

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR
J.T. ELLISON



Change, change, change, and the perfect Gnocchi for the holidays

December 2018 Newsletter
Vol. 203

Hi, Gentle Reader!



“To commit oneself to too many projects, to want to help everyone in everything, is to succumb to the violence of modern times.”

—Thomas Merton

I found [an article in my inbox](#) this morning (complete with the above quote) about the utter incompatibility of mindfulness and busyness. Zing! I settled in to read it, but something came up, and I ended up saving it for later to write this instead. Alas. The more things change, the more they stay the same.

This story, and the quote, perfectly represents the great irony of my 2018, the year I committed to change. And I have been making serious changes: to my work and lifestyle, my editorial future, my day-to-day writing schedule, committing myself to living more, deeper, present, working smarter. And yet...

Have I shared enough? Too much? Does this font look right? Is this color good on me? Do these pants make me look fat? Have I broadened my reading horizons properly? Did I stand up for my friends, my beliefs, my morals enough? Can I meet that deadline? What should I make for dinner? Is she going to be okay? Can I get another 500 words if I skip yoga? Oh, my God, WHY did I say that?

That's my daily internal dialog. Yours will differ. The point is, we're consumed with questioning ourselves and our actions, scurrying from place to place, network to network, text to text. Is all this rushing about making us better people? Enriching our minds? These are the questions I start asking myself at this time of year, when I look back one last time at my goals and desires that I laid out last year and judge my success. I am always reflective, but especially so in December.

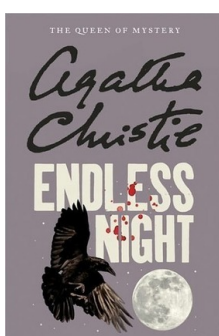
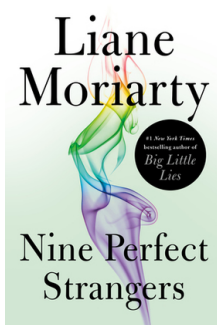
But there's no lying fallow for me. I've been writing a new novel! (or as I'm now calling it, "the book with 137 titles" as none of my working titles have stuck yet.) I use the title as a lodestone, so it's disconcerting to be this far in without the perfect one. It will happen, one that all parties can agree upon. It always does. I love this book though, the story, the characters, and especially, the setting. I'm having fun. It has a kick ass soundtrack, and the story is coming together. This is my fall 2019 book, a standalone, and as soon as I have info to share, I will. I promise you're going to love it!

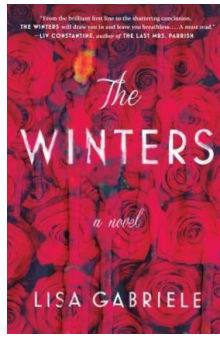
So many good things have happened this year, especially in the past month – y'all, A THOUSAND DOORS landed a **starred review from Publishers Weekly** and a **fabulous review from Bookreporter!** The little book that could, a decade in the making. Thank you for helping make it a star! And we did the final reveal of the new Samantha Owen series covers. You can see them all [here](#). **TEAR ME APART** made a couple of Best of 2018 lists, and the trade paperback for Brit in the FBI #5, **THE SIXTH DAY**, came out.

WHEW! That's a month!

With all these releases, all the words written, the trips taken, the communications drafted, 2018 was very busy. I give thanks for you, my dear, for being a part of my world. For sticking with me. Thank you for making 2018 great!

▯ What I'm Reading





NINE PERFECT STRANGERS by Liane Moriarty

NINE PERFECT STRANGERS is a fantastic book and it's relaunching one of the greatest book clubs to grace the online world: [She Reads](#). You should definitely check them out and join the conversation! I was lucky enough to see Liane Moriarty in person a few weeks back and she was simply magnificent - so self-deprecatingly funny.

SORORITY by Genevieve Sly Crane

It's very fitting that this author's middle name is Sly, because that's the perfect description of this book. A series of conjoined vignettes, it tells the story of a sorority from the inside out, the good, the bad, and the ugly – and wow is there a lot of ugly. The writing though – it is perfect, sparse, descriptive, in credible. I haven't been this excited about a debut author's possibilities since [SWEETBITTER](#). I'll be watching for Crane's work in the years ahead.

ENDLESS NIGHT by Agatha Christie

I read my first Agatha Christie this month! [Abby at Crime by the Book](#) said **ENDLESS NIGHT was her favorite** so I gave it a try. I'll tell you, it freaked me out so badly! Normally I read for an hour before bed and I found myself putting it down after a few pages because I knew it was going to give me nightmares. I both hate and love books that touch me like that, but I'll admit, I wasn't expecting ENDLESS NIGHT to wig me out so badly. I even figured it out 3/4 of the way in and it STILL unnerved me.

THE WINTERS by Lisa Gabriele

A heads up – you're going to see this on my Best of 2018 list soon. It is sheer and utter perfection. A modern retelling of Rebecca, with incredible writing, character development, and a modern edge. I loved it, and you will too.

7 Useful Things I Learned from the Internet This Month



[How to Manage Your Seasonal Depression](#) One of the best articles I've seen on managing SAD, including my

favorite trick, upping your Vitamin D intake.

How Do You Move A Bookstore? With A Human Chain, Book By Book That's the spirit!

The 2018 Modern Mrs. Darcy Gift Guide For Book Lovers Anne always puts together a great gift guide! Highly recommended.

What Happens When Your Crime Library Goes Up In Smoke? I cried when Jeff Abbott lost his house and library in a fire. I cried again reading this. He has some truly life-changing tips that we should all follow with our homes. I hope you've had a chance to read his new book, **THE THREE BETHS**, which I recommended last month.

8 Tips For Overcoming 'Reader's Block.' Nothing worse than a reading slump. These are great tips!

The Draw of the Gothic. "Feeling is at the heart of the gothic, because it is not a genre: it cannot be concocted out of an approved list of motifs." As I am in the midst of developing a gothic right now, this article couldn't have been more timely.

The Three Scientific Reasons You Shouldn't Check Your Notifications "In the same way that those tobacco companies were at fault for promoting something they knew was bad, social media companies are willingly and knowingly taking advantage of a resource they've commodified: our attentions. They've made us invested using our emotions. Although many of us know now that it's bad for us, we're so far in that it's hard to get out. None of this is accidental."

From the Homefront

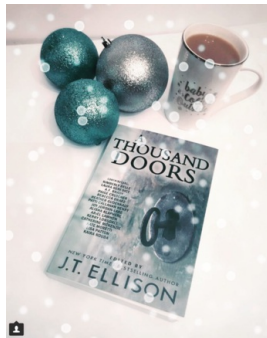
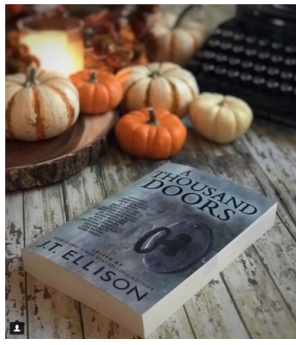


▣ TEAR ME APART ;

TEAR ME APART made **The Strand's**, **The Real Book Spy's**, and **Bookclubbish's** lists of best books of 2018. I am beyond honored!!!

Best of 2018? Now I have to read it!

A THOUSAND DOORS



It's so fun to see what bookstagrammers come up with when they highlight A THOUSAND DOORS. I love these shots from [@prose_and_palate](#), [@shereadswithcats](#), and [@angiesbookshelf](#). You should follow them all for great book recs!

What's Behind The Door?

A Brit In The FBI Updates



THE SIXTH DAY is out in trade paperback! The cover is stunning, and I love it! You can read more about what went into this book [here](#).

And THE LAST SECOND, the sixth book in the series, is up for preorder and will be out March 26, 2019.

From New York Times bestselling authors Catherine Coulter and J.T. Ellison comes a riveting thriller pitting special agents Nicholas Drummond and Michaela Caine against the head of a private space agency who has the power to end the world as we know it.

Outer space? Heck, yeah!

December's Recipe: Gnocchi Au Gratin with Ham and Peas



You'll love the flavor of this simple au gratin. Gruyère is an aged Swiss cheese with a firm texture and sweet, slightly nutty flavor. If you can't find Gruyère, you can substitute Emmental. This recipe is super easy, super filling, and a sure winner as either a main course or a side dish.

Gimme that Au Gratin!

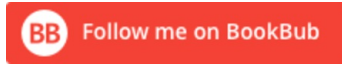
And so, 2018 draws to a close. The next time I see you, it will be with my Annual Review in hand. I do love putting these together, giving myself a "grade" for the year, seeing how many words I've written, what went right, what went wrong. It's great fun! I'll also have my best of 2018 book list – and wow, it's going to be hard to narrow down the year's wonderful reads.

Have a blessed holiday, however you celebrate, and safe New Year's Eve. Merry Everything!!!

peace and hugs,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "J.T. Ellison". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Keep up with all of my book bargains and recommendations!



Are you still here? After all that? Wow. You deserve a kitten!



Let's be friends. I don't bite!



#KeepReading

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