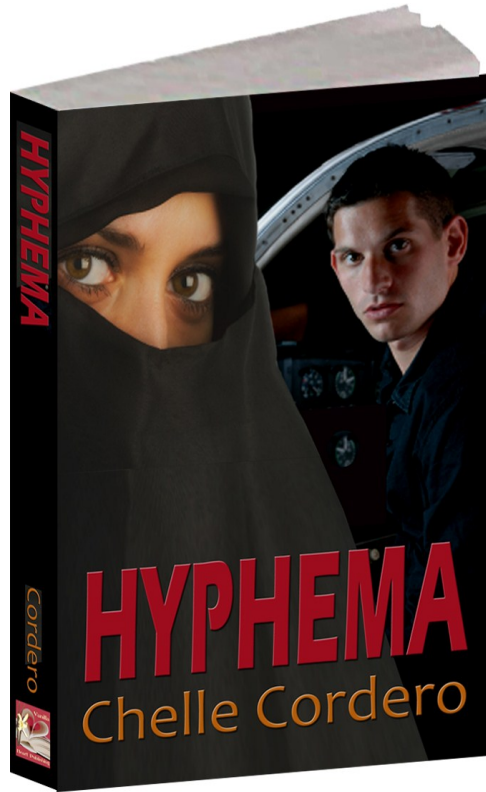


Hyphema Book Club Extras



Hyphema

By Chelle Cordero

Hyphema: Bleeding in the eye caused by trauma...

Matt Garratti, a paramedic from New York, moves his wife and son to North Carolina to work at his dream job as a flight medic. Pakistani born Sudah, his wife, receives frosty stares and insensitive comments from their new neighbors.

Before long, Matt wonders if he is pursuing his dream or bringing his family into a nightmare from which they may never wake.

Book Club Discussion Guide

***Hyphema* by Chelle Cordcro**

Hyphema is a thriller involving murder, suspense, prejudice, love, and emergency medical services. Former New York Paramedic Matt Garratti trains as a flight medic, but when the economy forces a career relocation he moves his immigrant Pakistani-Muslim wife and infant son to North Carolina.

The area of northeast North Carolina the Garratti family moves to is scenic and known for “southern hospitality”, but there are huge pockets of town folk who have never met a Muslim believer and only know of “them” from news reports after 9-11.

Matt’s wife Sudah is looked at with disdain by some of their neighbors. When strange things happen that threaten the small family’s well-being, there are those, including the local police, who erroneously believe that it is reaction to Sudah’s ethnicity – and while no one thinks it is right, they also seem to think it is not all that serious.

Here are some thoughts to ponder and discuss:

- 1) Muslims have been in America even before we were the United States of America. Christopher Columbus made a celebrated voyage to “the new world” in 1492 and America won its independence in 1776. Did you know that as early as 1178 a Chinese document known as the Sung Document records the voyage of Muslim sailors to America? In 1530 several million African slaves, arrived in America during the slave trade of that time and became part of the backbone of the American economy of that period. The first mosque in the United States was built in Maine in 1915. Until 1952 Islam was not recognized as a legitimate religion until after the American military was sued.

When did you first become aware of the Muslim (Islam) faith in the United States? Are you surprised by the extensive history of Muslims in American long before 2001?

- 2) In 1790, Congress established a formal process enabling the foreign born to become U.S. citizens; Policies established in 1965 are still largely in place. The policies have been changed many times since as immigration to this country has grown at often record rates. Today NON-immigrants are permitted lawful entry to the U.S. for reasons like tourism, diplomatic missions, study, and temporary work; temporary admission does not permit citizenship by naturalization. Non-immigrants wishing to remain in the United States on a permanent basis must apply for permanent admission. A real marriage to a U.S. citizen will, depending on circumstances, allow an immigrant to apply for naturalization sooner than an immigrant having no relatives in the U.S.

When did your family come to the United States? If they immigrated here, what do you know of the challenges they faced and any prejudices they had to deal with? Depending on how many generations your family has been in the U.S. do you feel strong ties to the country if your heritage? Have you ever visited the place(s) your ancestors came from?

- 3) Matt Garratti is a skilled paramedic with many years of experience answering 911 medical and trauma emergencies. He makes the move to becoming a flight medic and working in an aeromedical environment (an airborne “ambulance”). There are some increased risks associated with being a flight medic including hearing loss, exposure to heat and fumes, back injuries and air crashes. Why do you think someone would become a flight medic?
- 4) How does your local 9-1-1 system work? Are the first responders who work in your area paid or volunteer? Have you ever been a patient in a ground or air ambulance? If your local department is volunteer, how could you get involved? Did you know that a “paramedic” is sometimes also called “hands of the doctor”? What do you think it would be like to administer crucial life-saving skills during transport of a patient to the hospital?
- 5) If you were to move to another location such as Matt did from New York to North Carolina, what information would you need to know in order to find a place to settle (ie: schools, etc)? Is there a dream place that you would like to move to? Describe it.
- 6) Have you ever eaten Pakistani/Indian/South Asian foods? Some of the common spices used in Pakistani cooking are cardamom, coriander, cinnamon, curry, ginger, and cumin; dishes are often highly spiced and fragrant. Observant Muslims are forbidden to eat pork or consume alcohol and must follow the halal dietary guidelines.
What are some ethnic foods or dietary customs from your heritage? Do you often prepare foods native to your heritage? How do these dishes differ from the “usual cuisine” of the area where you live?
- 7) Sudah is a practicing Muslim. Matt is Christian. What problems do you think a mixed religion marriage might face? What are ways to blend both cultures so that each individual retains their own identity while sharing a life and customs with their partner? What about children, how should they be told why mommy and daddy are different faiths?

Additional Reading

Final Sin by Chelle Cordero

The Muslim Next Door: The Qur'an, the Media, and That Veil Thing

by Sumbul Ali-Karamali

A Paramedic's Diary: Life and Death on the Streets by Stuart Gray

The Complete Asian Cookbook by Nina Solomon and Charmaine Solomon

Coming to America (Second Edition): A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life
by Roger Daniels



Photo by Mark Engelman

Chelle has come a long way since first joining the Vanilla Heart Publishing queue of authors nearly two years ago with her first novel, *Bartlett's Rule*. Now with eight novels on the market, she has solidified her standing as a Romantic Suspense author (7 romantic suspense & 1 mystery.) She also has short stories in the VHP anthology *With Arms Wide Open*, Mandimam's Press anthology *Forever Friends*, the VHP anthology *Nature's Gifts*, VHP anthology *Passionate Hearts* and Mandimam Press anthology *Forever Travels*. She is currently working on her next murder mystery.

Bartlett's Rule was named one of Carolyn Howard-Johnson's Top Ten Reads for 2009; *Final Sin* was a 2009 Pushcart Nominee; and *Hostage Heart*, *Final Sin* and *A Chance of Riches* were nominated in the 2009 Preditors' and Readers' poll and had top-ten finishes. Chelle Cordero was recently featured as one of the authors in "50 Great Writers You Should Be Reading" published by *The Author's Show* in 2010.

Chelle Cordero belongs to the VHP Authors Group and the Arts Alliance of Haverstraw Rockland Author's Series. Along with fellow VHP authors Charmaine Gordon and Janet Lane Walters, Chelle is part of TLC: Three Local Characters With Stories To Tell, an author book discussion and workshop seminar program. She maintains an author's blog at <http://chellecordero.blogspot.com/>, a promotional blog at <http://cce613.xanga.com/>, blogs frequently at Lindsay's Romantics <http://bit.ly/3rGJ7l>, and offers a weekly writing workshop for Kindle Blog subscribers at <http://bit.ly/pILcG>.

Chelle lives in the suburbs of Rockland County, NY with her husband, Mark, of 35-years and family. They have two adult offspring, Jenni (& Jason) and Marc (& Trish); they also have three mischievous and spoiled pussycats, one of whom has taken up permanent residence on Chelle's desk. Chelle is a full-time freelance journalist for multiple publications, her articles appear regularly throughout North America, and she writes a monthly column on NYS Emergency Medical Services issues (she is also a volunteer EMT and the current President of her local ambulance corps).



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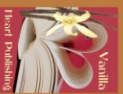
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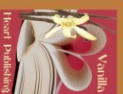
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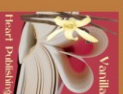
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