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Louise Penny's February Newsletter

Shoot a few scenes out of focus. I want to win the foreign film award. - Billy Wilder



Extreme weather

What a very odd month January has been! (Of course, being a proud Canadian, I'm referring to the weather.) A January thaw saw us practically in shirtsleeves, then down to minus 30 that saw us broadening our vocabulary.

I know we here in Quebec were not alone, there was extreme weather in many places. But for me personally, January has been a nice mix of staying at home by the fire, and doing a bit of traveling, promoting the Gamache books.

BURY YOUR DEAD - French book launch

Was in Quebec City mid-month for the launch of ENTERREZ VOS MORTS (French language version of BURY YOUR DEAD- where it became an immediate bestseller!). Plans are underway with one of the pre-eminent walking tour companies in the city to create a Gamache tour of the glorious city, visiting many of the sites and bistros the Chief Inspector goes to as he investigates, and heals. Including, of course, the magnificent Literary and Historical Society in the Morrin Centre. It won't be available until early summer, but I'll let you know as soon as there's more to say.

Gamache in 25 languages

Then home for a week and the fun news that we've sold the translation rights to a publisher in Brazil. That brings to 25 the number of languages Gamache et al now speak. Which means, if you have a mind to do this, you can read Ruth and find out how to curse in 25 languages. Ain't culture grand?

Toronto events

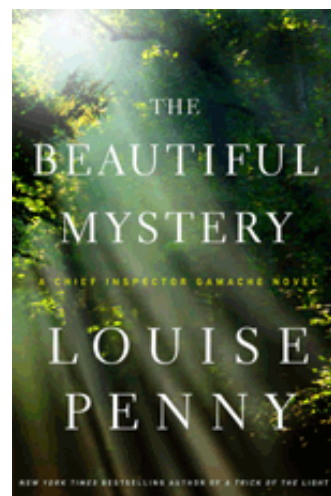
And now, I'm in Toronto. Yesterday was a big day. The Ontario Library Association is holding its Annual General Meeting and they invited me to be the keynote speaker.

Instead of just yakking at them, it was decided the wonderful Penny Griffin, of the Toronto Library system, would talk with me onstage. You can see the photo.



She did a fabulous job, and I had such a great time. Few things

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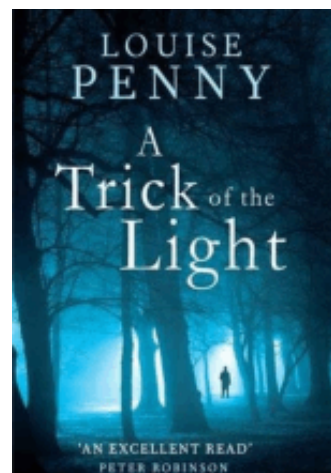
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better in the world than a room full of librarians. I consider them literary heroes. The keepers and defenders of the written word. Indeed, I have such respect for librarians I made Gamache's wife, Reine-Marie one.

Yesterday evening I had a wonderful public event organized by the Oakville Library. Paul McLaughlin interviewed me onstage. You can see what the event looked like from my POV.



Thank you all for coming out! Loved meeting so many of you, and you made me feel so welcome. And Paul did an amazing job - very hard to do an onstage interview. Much easier, I find, to answer the questions than to ask them.

Spending tonight in Toronto - have invited my brother Doug and his family, Mary, Brian, Roslyn and Charlie, to join me at the Thompson Hotel for the night. Sleepover! Heading home tomorrow. Then Super Bowl on Sunday. Yay! (I'm not kidding - I love football....can't explain why.)

Youtube film introducing myself



I mentioned earlier the different languages the Chief Inspector Gamache series has been translated into - well, the books are just now coming out in Norwegian, and the publishers there asked if I could do a short film introducing myself. So what did I do? What do I always do?

I called My Assistant Lise. The conversation went something like this:

Hi Lise.

Who is this?

Louise....(long pause)....Penny...

My Assistant Louise?

Kinda. Listen, the Norwegian publishers want a short film and I was wondering if you know how to do that on your iPhone.

No, really, who is this?

Please focus, and stop smoking your hooked rugs. This is serious.

So, let me get this straight. I get to direct you in a film?

Well, I was -

Great, I'll do it. Let me just find my riding crop and I'll be right over. You said your name was Kathy Reichs?

Close enough.

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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

OK, so the conversation might not have gone exactly like that, but that's my recollection. If you want to see the results (with Trudy the dog stealing the show - everyone's against me! I'm all alone. What will become of me???) [just click here to see the film](#).

HOW THE LIGHT GETS IN - book editing

January also saw me doing some fine-tuning on some of the technical scenes in the next book, HOW THE LIGHT GETS IN.

And this month, in about a week, I'll receive the line edits....the publishers go through the book word for word, line by line, and check spelling, grammar, and things like continuity....did the characters have breakfast twice? Did they lose a day? Is it sunny in one paragraph, then snowy the next?

I have to admit, I sometimes change the names of characters and don't always catch it in my own edits - so its not simply fairly small issues the line editor catches. Very helpful, and I hate it. So detailed. Ugh. But so worth it. I want all the books, and especially this one, to be great for you!

HOW THE LIGHT GETS IN can now be pre-ordered at your local bookstore or online. It comes out August 27th. SO exciting for me, and I hope for you! And thank you, as always, for spreading the word about the Gamache books! A day doesn't go by when I don't hear from a new reader who had one of the books recommended.

Sandra Goldberg Lecture - Montreal event

Oh, and I've agreed to be part of the prestigious Sandra Goldberg Lecture, which is put on by the McGill Council on Palliative Care. I used to volunteer at Palliative Care, so it's a cause close to my heart. They asked if I'd interview, on stage, the keynote speaker - Will Schwalbe. He wrote: THE END OF YOUR LIFE BOOK CLUB. I'm reading it now. Heartwarming, extremely interesting (the books his mother chose to read when she knew her time was limited) - and unexpectedly funny. The event is in Montreal on May 7th, at 5:30 in Leacock 132 of the Arts Building in McGill. No entry fee, no tickets....but that means scramble seating, so you might want to get there early. Still a way off, but I just agreed to it and thought I'd mention it. Both Will and I will be signing our books afterward. I think you'll enjoy the evening! I know for sure I will.

February at home

February itself will be quiet. We're not planning a trip this year. So much traveling for the books, we've decided to stay close to home. And, being Crazy Canucks, we love the snow. As long as it is viewed from the inside looking out.

Be well, my friend. Hope this finds you content, and safe, and reading a great book.

With warm embraces from frigid Quebec,

Louise

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