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## Louise Penny's February Newsletter

*"If there's a book you really want to read but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it."*

- **Toni Morrison**

### Winter

Hope you've been enjoying the winter....I wonder if that sentiment sounds odd – to enjoy a winter. But we do. Now. I must admit, Michael and I enjoy it a great deal more since we moved to the country and gave up our 9 to 5 jobs. We can simply stay home if the weather is awful.

But we both endured decades of digging cars out of city snow drifts, after the plows plugged them in. Or hearing the warning sirens in the middle of the night and running into the street in pajamas and boots, to furiously dig our cars from a snow drift ahead of the plow. Along with all the other neighbours. Each shoveling snow onto the other's vehicle.

No wonder I'm so full of murderous thoughts.

But now we adore winters...though not so much we don't dream of getting away – like the game Myrna, Clara and Gabri play in *Bury Your Dead*. Looking at travel magazines and internet sites, and dreaming of hot sandy beaches, and swimming in the ocean, and fruit drinks with umbrellas on the lounge. Vacation porn.

Well, Michael and I finally succumbed, and have booked a trip to someplace hot and sandy and quiet. I will read all manner of trashy novels and make only grunting sounds for two weeks. I aspire to being completely unintelligible. Granted, not exactly the long march for me, but how lovely not to have to worry about communicating anything more complex than a dinner order.

Ahhh.

### Publication date for THE BEAUTIFUL MYSTERY

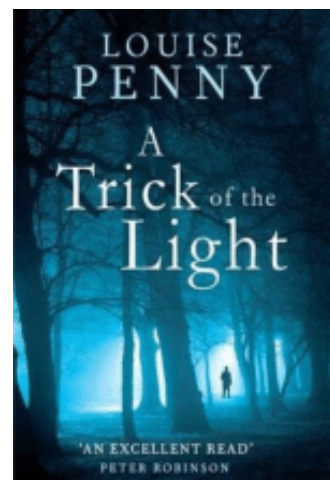
We have wonderful news! A publication date for THE BEAUTIFUL MYSTERY in the United States and Canada. It will be in stores and on sale on **August 28<sup>th</sup>**! I hope you're as excited as I am! The cover hasn't yet been chosen but I am happy to say that the book is now available for preorder at many online retailers and of course you can stop into your local bookshop, too!, which is a terrific idea since the first editions sell out quickly. The latest book, A TRICK OF THE LIGHT, is already into it's fourth printing.

### Advance Readers Copies - GIVEAWAY



### A Trick of the Light

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To thank you for your help and support, I'll be giving out a number of advance copies of THE BEAUTIFUL MYSTERY. These are called Advance Readers Copies, or ARCs and are very rare and collectable. Generally they're saved for major reviewers and booksellers, who can read it ahead of the crowd and spread the word. It's a marketing tool and very powerful one.

As a result, each book is precious. But Minotaur Books and I feel strongly that the main reason the Gamache books are growing in popularity is you! Without a doubt. You've discovered them, read them, and then did something magical. You told others.

I can't begin to tell you how crucial that is in the life of a book and an author. Without your word-of-mouth, Gamache and the others would have a very short life.

I am deeply grateful to you, and I know that Minotaur Books feels the same way, as does Little, Brown in the UK.

And so, we're setting aside a certain number of advance copies of THE BEAUTIFUL MYSTERY to give away. Starting with this newsletter.

If you're interested, just write to me at: [contact@louisepenny.com](mailto:contact@louisepenny.com), and please put THE BEAUTIFUL MYSTERY in the subject line.

My Assistant Lise (we are having her name legally changed to that) will be helping with the contest, and there's a chance you'll hear back from her, and I promise to read your message.

The winners of the Advance Copy of THE BEAUTIFUL MYSTERY will be announced in next month's newsletter – but since the ARCs won't actually be available for a few months, the winners will have to wait. Minotaur Books will mail me the ARCs as soon as they're available, I'll sign them and we'll mail them out as soon as we can – probably in June, but we'll know more when it gets closer.

But we wanted to celebrate the fact we now have the release date (**August 28<sup>th</sup>** - yay) – and to thank you for making the books such a success.

## **A TRICK OF THE LIGHT** **- nominated for two major awards**

We've had wonderful news for A TRICK OF THE LIGHT. It's been nominated for two major awards. The Independent Mystery Booksellers Association (IMBA) has shortlisted it for their Dilys Awards, which is given to the book the mystery booksellers in North America most enjoyed selling last year. It's a wonderful list of books:

*Faithful Place, Tana French*  
*Wicked Autumn, G.M. Malliet*  
*Tag Man, Archer Mayor*  
*A Trick of the Light, Louise Penny*  
*Ghost Hero, S.J. Rozan*

And, A TRICK OF THE LIGHT has also been nominated for an Indie Literary Award. The awards were created by online literary bloggers. It's the second year they've handed out these awards and the first year they've had a category for Mystery Novels. Here's the shortlist:

*Missing Daughter, Shattered Family by Liz Strange (MLR Press)*  
*The Cut by George Pelecanos (Reagan Arthur/Little, Brown)*  
*A Trick of the Light by Louise Penny (St. Martin's Press)*  
*The Two Deaths of Daniel Hayes by Marcus Sakey (Dutton)*

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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**

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*Fun & Games by Duane Swierczynski (Mulholland Books/Little, Brown)*

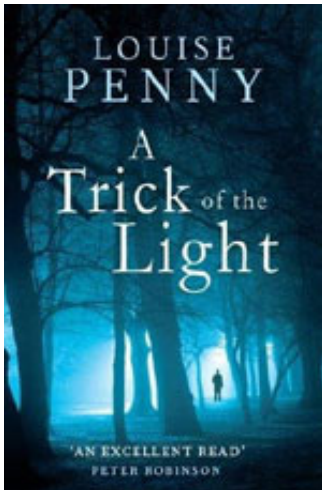
I'll tell you, both list of nominees would make marvelous 'to be read' suggestions, if you haven't already. And such a variety of styles. Very exciting for those of us who love crime fiction - indeed, who love just great fiction.

Congratulations to all the nominees!

## A TRICK OF THE LIGHT - Dorothy L

I'm so thrilled to say that A Trick of the Light has topped the Dorothy L list for the most popular book of 2011. Dorothy L is a very prominent (and clearly very intelligent!!) site for discussions of crime fiction. "Dorothy L" refers to the great Dorothy L. Sayers. Thank you for this very great honor.

## UK Launch February 2nd - A TRICK OF THE LIGHT



UK cover

In other news, A TRICK OF THE LIGHT is just about to be launched in Britain! (February 2<sup>nd</sup>) At last!! As you can see, the people at Little, Brown/Sphere have chosen a fabulous cover....love the image (which I take to be Gamache) in the woods. Again, you can order the book at many online retailers or at your local bookstore. It would be marvelous to develop an even larger swell of support for the Gamache books in the UK – and for that, I need your help. If you live in Britain or Ireland please tell others about A TRICK OF THE LIGHT and the other books. Thank you!

## DÉFENSE DE TUER

And, here in Quebec, the translation for book 4 came out in January. In English it's called A RULE AGAINST MURDER/THE MURDER STONE, and in French it's DÉFENSE DE TUER. You can order it from [Amazon.ca](http://Amazon.ca).

Very exciting when a new book comes out here and my Québécois friends and neighbours get a chance to read it. It's also a little scary. I care about their reaction. Hate to be pelted with baguettes when I go to the village. Though, actually, now that I think about it...

Stay warm and safe and I'll write again at the beginning of March. And don't forget to enter the contest for the Advance Copy of THE BEAUTIFUL MYSTERY, and to pre-order it....the first printing sells out pretty fast. A TRICK OF THE LIGHT is already in its fourth printing.

But I want to end this letter by again thanking you for your support, for telling so many others about the books, for championing Gamache. You make writing them so much fun.

How lovely you are.

Louise

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