



At Long Last, Deets About My New Book(s) and Tons of Book Recommendations!

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Dear ones,

I am back from a short vacation, a year older but rested, tanned, and rearing to go. I have so much news for you, chickens, so let's hop right in!

First, I am so thrilled that I can FINALLY announce some details about my next standalone novel. The title is: **IT'S ONE OF US**. And while we don't have the cover or description copy finalized, since you've been waiting so patiently, I thought I'd give you the elevator pitch so you can have a taste of what's to come your way next February.

An infertile couple's world is turned upside down when a familial DNA match shows the husband's child through a sperm donation years earlier is the suspect in a local murder.

I can't wait for you to meet Olivia and Park, Scarlett and Darby, Perry, Lindsey, the detectives Will Osley and Joey Moore, and uncover all the wild layers of this story. Suffice it to say this pitch is only the beginning. In addition to being a cracking crime thriller, it is also an examination of the heartbreak of infertility and miscarriage, and the consequences of our choices. It is one of the most personal stories I've written to date, as I go into in the author's note. Oh, I have been waiting SO long to share this with you, and I am beside myself excited we can finally start talking about it! I'm preparing to do the last pass on the manuscript, which means it will be in ARC form soon! I will keep you updated as to all the details, but the digital version is already [up for pre-order](#), and you can [add it to your Goodreads now!](#)

PREORDER IT HERE!

And drumroll, another treat for you, a surprise addition to the canon: I've sold a new story to Amazon Original Stories! The deal was just announced, and I am so, so excited to get this into your hands. This will actually release in January 2023, before the standalone.

≡ PublishersMarketplace Deal Report	
Digital: Fiction: Mystery/Crime	May 3, 2022
J.T. Ellison's <i>THESE COLD STRANGERS</i> , in which a young reporter becomes obsessed with a stranger after his heroic act goes viral, only to discover a terrifying secret, to Liz Pearsons at Amazon Original Stories , for publication in January 2023, by Laura Blake Peterson at Curtis Brown UK (world).	

I know you're probably wondering about Taylor #9. It really is almost finished. I have been inches from the end for a few months now, which is frustrating me. I've been interrupted several times with the various projects that are already under contract and must take precedence. But I hope to have better news in June... And I might as well loop you Sam fans in that I am trying to finish her next book as well, because it technically takes place before the Taylor. My timeline jumped up and bit me two weeks ago, and I have to figure out how to handle it. It will probably be a large novella or short novel, but it's also now in my field of vision. But since you've been so patient, and this is a NEWS-letter... the title of the new Taylor novel is: **THE WOLVES COME AT NIGHT**. Slick, yes?

And because I don't have enough on my plate, I'm also working on the next standalone for 2024. (not to mention the next [Joss](#), which is into it's final proof stage, too.)

Yeah. Now you understand why I haven't been out on the socials. It's a lot of work, but my goodness, it is FUN!

□ Poll

Speaking of work...your participation in last month's poll was SO incredibly helpful. The vast, vast majority of you are totally fine with me putting the Taylor ebook into Kindle Unlimited for the first three months, so that is the current plan. (Also, I totally spaced adding audio to the format list, but that's

because the audio format doesn't have any bearing on the ebook decision, but I should have asked.)

Since the poll was so much fun, shall we do another?

Which new project are you most excited for?

It's One of Us
(Standalone)

These Cold Strangers
(Amazon short story)

The Wolves Come at Night
(Taylor #9)

All Fall Down (Sam #5)

Master of Shadows (Jayne Thorne, CIA Librarian #2)

Read All About It...



It's sad that I have to go on vacation to read, but I did and it was glorious. I finished several books and stories that I've been working on for the past couple of months, and started a couple more. I'm making up for last month's dearth of books with this month's mega-recommendations list. Enjoy!

[I'LL BE YOU](#) by **Janelle Brown**

A stellar thriller with a gasp-worthy twist. I literally sat up in my deck chair and went "NO WAY!" Janelle is one of those amazing writers whose stories subsume me. I disappear into her worlds, and that is the highest compliment a writer can give.

[THANK YOU FOR LISTENING](#) by **Julia Whelan**

I have been a fan of Julia for years. Her audio work is legendary, and this new novel gives us a tantalizing glimpse into the world of audiobook production while also delivering an absolutely PERFECT love story. This story is an instant classic, as wonderful as *You've Got Mail*, *When Harry Met Sally*, and every other pitch perfect rom-com out there. And it's funny as hell, too.

[THE IT GIRL](#) by **Ruth Ware**

I was thrilled to get an early look at the queen of suspense's new novel, and it does not disappoint. Anything set in Oxford is going to be my jam, and the push and pull of the present and the past really worked for me. Depth of character and setting and a series of perfectly executed, corkscrew twists make this another surefire winner from Ware.

[DRAFT NO. 4](#) by **John McPhee**

This is going to be of huge use when I write the next standalone...and that's the last hint (wink wink nudge nudge) that you get today :)

[SMILE BEACH MURDER](#) by **Alicia Bessette**

A perfectly plotted mystery from a wonderful writer, this book is everything I want from a cozy—barrier-island beaches, a welcoming bookshop, a quaint small town—all balanced against deep secrets and complicated deaths. Callie Padgett is a sharp and compassionate amateur sleuth with a compelling backstory, and a quirky cast of characters, family and townspeople alike, round out the story. I can't wait to see what washes up next on the shores of Cattail Island!

[ON TARGET](#) by **Mark Greaney**

My dad and I are buddy reading the Gray Man series, and I have to say, Mark is not only a tactical plotter, but also a tremendously talented and surprisingly lyrical writer.

[THE EX](#) by **Danielle Girard**

Another writer whose work sucks me in and doesn't let me go, Danielle's newest story is a humdinger! Annabelle Schwartzman is a superb ME and Danielle is at the top of her game.

[DEAD DROP](#) by **James L'Etoile**

I'm not done with this one yet but it deserves a mention now because it has one of those incredible openings that grab you by the throat and toss you across the room. If James isn't on your radar yet, put him there. He's a gem.

[THE LAWLESS LAND](#) by Boyd Morrison and Beth Morrison

This brother-sister team have crafted a fabulous new world that is going to be an amazing series. A gallant knight, a witty heroine, a quest for the ages... this one combines the rich historical tapestry of Umberto Eco and the relentless pace and adventure of Clive Cussler into a brilliant new series. I mean come on, medieval thrillers for \$1000, Alex.

[WHEN SHE DREAMS](#) by Jayne Ann Krentz (writing as Amanda Quick)

WHEN SHE DREAMS is a luscious new entry from the queen of paranormal suspense, Amanda Quick, aka Jayne Ann Krentz. Set in the 1930s, this book is an homage to the classic detective novels of that era, and shows yet again why Quick/Krentz is the master of the genre. I also chatted with Jayne about the process of developing the idea and writing of this book, take a look below.

☐☐ May Recipe: Almond Flour Scones with Fresh Whipped Cream



It is rare when I find a recipe on the internet that I don't want to tweak, but [this delight from Elizabeth Rider](#) didn't have anything to fix. I followed it to the letter, even down to measuring the egg and only using 1 tablespoon of honey, and it turned out perfectly. This recipe can clearly be adapted with 1/3 of a cup of anything you like - raisins, dates, plain, cinnamon... you get the idea. You could even cut back on the honey and add herbs for a savory. 10 minutes in a 350 degree convection oven was spot on, too.

Since I didn't have the time to make clotted cream, I served this with a [lovely homemade whipped cream](#) to which I added two dashes of cinnamon to spice things up. Spectacular combo.

SOUNDS DELISH!

You can find all of my recipes [here](#), on the bright and shiny new Recipes website. And if you want some wine to go with the meals, [The Wine Vixen](#) has you covered.

□ Contest

Every month, I draw a name from those of you who open the newsletter and send that lovely person a \$30 gift card to the bookstore of their choice. It's my way of saying thanks for being here. Congrats to last month's winner: Susan D!

And don't forget to enter this month's drawing below!

I WANT THAT GIFT CARD!

□ A WORD ON WORDS and More...

We're wrapping the seventh season of A WORD ON WORDS, and there have been a few new episodes since the last newsletter. Check them out [here](#)!

I also had [a fun conversation](#) with Jayne Ann Krentz to celebrate her new book, WHEN SHE DREAMS, in which we discuss our process for developing an idea into a novel. Really cool.

And we continued [our exploration of the Gothic](#) with Barbara Peters of the Poisoned Pen Bookstores with debut author Isabel Cañas on her gothic masterpiece THE HACIENDA.

Thank you for sticking by me while I power through my year of creation! Stay smart, keep reading, and be sure to take a few big, deep breaths. It's a wild world out there, and we're all in this together.

Peace and hugs,



Are you still here?

Here's a kitten for your troubles!



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