

FEBRUARY MUSINGS

SHARON VIRTS



Reflections on Black History Month

Compelling Stories that must be Told

February is Black History Month—a time to reflect and honor the profound contributions Black Americans have made to our nation's history. For me, it's also a time to look critically at the complex and often painful chapters of our past, particularly those I have explored in my historical novels.

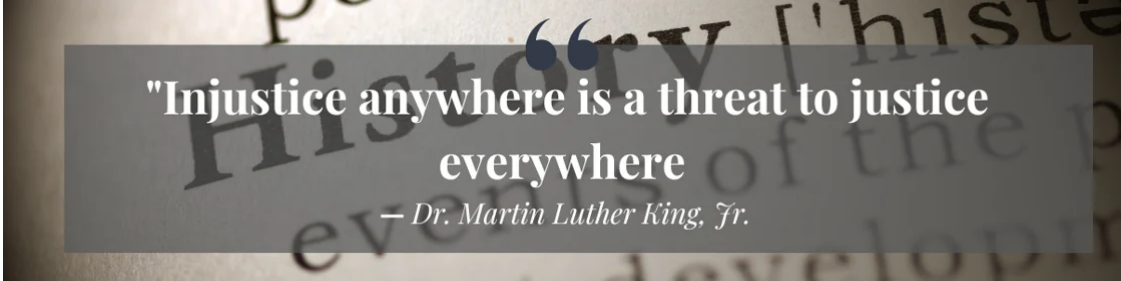
Two of my books, *[Veil of Doubt](#)* and *[The Grays of Truth](#)*, are set in the years following the Civil War during the South's turbulent Reconstruction era. One of my current projects, *Storms of Rage*, takes place decades later during Jim Crow,

grappling with many of the same unresolved issues of race, justice, and humanity.

Writing about these periods is both a privilege and a profound responsibility. As an author of historical fiction, my goal is to craft narratives that are honest and deeply human. When I delve into the history of race in America, I confront a stark reality: these stories are complex and difficult to tell. They are rife with injustice, suffering, and heartbreak. For me, it is less about the historical details, and more about the *experience*. Not only do I want to educate my readers but I want them to *feel* the same emotions of those living at the time. And therein lies the real challenge.

Storms of Rage (release expected in 2026) centers on a lynching in the South and the subsequent prosecution of the men responsible for the crime. It's a harrowing tale, rooted in real events in Loudoun County, Virginia and reflective of a legal system that too often failed to deliver justice for Black Americans.

As I immerse myself in research and writing, I find that I am constantly grappling with questions of balance. How do I convey the gravity of these events without sensationalizing them? How do I honor the victim's humanity while addressing the systemic failures that allowed such atrocities to occur? How do I approach these truths in a way that resonates with today's readers while respecting the historical context? And perhaps most challenging, how could I possibly understand the emotions surrounding such a horrendous event and put those emotions into words?... [<Read More>](#)



**"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice
everywhere**

— *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



What Are You Reading & What Are You Planning to Read?

It's time to embrace the season of hibernation—cozy blankets, a warm drink, and a captivating book in hand.

Share Your Current & Upcoming Reads for a Chance to WIN!

This contest is pretty simple, all you have to do is tell me what you are currently reading and what you have in your TBR pile. From all the book titles we receive, we will pick two books and one lucky person will win them both!

[Click Here to Tell Me About Your Favorite Books!](#)

The contest closes on **February 14th** - If you love to read as much as I do, don't miss this great opportunity to win books you may never have thought of.

I will share the full book list on my [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages plus in the March newsletter.



“February is the month where the heart whispers,
and only those who listen closely can hear its song.”

– *Maria Elena Cruz*

***The Grays of Truth* Reviews: I NEED YOUR HELP!**

Call for reviews on Amazon and Goodreads

If you've finished reading *The Grays of Truth*, I'd be so grateful if you could take a moment to share your thoughts with others by leaving a review on Amazon or Goodreads. Your review helps other readers discover the book and helps improve the book's position in Amazon and Google algorithms (which makes my publisher very happy!).

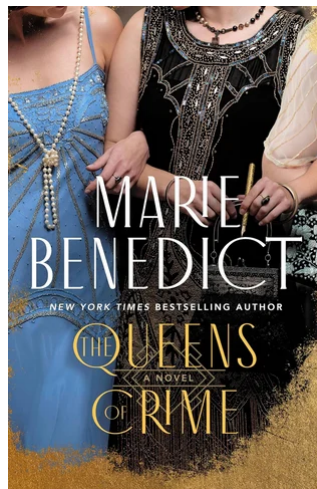
[Amazon Review](#)

[Goodreads Review](#)



February New Releases in Historical Fiction

Winter is a perfect time to settle into a great book! ❄️ Check out some of the new releases in historical fiction that have just hit bookstore shelves.

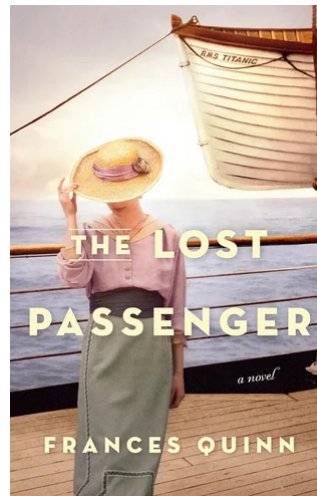


4.1★ on Goodreads

The Queens of Crime by Marie Benedict

London, 1930. The five greatest women crime writers have banded together to form a secret society with a single goal: to show they are no longer willing to be treated as second class citizens by their male counterparts in the legendary Detection Club.

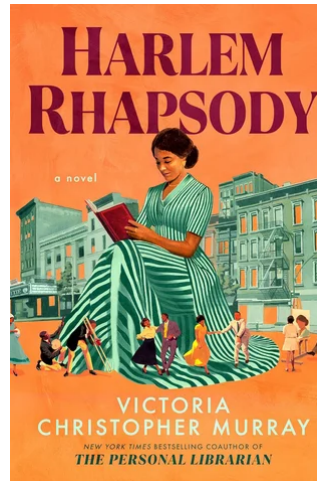
Led by the formidable Dorothy L. Sayers, the group includes Agatha Christie, Ngaio Marsh, Margery Allingham and Baroness Emma Orczy. They call themselves the Queens of Crime. Their plan? Solve an actual murder, that of a young woman found strangled in a park in France who may have connections leading to the highest levels of the British establishment.



4.2★ on Goodreads

The Lost Passenger by Frances Quinn

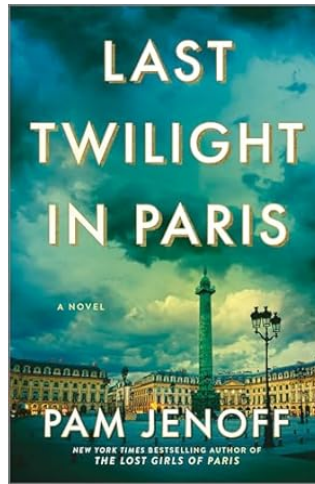
In the chaos of that terrible night, her secret went down with the Titanic. But secrets have a way of floating to the surface... When the ship goes down, Elinor realises the disaster has given her a chance to take Teddy and start a new life – but only if they can disappear completely, listed as among the dead. Penniless and using another woman's name, she has to learn to survive in a world that couldn't be more different from her own, and keep their secret safe.



4.3★ on Goodreads

Harlem Rhapsody by Victoria Christopher Murray

The extraordinary story of Jessie Redmon Fauset whose exhilarating world of friends, rivals, and passions all combined to create the magic that was the Harlem Renaissance. In the face of overwhelming sexism and racism, Jessie must balance her drive with her desires. However, as she strives to preserve her legacy, she'll discover the high cost of her unparalleled success.



4.3★ on Goodreads

Last Twilight in Paris by Pam Jenoff

A Parisian department store, a mysterious necklace and a woman's quest to unlock a decade-old mystery are at the center of this riveting novel of love and survival. Inspired by the true story of the Lévitán, Last Twilight in Paris is both a gripping mystery and an unforgettable story about sacrifice, resistance and the power of love to transcend in even the darkest hours.

“
In February, let love be your guide and happiness your destination, just like a good book that takes you on a journey of the heart.”

Love is in the air!

February Journal Prompt:

Focus on self-care, self-love, and cultivating a positive mindset. I will share tip & tricks for taking care of yourself!

This Valentine's season, don't forget to celebrate YOU!

Take a moment to reflect on your strengths, dreams, and the journey that has shaped you. Write yourself a heartfelt valentine, embracing the kindness, resilience, and passion that make you uniquely you.



💖 What do you love about yourself?

💖 What are you proud of?

💖 What makes you unique?

Whether it's a letter, a poem, or a simple note of appreciation, let your words remind you that self-love is just as powerful as any romance. **Grab your journal, and let love fill the pages!**

"Caption This" Content Call

For years, you've wowed me with your witty one-liners and hilarious takes on my weekly "Caption This" feature. **Now, I want to showcase YOUR photos!**

Send me your most fun, quirky, or curious snapshots, and I'll feature a new one each week for the community to caption—and win prizes. **Let's keep the laughter rolling!**



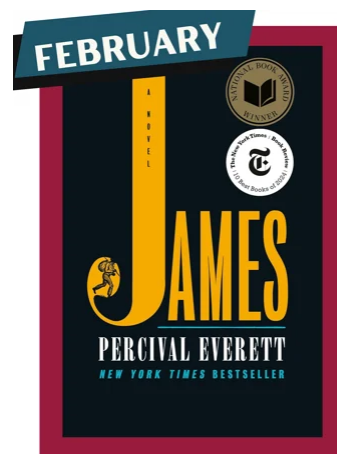
Upload Photos Here



#ReadWithSharon

Historical Fiction Book Club

Get ready for an awesome line up in my [#ReadWithSharon](#) book club. On Thursday, February 27th at 7pm eastern, in honor of Black History Month, we will discuss our February read, **James** by Percival Everett -- a brilliant, action-packed reimagining of Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, both harrowing and darkly humorous, told from the enslaved Jim's point of view. This book selection represents a change from my original selection for February.



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](#)



Here's to hope, love, and endless possibilities!



WWW.SHARONVIRTS.COM



Sharon Virts, Selma Mansion, Leesburg, VA 20176, United States, www.sharonvirt.com

[Unsubscribe](#) [Manage preferences](#)