

November 2022

Happy Belated Thanksgiving and welcome to all of our new readers!

We're nearly a week past Thanksgiving and it looks an awful lot like Winter from where I sit. December 21 may still be three weeks away, but the fields behind our house are sparkling with frost, and we've got a fire going here in the den. Miss Ellie is growing her winter coat as fast as possible, but still refusing to wear a sweater. We'll see if she gives in when I tell her it's below freezing and we're still going for a walk!

In writing news, the two Kindle deals on *Squatter's Rights* and *A Commission on Murder* have wrapped up—thanks to everyone who got great deals on the eBooks this month. The purchases of *Squatter's Rights* make me especially happy since it means new readers have found Mallard Bay and the Eastern Shore Mysteries. Our family is growing, and so is our library! Book Six, *In the Absence of Truth*, is bubbling along at a steady rate, and you'll get a peek at the new cover in the January newsletter.

And in the meantime . . .



LET'S HAVE A CONTEST!

I've been thinking about ways to let readers have a part in the creation of the Mallard Bay world. Yesterday, when I was struggling to name two new characters who will debut in the new book, I had a great idea (she said modestly.)

What's more fun than getting the last piece of pie at Thanksgiving?

More satisfying than discovering your pants still fit the next day?

More exciting than knowing there will be another feast (with pie) in December?

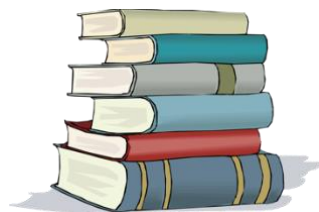
A contest to name the new characters in the next Eastern Shore Mystery!

Naming characters is one of the most enjoyable parts of this storytelling business. Often a name will pop up as I am developing the story, but at the moment, I have two stubborn new characters, one male, one female, neither of whom will tell me their first name. The last names came relatively easily and lulled me into a sense of complacency. The female is Detective Sergeant Xavier, (because I wanted an 'X' name.) The male is Detective Sergeant Greenley (because I was eating a spinach salad while typing.) I think you get the idea. There's not a lot of art to this naming thing, but it sure is fun, and now you get to try!

Here's how to enter the very first annual Eastern Shore Mysteries Name a Character contest:

1. Choose a first name for Xavier or Greenley. (Name both of them and double your chances of winning!)
2. Send an email to: Cheril@CherilThomas.com with your name suggestions in the body of the message. Please put NAME CONTEST in the subject line.

That's it! Two winners will be announced in the December newsletter, and they'll each receive an Advance Reading Copy of *In the Absence of Truth*. Yep! Win the contest and you'll get to read the new book weeks ahead of everyone else.



GOT BOOKS?

Need a good book to read in between work, kids, holiday decorating, shopping, and walking your bossy dog? I sure did and here are a few of the titles I've enjoyed this past month:

The Bookstore Sisters by Alice Hoffman (A Short Story)

What Happened to the Bennetts, by Lisa Scottoline

The Death of Mrs. Westaway, by Ruth Ware

Lost in Time, by A.G. Riddle (Note: This is **not** a mystery. I also read a lot of science fiction, particularly in the time travel sub-genre, and *Lost in Time* is one of the best I've read in quite a while.)

And with that, I'm off to (what else) walk Ellie! Happy reading until next month, and **don't forget to name those new characters and win an early copy of *In the Absence of Truth!***