

BOOKMARK

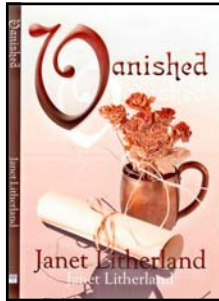


Fiction and Nonfiction News from Janet Litherland

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VANISHED My New Book

No, that's not what happened to it. That's the title—the *new* title. During its conception and throughout my two years of labor (not nine months; two years), I had envisioned my book as *The Lost Years*. I still like that title, but the publisher requested a change (it's all about marketing). So, my "baby" has been renamed—*Vanished*. It is now available in the online stores listed below.



The description:

Ben Cason was Missing In Action, presumed dead, in World War II. Fifty years later his granddaughter, Kelly, finds letters Ben sent to his wife *after* he was declared MIA. Kelly and her husband search for the truth. They follow clues that lead them across Georgia, to people who knew Ben and Rose Cason in the 1940s, and to military records long buried. Unexpectedly, they uncover a cache of shocking secrets and learn, finally, why Ben Cason *Vanished*.

**All of Janet's books
are available at:**

Amazon.com
BarnesAndNoble.com
BooksAMillion.com

Thrillers and Literary Novels

I just finished reading *The Last Juror*, a John Grisham book I somehow missed when it was published in 2004. Maybe I missed it because I suspected it was "out of genre." The title leads one to expect a Grisham legal thriller, but it's not. Yes, there's a murder to be solved and avenged, but Grisham takes his time, delivering a heart-warming, funny book about small-town characters trying to embrace both the old and new South. I liked the book. The *New York Times* called it "a thoughtful and atmospheric thriller." It is truly thought-provoking and definitely stirs up an atmosphere you won't forget; however, it lacks the can't-put-it-down excitement of a thriller.

The word "thriller" suggests fast-paced fiction, with a resourceful hero/heroine and a wicked, but smart, villain. Thrillers come in many flavors, for example: espionage (Bill Granger), legal (James Grippando), political (Stuart Woods), financial (Stephen Frey), psychological (Jonathan Kellerman), and many that cross categories, such as the books of Ridley Pearson, John Sanford and Nelson DeMille. Harlan Coben has written some exciting thrillers that cast ordinary heroes into terrifying situations. Coben first wrote mysteries, good ones, featuring sports agent Myron Bolitar. *Tell No One*, published in 2001, was his first thriller (out-of-genre, which we discussed in the last newsletter). In *Tell No One* we see the hero, eight years after his wife was abducted, focused on a computer screen where a message contains a phrase only he and his wife knew. The message holds out hope, but he has been warned to "tell no one." That was a book I could *not* put down! Same with Coben's subsequent thrillers, including *Gone For Good* (2002).

I'm not a big fan of literary novels, but once in a while a theme catches my attention and I'm drawn in. That was the case with Norman Lebrecht's *The Song of Names* (2004) and Robert Ford's *The Student Conductor* (2003). Both are about music, a subject close to my heart. *The Song of Names*, set before and during WWII, is about a young virtuoso violinist who disappears on the day of his world debut. Forty years later, his childhood friend begins a search for him. This book is full of human failings, emotion, and even humor. When the significance of the title was revealed, I was stunned. An absolutely beautiful book! *The Student Conductor* dwells more on music than story, specifically orchestral music; and if you, the reader, aren't at least a little bit of a musician, you probably will not like this book. Set in 1989 Germany, following the fall of the Berlin Wall, a 30-year-old American tries to revive his career by studying with a legendary pre-War conductor who proves to be a ruthless teacher. There is a love triangle with many secrets that force the characters into the past. *Booklist* review calls it a novel of power—power of the past, the future, and "of the individual to love and forgive." It is dark, intense, and very, very good. (And after I finished reading it, I was ready for something *light*!)



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I love to hear from my readers!

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About Language

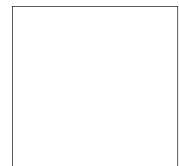
Occasionally I am asked to speak to groups about writing. I enjoy these sessions; they're good for me; they keep me sharp. Always at the end there are questions on many aspects of writing—some easy, some challenging—which I do my best to answer. Here are a few about language:

1. **When writing, is it okay to break those rigid language rules we learned in grammar school?** I like Winston Churchill's comment on "Never end a sentence with a preposition." He said, "This is the sort of English up with which I will not put." Regard the rules as guidelines, not laws.
2. **Which is correct—"an historic monument" or "a historic monument"?** The answer may surprise you. It's the second one. If the "h" is sounded (historic), use "a." If the "h" is silent, use "an" (an ~~h~~onorable man).
3. **Which is correct—"I feel bad about it" or "I feel badly about it"?** The answer is the adjective "bad," which refers to your emotion. "Badly" is an adverb. In this case it means there's something wrong with your sense of touch. ☺

Ken Follett is a best-selling author who dares to publish his own mistakes-in-print on his website (www.ken-follett.com). Go there. Click on "Welcome," then "Errors & Omissions." Follett's mistakes should assure you that even the best writers are not perfect.

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Janet Litherland is the author of 10 nonfiction books and three novels, *Vanished*, *Chain of Deception*, and *Discovery In Time*. She is the former owner of Write-Choice Services, Inc., a book-development company, which aspiring authors can find at www.writechoiceservices.com.



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