



Current Events and Book Writing Don't Mix, Do They?

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Dearestreader,

I am a bit at a loss for words this month, my friend. I'm visiting my parents, which is cause for much joy, but I've sat down to write this newsletter several times, and just haven't known the right things to say. I've always promised a politics-free zone, and yet...I have, like you I'm sure, been consumed with our current events. You know my background is in politics and international relations, and as such, I am having a very hard time looking away from the tragedy unfolding in Ukraine, from spending time in analysis, conversation, communication, and otherwise trying to find ways to be of help. Of course, there is little to nothing I can tangibly do outside of donations, which I hope is making a difference. (If you're interested, [donate to help relieve the humanitarian crisis](#), or, if you'd prefer to choose your own charity, [take a look at a more comprehensive list](#).)

My writing has always been an examination of the ways we can hurt one another, in all its guises. War in the internet age magnifies these realities, showing how decisions of hate and fear affect more than the person next door. Knife or bomb, personal animus or the insane desire to devastate an entire country and people, the decisions are made by a person. And as a writer, I've always felt it my duty to examine these motivations. The past few weeks' news has been oppressive, frightening, and as of this writing, continuing to escalate. They say may you live in interesting times. I vote for the opposite—may we live in the most boring times possible.

And yet...it is the stories of heroism, of courage, of the grit and determination of the Ukrainian leadership, the soldiers from around the world who have answered the call, the populace who have taken up arms to defend their freedom, their homes, their families, (just follow [MP Kira Rudick and her cat Michelle](#)) that lighten my heart. That we have such people, true heroes, who will find a way to end this conflict and save so many, is inspiring and humbling.

I have looked away, of course. Somehow, the external has driven the internal. I've finished the revision of the 2023 standalone which has gone into

production, turned in the proposal for the 2024 standalone, gotten halfway through the revision of [Master of Shadows](#) (Jayne #2), and am nearing the end of Taylor #9. What I haven't been doing is worrying about ways to present an entertaining social media feed by taking my annual Lenten sabbatical. Perspective has been good for me. Perhaps that is the key to long-term, consistent productivity. An interesting thought to meditate on this month.

□ Read All About It...



[SIERRA SIX](#) by Mark Greaney

Mark's Gray Man series is about to be launched on the big screen, so now's the time to read this incredible series to get ready for what is going to be a serious blockbuster. So thrilled for my friend—and these books are incredible.

[THE PARIS APARTMENT](#) by Lucy Foley

I needed an escape, and I got it. I haven't finished, but the sights and sounds of Paris are soothing my tired heart.

[I WILL DIE IN A FOREIGN LAND](#) by Kalani Pickhart

Thanks to [a piece in Electric Literature](#), I discovered this deep and inspiring novel, and have been learning more about how this conflict came about as well as the unassailable spirit of the Ukrainian people. A fascinating read, beautifully realized. Highly recommended.

[ON ALL FRONTS](#) by Clarissa Ward

Clarissa Ward has been doing incredible work on the ground in Ukraine. Her memoir was released during the pandemic, so flew a bit under the radar, but now we can all celebrate her incredible bravery and spirit.

📄 FOOD!

Rachel has been working her tail off to bring the recipes from their static PDF status to life as a searchable, commentable website! Check it out at TheWineVixen.com/recipes

You can search for your favorites, leave me comments on how it worked out, and print at will! And please join me in giving Rachel a big appreciative round of applause. This has been a HUGE project and she's done amazing work!

📄📄 March Recipe: Chicken Dijon



A new to me recipe that I came across in [Food & Wine](#), I needed something unique to satisfy some seriously bored tastebuds. It's so easy to get into a cooking rut, making those tried and true recipes that are satisfying and filling, and never stepping out of our comfort zone. This one satisfied my need for something new on all levels, and was a big hit, to boot.

SOUNDS DELISH!

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.

📄 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: Darlene V!

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

[I WANT THAT GIFT CARD!](#)

In these difficult times, we must hold strong, together. Find the joy, the calm, the story of courage that inspires you, and hold fast to that. We will get through this. You're in my thoughts, always.

Peace and hugs,



Are you still here?

Here's a kitten for your troubles!



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



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