

[LOGIN](#) [REGISTER](#)[Search](#)
[HOME](#)
[ROMANCE](#)
[MYSTERY](#)
[PARANORMAL](#)
[YOUNG ADULT](#)
[INSPIRATIONAL](#)
[MAINSTREAM](#)
[SCIENCE FICTION](#)
[EROTICA](#)
[Mainstream](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

[SUBSCRIBE TO RT](#)[Magazine](#)[Newsletter](#)

More than 200 new books reviewed in every issue. Subscribe and save 50%!

Try a free sample issue of digital magazine.

SUBSCRIBE: [Print](#) | [Digit](#)

## JANUARY 2016 SEAL OF EXCELLENCE

Wed, 01/20/2016 - 10:15am — [RT Book Reviews](#)

[APRIL RATINGS](#)

Download the ratings for all the new book reviewed in the April issue, conveniently formatted on easily printable pages.

[Download Now >>](#)

[RECENT POSTS](#)

[RT 2016 Convention Recap: A Girls' Night](#)

[RT Convention 2016 Recap: A Seat At The Table](#)[RT Exclusive Excerpt: A Totally Awkward Love](#)[Forewords — The Books Before the Buzz](#)[Tweetharts: Tweets We Loved This Week](#)

## RECENT REVIEWS

**CRAVING**  
by Helen Hardt**IN THE DARK**  
by Lila Rose**HIS FIRST CHOICE**  
by Tara Taylor Quinn**THE GOOD FATHER**  
by Tara Taylor Quinn**SEEK AND FIND**  
by Dana Mentink

**Each month the RT editors select one book that is not only compelling, but pushes the boundaries of genre fiction. This book stands out from all the others reviewed that month, in the magazine issue and on the website. January 2016's RT Seal of Excellence — the editors' pick for best book of the month — is awarded to *American Housewife*:**

*Stories* by Helen Ellis.

Where have you been all my life, Helen Ellis? *American Housewife* is a stunning marriage of razor-sharp wit and sensitive insight. From the darkly funny battles between neighbors over wainscoting, to unsettling recurring visits from dead doormen, to a surprisingly sympathetic rendering of reality television competitors, this collection is killer. — *Regina Small*

*American Housewife* is like if Truman Capote and Flannery O'Connor had a wicked Manhattanite baby. The only time I put this book down was to finish laughing. Usually in short-story collections, there's one or two that just aren't as good as the others, but that wasn't the case here. Every story makes you want more. — *Sarah McDaniel Dyer*

Before delving into this collection, I heard Ellis compared to Maria Semple. And let me tell you, I love Semple's send-up of privileged women, *Where'd You Go, Bernadette?*, with the fire of a thousand suns. So I opened this book with a decided, "Oh, yeah?" fighting words sort of attitude. Ellis won me over halfway down the first page. Her prose is delightfully horrible, and I mean that in the best way possible. I finished this in record time, and then flipped back to page one to start reading again. This is going to be one of those books you'll see everyone holding. Trust me. — *Elissa Petruzzi*

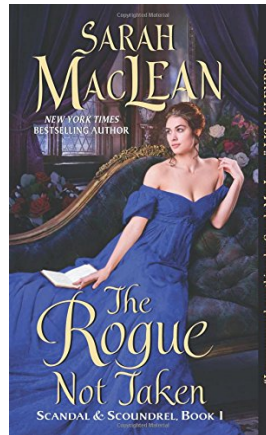
*American Housewife*, has to be the most horrifyingly delightful book on the shelves this month. Each of her dozen tales is more brilliant and biting than the last. From housewives who sit around doing little more than spending their husbands' money to those who are self-employed, from polite society wives to those more than willing to get their hands a little dirty, each woman within the pages of this book is equally worthy of fear and admiration — but mostly a wide-eyed stare and a few gasps of shock. Either way, you won't soon forget these anti-heroines, who have crafted their own version of a twisted and tawdry American Dream — one definitely worth living, if only vicariously. My one complaint is that there weren't more deliciously devious housewives to meet. I can't wait to see what Ellis cooks up for us next! — *Jennifer Peters*

It's pretty difficult to resist this collection of stories. Clever, over-the-top and laugh-out-loud funny, *American Housewife* should most definitely be accompanied by a glass of Pinot Grigio — which



you'll place on top of your glitter drawer in between stories, of course. Personal favorites include the all-too-perfect opener, "What I Do All Day," and "Wainscoting War," a back-and-forth story between feuding neighbors. So "stallion-walk like Beyonce" to the nearest bookstore and grab yourself a copy — you'll be seriously mistaken if you don't. — *Danielle Valente*

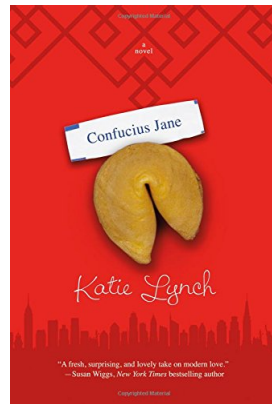
Here are the other books we considered for our January 2016 Seal of Excellence Award:



I have come to trust Sarah MacLean's work such that I was not at all worried about her beginning a new series, which started with this month's *The Rogue Not Taken*. I was more *anxiously awaiting the awesome*. And this heroine delivers. She made my heart hurt and the tears flow, so much so that my cat became concerned. (My husband, he's used to me weeping over books.) This one's a keeper for sure. — *Elissa Petruzzi*



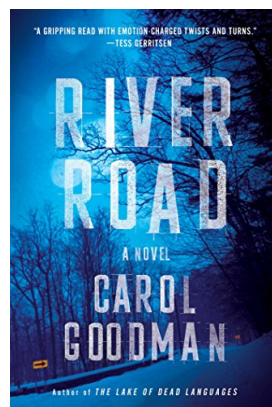
Karen Booth spins a story of lust, love and betrayal in *Pregnant by the Rival CEO*. This was such a fun and quick read! Personalities clash, egos get bruised and then there's a baby! My favorite part about this book is that it features a diverse cast of characters in a natural and respectful manner. There is no discussion of the fact that Anna and Jacob are of a different race, because a discussion is not necessary. They are two people with similar passions who have fallen in love. Plain and simple. And isn't that how it always should be? — *Kristin Wise*



*Confucius Jane* is a truly adorable tale. It's hard not to instantly fall in love with Jane and Sutton. You'll want to stay with them, in their tight little community nestled in New York's Chinatown district, long after this delightful book is done. — Sarah McDaniel Dyer



Any author, regardless of genre, must build a world for us to inhabit, and Daniel José Older truly excels at this in *Midnight Taxi Tango*, creating a New York City filled with ghostly mayhem. The dialogue is also pitch perfect for his full cast of characters, as he weaves together this Urban Fantasy tale. You'll want to start with book one, *Half-Resurrection Blues*, as plotlines continue. But it will be well worth it, I swear! — Elissa Petruzzi



Goodman's emotional and suspenseful tale takes us to upstate New York where creative writing professor Nan Lewis is investigated in the wake of her student's death on *River Road* — the same spot where Nan's daughter also lost her life. Suspicions arise, secrets unfold and readers are hooked. — Danielle Valente

Congratulations to the winner and all of the nominees! You can find all of our Seal of Excellence winners [here](#).

GENRE: [Mainstream](#)

TAGS: [Seal of Excellence](#)

reddit

G+1

Like 117

RELATED POSTS



Announcing RT's January Seal Of Excellence: Across The Universe By Beth Revis

The January 2012 RT Seal Of Excellence Winner Is ...

January 2015 Seal of Excellence

COMMENTS

Comments for this thread are now closed. ×

0 Comments

RT Book Reviews

1 Login

Recommend

Share

Sort by Best

This discussion has been closed.

ALSO ON RT BOOK REVIEWS

What's the Best Book Cover of the Month? Take the Poll!

1 comment • a month ago

Debs — All of the covers are gorgeous, but Laura Kaye's Hard Ride has my vote!

GHOST GIFTS

1 comment • 10 days ago

Kate Hearn — This sounds quite good! Must add to my summer list...thank you :)

Profiling Love Interests: Cynthia Ruchti's Song Of Silence

1 comment • 19 days ago

Cynthia Ruchti — In case anyone is looking for my impossible last name, it's R-u-c-h-t-i, and is pronounced as if the first syllable rhymes with ...

HOME TO CHAPEL SPRINGS

1 comment • 15 days ago

Ane Mulligan — Thank you, Patsy!

Subscribe

Add Disqus to your site

Add Disqus

Add Privacy

ROMANCE

MYSTERY

PARANORMAL

YOUNG ADULT





The Truth about Victorian Sex  
with Melissa Lenhardt

Hump Day Excerpt: Temptations of a  
Wallflower

Exclusive Excerpt: Laura Kaye's Ride  
Hard

Exclusive Excerpt: Jude Deveraux's The  
Girl From Summer Hill

Ye Olde Gambling Hells: A Reading List  
by Amy Sandas

Cover Breakdown: Susan Mallery's  
Daughters Of The Bride

[More Romance »](#)



Exclusive Excerpt: Heather  
Graham's One-Eyed Jack From  
Romantic Times: Vegas

Behind The Scenes: T.M. Causey's The  
Saints Of The Lost And Found Cover

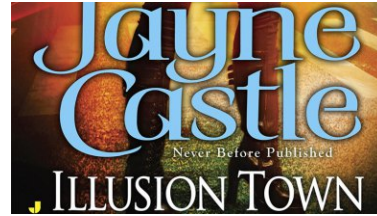
March 2016 Seal of Excellence

Cover Reveal: Lynn Cahoon's A Story  
To Kill

February 2016 Seal of Excellence

Exclusive Excerpt: Ann A. McDonald's  
The Oxford Inheritance

[More Mystery »](#)



Cover Breakdown: Jayne Castle's  
Illusion Town

We're back in the office after an  
awesome convention and ready to get  
this week going with an insightful  
cover breakdown! We have to admit...

Cover Breakdown: Magic Binds by  
Ilona Andrews

Cover Breakdown: Molly Harper's Big  
Vamp On Campus

Exclusive Excerpt: Runaway Vampire  
by Lynsay Sands

Dear Romanswer: The Seasons of Love

Exclusive Cover Reveal: Cari Z's Where  
There's a Will

[More Paranormal »](#)



RT Exclusive Excerpt: A Total  
Awkward Love Story

Life and Death with Lurlene McDermott

RT 2016 Convention: YA Spooky  
Slumber Party

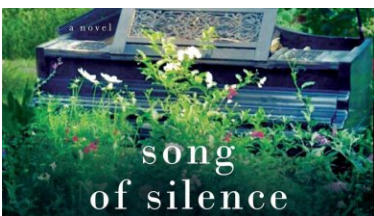
Shadowhunters Recap: S1, E 13:  
Morning Star

Shadowhunters Recap: S1, E 12: I

Cover Breakdown: Alessandra To  
Moonshot

[More Young Adult »](#)

## INSPIRATIONAL



Profiling Love Interests: Cynthia  
Ruchti's Song Of Silence

We romance fans live fo

Fun Facts: Siri Mitchell's Flirtation Walk

Cover Breakdown: Wanda & Jean  
Brunstetter's The Missing Will

December 2015 Seal of Excellence

## MAINSTREAM



Cover Breakdown: Amy E.  
Reichert's Luck, Love & Lemon  
Pie

It's Tuesday and we're getting ready to  
kick off the first official day here at the  
RT Booklover's Convention in Las  
Vegas!

Debut Author Spotlight: Catherine  
Lowell's The Madwoman Upstairs

## SCIENCE FICTION



Cover Reveal and Giveaway: J.A.  
Rock's The Silvers

Feel like a cover reveal, or winning an  
e-advanced copy? Who wouldn't?!  
Today we're taking a peek at J.A.

Author Q&A: Helen Lowe on  
Earthquakes, Prussian Generals and  
Rocking on the Porch

## EROTICA



RT 2016 Convention: Beyond  
BDSM: Top Five Tips For Writing  
BDSM

The RT Booklovers' Convention is  
swing and besides having an absc  
amazing time at all the fabulous  
parties, we are l

Exclusive Excerpt: Maya Banks's  
Dominated

---

Love and Fiction Collide in James L. Rubart's *The Five Times I Met Myself*

---

2015 RT Reviewers' Choice Award Nominees — Inspirational, Young Adult, New Adult and Multicultural

---

[More Inspirational »](#)

---

January 2016 Seal of Excellence

---

Exclusive Excerpt: Jacqueline Sheehan's *The Center Of The World*

---

Cover Reveal: Someone Else's Love Letter by Deborah Blumenthal

---

Cover Reveal: Lauren Baratz-Logsted's *Falling for Prince Charles*

---

[More Mainstream »](#)

---

Cover Breakdown: Taylor Anderson's *Blood In The Water*

---

2015 RT Reviewers' Choice Award Nominees — Science Fiction/Fantasy/Paranormal

---

Cover Breakdown: *Ring of Fire IV* by Eric Flint

---

[July Seal of Excellence](#)

---

[More Science Fiction »](#)

---

[Exclusive Excerpt: Kylie Scott's \*Dilemma\*](#)

---

[Sneak Peek: Sylvia Day's \*One with You\* Book Trailer](#)

---

[Exclusive Excerpt: Monica Murphy's \*Never Let You Go\*](#)

---

[Exclusive Excerpt: Violetta Rand's \*Possession\*](#)

---

[More Erotic »](#)

[Advertising](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Subscription Services](#) | [RT Review Source](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

RT Book Reviews © 2009 - 2016. All rights reserved.