

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR
J.T. ELLISON



It's beginning to look a lot like book release!

December 2019 Newsletter

Vol. 213

Hello GentleReader,



The house smells like cinnamon today. The kittens are lying in the pale winter sun. Our house faces South, and during the cold months, they ramble through the downstairs, sleepy and warm, following the sun, careful to stay inside the yellow shafts. Our Thanksgiving was quiet, and filling, and now our minimalist decorations are up, including a small stand of golden aspen trees in the corner in lieu of a live tree. My cards are addressed, most of the presents are purchased, and I only need to add a few extra weeks to the end of the year to find the time to manage everything. The writing is going well, though it's slow, agonizingly slow. The sands of this particular hourglass are running too quickly, as they do when there are fewer grains competing for the same chute. Everywhere I turn, every conversation I have, every present I buy and wrap, every

walk I take, my mind is elsewhere. It is living on a stark island cliff, inside an elegant villa fortress, during a terrible storm, and the power has just gone out...

And yet, and yet, the house smells of cinnamon today.

I started my new year's resolution early. Every year, I choose a word to represent my theme for the year ahead, something to keep top of mind as I move through my days. Last year it was Joy. This year, I believe the word will be Enough.

I am a perfectionist. Whether it's considered a virtue or not, it does mean things get done. Problem is, I want them done a very specific way, and the rest of the world doesn't always operate with that level of precision. Nor does the rest of the world care. Nor should they. I know this, deep in my heart. And so...

Not only a new year, but a new decade is coming. What better time to start practicing this new mantra—Enough. Enough. *This is enough. This doesn't have to be perfect. Let it be easy.* Whether it works or not, I'm finding this a lovely, calm place to start the new year.

We'll see how it goes. So far, so good. And speaking of good...

☒ **Good Girls Lie is almost here!**



We are mere weeks away from the release of GOOD GIRLS LIE on December 30 and I'm getting so excited for you to finally have it in your hands. I haven't had a new title release since September of 2018, so it will be lovely to share a new book at last.

The reviews and lists are starting to roll in. I'm over the moon that it's a

LibraryReads December Pick! And The Strand Magazine named GOOD GIRLS LIE one of their **top 12 books of 2019!** So, so honored by this recognition. There's something exceptionally special about being singled out.

Plus, CrimeReads said it's one of **9 books you should read in December,** PopSugar included it in **18 New, Must-Read Books Coming Out In December,** and Hypable mentioned it in **Winter 2019–2020 movie, TV, book release dates to add to your calendar.**

On top of that, The Professional Book Nerds podcast said GOOD GIRLS LIE is one of the **biggest books of December.** *pinches self*

PREORDER, BABY!

I WANT TO READ AN EXCERPT!

☒ Book Tour Is Happening!

J.T. ELLISON GOOD GIRLS LIE BOOK TOUR

1/7
NASHVILLE, TN
PARNASSUS BOOKS,
6:30 pm
In conversation with
Ariel Lawhon

1/13
WAKE FOREST, NC
PAGE 158 BOOKS,
12:00 pm
In conversation with
Barbara Claypole White

1/13
SOUTHERN PINES, NC
THE COUNTRY
BOOKSHOP,
5:00 pm
In conversation with
Barbara Claypole White

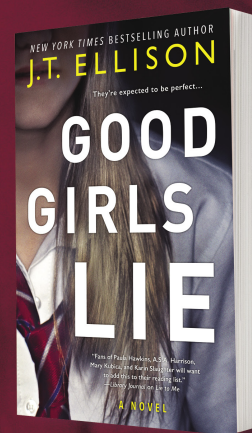
1/14
MILTON, GA
MILTON BRANCH
LIBRARY,
1:00 pm
(Bookmiser);
In conversation with
Emily Carpenter

1/14
SUWANEE, GA
GWINNETT PUBLIC
LIBRARY,
7:30 pm
Eagle Eye Books to sell;
In conversation with
Kimberly Belle

1/15
WASHINGTON, DC
SOLID STATE BOOKS,
7:00 pm
In conversation with
Alma Katsu

1/16
DUXBURY, MA
BOOKED FOR LUNCH,
12:00 pm
(Westwinds Bookstore);
In conversation with
Hank Philippi Ryan

1/16
PLAINVILLE, MA
AN UNLIKELY STORY,
7:00 pm
In conversation with
Hank Philippi Ryan



We announced the book tour last week! I can't wait to visit these wonderful places and be in conversation with authors Ariel Lawhon, Barbara Claypole White, Emily Carpenter, Kimberly S. Belle, Alma Katsu, and Hank Phillippi Ryan.

Will I see you there?

If I'm not visiting your town, please feel free to preorder a signed copy from Parnassus Books. You can contact them at [\(615\) 953-2243](tel:6159532243) or [order online](#).

IT'S TOUR TIME →

What I'm Reading



I'm closing in on my target of 80 books read for the year. I've experienced so many wonderful books this year, and next month, I will share my top ten list. But for now, here's what I loved this month.

NEVER LET ME GO by Kazuo Ishiguro

I found this slim volume when I was looking for boarding school mysteries. I saw the description of the three friends as Hailsham School and bought it without a second thought. I had no idea what I was getting into. Ishiguro was awarded the Nobel for Literature in 2017, and I've experienced other works of his, but nothing as deeply disturbing as this. The movie of the same name is an excellent adaptation, though it's more up front about what's happening than the book is. The slow reveal of Hailsham's true purpose shocked me, troubled me, and hasn't let me go. I suppose the title couldn't be more perfect.

TRUTH BE TOLD by Kathleen Barber

I am so excited that Kathleen Barber's book ARE YOU SLEEPING is being adapted by Apple TV – and being rereleased under the title TRUTH BE TOLD. I loved this book. I was completely hooked from the very first page. Layers of deceit, family drama, a murdered father, a disturbed mother, mayhem, cults, lies, betrayals, and a possibly deranged podcaster--this story has it all. Lanie and Josie are Janus twins, and their twisting lives left me breathless. Who to trust? Who to believe? Who really killed their father? TRUTH BE TOLD taps into our collective conscience with a true crime podcast propelling the narrative and takes an unflinching look at the truths we create about ourselves. Kathleen Barber is a fabulous new author to watch. If you like twisty psychological thrillers, this is your book. And watch the Apple TV series, starring Oscar winner Octavia Spencer & produced by Reese Witherspoon, coming soon!

THE QUEEN OF NOTHING by Holly Black

The last book in Black's Folk of the Air trilogy does not disappoint. There is nothing better than a grand escape, and Black's books provide that for me. King Cardan and Queen Jude are exceptional in this tale, and the worldbuilding is simply superb. I know it says a trilogy, but I do hope Black revisits this world soon. (If you're reading this, o glorious one, hear our entreaties: more Cardan and Jude, please.)

BAG OF BONES by Stephen King

My friend and fellow author Jeremy Finley has taken it upon himself to educate me in the ways of the King, and this was my first foray back to his world since THE SHINING scared my pants off. Since I enjoy King's accent and inflections, I chose to listen to the book. At 18+ hours, it was a commitment, but the writing is gorgeous, and the story so intriguing—it's a mystery, and a love story, with a ghostly backdrop. I don't know how much scarier I can go with King, but I thoroughly enjoyed this one.

The Latest From The Tao



See my weekly ponderings and the articles and ideas I found fascinating this

month, including the practical [Winter Houseplant Tips: Do's & Don'ts As The Weather Gets Colder](#) and the heartbreaking ["I'm Lonely and Scared. Would You Be My Friend?" 90-Year-Old Woman Writes in Heartbreaking Letter to Neighbor.](#)

TAKE ME TO THE LINKS!

PS: Did you know you can get my blog posts in your inbox? Sign up for as it releases (usually once or twice a week) or as a weekly digest. Or take it as an RSS feed. We aim to please. ☒

RIGHT AWAY

WEEKLY

RSS FEED

December's Recipe: Cornbread Dressing



Nothing says the holidays quite like cornbread and sausage. This is something I picked up from my mother-in-law, who makes a delightful chicken dressing for all the big holiday meals. Determined to find a good gluten-free alternative, I started messing around with this recipe from Tennessee Pride, and wow, is it tasty.

And its just not Christmas without the cookies, right???

PASS THE DRESSING!

BONUS: MY GIGI'S CHRISTMAS COOKIE RECIPES

You can find all of my recipes [here](#). And if you want some wine to go with the meals, [The Wine Vixen](#) has you covered.

That's it from me. Reach out to a lonely neighbor, take ten deep breaths, remember your furry friends at the shelters love towels, newspapers, and food donations this time of year. I'll see you in a few weeks for the release of GOOD GIRLS LIE! Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and blessings on you and yours this beautiful holiday season!

peace and hugs,



Are you still here?

Here's a kitten for your troubles.



Did you like this month's newsletter? Share it with a friend!



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