

AUGUST MUSINGS

SHARON VIRTS



Traversing the Echoes of Time

As a historical fiction author, the allure of the past is not just a fleeting interest but a perpetual call.

Last week, I returned from a Mediterranean cruise with my family. The trip was not only a vacation; it fueled my passion for stories obscured by time and stirred my curiosity about the lives of people who worked, slept, and dreamed in these ancient places.

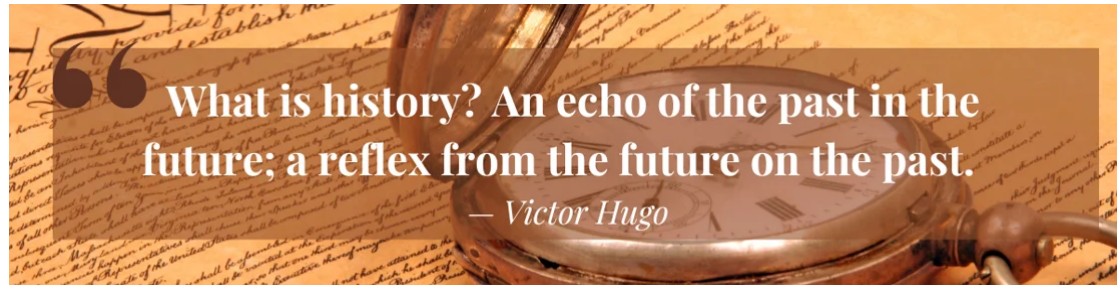
Wandering through the ruins of Pompeii, admiring the grandeur of seaside castles, and savoring the sights and sounds along the bustling streets of these ancient coastal cities has been nothing short of a pilgrimage through time. But amidst these explorations, I realized that fundamentally, little has changed in the human saga. The challenges of daily life, familial and societal pressures, economic woes, political strife, the need for entertainment and human connection, and the sheer impermanence of existence are as much a reality today as they were centuries ago.

Traveling through cities like Barcelona, Kotor, and Athens, the layers of history are palpable in the air. Each city is like a palimpsest, an old manuscript that has been written and rewritten over time. Beneath the modern veneer, the foundational elements of society—commerce, law, art, and social stratification—are remarkably consistent with the past.

This vacation served not only as a welcomed getaway from my own daily struggles, it has served as a reminder of the cyclical nature of history. Empires rise and fall, cities flourish and fade, but the core aspects of human life remain. We build, we destroy, we love, we betray. Each generation thinks itself unique, yet we tread paths worn deep by the footsteps of those who came before us. As I visit these ancient sites and historic cities, I realize that I am not just walking through ruins or museums; I am navigating the corridors of human experience.

History is not just about what changes; it's profoundly about what endures.

[You can read more about of my travel to the coastal towns of Spain, France, Italy, Greece and the Balkans and its influence on my writing at my [BLOG](#).]



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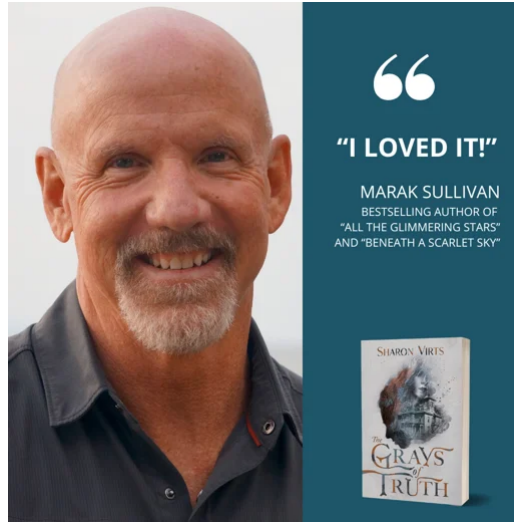
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The GRAYS OF TRUTH

Countdown to **Launch**

Glowing reviews keep pouring in for my upcoming book, *The Grays of Truth*.

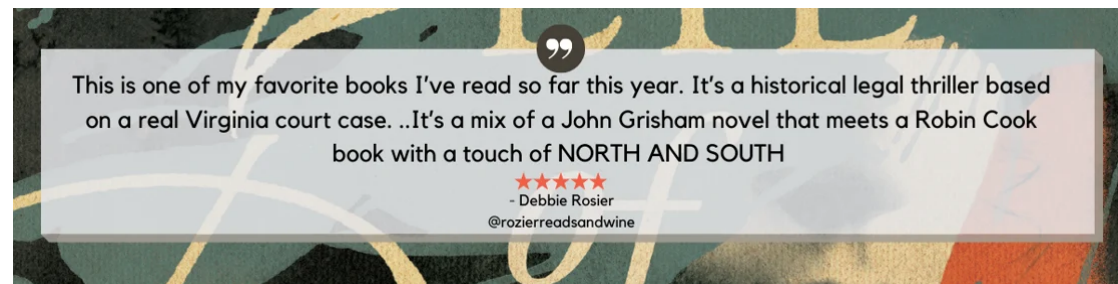
Mark Sullivan, bestselling author of “All the Glimmering Stars” and “Beneath a Scarlet Sky” read the story and thoroughly enjoyed it.



"Inspired by a true story and meticulously researched, the underbelly of high society Reconstruction Era Baltimore is brought brilliantly to life in Sharon Virts's atmospheric and deeply absorbing murder mystery The Grays of Truth. I loved it!"

The Grays of Truth will be released on October 29, 2024.

Pre-order Grays of Truth Now!



What are YOU Reading?

Look what I caught my son Zach and his fiancée reading by the pool while we were on vacation!

If you have read *Veil of Doubt*, be sure to leave a review on both GoodReads and Amazon. And if you need a copy, you can purchase yours on Audible, Kindle and in print format wherever books are sold.



[Buy Veil of Doubt](#)

“
If the book wasn't already good enough, I *never* would've guessed the ending. Wow!
What a satisfying read! This will probably be a favorite of the year for me.

★★★★★
- Samantha
@fiction_figurine

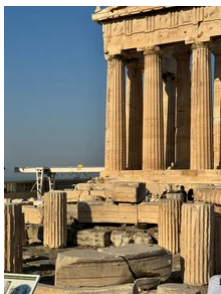


Dog Days of Summer

In ancient Greece and Rome, the Dog Days were believed to be a time of drought, bad luck, and unrest, when dogs and men alike would be driven mad by the extreme heat. This period of sweltering weather coincides with the rising of Sirius, the Dog Star and part of the Canis Major constellation.

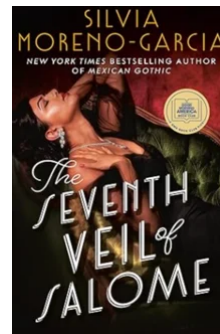
It was believed that super-bright Sirius's dawn rising in mid-to-late summer, combined with the heat of the sun, was the cause of summer's sweltering temperatures. Even the star's name, Sirius, stems from the Ancient Greek *seírios*, meaning "scorching." And having just spent the last two weeks in Greece and Italy myself, I can certainly understand why. It was miserably hot!

Below are a few photos of my trip through ancient cities along the Mediterranean. If you ever plan a trip to any of these places, be mindful of just how hot they are during the dog days of summer! [Source: The Farmer's Almanac]





Hot New Reads





***The Seventh Veil of Salome* by Sylvia Moreno Garcia**

As you recall, we read Sylvia Garcia's *Mexican Gothic* in my #ReadWithSharon book club a few years ago. Her latest novel is about a young woman who wins the role of a lifetime in a film about a legendary heroine — but the real drama is behind the scenes in this sumptuous historical epic. Set in 1950s, this is the tale of two women in Hollywood but it is also the story of the princess Salome herself, consumed with desire for the fiery prophet who foretells the doom of her stepfather, Herod: a woman torn between the decree of duty and the yearning of her heart. Before the curtain comes down, there will be tears and tragedy aplenty in this sexy Technicolor saga.

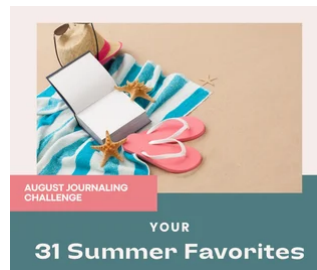
***The Unicorn Woman* by Gayl Jones**

Marking a dramatic new direction for Jones, *The Unicorn Woman* is a riveting tale set in the Post WWII South, narrated by a Black soldier who returns to home and searches for a mythical ideal. Set in the early 1950s, this latest novel from Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award finalist Gayl Jones follows the witty but perplexing army veteran Buddy Ray Guy as he embodies the fate of Black soldiers who return, not in glory, but into their Jim Crow communities.

***The Housekeeper's Secret* by Iona Grey**

Standing in the remote windswept moors of Northern England, Coldwell Hall is the perfect place to hide. For the past five years, Kate Furniss has maintained her professional mask so carefully that she almost believes she is the character she has created: Coldwell's respectable housekeeper.

It is the summer of 1911 that brings new faces above and below the stairs of Coldwell Hall—including the handsome and mysterious new footman, Jem Arden. Kate can feel her control slipping as Jem harbors secrets of his own.



August Journaling Challenge

With August's 31 days, I thought a play on Baskin Robbins "31 Flavors" would be a fun way to capture all YOUR summertime favorites in this month's journaling challenge.

Each day, write down one of your favorite things about summer. From favorite foods to fun-filled activities, the sky is the limit. If you journal electronically, include a photo of your favorite summertime thing. You can also include a hand-drawn sketch or paste a photo in your journal. If you are just starting now, no worries. Just make a simple numbered list of your 31 summer favorites!

For more ideas and prompts, I share some of my favorites in my posts each Friday. Simply follow me on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).



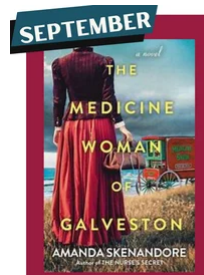
#ReadWithSharon

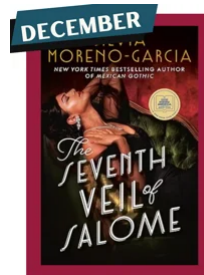
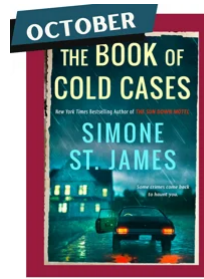
Historical Fiction Book Club

Get ready for an awesome line up in my [#ReadWithSharon](#) book club for Fall. On Thursday September 26 at 7pm eastern, we will discuss our September read, *Medicine Woman of Galveston* with Amanda Skenandore

The #ReadWithSharon book club only reads current release (within the last year) 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 are able to ask questions during the discussion. Meetings are the fourth Thursday of the month at 7pm eastern, and never go 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](#)





"History tells us what people do;
historical fiction helps us imagine how they felt."

– Guy Vanderhaeghe

August is like the Sunday of Summer. Enjoy it while it lasts!

Sharon



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