

# Can't get enough 'Heated Rivalry'? This Seattle bookseller can help keep the romance alive

**Katie Campbell**  
February 11, 2026 / 8:03 am



Meet Me Here co-host Katie Campbell recently interviewed Ashley Adair, owner of Beguiled Books in Seattle.  
Design by Katie Campbell

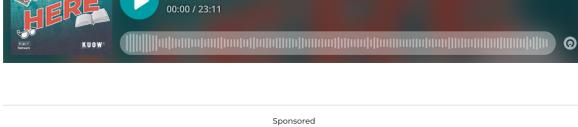
From hockey hookups to Bigfoot bonds, love is in the air — and on the page.

Seattle readers are so infatuated that local bookstores can't keep some hot titles on the shelves.

"[People are] coming in, and they're saying, 'Hey, do you have Heated Rivalry?' And we try not to laugh because they don't know about this shortage," said Ashley Adair, owner of [Beguiled Books](#), a romance bookstore in Seattle's Pioneer Square.

Adair was talking about the popular [hockey romance novel](#) by [Rachel Reid](#), which inspired [HBO Max series](#) of the same name. "Heated Rivalry" has been a massive streaming hit, driving so much demand for the source material that bookstores like Adair's have struggled to keep it in stock.

"It was originally published in 2010 by Rachel Reid, and it was recently adapted by Crave, which is a Canadian company," Adair said. "So, the publishers did not anticipate this being [released] in the United States, and they did not print enough copies."



Sponsored

**Call or Chat With an Expert**  
Connect One-on-One with an Expert and Get Your Answer in Minutes, 24/7. JustAnswer [Open](#)

Luckily for romance readers who can't get a copy of "Heated Rivalry" right now, Adair and other booksellers can offer plenty of other books to satisfy a wide range of romantic interests.

"[A romance novel] has to end in a 'happily ever after' or 'happy for now,'" Adair said. "However you get there, though, that's up to you."

Here are just a few titles Adair recommended ahead of Valentine's Day:

## 'Squatch Out! A Bigfoot Shifter Rom-com' by Deysi O'Donal



"Squatch Out! A Bigfoot Shifter Rom-com" by Deysi O'Donal  
Deysi O'Donal

If you're worried there isn't a romance novel out there for you, take comfort in Adair's first recommendation, in which "the hero happens to be half Bigfoot." Like a werewolf but Bigfoot. Or "Beauty and the Beast" set in the Pacific Northwest.

"It's about this Bigfoot enthusiast woman who is on a camping trip, and she goes out into the woods and does a mating call [that attracts the hero]," Adair said, giggling. "I'm giggling about it, but this is one of the books that we cannot keep on our shelves."

How very fitting for the PNW, which makes sense as author Deysi O'Donal is from these unique parts.

Giggles aside, though, "Squatch Out!" is a perfect example of Adair's point about the genre: To fit in, a novel need only have a happy ending.

Bigfoot romance isn't going to be for everyone, but it's for someone (more than a few someones, apparently). And Bigfoot isn't the only mythical or fantastical being to star in the genre. Monster romance is a popular sub-genre in which human characters fall in love with non-human beings.

There's a forbidden love element to monster romance as the two (or more) characters figure out how to love each other despite their physical and social differences.

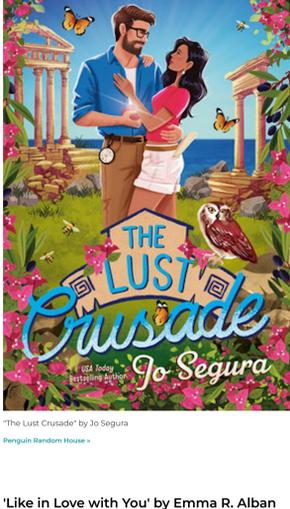
**RELATED: [Subscribe to the KUOW Book](#)**

[Club newsletter here](#)

Sponsored



## 'The Lust Crusade' by Jo Segura



"The Lust Crusade" by Jo Segura  
Penguin Random House

This is another pick by a PNW author, though Jo Segura's vibe is less "Beauty and the Beast" and more "sexy Indiana Jones," Adair said (a description some readers may find redundant).

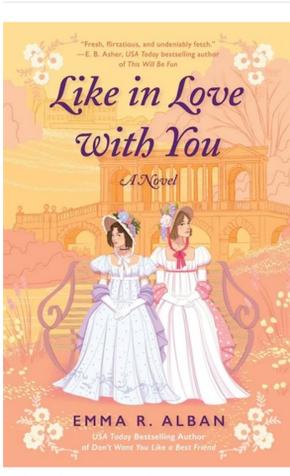
"[Segura] is known as the queen of action-adventure romance," Adair said. "They're going on an adventure. There's always a jungle... It's got those vibes."

Penguin Random House puts it this way: "A plucky librarian and an archaeologist on the run fake an engagement to save their lives, leading them into the labyrinth of their own desires."

The book also happens to play with a few popular romance tropes. The lead female character has a crush on her brother's best friend, who's being held hostage by smugglers. That's two tropes in one!

I don't mean "trope" pejoratively, by the way. Scroll through romance-centric social media, and you'll find dozens of preferred storylines. They include things like friends-to-lovers, enemies-to-lovers, fake relationships, and forced proximity romances. They're popular setups for the happily ever after, and each has its own dedicated following. One character being in love with their sibling's best friend is just one of those beloved setups, as is the criminal/mafia/bad guy element.

## 'Like in Love with You' by Emma R. Alban



"Like in Love with You" by Emma R. Alban  
HarperCollins Publishers

The success of "Heated Rivalry" is evidence of the growing mainstream popularity of queer romance. "Heated Rivalry" is about two male professional hockey players who fall in love.

[Sales](#) of LGBTQ+ romance have increased in the last decade. Still, Adair would like to see publishers releasing even more queer romance titles, lifting up both queer authors and queer readers.

"So often with queer stories in general, there's often tragedy," she said. "So, I think having more queer romance and celebrating that queer joy is what our customers want."

If that's what you want, Adair recommended Emma R. Alban's "Like in Love with You," which has been described as a "Mean Girls" meets "Northanger Abbey." It's a rivals-to-lovers story with a sapphic twist: Two young women competing for the same suitor fall for each other instead.

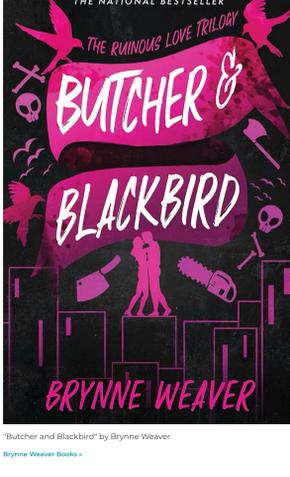
Fans of "Bridgerton" may enjoy the old English society vibes, complete with family drama that makes the leading ladies' love affair all the more scandalous — and fun to read.

**RELATED: [Books we loved in 2025, plus what's already on our TBR for 2026](#)**

Sponsored



## 'Butcher and Blackbird' by Brynne Weaver



"Butcher and Blackbird" by Brynne Weaver  
Brynne Weaver Books

Like monster romance, dark romance has become a wildly popular sub-genre. Think morally gray anti-heroes, possessive or obsessive behavior, and relationships that play on power imbalances, like in "50 Shades of Grey."

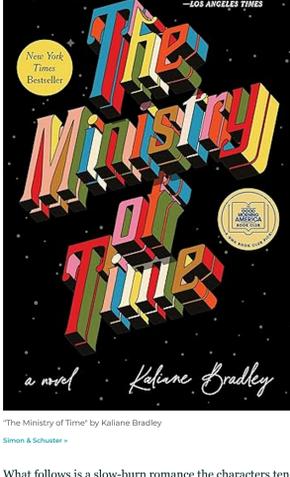
Scenarios may include a protagonist being kidnapped by an obsessed love interest, characters being trapped together, or, as in the case of Brynne Weaver's "Butcher and Blackbird," two serial killers falling in love.

"Romance covers it all," Adair said, emphatically assuring readers that does count. "Because they end up in a happily ever after. They just get there through murder."

Specifically, in a "Dexter" sort of way, as in the killers form a bond while hunting other murderers. As with many other violent dark romance novels, "Butcher and Blackbird" comes with its fair share of trigger warnings, including "accidental cannibalism."

That's part of the allure for some readers, though. Books like "50 Shades" and "Butcher and Blackbird" give readers a safe space to explore their darker fantasies.

## 'The Ministry of Time' by Kaliane Bradley



"The Ministry of Time" by Kaliane Bradley  
Simon & Schuster

Despite the wide variety of romance options on the market, some readers (like me) prefer love interests that take more of a backseat to the central plot of a novel.

I'm not what I would call a romance girl. But because I'm a woman of a certain age who often posts on social media about books, I've served a lot of content about the genre, hence my knowledge of the many sub-genres, tropes, and popular titles.

If you're like me and want a good bit of romance without that romance being the sole focus, I recommend "The Ministry of Time."

I didn't think this work of speculative fiction would be for me, mostly because the relationship that blooms between the lead characters is more central to the plot than I typically like. But the sci-fi explanation for how those characters meet proved too good to pass on.

Basically, the British government figures out time travel and uses it to rescue people from the past who face certain death, people whose disappearances from their own times won't (theoretically) cause wrinkles in history. One of them is time refugees is a Victorian naval officer from the doomed Franklin Expedition to the Arctic. He's awfully charming, as his assigned helper in the present quickly learns.

What follows is a slow-burn romance the characters tend while also trying to stop a nefarious enemy who threatens to snuff out their flame.

**RELATED: [Listen to "Meet Me Here," KUOW's arts and culture podcast](#)**

READ MORE FROM BOOKS or:

- Books
- Literature
- Arts
- Arts & Life
- Seattle
- Love

**Share your thoughts on this story**

Do you feel more informed on this issue? \*

Yes  No

Do you believe multiple sides and perspectives were considered and represented fairly? \*

Yes  No

Did you hear perspectives that were similar to yours? \*

Yes  No

What questions do you still have about this story? What did we get right, and what could we have done better? \*

Your first name \*

Your last name \*

Your email address \*

By checking this box, you agree to receive email communications from KUOW Puget Sound Public Radio.

Protected by reCAPTCHA  
\*All fields required

[Submit](#)

[Why you can trust KUOW](#)

**Katie Campbell**

ONLINE EDITOR/REPORTER

Katie joined KUOW's online team as an editor and reporter in 2024, after serving three years as senior producer of the local Morning Edition program. She has covered a variety of local topics, including the Seattle City Council, elections, and breaking news. She also brings readers some levity with a weekly news quiz.

[More stories from Katie Campbell](#)

### Recommended Stories

**Winter author series kicks off with Coll Thrush's 'Wrecked'**  
February 01, 2026

**Cozy reader winter: Join KUOW Book Club, Seattle Public Library for live author talks**  
January 28, 2026

**David Guterson's 'Snowfall' has a message of hope that still resonates**  
January 26, 2026

**Get Local Stories**  
Delivered to your inbox daily, weekly, or monthly.

[Explore Newsletters](#)