

Rights Catalog for Film/TV

Spring 2023



Sharlene Martin

Literary & Media Manager/ Producer*
Member of Producers Guild of America



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**Sharlene Martin is attached as an EP to MLM projects per contractual agreement with clients.*



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS 2003-2023

Winter 2023 Film/TV Rights Catalog

In 2003, Sharlene took her passion for great stories and their authors and her years in the entertainment industry, to form **Martin Literary & Media Management**. Her agency has experienced extraordinary success in sales and alliances. In the years since that time, her remarkable rise in the publishing industry is demonstrated by a rapidly growing list of non-fiction sales to such renowned major publishers as Random House, Harper Collins, St. Martin's Press, Penguin Putnam, Hachette, Simon and Schuster, as well as to a host of boutique publishers for specialized genre books.

Representing adult nonfiction, she has numerous New York Times bestsellers and high profile books, including: *Chasing Cosby* by Nicole Weisensee Egan; *Victim F* by Denise Huskins and Aaron Quinn, *Impossible Odds: The Kidnapping of Jessica Buchanan and Her Dramatic Rescue* by SEAL Team Six by Anthony Flacco; *Picture Perfect: The Jodi Arias Story* by Shanna Hogan; *Notes Left Behind* by Keith & Brooke Desserich; Raffaele Sollecito's book, *Honor Bound: My Journey to Hell and Back with Amanda Knox*; HLN's Jane Velez-Mitchell's memoir, *I Want*; Suzanne Hansen's *You'll Never Nanny in this Town Again*; MaryJo Buttafuoco's *Getting It Through My Thick Skull*; and The Goldman family's *If I Did It*, based on the OJ Simpson murders of Ron Goldman and Nicole Simpson. Many of Sharlene's authors have had their books boosted as serial reprints in prestigious publications such as Readers' Digest, People Magazine, WHO, and the London Times, and five of her clients have appeared on Oprah. Other client appearances include 60 Minutes, The TODAY Show, The View, Fox and Friends, Good Morning America, The Early Show, 20/20, 48 Hours, Discovery Channel, Inside Edition, The 700 Club, ET, The Insider, ABC Nightline, Dr. Phil, Anderson Cooper 360, CNN, HLN, Discovery ID and Fox News.

She is actively doing business with a host of film and TV companies for adaptations of her clients' books. Hallmark Hall of Fame's acclaimed TV movie is based on her client's book, *Front of the Class*. She was Executive Producer of Lifetime's movie, *The Pregnancy Project*, which garnered the two top *Imagen Awards* for *Best Primetime Movie/Special* and *Best Actress (Alexa Vega)* and is streaming on HULU. She was Co-Creator/Producer of the reality series, *DEADLY SINS* for Discovery ID, which ran for six seasons. She was the Co-EP for the season of specials, *EPIC MYSTERIES* for Discovery ID. She served as Executive Producer with Outpost Entertainment for A&E's documentary, *OJ: Guilty in Vegas*. She Was Executive Producer for **Apple TV+** straight to series one-hour scripted highly acclaimed mystery, *HOME BEFORE DARK*, directed and executive produced by Jon M. Chu (Crazy Rich Asians), based on her client, Hilde Lysiak, a 14-year-old crime reporter and publisher of the Orange Street News, and author of the Scholastic Branches six book series, *Hilde Cracks the Case*. She also Executive Produced *Secrets of a Marine's Wife* for Sony Television at Lifetime (June 2021). She is currently developing a number of projects based on her clients books and enjoys collaborating with screenwriters, producers, directors and production companies. Sharlene was named Home-based Entrepreneur of the Year by Entrepreneur Magazine for her previous business, won Entrepreneur of the Year by the Connecticut Chamber of Commerce and is currently a member of the Producers Guild of America. See full credits at www.IMDB.com (Sharlene Martin (1))

Additionally, she is co-author, with Anthony Flacco, of *Publish Your Nonfiction Book* (Writer's Digest Books) and *Literary Fails: Totally (sic)!* Publishers, editors, writers and entertainment execs who deal with her consistently express their joy in working with someone who is such an avid fan of good writing, as well as an enthusiastic guardian and representative of her clients' work. She employs this personal touch to all her business relationships and credits it with her proven record of success.

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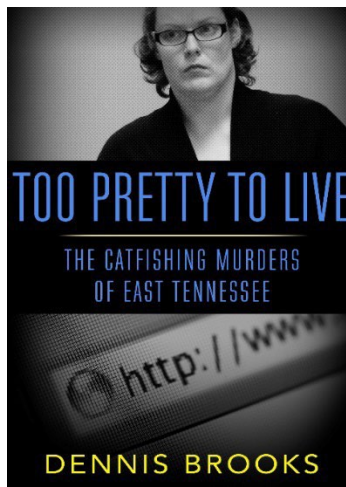
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TRUE CRIME



TOO PRETTY TO LIVE

The True, Strange Story of the Catfishing Murders of East Tennessee

By Dennis Brooks

Diversion Books

PITCH AVAILABLE for Scripted Limited Series

One morning in Mountain City, Tennessee, a young couple were found dead in their home. Shot through their heads. The woman died holding in her arms her baby son, who was still alive. The mother was wearing pajamas. The bullet that killed her lay in the baby's bouncy seat.

The motivation behind these killings is a shocking story. A collection of four persons contributed to the crime. A father who fancied himself a pseudo-CIA agent and acted under the belief he was protecting his family. A boyfriend in his late 30s, gullible to the commands of the first female to ever give him attention, entering the victims' home to aid the father. A mother, chronically overprotective and delusional, who domineered and controlled the men. And at the center of it all, a young woman able to manipulate them all despite her limitations.

Jenelle Potter, 30 at the time of the deaths of Bill Payne and Billie Jean Hayworth, had lived her entire life in her parents' home under their watchful eyes. As an adult, she never held a job. Socially awkward, she was drawn to the internet for the opportunity to communicate with the world. Through the type-written word, she was able to be anyone she wanted to be.

After Bill and Billie Jean began their relationship and started a family, Jenelle began assuming fictitious online identities to influence others to align against the couple and their friends. Presumably, Jenelle had been attracted to Bill. His new love of Billie Jean sent Jenelle into a jealous rage and pattern of harassment against Billie Jean and her friends. Jenelle's main pseudonym was Chris, a purported CIA agent who had gone to school with Jenelle. As Chris, Jenelle wrote often to her mother, Barbara Potter, who soon began to think of Chris as being like a son. Yet Barbara never met Chris, in spite of her yearning to do so. She was "catfished." Chris wrote to Barbara about the surveillance he had conducted on the victims and how the victims were conspiring to harm Jenelle.

Through this correspondence, Jenelle was able to convince her mother that she was in danger and that the danger would only end with the victims' deaths. Barbara thus began encouraging her husband, Buddy Potter, to act. Chris promised CIA backing for the sordid deed. Jenelle also assumed the Chris identity in writing to her secret boyfriend, Jamie Curd, who was also "catfished." As Chris, Jenelle was able to pit Jamie against his cousin, Bill, and manipulate him into assisting Buddy.

Too Pretty to Live tells the story of this crime and its ensuing prosecution. Dennis Brooks was a 17-year veteran Assistant District Attorney when the matter came to him with only the men being charged. Through a creative use of forensic linguistics and utilizing the theory of criminal responsibility, Brooks was able to weave together a case that ultimately convicted each of the Potters of two counts of first-degree murder. This story will shock and amaze you.



The Ark: A Story of Death and Deceit in Malibu

By Lukas I. Alpert
Proposal forthcoming

The tragic end of Dr. Mark Sawusch's life all started as he stood on line at a vegan ice cream shop in Venice Beach.

It was there that Sawusch, a brilliant, but troubled eye surgeon who struggled with bipolar disorder, met yoga gurus Anthony Flores and Anna Moore in the summer of 2017. It was a fateful encounter that would eventually lead to the doctor's death less than a year later and the plundering of his vast fortune.

A hair stylist on film shoots, Flores sported long, flowing hair and a beard. His girlfriend, Anna Moore, was a pixie-like blond, trying to make it as an actress and singer. Both ran a yoga center in Fresno, Calif., and their spiritual vibe cast a spell on Sawusch, who had just days earlier been released from a mental health facility after suffering a breakdown. Within a week, the couple had moved into Sawusch's multi-million dollar Malibu beachfront home to be his caretakers.

Sawusch called his home the Ark, perceiving it as a ship that protected him from the storms that had besieged his life. It was a safe haven from his overbearing mother, two failed marriages and the mental illness and alcoholism that had gotten the better of him by the time he met Flores and Moore.

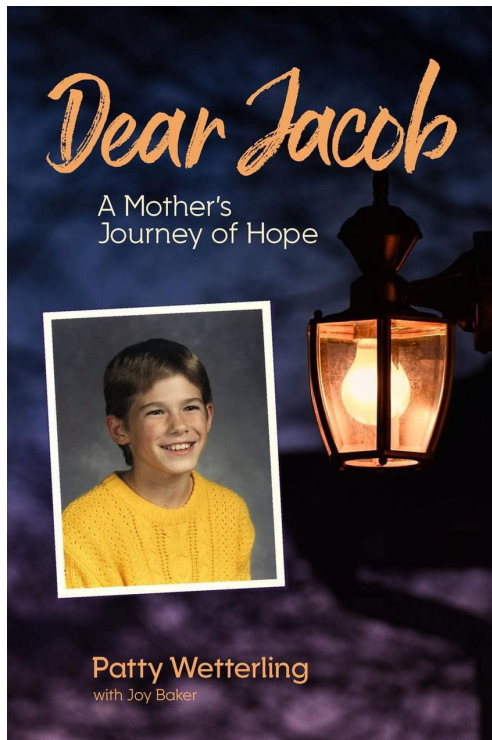
The couple said they felt a connection to Sawusch and saw it as their mission to help him get his life in order. They offered to feed him healthy, vegan food, keep him away from alcohol and make sure he took his medication. But prosecutors say they were really grifters who had spotted an isolated and vulnerable man with a fortune worth more than \$80 million.

In the final year of Sawusch's life, Flores and Moore established a vice grip over the doctor's psyche and finances. To keep him pacified, they fed him a steady diet of marijuana, LSD and ketamine, an animal tranquilizer that has shown promise as a treatment for severe depression. An army of massage therapists provided Sawusch with up to 10 hours of rub downs a day, all while Flores and Moore moved his money into accounts they controlled. His already strained relationship with his family grew even more distant. The sinister scheme ended in tragedy in May 2018 when Sawusch, in the deep thrall of a severe manic episode, ingested a toxic mix of alcohol and ketamine and died in his living room. The terrifying storms that had plagued Mark Sawusch's life had finally penetrated the sanctuary of his Ark.

The Ark: A Story of Death and Deceit in Malibu is a devastating true story that could have been ripped from the pages of a Ross Macdonald novel. It details Mark Sawusch's brilliant rise from a teenage author of more than a dozen highly successful computer manuals to a Johns Hopkins-educated surgeon who developed patents, through his years-long collapse into mental illness, estrangement from his family and embrace of conspiracy theories. It also tracks the path of Flores and Moore from strivers following the Hollywood dream to classic California con artists wrapped in a phony shroud of spiritualism.



Lukas I. Alpert is a Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative reporter who writes about financial crime for MarketWatch. He has previously worked for the Wall Street Journal in the U.S. and Russia, the New York Post and Daily News and the Associated Press. His work has also appeared in Playboy, Maxim and Vice.



Dear Jacob:

A Mother's Journey of Hope

By Patty Wetterling with Joy Baker
Minnesota Historical Society Press | Oct. 17, 2023

ABC 20/20 October 13, 2023

In 1989, Patty Wetterling was a 39-year-old mother of four who was married to her chiropractor husband and lived on a quiet cul-de-sac in a small Minnesota town. With kids ranging in age from 13 to 8, she was just starting to wonder what she wanted to do with the rest of her life. She'd recently renewed her teaching license and was about to accept a position as a part time math teacher at a nearby prep school.

That's when all hell broke loose. Overnight, her life was tossed onto a new and horrifying trajectory.

On October 22, 1989, Patty's 11-year-old son, Jacob, was biking home from the video rental store with his friend, Aaron, and younger brother, Trevor. It was a night like any other in tiny St. Joseph, a town where everybody knew everybody. But, on that night, a man dressed in black and wearing a mask walked onto the road in front of them and said, "Stop. I've got a gun."

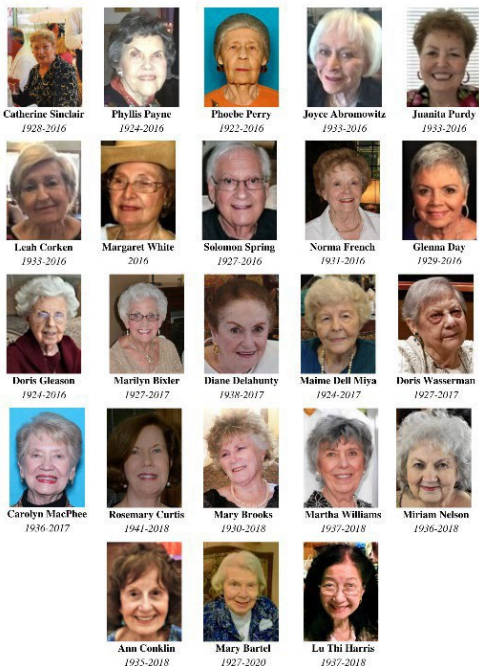
The man ordered the three boys to put their bikes in the ditch and lie face down on the ground. One by one, he asked them their ages, then told Trevor and Aaron to run away. "Don't look back or I'll shoot!" he threatened. When Trevor and Aaron finally did look back, Jacob and the man were gone.

DEAR JACOB is the raw, untold story of the 27 year search for Jacob, as told by the person who knows it best – his mom. For her own survival, Patty Wetterling chose to rise above the doubters who believed Jacob was dead and, instead, focus on hope. She became a sponge, soaking up every bit of knowledge on missing kids and how to find them. Her efforts eventually led her to Capitol Hill where she met the President and lobbied Congress to establish a national sex offender registry. It passed as the "Jacob Wetterling Act" of 1994.

Over two and a half decades, Patty became a well-known speaker, trainer, and national advocate for missing children. But in 2014, despite of all her efforts to find Jacob, she was faced with the horrible reality that Jacob had been missing for 25 years. That's when she was joined on her quest by two unlikely allies – a blogger and a plumber who, at age 12, had been kidnapped from a nearby town and sexually assaulted the same year as Jacob. Working together, Joy and Jared uncovered a string of similar assaults on young boys in nearby Paynesville that had never been fully investigated.

Combining forces, Patty and her husband, Jerry, joined Joy and Jared on a quest for answers. In 2015, under mounting pressure from the public, a multi-agency team would eventually step in to review the case and discover old DNA evidence that led to the arrest of a longtime suspect. One year later, in 2016, Danny Heinrich would accept a plea deal, confess to Jacob's murder, and lead authorities to his remains.

<https://www.facebook.com/hopeologist/>



Unnatural Causes

By Charlie Scudder *On Submission*

Podcast rights optioned!

When the deaths of several elderly women at luxury senior living communities are brushed aside by the police as heart attacks, their families must piece together clues and track one of history's most prolific serial killers. At least **two dozen families** in North Texas are coping with the shock of learning that their loved ones' seemingly peaceful deaths were anything but. For years, these deaths and theft reports went ignored as one of the most inexhaustible serial killers in U.S. history stalked vulnerable victims at luxury senior living communities. **UNNATURAL CAUSES** is the story of those families and the investigation.

Billy Chemirmir — a 49-year-old Kenyan immigrant who is now serving a life sentence in a Texas prison — killed their mothers and stole their precious heirlooms and jewelry. Even as the daughters of the victims raised suspicions, he turned tranquil senior living communities in North Dallas into his own private hunting grounds. Chemirmir would go from door to door, pretending to be a maintenance worker. Once inside an apartment, he'd force the women to the floor and push a pillow over their faces, smothering them to death before raiding their apartments of jewelry, cash and other valuables.

Among the protagonists we'll follow are:

***Shannon Dion**, who launched a crusade on behalf of her murdered mother, Doris Gleason, to track the crimes of similar murders and sought justice for vulnerable seniors who go unprotected.

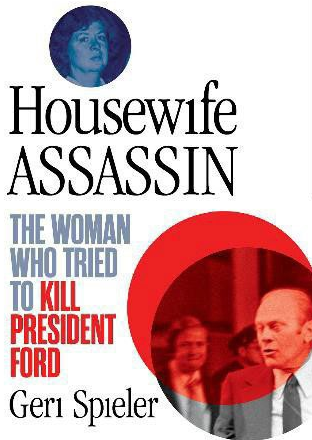
***Jennie Bassett**, who remembered the rumors of death among the old ladies in her mother, Ann Conklin's, retirement community .

***Mary Bartel** who — thanks to a swift 911 call from a neighbor — survived an attack and gave a description to police, leading them to Chemirmir and his final victim.

No one recognized evil when it visited — not the families, not law enforcement, and not the senior living homes administrators after grandmothers stopped showing up for water aerobics. It took years for investigators to finally put the puzzle pieces together and start making calls to unsuspecting families to let them know the horrible truth.

UNNATURAL CAUSES is based on a true story that Dallas journalist **Charlie Scudder** spent years reporting. Destined for limited series potential, the series will conclude with a shocking penultimate episode when Chemirmir goes to trial and after a first mistrial the new jury gets it right and Chemirmir is sentenced to life without parole. And finally, the characters you meet through each episode will receive justice and their recovery from grief can finally begin.

About the Author: Charlie Scudder is a freelance writer and editor based in Dallas-Fort Worth. For eight years, he was a general assignment reporter for *The Dallas Morning News* where he covered the case of Billy Chemirmir extensively. His two-part true-crime series on the case has won an Edward R. Murrow Award, the Michael Brick Storytelling Award and best feature series award from the Texas Associated Press Managing Editors, and the longform feature writing award in the Best of the West contest. Scudder was part of the reporting team at *The Dallas Morning News* named a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in breaking news reporting for coverage of the deadly July 7, 2016 ambush on Dallas police officers. His work has been published in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *Tampa Bay Times*, *USA TODAY*, *SAVEUR* magazine, *Texas Monthly*, *Garden & Gun* and others.



Housewife Assassin: The Woman Who Tried To Kill President Ford

By Geri Spieler

Diversion Books, February 2023

**Optioned by Writer/Director/Producer
Steven DeKnight, DeKnight Productions**

WHAT IF ... a country club mother and doctor's wife took **Dead Aim** at the President of the United States and came within six inches of killing him?

WHAT IF ... we find out this would-be assassin was also:

- ... a paid informant for the FBI
- ... a double agent for the radical underground
- ... picked up and released by the Secret Service just 14 hours before she tried to kill the President?
- ... the shooter who carried out the **plot** of a group of federally identified conspirators who set out to kill the president?

That assassin was Sara Jane Moore.

Sara Jane Moore was a despondent housewife searching for an escape from her stale, suburban life as a mother and homemaker, only to seek her independence through the unlikeliest of decisions...planning to assassinate the president. At the beginning of 1974, she was a Suzy Homemaker housewife to a successful doctor, mother to her son, and a model "Reagan boosting" country club member. By 1975, she becomes the only woman ever to fire a bullet at a sitting president. The \$64,000 question is "Why?"

It all starts on a cold February evening when the domestic terrorist organization Symbionese Liberation Army releases a hostage recording of their latest victim, newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst.

"Mom...Dad..." The sounds of Patty pleading for her parents to give in to the SLA's demands for a massive food giveaway sear into the minds of anyone who heard them. They certainly changed Sara Jane's life. And changed the course of history.

Like a twisted, real-life version of Forrest Gump, Sara Jane's volunteering leads to working with most of the significant historical players in the war between the Feds and San Francisco's radical underground. She starts as an apple-cheeked soccer mom handing out meals to the needy, becoming one of the trusted confidants of both the Hearsts and the extremists. Only then does she get the most unlikely call of all: an invitation into the FBI.

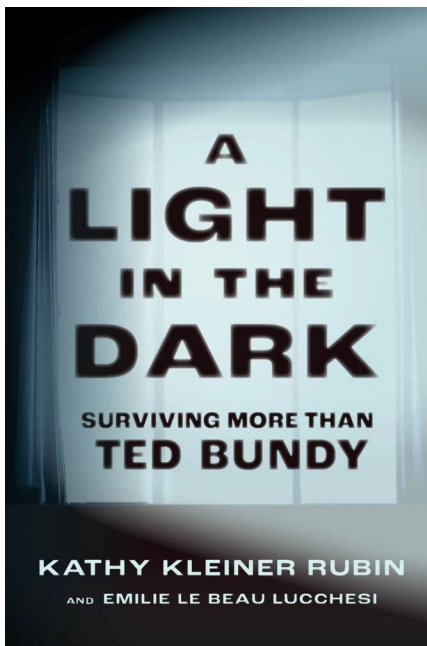
This soon-to-be would-be assassin was first a paid FBI informant. Through divorce, betrayal, and murder, Sara Jane slowly becomes radicalized herself, unbeknownst to her handlers at the Bureau. The vice tightens further when she becomes a double agent, feeding intelligence to a group of federally identified conspirators who were out to kill the President.

Through the lens of a thriller with shocking twists and horrifying revelations based on deep research, this book answers the obvious question, "Why would anyone try to assassinate Gerald Ford?" with a bullet.

But it also asks a better one. "How well do you know your mother?"

It's the story of an unlikely assassin, unlike any other female assassin story ever seen on screen. With themes that couldn't be more relevant to the moment—when women's rights face their gravest threats since the Equal Rights Amendment passed the first time. Right as this story begins...www.GeriSpieler.com

"Spieler offers a portrait of an erratic, unstable woman with a protean capacity to shift identities, with the 1960s and '70s as a dramatic backdrop. Fans of true crime accounts or contemporary history will savor this." —Publishers Weekly



A Light in the Dark

Kathy Kleiner Rubin
Emilie LeBeau Lucchesi

Chicago Review Press- October 2023

In 1978, Kathy Kleiner was sleeping in her bed in the Chi Omega sorority house at Florida State University as Ted Bundy stalked nearby. He strode through the parking lot, grabbed a heavy oak log from a pile of firewood, and slipped through an unlocked door. He started in the room where Margaret Bowman slept. He brutally beat her in the head with the oak log and strangled her with a pair of pantyhose. He tucked her body under her bedsheet, and worked his way down the hall, checking for unlocked doors. He found Lisa Levy's door open. He beat her head, strangled her, and savagely bit her body. **And then he came for Kathy.**

Kathy survived the brutal attack and testified against him in the trial that finally sent him to prison. Before his execution in 1989, he admitted to killing more than thirty-six women and girls. Some experts estimate he killed more than one hundred. Kathy was one of the fortunate few to survive, and she's contended with the legacy of a serial killer who became a household name.

Kathy is a serial survivor. Born into a Cuban American family in 1957, she received her first death sentence at the age of 12 when she was diagnosed with Lupus, then an incurable disease. She survived after a young physician suggested an experimental treatment being used in Cuba — chemotherapy.

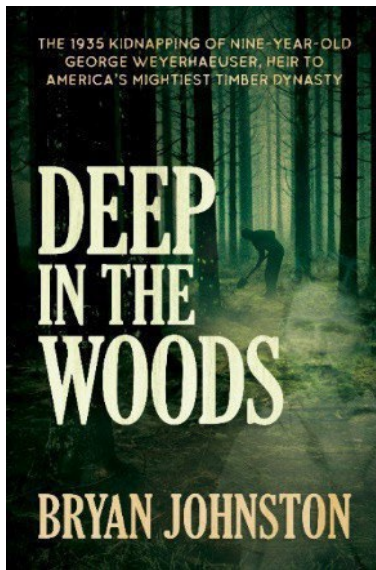
Kathy's story weaves in Bundy's history and his known attacks starting in 1974. **She is the first Bundy survivor to tell her story** and she brings a new dimension to a romanticized memory that glorified an evil monster. The other victims' stories are chilling. Most were attacked in their beds, like Kathy, or attacked from behind — contrary to the legend that Bundy charmed women into his car. The Bundy legend has diminished the victims' lives and stories, and Kathy honors them by telling her truth in "A Light in the Dark: Surviving More Than Ted Bundy," co-authored with Emilie Le Beau Lucchesi.

Kathy Kleiner Rubin is a motivational speaker who specializes in victim impact. She lives in South Florida with her husband and dog. She's given many interviews, including CBS News, CNN, *Cosmopolitan*, *People*, and *Vanity Fair*.



Emilie Le Beau Lucchesi is the author of "Ugly Prey" and "This is Really War." She is a regular contributor to *Discover* magazine. Her work has also appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, *Chicago Tribune*, and the country's largest newspapers. She lives in the Chicago area with her husband and three dogs.





DEEP IN THE WOODS

By Brian Johnston—POST HILL PRESS

Book trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIzPyOvJGTg>

On a sunny Friday afternoon, May 24, 1935, curly haired nine-year-old George Weyerhaeuser was snatched off the streets less than three blocks from his house, while walking home from school. George was not just any boy. He was a Weyerhaeuser, heir to America's mightiest timber dynasty. To this day, his great grandfather, Frederick Weyerhaeuser, is still considered the 12th richest man in American history. Bill Gates is 11th.

The ransom note contained 21 demands, the first being that the kidnappers wanted \$200,000 – over three million in today's dollars – in small, unmarked bills, and the money had to be paid within five days. Or else. The family was instructed to communicate with the kidnappers through personal ads in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer newspaper, using the code name "Percy Minnie." While the family scrambled to raise the money, the kidnappers kept George sealed in a trunk, locked in a closet, manacled in a dirt pit in the forest, and chained to a tree.

When the Weyerhaeusers produced the money hours before the deadline, they received a letter with exacting instructions for the drop. The payoff played out like something ripped from a Dashiell Hammett novel with the kidnappers driving off with a king's ransom.

The kidnappers, true to their word, released George. They took him deep into the woods and left him by a timber road in the rain with a blanket and one dollar. After waiting two hours in pitch darkness George took it upon himself to find his way home. He hiked for miles until finally coming upon a farmhouse.

The farmer piled him into his Model-T and headed for Tacoma, stopping in the town of Renton, to call the family. The telephone system the FBI had set up in the Weyerhaeuser home failed miserably: the farmer's call never made it through. Frustrated, the farmer then called the Tacoma police. At that very moment, a Seattle Times reporter was in the police station and overheard the call between the farmer and the police. He hailed a taxi and instructed the cabbie to race to Renton while keeping a weather eye out for a Model-T. The cabbie and reporter spotted the car and managed to get the farmer to pull over. The reporter insinuated that he was with the police, gave the farmer five dollars for his trouble, and the farmer handed George over, no questions. The reporter then instructed the cabbie to drive back to Tacoma on back roads, while he sat on the backseat floorboards, out of sight, and interviewed the boy. With George home, thus began, as the New York Times called it, *The greatest manhunt in Northwest history*.

The kidnappers were William Mahan, a career criminal bank robber and the mastermind of the caper, and the husband and wife team of Harmon and Margaret Waley. Harmon was a 24-year-old petty thief, and Margaret was a 19-year-old Mormon girl who had never been in trouble and who, according to her faith, did whatever husband told her to do.

The FBI managed to register the serial numbers of all 20,000 ransom bills. It took 4,200 person-hours accomplished within three days. The list was then spread across the land. When Margaret tried to pass a five-dollar ransom bill to purchase a twenty-cent cigarette case for her father at a Woolworth's department store, the FBI swooped in. Harmon was apprehended hours later after he burned several thousand dollars of the money in a potbellied stove.

After the Waleys were busted, William Mahan managed to evade the law. He was almost captured the



following day on a one-in-a-million chance encounter in Butte, Montana. While standing on a street corner, he locked eyes with a police officer who, remarkably, recognized him because he had arrested Mahan years earlier. After a chase on foot, Mahan escaped when a guard dog got between him and the cop, and the cop refused to shoot the dog. As a result, Mahan remained on the lam for another year.

In the meantime, the Waleys went to court. Harmon pled guilty and was sentenced to 45 years at Alcatraz, rubbing elbows with the likes of Al Capone. Margaret tried to plead guilty – even though she never once saw George during the entire duration of the kidnapping – because she couldn't imagine her husband behind bars while she remained free. The judge refused to allow her to plead guilty, based on the evidence, and she went to trial. And what a trial it was, becoming one of the most sensational and high-profile cases in the region's history, the courtroom packed to overflowing. While the courtroom drama was playing out, a different drama was taking place on the streets. The Northwest was in the grip of a massive lumber strike, complete

with riots, bayonet-wielding National Guardsmen, smoke grenades, and buildings dynamited.

Margaret's lawyer was the former mayor of Seattle, and as her defense he chose to characterize her as the stupidest woman on the planet. It didn't work. She was sentenced to 20 years on a Michigan work farm. On the day she was sentenced she vowed she would count the days, the hours, the minutes before she and her beloved Harmon would be reunited. A day later she blamed him for all her misery.

One year after the kidnapping, Bill Mahan's luck finally ran out. He was captured in San Francisco, pled guilty and was sentenced to 60 years in Alcatraz.

Twenty-eight years after going to prison, Harmon Waley was released. By then, George Weyerhaeuser was a grown man, and one of the top brass in the Weyerhaeuser organization. Waley, now 52-years old, called his former kidnap victim and had the gall to ask George for a job. George Weyerhaeuser, in a breathtaking display of grace and compassion, hired him.

<https://www.king5.com/video/entertainment/television/programs/new-day-northwest/new-book-highlights-an-obscure-part-of-pacific-northwest-history-new-day-nw/281-86219883-723e-47ec-909d-60ed49839b47>

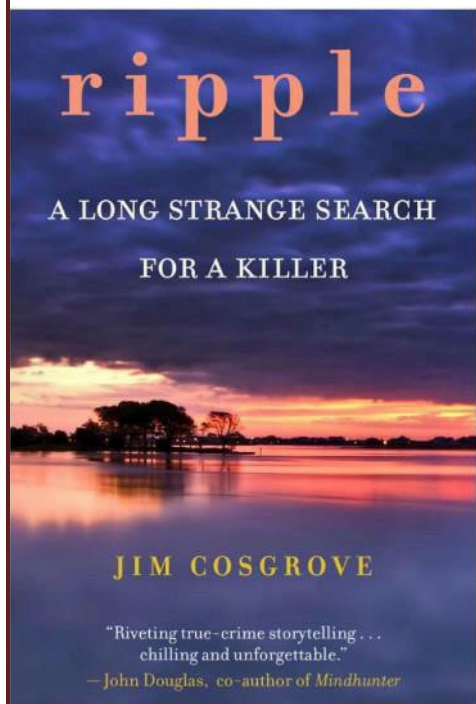
RIPPLE A Long Strange Search for a Killer

By **Jim Cosgrove**
Steerforth Press

"An intriguing . . . excavation of an unsolved crime."-- *Kirkus Reviews*

"Exquisite details help to make *Ripple* a captivating true crime account of a murder..." --*Foreword Reviews*

"Cosgrove masterfully weaves together the family's fabric and spends enough time with each of them to capture their individual characters, drawing the reader into their search for Frank. His conversational tone makes this an easy read for all, especially true crime lovers." --*Booklist*



Follow journalist Jim Cosgrove as he picks up the trail of a decades-old case involving the disappearance of a family friend. In 1982, Frank McGonigle, a hapless Grateful Dead fan, left his Kansas City home and never returned. His large Irish-Catholic family searched nine years for him, only to learn of his murder in a gritty South Carolina fishing village.

With the help of a cast of salty characters, Cosgrove uncovers connections to a ruthless local crime boss and miscues from a threadbare sheriff's department. A chance meeting with a soft-hearted psychic who provided freakishly accurate details about Frank's death put Cosgrove face to face with the alleged killer. After a 25-year investigative journey that has brought the McGonigle family some long-sought closure, it's clear that Cosgrove's story and Frank's have become inextricably intertwined.

Ripple interweaves themes of familial bonds, guilt, redemption, compassion, and self-discovery with a thread of the esoteric.

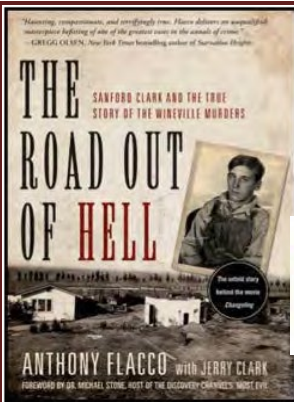


About the Author:

Award-winning entertainer, author, and speaker Jim Cosgrove is a former staff writer for the *Albuquerque Journal* and for Hallmark Cards. His first book, *Everybody Gets Stinky Feet* (Mighty Mo Productions, 2017), is a collection of essays from his time as a parenting columnist for *The Kansas City Star*. His three children's books *Bop Bop Dinosaur*, *Sullen Sally*, and *Hark! It's Harold the Angel*, were released in 2020 by Ascend Books.

Young music fans may be more familiar with Cosgrove's persona as beloved kid-rockers "Mr. Stinky Feet." Over the past 23 years, he has performed more than 4,500 high-energy shows throughout North America and Europe and twice at The White House Easter Egg Roll. His nine family albums have earned an impressive collection of national parenting awards. His YouTube channel has more than 2.5 million views. In 2020, his music was streamed more than one million times on Spotify alone.

https://www.kansascity.com/entertainment/books/article259556284.html?fbclid=IwAR0NT0Ghof5AkW_5PkZxuv-iVOSDdWDETuMfWTjCq3HdYsix-D_RCq9Sqls



THE ROAD OUT OF HELL

Sanford Clark and the True Story of the Wineville Murders

By Anthony Flacco with Jerry Clark

Sterling Publishing



And you wonder: How the hell did this guy go on to be a loving father and how ! he bury all that crap? That's a story in itself."

-Clint Eastwood, Director of THE CHANGELING

*The film story of young Sanford Clark and his forced participation in the Wineville Murders was covered in Clint Eastwood's movie, THE CHANGELING, but for answers to the questions Eastwood posed after completing the project, turn to the true story of the Wineville murder and Flacco's The Road Out of Hell. **The hell part isn't what makes the story important; it's the road out that does.***

The Road Out Of Hell goes travels beyond the murder farm. This story puts us behind young Sanford Clark's POV throughout his capture, then past the trial, conviction, and execution of Gordon Stewart Northcott. It is based on the question, how can any child endure such treatment for two years and somehow go on to build a positive life?

We follow this shattered boy through a stint in the reformatory until age 18 (for being in the States illegally), then his deportation back to his childhood hometown in Canada. There, initial public suspicion remains high, even though the press has made it clear he was never a willing perpetrator. For those first months after returning, every social encounter is a quiet ordeal, either over his treatment by others or because of his own painful shyness.

Soon after he comes home, Canada joins Britain in what will become the Second World War. Sanford enlists and fights heroically in Europe, commanding a cannon crew through heavy artillery battles. His cheerful demeanor while under fire inspires his fellow soldiers; a quick death from an exploding shell doesn't seem to scare him at all. Sanford cracks corny jokes while they load and fire. He earns a number of combat medals.

He returns from war and gets a job as a postal carrier with a route in his old hometown. Courage under fire has burnished his public image a bit, and slowly, his persistently kind and personable demeanor wins people over. He meets June at a party when she rescues him from a solitary corner. They hit it off and she will soon be his wife. When he finally reveals his past to her, she smiles! She already knows his story. Rather than hardening her heart toward him, it has completely opened her up. She sees how much he desires to rebuild his life and she wants to do it with him.

They marry in a simple ceremony, and both work to buy a small house on Sanford's mail route. When they learn June can't have children, they decide to adopt, and take on a three-year-old boy from the local orphanage. The toddler is having a much harder time finding placement than a baby would. Sanford and June want to give the boy a chance. (And this boy is Jerry Clark, who will eventually open up the archives underlying this story).

Sanford makes sure his son Jerry never suffers from a lack of friends by buying the empty lot next door to their house. He grades it flat and after winter sets in, persuades the fire company to bring a truck around. They spray enough water over the lot to form a solid ice coating. Hockey is inevitable.

Jerry is 18 when his father Sanford takes him aside and tells him the entire Wineville story. He knows despite social acceptance there will always be gossip, and he wants Jerry to hear the story from him. He tells him all about his time at the murder farm and in the burial pits with the roof pressing down on him, never knowing how long his term in the hole would be.

That night, Sanford hears odd noises and walks into Jerry's bedroom to see Jerry walking in his sleep and obviously in the throes of a nightmare. He is standing on his bed and pressing his hands up against the ceiling. Pushing with all his might. Trying in vain to lift the ceiling and somehow escape. Sanford gently wakes him before June is aroused by the sounds. He quietly explains to his son that it mattered to Sanford for his son to get a glimpse of what happened, not to share in his nightmares but to help him stand strong when people try to tear him down.

After twenty-eight years on his postal route, Sanford suffers a heart attack while on his mail route. He barely survives and must retire. With too much free time on his hands, old memories begin to run through his mind. They torment him.

June arranges a job for Sanford at a local car museum, hosting the fancy displays. It is good for Sanford to have the distraction, and he excels at the job as a popular tour host. In his free moments, it is not the scenes of wartime battle which cause him such pain, it is always the murder farm. But he has pulled himself out of that hell and created a life to be proud of. He and June remain married for 58 years.

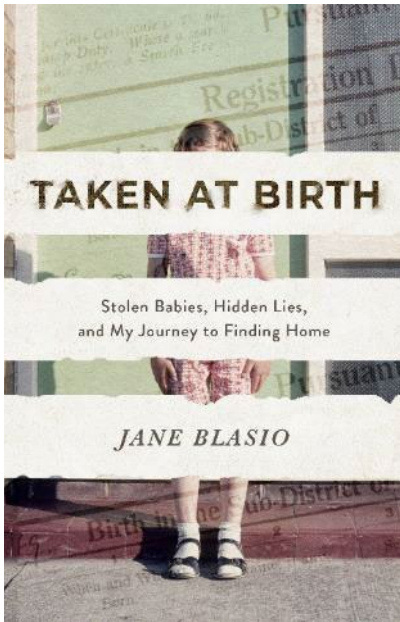
See Book Trailer Here: <http://www.anthonyflacco.com/booktrailer.htm>

TAKEN AT BIRTH

Stolen Babies, Hidden Lies, and My Journey to Finding Home

By Jane Blasio Revell/Baker Books

Click link to watch trailer: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ESyHEzX7WNo



For years from the 1940's through the 1960s, young pregnant women entered the front door of a clinic in a small North Georgia town. Their babies exited out the back, sold to northern couples desperate to hold a newborn in their arms. But these weren't adoptions—they were transactions. And one unethical doctor was exploiting other people's tragedies.

Jane Blasio was one of those babies. At six, she learned she was adopted. At fourteen, she first saw her birth certificate, which led her to begin piecing together details of her past. Jane undertook a decades-long personal investigation to not only discover her own

origins, but to identify and reunite other victims of the Hicks Clinic human trafficking scheme. Along the way she became an expert in black market adoption, serving as an investigator and telling her story on every major news network. ***Taken at Birth*** is the remarkable account of her tireless quest for truth, justice, and resolution.



Jane Blasio is a Hicks Baby, sold at birth and passed through The back door of a clinic in North Georgia. She has served for more than 18 years in federal law enforcement. An expert in illegal adoption, she helped unravel the mystery of the Hicks Clinic, breaking the story in 1997. She has appeared on CNN, ABC *Primetime*, *Good Morning America*, *Fox News*, *Inside Edition*, and *Entertainment Tonight*, as well as in the *New York*

Times, *People*, and *Reader's Digest*. She was the investigative lead on the recent TLC docuseries, *Taken at Birth*. Jane currently lives in Akron, Ohio, and spends as much time as she can with family and friends. www.JaneBlasio.com

[Mark Meets... Jane Blasio, born and sold from the Hicks Clinic in Georgia - YouTube](#) 1-6-2023

[TAKEN AT BIRTH: Stolen Babies, Hidden Lies, and My Journey to Finding Home by Jane Blasio - YouTube](#)

People like to say it takes a lot of courage to do a book like this: I think it takes a site more than that. Jane Blasio lived a story that most of could only imagine, from being sold as an infant by a small- town doctor, to years of searching for her birth mother, a gut-wrenching ordeal. But she not only lived it, she wrote the mortal hell out of it, bringing it all to life for the reader as it poured out of her. Sometimes you have to remind yourself that this was a life lived, not one just crafted.--Rick Bragg, Pulitzer Prize winner for NYT journalism, Prof. of Writing, University of Alabama



SOLE SURVIVOR

By Holly K. Dunn and Heather Ebert

Just as she was starting her junior year of college, Holly Dunn and her boyfriend were attacked while walking along railroad tracks. After her boyfriend is murdered, Holly is stabbed, raped, and beaten nearly to death. Their assailant remained at large for two years before police realized he was a serial killer connected to many more murders in several states. In this memoir of survival and healing from a horrific true crime, Holly recounts how she survived the vicious assault, endured a long journey of healing, and ultimately found meaning and purpose through service to victims of sexual assault and other violent crimes.

On August 28, 1997, Holly Dunn and her boyfriend, Chris Maier, were strolling along a set of railroad tracks not far from the University of Kentucky in Lexington where both were students. As they were heading back to a nearby house party, a strange man emerged from the shadows brandishing a sharp, pointed weapon.

Holly and Chris offered him money, credit cards, even their car while begging the man not to hurt them. Disregarding their pleas, the stranger viciously attacked them both, tying their arms and feet and dragging them into a ditch on the side of the tracks. Holly watched helplessly as the assailant bludgeoned Chris to death with a 50-pound rock. The killer then turned to Holly, stabbing her in the neck, raping her, and beating her over the head and face with a board until she was unconscious. Leaving her for dead, the attacker fled the scene.

After a while, Holly regained consciousness and miraculously managed to walk barefoot and coated in blood to a nearby house for help. From there, Holly was rushed to the University of Kentucky Medical Center where she stayed for five days being treated for multiple cuts and gashes, a broken eye socket, and a fractured jaw. Much worse than the physical harm was the emotional and psychological devastation that Holly endured after the attack. Holly's memoir moves from a detailed account of the night she and Chris were attacked by the tracks, through her heartbreaking journey of grief and healing as she comes to terms with what happened.

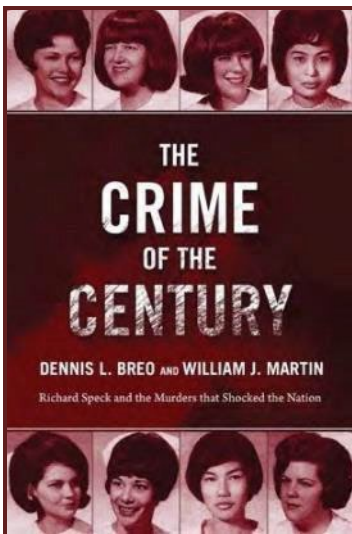
For two years after the attack, Lexington police have no idea who or where Holly's attacker is. **At the story's midpoint, the assailant is revealed to be a serial killer who has murdered multiple people in several states.** Given that his victims are all discovered a short distance from train tracks, the media nicknames him the **Railroad Killer**.

His best-known alias at the time was Rafael Resendez-Ramirez, an illegal immigrant from Mexico with a mile-long rap sheet dating back to when he was 16 years old. At the height of a national manhunt, Resendez- Ramirez is added to the FBI's Ten Most Wanted list, right between Osama Bin Laden and followed shortly after by Whitey Bulger. After he is finally apprehended by a fiercely determined Texas Ranger, the killer's actual name turns out to be **Angel Maturing Resendiz**. Resendiz is brought to justice, and Holly bravely testifies against him during the punishment phase of his trial in Houston, Texas. The jury recommends the death penalty, and the notorious Railroad Killer is finally executed in 2006.

Holly's story doesn't end with Resendiz's death, however. Not long after her attacker's arrest, Holly begins speaking to various groups to tell her story, offer safety tips, train law enforcement, and much more. She also works with a local police detective for several years to establish **Holly's House** in her hometown, Evansville, Indiana. Holly's House offers a safe and nurturing space for forensic interviews, services and support for victims, and community outreach and education programs.

Her Christian faith brought her strength throughout the healing process, and she believes she was given a second chance at life for a reason. Since her ordeal, Holly has embraced every opportunity to serve others, especially those who have endured rape and other violent crimes. Holly's story is ultimately inspiring and redemptive as she demonstrates that even in the face of one's worst nightmare come true, life can still be good, meaningful, and joyous. www.HollyKDunn.com

I SURVIVED A SERIAL KILLER: <https://youtu.be/s8k3q5uhT3k>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWPiZ47PQIo&t=896s>



THE CRIME OF THE CENTURY

Richard Speck and the Murders That Shocked a Nation

By Dennis L. Breo and William J. Martin
Skyhorse

A detective cuts the police tape, and five men enter the scene of the crime, a small, boxy, two-story townhouse on the south side of Chicago. Here, some 13 days earlier, Richard Franklin Speck, a drifter from Dallas, had broken into the townhouse, which served as a dorm for six American nursing students and three Filipino exchange nurses, and savagely stabbed, strangled, and killed eight young women in a violent sexual rampage. One nurse, the tiny Corazon

Amurao, miraculously survived by hiding under a bed behind a hanging blanket. Cora's eyewitness description and a match of fingerprints left on a bedroom door had identified Speck as the killer.

Now, as the five men step around congealed blood on the floors of the upstairs bedrooms, Speck's killing fields, they vow to bring the killer to justice. Team Speck, as the prosecutors will come to be known, are led by Bill Martin, 29, the father of four, including two young daughters. Earlier this day, Martin had locked in his office safe a priceless piece of evidence – 22 pages of handwritten notes and townhouse diagrams provided by a Filipino translator who had interviewed Cora in her native Tagalog. It tells Martin exactly how Speck, who had been whiling away the hours in a seaman's hiring hall across the street from the townhouse, had carried out his barbaric attack.

Martin, charged with prosecuting Chicago's most-famous killer since Al Capone, hardens his heart and steels himself for the hard work ahead. He tells his colleagues: "If we win this case, nobody will ever remember us; if we lose it, nobody will ever forget us."

As the 14-hour days blur into months, the young prosecutor has one overriding concern—protecting the emotional and psychological health of his star witness. Only three months removed from a rural hamlet in the Philippines, Cora has survived a night of unimaginable evil and could easily repress her terrifying memories. While Speck was raping his final victim, the horrified Cora was only a few feet away, under a bunk bed, eyes closed and head pressed against the floor, furiously praying.

After the killer had disappeared into the night, she slowly loosened the bindings on her ankles and wrists, crawled out of her hiding space, walked over the dead bodies of her friends, pushed open a bedroom window, climbed onto a townhouse ledge, and screamed for 20 minutes: "They are all dead! Oh, my God, they are all dead!"

Martin knows he must protect the fragile Cora, or his case may be lost. Reporters want interviews about her story of survival and major magazines are offering to pay a lot of money for that story, which would prejudice the State's case; the hospital wants her to return to work, but she is afraid she may make mistakes; the Philippine consulate wants to control her actions, but she wants to make her own decisions. Demonstrating remarkable integrity, Cora, who comes from a very poor family, turns down all offers of paid interviews and firmly states that she wants only "to honor the memory of my friends."

In the first of many bold moves, Martin decides he must "kidnap" Cora and her mother and cousin,

who have been flown to Chicago from the Philippines by an American magazine and place them in the witness protection program under 24/7 police protection at an undisclosed location. As the months pass, Cora puts her trust in her well-chosen police bodyguards, “Jacques” and “Jeem,” as she calls Jack Wallenda and Jim Georgalas, and also in Martin, who brings his young children to splash around in a swimming pool with the Amurao clan.

Four months will pass before Martin begins to prepare Cora to testify. With pen and legal notepad before him, Martin is afraid he may blunder in his questioning and cause Cora to repress her memories. But with a Pepsi-Cola in hand (“I just drink Pepsi,” she says), Cora is composed and unflinching as she explains and diagrams how Speck moved the nurses about the townhouse bedrooms. She is determined to help Martin avenge the murder of her friends.

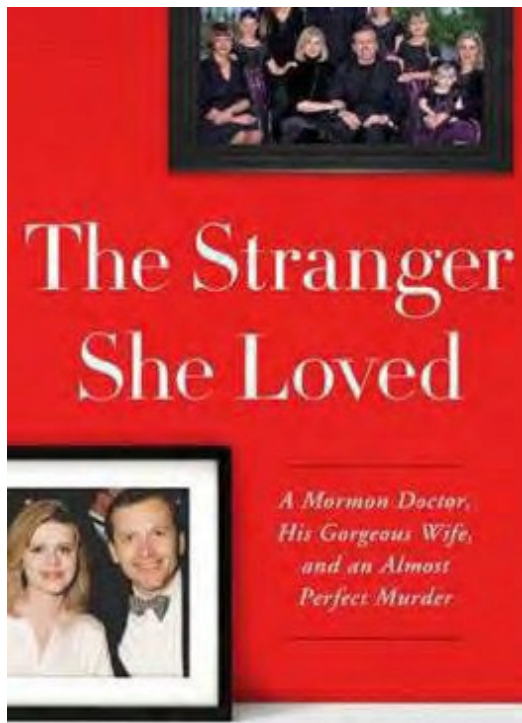
The painstaking preparation will pay off in April 1967, when Cora is reunited with Speck in a court of law. One veteran criminal reporter will describe her as “as a blend of steel and lace” and the “best trial witness I have ever seen.” Martin will have little need for his notes as he and Cora settle into a grooved routine in which Martin perfectly pitches a question and Cora perfectly throws back the answer. It is like a game of catch and both are throwing strikes. Before answering, Cora looks at Martin and then speaks directly to the jurors on her right. Using a scale model of the townhouse built by the FBI and figurines to represent the nurses, Cora explains and demonstrates to the astounded jurors precisely how the killer carried out his night of horrors. Asked by Martin if the killer is in the courtroom, Cora steps down from the witness chair, walks to within a foot of Speck, points at his pockmarked face and vacant stare, and declares in an unwavering voice: “This is the man!”

The jurors require only **49 minutes** to return a death sentence.

THE STRANGER SHE LOVED

By NYT Bestselling author Shanna Hogan

St. Martin's Press



SHANNA HOGAN

Michele MacNeill lay slumped, limp and lifeless folded inside the drained bathtub. Her husband Martin—clad in a white lab coat—hovered above the tub, wailing for help.

It was late on the morning of April 11, 2007, and Michelle, a 50-year-old former beauty queen and mother of eight, was dead inside the master bathroom of her Pleasant Grove, Utah home. She had just undergone a full-face lift eight days prior. At the hospital as his wife of 30-years was pronounced dead, Dr. Martin MacNeill—a practicing physician, lawyer, and Mormon bishop—wept dramatically. Michele's death was quickly ruled natural by the medical examiner due to an unknown heart arrhythmia. Dr. MacNeill appeared every bit the grieving widower.

Nothing about Dr. MacNeill was as it seemed. It would take six long years and the unrelenting dedication of Michele's children to solve the mystery of her death, exposing a complex web of lies, betrayal and murder. Beneath the carefully concocted façade of a family man, Dr. MacNeill was a cunning manipulator with a disturbing double identity. He used his position as a doctor to gain access to other women and used his title as attorney to get around the law.

The unraveling of Dr. MacNeill's lies began soon after Michele's surgery, which he had persuaded his wife to undergo. As she recovered, a disturbingly groggy Michele turned to her older daughter Alexis and said, "In case anything happens to me, make sure it was not your dad. "Michele had suspected her husband of an affair and believed he intended to kill her.

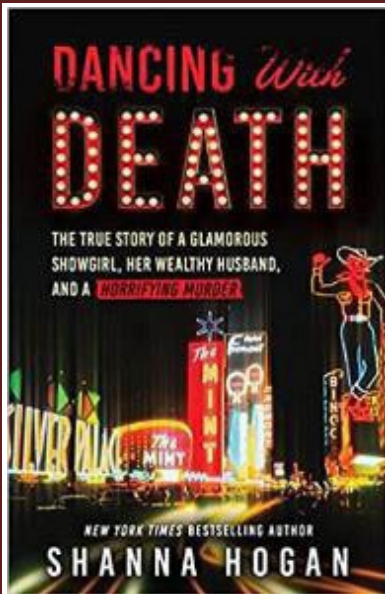


Days after his wife's funeral, Dr. MacNeill hired his mistress, Gypsy Willis, to be the live-in nanny—much to the chagrin of his children. Both Dr. MacNeill and Gypsy neglected the MacNeill children and eventually lost custody. In the summer of 2007, they abandoned his teenage, adopted daughter in her homeland of the Ukraine. He then used the girl's Social Security number to give his mistress a new identity and conceal his own massive debts.

As Dr. MacNeill's children began to suspect their father of murder, they conducted their own investigations, revealing his multiple affairs, a criminal record for forgery and falsified transcripts proving he was never qualified as a doctor.



Toxicology tests later proved Michele was dosed with a combination of drugs that would have left her helpless to defend for her herself. In 2013, Dr. Martin MacNeill was convicted murdering his wife by pressing her to get plastic surgery, drugging her and drowning her in the bathtub. As the prosecutor would say in court, "it was an almost perfect murder." He later committed suicide in prison. See: www.ShannaHogan.com



DANCING WITH DEATH

The True Story of a Glamorous Showgirl, Her Wealthy Husband,
and a Horrifying Murder

By Shanna Hogan St. Martin's Press/Diversion

October 23, 2004. The crime scene is gruesome. On the outskirts of the Phoenix desert detectives discover a headless, limbless torso entombed inside a large plastic box, stewing in blood and grim. Matching a set of car keys found with the victim, detectives quickly identify the torso in the box as Jay Michael Orbin.

Flash back to 20 years prior where a young Jay Orbin is sipping a beer at a strip club. Jay is a budding art dealer who travels two weeks a month on business trips. He is also a playboy with an affinity for strippers. When a beguiling blonde stripper named Marjorie Marqui sensually cavorts on stage, Jay falls head over heels. After weeks of seducing her with money and gifts they begin dating and Marjorie even moves to his house. After one embarrassing sexual encounter, Marjorie

leaves Jay and returns to her home state of Florida.

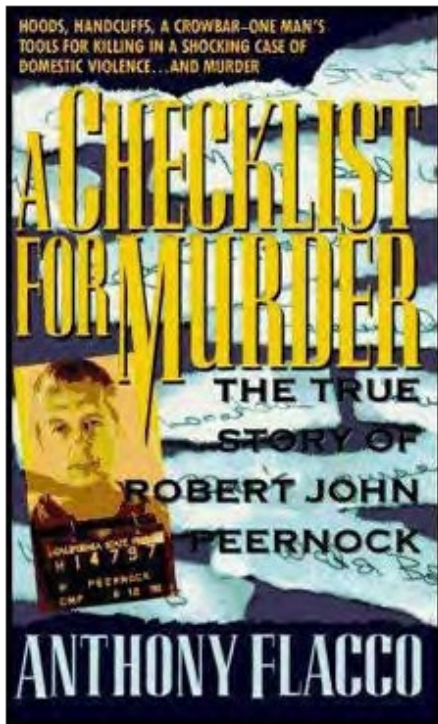
Eight years later, Jay has not forgotten about Marjorie and still refers to her as the “love of his life.” Then, in 1995, on a business trip to Las Vegas, Jay sees Marjorie’s face on a billboard advertising a topless dance show. Jay is in awe. He had been searching for her for years. He finds her number in the phone book and calls her. They meet for drinks where Marjorie tells Jay about her life over the past 10 years. After leaving Phoenix, Marjorie returned to her home state of Florida and hooked up with a multi-millionaire playboy named Michael J. Peter, who is known throughout Florida as the “strip club king.” While with Michael, Marjorie starred in his burlesque-style dance troupe called the “Platinum Dolls.” Michael and Marjorie had a romantic relationship, and she was involved in many of his endeavors, starring in his movies and music videos including a cameo in the Motley Cru video “Girls, Girls, Girls.” Marjorie was even featured with Michael in an episode of *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*, about his life of opulence. When speaking with Jay, Marjorie does leave out many mysterious details about her past, which would be revealed later in the story.

Jay and Marjorie rekindle their relationship and he quickly proposes marriage. Marjorie, however, turns him down. But when Marjorie tells him of her one regret—that she is infertile and can never be a mom—they make a deal. If Marjorie marries him, Jay promised to pay for fertility treatments. The couple agrees to an arrangement where if Marjorie is not pregnant in two years she will leave. They elope in Vegas and Marjorie moves with him to Phoenix, soon giving birth to a son named Noah. While Jay’s family and friends have mixed opinions about Marjorie, their relationship seems to work and over the next eight years they live together as a seemingly happy family. Then, on September 8, 2004, Jay’s 45th birthday, he fails to return home from a business trip. Over the next few weeks, the family becomes increasingly concerned. Jay’s older brother Jake comes down from San Diego to search for his brother. The family, in particular Jake, will be instrumental in uncovering Marjorie’s mysterious past. While Marjorie tells the family that Jay is expected any day, Jake convinces Marjorie to report him missing. With missing persons detectives Marjorie seems unconcerned and evasive. It’s clear to them that she’s hiding something.

During one phone call with Detective Jan Butcher, Marjorie refuses to take a lie detector test. In the background a male voice pipes up in the background telling Marjorie not to cooperate. Suspicious, Detective Butcher orders a search warrant on the house and discovers that Marjorie has been having an affair with a 60-year-old body builder named Larry Weisberg, who attacks SWAT officers and is Tasered inside Marjorie’s house. That night Jay’s brother Jake goes to the house to check on Noah and hears as Marjorie tells detectives a shocking secret—she and Jay are not actually married. They had divorced eight years prior because Marjorie had a tax lien in her name. No one, not even Jay’s parents, knew of the divorce. Because Marjorie was not Jay’s wife, she would not be entitled to his assets in a divorce. She is however, the main beneficiary on his millionaire dollar life insurance payouts.

Over the next month, Jake hires a private detective to learn more about Marjorie. He soon discovers that Marjorie is not who she has claimed to be. Marjorie had been married and divorced seven times and has a petty criminal record and links to mob ties through her ex, Michael J. Peter. The family later learns that Marjorie had been suspected of egregious acts at her son’s karate studio, including harassing other parents. She had even been dying her eight-year-old son’s hair blonde to match hers since he was just a few months old. Then, on October 23, 2004, more than a month after he went missing, a dismembered chunk of Jay’s torso is discovered in the Phoenix desert. Homicide detectives quickly put together a case against Marjorie and her boyfriend Larry Weisberg. After discovering video of Marjorie buying the Rubbermaid tub the torso was discovered in, an arrest is made. No evidence is ever found on Larry Weisberg and he is later offered immunity. On September 21, 2009, Marjorie is convicted on first degree murder and sentenced in life without the possibility of parole.

For more about Shanna, see www.ShannaHogan.com



A CHECKLIST FOR MURDER

By Anthony Flacco

Penguin Random House/Diversion Books

Screenplay available

Stark reality and rampant paranoia blend and blur in this deep psychological thriller. The story opens as 18-year-old Natasha Peernock is found lying half dead in the wreckage of a burning car, only a few feet from her mother's body. Both women have been severely beaten with a tire iron, the only difference being that Natasha barely survives. In the hospital, we see from her POV while she tells a tale of being kidnapped by her own father, Robert Peernock, who blindfolded, bound, and tortured her for nearly 11 hours while Daddy waited for Mommy to come home. Natasha says that he then beat her mother to death and loaded both of them into the car and rigged it to crash.

Robert Peernock produces an alibi *and* a compelling alternate theory of this crime—he is a computer programmer working for the State of California, who claims to have discovered government corruption in the awarding of state contracts. He has been a victim of constant harassment because of his whistle-blowing activities. As a point of proven fact, Peernock has already won numerous lawsuits against the organizations he has targeted, and he claims to be on the verge of releasing a detailed book that traces government corruption from office to office, all the way up to the Governor of State of California.

He protests that he is being framed. His daughter was drugged and brainwashed, and then the murder was set up to implicate him—all in order to destroy his credibility. His opponents would then be safe from the effects of his book, even if he ever got it published.

Police reject Robert Peernock's alibi. They want him to come in for another interview. He flees town. Even so, he continues to communicate with police, via his attorney. He reveals that he is afraid to return, because the police work for the same forces that Peernock is trying to expose. He is sure that he will become a "jailhouse suicide" if he surrenders. So, in a desperate effort to hide from them, he gets plastic surgery in Las Vegas and returns to L.A. in secret, where his girlfriend helps him avoid capture for months. He fails to assist in his daughter's recovery or attend his wife's funeral.

Eventually, Detective Steve Fisk puts in enough overtime to track him down and Assistant District Attorney Craig Richman begins to look for holes in Peernock's alibi. But... when civil attorney Victoria Doom enters the case *pro bono* to help shattered Natasha get put her life back together, she discovers a host of contrasting details and helps to prove that Peernock has committed a near-perfect murder. The question regards motive. Before the crimes, he had already been granted his wife's permission for a divorce—and even after splitting their estate, they would both be very well off. So why would he attack his own daughter? Natasha herself talked about how she used to be the apple of her father's eye. Young Natasha suffers violent recurring nightmares about the crime—at the same time, her jailed father suffers from nightmares about being set up and convicted for murder. It is only because of Victoria Doom's after-hours passion for this case that the truth finally comes out: Robert Peernock indeed would have committed the perfect murder if only he had not been so obsessive about keeping his detailed checklist for murder.

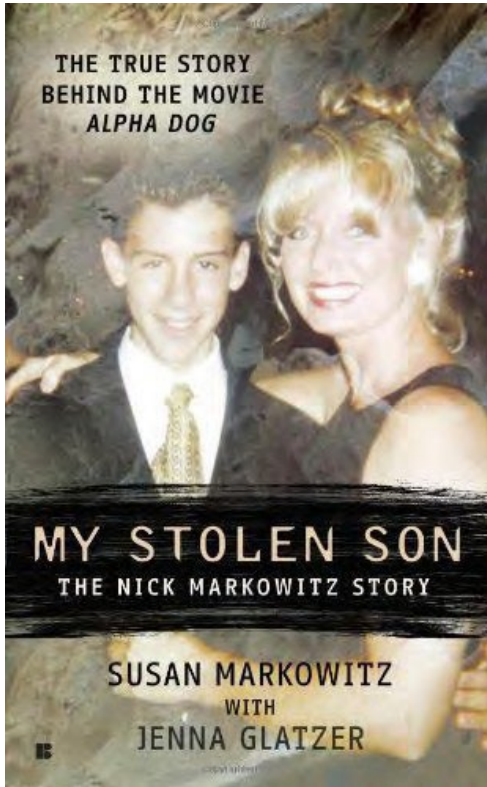
Victoria Doom reveals that Peernock's fight against the state drove his paranoia out of control, until he became convinced that both his ex-wife and his daughter had been enlisted in the state's clandestine struggle to silence him. After a fierce murder trial filled with screaming outbursts—and a bound and gagged defendant in the courtroom—Robert Peernock's jury finds him guilty of 1st Degree Murder along with a host of accompanying crimes.

Later, while Doom helps Natasha to quietly get on with her life in an out-of-state location, word comes from the police that Peernock is in jail trying to hire a killer to go after his daughter and finish the job on her. He is working at this task with the relentless patience of an obsessive madman. The story ends with Peernock in his solitary cell, hand drawing the new home page for his website: It shows a picture of him bound and gagged in court during his trial. The caption cries: "Innocent whistle-blower!" For the text underneath, he writes: "This is the story of an innocent man..." and smiles as he reads back over his handiwork.

UPDATE: ROBERT PEERNOCK DIED IN PRISON FROM COVID IN APRIL, 2021

For more about Anthony, see www.AnthonyFlacco.com

Watch 1/14/2023 <https://www.oxygen.com/accident-suicide-or-murder/season-4/videos/robert-peernock-reveals-a-twist-in-his-wifes-case>



MY STOLEN SON

The Nick Markowitz Story

By Susan Markowitz
Penguin Random House

* Starred Review from Publishers Weekly

This poignant memoir tells the painful story of a brutal slaying that captured national attention when it became the basis of the 2007 drama *Alpha Dog*. In the summer of 2000, Susan Markowitz's 15-year-old son, Nicholas, was kidnapped and murdered by a local drug dealer in revenge for his brother's debts. Nicholas's death, the ensuing trials of his killers, and the international manhunt for a fourth suspect nearly tore his family apart and sent his mother on a decade-long quest for justice and sanity. Markowitz writes with candor about her grief-induced alcoholism and suicide attempts as well as the troubles that shook her family's foundation long before Nicholas's death. Her unflinching honesty makes this a deeply powerful story that will move fans of the film and anyone grieving a loved one's death by homicide or suicide.

On the morning of August 6, 2000, fifteen-year-old Nicholas Markowitz - knowing he was in trouble with his parents - snuck out of the house. He never came home. One week later, authorities arrived on Susan's doorstep with devastating news: her son had been found dead. Days earlier, a 20-year-old drug dealer, Jesse James Hollywood, and 3 of his accomplices, had kidnapped the teenager in broad daylight as revenge for a drug-related debt owed by Nick's half-brother. They later murdered the innocent boy in cold blood and buried him in a shallow grave. Hollywood fled to Brazil as a fugitive and became the youngest man ever on the FBI's top ten "Most Wanted" list. It would be nearly a decade before he was brought to justice.

Initially, Susan had thought only about getting justice for her son. But along the way, she rediscovered her own will to live, and promised to honor her beloved son's memory by making sure something positive came from the pain he had to endure. **MY STOLEN SON** is the gripping account of one mother's relentless 9-year fight to bring her son's killer to justice, and to rebuild a family shattered by an unconscionable crime.

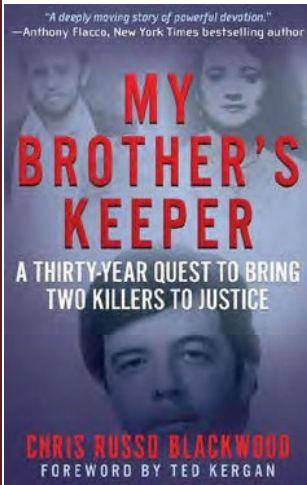


For more see: www.NicholasMarkowitz.com or www.MyStolenSon.com

MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

By Chris Blackwood

Wild Blue Press



On the night of Gary Kergan's murder, he was a confidant, charismatic 40-year-old on the verge of a break-through business deal for himself and younger brother Ted. He had called Ted with the news that the funding they sought for their franchise partnership was granted; the brothers were soon going to own dozens of franchise locations. This was the level of success they had chased together for years. On the phone call, Gary told Ted he was on his way over, so the elated pair could celebrate this great news together. Ted settled on his sofa and waited for the sounds of his brother's steps on the front porch. For so many years, the brothers had functioned as a duo in business ventures, beginning with mutual paper routes as teenagers. Ted was four years younger and looked up to his brother, while Gary, a big man at six feet, five inches tall, had always been Ted's protector. Everyone who knew the Kergan brothers realized they had a special closeness, even if people were unaware it was built on escaping the poverty of their childhoods together. When they spoke on the phone, they used a special kind of coded language that often-made sense only to them. Ted fell asleep waiting. Gary never arrived.

It would later be learned the celebratory mood had caused Gary's good judgment to fail him. He drove to a North Baton Rouge strip bar to meet up with Leila Mulla, a young dancer there. They later left the bar together and were seen entering her apartment just blocks away. But Leila already had a boyfriend. He was hiding inside the apartment with a heavy blunt instrument in his hand, waiting for her to bring home a victim with a fat wallet. And with that, Gary disappeared into the memories of those who loved him.

The following day, his late-model Eldorado turned up in suburban New Orleans, an hour's drive east of the dancer's apartment. When police popped open the trunk, they found it soaked with a large pool of blood, evidence of such great blood loss that the victim's survival was unlikely. As evidence in a murder case, that much blood legally served as a stand-in for the body itself as proof of death. The authorities called it a "body of blood."

Ted mobilized a search for his brother and quickly came across the name of Leila Mulla, a 19-year-old Kent, Ohio high school honor student and daughter of a prominent Syrian physician. Leila had run away from drug rehab and ended up homeless in New Orleans. There she had met Ronald Dunnagan, a magician and drifter in his thirties.

Police investigated her and her boyfriend, but no solid evidence was found. And yet Ted did not doubt their guilt.

Leila chronicled her sex trade tricks and her earnings in several diaries, and one of them included this damning entry: "Hit Gary next time," and a reference to the fact that Gary owned a chain of South Louisiana Sonic restaurants. Ted didn't doubt their guilt. The question was one of proof.

After being extradited to Baton Rouge, Leila and Ron spent several months in East Baton Rouge Parish Prison. When the investigation failed to turn up Gary's body, the grifter pair was released and went their separate ways.

But Ted Kergan remains convinced the couple was guilty and refused to hold a memorial service for his brother until he found the truth. This began his decades-long investigation and pursuit of his brother's killers. After years of private detective work, DNA science finally caught up with the paltry evidence in Gary's death. The Baton Rouge police department re-opened the case and established new DNA evidence which triggered Leila's and Ron's arrest in December of 2012. It was only brother Ted's persistence that brought about their conviction. The killers would have done the perfect murder, if not for the bond between the Kergan brothers. Ted Kergan was never going to walk away from this.

The twists and turns of Ted Kergan's investigation read like a crime novel but reflect one man's quiet determination to bring justice for a brother who had always been his protector in life. He repeatedly comes oh-so-close to bringing Leila and Ron to justice, only to see their experienced criminal attitudes allow them to bluff their way past the law. Sometimes it seems as if the stars are lined up to help them – and the years tick by. This real-life drama is a compelling tale driven by the victim's brother who obsessively seeks the truth, spending a fortune in the process. Even though Gary's body was never recovered, the body of blood in his car was enough for the conviction. Ted lived to see the killers face the consequences of their murderous acts, and to know they were both aware of his role in chasing them down after a manhunt spanning three decades. www.mybrotherskeeperbook.com

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gp6dNpk_xjQ

<https://crimewatchdaily.com/2018/02/09/sonic-garys-brother-keeps-cold-case-alive-long-enough-to-help-solve-it-after-30-years/>



DADDY'S LITTLE SECRET

By Denise Wallace

WildBlue Press

Screenplay Available

Denise Wallace had spent years hiding deadly secrets about her enigmatic father, Wesley Wallace. Wes was a trusted security guard of the Ritz Carlton Palm Beach, who was supposed to protect those who found themselves in his care. But a closer look into his brutal murder revealed a split personality -- one that his daughter may have seen.

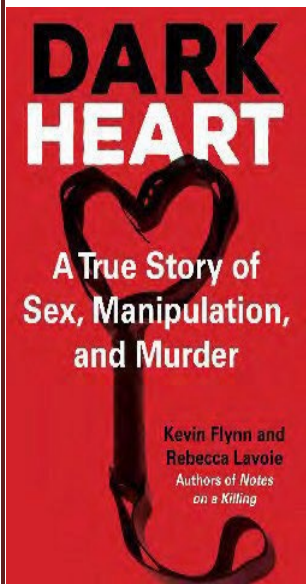
The detectives persuaded Denise to assist them in the capture of her father's killer by taking them on a series of outings that would be far from away from the glitz of Palm Beach. The trail would lead them to the murky streets of Dixie Highway, where it was discovered that Wes spent much of his free time. It was there that Wes picked up Travis Jones, an eighteen-year-old homeless man who was possibly addicted to crack cocaine. Wes had lured Travis into his car that night with the promise of money in exchange for homosexual favors, but never planned to make good on the deal.

Instead, he had tried to force Travis to be a participant in a violent sex game where Daddy was going to get what he wanted -- even if it killed him. A terrorized Travis had then engaged in a frenzied attempt to cover up the crime. The detectives would find an overflowing bathtub filled with bleach-smelling water, bloody sheets, and a gold lamp base along with items missing from Wes' apartment.

But where was the killer? Travis had gotten on a bus and left town until the one friend he told about the murder decided to turn on him. The details of the crime would be recanted by Travis himself on the stand, which would cause Denise to remember something that had happened long ago. Her father had a history of collecting sex slaves. Would telling his secret to the prosecutor be enough to save Travis from the death penalty? Even from the grave Wes' ominous weight could still be felt by his daughter and the killer.

For more about Denise see www.DeniseWallaceAuthor.com

<http://truecrimepage.com/denise-wallace-confronts-her-slain-fathers-double-life-in-daddys-little-secret/>



DARK HEART

A True Story of Sex, Manipulation, and Murder

By Kevin Flynn & Rebecca Lavoie

Penguin Random House

In this tale of *The Loft* meets *Fifty Shades of Grey*, a beautiful co-ed goes missing after being lured to the apartment of a couple seeking a partner for a kinky threesome. Was it a sex act gone wrong or something more sinister?

Though 19-year-old **Lizzi Marriott** said she'd be home before midnight, the marine biology student never arrived. She'd said she was on her way to visit her new friends, Kat and Seth. What she didn't know was the real reason the couple invited her over.

To the outside world, 18-year-old **Kat McDonough** and 30-year-old **Seth Mazzaglia** were a normal couple who enjoyed acting, video games, and Dungeons and Dragons. Seth convinced the impressionable Kat their role-playing alter egos were real, spirits from their "past lives" who could control their present. Seth cautioned that he was pursued by an otherworldly "Darkness," a power that would overtake him unless Kat did what he said. From there, Seth led the much-younger woman into the world of extreme bondage, knife play, masochism, threesomes, and erotic asphyxiation.

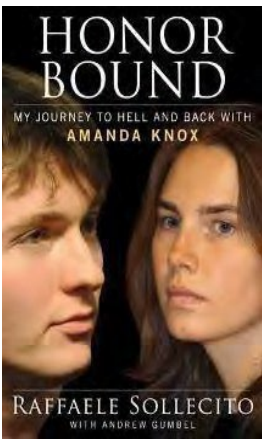


Seth turned Kat literally into his sexual slave, demanding all her master's needs be unquestionably met. When Kat left for two weeks to work as a summer camp counselor, he demanded she find him a "replacement" to satisfy his pleasures. When she failed, the master inflicted punishment on his slave: days of bondage and rough sex. He said the punishment would continue until she found him a friend who would "die by orgasm" in front of her.

When Lizzi Marriott vanished, police traced her last known location to Seth and Kat's apartment. After hours of interrogation, Seth confessed Lizzi died during a BDSM session in which he accidentally choked her with a rope. He disposed of her naked body in a swift river which dumped into the Atlantic Ocean. Later, in an effort to free her arrested boyfriend, Kat told defense lawyers the girl accidentally died of smothering when she sat on Lizzi's face. Authorities were never able to recover Lizzi's body, losing the most important piece of evidence in the case. Prosecutors desperately needed Kat's eyewitness account to convict Seth. After Kat was arrested on witness tampering charges, they cut a deal for her testimony.

In court, Kat told what really happened that night. After playing a flirty game of strip poker, Lizzi rebuffed Seth's advances and an invitation to join the couple in bed. The master, unaccustomed to hearing "no" in his own bedroom, strangled Lizzi from behind with a rope used for bondage. Under cover of darkness, both Seth and Kat dumped Lizzi's body into the river and abandoned her car. Kat, however, was a troublesome witness. She had lied many times to protect Seth – lies the defense used against her. At trial, they confronted her with her beliefs in spirits and dragons and her own kinky predilections. Defense attorneys accused Kat of killing Lizzi and setting Seth up to take the fall. It would be up to a jury to decide whom they believed most.

See: www.AuthorKevinFlynn.com



HONOR BOUND:

My Journey to Hell and Back with Amanda Knox

By Raffaele Sollecito with Andrew Gumbel

Gallery Books/Simon and Schuster

Available scripted treatment for six-part limited series

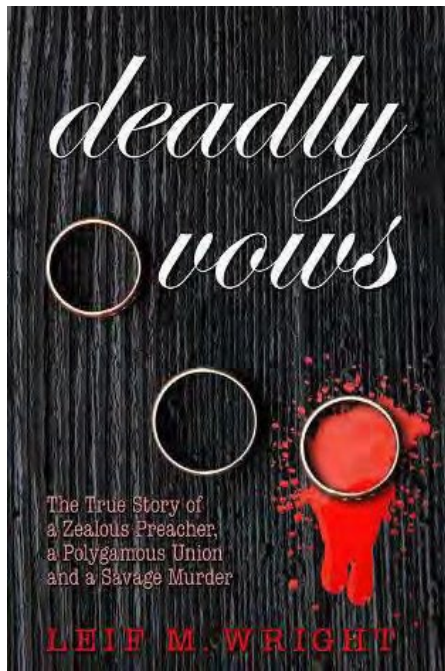
The story of Raffaele Sollecito is a natural for the movies. It is both a thriller and a love story. Its protagonists are young, attractive and innocent. Its antagonists are compelling, Machiavellian, and marvelously complex. It has a natural three-act structure: Raffaele and Amanda Knox meeting and falling in love; their arrest and incarceration; and their struggle—seemingly impossible at first, but ultimately successful—for vindication and freedom.

As in the best love stories, there is nothing static or simple about the relationship between the lovers. Raffaele would most likely have been dumped and left heartbroken if the murder of Meredith Kercher had not intervened. He and Amanda then formed an extraordinary bond, even though they had no physical contact during the four years of their incarceration. Over and over, Raffaele came under pressure from the prosecution, from his own lawyers and from his family to change his testimony and get himself off the hook. All he needed to say was that he didn't know whether Amanda left his house on the night of the murder. But he refused to say it, because that would have meant betraying Amanda and leaving her to swing in the wind. He knew she had not left his house, because she did not have his key and would have needed to be buzzed back in. He never wavered on this point. He had a keen sense of justice, but also a heart carried away by his infatuation.

Beyond Raffaele's prison cell was a scheming and conniving public prosecutor determined to prove that the sexually uninhibited Amanda was some sort of witch or devil; a complex game of legal brinkmanship in which the prosecution and defense were both jockeying for maximum advantage; Raffaele's own family, who worked tirelessly to demolish the evidence against him but also fought bitterly with him because they felt he was gratuitously throwing his life away for an American exchange student who didn't care that much about him.

A movie adaptation of this story would be fast-paced, full of surprises even for viewers who followed the case on television or in the newspapers, visually compelling (the beauties of Umbria and the Apulia coast contrasting with the cold gray of Raffaele's prison cell) and crammed with great characters:

- Raffaele's passionate but overbearing father;
- his sweet-natured sister punished at every turn for the charges leveled at her brother;
- the public prosecutor, Giacomo Mignini, who has all the makings of a memorable screen villain, plus:
- the craven, weak lower court judge who convicted Raffaele and Amanda;
- Raffaele's talented but realistic legal team, who tried to short-circuit the system but ended up working painstakingly to dismantle the case against him piece by piece;
- a clutch of improbable and wildly unreliable eyewitnesses and expert consultants, each of whom could be a terrific cameo; and, of course,
- Amanda and Raffaele themselves—appealing, mismatched, desperately unlucky and ultimately, if improbably, heroic.



DEADLY VOWS: **The True Story of a Zealous Preacher, a Polygamous Union and a Savage Murder**

By Leif M. Wright
New Horizon Press

A lone Palo Verde tree stands out defiantly against the Arizona desert, miles from anything else. Well, except for the strange pile of volcanic stones under it. What a jogger discovers underneath those stones—the violently desecrated corpse of a woman who had been brutally stabbed, then dismembered and disfigured—leads to one of the strangest cases detectives and medical examiners have ever seen.

In beautiful San Diego, handsome, engaging and popular preacher Sean Goff is telling everyone who will listen that his second wife, Joy—the one who had been living with him, his first wife and the trio's three kids—simply tired of domestic life and pulled up roots to wander around Europe with an old flame, leaving her children and everything else behind.

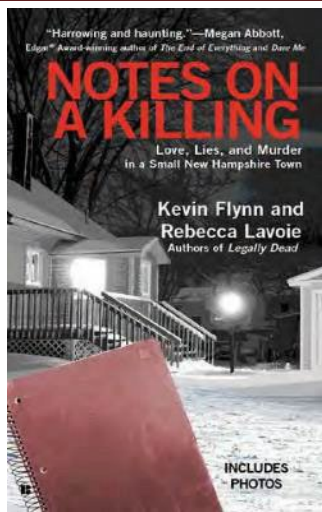
Joy's friends keep pushing Sean for answers, until they start receiving emails from Joy telling them to chill out and leave her alone. Except the emails don't really sound like the Joy they knew. And leaving her kids behind definitely doesn't sound like her. So, they call police, who send a missing persons detective to talk to Sean.

Back in Arizona, medical examiners unravel the horrific crime that had been perpetrated on the woman found underneath the tree: she had been stabbed at least a dozen times in the chest—at some point so violently that her bones reveal injuries they've never seen before. Her fingertips have been sawed off and disposed of somewhere else. Her teeth have been sawed completely from her head. Her face has been bashed in. Some killer knew exactly what police would be looking for and had gone out of his way to make sure they wouldn't find it.

Deadly Vows follows Sean Goff's transformation from wunderkind preacher to cold-blooded manipulator and killer from the perspective of the man who saw it all, his best friend.

Deadly Vows is visceral, visually oriented and captivating for both readers and would be for viewers on film — from the cinematic opening page to the gripping courtroom drama that closes it. Its themes of fringe religion, polygamy and the transformation of a man and his wives demand to be displayed on-screen as both a spectacle and a cautionary tale.

For more about Leif, see www.leifwright.com



NOTES ON A KILLING

By Kevin Flynn & Rebecca Lavoie

Penguin Random House

Sandra Merritt was surprised to get a phone call at work from Edith “Pen” Meyer, her AA confidant. Pen urged Sandy to resume her affair with a married man, reversing the advice she’d given for months. After the call, Pen vanished. Investigators found Pen’s lakefront home empty except for her beloved dog, Fluff.

Sandy and Pen’s boyfriend suspected Ken Carpenter in the disappearance. When Sandy had called off the yearlong affair with the married man - filing a restraining order against him - Carpenter openly blamed her supportive friend Pen for coming between them. During the search, an anonymous caller told police Pen had flown to the islands with a secret lover. Investigators recognized the voice on the phone as Carpenter’s. The caller also suggested detectives check out the pay phone at the local country store. There, investigators discovered a key to Pen’s safe deposit box fastened to the phone with a piece of range duct tape.

Already suspicious of Carpenter, police asked Sandy to record phone calls with her ex-lover. On the tape, Carpenter told Sandy he had “spoken to God” and what happened to Pen would be revealed in a few days.

When police searched Carpenter’s home, they came across a fire pit smoldering in the backyard. Inside the ashes was a pair of eyeglasses missing from Pen’s home, keys to her house and PO Box, and more than a dozen human bone fragments. They also found a roll of orange duct tape, a garrote, and a .22 rifle wrapped in a raincoat. Under a chair, police discovered a notebook with plans for a murder and scripts for Pen to read over the phone to Sandy. After his arrest, Sandy received a contract in the mail turning over all of Pen’s property to her. Pen’s signature had been forged on the paper.

Pen Meyer’s murder was hardly an open-and-shut case for prosecutor Kirsten Wilson. With no usable DNA and a handful of bone fragments, they couldn’t even get a death certificate, let alone a forensic cause of death. Investigators monitored Carpenter’s jailhouse calls with his wife, Cynthia “Harv” Harvey, for clues.

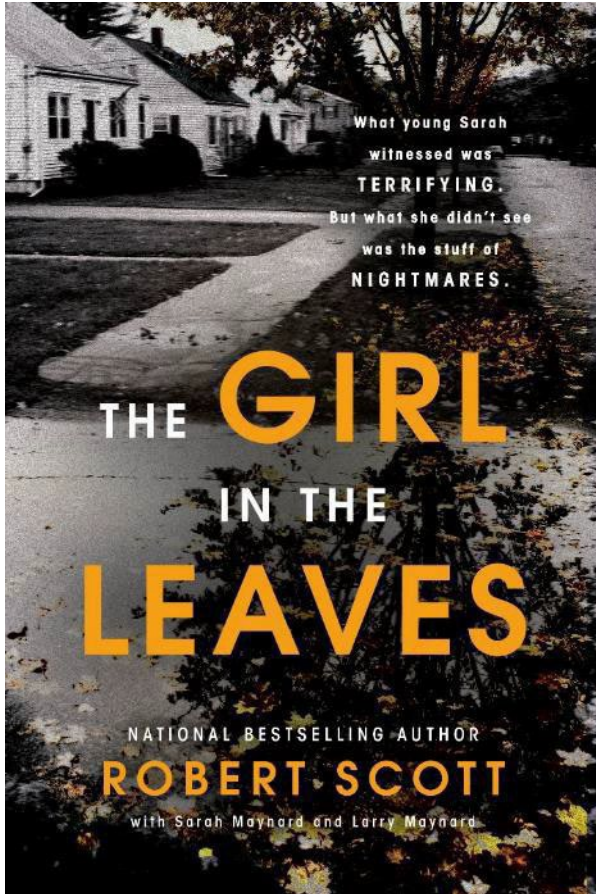
Carpenter consistently maintained his innocence. A nurse herself, Harv grilled him on why so few bones were in the fire pit. Carpenter eventually drew a map to a hollowed stump in their yard. There, Harv found burnt pieces of skull and Pen’s distinctive jewelry. Loyalties torn, Harv called the police. Carpenter doubled down. He claimed a stranger named “Phil Waters” had approached him after the restraining order and said he could take care of his “problem.” Carpenter said he left Pen alone with Phil at his house, and when he returned, the woman was gone, and the fire was burning in his backyard. To prove his claim, he led Harv to more hidden evidence: a letter in Pen’s handwriting talking about the wonderful day they’d spent together – the day Pen disappeared. Police believed Carpenter forced Pen to write it at gunpoint.

Meanwhile, a yearlong effort to reconstruct the skeleton from the various pieces was underway in a forensic pathologist’s lab in neighboring Maine.

When Carpenter’s public defender withdrew because of a conflict, famed defense attorney Mark Sisti took the case. Sisti, whose reputation had stemmed from his defense of Pamela Smart, excelled at raising doubt about how and where the killing could have happened, or whether the charred remains were even Pen Meyer’s. In the courtroom climax, the forensic anthropologist testified she had discovered a bullet hole in the reconstructed skull, answering once and for all how Pen was murdered. After a rousing closing argument re-written from scratch on the penultimate night of the trial, the jury convicted Ken Carpenter in just two hours. For more see: www.AuthorKevinFlynn.com

THE GIRL IN THE LEAVES

By Robert Scott with the cooperation of Sarah & Larry Maynard
Penguin Random House



Sarah and Kody Maynard were just typical kids growing up in idyllic Apple Valley, Ohio. Kody, at the age of 11, was already a superb baseball pitcher, and Sarah was a pretty, happy-go-lucky cheerleader at the age of 13. On November 10, 2010, however, their whole world was overturned in an instant.

As soon as Sarah and Kody walked home from school and entered the front door of their home, they noticed blood on the living room carpet. Suddenly a man came running down the hallway to grab them. Sarah managed to slip by him and dashed to her bedroom, while Kody turned to run out the front door. Before Sarah could call the police, the knife-wielding man grabbed her and tied her up.

Taken to the man's residence, Sarah was forced into his basement and tied upon a bed of leaves in a dark corner. In fact, her assailant was absolutely fixated with trees and leaves. Every room in his house was stuffed with dry leaves.

Meanwhile, Sarah's father, Larry Maynard, was beside himself with worry, not knowing what had happened to his daughter, son Kody or ex-wife Tina. Many law enforcement agencies became involved, including the FBI, but more than any other,

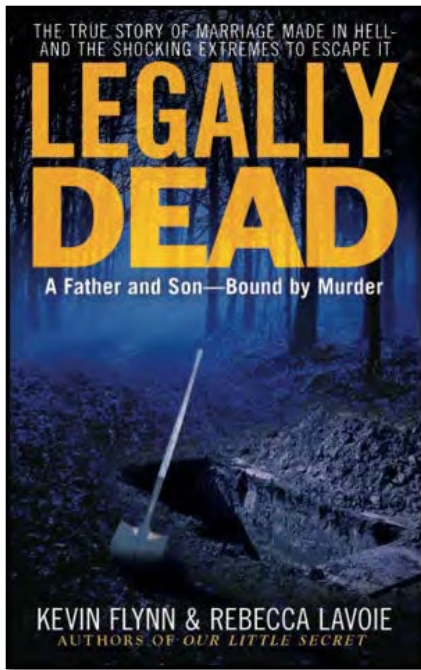
Sarah's fate now depended upon Knox County Sheriff David Barber.

In a race against time, Knox County Sheriff's Office detectives uncovered one vital clue after another about the crime and who might have kidnapped Sarah. And all the while, shackled to a bed of leaves, Sarah survived on one bowl of cold cereal, playing a cat and mouse game of wills with her captor. By now she was certain that her assailant had killed Kody and her mother, and she also believed that she would be next once he tired of her.

Suddenly on November 14, 2010, a SWAT team burst into the man's house and arrested him. Then to their astonishment, they found Sarah alive in a dark corner of the basement, tied to a bed of leaves.

Unfortunately for Tina, Kody and Tina's friend, Stephanie Sprang, Sarah was right about their demise. The perpetrator, 30-year-old Matthew Hoffman of Mount Vernon, Ohio, had killed them and stuffed their bodies into the trunk of a hollow tree. On the one-year anniversary memorial service for Kody, Tina and Stephanie, Sarah spotted Sheriff Barber in the crowd. She well knew who had saved her, and in an exuberance of gratitude, Sarah ran up and gave him a huge hug. This a story of Sarah's courage, Larry Maynard's anguish and the tireless work by the detectives of Knox County in saving Sarah. Both Sarah and Larry Maynard have been on the TODAY show.

For more about the story, see www.tinakodyandsarah.org



LEGALLY DEAD

A Father and Son Bound by Murder

By Kevin Flynn & Rebecca Lavoie
Penguin Random House

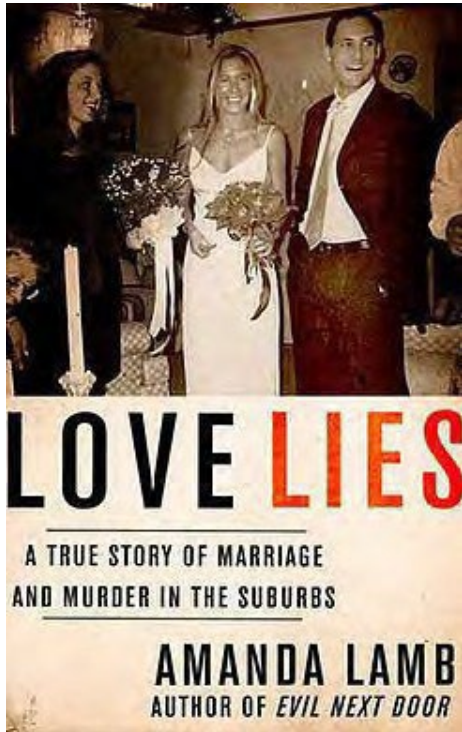
On March 11, 1996, Vicki Bader found an unpleasant delivery in her mailbox - a pipe bomb. It was the latest in a series of threats against the New Hampshire woman and mother of three. Vicki's tires had been slashed, she'd received harassing phone calls, and someone had killed her pet birds by roasting them alive in her oven. Police focused on Vicki's relationship with her ex-husband, a narcissistic attorney named Seth Bader. As the custody battle over their three sons dragged on, Bader enjoyed putting the screws to Vicki. His intimidation was so overwhelming, a psychologically weakened Vicki repeatedly attempted suicide.

Each time she recovered, Bader would push her harder, unmercifully, driving her to the brink. Bader was living in a mansion, using all his legal tricks to keep the children away from their mother. Their oldest boy, 13-year-old Joey, lived like a virtual slave in his house—cooking, cleaning, and caring for his brothers while Bader romanced his sexy new girlfriend, Mary Jean Martin. He lavished Mary Jean with expensive gifts, but it was never enough to secure her love. The money owed to his ex-wife became a wedge in their tumultuous relationship.

In August 1996, Vicki Bader vanished. Seth Bader said their last meeting was an uneventful drop off of their three-year-old son at his house. No one knew where she went afterward. Nearly a year later, police would be led to a body in the deep woods of Maine. Investigators would discover Vicki was murdered by a motley group of thugs organized by Seth Bader. The conspiracy included a pool shark, a wannabe gangster, a gold-digging siren, and—most disturbing of all—the Bader's own son.

Did Seth Bader try to drive Vicki to suicide, then scheme to kill her himself? Or was the lawyer a patsy for a hungry group of con-artists who smelled a big payday? The answers are revealed in *Legally Dead*, the latest compelling true crime story from authors Kevin Flynn and Rebecca Lavoie. This tale of depravity and selfish scheming is one that you will not soon forget.

For more see: www.AuthorKevinFlynn.com



LOVE LIES

By Amanda Lamb

Penguin Random House

Love Lies would translate perfectly from the page to the screen. It has all the elements of a real-life thriller. Nancy and Brad Cooper were Canadians who had discovered the American dream in North Carolina. It was a place where they would raise their two daughters, make new friends and spend their time jogging on picturesque trails. That is *until Nancy disappeared*.

Hundreds searched for her. Finally, a man walking his dog found Nancy facedown, partially clothed in an undeveloped subdivision three miles from her home. Her handsome husband, Brad, said she went jogging and never returned. But in the days and weeks following the discovery of Nancy's body came startling discoveries about the couple's crumbling marriage.

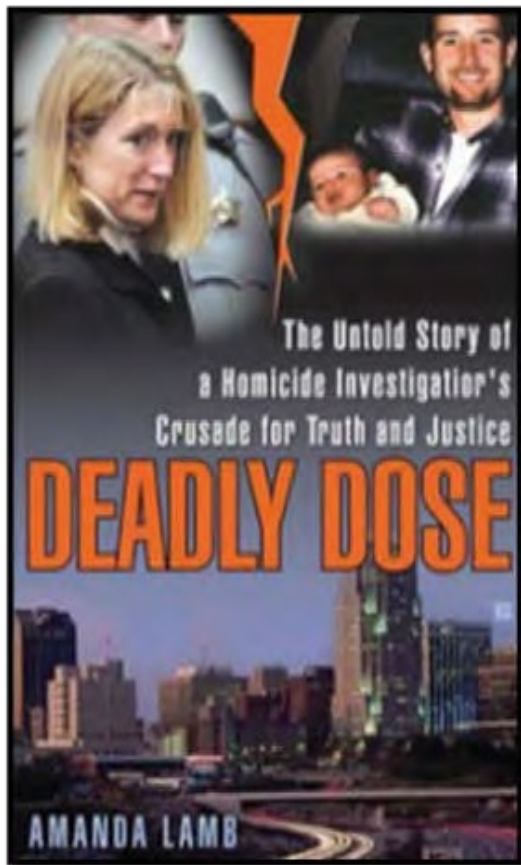
Despite Nancy's reputation as a saucy, strong-willed, gutsy woman, friends and family said Brad had been controlling Nancy's life—cutting her off from money, friends and relatives. It was obvious they were headed for divorce, but the couple had many dark secrets, as did their friends, that were yet to be uncovered—infidelities, alcohol-infused arguments, and betrayals.

Brad Cooper was arrested for his wife's murder—but the investigation didn't end there. Police continued to search for the smoking gun, the one piece of incontrovertible evidence that would seal his fate. They found it in the form of a Google Map search of the site where Nancy's body was dumped. Prosecutors say Brad performed the search on his computer at work 12 hours before his wife disappeared.

After a contentious 10-week trial, Brad Cooper was convicted of killing Nancy. But the controversy over his guilt still lingered. Some believed that he was railroaded by overzealous police and prosecutors in what was a largely circumstantial case. Ultimately, the North Carolina Court of Appeals overturned his conviction ruling the trial court judge had made several mistakes. But there would not be another trial—Brad cut a deal with the state. He admitted to second degree murder in return for a shorter sentence. He is scheduled to be released from prison in 2020.

Love Lies would be a perfect vehicle for film because it exposes the subtleties of domestic abuse that we can't see against the backdrop of an alleged suburban paradise that turns out to be anything but heavenly.

For more about Amanda, see www.ALambAuthor.com



DEADLY DOSE

The Untold Story of a Homicide Investigator's Crusade for Truth and Justice

By Amanda Lamb
Penguin Random House

Ann Miller wasn't the kind of woman anyone would suspect of being a killer, anyone *except* veteran homicide detective Chris Morgan.

When pediatric AIDS researcher Eric Miller died of an unknown illness at the hospital in Raleigh, North Carolina, his grieving wife came to the police station to give a statement. But almost immediately, Morgan saw something unnerving in the mousy, demure woman who appeared to everyone else to be a victim.

Deadly Dose is an excellent vehicle for film because it documents the investigation of one of the few sociopathic female killers of our times. Ann was a scientist, a mother, a churchgoing woman, not someone who schemed and plotted the demise of her kind and brilliant husband. In the tradition of some of the most famous female killers in history, she used arsenic to take her husband's life.

The main character for the film would be Chris Morgan, the larger-than-life tough-talking cop who refuses to rest until he sees Ann behind bars. For four years, he pursues her as she leaves Raleigh and continues on with her life. He soon discovers that behind the façade, she isn't at all who she pretended to be.

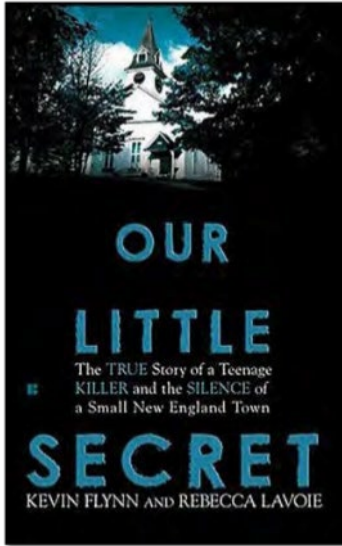
Ann had a series of lovers. One man in particular she called upon to help with her husband's murder. When he fell down on the job, she decided to finish it herself. But the lover couldn't take the heat of the police moving in on him, trying to get him to talk and ended his own life.

A film version of *Deadly Dose* as told through the eyes of investigator Morgan would have viewers on the edge of their seats, and husbands constantly looking over their shoulders...

For more about Amanda, see www.ALambAuthor.com

OUR LITTLE SECRET

The True Story of a Teenage Killer and the Silence of a Small New England Town



By Kevin Flynn and Rebecca Lavoie
Penguin Random House

Just as “Gone Baby Gone” made audiences question the difference between the law and the right thing to do, so will **Our Little Secret**. This true story will have everyone asking himself or herself, “What would I do?” If you knew your friend killed somebody, would you keep it a secret? What if you thought the victim deserved to die?

Our Little Secret explores a 20-year-old New Hampshire cold case. In 1985, Danny Paquette is shot square in the heart by a stray bullet from the woods 300 yards away. Although Danny’s sexual conquests have made him the enemy of many husbands, police rule his death an accident. They don’t believe anyone could make that precise of a shot.

Danny’s in-laws are not sad to see him die. His ex-wife had fled to Alaska to get away from him. His adopted daughter Melanie, whom he had sexually abused, is secretly living with relatives in another town. Her aunt is a homicide prosecutor. Danny’s brother, Victor, is a profane biker who lives outside the law. Ironically, he’s the one who pushes police to keep the case alive. Victor thinks the bullet that killed Danny might have been meant for him. Steve Agrafiotis was a rookie cop on the murder case, doing grunt work for investigators. In 2004, he is now the police chief and re-opens the case. He hires an 80-year-old civilian retiree to dive into the file. They focus on a then- 17-year-old boy named Eric Windhurst, who had been Melanie Paquette’s alibi. The kid was a crackerjack shot. An anonymous letter in the 90s accused Windhurst, but no one in his hometown would talk to cops.

Detectives fly across country to confront Melanie. She tells police Windhurst shot her father because Danny was about to learn where she was living. She feared he would come and rape her again. Windhurst agrees to kill Danny in order to protect Melanie.

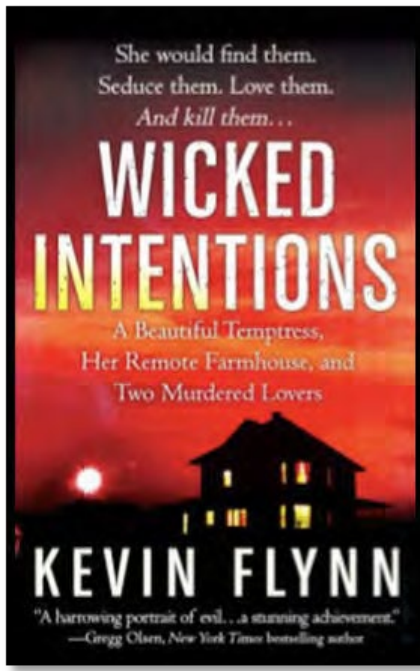
Windhurst’s actions are an open secret in town. Everyone knows; no one turns him in. They believe it was a justified killing. Authorities however find that grown-up Windhurst is a decent man haunted by his deadly action. As the case heads to trial, attorneys think no jury in the world will convict a man who killed a child molester. But then, one final twist. Prosecutors learn that Windhurst’s reasons for killing Danny Paquette have nothing to do with Melanie...

Our Little Secret is an unforgettable true morality play. There are no white hats/black hats. The victim is unsympathetic; the killer is righteous; the damsel in distress is manipulative.

For more see: www.AuthorKevinFlynn.com



To see book trailer: [Video Book Trailer](#)



WICKED INTENTIONS

The Sheila LaBarre Murders

By Kevin Flynn

New Horizon Press; St. Martin's Press

In the vein of “Monster” and “Zodiac” comes **Wicked Intentions**, the true story of a beautiful seductress who lured men to her secluded farm, then murdered them and incinerated their bodies. As **Wicked Intentions** opens, two police officers arrive at a farmhouse in the woods at dusk. They’re doing a well-being check on Kenny Countie, a man whose last known address was this farm. The home is deserted but they discover two fires actively burning in barrels. When they approach, they discover a human bone covered in burnt flesh.

Wicked Intentions follows the exploits of Sheila LaBarre, who spent years using her sexuality to allure men, and her anger to battle anyone who crossed her. Her home is filled with her “children,” hundreds of free-range rabbits. As police search her blood-splattered home and the 115 acres of pasture surrounding it, LaBarre eludes detectives. While

on the run (with three rabbits in tow), she charms and manipulates people into doing her bidding, giving her shelter, and proclaiming her innocence to the police and media.

Wicked Intentions is also the tale of a reporter obsessed by a story that should catapult him into the national spotlight. As in “Capote,” the reporter transforms from a mild-mannered, disinterested writer to an aggressive, take-no-prisoners journalist who is willing to cross lines in order to get the story, even do a killer’s bidding. As police and the media uncover the details of LaBarre’s past, they learn that many men had cycled through the farm in the past few years; none of them are accounted for. Flashbacks illustrate how Sheila conned the farm out of an elderly widow chiropractor, and about the many men who lived on the farm with her. Sheila would troll homeless shelters and telephone chat lines looking for men who were meek and easily led.

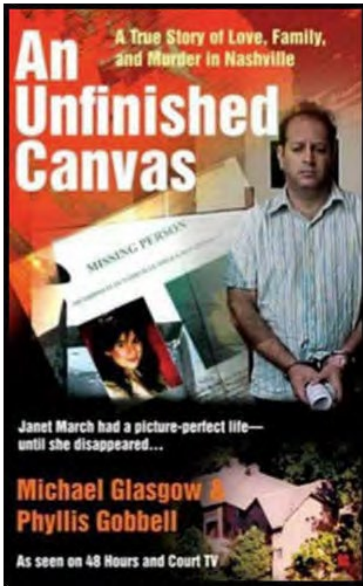
They were all beaten and battered by Sheila; virtual captives on the isolated farm. LaBarre is eventually captured and her attorneys mount an insanity defense. To the horror of all, it seems Kenny Countie isn’t the only man she killed, dismembered, and incinerated on her farm. To this day, authorities cannot say just how many are out there.

Wicked Intentions is a gripping true crime story that transcends the genre. Part murder mystery, part psychological study, its protagonist, a female serial killer, offers an actress an eat-the-furniture role that also has real pathos. Equally suitable as a MOW or a feature film, **Wicked Intentions** stands apart from other black widow tales.

For more about Kevin, see www.AuthorKevinFlynn.com



To See Book Trailer: [Video Book Trailer](#)



AN UNFINISHED CANVAS

A True Story of Love, Family, and Murder in Nashville

By Michael Glasgow and Phyllis Gobbell
Penguin Random House



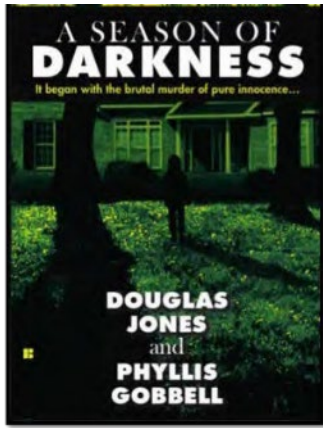
The electrifying true-crime thriller, *An Unfinished Canvas*, brilliantly captures a unique cast of characters. Janet March, the attractive young wife of corporate lawyer Perry March, had it all: two children she adored, a flourishing career as an artist, and a dream house she had designed. What no one knew was that her husband, attorney to the rich and powerful, led a destructive double life of secrets and lies. The night before she was scheduled to meet with a divorce lawyer, Janet simply vanished. Perry maintained that they argued, and Janet drove away, promising to return for their son's sixth birthday. But no one ever saw or heard from Janet March again.

Janet and Perry March are rising stars in Nashville, a city in the New South that is rising, as well. Larry Levine, an intimidating attorney, and his wife Carolyn will stop at nothing – even a secret mission in Mexico to retrieve their grandchildren– in the quest to find justice for their daughter. Perry's father, Arthur March, lures Perry to Mexico to begin a new life, but in the tradition of the best Shakespearean dramas, father turns against son, exposing their conspiracy to murder Janet's parents. Inmate Nathaniel Farris is a street-smart kid who cons the arrogant Perry March, working with police and the D.A. to expose a plot against Larry and Carolyn Levine.

The book chronicles the bizarre events on the night Janet March was last seen and during the disturbing two weeks before she was reported missing; Perry March's flight with his children to Mexico; the international custody battle over the two March children, Sammy and Tzipora. A decade after Janet's disappearance, Nashville's Cold Case Unit develops a case against Perry, and a secret grand jury is empaneled. Following his murder indictment, and with the involvement of the FBI and the office of Mexican President, Perry is arrested and extradited back to Tennessee. Excellent detective work uncovers a scheme by Perry March from behind bars, while he is awaiting trial, to hire a hit-man to murder his former in-laws. Perry goes to trial almost 10 years to the day from the date his young wife vanished. Assistant D.A. Tom Thurman has his work cut out for him– no body, no cause of death, no physical evidence– but in the third of a series of trials, Perry March is found guilty. The “smartest guy in the room” goes to prison for 56 years.

The March case received national attention over the decade from 1996 to 2006, during which time CBS's *48 Hours* aired four episodes. Leslie Stahl stated, “This is as good a mystery as you will ever see—in fiction or in real life.”

For more about Phyllis, see www.phyllisgobbell.com



SEASON OF DARKNESS

Marcia Trimble and the Coldest Cold Case Solved

By Doug Jones and Phyllis Gobbell

Penguin Random House

Radio personality Teddy Bart, on the Marcia Trimble case:

"It had all the elements: a beautiful little girl, a murder, a bungled police operation, fundamentalist religion, and a neighborhood where things like this aren't supposed to happen."

It is a spring-like February afternoon in 1975. Nine-year-old Marcia Trimble, who lives in a quiet, attractive neighborhood, goes across the street to deliver Girl Scout cookies. She never comes home. Her disappearance prompts a massive search, unlike anything known in Nashville, Tennessee. Turf wars develop among the various police units, each with its own command structure. Volunteers trek through the neighborhood leaving millions of fingerprints and footprints before FBI agents arrive. Police set up a command post in a bedroom of the Trimble house. Detectives question Jeffrey Womack, who lives on Marcia's street. The 15-year-old has a condom in his pocket, and "Fuck You" written on his shoes. He is targeted as a suspect, and police will pursue him for more than 30 years.

Young detective Diane Vaughn has been working a series of rapes and the murder of a college coed named Sarah Des Prez, all within a five-mile radius of the Trimbles' neighborhood. She is close to connecting those vicious crimes. But she is drawn away into the search for Marcia Trimble, which has consumed police, the media, and the entire city.

Marcia's mother, Virginia Trimble, is a devoutly religious woman, one whose stoic demeanor in front of the TV cameras fuels nasty rumors and innuendos. On Good Friday, Virginia tells reporters, "It is a time of miracles. Who knows what may happen?" On Easter morning, 33 days after Marcia's disappearance, the child's body is discovered in a deteriorated garage less than 200 yards from the Trimbles' front door. The family is grief-stricken. The city is in shock. One statement will come to define the Marcia Trimble murder: "In that moment, Nashville lost its innocence."

The police are under even more pressure to solve what is now a homicide. They focus their investigation on the boys in the neighborhood, with Jeffrey Womack as the prime suspect. In the wake of bizarre stories involving the children, many of the families move away. The Trimble murder and investigation take a brutal toll on Marcia's family, her neighborhood, and the police department. The Marcia Trimble story becomes part of the fabric of Nashville.

What follows is a trail of twists, turns, frustrating dead ends, lives forever damaged, and a city forever changed. The mystery evolves over three decades. Investigators are criticized for their "tactics of intimidation" in obtaining DNA samples from more than 100 young men, most of whom were "boys in the neighborhood" in 1975. Though no evidence ever implicates Jeffrey Womack, he remains under a cloud of suspicion. It seems the case will never be solved.

But in 2007, the reopening of another 1975 case plunges Cold Case detective Bill Pridemore into the heart of the Marcia Trimble case again. He takes a fresh look at all the evidence. The good police work by Detective Diane Vaughn, deceased since the 1980s, leads Pridemore to an astonishing revelation about the Des Prez murderer—paving the way for a shocking, long-awaited conclusion to the coldest of cold cases: the Marcia Trimble murder.

For more about Phyllis, see www.phyllisgobbell.com

ADULT NONFICTION



GOLD FROM IRON: The Nick Baumgartner Story

By Nick Baumgartner with Jeff Seidel
Triumph Books | Fall 2023

Nick Baumgartner won his gold, not just for himself, not just for Michigan. Not even for Team USA. He did it for everyone chasing a dream after they thought they'd run out of chances.

The oldest athlete to compete for Team USA at the Beijing Olympics, forty-year-old Nick Baumgartner missed out on competing in the men's final for Snowboard Cross, his specialty. Crying in the way only [a post-loss interview](#) can elicit, Nick spoke openly about the heartbreak – and went viral. It was his fourth Olympics, he'd trained for years, he was “running out of chances,” and he didn't want to end on a disappointment like this. Little did he know his Olympic dream wasn't over, as two days later he was chosen to compete in the inaugural mixed snowboard cross event at the Olympics, pairing up with Lindsay Jacobellis. Nick had one chance left.

Growing up in Iron River, Michigan, part of the Upper Peninsula (the U.P., home to the self-proclaimed Yoopers), Nick lived the kind of story Disney underdog films are made of. **GOLD FROM IRON: The Nick Baumgartner Story** takes you from Beijing to Iron River, and back again. A union man who pours concrete and works construction in the offseason to fund his Olympic dreams, a single dad of a seventeen year-old, and guy too stubborn and too driven to ever give up. From early days in a town of less than 3,000 people, this blue-collar Olympian chased his need for speed and created opportunities – whether playing football, competing in the X-games, or supporting his foster-siblings. Then he found snowboard cross.

Appropriately, the mixed snowboard cross is a team event, and Nick is the first to tell you he couldn't chase his dream without the support of his team – his family and entire community. Perhaps that's why his earlier, solo loss made him feel like he let people down. This time, in the mixed snowboard cross, he and his teammate would have to lean on each other. The men race first, and their performances determine the women's starting positions. Then the men must [wait and watch from the bottom of the hill](#).

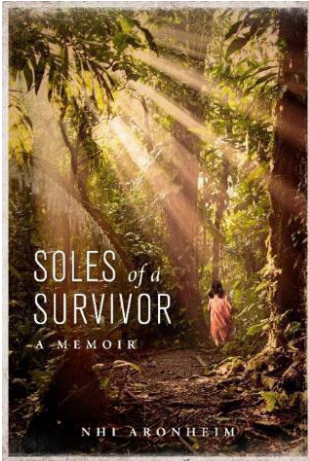
This is Nick's story, **GOLD FROM IRON**, told with the help and guidance of award-winning Detroit Free Press journalist Jeff Seidel, who has followed Nick's career. Jeff has been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize more than ten times and in 2022, he won the Triple Crown in the Associated Press Sports Editors writing contest, which is considered one of the highest honors for sports writing.

The full mixed snowboard cross final here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zL1OvGEf5W8&t=4s>

Soles of a Survivor

The Unbelievable True Story of a Vietnamese Refugee Who Not Only Made the United States Her Home, But Learned the True Value of Hope, Love, and Religion Along the Way

by Nhi Aronheim, Skyhorse



"Nhi Aronheim has lived many lives: the privileged daughter of a physician in Vietnam, frightened child who escapes barefoot through the jungles of Cambodia, refugee in Thailand with only two pieces of clothing to her name, adopted daughter of an American family in the South, and now wife, mother, and writer. In Soles of a Survivor, she writes beautifully about war and its aftermath, adversities and misfortunes to be overcome, the vicissitudes of religion and fate, and, ultimately, resilience, endurance, and gratitude. Her life and her words are an inspiration."— Lisa See, New York Times bestselling author of *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*, *The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane*, *Peony in Love*, *Shanghai Girls*, *Dreams of Joy*, and *China Dolls*

From one corner of the world to another, the global community is experiencing the worst refugee crisis in history. For too many of us, the reality refugees face seems far away and hard to imagine. That's one reason Nhi Aronheim's compelling new book is so helpful right now. By sharing her own story, she makes the refugee crisis real, personal and understandable for the rest of us. Her resilience and path to a new life should give us hope that the same path is possible for others. We need Nhi's message now because millions of refugees need our help now more than ever."— Michael J. Nyenhuis, President and CEO, UNICEF USA

The soles of Nhi Aronheim's feet still bear the scars of her escape from Vietnam—trudging through the jungles of Cambodia as a twelve-year-old with a group of strangers seeking the land of opportunity: America.

Her quest for survival through the Cambodian jungle eventually led her to a boat that took her to Thailand and an orphanage where Nhi lived for two years until she qualified for refugee status in the U.S. Years later, she returned to Vietnam to reunite with the family she never thought she'd see again. A second trip to Vietnam brought her two mothers, birth and adopted, face to face.

Yet *Soles of a Survivor* isn't just another inspirational survival story. It's about the lessons Nhi learned about humanity, diversity, and unconditional love since arriving in the United States. She now has a deeper appreciation for the parallels between the Jewish and Vietnamese cultures, and others. After she met her Jewish beau, they got married. She eventually converted to Judaism, though the process was challenging for an Asian woman adopted into a Christian household. Her story shows it matters less what religion we're part of as long as we radiate goodness to those we meet. Now she relishes being a Vietnamese Jew.

Having come full circle from prosperity to poverty and back, Nhi hopes to encourage others to believe that in spite of overwhelming odds, all things are possible if one has an intense desire, focused energy, and the audacity to grasp presented opportunities.



Several anthologies including *Kentucky Women: Two Centuries of Indomitable Spirit and Vision*, Colorado Public Radio (CPR), Harvey Brownstone Interviews (Canadian Show), and Lotus Network have profiled her harrowing journey as a child refugee who escaped war-torn Vietnam in search of the American Dream.

Wanting to make a positive difference in people's lives, Nhi has been a mediator and interpreter since her retirement from the mortgage industry.

For more about Nhi, see www.NhiAronheim.com



STRAIGHT JACKETS AND LUNCH MONEY

By Katya Cengel

Woodhall Press, 2023

A psychologist described the pandemic as having thrown gasoline on embers that were already glowing. The fire in question – a mental health crisis for children under 13. Between the same six-month period in 2019 and 2020 the proportion of children ages 5 to 11 seeking mental health treatment in emergency rooms around the country versus other treatments saw a 24 percent increase.

Providers and parents cite the same concerns author Katya Cengel experienced as a young child and reports on as an adult: lack of treatment and options for younger patients, smaller insurance reimbursement for mental health care compared to other medical services, and lack of screening for young children.

Katya was ten years old when she was institutionalized in 1986. Her young age set her apart from the other – mostly teenage – children on the psychosomatic unit: anorexic girls became her babysitters, non-compliant diabetic boys her big brothers. Instead of learning her multiplication tables, Cengel learned how to throw up. The bulimic teens taught her that. Visitors from other units showed her how to be ashamed. Hospital staff put her in a straitjacket – and on anti-psychotic medication. Her young age, the length of her stay – almost three months – and her lack of diagnosis inspired a rare intimacy in staff and patients, allowing Katya to penetrate a hidden world more deeply than most.

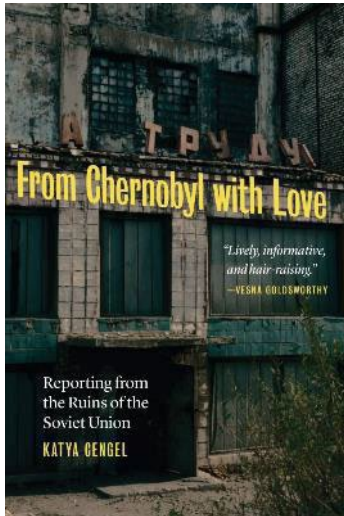
Thirty years later Cengel, now a journalist, returns looking for answers and discovers her young age was not the only thing that made her stay unusual. The idea of psychosomatic units themselves, where patients have dual medical and psychological diagnoses, was a revolutionary one. Treating the medical alongside the psychological has since largely fallen out of favor. Cengel finds this out when she tracks down the doctors, psychologists and counselors who once cared for her. She tells that part of the story as a journalist.

The account of what happened to her as a child is told in the voice of a ten-year-old girl. The two narratives unfold simultaneously.

The result is a gut-wrenching account of childhood mental illness told from the inside interspersed with updates from experts in the field on everything from Munchausen syndrome by proxy to psychological disorders in which a patient's physical symptoms cannot be fully explained by a medical or neurological condition.

With the news sense of a seasoned journalist whose bylines have appeared in *New York Times Magazine*, *Smithsonian* magazine, and *Marie Claire* magazine – and the spirit of a former patient – Cengel investigates her biggest story yet, her own.

Katya Cengel became patient number 090 71 51 at the Roth Psychosomatic Unit at Children's Hospital at Stanford in 1986. She was ten years old. Today she is the author of three traditionally published non-fiction books and reports from around the world for *New York Times Magazine*, *Marie Claire* and *Smithsonian* among others. She has been awarded grants from the International Reporting Project, the International Women's Media Foundation and the International Center for Journalists. www.KatyaCengel.com



From Chernobyl With Love

By Katya Cengel

In 1986 an explosion at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic helped trigger the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Three and a half decades later, in 2022, the plant's capture by Russian forces reminded Ukraine – and the world – that, for Russia, it isn't over.

In between an American reporter and a Ukrainian photographer fell in love. At Chernobyl. Site of world's worst nuclear disaster.

They met on a press bus after witnessing the plant's last working reactor being switched off in December 2000. Another journalist – Georgiy Gongadze – had already gone missing. Later the discovery of Gongadze's headless corpse and secret audiotapes that seem to implicate the government in his murder spark a movement that topples the government, setting off revolutions that ultimately end in war.

Before that though, there was something else – hope.

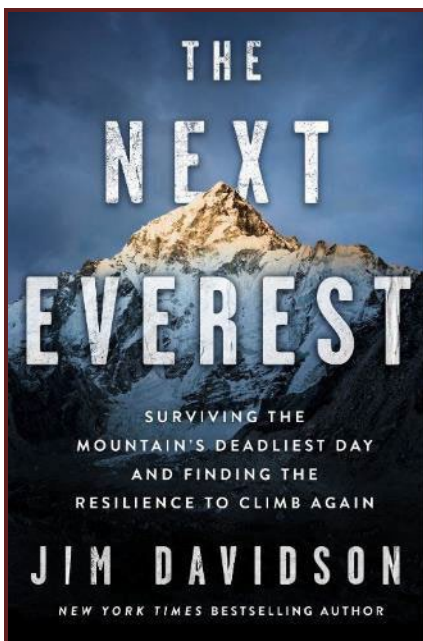
In the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the late twentieth century was a time of unprecedented optimism. The collapse of the Soviet Union left behind a number of independent countries where the Scorpions' 1990 pop ballad "Wind of Change" became a rallying cry.

Young writers, journalists, and adventurers flocked from the West eastward to cities like Prague and Budapest. Katya Cengel landed in Riga, Latvia. She took her first job at the *Baltic Times* just seven years after Latvia regained its independence and less than a week after she graduated from college. Two years later she was in Kyiv, Ukraine. In the three years she reported from Ukraine she made several trips to Chernobyl, where she met her fiancé. But as she fell in love, Ukraine collapsed, bringing it to the brink of political disintegration and civil war. Ultimately, this fall of idealism in the East underscores Cengel's own loss of innocence.

From Chernobyl with Love is an equal parts heartbreaking and humorous true coming of age story of a girl and a country made all the more poignant because of current events.

Katya Cengel lived and reported from the former Soviet Union for half a decade and continues to cover the region, most recently for *Smithsonian Magazine*. She is the author of three traditionally published non-fiction books and reports from around the world for *New York Times Magazine*, *Marie Claire* and *Smithsonian* among [others](#). She has been awarded grants from the International Reporting Project, the International Women's Media Foundation and the International Center for Journalists.

"Not too many young journalists would ditch the beaches of California for the cold, corruption, and chaos of Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall. But Katya Cengel is no ordinary scribe. In her witty, insightful, and heartfelt memoir, *From Chernobyl with Love*, Cengel uncovers it all, from Latvian Nazis to Ukrainian uprisings to finding love in the land of nuclear disaster. *From Chernobyl with Love* is a rewarding blend of candid experiences and expert reporting from an important yet enigmatic part of the world." — **Franz Wisner**, *New York Times* best-selling author of *Honeymoon with My Brother*



THE NEXT EVEREST

Surviving the Mountain's Deadliest Day and Finding the Resilience to Climb Again

By Jim Davidson, NYT Bestselling Author

St. Martin's Press

100th Anniversary of the First Everest Expedition

"[Davidson] follows in the literary trail blazed by Krakauer . . . a gripping account." —*The New Yorker*

"There's more to this book than a disaster survival story...authentic, illuminating." —*Outside*

"Deft and honest....Davidson exorcises the demons of a tragedy decades in his past."

—David Roberts, author of *The Mountain of My Fear*

Harrowing." —*Forbes*

On April 25, 2015, Jim Davidson was climbing Mount Everest when a 7.8-magnitude earthquake released avalanches all around him and his team, destroying their only escape route and trapping them at nearly 20,000 feet. It was the largest earthquake in Nepal in eighty- one years and killed nearly 8,900 people. That day also became the deadliest in the history of Everest, with eighteen people losing their lives on the mountain.

After spending two unsettling days stranded on Everest, Davidson's team was rescued by helicopter. The experience left him shaken, and despite his thirty-three years of climbing and serving as an expedition leader, he wasn't sure that he would ever go back. But in the face of risk and uncertainty, he returned in 2017 and finally achieved his dream of reaching the summit.

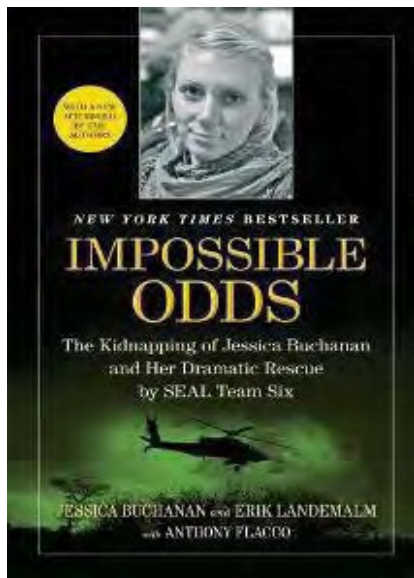
Suspenseful and engrossing, *The Next Everest* portrays the experience of living through the biggest disaster to ever hit the mountain. Davidson's background in geology and environmental science makes him uniquely qualified to explain why the seismic threats lurking beneath Nepal are even greater today. But this story is not only about "conquering" the world's highest peak. Instead, it reveals how embracing change, challenge, and uncertainty prepares anyone to face their next "Everest" in life.

JIM DAVIDSON is an accomplished high-altitude climber, photographer, motivational speaker, and coauthor of the *New York Times* bestseller *The Ledge*. Along with his teammates, he has been commended twice by the U.S. National Park Service for volunteering on risky and remote mountain rescues. He has inspired audiences across the U.S. and overseas through his professional business, **Speaking of Adventure**. Davidson has two adventurous children and lives in Colorado with his very tolerant wife.

See speakingofadventure.com Video: https://youtu.be/BCe2VitI_K4

<https://coloradosun.com/2022/06/19/sunlit-jim-davidson-the-next-everest/>

NPR Radio: [Surviving Everest's deadliest day: A conversation with Jim Davidson | KUNC](#)



IMPOSSIBLE ODDS:

The Kidnapping of Jessica Buchanan and Her
Dramatic Rescue by SEAL Team Six

By Jessica Buchanan, Erik Landemalm with Anthony Flacco
Atria/Simon & Schuster

*Screenplay available

**Formerly under option with Clint Eastwood, Warner Bros.
All rights reverted.**

On October 25, 2011, 32-year-old **Jessica Buchanan** is an attractive American teacher working for a humanitarian NGO in Somalia. She trains local communities on how to avoid the landmines and unexploded munitions that litter the region. But on this day, she and an older male colleague are kidnapped at gunpoint and held for ransom by an organization of Somali pirates who have moved their operations on land. Their number includes traumatized child soldiers who are hooked on drugs supplied by their masters.

An FBI asset sees the attack and within two hours the White House and FBI are already monitoring. They quickly locate the captors out in the desert, but fear that an attack will only result in the captives' deaths. Jessica's sole source of hope among her captors is a Somali man of goodwill, who has only joined the captors because they were going to force his son into their child army. He saved the boy by going in his place. He hates what is happening there but can only give limited support.

For the next three months, Jessica is terrorized by more than two dozen terrorists, some adult and some very young, who carry assault rifles at all times and work themselves into near delirium by chewing addictive khat leaves. She is held outdoors in filthy conditions and kept on a starvation diet while her health and that of her 60-year-old Danish counterpart steadily deteriorates. Negotiations drag. Strangely, her worst tormentor is the youngest, a child soldier of about 12, who appears determined to inflict all the sadism upon others that the world has shown to him. Only Jessica's "friendship" with her one reluctant captor named "Helper," plus her understanding of their culture, allows her to manipulate the men just enough to remain alive. She repeatedly staves off rape and mock execution. But while tied to trees in the Somali wilderness, she slowly succumbs to malnutrition and kidney failure, and only keeps her sanity by visualizing long visits to familiar places.

As the ordeal stretches into its third month, the captors grow increasingly nervous. They worry about turncoats within their own ranks. Nobody can be trusted. The khat leaves fuel paranoia. The aura of the camp shifts to desperation laced with heightened suspicion. The kidnappers become even more agitated when a faint but constant droning sound begins to drift down from somewhere high overhead. It is nearly too soft to hear and never quite identifiable. Nobody can see anything up there, but the noises continue. Their paranoia is correct here; the SEALs are watching everything these men do.

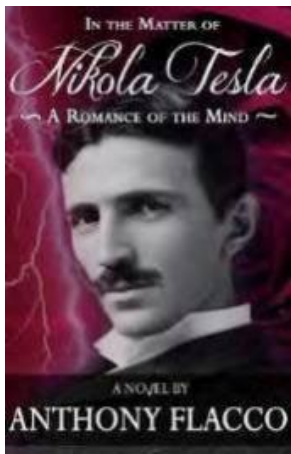
Throughout the ordeal, every moment Jessica Buchanan spends suffering in captivity is matched by that of her adoring husband of less than three years, **Erik Landemalm (35)**, a humanitarian aid worker who manipulates tribal chiefs to circulate false gossip and confuse the kidnappers. While SEAL Team Six rehearses their potential raid, Erik bolsters the hunt for her by acting as liaison between their two families, the FBI, professional hostage negotiators, and the United States Government.

During those torturous months, they are teased by rare chances to communicate for a display of "Proof of Life," and tormented by the kidnappers' unexplained silences and psychotic outbursts. Their long midnight of the soul tests their individual resolve as well as their faith in one another. Finally, after 93 days of fruitless negotiations, Jessica's rapidly failing health raises her medical state to a life and death issue. President Obama secretly orders Seal Team Six to raid the location. The violent rescue by 24 SEALs is played out in detail, from their rehearsals to the parachute drop, to the attack itself. It is January 25, 2012, and while the President delivers his State of the Union speech to a national television audience, the rescue team parachutes from a C-130 under cover of darkness, hikes two miles to the location, and attacks the heavily armed hostiles on duty that night. All are killed with no harm to the hostages, who are quickly airlifted out on a military rescue helicopter.

Today Jessica is a young mother of a son and daughter, a motivational speaker and serves as Goodwill Ambassador for the Navy Seal Foundation. For more about Jessica, see www.JessBuchanan.com



Watch 60 Minutes: <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-rescue-of-jessica-buchanan/>



NIKOLA TESLA

6 Part Limited Dramatic Series

Adapted from the Novel by Anthony Flacco, wga/w

*** Full Treatment Available ***

This proposed **six part limited dramatic historical** series with potential for ongoing series is told through the POV of mega-rich financier, **J.P. MORGAN** in following the life of the brilliant inventor Nikola Tesla. It is told through the eyes of those who work with him, work against him, spy on him, believe in him, and betray him. The story follows a five-year timeline from 1899 to 1904. For Morgan, the Great Question is simple: what drives this revolutionary scientific genius -- and does the answer threaten Morgan's empire?

WHY J.P. MORGAN?

These six episodes are told principally from Morgan's POV because he is the reason for the failure of Tesla's plan for Universal Free Energy. Morgan is the source of the blackball put on Tesla by Wall St. investors. Plainly put, J.P. Morgan single-handedly destroyed the career of Nikola Tesla.

But as the story will show, he had no other choice, given the information he possessed. Tesla wasn't dangerous because he was wrong; he was dangerous because he was right. If Morgan hadn't stopped Tesla, then for better or worse, there is no doubt the world would be much different today. And in Morgan's view that meant disaster, either from Tesla himself or from the people given his machines and tearing up the planet with their carelessness.

J.P. Morgan's museum-quality office is the lair of the 19th Century Alpha Male, with oversized Victorian furniture calculated to impress, intimidate. There he pulls in other people (Mark Twain, George Westinghouse, Tesla assistant George Scherff) to ask about Tesla and get their perception of the man. Morgan has massive investments at stake, perhaps entire industries, and he has to know whether or not to continue backing Tesla's experiments or cut him off and leave him dry. The stories these men tell are played out in Morgan's visionary imagination, while *none of them agree* on who this strange man is.

Each time one of them begins telling about Tesla, the narrative begins as seen from their POV, however the POV quickly switches to that of J.P. Morgan, while he visualizes what he is being told. HIS version never makes the speaker or the subject look very good. Everybody in Morgan's POV is always noticeably more unkempt in appearance and slow of speech.

HERE'S HOW THE POV CHANGES ARE USED:

Author Mark Twain looks at Tesla and sees a beautiful genius doomed to be derailed by human stupidity. Tesla plays out exactly that way in Twain's POV.

But while Morgan listens to the famous author, the narrative switches to his POV and shows a decadent writer of trivial popular novels who is speaking up for a dangerously eccentric inventor.

George Westinghouse tells Morgan about his associations with Tesla. In financing the Niagara Falls power system for Tesla, using Morgan's money, he has come to see Tesla as an inventive man. But he sees Tesla's naivety as proving his genius to be over-rated.

Of course, while Morgan listens, the narrative shifts to his POV and reveals that he regards Westinghouse as an uncultured “lucky winner” in business. In Morgan’s POV, Westinghouse is a rather unintelligent bore who can barely keep Tesla listening to him when he speaks. Morgan dismisses the worth of his responses, lights a cigar, and begins to sing an idle tune under his breath while Westinghouse drones on.

As for George Scherff, Tesla’s longtime assistant is so kind in his version of Tesla that Morgan accuses him of covering up for his boss. But Scherff persists in telling of a solitary genius who lives most of his life inside his head, where he entertains a “muse” who may be invisible, but who is real to him.

Scherff insists Tesla’s motives are pure. His POV shows Tesla as a passionate romantic with a vivid personal imagination. Scherff tells how he sometimes watches Tesla’s revels from the shadows, a guilty voyeur filled with admiration.

But while Morgan listens, his POV overlaps Scherff’s, and now both Scherff and Tesla come across as “a fool and his servant,” sloppily attired and slower of speech. Morgan sees what the genius cannot: the proposed World Power System would concentrate all broadcasting of electrical power as well as all forms of information to a handful of Tesla Towers around the globe. The commercial and military challenges to seize control of them would never end.

In this way we come to understand why the great J. Pierpont Morgan, more financially powerful than the United States government, will see to it that this man must be stopped. The fact that Nikola Tesla has already conceived, designed, and installed the first electrical generators at Niagara Falls doesn’t speak in his favor-- it proves he must be stopped.

And so, although the Niagara Falls power station is a model for the world’s emerging power grid, Tesla will die in 1943 too poor to pay his own light bill.

According to J.P. Morgan, civilization dodged a bullet.



SOLD ARABIC for scripted limited series to Eagle Films!

HIDDEN GIRL

The True Story of a Modern-Day Child Slave

By Shyima Hall

With Lisa Wysocky

Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers

When Shyima Hall was eight years old her poverty-stricken Egyptian parents, overwhelmed with close to a dozen children, sold her into slavery. The price? 17 dollars a month. The wealthy Cairo couple who bought Shyima moved to California two years later and brought the little girl into the US illegally.

As a child slave, Shyima Hall had no friends or family, no emotional support whatsoever. She did not speak a word of English and, after moving to the US, was thousands of miles and an ocean away from everything that was familiar to her. On top of that, a terrorized Shyima was forced to toil 16 or more hours a day, seven days a week for her captor's family, which included five children—some of whom were near her age. At night, Shyima slept on a squalid mattress in a windowless garage. A bucket and some water were all she had in which to wash herself and her clothes; and she was forbidden from going to school. Shyima never visited a doctor or dentist, even when she was ill with the flu. Additionally, her captors continually berated her and often slapped her.

While Shyima was rarely allowed outside the home, a neighbor began to suspect something was not quite right. Rumors abounded, with glimpses of a small dark-haired girl during times children her age should have been in bed. In 2002, possibly acting on a tip from a neighbor, child welfare authorities rescued Shyima. US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) investigated her case, and her captors were eventually prosecuted and imprisoned.

At the time of her rescue, 13-year-old Shyima decided to stay in the US. She hasn't returned to Egypt or seen her family since. While Shyima may have been isolated during her slavery, she was not alone. From 2010-11, US federal immigration officials launched 651 investigations into human trafficking and arrested roughly 300 people. According to the United States State Department, there are more than 12 million people entrapped in some form of slavery worldwide.

While Shyima could have chosen to fade into obscurity, she has decided on a much different path. Now 26, Shyima speaks to groups across the country about combating human trafficking and has often briefed ICE agents about the emotional and physical trauma that victims endure. Shyima's dream is to become a federal agent for ICE to help crack down on human trafficking and free the enslaved. And, she took a major step toward that goal in December 2011 when she became a citizen of the United States.



Hidden Girl empowers readers to step up when they believe a wrong is being committed. If not for a concerned neighbor, Shyima might still be ensnared in the web of slavery. This first-person, 65,000-word narrative details Shyima's difficult Egyptian childhood and her challenging years as a slave. Her assimilation into foster homes, school, eventual adoption, and request for legal emancipation is shown through the rare point of view of a young teen experiencing both freedom and the culture of the United States for the first time.

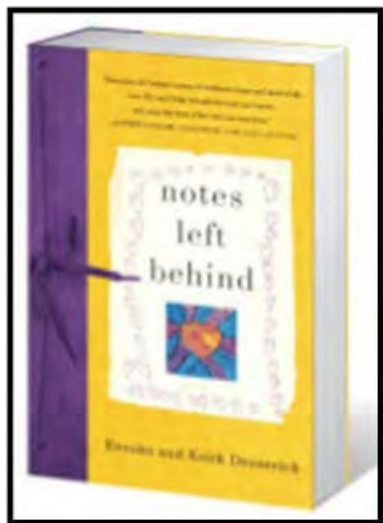
Shyima's many firsts are also shared. Imagine being 13 and never having seen the inside of a school, been to a movie or a store, eaten at a restaurant, or made a friend. These emotional firsts are told with honest humility and wonder and come with their own unique set of challenges. The story culminates with Shyima triumphantly standing before a federal judge and being sworn in as a naturalized citizen of the United States. **Watch AP story:** [AP Video Story](http://video.pbs.org/video/2365210010/)

Watch interview with Shyima on Tavis Smiley, March 2014 <http://video.pbs.org/video/2365210010/>

NOTES LEFT BEHIND

By Keith and Brooke Desserich

William Morrow/HarperCollins Translated in 24 languages.



It started with just one girl and became a movement among millions that will change the way a world fights cancer. **Notes Left Behind** is a story that Elena's parents never wanted to tell; the story of love, compassion and six-year-old Elena's heroic fight against cancer. From cereal kisses in the morning to trying on wedding dresses far too early, and to the simplest action of holding hands with their daughters on the way to school, the Desserich's book has been called "The Last Lecture for parents."

It began with a series of notes left by Elena for her younger sister Gracie as a form of remembrance and was soon followed by thousands of mothers and fathers who heard the story on the internet and were each inspired to appreciate and love their own children in more clear and present ways. Learning to value the smaller moments in life over the milestones, the Desserich family passed on the lessons of their children in touching journal entries that captured the joy and passion of a family who discovers the true value of life in drinking deeply of the day.

But it was after Elena's passing and the completion of the journal, that the Desserich's soon discovered the most important lesson their daughter was to leave behind. Finishing a remodeling project that began prior to her diagnosis, they began to find hundreds of notes hidden throughout the house from Elena – each with a simple message of love and compassion. And in doing so, Elena would leave her own notes and memories that would endure today. Within days of its initial release in the US, **Notes Left Behind** immediately became a New York Times Bestseller, receiving the attention of The Today Show, CNN, Good Morning America, People Magazine, AOL.com, Yahoo.com, Air America, Inside Edition and beyond. Soon it developed a worldwide following with over 25 different foreign language translations continuing into 2010.

Written as a celebration of Elena's life, the inspirational **Notes Left Behind** accomplishes the impossible through the charity created in her honor, The Cure Starts Now. Developed as a calling to fight those cancers that experts believe will offer us a cure for all cancers, it represents a revolutionary cancer strategy that has never before been proposed. And today this "homerun" cure strategy sweeps the world with over 20 chapters and thousands of sponsors. All US and Canadian author proceeds benefit www.TheCureStartsNow.org

"This is a stunning story that teaches us how precious children, family and life are, and that the sacrifices we make are worth it. I won't forget the Desserich family, and neither will you." —James Patterson, Renowned Author

For more on the story, see www.NotesLeftBehind.com

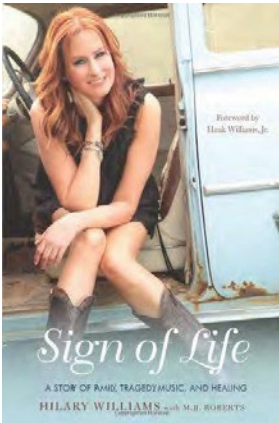
View the book trailer: [Notes Left Behind Book Trailer](#)



SIGN OF LIFE

A Story of Family, Tragedy, Music and Healing

By Hilary Williams, Daughter of Hank Williams Jr. , With M.B.Roberts
DaCapo Press/Perseus Books



From the time she was eight-years-old, singer-songwriter Hilary Williams lived with an empty place in her heart. It was the year her parents divorced, and it hurt – still hurts. She felt as though she lost her father, country music superstar Hank Williams, Jr., even though he wasn't around much anyway.

Hilary never knew her famous grandfather, country music icon Hank Williams, who died tragically nearly thirty years before she was born. Another piece of the empty place in her heart. Warren White, her maternal grandfather was different. She knew him well and loved him dearly. He died in the early spring of 2006. Hilary would strive to fill part of the empty space with his memory.

It's a sunny March day. Hilary, 26, and her sister Holly, 24, are driving down a rural stretch of Mississippi road en route from Nashville to Louisiana for their grandfather Warren's funeral. Back in Tennessee, their father, Hank Williams, Jr., sits in a barber's chair while his pilot readies his private plane to fly him to the service. Hilary and Holly's mother, Becky, along with their grandmother, aunts and many cousins are in Louisiana preparing for the funeral.

The girls are riding along when Hilary reaches for her iPod. In an instant, the car hits a series of ruts in the road, flips violently four times and lands mangled on its side. Holly's arm is trapped under the car. Hilary is dangling upside down with crushing injuries to her collarbone, hips and legs. Hilary's blood loss is massive and just as a Life flight helicopter lands and EMT's rush to her aid, she dies.

Hilary is transported during a vivid Near-Death experience. She sees a glittering vision of heaven and is comforted by her deceased grandparents, Hank and Audrey Williams, as well as her Godparents, Johnny and June Carter Cash. Then, she is brought back as EMT's heroically revive her using an experimental blood substitute. Holly, whose injuries are less severe, is flown to the hospital in Memphis followed by a helicopter carrying Hilary, who is barely grasping onto life.

Becky, who received a chilling phone call from the accident scene where she could hear Holly's screams, leaves her father's wake and heads to Memphis. Hank Jr. diverts his plane from Louisiana to Memphis, arriving just in time to see Hilary, cold and pale, being wheeled into surgery. Hours later, Hilary wakes to find her father holding her hand and weeping softly at her bedside. Later, he recounts details of his own near-fatal accident when he fell off a mountain twenty years ago. The revelation that Hank Jr. and Hilary were the exact same age when both nearly died – and memories of Hank Sr. dying at the height of his fame in the backseat of a car—begs the question: Is there a Williams curse?

Back-to-back surgeries – eventually she will endure 23-- fill the first few days in Memphis, where Hilary stays for a month. A National Enquirer reporter dressed as a plumber tries to get into Hilary's room. Hank Jr.'s close friend Kid Rock visits. Doctors warn Becky that they may have to take her leg in order to save her life.

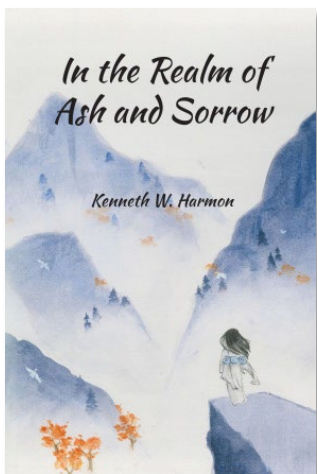
Hilary's diabetes causes complications during surgery after surgery performed to repair her shattered body. During one particularly excruciating physical therapy session, her doctor tells her that "Pain is a sign of life." This is a mantra she won't forget.

Six weeks after the accident, Hilary comes home to her mother's house in Nashville. She stays in a hospital bed in the living room for six months. Becky and Holly dress her, bathe her, and help her go to the bathroom. Humbling to say the least. Often alone with her thoughts, Hilary remembers childhood traumas (her mother crying in the arms of her best friend Jessie Colter after her parents' split, being diagnosed with juvenile diabetes), as well as happy memories (a poolside party at Waylon Jennings' house, Johnny Cash singing happy birthday to her over the phone). She has bizarre recollections (fans shooting off guns in the driveway in tribute to Hank Jr., house sitting for half-brother Shelton, a.k.a. Hank III, at his haunted house). She also thinks of her grandfather, who endured back surgery and became hooked on painkillers similar to those she is taking.

Karen Pryor, a therapist who is part-drill sergeant, part-sweet preschool teacher, pushes Hilary to learn to walk as she struggles with severe pain and frustration. After a follow-up surgery, Hilary begins the entire process from scratch. Then, unexpectedly, the "permanent" rod in her leg breaks. Disheartened, she struggles to learn to walk yet again. Depression sets in. She is cheered by visits from her half-brother Sam, and half-sister Katie, who she loves dearly despite her dislike of their mother.

Fear of permanent damage to her vocal cords (due to intubation while she was hospitalized) and her waning confidence prevent Hilary from singing at first. She is afraid to try. She also fights feelings of jealousy towards Holly, whose singing career is taking off. Nonetheless, Hilary starts voice lessons and despite being wheelchair-bound, also begins to date. Three years after the accident, Hilary performs a concert at a small venue in Nashville. The place is packed, and she meets her goal of walking onto the stage unassisted. She brings down the house when she sings "Sign of Life," the inspirational song she wrote about her life-changing experience. The moment onstage is more than a happy ending. It's the beginning of a young woman's life. Still to be seen is how Hilary Williams, who found deep layers of determination during her recovery, will fit into the legacy of her famous family. <http://www.soundlikenashville.com/news/hilary-williams-debut-album-lucky-scars/>

ADULT NOVELS



In the Realm of Ash and Sorrow

By Kenneth W. Harmon

Regalo Press, February 2024

Originally self-published and named a [Kirkus Best Book of 2020](#)

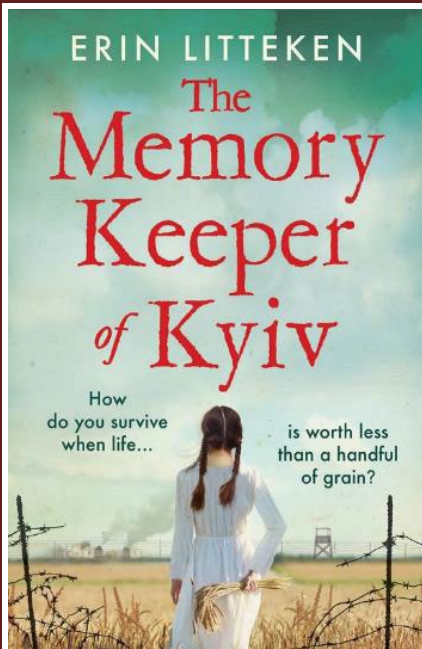
All the Light We Cannot See meets *Ghost* in this gorgeous World War II novel about an American bombardier downed over Japan whose spirit remains trapped as a *yūrei* ghost and the war widow he comes to love.

*“[A]n extraordinarily imaginative and compelling exploration of love, death, race, and patriotism with countless unusual twists to keep the reader guessing... **Thorough research and stylish execution make for a striking tour de force.**”*—[Kirkus \(starred review\)](#)

When WW II bombardier Micah Lund dies on a mission over Japan, his spirit remains trapped as a *yūrei* ghost. Dazed, he ends up following Kiyomi Oshiro, a war widow, and her young daughter, Ai. Watching them together, Micah reconsiders his intolerance for the people he'd considered the enemy. He then discovers he can interact with Kiyomi and Ai when they dream. While his feelings for them deepen, destruction looms—Hiroshima is about to be bombed, and Micah must warn Kiyomi and her daughter. In a place where dreams are real, Micah races against time to save the ones he's come to love the most.



Kenneth W. Harmon calls Fort Collins, Colorado home, where he lives with his wife and three daughters. When he's not writing, Kenneth enjoys working in the garden, reading, watching movies, sports, and *Mysteries at the Museum*, taking walks along the Poudre River, and trying to stay ahead of three teenage girls. Originally a horror writer (his debut *The Amazing Mr. Howard* was a semifinalist for the prestigious Bram Stoker Award), he now focuses on his first loves, literary and historical fiction.



2022 Winner for Best Historical Fiction of the Year

Translation rights sold in 14 major foreign territories in auctions/pre-empt

The Memory Keeper of Kyiv

By Erin Litteken

Boldwood, UK- May 2022

A share of proceeds will be donated to DEC's Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal



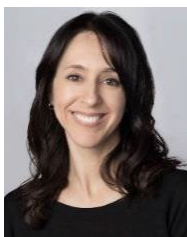
* Bookbub Featured New Release * Fortune Magazine Top 10 Page-Turning Novel for Summer 2022

Perfect for fans of *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* and *The Beekeeper of Aleppo*.

In the 1930s, Stalin's activists marched through the Soviet Union, espousing the greatness of collective farming. It was the first step in creating a man-made famine that, in Ukraine, stole almost 4 million lives. Inspired by the history the world forgot, and the Russian government denies, Erin Litteken reimagines their story.

In 1929, Katya is 16 years old, surrounded by family and in love with the boy next door. When Stalin's activists arrive in her village, it's just a few, a little pressure to join the collective. But soon neighbors disappear, those who speak out are never seen again and every new day is uncertain. Resistance has a price, and as desperate hunger grips the countryside, survival seems more a dream than a possibility. But, even in the darkest times, love beckons.

Seventy years later, a young widow discovers her grandmother's journal, one that will reveal the long-buried secrets of her family's haunted past.



This is a story of the resilience of the human spirit, the love that sees us through our darkest hours and the true horror of what happened during the Holodomor.

Erin Litteken is a debut novelist with a degree in history and a passion for research. At a Young age, she was enthralled by stories of her family's harrowing experiences in Ukraine before, during and after World War II. She lives in Illinois with her husband and children.

I was utterly gripped by this beautiful novel from the very first page! Litteken has weaved a compelling and intimate story of love and survival. It is harrowing, haunting and chilling in its portrayal of history, illuminating the horrors of the Holodomor in a way which brings us to the heart of the people and families who suffered. And yet, at the same time, it is sensitive, beautiful and inspiring. Everybody should read this story especially now. The Memory Keeper of Kyiv is written by an author who understands the depths of both loss and love. I cannot recommend it highly enough. – Christy Lefteri, #1 international bestselling author of *The Beekeeper of Aleppo*

"A powerfully moving debut . . . on every page the Ukrainian spirit shines out, unbowed, unbent, and unbroken. This is a compelling, timely read." – Kate Quinn, international bestselling author of *The Alice Network*

"A stunning portrait of Ukraine and its people, of strength, of endurance, of the fight for survival during the forced famine, the Holodomor, but also a tender story of Katya, a grandmother whose hidden history holds the power to guide her granddaughter through the darkness of loss and grief, toward life and a limitless future. A remarkable read not to be missed." – Lisa Wingate #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Before We Were Yours*



The Lost Daughters of Ukraine

By Erin Litteken, April 2023

The heart-rending and powerful follow-up to the
International Bestseller *The Memory Keeper of Kyiv*

In *The Memory Keeper of Kyiv*, Halya and her family persevered through the devastation of Stalin's forced famine, the Holodomor. Now twelve, with WW2 raging, Halya must use her wits to survive as she's taken from her home in Ukraine to work as an *Ostarbeiter* (Eastern worker) in a German munitions factory.

HALYA, born during the Holodomor in *The Memory Keeper of Kyiv* and now twelve years old, soon finds living under German occupation is no better than life under Stalin. When auxiliary police forces take her from her family and send her to Germany to work as an *Ostarbeiter* (Eastern worker) in a munitions factory, she must find a way to persist in a dangerous, hostile country far from home.



After losing her parents and her house in the war, eighteen-year-old LILIYA moves in with her Aunt Vika and Uncle Maks in western Ukraine. But when she narrowly escapes a forced labor shipment, a price must be paid.

Her cousin Slavko is sent west in her place to work in a factory for the German war effort, and Liliya knows she must do everything she can to make sure he stays safe – even if it means leaving behind an unexpected chance at love and trading her hard-won freedom to follow and protect him.



VIKA's four children are her life, so when her oldest son, Slavko, is taken as an *Ostarbeiter*, she swears she won't rest until he's home. But, as the

fighting draws closer – with the Soviets approaching from the east and the Germans employing a scorched earth policy as they retreat west – devastation reigns, villages are destroyed, and the reality of living under Stalin's oppression again becomes all too real. Vika must choose: stay and fight for her beloved yet broken homeland or flee into war-torn Europe by wagon in search of a new life – and, hopefully, her son.

As Europe emerges from the wreckage of war (and the Bombing of Dresden, a pivotal scene), millions of refugees struggle to rebuild their lives amid the ruins, and desperately await word from long-lost family members. Displaced Persons camps become home to many for years, as survivor lists are posted and people chase gossip and rumors of loved ones. There, in Germany, Halya has the opportunity to move and start a new life in America with her dear friends from the factory, Slavko and Liliya, but it means abandoning her search for the family she fears is gone forever.

Interweaving between the POVs of Halya, a child forced to grow up far too fast as an *Ostarbeiter*, Liliya, a young woman fighting for the future she's always dreamed of, and Vika, a mother struggling to put the pieces of her scattered family back together, this story is a powerful and inspiring testament to the human spirit and the lengths people will go for the ones they love.



The Abominations

By Simi Lichtman

ON SUBMISSION CURRENTLY TO PUBLISHERS

For fans of the Emmy-winning series *Unorthodox*.

A powerful story inspired by a [real-life rabbi matchmaker](#) who matched gay men with lesbian women within the Orthodox Jewish community.

All Temimah Silverman has ever wanted is to live the life expected of her. As an Orthodox Jewish woman, that means getting married and having babies. So when Temimah realizes that she is gay—an abomination to God—she must do whatever it takes to protect her secret and stay in the community.

Fortunately, Temimah stumbles upon a clandestine Orthodox matchmaking system that pairs lesbian women with gay men, where she meets Yehuda, her perfect—if sexually repellant—soulmate. Temimah settles into marriage, never questioning that she has done what is right. Even meeting Aliza, the first woman Temimah might truly love, is not enough to break Temimah’s faith.

But when she and her husband are confronted with infertility, after years of unenjoyable sex, Temimah is finally forced to choose between communal acceptance and the yearnings of her heart.



Simi Lichtman spent a year as a columnist at the historic *Jewish Daily Forward*, where she published a [weekly column](#). In addition, she is the author of numerous articles and blog posts published in The Tablet, The Huffington Post, and Medium, among others. She herself is an Orthodox Jew who identifies along the LGBTQ+ spectrum. This is her first novel.



One Tough Cookie

By Delise Torres, Alcove Press, July 2023

Available for pitch by **Writer/Director /Producer**

Gabby Revilla Lugo

Humorous and heartfelt foodie women's fiction set at a cookie company—A Puerto Rican *Fleabag* committed to her carefree single life meets the sexy new mechanic determined to break through her defenses.

“Sharp and voicey, One Tough Cookie is a fast read, making you crave cookies as it delves into Karina's world at a cookie plant. Karina is snarky and sassy, a unique heroine searching for what she really wants. A charming debut!”—Lyn Liao Butler, author of *The Tiger Mom's Tale*

At Singular Cookies, Inc., cookies are like people, each with their own personality.

Twenty-seven-year-old Karina Cortés works as a production floor supervisor at a small family-owned cookie manufacturing plant in Fort Pierce, Florida. It's a well-paying job for a high-school dropout whose only achievement is passing the GED exam.

Work and play collide when she meets the company's hot new mechanic, Ian Feliciano, who stirs up feelings she tends to avoid. Karina knows she shouldn't date him, but she's strong; she'll never turn pathetic like her friends or, especially, her mom. And with a looming plant inspection and two managers butting heads over how to prepare, Karina has enough to distract herself.

As the inspection draws near and Karina battles her heart, she'll have to decide whether to continue holding on to deeply ingrained beliefs that keep everyone at bay, or learn that love is not as dangerous as she fears; that it is our history—our singular recipe—that shapes how we want to live.



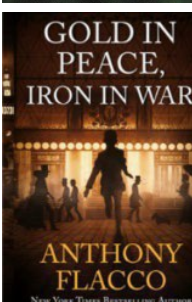
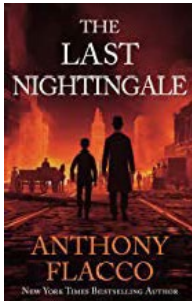
Delise Torres grew up in Puerto Rico. Her [website](#) claims she's a “daydreamer of messy love stories.” She has a PhD in Food Science and experience as a quality assurance manager. An active member of the Women's Fiction Writers Association, she serves as manager of their Pinterest page. She currently lives in Germany with her daughter and German husband.



The Nightingale Series—Historical Crime by Anthony Flacco, NYT & International Bestselling Author, WGA

www.AnthonyFlacco.com

For fans of *The Alienist* and *The Devil in the White City*



1. **The Last Nightingale** — San Francisco, 1906. The Great Earthquake and Fires. Police Sgt. Randall Blackburn (35) has just finished his night beat on the infamous Barbary Coast district when the temblor devastates this thriving West Coast city. Meanwhile, Shane Nightingale (12) is witness to the violent deaths of his adoptive mother and sisters—not from the earthquake, but a serial killer who uses the chaos to hide his crimes and get away clean. A savvy ten-year-old from the same orphanage Shane was adopted out of names herself Vignette and convinces him she is his sister. When their paths cross that of police Sgt. Blackburn, he finds himself with two newly escaped orphans living in his bachelor apartment. He and Shane form an investigative team using the youth's intuitive gifts and the beat cop's experience to pursue the killer, who knows Shane is still out there, and won't rest until the last Nightingale is in his grave.

2. **The Hidden Man** — 1915. Nine years after the great earthquake, San Francisco is on the brink of a new era. The World's Fair is opening to trumpet the completion of the Panama Canal and display the wonders of the new technological age. Vignette Nightingale is now 19 and a savvy nonconformist who is of real value to their little makeshift family. But a murderous fanatic stalks one of the fair's main attractions, the brilliant mesmerist J.D. Duncan. When J.D. receives a threatening note from his stalker, it's up to Randall Blackburn, now promoted to Homicide Detective, and his adopted children, Shane and Vignette Nightingale, to combine their intuitive profiling skills and solve a murder before it happens and avoid disastrous publicity for the fair. While the detectives work hard to unmask his elusive stalker, J.D. works twice as hard to hide his early onset dementia. His legacy is at stake. He is willing to walk into fire. Vignette and Shane do such a fine investigative job, Randall decides to form his own P.I. agency and employ them.

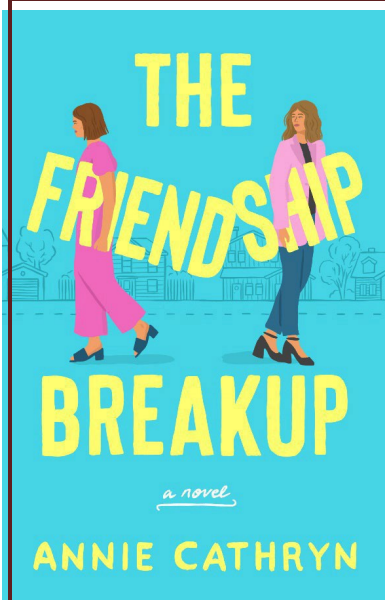
3. **Vengeance for All Things** — 1916. Based on the only unsolved terrorist attack in S.F. history. It is one year after the flash and glitter of the 1915 San Francisco World's Fair. Randall Blackburn and Vignette Nightingale are still in shock over the murder of adoptive son Shane. It has hit them hard, and Vignette is devastated. [Note: Shane recurs via memory and dreams.] Their mourning, however, is cut short by a plea for help from City Hall. Mayor James "Sunny Jim" Rolph has a compromised staff and has no time to ferret out the turncoats—in the upcoming citywide Preparedness Day Parade, anti-American attackers plan to set off a series of powerful bombs along the route, with the capacity to kill thousands. The bombers want the U.S. to stay out of the Great War overseas. While Blackburn tackles the case with traditional methods, his tough and resourceful adoptive daughter, Vignette Nightingale (now 20), prefers an unconventional approach, as an expert lockpicker who lives by her own rules. She's a person of iron character, even if her authority issues could use some work. The investigation hits a thick brick wall. The halls of city power are dangerously compromised, all the way to the state capital. The race is on to stop Mario Buda, the "Bombmaker Nonpareil," who is somewhere in the city building shrapnel bombs. The truth is worse; he is already handing them out to messengers. Because America has to fall.

4. **Gold in Peace, Iron in War** — 1920. Based on the Wall Street Bombing of September 1920. Vignette Nightingale is now 24 years old and is a partner to Randall Blackburn (49) in their P.I. agency. As the world pulls itself into recovery from the Great War, Blackburn & Nightingale are hired to investigate the "orphan trains" bringing children who were orphaned in Europe to auction sites across the country in hopes of adoption to kind families. Much of that happens. But someone has infiltrated the trains with stolen children who have been shocked into silence and are sold into slavery, as well as "indentured" adults, who are slaves by another name. Knowing only this much, Randall and Vignette are charged with traveling to NYC to track down the perpetrators. The city hall there is having the same problems of infiltration by hostile forces; bribes have been rolling in from somewhere on waves of cash. The detectives quickly become embroiled in an international ring of anti-American anarchists who have bribed and blackmailed their way into disrupting the coming presidential election. The world's anti-American anarchists still agree: America has to fall. Beneath the story of intrigue runs the character story of nine-year-old Dante, an orphan who refuses to discuss his past but who was brought in by the illegal orphan train ruse. In New York, when he learns what his captors ("parents") expect him to earn his keep, he runs away across the country to San Francisco, where he and Vignette meet. He idealizes her and Randall and they become fast friends. He accompanies them to NYC and helps identify and defeat the murderous smugglers.

Gold in Peace, Iron in War is fast-paced and action packed, somewhat in the style of old fashioned weekly radio detective dramas or Saturday morning trips to the local cinema. There are a whole series of heart stopping and cliff hanging moments. — *The Historical Fiction Company*

<https://www.thebigthrill.org/2022/08/vengeance-for-all-things-by-anthony-flacco/>

[Bombings of the Past Mirror Today's Anarchy - an Editorial Review of "Vengeance For All Things" \(thehistoricalfictioncompany.com\)](https://thehistoricalfictioncompany.com/)



The Friendship Breakup

By Annie Cathryn, Alcove Press

"This novel will be popular with readers who find themselves navigating life in a way no one prepared them for. Funny, endearing, and sincere." —Booklist

"In this warm and witty story, Annie Cathryn paints a portrait of a woman who must let go of her preconceived notions of what her life should be like in order to find out who she really is—and become her own best friend."
— Camille Pagán, national bestselling author of *I'm Fine* and *Neither Are You*

On the eve of turning forty, aren't you supposed to have it all figured out?

Fallon Monroe, premenopausal mama bear of one, self-help book junkie, and budding chocolatier, has always relied on her neighborhood mom friends to get her through the trials of motherhood, because failing together is what makes failing tolerable. So, when her bestie, Beatrice, inexplicably begins ghosting her and takes all their mutual friends with her, Fallon's left wondering how everything went so wrong. Pushing down a lifetime of insecurities, Fallon doubles down on her can-do attitude and decides to win them back.

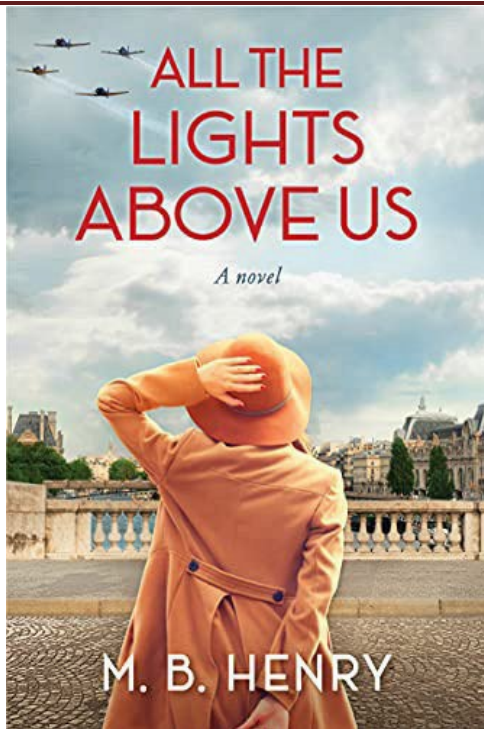
She hosts an epic Cinco de Mayo party that goes swimmingly, and she's on her way back into her friends' good graces ... until a stripper—who no one fesses up to ordering—literally crashes the party, sending several guests to the hospital and straight out of Fallon's life. Suddenly she's more alone than ever.

After failing in her attempts to win back her friends, she joins a friendship app to prove to everyone, especially herself, that she *is* a good friend. When she discovers one of her new friends is in a relationship with Beatrice's soon-to-be ex-husband, Fallon must decide where her loyalties lie.

And just when she's about to throw in the dirty towel on the whole friendship mess, she reads a recently-unearthed letter that she had stubbornly refused to open decades earlier. Reading it forces her to finally face the deep-seated fears that she's desperately tried—and failed—to bury. Now looking at her friendships with fresh eyes, she must decide between hanging on or letting go.



Annie Cathryn is an avid reader, blogger, marketer, and [Bookstagrammer](#), with 12.9K+ followers on Instagram. She is the host of IGTV's [Soulful Series Video Chats](#), featuring award-winning and bestselling authors. The series won a 2021 [Dotcom](#) For more than two decades, Annie has worked in marketing communications; first for a Fortune 500 company, before starting a [marketing consulting agency](#) where she provides marketing and PR for new and established brands. Annie has a degree in journalism and Masters in communications from Marquette University. She is an active contributor to the [Revision Division](#) newsletter, has written for Zibby Owens's blog *Moms Don't Have Time to Write*, and is a member of the Women's Fiction Writers Association and the Chicago Writers Association. She lives with her husband and daughter outside of Chicago.



All The Lights Above Us

Inspired by the Women of D-Day

by M.B. Henry

Alcove Press May 2022

"The talent and skills M.B. Henry has shown in her debut novel rate her as an author to follow. Her ability to express different voices of women, under different circumstances, at the same period in history is extraordinary. Telling the story of D-Day through the lives of five women, genius. History will be remembered - inclusive of the military and civilians, as it should be. Embrace these five amazing women who represent the millions of unknown. Do not judge them. This novel should be required reading for young students to remember that day – D-Day. I highly recommend it to readers of all ages and genders."

-Heather Morris, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*

*"Everyone's going to read **All the Lights Above Us**. People are going to fall in love with it exactly the way I did. Character by character. I mean there's such emotion in this book. And it's WWII like you've never thought of it before. And D-Day like you've never thought of it before. And I think M.B. chose one of the most haunting days in American history to write about. But she did it with these five women. Each one different. Different facets of this whole conflict."*

-Adriana Trigiani, New York Times Bestselling Author

Female-led World War II fiction, in the spirit of *Dunkirk* and *1917*, that follows the lives of five very different women as D-Day unfolds. There are forbidden romances, treasonous alliances, painful losses, and mother/daughter conflicts, all against the backdrop of one of history's most critical days.

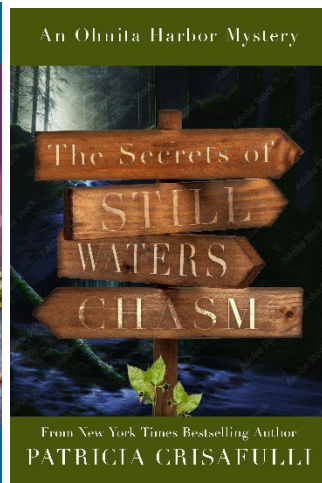
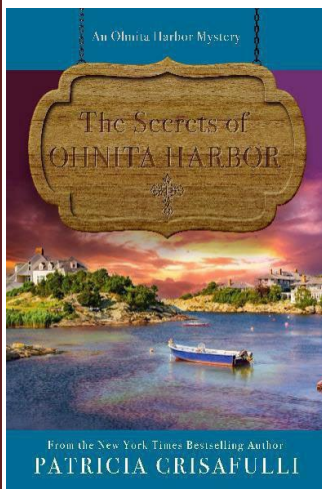
The story interweaves between:

- MILDRED**, an American radio star living in Berlin (based on the historical figure Glassmaker "Axis Sally," the first woman in the US convicted of treason)
- FLORA**, a member of the French Resistance
- THEDA**, a British medical volunteer in Portsmouth, a town just off the English Channel
- ADELAIDE**, a woman desperate to reach her daughter in the French countryside
- EMILIA**, a worker at the Caen Gestapo headquarters.

As the clock strikes midnight on June 6, each woman's life shifts on its axis. When the world's largest military invasion arrives on the French coast, they face difficult (and deadly) choices about duty, sacrifice, and identity. In the most intense twenty-four hours of their lives, all five women summon unknown strength and make impossible decisions.



The author, M.B. Henry, has served as a historical consultant and researcher on films and TV, including 42 seasons on [The Originals](#), and she's working hard to build her platform. She maintains an [active website and blog](#) and on [Twitter](#).



The Secrets of Ohnita Harbor

4 book series, Woodhall Press

By Patricia Crisafulli

New York Times Bestselling Author

Fans of TV's *Murder, She Wrote* and who fondly remember the Nancy Drew mysteries will find a new home in Ohnita Harbor, New York—a small town with a long history and big intrigue of murder and mystery. The Ohnita Harbor mystery series brings this Great Lakes port city to life with three centuries of historic characters, quirky modern-day residents, and an engaging protagonist—librarian and authenticator Gabriela Domenici.

In *The Secrets of Ohnita Harbor*, the first book in the series, an unusual antique cross turns up in the donations for the library's rummage sale—and everything changes. Soon the small town is gripped by greed and awe, and someone wants the cross badly enough to kill for it. Gabriela must uncover the origins of the cross, which is traced back to Catherine of Siena—while staying one step ahead of a killer.

The Secrets of Still Waters Chasm, the second book in the series, opens with Gabriela's discovery of two bodies on the beach of a secluded lake—which suddenly disappear after she goes for help. From a string of poisoning deaths to a nefarious development in the woods surrounding the chasm, Gabriela finds herself caught in a web of deception and danger. The third book, *The Secrets of the Old Post Cemetery*, centers on a Revolutionary War-era map which not only reveals a spy's deception, but coincidentally leads to evidence of a modern-day smuggling ring. Book 4 is *The Secrets Wrapped in Snow-A Christmas Mystery*.

Each book in the series presents a modern-day murder mystery intertwined with historic artifacts (both true and true-to-life). Every artifact “wants” to be uncovered—and its true meaning helps to solve the present-day mystery. Additional books in the series are also in development.

“Who knew a rummage sale could be so interesting? Or so dangerous? Crisafulli has given us the perfect cozy—an intriguing mystery, characters to root for, and a setting that is both familiar yet unique. And a bit more—the character complexity and exquisite writing of a literary novel. A gem of a book.” – Sam Hill, co-author of the bestseller Radical Marketing, and author of the critically acclaimed mysteries Buzz Monkey and Buzz Riff

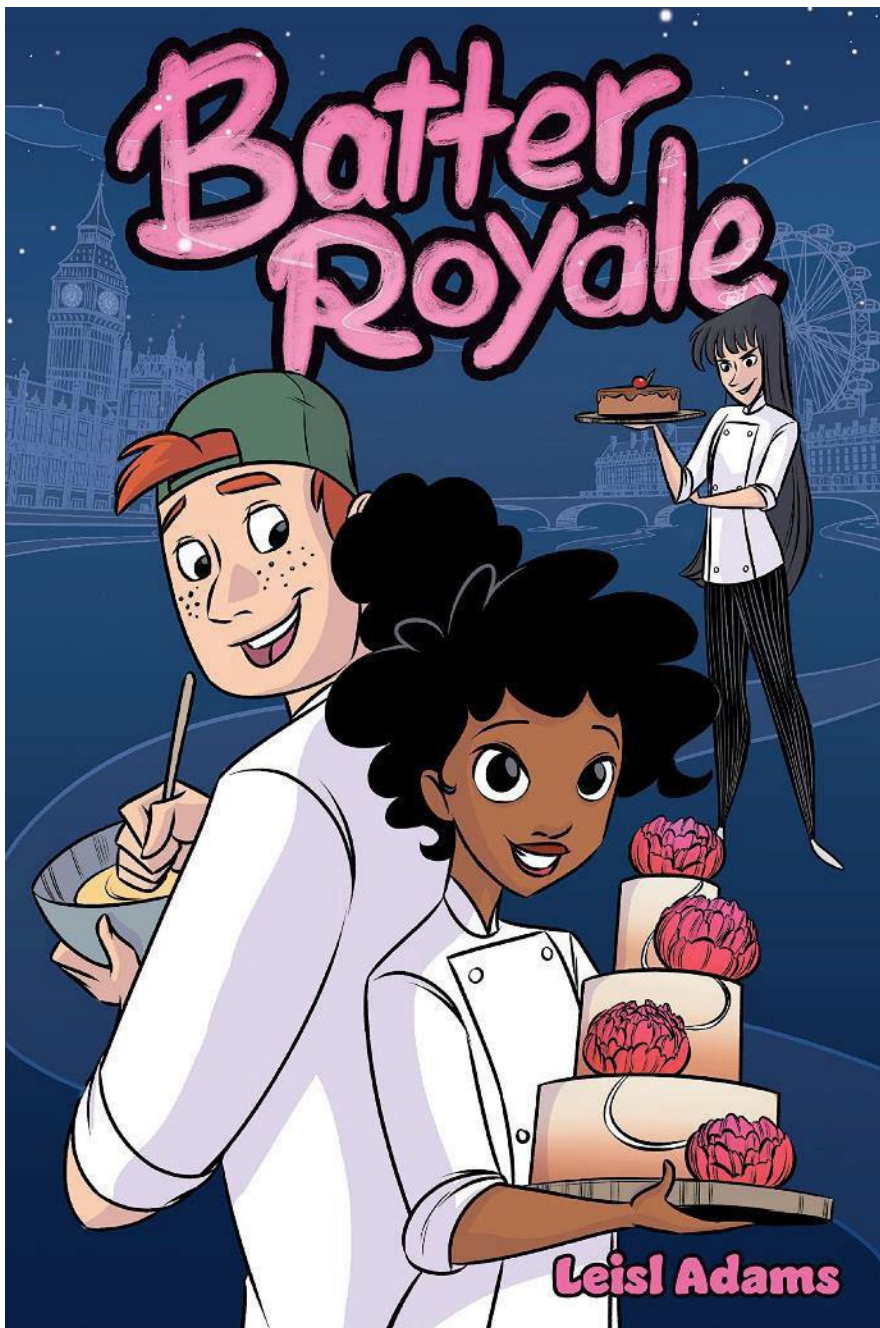
Patricia Crisafulli has crafted an engrossing and erudite novel which was satisfying on many levels, perhaps especially for its well-drawn characters and finely wrought plot.” Christine Sneed, author of Little Known Facts and Please Be Advised: A Novel in Memos

“Patricia Crisafulli expertly creates a suspenseful and intriguing story of a small community and its library in upstate New York harboring a valuable Medieval cross in its complicated history.”– Michele Weldon, award-winning author of I Closed My Eyes, Escape Points, and Act Like You're Having A Good Time

www.Faithhopeandfiction.com

Interview with author <https://tinyurl.com/3wafsw3c>

GRAPHIC NOVELS



BATTER ROYALE

Written and Illustrated by

Leisl Adams

YA Graphic Novel –
Publishing with Abrams in 2022

Baking competition romantic comedy.

17-year-old Rose is a waitress and aspiring chef with a secret love of inventing desserts. Fred is an apprentice chef stuck working at his mother's failing restaurant, the Quayga Diner. When a popular food magazine critic walks through the door, Rose and Fred impress her with their baking skills, and she invites them to travel to London to enter a cutthroat reality baking contest called Winner's Dozen. What have they got to lose?

The competition is an intense 10 days of strange challenges, fierce

rivalry, and backstage drama. Rose and Fred are completely in over their heads! Their main rival, Misty, will lie, cheat, and ruin relationships in order to win, and when Rose almost loses a round, and Fred's family's restaurant goes into foreclosure, the team's stability is threatened.

Batter Royale is a fish-out-of-water style comedy with a bit of *The Hunger Games* thrown in. Geared toward teen female readers and lovers of the Great British Baking Show, it's about climbing out of the circumstances you're in and realizing that you don't need to be cutthroat to get ahead.

Nominated for the Forest of Reading Red Maple Award!

<https://leisladams.com/>

The Other Side of Tomorrow

Written by Tina Cho, illustrated by Deborah Lee

Middle Grade Graphic Novel – Publishing with Harper Alley in 2023

Background: The Asian Underground Railroad is a secret network of safe houses designed to help people escape an oppressive, impoverished country and find freedom in a safer, healthier place. After hearing about the AUR, author Tina Cho interviewed two AUR refugees, as well as one of the organizers of the operation. Their accounts kicked off months of research, which Cho funneled into the poignant, unforgettable story, **The Other Side of Tomorrow**, which won second place in Scholastic Asia’s novel writing competition in 2016.

Description: When North Koreans are caught trying to flee their country, they’re repatriated and imprisoned in brutal concentration camps. So, when shy, resourceful Yunho and fierce Joo Ri resolve to run away from the bleak futures they face, they know their lives are at stake. After making it to the first safehouse, they change their appearance—they gain weight, Joo Ri cuts her hair short, and they are provided with a new wardrobe that will help them blend in. They face many trials on the AUR route—poisonous jungle snakes, midnight boat trips, a sprained ankle, imprisonment, corrupt soldiers, and the daily fear of being found out and sent back.

www.TinaMCho.com



YOUNG ADULT NOVELS

ONLY THE STARS:

The Diary of a Teenage Nobody

by Charles Ghigna
Young Adult Novel-in-Verse

A teenage poet bears her soul in a diary over the course of a year. Like others her age, Stella is smart, caring, and sensitive yet searching for herself and the elusive thing called Love in this coming-of-age story. Stella lives with her single Mom and beloved rescue dog, Daisy. Each night, Stella pours out her heart in her secret diary, recording the day's events, but her inner voice must also release the raw, gut-punching, even sensual poems which take the reader deeper, and give a more personal look behind the scenes into the emotional rollercoaster of life. Stella records the joys and heartbreaks she experiences over a year, beginning with a clandestine summer romance, a lonely autumn, a new love in winter, and a beautiful ending of hope and self-discovery in spring.

*"I'm nobody. Who are you?
Are you nobody too?"
—Emily Dickinson*



Charles Ghigna is a best-selling author and poet of more than 100 books from Disney, Random House, Scholastic, Simon & Schuster, Time, Inc. and other publishers. He has written more than 5,000 poems for children and adults appearing in anthologies, textbooks, syndicated newspapers, and magazines ranging from Harper's and The New Yorker to Highlights for Children and Cricket. He served as poet-in-residence at the Alabama School of Fine Arts, instructor of creative writing at Samford University, poetry editor of the English Journal for the National Council of Teachers of English, and as a nationally syndicated feature writer for Tribune Media Services. Ghigna has read his poems at The Library of Congress, The John F. Kennedy Center, American Library in Paris, American School in Paris, the International Schools of South America, Indigenous Schools of Alaska, and conferences, libraries, book events, and schools throughout the U.S. and overseas. For more information: www.FatherGoose.com

More Than a Thief

by Beverly Patt

Young Adult Historical Fiction

Publishing with Owl Hollow Press in 2023



The Lizzie Borden case from the perspective of her next-door neighbor.

In 1893, in the large, bustling town of Fall River, Massachusetts, 16-year-old Victoria Robbins feels trapped by her high-society, pre-debutante life. Not only does she require a chaperone to do anything outside of the house, but she is also stuck playing nursemaid to her mother suffering from an unexplained paralysis. Victoria's only escapes are visits with her best friend Gwyne and her neighbor Miss Lizzie Borden, reading Sherlock Holmes serials and—when the urge overtakes her—stealing.

When her next-door neighbors Mr. and Mrs. Borden are murdered and Lizzie is accused of committing the acts, Victoria begins crossing paths with young apprentice detective Declan Dempsey as they both search for the truth. Lizzie couldn't have committed those murders—could she have? Victoria debates with herself. If her friend Lizzie has a dark side—then what does that mean for Victoria, who has her own sordid secret?

Victoria goes to extraordinary lengths to give up her kleptomania, a penchant she shares with neighbor and accused murderess, Lizzie Borden. In her quest to not become Lizzie Borden, Victoria loses old friends, makes questionable new ones and finds her fiercest enemy resides within her own skin. Interspersed with real newspaper articles, the reader feels like they are experiencing the murder trial as it's happening in real time.



Beverly Patt is the author of *Best Friends Forever: A World War II Scrapbook*. She has a master's degree in special education and taught at a school for abused and neglected children. Because of the wide range in her classroom, Bev realized the one activity her students could all do together was to listen, so she made a point of reading to them every day, and then began writing stories herself.

www.BeverlyPatt.com



Mostly Their Fault:

Elva and Chester Shred History

Y/A Science Fantasy

By

Adrian Archangelo

(pen name for NYT/International Bestselling author)

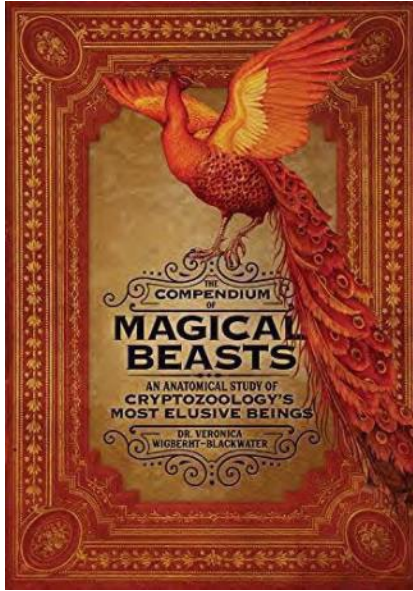
On Submission

Elva and Chester are space aliens who appear to be human 17 year old teenagers but have been here on Earth since the year 1100 with the goal of helping humanity develop more empathy and compassion. (The rest of the beings in the galaxy don't want us flying around out there until we do!) The duo have no human habits to contend with, but they are extraordinarily responsive to chocolate and hold it in special regard. However, Elva and Chester find human behavior baffling, and continually see their plans twisted by human responses. Consequently nearly every wrong on planet Earth over the past thousand years was caused by one of their historic debacles that include, but are not limited to, why the Leaning Tower of Pisa leans, the spread of the Black Plague, both World Wars and unsuccessfully battling the Salem Witch Trials..

When the story opens, their bosses have shown up on Earth to express their outrage because the human race is so far behind the goal. The Overloards intend to deflect another of those big asteroids into Earth's path, just as they did to get rid of those pesky dinosaurs, and wipe out humanity once and for all. Elva and Chester demand an appeal, but will they be able to save the planet and its human inhabitants?

See the original song composed and sung by the author, to accompany the theme of this book, here:

<https://youtu.be/dURI-0SS3Ys>



The Compendium of Magical Beasts

Young Adult

By Dr. Veronica Wigberht-Blackwater

Written by Melissa Brinks

Illustrated by Lily Seika Jones

*“When explaining a crashed ship and lost cargo, it is perhaps more acceptable to claim beautiful maidens tempted you to the shore rather than an overindulgence in alcohol or falling asleep at the mast.” – From Dr. Veronica Wigberht-Blackwater’s findings on mermaids in **The Compendium of Magical Beasts***

The Compendium of Magical Beasts, written by Melissa Brinks and illustrated by Lily Jones, publishing with Running Press in Fall 2018, is a gorgeous coffee table book that compiles the fictitious findings of Dr. Veronica Wigberht-Blackwater, a fictional cryptozoologist who studied the anatomy of magical creatures.

The Compendium of Magical Beasts follows the fictitious academic career of Dr. Veronica Wigberht-Blackwater, a 1920s Era biologist, folklorist, and investigator of magical beasts. Her work is tinged with societal commentary and scientific analysis; her complex identity as a young female, Native American academic framing the edges of her research. With the scientific community chastising her research as silly and delusional, Dr. Veronica struggles to find the funds for her research, until she crosses paths with a wealthy businessman who is intrigued by her research and invests in it. But the financial backing comes at a price: she must let him come with her on her adventures as she tracks unicorns through thick and foggy forests, stalks vampires in Romania and resists the allures of sensuous sirens. And his financial backing will only last a year’s salary.

In over her head with the volume of work she’d like to accomplish in a year’s time, Dr. Veronica places an ad in a paper for an assistant, which introduces her to the artistically talented but easily distracted flapper who serves as her comedic relief sidekick and illustrator. As a bisexual Native American woman, she faces racism and sexism as well as the frequent necessity of keeping her romantic interests hidden. *The Compendium of Magical Beasts* is ripe for complex characters, an intriguing love triangle, and an element of light fantasy that blends together with science in a delightful way.

Each episode is a globe-trotting adventure where Dr. Veronica, her illustrator sidekick, and their financial backing focus on seeking out one magical creature in their natural habitat, in order to study and observe them.

For fans of *The Shape of Water*’s fairytale examination of bigotry, *Miss Fisher’s Murder Mysteries*’ charming characters and setting, the wonder and magic of *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, and a center around a complex and lovable character like *Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, *The Compendium of Magical Beasts* offers a fascinating show full of adventure, whimsy and heart.

<https://melissabrinks.com>

www.lilyseikajones.com

MIDDLE GRADE NOVELS

OLIVETTI

By Allie Millington

Middle Grade - Feiwel & Friends – Winter 2024 release



Being a **typewriter** is not as easy as it looks. Surrounded by books (notorious attention hogs) and recently replaced by a computer, OLIVETTI has been forgotten by the Brindle family—the humans he’s lived with for years. The Brindles have become busy creatures: Felix and Beatrice work constantly, three of their children put the *extra* in extra curriculars, and Ernest, their reclusive, guarded twelve year old, goes off alone to read his collection of Oxford English Dictionaries. The least they could do was remember OLIVETTI once in a while, since he remembers every single word they’ve typed on him. It’s a thankless job, keeping memories alive.

OLIVETTI gets a rare glimpse of action from Beatrice, his used-to-be most frequent visitor—only for her to drop him off at

Heartland Pawn Shop and leave him helplessly behind.

It isn’t until Ernest spots him in the shop window, that OLIVETTI learns **Beatrice has mysteriously gone missing**. OLIVETTI believes he can help find her *and* prove he’s more than just some pawn. He breaks the only rule of his ‘kind’ and **types back to Ernest, divulging Beatrice’s memories stored inside him**.

Their search takes them across **San Francisco—typing on toilet seats, dodging a dumpster-diving girl, and sure, committing a few minor felonies**. As OLIVETTI spills out the past, Ernest is forced to face what **he and his family have been running from, *The Everything That Happened***. Only by working together will they **find Beatrice, friendship, and the parts of themselves they’ve lost**.

This Middle Grade magical realism story is told from the unique vantage points of a witty **typewriter** and a lonely, introverted boy—both of whom **discover their voice and belonging**. It’s full of humor, heart, and the magic of memories.



About the Author:

Allie is an author, artist, and has been known to be spotted foraging in the woods. Growing up, every day after school she’d throw a ball against a wall for hours on end, speaking stories into existence. (Much later she discovered she shared this childhood quirk with Judy Bloom, which made her feel less crazy).

At eighteen, Allie moved from Atlanta to England, where she worked in a secondary school, and eventually met her husband. In their first three years of marriage, they moved to Brazil to serve in classrooms and soccer fields, then became house parents for young adults in Foster Care back in Atlanta. She can never get enough of middle schoolers, though, so she also works part time as the

program coordinator for a non-profit that mentors under-resourced students.

Olivetti is Allie’s debut novel.

NO ORDINARY THING

By Gail Zhuang-Schmidt

Holiday House
Middle Grade Novel



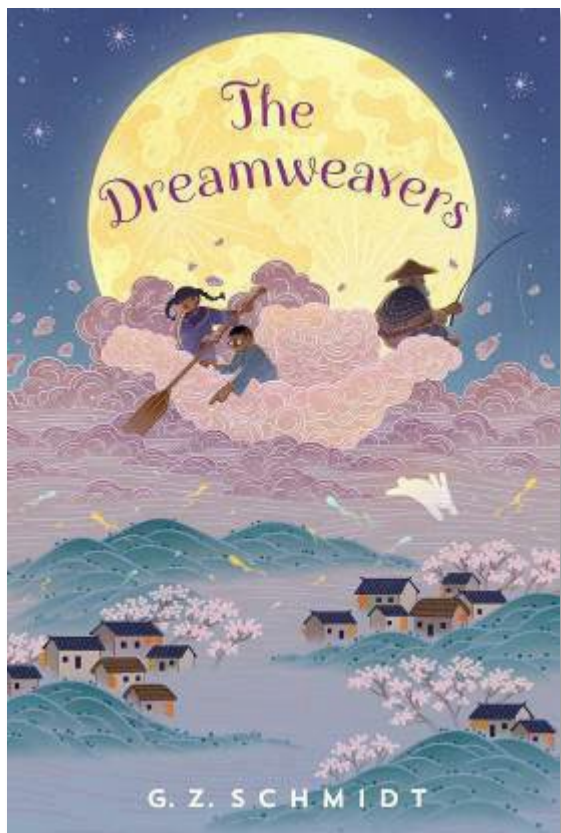
A boy finds a time traveling snow globe that unravels the mysteries of his hidden past.

In 1908 New York, magician Elbert the Excellent invents special candles that outlast all others on the market. When he's scammed of the candles by a shrewd and greedy business tycoon, Elbert begins a long quest to seek the hidden secrets of time travel in order to take vengeance.

One century later, 12-year-old Adam LeeTripp discovers a magic snow globe that takes him on a series of journeys through time. Strangely, each individual Adam encounters through the snow globe has a past that is interwoven with his own including a girl who plays in cemeteries, and a runaway candle seller. Tying their histories together is an abandoned candle factory, a factory that claimed multiple lives in a tragic fire years ago. A stranger from the factory's disturbing past shows up with his own ideas. The stranger seems to know every last detail about Adam and wants the snow globe for his own nefarious purposes, no matter the cost.

Told in multiple frame stories and timelines, **No Ordinary Thing**, connects two narratives and unravels the mysteries behind each. With a touch of whimsical narration, interwoven narratives, and adventure, Candlelight is great for fans of *The Inventions of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick, *Echo* by Pam Muñoz Ryan's, and Ross Welford's *Time Traveling with a Hamster*. www.gzwrites.com

Review by PW: <https://www.publishersweekly.com/9780823444229>



THE DREAMWEAVERS

by G.Z. Schmidt

Middle Grade Fantasy –Holiday House

**Starred book review from School Library Journal*

<https://www.slj.com/?reviewDetail=the-dreamweavers>

Foreword Reviews called her debut *No Ordinary Thing* "no ordinary time travel story; it contains timeless lessons on friendship, bravery, and letting go."

-Booklist Schmidt has nicely woven Chinese mythology and history into a fantastic adventure. Readers will find themselves entranced by Schmidt's writing, which will draw them in much in the same way that a storyteller captivates listeners when retelling a folktale

[Publisher Weekly Children's Book Review: The Dreamweavers by G.Z. Schmidt. Holiday House, \\$17.99 \(272p\) ISBN 978-0-8234-4423-6 \(publishersweekly.com\)](#)

Twin siblings' journey through the City of Ashes and visit the Jade Rabbit to save their grandpa in this Chinese folklore-inspired fantasy adventure.

Since their parents' strange disappearance several years ago, 12-year-old twins Mei and Yun been raised by their grandfather, who makes the best mooncakes around using a secret ingredient.

On the day of the Mid-Autumn Harvest Festival, the Emperor sends his son to sample Grandpa's renowned mooncakes--but instead of tasting wonderful, they are horrible and bitter, strangely mirroring the odd, gloomy atmosphere and attitudes that have been washing over the village in the last few days. Grandpa is arrested for insulting and harming the prince, and Mei and Yun realize they are the only two people who will come to Grandpa's aid.

The twins set out on foot for the long journey to the emperor's palace where Grandpa's being taken, but a surprising stop in the eerie City of Ashes, a visit with the legendary, mystical Jade Rabbit, and an encounter with a powerful poet whose enchanted words spread curses, influence just how Mei and Yun will manage to clear their grandfather's name.

About the author: G.Z. Schmidt was born in China and immigrated to the United States when she was six. She grew up in the Midwest and the South where she chased fireflies, listened for tornado warnings, and pursued a love of reading. In the third grade, she began writing stories in a spiral-bound notebook, and never looked back. She currently lives in California with her husband and their tuxedo cat.

PICTURE BOOKS

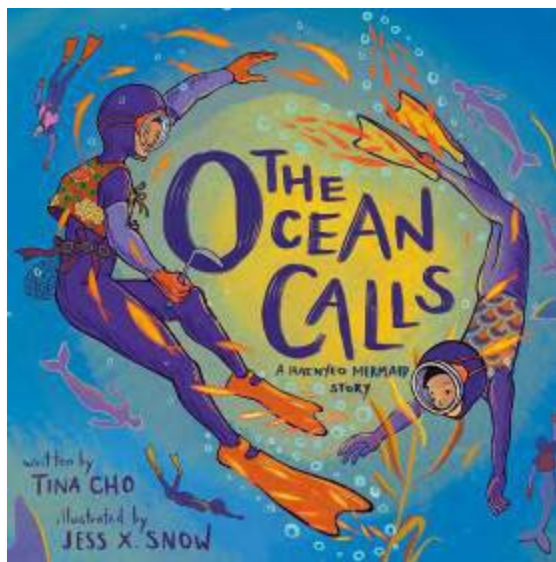
***This book was bought by Netflix for a one hour animated special and MLM got all rights back in turnaround when Netflix cancelled all childrens animation programming.**



THE OCEAN CALLS: A Haenyeo Mermaid Story

Written by Tina Cho

Picture Book – Publishing with Kokila (Penguin Random House)



***A Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection**

Kirkus: www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/tina-m-cho/the-ocean-calls/?fbclid=IwAR2KXuzDWTWV-NeHMTgDhgqmcV_j1Mo0AfQjBLU-ZusicdMRwzbO-95EyMg&page=3

Publishers Weekly: <https://www.publishersweekly.com/978-1-984814-86-9>

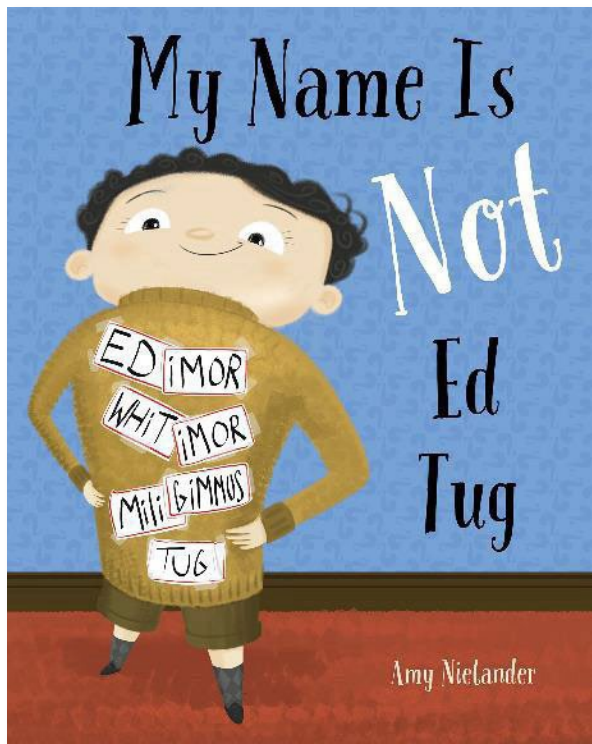
Booklist: <https://www.booklistonline.com/The-Ocean-Calls-A-Haenyeo-Mermaid-Story-Jess-X-Snow/pid=9732520?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>

A breathtaking picture book featuring a Korean girl and her Haenyeo (free diving) grandmother about intergenerational bonds, finding courage in the face of fear, and connecting with our natural world.

Dayeon wants to be a haenyeo just like Grandma. The haenyeo dive off the coast of Jeju Island to pluck treasures from the sea--generations of Korean women have done so for centuries. To Dayeon, the haenyeo are as strong and graceful as mermaids. To give her strength, Dayeon eats Grandma's abalone porridge. She practices holding her breath while they do the dishes. And when Grandma suits up for her next dive, Dayeon grabs her suit, flippers, and goggles. A scary memory of the sea keeps Dayeon clinging to the shore, but with Grandma's guidance, Dayeon comes to appreciate the ocean's many gifts.

Tina Cho's *The Ocean Calls*, with luminous illustrations by muralist Jess X. Snow, is a classic in the making.

www.TinaMCho.com



MY NAME IS NOT ED TUG

by author/illustrator Amy Nielander

Picture Book – West Margin Press, 2022

From Amy Nielander, the author-illustrator of *Gramma's Hug* comes a whimsical exploration about the meaningfulness behind a person's name and the power of accepting people just as they are.

Edimorwhitimormiligimmus Tug has a very special name that is all his own. But his teacher thinks it's too long, too hard to say, and too difficult to spell. One day

she decides he must shorten it to. . . Ed.

He loves his name just the way it is, though. So he comes up with a plan: if he teaches everyone at school his name, then his teacher and the whole class will learn and love it too!

Steeped in family love, *My Name is Not Ed Tug* empowers young readers to own their identities and proudly celebrate who they are.

About the creator: Amy Nielander is a designer and award-winning children's book author and illustrator who loves to create playful stories for kids. She is the recipient of the IPPY Bronze Medal Book Award and a Silent Book Finalist, and her work has traveled all the way to Milan, Italy, for exhibition. Growing up, she had her name frequently misspelled by others. Her picture book *My Name is Not Ed Tug* was inspired by this experience and by her time volunteering in her children's classrooms. Amy lives near Detroit, Michigan. You can see more of her work here:

<https://www.amynielander.com>

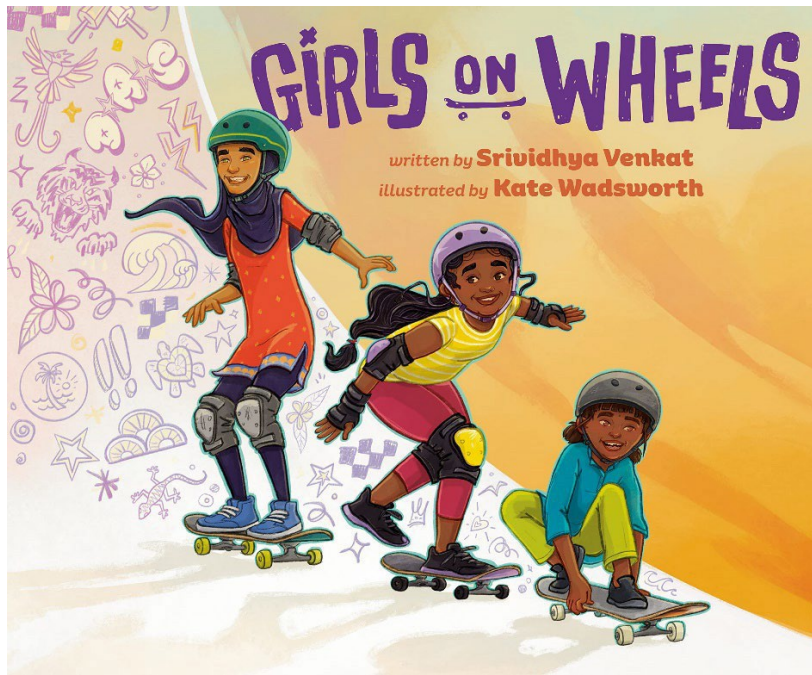
Book Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/752065811>

GIRLS ON WHEELS

Written by Srividhya Venkat, illustrated by Kate Wadsworth

Picture Book – Kokila, 2023

Chosen as a Junior Library Guild Selection



Inspired by the skateboarding revolution in India, this picture book follows three friends from different walks of life who come together in their special place—the skate park—and support one another through the ups and downs of learning to skateboard.

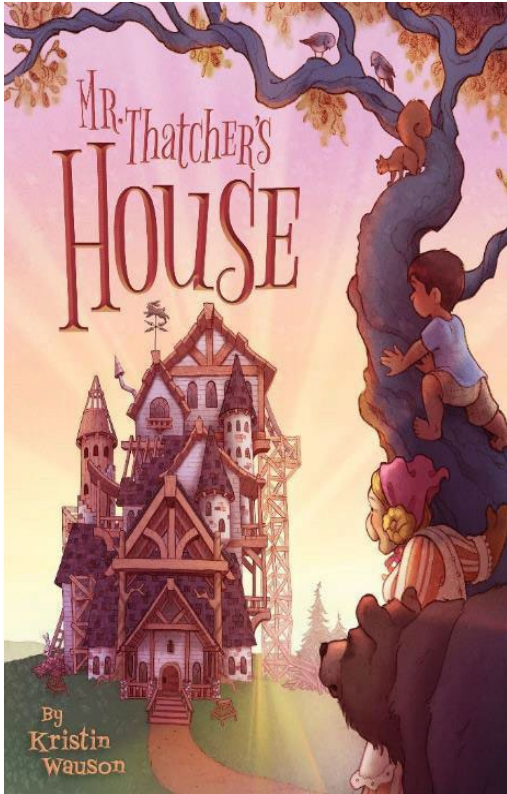
About the creator: Srividhya Venkat's first story was illustrated and published by her brother when she was eight years old. Then she grew up to be just another adult. But after reading several books to her children, she became a child once more and began to weave stories again. Today, she is a children's author and oral storyteller who loves to create and share stories about our big, beautiful world where everyone is different, yet same-same.

Connect with her at www.srividhyavenkat.com

MR. THATCHER'S HOUSE

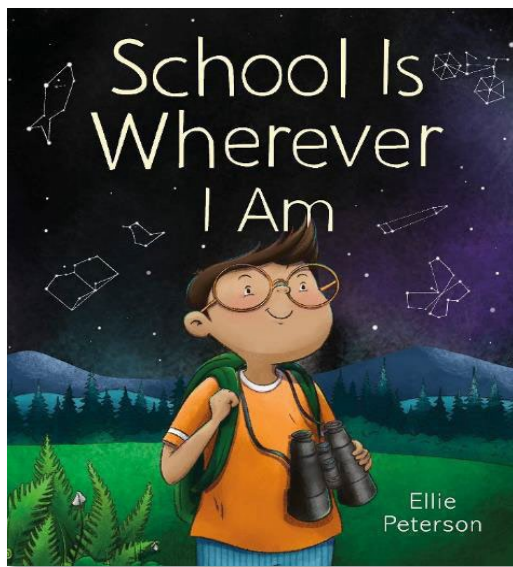
by author/illustrator Kristin Wauson

Picture Book – Publishing with Sleeping Bear Press



Mr. Thatcher has been working to build the perfect house. And working. And working . . . and so, quite by accident, the house grows and grows in size. But it never seems quite like home. When a crowd of characters from his storybook neighborhood show up looking for a place to stay, Mr. Thatcher cries "It's not perfect yet! You don't want to stay here!" But soon he finds that what makes a house a perfect home has nothing to do with the craftsmanship and everything to do with the friends and family inside it.

About the creator: MR. THATCHER'S HOUSE is Kristin's debut picture book, inspired by her father-in-law who has been working on his house for decades, and it never quite seems to be finished. Kristin's work can be found on her website at www.kristinwauson.com



SCHOOL IS WHEREVER I AM

by author/illustrator Ellie Peterson

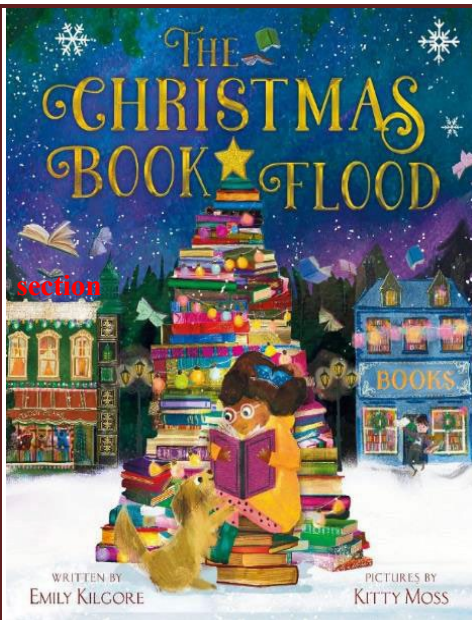
Picture Book –Roaring Book Press

Thought-provoking, inspiring, and likely to resonate with students adjusting to pandemic life.—Booklist

★ **Library Journal** K-Gr 2—In this quiet, message-driven story, young readers are reminded that learning can happen outside of the classroom. As a young boy considers all the reasons he loves school, he wonders where else learning might take place. Could school be in the visit to the zoo or at the aquarium with his classmates, or in the kitchen making pot stickers with his grandma? Does school have to be in a school building with other students, or could it also be alone at home or on the computer screen? Could school even be in the times when a problem needs to be solved and an apology needs to be made? Following the narrator through his day, young readers will see many ways they can continue learning outside of school. With only one sentence per page, the brightly colored cartoon illustrations do the majority of the storytelling. These generally cheerful scenes help maintain a lighter tone, even while discussing a serious, even provocative topic. Of special importance is the author's inclusion of online learning and at-home learning.

In this charming, thoughtful picture book, author-illustrator Ellie Peterson explores learning, adventure, and the thousands of the things you can discover outside of a classroom—about the world, about your family, about yourself. Because school is truly wherever you are. Inspired by Ellie Peterson's experiences as a middle school teacher during the COVID-19 pandemic and the creative places she saw her students learn.

About the creator: Ellie Peterson is a picture book author, illustrator, and science teacher living in the Seattle area. She is the author/illustrator of many picture books including *SCHOOL IS WHEREVER I AM* (Roaring Brook Press, 2022), *HOW TO HUG A PUFFERFISH* (Roaring Brook Press, 2022), *SANDCASTLES ARE FOREVER* (Roaring Brook Press, 2023), *IT'S A ROUND, ROUND WORLD* (Boyd's Mills Kane, 2019) and *THE REASON FOR THE SEASONS* (Boyd's Mills Kane, 2020). She was also the illustrator for *BEA'S BEES* (Schiffer, 2019) and *HOME IS CALLING* (WorthyKids, 2023). Her work is inspired by her experiences teaching STEM, her upbringing as a biracial army brat, and her adventures in parenting. She is the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion coordinator for the Western Washington chapter of SCBWI. You can see more of her work here: www.elliepetersonart.com



2022 Indie Bestseller list at #12 in Childrens illustrated

THE CHRISTMAS BOOK FLOOD

by Emily Kilgore, illustrated by Kitty Moss

Farrar, Straus & Giroux Children's

The Christmas Book Flood is an ode to books. Based on a true Icelandic tradition—Jólabókaflóðið, where Icelanders gift each other books on Christmas Eve and spend all night reading and sipping hot chocolate. It's seeped in wintry wonder, holiday cheer and the magic of gifting loved ones the perfect book.

About the creative team: Emily Kilgore is the author of THE WHATIFS (Little Bee Books, 2020), and THE IHEARDS (Little Bee, 2022), as well as THE CHRISTMAS BOOK FLOOD (FSG Children's, 2022). She can be found [on Twitter](#) or [on her website](#). Kitty Moss is an Irish artist whose debut picture book WHERE BONE? published with Page Street kids in 2020. Her dazzling art can be found on Instagram at [@misskittymoss](#) or [her website](#).

Starred Review from Kirkus



As winter settles across a beautiful land, people prepare for the tradition of gifting books on Christmas Eve. They pore over bulletins and bookstore shelves to plan the perfect choices for family and friends. Scenes of holiday cheer and tight-knit community abound as the day approaches. Then, people stream into the bookshop to make their long-awaited purchases. A young brown-skinned child even makes a last-minute discovery, having found the perfect book "to bring loved ones joy." Everyone heads home for a marvelous celebration among festive decorations, sparkling lights, sumptuous food, and many loving hugs. After, they all settle in for "the best part of all"—cozy snuggles by the hearth with hot chocolate and hours of reading their new treasures. Kilgore depicts the Icelandic tradition of Jólabókaflóðið, or "Christmas Book Flood," in loving, magical terms (more historical information is provided in an author's note). The art adds old-world charm while leading the narrative through blue-tinted winter nights and warm, homey interiors. Moss' lovely, heavily saturated colors seem to evoke old Currier and Ives prints with their detail to scenic landscapes, while collaged images of newsprint like pages add texture and fun. These captivating illustrations depict a family of four (one parent and two children are brown-skinned; one parent is light-skinned) as the story's focus among a racially diverse country town. Marvelously enchanting. (Picture book. 4-8)

THE WORLD'S LONGEST SOCK

Written and illustrated by Juliann Law / WorthyKids

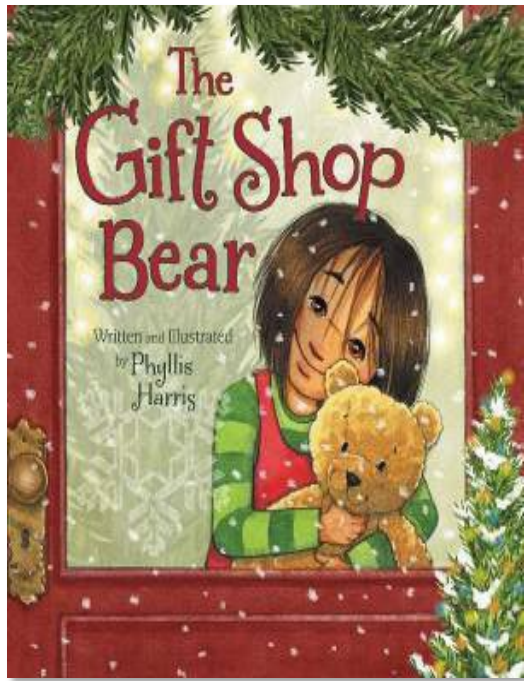
“There are plenty of purls of wisdom from this clever competition, no knitting knowledge required.”--Kirkus



Nana Nina in Chile started knitting a sock and never really stopped. The sock grew so long that it won the World Record for “The World’s Longest Sock!” Everyone is happy for her, except for Chuck, a lonely lumberman on the other side of the world in New Zealand who also happens to be knitting a very long sock. When he sees Nina’s news on the TV, he is determined to out-knit Nana Nina and beat her world record. And he does! But then she vies to reclaim her record...

Nana Nina and Chuck the Lumberman begin a battle of the knittest to see who can finally hold onto the world record—for good. The world takes sides: Team Nina or Team Chuck. Things get out of control, and it’s going to take a miracle to get either of them to lay down their knitting needles and end the knitting war.

www.JuliannLaw.com



THE GIFT SHOP BEAR

by author/illustrator Phyllis Harris

Picture Book –WorthyKids, 2021

Discover the power of friendship in this nostalgic Christmas tale of a young girl and her furry friend—perfect for fans of *The Velveteen Rabbit*, *Corduroy*, and *The Polar Express*.

All year long, Bear watches from his spot in the attic as the seasons change, waiting for the first snowflakes that signify Christmas is coming. You see, at Christmastime, Bear gets to join his special friend, Annie, in the festivities in her grandma's gift shop. But this year is different—the gift shop is closing and Bear's future seems uncertain.

Will Bear see Annie and Nana again? The heartwarming conclusion will make this story a family favorite at Christmastime each year.

Author-illustrator Phyllis Harris brings a warmth and coziness to her art and storytelling that give the book the timeless feel of a Christmas classic.

Granddaughter finds old teddy bear in Kansas City area attic — and inspires new book:

www.kansascity.com/entertainment/books/article256044297.html

Watch book trailer here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1AaRKWlsPik>

<https://www.phyllisharris.com>



HER NAME WAS MARY KATHERINE:

**The Only Woman Whose Name Appears on
the Declaration of Independence**

Text by Ella Schwartz

Illustrations by Dow Phumirok

Christy Ottaviano Books/Macmillan

George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Hancock. These are the names most people associate with the American Revolution. Rarely do people think of influential women who impacted the founding of America. That's because their contributions have been largely ignored.

One such brave woman was Mary Katharine Goddard. Her name is the only woman's name that appears on an official copy of the Declaration of Independence. While she wasn't a signer of the Declaration, her role in the fight for our nation's freedom is equally important to our nation's history—yet Mary Katharine Goddard is barely recognized in history. This fierce patriot should be celebrated as one of our nation's Founding Mothers, but her legacy has faded into obscurity.

Mary Katharine Goddard defied societal norms of her time. While most colonial women barely learned how to read and write, Mary Katharine operated a successful printing business. She went on to run several colonial newspapers, including the influential Maryland Journal, which printed news of the Revolutionary War. She fought for the freedom of the press before the First Amendment was drafted. She campaigned fiercely for liberty and was as staunch a patriot as any of the Founding Fathers. When she was bestowed the honor of printing an official version of the Declaration of Independence, she boldly added her name to the document, announcing to the world that she was ready to sacrifice her life for the vision of America she so strongly cherished. It's time the world learned about Mary Katharine Goddard. Businesswoman, Journalist, Revolutionary, Patriot.

Ella Schwartz is the author of four upcoming middle grade books including **CAN YOU CRACK THE CODE? A FASCINATING HISTORY OF CIPHERS AND CRYPTOGRAPHY** (Bloomsbury, 2019). Ella is a cybersecurity specialist interfacing with the U.S. federal government on strategic technology initiatives. Read more about Ella at www.ellasbooks.com . Dow Phumirok is an award-winning illustrator.

Soaring in Style

By Jennifer Lane Wilson
Illustrated by Lissy Marlin
Capstone, February 2022

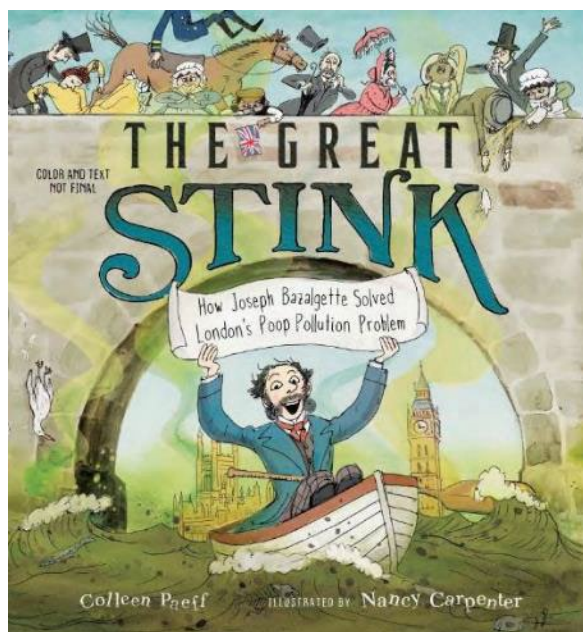


Long before Amelia Earhart became a superstar, she was a girl who longed to touch the stars. But the dresses women had to wear at the time made those dreams seem almost impossible. Amelia didn't let that stop her. As a young aviator breaking records and expectations, she learned to fly her plane with flair. Later, she dared to create a trendsetting fashion line for active women like herself. Soaring in Style tells the groundbreaking story of how Amelia Earhart defied expectations in the air and on the ground to become America's first celebrity fashion designer.

THE GREAT STINK HOW JOSEPH BAZALGETTE SOLVED LONDON'S POOP POLLUTION PROBLEM

**By Colleen Paeff, Illustrated by Nancy Carpenter
Margaret K. McElderry Books (Simon & Schuster)
March 2021**

2022 SCBWI Golden Kite Award for Best Nonfiction Children's Book for The Great Stink!



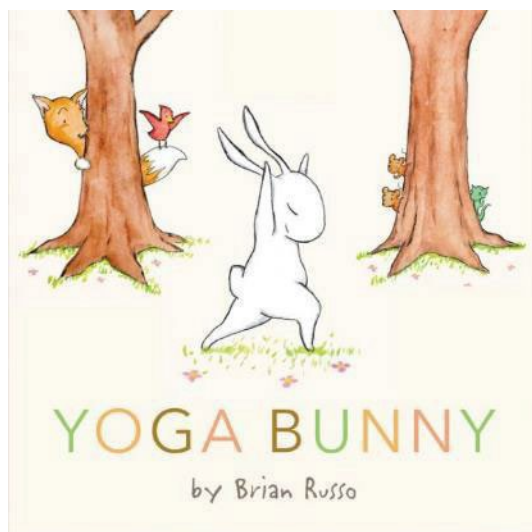
In the summer of 1858, London's River Thames STANK. What created such a revolting smell? No matter what you called it, the answer was gross: the river was full of poop. This funny and informative picture book tells the story of Joseph Bazalgette, a 19th century engineer who designed London's first comprehensive sewage system. In doing so, he saved thousands of lives from cholera outbreaks that regularly plagued the city. This STEM-focused story provides a window into the past and shows how one invention went on to affect generations to come-and teaches kids how they can prevent pollution in their own neighborhoods today.

★ "This informative exploration of London's sanitation history will delight nonfiction fans interested in history, ecology, biography, and more...Far from stinky." - Kirkus, STARRED review

★ "Colleen Paeff's debut is quite pleasant, despite the fact that she's writing about something best described as noxious...Together author and illustrator make a revolting topic utterly enticing." - Shelf Awareness, STARRED review

YOGA BUNNY

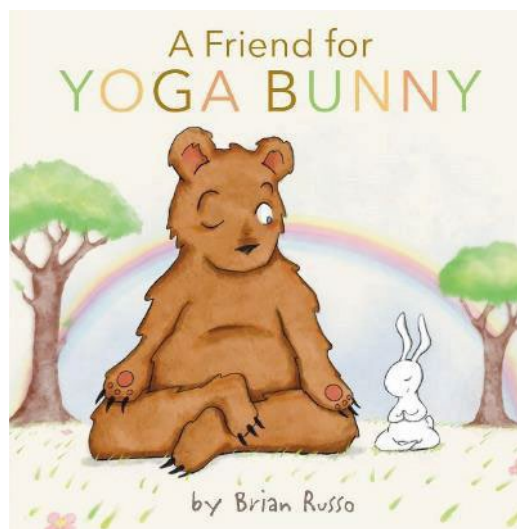
By Brian Russo



and

A FRIEND FOR YOGA BUNNY

HARPER COLLINS BOOKS



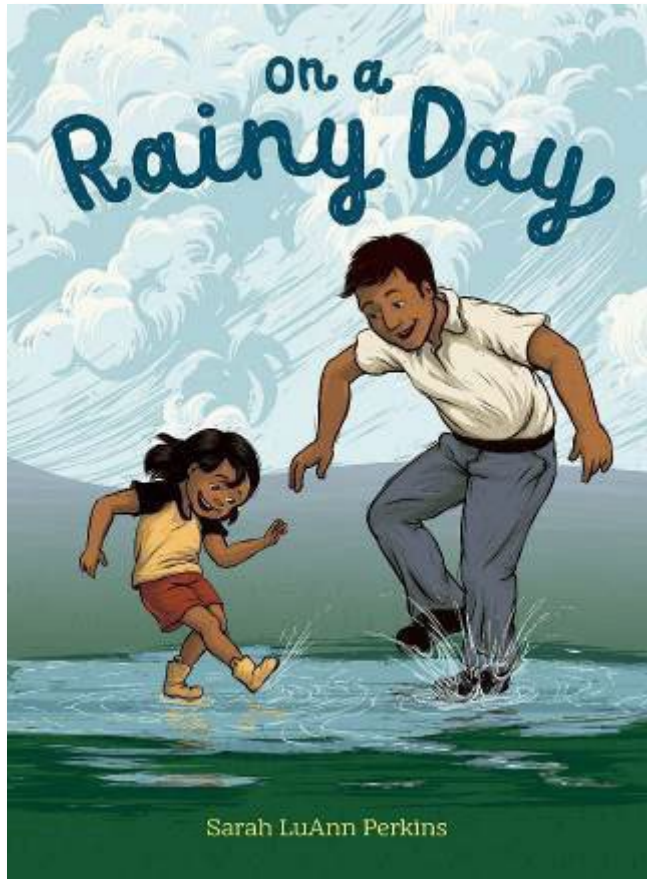
Yoga Bunny is Amazon Editors' pick for the top 20 best children's books of 2021!

It's a perfect day for yoga, and Bunny is practicing his poses when suddenly he bumps into bear. Bear is anxious because it's her birthday. Birthdays mean parties with big crowds, and big crowds make Bear nervous. To cheer her up, Bunny offers Bear a paw of friendship and shows her some yoga poses. But will it be enough for her special day?

Yoga poses, mindful practices, and new friends await in the tale filled with surprises at every turn!

Brian Russo, author/illustrator of *Yoga Bunny* and *A Friend for Yoga Bunny*, has been drawing since he can remember. He grew up in Short Hills, New Jersey, then moved to New York, where he earned a degree from NYU. Afterwards, he discovered something he loves just as much as drawing: doing yoga. He earned a teaching certificate from Yoga to the People in 2010, during which time he developed the Yoga Bunny illustrations. He now lives in Lehi, Utah (the setting of the film *Footloose*), with his beautiful wife, Emily, adorable son, Quill, and loyal dog, Spike. His favorite film is *Spirited Away*, and the celebrity he'd most like to meet is "Weird Al" Yankovic.

See more at RussoDraw.com



ON A RAINY DAY

by author/illustrator Sarah Luann Perkins

Picture Book – Publishing with
Viking Children's in 2022

A sweet story of a father and daughter's cozy day together as they wait for a storm to pass

When rain interrupts their outdoor play, a girl and her father retreat indoors to wait out the storm. As lightning cracks and thunder booms, they each have their own ideas of things they can do together on a rainy day.

Told through spare text and bold sound effects, Sarah LuAnn Perkins' unique linocut-like textured illustrations create a fun read-aloud experience for both reader and listener.

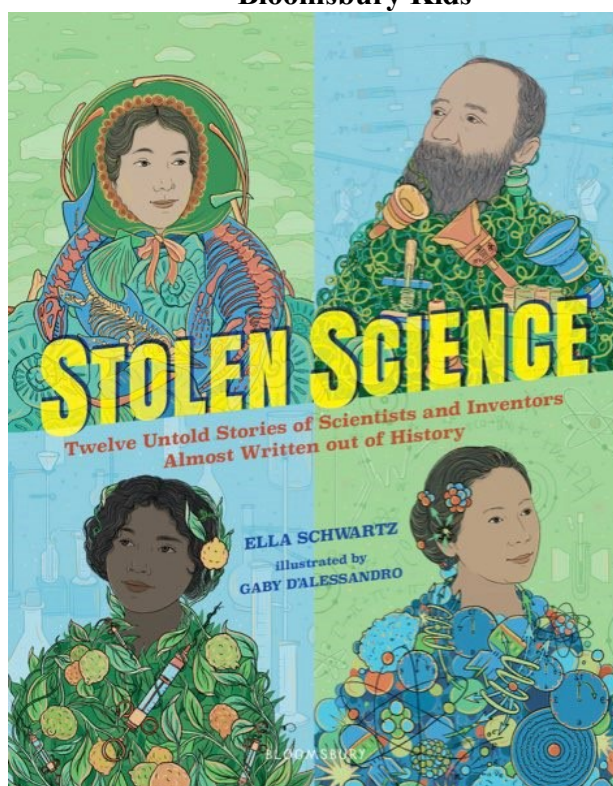
“A sonically rich story that captures the simple joys of rainy days at home.”--Kirkus

STOLEN SCIENCE HAS BEEN NAMED A FINALIST IN 2023 SUBARU AWARD FOR MG SCIENCE BOOKS!

STOLEN SCIENCE

The Untold Stories of the Scientists and Inventors Almost Written out of History

By Ella Schwartz
Bloomsbury Kids



Sometimes history is a big lie. Over the centuries, certain scientists and inventors have been overlooked time and again, not because their work wasn't brilliant, but because of who they were. For much of history, discriminated groups including women, minorities, and immigrants often had to claw their way past biases, only to have the credit for their discoveries stolen by their white, male colleagues. The goal of this book is to set the record straight and finally give credit where credit is due!

STOLEN SCIENCE: The Untold Stories of the Scientists and Inventors Almost Written out of History tells the stories of scientists not recognized for their work due to their race, gender, or ethnicity. *STOLEN SCIENCE* will celebrate the achievements of pioneering scientists who have paved the way for the next generation.

Written by established middle grade nonfiction author, Ella Schwartz, the creative mind behind *CAN YOU CRACK THE CODE? A FASCINATING HISTORY OF CIPHERS AND CRYPTOGRAPHY* (Bloomsbury 2019) and *MAKE THIS!* (Nat Geo 2019).

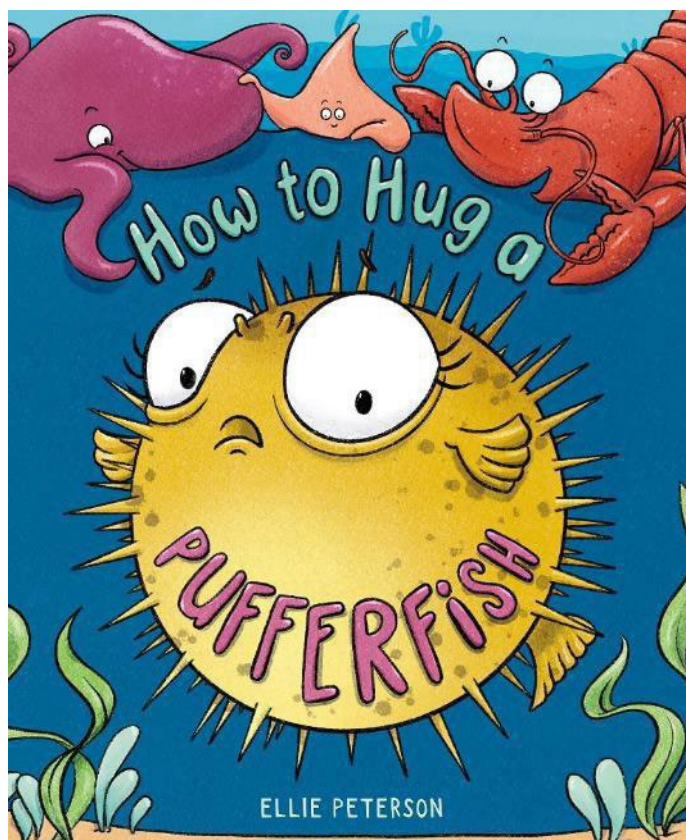
www.EllasBooks.com

See book trailer here: <https://youtu.be/yNCIYzA2yUE>

HOW TO HUG A PUFFERFISH

by Ellie Peterson

Picture Book – Publishing with Roaring Brook Press in 2022



Pufferfish values her personal space bubble. When she is hugged or touched unexpectedly by her friends, she puffs up into a giant spiky ball. It's not that Pufferfish doesn't ever want hugs—she just has a few ideas on how to make them even better!

HOW TO HUG A PUFFERFISH provides a practical look at consent, and Ellie explores this topic through the accessible lens of humor, in an attempt to peel back the layers of fear and stigma that can prevent people from talking about it.

About the creator: Ellie Peterson is a picture book author, illustrator, and science teacher living in the Seattle area. She is the author/illustrator of the Joulia Copernicus Book Series from Boyds Mills Kane—IT'S A ROUND, ROUND WORLD (2019) and THE REASON FOR THE SEASONS (2020). She was also the illustrator for BEA'S BEES by Katherine Pryor (Schiffer, 2019). Her work is inspired by her experiences teaching STEM, her upbringing as a biracial army brat, and her adventures in parenting. She is the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion coordinator for the Western Washington chapter of SCBWI. You can see more of her work here: www.elliepetersonart.com

"A winning look at body autonomy; one of the best you will....sea."--Kirkus



HALAL HOT DOGS

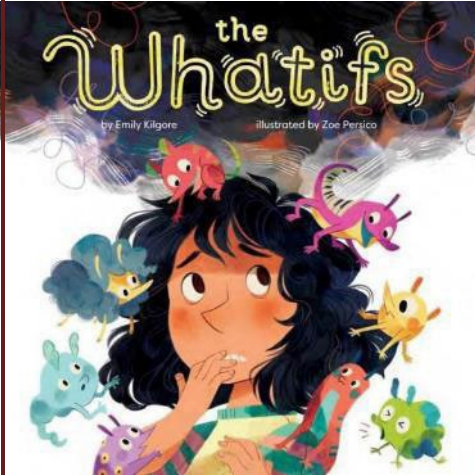
by Susannah Aziz, illustrated by Parwinder Singh

Picture Book –Little Bee Books

"Musa's enthusiasm for halal hot dogs is infectious, and this portrait of a family and community that takes joy and pride in their identity and traditions is refreshing. Singh's colorful illustrations use animation-style effects to bring out the humor of the scenes and accessibility of the characters. This is a fast-paced read, with a vigorously multicultural urban setting that will feel familiar to some and intriguing to others. A joyful celebration of street food and Muslim American culture."--KIRKUS

Every Friday after Jumma prayer, Musa's family has a special Jumma treat. They take turns picking out what the treat will be. Mama always picks slimy molokhia. Bleck! Baba always burns the kufte kebabs on the grill. Seedi always brings riz b'haleeb—funky chunky rice pudding. Ick! Finally, it's Musa's turn to pick—and he picks his favorite: halal hot dogs! But actually getting to eat the deliciousness turns into a journey riddled with obstacles. Will he ever reach his favorite tasty treat?

About the author: Susannah Aziz is a children's librarian, and third generation Palestinian-American Muslim. Through reading to her own children, Aziz felt humor was missing in the majority of traditional Islamic children's literature. So, she picked up a pen one day. And she wrote fun, silly stories. Susannah aims to depict the lives of average Muslim children in her work—fun-loving, enthusiastic, and delightful children. Aziz is an advocate for the UNRWA—the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East—which strives to provide support for the psychosocial health of refugee children living in the Gaza Strip. Aziz currently resides in Staten Island with her husband, three children and her mischievous orange tabby cat Chickpea.



THE WHATIFS

Written by Emily Kilgore

Illustrated by Zoe Persico Little Bee Books

"Kilgore successfully balances the whimsical with a tale grounded in reality." —Publishers Weekly

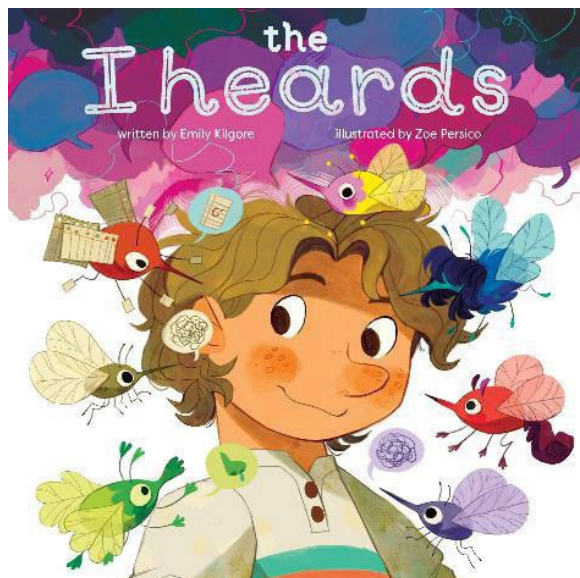
Cora is constantly worrying, plagued by those nervous questions: the Whatifs! These sneaky little creatures like to make her worry about everything, from little things -- what if my crayon breaks? ñ to big ones -- what if my dog runs away? Some of her Whatifs are silly, others are frightening, some are likely to happen, others are impossible -- but Cora feels like they are following her everywhere! And with a piano recital coming up, Cora is particularly plagued with Whatif worries, each one weighing her down more than the last.

Fortunately, her friend Stella helps her see that Whatifs don't have to be negative -- she can turn her Whatifs around by asking herself 'What if I play better than ever?' As her head begins to fill with positive Whatifs full of possibilities, the 'heavy, lumpy, and grumpy' ones start to slink away. With her confidence boosted, even when she hits a wrong note in the middle of the recital, Cora is able to recover quickly after assuring herself, 'What if I CAN do this?'

Filled with vibrant artwork by Zoe Persico, this gentle picture book introduces real-life cognitive behavioral therapy techniques in a playful way, perfect for showing kids they can overcome their worries and thrive! Highly recommended for ages 4 to 8

<https://www.emilykilgore.com> www.zoepersico.com

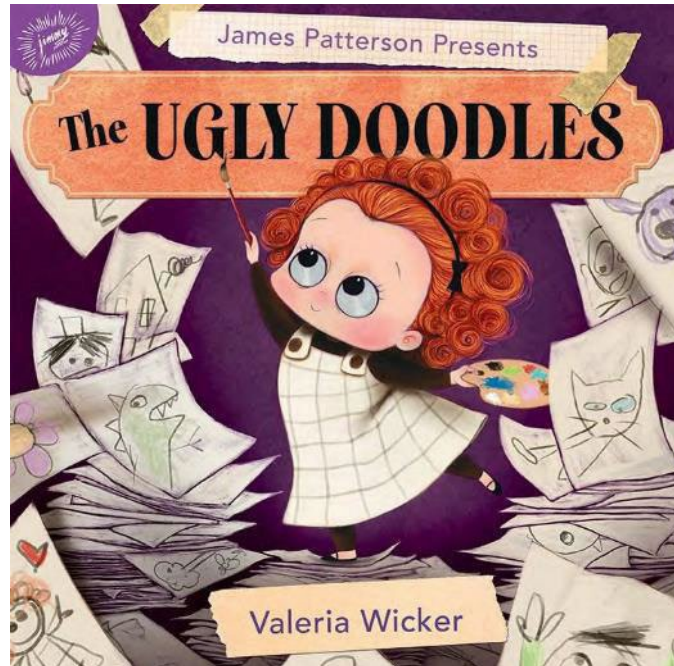
Next in series is The IHeards!!



THE UGLY DOODLES

Written and illustrated by Valeria Wicker

Jimmy Patterson Books (Little Brown/Hachette)



"“Maybe every masterpiece starts with an ugly doodle!” she crows. If her lumpy masterpieces look more suitable for refrigerators than museum walls, the notion that art needs perspiration at least as much as inspiration is still a worthy one to draw. Like Peter H. Reynolds’ The Dot (2003) and Ish (2004), this is an effective way to get creative juices flowing with atmospheric illustrations to add an unexpected tickle of dramatic tension.” —Booklist

This hilarious and adorable picture book about creativity, fear of failure, and embracing your imperfections is perfect for kids and budding artists of all ages.

After an inspiring visit to the local art museum, Raven Rembrandt is eager to create her own beautiful masterpieces. But the only thing she can seem to draw are ugly doodles -- and they won't go away, no matter how hard she tries to discard them! After a few increasingly inventive attempts to get rid of them, Raven realizes that the only way to learn to love her art is to just *create*.

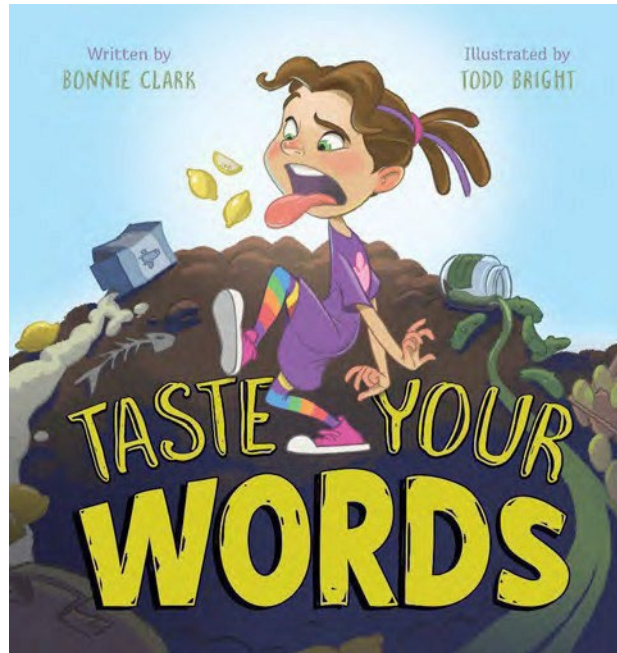
Valeria Wicker's endearing and quirky art style adds humor to her sweet and whimsical story about overcoming a fear of imperfection and failure.

About the Author

Valeria Wicker is an Italian Art School Graduate passionate about all types of Art. When she's not drawing, she can be found in her shop working on projects such as carving wood sculptures, restoring antique trunks, and refinishing furniture. Valeria resides in eastern Pennsylvania with her husband Mike, their five beautiful children, a bunny, and an adorable teddy-bear-like Labrador named Mia. www.ValeriaWicker.com



Watch book trailer here: <https://vimeo.com/427436208/9c923470ad>



TASTE YOUR WORDS

Written by Bonnie Clark, Illustrated by Todd Bright

Picture Book –Worthy Kids

Amera's mom always tells her to taste her words before saying them, to see how sweet—or yucky—they are. When Amera calls her brother a name, she tastes a sour and bitter flavor— lemons and dirt! When she complains, she tastes sour milk, and then pickle juice. Bleck! But when she pauses to think about how she can use her words for good, things start tasting delicious—like birthday cake, jellybeans, strawberry ice cream and chocolate drizzle.

This project is written by Bonnie Clark and illustrated by former Disney/Pixar animator Todd Bright, whose credits include character design for Disney's *Mulan*, *Tarzan*, *Lilo & Stitch*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and more. You can check out more of his work at www.ToddBright.com



CAN YOU CRACK THE CODE?

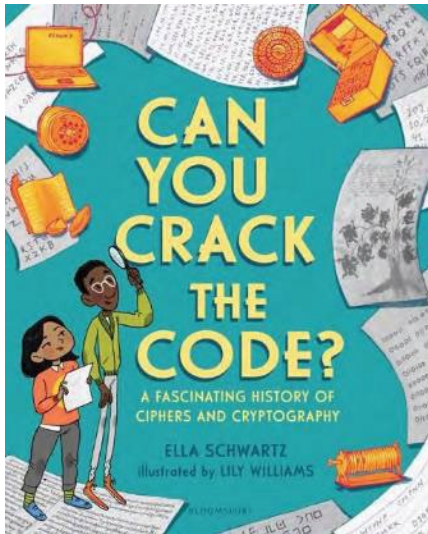
A Fascinating History of Ciphers and Cryptography

By Ella Schwartz
Bloomsbury Kids

Selected for the Scholastic Summer Reading List 2019

Selected as a New York Public Library Book of the Month

Winner of the AAAS/Subaru Prize for Excellence in Science Books



Codes can carry big secrets! Throughout history, lots of good guys and lots of bad guys have used codes to keep their messages under wraps. This fun and flippable nonfiction features stories of hidden treasures, war-time maneuverings, and contemporary hacking as well as explaining the mechanics behind the codes in accessible and kid friendly forms. Sidebars call out activities that invite the reader to try their own hand at cracking and crafting their own secret messages. This is the launch of an exciting new series that invites readers into a STEM topic through compelling historical anecdotes, scientific backup, and DIY projects.

www.EllasBooks.com

RICE FROM HEAVEN

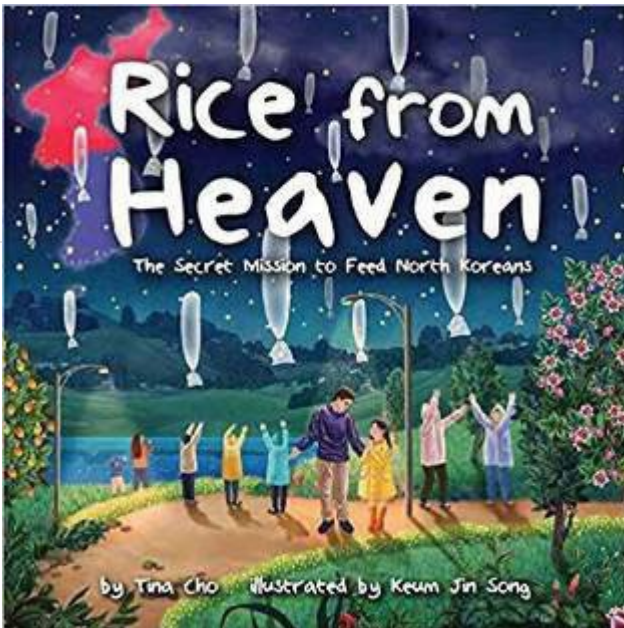
The Secret Mission to Feed North Koreans

By Tina Cho
Little Bee Books (Bonnier)

Winner of the 2019-2020 Morning Calm Medal

An Annual Book Award Selected by International School Students in Korea

**Starred Review from Foreword: North Korean refugees share this fascinating true story of a secret mission that launched hundreds of rice-filled balloons under the cover of rain and darkness across the border from South Korea to the starving families left behind. Beautiful, intricately detailed illustrations highlight the culture, customs, and landscape while gently educating children about the vastly different political climates and shared history of North and South Korea.*



RICE FROM HEAVEN tells the true story of a group of people in South Korea who meet together under the cloak of night to fill giant balloons full of rice and float them over the border into North Korea, with the hope that they will land in a neighborhood and provide food for impoverished North Koreans. This secret kindness mission faced opposition from local villagers who saw this mission as helping the enemy.

Yoori lives in South Korea and doesn't know what North Korea is like, but her father (Appa) does. Appa grew up in North Korea, where he did not have enough food to eat. Starving, he fled to South Korea in search of a better life. Ooori doesn't know how she can help as she's only a little "grain of rice" herself, but Appa tells her that they can secretly help the starving people by sending over special

balloons that carry rice over the border.

Villagers glare and grumble, and children protest feeding the enemy, but Yoori doesn't back down. She Has to help. People right over the border don't have food. No rice, and no green fields. With renewed spirit, volunteers gather in groups, fill the balloons with air, and tie the Styrofoam containers filled with rice to the tails of the balloons. With a little push, the balloons soar up and over the border, carrying rice into the darkness of the night over to North Korea.

RICE FROM HEAVEN explores important themes such as compassion, bravery, and pushing past a culture of xenophobia to embrace the oppressed. Tina Cho takes an overwhelming, challenging topic and offers the simple reminder that being a Good Samaritan is often met with opposition.

Tina Cho is an American teacher currently living and working in South Korea who has been in Yoori's shoes. She has partnered with North Korean refugee organizations to send rice balloons over the border.

www.TinaMCho.com

[http://www.kidlit411^{7.3}com/2018/08/Kidlit411-Author-Tina-Cho.html](http://www.kidlit411.com/2018/08/Kidlit411-Author-Tina-Cho.html)

UNSCRIPTED DOCS/REALITY

10th Anniversary -- December 2022

NEWTOWN

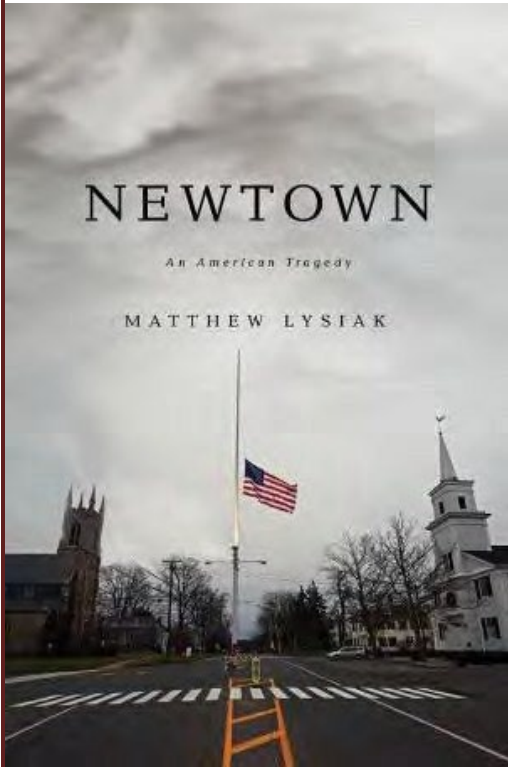
An American Tragedy

By Matthew Lysiak

Gallery Books/Simon & Schuster

UNSCRIPTED DOC RIGHTS AVAIL

WITH OVER FIVE HOURS OF VERIFIED AUDIO RECORDINGS BY SHOOTER



The arc of this movie follows the dysfunctional relationship between Adam Lanza (age 18 to 20) and his divorced mother, Nancy Lanza (age 50-52), beginning in 2010 when Adam's already shaky and dysfunctional state of mind begins a sudden drop away from rational behavior and turns into obsessive-compulsive, irrational behaviors. As his mindset deteriorates, Nancy Lanza's enabling escalates. It proceeds to the moment two years later December 14, 2012, when he shoots his mother to death in her bed and sets out on his twisted mission, soon to kill 20 children and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. **The murders are not portrayed.**

In the vein of Dave Cullen's *Columbine*, the first comprehensive account of the Sandy Hook tragedy—with exclusive new information that chronicles the horrific events of December 14, 2012, including new insight into the dark mind of gunman Adam Lanza.

26 people dead; 20 of them schoolchildren between the ages of six and seven. The world mourned the devastating shooting at Sandy Hook elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut in December 2012. Now, here is the startling, comprehensive look at this tragedy, and into the mind of the unstable killer, Adam Lanza. Drawing on hundreds of interviews and a decade's worth of emails from Lanza's mother to close friends that chronicled his slow slide into mental illness, *Newtown* pieces together the perfect storm that led to this unspeakable act of violence that shattered so many lives.

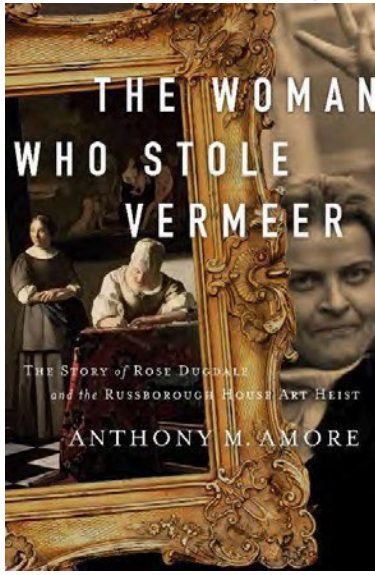
Newtown explores the two central theories that have permeated the media since the attack: some claim Lanza suffered from severe mental illness, while others insist that, far from being a random act of insanity, this was a meticulously thought out, premeditated attack at least two years in the making by a violent video-gamer so obsessed with "glory kills" that he was willing to go to any length to attain the top score. Lanza's dark descent from a young boy with adjustment disorders to a calculating killer is interwoven with the Newtown tragedy as it unfolded at the time, told from the points of view of eyewitnesses, survivors, parents of victims, first responders, and Adam's relatives. A definitive account of a tragedy that shook a nation, *Newtown* features exclusive material including initial misinformation reported by the media and commentary on how this American tragedy became a lightning rod for political agendas, much like *Columbine* did more than a decade ago.



Matthew Lysiak was a staff writer for *The Daily News* (New York) who has received national recognition for his exclusive reporting on the shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary and the Newtown killer Adam Lanza, the Aurora gunman James Holmes, the Tucson shooter Jared Loughner, the Fort Hood army psychiatrist Nidal Malik Hasan, and more. Lysiak currently lives in Arizona with his wife and four daughters. The Apple TV+ series, *Home Before Dark*, is inspired by his work and his family.

THE WOMAN WHO STOLE VERMEER

The True Story of Rose Dugdale and the 1974 Russborough House Art Heist



By Anthony M. Amore Pegasus

Available for Unscripted Documentary

Scripted rights in development for limited series with Mammoth Screen

"Anthony Amore has written an engrossing character study of Rose Dugdale, a remarkable criminal. I'm very familiar with Anthony and his work, and there are similarities in how he analyzes thefts of art to come up with a specific offender profile and my process for analyzing crimes of violence. Why + How = Who." - John Douglas, legendary FBI criminal profiler, #1 New York Times best-selling author, and inspiration for Netflix's Mindhunter

A rollicking biography of a female art thief. In his lively third book about art and crime, Amore, the director of security at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, tells the story of a 'fiery, bold, and brash' Englishwoman who stole for nationalistic reasons. A captivating, detail-rich biography of a 'criminal legend.' - Kirkus Reviews

Engrossing account... Thorough research matched by prose that keeps the reader turning pages. True crime and history buffs will revel in the saga of this truly fascinating woman. - Publishers Weekly

Rose Dugdale's life is singularly notorious. Born into extreme wealth (she was a member of the last class of debutantes who were presented to the Queen), she abandoned her life as an Oxford-trained Ph.D. and heiress to join the cause of Irish Republicanism. While on the surface she appears to be the British version of Patricia Hearst, she is anything but. Dugdale ran head-first towards the action, spearheading the first aerial terrorist attack in British history by dropping bombs on a police station.

Later, Dugdale was the mastermind and leader of the biggest art theft of her time, when she led a gang into the opulent Russborough House in Ireland to make off with millions in prized paintings, including a work by the mysterious master Johannes Vermeer. Dugdale thus became—to this day—the only woman to pull off a major art heist.

Later imprisoned, Dugdale shocked the UK when it was learned that she was pregnant and would later give birth to her only son while locked up among terrorists and other criminals. In a first-of-its-kind arrangement, prison officials later let her marry the also-incarcerated father of her child. When he was later released, he would go on to stage a kidnapping of Dublin's leading industrialist in an attempt to win his wife's freedom in a weeks-long standoff that had all of Ireland at the edge of their seats.

The Woman Who Stole Vermeer will examine the likelihood that this was not her only such heist. Rose Dugdale was truly ahead of her time. It's the perfect book for a wide audience. It will appeal to fans of true crime, fine art, and third-wave feminism.



Anthony M. Amore has previously published two books. His first, **STEALING REMBRANDTS: THE UNTOLD STORIES OF THE MOST NOTORIOUS ART HEISTS** was a *Wall Street Journal* Crime Best Seller. His second book, **THE ART OF THE CON: THE MOST NOTORIOUS FAKES, FRAUDS and FORGERIES** was a *New York Times* bestseller in crime. It was also named to the top twenty of Amazon's 100 Best Nonfiction Books of 2015.

Amore is the chief investigator of the infamous 1990 heist at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in which more than \$500 million in masterpieces were stolen. As a result, he garners a great deal of media attention, and has been profiled in The New York Times, The Boston Globe, and countless international and national broadcast media outlets. In addition, he is a frequent contributor to broadcast outlets, offering his expertise on matters related to theft, security, and terrorism.

www.AnthonyAmore.com www.lostartproject.com/about

THE GREEN REAPER:

Life in a One-Woman Mortuary in Boring, Oregon

By Elizabeth Fournier

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Elizabeth spent a lot of time in funeral homes as a kid, not because her family was in the business, but because they were so frequently found in caskets. Her mother died when she was young; so did her grandparents. Elizabeth began to read about different cultures' death rituals in *National Geographic* magazine. She held a mock cemetery on her dresser, and when friends' pets died, she would perform the funeral.

Elizabeth stood out at her tiny suburban Catholic school and knew it. After her mother's death and the loss of her fond attentions, Elizabeth performed dance routines for anyone she could press into watching. Her family's garage was the scene of many an elaborate recital. The dancing put joy back in her life but did nothing to assuage her sense of wrongness. Grief had hurt Elizabeth in ways she couldn't put into words. Elizabeth felt starved for reassurance, and without it, an inner voice began to chant that she was pathetic. She wanted to crawl into a tire swing and die.

Elizabeth realized her life calling when she was offered the chance to be a live-in night keeper at a funeral home on a big hill. For Elizabeth, it was a casting call from Hollywood. She took the job and slept in a trailer on the spooky edge of the cemetery, with a shotgun under her bed. It was the scariest summer of her life, but it set things in motion. Elizabeth continued learning the ropes in the funeral world while living in the San Francisco Bay area, but her biological clock was ticking louder by the month while her dating life stalled at Dysfunction Junction. A move back to Oregon proved fruitful; in a mortuary version of romance, she found her husband after descending into the bowels of the corporate funeral home where they both were employed. (He worked there as a cremator). They soon married and together broke free from the corporate funeral home world and headed off to tiny Boring, Oregon, to make a fledgling country funeral home their own. Daughter, Sofia (named after the Catholic Patron Saint of Widows) arrived the following year and Elizabeth brought her to the parlor every day. Sofia soon taught her that by lying in a grief-stricken widow's arms for a moment, and she could help the tension ease a bit. The baby held a natural gift of comforting the bereaved.

At the start of Elizabeth's career, it was truly an anomaly to walk into a funeral home and be greeted by a woman. Now Elizabeth runs a one-woman funeral service in the small town of Boring, a semi-rural community just outside of Portland. Elizabeth is the owner and operator of Cornerstone Funeral Services, the first green funeral home in the Portland Metropolitan area. She works as a green mortician and eco-educator and is affectionately known as the Green Reaper because of her passion of home funerals and natural burials. Elizabeth is always ready to lend a hand (or a shovel) and she is renowned for burying her townsfolk in their backyards.

Her story weaves anecdotes linked by her "Green Reaper" philosophy of eschewing big profits and instead returning to old-school burial practices that are far kinder to humans and the Earth. Elizabeth is inherently led toward helping others relate to death through taking care of their dead, and to preparing more meaningful burials. Through these experiences, she continues to reach more of her own healing and to reestablish inner connections. Some of us work for a better life; Elizabeth works for a better death.

www.ElizabethFournier.com

www.cornerstonefuneral.com



THE ART OF THE CON

By Anthony M. Amore

St. Martin's Press

** 12-part Limited Series Proposal Available*

Art collectors simply want to believe. *They want to believe very badly.*

Hermann Goering's eyes opened wide when he saw Johannes Vermeer's *The Woman Taken in Adultery*. With only 35 or 36 known paintings attributed to the great Dutch master (scholars will probably argue over the actual number forever), a "new" Vermeer would be a crowning addition to his growing, awe-inspiring, and completely ill-gotten art collection. Even that failed artist Adolph Hitler himself, who at the time was building his *Fuhrermuseum* in which he would display the greatest art collection he could steal and loot, hadn't scored such a coup as a heretofore unknown Vermeer. Never mind the fact that *The Woman Taken in Adultery* didn't look at all like the work of Vermeer.

Goering had to have it and traded 200 looted paintings to the person in possession of this "missing Vermeer," mediocre artist Han van Meegeren. Later, with the war over and facing execution, van Meegeren admitted that he had forged the alleged Vermeer and proved so by painting another in the courtroom. Goering, facing his own trial in Nuremberg, was informed of the forgery, but steadfastly refused to believe it. Art fraud has been a consistent scam used by con artists throughout the decades.

And even today, armed with the advances in methods used to unmask fakes and the knowledge of the widespread problem of art forgery, dupes continue to line up to buy bogus "masterpieces." The news continues in the headlines with the breaking news recently that Glafira Rosales had sold 63 Modernist fakes for an estimated \$80 million, with her own personal take a cool \$33 million. All that for paintings put on canvas by a Chinese immigrant who, having failed at his own attempt at art superstardom in the United States, worked for Rosales out of the garage of his home in Queens, often putting his forgeries out in the driveway to dry out in the sun. And just last year, authorities in Germany broke up a Russian forgery gang they say sold more than 400 forgeries by artists including Kandinsky, Goncharova, and von Jawlensky.

Art scams are today so numerous that the specter of a lawsuit arising from a mistaken attribution has scared a number of experts away from the business of authentication, and with good reason. Art scams are increasingly convincing and involve incredible sums of money. The cons perpetrated by unscrupulous art dealers and their accomplices are proportionately elaborate. From these stories comes the reality show, *The Art of the Con*.

The Art of the Con will tell the stories of some of history's most notorious yet untold cons. They involve stolen art hidden for decades; elaborate ruses that involve the Nazis and allegedly plundered art; the theft of a conceptual prototype from a well-known artist by his assistant to be used later to create copies; the use of online and television auction sites to scam buyers out of millions; and other confidence scams incredible not only for their boldness but more so because they actually worked. *The Art of the Con* will also take the viewer into the investigations that led to the capture of the con men, who oftentimes return back to the world of fakes, frauds, and forgeries in the art world.

For some, it's an irresistible urge because their innocent dupes all share something in common: They want to believe.

For more about Anthony, see www.AnthonyAmore.com