

# storytellers' newsletter

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## Waiting...

An original article by Tracey Bateman

Smoke leaks into my hiding place, burning my lungs. I want to cough, but they'll find me if I do. *Oh, God, don't let them find me.* I'm curled into a ball, tucked into a space too small for my nearly-grown girlish body. My cramped muscles beg for release, but fear holds me tight.

One way or another, I will not live through this awful night. As surely as childhood monsters exist, and I know now that they do, I am going to die. I pray that death will come fast and painless.

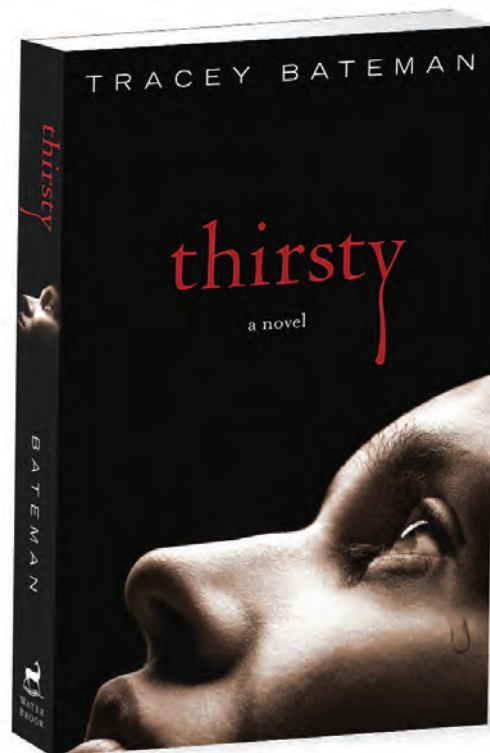
If I pray for rescue, will it do any good? How can it? No one knows I'm here. And if they did, they probably wouldn't care. I've pushed Nina away because she wasn't the mom I needed. Wanted. But as I wait for the inevitable, I close my eyes and imagine my arms wrapped around her waist, my face pressed into her soft neck. The scent of her skin washes across my memory and, I swear, mingles with the thickening smoke.

I press my fist to my mouth to stop myself from crying out to her. But let's face it, the mother I wish for no longer exists. That once-upon-a-time mommy was taken over by something else. Drunkenness, every bit as terrifying as the creatures that lurk beyond the secret of this hiding place.

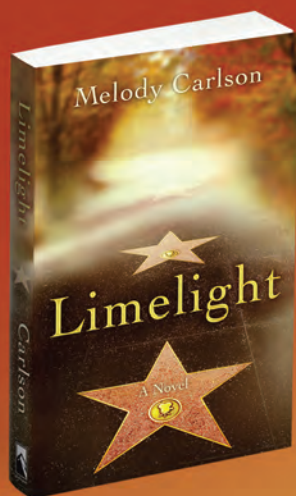
I ran away from her this time, but she left me first. Left me to find her next drink. She destroyed everything in her path. Her career, her marriage, our family...me. And even now, she brought me to this town, Abbey Hills, where we were supposed to start fresh. Instead, disappointment and death followed us.

I've held my anger close, so close, and now I see how stupid it was, how childish and such a waste. Nina seems different, more settled, and definitely sober. I've seen her lips move in silent prayer and I wonder if somehow she truly has changed. Time will tell. Time that for me is about to end.

I hear footsteps in the room.  
Voices calling out to me.  
Closer, now...  
I've been found.



It's never too late to change... or is it?



Claudette Fioré has lost it all: youth, beauty, fame, and fortune. But if she can move beyond her own cynicism, this could be the beginning of a whole new way of life.

## Author Spotlight: Tracey Bateman

Alcoholism is a relentless enemy of the soul. Like a vampire, it lurks, waits, watches and tests the edges of our weaknesses. I've been asked how I could write a vampire novel and call it "Christian". Easy. It's personal. After almost twenty years of sobriety, my dad lost his battle with addiction. A few years later, this immortal, insatiable, monster took his life as well. Churches are filled with those who suffer addiction in silence. I want to scream out to those tortured souls, "You are not alone!"

In *Thirsty*, Nina Parker's addiction has robbed her of everything she values. Newly sober, she is trying to rebuild her life and her relationships. When she encounters Markus, she believes she's found a friend. But the vampire's secret obsession with her mirrors the subtlety of alcoholism as he tries to seduce her away from her focus. She has to choose. By our actions today, we decide who we are tomorrow. The devil wants to kill, steal and destroy (John 10:10) but God is cheering us on. Choose life.

