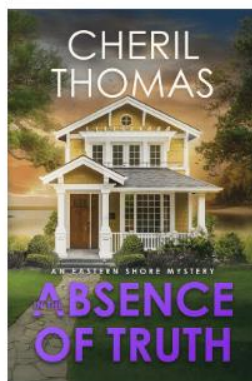


January 2023

Welcome everyone!!

It's a classic dreary winter day here on the Eastern Shore, but we're also seeing signs of spring. Two crocuses have popped up in a sheltered spot in the front yard, and the sky is pinking up a little earlier each morning. Warmer weather will arrive one of these days and then summer will be here. And summer means a new Eastern Shore Mystery!

Book Six, *In the Absence of Truth*, will be released in late May 🍌. Soon, I'll be giving the Facebook group a glimpse of the cover and advertising will begin, but as promised, you are the first to see the final edition of the artwork:



As you know, the Mallard Bay books all have a house on the cover, but you may not know why. In each of the books, at least one house stands out in the storyline. Delaney House (on the cover of *Squatter's Rights*) is a part of every book in the series. The dilapidated farmhouse where Grace and Connie nearly died is on the cover of *A Commission on Murder*. The river house that was David's last gift for Grace is in the background on *Bad Intent*. Ellender York's house (and her awful neighbor's), are depicted on *Death and Consequences*. The white Victorian where Grace and Cyrus Mosley have their law practice was the hardest to create, as it has two front doors, but I think the designers pulled it off for the cover of *Twisted Karma*.

For the cover of *In the Absence of Truth*, I wanted to show you the cottage Mac renovated for Grace. I had so much fun planning that house and giving Grace her dream kitchen. Here's another view of McNamara Cottage in its idyllic setting on the Little Wye River. I think the artists at MibiArt outdid themselves. I hope you like it as much as I do.

Cover art by MibiArt



GOT BOOKS?

I'll keep this month's recommended mystery reads brief since I chattered on so long about book covers. Here's what I've read and enjoyed:

A World of Curiosities by Louise Penny

The Investigator by John Sanford

The Boy from the Woods by Harlan Coben

The Stranger by Harlan Coben

I'd love to know which mysteries you're reading, too!