

BOOKMARK



Fiction and Nonfiction News from Janet Litherland

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REVIEWS

Potpourri

Here's a quote from David Baldacci's *The Escape*, featuring John Puller, a man who investigates military crimes. "He thought better in cursive. The joined-up writing seemed to spur connective thinking." Another good reason to keep teaching cursive in public schools!

The latest in stress-relief: Adult coloring books. Check online or at your local gift shop. You'll find designs of Gardens, Animals, Cars, and lots more—even a "Maxine" cartoon coloring book! Do you have one? I do. Mine is "Victorian Houses."

Did you know that a mystery novel written in 1939 remains the best-selling crime novel of all time? Yes, it's Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None*. Have you read it?

"I have sometimes been wildly, despairingly, acutely miserable, racked with sorrow, but through it all I still know quite certainly that just to be alive is a grand thing."—Agatha Christie

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."—John Wesley

**Janet Litherland's books
are available at:**

Amazon.com
and other online stores.

"The historian will tell you what happened. The novelist will tell you what it felt like." —E.L. Doctorow (1931-2015), in *Time* magazine.

Skeleton Hill (Peter Lovesey, 2009). I own many of Lovesey's books and really enjoy them. This one is from his "Peter Diamond" series (British police procedurals), and it captures the reader's attention from page one. During a battle reenactment near Bath, England, a headless skeleton is discovered by two reenactors, one of which is later found murdered. Puzzles from the past and the present wait to be solved by Peter Diamond. And, of course, Diamond comes through!

The Line Between Here and Gone (Andrea Kane, 2012). This is the second in the author's "Forensic Instincts" series, and it's a winner! I reviewed the first one (*The Girl Who Disappeared Twice*) in the January 2014 issue of *Bookmark* and loved it. Forensic Instincts is a private investigation firm—actually, a group of talented, lovable rogues who operate slightly outside the law to solve crimes. This time, they're trying to find the father of an infant who is battling a rare immune deficiency. Supposedly, the man was murdered, but the team doesn't believe that. Are they tracking a ghost? Excellent book. Now I'm anxious to read the third one (*The Stranger You Know*)!

The Silent Lady (Catherine Cookson, 2001). This novel, from an unpublished manuscript, was published four years after the author's death. Cookson was an excellent storyteller with a true talent for plotting. A disheveled, confused woman appears at a law office in London, wearing the same clothes that particular lawyer had seen her wearing 27 years before! Where had she been all those years? How did she survive? Problem now is—she seems unable to speak. The readers (you and I) know where she was, but how can she regain her former life if she can't communicate? Loved this book!

The Lake House (Kate Morton, 2015). I am an enthusiastic fan of this author's previous books—*The House at Riverton*, *The Secret Keeper*, and *The Forgotten Garden*. This one, however, was long, tedious, and at times boring. Covering a 70-year time span, it involves a child who disappeared, too many family secrets, and a multitude of suspicions that left me wondering not How or Why, but When—When will it be over? Sorry, just can't recommend this one.

Fear Nothing (Lisa Gardner, 2015). I usually like Gardner's work, but this one held little interest for me. Too much blood and violence; the shift in viewpoints was confusing; and the ending was predictable.

CONFESSION TIME

FICTION AND NONFICTION NEWS
FROM JANET LITHERLAND



*I love to hear from my
readers!*

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In the last issue (October) I discussed Lawrence Block's *The Crime of Our Lives*, and mentioned that Block worked for the Scott Meredith Agency in the 1950s. Part of his job at that time was to write "true" magazine stories that weren't true at all. Well ... confession: I did the same thing in the late 1970s, early 1980s! Yes, I made up "true" stories for romance magazines popular during those years.

Here are some of my creations:

For *True Experience*

October 1979, "I Never Said Good-bye"

September 1980, "The Life I Saved Was My Own"

October 1980, "My Wife and Kids Will be Better Off Without Me" (male point of view)

October 1981, "The Love We Lost Is Ours Again!"

For *True Romance*, July 1982, "How Lucky I Am to Have Him!"

I also wrote some serious self-help nonfiction:

For *Secrets*, May 1978, "How to Say NO—and Mean It"

For *Modern Romances*, June 1980, "When You're in a Rut"

For *True Romance*, October 1983, "You Can Make That Speech—With Confidence"

Ahh, the memories...

Language

Are you a **librocubicularist**? You are, if you read in bed!

Centripetal force = Moving toward the center. Centrifugal force = Moving away from the center.

Recently, I saw (twice) in print media: The Smithsonian Institute. Incorrect. It's The Smithsonian Institution!

Did you know that a "jiffy" is actually 1/100th of a second? (Urban Dictionary)

Can you think of a word that rhymes with purple? I can't.

Ready for some British slang? Dodgy = not to be trusted. (Dodgy food should be thrown away.) Jammy = lucky! "She's a jammy woman." (No, a jammy is not what you wear to bed!)

Here's another palindrome for you: racecar.

Read back issues of *Bookmark* online at: www.janetlitherland.com/newsletter.htm



Bookmark
Janet's Book News

Janet's Ratings: Scaled 1 - 5 ★=OK, ★★★★★=Fantastic!

The Little Paris Bookshop (Nina George, 2015) ★★★★★

The All-Girl Filling Station's Last Reunion (Fannie Flagg, 2013) ★★★★★

The Stranger You Know (Andrea Kane, 2013) ★★★★★

Janet Litherland, author of 10 nonfiction books and eight novels, also is editor emeritus and former owner of Write Choice Services, Inc., a book-development company that aspiring authors can find at: www.writechoiceservices.com.