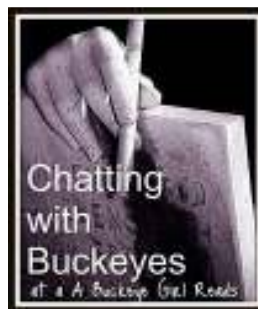




Author Interview: Marcia James: Chatting with Buckeyes



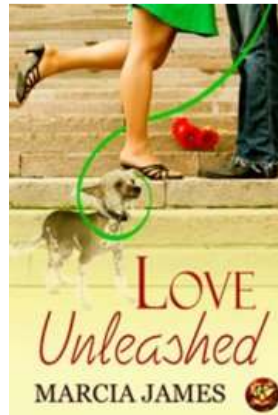
Welcome to the third edition of Chatting With Buckeyes! Today we talk with Contemporary Romance Author Marcia James!



Marcia James, when she isn't penning romantic comedies with elements of mystery and suspense, is a freelance video scriptwriter and advertising copywriter. In addition to developing marketing and promotional materials, she writes romance articles for her local weekly newspaper. After years of dealing with such sexy topics as how to safely install traffic lights, Marcia is enjoying "researching" and plotting steamy love scenes for her romance novels with her husband and hero of many years.

Your newest release is the novella, *Love Unleashed*; tell us a little bit about it?

Love Unleashed is about second chances -- not allowing an ex-love to slip away without one last shot at saving the relationship. That sounds pretty serious, but the novella is actually funny and very sexy. Here's the cover and the book blurb:



His best laid plans...

DJ "Rabid Ron" Hart has a grand scheme to win back the woman he loves. It involves an animal adoption fair, a hairless dog named Charlie and an offer she can't refuse.

Her hidden desires...

Cara Wilson has fantasies she's never admitted, and her ex-boyfriend still features in her erotic dreams. If only he didn't keep his bad-boy urges so tightly leashed.

Tonight they'll learn that winning sometimes takes losing control.

Where is *Love Unleashed* available to buy from?

All Romance eBooks (<http://www.allromanceebooks.com/product-loveunleashed-402754-149.html>) published *Love Unleashed* as part of its "Twenty-Eight Days of Heart" fundraiser. All Romance eBooks released a different short story every day in February and donated the money to the American Heart Association (AHA), a wonderful charity. AHA is doing so much to stop heart disease, which is important to women, because the symptoms of women's heart problems are much more difficult to recognize and diagnose than those of men.

What would you like readers to take away from your romances?

I write "hot, humorous romances," which I hope will entertain and amuse readers. With so much stress and unhappiness in the world, people need a good time -- a guaranteed happy ending -- and romance novels provide that.

I love how animals, especially dogs, are secondary characters in your books. What made you include animals in your stories?

Since childhood, I've always enjoyed reading books that featured animals, so it was natural for me to add dogs and cats to my own books. The way two-legged characters react to four-legged ones also humanizes them (in the case of a hero or heroine) or makes them "boo-worthy" (in the case of a villain). Hollywood calls this phenomenon "petting the dog". One clear example of a dog bringing out the nice side of a person is Jack Nicholson's grouchy character in *As Good As It Gets*. Fictional characters can also reveal hidden depths and emotions when interacting with children. My December release has both a dog and a child in it.

In *Love Unleashed*, the love interest, Ron chooses to adopt a Chinese Crested hairless dog. What made you choose the Chinese Crested hairless dog as the type of dog? It seems like an unlikely breed to pick.

When I was writing my first novel, *At Her Command* (a comic romantic suspense), I wanted an unusual breed for the "undercover" DEA drug-sniffing dog in the book. Chinese crested hairless dogs seem the antithesis of big, scary drug dogs, like German Shepherds -- and therefore the perfect choice for a drug dog that no one would suspect. I also thought having the tall Alpha hero (a police detective) bond with the tiny dog would be funny. The "crestie" dog character, Smokey, became so popular, I decided to use him as my author logo. He's on my website, business cards, etc.

Since then, every book or novella I've written has featured a crestie dog. In *Love Unleashed*, I needed a dog unattractive enough to be passed over at the pet adoption fair, and cresties have a reputation for winning the World's Ugliest Dog contest year after year. When the hero takes the poor, scrawny dog home to foster it, the heroine can't help but be grateful. If the hero had been fostering an adorable Golden Retriever puppy, it wouldn't have been such a big deal.

On your website, it mentions that you do a lot of volunteer work--do you have a favorite non-profit organization?

I do have a favorite category of non-profits: any organization that helps animals. Some of those include Best Friends, an amazing place in Utah, and several Ohio non-profits: the Animal Adoption Foundation, Cozy Cat Cottage, and the Madison County Humane Society. I also support non-profits that fight disease, such as the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society, and the Arthritis Foundation. I enjoy making gift baskets for their silent auctions, as well as supporting them with my royalties on *Love Unleashed* and *Tails of Love*.

How did you come up with doing the James Gang, where you interview authors with your last name? I thought that was such a fun feature on your site!

Thanks! ;-) Back in 2001, I chose my pen name, Marcia James (a combination of my first name and my husband's first name). Then I Googled it and noticed only two other romance writers with James in their pen name: Eloisa James and Stephanie James. So I bought my domain name and created my website. Suddenly, with the success of so many small presses, there are many authors with "James" in their name. So I decided to make lemonade from those lemons and interview a different author each month for my website's "James Gang" feature. ;-) I've interviewed several editors as well. And this month, I'm featuring a handsome romance cover model, Jimmy Thomas.

Do you have any upcoming releases that we can look forward to?

Thank you for asking! ;-) I don't have the cover yet, but in mid-December, Liquid Silver Books (<http://www.liquidsilverbooks.com/index.htm>) will release my funny, sexy Christmas novella, Heating Up the Holidays. This reunion story features high school sweethearts reconnecting through the hero's daughter and her Christmas wish. Here's the blurb for Heating Up the Holidays:

Nicky Paxton is up to her pointed elf ears in work—filling in for a sick Santa's helper, corralling kittens in a mechanical winter wonderland and running her family's department store chain. With only 14 shopping days until Christmas, the last thing she needs is the return of her high school heart-breaker.

Lawyer and single dad Chris Spencer leaves the Los Angeles rat race to raise his five-year-old daughter, Holly, in his sleepy Virginia hometown. His first goal is to make sure Holly has a Christmas to remember. His carefully laid plans don't include a second chance with his first love.

When Holly asks the store Santa for a "fairy pony puppy", Chris enlists Nicky's help to track down the elusive item. Despite Nicky's resolve not to re-gift her heart to Chris, their sexual attraction could power the town's holiday lights. With the help of mistletoe, a hairless dog and a lonely child, Chris and Nicky just might get their Christmas desires.

Where can we find you on the web?

My website URL is www.MarciaJames.net, and I hope your readers will visit and sign up for my short monthly e-newsletter. Each month I hold a contest for my e-newsletter subscribers only, with jewelry and other goodies as prizes.

Were there any authors who influenced you to write romance?

Like other authors I know, I fell in love with romance novels by reading those of Nora Roberts. Luckily many of her books are released as audiobooks, which I enjoy. Then I branched out to the character-driven novels of Susan Andersen, Suzanne Brockmann, Susan Elizabeth Phillips, Susan Sey, and Susan Donovan -- and many more authors who don't have some form of "Susan" in their pen names. ;-D I like almost every subgenre of romance, although I tend to gravitate toward books that include humor. For example, Katie MacAlister's books are great, and I've been on a Victoria Dahl contemporary romance binge. When I want something more emotional, I read my author friend Patricia Sargeant's contemporaries. Of course, I love all of the books written by my friends in Central Ohio Fiction Writers (<http://www.cofw.org/authors.html>).

Some fun Ohio questions:

Cincinnati Bengals or the Cleveland Browns?

Okay. I'm not a big sports fan, beyond admiring the players in their tight uniforms. But I'll say: Bengals. I like their uniforms better! ;-)

Where is your favorite place to go in Ohio?

Anywhere that has great consignment and thrift stores. I love the "treasure-hunting" aspect of never knowing what you'll find in those stores. I LOVE "retail therapy."

Which C city is your favorite-Columbus, Cincinnati, or Cleveland?

Columbus, since I've lived here for a decade and enjoy the people, the stores, and the restaurants.

What's your favorite thing about living in Ohio?

The friendliness of the people. I moved here from Washington, DC, which is an exciting, but transient and often stressful city. I found the Midwest to be very welcoming, and the members of Central Ohio Fiction Writers quickly became my friends. Columbus now feels like home.

Thanks, Colette, for the opportunity to talk about my writing!

Thank you Marcia for being a part of Chatting with Buckeyes! Next month Patricia Sargeant will be our next Chatting with Buckeyes Author! :)