



## Devouring books, deadlines, and interviewing our literary hero

May 2021

Vol. 229

Hello GentleReader,

Wow, I've been busy since we talked last. And you know how much I dislike the term busy, because it's often something I use to procrastinate on my real work—but this was real work business, so it's falls on the right side of the fence for me. The HER DARK LIES tour is wrapping up, I'm on deadline for the next standalone, and I have a **big** surprise in the works that I'll be able to share with you next month, in June's newsletter. I don't want you to have hopes dashed a month from now, so I will say it is not a Taylor Jackson novel, which I hope to address later this year. But it is a big deal, so stay tuned.

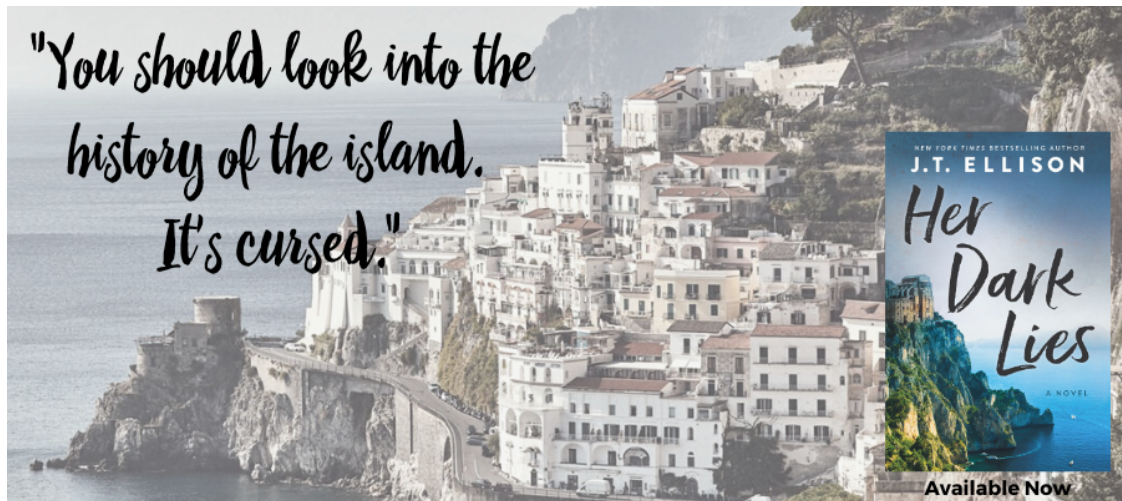
I've also been reading like a mad woman. I've been off the socials for the most part, and that's helped give me the space to reinvigorate my love of the written word. Did you have trouble reading during the height of the pandemic? I did. I was so tuned into the news that I couldn't focus on books. I could—and did—write, but reading was a bridge too far. My ability to multi-task has really dropped off in the past couple of years, that might have something to do with it, too. But now, my reading gene has switched back on, and I've been devouring books. You'll see some of my favorites below, as always, but one stood out this month, and that's SOOLEY by John Grisham. I am a college hoops fan, and love March Madness, so this book was right up my alley—but it's about so much more than basketball. Family, and tragedy, and the humanitarian crisis in the South Sudan. As it happens, I had a chance to speak with John about his latest, and [you can watch our chat here](#). It was a lot of fun.

We've been in high gear on A WORD ON WORDS, too. We're just wrapping season 6 (!) and the line-up has been incredible this year. From Zakiyah Dalila Harris to Kazuo Ishiguro to Robert Kolker to Alka Joshi, and many more, there is something for everyone. [Check out the shows here](#).

In addition to the surprise next month, there is, as always, a new novel underway. I'm nearing the end of the first draft and of course, that's when the real work begins. I'm excited about this story, and really love my characters, even the flawed ones. I can't wait to talk more about it—but I gotta get it done, first.

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## ☐ **HER DARK LIES** tour is wrapping up



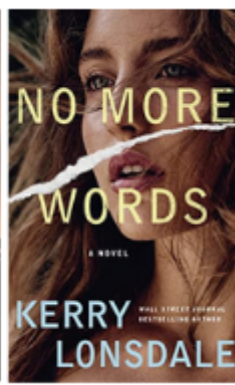
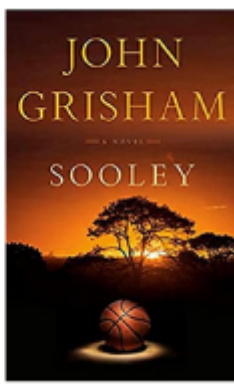
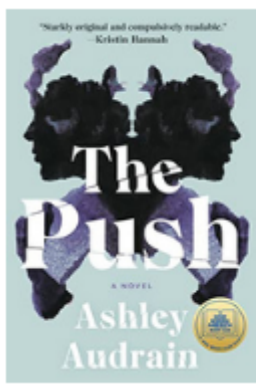
Thank you for the outpouring of support for [HER DARK LIES](#)! You can see all the details from the tour [here](#), and I hope you enjoyed the book! I have a few more events scattered over the next few months, but for the most part, the tour is wrapped. I am so happy y'all love this book so much!

[HOW DO I NOT HAVE THIS BOOK YET?!](#)

[ADD TO GOODREADS](#)

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## ☐ **What I'm Reading**



### **[THE PUSH](#) by Ashley Audrain**

An absolute stunner—I went into this story somewhat blind, and it took me a moment to get my bearings, but once I did, I couldn't stop reading. Blythe's journey to motherhood, the sense of dread that permeates the pages, the exquisite storytelling and descriptive prose, kept me hooked. Second person narratives rarely work for me, but *THE PUSH* was perfect. It's already cemented a spot on my Best of 2021 list.

### **[THE NEXT WIFE](#) by Kaira Rouda**

How many congratulations can I give out to my friend Kaira Rouda on the release of this glorious new book? It was an Amazon First pick for April, and come on, just the cover is enough to entice. Super book from a super author, full of twists and turns!

### **[SOOLEY](#) by John Grisham**

This new book by John Grisham is a delight. If you have even a peripheral interest in basketball, you will love it. Fans of the game, especially college hoops, will adore—and get their very own March Madness Cinderella story. And for those of you who simply want a crackling good read that will tug at your heartstrings, this is your book. Classic Grisham style with a very modern punch. Also, [Doctors Without Borders](#) plays a role in this book and they're a wonderful organization for you to check out if you'd like to explore a little bit more about the humanitarian crisis in the South Sudan. Highly recommend this book!!!

### **[NO MORE WORDS](#) by Kerry Lonsdale**

Kerry is a favorite of mine and I was so thrilled to read an advance copy of her latest. It's deep and unsettling and the beginning of a very cool series. Highly recommend you catch up with her earlier work to get ready for this fabulous July release.

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**☐☐ May Recipe: Spinach Salad, Two Ways**



In honor of warmer weather, I thought I'd share my go-to spinach salads, which are as easy to prepare as they are delicious. I was never a fan of spinach until a few years ago, when I discovered that, while I do hate canned or bagged spinach, I love fresh baby spinach. I use it as the base for pretty much everything now. Here are two variations that are simply divine.

LET'S EAT!

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

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## □ 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: Dee E.

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That's all for now. Be good to each other, get your vaccine if you can, and get back out in the world! I'll see you next month!

peace and hugs,





## Are you still here?

Here's a kitten for your troubles.



# NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR J.T. ELLISON



Did you like this newsletter? Share it with a friend!



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