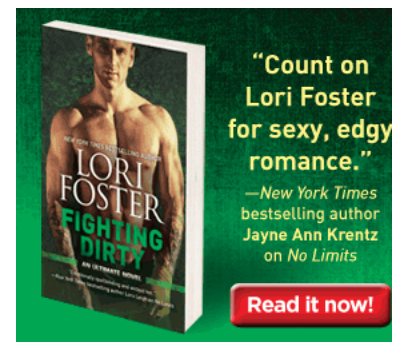


[LOGIN](#) [REGISTER](#)[Search](#)
[HOME](#)
[ROMANCE](#)
[MYSTERY](#)
[PARANORMAL](#)
[YOUNG ADULT](#)
[INSPIRATIONAL](#)
[MAINSTREAM](#)
[SCIENCE FICTION](#)
[EROTICA](#)
[Fantasy](#)

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](#)

OCTOBER 2015 SEAL OF EXCELLENCE

Mon, 10/26/2015 - 1:14pm — [RT Book Reviews](#)

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. October 2015's *RT* Seal of Excellence — the editors' pick for best book of the month — is awarded to Rachel Vincent's *Menagerie*.

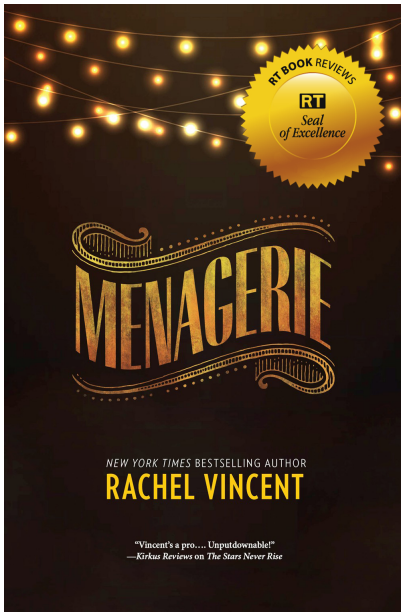
[APRIL RATINGS](#)

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](#)



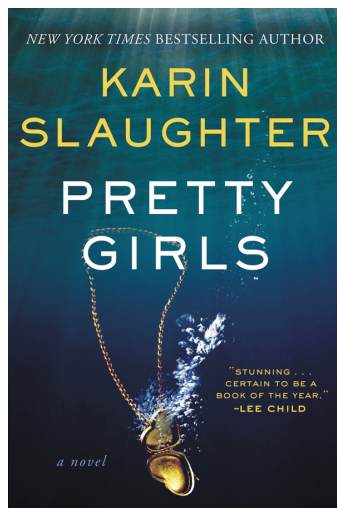
I'm a fan of hellish carnivals and boy did *Menagerie* deliver. Delilah's ordeal kept me on the edge of my seat until the very end. Vincent adeptly captures the feeling of dehumanization that comes with enslavement. It's easy to see parallels between this book and animal, as well as immigration rights. It's a sobering reminder of what happens when one group of people is seen as less deserving. The book stands on its own, but once you get to the end you'll be eager for book two. This is a dark and thrilling read that you will easily burn through in a couple sittings. I know I did. — Sarah McDaniel Dyer

Every reader has their pet peeves, and one of mine is flashbacks. *Just tell me, already!* Despite this misgiving, I was entranced by *Menagerie* from the very start, no matter that the reveal behind the Reaping is given to us in tiny morsels. Vincent's worldbuilding is impeccable and does what all the very best fantasy novels must — make us think about our own world, and the prejudices within. Heroine Delilah is real and

multidimensional — someone to root for from page one. — Elissa Petruzzi

I've been a fan of paranormal and urban fantasy for a long time, but lately, we've seen fewer releases — the pickings, they've been slim. So imagine my sheer delight when I picked up *Menagerie* by Rachel Vincent. Fresh, engaging and dark as hell, *Menagerie* follows a troupe of enslaved, circus-performing cryptids, aka human/creature hybrids straight out of myth. (Think sirens, ifrits and, yes, even a Minotaur.) Our heroine, Delilah Marlow, has a spine of steel and a will to match. Watching Delilah lead a revolution is utterly and relentlessly thrilling — I had to remind myself to breathe. — Regina Small

Here are the other books we considered for our October 2015 Seal of Excellence Award:



Karin Slaughter's *Pretty Girls* is an extremely well written and very moving book that delves deep into the seedy underbelly of violent kidnappings. The story makes a very important point — people go missing every single day, and long after the media and the rest of the world forget, the families must cope and continue to seek justice. Slaughter seamlessly intertwines the stories of two sisters with diary entries from the father of a missing girl, painting a vivid picture of the pain and anguish caused by never finding a missing family member. As we discover more about the kidnappings, the events of the book become positively gruesome. I've been referring to the the plot as every parent's worst nightmare. Because of the

[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

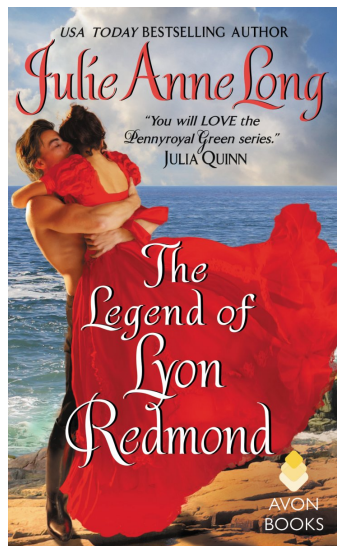


THE GOOD FATHER
by Tara Taylor Quinn

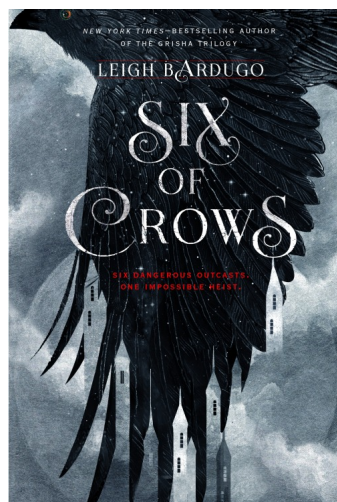


SEEK AND FIND
by Dana Mentink

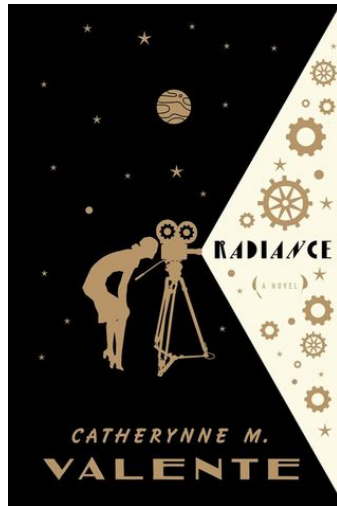
disturbing nature of the story, this book is not for everyone. The writing pushed me forward, though there were moments of nausea and tears. I felt like I became a part of the Carroll family. I was so invested in their anguish that I had to see them find peace. I also became positively terrified to walk home alone from the train in the dark and double locked my door. Such a powerful emotional reaction is certainly the hallmark of an engaging story. — *Kristin Wise*



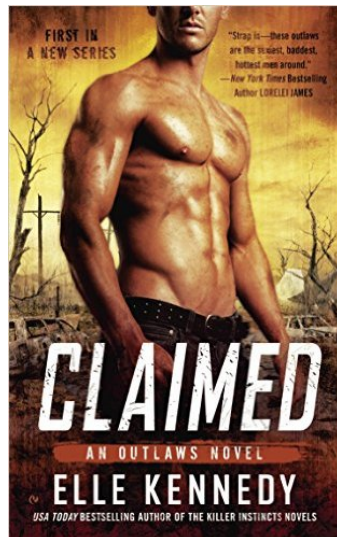
Oh, hey there! I know I've been talking about this book *kind of a lot*, because *boy was I excited*. I was also nervous, because we'd waited so long for the real story behind Lyon and Olivia's affair. But I needn't have been concerned. *The Legend of Lyon Redmond* was so, so good. So good. I just loved it. The only reason I didn't wrestle the other editors to the ground and insist this win SOE for October was the very simple fact that this book is a lovely culmination, and you deserve to read the other Pennyroyal Green titles before getting to this deliciousness. If you need me, I'll be on a beach in Spain. — *Elissa Petruzzi*



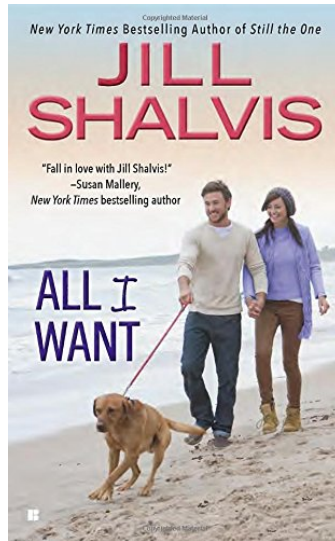
YA fantasy is huge right now, and Leigh Bardugo's *Six of Crows* is a great example of why that trend is not dying out anytime soon. Her band of misfits is so well-rendered (in multiple POVs, no less), and her worldbuilding so intricate that I felt like I was right there with them, trying to break into an unbreakable prison. Set in the same world as her Grisha trilogy, newcomers can hop right into the breathtaking adventure, and I really recommend that you do. — *Elissa Petruzzi*



When discussing *Radiance* with my fellow editors, I joked that it's the literary equivalent of an acid trip. In all the best ways. [Catherynne M. Valente](#), returning with her first adult novel since *Deathless*, is the kind of the writer who pushes the boundaries of narrative and storytelling in some of the most offbeat and creative ways I've ever encountered as a reader. In *Radiance*, she examines the disappearance of a young filmmaker, Severin Unck — through the biopics that Severin's father makes detailing her rise and fall, her life and death. The story-within-a-story convention calls into question the act of storytelling itself, putting history and the truth into competition with the embellished stories we tell about them for the sake of art. *Radiance* is haunting and ambitious, even — or maybe especially — when it throws the reader off-balance. Oh, and did I mention this all takes place across several planets?— *Regina Small*



When I read the early reviews of [Elle Kennedy](#)'s new erotic romance, *Claimed*, I was intrigued. It sounded not just sexually exciting, but adventurous and thrilling, the kind of book that would make my heart race for so many reasons. And Oh. Em. Gee! The hero, Connor, is one of the hottest male leads I've read, and Hudson is a fantastic heroine — the perfect match for Connor. Their chemistry is explosive. But the side characters, too, are three-dimensional and feel more fully realized than most secondary characters. All together, those elements create a story that keeps you on the edge of your seat, heart pounding, from page one right up until the end. Even for readers not already fans of Kennedy's writing, they will definitely be anticipating her next book after reading *Claimed*. I know I am! — *Jennifer Peters*



All I Want by Jill Shalvis begins with a misunderstanding: the hottie on Zoe's front steps isn't her blind date — he's her brother's friend Parker. Guess it's okay that she planted one on him, right? A case of mistaken identity — and forgetfulness of a temporary houseguest — catapults readers into Shalvis' witty, romantic story of a no-nonsense pilot-for-hire and a USFW special agent. Though deeper issues affect our main characters, the playful interactions and clever quips really get romance fans going. If you need some levity and are looking to unwind after a long day, *All I Want* is a perfect go-to. No judgment if your nightstand snack ends up on your sweater while reading — if Zoe can rock a few crumbs *and* still look irresistible to Parker, then there's hope for us all. — *Danielle Valente*

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

GENRE: Fantasy

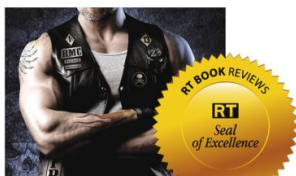
TAGS: Seal of Excellence, rachel vincent, menagerie

reddit

G+1

Like 199

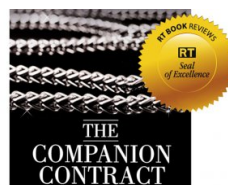
RELATED POSTS



October 2014 Seal of Excellence



January 2015 Seal of Excellence



February 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

Shadowhunters Recap: S1, E 13: Spring Awakening

1 comment • 20 days ago

Tania Stanwood — I think this is not a bad show. I like the fantasy genre so I like this series. Although I don't watch much TV I prefer to read. I am reading Ben ...

GHOST GIFTS

1 comment • 10 days ago

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

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!

RT 2016 Convention: Thursday Parties Photo Recap!

1 comment • 11 days ago

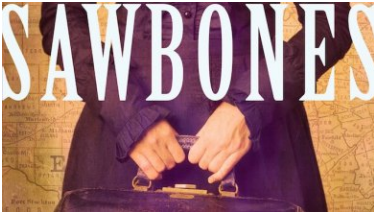
Denise S — The Keith Milano Memorial Fund was honored to be apart of RT16. We were overwhelmed by the support for the fund and our cause to raise ...

Subscribe

Add Disqus to your site Add Disqus Add

Privacy

ROMANCE



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

MYSTERY



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

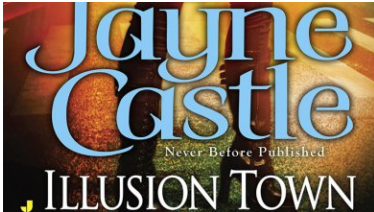
Cover Reveal: Lynn Cahoon's A Story To Kill

February 2016 Seal of Excellence

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

More Mystery »

PARANORMAL



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

YOUNG ADULT



RT Exclusive Excerpt: A Total Awkward Love Story

Life and Death with Lurlene McD:

RT 2016 Convention: YA Spooky Slumber Party

Shadowhunters Recap: S1, E 13: Morning Star

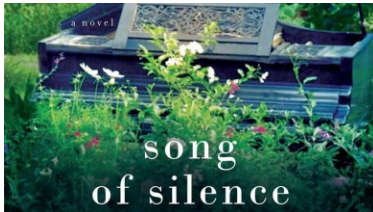
Shadowhunters Recap: S1, E 12: I

Cover Breakdown: Alessandra To Moonshot

More Young A

[More Romance »](#)[Exclusive Cover Reveal: Cari Z's Where There's a Will](#)[More Paranormal »](#)

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

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 »](#)

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*

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 »](#)

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*

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 »](#)

EROTICA



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

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

Exclusive Excerpt: Maya Banks's *Dominated*

Exclusive Excerpt: Kylie Scott's *Dilemma*

Sneak Peek: Sylvia Day's *One with a View* Book Trailer

Exclusive Excerpt: Monica Murphy's *Never Let You Go*

Exclusive Excerpt: Violetta Rand's *Possession*

[More Erotica »](#)

