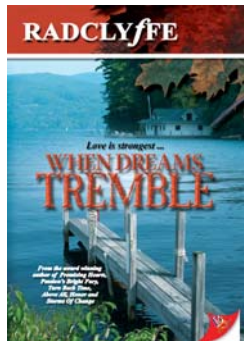


## Book Review: February 2007

by Cheri Rosenberg (reviewer at [JAW](#) & [L-word.com Literature](#))



### When Dreams Tremble

Radclyffe

ISBN: 978-1-933110-64-6

Trade paper, 272 pp, \$15.95

January, 2007

Lesbian Romance

Bold Strokes Books, Inc.

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Nann Dunne

Editor-in-Chief

& Publisher

*When Dreams Tremble* takes place in Bolton Landing, New York, and environmental biologist Dr. Devon Weber would like to preserve the beauty of the popular scenic tourist town. For readers who live near, or have been to Lake George, Radclyffe's description brings back fond memories. Those who haven't had the pleasure will be able to visualize the three hundred square miles of parkland that surround the enormous lake nestled in the Adirondack Mountains.

Radclyffe clearly depicts "the unmistakable sounds of morning in the mountains." Imagine a small rustic cabin in the woods, revel in the crisp clean scent of nature, and feel yourself relax. High-powered Manhattan attorney Leslie Harris is going home for much needed rest and relaxation in the rustic setting of her parents' lodge at Lakeview Cottages. What she doesn't count on is bridging the gap between her and her mother or dredging up past regrets when she reunites with her childhood friend Devon—making the trip an emotional rollercoaster.

Devon and Leslie are both haunted by the past. The longing Dev feels as she revisits the pain of rejection intensifies when they reunite after fifteen years. Devon has changed since her troubled youth but she is not over her first love. Radclyffe uses powerful metaphors to emphasize her points, for example, "The tension in [Devon's] chest and groin began to ease. She remembered who she was, where she was, and she remembered, too, how that long ago kiss had ended. The phantom passion, like the taunting memory of a lost limb, might refuse to die, but she did not need to breathe life into it" (p. 62). When Dev finds she can't let go and Les confronts what she has known for a long time, that she's in love with Dev, the complications threaten to destroy each woman's heart. Radclyffe explores how they suffer because of homophobia and what happens when young people grow up without support for their feelings in a less than accepting world.

With an authoritative flair, Radclyffe honestly depicts vulnerability and strength better than most authors I've read, thereby achieving a higher level of connection to the characters. *When Dreams Tremble* explores innocence, friendship, and love through memories and current situations. The hardships in our lives either kill us or make us stronger. Discover how Dev and Les overcome obstacles to become the women they are as you root for their happiness.

Devon and Leslie have become part of my long list of characters I'd love to hang out with in real life. Radclyffe's 25th novel adds a few new touches that you will have to experience for yourself. Romance lovers will be satisfied with *When Dreams Tremble*, but will hunger for more. Here's hoping this stand-alone novel is the beginning of another excellent series by the award-winning author.

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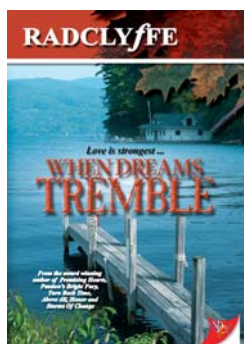
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## Book Review: March 2007

by Arlene Germain (reviewer at [MBR](#))



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Editor-in-Chief

Radclyffe, one of today's most prolific authors of the lesbian Romance genre, has written her twenty-fifth book, a stand-alone novel entitled *When Dreams Tremble*. It is bound to satisfy her legion of fans, and for those who have yet to experience her writing, this is perhaps, a good opportunity to discover this best-selling writer.

The setting is the Lake George area in New York. Successful Manhattan corporate lawyer, Leslie Harris, has returned to her family's upstate lakeside resort after receiving some unsettling health-related news. Also, in the area is Dr. Devon Weber, the former town bad girl, who went to high school with Leslie and with whom she shares a rather secretive past. Devon is now an environmental biologist conducting some research of the lake. When unexpectedly asked by Leslie's mother to pick up her daughter at the train station, Devon agrees. Fifteen years have passed when last they were together so it is with a sense of anticipation and a degree of trepidation that Dev finds herself waiting in the train station parking lot. After all, the last words she heard Leslie say that calamitous night hurt Dev as nothing ever had or would. "...it was a joke! I was just fooling with her. She doesn't mean anything to me. She's nobody!" (p. 36).

There are several basic questions this reviewer considers when evaluating a book. How well the author achieves the answers determines the quality of expression and the level of craft. Does Radclyffe show rather than tell her story? As in other works by the author, *When Dreams Tremble* manages to create a setting so vibrant and distinct that it transports the reader to that time and place. Does the introduction grab the reader? The opening scenes clearly delineate the persona of Leslie, at least the façade she puts forth in the world. The courtroom action and aftermath engage the reader from the outset creating that anticipation needed to keep turning the pages. Are there basic truths to be found within the chapters? Radclyffe writes about the causes and effects of disappointment, heartbreak, and regret, while at the same time exploring, through convincing characterization, the implications and ramifications of culpability, remorse, and contrition.

As for the romance genre, *When Dreams Tremble* is a notable example of the genre and well worth the reader's time. The use of the flashback technique expands the plot development giving it that story within a story aspect. The usual Radclyffe fireworks take more than the usual time to ignite; however, this reviewer found it to be a surprising and refreshing departure from past works. *When Dreams Tremble* is a commendable addition to the Romance genre.

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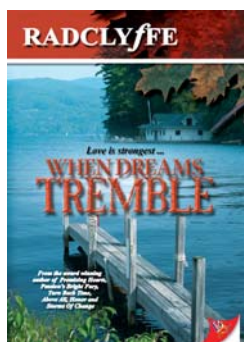
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## Book Review: March 2007

by Kathi Isserman (reviewer at [JAW](#))



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Nann Dunne

Editor-in-Chief

& Publisher

The cover of *When Dreams Tremble* by Radclyffe is absolutely stunning, the entire presentation of the book is fetching, but what's inside enhances the total package even more. Radclyffe's stories always illuminate the journey each character takes, and this book is no exception. This focus on character development is meticulous and comprehensive, filled with angst, regret, and longing, building to the ultimate climax. High emotion is always present so that the reader gets swept away with the characters and becomes one with the book. These are the elements that completely absorb us with *When Dreams Tremble*.

In *When Dreams Tremble*, high powered Manhattan corporate attorney Leslie Harris returns home for some respite after a health scare. Home is upstate New York on Lake George where her parents own a resort. Relations with everyone are strained but none more so than with her childhood friend Dr. Devon Weber who is staying at her family's resort doing environmental research on the lake. So much has changed. The last time Dev and Leslie were together in high school, so much went wrong. With so much regret and sorrow between the two of them, can they reconcile their past?

As the story progresses, Radclyffe presents the characters' inner thoughts and feelings along with revealing dialogue and descriptions of their body language. We get a very thorough picture of each character and see the internal battles and how that motivates their behavior in relation to others. The author engages all of our senses, and we are alert and active participants. We are rooting for Leslie and Dev to heal and to heal together because the pain these two women feel for their lost youth emanates from the pages and is heart wrenching.

Issues from the past, how they shape our lives, how we move on and grow from them, and how we cope when confronted with them, these are the themes in *When Dreams Tremble*. The characters exemplify the pain of coming out when you are young and isolated, and the loneliness and cruelty that can accompany it. The author exposes the guilt of the past that Leslie carries with her because she did not do what she considers the "right" thing, and we see her struggle with this dilemma of unrealistic expectations from her immature and young teen years.

Many of Radclyffe's romances are about second chances and that includes *When Dreams Tremble*. She gives us a bonus by adding spectacular and peaceful images of the way of life in a resort setting. This book is a perfect romance in every way, but in the end, Radclyffe surprises us with a very different ending. I liked it and so will you.

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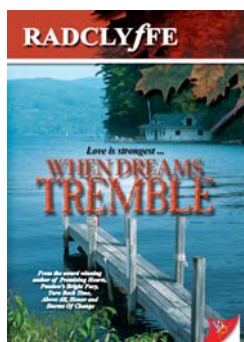
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## Book Review: November 2007

by Anna Furtado, author of *The Heart's Desire* & reviewer at JAW



### **When Dreams Tremble**

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**Nann Dunne**

*Editor-in-Chief*

*& Publisher*

Radclyffe just keeps giving us one tension-filled, yet lovely, romance after another, and *When Dreams Tremble* does not disappoint. Leslie Harris fled her upstate New York home in an effort to run—from her own feelings for—and the pain she had a part in inflicting on—Devon Webber. Having created a whole new life for herself, Leslie comes home to visit her parents at their lakeside resort and discovers that Dev is in residence doing aquatic research at the lake. Finding Dev doing this type of work is amazing in itself because she was the nonconformist bad-girl who seemed destined to have no real future. Now, her work as a research scientist is in conflict with Les' corporate stance to protect big business from government demands on environmental protection.

Their reunion conjures up some bitter feelings, some guilt, but these are soon overshadowed by the old attraction they once felt for one another. Dev struggles against the past, convinced that Les has never had feelings for her while Les is guilt-ridden and convinced that the superficial relationship that she has with her girlfriend in Manhattan is all she really needs. To go deeper would be to face the dreams she left behind—something Leslie thinks she is not prepared to do.

As the tentative relationship is rebuilt each woman finds out just how much the other has changed. They both begin to question the meaning of their past together, while they continue to run from one another in the present. The reader may wonder if these two will ever face themselves and each other to allow the past heal and possibilities to open up for them.

As the present conjures up memories for each woman, their history is revealed, doled out like the finest bittersweet chocolate to a chocoholic, and we find out why they are having such difficulties in the present. Who they have become on one hand is to be commended, but who they might become is the real challenge.

Radclyffe is a master of emotional and sexual tension, and she can always be counted on to write fully realized, lively characters within beautifully drawn plots. This is true for this stand-alone romance as well. The story lingers for quite a while after the reading is done. Don't miss *When Dreams Tremble*—another story filled with heart.

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