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## Louise Penny

### July Newsletter



A home without books is a body without soul.  
**Marcus Tullius Cicero**

## A NEW VOICE FOR THE BOOKS

Well, finally, I have news for you about the audio book.

After an exhausting and exhaustive international search, we've found someone to build on what Ralph Cosham created as the voice of Three Pines. After Ralph's death last year we were left reeling, personally, but also, well, the question weighed heavily - what could we possibly do about the audio books?

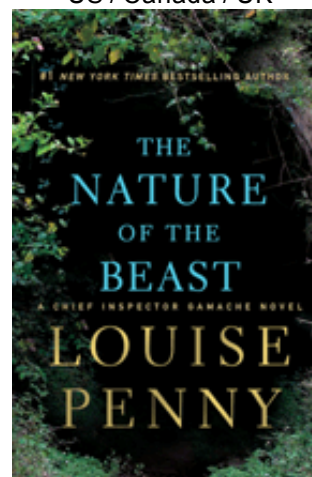
We knew we wanted to continue them, but Ralph had put so much of himself into the narration, becoming the voice especially of Armand Gamache, that we almost despaired of finding anyone who could possibly take over.



*Robert Bathurst*

Which is why it took so long. Thank you, thank you for your patience. We finally have our new voice for the books. You might know him. He's a British actor named Robert Bathurst, best known in North America for his role in Downton Abbey.

**The Nature of the Beast**  
US / Canada / UK



August 25th

Click if you wish to pre-order

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**The Long Way Home**  
US / Canada / UK

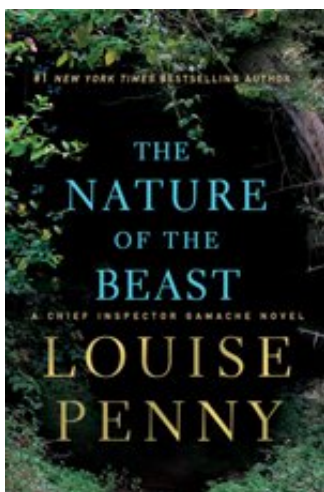
He's busy recording **THE NATURE OF THE BEAST** even now, and I'm hoping that next month I'll be allowed to play you just a snippet.

I know it will be so very difficult to hear someone else, but I also know you'll give Robert a chance. He's an extraordinary talent and we're lucky to have him.

If you want to learn a little more about his work [click here](#) to view his biography.

## **THE NATURE OF THE BEAST**

Have I mentioned that **THE NATURE OF THE BEAST**, the next Gamache book, will be published August 25<sup>th</sup>? Just kidding – of course I've told you!



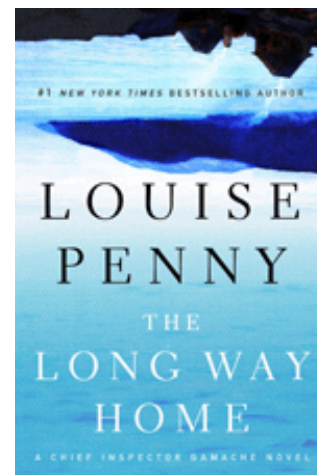
August 25th

The book is the result of a year's work. Every day. I'm so excited/nervous about it. Always am. Some things never change. But my nerves were steadied somewhat when the first review came in, from ***Publisher's Weekly*** – and it's a starred review! Here's an excerpt:

*The bucolic Quebec village of Three Pines again proves no refuge in Penny's stellar 11th Armand Gamache novel.... Gamache has settled in the small community after retiring from the Sûreté, where he worked as a homicide detective. But he's drawn back to the hunt after Laurent Lepage, a nine-year-old boy with a penchant for crying wolf, is found dead under circumstances that Gamache finds suspicious.... Series fans will delight in Penny's continued complex fleshing out of characters they have come to love.*

I am so pleased about the early buzz surrounding this book.

Our series of quotes from **THE NATURE OF THE BEAST**



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**HERE'S THE ORDER OF THE CHIEF INSPECTOR GAMACHE BOOKS, FROM THE FIRST TO THE MOST RECENT:**

STILL LIFE

A FATAL GRACE / DEAD COLD

THE CRUELEST MONTH

A RULE AGAINST MURDER / THE MURDER STONE

THE BRUTAL TELLING

BURY YOUR DEAD

A TRICK OF THE LIGHT

THE BEAUTIFUL MYSTERY

HOW THE LIGHT GETS IN

THE LONG WAY HOME

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST

continues through the summer. To get caught up, [here's the facebook link](#).

If you'd like to read the first chapter, or pre-order the book, [click here](#).

And, our feature on the Real Places of Three Pines is also continuing. Every second Monday we tell you about an existing place, that you can visit, that inspired a setting in one of the Gamache books. [Here's the link](#) to that feature.

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## **MAP OF THREE PINES - PRIZE DRAW**

Now, as a special thank you, and gift, the US publishers and I are working on a map of Three Pines. It's a limited edition, frameable drawing. Because it's a limited printing, we're holding a draw. It's open to anyone who pre-orders the book, to say thank you. Sort of like when you go to a shop and they give you a free gift with a purchase. This is our added gift.

Now, since this is my US publisher, it is only available to people in their territory, which is the US and Canada (including Quebec). It's possible other publishers will pick up on the idea. I hope so! It's also possible you know someone in the US or Canada who can put their name in, and send you the map.

Cunning.

If you'd like to enter, just [click here](#).

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## **BOOK NEWS**

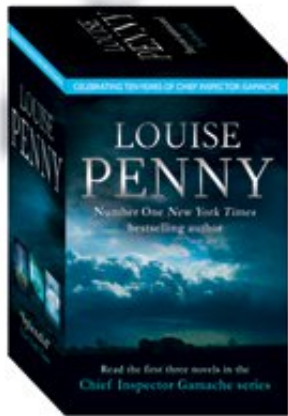
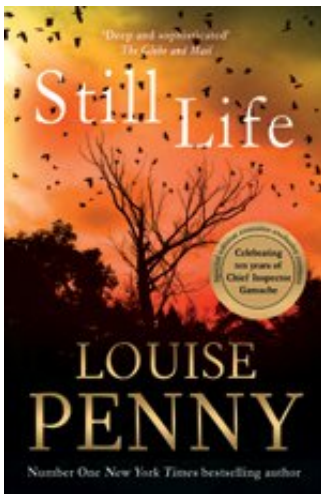
As well in June, we heard that THE LONG WAY HOME has been nominated for the Macavity Award in the US for Best Novel. How exciting is that?!?

And the AARP Magazine in the US had a feature on the six most prominent women crime writers: Mary Higgins Clark, Tess Gerritsen, Sue Grafton, Sara Paretsky, Janet Evanovich and...me. Thrilling company and fun article. [Here is, yes, the link](#). (how'd you guess?)

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## **10TH ANNIVERSARY FOR GAMACHE**

Looking ahead to July, all sorts of fun things are happening, beginning with a celebration of the tenth anniversary of the first appearance Chief Inspector Armand Gamache, in STILL LIFE.



To mark the occasion, my UK publishers are putting out two special editions of STILL LIFE. A new hardcover and a new paperback. [Click here](#) for more information. Both have an in-depth essay by a UK reviewer, about the books, Still Life in particular, and about me. Have to say, after he and Michael and I got together for a long lunch in London, and then I saw his draft of the essay, I was a little shocked. Not because it was inaccurate, but because it was so accurate. And personal.

But it is all true, and while cutting close to the bone at times, I considered, and felt if I'm going to open up, might as well commit.

A special box set of the first three books will also be available to buy.

In the US, to celebrate Still Life at 10, my publishers are re-issuing it in mass market paperback.

It'll be everywhere, everywhere I tell you! Three Pines is invading the world. Who knew Clara and Gabri and Myrna were so territorial? Now, Ruth I can see.

## MOVING ON

It's been a hectic June, *chez nous*. Preparing for the move. Clearing out closets and drawers. Purging is I think the word. Certainly feels as much like throwing up as throwing out.

The key I discovered, after spending a whole afternoon looking at a single photograph album, is not to look at photograph albums. Or sit down and re-read letters. Or books.

In fact, do not sit down at all.

Have to admit, while I have a sentimental side for sure, things are not all that important to me – but at the same time I want to be careful not to be too rigorous, and regret giving away or tossing things that I'll later miss.

Oddly, I am most tempted to throw out letters and notebooks from Michael. I find seeing his handwriting almost too painful. Such a precise hand, unmistakable. The photos of us together through 20 plus years don't bother me, except to see myself morph from slender young thing to a woman of almost 60. I

think I'm inured to the photographs because we have so many around the house. I'm used to seeing them. But the handwriting upsets me. I suppose because it seems so intimately "Michael" – and reminds me of what was.

So I've set up three boxes I call my memory boxes. Into those I place the notebooks and his sketch pads, and all the letters and cards and the photos. His watch, which he no longer needs since time is now meaningless.

All the things that I cannot afford to feel right now, go into the boxes. For some later date. When I am old and gray and nodding by the fire – in the words of Yeats. When it no longer fills me with pain, but joy, I'll remember that one man loved the pilgrim soul in me. But for now I cannot bear to go there. So into the boxes they go.

I sometimes wonder how long it will take before I can open them up. But I do know I will get there one day. Of that I have no doubt. All shall be well – in the words of Julian of Norwich. My lovely US editor, Hope Dellon, gave me a necklace with those words on it last Christmas. I cherish it. And her. And I know it's true. All shall be well.

We take possession of the new home this month, and then renovations start. Among other things, we're having more bookcases put in. I was hoping to have one of the bedroom doors hidden behind a bookcase. A sort of secret passage. I've long wanted one of those. But it's proving a little problematic, so instead we'll go with regular bookcases, everywhere.

We have one last summer to enjoy our home. How lucky is that? And then we move to a village nearby. Staying, of course, in Quebec's Eastern Townships. Where our roots go far deeper than even we imagined. And when the time comes to leave this home it will be sad, but also an immense relief. All the things we loved about this place are now the very things that make it impossible. The stairs, the rambling nature of the 1869 farmhouse. The solitude that now feels like isolation.

So, each afternoon I do one more closet. One more drawer. And eventually we'll get there. Lighter in possessions and heart.

As long as I don't sit down!

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## **OUR ANNIVERSARY**

Oh, and Michael and I celebrated our 19<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on June 28<sup>th</sup>. While going through the photographs I came across one I thought had been lost. It's my favourite shot from our wedding. Here it is.



What's with the finger??

Unfortunately, speaking of weddings, we're going to miss the wedding of our beloved niece Sarah, to Ryan. It's happening in Edmonton, but Michael is just is not up to traveling. Had to make the very difficult call, to let them know. But they were loving and understanding.

## ARTS ALIVE

And one other thing I want to tell you about is close to home, in early July. It's called Arts Alive and is a festival in the village of Knowlton. As part of it they're having a Three Pines brunch where prizes will be awarded in a trivia contest.

If you'd like more information, or tickets, [here's a link](#).

Well, I've talked your ear off. Hope you're enjoying your summer as much as we are. Michael sends love, and Bishop send licks, and I send endless thanks for your glad company, my friend.

Talk to you next month. Be well.

Louise, Michael and Bishop

*(To see the photographs used in this newsletter in a larger size [click here to see them via my website](#).)*

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Louise Penny on [Facebook](#)

E-mail: [contact@louispenny.com](mailto:contact@louispenny.com)

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