

# EDITING MAG

FOR BOOK LOVERS

PREMIER ISSUE

WALL OF FAME:  
OLD MYSTERY  
STORIES

GLIMPSE OF  
MYSTERY  
MINDS

PRIDE MONTH  
AUDIO BOOK  
APPRECIATION  
MONTH

## PLUS

FROM EDITOR'S  
DESK

\*

AUTHOR  
INTERVIEWS

\*

GUEST POST:  
LAURA  
DOUGLAS

\*

MYSTERY AND  
SUSPENSE

\*

OUR READING  
SUGGESTION

\*

QUOTES  
GALLERY

\*

ABOUT US

\*



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Rucha Shrinath

**Associate Editor :**

Catherine Edward

**Staff Writer :**

Michaelle Sandefur

Alankrita Verma

Portia Ekka

Melissa S. Vice

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**Guest Writer :**

Lora Douglas

**Cover Design :**

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## *In this Issue*

1

### FROM EDITORS DESK

A LETTER FROM EDITOR'S DESK. WELCOME NOTE FOR OUR READERS AND MENTION ABOUT MAGAZINE AND US

2

### WALL OF FAME

IN WALL OF FAME WE ARE SHARING SOME MYSTERY STORIES FROM FAMOUS MYSTERY, SUSPENSE, THRILLER AUTHORS.

3

### GLIMPSE OF MYSTERY MINDS

ARTICLE FROM OUR GUEST AUTHORS AND REVIEWS AND AUTHORS INTERVIEWS. FROM OUR TEAM.

4

### MASTER STROKES

LET'S MEET SOME VERY AMAZING AUTHORS AND FIND MORE ABOUT THEM AND THEIR BOOK.

5

### MYSTERY AND SUSPENSE

A SMALL ARTICLE ABOUT CONNECTION BETWEEN MYSTERY AND SUSPENSE

6

### PRIDE MONTH

SOME VERY AMAZING ARTICLES ABOUT PRIDE MONTH FROM OUR TEAM

7

### AUDIO BOOK MONTH

WHAT ARE AUDIO BOOKS AND WHAT'S THEIR IMPORTANCE IN TODAY'S WORLD. LET'S FIND OUT HERE.

8

### READING SUGGESTION

SOME BEAUTIFUL SUGGESTIONS FROM OUR TEAM AND FROM OUR READERS.





9

## QUOTES GALLERY

SHARING SOME WONDERFUL QUOTES FROM  
FAMOUS AUTHORS

10

## ABOUT US

TALKING ABOUT US, OUR FUTURE PLANS AND  
OUR ONGOING PROJECTS





In this issue, we are decided to explore the mystery genre and celebrate Pride month and Audio Book appreciation month.

In this Premier Issue of Editingle mag, we wanted introduce us as Hybrid Publishing House by giving platform for published

authors as well as Indie authors. We wanted to share stories and introduce our readers to new authors and their books. Also we wanted to explore the past of book world and get to know more about the legends.

We seek to breakdown stereotypes of literature magazine and give our readers something new and more out of the box content. We also hope that this magazine open new doors of communication for authors and readers by bridging the gap between them.

In this issue, we are decided to explore the

mystery genre and celebrate Pride month and Audio Book appreciation month. You will get a chance to read some wonderful stories, columns, articles and much more from various authors. Our hope is that with every issue we carve out a space online where the authors and readers can tell their stories, get inspired, raise awareness, and find opportunities to better themselves and share happiness. We believe that there is something for everyone in this issue and hope you enjoy the read! Remember, this is a digital magazine and publish for private circulation only.

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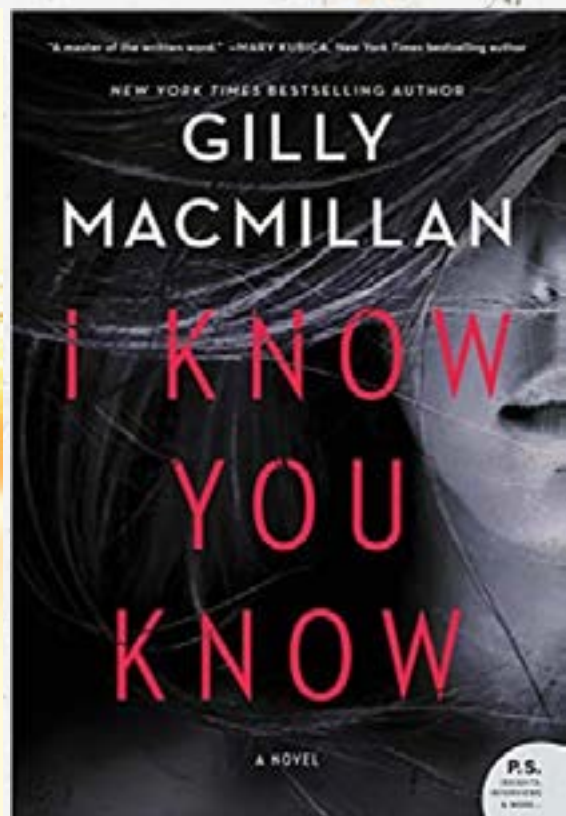
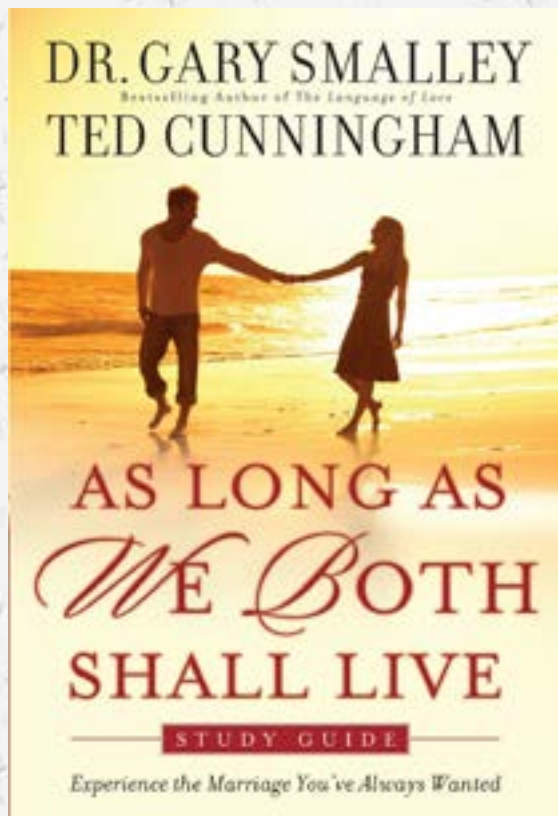


Our hope is that every issue we carve out a space online where the authors and readers can tell their stories, get inspired, raise awareness, and find opportunities to better





## 2019 Best Mystery Issue





WALL OF FAME:

OLD  
MYSTERY  
STORIES



*M*

# THE RED SILK SCARF



On leaving his house one morning at his usual early hour for going to the Law Courts, Chief-Inspector Ganimard noticed the curious behaviour of an individual who was walking along the Rue Pergolèse in front of him. Shabbily dressed and wearing a straw hat, though the day was 1 December, the man stooped every thirty or forty yards to fasten his boot-lace, or pick up his stick, or for some

other reason. And, each time, he took a little piece of orange-peel from his pocket and laid it stealthily on the curb of the pavement. It was probably a mere display of eccentricity, a childish amusement to which no one else would have paid attention; but Granimard was one of those shrewd observers who are indifferent to nothing that strikes their eyes and who are never satisfied until they

know the secret cause of things. He therefore began to follow the man.

Now, at the moment when the fellow was turning to the right into the Avenue de la Grand-Armée, the inspector caught him exchanging signals with a boy of twelve or thirteen who was walking along the houses on the left-hand side. Twenty yards further, the man stooped and turned up the



# Aurice Leblanc

bottom of his trouser-legs. A bit of orange-peel marked the place. At the same moment the boy stopped and, with a piece of chalk, drew a white cross surrounded by a circle on the wall of the house next to him.

The two continued on their way. A minute later, a fresh halt. The strange individual picked up a pin and dropped a piece of orange-peel; and the boy at once made a second cross on the wall and again drew a white circle round it.

"By Jove!" thought the Chief-Inspector, with a grunt of

satisfaction. "This is rather promising. What on earth can those two merchants be plotting?"

The two "merchants" went down the Avenue Friedland and the Rue du Faubourg-Saint-Honoré, but nothing occurred that was worthy of special mention. The double performance was repeated at almost regular intervals and, so to speak, mechanically. Nevertheless, it was obvious on the one hand that the man with the orange-peel did not do his part of the business until after he had picked out with a glance the house that was to be

marked, and on the other hand that the boy did not mark that particular house until after he had observed his companion's signal. It was certain, therefore, that there was an agreement between the two; and the proceedings presented no small interest in the chief-inspector's eyes.

At the Place Beauveau the man hesitated. Then, apparently making up his mind, he twice turned up and twice turned down the bottom of his trouser-legs. Hereupon, the boy sat down on the curb opposite the sentry who was mounting guard

outside the Ministry of the Interior and marked the flagstone with two little crosses contained within two circles. The same ceremony was gone through a little further on when they reached the Elysée. Only on the pavement where the President's sentry was marching up and down, there were three signs instead of two.

"Hang it all!" muttered Ganimard, pale with excitement and thinking, in spite of himself, of his inveterate enemy, Lupin, whose name came to his mind whenever a mysterious circumstance presented itself. "Hang at all, what does it mean?"

He was nearly collaring and questioning the two "merchants". But he was too clever to commit so gross a blunder. The man with the orange-peel had now lit a cigarette. And the boy, also placing a cigarette-end between his lips, had gone up to him, apparently with the object of asking for a light.

They exchanged a few words. Quick as thought, the boy handed his companion an object which looked—at least, so the inspector

believed—like a revolver. They both bent over this object and the man, standing with his face to the wall, put his hand six times in his pocket and made a movement as though he were loading a weapon.

As soon as this was done, they walked briskly to the Rue de Surène and the Inspector, who followed them as closely as he was able to do without attracting their attention, saw them enter the gateway of an old house of which all the shutters were closed, with the exception of those on the third or top floor.

He hurried in after them. At the end of the carriage-entrance, he saw a large courtyard with a house-painter's sign at the back and a staircase on the left. He went up the stairs and, as soon as he reached the first floor, ran still faster because he heard, right up at the top, a din as of a free-fight.

When he came to the last landing, he found the door open. He entered, listened for a second, caught the sound of a struggle, rushed to the room

from which the sound appeared to proceed, and remained standing on the threshold, very much out of breath and greatly surprised to see the man of the orange-peel and the boy banging the floor with chairs.

At that moment, a third person walked out of an adjoining room. It was a young man of twenty-eight or thirty, wearing a pair of short whiskers in addition to his moustache, spectacles, and a smoking-jacket with an astrakhan collar and looking like a foreigner, a Russian.

"Good morning, Ganimard," he said. And turning to the two companions, "Thank you, my friends, and all my congratulations on the successful result. Here's the reward I promised you." He gave them a hundred-franc note, pushed them outside, and shut both doors.

"I am sorry, old chap," he said to Ganimard. "I wanted to talk to you... wanted to talk to you badly." He offered him his hand and, seeing that the Inspector remained flabbergasted and that his face was still distorted with anger, he exclaimed,

“Why, you don’t seem to understand!... And yet it’s clear enough... I wanted to see you particularly. So what could I do?” And, pretending to reply to an objection, “No, no, old chap,” he continued. “You’re quite wrong. If I had written or telephoned, you would not have come or else you would have come with a regiment. Now I wanted to see you all alone, and I thought the best thing was to send those two decent fellows to meet you, with orders to scatter bits of orange-peel and draw crosses and circles—in short, to mark out your road to this place.... Why, you look quite bewildered! What is it? Perhaps you don’t recognize me? Lupin...Arsène Lupin.... Ransack your memory. Doesn’t the name remind you of anything?”

“You dirty scoundrel!” Ganimard snarled between his teeth.

Lupin seemed greatly distressed, and in an affectionate voice, “Are you vexed? Yes, I can see it in your eyes.... The Dugrival business, I suppose? I ought to have waited for you to come and take me in charge? There now, the

thought never occurred to me! I promise you, next time....”

“You scum of the earth!” growled Ganimard.

“And I thinking I was giving you a treat! Upon my word, I did. I said to myself, ‘That dear old Ganimard! We haven’t met for an age. He’ll simply rush at me when he sees me!’”

Ganimard, who had not yet stirred a limb, seemed to be waking from his stupor. He looked around him, looked at Lupin, visibly asked himself whether he would not do well to rush at him in reality, and then, controlling himself, took hold of a chair and settled himself in it, as though he had suddenly made up his mind to listen to his enemy. “Speak,” he said. “And don’t waste my time with any nonsense. I’m in a hurry.”

“That’s it” said Lupin, “let’s talk. You can’t imagine a quieter place than this. It’s an old manor-house, which once stood in the open country, and it belongs to the Duc de Rochelaure. The duke, who has never lived in it, lets this floor to me

and the outhouses to a painter and decorator. I always keep up a few establishments of this kind; it’s a sound, practical plan. Here, in spite of my looking like a Russian nobleman, I am Monsieur Daubreuil, an ex-cabinet minister.... You understand, I had to select a rather overstocked profession so as not to attract attention.”

“Do you think I care a hang about all this?” said Ganimard, interrupting him.

“Quite right, I’m wasting words and you’re in a hurry. Forgive me. I shan’t be long now. Five minutes that’s all... I’ll start at once. Have a cigar? No? Very well, no more will I.”

He sat down also, drummed his fingers on the table while thinking, and began in this fashion, “On 17 October 1599, on a warm and sunny autumn day.... Do you follow me?. But, now that I come to think of it, is it really necessary to go back to the reign of Henry IV and tell you all about the building of the Pont-Neuf? No, I don’t suppose you are very well up in French history; and I should



only end by muddling you. Suffice it, then, for you to know that last night, at one o'clock in the morning, a boatman passing under the last arch of the Pont-Neuf aforesaid, along the left bank of the river, heard something drop into the front part of his barge. The thing had been flung from the bridge and its evident destination was the bottom of the Seine. The bargee's dog rushed forward barking and, when the man reached the end of his craft, he saw the animal worrying a piece of newspaper that had served to wrap up a number of objects. He took from the dog such of the contents as had not fallen into the water, went to his cabin and examined them carefully. The result struck him as interesting and, as the man is connected with one of my friends, he sent to let me know. This morning, I was woken up and placed in possession of the facts and of the objects which the man had collected. Here they are."

He pointed to them, spread out on a table. There were, first of all, the torn pieces of a newspaper. Next came a large cut-glass

inkstand, with a long piece of string fastened to the lid. There was a bit of broken glass and a sort of flexible cardboard, reduced to shreds. Lastly, there was a piece of bright scarlet silk, ending in a tassel of the same material and colour.

"You see our exhibits, friend of my youth," said Lupin. "No doubt the problem would be more easily solved if we had the other objects which went overboard owing to the stupidity of the dog. But it seems to me, all the same, that we ought to be able to manage, with a little reflection and intelligence. And those are just your great qualities. How does the business strike you?"

Ganimard did not move a muscle. He was willing to stand Lupin's chaff, but his dignity commanded him not to speak a single word in answer nor even to give a nod or shake of the head that might have been taken to express approval or criticism.

"I see that we are entirely of one mind," continued Lupin, without appearing to remark the Chief-Inspector's silence. "And I can sum up the

matter briefly, as told us by these exhibits. Yesterday evening, between nine and twelve o'clock, a showily-dressed young woman was wounded with a knife and then caught round the throat and choked to death by a well-dressed gentleman wearing a single eye-glass and interested in racing, with whom the aforesaid showily-dressed young lady had been eating three meringues and a coffee éclair."

Lupin lit a cigarette and, taking Ganimard by the sleeve, "Aha, that's up against you, Chief-Inspector! You thought that in the domain of police deductions, such feats as those were prohibited to outsiders! Wrong, sir! Lupin juggles with inferences and deductions for all the world like a detective in a novel. My proofs are dazzling and absolutely simple."

And, pointing to the objects one by one, as he demonstrated his statement, he resumed, "I said after nine o'clock yesterday evening. This scrap of newspaper bears yesterday's date, with the words, Evening Edition. Also, you will see here, pasted to the

paper, a bit of one of those yellow wrappers in which the subscribers' copies are sent out. These copies are always delivered by the nine-o'clock post. Therefore, it was after nine o'clock. I said a well-dressed man. Please observe that this tiny piece of glass has the round hole of a single eye-glass at one of the edges and that the single eye-glass is an essentially aristocratic article of wear. This well-dressed man walked into a pastry-cook's shop. Here is the very thin cardboard, shaped like a box and still showing a little of the cream of the meringues and éclairs which were packed in it in the usual way. Having got his parcel, the gentleman with the eye-glass joined a young person whose eccentricity in the matter of dress is pretty clearly indicated by this bright-red silk scarf. Having joined her, for some reason as yet unknown he first stabbed her with a knife and then strangled her with the help of this same scarf. Take your magnifying glass, Chief-Inspector, and you will see on the silk stains of a darker red which are here, the marks of a knife wiped on the scarf and there,

the marks of a hand, covered with blood, clutching the material. Having committed the murder, his next business is to leave no trace behind him. So he takes from his pocket first the newspaper to which he subscribes—a racing-paper, as you will see by glancing at the contents of this scrap; and you will have no difficulty in discovering the title—and, secondly, a cord, which, on inspection, turns out to be a length of whip-cord. These two details prove—do they not?—that our man is interested in racing and that he himself rides. Next, he picks up the fragments of his eye-glass, the cord of which has been broken in the struggle. He takes a pair of scissors—observe the hacking of the scissors—and cuts off the stained part of the scarf, leaving the other end, no doubt, in his victim's clenched hands. He makes a ball of the confectioner's cardboard box. He also puts in certain things that would have betrayed him, such as the knife, which must have slipped into the Seine. He wraps everything in the newspaper, ties it with the cord, and fastens this cut-glass inkstand to it as a make-weight.

Then he makes himself scarce. A little later the parcel falls into the waterman's barge. And there you are. Oof, it's hot work!... What do you say to the story?"

He looked at Ganimard to see what impression his speech had produced on the inspector. Ganimard did not depart from his attitude of silence.

Lupin began to laugh, "As a matter of fact, you're annoyed and surprised. But you're suspicious as well. 'Why should that confounded Lupin hand the business over to me,' say you, 'instead of keeping it for himself, hunting down the murderer and rifling his pockets, if there was a robbery?' The question is quite logical, of course. But—there is a but—I have no time, you see. I am full up with work at the present moment: a burglary in London, another at Lausanne, an exchange of children at Marseilles, to say nothing of having to save a young girl who is at this moment shadowed by death. That's always the way: it never rains but it pours. So I said to myself, 'Suppose I handed the business over to my dear old

Ganimard? Now that it is half-solved for him, he is quite capable of succeeding. And what a service I shall be doing him! How magnificently he will be able to distinguish himself! No sooner said than done. At eight o'clock in the morning I sent the joker with the orange-peel to meet you. You swallowed the bait and you were here by nine, all on edge and eager for the fray."

Lupin rose from his chair. He bent over to the inspector and, with his eyes on Ganimard's, said, "That's all. You now know the whole story. Presently, you will know the victim; some ballet-dancer, probably, some singer at a music-hall. On the other hand, the chances are that the criminal lives near the Pont-Neuf, most likely on the left bank. Lastly, here are all the exhibits. I make you a present of them. Set to work. I shall only keep this end of the scarf. If ever you want to piece the scarf together, bring me the other end, the one which the police will find round the victim's neck. Bring it me in four weeks from now to the day; that is to say, on 29 December, at ten o'clock in the

morning. You can be sure of finding me here. And don't be afraid; this is all perfectly serious, friend of my youth, I swear it is. No humbug, honour bright. You can go straight ahead. Oh, by the way, when you arrest the fellow with the eye-glass, be a bit careful; he is left-handed! Good-bye, old dear, and good luck to you!"

Lupin spun round on his heel, went to the door, opened it, and disappeared before Ganimard had even thought of taking a decision. The inspector rushed after him, but at once found that the handle of the door, by some trick of mechanism which he did not know, refused to turn. It took him ten minutes to unscrew the lock and ten minutes more to unscrew the lock of the hall-door. By the time that he had scrambled down the three flights of stairs, Ganimard had given up all hope of catching Arsène Lupin.

Besides, he was not thinking of it. Lupin inspired him with a queer, complex feeling made up of fear, hatred, involuntary admiration, and also the

vague instinct that he, Ganimard, in spite of all his efforts, in spite of the persistency of his endeavours, would never get the better of this particular adversary. He pursued him from a sense of duty and pride, but with the continued dread of being taken in by that formidable hoaxter and scouted and fooled in the face of a public that was always only too willing to laugh at the Chief-Inspector's mishaps.

This business of the red scarf, in particular, struck him as most suspicious. It was interesting, certainly, in more ways than one, but so very improbable! And Lupin's explanation, apparently so logical, would never stand the test of a severe examination!

"No," said Ganimard, "that is all swank; a parcel of suppositions and guess-work based upon nothing at all. I'm not to be caught with chaff."

When he reached the headquarters of police at 36 Quai des Orfevres, he had quite made up his mind to treat the incident as though it had never happened. He went up to the Criminal Investigation



Department. Here one of his fellow-inspectors said, "Seen the chief?"

"No."

"He was asking for you just now."

"Oh, was he?"

"Yes, you had better go after him."

"Where?"

"To the Rue de Berne. There was a murder there last night." "Oh! Who's the victim?"

"I don't know exactly. A music-hall singer, I believe."

Ganimard simply muttered, "By Jove!" Twenty minutes later, he stepped out of the underground railway-station and made for the Rue de Berne.

The victim, who was known in the theatrical world by her stage-name of Jenny Saphir, occupied a small flat on the second floor of one of the houses. A policeman took the Chief-Inspector upstairs and showed him the way through two sitting-rooms to a bedroom, where he found the magistrates in charge

of the inquiry, together with the divisional surgeon and Monsieur Dudouis, the head of the detective service.

Ganimard started at the first glance which he gave into the room. He saw lying on a sofa the corpse of a young woman whose hands clutched a strip of red silk! One of the shoulders which appeared above the low-cut bodice wore the marks of two wounds surrounded with clotted blood. The distorted and almost blackened features still bore an expression of frenzied fear.

The divisional surgeon, who had just finished his examination, said, "My first conclusions are very clear. The victim was twice stabbed with a dagger and afterwards strangled. The immediate cause of death was asphyxia."

"By Jove!" thought Ganimard again, remembering Lupin's words and the picture which he had drawn of the crime.

The examining magistrate objected, "But the neck shows no discoloration."

"She may have been strangled with a napkin or a handkerchief," said the doctor.

"Most probably," said the Chief Detective, "with this silk scarf, which the victim was wearing and a piece of which remains, as though she had clung to it with her two hands to protect herself."

"But why does only that piece remain?" asked the magistrate. "What has become of the other?"

"The other may have been stained with blood and carried off by the murderer. You can plainly distinguish the hurried slashing of the scissors."

"By Jove!" said Ganimard between his teeth, for the third time. "That brute of a Lupin saw everything without seeing a thing!"

"And what about the motive of the murder!" asked the magistrate. "The locks have been forced, the cupboards turned upside down. Have you anything to tell me, Monsieur Dudouis?"

The Chief of the detective service replied, "I can at least

suggest a supposition, derived from the statements made by the servant. The victim, who enjoyed a greater reputation on account of her looks than through her talent as a singer, went to Russia two years ago and brought back with her a magnificent sapphire, which she appears to have received from some person of importance at the court. Since then, she went by the name of Jenny Saphir and seems generally to have been very proud of that present, although for prudence's sake she never wore it. I daresay that we shall not be far out if we presume the theft of the sapphire to have been the cause of the crime."

"But did the maid know where the stone was?"

"No, nobody did. And the disorder of the room would tend to prove that the murderer did not know either."

"We will question the maid," said the examining-magistrate.

Monsieur Dudouis took the Chief-Inspector aside and said, "You're looking very old-fashioned, Ganimard.

What's the matter? Do you suspect anything?"

"Nothing at all, chief."

"That's a pity. We could do with a bit of showy work in the department. This is one of a number of crimes, all of the department. This is one of a number of crimes, all of the same class, of which we have failed to discover the perpetrator. This time, we want the criminal, and quickly!"

"A difficult job, Chief."

"It's got to be done. Listen to me, Ganimard. According to what the maid says, Jenny Saphir led a very regular life. For a month past, she was in the habit of frequently receiving visits on her return from the music-hall—that is to say, at about half-past ten—from a man who would stay until midnight or so. 'He's a society man,' Jenny Saphir used to say, 'and he wants to marry me'. This society man took every precaution to avoid being seen, such as turning up his coat-collar and lowering the brim of his hat when he passed the porter's box. And Jenny Saphir always made a point of sending away her

maid even before he came. This is the man whom we have to find."

"Has he left no traces?"

"None at all. It is obvious that we have to deal with a very clever scoundrel who prepared his crime beforehand and committed it with every possible chance of escaping unpunished. His arrest would be a great feather in our cap. I rely on you, Ganimard."

"Ah, you rely on me, chief?" replied the Inspector. "Well, we shall see... We shall see... I don't say no... Only..." He seemed in a very nervous condition, and his agitation struck Monsieur Dudouis. "Only," continued Ganimard, "only I swear... Do you hear, Chief? I swear..."

"What do you swear?"

"Nothing. We shall see, Chief... We shall see..."

Ganimard did not finish his sentence until he was outside, alone. And he finished it aloud, stamping his foot, in a tone of the most violent anger, "Only, I swear to Heaven that the arrest be effected by my own

means, without my employing a single one of the clues with which that villain has supplied me. Ah, no! Ah, no!..."

Railing against Lupin, furious at being mixed up in this business and resolved, nevertheless, to get to the bottom of it, he wandered aimlessly about the streets. His brain was seething with irritation, and he tried to adjust his ideas a little and to discover, among the chaotic facts, some trifling detail, unperceived by all, unsuspected by Lupin himself, that might lead him to success.

He lunched hurriedly at a bar, resumed his stroll and suddenly stopped—petrified, astounded, and confused. He was walking under the gateway of the very house in the Rue de Surène to which Lupin had enticed him a few hours earlier! A force stronger than his own will was drawing him there once more. The solution of the problem lay there. There and there alone were all the elements of the truth. Do and say what he would, Lupin's assertions were so precise, his calculations so accurate that, worried to the

inner-most recesses of his being by so prodigious a display of perspicacity, he could not do other than take up the work at the point where his enemy had left it.

Abandoning all further resistance, he climbed the three flights of stairs. The door of the flat was open. No one had touched the exhibits. he put them in his pocket and walked away. From that moment, he reasoned and acted, so to speak, mechanically, under the influence of the master whom he could not choose but obey.

Admitting that the unknown person whom he was seeking lived in the neighbourhood of the Pont-Neuf, it became necessary to discover, somewhere between that bridge and the Rue de Berne, the first-class confectioner's shop open in the evenings at which the cakes were bought. This did not take long to find. A pastry-cook near the Gare Saint-Lazare showed him some little cardboard boxes, identical in material and shape with the one in Ganimard's possession. Moreover, one of the shop girls remembered having served, on the previous evening, a

gentleman whose face was almost concealed in the collar of his fur-coat, but whose eye-glass she had happened to notice.

"That's one clue checked," thought the Inspector. "Our man wears an eye-glass."

He next collected the pieces of the racing-paper and showed them to a news vendor, who easily recognized the Turf Illustré. Ganimard at once went to the offices of the Turf and asked to see the list of subscribers. Going through the list, he jotted down the names and addresses of all those who lived anywhere near the Pont-Neuf and principally—because Lupin had said so—those on the left bank of the river.

He then went back to the Criminal Investigation Department, took half-a-dozen men, and packed them off with the necessary instructions. At seven o'clock in the evening, the last of these men returned and brought good news with him. A certain Monsieur Prevailles, a subscriber to the Turf, occupied an entresol flat on the Quai des Augustins. On the previous evening he



left his place wearing a fur-coat, took his letters and his paper, the Turf Illustré, from the porter's wife, walked away, and returned home at midnight. This Monsieur Prevailles wore a single eye-glass. He was a regular race-goer and himself owned several hacks which he either rode himself or jobbed out.

The inquiry had taken so short a time and the results obtained were so exactly in accordance with Lupin's predictions that Ganimard felt quite overcome on hearing the detective's report. Once more he was measuring the prodigious extent of the resources at Lupin's disposal. Never in the course of his life—and Ganimard was already well-advanced in years—had he come across such perspicacity, such a quick and far-seeing mind.

He went in search of M. Dudouis. "Everything's ready, Chief. Have you a warrant?"

"Eh?"

"I said, everything is ready for the arrest, Chief."

"You know the name of

Jenny Saphir's murderer?

"Yes."

"But how? Explain yourself."

Ganimard had a sort of scruple of conscience, blushed a little, and nevertheless said, "An accident, chief. The murderer threw everything that was likely to compromise him into the Seine. Part of the parcel was picked up and handed to me."

"By whom?"

"A boatman who refused to give his name for fear of getting into trouble. But I had all the clues I wanted. It was not so difficult as I expected." And the inspector described how he had gone to work.

"And you call that an accident!" cried Monsieur Dudouis. "And you say that it was not difficult! Why, it's one of your finest performances! Finish it yourself, Ganimard, and be prudent."

Ganimard was eager to get the business done. He went to the Quai des Augustins with his men and distributed them

around the house. He questioned the portress, who said that her tenant took his meals out of doors, but made a point of looking in after dinner.

A little before nine o'clock, in fact, leaning out of her window, she warned Ganimard, who at once gave a low whistle. A gentleman in a tall hat and a fur-coat was coming along the pavement beside the Seine. He crossed the road and walked up to the house.

Ganimard stepped forward, "Monsieur Prevailles, I believe?" "Yes, but you are you?"

"I have a commission to..."

He had not time to finish his sentence. At the sight of the men appearing out of the shadow, Prevailles quickly retreated to the wall and faced his adversaries with his back to the door of a shop on the ground-floor, the shutters of which were closed. "Stand back!" he cried. "I don't know you!" His right hand brandished a heavy stick, while his left was slipped behind him and seemed to be trying to open the door.

Ganimard had an impression that the man might escape through this way and through some secret outlet. "None of this nonsense," he said, moving closer to him. "You're caught. You had better come quietly."

But just as he was laying hold of Prevailles' stick, Ganimard remembered the warning which Lupin gave him. Prevailles was left-handed, and it was his revolver for which he was feeling behind his back.

The inspector ducked his head. He had noticed the man's sudden movement. Two reports rang out. No one was hit. A second later, Prevailles received a blow under the chin from the butt-end of a revolver, which brought him down where he stood. He was entered at the dépôt soon after nine o'clock.

Ganimard enjoyed a great reputation even at that time. But this capture, so quickly effected by such a very simple means and at once made public by the police, won him a sudden celebrity. Prevailles was forthwith saddled with all the murders that had remained unpunished, and the

newspapers vied with one another in extolling Ganimard's prowess.

The case was conducted briskly at the start. It was first of all ascertained that Prevailles, whose real name was Thomas Deroeq, had already been in trouble. Moreover, the search instituted in his rooms, while not supplying any fresh proofs, at least led to the discovery of a ball of whipcord similar to the cord used for doing up the parcel and also to the discovery of daggers which would have produced a wound similar to the wounds on the victim.

But, on the eighth day, everything was changed. Until then Prevailles had refused to reply to the questions put to him. But now, assisted by his counsel, he pleaded a circumstantial alibi and maintained that he was at the Folies-Bergères on the night of the murder. As a matter of fact, the pockets of his dinner-jacket contained the counterfoil of a stall-ticket and a programme of the performance, both bearing the date of that evening. "An alibi prepared in advance," objected the

examining-magistrate. "Prove it," said Prevailles.

The prisoner was confronted with the witnesses for the prosecution. The young lady from the confectioner's "thought she knew" the gentleman with the eye-glass. The hall porter in the Rue de Berne "thought he knew" the gentleman who used to come to see Jenny Saphir. But nobody dared to make a more definite statement. The examination, therefore, led to nothing of a precise character, provided no solid basis whereon to found a serious accusation.

The judge sent for Ganimard and told him of his difficulty, "I can't possibly persist, at this rate. There is no evidence to support the charge."

"But surely you are convinced in your own mind, monsieur le juge d'instruction! Prevailles would never have resisted his arrest unless he was guilty."

"He says that he thought he was being assaulted. He also says that he never set eyes on Jenny Saphir and, as a matter

of fact, we can find no one to contradict his assertion. Then again, admitting that the sapphire has been stolen, we have not been able to find it at his flat."

"Nor anywhere else," suggested Ganimard.

"Quite true, but that's no evidence against him. I'll tell you what we shall want, Monsieur Ganimard, and that very soon—the other end of this red scarf."

"The other end?"

"Yes, for it is obvious that, if the murderer took it away with him, the reason was that the stuff is stained with the marks of the blood on his fingers."

Ganimard made no reply. For several days, he had felt that the whole business was tending to this conclusion. There was no other proof possible. Given the silk scarf—and in no other circumstances—Prevailles' guilt was certain. Now Ganimard's position required that Prevailles' guilt should be established. He was responsible for the arrest, it had cast a glamour around him, he had been

praised to the skies as the most formidable adversary of criminals, and he would look absolutely ridiculous if Prevailles were released.

Unfortunately, the one and only indispensable proof was in Lupin's pocket. How was he to get hold of it?

Ganimard cast about, exhausted himself with fresh investigations from start to finish, spent sleepless nights in turning over the mystery of the Rue de Berne, studied the records of Prevailles' life, sent ten men hunting after the invisible sapphire. Everything was useless.

On 28 December the examining-magistrate stopped him in one of the passages of the law courts. "Well, Monsieur Ganimard, any news?"

"No, monsieur le juge d'instruction."

"Then I shall dismiss the case."

"Wait one day longer."

"What's the use? We want the other end of the scarf; have you got it?"

"I shall have it

tomorrow."

"Tomorrow!"

"Yes, but please lend me the piece in your possession."

"What if I do?"

"If you do, I promise to let you have the whole scarf complete."

"Very well, that's understood."

Ganimard followed the examining-magistrate to his room and came out with the piece of silk. "Hang it all!" he growled. "Yes, I will go and fetch the proof and I shall have it, too. Always presuming that Master Lupin has the courage to keep the appointment."

In point of fact, he did not doubt for a moment that Master Lupin would have this courage, and that was just what exasperated him. Why had Lupin insisted on this meeting? What was his object, in the circumstances?

Anxious, furious, and full of hatred, he resolved to take every precaution necessary not only to prevent his falling into a trap himself, but to make his enemy fall into one,

now that the opportunity offered. And, on the next day, which was 29 December, the date fixed by Lupin, after spending the night studying the old manor-house in the Rue de Surène and convincing himself that there was no other outlet than the front-door, he warned his men that he was going on a dangerous expedition and arrived with them on the field of battle.

He posted them in a café and gave them formal instructions: If he showed himself at one of the third-floor windows, or if he failed to return within an hour, the detectives were to enter the house and arrest anyone who tried to leave it. The chief-inspector made sure that his revolver was in working order and that he could take it from his pocket easily. Then he went upstairs.

He was surprised to find things as he had left them, the doors open and the locks broken. After ascertaining that the windows of the principal room looked out on the street, he visited the three other rooms that made up the flat. There was no one there.

"Master Lupin was afraid," he muttered, not without a certain satisfaction.

"Don't be silly," said a voice behind him.

Turning round, he saw an old workman wearing a house-painter's long smock standing in the doorway.

"You needn't bother your head," said the workman. "It's I, Lupin.

I have been working in the painter's shop since early morning. This is when we knock off for breakfast. So I came upstairs." He looked at Ganimard with a quizzing smile and cried, "Upon my word, this is a gorgeous moment I owe you, old chap! I wouldn't sell it for ten years of your life; and yet you know how I love you! What do you think of it, artist? Wasn't it well thought-out and well foreseen?

Foreseen from alpha to omega? Did I understand the business? Did I penetrate the mystery of the scarf? I'm not saying that there were no holes in my argument, no links missing in the chain, but what a masterpiece of intelligence, Ganimard, what a reconstruction of events! What an

intuition of everything that had taken place and of everything that was going to take place, from the discovery of the crime to your arrival here in search of a proof! What a really marvellous divination! Have you the scarf?"

"Yes, half of it. Have you the other?"

"Here it is. Let's compare."

They spread the two pieces of silk on the table. The cuts made by the scissors corresponded exactly. Moreover, the colours were identical.

"But I presume," said Lupin, "that this was not the only thing you came for. What you are interested in seeing is the marks of the blood. Come with me, Ganimard; it's rather dark in here."

They moved into the next room, which, though it over looked the courtyard, was lighter, and Lupin held his piece of silk against the window-pane. "Look" he said, making room for Ganimard.

The inspector gave a start of delight. The marks of the five fingers



and the print of the palm were distinctly visible. The evidence was undeniable. The murderer had seized the stuff in his blood-stained hand, in the same hand that had stabbed Jenny Saphir and tied the scarf round her neck.

“And it is the print of a left hand,” observed Lupin. “Hence my warning, which had nothing miraculous about it, you see. For, though I admit, friend of my youth, that you may look upon me as a superior intelligence, I won’t have you treat me as a wizard.”

Ganimard had quickly pocketed the piece of silk. Lupin nodded his head in approval, “Quite right, old boy, it’s for you. I’m so glad you’re glad! And, you see, there was no trap about all this, only the wish to oblige; a service between friends, between pals. And also, I confess, a little curiosity. Yes, I wanted to examine this other piece of silk, the one the police had. Don’t be afraid; I’ll give it back to you.... Just a second ”

Lupin, with a careless movement, played with the tassel at the end of

this half of the scarf, while Ganimard listened to him in spite of himself. “How ingenious these little bits of women’s work are! Did you notice one detail in the maid’s evidence? Jenny Saphir was very handy with her needle and used to make all her own hats and frocks. It is obvious that she made this scarf herself. Besides, I noticed that from the first. I am naturally curious, as I have already told you, and I made a thorough examination of the piece of silk which you have just put in your pocket. Inside the tassel I found a little sacred medal which the poor girl had stitched into it to bring her luck. Touching, isn’t it, Ganimard? A little medal of Our Lady of Good Succour.”

The inspector felt greatly puzzled and did not take his eyes off the other. And Lupin continued, “Then I said to myself, ‘How interesting it would be to explore the other half of the scarf, the one which the police will find round the victim’s neck! For this other half, which I hold in my hands at last, is finished off in the same way, so I shall be able to see if

it has a hiding-place too and what’s inside it. But look, my friend, isn’t it cleverly made? And so simple! All you have to do is to take a skein of red cord and braid it round a wooden cup, leaving a recess, a little empty space in the middle, very small, of course, but large enough to hold a medal of a saint—or anything. A precious stone, for instance.... Such as a sapphire ”

At that moment, he finished pushing back the silk cord and, from the hollow of a cup, he took between his thumb and forefinger a wonderful blue stone, perfect in respect of size and purity.

“Ha! What did I tell you, friend of my youth?” He raised his head.

The Inspector had turned livid and was staring wild-eyes, as though fascinated by the stone that sparkled before him. He at last realized the whole plot, “You dirty scoundrel!” he muttered, repeating the insults which he had used at the first interview. “You scum of the earth!”

The two men were standing one against the other. “Give me that

back,” said the Inspector.

Lupin held out the piece of silk.

“And the sapphire,” said Ganimard in a peremptory tone.

“Don’t be silly.”

“Give it back, or. ”

“Or what, you idiot?” cried Lupin. “Look here, do you think I put you on to this soft thing for nothing?”

“Give it back!”

“You haven’t noticed what I’ve been about, that’s plain! What! For four weeks, I’ve kept you on the move like a deer; and you want to ! Come, Ganimard, old chap, pull yourself together! Don’t you see that you’ve been playing

the good dog for four weeks on end? Fetch it, Rover! There’s a nice blue pebble over there, which master can’t get at. Hunt it, Ganimard, fetch it, bring it to master.... Ah, he’s his master’s own good little dog!... Sit up! Beg! Does’ms want a bit of sugar then?”

Ganimard, containing the anger that seethed within

him, thought only of one thing—summoning his detectives. And, as the room in which he now was looked out on the courtyard, he tried gradually to work his way round to the communicating door. He would then run to the window and break one of the panes.

“All the same,” continued Lupin, “what a pack of dunderheads you and the rest must be! You’ve had the silk all this time and not one of you ever thought of feeling it, not one of you ever asked himself the reason why the poor girl hung on to her scarf. Not one of you! You just acted at haphazard, without reflecting, without foreseeing anything. ”

The inspector had attained his object. Taking advantage of a second when Lupin had turned away from him, he suddenly wheeled round and grasped the door-handle. But an oath escaped him; the handle did not budge.

Lupin burst into a fit of laughing. “Not even that! You did not even foresee that! You lay a trap for me and you won’t admit that I may perhaps smell the thing

out beforehand. And you allow yourself to be brought into this room without asking whether I am not bringing you here for a particular reason and without remembering that the locks are fitted with a special mechanism. Come, now, speaking frankly, what do you think of yourself?”

“What do I think of it?” roared Ganimard, beside himself with rage. He had drawn his revolver and was pointing it straight at Lupin’s face. “Hands up!” he cried. “That’s what I think of it!”

Lupin placed himself in front of him and shrugged his shoulders. “Sold again!” he said.

“Hands up, I say, once more!”

“And sold again, say I. Your deadly weapon won’t go off,”

“What?”

“Old Catherine, your housekeeper, is in my service. She damped the charges this morning, while you were having your breakfast coffee.”

Ganimard made a furious gesture, pocketed the revolver

and rushed at Lupin. "Well?" said Lupin, stopping him short with a well-aimed kick on the shin.

Their clothes were almost touching. They exchanged glances of two adversaries who mean to come to blows. Nevertheless, there was no fight. The recollection of the earlier struggles made any present struggle useless. And Ganimard, who remembered all his past failures, his vain attacks, Lupin's crushing reprisals, did not lift a limb. There was nothing to be done. He felt it. Lupin had forces at his command against which any individual force simply broke to pieces. So what was the good?

"I agree," said Lupin in a friendly voice, as though answering Ganimard's unspoken thought, "you would do better to let things be as they are. Besides, friend of my youth, think of all that this incident has brought you: fame, the certainty of quick promotion and, thanks to that, the prospect of a happy

and comfortable old age! Surely, you don't want the discovery of the sapphire and the head of poor Arsène Lupin in addition! It wouldn't be fair. To say nothing of the fact that poor Arsène Lupin saved your life. Yes sir! Who warned you, at this very spot, that Prevailles was left-handed? And is this the way you thank me? It's not pretty of you, Ganimard. Upon my word, you make me blush for you!"

While chattering, Lupin had gone through the same performance as Ganimard and was now near the door. Ganimard saw that his foe was about to escape him. Forgetting all prudence, he tried to block his way and received a tremendous butt in the stomach, which sent him rolling to the opposite wall. Lupin dexterously touched a spring, turned the handle, opened the door, and slipped away, roaring with laughter as he went.

Twenty minutes later, when Ganimard at last succeeded in joining his men, one of them

said to him, "A house-painter left the house as his mates were coming back from breakfast and put a letter in my hand. 'Give that to your governor,' he said. 'Which governor?' I asked, but he was gone. I suppose it's meant for you."

"Let's have it."

Ganimard opened the letter. It was hurriedly scribbled in pencil and contained these words:

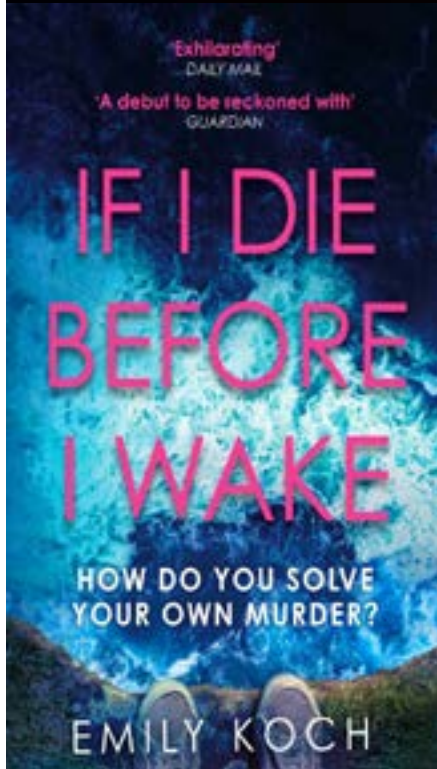
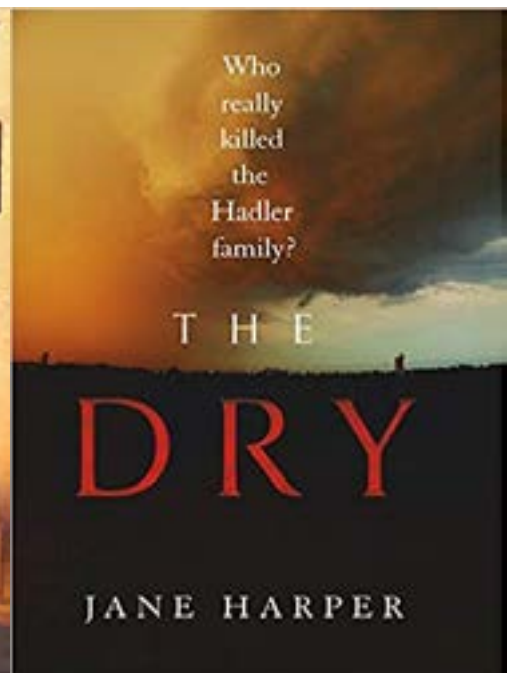
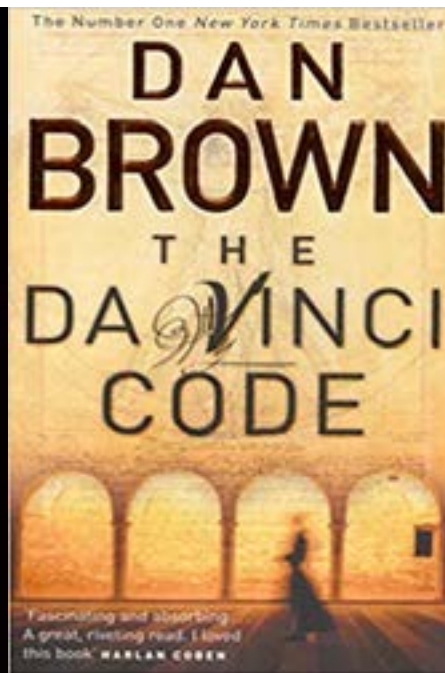
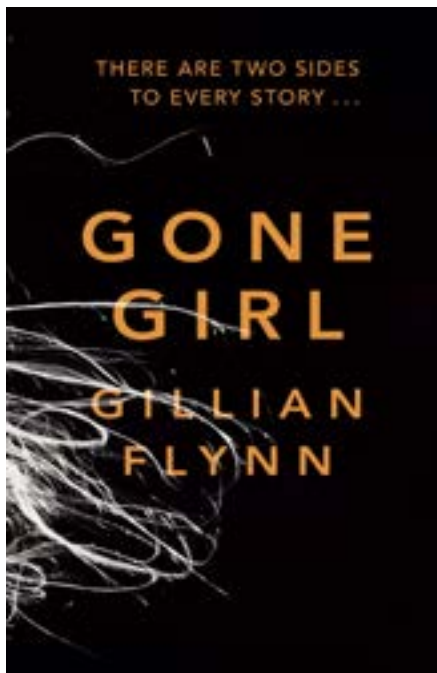
*This is to warn you, friend of my youth, against excessive credulity. When a fellow tells you that the cartridges in your revolver are damp, however great your confidence in that fellow may be, even though his name be Arsène Lupin, never allow yourself to be taken in. Fire first and if the fellow hops the twig, you will have acquired the proof (1) that the cartridges are not damp, and (2) that old Catherine is the most honest and respectable of housekeepers. One of these days, I hope to have the pleasure of making her acquaintance.*

*Meanwhile, friend of my youth, believe me to be always affectionately and sincerely yours,*

*Arsène Lupin*

*Maurice Leblanc,*

*“The Red Silk Scarf” in The Confessions of Arsène Lupin (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1913):138–176.*

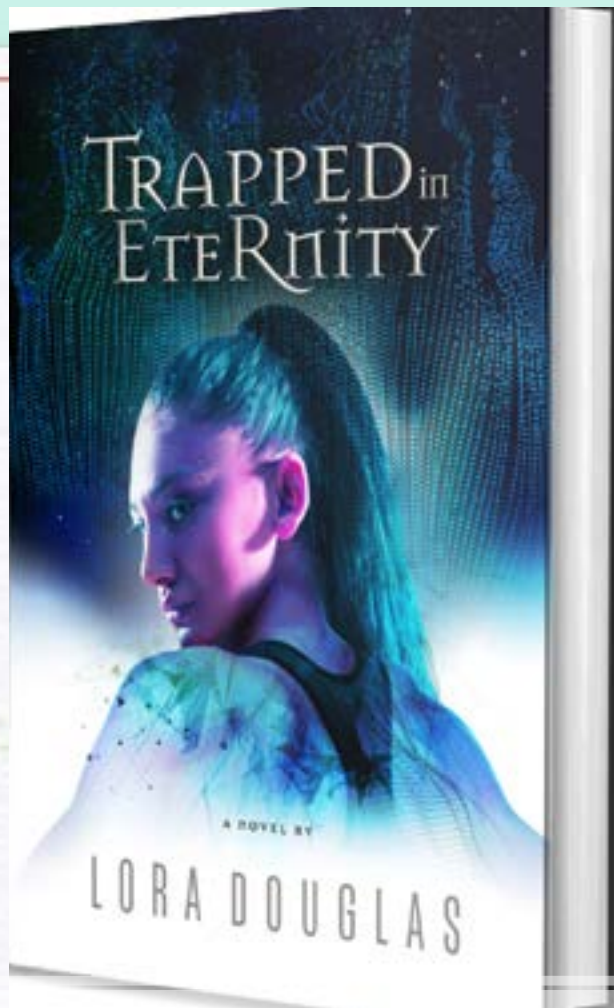




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# THE BLUE CROSS

Valentin smoked frowningly  
for a few seconds; then,  
removing his cigarette, he  
said: "If you know what a  
man's doing, get in front of  
him; but if you want to guess  
what he's doing, keep behind  
him.

Between the silver  
ribbon of morning and  
the green glittering  
ribbon of sea, the boat  
touched Harwich and  
let loose a swarm of  
folk like flies, among  
whom the man we  
must follow was by no  
means conspicuous –  
nor wished to be. There  
was nothing notable  
about him, except a  
slight contrast between  
the holiday gaiety of  
his clothes and the





official gravity of his face. His clothes included a slight, pale grey jacket, a white waistcoat, and a silver straw hat with a grey-blue ribbon. His lean face was dark by contrast, and ended in a curt black beard that looked Spanish and suggested an Elizabethan ruff. He was smoking a cigarette with the seriousness of an idler.

There was nothing about him to indicate the fact that the grey jacket covered a loaded revolver, that the white waistcoat covered a police card, or that the straw hat covered one of the most powerful intellects in Europe. For this was Valentin himself, the head of the Paris police and the most famous investigator of the world; and he was

coming from Brussels to London to make the greatest arrest of the century.

Flambeau was in England. The police of three countries had tracked the great criminal at last from Ghent to Brussels, from Brussels to the Hook of Holland; and it was conjectured that he would take some advantage of



the unfamiliarity and confusion of the Eucharistic Congress, then taking place in London. Probably he would travel as some minor clerk or secretary connected with it; but, of course, Valentin could not be certain; nobody could be certain about Flambeau.

It is many years now since this colossus of crime suddenly ceased keeping the world in a turmoil; and when he ceased, as they said after the death of Roland, there was a great quiet upon the earth. But in his best days (I mean, of course, his worst) Flambeau was a figure as statuesque and international as the Kaiser. Almost every morning the daily paper announced that he had escaped the consequences of one extraordinary crime by committing another. He was a Gascon of gigantic stature and bodily daring; and the wildest tales were told of his outbursts of athletic humour; how he turned the juge d'instruction upside down and stood him on his head,

"to clear his mind"; how he ran down the Rue de Rivoli with a policeman under each arm. It is due to him to say that his fantastic physical strength was generally employed in such bloodless though undignified scenes; his real crimes were chiefly those of ingenious and wholesale robbery. But each of his thefts was almost a new sin, and would make a story by itself. It was he who ran the great Tyrolean Dairy Company in London, with no dairies, no cows, no carts, no milk, but with some thousand subscribers. These he served by the simple operation of moving the little milk cans outside people's doors to the doors of his own customers. It was he who had kept up an unaccountable and close correspondence with a young lady whose whole letter-bag was intercepted, by the extraordinary trick of photographing his messages infinitesimally small upon the slides of a microscope. A sweeping simplicity, however, marked many of his experiments. It

is said that he once repainted all the numbers in a street in the dead of night merely to divert one traveller into a trap. It is quite certain that he invented a portable pillar-box, which he put up at corners in quiet suburbs on the chance of strangers dropping postal orders into it. Lastly, he was known to be a startling acrobat; despite his huge figure, he could leap like a grasshopper and melt into the tree-tops like a monkey. Hence the great Valentin, when he set out to find Flambeau, was perfectly aware that his adventures would not end when he had found him.

But how was he to find him? On this the great Valentin's ideas were still in process of settlement.

There was one thing which Flambeau, with all his dexterity of disguise, could not cover, and that was his singular height. If Valentin's quick eye had caught a tall apple-woman, a tall grenadier, or even a tolerably tall duchess, he might have arrested them on the spot. But

all along his train there was nobody that could be a disguised Flambeau, any more than a cat could be a disguised giraffe. About the people on the boat he had already satisfied himself; and the people picked up at Harwich or on the journey limited themselves with certainty to six. There was a short railway official travelling up to the terminus, three fairly short market gardeners picked up two stations afterwards, one very short widow lady going up from a small Essex town, and a very short Roman Catholic priest going up from a small Essex village. When it came to the last case, Valentin gave it up and almost laughed. The little priest was so much the essence of those Eastern flats; he had a face as round and dull as a Norfolk dumpling; he had eyes as empty as the North Sea; he had several brown paper parcels, which he was quite incapable of collecting. The Eucharistic Congress had doubtless sucked out of their local stagnation many such creatures, blind and helpless, like

moles disinterred. Valentin was a sceptic in the severe style of France, and could have no love for priests. But he could have pity for them, and this one might have provoked pity in anybody. He had a large, shabby umbrella, which constantly fell on the floor. He did not seem to know which was the right end of his return ticket. He explained with a moon-calf simplicity to everybody in the carriage that he had to be careful, because he had something made of real silver "with blue stones" in one of his brown-paper parcels. His quaint blending of Essex flatness with saintly simplicity continuously amused the Frenchman till the priest arrived (somehow) at Tottenham with all his parcels, and came back for his umbrella. When he did the last, Valentin even had the good nature to warn him not to take care of the silver by telling everybody about it. But to whomever he talked, Valentin kept his eye open for someone else; he looked out steadily for anyone, rich or poor, male or female,

who was well up to six feet; for Flambeau was four inches above it.

He alighted at Liverpool Street, however, quite conscientiously secure that he had not missed the criminal so far. He then went to Scotland Yard to regularise his position and arrange for help in case of need; he then lit another cigarette and went for a long stroll in the streets of London. As he was walking in the streets and squares beyond Victoria, he paused suddenly and stood. It was a quaint, quiet square, very typical of London, full of an accidental stillness. The tall, flat houses round looked at once prosperous and uninhabited; the square of shrubbery in the centre looked as deserted as a green Pacific islet. One of the four sides was much higher than the rest, like a dais; and the line of this side was broken by one of London's admirable accidents – a restaurant that looked as if it had strayed from Soho. It was an unreasonably attractive object, with dwarf plants in

pots and long, striped blinds of lemon yellow and white. It stood specially high above the street, and in the usual patchwork way of London, a flight of steps from the street ran up to meet the front door almost as a fire-escape might run up to a first-floor window. Valentin stood and smoked in front of the yellow-white blinds and considered them long.

The most incredible thing about miracles is that they happen. A few clouds in heaven do come together into the staring shape of one human eye. A tree does stand up in the landscape of a doubtful journey in the exact and elaborate shape of a note of interrogation. I have seen both these things myself within the last few days. Nelson does die in the instant of victory; and a man named Williams does quite accidentally murder a man named Williamson; it sounds like a sort of infanticide. In short, there is in life an element of elfin coincidence which people reckoning on the prosaic may

perpetually miss. As it has been well expressed in the paradox of Poe, wisdom should reckon on the unforeseen.

Aristide Valentin was unfathomably French; and the French intelligence is intelligence specially and solely. He was not “a thinking machine”; for that is a brainless phrase of modern fatalism and materialism. A machine only *<is>* a machine because it cannot think. But he was a thinking man, and a plain man at the same time. All his wonderful successes, that looked like conjuring, had been gained by plodding logic, by clear and commonplace French thought. The French electrify the world not by starting any paradox, they electrify it by carrying out a truism. They carry a truism so far – as in the French Revolution. But exactly because Valentin understood reason, he understood the limits of reason. Only a man who knows nothing of motors talks of motoring without petrol; only a man

who knows nothing of reason talks of reasoning without strong, undisputed first principles. Here he had no strong first principles. Flambeau had been missed at Harwich; and if he was in London at all, he might be anything from a tall tramp on Wimbledon Common to a tall toast-master at the Hotel Metropole. In such a naked state of nescience, Valentin had a view and a method of his own.

In such cases he reckoned on the unforeseen. In such cases, when he could not follow the train of the reasonable, he coldly and carefully followed the train of the unreasonable. Instead of going to the right places – banks, police stations, rendezvous – he systematically went to the wrong places; knocked at every empty house, turned down every cul de sac, went up every lane blocked with rubbish, went round every crescent that led him uselessly out of the way. He defended this crazy course quite logically. He said that if one had a clue this was the

worst way; but if one had no clue at all it was the best, because there was just the chance that any oddity that caught the eye of the pursuer might be the same that had caught the eye of the pursued. Somewhere a man must begin, and it had better be just where another man might stop. Something about that flight of steps up to the shop, something about the quietude and quaintness of the restaurant, roused all the detective's rare romantic fancy and made him resolve to strike at random. He went up the steps, and sitting down at a table by the window, asked for a cup of black coffee.

It was half-way through the morning, and he had not breakfasted; the slight litter of other breakfasts stood about on the table to remind him of his hunger; and adding a poached egg to his order, he proceeded musingly to shake some white sugar into his coffee, thinking all the time about Flambeau. He remembered how Flambeau had escaped,

once by a pair of nail scissors, and once by a house on fire; once by having to pay for an unstamped letter, and once by getting people to look through a telescope at a comet that might destroy the world. He thought his detective brain as good as the criminal's, which was true. But he fully realised the disadvantage. "The criminal is the creative artist; the detective only the critic," he said with a sour smile, and lifted his coffee cup to his lips slowly, and put it down very quickly. He had put salt in it.

He looked at the vessel from which the silvery powder had come; it was certainly a sugar-basin; as unmistakably meant for sugar as a champagne-bottle for champagne. He wondered why they should keep salt in it. He looked to see if there were any more orthodox vessels. Yes; there were two salt-cellars quite full. Perhaps there was some speciality in the condiment in the saltcellars. He tasted it; it was sugar. Then he looked round at the restaurant with a refreshed air of

interest, to see if there were any other traces of that singular artistic taste which puts the sugar in the salt-cellars and the salt in the sugar-basin. Except for an odd splash of some dark fluid on one of the white-papered walls, the whole place appeared neat, cheerful and ordinary. He rang the bell for the waiter.

When that official hurried up, fuzzy-haired and somewhat bleary-eyed at that early hour, the detective (who was not without an appreciation of the simpler forms of humour) asked him to taste the sugar and see if it was up to the high reputation of the hotel. The result was that the waiter yawned suddenly and woke up.

"Do you play this delicate joke on your customers every morning?" inquired Valentin. "Does changing the salt and sugar never pall on you as a jest?"

The waiter, when this irony grew clearer, stammeringly assured him that the establishment had certainly no such intention; it must



be a most curious mistake. He picked up the sugar-basin and looked at it; he picked up the salt-cellar and looked at that, his face growing more and more bewildered. At last he abruptly excused himself, and hurrying away, returned in a few seconds with the proprietor. The proprietor also examined the sugar-basin and then the salt-cellar; the proprietor also looked bewildered.

Suddenly the waiter seemed to grow inarticulate with a rush of words.

"I rink," he stuttered eagerly, "I zink it is those two clergymen."

"What two clergymen?"

"The two clergymen," said the waiter, "that threw soup at the wall."

"Threw soup at the wall?" repeated Valentin, feeling sure this must be some singular Italian metaphor.

"Yes, yes," said the attendant excitedly, and pointed at the dark

splash on the white paper; "threw it over there on the wall." Valentin looked his query at the proprietor, who came to his rescue with fuller reports.

"Yes, sir," he said, "it's quite true, though I don't suppose it has anything to do with the sugar and salt. Two clergymen came in and drank soup here very early, as soon as the shutters were taken down. They were both very quiet, respectable people; one of them paid the bill and went out; the other, who seemed a slower coach altogether, was some minutes longer getting his things together. But he went at last. Only, the instant before he stepped into the street he deliberately picked up his cup, which he had only half emptied, and threw the soup slap on the wall. I was in the back room myself, and so was the waiter; so I could only rush out in time to find the wall splashed and the shop empty. It don't do any particular damage, but it was confounded cheek; and I tried to catch the men in the street. They were too far off though; I only

noticed they went round the next corner into Carstairs Street."

The detective was on his feet, hat settled and stick in hand. He had already decided that in the universal darkness of his mind he could only follow the first odd finger that pointed; and this finger was odd enough. Paying his bill and clashing the glass doors behind him, he was soon swinging round into the other street.

It was fortunate that even in such fevered moments his eye was cool and quick. Something in a shop-front went by him like a mere flash; yet he went back to look at it. The shop was a popular greengrocer and fruiterer's, an array of goods set out in the open air and plainly ticketed with their names and prices. the two most prominent compartments were two heaps, of oranges and of nuts respectively. On the heap of nuts lay a scrap of cardboard, on which was written in bold, blue chalk, "Best tangerine oranges, two a penny." On the oranges was the equally clear and exact

description, "Finest Brazil nuts, 4d. a lb." M. Valentin looked at these two placards and fancied he had met this highly subtle form of humour before, and that somewhat recently. He drew the attention of the red-faced fruiterer, who was looking rather sullenly up and down the street, to this inaccuracy in his advertisements. The fruiterer said nothing, but sharply put each card into its proper place. The detective, leaning elegantly on his walking-cane, continued to scrutinise the shop. At last he said, "Pray excuse my apparent irrelevance, my good sir, but I should like to ask you a question in experimental psychology and the association of ideas."

The red-faced shopman regarded him with an eye of menace; but he continued gaily, swinging his cane, "Why," he pursued, "why are two tickets wrongly placed in a greengrocer's shop like a shovel hat that has come to London for a holiday? Or, in case I do not make myself clear, what is the mystical association

which connects the idea of nuts marked as oranges with the idea of two clergymen, one tall and the other short?"

The eyes of the tradesman stood out of his head like a snail's; he really seemed for an instant likely to fling himself upon the stranger. At last he stammered angrily: "I don't know what you 'ave to do with it, but if you're one of their friends, you can tell 'em from me that I'll knock their silly 'cads off, parsons or no parsons, if they upset my apples again."

"Indeed?" asked the detective, with great sympathy. "Did they upset your apples?"

"One of 'em did," said the heated shopman; "rolled 'em all over the street. I'd 'ave caught the fool but for havin' to pick 'em up."

"Which way did these parsons go?" asked Valentin.

"Up that second road on the left-hand side, and then across the square," said the other

promptly.

"Thanks," replied Valentin, and vanished like a fairy. On the other side of the second square he found a policeman, and said: Thus is urgent, constable; have you seen two clergymen in shovel."

The policeman began to chuckle heavily. "I 'ave, sir; and if you arst me, one of 'em was drunk. He stood in the middle of the road that bewildered that —"

"Which way did they go?" snapped Valentin.

"They took one of them yellow buses over there," answered the man; "them that go to Hampstead." Valentin produced his official card and said very rapidly: Call up two of your men to come with me in pursuit," and crossed the road with such contagious energy that the ponderous policeman was moved to almost agile obedience. In a minute and a half the French detective was joined on the opposite pavement by an inspector and a man in plain clothes.

“Well, sir,” began the former, with smiling importance, “and what may – ?”

Valentin pointed suddenly with his cane. “I’ll tell you on the top of that omnibus,” he said, and was darting and dodging across the tangle of the traffic. When all three sank panting on the top seats of the yellow vehicle, the inspector said: “We could go four times as quick in a taxi.”

“Quite true,” replied their leader placidly, “if we only had an idea of where we were going.”

“Well, where <are> you going?” asked the other, staring.

Valentin smoked frowningly for a few seconds; then, removing his cigarette, he said: “If you know what a man’s doing, get in front of him; but if you want to guess what he’s doing, keep behind him. Stray when he strays; stop when he stops; travel as slowly as he. Then you may see what he saw and may act as he acted. All we can do is to

keep our eyes skinned for a queer thing.”

“What sort of queer thing do you mean? ” asked the inspector.

“Any sort of queer thing,” answered Valentin, and relapsed into obstinate silence.

The yellow omnibus crawled up the northern roads for what seemed like hours on end; the great detective would not explain further, and perhaps his assistants felt a silent and growing doubt of his errand. Perhaps, also, they felt a silent and growing desire for lunch, for the hours crept long past the normal luncheon hour, and the long roads of the North London suburbs seemed to shoot out into length after length like an infernal telescope. It was one of those journeys on which a man perpetually feels that now at last he must have come to the end of the universe, and then finds he has only come to the beginning of Tufnell Park. London died away in draggled taverns and dreary scrubs, and then was

unaccountably born again in blazing high streets and blatant hotels. It was like passing through thirteen separate vulgar cities all just touching each other. But though the winter twilight was already threatening the road ahead of them, the Parisian detective still sat silent and watchful, eyeing the frontage of the streets that slid by on either side. By the time they had left Camden Town behind, the policemen were nearly asleep; at least, they gave something like a jump as Valentin leapt erect, struck a hand on each man’s shoulder, and shouted to the driver to stop.

They tumbled down the steps into the road without realising why they had been dislodged; when they looked round for enlightenment they found Valentin triumphantly pointing his finger towards a window on the left side of the road. It was a large window, forming part of the long facade of a gilt and palatial public-house; it was the part reserved for respectable dining, and labelled “Restaurant.” This window, like

all the rest along the frontage of the hotel, was of frosted and figured glass; but in the middle of it was a big, black smash, like a star in the ice.

“Our cue at last,” cried Valentin, waving his stick; “the place with the broken window.”

“What window? What cue?” asked his principal assistant. “Why, what proof is there that this has anything to do with – ”

Valentin almost broke his bamboo stick with rage.

“Proof!” he cried. “Good God! the man is looking for proof! Why, of course, the chances are twenty to one that it has nothing to do with them. But what else can we do? Don’t you see we must either follow one wild possibility or else go home to bed?” He banged his way into the restaurant, followed by his companions, and they were soon seated at a late luncheon at a little table, and looked at the star of smashed glass from the inside. Not that it was very informative to them even then.

“Got your window broken, I see,” said Valentin to the waiter as he paid the bill.

“Yes, sir,” answered the attendant, bending busily over the change, to wretch vaientm silently added an enormous tip. The waiter straightened himself with mild but unmistakable animation.

“Ah, yes, sir,” he said. “Very odd thing, that, sir.”

“Indeed? Tell us about it,” said the detective with careless curiosity.

“Well, two gents in black came in,” said the waiter, “two of those foreign parsons that are running about. They had a cheap and quiet little lunch, and one of them paid for it and went out. The other was just going out to join him when I looked at my change again and found he’d paid me more than three times too much. ‘Here,’ I says to the chap who was nearly out of the door, ‘you’ve paid too much.’ ‘Oh,’ he says, very cool, ‘have we?’ ‘Yes,’ I says, and picks up the bill to show him. Well, that was a

knock-out.”

“What do you mean?” asked his interlocutor.

“Well, I’d have sworn on seven Bibles that I’d put 4s. on that bill. But now I saw I’d put 14s., as plain as paint.”

“Well?” cried Valentin, moving slowly, but with burning eyes, “and then?”

“The parson at the door he says all serene, ‘Sorry to confuse your accounts, but it’ll pay for the window.’ ‘What window?’ I says. ‘The one I’m going to break,’ he says, and smashed that blessed pane with his umbrella.”

All three inquirers made an exclamation; and the inspector said under his breath, “Are we after escaped lunatics?” The waiter went on with some relish for the ridiculous story:

“I was so knocked silly for a second, I couldn’t do anything. The man marched out of the place and joined his friend just round the corner. Then they went so quick up Bullock Street that I couldn’t

catch them, though I ran round the bars to do it."

"Bullock Street," said the detective, and shot up that thoroughfare as quickly as the strange couple he pursued.

Their journey now took them through bare brick ways like tunnels; streets with few lights and even with few windows; streets that seemed built out of the blank backs of everything and everywhere. Dusk was deepening, and it was not easy even for the London policemen to guess in what exact direction they were treading. The inspector, however, was pretty certain that they would eventually strike some part of Hampstead Heath. Abruptly one bulging gas-lit window broke the blue twilight like a bull's-eye lantern; and Valentin stopped an instant before a little garish sweetstuff shop. After an instant's hesitation he went in; he stood amid the gaudy colours of the confectionery with entire gravity and bought thirteen chocolate cigars with a certain care. He was

clearly preparing an opening; but he did not need one.

An angular, elderly young woman in the shop had regarded his elegant appearance with a merely automatic inquiry; but when she saw the door behind him blocked with the blue uniform of the inspector, her eyes seemed to wake up.

"Oh," she said, "if you've come about that parcel, I've sent it off already."

"Parcel!" repeated Valentin; and it was his turn to look inquiring.

"I mean the parcel the gentleman left – the clergyman gentleman."

"For goodness' sake," said Valentin, leaning forward with his first real confession of eagerness, "for Heaven's sake tell us what happened exactly."

"Well," said the woman a little doubtfully, "the clergymen came in about half an hour ago and bought some peppermints and talked a bit, and then went off

towards the Heath. But a second after, one of them runs back into the shop and says, 'Have I left a parcel?' Well, I looked everywhere and couldn't see one; so he says, 'Never mind; but if it should turn up, please post it to this address,' and he left me the address and a shilling for my trouble. And sure enough, though I thought I'd looked everywhere, I found he'd left a brown paper parcel, so I posted it to the place he said. I can't remember the address now; it was somewhere in Westminster. But as the thing seemed so important, I thought perhaps the police had come about it."

"So they have," said Valentin shortly. "Is Hampstead Heath near here? "

"Straight on for fifteen minutes," said the woman, "and you'll come right out on the open." Valentin sprang out of the shop and began to run. The other detectives followed him at a reluctant trot.

The street they threaded was so narrow and shut in by shadows that when they came



out unexpectedly into the void common and vast sky they were startled to find the evening still so light and clear. A perfect dome of peacock-green sank into gold amid the blackening trees and the dark violet distances. The glowing green tint was just deep enough to pick out in points of crystal one or two stars. All that was left of the daylight lay in a golden glitter across the edge of Hampstead and that popular hollow which is called the Vale of Health. The holiday makers who roam this region had not wholly dispersed; a few couples sat shapelessly on benches; and here and there a distant girl still shrieked in one of the swings. The glory of heaven deepened and darkened around the sublime vulgarity of man; and standing on the slope and looking across the valley, Valentin beheld the thing which he sought.

Among the black and breaking groups in that distance was one especially black which did not break – a group of two figures clerically clad.

Though they seemed as small as insects, Valentin could see that one of them was much smaller than the other. Though the other had a student's stoop and an inconspicuous manner, he could see that the man was well over six feet high. He shut his teeth and went forward, whirling his stick impatiently. By the time he had substantially diminished the distance and magnified the two black figures as in a vast microscope, he had perceived something else; something which startled him, and yet which he had somehow expected. Whoever was the tall priest, there could be no doubt about the identity of the short one. It was his friend of the Harwich train, the stumpy little <curé> of Essex whom he had warned about his brown paper parcels.

Now, so far as this went, everything fitted in finally and rationally enough. Valentin had learned by his inquiries that morning that a Father Brown from Essex was bringing up a silver

cross with sapphires, a relic of considerable value, to show some of the foreign priests at the congress. This undoubtedly was the "silver with blue stones"; and Father Brown undoubtedly was the little greenhorn in the train. Now there was nothing wonderful about the fact that what Valentin had found out Flambeau had also found out; Flambeau found out everything. Also there was nothing wonderful in the fact that when Flambeau heard of a sapphire cross he should try to steal it; that was the most natural thing in all natural history. And most certainly there was nothing wonderful about the fact that Flambeau should have it all his own way with such a silly sheep as the man with the umbrella and the parcels. He was the sort of man whom anybody could lead on a string to the North Pole; it was not surprising that an actor like Flambeau, dressed as another priest, could lead him to Hampstead Heath. So far the crime seemed clear enough; and while the detective

pitied the priest for his helplessness, he almost despised Flambeau for condescending to so gullible a victim. But when Valentin thought of all that had happened in between, of all that had led him to his triumph, he racked his brains for the smallest rhyme or reason in it. What had the stealing of a blue-and-silver cross from a priest from Essex to do with chucking soup at wall paper? What had it to do with calling nuts oranges, or with paying for windows first and breaking them afterwards? He had come to the end of his chase; yet somehow he had missed the middle of it. When he failed (which was seldom), he had usually grasped the clue, but nevertheless missed the criminal. Here he had grasped the criminal, but still he could not grasp the clue.

The two figures that they followed were crawling like black flies across the huge green contour of a hill. They were evidently sunk in conversation, and perhaps did not notice where they were going; but they were

certainly going to the wilder and more silent heights of the Heath. As their pursuers gained on them, the latter had to use the undignified attitudes of the deer-stalker, to crouch behind clumps of trees and even to crawl prostrate in deep grass. By these ungainly ingenuities the hunters even came close enough to the quarry to hear the murmur of the discussion, but no word could be distinguished except the word "reason" recurring frequently in a high and almost childish voice. Once over an abrupt dip of land and a dense tangle of thickets, the detectives actually lost the two figures they were following. They did not find the trail again for an agonising ten minutes, and then it led round the brow of a great dome of hill overlooking an amphitheatre of rich and desolate sunset scenery. Under a tree in this commanding yet neglected spot was an old ramshackle wooden seat. On this seat sat the two priests still in serious speech together. The gorgeous

green and gold still clung to the darkening horizon; but the dome above was turning slowly from peacock-green to peacock-blue, and the stars detached themselves more and more like solid jewels. Mutely motioning to his followers, Valentin contrived to creep up behind the big branching tree, and, standing there in deathly silence, heard the words of the strange priests for the first time.

After he had listened for a minute and a half, he was gripped by a devilish doubt. Perhaps he had dragged the two English policemen to the wastes of a nocturnal heath on an errand no saner than seeking figs on its thistles. For the two priests were talking exactly like priests, piously, with learning and leisure, about the most aerial enigmas of theology. The little Essex priest spoke the more simply, with his round face turned to the strengthening stars; the other talked with his head bowed, as if he were not even worthy to look at them.

But no more innocently

clerical conversation could have been heard in any white Italian cloister or black Spanish cathedral.

The first he heard was the tail of one of Father Brown's sentences, which ended: "... what they really meant in the Middle Ages by the heavens being incorruptible."

The taller priest nodded his bowed head and said:

"Ah, yes, these modern infidels appeal to their reason; but who can look at those millions of worlds and not feel that there may well be wonderful universes above us where reason is utterly unreasonable? "

"No," said the other priest; "reason is always reasonable, even in the last limbo, in the lost borderland of things. I know that people charge the Church with lowering reason, but it is just the other way. Alone on earth, the Church makes reason really supreme. Alone on earth, the Church affirms that God himself is bound by

reason."

The other priest raised his austere face to the spangled sky and said: "Yet who knows if in that infinite universe – ?"

"Only infinite physically," said the little priest, turning sharply in his seat, "not Infinite in the sense of escaping from the laws of truth."

Valentin behind his tree was tearing his fingernails with silent fury. He seemed almost to hear the sniggers of the English detectives whom he had brought so far on a fantastic guess only to listen to the metaphysical gossip of two mild old parsons. In his impatience he lost the equally elaborate answer of the tall cleric, and when he listened again it was again Father Brown who was speaking:

"Reason and justice grip the remotest and the loneliest star. Look at those stars. Don't they look as if they were single diamonds and sapphires? Well, you

can imagine any mad botany or geology you please. Think of forests of adamant with leaves of brilliants. Think the moon is a blue moon, a single elephantine sapphire. But don't fancy that all that frantic astronomy would make the smallest difference to the reason and justice of conduct. On plains of opal, under cliffs cut out of pearl, you would still find a notice-board, 'Thou shalt not steal.'"

Valentin was just in the act of rising from his rigid and crouching attitude and creeping away as softly as might be, felled by the one great folly of his life. But something in the very silence of the tall priest made him stop until the latter spoke. When at last he did speak, he said simply, his head bowed and his hands on his knees: "Well, I think that other worlds may perhaps rise higher than our reason. The mystery of heaven is unfathomable, and I for one can only bow my head."

Then, with brow yet bent and without changing by the faintest shade his attitude or voice, he added: "Just hand over [that sapphire cross of](#)

that sapphire cross of yours, will you? We're all alone here, and I could pull you to pieces like a straw doll."

The utterly unaltered voice and attitude added a strange violence to that shocking change of speech. But the guarder of the relic only seemed to turn his head by the smallest section of the compass. He seemed still to have a somewhat foolish face turned to the stars. Perhaps he had not understood. Or, perhaps, he had understood and sat rigid with terror.

"Yes," said the tall priest, in the same low voice and in the same still posture, "yes, I am Flambeau."

Then, after a pause, he said: "Come, will you give me that cross?"

"No," said the other, and the monosyllable had an odd sound.

Flambeau suddenly flung off all his pontifical pretensions. The great robber leaned back in his seat and laughed low but

long. "No," he cried, "you won't give it me, you proud prelate. You won't give it me, you little celibate simpleton. Shall I tell you why you won't give it me? Because I've got it already in my own breast-pocket."

The small man from Essex turned what seemed to be a dazed face in the dusk, and said, with the timid eagerness of "The Private Secretary": "Are – are you sure?" "Oh, by being a celibate simpleton, I suppose," he said. "Has it never struck you that a man who does next to nothing but hear men's real sins is not likely to be wholly unaware of human evil? But, as a matter of fact, another part of my trade, too, made me sure you weren't a priest."

"What?" asked the thief, almost gaping.

"You attacked reason," said Father Brown. "It's bad theology."

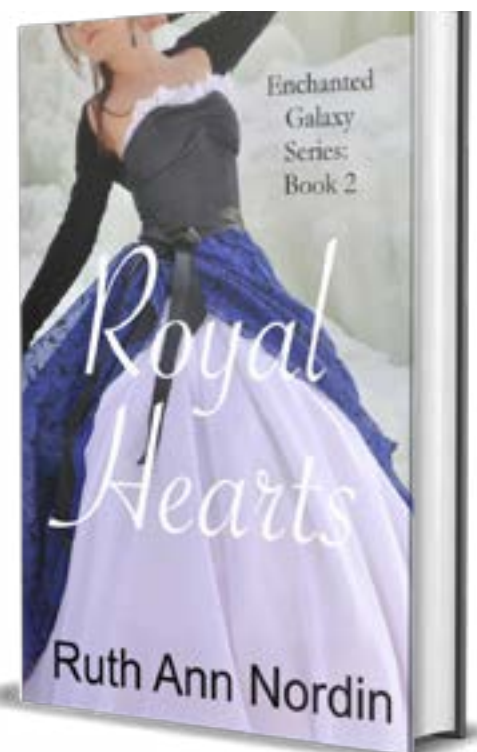
And even as he turned away to collect his property, the three policemen came out from under the twilight

trees. Flambeau was an artist and a sportsman. He stepped back and swept Valentin a great bow.

"Do not bow to me, mon ami," said Valentin with silver clearness. "Let us both bow to our master."

And they both stood an instant uncovered while the little Essex priest blinked about for his umbrella.

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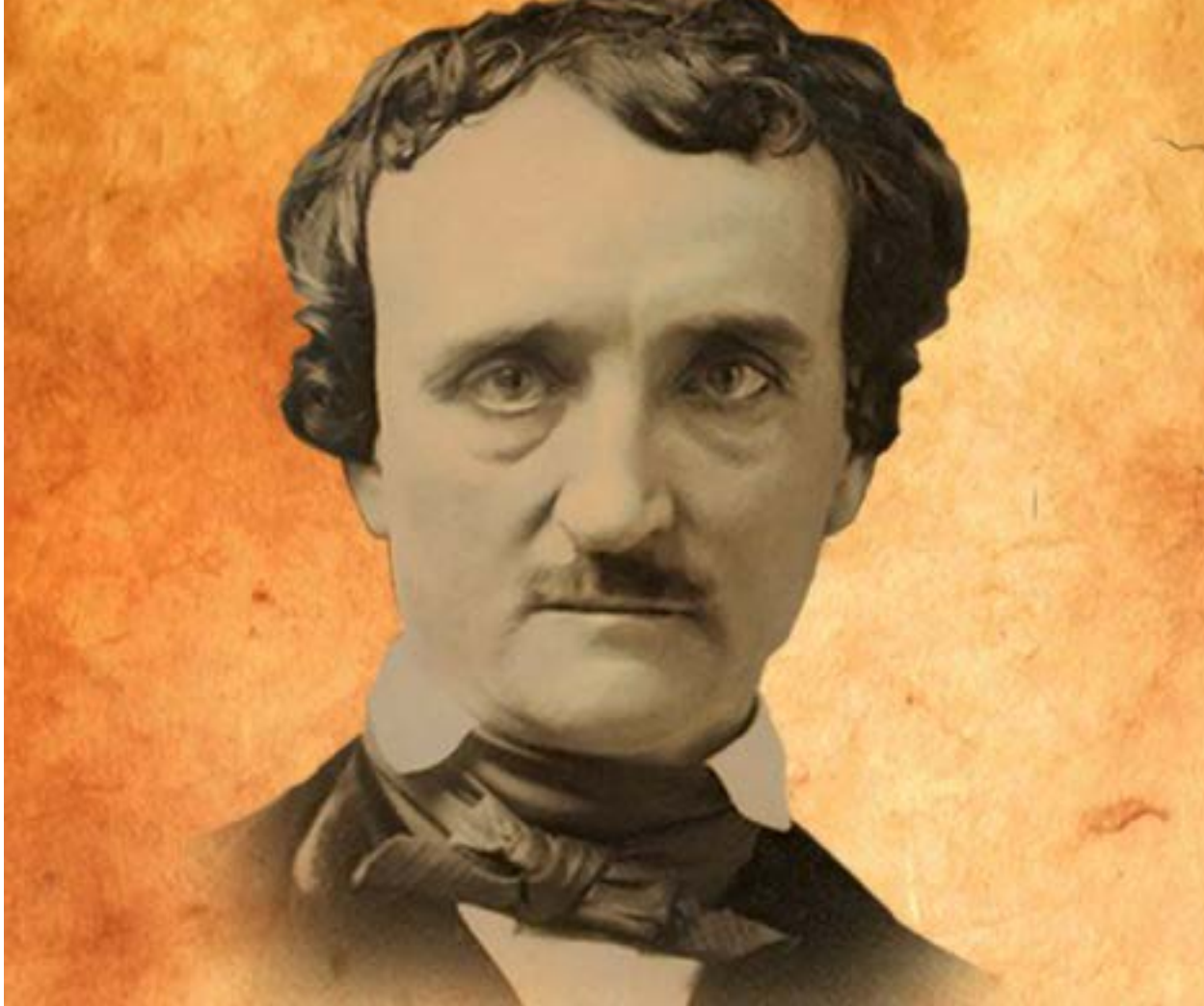
## **Red Velvet and Anemones**

Betrayal always offers a choice: Bitter or Better?

**Coming Soon**  
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# THE TELL TALE HEART



Edgar

Allan



"I have often been reproached with the aridity of my genius; a deficiency of imagination has been imputed to me as a crime; and the Pyrrhonism of my opinions has at all times rendered me notorious."

\*\*\*\*\*

True! --nervous --very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why will you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses --not destroyed --not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily --how calmly I can tell you the whole story.





"I heard all  
things in the  
heaven and  
in the earth. I  
heard many  
things in  
hell."

It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! yes, it was this! He had the eye of a vulture --a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so by degrees --very gradually --I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever.

Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen me. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded --with what caution --with what foresight --with what dissimulation I went to work! I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him. And every night, about midnight, I turned the latch of his door and opened it --oh so gently! And then, when I had made an

opening sufficient for my head, I put in a dark lantern, all closed, closed, that no light shone out, and then I thrust in my head. Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly --very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. It took me an hour to place my whole head within the opening so far that I could see him as he lay upon his bed. Ha! would a madman have been so wise as this, And then, when my head was well in the room, I undid the lantern cautiously--oh, so cautiously --cautiously (for the hinges creaked) --I undid it just so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye. And this I did for seven long nights --every night just at midnight --but I found the eye always closed; and so it was impossible to do the work; for it was not the old man who vexed me, but his Evil Eye. And every morning, when the day broke, I went boldly into the chamber, and spoke courageously to him, calling him by name in a hearty tone, and inquiring how he has passed the night. So you see he would have been a very profound old man, indeed, to suspect that every night, just at twelve, I looked in upon him while he slept.

Upon the eighth night I was more than usually cautious in opening the door. A watch's minute hand moves more quickly than did mine. Never before that night had I felt the extent of my own powers --of my sagacity. I could scarcely contain my feelings of triumph. To think that there I was, opening the door, little by little, and he not even to dream of my secret deeds or thoughts. I fairly chuckled at the idea; and perhaps he heard me; for he moved on the bed suddenly,

as if startled. Now you may think that I drew back --but no. His room was as black as pitch with the thick darkness, (for the shutters were close fastened, through fear of robbers,) and so I knew that he could not see the opening of the door, and I kept pushing it on steadily, steadily. I had my head in, and was about to open the lantern, when my thumb slipped upon the tin fastening, and the old man sprang up in bed, crying out --"Who's there?" I kept quite still and said nothing. For a whole hour I did not move a muscle, and in the meantime I did not hear him lie down. He was still sitting up in the bed listening; --just as I have done, night after night, hearkening to the death watches in the wall.

Presently I heard a slight groan, and I knew it was the groan of mortal terror. It was not a groan of pain or of grief --oh, no! --it was the low stifled sound that arises from the bottom of the soul when overcharged with awe. I knew the sound well. Many a night, just at midnight, when all the world slept, it has welled up from my own bosom, deepening, with its dreadful echo, the terrors that distracted me. I say I knew it well. I knew what the old man felt, and pitied him, although I chuckled at heart. I knew that he had been lying awake ever since the first slight noise, when he had turned in the bed. His fears had been ever since growing upon him. He had been trying to fancy them causeless, but could not. He had been saying to himself --"It is nothing but the wind in the chimney --it is only a mouse crossing the floor," or "It is merely a cricket which has made a single chirp." Yes, he had been trying to comfort himself with these suppositions: but he had found all in vain. All in vain; because Death, in

approaching him had stalked with his black shadow before him, and enveloped the victim. And it was the mournful influence of the unperceived shadow that caused him to feel --although he neither saw nor heard --to feel the presence of my head within the room.

When I had waited a long time, very patiently, without hearing him lie down, I resolved to open a little --a very, very little crevice in the lantern. So I opened it --you cannot imagine how stealthily, stealthily --until, at length a simple dim ray, like the thread of the spider, shot from out the crevice and fell full upon the vulture eye. It was open --wide, wide open --and I grew furious as I gazed upon it. I saw it with perfect distinctness --all a dull blue, with a hideous veil over it that chilled the very marrow in my bones; but I could see nothing else of the old man's face or person: for I had directed the ray as if by instinct, precisely upon the damned spot. And have I not told you that what you mistake for madness is but over-acuteness of the sense? --now, I say, there came to my ears a low, dull, quick sound, such as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I knew that sound well, too. It was the beating of the old man's heart. It increased my fury, as the beating of a drum stimulates the soldier into courage.

But even yet I refrained and kept still. I scarcely breathed. I held the lantern motionless. I tried how steadily I could maintain the ray upon the eve. Meantime the hellish

tattoo of the heart increased. It grew quicker and quicker, and louder and louder every instant. The old man's terror must have been extreme! It grew louder, I say, louder every moment! --do you mark me well I have told you that I am nervous: so I am. And now at the dead hour of the night, amid the dreadful silence of that old house, so strange a noise as this excited me to uncontrollable terror. Yet, for some minutes longer I refrained and stood still. But the beating grew louder, louder! I thought the heart must burst. And now a new anxiety seized me --the sound would be heard by a neighbour! The old man's hour had come! With a loud yell, I threw open the lantern and leaped into the room. He shrieked once --once only. In an instant I dragged him to the floor, and pulled the heavy bed over him. I then smiled gaily, to find the deed so far done. But, for many minutes, the heart beat on with a muffled sound. This, however, did not vex me; it would not be heard through the wall. At length it ceased. The old man was dead. I removed the bed and examined the corpse. Yes, he was stone, stone dead. I placed my hand upon the heart and held it there many minutes. There was no pulsation. He was stone dead. His eye would trouble me no more.

If still you think me mad, you will think so no longer when I describe the wise precautions I took for the concealment of the body. The night waned, and I worked hastily, but in silence. First of all I dismembered the corpse. I cut off the head and the arms and the legs. I then took up three planks from the flooring of the chamber, and deposited all between

the scantlings. I then replaced the boards so cleverly, so cunningly, that no human eye --not even his --could have detected any thing wrong. There was nothing to wash out --no stain of any kind --no blood-spot whatever. I had been too wary for that. A tub had caught all --ha! ha!

When I had made an end of these labors, it was four o'clock --still dark as midnight. As the bell sounded the hour, there came a knocking at the street door. I went down to open it with a light heart, --for what had I now to fear? There entered three men, who introduced themselves, with perfect suavity, as officers of the police. A shriek had been heard by a neighbour during the night; suspicion of foul play had been aroused; information had been lodged at the police office, and they (the officers) had been deputed to search the premises. I smiled, --for what had I to fear? I bade the gentlemen welcome. The shriek, I said, was my own in a dream. The old man, I mentioned, was absent in the country. I took my visitors all over the house. I bade them search --search well. I led them, at length, to his chamber. I showed them his treasures, secure, undisturbed. In the enthusiasm of my confidence, I brought chairs into the room, and desired them here to rest from their fatigues, while I myself, in the wild audacity of my perfect triumph, placed my own seat upon the very spot beneath which reposed the corpse of the victim.

The officers were satisfied. My manner had convinced them. I was singularly at ease. They sat, and while I answered cheerily, they

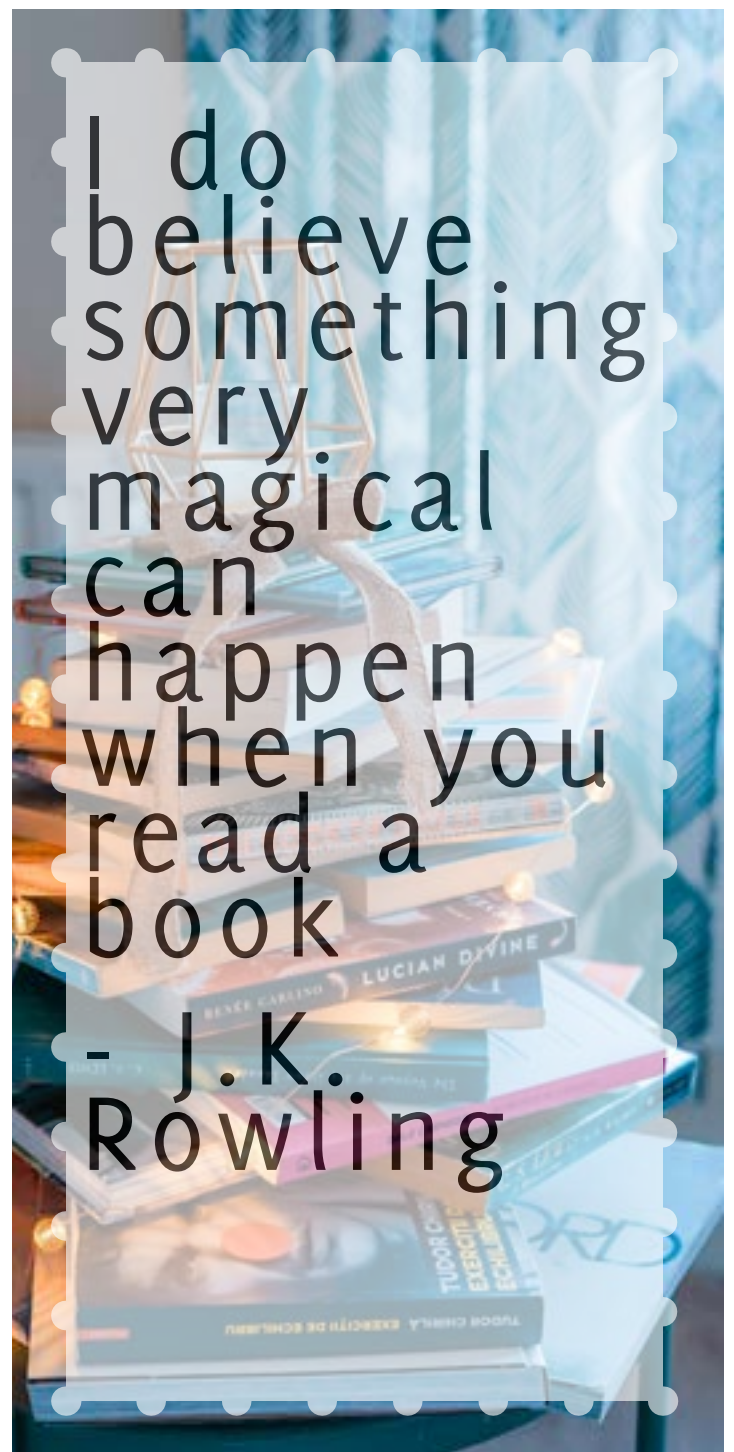


chatted of familiar things. But, ere long, I felt myself getting pale and wished them gone. My head ached, and I fancied a ringing in my ears: but still they sat and still chatted. The ringing became more distinct: --It continued and became more distinct: I talked more freely to get rid of the feeling: but it continued and gained definiteness --until, at length, I found that the noise was not within my ears. No doubt I now grew very pale; --but I talked more fluently, and with a heightened voice. Yet the sound increased --and what could I do? It was a low, dull, quick sound --much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I gasped for breath --and yet the officers heard it not. I talked more quickly --more vehemently; but the noise steadily increased. I arose and argued about trifles, in a high key and with violent gesticulations; but the noise steadily increased. Why would they not be gone? I paced the floor to and fro with heavy strides, as if excited to fury by the observations of the men --but the noise steadily increased. Oh God! what could I do? I foamed --I raved --I swore! I swung the chair upon which I had been sitting, and grated it upon the boards, but the noise arose over all and continually increased. It grew louder --louder --louder! And still the men chatted pleasantly, and smiled. Was it possible they heard not? Almighty God! --no, no! They heard! --they suspected! --they knew! --they were making a mockery of my horror! --this I thought, and this I think. But anything was better than this agony! Anything was more tolerable than this derision! I could bear those hypocritical smiles no longer! I felt

that I must scream or die! and now --again! --hark! louder! louder! louder! louder!

“Villains!” I shrieked, “dissemble no more! I admit the deed! --tear up the planks! here, here! --It is the beating of his hideous heart!”

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**ONLY ENEMIES  
SPEAK THE  
TRUTH;  
FRIENDS AND  
LOVERS LIE  
ENDLESSLY,  
CAUGHT IN THE  
WEB OF DUTY.**  
-STEPHEN KING



**YOU MUSTN'T  
FALL IN LOVE  
WITH YOUR  
OWN HERO.**

-LEE CHILD

**THE KEY TO  
THRILLERS IS  
VICARIOUS  
PLEASURE.**

-LEE CHILD



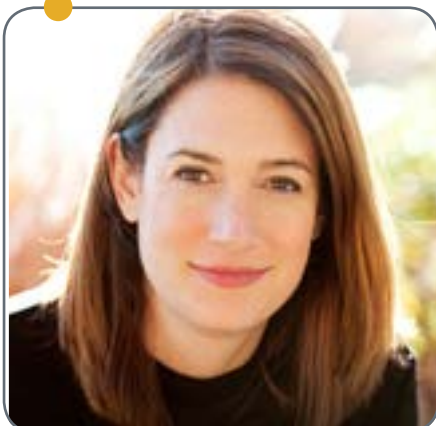
**IT'S NOT  
ABOUT WHAT  
YOU TELL  
THE READER,  
IT'S ABOUT  
WHAT YOU  
CONCEAL.**

-DAN BROWN



**I LIKED THE  
IDEA OF A  
WHODUNIT  
REVOLVING  
AROUND A  
MARRIAGE.**

-GILLIAN FLYNN



**WOMEN  
SHOULDN'T  
BE EXPECTED  
TO ONLY PLAY  
NURTURING,  
KIND  
CARETAKERS.**  
-GILLIAN FLYNN

**EVERYTHING  
THAT HAS  
EXISTED,  
LINGERS  
IN THE  
ETERNITY.**

**-AGATHA CHRISTIE**



**SUCCESS  
LEAVES CLUES,  
AND IF YOU  
SOW THE SAME  
SEEDS, YOU'LL  
REAP THE SAME  
REWARDS.**

**-BRAD THOR**

**I REALLY  
BELIEVE THAT  
A WRITER IS  
SOMEONE WHO  
HAS TRAINED  
THEIR MIND TO  
MISBEHAVE.**

**-BRAD THOR**

**THE GREATEST  
GIFT IS OUR  
OWN EYES,  
SENSE OF  
SMELL, AND  
ABILITIES TO  
DEDUCE.**

**-PATRICIA CORNWELL**



**THE HUMAN  
CAPACITY TO  
BE CURIOUS  
HAS ALWAYS  
EXISTED.**

**-PATRICIA CORNWELL**



**I'M ALWAYS  
FASCINATED BY  
HOW DIFFERENT  
WRITERS'  
ROOMS WORK.**

**-MEGAN ABBOTT**







EDITINGLE

INDIE

BOOK CAFE

CATALOG

1ST EDITION

COMING SOON



*glimpse of  
mystery  
minds*



# SAMANTHA GOODWIN & MURDER AT MACBETH



Samantha Goodwin has written professionally for her business career as a Chartered Marketing Manager for over a decade before turning her hand to fiction. As an avid crime fiction fan, she regularly participates in the renowned Theakston Old Peculier Crime Writing Festival in Harrogate and completed their in Harrogate and completed their

prestigious Crime Writing Creative Workshop. She also relishes attending literature festivals across the country as well as engaging in numerous online writing communities.

Keen to support upcoming authors, Samantha recently launched the #IndieWritingWisdom initiative on Instagram to collate and share inspiring, original quotes from a wide range of different writers to

encourage others.

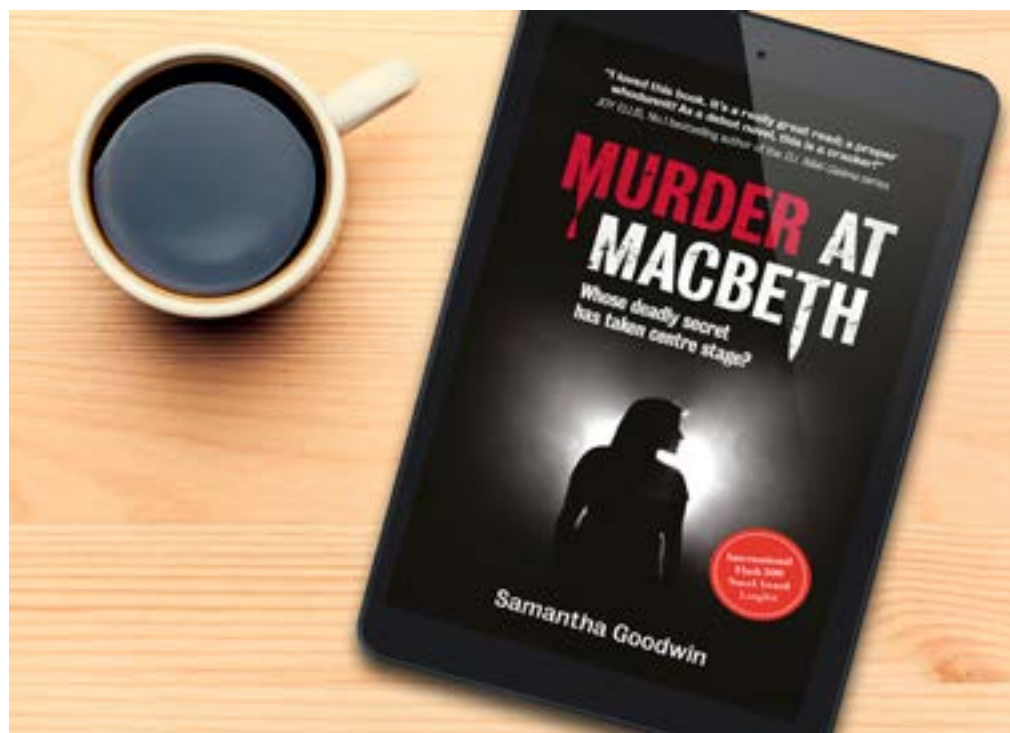
When she is not writing, Samantha enjoys reading, countryside walks, movies, musicals and almost all chocolate (but controversially not Oreos). She lives in Leeds with her husband, Chris, and son, Jack.

Murder at Macbeth is her first novel and was longlisted for the international Flash 500 Novel Award in 2017.

"I loved this book. It's a really great read; a proper whodunnit! As a debut novel, this is a cracker!"

-JOY ELLIS,

No.1 bestselling author of the D.I. Nikki Galena series





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No.1 bestselling author of the  
D.I. Nikki Galena series

Murder at Macbeth is a treat for crime and mystery lovers.

It starts with stage actress Nikki, stabbing herself while hundreds of audience watching. When the scene ends, claps drown the theatre. Only behind the closed curtains, Nikki pleads unsuccessfully to her colleagues with her eyes before losing consciousness.

The director and everyone first thinks that she got too much into the character. But when she doesn't move even when it's time for the next scene, to their horror they realize what had happened.



Nikki is rushed to the hospital and the detectives get to work, slowly unraveling the knots of mystery. The more they dig more politics and propaganda comes out. The anticipation only keeps on building from there on.

They are led on a tail chase as they follow each bread crumbs, so are the readers. The success of this author lies in the factor that readers are led on to suspect anything and everything they come across. The story is well plotted that readers don't narrow down their suspects for at least 90% of the story.

Even if a few had succeeded in guessing the killer, there is still a suspense that you never expected. Like I said, this crime drama is a treat to

crime and mystery lovers.

When I started reading I felt a wave of nostalgia. I grew up reading crime mysteries. And this book reminded me of my childhood days when I was first introduced to books. Such a good old memories.

The book sucked me in, taking me to London along with the characters. It's a while since I got lost into a story so religiously.

"A classic whodunnit that entertains in true Poirot style. It read like a really good episode of a prime-time crime series."

CAROL DEELEY,

Author of the Britannica series

Author Samantha had done a great job in her debut novel, which only increases the expectation of the readers for her next. Highly recommend this read.

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By Catherine  
Edward



# CHIT CHAT WITH SAMANTHA GOODWIN



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A small Interview with Samantha Goodwin on the occasion of her debut novel .- by Michaelle Sandefur

Hello Samantha, thank you for giving me your time for this interview. I'm excited for you to give us encouragement, insight and also a view into your world of mystery.

**Q.1- Having a job and family, how do you manage to find time to write?**

It certainly is a challenge! I find I have to make the most of small

snippets of time, rather than just discount them for not being long enough. That means I can continue to progress slowly but surely; for example when my baby is napping! Having a one-page outline is really useful for staying focused so I can pick up writing from where I left off while maintaining oversight of the whole story arc.

**Q.2- Did you ever envision**



**that you would ever become an author? What gave you the push in that direction?**

I've always written stories, ever since I was about 5 years old! It's been a dream of mine my whole life to write a book, so I'm really excited that I've finally released my debut novel. It's been a long time coming! It was my husband, Chris, who finally convinced me that I could do it. Also, it ended up being the last proper conversation I had with my Dad before he died suddenly of encephalitis two years ago so I felt very driven to finish it as a tribute to him. I found the whole process of writing very cathartic during grieving, it was helpful to be able to pour my energy into something positive.

**Q.3- Once you started writing, did you have any doubts and worries? If so what were they?**

I am a people pleaser so I did worry about others not enjoying reading it. But being in a Book Club really opened my eyes to the fact that people can have very diverse opinions about the same book, so that made me relax about it a lot more

– you can never please everyone!

**Q.4- I'm sure family has always been supportive, did you ever experience jealousy on their part when you were engrossed in writing?**

I've actually been really blessed with a very supportive family, so have never experienced jealousy from any of them, but the balancing act was certainly tricky at times, especially with a young baby. My husband is a Graphic Designer so he understands the importance of having a creative outlet, and coincidentally he's the one who designed my book cover!

**I see that you participate often in the Theakston Old Peculier Crime Writing Festival and completed the Crime Writing Creative Workshop.**

**Q.5- Do you feel like it has honed your ability to write mystery crime novels? Do you suggest others should get involved with such festivals.**

I would definitely recommend that aspiring authors get involved with crime writing festivals. It was an

absolutely fantastic experience and was very inspiring to be coached by bestselling crime authors such as Lesley Thomson and Elly Griffiths. I learned a lot of great tips that I could incorporate into my novel, especially regarding maintaining a good pace and developing interesting characters.

**I love the fact that you have involved yourself with helping other authors. And your willingness to give them your time and support.**

**Q.6- Is this the reason why you created #IndieWritingWisdom on instagram so authors can find you and Connect? Have you had a good response?**

Yes it is, I love to help support fellow writers.

#IndieWritingWisdom is an initiative I launched on Instagram late last year to collate and share inspiring writing quotes from new and upcoming authors to encourage others. I've always been a fan of motivational writing quotes and I thought it would be an ideal way of giving a voice to

new authors in the online writing community.

I've had a great response so far; over 50 authors have contributed original quotes already and I hope to see that number grow even more this year.

**Q.7- What inspired you to come up with the title "Murder At Macbeth"?**

I've always been fascinated by the superstitions surrounding Macbeth about it being cursed and the fact the play itself is about corruption and deception provided an interesting parallel to the novel's murder mystery.

I was also inspired by a newspaper article about a London West End actor who was accidentally stabbed live on stage. That sparked an idea in me about how dramatic that would be if it had been intentional. Plus, I found the concept of interviewing suspects who are also actors really interesting; they could so easily be playing a part to hide the truth.

**Q.8- Of all the characters in your book, who is the one that you identify with the most? And why?**

Always a tricky question when most of them are murder suspects! Although I did work really hard at creating multi-dimensional characters, so I do relate to a lot of them in some way. Violet Underwood is the one I identify with the most; she's very conscientious and studious which was loosely based on my younger self. Plus she's always late; my friends will confirm that is definitely like me!

**Q.9- Were you shocked at the response to *Murder At Macbeth*? Did it change your life so to speak?**

I've been so thrilled by how well it has been received. To get five star reviews from numerous book bloggers and reach the No.1 spot on Amazon UK is a dream come true. And a lot of readers have compared my writing to Agatha Christie which is an incredible compliment. I wouldn't say it's necessarily life-changing but the thing that has shocked me the most is how people from all over the world have been enjoying my book which is really exciting to see. So far it's been read in 14 countries and 10 states (that I know about) which is kind of mind-blowing to me!

**Q.10- Can we hope to find more novels in the future? If so is there a possibility for a series?**

I've definitely left it open so that the series can indeed continue. I think there would be a lot of scope to develop D.I. Robson further. I do have a lot of ideas, but haven't started working on my next book just yet – as I recently became a new mum I'm taking my time on the writing front at present.

**I bet family and friends find it difficult to watch crime dramas and movies with you. Because you guess the outcome.**

**Q.11- Do you always get it right? Or do you get surprised sometimes?**

That is a brilliant question as it is so true! I must admit I can often guess the outcome of a lot of crime dramas and movies. I can still be surprised though and I love discovering new shows that have more twists and are less predictable; *Killing Eve* is a current favorite.

**Q.12- What other types of genre do you enjoy reading? Have**

## **you ever thought of writing something other than crime?**

I absolutely love reading dystopia books, so it would be interesting to explore that genre. I think it's so great to have that sense of escapism of experiencing another world.

## **On one last note, is there anything you would like to say to your fellow authors?**

Believe in yourself, and surround yourself with positive people who will spur you on. Writing groups and online communities are great for when you need advice.

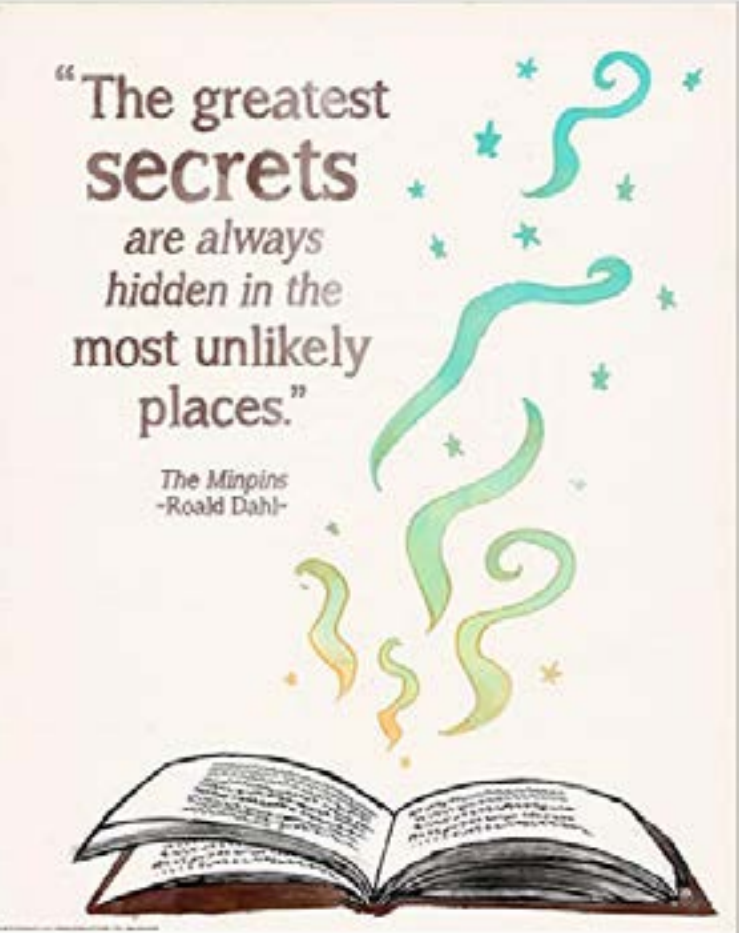
Also don't worry about getting it right first time, otherwise you'll never write anything. One of my favourite writing quotes is from Shannon Hale who said, "I'm writing a first draft and reminding myself that I'm simply shovelling sand into a box so that later I can build castles."

**Thank you so much for doing this interview and we look forward to seeing more from you!**



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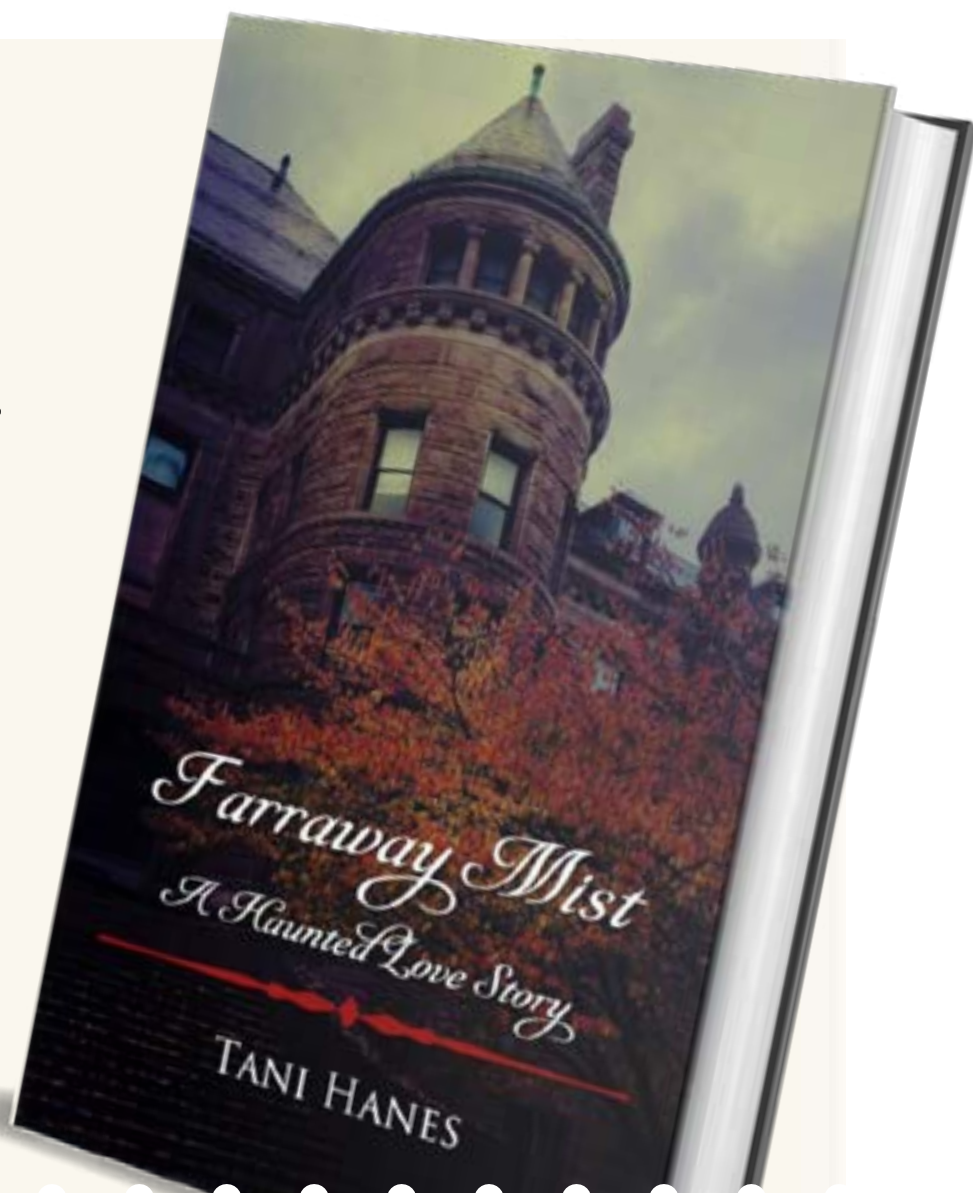
**"The greatest  
secrets  
are always  
hidden in the  
most unlikely  
places."**

*The Minpins  
-Roald Dahl-*





# By Tani Hanes



Scout Lawson is fleeing an unhappy past, and thinks she's run as far as she can from Yale University when she lands a job restoring a library in Cornwall, England for reclusive rock star George Wilder, who dropped out of sight after the death of his beautiful wife the year before.

As soon as she arrives at his estate, Faraway Mist, strange things start to happen.

As the couple's feelings for each other grow, the events become more harrowing, until everything they hold dear is in peril.



# THE PART OF PIECES



Author of *Ages from Eternity* and *Trapped in Eternity*. With her novels, Lora Douglas, offers a glimpse into her mind. A wanderer since birth, she delights in the wonders of places, people and culture. When she isn't writing, or absorbed in the wonderfully crazy dance of daily life, you can find her rocking out in her car or searching for an adventure deep in the pages of book or out on the winding road.



What is it about a good thriller that keeps us captivated? What keeps us coming back to the same ride? We know the twists and turns. We know when that music builds that something is coming. We shift to the edge of our seats, literally or figuratively, and we wait with bated breath for the killer, the stalker, the inevitable pin drop. We know what waits around the bend. We have felt the gutted sadness of the mortal loss. We have seen the guise of the suspected fall to reveal blasted innocence. We have ridden the highs and lows, and though the names and

situations change, the bones are similar.

So, in those cases, when we know the story, we know the bones. What keeps us strapped into the seat, readying the cup of coffee, a glass of wine, or a mountain of popcorn and taking the ride?

One aspect is the art of controlled, regulated fear. Within a safe environment, we can tap into that primal, primitive fear that takes hold as we ride the wave through anxiety, determination, tension, terror, and finally landing the addictive pool of relief, exhilaration, and satisfaction.

This ride is more than a mental jaunt or trivial entertainment. The limbic system, deep in our brains, plays a paramount role in our response to a threat, whether it is real or fictitious. If the brain perceives it, the limbic system responds. The limbic response affects many different areas, part, and workings in the body, mainly the release

of steroid hormones.

Cortisol, the stress hormone, increases your blood pressure and breathing rate. Also, with the fear response, neurotransmitters like dopamine, norepinephrine, and epinephrine (also called adrenaline), (gamma)-aminobutyric acid (GABA), and serotonin flood the brain. These little transmitters play a mighty role.

Often referred to as the “feel good hormone,” dopamine triggers a feeling of euphoria and aids in motivation and concentration. GABA inhibits stress and anxiety. Endorphins alter the perception of pain and create feelings of euphoria. Serotonin regulates your mood. When the body perceives a threat, a flood of these neurotransmitters can suppress activity in certain parts of the brain that affect concentration and short-term memory while also affecting rational thought and inhibitions.

All of this together fuels the flight or fight response. Your body receives a healthy dose of pain numbing, thought focusing, blood pumping fuel as your brain zeros in on the task at hand. In *Shutter Island* by Dennis Lehane, as Teddy climbs his way to the lighthouse, your brain scours the road that has led him here. You search the scenes, aimlessly trying to discern truth from lies. You have felt his pain, saw his mental turmoil and at least you are given the truth. The rug is pulled from your feet and you saw with new, sane eyes. The pieces tick into place and you are faced with gaping bewilderment or palatable satisfaction. “I knew it!”

The story wove its track and your brain worked its magic. This twisted pas de deux, like many others in many tales, took you on a visceral thrill ride, leaving your stress, concerns, and day-to-day humdrum at the gate. The twists and turns consume your brain and you get a great boost of

feel-good hormones to boot.

Another aspect of a good thriller that keeps us engaged and coming back, is the power of the trick. This is more than the brilliance of the plot twist or the “shockingness” of the reveal. The true power lies in the build up. What makes up the trail of bread crumbs that keeps us with our eyes locked on the page and our brain, dutifully focused? Personally, the most captivating, clutching, and at times infuriating part of a good thriller that keeps me coming back for the damned ride, is that trail.

The fragments of foreshadowing and tips of information dropped along the way are the crucial elements that leave me thoroughly satisfied or frustratingly disappointed. Give me a lack-luster twist but if the pieces are clear and clever, then chances are, I am satisfied. Throw in a hell of a twist but leave the pieces disjointed, scattered or at worst, forced, and I might applaud the twist, but I will not close the book with a smile. Give me a good rug pull and instantly my mind will dive back to the beginning and analyze all the pieces leading up to the monumental moment. Our brains crave information and we are addicted to certainty. I believe a story with sound pieces feeds those parts of our brain. When mixed with the visceral cocktail of neurotransmitters and endorphins, voila, you have the perfect means of pleasurable escape.

My first experience with the

magic of the pieces occurred by complete accident. I was only seven when I crossed the living room and glimpsed an image on the television screen. It was a small penguin. A man in a wheelchair was setting it back on a small table littered with other little figures and a voice in my young brain was adamant that something was wrong. That little penguin needed to face a different direction. I had no context, no reason to feel so strongly about such a trivial image but I did. Years later, in the throes of building suspense in the pages of Stephen King’s *Misery*, I saw that little penguin again and behold, that young voice was dead on in its perception. Call it intuition. Call it a coincidence. I call it the power of the pieces. The setup and attention to detail were done so precisely that I didn’t need to know the story to feel the power in that little action. I did not know why it was important. I did not know why I had this primal need to correct the man on the screen, the need to fix the penguin but I did, and that need was raw and compulsive.

For some people, their mind relishes in a good puzzle. I have heard it said many times by family, friends, associates, and readers, “Don’t just scare me; make me think.” We want to see the options, analyze the data and find the certainty in the conclusion. Will they survive? Who is the culprit? Who is the real evil? What is the twist going to be? We crave the certainty in the midst of building tension, character development, winding plot and

visceral thrill. We want to know. Sometimes the puzzle takes on a different feel. Maybe we think we could survive. We could do it better than the fleeing victim. Maybe we would not get caught. We would see through the disguise and we would win. Sometimes we slip into the protagonist's shoes and stand toe to toe with the towering evil and we win. Regardless of the tone of the puzzle, the crux of the pull stays the same. We devour the pieces, we analyze the data and through that, the story grabs us.

No doubt certain movies or stories come to mind. A strew of red objects, a harbinger that lays out the story, a disinterested guard, or flashes of dreams. Some pieces stand in the foreground, shining a light on things to come. Others only fully make sense after the reveal but once you know of their existence, they line the track of the ride and without them, the experience would not be the same.

While I am sure that all pieces are technically considered foreshadowing, for the sake of this article, I have split the two. Foreshadowing is a vital force to be planned, executed, and revised. It is a power to be honed though never overused. It morphs and shifts in the way it is wielded. Take care in foreshadowing. Give it due attention. Though I value its importance, the pieces I refer to can differ slightly. They are, in a sense, foreshadowing but it is the clever craft of the tangible object

or the use of the phrase, precise in its oddity that taunts the mind to pay attention. As the penguin, mundane in its existence, with a twist of its position, gave way to unease. This small piece not only brought hardship on our hero but dusted off another layer of the perverted psyche of Annie, our antagonist. In the film, the stillness of the lens hinted to the importance of our little penguin, but a viewer caught up in the thrill ride, on the edge of their seat, holding their breath or screaming at Paul to move faster, could miss the gravity until the moment the piece flexes its power. Then, inevitably, the mind snaps back to the blasted little penguin. Moments like this, the pieces glow in the mind, like a beacon along the track, not too quickly forgotten.

When you sit down to pen your story, remember the pieces. Treat them with respect, hone them to clarity, chip them to perfection and lay them out precisely. Set up the track with its twists and turns and give your reader, your watcher a ride of a lifetime. And when that final gong hits, that last gut punch, rug pull or feel good moment ends, give them pieces to go back and digest. This is when the story becomes part of them.

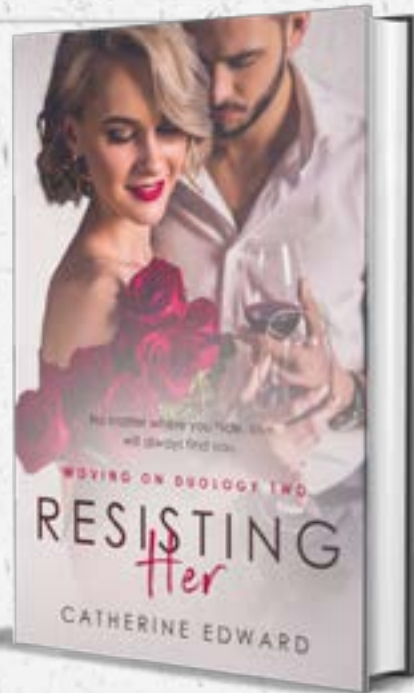
What is it about a good thriller that keeps us captivated? What keeps us coming back to the same ride? A good thriller grips us at a primal level. It takes us on a visceral ride that gets our minds and bodies involved. They do not just scare us; they make us think.



They grab ahold of our need for certainty, our craving for escape and they reward us with a physical, feel-good sensation and senses of relief or satisfaction. But most of all, they lay out a tempting puzzle with hooking pieces that keep me coming back, digging for more and digesting the information until I am intoxicated with the feeling of certainty, intelligence, and understanding. I see it. I feel it. I want to strap in again for the same ride, the same rush, and the same hunt.







Coming soon  
by  
Catherine  
Edward

# Rememberance

*Your hands easy weight,  
teasing the bees  
hived in my hair,  
your smile at the slope of my cheek.*

*On the occasion,  
you press above me,  
glowing, spouting readiness,  
mystery rapes  
my reason*

*When you have withdrawn  
your self and the magic,  
when only the smell of your  
love lingers between  
my breasts, then, only then,  
can I greedily consume  
your presence.*

*- Maya Angelou*





# Master Stroke tips from well known Authors

# WRITING TIPS FROM ASPIRING AUTHORS

Excited him now natural saw passage offices  
you minuter. At by asked being court hopes.

Farther so friends am to detract. Forbade  
con private be. Offending residence but men





# Stephen King

## 1. On what it takes:

“If you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot. There’s no way around these two things that I’m aware of, no shortcut.”

## 2. On going forward:

“The scariest moment is always just before you start.”

## 3. On motivation:

“You cannot hope to sweep someone else away by the force of your writing until it has been done to you.”

## 4. On keeping it simple:

“Description begins in the writer’s imagination, but should finish in the reader’s.”

## 5. On quality:

“I think the best stories always end up being about the people rather than the event, which is to say character-driven.”

## **6. On style:**

“The road to hell is paved with adverbs.”

## **7. On meaning:**

“Words create sentences; sentences create paragraphs; sometimes paragraphs quicken and begin to breathe.”

## **8. On happiness:**

“Writing isn’t about making money, getting famous, getting dates, getting laid, or making friends. In the end, it’s about enriching the lives of those who will read your work, and enriching your own life, as well. It’s about getting up, getting well, and getting over. Getting happy, okay? Getting happy.”

## **9. On finding ideas:**

“Let’s get one thing clear right now, shall we? There is no Idea Dump, no Story Central, no Island of the Buried Bestsellers; good story ideas seem to come quite literally from nowhere, sailing at you right out of the empty sky: two previously unrelated ideas come together and make something new under the sun. Your job isn’t to find these ideas but to recognize them when they show up.”

## **10. On hard work:**

“There is a muse, but he’s not going to come fluttering down into your writing room and scatter creative fairy-dust all over your typewriter or computer. He lives in the ground. He’s a basement kind of guy. You have to descend to his level, and once you get down there you have to furnish an apartment for him to live in. You have to do all the grunt labor, in other words, while the muse

sits and smokes cigars and admires his bowling trophies and pretends to ignore you. Do you think it's fair? I think it's fair. He may not be much to look at, that muse-guy, and he may not be much of a conversationalist, but he's got inspiration. It's right that you should do all the work and burn all the mid-night oil, because the guy with the cigar and the little wings has got a bag of magic. There's stuff in there that can change your life. Believe me, I know."

*All quotes taken from Stephen King's On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*

Harriett Larson has been in love with Stan Craftsman for years, but he's never paid any attention to her. Instead, his focus has always been on her twin sister. So when Stan proposes to Harriett, she knows it's only because he needs a mother for the little girl he recently adopted.

And while her first reaction is to turn him down, she can't bring herself to turn her back on an innocent child who needs her. So it is with reluctance she agrees to marry him. But only on one condition. Theirs will never be anything more than a marriage of convenience. She will not be vulnerable to him ever again.

But as soon as Stan marries her, he regrets the deal he made. She's not the wallflower he thought her to be. In fact, she's much more appealing than her sister. The problem is, how can he convince her of that so they can turn their marriage of convenience into something much more?





# Lee Child

Like his famous protagonist, Jack Reacher, Lee Child is a bit of a rogue badass—especially when it comes to his thoughts on writing, and debunking popular writing rules.

In his ThrillerFest session “Tell, Don’t Show: Why Writing Rules are Mostly Wrong,” Child battled a few of the biggest writing myths out there, and explained what really keeps a reader reading until The End.

## 1. Show, Don’t Tell

Picture this: In a novel, a character wakes up and looks at himself in the mirror, noting his scars and other physical traits for the reader.

“It is completely and utterly divorced from real life,” Child said.

So why do writers do this? Child said it’s because they’ve been beaten down by the rule of Show, Don’t Tell. “They manufacture this entirely artificial thing.”

“We’re not story showers,” Child said. “We’re story tellers.”

Child said there’s nothing wrong with simply saying the character was 6 feet tall, with scars.

After all, he added—do your kids ever ask you to show them a story? They ask you to tell them a story. Do you show a joke? No, you tell it.

“There is nothing wrong with just telling the story,”



Child said. “So liberate yourself from that rule.”

Child believes the average reader doesn’t care at all about telling, showing, etc. He or she just wants something to latch onto, something to carry them through the book. By following too many “rules,” you can lose your readers.

## **2. Don’t Start With the Weather**

“If the weather is what’s on your mind, start with it,” Child said. Simply put, all-time great Alistair MacLean did it all the time. Enough said.

## **3. Suspense is Created by X, Y, or Z**

For instance: Suspense is created by having sympathetic characters. More and more, Child said, this rule doesn’t add up. Case in point: In *The Runaway Jury* by John Grisham, Child said there isn’t a sympathetic character in the entire book—there are bad guys, and worse guys. Instead of sympathetic characters, the book is driven by what the verdict of the trial at the heart of the story will be.

“And that’s how you create suspense,” he said—it all boils down to asking a question and making people wait for the answer.

Child added that one thing he has learned throughout his career as a television writer and novelist is that humans are hard-wired to want the answer to a question. When the remote control was invented, it threw the TV business through a loop. How would you keep people around during a commercial? So TV producers started posing a question at the start of the commercial break, and answering it when the program returned. (Think sports—Who has the most career grand slams?) Even if you don’t care about the answer, Child said, you stick around because you’re intrigued.

Ultimately, he said writing rules make the craft more complicated than it really is—when it comes down to it, it’s a simple thing.

“The way to write a thriller is to ask a question at the beginning, and answer it at the end,” he said.

When he's crafting his books, Child doesn't know the answer to his question, and he writes scene by scene—he's just trying to answer the question as he goes through, and he keeps throwing different complications in that he'll figure out later. And that very well may be the key to his sharp, bestselling prose.

"For me the end of a book is just as exciting as it is for a reader," he said.

Clever, beautiful but unfortunately lonely Violet Fire works peacefully in the company of the powerful, one of the richest men in Madrid, Spain - Kyle Jamieson. But one night in club 'Drunken Cherry' changes her life abruptly, and Violet having no idea if it is for the better or worse. An accidental meeting with her gorgeous boss, Mr. Jamieson who all women in the office are thrilled with, twists her destiny. A destiny she couldn't imagine even in her worst nightmares or her best daydreams. A destiny that turns her life upside down.

Will Violet survive this race in her life where her independence is at stake? Will she be the independent woman Violet always thought she was?





# Bernard Cornwell

Bernard Cornwell is a British author of historical novels, modern thrillers, and a history of the Waterloo Campaign. He was born 23 February 1944.

He is best known for his novels featuring Napoleonic Wars rifleman, Richard Sharpe, which were adapted into a series of Sharpe television films. The first book in the series was Sharpe's Eagle.

Other works include The Saxon Chronicles Series, which began with The Last Kingdom in 2004. The books have been adapted to a television series of the same name.

Here is some tips from his website titled: Writing Advice

## **1. The Story Is All-Important**

“When I had written two or three books, I learned that style is something that can be applied at the later stages of writing. The most important thing, the all-important thing, is to get the story right. Write, rewrite, rewrite again, and do not worry about anything except story. It is story, story, story... Once the story is right, everything else will follow.”

## **2. Begin With A Question**

“Kurt Vonnegut once gave a splendid piece of advice. Every good story, he said, begins with a question. Harry meets Anne and wants to marry her. There's the question

already, will he succeed? But Harry is already married to Katharine, so there is your plot. Simple, isn't it? And if your opening question is right, then the pursuit of the answer will propel the reader through the book. More important, it will propel the writer through the book."

### **3. Improve Your Work By Analysing Other Books**

"Suppose you decide to build a better mousetrap. You would begin, surely, by taking apart the existing mousetraps to see how they worked. You must do the same with books."

### **4. You will Never Know How Much Research Is Enough**

"Research, how much is needed? The answer is annoyingly contradictory – both more than you can ever do and only as much as is needed. By that I mean that you can never know enough about your chosen period, and so your whole life becomes a research project into the 16th or 18th or whatever century it is you are writing about, but when it comes to a specific book there really can be too much research. Why explore eighteenth century furniture making if the book doesn't feature furniture? Do as much research as you feel comfortable doing, write the book and see where the gaps are, then go and research the gaps. But don't get hung up on research – some folk do nothing but research and never get round to writing the book."

### **5. You Have To Do The Work**

"In the end you have to write the book. Do it, remember that everyone began just like you, sitting at a table and secretly doubting that they would ever finish the task. But keep at it. A page a day and you've written a book in a year! And enjoy it! Writing, as many of us have discovered, is much better than working."





# jeffrey Archer

Jeffrey Archer (born 15 April 1940) is an English author and former politician. His books, starting with Kane and Abel have been published in 97 countries and in more than 33 languages. Jeffrey Archer is a firmly established bestselling novelist, with international sales passing 330 million copies.

## **1. Make time**

“Decide when you’re going to write. Don’t be casual and only do it as and when it suits you. Don’t think you can write a novel after you’ve done a hard day’s work, it’s insulting to those professional novelists who spend their time doing nothing else.”

## **2. Be disciplined**

“For example, I write from 6-8 a.m., 10-12 a.m., 2-4 p.m., 6-8 p.m. I keep that routine up for 40-50 days and handwrite every word. I then take a break and go back to it again a month later.”

## **3. Write what you know**

“Don’t do vampires, wizards or ghosts because they’re in fashion. Jane Austen wrote about family life in a small village and gave us six of the greatest novels ever written.”

## **4. Get some fresh air.**

“I go for two long walks between sessions, for two reasons,

physical and mental. The plot will buzz around in your mind while you are walking, continually churning over, which it can't be while you're actually writing."

## **5. Do several drafts**

"Do not imagine that the first draft of your book is the one that will be published. My latest novel, *The Sins of the Father*, was 14 drafts and took approximately 1000 hours."

## **6. Be flexible**

"If you think of something better half-way through the writing process, don't be frightened to go back and incorporate it or even change the story completely."

## **7. Seek opinions from professionals**

"When you want an opinion on what you consider the finished script, seek it from a professional editor, an agent or someone you don't know, through a third party. Do not seek an opinion from your wife, husband, partner, mistress or close friend. They will lie."

## **8. Read the greats**

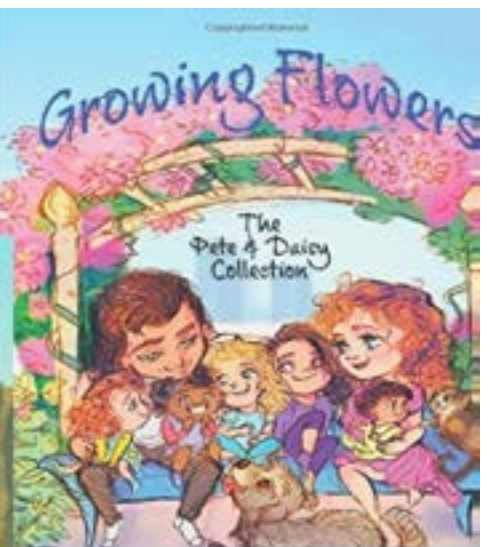
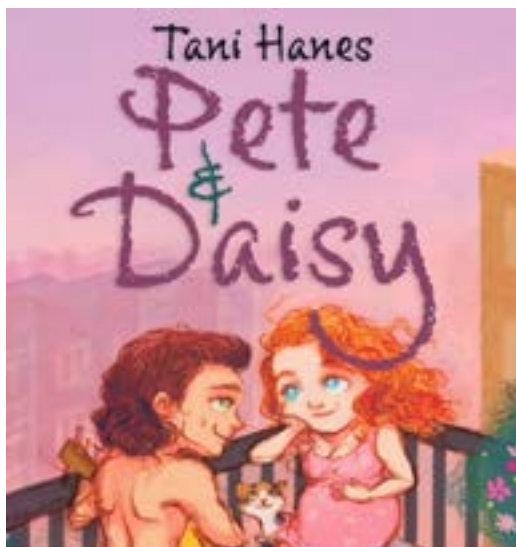
"There is no substitute for reading great novelists, and instead of just enjoying their craft, think carefully about how they've achieved it? Do they spend pages on description, do they move the story on quickly, how do they make you turn the page? It's all there in front of you if you look carefully, so at least when you try to do it, you have analysed how successful authors have managed it in the past."

## **9. Stay fit**

“If the body is a physical wreck – too much drinking, smoking, late nights – how can you expect the written word to be anything less than drunken, useless and tired?”

## 10. Don't give up

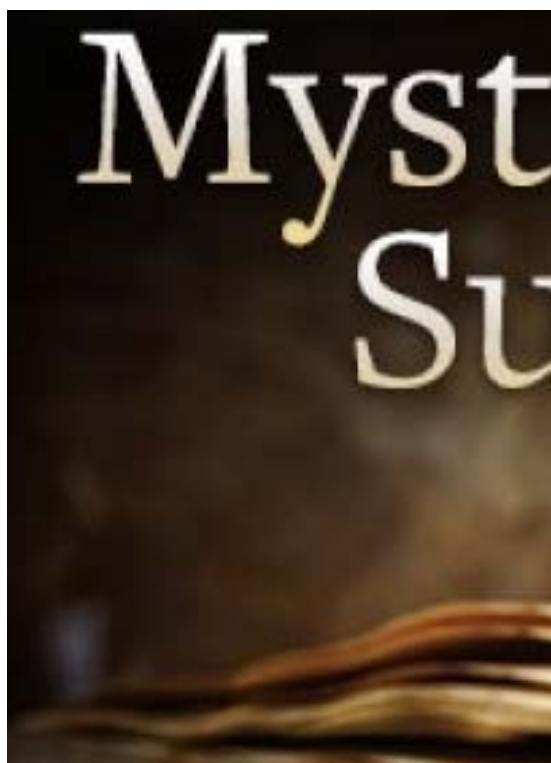
“My first novel, *Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less*, was turned down by 14 publishers, ended up with an advance of £3,000 and on first printing took a year to sell 3,000 copies. It is still extremely rare for a first book to be a best-seller.”



# MYSTERY AND SUSPENSE



MYSTERY  
IS TO DO  
WITH THE  
BRAIN;  
SUSPENSE  
AFFECTS  
THE GUT





Mystery is like puzzle. To crack a mystery one must have enough clues. A crime, usually murder, has been committed and it's hero's responsibility to find a culprit with given clues, that's why mysteries often called as "whodunits" because the culprit is unknown for readers and hero's both.

A mystery is to do with powers of deduction. To join the dots. And to do that one needs to use the grey cells. That means action or atmospherics can be done away with. What becomes important then is the plot. The story line can't have holes and all loose ends must be tied.

Also important are probable characters. So we can't have Superman or Joker in the mystery novel, can we? It has to be the butler, the dowager aunt, the sinister sister-in-law...and of course the slightly eccentric detective.

Agatha Christie is well known as one of the best mystery writer in modern time and a master at providing clues. She scatters enough clues across her pages for her detectives, as well as the reader to pick up and make sense. There are also a few red herrings that add to the fun.

On the other hand Suspense is a state

of existence marked by increased heart beats, sweaty palms, chewed finger nails... Where mysteries start the brain cells whirring, suspense sends adrenaline scoring through the veins. There is no mystery when it comes to suspense; all the cards are laid on the table; it's just the wait — will it or will it not happen? Plot can be thin and atmospherics reign supreme.

Unlike a mystery, there is no puzzle to solve. Its main purpose is create high level tension and foreboding in readers mind.

Mystery & Suspense FICTION



## PRIDE MONTH READ SUGGESTION



"TENDER, SEXY AS HELL AND LAUGH-OUT-LOUD FUNNY."  
CYNTHIA D'APRIX SWEENEY, AUTHOR OF THE NEST

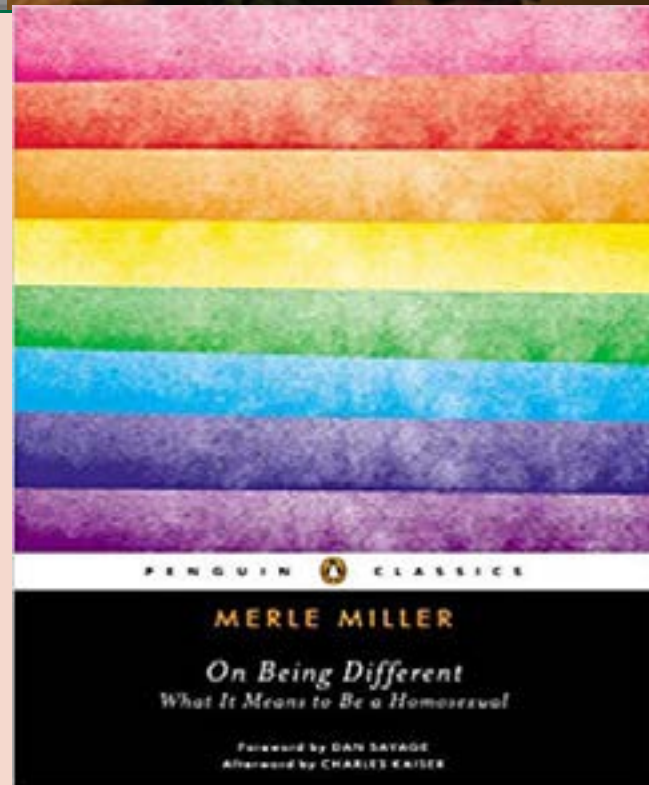
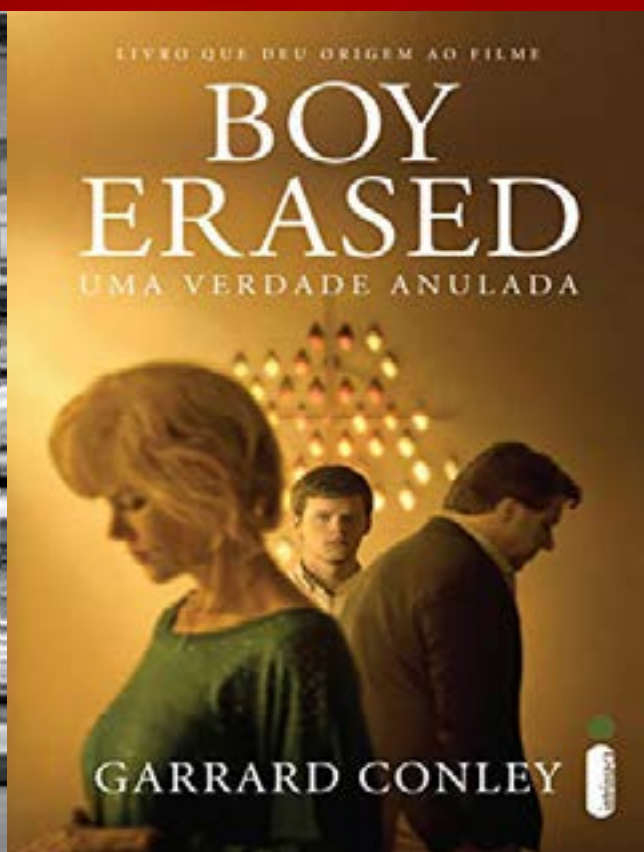
# WHEN KATIE



# MET CASSIDY

CAMILLE PERRI

AUTHOR OF THE ASSISTANTS







# THE BECOMING OF PRIDE MONTH

The rise of homosexuality as an accepted and free community in recent years have been a very critical situation. It is still a very sensitive topic around the world. The conception of a person having the choice to love who he/she wants irrespective of the specific gender human minds are drilled into loving since the day we are born. The fight for the rights of an LGBTQ+ community has been long and hard. Some countries are still against the notion that a person falling in love with another person of the same gender is acceptable.

The general myth of the LGBTQ+ community is that it is only about gays and lesbians, when people refuse to believe that the LGBTQ+ community, as explained by Wikipedia is a loosely defined grouping of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual, Transgender as well as other minor subcultures. The people belonging to the community have had to suppress themselves and their preferences for centuries now, however, it is also stated that not all people who are





Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender consider themselves part of the community. The community has since a long time now accepted the rainbow flag as the symbol of their existence, each color proudly displays a value in the community as well as a section of it; pink shows sexuality, red is of life, orange is a symbol of healing, yellow is the color of the sun, green of nature, blue of art, indigo represents harmony, and violet is a symbol of harmony. The flag that is seen now lacks pink and indigo just for the sake of the fact that individual life and harmony should not be linked to only one community.

The community that still struggles with acceptance is largely compromised by globalization and several other factors out of which the most important are homophobia, heterosexism and communal phobias against bisexual and transgender people. Social acceptance of the community varies over time and place, countries that were more accepting to countries where the practice is



a sin and repressing it through law enforcement and judicial mechanisms, some countries going as far as prescribing it under the penalty of death. A vast study by Gwen Broude and Sarah Greene in 1970 shows that out of 70 different communities, 17 strongly condemned the idea of homosexuality, 11 considered it as undesirable but weren't set to punish its members and 5 had no concept of homosexuality whatsoever but 29 communities were accepting and the practice was common in it.

Although the history of homosexuality goes back a couple of thousand years, we find that existence and acceptance of the community were better and wasn't a taboo in ancient times. The evidence lies in the great literary figures of Socrates, Lord Byron, King Edward the second, Christopher (Kit Marlowe and Shakespeare have the terms –gay and bisexual attached to them. The more ancient written evidence found in Indian mythology is the existence of Shikhandi, a character in the Hindu epic Mahabharata. Born to the king of Panchala, Drupada as a girl child. The epic claims Shikhandi as the reincarnation of Amba, taken against her will from her own marriage. Legends claim that shikhandi is a eunuch born as a woman whereas others claim that she changed her gender with a yaksha ending up as a man. Another existence is the presence

of transgender women and men in the castle of Indra, the king of Indian mythical gods. The indigenous people of America before the British colonization respected the roles of homosexual and bisexual people in their community, and are still supposed to exist, some examples being the communities of Aztecs, Mayan, Moche, and Zapotec civilizations. Homosexuality in East Asia contains the custom of the cut sleeve, the pleasures of the bitten peach and the southern custom of China recorded in existence since 600 BCE whereas Scholar Pan Guangdan came to the conclusion that nearly every emperor in the Han Dynasty had one or more male sex partners and homosexuality was mentioned in many famous works of Chinese literature. Ancient Greece is the biggest source of homosexual literary works, art and mythography





material, Plato praised the relationship between a male slave and an adult male for several benefits like population control and for teaching/punishing methods. In Rome, every emperor except Claudius is said to have male lovers and during the renaissance the cities of northern Italy especially Florence and Venice were renowned for the widespread practice of same-sex relationships. Prominent figures like King James I and Duke of Buckingham were examples that highlighted the issue of homosexuality in their times. In 1867 Karl Heinrich Ulrich became the first self-proclaimed homosexual to speak out publicly through his series of twelve tracts titled “research on the riddle of man-manly love”, and spoke in defense of homosexuality through his plead at the Congress of German jurists against anti-homosexual laws.

In 1948 Alfred Kinsey published a report sexual behavior in the human male, popularly known as the Kinsey reports. Homosexuality was deemed as a mental illness, a disorder for many years until the theory was determined to be flawed and declassified as mental illness. In 1897 the homosexual women and men were given a voice by the founding of the Scientific Humanitarian Committee in Berlin. In 1914 the British Society for the study of sex psychology was founded by Edward Carpenter and Havelock, and similarly, the



society for human rights was formed in the united states in 1924 by Henry Gerber, a German immigrant. The mid-twentieth century saw an increasing number of organizations supporting the LGBTQ community in varied forms and levels, like the Mattachine Society by Harry Hay in Los Angeles, Daughters of Bilitis was formed in 1955 by Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin in San Francisco.

One major initiation of such more formations commenced with the Stonewall Riots took place on June 27, 1969, in the USA; the official beginning of the gay rights movement, a violent conflict between New York Police Department and people of the Stonewall Inn, a hidden gay hangout in Greenwich Village. After almost 50 years since this incident, the NYPD quoted its official apology, “The actions taken by the NYPD were wrong,

plain and simple. The actions and the laws were discriminatory and oppressive, and for that, I apologize.” said the NYPD Commissioner James O’Neill said.

Even though the issue was addressed, it does not go unnoticed that it took 50 years to finally accept and apologize for the oppressive succession of incidents that took place in Stonewall. The poem two loves by Lord Alfred Douglas had declared that “homosexuality is the love that dare not speak its name”. More than 400 people joined the riot against the police and were successful, successfully celebrated as the annual pride month not only in the USA but worldwide in this day. The 1970s and 1980s saw the rise of the community struggle across a globe which was only situated in Europe and America till then although the reception, size, strength, and success varied significantly from each other.

In 1998 Glen Murray became the first mayor of Winnipeg, Manitoba. The first openly gay politician to lead a large city, followed by Johanna Sigurdottir to be the first openly gay prime minister of Iceland and the first openly gay head of a government. In the Indian political front, India has become increasingly tolerant of its gay citizen over the past decade. On September 6, 2018, the Supreme court of India decriminalized homosexuality by

declaring section 377 if the Indian Penal Court is unconstitutional. Homosexuality never being illegal or a criminal offense in Ancient Indian communities and Tradition as depicted by the Khajuraho temples, famous for its erotic and homosexual art but criminalized by the British government.

Homosexuality has been a topic of debate for years now, people belonging to the community were oppressed, legally victimized and murdered on the pretense of sin, the religious and social dogma of homosexuality has seen the lowest and highest state of its oppression, an individual belief and substance of its beliefs have changed greatly over the last century or so. The Christian Leviticus 18:22 says,

“Men shall not lie with a male as one lies with a woman, its an abomination ”

and in Leviticus 18:13,

“If there is a man who lies with a man as those who lie with a woman. Both of them have committed a detestable act.”

But these were the rules that were accepted whereas the rules that advice animal sacrifices and determine what to eat and what not to eat was severely ignored. The clear indication that men follow what he chooses to and ignore he himself find wrong, ultimately proving that the people in power choose





*All people  
should be  
treated equally,  
regardless of  
who they are or  
who they love*


according to their will for others to follow. Whereas Christians are supposed to follow the rules of the old testament that were included in the new testament.

Man has taken too long to interpret that the spirit of love is as free as the birds living in the free world, the community has struggled to live and love just as a man loves a woman, its not a person's choice who they fall in love with, but the society's view and acceptance of love is so complicated that we love one kind of love and despise another. When gods and kings the highest people of the social ladder, the people we look up to have not ever regarded love differently from one another. For the truth remains that love is love, it's not about gender of an individual, it's the soul that links itself to another soul through the bond of love and commitment because we

were made in pairs, a single soul in two bodies yearning for each other, it doesn't see the gender of the person who completes it, it only sees the soul it is bound to. Let it be free of social humiliation and hatred because, at the end of the day, LOVE IS LOVE.



*By - Alankrita Verma  
Portia Ekka*



That's the  
thing about  
books.  
They let  
you travel  
without  
moving your  
feet.

# INTERVIEW WITH SAM BURNS



With the onset of June, all of the pride community and the supporters have pushed in a relentless front of union. We have Sam Burns the author of *Blackbird in the Reeds* (The Rowan Harbor Cycle, #1) with us today. Giving some insight into our curious questions. We welcome her in this issue of rendezvous. Hello Sam, Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to take this interview.

## **1. What is life like for a person from the LGBTQ community?**

Honestly, we all have vastly different experiences. There are commonalities, obviously, but everyone's experience is unique.

## **2. What is sexual orientation?**

Sexual orientation is pretty simple: who you're sexually attracted to.

## **3. Is sexual orientation really a choice?**

No. I can't say this enough. There is no choice in sexual orientation.

## **4. Why is anyone's sexual orientation a matter of discussion between the religious groups?**

Frankly, it shouldn't be. Why do people try to make something their business when it has nothing to do with them? You'd have to ask the religious extremists who have issues with the LGBTQIA+ community that question.

## **5. If it were accepted that one's sexual preference**

**is not a matter of choice, would the general prejudice towards the LGBTQ community reduce significantly?**

To some degree, yes, but I think some people just want a target for their hatred, so some would remain.

## **6. Why do you think that there is such acceptance crisis for the LGBTQ community?**

Do we have time for me to get a psychology degree? At its heart, I think the issue is that people like us vs. them dichotomy, and for that to exist, there has to be a them. If it isn't LGBTQIA+ people, it's people of color, people of different religions, or people of different social classes. People want someone to blame for their problems that isn't themselves, whether it's logical or not.

## **7. Do you think that the digression in the LGBTQ communities are a source of identity crisis?**

I think a rigid, unaccepting society and people searching for their place inside of it are the source of identity crises.

**8. What is the most stereotypical that thing you have encountered with LGBTQ community?**

I can't think of a single thing. Every person I've known in the community is more individual than stereotypes allow for.

**9. Why is there a need for 'special rights' if what they are looking for is equal rights?**

There's no such thing as 'special rights.' There are only basic human rights, which are being denied based on gender and orientation.

**10. Do you feel that the current laws and regulations are enough or satisfactory?**

Considering the fact that people are pushing for laws that ban trans people from bathrooms and same-sex couples from adoption, I would say it's clear there aren't enough protections in place.

**11. Do you still feel safe in the society when you hear about the homophobic incidents around the internet?**

No.

**12. What message would you want to give to the people struggling to understand their gender identity?**

This is hard because "it gets better" messages aren't helpful, even though it's the knee-jerk reaction. I think maybe the most important thing for me when I was a kid would have been to hear that however much you feel like an outsider, however "weird" you think your identity or thought process on that identity is, you're absolutely not alone. There are other people struggling with the same thing as you.

**13. What advice would you give to young people who are dealing with their sexual orientation and have 'come out of the closet' very recently?**

Find your people. I'm not going to pretend it's always an option, but if you can make friends within the community who've dealt with similar issues, you'll have someone to lean on when things are their hardest. And then you can return the favor in someone else's darkest hours.

**14. What message you'd want to send out to our readers in regards to this subject?**



We've come a long way on these issues in the last twenty years, but unfortunately, we've got a long way to go. Pride started life as a protest, and we've turned it into a celebration of who we are. We've just got to remember that it still is a protest, at heart. Until we live in a utopia that doesn't care who we love or how, we've got to keep fighting.

*Follow on Sam Burns  
on Social Media*



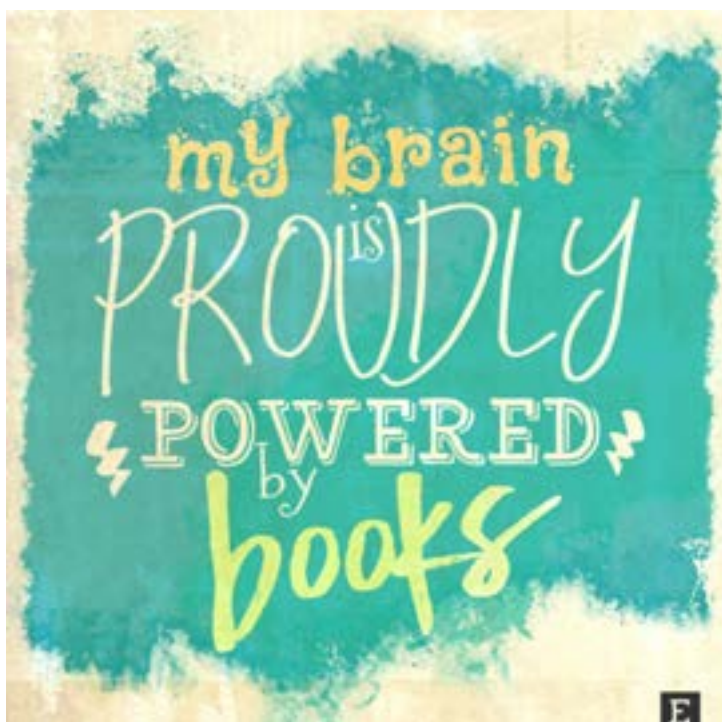
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@SamBurnsWrites



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T  
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# CHOICES OF A STRUGGLING COMMUNITY

Let us all treat  
people with  
kindness.

Everyone  
is fighting  
a battle we  
know nothing  
about, let's  
just be  
respectful and  
give love

A suppressed community that has suffered in silence for a long time and has been forced to face discrimination just because of the choices that weren't theirs to make. The LGBTQ+ community has its definition evolved and twisted to a greater extent in the last century or so. The ancient people had a greater acceptance of the social stigma it has been turned into now, the more "modern" times. Today, if we are to experience the life of a member of the community be it a gay, lesbian, bisexual or any other variant of a sexuality that isn't the acceptable heterosexuality, It is frowned upon, guilt tripped and in some areas of the world punished. Love has its meaning twisted to

the fairy-tale versions of itself that today people have refused to believe that a man can be another man's "Romeo" and a woman can be another woman's "Juliet" or a person can end up having a Romeo as well as Juliet in their lives because at the end of the day, love is love , it is supposed to be boundless and free, not guided by people and definitely not judged by others who don't know what it feels like to be in a place of another person's shoes.

LGBTQ initials has been adopted into the mainstream as an umbrella term for use when labelling topics referring to sexuality and gender identification. It goes on



to add lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender, queers and the + sign referring to other variants of the sexualities that are considered to be minorities in the community itself are united by a common culture and social movement. Sometimes the term pride or gay pride is used to express the LGBT community's identity and collective strength. When it's much more than that. The Stonewall riots are considered the dawn of gay liberation movement across the world whereas there were multiple incidents that led to the stonewall riots. From protest against police harassment, Transgender women, drag queens, lesbians, and gay men clashed with police at Cooper Do-nuts, a hang-out frequently harassed by the Los Angeles Police Department to protest the firing of an employee suspected of being gay. To protest a police raid on a gay bar to the protest against the classification of homosexuality as a mental illness. In 1959, the police force of New York City's Wagner administration began closing down the city's gay bars, which had numbered almost two dozen in Manhattan. Existing gay bars were quickly closed and new ones lasted only a short time. In April of 1966, a staged Sip-In resulted in the anti-gay accommodation rules of the NY State Liquor Authority getting overturned court. The SLA provisions declared that serving alcoholic beverages to homosexuals is illegal. The

result of the changes in the law initiated the, combined with the social attitudes of the late Sixties led to the increased visibility of gay life which resulted in the riots at The Stonewall Inn on Friday, June 27, 1969. However the riots got no publicity in newspapers or such until the commemorative march one year later, organized by the impetus of Craig Rodwell, leading to the emergence of the modern day pride month and parades organised all over the world.

The LGBTQ+ community has been at odds with the "normal" people for a very long time, the so called normal people refuse to accept choices that are at par control of a person. Who you are attracted to has absolutely nothing to do with person's choice. Love as an attraction is not a choice, it's beyond a person's control, but so are the on-going struggle of the identity as well as equal rights. No rules or regulations protect members



of the LGBTQ community from getting fired from a job just because of their sexual orientation, getting basic public accommodations denied because of their sexuality, gender identities still aren't protected under the hate crime statutes, some states still consider consensual sex illegal, sexually active gay men are still banned from donating blood, struggle for the custody right or as simple a thing as sexual health education, doesn't include gay and lesbian sex at all. A facade of equality that we have successfully won and accepted, it is however applies to more mainstream, respectable and privileged gay or lesbian person. The first country to legalize same-sex marriages was the Netherlands in 2001. The first US state to decriminalize sodomy was Illinois in 1961 followed by Connecticut in 1969 and the last 14 states that did not repeal these laws until 2003 were forced to by the landmark United States Supreme Court.

In the life of a member of the community the struggle doesn't start with being what you are, the struggle starts with the feeling that you're not similar to your siblings, cousins or peers. The realisation hits you like a bomb, sometimes as early



as the age of seven years old or the early onset of puberty in the varied age of eleven to eighteen. The young minds baffled in the realisation that they are different from the people around them, clouded by the feeling of not belonging with the people they have spent their whole lives with the fear of getting judged and left alone. Some people just resort to denial their entire lives, with realisation of throwing themselves into relationships and suffering through them





for years on end just to show themselves and others as well as feel a little accepted and normal because the human society has twisted the meaning of normal into a definition that isn't normal in itself.

You, me and everyone is normal, having the same body organs, the same air and food to consume, but normal for communities is a man marrying a woman. Acceptance is such a crucial part of it and more factors than necessary play a role in it. One factor that jumps out is religion, in the Hindu epics and scriptures, homosexuality and third gender is very much accepted as the normal part of the society, however Christian societies have been more reserved in the matter and have been in denial and rejection of the fact that variable sexualities

are acceptable. The more strict and closed knit a society is, the harder is the acceptance of one's sexuality by themselves. More so less by other people who don't understand or feel an ounce of struggle the person is going through. The societies that are more acceptable and sensitive to the people are made up of easier opportunities to come out to and live on. However, the denial and the psychological effect of one's sexuality is reportedly less.

Another factor that plays a lot more vital role is trust, the family is one of the most important part of humans life, society plays far less role than family does, most people prefer coming out to their families or at least to a trusted part of the family that they prefer peers. Acceptance by the family plays a major role in the acceptance of the fact that different is also normal. Many families that aren't very accepting, play a very crucial role in the person's life struggle, however, when the families are supporting and accepting, being themselves becomes much easier and normal. The relief to the scared mind is maybe incomparable. Social acceptance is another stigma the community has still to endure and at one point in time, overcome. Homophobia is one such factor that needs to go extinct from the human minds, the members of the community on more times than

not lost people who they were once very close to only because the acceptance was compromised and the fact that a person's nature and acceptability does not change with his sexuality. When acceptance from family and society is gradually received, several aspects of a person's life change, one of them being self-love. When we start to accept the people around us without reservations and conditions, they love themselves more, they don't dwell and burn in self-hate because the people around them refuse to accept the way they are. The happiness comes with being who you want to be, with the support of family and friends, the realization that someone's sexual orientation does not and cannot define them as a person, nothing is wrong with them just because they are not in a "normal" heterosexual relationships. Rather in one that does not identify as part of the community one was born and raised in. The fear of hiding, having to keep secrets and pretending to be what you do not leave the person vulnerable and sensitive, effectively killing the life meant to be cherished and lived.

On the other hand, the age of technology has brought its boons and curses along with it social media has helped the people to reach out to others and finding similarities and differences among the people living across the globe. It has made people in



more ways fathomable than not, now the sexual identities are easier to recognize and found that it was in the early 1990s. Social media has made people find and converse with people who have been through the same thing far easier than before, people have found their questions answered and confusions cleared, the acceptance to not being different is resolved to a far greater degree than personal interaction could ever do. But with this, has arrived the curse of cyberbullying, as if a person suffering in real life wasn't enough and the social stigma pertaining in the society wasn't ruining a person's mental health searching for acceptance, the power of being behind a screen with far less possibility of getting caught and prosecuted has made people with homophobic tendencies bolder and sharper in their approach, the hate spread by homophobic, transphobic, biphobic people is easy to spread and harder to ignore. From using slurs to accusing of ruining society the bullying refuses to stop or decrease. Then there are incidents of homophobic abuse treated as breaking news for online media outlets without realising that it is in a very twisted way spreading hate, even when more people of the community itself choose to ignore them because they know that the action taken on it would be next to nothing as there are no legislative rules and regulations protecting them from it and prosecuting people responsible for it, the question

is 'will the people keeping quiet on homophobic abuse in public and make the abuse eventually stop?' and 'can't we stop meddling in other's lives and making them feel unsafe, upset and scared?' The answer very clearly is, "no" it would never do, except making the abusers bolder and more aggressive than they already were, and yes to the latter by being accepting of the fact that someone's love life and sexual preferences are no one's business except the person itself and their better halves. Imagine the outrageous bafflement if someone tells somebody that your relationship with your wife or husband is wrong just because it's your personal preference! Are we allowed to judge someone just because our preferences differ? No, we're not; do we do that anyway? Yes, every day every minute. Is it justified? No, it's not and would never be.

While it is agreeable that a lot of people are more accepting than they seem to be, they can love you and your sexuality doesn't change that, having it out there and being able to get support would lift a huge weight off a person's shoulders. People shouldn't feel pressured to come out at any specific time but encouraged by making them feel safer and accepted and not be obligated to hide themselves and their inclinations. People who aren't out yet need to take their time, and we as a community are

responsible to make the people who are struggling with self-acceptance know that they are perfect and acceptable, however, it may take time to accept yourself. Time really does heal pain, just stay positive and when you are ready and want to come out, do it. If you don't feel safe and comfortable, take your time but know that there is always someone who cares for you no matter what. Stay strong and don't give up. One day you will be able to come out and feel like you are loved and that you belong. Be patient. You are beautiful. You are worth it. Just hold on! Be true to yourself even if you get told to hide it or stop it just be true to yourself and you will never be ashamed to be who you are. At least till the day we go back to the mentality our ancient forefathers possessed, where sexuality and its different forms were general form of life, not frowned upon but encouraged, just like we see in the Khajuraho temples, famous for their erotic sculptures that contain several depictions of homosexual activity and like scriptures and artefacts that portrayed Roman men were free to enjoy sex with other males without a perceived loss of masculinity or social status.

Till then the only thing we are capable of doing is to Love everyone. Whether they are gay, straight, pan, bi, we are ultimately all human and no matter what, we should love and accept the people around us. We may never realize how much just a few kinds or accepting words can

help someone out of a dark place. The best thing we can do is to educate ourselves and be kind to one another. It doesn't matter if you "agree" with someone being a part of the LGBTQ community or not we are all human and deserve true love and it could come in any form imaginable.

We truly do not understand how hard it is to be hated for who we love and probably never will but do not give homosexual couples secret glances and obvious whisperings, making them feel uncomfortable and scared to be on the streets, and not abandon them due to their revelation or reject them just because they are LGBTQ or judge them because we don't see it; it is bound to hurt a lot. Let us all treat people with kindness. Everyone is fighting a battle we know nothing about, let's just be respectful and give love.

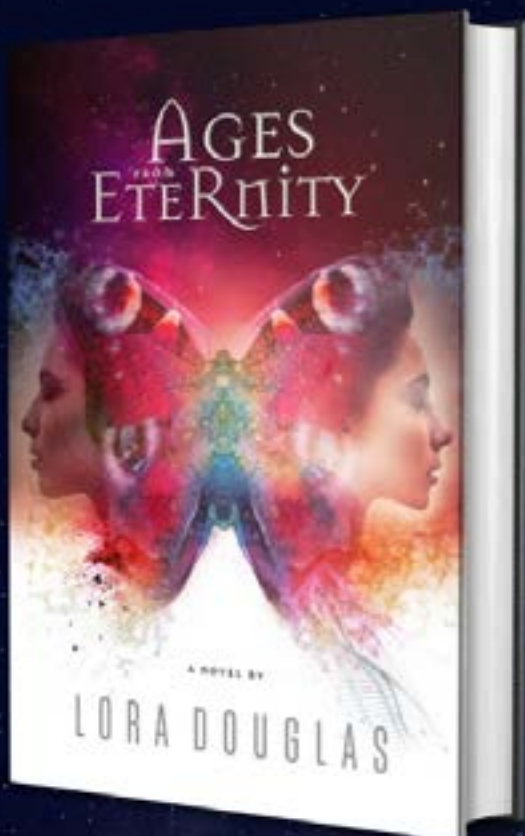
By  
Alankrita  
Verma



**“A classic is a book that has  
NEVER finished *saying* what  
it has to say.”**

**-Italo Calvino**

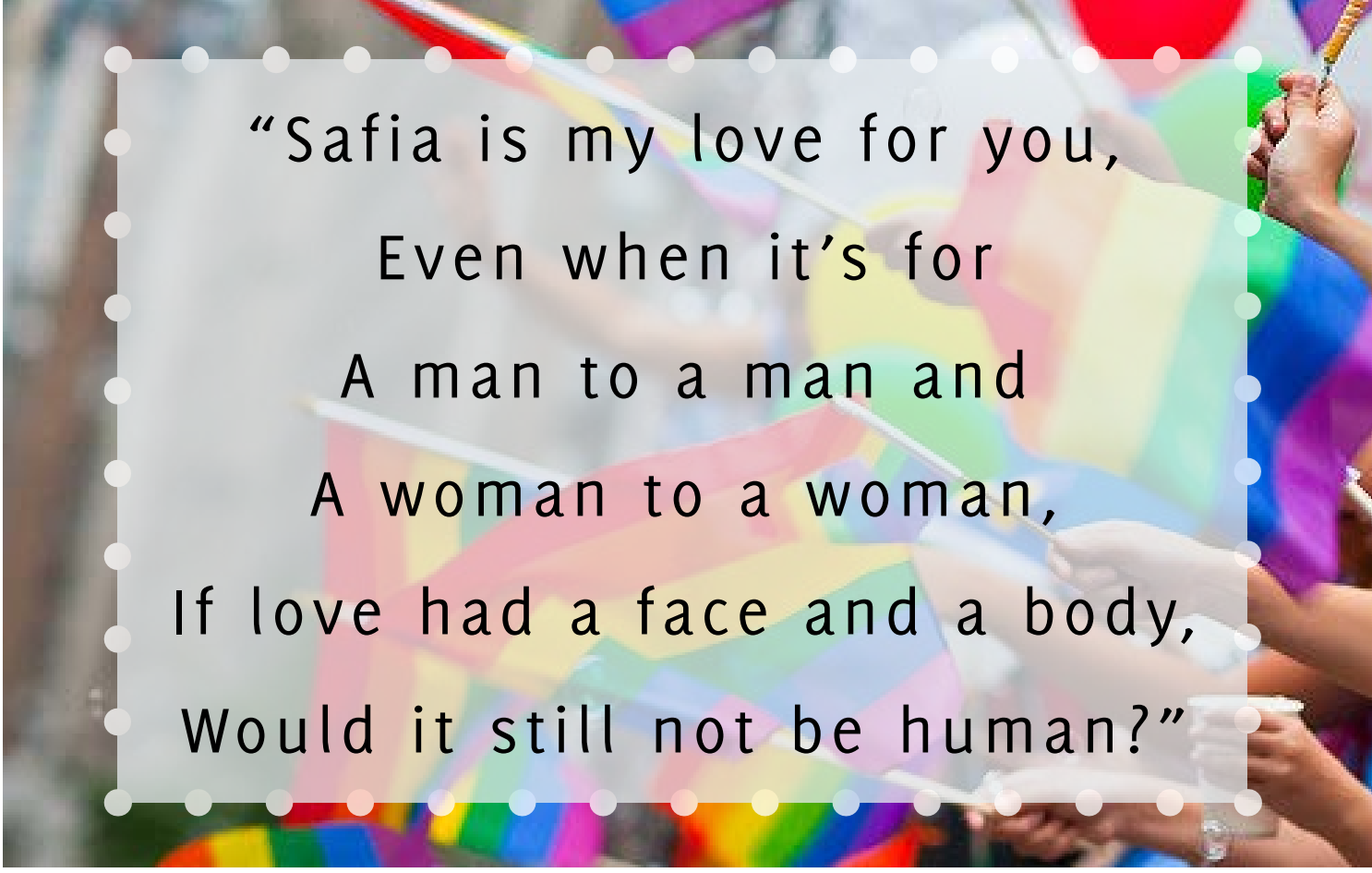
**By Lora Douglas**



**"LET ME FIGHT A  
THOUSAND BATTLES WITH  
THOSE THAT CHOSE THEIR  
COURSE RATHER THAN  
SPEND A MOMENT IN THE  
SUFFERING OF THOSE  
DEALT THEIR FATE."**

**AFTER YEARS OF  
RELENTLESS WARFARE,  
WITH HER MORAL  
COMPASS ON THE VERGE  
OF COLLAPSE, CALLA, A  
GUARDIAN WITHIN THE  
REALM, IS THROWN INTO  
AN ASSIGNMENT THAT  
THREATENS TO PUSH HER  
TO A BREAKING POINT. IF  
INTUITION AND  
NIGHTMARES HOLD ANY  
TRUTH, SHE IS ABOUT TO  
EMBARK ON HER MOST  
DIFFICULT ASSIGNMENT  
YET.**

# SAFIA



“Safia is my love for you,  
Even when it’s for  
A man to a man and  
A woman to a woman,  
If love had a face and a body,  
Would it still not be human?”

To start with a confession; people on the planet excluding the other Binomial nomenclatures.

I don’t know my Verses, or my Scriptures or the Testaments and the Vedas nor do I care to fill in my uninterested brain with the learnings of the making of the world in 7 days and the construction of it, only to be swamped with the 40-day rain.

I hold no value for the arc that carried a pair of every species and probably birthed the next 6 billion

Or the parting of the Red waves, paving the way for the people of God and leaving a trail of bodies of the ungodly folks behind.

I do, however, care about what I feel and I’m preciously selfish with my choice of words.

As the number of times, I used “I”

and the number of times, I have refused to give a moment's worth of my understanding, learning about the societal background our lives are built on.

Now, people will call me too forward with my thinking or too naive, with maybe a slight hint of blasphemy which again I do not give any thoughts to.



People may even call me dumb for my “negligence” or lack of unearthly importance, but can you blame me if I don’t want to listen to patriarchy?

No, it’s my rigidness to not dedicate my life to the scriptures from 3000 years back, I might as well use the Mayan calendar.

But I have not.

I do believe in a few pivotal things though.

Like reaching to some-place takes longer than coming back home, and that sometimes the engine noise of my car relaxes me, the best taste of Ramen is in licking the plate part and that people should only sleep with one sock on. I can go on and on with my pivotal list but I’ll stop with the thing of most importance, that I most viciously believe in, and that you should too in all your awareness, It’s that everyone and I mean EVERYONE has the right to love.

Or hate. Depends on the person completely, I’m not judging you.

Okay, maybe just a little.

But I believe that everyone has the right to love. Man, woman, child, and dogs. And anything or anyone that tells me otherwise or that believes other else can stay away from me.

Please don’t kill my vibe.

I have made my decision that if there is a God, he definitely won’t sit still on his high pedestal and condemn the love a person, he made in his own image, has for another. Love that is not a choice and that happens with



an easy slip of concern and has befuddled the minds of scholars and philosophers for centuries.

Are you telling me that it is wrong to love?

And If it is so right to fall in love and if we should love our neighbors like ourselves, then why is it a matter of debate if a man falls in love with another man whom the god has created in his own image?

An angelic image apparently.

Why did we lose so many brothers and sisters in the name of love?

Because it couldn't satisfy the needs of the words written and adapted thousands of years ago? Are we not past crucifixion? Have we not decided on votes and ban on slavery? Why follow just a select few rules and concentrate the horror and pain on a subject far-FAR away from any form of love?

Why is our source of admission so muddled with words that don't reflect in love, although it prompts on it a million times?

What is so wrong with living in love, peace, and acceptance?

When the decisions that people want to make it for themselves and their lives. When all they want is to love without fearing for their lives and to continue being themselves regardless of what anyone thinks;

Why do they have to parade their

grief and fight for equal rights?

Why is a man loving another man or a woman loving another woman an idea of abhorrence? Why do these 29 countries still don't accept homosexuality as a trait of character and sexual preference and refuse to acknowledge the existence of it so blatantly?

If this was mentioned in the Holy Scriptures, Verses and Vedas even then when 2019 was a mere myth then it sure was prevalent during the reigns of kings and queens and everyone in between.

And if we've only ever tried to curb and suppress this, that comes from deep within the core feelings of all these, children of God, then maybe, just maybe, it's time we give them an equal chance and acceptance and try to be kinder, better human beings than our past regimes and ancestors.

Let me remind you dear all, even homophobic culture too. My God doesn't deny his kingdom to his children because they fell in love with each other.

Man with Man and  
Woman with Woman.

Love is holy and if you ask me whose side I'll take, Scriptures or Amendments. Verses or Laws.

I will always, always choose the side of love.





And to those that stand to disagree,

*May your idols, ideas,  
and myths*

*be fucketh.*

By Portia Ekka

Jesse's only priority in life is protecting the people he loves, so he's determined to see Rowan Harbor's wards rebuilt. There's just one problem: they're missing an ingredient that can't be ordered online.

Jesse volunteers to search for the missing component in the realm of the fae, but his boyfriend, Sean, isn't letting him go alone. The town has an enemy among the fae, so they'll need to keep a low profile. Along their way, they find unexpected allies, surprising enemies, and a whole host of problems.

The journey is a test of their endurance, but also of their relationship and their faith in each other. Can they find what they need and get back home in one piece in time for the summer solstice?



# Audio Book Month







# INTERVIEW WITH JENNY ROSEN



Jenny Rosen is published audio book author. Her *Cheater.Faker. troublemaker Series* just got published by Hachette audio and you can listen her book on Amazon Audible

On the occasion of audio book month our PR 'Michaelle Sandefur's chat with Jenny Rosen on her views and experinace with audio books.

**Q.1- Were you surprised by the response and how did it affect you and Kristen?**

I was shocked to see how well the book has done since I first posted. I actually didn't expect anyone to read it because it was a totally new rewrite of a short story I'd come up with in 8th grade. So writers, if you have something you wrote in the past, don't be afraid to rework it!

**Q.2- Speaking of Kristen, how did you two meet and who's idea was it on the collaboration?**

We've been best friends since university! We both went to UCLA and met while we were taking classes in the school of Theater, Film, and Television. We both love writing stories & making films so once I had a few chapters finished, I let her read it and we started collaborating from there!

**Q.3- You have a BA in English, were you still in Uni when you started writing on Wattpad? If so, how did you manage to juggle writing and classes. If not and was teaching, how did you manage?**

Yes I was. I first joined Wattpad in 2011 and I loved how supportive and responsive the readers were on



the website so much that I made a point to consistently update. I wrote whenever I had free time and on train & bus rides whenever I had long-haul trips.

**Q.4- Besides Wattpad, do you have your work on any other writing platform? If no, how old were you when you started on this platform. If yes, same question. Also how old are you now.**

Wattpad is the only place you'll find my writing. My published audiobooks from Hachette are available on Audible, Amazon, and most major retailers. I'm 30 years old!

*You have done interviews, reviews, also press releases. Like with your one book "Vigilante Green" in The Huffington Post.*

**Q.5- How and when did all this come about?**

Things really started taking off press-wise after Cheater.Faker. Troublemaker won the Watty Award in 2016. Directly after that, I landed a two-book audiobook deal with Hachette thanks to my awesome team at Wattpad. Wattpad also helped arrange a massive interview alongside Anna Todd with The Mirror/Der Spiegel which was exciting because it was my first feature in a majorly syndicated magazine. I've done a handful of other features with Riveted Lit, Thought Catalogue, and the Daily Bruin along with Kristen as well.

I enjoyed Kristen's rendition of the books on YouTube. She's quite the voice actor!

*Jenny ~*

*Thank you so much! We appreciate you taking the time to listen!*

**Q.6- Do you think that showing its potential for an audiobook is what grabbed Wattpad's attention? And ultimately got you the deal with Hachett?**

That's a great question! I'm not entirely sure. Wattpad approached me after the Watty's saying Hachette wanted to Cheater.Faker. Troublemaker to be one of the first two stories to kick off their Audiobook Partnership with Wattpad. Both the voice actors, Christine Lakin & Aaron Landon, did an amazing job with the first two books, Cheater.Faker.Troublemaker and Love Her, Leave Her, so I'm very grateful for the opportunity.

In this day and age we have a lot more options than we used to for reading. Besides traditional paperbacks and hardcovers for the ones who love the smell and feel of a good book. We now have digital libraries, ebooks and audiobooks.

**Q.7- What are the pros and also the cons of doing an audiobook.**

I think an audiobook has mostly pros! It's a totally new medium to reach your readers with, it brings the characters to life, and it expands the experience of reading. The recording process is a bit grueling, but still

quite fun. If there's any con, it's that sometimes readers prefer to imagine the characters' voices and can be a bit shocked or when a voice actor's rendition doesn't match what they've imagined. But then again, that's almost the case with any book being changed into a new form of visual or audio media.

**Q.8- Has your audiobook been received well and is it taking off?**

It was received very well! Kristen and I were floored by the wonderful reviews on Goodreads, Amazon, and Audible and we appreciate everyone who has taken the time to leave their thoughts on the book. I'd love to look into promoting the book so it can reach larger audiences, but I'm planning on doing that once I eventually release the book as an e-book & hard copy.

Speaking on traditional publishing and audiobooks with now and future projects.

**Q.9- Is there a waiting time before you're allowed to take your audiobook to print.**

I'd have to double check with my team before I can answer that.

**Q.10- And in the future would you do it different? Would you do print first and then an audiobook?**

In the future, I think I'd release both at the same time.

*Your books are a wonderful find and I hope we will see more of your*

*works making their debut.*

**Q.11- Do you have any thoughts or words of encouragement for your fellow authors?**

Write a story that only you can tell and that distinctly belongs to you. There's a lot of pressure sometimes to jump into trends and try to write what's popular, but you tend to lose the love of writing if you're focused on numbers and popularity instead of being true to your and your characters' experiences. As long as your story can connect to, encourage, and move someone, you're headed in the right direction.

Let's not leave out the faithful reader to whom, without their support, wouldn't be able to continue writing. Making their lives full and enriched and a little less dreary.

**Q.12- What do you want to say to them?**

You guys feel like family at this point. I have known or gotten to know some of you over the last 8 years and I am truly grateful for every single person who has taken the time to read, comment, and support the story. Kristen and I do read every message and try our best to respond when we can. Sometimes I don't know how because I'm so overwhelmed by the support it's tricky finding the right words to say thank you. We hope to keep writing stories that move you and creating characters that help you realize that you're not alone. Thank you for believing in us for this long! Can't

wait to write another adventure for you!

Jenny Rosen thank you so much for giving us your time for this interview.

Keep a watchful eye out for these two amazing ladies! And don't forget to check out their audiobooks by Hatchett on Amazon.

THANK YOU

Follow Jenny Rosen on  
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By  
Michaelle  
Sandefur

JENNY ROSEN  
**CHEATER, FAKER,  
TROUBLEMAKER**  
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# June is Audiobook Mo



## Hear Me, See Me, Hold Me

There are many preferred tastes when choosing which creative design speaks the loudest. Music, art, architect, hell, maybe even ASMR. But what is a reader's preferred handling when it comes to a story? Do they favor reading? Or listening?

When I was given this assignment, to express my opinions of audiobooks, I thought, 'Shit. I know absolutely nothing about them'.

I grew up touching black ink on the dry texture of paperback novels. The aromatic reminiscence of my childhood and adulthood, a physical embodiment that made me whole in a sense. I'm reminded of Barnes & Noble and their shelves of Manga and teen journeys that helped me discover who I am. Of old corner bookstores that were overflowing

with opportunity and growth.

There's history behind each book I hold. A tale within a tale that is embedded into the words I've read that tell me of a time and place I once resided within. Perhaps it's the exact same thing for those who enjoy audiobooks.

All the pages my fingers have touched, and the covers my eyes have seen. Tears I can't undo and laughter that shook the pages with evidential glee and surprise. My terrible habit of abusing the fragile pages with dog ears that would eventually tear off if I wasn't careful, and with those lessons I came to cherish them all the more, utilizing anything I could find as a bookmark, from hairpins to shoelaces and even my bras.



# onth

When it comes to the radio, I can only listen to it when I'm in the car going to work. Not even coming back home, it's just on the way to work. It's led me to wonder, for those who have a fondness for listening to audiobooks, is it dependent on what kind of mood to be in?

There's a method to audiobooks in regards to how the story is being told and what kind of ambiance the narrator can create with their voice. Is it a static charge of chemistry in the air for a romantic inclination? A horrific or suspenseful sensation of terror? How about a captivating or adrenaline-spiking anticipation of what's to come?

What kind of story does the voice behind the mic bring to life for each person?

But times are changing. The option for reading is

now being stretched through many directions of creativity, and honestly, I couldn't be happier. It's how I've become more engrossed with stories, through video games, short clips, music videos, even interactive mobile apps such as Chapters or Choices.

I'm happy for readers who are able to find what works for them when it comes to enjoying a book, be it through listening, playing a game or holding a book. Maybe I'm a knuckleheaded, old-school individual who hasn't quite acquired the taste for audiobooks yet, and may never get into it for all I know.

Or, perhaps I just haven't come across the right voice yet. That being said, for anyone who knows of any superb audiobooks that could loosen my blank slated feelings on audiobooks, feel free to give suggestions with links at the ready!

An American Author of Erotica, Fantasy & Paranormal romance novels, Vice was born in Duluth, GA a proud Libra in the Fall of October. She is the author of *Oblivion*, the first novel to her *Tales of Incipion* series, and the highly anticipated werewolf novel, *Beneath the Blood Moon*.



**audible**  
an amazon company



There's nothing worse than having to take a bathroom break when there's none to be had. When Whitney Dugan is forced to play babysitter to a patient, her temporary position is turned into a permanent one. Soon, she's pulled into a troubling situation she wants no part of, despite there being two dangerously, smoldering Alphas at her side.

The Viktor twins have the world at their feet. Demanding an empire of respect, fear and submission, human and lycan steer clear of the dynamic duo. But when a brutal attack lands one of them in the hospital, they realize everything is nothing without the presence of their female as they all too suddenly fall for their human mate.

Willing to do whatever it takes for revenge while keeping their female happily by their side, they must bare every dark secret they hide in hopes it will bring them together instead of driving them apart.



# About Us





Editing Indie House, a hybrid publishing house is created by a team who believes every story, and every author matters.

We seek to provide a traditional publishing opportunities as well as focus on helping self-publishing authors in their journey of publishing. We strive to make a difference in the publishing world, starting with things other publishers don't often offer.

Editing works with its authors side by side as they establish themselves in the writing world. We help create a path they envision and guide them toward the right direction.



Catherine Edward,  
Co-Founder



Rucha Shrinath,  
Co-Founder





Michaelle Sandefur,  
Public Relations Head

Portia Ekka,  
Marketing Head



GLHF!



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Head Developmental

Apurva Biswas,  
Production Assistant



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