

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR  
**J.T. ELLISON**



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An Exclusive Snowpocalypse Survival Kit, 7 Useful Things I Learned,  
and the Best Broth Ever

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January 2018 Newsletter

Vol. 193

## Hi, Gentle Reader!



I hope this letter finds you with a cup of tea and a peaceful spirit. If you're anything like me, you find it hard to leave your nest in the winter. It's cold, damp, and dark – why venture outside if you don't have to? Clearly, I have taken this mindset to heart. I just figured out that yesterday was the first day I'd driven my car since New Year's. *New Year's*. Ten whole days of agoraphobic bliss. When I told my husband, he cocked an eyebrow at me and asked, "Weren't you getting a little stir crazy?" I smiled and shook my head.

Thank God I'm a writer. It makes winter so much more bearable. I'll admit, I do sleep better when the nights are longer and cooler. I love the coziness of a warm kitten on my lap (or in the crook of my arm whilst typing away). Soups and stews are my comfort food this time of year. After a few hours at the keyboard, I enjoy the monotony of chopping vegetables and letting them simmer away on the stove – my latest creation is a veggie broth that is, according to Assistant Amy, out of this world. Don't worry, I've left the recipe for you at the end of this note. The only downside to stew making? Chopping raw chicken for my chicken stew. You'd think the thriller writer wouldn't bat an eye at handling flesh, but you'd be sadly mistaken. My pen is much mightier than my chef's knife, I'll say that.

Winter is also a great time for intensive creative work. Right now, I'm finishing the big edit on my new standalone *TEAR ME APART*, which you'll get to read on September 18. And once I'm finished with that, I hop on a plane and travel to foggy San Francisco to plot the sixth Brit in the FBI novel with my devious cowriter. The sixth Nicholas book! Can you believe it? I sure can't.

As you read through this month's newsletter, you may notice it's a bit longer than usual. I had more things to tell you, dear newsletter reader. If you like this longer letter (or didn't!), will you reply to this message let me know? It's such a privilege to be invited into your inbox, and I only want to send you things you're going to love.

Snowpocalypse, books, TV, winter events, broth: like I said, there's lots to cover. Let's do it!

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## A Newsletter Subscriber Exclusive: Snowpocalypse Survival Kit



Hey, y'all, I don't know if you've noticed, but: *it's freaking cold outside*. Even down here in the South. When New Orleans and Florida are seeing snow, you know I'm not making this up.

When the mercury drops and the winter winds blow, it's time to tuck in for a bit of hygge and embrace the season of throw blankets and hot mugs of belly-warming beverages. I, for one, have no problem doing this. And since I love a good snowpocalypse, I decided to get a head start on gathering supplies to hunker down and enjoy the winter wonderland.

Here's what I'm grabbing besides coconut milk, gluten-free bread, and yummy brown eggs:

**Apple TV.** I can't get enough of *The Sinner*, *Outlander*, and *The Handmaid's Tale*. What's your current binge-watch?

**Trivial Pursuit.** It's the perfect way for us nerds to pass the time.

**UGG Slippers.** Cozy, warm, and wonderfully made. I am in heaven trotting around the house in these beauties.

**An Electric Blanket.** What do you do when your firewood is wet? Or if you don't even have a fireplace? You grab a blanket. And here's an insider tip for you kitty parents: my girls love a heating pad kept on low.

**Constant Comment Tea.** I've been raving about this tea for years – for good reason. It's so delicious.

**This Teapot.** Nice and big inside, lots of room for water to move through the leaves, and it stays hot under the cosy for at least an extra two hours. Highly recommended.

**Golden Milk.** A few months back, I shared my recipe for Golden Milk. Warm, frothy, spicy goodness. If you haven't tried it yet, *what are you waiting for?*

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## My Favorite Blog Post Each Year (aka my Annual Review)



*Whew.* We made it through another year. You know what that means? It's time for an annual review – my ninth one. Why do I do them? Because I am my own HR Department, and someone has to hold me accountable. Might as well be me.

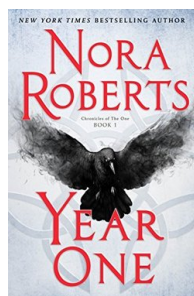
I have to admit: 2017 was one of the craziest, wildest, most frustrating years I've ever had. So many roadblocks encountered and surmounted. So many exciting plans for the future (some of which I can't even tell you about yet – but soon!).

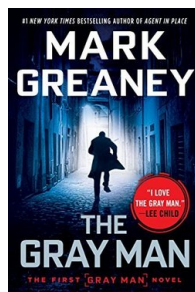
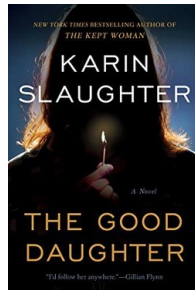
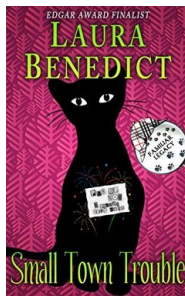
At the beginning of each year, I decide on a word that will define my mindset for the year. 2017 was the Year of Flow: I wanted to pull back from external commitments, focus on my craft and wellness so that I could be the best writer, wife, daughter, friend, kitty mom, boss, and person I could be. How well did I do? Well... if it helps, my word for 2018 is Change!

[Want to see how accurate my predictions were?](#)

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## What I'm Reading





I got to read a bunch over the holidays, and boy do I have some goodies for you this month!

YEAR ONE is super storytelling, inventive and scary. (Pro Tip: Don't go grocery shopping prior to a possible snowpocalypse whilst listening to this book. ☺) SMALL TOWN TROUBLE is a sweet murder mystery featuring Trouble the cat, who, I might add, completely steals the book from his human counterparts. A great read from a great author. And speaking of great authors, Karin Slaughter just keeps getting better. THE GOOD DAUGHTER is tight, tense, and all-too-real. I loved it. Oh, and I listened to THE GRAY MAN a few weeks ago. The tag line is "Bourne for the new millennium" and that's just what you'll get – a thrilling ride. It's excellent!

*Click each cover to learn more!*

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## Where to Find Me This Winter

# WINTER 2018 EVENTS

FEB 3	MURDER IN THE MAGIC CITY	HOMWOOD, AL
FEB 4	MURDER ON THE MENU	WETUMPKA, AL
MAR 3	SW FL READING FESTIVAL	FT. MYERS, FL

I'm not getting out a lot this year – part of my 2018 goals to level up my writing and that means spending more time on it – but I'm thrilled to be part of these events. If you're in central Alabama or southwest Florida, come by and say hi! I would love to meet you and swap stories about books and kitties.

Need more details? [Here you go!](#)

## 7 Useful Things I Learned from the Internet This Month



Sometimes the Internet can be a wasteland of notifications and clickbait, but it can also be a tool for good. I enjoy the randomness of the Web, and wanted to pass on these interesting tidbits.

1. **If you're flying to Europe and your passport expires less than three months after your scheduled return date, you're not getting on the plane.** We ran into this non-expiration expiration problem once, too. If you don't have a passport office close by, you're in trouble. Renew early!
2. **How to use money to buy back your time.** Superb, important, and true – especially for creatives who feel overwhelmed! I've accomplished three times the creative work since I brought Amy on board.
3. **This map shows where your favorite British TV shows take place.** If you're a geography nerd like me, this is essential.
4. **You can gain more personal freedom through more discipline.** Seems like a paradox, but the logic is sound – trust me. Personal freedom equals peace of mind.
5. **How to make business travel more enjoyable.** Because being on the road doesn't have to be so stressful. Taking advantage of the perks really does make a difference. Slow down and enjoy the ride.

6. **A diabetes drug has reversed memory loss in Alzheimer's Disease mouse models.** This is huge, y'all! An accidental find and a promising start.

7. **These are women who will kick ass onscreen in 2018.** It's looking like a good year for movies! 😊

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## January's Recipe: Rich, Sippable Veggie Broth (aka Bone Broth for those of us who don't like bones)



Y'all. If you want a flavorful soup base or a delicious way to warm up quickly, this broth is it. I can't believe how much flavor there is just from vegetable scraps. If you make any of my soups and stews this winter, I say you should start with this one first.

Here's a tip: when you make other dishes, collect your peels, trimmed stems, and other goodies into a plastic bag and toss into the freezer until you're ready to make this. It's a free-flow recipe – any veggie remnant works.

Hey, lady, gimme that broth recipe.

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That's it from me. I hope your 2018 is off to a wonderful start. I wish you a year filled with joy and learning, of contentment and close relationships and love. May you read good books and have important conversations. May we nourish our spirits and spread light to those around us.


Y'all be good.

xo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alison".

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