

DANIELA VALENTI

AUTHOR BIO

Daniela Valenti is the pen name for a Canadian psychiatrist who writes Paranormal Fiction. That may seem incongruous, but it's not really. The work in her chosen field and her writing dovetail nicely. She is able to draw upon her work as a psychiatrist to create multidimensional characters who are simultaneously powerful and vulnerable.

Daniela lives in Montreal and holds a medical degree from McGill. She speaks French and regards herself a chatty introvert. Growing up, she was a voracious reader of sci-fi and fantasy. Her interests today include supernatural lore, skincare and fashion, gorgeous travel destinations, true crime, and learning about narcissism and psychopathy. She's thought a lot about love and evil and maintains that narcissism is the true nature of all evil.

Daniela has traveled extensively. Her love of the exotic dominates many of the settings where the characters in her stories romp and play their parts.

Her prior attempts at writing began at age nine with a story about a doctor's cat, and then a short sci-fi story at age twenty-three. Thirteen years later, her foray into serious-minded writing simply happened. She began writing in 2017, after she returned from a trip to Prague for an international forensic psychiatry conference. What she learned there, combined with her impressions of Prague, her prior ruminations on the nature of love and evil, and her clinical knowledge all combined to create the first book in her series. It was a moment when all sorts of aspects of herself, her life experiences and her interests came together, like a self-assembling puzzle.

The story came to her like a movie, unfolding in her head as she sat on an airplane, staring at the screen-less back of the chair in front of her, for the eight-hour trip back to Canada. Once set in motion, the wheels of creation kept on turning, and resulted in the Sentinel 10 series.

SHORT DESCRIPTION FOR SENTINEL 10: THE DIAMOND ROSE

Amanda's medschool graduation is unlike any other. A solar flare awakens her super psychic powers, enabling her to fight evil, supernatural and human alike. She is the Sentinel 10, the most powerful warrior in a secret society of similarly endowed people. Her life becomes a whirlwind of international travel and exciting paranormal challenges.

But all is not as it seems. Soon Amanda discovers that the man she loves has an evil alter ego, and that her own powers have a dark side. This first year as a Sentinel will push the limits of her resilience, and put her own humanity to the test.

The Diamond Rose is a thrilling and romantic adventure, the first in an exciting new series. Fans of paranormal romance will enjoy this tale of a female heroine who struggles to understand love and master her own powers.

See the [Kirkus Review](#) and the [US Review of Books](#) for the **longer description**. The Diamond Rose is US Review of Books RECOMMENDED.

Q&A WITH AUTHOR DANIELA VALENTI

1. How did you come up with Sentinel 10 as a title for your series?

The actual designation of the Sentinels developed long before any real story. It came with the original kernel of an idea, back when I was 20 or 21, and was still watching *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, the TV series. I suppose the name came from that. Slayer, Sentinel. It was a long time ago.

2. Certain events in your stories are based on real events. Can you give us some examples?

Back in 2017, just before I left for Prague, I read about an Italian man's sky-diving suicide story on MSN news. He called his girlfriend and told her what he was going to do, and then he jumped. Nobody knew why.

Another example has to do with Amanda's first assignment, to stop the psychic assassination of a politician. I was inspired by both the assassination of Aldo Moro in the 70s and a mysterious, improbable accident that ended the life of a Ukrainian politician in the 80s.

In Book 2, the villain says, "I'd like your head on a stick," which is something Ed Kemper, an infamous serial killer, said. In a later book in the series, I'm already incorporating Jeffrey Epstein's "suicide".

3. How did you come up with your main characters? Are they based on real people you know or have met?

A writer's characters are a part of themselves. They're rarely created out of thin air. There was an animated movie titled "9", in 2009, that illustrates this concept quite well: the creator in the movie breathes in parts of his soul into each of the nine characters.

But at the same time, some of my characters, especially the villains, are inspired by real people. As an example, in Book 3, there is an evil girl with a burn on her hand and a snake ring on her finger. Totally inspired by a real person. Another villain is very loosely based on my ex. Shh... Don't tell him. Haha.

4. You don't believe in the supernatural per se, but you like to let your imagination run wild. What exactly is imagination and is it a skill one can develop?

I've always had a lot of imagination. It starts in childhood. I'm sure being an introvert contributes. Reading a lot of stories helps, too. I was reading a lot as a kid. But as an adult, imagination can also be a means of escape or stress management. All "creatives," writers, artists, musicians, and most likely actors, must have a lot of imagination.

5. You believe narcissism is the true nature of all evil. Tell us about that and is narcissism a theme in your books?

Absolutely! Narcissism, my favorite obsession! Narcissism is big in all of the books in the series (some more than others). It helps that Amanda's best friend, Lydia, is a psychiatrist-in-training. One of the points this series makes about narcissism is that a narcissist can only be "cured" by supernatural intervention!

On a more serious note, I could talk about narcissism endlessly. A narcissist, a true narcissist, is never going to change. It comes down to their lack of a real self, which is such a puny, infantile one, that if they were to truly confront the reality of who they are, they would fall apart, so they guard against it, with a quasi-delusional conviction of their superiority and a need for control.

Thinking and learning about narcissism calls to mind the story of Dorian Gray, the fictional character whose portrait aged but he didn't. The parallel with narcissism is that being forced to look at his portrait was lethal to Dorian. Being confronted with their true self can be devastating to a narcissist.

6. Why did you choose a female heroine?

Originally, Amanda was based entirely on me; I was simply projecting myself into the story. It is no longer the case; she feels more like a sister to me. She feels like a distinct person.

My female heroines are accomplished, smart, beautiful young women with a lot of heart and courage. But they're not martial arts experts, they don't engage in physical fights, that's what the guys are there for! Among other things, haha. How many women can physically fight a man, or a monster? In paranormal fiction, as well as in the movies, every woman is kicking, and punching, and taking down big guys. That's not realistic. My heroines have special super-psychic powers; they kick ass AND get to keep their stiletto heels.

7. What inspires you most to write? What inspired you to write the Sentinel 10 series.

Well, to be honest, a wish to escape. Like the Cineplex movie theatre chain in Canada, their logo is "escape with us." So, I mustn't be the only one looking to escape everyday life! To escape into a glamorous world, where you're a former model turned anesthesiologist in training, where you have superpowers, and everything else you could possibly want: true love, true friendship, a great career, an amazingly caring father-figure, exotic destinations, adventures, and even romantic interest from other guys with the oftentimes resulting complications.

8. Amanda's best friend, Lydia, is in training as a psychiatrist. What is their relationship like?

They're best friends, like sisters, really. They met at age seven and they clicked right away, but after a year, Amanda's father landed a position at a bigger hospital, so they moved away. Both Amanda and Lydia had narcissistic surgeons for fathers. They have that in common, growing up with nearly absent fathers. But Lydia's mom is quite different from Amanda's mom. Lydia's mom is a psychologist, and she was able to properly guide Lydia, so that she didn't get damaged. Amanda wasn't so lucky, and then, to top it off, her parents went mountain climbing and were killed in a fall.

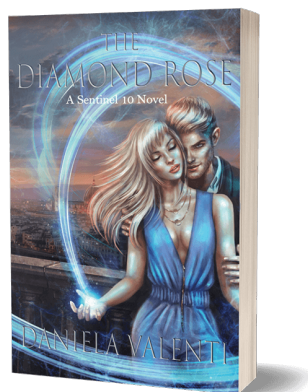
After all that, Amanda and Lydia ended up going to the same medical school. So, they ran into each other there, in the first week, and it was as if they'd known each other all those years. They reconnected right away. They go to spas and restaurants and travel together and chat about the nature of love and evil... um, I mean, about guys. Lol.

9. Exotic locales pepper your stories. How did you choose them?

I chose the ones I've traveled to myself. There will be one exception, later in the series, but aside from that, I've been everywhere my characters go. The places they mention but don't travel to are usually places on my bucket list!

10. Is there any advice you'd like to give to others who may be thinking of writing paranormal romance stories?

I feel like it's too early in my journey as a writer to be giving "real" advice. However, it is important to read the genre, to get a feel for the contemporary tendencies. My editor suggested that. Believe it or not, I had not read any paranormal romance back when I started this first story. In medical school, I was too busy, I had no time to read for fun at all. In residency, I was reading nonfiction only: true crime, disasters, conspiracies, a few other things. But my imagination was still with me, waiting for the right mix of circumstances to happen. The best advice for any writer is to write. Keep writing. If you get an idea, write it down. Write around it. You can edit it later, but you can't edit an empty page. Don't wait, the idea might disappear. Inspiration comes and goes. If you're inspired, go for it. Work it while it's hot!



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My Book Sherpa, Gail M. Kearns, is a wonderful guide into the book publishing jungle.
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