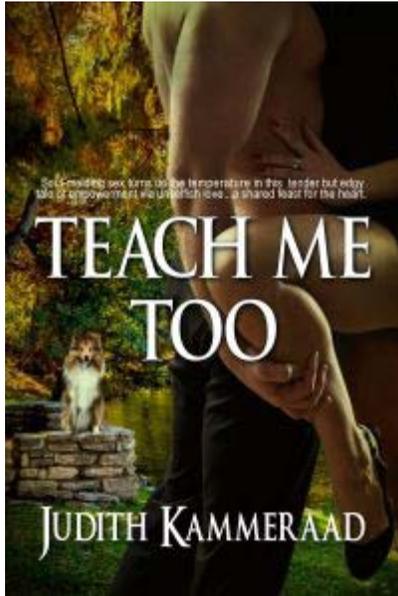


Teach Me Too by Judith Kammeraad

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Author: Judith Kammeraad

Hello, and welcome to Judith Kammeraad. I'm pleased to have you here on my blog, Sizzling Romance, today.

Thank you for hosting me, April. This is a thrill for me, since I am a debut author, and this is my first interview.

Today we are going to talk about your latest book, *Teach Me Too*. Can you tell me just a small bit about the book?

My books feature characters who have been hurt in some way. Love empowers them to seek out healing or redemption. That's it—the whole story.

Here's the back cover blurb for *Teach Me Too*:

Angry students assault Lyla Grey at school and put an end to her career. She heads to Citrus County, Florida for a new life as governess on an orange and alpaca ranch. She recovers her professional confidence quickly, but rebuilding a normal life is out of the question. What is she supposed to do with a libido on overdrive and dread of...the scary part of men?

Even so, sweet, yummy looking Mark DuPree keeps her on a slow burn with his hungry, sad green eyes. He's lost in running the ranch and dealing with vandalism, lifelong feuds, and his anger junkie father. She can't seem to stop her loin-wrenching arguments with Mark...

Tending to the tattered emotions of those worse off than she is gobbles up Lyla's obsession with herself. But will Mark help her overcome her past and teach her there's nothing scary about loving after all.

See? You already know what's got to happen, because the story issues from the characters, who drive the changes in their lives in an intriguing way. The who devising the how.



What was one of the hardest parts of writing, Teach Me Too ?

To me, the hardest work is never the hardest part. For example, the writing, editing, and pitching are exquisitely gratifying. Waiting for a publisher to love my characters and my story is grueling, and the closure of Teach Me Too's first publisher, Secret Cravings, was heart-breaking, because these times tapped into my greatest fears. They also taught me to trust my own power and resourcefulness.

That said, plotting a novel plays to my self-doubt. I always feel better when I've got an outline of the major events of the story. There again, I'm trusting that the unknown will reveal itself if I really know my characters. I guess you can tell I always did my homework in school.

And your favorite part of writing, Teach Me Too ?

It took me a year to write a dozen drafts of Teach Me Too. Then a year of critiquing, beta reading, and umpteen edits. As I learned more about writing, I worked eight hours a day crafting my story. I loved every minute of the process, and I cried when I had to stop. When I went to my new publisher, I Heart, I rewrote the book again.

My second favorite part of Teach Me Too's odyssey was the moment when I laid my printed book in my 93-year-old mother's hands. She cried, "If only your father were here."

I loved it when my story made me laugh, cry, flush with anger, or feel...um...sexy.

I confess, receiving my first 5-star ratings was a tremendous validation.

Will you tell us just a bit about the characters in the book?

Lyla's students assaulted her, and she fought back. Jail, a mental hospital, and a lost career were nothing compared to her shattered confidence and the phobia that rules out getting physical with a man. Lyla is a bright, gifted teacher in the widest sense of the word. Creative and resourceful, she is determined to get back some kind of a life. She starts with a position as governess to motherless children, whose need for love calls out to her need to give. Pretty soon, she's in tune with the needs of all kinds of hurting creatures and in love with a achingly appealing man. What about that phallus phobia?

Mark, her employer and sparring partner takes her breath away. Strong for her when he needs to be, he's suffered all kinds of hurt—loss of wife and children, raising his son and daughter alone, dealing with his father's mental illness, and running the ranch without help are just the beginning. He needs a help-mate and partner with a heart big enough to take him on and help him empty out all his hurt. Will his unselfish love teach Lyla not to be afraid of the loving they both need?

Mark and Lyla's love story involves the crucial intertwining arcs of these characters:

the father (who wrote the book on guilt and anger)

the brother (with whom Lyla should fall in love)

the hired hand (whose overt sexuality terrifies Lyla)

the textile artist (another missing link in the family tree?)

the housekeeper (who loves them all but lost her own child)

Mark's two children and a brain-damaged boy who longs for Lyla to "teach me too."

So, Judith Kammeraad, now that you have written *Teach Me Too*, what is next on your list?

I am ready to submit my next book, *Half and Half Rose*. This is an unconventional story, in that the romance is between people who are already married to each other, but separated.

Michael's drunken driving kills their unborn child, and Rose can't get him to mourn as a pair. Neither can get past the tragedy. His alcoholism has damaged her and the marriage, and the hurt keeps tearing them up. She sees no choice but to try to get over the love of her life by removing herself from the temptation of being around her ever arousing soul mate.

This takes the story to Ireland, where Michael uses innovative means to woo her from across the ocean. Everywhere Rose travels—everything she sees and does—brings back passionate memories. Her good intentions are no use. She can't stop loving him. Wanting him.

Meanwhile, Michael announces he has given up on her and sets out to travel the world to give her the freedom she ordered. Now it's up to Rose to try to find her lost man—and integrate her divided emotions into one true self.

As always, colorful secondary characters and subplots abound. And children. And dogs.

I've also started on two other novels and a children's novella, so I shouldn't go dry too soon.



If there was one thing that you could say to your readers, what would it be?

If my book made you laugh, cry, or feel sexy—if it made you think, I feel validated. If you are one of the readers who needed to find this novel, I'm glad. I wrote this book for all of you. Maybe you find yourselves in there somewhere. Know I'm there with you.

What draws you to write in the genre you do?

I first wrote stories for older children, because I am a student of how they think. My first novel was a coming of age story. It featured a *Thornbirds* kind of love between a young girl and her mentor, and it grew to a second volume by way of a grown up romance. There was a natural progression in my interest, with the romance budding from the coming of age. It didn't take much to learn that erotic love is a powerful way to make the readers (and myself) feel compelling love. Also, I wanted to write for a thinking readership, so my stories featured complicated characters and plots. These days I label my work as romantic suspense, erotic suspense, or erotic romance.

What are some of your influences? Other authors? People watching? Dreams? Movies? etc...

I watch people all the time and imagine their lives. I also dream vividly all night long. Making up stories is an inborn blessing and a curse. Everything I read or hear or watch becomes a story of my making. I constantly think of potential characters, settings, and situations, even if I'm

distracted the next moment. So pardon me if I'm watching you at McDonald's. I truly can't help it.

When you are writing is there anything that you simply have to have going on? Music, television, quiet, certain drinks, et c?

I have my father's author desk set in one of my study's three window walls that look out at the woods. This is where I feel most comfortable. All my reference books sit on the large desktop, with two computers, two printers, and small appliances at my fingertips. My drink rests on a pull-out shelf. When I get into the zone, I like it quiet, so sometimes I use a white noise machine. Best of all, Teddy, my sheltie lies at my feet. At 2 or 3 a.m. he gives me the eye. Then he makes his way into the bedroom.

Now on to something that I think is fun. I'm going to give you one word questions and you reply with the first thing that comes to mind. :)

WHAT? writing

WHEN? all the time

WHERE? everywhere

WHY? because it makes me happy

WHO? People in books (are real to me).

Thank you for spending a little time with me and letting us all get to know you, Judith Kammeraad.

Thank you April and friends for your interest in what I have to say.

Teach Me Too is available on Amazon and at the usual venues in e-book and paperback format. You can find my author website at judithkammeraad.com. My blog, e-mail address, and news are there. I also frequent Facebook. See you.