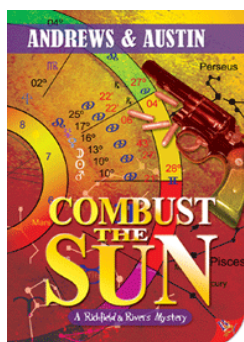


Book Review: January 2007

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



Combust the Sun

Andrews & Austin

ISBN: 1-933110-52-X

Trade paper, 216 pp, \$15.95

August, 2006

Lesbian Mystery/Romance

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In a succinct film style narrative, with scenes that move, a character-driven plot, and crisp dialogue worthy of a screenplay, Andrews & Austin have successfully crafted an engaging Hollywood mystery. The added bonus is an unpredictable romance between two intelligent and witty women who have a fantastic sense of humor evident on every page, even as danger lurks at every turn. Richfield and Rivers are destined for each other, as if by cosmic command. *Combust the Sun* doesn't follow the structure of traditional lesbian fiction, yet Andrews & Austin are able to sustain the sensuality/sexuality amidst utter chaos.

Someone is killing Marathon Studio's bigwigs and Teague Richfield, an ex-cop turned screenwriter, ends up in the middle of the mess. After having lunch with the smashingly handsome Barrett Silvers, head of development at Marathon Studios, who had launched Teague's writing career, Barrett ends up in Intensive Care, and Teague finds herself in peril while being pursued by thugs.

In the meantime, Teague's mom introduces her skeptical daughter to a psychic astrologer, Callie Rivers. Teague is immediately hooked on Callie: "The door swung open to reveal a drop-dead gorgeous blond...I followed her trail of orgasmic perfume pretending to check out the floor-to-ceiling glass that provided a nice view of the river, but mostly I was checking out her fabulously small, tight ass..." (p. 46-7)...The mutual attraction occurs early in the novel, without the usual build-up, barriers, and finally earth-shattering consummation of the relationship as in most typical romance novels, but this rollercoaster romance works because real life isn't always neat and predictable...

...The humor is without question the fun part, the mystery is the hook, and the love interest is what I enjoy most. Teague and Callie fighting in public is a classic. At the height of their loud argument, "A tall, thin waiter swished over to us and brandished his pad and pencil. 'Do you two need more time...or would that just make things worse?'" (p. 138).

Andrews & Austin convince me that it's possible for Teague to fall so completely, madly, and deeply in love with a psychic at first sight, and that if Callie Rivers has special powers, then it must be true, or else life is full of some very incredible coincidences.

I could write a book about all that I found clever, witty, and just plain funny amidst the action, adventure, and mystery, but luckily, they already wrote it! Every page has something that tickles my funny bone. I love the truisms they included as it increased my hope for romance, survival, and justice for the main characters. Even a person who doesn't put faith in psychics will wonder about that after reading *Combust the Sun*.

Combust the Sun will leave you waiting impatiently for the sequels *Stellium In Scorpio* (2007) and a third book in the Richfield & Rivers Mystery series entitled *Venus Besieged*, which will be out in 2008. A mystical romance *Mistress of the Runes* (2007) is also on the schedule. If you long for a fun diversion in your life, you enjoy action sequences that keep you on the edge of your seat, a who-done-it that will keep you guessing, and a stay-tuned for the next episode type of book, then *Combust the Sun* is for you.

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