

The background of the cover is a rich, dark red with a large, ornate golden circular emblem in the center. The emblem features intricate scrollwork and a central design. To the right, a red lantern with a golden tassel hangs from the top. In the foreground, two characters are depicted. On the left, a man with long dark hair, wearing a yellow and blue robe, sits on a golden throne. He has a small crown on his head and a ring on his finger. On the right, a man with short dark hair, wearing a dark blue robe with a gold pentagram on the chest, sits next to him. He has a skull hanging from his belt. In the bottom right corner, there is a glowing green skull and some green smoke or mist. The title is written in a large, white, serif font, with the word 'A' in a smaller font above 'NECROMANCER'S'. The words 'GUIDE TO' are in a smaller font between 'NECROMANCER'S' and 'ARRANGED MARRIAGES'.

A
NECROMANCER'S
GUIDE TO
ARRANGED
MARRIAGES

KATY NYQUIST

A
NECROMANCER'S
GUIDE TO
ARRANGED
MARRIAGES

SCANDALS OF THE GIFTED
BOOK 3

KATY NYQUIST

JABberwocky Literary Agency, Inc.

A Necromancer's Guide to Arranged Marriages

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Praise for Katy Nyquist

"This fantasy story is a wild ride, featuring a fascinating cast of characters that keep the story rolling. Ysabel is such a compelling character as she dodges corrupt leaders, warriors, and others who think they have a right to her... this story sucked me right in. *A Holy Maiden's Guide to Getting Kidnapped* by Katy Nyquist is a fast-paced romp full of intrigue, adventure, and steam!"

— Natasha Jackson of *Readers' Favorite*

"*A Holy Maiden's Guide to Getting Kidnapped* a protagonist with a strong voice and unique character facets like face blindness and a healing gift... and some nice worldbuilding, both in broad strokes and specific detailing."

— Elayne Audrey Becker, author of the Forestborn duology

"Absolutely fell in love with Ysabel and Kaine... The 'opposites attract' trope worked so well for this story... The stakes are high throughout... Great craft and storytelling!"

— April L. Wood, author of the Season of the Witch series

"Both [Ysabel and Kaine are] strongly drawn and very relatable."

— Bogi Takács, author of *Power to Yield*

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Sneak Peek of *The Purgatory Hotel for Wayward Ghosts*

About the Author

Books by Katy Nyquist

To my mother, who read the very first clumsy poem that I wrote and told me it was good, inspiring me to continue writing. You have encouraged me every step of the way, reading all of my early writing no matter what strange genre I threw at you. Without you, I never would have stuck at it long enough to get published.

Chapter One

The first time I saw a ghost, I had been lying on my belly in the attic reading. My candle had burned down to a nub. The ceiling was so low that I would have hit my head if I sat up. The air reeked of mold. I'd come to find the smell comforting. This was my safe space. Here I kept all my books about distant foreign lands, both real and imaginary. At fifteen, I was desperate to escape my village, my peers, my home, and most of all my parents.

My older brother Calum appeared out of nowhere with his torso sticking out of the floor. Blood poured from his cut throat, more than seemed possible for a human body to hold. The crimson flood struck straight through my pajamas and my stomach. Yet I felt no sensation of wetness as my brother's insubstantial blood ran through mine.

Was this all a nightmare? Last time my sister Bora caught me up there, she'd told me that I could die if I fell asleep reading and lit the attic on fire. Could I be burning alive in the real world? In a confused panic, I blew out the candle.

The ghost glowed like moonlight illuminating the darkness. Calum's glassy eyes fixed on me. "Tell Ysabel that it's a trap. Head Cardinal Jiang is Dark Lord Chingis. She can't let him sacrifice her, it won't save anyone, it will doom the world. *Please*. Tell her."

My sweaty hands and dry throat felt too real for a dream. With a strangled cry, I flung open the attic trapdoor and dropped down into the closet. My bare feet stung from the impact.

When I looked down, I wished I hadn't. Blood flowed between and through my toes, intangible and glowing. The ghost hovered above me. I could hear his labored breath like someone trying to inhale through a slit throat.

I ran downstairs, following a thread of light to the dining room. As soon as I was out of sight of the apparition, I started to feel sane again. "Bora, I had a dreadful nightmare!"

Bora's eyes were red and puffy. Sitting at the table, she held a letter in her trembling hands. Her voice sounded as if she couldn't believe her own words. "Calum is dead. A necromancer murdered him."

The blood-soaked ghost appeared behind her, staring with eyes empty of emotion, as if her tear-filled gaze had sucked in all the sorrow in the world.

I don't remember what happened next, but I'm told I fainted. The head damage and loss of my brother covered up my subsequent hysteria. No one realized my babbling

had betrayed that I had necromancy, the hated gift that carried a death sentence in these parts.

In fact, Calum had been dead for an entire day. Between the army of zombies taking over the Holy City and my oldest sister collapsing after the battle, it had taken a while for anyone to send us a letter. There had never been the slightest chance for me to deliver his message.

For years, I begged and pleaded with my brother's ghost to speak, but he never said another word.



My name Benoni means *sorrow*. My mother named me such because the day I was born, my sister Ysabel brought me back from the dead, and less than a week later, our father sold her into slavery for her healing powers. My mother never forgave me. The name served as a perpetual reminder that I took my sister's future in order to live.

Two days ago, my mother's very last words to me had been to tell me that I should never have been born. Then she got into a carriage with my father, who for some mysterious reason was a lot more forgivable than me. My personal theory was that she had found me smaller and easier to hit.

The carriage never reached the planned picnic lunch. One broken wheel and tumble off a cliff later, I was doing my best not to laugh at their funeral. No matter my terrible relationship with my parents, it would have looked awful to laugh during their burial. I blamed the orcs.

Our village cemetery was small but very well maintained, surrounded by an iron fence and a wall of purple rhododendrons. Every headstone had been made by the same local stone-carving family for generations with the exact same round design etched with angels. More flowering bushes obscured the back of our red wooden church.

The grave had been filled in, the priest had finished speaking, and the dark clouds overhead threatened rain. But it had long been the tradition of my village for every citizen (we didn't have that many) to line up and give condolences to the bereaved family after the burial. That was only me. My second-oldest sister Bora had been out of the country in South Sherda, and given our lack of embalming services in the small village, we couldn't wait for her to return before planting the corpses unless we wanted to stink up the entire church. My oldest sister Ysabel hadn't spoken to our parents since they sold her into slavery, and good for her. My older brother Calum hovered in front of me, blank-faced and silent. Ever since the first and only time he'd spoken to me, he'd been following me around without a single sign of awareness. The endless blood still gushed from his throat.

The ghosts of three orcs who had decided to haunt me floated around the cemetery. Corporal Bloodlust poked her hand through a tombstone and shouted, "Will not the dead rise up and challenge me to glorious battle? Lord Necromancer, can't you at least summon up a skeleton or two?"

I glared, attempting to convey with my eyes that:

1. No, I wasn't going to raise the dead;

2. This was my parents' funeral;

3. She needed to shut up because no one else could see or hear her, and she was making me look crazy for reacting to her.

Alas, Corporal Bloodlust had never been the type to take a hint. She stood half again my height with warty green skin, long ears ending in fins, giant tusks, steel plate armor, and jet-black hair. Her helmet and part of her skull had been crushed by the rock that had killed her. Swinging her double-headed battle axe, she roared at the sky, "Come down and face me like warriors, storm clouds! Only pansies hide up in the air!"

When her insubstantial weapon swung straight through the baker's oversized raccoon hat, I nearly laughed. Covering my mouth with my hand, I hoped it looked more like I'd been overcome with grief.

The baker stepped forward. "My sympathies for your loss. May the Sun God be with you during this tragic time."

"It was very unexpected." I couldn't say *tragic* with a straight face.

"You'll tell your sisters that I gave my sympathies, won't you?" The baker looked around as if hoping my famous sisters would appear. Our village's only claim to fame had been producing Holy Maiden Ysabel and Head of the Royal Council Bora. The same people who used to push around my

sisters for being half-Conollian now bragged about having met them.

I grunted in a way that promised nothing. My collar itched. I only owned one black tunic, and it was too small on me. My britches looked more grey than black, but no one local could afford fancy black mourning finery, so I didn't look too out of place.

Sergeant Toesmiter stuck an arm around my shoulder, hovering but not able to touch without going through my skin. The crushed and bleeding half of his body pressed against me. His face looked like a mad artist's painting, his nose smooshed up near his eyeballs. However, I was used to him. In a very earnest way, he said, "My lord, it deeply sorrows me that your parents would be buried without any enemies to share their casket. Are there no neighboring countries to make war on? Or you could slay whoever constructed the carriage for vengeance."

"It's not worth the effort," I hissed out of the corner of my mouth. "We weren't close."

I'd been unwanted from the moment of my conception. My parents had apparently been taking measures to avoid having a child, and they had failed. My mother had been told after her last child that another would probably kill her, which the doctor proved completely right about. After a long and bloody childbirth, my healer sister had saved us both. My father couldn't afford to pay a doctor for a termination, so obviously, he couldn't afford to feed me either. I wasn't present for any of this, but I heard later that my dad tried

hitting my mom's pregnant stomach repeatedly. She shouted at him about it late at night. That was my childhood. Dad used to say my prenatal beatings might explain a few things about me, in a tone as if it wasn't his problem. Both my parents had turned fists on me, whenever Calum and Bora weren't around to stop them. At least until Ysabel had returned as a wealthy Holy Maiden and used her money to control the household. She'd installed servants as spies and made it clear the stipend she sent depended on my so-called parents only hitting each other. Their relationship had been scrambled as a dog's breakfast: they'd divorced, reconciled, then separated again, and been back together when they'd died.

Calum had been my only true parent. As long as I kept looking at his maimed shade, I could resist laughing at this farce of a funeral. No one in the village had shown up out of affection—my father had been in debt to anyone dumb enough to lend him money, and my mother had a vicious tongue. I'd gone through a period of seeking my mother's approval and forgiveness for the crime of being born, before eventually realizing she wasn't much better than Dad. Mom only idolized Ysabel after she was gone. That woman couldn't have been a good parent to any present and living child with needs.

I'd already mourned my parents long before they'd died, on account of their lengthy illness—the common condition of being assholes. I'd even finished mourning the parents they could have been if they'd been better people. The

funeral was merely a social obligation. I'd spent the whole time worried they might show up as ghosts, but I'd been spared that. Most people didn't linger after death.

Toesmiter nodded, his head falling off his broken neck. "Ah, I see, you desire your foul progenitors to be condemned to roam the earth and unable to find the afterlife or reincarnate, like me and my disgraced comrades who died in a landslide instead of magnificent combat."

I'd had this argument before, yet even as the village seamstress stepped forward, I could not resist trying again. My hand over my mouth, I whispered. "Not all orcs who died peaceful deaths become ghosts, or there would be a lot more of you. I could help you pass along."

"CONDEMNED TO WANDER THE EARTH! UNTIL WE FIND AN HONORABLE BATTLE TO DIE IN!" Toesmiter waved his arms and screamed at the clouds.

"If you insist," I whispered. They were all very dramatic. I knew full well such long-lived and experienced ghosts could erase their death injuries, but orcs found blood to be stylish.

The seamstress scowled at me. "What are you saying?"

"Nothing." I pasted a fake smile on my face, realized it looked inappropriate, and replaced it with an equally fake frown. "Thank you for your condolences."

The lines on her face deepened. "I hadn't given them yet."

"Oh, I'm sorry, it's just... it looks like it might rain soon..." I craned my neck at the people behind her. It wasn't

only the storm clouds that made me want to get this over with. Cemeteries made me feel very strange, almost electrified. The corpses below sang to me. I could have counted their bones like the lines in my palm. I had never once raised a corpse from the dead before and didn't intend to start now. Yet a part of me kept reaching like a thirsty man chained just out of reach of a cup of water.

Begrudgingly, the seamstress said, "Condolences."

Captain Desolation perched on my mother's tombstone with her legs crossed. Her giant boots dragged on the ground. Lichen grew on her right cheek and down her arms, but that seemed to be normal for orcs. Her tusks were as long as my hand. She'd emerged from the landslide with the least damage—only an unlucky rock had hit her on a deadly place on her forehead, leaving a purple bruise. "If you brought back your parents as zombies, I could kill them a second time so they could die in battle."

"Really not necessary," I said between clenched teeth. "In fact, it's not necessary for you three to be here at all."

Desolation smiled with many teeth. "We're here to support you! It's not like you have any other friends." The other two orcs laughed raucously.

This was completely true. However, I attributed my outcast status in no small part to the ghosts who followed me around, leading to me apparently talking to thin air around other people. Their friendship was a self-fulfilling prophecy of loneliness. "I don't need—"

The stone carver cleared his throat. I'd spoken too loudly, judging from his glare. His wife and three small children stood next to him. Puffing out his chest, he said, "I'm sorry for your loss." Then, entirely too loud, he added, "And sorry for your parents that their only surviving son is a lunatic."

"They weren't the best parents either," I said flatly, staring him down. The whole village knew about my parents' abuse. Small villages always knew.

He didn't like that, judging from his glare. Thunder rolled overhead. He looked up at the darkened sky, then left with his family.

A few other people in line discreetly slipped off as well. I thanked them in my head. The butcher and his pregnant wife said a few quick words, then ran just as the first fat raindrops hit the ground.

Lightning crackled down somewhere outside the village, followed by louder thunder. For a brief moment, I could have sworn the shadow of a dragon flashed overhead, but it must have been a funny-shaped cloud.

"That's it?" Bloodlust demanded. "No burning boats? No drinking? No fights to the death?"

Now we were finally alone, I didn't hesitate to speak directly to her. "We tend to bury the dead, not cremate, in Arahasnor, and humans don't have such a celebratory attitude toward death."

Bloodlust threw her axe at the ground. "No wonder you're all so small! Humans have undernourished spirits."

“Whose species is extinct, yours or mine?” I had a close-enough friendship with the orcs to make dark jokes. Or, rather, I couldn’t even feel anything when Bloodlust tried to throttle me.

Desolation lifted the corporal away from my throat. To me, she said, “I wish we could give you a better fight on your parents’ funeral.” She sounded sincere about it.

Toesmiter hit me with a hammer from behind. It passed through my torso. “Did you feel anything?”

“No, sorry.”

Desolation picked him up, too. She was a head taller and much bulkier than him. Orc women ran larger and more muscular than men. You would think that would lead to a female-dominated society, especially since orcs valued strength above all else, and you’d be partly right. But anyone could have magic, and that proved to be an equalizer. A man who can toss around balls of fire can kick the ass of a woman slightly taller. Since orcs valued strong mates, they encouraged males to learn combat with the females. I’d say I saw slightly more female commanders, but the inequality was nothing like how humans treated women. Orcs gave out no handicaps but were happy to accept any man as a leader if he proved he could kill as well as a woman.

Savagely, Desolation banged together the heads of her two subordinates. Their helmets clanged with the impact (ghosts could touch each other). “Sorry for their silliness,”

she told me. "We should find a way to honor your parents in human tradition."

"No, you really don't have to." But they had already faded away.

That left me alone with my silent dead brother. I was about to vanish myself before the sprinkling turned into proper rain. Then I spotted the little girl standing at the cemetery gate.

She had tanned skin, dark monolid eyes, and black hair in two pigtails. I would have guessed her age to be five or six years old. The rain pattered through her body, but even without that, I would have known her as a ghost. Necromancers had a certain instinct. No child had died recently in our small village, and her white, embroidered robe marked her a foreigner. She must have been drawn to me from a long distance.

I walked over and knelt down. Pellets of rain ran down my face. Mud soaked into my knees. Gently, I asked, "What's your name, little lady?"

Looking up from under her bangs, she whispered, "Ai."

For someone so young, this situation had to be handled delicately. "It's nice to meet you. My name is Benoni. How are you doing?"

"I know I'm dead," Ai said. "I was sick for a long time."

Ah. My heart clenched. That did make it easier. "I'm sorry. Do you have any final wishes or words to pass along?"

She shook her head. "I wanted to see our cat give birth, so I stayed. The kittens were very cute. Now I'm stuck. I

don't know how to leave."

"I can help you with that."

"Can you help him?" She pointed over my shoulder at where Calum's ghost noiselessly bled.

Humans have an amazing adaptability; even other intelligent species say so. It turned out I could even get used to seeing my brother's eternally bleeding corpse for every single day of my entire life. At this point, I barely noticed him.

I turned to look at where my older brother stood next to our parents' gravestones. He did not seem aware these stones belonged to anyone connected to him.

"I'm trying to help him. The necromancer who murdered him did something strange to him. I can't help him pass along like I can with other ghosts, and he can't speak."

She gazed at me solemnly. "He's in very bad shape. I can hear him screaming inside. He's trapped in darkness and can't get out. It's getting worse. Soon, he won't have any mind left to save."

My stomach rolled with acid. I'd always told myself that at least Calum couldn't feel anything in his current state. "How can you tell? Can you talk to him?"

She shook her head. "I can feel his emotions. I always used to be able to feel people."

Sometimes, ghosts retained their magical gifts after death; sometimes, they didn't. It depended on if a ghost could still pay the price their magic required.

"I've made you sad." She hung her head. "I'm sorry."

“No, thank you for telling me how my brother feels. I’ll try even harder to help him, as soon as possible.” I forced a smile.

“Am I going to end up like that?” she asked nervously.

“No, I’m followed around by three orcs who have been fine as ghosts for a millennium. If you have a reason to stay in this world, then you can. If you don’t, then I can send you on. The choice belongs to you.” I thought this small girl had already been offered too few choices in her short life. I wouldn’t push her one way or another.

She gnawed on her lip. “I should go. Reminders of me only make my parents sad. I tried very hard to become visible and say hi to my friends, but I scared them.”

I felt grateful she hadn’t asked me what came next. Despite being a necromancer, I had no idea. The village priest would have spoken of heaven. The elves believed in reincarnation. My orc friends possessed the peculiar belief that mortal life was a boot camp to prepare them for a grand war in the afterlife, an epic battle of good against evil. I’d never seen evidence to support any of the many religions around the world, so I considered myself open-minded and agnostic. I knew souls existed after death, because I currently spoke to one. And I knew that ghosts went somewhere besides oblivion, because I touched that place with my mind as they passed.

I held out my hand. Ai pressed her palm to mine. I said, “Ai, I wish that you will find all the peace and happiness the place beyond this world can offer. I hope that you will have

more joy and experiences than you did in this life. If there is any power in this gift of mine, then let your afterlife bring you fulfillment.”

Ai smiled at me, then her body turned into a brilliant pillar of light. The ray shot up like a beacon, piercing the dark clouds overhead. I felt her soul pour between my fingers: her stubbornness, her love of all creatures fluffy, her antsy energy that always had her staying up late at night, her fierce love for her parents and annoyed budding love for her baby brother. In that moment, I touched some greater force than either of us, the life of the very planet itself, connecting every soul. It washed away all my pain and complicated guilt for my parents’ deaths in an exquisite moment of perfect peace.

Then I was back in the cemetery, the rain pelting me and my brother’s shade staring through me.

Groaning, I stood up. The rain had gotten harder, soaking through my clothing and my shoes. My bangs clung to my face. Shivering, I felt the cold all the way to the roots of my teeth.

Behind me, the priest asked, “Were you praying?”

I whirled around. “Um. Yes. Praying.” Normally, I didn’t attend church or pretend to be a believer in the Sun God. But I needed an excuse. If anyone found out about my necromancy gift, it would get me lynched by my own neighbors. It didn’t matter that the current monarchy had legalized all gifts. People remembered Dark Lord Chingis, who had devastated this continent with a zombie army.

More recently, they remembered Chingis returning under the name Jiang and killing a bunch of people again, including my brother.

Not a single living person knew what I could do. Although I knew Bora wouldn't have turned me in, given all the pain a necromancer had caused our family, I had decided against telling my sister. Why become another source of suffering for my family?

The elderly man beamed at me. He carried an umbrella, but the hem of his white robe had gotten soaked. "Times like these do return us to our faith."

"Uh-huh." I didn't want to get his hopes up about seeing me in church. "Look, it's raining; we should head inside."

He took my hand. "I'm very sorry for your loss. Just when your parents were patching up their marriage, too."

"I can't think of two people better suited to take each other out of the marital pool." I pulled back my hand.

"It's a shame you're the only one of their children who could be here."

From the priest's dreamy eyes, he fantasized about the Holy Maiden in her legendary glory, listening to his sermon. If only he could see Calum standing behind him with a gaping slit throat. "Uh-huh." I edged for the door.

"Hey!" three orcs chorused at the same time. I turned to look. Bloodlust, Desolation, and Toesmiter all spat on my parents' graves.

"We are enacting a human tradition for the dishonorable dead," Desolation said.

Toesmiter danced on top of the graves. He was very bad at it, resembling a man trying to shake ants out of his pants. “This is for two cowards who hit small children instead of someone their own size.”

Bloodlust chopped her axe through the grave. “That’s for trying to send your own son to a mental institution! If the beings he talks to don’t exist, then who’s chopping up your grave, huh?” She stuck her butt over the gravestone and farted.

I finally gave in and laughed like a maniac, as rain poured over me, thunder boomed, and the priest gaped.



Unfortunately for me, it was still raining when I went graverobbing. The worst of the storm had passed, leaving only a steady drip of rain. My blue wool cloak, a gift from Bora, had a thick hood to keep the rain off my face. My hands carrying the shovel still got soaked.

The fence gate was not locked. People rarely bothered to lock any doors in my hometown. Mud soaked my boots and splattered my pants legs as I slogged toward the graves.

Bloodlust floated alongside me, chattering, “This is great! You’re finally committing crimes! When we first found you, we thought a necromancer would surely live an exciting life of gruesome slaughter. We believed you would be the fulcrum about which history would turn and empires

would rise and fall. Then you turned out to be just some guy living off his sister's money."

"Hey!" I protested. "I was working my butt off at Silvan College when you met me, and I graduated with full honors. Yes, Ysabel paid for my tuition, and yes, I'm very grateful. I'm even more grateful that she gifted money to all us siblings so I didn't have to find a job and I could focus on saving Calum." Not only had I been hard at work trying to decipher my gift in secret, I'd dealt with a steady flood of ghosts requesting my help. I didn't deserve to be treated like a bum.

"Books." Bloodlust dismissed the concept with a wave of her axe. "It would be a more honorable quest if you wanted to kill your brother—I'm not sure why you're so focused on making him talk. He's cute with his voice box missing." She glanced at Calum trailing after us as usual.

"Because a necromancer horrifically harmed him, and now I can't help him pass along and he's trapped in a state worse than death." The books that Bloodlust disparaged had been of great use to me in understanding my powers. Silvan College had a collection of necromantic texts in the restricted section of the library. I'd made a fake key to sneak in, and I'd copied the relevant rituals.

Then I'd returned to my hometown to obtain grave dirt from my two siblings who'd died as babies. It hadn't been enough. The books said that remains of the mother and father had a special and unique connection to life and

stables to check their hooves and teeth before the races to assess which horse was in the best shape. She'd been trampled to death while inspecting a horse. Mum had the last laugh on that one.

Shoulders sagging, Delilah complained, 'But I gave ten per cent of my winnings to charity.' Should she have given more?

She hadn't been rich! Would she truly be cast into eternal torment over buying her first-ever designer clothing after a lifetime of staring in the shop windows at what she couldn't afford?

Heather's face softened. 'Don't be too nervous. You get seven attempts at your test.'

'Thank goodness.' Delilah felt like the weight of the horse that had killed her had been lifted off her shoulders. Now that she knew she could afford to spend one try on reconnaissance, she no longer felt afraid. She'd beat this challenge just as she'd perfected the claw-machine game at the local carnival.

Jaime sat in a chair next to the reception desk to eat her biscuit. 'You're lucky you even get to try...'

Heather typed into her computer again. 'We have many guests, and only one person is allowed to test at a time on Floor Greed. Normally, the waiting list is about a month.'

A month? Delilah could have screamed. She bit back any complaints. It wasn't Heather's fault. During her time in customer service, Delilah had always hated being berated by customers for problems outside her control.

Looking up with a smile, Heather said, 'Fortunately for you, we had a cancellation today. Sometimes guests get cold feet. Floor Greed is free right now, if you hurry. Of course, if you'd rather wait, that would be understandable.'

'I'd like to get it over with, before my nerves fail. Thank you.' Delilah reminded herself she didn't have to pass the first time.

'Good luck,' Heather said.

Delilah called for the lift and marched in. 'Greed, please.'

She grinned at Damien. 'I've got this in the bag. I'm not even particularly greedy.'

'You've got courage. That may help you.' He took her down to Floor Greed and opened the door. 'Good luck.' His eyes held a sadness older than his body.

The lift bell dinged, and the doors closed as soon as she stepped out.

About the Author

KATY NYQUIST's first two spicy, romantasy novels, *A Holy Maiden's Guide to Getting Kidnapped*, and *A Farm Girl's Guide to Ruling as a Bloodthirsty Tyrant* published with Podium in 2025. She has an upcoming cozy fantasy publishing with Headline Hachette in October 2026, *The Purgatory Hotel for Wayward Ghosts*. She's had short fiction published in *Abyss & Apex Magazine*, *The Arcanist*, *Every Day Fiction*, *Strange Changes*, and *Magic, Mayhem, and Monsters*. She works as an economist in Washington, D.C., and writes humorous, sexy fantasy novels to take a break from the constant math jargon. You can find her on Tumblr [@aimportantdragoncollector](https://www.tumblr.com/aimportantdragoncollector), or on her website at www.katynyquist.com.

BOOKS BY KATY NYQUIST

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