



BOOKMARK



Fiction and Nonfiction News from Janet Litherland

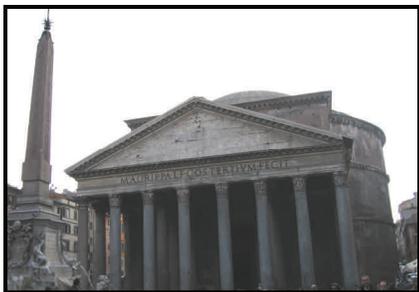
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Reviews

Potpourri

In the last issue I promised to post a picture from my trip to Rome, Italy. The mixture of ancient and modern fascinated me. Here are two photos to show you what I mean.

The Pantheon between rows of apartment buildings:



The Colosseum with modern traffic whizzing by:



Lots of folks attended my presentation at the Thomas County Library last month—readers and writers! We had a great time!

Love You More (Lisa Gardner, 2011). If you love mysteries, as I do, you don't want to miss this one! You've heard the phrase, "couldn't put it down." Start this novel when you've plenty of time; because, believe me, you will NOT be able to put it down! A man lies dead on the kitchen floor, and his wife—a state police trooper—claims to have shot him in self-defense. She definitely has been beaten, so her story seems to be true. But where is their six-year-old daughter? Each time I had this one figured out, the author blew a hole in my theory—several times, right up to the end!

I'll Walk Alone (Mary Higgins Clark, 2011). A 3-year-old boy is kidnapped. Two years later his forever-distraught mother is a victim of identity theft. Now, she appears to be implicated in the kidnapping. She is hounded by the media and cursed by her husband. On her own, she sets out to find the perpetrator of the hoax, and to find her son! A very good, light-weight mystery.

Born to be Wild (Catherine Coulter, 2006). Beware—this is an out-of-genre book. In past newsletters, I have praised this author's work, especially her FBI series. This one (not FBI) is a combination of romance, mystery, humor, and soap opera. It surprised me, as I expected fast pacing and sharp plotting. To be fair, Coulter says on the cover: "I hope you laugh a lot ... root for Mary Lisa in all of her roles, and have a fine time with this book." It was just okay, no high praise from me. If you want to refresh your memory on out-of-genre books, check **Bookmark** online, the July 2006 issue.

Eleventh Hour (Catherine Coulter, 2002). Now THIS is the kind of Catherine Coulter book I love to read! It's from her FBI series, starring Savich and Sherlock, a married couple who are FBI agents working together. The story revolves around the murder of a priest and the only eyewitness, a woman who is running from her own nightmare and is unwilling to get involved. Full of twists, turns, and endearing characters.

The Bishop (Steven James, 2010). This novel is #4 in the author's series, "The Bowers Files." It is a stunning 520-page paperback thriller! Special Agent Patrick Bowers is on the trail of a spree of "perfect" crimes. He knows they are connected, but he has nothing tangible to link them together. This is my first Steven James novel, and I will definitely be reading more!

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

"If writing [or reading] a book is like driving across America, then the book's middle is an endless highway across Kansas. There are, to be sure, a lot of interesting things in Kansas, but you won't enjoy them much if you spend every moment telling yourself you can't wait to get to California."—*Lawrence Block*

A Delightful Book!

FICTION AND NONFICTION NEWS FROM
JANET LITHERLAND



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The Phantom Tollbooth (Norton Juster, with illustrations by Jules Feiffer, 1961). Yes, that's correct—copyright 1961, first published in 1962. This year marks the 50th anniversary of this remarkable little classic, newly published.

The cleverly illustrated story (pen and ink drawings) is intended for elementary school readers, but I enjoyed it immensely—and it's been several *decades* since I was in elementary school! Anyone who appreciates language will love, and laugh with, this book. It's funny and full of puns. (That must mean it's "punny.") ☺

A boy named Milo is bored and "doesn't know what to do with himself," when he notices a strange package in his bedroom containing pieces that need to be assembled, which he does. It's a tollbooth! So he hops into his little car, pays the toll and drives through. He finds a new pal—a watchdog named Tock, who ticks—and together they travel to Dictionopolis (ruled by the Unabridged King) and to Digitopolis (ruled by the king's brother and rival, the Mathemagician). According to the King, "Words are more important than Wisdom." The Mathemagician claims that "Numbers are more important than Wisdom." They are at war. Milo and Tock discover that the sweet princesses, Rhyme and Reason, who had kept things calm and reasonable in both kingdoms, have been banished to the Castle in the Air. Milo and Tock decide to rescue the princesses. Along the way they meet the Spelling Bee, the Humbug, and others. They avoid the Island of Conclusions because, Milo says, "You can waste too much time jumping to Conclusions."

Milo and Tock are successful in returning Rhyme and Reason to the confusion and discord from which they were banished, and Milo is hailed as a hero. It is then that he's told that the journey he had undertaken was impossible. *What?*

"If we'd told you," said the Unabridged King of Dictionopolis and the Mathemagician of Digitopolis together, "You might not have gone. ... Many things are possible just as long as you don't know they're impossible."

Language: What's Bugging You?

A reader in New York is bugged by the use of the word *back* after *reflect* or *revert*. As in "reflect back on earlier times," or "revert back to the old ways." "Reflect on earlier times" and "Revert to the old ways" are correct.

Someone in Atlanta is bugged by the pronunciation of *advertisement* and *applicable* as adVERTisement and apPLICable. Webster's Dictionary prefers ADvertisement and APPLICable.

Ineluctable. Ever hear of an ineluctable conclusion? (inescapable) And here's one for my relatives in Pennsylvania and Florida: **Comstockery.** It means censorship of literature, art, and theater because of alleged immorality!

If once in a while I feel discombobulated, does than mean that most of the time I'm combobulated?

Do you know what *emoticons* are? They are: Happy Face :) Sad Face :(Big Grin :D and other such symbols. Did you notice my Happy Face in the review above? (Sorry, the program I'm working in doesn't include drawings of Sad Face and the Big Grin.)

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



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Janet's Book News

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

Got the Look (James Grippando, 2006) ★★★★★

Rage (Jonathan Kellerman, 2005) ★ (unresolved ending)

Mystery (Jonathan Kellerman, 2011) ★ (dull)

Janet Litherland, author of 10 nonfiction books and six 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.