

AUGUST MUSINGS

SHARON VIRT



The Guest of the Nation

200th Anniversary of Marquis de Lafayette Visit to America

On August 9, 1825, the Marquis de Lafayette made a stop in Leesburg Virginia on the last leg of his farewell tour of the United States, commemorating to fiftieth anniversary of America's declaration of independence. This month the Town of Leesburg, in conjunction with the Thomas Balch Library and Loudoun Museum, will celebrate the 200th anniversary of that historic moment.

In writing my new book *Bargains of Fate* (release date July 2026), I wrote a scene describing the military exercises conducted at "William McCarty's field" west of the town of Leesburg – *for those of you living in Loudoun County, this is near the corner of W. Market and Ayr Streets*. Due to word count and page restrictions, this part of the scene was cut from the final manuscript so, in the spirit of celebrating the "Guest of the Nation", I felt it would be appropriate to share it with all of you.

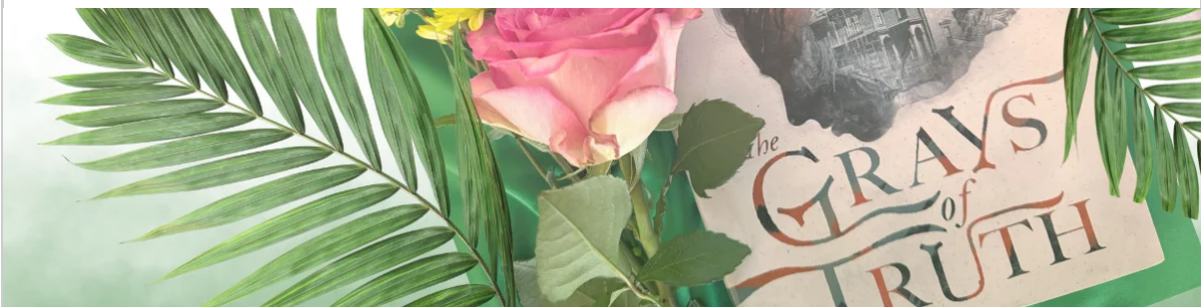
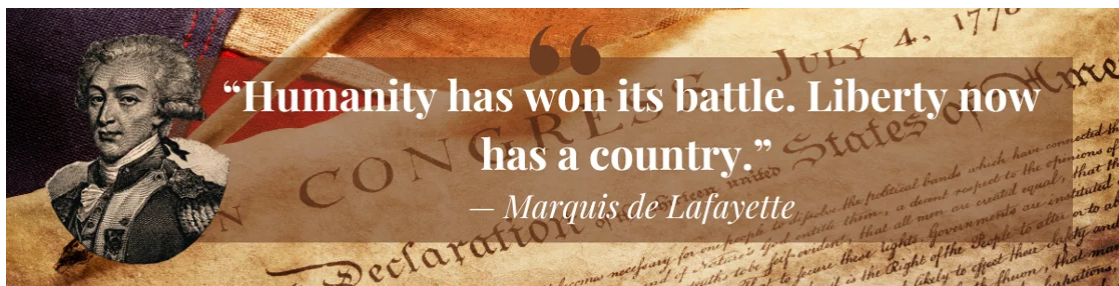
Missing Scene from *Bargains of Fate*

Clouds of gnats swarmed around their heads as Lucinda and Jack waited with hundreds of others in anticipation of the arrival of Marquis de Lafayette. The marquis had traveled to the county on Saturday and was staying with former President James Monroe at his Oak Hill estate.

This morning, the marquis and his entourage were leaving Oak Hill and traveling to William's field just west of town for a Pass-in-Review Ceremonial Drill followed by a military parade into the town of Leesburg. Alongside the artillery, companies of cavalry, light infantry and riflemen had assembled in full military dress on the field beneath the scorching August morning sun. Amidst the heat and oppressive humidity Lucinda, too, was sweltering. She glanced at Jack standing next to her. Even though he was wearing his officer's uniform, he appeared unphased by the heat and the relentless gnats. She shook her head as she swatted at the bugs with her fan while trying to stay cool under the shade of her parasol.

It was nearing ten o'clock when the calvary and an advance guard of militia men appeared in the distance. Multitudes from near and far stood along the road, crowding forward to behold the veteran Apostle of Liberty. When a handsome carriage drawn by four bays following behind the soldiers pulled onto the field, canons fired a national salute to honor the Guest of the Nation. ...

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Uncover the Mystery in *The Grays of Truth*

Step into the shadows of 19th-century Baltimore in my latest historical thriller, *The Grays of Truth*. Inspired by a real-life unsolved case, this gripping tale follows Jane Gray as she unravels a web of secrets, lies, and betrayal—where nothing is as it seems, and the truth comes at a cost. Part mystery, part courtroom drama, and wholly unforgettable.

Grab your copy today at [**AMAZON**](#) or wherever books are sold, and see if you can uncover the truth before the final verdict.



Pirates in Bald Head!

This is one of my favorite summer weekends on Bald Head Island!

The Pirate Invasion was back August 1–3 and was packed with fun for all ages—live cannon battles, sword fights, treasure hunts, ghost walks, and plenty of mischief.

Scott and I look forward to it every year. You are encouraged to dress up like a pirate - the costumes keep getting better and better each year!

Lafayette in Leesburg - Celebrations!

Leesburg, Virginia celebrated the 200th anniversary of the Marquis de Lafayette's visit. Scott and I had a lot of fun participating in the festivities.





Loudoun Museum Event

On August 9th, we got to learn more about the Marquis de Lafayette's visit to Leesburg (exactly 200 years ago) during an interactive exhibit at the Loudoun Museum.

As a museum Board Member, seeing this exhibit come to life was very rewarding as well as informational.

Upcoming Event: September 21

2025 Friends of Thomas Balch Library Annual Fundraiser

The Friends of the Thomas Balch Library are hosting *Past to Prose*, a look into how the past influences the stories we craft today. I will be the guest speaker at the event and will share how my passion for history and deep interest in primary sources shape my stories.

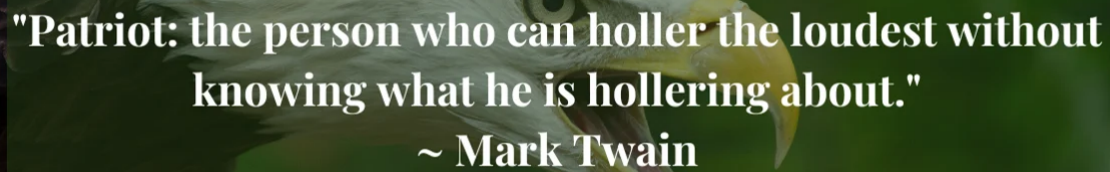
I will also be signing books and taking pre-orders for the re-release of *Masque of Honor*.



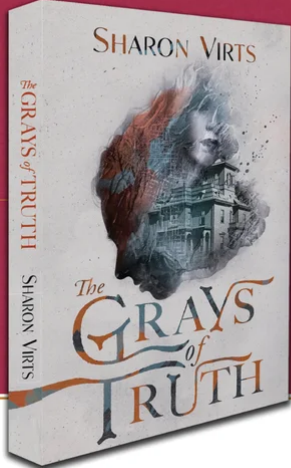
FRIENDS OF
THOMAS BALCH
LIBRARY

Get Tickets!

All funds support the Friends' programming, events, and research endeavors conducted on behalf of the Thomas Balch Library and the greater Loudoun community.



"Patriot: the person who can holler the loudest without knowing what he is hollering about."
~ Mark Twain



Have Sharon Attend Your Book Club Meeting

20% off your purchase of ten or more books

[LEARN MORE](#)

My calendar is filling up with fall book club visits, but I'd love to do even more! If you are in Loudoun County, I am happy to come in person; if not, Zoom is a great way to meet too!

August Beach Reads

In the dog days of summer, there is nothing better than a great beach read.

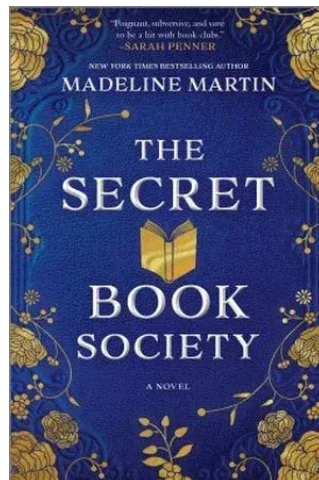


4.67★ on Goodreads

This Here Is Love

by Princess Joy L. Perry

The lives of three young people in seventeenth-century Virginia, a girl born into slavery, the enslaved son of a freed father, and an indentured servant making the crossing to America, cross paths on the same plot of land. While each of them face horrific circumstances and hardship, they'll all have to decide how to face it and what it will turn them into in this haunting tale of slavery, indentured servitude, and survival.



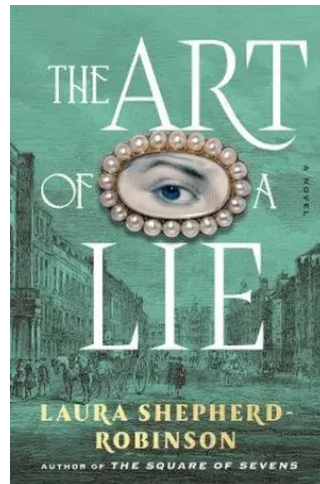
4.41★ on Goodreads

The Secret Book Society

by Madeline Martin

In late nineteenth-century London, Eleanor Clarke, Rose Wharton, and Lavinia Cavendish receive mysterious invitations from the notoriously private Lady Duxbury. Under the guise of afternoon tea, their thrice-widowed hostess ushers them into a

secret book club where the women can find freedom and agency through reading the books their husbands have forbidden them from opening.

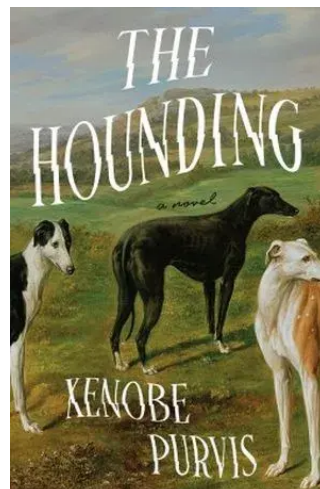


4.38★ on Goodreads

The Art of a Lie

by Laura Shepherd-Robinson

A widowed confectioner in eighteenth-century London struggles to keep her shop afloat after her husband is murdered. Then, a friend of her late husband introduces her to a new Italian delicacy that might be just the thing she needs to turn her shop around: ice cream. But as she learns more about the circumstances around her husband's death and is drawn into speculation and conspiracy, she may create the very destruction she was trying to avoid for herself.



3.94★ on Goodreads

The Hounding

by Xenobe Purvis

The Mansfield girls have always been a little...odd, and Little Nettlebed has always been a bit...unusual. That was even before someone claimed one of the Mansfield

sisters transformed into a dog right in front of their eyes. This is eighteenth-century England, and people may not believe in witches anymore, but they certainly believe in the weird. If you ask five of their neighbors, the Mansfields have always been weird, and if their strangeness is starting to affect Little Nettlebed, maybe it's time to do something about that.



August Journaling Challenge: Capturing Summer Memories



As the golden days of summer begin to fade, August invites us to pause and soak in its final moments. There's a special kind of magic in this season's end—the warmth lingering in the evenings, the taste of ripe fruit, the hum of cicadas under a painted sunset.

This month, let's focus on savoring and gratitude. Reflect on the memories you've made, the adventures you've taken, and the simple joys that define summer for you.

Each day, write about:

- ☀️ What was the highlight of your summer so far?
- ☀️ What moment today felt like pure summer bliss?
- ☀️ How can you carry the ease and warmth of summer into the seasons ahead?

Let August be your gentle reminder: the best way to hold on to something beautiful is to cherish it fully, right now.

Pick up your pen and let's capture the last golden rays of summer together.



#ReadWithSharon Book Club

Get ready for an awesome lineup in my [#ReadWithSharon](#) book club. On Thursday, August 21, at 7:00 p.m. Eastern, we will discuss ***Ace, Marvel, Spy*** with author Jenni Walsh.

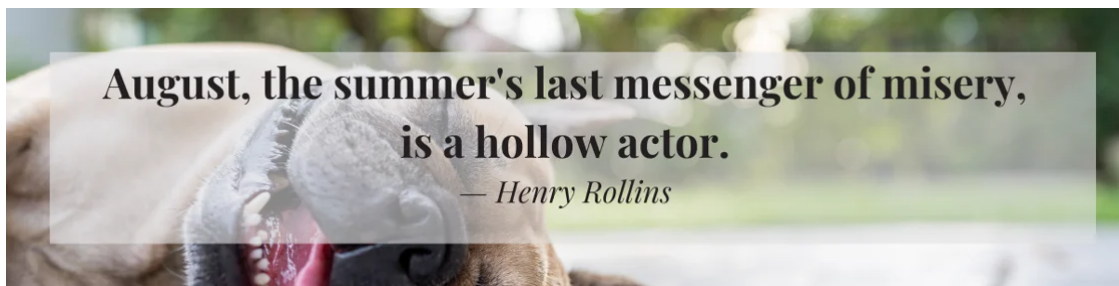
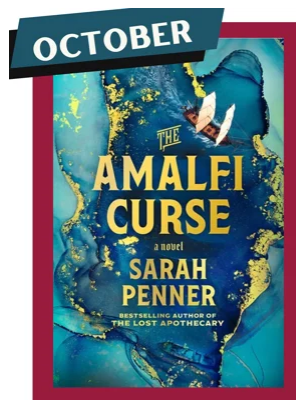
The novel follows Alice, a determined tennis champion and rising Wonder Woman comic editor whose world shatters when her husband is killed in World War II. Heartbroken but resolute, Alice accepts a daring mission from the U.S. Army: to spy on the enemy under the cover of tennis exhibitions in Switzerland. *Ace, Marvel, Spy* is a story of resilience and reinvention in the face of devastating loss.



The #ReadWithSharon book club only reads current releases (within the last year) of historical fiction, and I do my best to pre-read every selection before making the pick. Most months, the author joins us via Zoom, and you can ask questions during the discussion. Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month (this month being an exception) at 7:00 p.m. Eastern and last no longer than an hour. For

meetings you miss, you can access our Zoom discussions with the authors on my [YouTube Channel](#).

If you love stories from the past, this club is for you. You can sign up for free [HERE](#).



Stay cool during these dog days of summer!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Jenna'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.



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