

INDEPENDENT PRESS AWARD AND NYC BIG BOOK AWARD PRESENT

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# Holiday

## GIFT GUIDE



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INTERVIEW ON  
WORLD STROKE DAY

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 8

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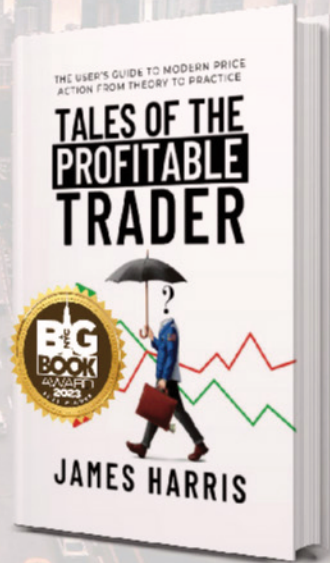


## "What You Ought To Know About The Stock Market?"

New to the stock market? Are you interested in breaking into the world of successful stock investing but unsure where to start? No problem! Our step-by-step guide will help you become a profitable stock investor—even with no experience.

James Harris will guide you through the most important trading information, methods, personal tips, useful tools, and a very user-friendly way that'll put you on the fast track to success. Learn the proven system of modern price action, from theory to practice. Understand the fundamentals of stock investing, effortlessly execute winning trades, learn directly from other traders, and know what mistakes to avoid like the plague.

Never before has one information-packed guide on stock investing and trading covered so much ground in such an exciting, impactful, and clear-cut way.



available at  
**amazon**

Start Your Stock Investing Journey Today

Paperback: \$47.00 / eBook: \$9.99

ISBN: 979-8987391341



Well, here it is, November, and it's time to get a jump on holiday shopping; and I ask: "What better gift than a good book?" Books are perfect for that smart aunt to that 'not-so-smart' cousin. I am convinced there is a book for everyone, something that can transport us to new worlds, introduce us to new ideas,

and help us learn and grow at any level. Books are also a gift that can be enjoyed over and over again and easily shared.

To help you with your choices this year, I've presented over 600 award-winning books from both the Independent Press Awards and the NYC Big Book Awards that will make great gifts for anyone on your list.

But with so many books to choose from, it can be tough to know where to start. Here are a few tips on how to find the perfect book gift for everyone on your list:

- Consider the person's interests. Ask yourself, what do they like to read in their free time? Are they a fan of fiction, non-fiction, or both? Do they plan to travel, or spend more time on cooking, working out or meditating? Do they have any favorite authors or genres?
- Think about what they're going through in life. Is there a book that could help them learn something new, cope with a difficult challenge, or simply relax and escape?
- Don't be afraid to ask for help. If you're not sure what to get, ask a friend, family member, or bookseller for recommendations. Head to a special section in this magazine and get some ideas for purchase.

No matter who you're shopping for, there's a book out there that's perfect for that special someone. So get started early and find the perfect book gift for everyone on your list.

Happy holiday book shopping!

Until next month...

*Ted Olczak*

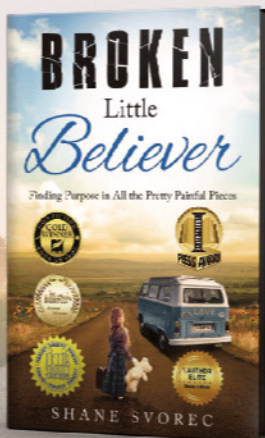
Publisher

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Any questions or comments, please contact the Publisher Ted Olczak at Ted@GabbyBookAwards.com or Ted@PrintedWordReviews.com

## BROKEN LITTLE BELIEVER: FINDING PURPOSE IN ALL THE PRETTY PAINFUL PIECES

by Shane Svorec



Are you seeking greater perspective? Have you felt lost in a world of instability and uncertainty? Or have you lost hope in the face of difficult circumstances? Like going on a road trip with a good friend and a great playlist, this book weaves true stories into life lessons while entertaining and encouraging readers on an unforgettable journey.

[www.ShaneSvorec.com](http://www.ShaneSvorec.com)

"From the very outset of her book *Broken Little Believer: Finding Purpose in All the Pretty Painful Pieces*, author Shane Svorec immediately pulls the reader into a much-needed hug, asks them to voluntarily check the "baggage" that weighs them down, helps them up onto a figurative bus, directs them to take their seat, then guides them on an emotionally scenic expedition with often unexpected turns in the road. Lest they feel they are being driven by someone who has no sense of where the journey leads, Svorec openly reveals that she has traveled the route before and is rather confident about navigating it. What follows are pages and pages of the raw, soul-baring, sometimes heartbreaking personal events that could have shattered the author beyond repair but, with hope, faith, and a positive outlook, left her with the fortitude to still see the beauty in the broken pieces." -*Nonfiction Authors Association*

AVAILABLE ON AMAZON, BARNES & NOBLE, ALL ONLINE RETAILERS, AND FINE BOOKSTORES. RETAILERS CAN ORDER THIS BOOK THROUGH INGRAM.

ISBN: 978-164746807

Purchase Price - \$19.99

Nonfiction, Self-Help, Inspiration



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<https://www.independentpressaward.com/advertise>



**..it's a tense, exciting adventure, and Winterhawk is a charismatic and honorable hero. An effective western thriller graced by a memorable protagonist."**  
*-Kirkus Reviews*

Veteran Jolon Winterhawk escorts a gold train through Oregon's Cascade Mountains during the Civil War. He survives an ambush and must now deliver the gold alone. Balloons from the Army Balloon Corps are dispatched to find the train, but they plan to steal it. Now, Winterhawk must battle them and a horrifying creature lurking in the woods.

David Buzan is an award-winning novelist and optioned screenwriter. He's had work published in "American Cinematographer," "Film Score Monthly," "This Week Magazine," among several others. David is a graduate of the Vancouver Film School, and also holds a Bachelor of Science Degree In Psychology from Liberty University. He and his wife currently reside in Keizer, Oregon.



**DAVID BUZAN**

Available on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and online bookstores  
[davidbuzan.com](http://davidbuzan.com)

Purchase Price: \$21.95      ISBN: 978-1685132507 Hardcover  
 ISBN: 978-1685133313



**Multi-award winning. A Sky of Infinite Blue is a heart-wrenching, powerful, compelling memoir. Kyomi's story with deep reflection, introspection, love and compassion would take readers into their own journeys.**

**"An engaging and poignant immigrant account with sharp, sincere, and tenderly insightful writing."**  
*-Kirkus Reviews*



**kyomiconnor.com**      **Kyomi O'Connor**

Category: Non-fiction, Memoir, Multicultural, Inspirational, Grief, Mind & Spirit  
 Retail / distributor availability: Amazon, Bookshop.org  
 ISBN: 978-1647422271 - Purchase Price: \$17.95

# FICTION

## Anthology

**Celestial Bodies: The Tess Lee and Jack Miller Novels**  
by Patricia Leavy

**Fact Check and More Probing Tales**  
by James Hanna

## Comedy

**Giant Banana Over Texas**  
by Mark Nutter

## Comics & Graphic Novels

**Cult Girls**  
by Natalie Grand

**Hashman**  
by Alex Grand & Joshua S. Berman

## Cross Genre

**Flight of Fools**  
by Sean Myers

**General Jack and the Battle of the Five Kingdoms**  
by David Bush

**Let It Bleed**  
by Nicole Nesca

**Life Interrupted, Dr. Dua's Survival Guide**  
by Dr Manu Dua, Foreword and Epilogue by Dr. Parul Dua Makkar

**Rotten Fruit in an Unkempt Garden: A Memoir in Poetry and Prose**  
by Michael Nanfito

**Secrets In The Mirror**  
by Leslie Kain

**Shadow of the Gypsy**  
by Shelly Frome

**What Seems True**  
by James Garrison

## Cultural & Social Issues

**Mothers Vol. 1**  
by Ben Burgess Jr.

## Cultural Heritage

**My Place Among Them**  
by J Stanion

**Crossing Lake Pontchartrain**  
by Arthur Byrd

**Into the Attic**  
by Ellen Sherman

**Italian Love Cake**  
by Gail Reitano

**The Shady Oaks Division**  
by L. M. Coppa

**This Time Tomorrow: A Novel**  
by Emma Straub

**Trust**  
by Hernan Diaz

## Historical Fiction

**An Enemy Like Me**  
by Teri M Brown

**BLOODROOT**  
by Daniel V. Meier, Jr.

**Day of Days: September 11, 2001**  
by Frank Napolitano

**Finding Napoleon: A Novel**  
by Margaret Rodenberg

**Forgiving Nero**  
by Mary Ann Bernal

**Look Unto the Land**  
by George Rollie Adams

**Madam in Lace**  
by Gini Grossenbacher

**Sincerity is a Goddess: A Dramatic and Romantic Comedy of Ancient Rome**  
by Adam Alexander Haviaras

**Storykeeper**  
by Daniel A. Smith

**The Bereaved**  
by Julia Park Tracey

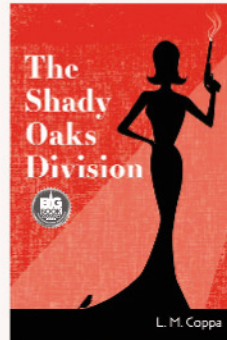
**The Girl Who Counted Numbers**  
by Roslyn Bernstein

**The Lioness of Leiden**  
by Robert Loewen

**The Time Between Us**  
by Marina McCarron

## Humor

**Just River**  
by Sara B. Fraser



### GENERAL FICTION

#### **The Shady Oaks Division**

L. M. Coppa

After decades of service, Jill retired and moved to a sleepy suburb. However, her lethal instincts, which made her one of the most sought-after government assets, made it difficult for her to adjust to the quiet life. Her past kept coming back to haunt her, making it hard for her to settle down and enjoy her retirement.

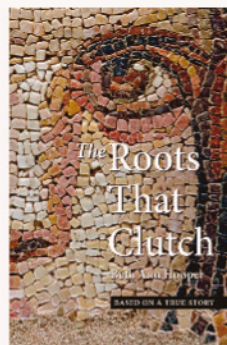
*The Shady Oaks Division* follows Jill as she struggles to fit into her new role. Her paranoia, fueled by her sharp instincts, threatens to ruin everything. But is it just paranoia? Or are they forgetting that her training and expertise are what made her their number-one asset?

Jackson, the agent assigned to Jill, is tasked with keeping her from disturbing the picturesque town she's moved into. His own colorful past allows him to connect with her, and he works tirelessly to keep her on track. But will it be enough, or will it complicate matters further

**ISBN: 979-8887470252 • \$18.95**

Available on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and online bookstores

<https://lmcoppa.com>



### LITERATURE

#### **The Roots That Clutch**

Published by Tower of Babel Communications and Publications

*The Roots That Clutch* tells the haunting true-story of how a young woman discovered through her PhD research on T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound that her grandmother had had an affair with the other great American Modernist, William Carlos Williams.

**ISBN: 978-9082146882 • \$15.00**

Available through direct purchase from the publisher.

[www.therootsthatclutch.com](http://www.therootsthatclutch.com)

## General Fiction

**A Seventh Sense**  
by Steve Jam

**An Upside Down Sky**  
by Linda Dahl

**Angel of Ambition**  
by Glenn Kaplan

**Make America Beautiful Again**  
by Bo Bancroft

**Tell Us When to Go**  
by Emil DeAndreis

**The Judges**  
by Eric J. Matluck



**Pure Cosmos Club**

by Matthew Binder

**Sun City, A Hilariously Addictive Story of Rebellion**

by Matthew Minson

**Jewish Literature**

**Dineh**

by Ida Maze, translated by Yermiyahu Ahron Taub

**Legal Thriller**

**Extreme Vetting: A Thriller**

by Roxana Arama

**Where's ... Eli?**

by Alex S. Avitabile

**You Have The Right to Remain Silent**

by Mark M. Bello

**Literary Fiction**

**Figurines**

by Jamie Boud

**In the Aftermath**

by Jane Ward

**In the Land of the Feathered Serpent**

by Richard C Brusca

**Lester Lies Down**

by James Ladd Thomas

**Metropolis**

by Monte Schulz

**Mount Wonder**

by Scott J. Bloch

**Not My Ruckus**

by Chad Musick

**Secret Waltz**

by Karen Lee Boren

**The Girl in the Water**

by Joseph Howse

**The Hammerhead Chronicles**

by Scott Gould

**Treasure of the Diary**

by Tom Collins

**Winter's Reckoning, a novel**

by Adele Holmes, MD

**Witness to the Crucifixion**

by David Benjamin

**Medical Mystery/Thriller**

**Adverse Effects (The Memory Thieves series, Book 1)**

by Joel Shulkin

**An Inch from Oblivion**

by Sam Polakoff

**Catching Cold: Vol 1 - Brea through: Hearts Must First Break to Strengthen**

by Lem Moyé

**Catching Cold: Vol 2 - Redemption**

by Lem Moyé

**Catching Cold: Vol 3 - Judgment**

by Lem Moyé

**Hold**

by Amy S. Peele

**Toxic Effects**

by Joel Shulkin

**The First Harm**

by Steven Piskula

**WARM AND DEAD (Dr. Zack Winston Series, Book 2)**

by Mike Krentz

**Military Fiction**

**Angels and Bandits**

by Brodie Curtis

**Answering Lincoln's Call: War in America**

by T.W. Harvey

**Before the Snow Flies**

by John Wemlinger

**Brothers Of War, The Iron Brigade At Gettysburg**

by Michael Eisenhut

**Confederacy of Fenians**

by James D. Nealon

**Seeing the Elephant: One Man's Return to the Horrors of the Civil War**

by T.W. Harvey

**Multicultural Fiction FLEE (NomaD Thriller Series)**

by Joe Klingler

**Holy Parrot**

by Angel A

**Lock Up**

by Joe Klingler

**Secrets in the Wind**

by Rumki Chowdhury

**Stand A Little Out of My Sun**

by Angelyn Christy Voss

**New Adult**

**Fallout Shelter**

by Steven Schindler

**New Fiction**

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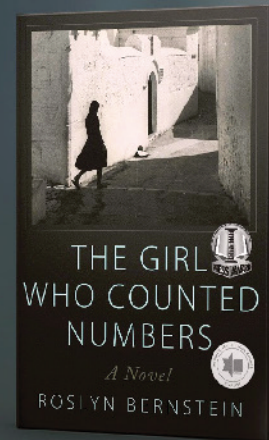
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**AWARD WINNING NOVEL THE GIRL WHO COUNTED NUMBERS**



Did her Uncle Yakov survive the Holocaust? That was the challenge given to an American girl by her father in 1961 during the Adolf Eichmann trial. After falling in his search, it was Susan's turn to find out what happened to Yakov, who did not come to America with the family in 1920 and whose records were never found after the concentration camps were liberated.

The Girl Who Counted Numbers brings to life two intertwined coming-of-age stories, a generation and an ocean apart. It is both a family mystery and a personal revelation.

"All families must deal with the past in order to move forward...Moving, nuanced and inspiring, this gripping book rings achingly true." (Gish Jen, Author)

"...Bernstein deals with how we remember, and how we confront our morally complicated histories. A wonderful book for our times." (Colum McCann, Author)

"An engrossing mystery wrapped in a coming-of-age story and the heart-rending legacy of the Holocaust." (Kirkus starred review)



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Amsterdam Publishers • 288 pages \$19.89



# FICTION

***Between the Lines: A novel***  
by Sarah Lynn

by Sarah Lynn

***Extreme Vetting: A Thriller***  
by Roxana Arama

***Finding Napoleon: A Novel***  
by Margaret Rodenberg

***She Lies Still***  
by Cassidy Choi

***Small Town Empire***  
by Mary E. McDonald

***The Secrets We Conceal***  
by S.R. Fabrico

## Novellas

***Giant of the Valley***  
by Harry Groome

***Lincoln and Rachmaninoff***  
***Walk Into a Bar***  
by Cherie Magnus

***The Bishop's Palace***  
by Janet K. Shawgo

***The Islander***  
by David W. Berner

## Political

***What Would The Founding Fathers Tell Us Today?***  
by Werner Neff

## Short Stories

***Asylum Of Diction***  
by Alyssa Milani

***Deadly Geminis and Other Short Stories***  
by Elle Stockton

***Not for Polite Society and Other Short Stories: Fictional tales on a ride of twists, turns, and the unexpected***  
by Elle Stockton



## LITERARY FICTION

***Winter's Reckoning, a novel***  
ADELE HOLMES, MD

In the dying Southern Appalachian town of Jamesville, 46-year-old Madeline Fairbanks has no use for ideas like "separation of the races" or "men as the superior sex." She challenges the status quo with her socially progressive views. She takes on a Black apprentice, Ren Morgan, and continues to practice herbalistic medicine despite threats from the KKK. When a new reverend arrives and begins preaching about racial segregation, Maddie must decide whether to bow to the KKK's demands or fight to keep her home and protect the future of the people she loves, both Black and White.

ISBN: 978-1647420871 • \$17.95

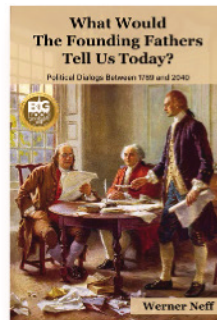
Available on Amazon.

[www.adeleholmes.com](http://www.adeleholmes.com)

## POLITICAL FICTION

***What Would The Founding Fathers Tell Us Today?***  
***Political Dialogs Between 1789 and 2040***  
Werner Neff

Neff reflects on history, politics, democratic theories, and principles in the form of fictional dialogs, allowing the Founding Fathers to express their theories on what truly makes America great, and what will provide the American people today with real freedom and prosperity. Neff believes that democratic principles, ethical and selfless leadership in service of the people are the pillars to justice, equality, and prosperity for all.



ISBN: 979-8887229188 • \$12.97

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[www.wernerneff.com](http://www.wernerneff.com)

## ROMANCE, FRIENDSHIP, WOMEN'S FICTION



***Back to One***  
Antonia Gavrihel

The award-winning first novel in the Back to One series of books. "A story of complex relationships, expertly told in a memorable and beautiful read—leaves a desire to know more after the last page has been turned."  
Journalist Reviewer

Cate & Kyle have the perfect friendship—deep, lasting, and platonic. Friendship without sex? The world of gossip doesn't buy it. Cate is beautiful, trusting, and married. Kyle is a single, handsome movie star with a tabloid reputation. Will the boundaries created to protect their enduring friendship ultimately destroy it?

Available on Amazon, Barnes & Noble and all online booksellers.

[www.antonitagavrihel.com](http://www.antonitagavrihel.com)

ISBN: 978-1-955893-00-8 • \$17<sup>99</sup>

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by John Sheirer

***The Game Cafe: Stories of New York City in Covid Time***  
by Eleanor Lerman

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***A Machine Divine***  
by Derek Paul

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by S.L. Choi

***The Palladium***  
by Thorsten Brandl

## Visionary Fiction

***Birth of the Fae: Locked out of Heaven***  
by Danielle M. Orsino  
***Ekstasis: The Return of the Sovereign Heart***  
by M. I. Dugast

***Ice Out***  
by Susan Speranza

***Kat's Cradle: Webovolution Book One***  
by Karuna Das

***No, You're Crazy***  
by Jeff Beamish

***The Time Travelers***  
by Richard C Brusca

## Western Fiction

***HARDLAND***  
by Ashley E. Sweeney

***Rowdy: Wild and Mean, Sharp and Keen***  
by Chris Mullen





# WHO CAN ENTER?

Print and audiobooks can be submitted by:

- Independent publishers
- University presses
- Hybrid publishers
- Association presses
- Self-published authors

If you are a big five publishing house, you must submit your books to our fall competition, [NYCBigBookAward.com](https://www.nycbigbookaward.com), which has a separate committee and entry fee.

Outside of the big five publishing houses, any publisher or author may submit to both competitions, [IndependentPressAward.com](https://www.independentpressaward.com) (every spring); and [NYCBigBookAward.com](https://www.nycbigbookaward.com) (every fall). See webpages for complete details.

## WHEN CAN I ENTER the Independent Press Award?

We are on a rolling submission, approximately every two and a half months, with two hard deadlines:

- (1) March 2023 to August 30, 2023;
- (2) September 1, 2023 to December 30, 2023

**All entries must be postmarked no later than December 30, 2023. This final deadline will not be extended.**

What if I miss the deadline? Enter our fall program [NYCBigBookAward.com](https://www.nycbigbookaward.com) as we take books until August 30th.

## ENTRY FEE

**\$125 per title/per category, plus \$75 for any additional category**

## STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Decide which books (copyright date within the past three years is recommended but not required) to enter into this year's competition.
- 2 Calculate the total entry fee.  
Choose which categories, <https://www.independentpressaward.com/categories>, to enter each book into. You may enter a book into as many categories as you'd like. The fee for the first category is \$125. Any additional book categories for that same book is \$75 per category.
  - SINGLE BOOK, MULTIPLE CATEGORIES: One who enters "Book One" in Children's Educational and Book Cover Design Childrens category, the entry fee is  $\$125 + \$75 = \$200$ .
  - MULTIPLE BOOKS: One who enters "Book One" in Children's Educational and Book Cover Design Childrens category, the entry fee is  $\$125 + \$75 = \$200$ , and "Book Two" in Mystery and New Fiction (first-time published), the entry fee is  $\$125 + \$75 = \$200$ , so  $\$200 + 200 = \$400$  in total book entry fees.
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# NONFICTION

## Addiction & Recovery

***And She Came Tumbling Down: Breaking the Bonds of Alcohol and Creating a Life of Freedom***

by Karla Adkins

***Choosing Life: One man's journey through alcoholism and depression to wellness and self-discovery***

by Blue Andrews

***Powerless But Not Helpless***

by Buddy C.

***Resilience - Based on a True Story of Robert J. Moore***

by Robert J. Moore

## African American Fiction

***Still Waters***

by Jenna Caldwell

***The Miseducation of Obi Ifeanyi***

by Chinedu Achebe

## African American Nonfiction

***Black, White, And Gray All Over; a Black Man's Odyssey in Life and Law Enforcement***

by Frederick Douglass Reynolds

***Climbing Together: America's Journey for Racial Equality***

by Michael Smith Leavitt

***These Broken Roads: Scammed and Vindicated, One Woman's Story***

by Donna Marie Hayes

## Aging/Midlife

***Chronological Order: The Fine Print for a Large Life***

by Jill B. Yesko, Laurean Kile

***The Inside Story***

by Susan Sands

***Women, We're Only Old Once***

by Bertha D. Cooper

## Animals/Pets

***Blue Zeus: Legend of the Red Desert***

by Carol J. Walker

***Falling Off Horses***

by Karen Donley-Hayes

***Rabbit at the Sliding Door: Chloe's Story***

by Denise Lee Branco

## Anthology

***Queer for the New Year: Nine Stories of New Beginnings***

by Alex Bauer, Emerson Seipel, F.

Zoe Blackheart, K. B. Creech, Leo

Otherland, Lex Night, Nyri A.

Bakkalian, Theodore Niretac Tinker,

Val Sierakowski

## Arts & Entertainment

***LOST AND FOUND: Assemblage Artists of Northern California***

by Spencer Brewer and Esther Siegel

***Love And Murder The Final Days of Vincent van Gogh***

by Dr. Irv Arenberg

***My Dance Journal: 52 weeks of goals, growth, and gratitude***

by S.R. Fabrico

***Mysteries in the Music: Case Closed***

by Jim Berkenstadt

***Ramayana Through Ikebana***

by Simran Sadana & Meena Iyer

***The Beatle Who Vanished***

by Jim Berkenstadt

## Autobiography

***Living While Human***

by Arwinder Kaur

## Biography

***Einstein: The Man and His Mind***

by Gary S. Berger, Michael

DiRuggiero, Hanoch Gutfreund

(Foreword)

***Khuda Buksh: The Pioneer of Life Insurance in Bangladesh***

by Muhammad Rahim

***Pedro Arrupe***

by Brian Grogan, SJ

## Cancer

***Crybaby: Infertility, Illness, and Other Things That Were Not the End of the World***

by Cheryl E. Klein

***Off Our Chests***

by John Marshall and Liza Marshall

## Caregiving

***I Didn't See It Coming: Scenes of Love, Loss and Lewy Body Dementia***

by Mary Lou Falcone

***Raging Currents: Mental Illness and Family***

by Nanette J. Davis, Ph.D.

***Run, Walk, Crawl: A Caregiver Caught Between Generations***

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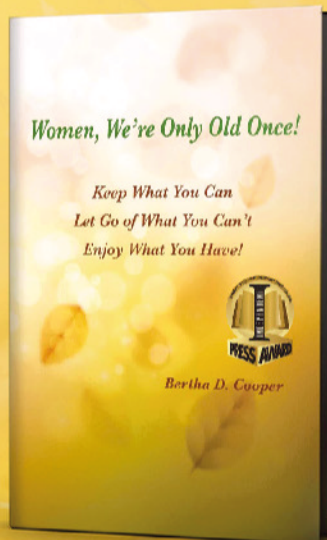
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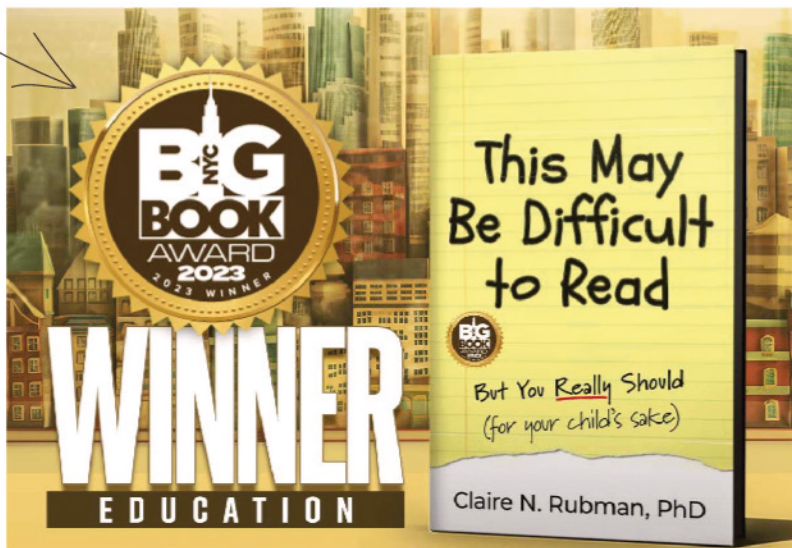
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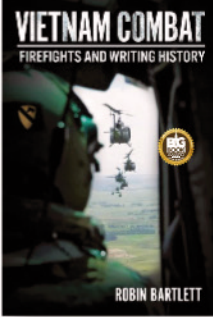
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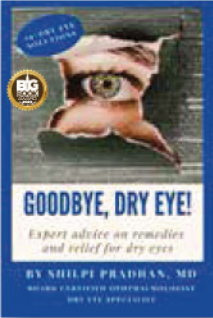
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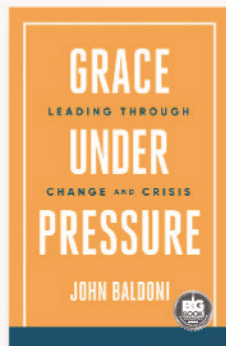
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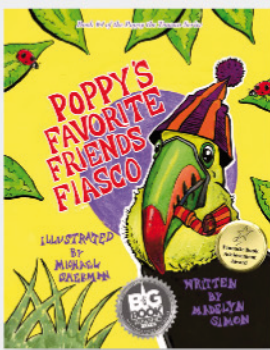
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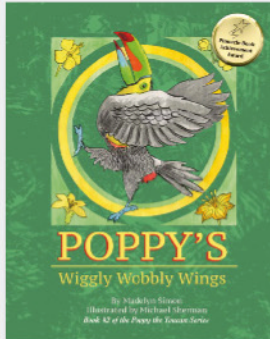


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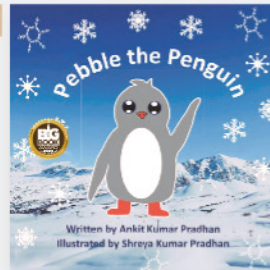
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CHILDRENS: ANIMALS & PETS

**Please Love Me Like I Love You**

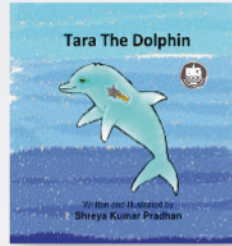
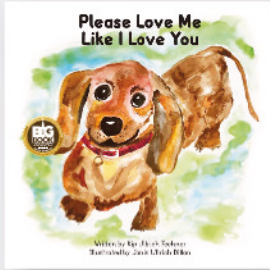
Written by Kip Ullrich Fechner,  
Illustrated by Janis Ullrich Dillion

In this adorable book, dogs of all breeds ask children to "Please love me like I love you." Each dog has a message about how children can show their love in a kind and gentle way. For example, one dog says, "Don't pull my ears. That hurts! Oh My!" and the facing page shows the three dogs sweetly looking and saying, "Your voice is so special to me like a sweet lullaby." The book also includes a feature where children can find a heart on every page. This is a fun way for children to interact with the book and learn about kindness and compassion.

The illustrations are all in original watercolor and are sure to delight.

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Shreya Pradhan

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About the Author/Illustrator:

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2023 NYC Big Book Award Winner

My tip for what makes a good read: if it doesn't grab you within the first 50 pages it's unlikely to grab you at all.

**S. F. Baumgartner**

Author of: *Living Secrets*

Why *Living Secrets* would make a perfect gift? The thriller deals with a biological weapon threat which is timely. And it's action-packed. Readers have said it was captivating.





# Terence Ang



Author: *Emerging from the Dark: Stroke...The Untold Stories*



Terence Ang shares his new book, *Emerging from the Dark: Stroke...The Untold Stories*, a 2023 New York City Big Book Award Distinguished Favorite in Inspiration. In August 2020, Terence suffered an unexpected stroke. At the time, he was the director of digital marketing and e-commerce for a leading Singaporean electronics and home appliances company. The stroke transformed his life, and his new reality was fraught with confusion, anger, and ultimately resilience—all of which he recounted in his first book, *A Cry in the Dark*. The book and Terence's journey garnered significant recognition, culminating in a speaking engagement at the World Stroke Congress 2022. His second book, *Emerging from the Dark: Stroke...The Untold Stories*, continues to inspire with the intimate stories of stroke survivors, their struggles, their heroic will to survive, and their journey to recovery.

GABBY:

Terence, can you please share with our listeners your story beginning with that fateful day in August 2020?

TERENCE:

That day in August was a turning point in my life. It was a day that brought me face to face with the harsh reality of a stroke. Initially, I was overwhelmed with shock and denial. I struggled with feelings of anger and self-pity, I questioned why this happened to me and what I had done to deserve it. It was a really challenging period emotionally, and I couldn't see a way forward.

It was during these dark times that I experienced the unwavering support of my partner and my sister. They were the beacons of light in my journey, guiding me toward a path of recovery and hope. So I was determined to redefine my life.

I knew that showing the world the new me was the best way to honor my own resilience and the support I had received. I wanted to prove that the stroke was just a chapter in my story, not the entire book.

GABBY:

Your debut book, *A Cry in the Dark* was launched in June 2022. It eloquently detailed your journey from victim to survivor. You were subsequently asked by the WORLD STROKE ORGANIZATION to speak at the 14th World Stroke Congress 2022 in Singapore. What inspired you to write and illustrate *Emerging from the Dark: Stroke...The Untold Stories*?

TERENCE:

I was angry and frustrated in the first year of my stroke. So I channeled my feelings into writing *A Cry in the Dark*. Many stroke survivors reached out to me after that which inspired me to

write the next book and share the stories of other stroke survivors. I wanted to pay tribute to the strength and courage of those who have walked the same journey.

GABBY:

*Emerging from the Dark: Stroke...The Untold Stories* is incredibly inspirational. The narratives you've included from both survivors and caregivers are filled with hope, determination and resilience. However, some of the narratives and illustrations are also dark and disconcerting. Why was it important to share this side of recovery?

TERENCE:

Ultimately, my book's aim is to explore the multifaceted reality of life after a stroke, and the full spectrum of experiences. The last thing I want is to create false expectations or give the wrong impression of what life after a stroke can be like. Every stroke survivor's experience is unique, some may find their recovery more manageable, while others may encounter greater obstacles.

In sharing an honest although sometimes dark side of life after a stroke, I wanted to show solidarity with those who are navigating this path but also gain understanding from those who have not directly experienced the condition. My hope was to evoke support and a willingness to learn more about the unseen struggles of stroke survivors.

GABBY:

What is the biggest misconception about strokes?

TERENCE:

The truth is that strokes can affect anyone, at any time. They happen to people of all ages, from teenagers, to young and middle-aged adults, as well as the elderly.

The more people understand that strokes are unpredictable, the better prepared they can be to respond and seek the help they may need. My own experience has taught me the importance of understanding the risk factors, recognising the symptoms, and seeking prompt medical attention.

**GABBY:**

You are a passionate advocate of patient rehabilitation. What are the most critical first steps a stroke survivor should take?

**TERENCE:**

The initial stages of stroke recovery, or the “golden period of recovery,” are crucial and can set the tone for the rest of the journey. Time is of the essence when it comes to stroke, and the faster medical intervention occurs, the better the chances of minimizing damage and achieving a more complete recovery. Recognising the signs and symptoms of a stroke and knowing to call for help without delay can be a life-saving decision.

Early rehabilitation, including physical, occupational, and speech therapy, is also essential. It’s crucial to start as early as possible to maximize progress.

**GABBY:**

What is the biggest challenge stroke survivors face during their recovery journey?

**TERENCE:**

Every stroke is unique, and as a result, the challenges we face can be very diverse. Among the many physical, cognitive and emotional struggles we face, we must also navigate a new normal. The life we once knew transforms drastically, and the changes can be mentally and emotionally taxing. Coping with these adjustments, as well as the grief is the greatest challenge.

What also makes these challenges so daunting is their unpredictability. One moment, you’re riding high, beginning to gain some progress, and you feel optimistic. But then suddenly, the journey takes a turn. It feels like you’ve come to a standstill. Sometimes, you may even experience setbacks, where the progress you’ve made is undone before your eyes. It’s a reality check, a reminder that recovery is far from a linear process.

**GABBY:**

Both *A Cry in the Dark* and *Emerging from the Dark: Stroke... The Untold Stories* are filled with illustrations and quotes. You drew and wrote them with your right hand which was deeply affected by the stroke. What is the significance of this?

**TERENCE:**

I didn’t think I could draw, but Dr. Moses suggested I try drawing and express myself in a new way. It’s also an example of how we underestimate our own capabilities. By using my stroke-affected hand, I wanted to demonstrate that my stroke didn’t define my capabilities. My drawings and writings may not be perfect, but they mean a lot to me.

**GABBY:**

You are a celebrated author who has made great strides in stroke awareness. What is next for you?

**TERENCE:**

I don’t consider myself a celebrated author but I’m grateful that I went on this journey because of my stroke. Before it happened, I never envisioned myself as a writer. But sometimes, life takes unexpected turns, and we discover new passions and purposes.

I hope to write more books that can help stroke patients in their rehabilitation journey and continue sharing the inspiring stories of survivors and their caregivers. In fact, I’m currently writing my next book, “Strength in Motion: Dancing through Stroke Recovery.” This book is about the incredible role that exercise plays in stroke rehabilitation, showing that healing is possible through physical activity. I hope to build a community where everyone impacted by stroke can find support through a network of people who understand their journey.

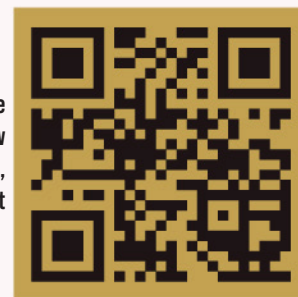
**GABBY:**

What has this journey taught you?

**TERENCE:**

I’ve learned that the human spirit is incredibly resilient. When faced with unexpected challenges, we have the capacity to adapt, persevere, and find strength within ourselves. This journey has also taught me that perspective matters. How we view our circumstances can greatly affect our ability to overcome them. A positive outlook can make a world of a difference.

Listen to the entire interview on [www.TheGabTalks.com](http://www.TheGabTalks.com). Learn more about Terence Ang, his books and his work on Ang’s official website, Grateful Steps. *Emerging from the Dark: Stroke... The Untold Stories* and *A Cry in the Dark* can be purchased on Amazon.



To listen to the full interview or to learn more, please visit

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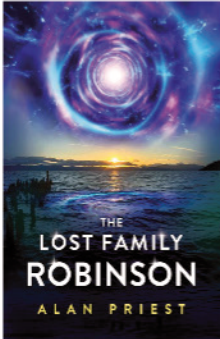
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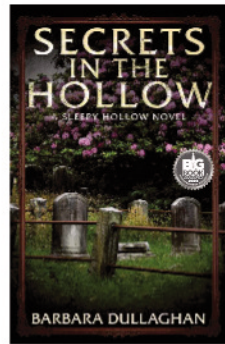
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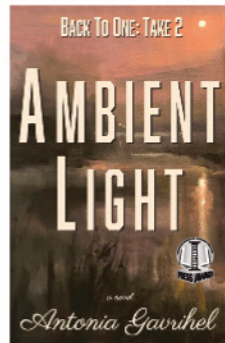
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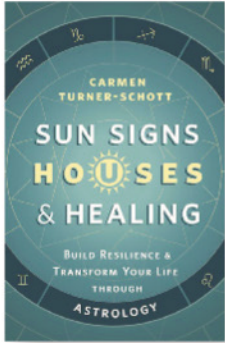
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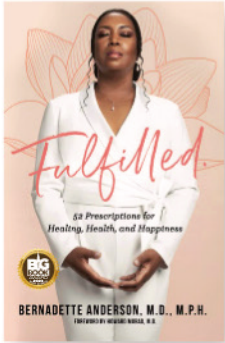
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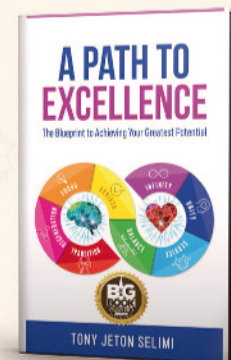


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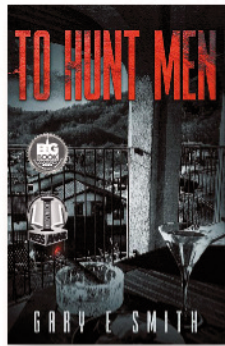
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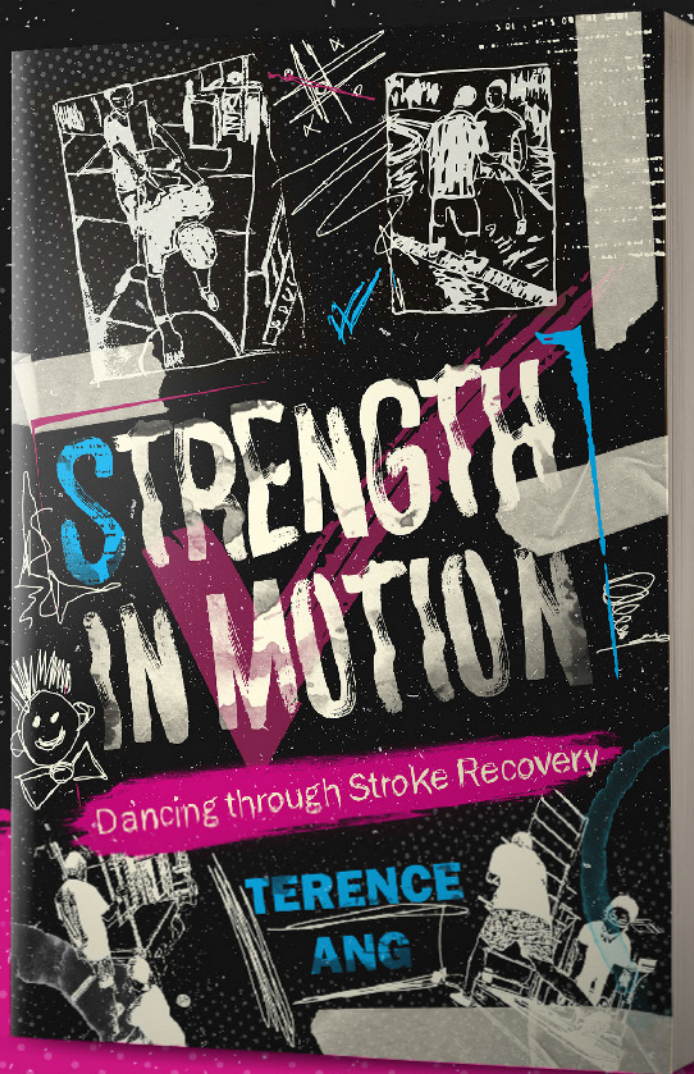
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