



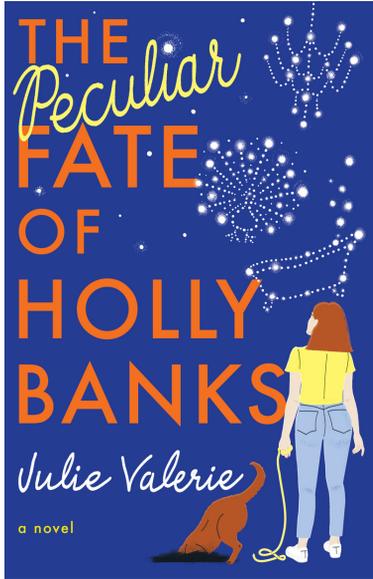
2021

Holiday Gift Guide



AUTHOR TALK NETWORK

For the laughter-filled mom



Holly Banks is on a desperate mission to have it all, but nothing in life goes according to plan. She's quickly learning that keeping up with the Joneses is a full-time job, especially when the women of Primm, her new neighborhood, seem to have it together all the time.

With her husband's job in flux, her daughter's difficulty with learning to read, and her mother's new zest for dating, Holly's life is already anything but picture perfect. Then her dog digs up an old artifact in the village center, and the mishap draws the attention of local media. Because of course it would.

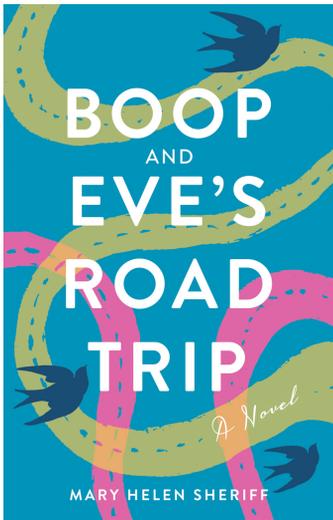
Holly finds herself at the center of a mystery between two rival towns that, if solved, could change the Village of Primm forever. Attention is the last thing she needs as she's launching a new business, the village-wide "Parade of Homes" is approaching—though she's hardly unpacked—and she needs to submit her entry for an upcoming film festival. Can Holly still create her perfect (looking) life? Or is fate about to go off script and give her a story she never could have imagined? **BUY**



Are you trying to balance raising a family with maintaining your own identity? Have you ever been so exhausted that you showed up to a meeting carrying your baby's diaper bag instead of your briefcase? In her debut collection, *I Love You More Than Coffee*, Melissa Face writes about the emotions we all experience as parents: anticipation, joy, fear, guilt, and worry. Whether you are a new or seasoned parent, you will find common ground in Melissa's heartfelt, humorous, and authentic stories of her life with two young children. If you love coffee a lot and your kids (a little) more, this book is for you. Fill your mug with your favorite brew and settle in with *I Love You More Than Coffee*. **BUY**



For the spunky retiree

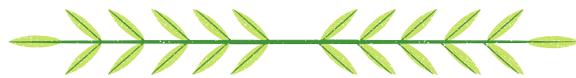


Eve Prince is done—with college, with her mom, with guys, and with her dream of fashion design. But when her best friend goes MIA, Eve must gather together the broken threads of her life in order to search for her.

When Eve's grandmother, Boop, a retiree dripping with Southern charm, finds out about the trip, she—desperate to see her sister, and also hoping to alleviate Eve's growing depression—hijacks her granddaughter's road trip. Boop knows from experience that healing Eve will require more than flirting lessons and a Garlic Festival makeover.

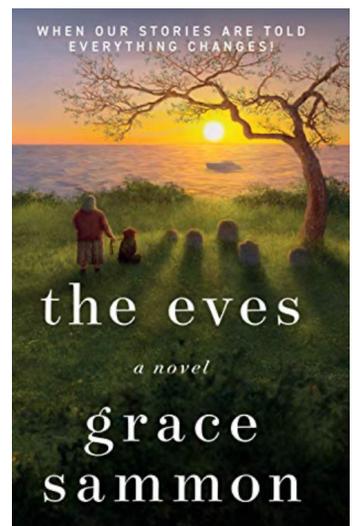
Nevertheless, Boop is frustrated when her feeble efforts

yield the same failure that her sulfur-laced sip from the Fountain of Youth wrought on her age. She knows that sharing the secret that's haunted her for sixty years might be the one thing that will lessen Eve's growing depression—but she also fears that if she reveals it, she'll lose her family and her own hard-won happiness. **BUY**

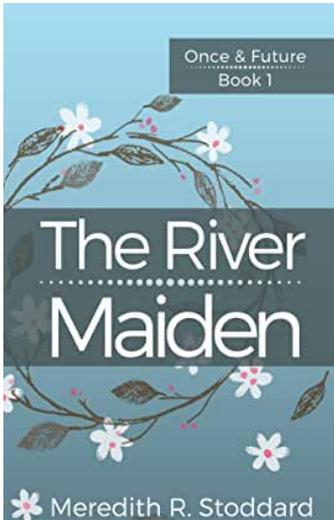


The Eves is a multi-generational novel portraying lives lived well and lives in transition. Filled with poignancy and humor, *The Eves* captures the conversations we wish we had had with our parents, if we had taken the opportunity, and the lessons we would want to impart to our children, if they were ready to listen. Told through the voice of the psychologically complex Jessica Barnet, this is her story. As the primary witness in a messy trial she has been torn from the foundation of her existence—her connection to her children. With a partially finished doctoral degree, and incomplete renovations on her Washington, DC row house, she has let

go of her ambitions and her appearance, but not her vodka or her sense of loss and guilt. When Jessica meets five diverse, determined, and sometimes ditzzy old women living in a sustainable community everything and everybody changes. Through plot twists and turns that cover three continents, we learn the truth of Jessica's life and lies just as we fall in love with the vividly drawn characters and the vibrantly described settings. **BUY**



For the genealogy aficionado



Sarah MacAlpin has plenty of ghosts. Her mother mental illness plagued her early years, and her grandmother who raised her died when she was just eighteen. In spite of her difficult upbringing she's built a life for herself. One of the things that still haunts her is a song that her grandmother taught her. Growing up in the Blue Ridge mountains there were plenty of folk songs to learn, but the one Granny taught her was from her home in Scotland, in Gaelic, and unlike any other Sarah has heard. While researching her dissertation, she hears another version of her grandmother's song from a woman in Nova Scotia. Thinking it is the key to her

dissertation thesis and her academic future, she pursues that song with the help of a new colleague from Scotland, Dermot Sinclair. Trust doesn't come easy for Sarah. In spite of her attraction to Dermot, she isn't sure that he is being entirely honest with her. But there is something more sinister than the mysterious Scot lurking around Sarah's life. A series of near accidents and strained relationships have her on edge. She begins to worry for her own mental health as her research progresses, but her life begins to unravel. Can she keep it together long enough to find the source of the song? **BUY**

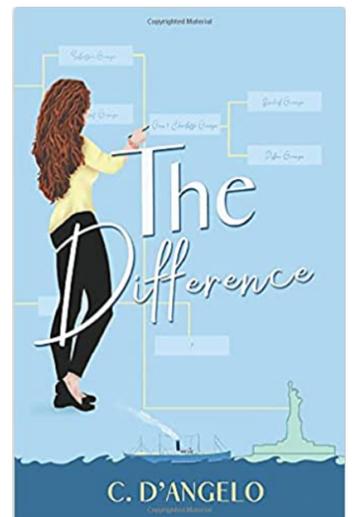


When anxiety-prone Rachel Granza learns that her growing sense of emptiness is affecting her relationship with her almost perfect boyfriend and that she's jeopardizing any possibility of a marriage proposal, she knows she must pull herself out of her funk. But how? A dream apartment in New York City, a thriving psychotherapy practice, and her unique obsessions with topics like the Titanic don't even make her feel grounded anymore. Red alert!

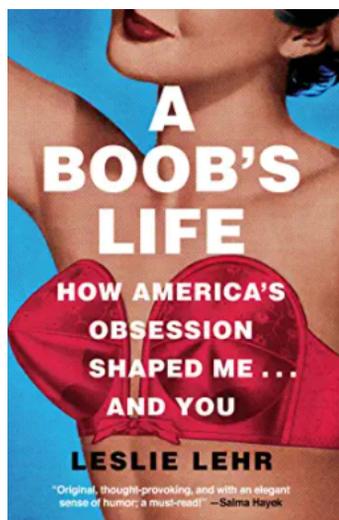
Trying to find happiness and meaning again—in more than her beloved Italian food—she stumbles into a genealogy mission to discover childhood information about her idol,

aka her grandpa, who died years ago. He never spoke about his Italian immigrant past and now she's determined to find out the reason for his unusual secretiveness.

Rachel's ancestral roller coaster has roadblocks galore, but she needs the answers to her family's hidden history. They're her only hope to know more about her hero, salvage her relationship, and most importantly to save herself. **BUY**

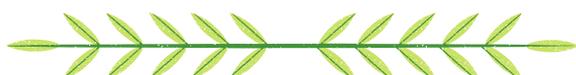


For the feminist



A Boob's Life explores the surprising truth about women's most popular body part with vulnerable, witty frankness and true nuggets of American culture that will resonate with everyone who has breasts—or loves them. Author Leslie Lehr has gone from size AA to DDD and everything between, from puberty to motherhood, enhancement to cancer, and beyond. And she's not alone—these are classic life stages for women today. At turns funny and heartbreaking, *A Boob's Life* explores both the joys and hazards inherent to living in a woman's body. Lehr deftly blends her personal narrative with national history, starting in the 1960s with the women's

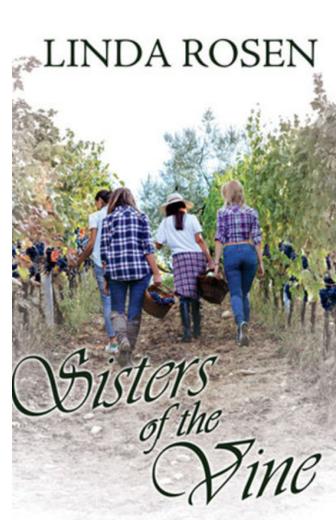
liberation movement and moving to the current feminist dialogue and what it means to be a woman. Her insightful and clever writing analyzes how America's obsession with the female form has affected her own life's journey and the psyche of all women today. From her prize-winning fiction to her viral *New York Times Modern Love* essay, exploring the challenges facing contemporary women has been Lehr's life-long passion. *A Boob's Life*, her first project since breast cancer treatment, continues this mission, taking readers on a wildly informative, deeply personal, and utterly relatable journey. No matter your gender, you'll never view this sexy and sacred body part the same way again. **BUY**



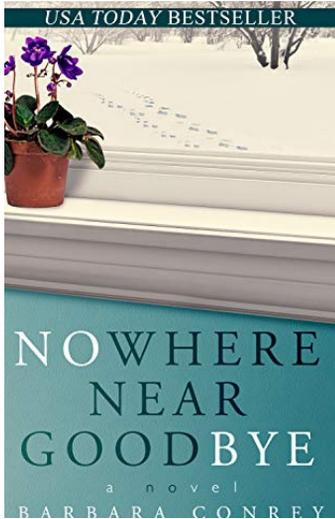
Housewife and mother with a loving husband to take care of her - that's all Liz, a Fifties gal, ever wanted. Over her father's objections, she drops out of college to marry Rick, who dreams of living off the land. They buy a farm on a verdant hillside in the Hudson Valley, but can't agree on what to plant. When they discover French-American hybrid grapes, Liz is confident they'll be happy. Grapes are classy.

As the rich soil sinks into her soul and the vines begin to thrive, the marriage grows rocky. Refusing to disappoint her father again, Liz is determined to make her marriage work . . . until she discovers a photograph hidden in the old barn.

Faced with impossible decisions, Liz is desperate. She has a vineyard ready to harvest and no idea how to accomplish the task. Does she have the moxie to flourish? Or will she and the land turn fallow? **BUY**



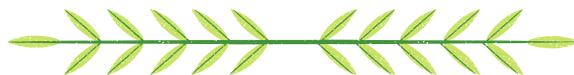
For the working mom



A mother's love vs. a doctor's oath. Oncologist Emma Blake has dedicated her life to finding a cure for a rare brain cancer. Twenty-five years ago, Emma's childhood friend Kate died of glioblastoma, and Emma vowed to annihilate the deadly disease. Now, Kate's father, Ned, is pushing her to work harder to fulfill that promise.

When Emma discovers she's pregnant, she's torn between the needs of her family and the demands of her work. While Ned pressures her to do the unthinkable, her husband, Tim, decorates the nursery. Unwilling to abandon her research, Emma attempts to keep both sides of her life in balance.

Emma knows she needs to reconcile her past with her present and walk the fine line between mother and physician. But Ned has a secret, and when Emma discovers what he's been hiding, the foundation of her world cracks. *Nowhere Near Goodbye* is a story of family, failure, and second chances. **BUY**

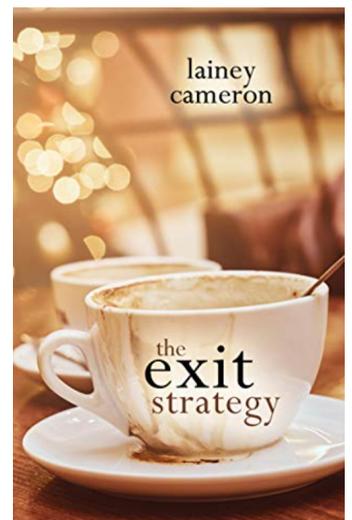


Tech executive Carly can't wait to marry the man of her dreams. But her world is turned upside down when she discovers her fiancé is already wed to Ryn - her company's top investor! Can the two women overcome heartbreak together?

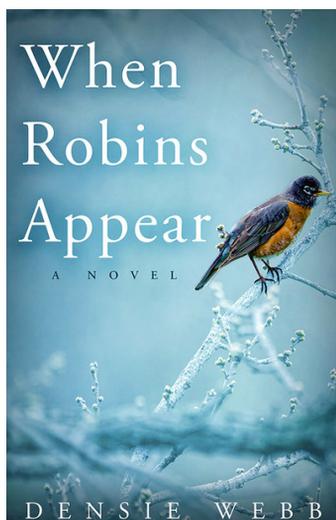
Silicon Valley investor Ryn Brennan is on the verge of achieving everything she dreamed. She's succeeded in the sexist venture capital world, has a supportive husband, and is about to close the deal of her career. Everything is going exactly as planned, until she meets her husband's mistress, across the negotiating table.

Carly clawed her way back from being a teenage runaway to become an accomplished scientist, caring single mom, and co-founder of her startup. Once she marries her loving fiancé, she'll secure the complete family she craves. But she's blindsided to discover her not so perfect fiancé is already married.

In an industry full of not-so-subtle sexism, can the two women rise above, and work together to overcome heartbreak, and ensure their success? **BUY**



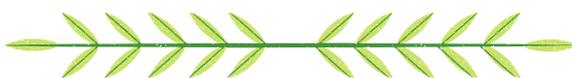
For the empty nester



With a lucrative freelance career and a loving family, Deborah Earle has a life many women would envy. But her daughter, Amanda, is heading to college soon, and Deborah worries about having an empty nest. She thinks another child might be the answer. Her husband, Richard, however, may not be willing to start over so late in life.

Amanda is excited about attending NYU next year, but she meets Graham, a handsome older boy, falls hard, and considers postponing her education to stay close to him. Her mother takes an instant dislike to Graham, but Amanda refuses to let her keep them apart.

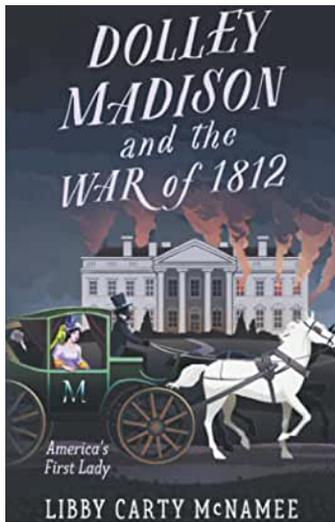
As Deborah watches her daughter rush headlong toward heartache on an all-too-familiar path, the secrets lurking in Deborah's past continue to echo in her present. When tragedy strikes, Deborah faces a future she could never have imagined. **BUY**



Peggy Moriarty's life has been focused on being a single mom to her twins, Grace and Greg. But now that they're teenagers doing their own things, she's at a loss. Her only hobby is watching Messages from Beyond, a show about a medium who connects the grieving with their deceased loved ones. When the twins leave for college, they give Peggy a gift certificate for an exercise class. At first, Peggy is insulted. But once the sting wears off, she realizes if she gets in shape, she might gain the confidence she needs to go on her favorite TV show and talk to her late husband one last time. With help from her new friends at the gym and Carmen Tavaréz, the mother of Grace's boyfriend, Peggy begins to emerge from her shell and spread her wings. She may soon discover that her sum is more than a mother, a widow, and her body. **BUY**



For the historical fiction fan

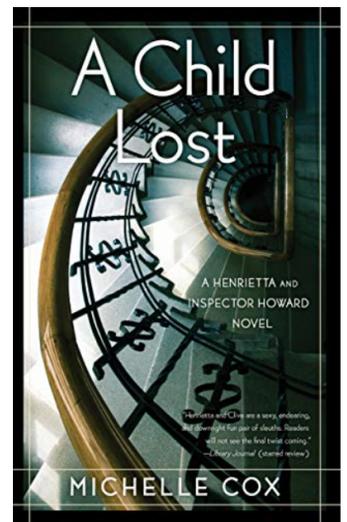


Amidst the nonstop turmoil of the War of 1812, the decisive First Lady takes action and inspires an anxious nation. Dolley Madison faces a bitterly divided Washington City when her husband, James Madison, becomes our fourth president. The prospect of war against Great Britain threatens to tear our fragile republic apart. The "Presidentess" hosts open parties in the new President's House to unite political foes and cultivate an American identity. When President Madison declares war with disastrous results, Dolley carries on, ignoring the threats against her. However, as British soldiers march toward Washington City,

she becomes their target. Now America's Second War of Independence hinges on her. What must she do to save the United States while also saving herself? The true story of a woman with humble Quaker roots who rallies America during the War of 1812! **BUY**

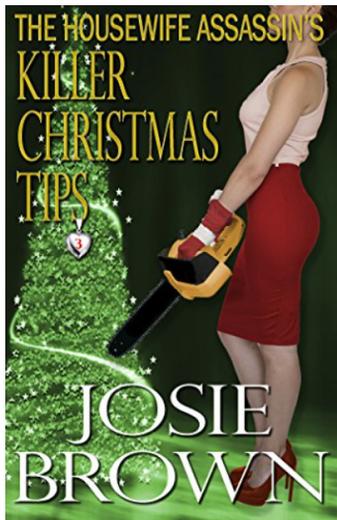


A spiritualist, an insane asylum, a lost little girl . . . When Clive, anxious to distract a depressed Henrietta, begs Sergeant Frank Davis for a case, he is assigned to investigating a seemingly boring affair: a spiritualist woman operating in an abandoned schoolhouse on the edge of town who is suspected of robbing people of their valuables. What begins as an open and shut case becomes more complicated, however, when Henrietta—much to Clive's dismay—begins to believe the spiritualist's strange ramblings. Meanwhile, Elsie begs Clive and Henrietta to help her and the object of her budding love, Gunther , locate the



whereabouts of one Liesel Klinkhammer, the German woman Gunther has traveled to America to find and the mother of the little girl, Anna, whom he has brought along with him. The search leads them to Dunning Asylum, where they discover some terrible truths about Liesel. When the child, Anna, is herself mistakenly admitted to the asylum after an epileptic fit, Clive and Henrietta return to Dunning to retrieve her. This time, however, Henrietta begins to suspect that something darker may be happening. When Clive doesn't believe her, she decides to take matters into her own hands . . . with horrifying results. **BUY**

For the crime fanatic



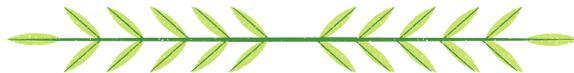
Murder, suspense, sex--and some handy household tips.

"Josie Brown writes with all the secrets, sex, money and scandal of an OK! Magazine cover...Truly entertaining reading." -- Jackie Collins

In book 3 of the Housewife Assassin Series:

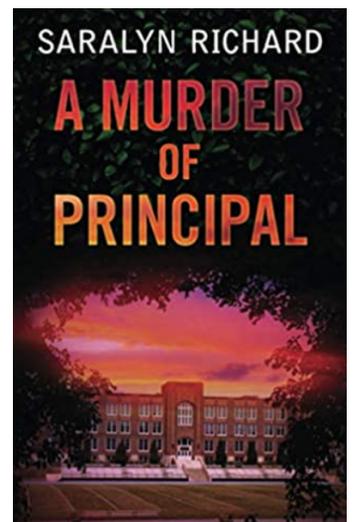
'Tis the season for murder, mayhem, and missing missiles! Housewife Assassin Donna Stone's Mission: Stop a terrorist cell before it launches a heat-seeking missile at a plane landing in Los Angeles. And naughty Santa is everywhere. It's

hard to convince your child that Santa is so good, when everywhere you turn he's being very, very bad! **BUY**



When a maverick principal comes in with a student-centered agenda, there's no more business as usual at Lincoln High School. And killing the principal is just the beginning...

When someone sets fire to Lincoln High and kills the new principal, chaos threatens to overtake the urban school. Assistant Principal Sally Pearce, originally hired to help the deceased principal revamp the culture, vows to carry on the mission. In so doing, she locks horns with fellow assistant principal, Wally Welburton, and gets caught up in gang threats, racial tensions, grievances, sexual harassment complaints, and murder.



Sally never dreamed she'd be faced with solving a mystery and returning the school to order. The odds are against her—a woman in a man's job, a minority in a tough position. Her strong moral compass and commitment to students bolster her as she meets challenge after challenge. When a second murder happens on campus, Sally realizes she's trapped in a cycle of violence that must be stopped—now. **BUY**

For the storyteller



You'll meet Eva, the young daughter of traveling Pentecostal preachers, who catches snakes while her parents hide behind the bible and a large wooden crate. Eva's life changes when she makes her first friend and realizes there is more to life than fear.

In Plans for Sweet Lorraine, you'll meet Lorraine's mama, Cordelia - a fiery red-head with a temper to match, and a mind as sharp as the sting from a leather strap. She'll do anything to keep her daughter safe. Even if she has to beat the devil himself.

Laurel, the young girl in The Day I Threw the Rock has no idea that she saved someone's life, or that she may have killed someone to do it. She just knows that she should be allowed to wear overalls and play ball like the boys. Well, ain't it true that she can throw a baseball harder and faster than Luke or John Randall? Just ask Sarah Rose's Uncle...

Junebug Fischer is ready to set the record straight and let you know what really happened the summer she turned fifteen. It's true, she killed someone, but she never killed nobody on purpose. That was purely accidental. **BUY**

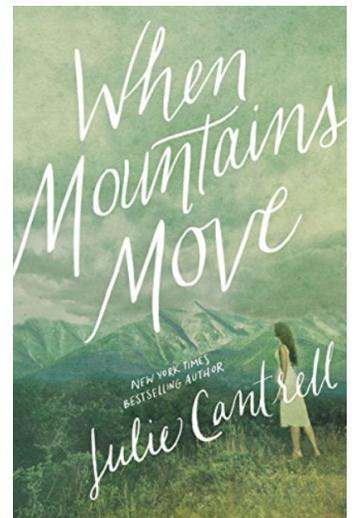


Millie's mind is racing and there seems to be no clear line between right and wrong. Either path leads to pain, and she'll do anything to protect the ones she loves. So she decides to bury the truth and begin again, helping Bump launch a ranch in the wilds of Colorado. But just when she thinks she's left her old Mississippi life behind, the facts surface in the most challenging way.

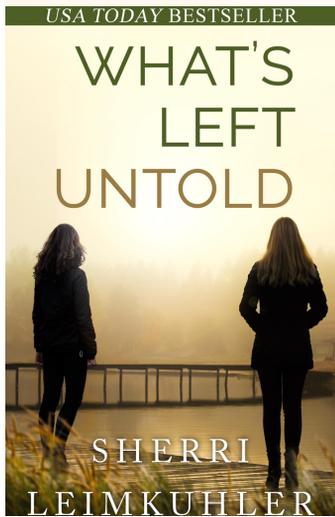
That's when Millie's grandmother, Oka, arrives to help. Relying on her age-old Choctaw traditions, Oka teaches Millie the power of second chances. Millie resists, believing redemption is about as likely as moving mountains. But Oka

stands strong, modeling forgiveness as the only true path to freedom.

Together, Bump, Millie, and Oka fight against all odds to create a sustainable ranch, all while learning that the important lessons of their pasts can be used to build a beautiful future. **BUY**



For the best friend



Every secret has its price. Anna Clark and Lia Clay were unlikely best friends in high school, but their yin-and-yang personalities drew them together in a sister-like bond. Then during college, Lia inexplicably walked out on their friendship and disappeared, leaving Anna hurt, confused, and disillusioned. Twenty years later, Anna discovers a letter Lia wrote the summer after high school—a letter that contains a cryptic postscript concealing a devastating truth. With her twenty-year high school reunion approaching, Anna moves closer to uncovering the secret in Lia's letter and the heartbreaking consequences it set in motion. As the layers of

deceit and betrayal begin to unravel, Anna is forced to question everything she believes and come to terms with what it means to forgive the one person who hurt her in the worst way imaginable. **BUY**



AUTHOR TALK NETWORK

Author Talk Network is a small group of award-winning, dedicated authors who love talking books, writing, publishing, and the art of story. With the Author Talk Network, you will meet authors who, happily, will talk to your book club, school group, or club; be a guest on your show; chat for an interview or book blog; and connect you to their bookish world. Looking for an author to speak at your next event, then email grace@gracesammon.net for more information.