

# hi, it's me

...

*writing female anti-heroines we root for*



*sponsored by*

The Rebel MFA  
Sanctuary



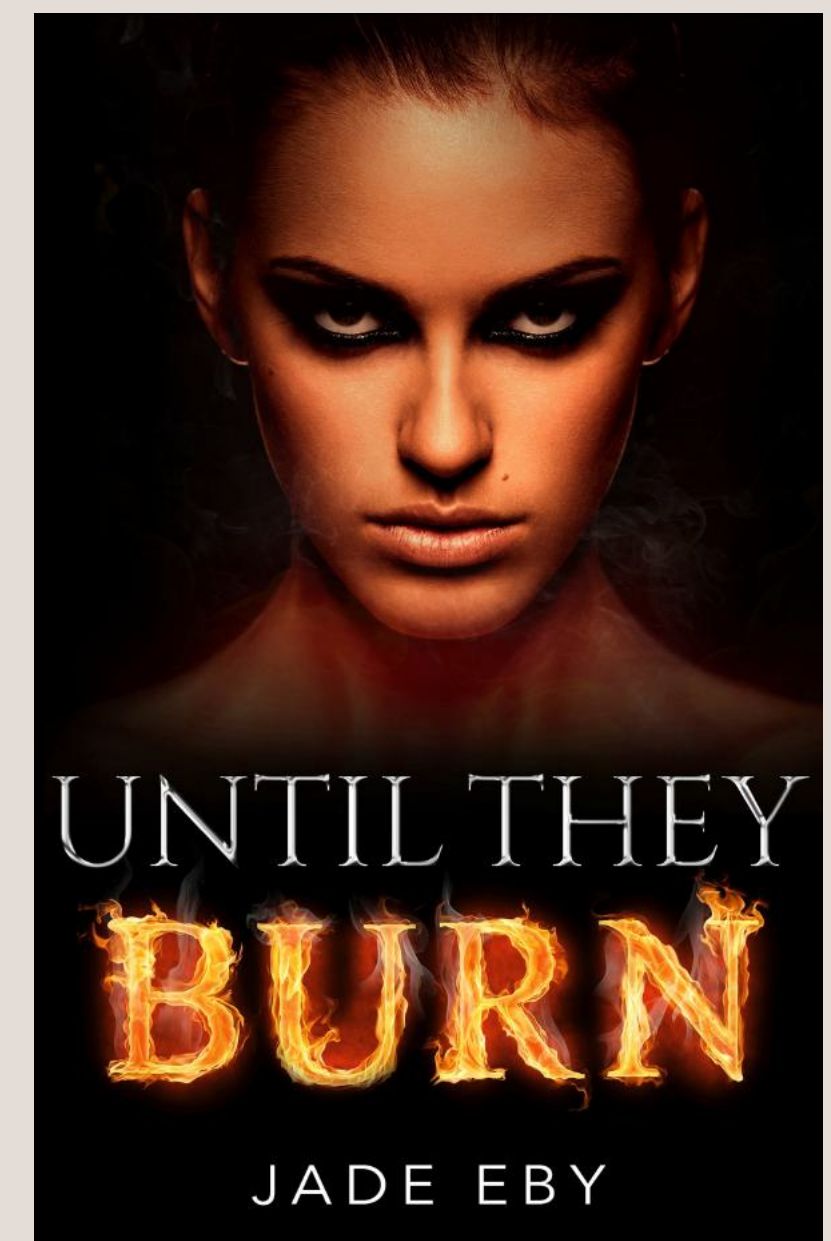
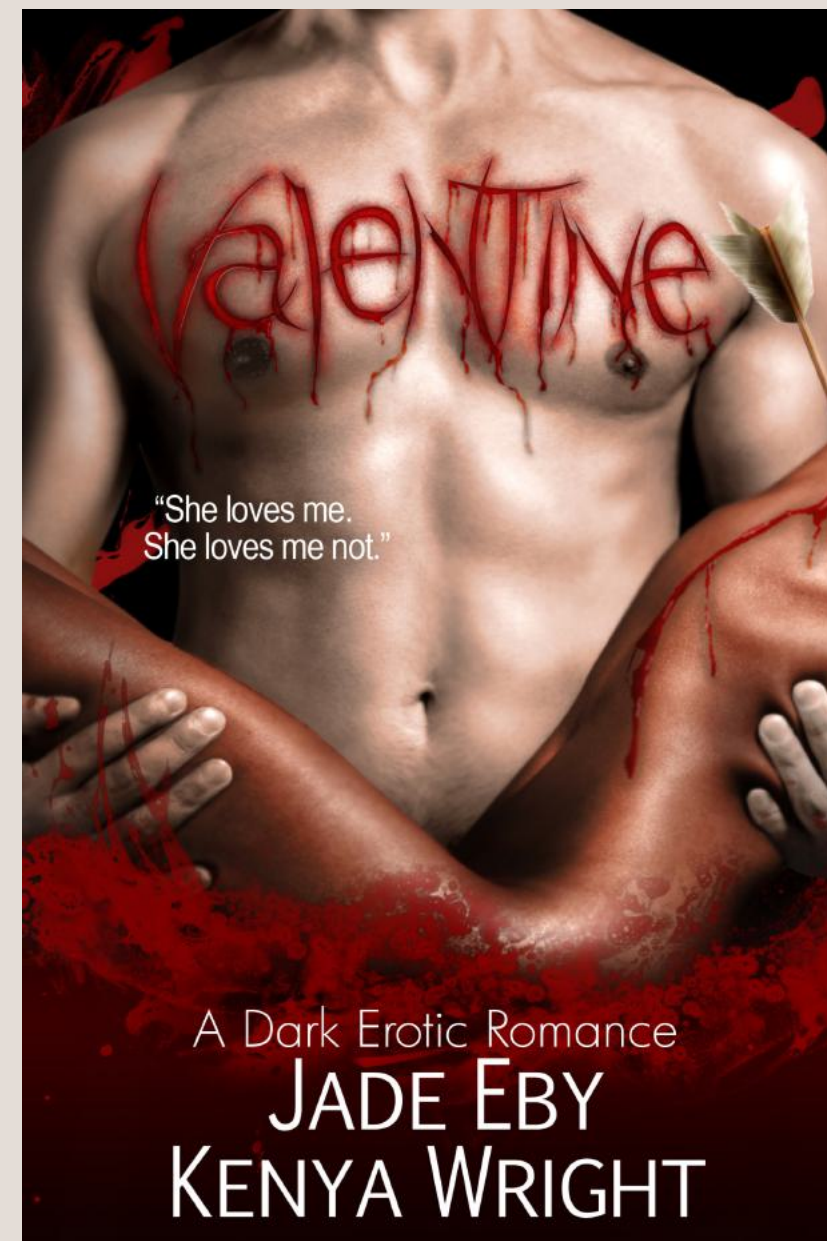
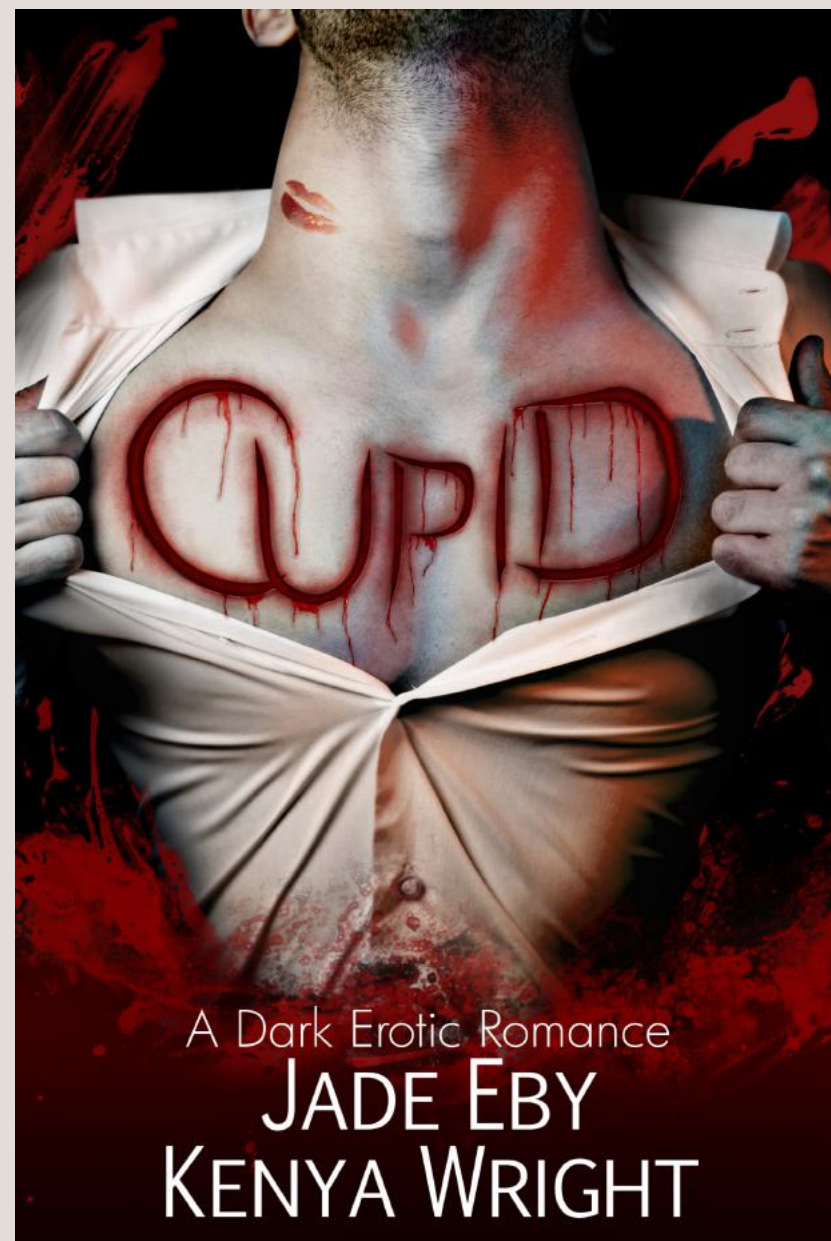
# WHO AM I?

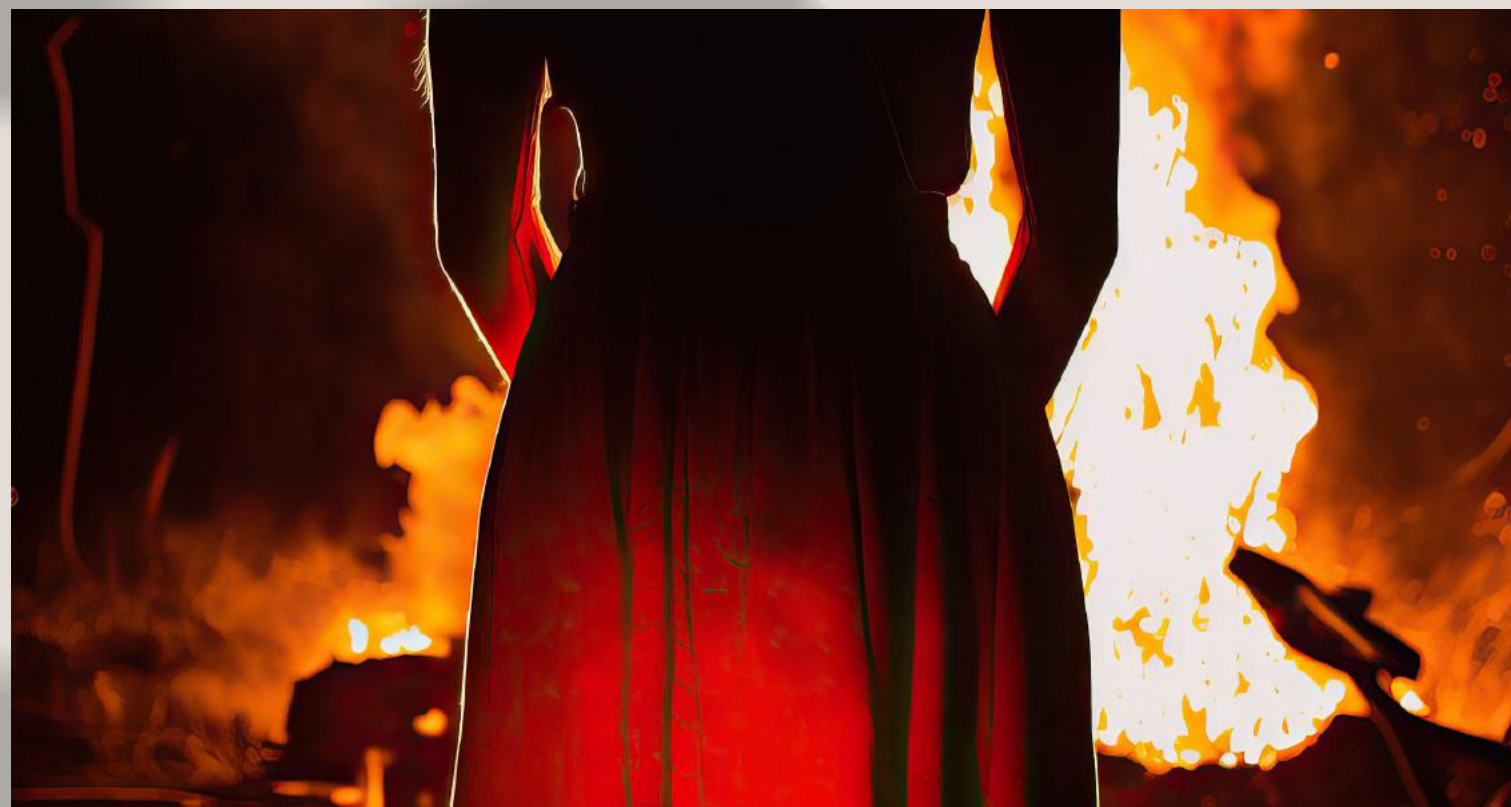
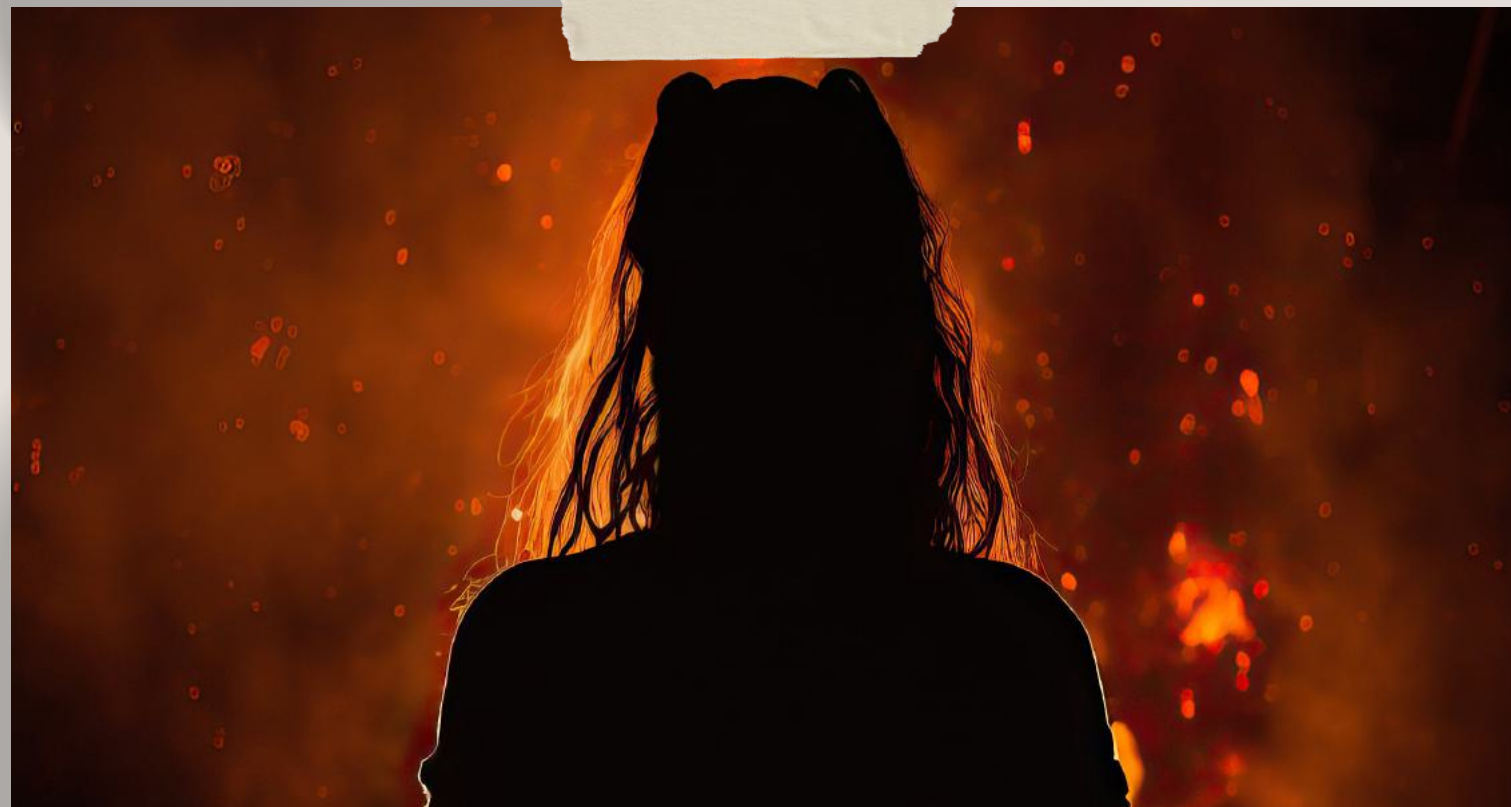
---

- A lover of the anti-hero archetype
- Obviously a Taylor Swift fan
- Author, trauma recovery and storytelling coach, and community builder
- #Potterhead
- Enneagram 4 wing 5, Splenic Projector and proud INFJ
- Pet mama
- Perpetual student



# MY ANTI-HEROES





# ABOUT THIS SEMINAR

I don't know about you, but I love to root for the underdogs in stories. Most of the time though, those characters turn out to be anti-heroes.

Why do I love them so much? What makes me want to root for these morally ambiguous characters? What makes *you* root for them?

This seminar is all about understanding, developing, and writing anti-heroes that both *you and your readers* will love to root for.

# UNDERSTANDING THE ANTI-HERO ARCHETYPE

- Definition
- Appeal
- Importance
- Examples
- Writing Exercises



The defining characteristic of the anti-hero is their ability to **challenge** and **subvert** our expectations of what a hero should be.

It's important to know that anti-heroes (and actual heroes) **don't have to be likable**.

But they do need to be interesting!

A common trait is the **self-awareness** the anti-hero has. They know they are flawed and in fact, may believe they are "bad," "evil," or "wrong," even when they aren't.

## WHAT IS AN ANTI-HERO?

Anti-heroes are characters who often lack conventional hero traits we typically associate with the "good guy" in a story.

Instead, they exhibit qualities that are often morally ambiguous or even outright villainous.

Deeply flawed and complex, anti-heroes often have complicated backstories that explain why they are the way they are.



# THE APPEAL OF ANTI-HEROES

Anti-heroes have become appealing because they offer a different perspective on storytelling.

Rather than giving us a traditional hero who always does the right thing, anti-heroes allow us to explore the darker, more complicated sides of humanity. They offer a level of complexity to storytelling that can be incredibly satisfying to readers and viewers alike.

They also often serve as a way for us to explore our own inner demons and conflicts. We may not always act heroically in our own lives, and seeing characters on screen or in literature who struggle with the same issues can be validating and cathartic.

On a more superficial level, anti-heroes can also be downright badass. Their rebellious attitudes and unconventional methods can be attractive to those who are tired of seeing the same old hero tropes played out time and time again.



Female anti-heroes allow women to **explore** the darker, more complex aspects of their own personalities without being **judged** or **condemned**.

They offer a sense of **empowerment** to women who have been told that they must always be virtuous and selfless, and allow them to **claim agency** over their own lives and decisions.

They show that women can be **flawed** and still be **powerful**, and that they can make their own choices even if those choices are unconventional or unpopular.

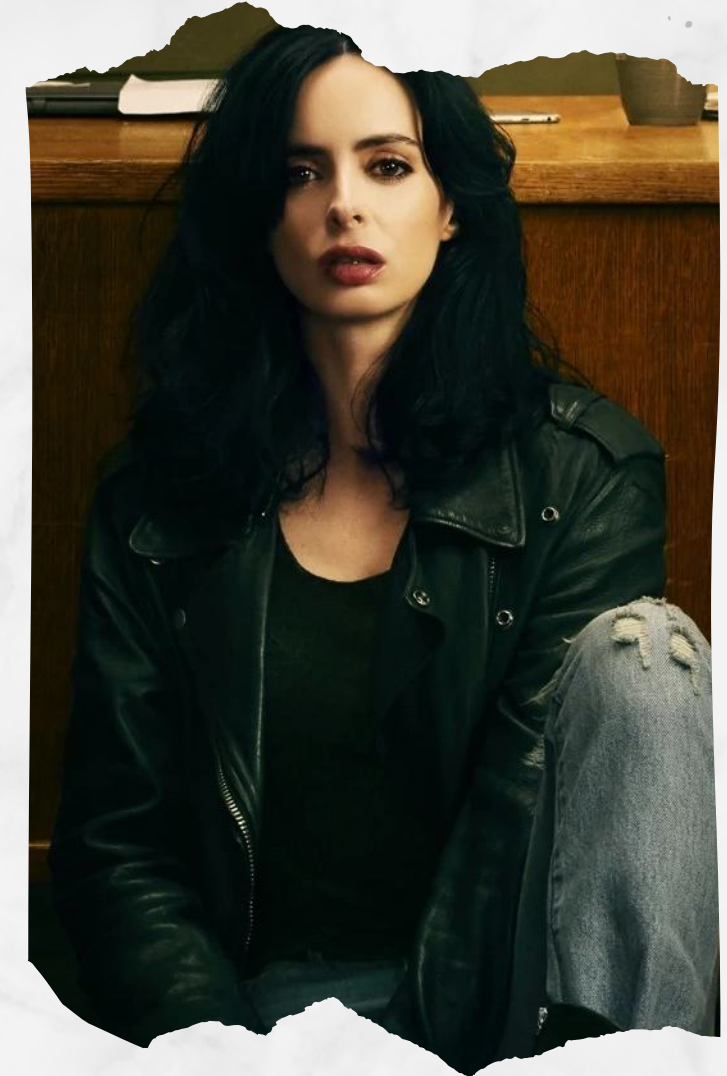
## WHY FEMALE ANTI-HEROES ARE IMPORTANT

Female anti-heroes are crucial to storytelling because they challenge traditional gender stereotypes and offer a fresh perspective on what it means to be a woman in society.

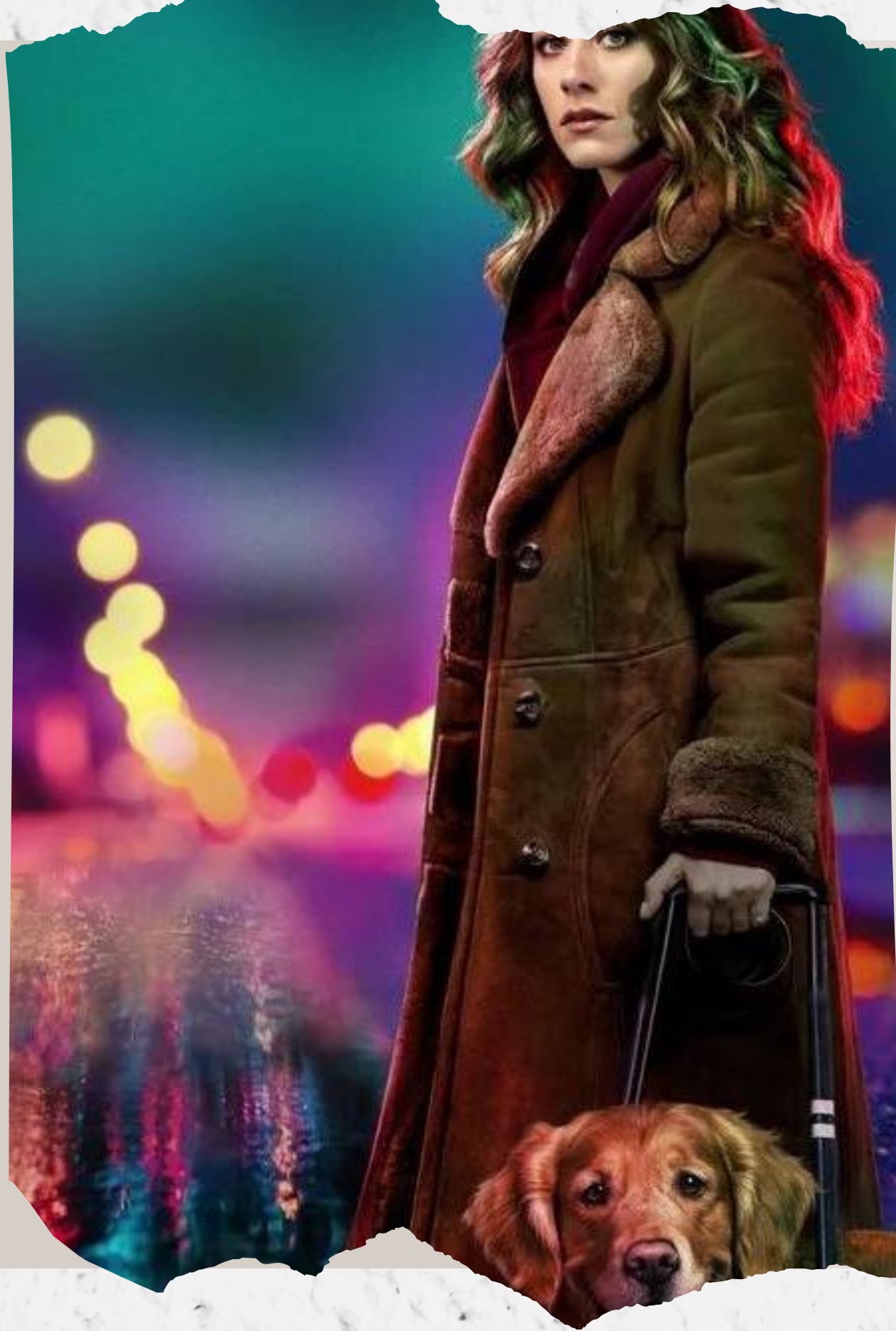
Historically, female characters have been relegated to supporting roles or one-dimensional stereotypes, but female anti-heroes offer complexity and depth to female characters that we rarely see in mainstream media.



# POPULAR FEMALE ANTI-HEROES



Think of your favorite female characters from literature, television, or movies. Are any of them anti-heroes?



# MURPHY MASON

From *In The Dark*

Murphy Mason is a prime example of a female anti-hero.

She is a young blind woman who spends her days drinking, smoking, and engaging in promiscuous behavior, all while working at her parents' guide dog school.

She is not a likable character by traditional standards, but she is incredibly compelling and captivating to follow.



# BETH DUTTON

From *Yellowstone*

Beth Dutton is known to be one of the most iconic characters on television today. She is the daughter of John Dutton, the owner of the largest ranch in Montana on the show, *Yellowstone*.

From the first episode to the current season, Beth is introduced as a strong-willed woman with fierce determination and tenacity but can also be cruel, selfish, condescending, and arrogant.

Her character is established to be nearly the opposite of every well-liked female hero in a series.



# SCARLETT O'HARA

From *Gone with the Wind*

Scarlett O'Hara may be considered one of the most popular anti-heroes from literature as she is not an easily liked woman. She is spoiled, selfish, immature, and willing to be cruel to get what she wants.

Living in a time period where it was more acceptable for a woman to be seen, rather than heard, Scarlett rejects that ideal. She speaks her mind, even when it's inappropriate to do so, and tends to start disagreements just for fun.



# JESSICA JONES

From *Marvel's Jessica Jones*

In the popular Netflix series, *Jessica Jones*, we see Jessica exploring themes such as trauma, addiction, and mental health. Jessica's PTSD from her time under Kilgrave's control is a huge motive for Jessica's actions and behaviors, and the portrayal of her struggles with alcoholism is a relatable reason why viewers have a soft spot for her.

Another reason viewers love to root for Jessica is that she often is acting out or living out her negative behaviors as a way of self-sabotage and self-harm.

# WRITING EXERCISES

## **Exercise #1:**

1. Make a list of anti-hero characters from literature, movies, and television that you find interesting, compelling and unique
2. Try to determine the deeper reason WHY you feel drawn to that anti-hero character

# WRITING EXERCISES

## **Exercise #2:**

1. Make a list of traits that you find deplorable, inappropriate or "anti-heroic." If it helps, think of people in real life you detest or can't stand. What about them makes it so? Add those qualities or traits to the list.
2. Think of people who do, say, or act in ways that make you uncomfortable and make a list of those ways they make you uncomfortable.
3. Think of actions, behaviors or responses that confound or confuse you and make a list of those things that you can't understand.

# WRITING EXERCISES

## Exercise #3:

1. On a piece of paper or in a grid on your computer, label two rows – one for "Negative Traits" and one for "Reframed Traits."
2. Take a look at the lists you created in the previous exercise and start listing out the most impactful "negative traits" that you want to explore.
3. In the next column begin to think about what a reframe of that negative trait would/could be.

Negative Traits	Reframed Traits
Controlling	Managerial
Hot-Headed	Passionate
Sneaky	Strategic
Manipulative	Persuasive
Violent	Able to defend oneself