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Louise Penny's October Newsletter

"Choose a number between one and sixteen."

- **Andrew Martin, publisher, Minotaur Books**

With those words, Andy Martin changed my life. I was standing in a hotel room in Omaha, Nebraska, having just flown in from doing a couple of events the day before in Houston.

New York Times bestseller

The phone rang in the hotel room and I answered, expecting it would be Michael. But it was Andy - the head of Minotaur books. Now, I knew that was the day the New York Times bestseller list went out to the industry. Basically, publishers get to see it three days or so before it's announced to the public.

The list we see in the newspaper is from the top seller to number sixteen. And then there's what's known as the 'long list' - which appears online and is sent to publishers, but doesn't appear in the Times itself. That one shows the top 35 books in the US that week.

The goal, the dream, the fantasy, is to make the printed list. The top 16.

I never have.

My last three books, against all odds and expectations, made the 'long list' - and I was shocked and thrilled and deeply happy.

Throughout the three hour flight from Houston to Omaha that afternoon I listened to music, looked out the window at the blue sky and fluffy clouds, and prayed, 'Dear Lord, please don't let me be number 17. I'd rather be number 35. Or not on the list at all. But please, don't let me come so close, and miss it. And please make the child behind me stop kicking the seat. Amen.'

I'd barely dropped my bags in the hotel room when the phone rang.

Andy. And with him in his office were Hope Dellon, my editor, and Sarah Melnyk, my publicist at Minotaur.

'Choose a number between one and sixteen,' said Andy.

I slumped to the side of the bed - my eyes staring and stinging.

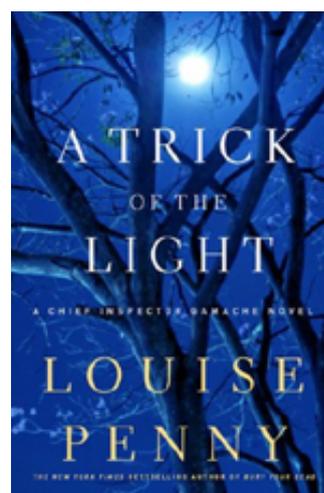
A TRICK OF THE LIGHT had done it. What I'd barely dared hope for had happened. The glint, the gleam in the distance - perhaps not even there - was made real in that moment.

'You're number 4!' said Andy - and a few other choice words might have been uttered, by everyone.



A Trick of the Light

US / Canada



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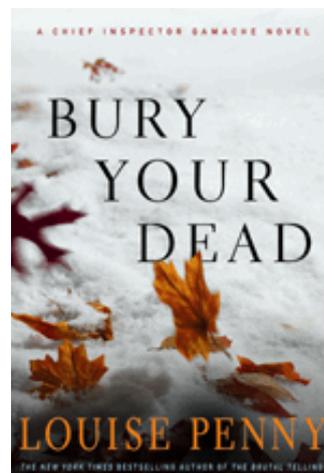
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Number 4??!! I could barely believe it. I could barely breathe. I think my mouth stayed open so wide, and so long, that I might have dribbled. That's what a dream coming true looks like. A middle aged woman in a hotel in Omaha, drooling.

I still can't believe it. But what I do believe - in fact, what I know, is that a whole bunch of people are standing on the Times list with me. Andy and Hope and Sarah. Dan Mallory, my UK editor. Teresa Chris and Patty Moosbrugger, my agents. Jeanne-Marie and Paul and Marjorie, who do the social media. David Rotstein, who designed the magnificent cover for A TRICK OF THE LIGHT. My Assistant Lise!!! Can you believe it Lise?!

And beautiful, glorious Michael. Who knew this would happen the moment I started writing STILL LIFE. And never flagged in his belief. And in reassuring me the gleam I saw in the distance was real. And approaching. And would arrive one day.

And you.

Thank you. Oh, thank you so much, for finding the Gamache books, for embracing the characters, the village, the stories. Me. For supporting the books, championing the books. Telling so many others about the series. Reading the books and finally, buying them! And even if you don't buy them, but borrow them - I know you're spreading the word.

I am so deeply grateful. What a magical, unexpected time!! Michael has taken to calling me Number 4 - which makes me a little glad we didn't land slightly higher on the list.

Bestseller lists

A TRICK OF THE LIGHT also made The Globe and Mail bestseller list in Canada, for the first time. And a bunch of other bestseller lists:

#4 - New York Times list

#5 - Publishers Weekly

#5 - Chicago Tribune

#6 - Washington Post

#9 - National Independent Bookstores

#7 - Toronto Globe and Mail

#2 - Canadian Bookseller's Association

#3 - Vancouver sun

#10- Maclean's

#5 - Entertainment Weekly

(and, did I mention...we were #4 on the New York Times list?!)

Reviews

The reviews are outstanding:

"Stellar....With her smart plot and fascinating, nuanced characters, Penny proves again that she is one of our finest writers."

- **People Magazine (4 out of 4 stars)**

"A deceptively charming whodunit... delivering acute insights into the complicated motives of complex characters....Behind each volatile outburst of marital discord and professional envy lies some deeper

[Barnes & Noble.com](http://Barnes&Noble.com)
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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

truth involving the betrayal of trust and the need for atonement and forgiveness"

- **The New York Times Book Review**

"Louise Penny elevates the small-town murder mystery to new heights in this seventh installment of her psychologically piercing series featuring Chief Inspector Armand Gamache."

- **Parade Magazine (A Book of the Week Pick)**

"A commanding and artful performance.... For connoisseurs of mysteries, success is judged by the genre's holy trinity: plot, people and prose. When all three attain excellence, a fourth quality shines through: power..... what lifts her work to the highest plane is the deep sense of humanity with which she invests her novels, and 'A Trick of the Light' satisfies and surpasses that standard."

- **Richmond Times-Dispatch**

"Superb...masterful....Penny continues to amaze with each novel. Wrapped in exciting plots and domestic details, her characters are people we want to follow through their very real joys and sorrows."

- **Cleveland Plain Dealer**

"The twist of beauty into death and back again is the heart of Louise Penny's seventh and best mystery set in Three Pines....This is a beautiful book, gorgeously written and carefully constructed."

- **The Toronto Globe and Mail**

"Penny, elevating herself to the pantheon that houses P.D. James, Ruth Rendell and Minette Walters, demonstrates an exquisite touch with characterization, plotting and artistic sensitivity."

- **Kirkus Reviews (starred review)**

"Outstanding....With her usual subtle touch and timely injections of humor, Penny effectively employs the recurring motif of the chiaroscuro, the interplay of light and dark, which distinguishes Morrow's artwork and which resonates symbolically in the souls of the author's characters."

- **Publishers Weekly (starred review)**

"...a gripping mystery."

- **The Associate Press**

Book tour



What a month it has been! I've been on book tour from the pre-launch party at Danny and Lucy's Brome Lake Books on Aug 27th, to today. I've been from Prince Edward Island, and Maine to Phoenix, to Victoria and Vancouver - and all sorts of wonderful places in between. And getting to meet so many of you. And thank you in person for this glorious time in my life.

How lucky I am, to do what I love for people I admire and to work with people I respect.

And to have our health. Michael's healthy. I'm healthy. And more than anything, I hope you are too.

The book tour continues with a few more events, but for the most part - it's over. Today, October 1st, will be the first time in six weeks I've been home to the townships. Michael and I met up in Montreal for a few days - and that was blissful. Then I was off again. And he went home.

Today, I have a signing at 2pm today at the little local library in Sutton. A perfect circle. The tour started in the townships, and virtually ends here too.

But I do want to mention a couple of other events this month -

On October 6th, I'll be speaking and signing books at Paragraphe Books in Montreal - at 7pm.

Then - get this (so exciting) - Guy Dubois, the owner of La Maison Anglaise bookstore in Quebec City - has teamed with the blog spot houseofcrimeandmystery, and the Literary and Historical Society (at the Morrin Centre) in old Quebec, to put on a crime writing festival at the end of October. Most of the events will be in the Lit and His itself! A magnificent idea!!

The festival will be on Oct 28, 29, and 30th - and the guests include Ian Rankin - Lawrence Block - John Brady - Kathy Reichs - Denise Mina - Ian Hamilton - and many more. The list is honestly

brehtaking! Oh, and me.

I'll be doing a reading and book signing with some others, including Ian Rankin, on Friday, October 28th at 7pm. If you'd like tickets or more information, please go to their [website](#) : or I believe you can call La Maison Anglaise in Quebec City at: 418-654-9523. It's a fabulous chance to see Quebec City, and some of the world's top crime writers. Feel free to join me on [Facebook](#), and follow along on the [blog](#). Very exciting.

But the amazing news doesn't end there -

BURY YOUR DEAD - wins the Anthony and the Macavity Awards



BURY YOUR DEAD the previous book in the Gamache series - has won both the Anthony and the Macavity Awards for Best Crime Novel of the Year!! They were announced and presented at the annual crime readers/writers convention that was held this year in St. Louis. What a huge honour this is!! Thank you!

And now, the tour is all but over, and I'm home. And soon, I suspect, this will seem a dream. But I know for sure it will never fade. And forever I will have a hotel room in Omaha in my memory. And the beautiful image of standing at the front of a room, and seeing your smiling faces.

This comes to you with warm embraces - and endless gratitude.

Your friend,

Louise

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