



Cole, Harper Miller and Carrie Nichols

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By: **Denny S. Bryce** | June 29, 2018 12:00 am

Happy summer! Happy June! Vacation season is upon us! So, let's talk about what the publishing industry likes to call "beach reads," or better yet, those book boyfriends who provide the most thoughtful, compelling and fun romance novels for fall, winter, spring or summer!

To that end, I am thrilled to have these three authors visiting with me this month to talk book boyfriends (and girlfriends, too).



Kari Cole

Kari Cole writes paranormal romantic suspense about werewolves, witches, demons and anything else that might go bump in the night. She won the 2017 Golden Heart for Paranormal Romance, and her debut novel, *Hunt the Moon*, was released this month.

Kari's book boyfriend is Rochlan "Rock" North from *Slow Burn* by **Autumn Jones Lake**.

Denny: Sounds to me like this character is as you say your "true book boyfriend love" – I may need to make this a new category ... ultimate book boyfriend. Tell me why, Kari. Go!

Kari: My true love book boyfriend, forever and ever, is Rochlan "Rock" North, president of the Lost Kings Motorcycle Club from Autumn Jones Lake's contemporary series. Lucky for me – and everyone else – his story is told over the course of several books, beginning with *Slow Burn*.



heaping helping of unabashed appreciation for an intelligent woman, and I'm all in. Rock definitely fits the bill.

Denny: In this story, the adage applies: Every good man has a good woman, so let's talk about the heroine in this story.

Kari: When he first meets Hope Kendall, she is already happily married (don't worry, this isn't a cheating book), but she can't help but be drawn to him. The feeling is more than mutual. He would do almost anything to make Hope his, except dishonor who she is by trying to seduce her away from her husband. The constant care and attention Rock shows for Hope's career and choices are some of the sexiest things about him, especially in a sub-genre often populated by misogynistic alpha-holes.



Rock is the best kind of alpha hero: assertive and dominant, but not domineering. In a club full of tattooed, buff, alpha men, he is the king of Kings. He is loyal, loving and defined by his willingness to sacrifice his own happiness to protect others, whether they're his MC brothers, their extended families or the sweet, shy woman he is determined to win.

Denny: Oh, I like him! What's the tipping point in the story? When does Colton first show just how wonderful he can be?

Kari: When tragedy strikes Hope's life, Rock drops everything to be by her side. He could have pushed for a relationship right then. Instead, he spends the next year taking care of his MC family and changing his life to be a better man for her. How can you not respect the sort of dedication that leads to this thought? "Besides her permanently in my life, I have no other wants. I need her in my arms, on my skin, in my bed, on my bike every second of every day." *Swoon*

Given Rock's hard-knocks backstory, perhaps it's not surprising how patient and careful he is with Hope. Since he was little more than a kid himself, he's provided



escape became dangerous, he risked everything to take control to protect his brothers.

Denny: You do LOVE him! Who could play Rock's part in a film? Is there anyone?

Kari: I admit I spend a ridiculous amount of time fantasizing about Rock. I own a Lost Kings MC T-shirt that says "Property of Rock" on the back. I troll Google Images looking for just the right guy to share in the Lost Kings MC Ladies Facebook fan group. My current fav is fitness model Lewis Craddock.

If you like your book boyfriends hot, dirty and surprisingly sweet, Rochlan North is your man. Just remember, I saw him first.



Harper Miller

Harper Miller is a kink enthusiast who writes sex-positive love stories featuring a diverse cast of characters. Her most recent release is *Complexity*, book four in the Kinky Connect Chronicles series, and coming soon is *The Business of Love*, about two dueling romance authors.

Harper's book boyfriend is Benjamin Drummond in *Being Plumville* by Savannah J. Frierson.

Denny: Welcome, Harper! I am so glad you were able to join us this month. Now, let's dive right in, tell me about your book boyfriend and this

fascinating book.

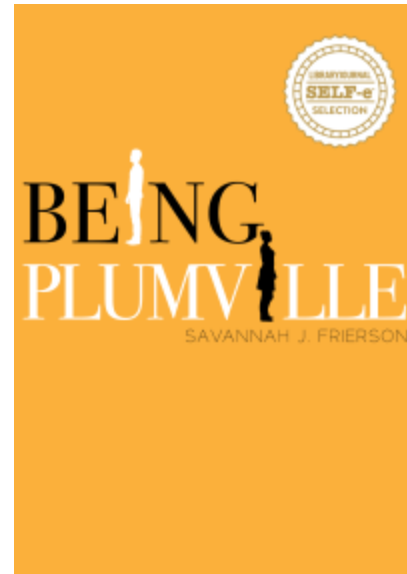
Harper: Thanks for having me! My book bae is Benjamin Drummond, in Savannah J. Frierson's NA historical *Being Plumville*.

Friends-to-lovers is my favorite trope. *Being Plumville* opens in 1953, and Coralee's mother works as a maid for the Drummond family. That's how 8-year-old



Denny: Layers and layers of real-world (for the era and beyond) conflict in this story. How do these two defy the times and find the courage for their friendship?

Harper: Jim Crow is wedged between them, but in 1968 now college student Coralee is tasked with tutoring star quarterback Benjamin to keep him out of academic probation and on the field. Their sessions are done in secret because Coach Norman isn't thrilled a "nigra" is the chosen tutor, but he needs Benjamin to pass to play.



Their years-long separation left their friendship broken, but Benny, as Coralee calls him, never stops trying to rekindle the closeness and trust they'd shared once Coralee is back in his life. But the world doesn't make it easy. Coralee and the Black Student Union at Solomon College rally and petition for equality and a Black Studies Department. Benjamin's frat brothers prefer to maintain the cultural power they hold on campus and in Plumville at large.

Benjamin is far from the stereotype of a self-centered, hard-partying, notch-seeking, rich kid who might occupy college campuses. He's a tender-hearted guy and genuine to the core. This period was rife with protests against wars and the government, kind of like today, but going against societal norms for the time and seeing Coralee for who she is (a brilliant black woman) and treating her with dignity and respect is scandalous for Benny's circle. He risks social suicide when he chooses to defend Coralee when his peers claim "she's no good."

Denny: I love historical fiction and 20th-century historical romance. What resonates with you about the dynamic between men and women during 1960s?

Harper: Since most of the book takes place in the late 1960s, it's noticeable how different men treated women. In some circles, women were supposed to be seen and not heard, but Benny cares about what Coralee has to say. He wants to know



comeback!

Denny: Who plays Benny in your film version of this book?

Harper: Chris Pine may be a lot older than the characters in the book, but he'd nail the role. He's good-looking, but not pretty, and he charmed Diana and the world as Steve Trevor (in *Wonder Woman*). As far as Coralee, I see Janelle Monae playing her! Her role as Mary Jackson in *Hidden Figures* solidified the casting for me — self-assured

despite what the rest of the world tried to tell her she was capable of.

Denny: OK, I need to be a Hollywood producer! Love this cast! Now, tell me about the villain in this story — although, I already have a good idea.

Harper: There are lots of villains in *Being Plumville*, but the big baddie is racism. Benny and Coralee come from different racial backgrounds and social class. Their relationship is considered a crime in many areas. The fact that Benny refuses to fall into society's standards regarding who he should love makes him even more lovable and heroic.



Carrie Nichols

Carrie Nichols, a 2016 RWA Golden Heart winner, writes contemporary romance. Her latest release, *The Marine's Secret Daughter*, is available now.

Carrie's book boyfriend is Colton Walker from *Then There Was You* by **Miranda Liasson.**

Denny: Hi, Carrie! And welcome! And let's talk Colton!

Carrie: He smelled like plain soap and leftover sunshine from the warm day. I think Miranda Liasson's description of Angel Falls police chief Colton Walker, the hero of her book *Then There Was You*, is absolute perfection.



biscuits in his pocket to lure an escape artist poodle so that he can return the errant canine to her frantic owner. But embarrassment doesn't prevent him from doing it, and I love that about him. Colton considers helping the people in his town as part of his job and does it because he remembers what it was like to feel helpless. He doesn't realize how special that makes him.

Denny: I always enjoy a hero with depth and lots of layers. What personal challenges does Colton have to overcome?

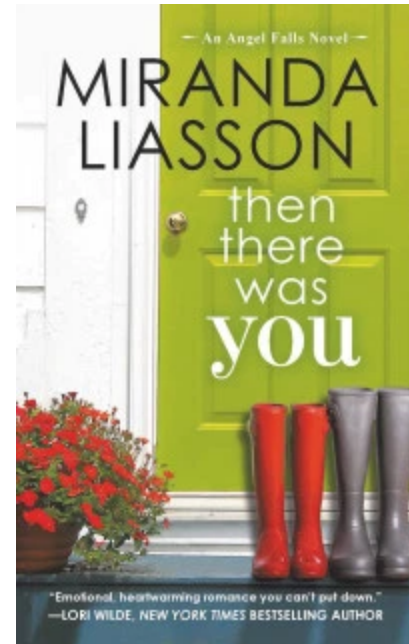
Carrie: Despite being a cocky jock in high school, his life was not on a good path until the former police chief took him under his wing and set him straight. Colton honors his mentor by intervening when a kid is heading in the wrong direction. He doesn't think about it; he simply does it. Nor does he look for credit. Did I mention this guy has no idea how special he is? Is there anything more wonderful than that?

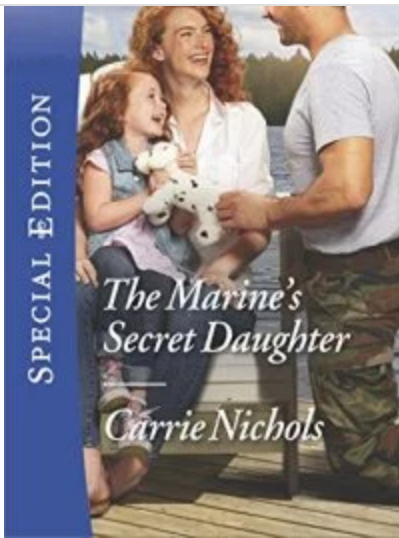
Denny: OK, now — explain his nickname!

Carrie: Colton's nickname is "The Revolver" because of the frequency with which he changes girlfriends, but when it comes to his 18-year-old sister, his advice is never to date someone like him. Or have sex with anyone. Ever. Having "the talk" with his sister before she goes off to college is the last thing Colton wants to do, but as the only father figure in her life, it falls to him, so he sucks it up. Of course, he loves having sex, but talking about it with his "baby" sister? No way. His sincerity and awkwardness during their conversation melted my heart.

So why wasn't the heroine Sara as deeply, madly in love with Colton as I was? Why does she consider him Enemy No. 1? Not only does she blame him for her fiancé jilting her two days before their wedding, but she also can't forget how Colton the jerk —uh, jock — teased her mercilessly in high school.

Denny: What makes Colton even more lovable?





things right. I love a guy who can own up to his mistakes and do his best to rectify things even if the outcome might not be what he desires. Failure could end up making him an object of pity to the citizens of Angel Falls, but that doesn't stop him from trying his hardest to win the woman he loves. I admire that.

Then There Was You is a romance, so you know there's the requisite HEA, and I won't give it away. But I do have to say Colton's actions in the epilogue brought me to my knees and demonstrated why "The Revolver" won Sara's,

reluctant heart. And mine.

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Great book boyfriends (and girlfriends, too) this month! Thank you, Kari, Harper and Carrie for sharing!

Until next time!

Denny S. Bryce is a three-time RWA Golden Heart finalist (**including this year!**). She won the 2014 Golden Heart in the romantic suspense category. She also writes mainstream historical fiction, romantic suspense, and paranormal romance. Her website is www.dennysbryce.com. You can also connect with her on Twitter (@DennySBryce) or Facebook.

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