



# BOOKMARK



## *Fiction and Nonfiction News from Janet Litherland*

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### REVIEWS

#### Potpourri

**Memoirs!** (Oh, here she goes again.) Yes, I firmly believe that YOU should write—record—your “memories,” not only for future generations but also for *yourself*. Do you keep a journal/diary?

Here’s an excerpt from Dr. Tim Morrison’s excellent book, *Writing Secrets: Essential Steps to Discover How to Start*. (Reprinted by permission): “Our journals represent our growth journeys. How we handled difficult situations. The moments in our lives in which we stumbled. The barriers we conquered. Accomplishments we achieved. Events we celebrated. Successes we enjoyed. Your journal may be a record of how you came to think differently about an idea or a process, a situation or belief. Those entries, sorted, compiled and expounded upon might become an amazing book for others to read. [In addition] ... You have written not so much to impart knowledge to others as you have written to inform yourself. ... Yes, we write to inform ourselves, to gain clarity in our thinking and ideas. Such writing becomes the foundation for what we tell others.”

So, begin organizing your journal (if you have one) into a *memoir* and print it for posterity!

Here’s another incentive for you. In Revelation 1:19, we find this: “Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.” Yes, *write* them!

**Janet Litherland’s books are available at:**  
Amazon.com  
and other online stores.

**Touch & Go** (Lisa Gardner, 2013). In the July 2012 issue of *Bookmark* (see the online archives) I wrote a glowing review of *Love You More* by the same author. Now I’m “glowing” again! Though not a sequel, this novel includes some of the same characters who appeared previously. An entire family has disappeared and investigator Tessa Leoni—the principal character in *Love You More*—is tasked with finding them. Not only will you follow the plot from Tessa’s point of view, you also will get first hand information from one of the abducted family members—scary info! Can you figure out “whodunit” before the conclusion? It’s tricky.

**The Sound of Broken Glass** (Deborah Crombie, 2013). After a start that was somewhat confusing, this one picked up to the point that I could not put it down! The early confusion was in identifying the characters and trying to figure out how they related to one another. With placing one foot in the present and one in the past (as I do in writing my novels), some clarity is needed. However, once the plot showed its face, I was completely engaged. In present-day London, two lawyers are murdered in the same bizarre manner, and the crimes seem to relate to incidents in the past. The innocent appear guilty, and the guilty appear innocent. Caught in the middle is a young guitar player who has made a good life for himself despite a miserable, lonely childhood. Could not help cheering him on!

**Innocence** (Dean Koontz, 2013). A literary thriller—slow, but compelling. Addison Goodheart, a young man whose countenance is so frightening that his own mother could not look at him, lives in an abandoned bunker beneath city streets and only comes out at night, a hood to hide his face. Gwyneth, a young woman who cannot bear to be touched, encounters Addison in a darkened and locked library, where he saves her from an evil man. They become friends, but there are rules: He is never to touch her, and she must never try to see his face. Together, they fight evil in their world, especially evil against children. This story (an allegory) promotes nonviolence and love, and offers hope for redemption. The ending—when you finally get there—is absolutely lovely.

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I’ve been asked how I choose books to review in *Bookmark*. Many (old and new) are recommended by my readers; some I select because national reviews (good and bad) pique my curiosity; others are continued output from my favorite authors. A few weeks ago I read a “techno-thriller” published in 1989. It was a great story for its time, but the advances in technology over the past 25 years made it much less “thrilling” than originally intended. I had a hard time getting excited about computer crimes that depend on pay phones and floppy disks. However, as a step back in time, I found it interesting. (*The Fool’s Run*, by John Sandford)

## TWO UNUSUAL BOOKS

FICTION AND NONFICTION NEWS  
FROM JANET LITHERLAND



*I love to hear from my  
readers!*

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*The Hare with Amber Eyes* (Edmund DeWaal, 2010). A memoir? A biography? History from an intimate perspective? All of the above! As a reviewer for London's *The Guardian* described it, "... a new genre, unnamed and maybe unnameable ... [a] cabinet of wonders." DeWaal's story begins when he decides to trace the origin of a particular inheritance—214 tiny Japanese antique figurines called netsuke. As he follows the netsuke back in time, from his parents to his great-great-grandparents, we learn, as he learns, about life in Paris and Vienna, enormous wealth and wanton destruction, the persecution of Jews by the Nazis, and the amazing story of how the little netsuke survived all of it and ended up in DeWaal's hands. A fascinating dip into history. (If you'd like to see examples of netsuke, including the author's "Hare with Amber Eyes," check out Google Images.)

*And I shall have some peace there: trading in the fast lane for my own dirt road* (Margaret Roach, 2011). The friend who loaned me this book—a memoir—said she was drawn to it by the title. I believe many of us can understand that. The author's "fast lane" meant living and working in New York City, as a *New York Times* editor and, most recently, as Editorial Director of Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia. Her "dirt road" is a cottage in the woods of upstate New York, where she often had spent weekends indulging her passion—gardening. In making this her full-time home and life, she needed to "strip away attachment to self-esteem, income, and the increasing carrot of career advancement." Now, she says, "I am a woman who increasingly basks in the quality of just enough, and not a pinch more." This is a very detailed, very personal account of her remarkable journey.

## Language Bugs

This one really bugs me: "I'll try and ..." Whether it's "try and find something" or "try and make it" or any other "try and," the phrase makes me cringe! Instead, let's "try to find something" or "Try to make it by six o'clock."

Lately, I've been reading novels from British Author Colin Dexter's Inspector Morse series. Morse is a highly literate detective who uses words that send me to the dictionary! Words such as opprobrious, solecism, and peregrinations. And, he's proud of his cruciverbalistic competence. (That means he's really good at working crossword puzzles!) He enjoys classical music, literature and theater, finds great pleasure in Keats and Shakespeare, and doesn't believe in coincidence. He insists that this particular oddity is not coincidence: "Find the forty-sixth word from the beginning of the forty-sixty psalm," he says, "and the forty-sixth word from the end of it—and see what you land up with!" (King James Version) Are you curious? The stand-alone word at the end, Selah, doesn't count. Selah simply denotes a "break" or "interlude" between psalms (songs). Try it—find what Morse found! As a detective, Morse is a bit of a show-off. But he's also very good at solving mysteries!

Did you know that there is a hippocampus in your body? It's the part of your brain that's responsible for short-term memory. The name is derived from its resemblance to a *sea monster*. (Well, that explains my problem!)

**Read back issues of *Bookmark* online at: [www.janetlitherland.com/newsletter.htm](http://www.janetlitherland.com/newsletter.htm)**



**Bookmark**  
Janet's Book News

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

*Void Moon* (Michael Connelly, 2000) ★★ (Too much detail)

*Rules of Deception* (Christopher Reich, 2008) ★★★★★

*Private: #1 Suspect* (James Patterson & Maxine Paetro, 2012) ★★★★★

Janet Litherland, author of 10 nonfiction books and seven 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](http://www.writechoiceservices.com).