

# Memorial Day

May 31, 2021



We must never forget those who have made the ultimate sacrifice when protecting this country, including those in the arms services and those first responders here at home.

Remember that it is only by their willingness to forego any guaranty that they will return safely at the end of each patrol or shift that we can count on the guaranty of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Today and every day, we must keep them and their families in our prayers. And if you happen to see one of those brave men and women out there today when you are racing around picking up the last ingredient for your bbq, or that last case of beer, take a moment to thank them.

Speaking of Memories. Yesterday was a mixed blessing of the completion of Lisa's project to clean our garage and a face time conference with Eileen, Joe and BC (and a surprise appearance by Nan) as well as other luminary members of the Collins' Clan like Mary C, and Mary Conneely O'Connor, who were attending Collins-Fest in Hamilton NY. Hi both Mary(s)!

I cannot be sure whether or not it is just a byproduct of my over-active imagination, but they all looked amazing and somewhere over the 3000 mile distance in the wireless ether over forty-years of life dropped from their appearances. We were all back in our twenties sharing laughs and stories.

One shared story in particular involved a major fight involving all of us in a bar called the Eagle's Nest on South Broadway in Yonkers that I believe took place during my roving bachelor party which involved JS, a knife, a nose (think the movie Chinatown) my oldest brother (BC had to have been there, Lenny and my other brothers, and I kind of recall Michael Collins there as well. Hi Mikey!) followed by a lot of fists, blood, and a battle royale that spilled onto South

Broadway. Eileen C, who has fought for gender equality long before it was fashionable, appears to have been there that night as well. Not sure if she was throwing down - she was not to be trifled with - but I believe JS mentioned that he threw her the keys to his car to fashion some form of escape plan. My memories are a bit blurry, at least that is what I would swear to if called upon, and I did not mention this during yesterday's call, but I do believe the night may have ended with all of the males in the bachelor party scaling the fences of RNH for midnight skinny-dip while Eileen cursed us because she could not scale the fence. We can only be thankful that this occurred long before the time of the ubiquitous iPhone (our instant communication was limited to semaphore or smoke signals although JS and Stein used to take a lot of photos back then). Luckily no one in our party suffered any major damage (or arrest) that night. Can't wait to tell this tale in full color in The Riverdale Chronicles. I'm sure by then all of the parties involved will have lawyered up. Stay tuned.



# STILL HATE DUMPSTERS - STILL TOP OF THE LISTS

May 30, 2021



Yesterday, I started my outside work at 6 am cutting down some dead trees (at Lisa's insistence -- I argued (unsuccessfully) that they should be left in place because they still made great perches for the local birds) and then dragged them across the front yard (of course they were on the farthest western side of the front property). Then I had to cut them up -- they were too long to go into the dumpster in one piece -- and toss them into the dumpster (which is sitting on the farthest eastern side). Each one of the trees took their pound of flesh from me leaving long scrapes and gouges in my arms and crushing my shoulders (I know how Jesus must have felt humping that huge cross on his shoulder - none of this forgiveness stuff -- "Just wait, I'll fix these assholes!"). Then the fun began. I had to move a stack of James Harding cement based leftover material and the giant pallet it sat on (which then had to be chopped up and tossed) from the opposite end of my long driveway and into the dumpster. Finally, I had to wheelbarrow up from the side of the workshop in the back of the back yard (and hump on my shoulders the pieces too large to wheelbarrow) most of the huge pile of scrap wood and composite materials that went into building the outside decking, cut up about half of it, and then toss it all into the dumpster. All the while I'm thinking (1) the dead tree wood could be used in the fireplace come winter, and (2) I could have built an amazing three story chicken coop out of the scrap James Harding and decking materials -- solid as the third little pig's brick house -- if only my wife would have waited one more year! Spaghetti is surely rolling over in his grave over the sheer wastefulness. Think of all the free eggs! Why can't people see the long game?

The good news is that two of my granddaughters came by to visit, with a slight overlap. Savanna arrived in the

morning and Scarlett in the afternoon after her ballet class (while Savanna went home for a nap) so that kept Lisa too busy to come up with other tortures for me. But today's a new day.

I did get to put my feet up in the late afternoon and watch a wonderful Johnny Depp, Kate Winslett movie called Finding Neverland. I highly recommend it to you all. Its the story about how Sir James Barry came up with the ideas for his play Peter Pan, which not only reaffirmed my own creative process - draw heavily from the truth around you and add a little magic -- but also showed that a good writer can meld together so many different and weird concepts - pirates, fairies, Native Americans, lost boys, a clock swallowing crocodile and a magical boy who never wanted to grow up.

Is anyone drawing the connections here?

Anyway, Eileen Cotto later reported by texts from her embedded station at the post pandemic Collins Clan gathering in upstate New York, including about the arrival of Joe Serrano later in the afternoon (that's Eileen sitting, far right by the door in the early moments of the gathering).

Eileen is sworn to secrecy as to the remaining story and characters of The Claire Trilogy, but was allowed to share just enough allusions to tantalize the family (they are an entire, stand alone, demographic in themselves) and drive Joe S crazy. Then I heard that BC was also going to attend the final two days of the event (its like Woodstock - no, not Snoopy's friend - the rock concert from back in the day), and I am now worried that he and Joe might drug the tea-totaling Eileen's sarsaparilla (I do write fiction) with sodium pentothal to drag the truth from her. They are both natural born henchmen and must not be trusted. Eileen, do not leave your sarsaparilla unattended. However, I hope that the weekend event concludes wonderfully for the entire Collins

Clan. Hi all! That reminds me, I must invest heavily in the stocks of the major US breweries, I sense an uptick. Hats off to my publisher, Reagan Rothe, and his team, for placing TWA in the ongoing Kindle sale this weekend, for I am certain that has led to my returning to the top ten on three lists - No. 1 in both Humorous Dark Comedy & Psychic Suspense, No. 6 in Legal Thrillers (Kindle Books - Right in front of To Kill A Mockingbird - how wonderful is that!), as well as No. 12 in Legal Thrillers (Kindle Unlimited - right in front of Grisham's A Time For Mercy - Ditto!). Daily reviews continue on the whole to be multiple and positive, which means new people are reading and responding to the TWA story and characters, and most are happily anticipating the sequels (although I'm still not understanding glowing reviews and a 4 star rating - but I must stop whining about it). I thank each and every one of you from the bottom of my heart, including Lennie from Texas, who was kind enough to also reach out to me on this website. I really love seeing that the reviews are coming from all over the country, which tells me that this story travels well. I am also receiving positive reviews from other mule caretakers. Claire is thrilled to death. She sends a solid shout out to all of her brethren and their caretakers. Honey too!

Reagan also contacted me yesterday to run some beta search programs on KMAG by me, which made the third novel very real to me. I can rest easier knowing it too is in the BRW hopper and that the final part of the story (or is it) will be told, come rain or shine, on April 28, 2022, just in case I am struck by a milk truck! Thank you Reagan and Minna Rothe, and the rest of the BRW family. Enjoy the rest of the holiday weekend.

And to all of the families of the fallen service men and women, and those of the fallen first responders, we



remember you and your loved ones' ultimate sacrifice every day, but especially on Memorial Day. Never forget.

# REALLY HATE DUMPSTERS - LOVE ARTHUR AVENUE

May 29, 2021



My wife has been insisting we get a dumpster so we can clear out "all the crap" (as she put it - where did she get that potty mouth?) hiding in our garage and at different locations around the property. I have artfully been able to put this off for a couple of years. Yesterday, I ran out of real estate when a twenty yard dumpster arrived in my driveway and, after my abbreviated work day ended (due to the holiday

weekend), I was compelled against my will to begin assisting her with filling that dumpster. Hated it!!!! And the absolute worst thing about this is not the actual physical labor, which I also hate, but that we end up fighting over everything she tries to throw away. I am a hoarder by nature and refuse to part with anything that even remotely stands a chance at some point in the future to have a use. I can be very caustic and childish when it comes to these debates, and the more physically tired I become, the worse I am. There, I admit it.

Anyway, I had to move a huge pile of broken stones from the side of my driveway that had been sitting there for three years (since I last collected and moved them from Gnome Island at Lisa's command). They are flat stones and the way they sat in that large pile reminded me of an Armadillo, so when any of the locals asked about them I lied and told them they were a pricey art installation called "The Sleeping Armadillo," because I knew from my own experiences that modern art is a pretty loose concept and no one really challenges the value of something you have identified as an expensive art piece. To each his own. As has often been the case during my adult life, my ruses worked on everyone but Lisa.

What really sucks is there is still lots of room in the dumpster and my wife is still conscious, so the suffering will continue for the entire weekend (unless I fake a heart attack while out toiling on the property). I would be lying if I told you that while I was filling, humping and re-dumping wheelbarrows of stones in the receptacle, that my imagination has not somehow connected the dumpster and my wife in a way . . . . Oh well, I better leave it there.

The good news to counter and somehow prepare me for this painful torture is that, after a final careful review of KMAG by

Eileen Cotto (ne Collins), during which we debated at length over the proper tense of a prognostication of being struck by a milk truck, I packed off that novel to my publisher so he can get a look at the final book while he is preparing AAA for its publication. I am very pleased with the result and I hope the readers are as well. It was a lot of fun catching up with Eileen (the debate was during a lengthy phone call). I told her to say hi to the Collins crew (and Serrano if he shows up) when they gathered this weekend in upstate NY. And yes, Joe, Eileen knows how the story ends, including the fate of your character. She is sworn to secrecy.

I wonder if yesterday's events were part of Lisa's devious plan to capitalize on my demise once I completed The Claire Trilogy. She and Eileen are good friends, so if I do shed this mortal coil through being dumpster tortured this weekend, someone check Eileen's phone records to make sure she has not been in touch with Lisa after concluding our final edits of KMAG. Eileen knew I was sending the final manuscript off to the publisher. My continued existence has been rendered a redundancy. Whiley women!!!!

The most surprising and wonderful news of the day had to be the delivery of three stuffed boxes of delightful Italian pastries that arrived on my door step from "*Egidio Pastry Shop Inc.*" on Arthur Avenue (187th Street) in the Bronx!

The delightful hoard of all kinds of Italian baked treasures set my salivary glands on full production mode, they have kicked in just by my typing these words. I made sure I sampled wonders from each of the three boxes before I was conscripted to work in Dumpsterville. I wanted it to be my last meal in case I didn't survive the torture (I would happily go the Dante's lawyers' ring below with that sweet taste in my mouth). It is my goal and dream to eat every last pastry in those boxes (although I may share a few with Claire and

Honey just so they can fully appreciate the experience).

This wonderful and totally unexpected gift came from Steve Morley, the Riverdale life-long family friend, official Clan member (and best friend of the Ginger) whom I have mentioned in earlier blogs. Thank you Steve for delivering manna from heaven!!!! You Rock!!!! Say hi to your mom!!!!

If any of my readers visit AA you must stop at Egidio's and top off your pastry collection (have the coffee ready). Tell them I sent you (and when they say, "Who is that?" just tell them Steve Morley sent you.) You just can't fake AA food, just ask Ferd Beck, the family Merlin. Period! Full stop!! Wait, the crack addict has just checked the Amazon Best Seller lists and TWA now appears as #1 ON TWO SEPARATE LISTS!!! Psychic Suspense and Humorous Dark Comedy!!!! (and #6 and #12 on Legal Thrillers (books and Kindle Unlimited, respectively). Take me Dante, just let me grab a handful of Egidio's cookies before I go.



# THE SALE BEGINS - A NEW LIST

May 28, 2021



Look inside ↓



Tom McCaffrey  
The Wise Ass  
Trilogy Book 1



Book 1 of 1

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Today the kindle version of TWA is on sale for \$1.99. I'm beginning to enjoy learning about the business of book selling and I have realized that one needs to employ smart business techniques even to creative endeavors. Oddly enough, my youngest sibling (yes, that one) has coached me through this learning process - that kid can sell snow to the Inuit. I'm looking forward to seeing if this sale price moves the needle in sales, listings and reviews. I'm really just looking to get TWA into as many hands as I can because I am looking forward to building a loyal readership that will carry forward through the remainder of The Claire Trilogy. I believe TWA has legs. I also believe that this three part story that I have dubbed The Claire Trilogy is worth the effort. This temporary sale price should help accomplish all of my goals.

Speaking of lists, I learned late yesterday that TWA now appears in the top 10 of a brand new (for me at least) Amazon list - #4 on "Psychic Suspense." So that leaves me in the top 10 on 3 lists and lucky #13 on a fourth, where I still appear one in front of John Grisham's A Time for Mercy (pinch me). I'm waiting for Amazon to create an "old, bald, blue eyed lawyer with an earring list," so I can get on that one too (for anyone who wants to learn how I got that earring, go back to one of my earlier blogs about the mythic Terry "Goose" Gans (RIP). It happened during a vodka party in Violet's Flop House. It's a fun story that will be resurrected in The Riverdale Chronicles). (Totally unsupported rumor and gossip has it Lenny got a Prince Albert shortly afterwards).

A number of new reviews reached posting last night (it can take a couple of days), and its always nice to wake up to six

new reviews (4 (5 star)/2 (4 star, sigh)) where the substance of all the reviews were extremely positive and the reviewers look forward to the sequels. Loved how one four star review (by Patricia S Bundy) compared TWA to "a superb soup," and how the latest five star reviewer (Jumbo) wished they "could give [the TWA] rating all the stars seen by the Colorado night." But, gun to my head (been there done that), if I had to select just one review it would be Jen's, who said "Love how you incorporated your true love as well as all your friends! You Rock!" There are a lot of natural poets out there, and I really appreciate reading each one of these reviews. Keep them coming.

With AAA pretty much finalized as far as story and substance (I still need to review the galley version when its ready and I am really looking forward to seeing the new AAA cover by Richard Lamb), I turned to my first read through of KMAG since I completed my first draft. I have been collecting comments from my inner circle of readers, so I have popped through it a couple of times to correct caught typos (some were just shocking), but I had not gone back and reread it front to back. I'm going to admit that I was a little bit nervous to see how KMAG held up, given its importance to the entire story arc. Being away from it for a month while I went back and re-immersed myself in AAA really helped. BTW, knowing how the trilogy resolves itself in KMAG was also a great help to me in revising AAA, because it allowed me to make sure all of the proper foreshadowing was in place. It is. (I write legal briefs the same way). Similarly, as I went through KMAG this time I found myself making some additions and revising some events to strengthen the continuation of the story line through all three novels. I'm really happy and proud of my

work on this trilogy. I hope the fans of TWA feel the same. I believe its a fun story. Time will tell.

Until then, please tell all of your friends about the TWA \$1.99 Kindle sale. The price starts to go back up after today. Claire and Honey each need a couple of new pairs of shoes (jk, I don't shoe my mules, but Claire has been making noises about getting her own custom set of Nisolo, ethically made, mules!).



# Chasing Honey

May 27, 2021



My dear sweet mini-mule, Honey, is happy go lucky as long as she can hang with her big sister Claire and roam freely anywhere she wants to go on the property.

As I mentioned earlier we have had to curtail their access to the back and west side yard areas because both mules gobbled up Lisa's flower beds. Claire also pulled a Godzilla on the fencing I placed around Big Eddie's Orchard (five apple saplings I planted last summer) and luckily I was quick enough to stop her from munching on the tender branches. So they are only allowed to come through that back gate if one or more of us are there to keep an eye on them.

They are both fully aware that the grazing in the off limits area is pretty damn good (I refuse to mow that area), and will come to the gate mentally demanding entrance a few times a day. At those moments I try not to look out the office window, for fear Claire will exert her mind control over me and force me to open it against my will. Its a trick she has learned from my wife. It is useless to resist.

Anyway, Honey was diagnosed last fall with the chronic Cushing's disease, which came on out of the blue but affects about 30% of all equines. While I cannot recite the reasons for it, I can recount that it caused her to suffer pain in her legs and hooves, which in turn caused her to spend most of her days lying down or, if standing, constantly shifting her weight from hoof to hoof in a strange form of St. Vitus dance.

Luckily, we have an amazing Vet who I call "Doc Steve" (think Dr. Po without the funny accent) and he prescribed a tiny (expensive) pill and a powder that must be given to Honey daily. The pill has to be hidden in some treat and the powder mixed with water and then squirted into her mouth. Sounds easy enough.

However, Honey is afraid of men (past abuse) so I cannot get near her without assistance. That assistance comes from my eternally patient wife, who must somehow corral Honey and get the halter on her before I can administer the drugs.

Now, if the mules are out on the open back property, this is impossible because Honey will run circles around Lisa (and me) while Claire watches, quite amused.

So we have to wait until we see both of them in the side corral on the hill leading up to the driveway sometime in the afternoon. It seems they like the shade from the summer afternoon sun that the house throws on that area.

If I happen to see them there any time after 2 pm, I have to sneak out across the yard, past the back gate and into the back property, and then swing around between the barn and the art studio and close the big gate between the side corral and the back property. It seems that if we get them both locked into the side corral, Lisa and I can get Claire to go down by the trough and then force Honey into that corner, and after both of us approach in a pincer movement to slowly corner her, like a game of ringolevio, she submits and allows Lisa to halter her. It's a daily game we must play.

However, in order to pull this off, I have to actually sneak across my backyard without the mules noticing me, because if Honey spots me, it's a race to the back gate and I always lose. I arrive out of breath and cursing a blue streak as Honey sails through the gate and out to freedom in the back property. I can always hear her laughing as she passes.

Now the real cowboys and ranchers out here think we are crazy and that we should just pen Honey up in the area around the small barn known as Claire's "Laire"/ Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood/Honey's Hive, so we don't need to go through these machinations each day. And they are right to think so.

But when we adopted Claire (Mr. Rogers) and Honey, we did so for the purpose of providing them the freedom to roam and enjoy the entire property. It's their forever home, a holiday camp, and we want them to be as free as possible. They have been happy doing so, and I would never want to restrict their freedom. So if Lisa and I need to perform reenactments of the Keystone cops for the amusement of our neighbors - I admit, it is quite comical - so be it.

But that's not where the fun ends. Lisa has to hold Honey's halter so I can get her to eat the snack with the pill, make sure she actually chews and swallows it, and then squirt the liquid into the back of her throat to wash it all down. But Honey likes to spit the treat out about 100 times before I can actually get her to chew it and swallow - I have tried to mix up the treats and she does it with all of them (I bet if I wrap it in Lisa's flowers she'd eat it no problem). Then when she finally does chew and swallow the treat I have to squirt the other medicine deep into her throat and then hold her nose high so she doesn't spit that out. I feel like Nurse Ratchet in *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*. All I need is that terrible Muzak playing in the background.

But the treatment has been working because Honey can and does run like the wind every day, just because she can. And I am fine with that.



# TOP TEN ON 3 AMAZON LISTS! - Memorial Weekend Sale

May 26, 2021

3:05



TWITTER

now

**Today in \$TSLA**  
Gali: Cybertruck update 😊 [twitter.com/HyperChangeTV/...](https://twitter.com/HyperChangeTV/)



### Customer images



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152 global ratings | 82 global reviews

## From the United States



motherrath

★★★★★ **Verified Purchase**

### My kind of humor

Reviewed in the United States on May 25, 2021

I had no idea what I was getting into, enticed by the line "like John Grisham on mushrooms." What a fun read!

Helpful

Report



Kindle Customer

★★★★☆ **Verified Purchase**

### Interesting characters

Reviewed in the United States on May 25, 2021

Enjoyed this novel. The characters were interesting and well developed and I liked the dialogue and humor. Having a talking mule, aliens, mind readers...maybe a bit too far fetched but still enjoyed it.

Helpful

Report

Finally cracked the Top 10 on all three Amazon Kindle Lists at one time - #2 Humor, #6 Legal Thrillers (Kindle Book) [right behind To Kill A Mockingbird!] and #10 Legal Thrillers (Kindle Unlimited) [with Grisham, Pratt, Drugoni, Chandler and Methos]. And it is all thanks to you wonderful readers who support Claire's story.

Now, to further entice new readers into the fold, I have been told that, in honor of the upcoming Memorial Day Holiday and the men and woman who have valiantly served our country, the publisher, Reagan Rother, will be running a Kindle Countdown Deal starting this Friday, 5/28/21, for 7 days. Price will go \$1.99 and then scale back to full price.

So if you have any friends that have been sitting on the fence about buying TWA, now is their chance to swoop in and snatch it at a THIS WEEK ONLY price. TWA is the perfect summer novel for all of your friends and family to take with them to the beach on their iPhones (that's what I use - I flip it sideways) and Kindle readers.

Now you have all heard me mention my writing mentor, fellow Lehman College alumnus (a bastion for Irish writers - just ask Billy Collins), and dear friend, Colin Broderick (check out his books and films, he is a modern day, Irish Bukowski, in life stories, talent and productivity). When I was first preparing to publish TWA, Colin offered to provide me with a cover blurb. I was honored. When I saw what he wrote "[t]his is Grisham on mushrooms" I knew just where I wanted the blurb to go -- right on the front cover of TWA by Claire's nose! I had no idea if that blurb actually made a difference to potential readers, but I was so proud that such a fine writer had said that about my novel, I could have burst. This morning I learned that it has made a difference,

at least to the one reader who mentioned it in her review.

See above. So thank you "motherrath" for that 5 star review and thank you Colin, for your hand in bringing it about. Finally, thank you John Grisham for just being an amazing and prolific writer. You are the platinum standard for all lawyer-writers. I am chuffed (as the British like to say - ask Richard and Maggie) just to land in any conversation that has your name bandied about.

# IT WAS A GREAT RUN

May 25, 2021

TWA got knocked out of the No. 1 spot on the Amazon Dark Humor list last night. I'm hoping its just a temporary landing at No. 2, but I can handle it. The legal Thrillers lists still hold strong at #6 (Kindle Books) and 15 (Kindle Unlimited). Have to kick this habit!

Excited that most of the final detail work for AAA is completed. Inner circle (thanks Eileen) still catching those mischievous typos that my brain keeps reading right over.

Don't want to give a critical reviewer something to shoot at. Just want everyone to enjoy the story. I'm really confident that they will.

Cover design is coming along and cover blurb is locked in.

Over all, I am really excited to get AAA out to the readers.

Never was one to wish away the Summer but Christmas cannot come too soon.

Now to turn towards getting KMAG put to bed. Stay tuned.

Postscript: Yesterday I had my first honest to God fan approach. Lisa and I were having breakfast in Grandpa's Diner and a man approached our table carrying TWA. He was very polite and mentioned how the waitstaff and some of the regulars told him that we ate breakfast there most Mondays and he wanted to say hello. His name was Jeff and he was a very pleasant and courteous person. It turned out that he was one of the people who came to meet me at the reading at Side Tracked a few weeks back and I had already inscribed the book for him. He had to be somewhere else that day so he didn't get to hang around.

We chatted a bit about the novel and how he really responded to the animal stories in it. When our meal arrived he politely excused himself and went on his merry way. I was touched. Speaking of ST, when I stopped by there the other night to pick up their great vegetarian pizza, I bumped into Cowboy and JoEllen and she was kind enough to invite me to stop in at her son's wedding reception at ST on June 5th. I am honored by the invitation and will do my absolute best to pop in. Congrats to your son and his soon to be wife.

# AAA IS READY

May 24, 2021



118 global ratings | 76 global reviews

## From the United States



Darlene

★★★★★ **Verified Purchase**

### I Loved This Book!

Reviewed in the United States on May 23, 2021

Holy Cow! I don't even know where to start. This book is so full of rich examples of life over such a wide spectrum. Let's just say It has it All!

Those few that didn't give this book 5 stars are crazy!

★★★★★!

Helpful

Report



Kirsten'sBOOKNOTES

★★★★★ **Verified Purchase**

### Magical

Reviewed in the United States on May 22, 2021

Just on the right side of unbelievable, this is a warm and funny story of connection and redemption. Good read

Helpful

Report



Judy Pappas

★★★★★

### A fun read!

Reviewed in the United States on May 22, 2021

I haven't even finished the book yet and I am already wondering where is the next episode? This is an enlightening fun read.

Helpful

Report

Spent the last two days finalizing AAA, its dedication page and its acknowledgements. It is ready for prime time. I've also nailed down its first cover blurb by Margaret Reyes Dempsey and its cover design by Richard Lamb. I am thrilled on both counts. I believe my readers are going to enjoy this sequel every bit as much as they have TWA, and some even more so. Time will tell. Now on to making sure that KMAG does TWA and AAA equal justice.

TWA is still doing well on the Amazon lists - No. 1, Humorous Dark Comedy; No. 6 Legal Thrillers (Kindle Books); No. 13, Legal Thrillers (Kindle Unlimited), again immediately followed on the latter two lists by John Grisham's A Time for Mercy. I am so honored to open onto the same website as this man, never mind, appearing right beside him. He once was a client of one of the past entertainment law firms I worked for and I remember noting how freaking tall he was.

I love that each day I am still receiving new reviews, most of them positive. I love seeing that new people from all areas of the country are still enjoying the story lines and characters that found their voice in TWA and will carry forward throughout the remaining two books in The Claire Trilogy. I love and appreciate that they make the effort to let the next potential reader know that TWA is well worth their coin and time. While I have no scientific proof of this, I believe that each positive review nets me 10 new readers. But today's review of note comes from Darlene, a copy of the review is above. What caught my eye is that, while some other reviewers have cited the other positive reviews as something to consider in support of their position, this review demonstrates that the readers of TWA are cohering

into a community, and Darlene is the first reviewer to address some of the others as follows: "Those few that didn't give this book 5 stars are crazy!"

I am a big first amendment fan, so while I do not agree with the few negative reviews TWA has received, I believe with all my heart as a US citizen, a lawyer, and an author, that everyone, including those reviewers, has an inalienable right to express their opinion. To quote Evelyn Beatrice Hall, "I [may] disapprove of what *you say*, but I will defend to the death your right to say it." However, on the same basis, I equally defend Darlene's right to speak her mind on the issue, and I would be lying if I was not quiet tickled by seeing someone coming to the defense of TWA against the outliers in the TWA community. So thank you Darlene for defending my honor. Shout outs to Kirsten and Judy who also appear on the above page, as with all the positive reviews, I am thrilled by yours as well. Thank you.

# SAW MY SISTER YESTERDAY - NOTES ON AAA

May 23, 2021



My dearest and only sister, Veronica (never Ronnie to me, but the basis for Bonnie in the Claire Trilogy), popped by for a visit yesterday afternoon. I had not seen her for over a year, despite the fact that she only lives in Denver. Fucking COVID.

It was great seeing her and catching up. She is very special to me. She and her significant other, "b," (the basis for Tessa in the CT -- I performed their US wedding ceremony - and automatically became an apostate to mother Church) who I also adore, are also fairy godmothers to all of my children. They have single handedly bumped the social evolution of the next generation of my family up three rungs on the familial ladder. Our family is forever in their debt. Luckily V was still with me when Lisa arrived from work so we engaged in even more catch -up.

Family is important, especially when you reach the autumn of your life (unless, of course, you are a Centauri hybrid, in which case, you have plenty of time). But don't wait until the late stages to make your moves, cherish each and every day you share with them all.

Now off I go to buy carrots and apples for the week's prep and then take one more look at AAA before I put it to bed. Since we are on that subject, I got some great editing notes from the brilliant writer, Margaret Reyes Dempsey, who sacrificed her valuable time -- she's moving -- to squeeze the book into her hectic schedule. She provided me different perspective, particularly on a certain issue, which, despite my toxic maleness, also caused me to make some changes that I think benefitted the narrative. Thank you Margaret, Marg, Maggie!

I also am engaging the talented Richard Lamb, scion of the immortal Gothic Horror editor Hugh Lamb, to create the book covers, first for AAA and then for KMAG. If you have

seen the cover for Mind Games, you'll understand why he was an obvious choice to create the continuity necessary for the last two installments of the Claire Trilogy. What's even cooler is that he intends to somehow include the above iconic photo of Claire (forever thanks to Kathy Fronsdaahl, love to you and Jimmy) in both those covers. I cannot wait to see what he creates.

With any luck, I'll put AAA to final bed this afternoon and send it off to Black Rose Writing. Then on to finalizing KMAG. What a wonderful life.



# BEST REVIEW EVER

May 22, 2021

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111 global ratings | 69 global reviews

---

## From the United States



Anonymous



### Enjoyed the book but ...

Reviewed in the United States on May 21, 2021

In the time since Area 51 surfaced in the public eye and throngs of people started heading out to Nevada for an extraterrestrial "experience" every year, Colorado has become the most popular US state for legit, card-carrying extraterrestrials to take up residence. We have enjoyed our anonymity, implausibility and the warmth of the Berthoud people, among others. But now, with the growing popularity of Mr. McCaffrey's book and its objective to make the implausible plausible, if the curious throngs start driving east from Nevada, we may need to go state shopping again. So thanks for the fun read. But no thanks on another level -- if you get our "drift".

Helpful

Report



Mikefrmgarner



### Wow, just wow

Reviewed in the United States on May 20, 2021

Saw it, read the blurb, and had to take a chance. Just fabulous. It ended far too soon, but at the exact perfect place. Now the wait until we are off to see the Wizard again. Glinda, lend a hand to make it come faster.

Helpful

Report



Mary Lou Heath

There has been nothing conventional about the writing or roll out of TWA. Just ask Claire. So its no surprise, but is funny as hell, that someone would post the above copied review that fully embraces the extraterrestrial aspect of the novel and its characters. When I showed the real Everett and Michelle that someone had spoken up on their behalf, their reply came quickly: "Who appointed this asshole spokes person!" I had always explained to them that there was a very real possibility that by agreeing to appear as characters in my novel, they would open themselves up scrutiny by very passionate followers. The recent increase of ubiquitous news stories about their compatriots' exploits in our skies has created a perfect storm of interest in the subject of UFOs, which I pray will lead to even more interest in TWA. But can caravans of supporters that will camp out on E&M's property, just a bit down the road from my own, be far off?

Personally, I hope so. I hope it brings visitors to Berthoud in droves, and leads to the increased support of local businesses for Berthoud and its surrounding towns. The local town council has begun to distribute "BECO" bumper stickers. Maybe they should consider adding a tiny mule and spaceship to their next batch.

Thank you "Anonymous", whoever you are!!!! That comes from the heart.

Postscript: TWA continues to rise on the Amazon lists. Still holding the No. 1 spot on the Humorous Dark Comedy list, it has risen to Nos. 6 and 12 on the Legal Thrillers Kindle Book and Kindle Unlimited lists, respectively, directly in front of John Grisham's *A Time for Mercy*. Thank you Reagan

and Minna Rothe, you rock!!! Dear Lord, do not wake me  
from this dream!

# SHAKE IT OFF

May 21, 2021



**BEWARE**

**AREA PATROLLED BY  
FREE RANGE GUARD  
MULES**

Does not matter how many good reviews you receive, it's the bad ones you remember. Of course, once you realize that the disgruntled reviewer is grinding an ax you did not bring to the wood chopping party, you take a deep breath and move one. Luckily for me, this particular woman's objections quickly established she was reading a different book than the one I wrote. I hope she bought the Kindle version, because I would hate to think she sacrificed more than one Starbucks Grande *macchiato* for her misery. But as I have said many times, I read each review, good or bad. I appreciate when my readers take the time to post them. I'd like to say that the bad ones don't bother me, but, as you can see from this post, I'd be lying. In this one instance I am truly sorry the reader did not enjoy the trip.

The good news is that all of the other **TWA** reviews posted yesterday evidenced erudition and the readers expressed their enjoyment (how's that for alliteration) in taking this first step in the journey with Claire and the other misfits that will continue in **AAA** and **KMAG**. And I am maintaining my pole positions on Amazon's best sellers lists. Thank you one and all for getting me there and keeping me there. I do not exist as an author without you. I so appreciate your support. I intend to spend this weekend giving AAA a final going over. I am determined to make all of my readers come away believing that AAA is even better than TWA, not because I do not love TWA, but because that is what my readers deserve. I must not rest on my laurels. Your happiness is really important to me.

But if my disgruntled reader is out there reading this, please do not sacrifice anything else from your daily existence just to tear me a new one with my next books. I can guaranty right here and now that if you did not enjoy TWA (the 87%



the Kindle said you read), you will not enjoy the others. I'm just not your guy. Time to move on. Shake it off.

# PLEASE DON'T EAT THE DAISIES

May 20, 2021



My long patient wife is in an uproar. It seems like the mules have developed a taste for the contents of Lisa's flowerboxes. Word has it that Claire has been splashing around her TWA money to buy off the elves and cherubs that are supposed to be watching over those plants. I knew that the reclining elf that looked like BC could be gotten to.

Its all about the Benjamins. It was just a matter of time before he convinced the others to go along with the graft.

Suspecting the worst for a couple of weeks, I have been secretly replacing the occasional missing shrub with the hope that the mules would grow tired of their pranks and go back to mowing the grass, but yesterday was the final straw when Lisa came into the back patio and found all of the boxes devoid of flowery color. The differing heights on the retaining walls made it clear that both Claire and Honey were the culprits. This was not a one-mule job. Lisa immediately imposed a mule ban from the back yard and patio area. Lisa is not to be trifled with. Realizing that the ban would prevent Claire from appearing outside my office window or at our back door, Claire immediately retained my legal services and after a long and painful negotiation, I managed to reach a compromise with Lisa whereby the mules would again have the run of the entire property but only when there was an adult human in the back area to supervise them. Otherwise they must stay in the side paddock and back area. They are worse than two four year olds.

The good news is that I awoke to find that TWA remains No. 1 on the Amazon Dark Comedy list and Nos. 6 and 12 on the Amazon Legal Thriller lists on Kindle Books and Kindle Unlimited, respectively. Life is good. Thank you readers. I also have been blessed to continue positive reviews on the TWA Amazon page. When the book first dropped most of the reviews came from the NYC area as I had a built in market from my 60+ years of living there. But over time this base has broadened and now I receive wonderful reviews from everywhere in the country. My recent reviews come from Texas, California, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio, Florida and one that identifies more broadly as "The South." I check every one because I'm tickled pink and fascinated by anyone who takes the time to write a review. This morning's

latest reviewer, HR3, hails from Ruston, Louisiana. You do not know how much I appreciate the fact that the book has appealed to such a broad audience. You always worry that NYC does not play well in other parts of the country. New Yawkers are an acquired taste. Thank you all for buying my novel and letting me know that you appreciate my writing and the story I told you. Claire loves hearing about all of the shout outs, and insists I read them to her every day. More to come.

My focus for the next few weeks will be on getting AAA in publishing shape (there are still a few typos that need to be hunted down and killed), and then approving the other information that appears in the book and finalizing its front and back covers. Then I will be turning immediately to KMAG to give it one final review for story purposes - will confer with my inner circle of readers -- and then perform a couple more typo hunting reviews and then the other business aspects to final publication. Fini.

But in all honesty, finalizing The Claire Trilogy is a daunting task. When I wrote TWA, it was just me I had to please, because I never knew if anyone else (besides Lisa) would ever see it. This trilogy was never about money, because I have made a barely comfortable living and raised my family based on my day job as a lawyer. I just wanted to tell a good story and make people laugh (and maybe shed a tear or two). There is nothing better than that. And in the end, I fell in love with my characters, each one as real to me as Claire is. So when I sent them out into the world through the publication of TWA, I prayed that they would be loved by my readers. My prayers have been answered as most readers have become extremely fond of the "merry band of misfits." It has been those reviewing readers repeated calls for a sequel so they could continue to enjoy those

characters that has really changed my life. Thank you one and all for that.

Even while writing TWA, I knew generally that the overall story had an arc which required a final resolution. Now that the readers are invested in the story, and the characters, I feel a weighty obligation to provide them with my best efforts to tell them my best stories about my wonderful characters.

I truly believe I have accomplished that, but only time and my readers' reviews will confirm to me that I have met that challenge. I am in your hands.

So, as of right now, **An Alien Appeal** should hit the on-line bookshelves by early fall with a publishing date of **December 23, 2021**. It will make a wonderful Christmas gift.

Then, **four months later**, on **April 28, 2022**, **KMAG** will be published, which means it should be available for pre-order shortly after AAA drops.

The additional good news is that the books (as will TWA) will be available in paperback, kindle and audible formats.

Thank you Reagan Rothe and the BRW team.

So until then, for those among you that have not read TWA, now is the time to get on board. Spread the word and tell your friends. And if you really, really, really like it, let me know. I'll keep checking those reviews. You can also drop me a line on this website, I read and respond to every email.

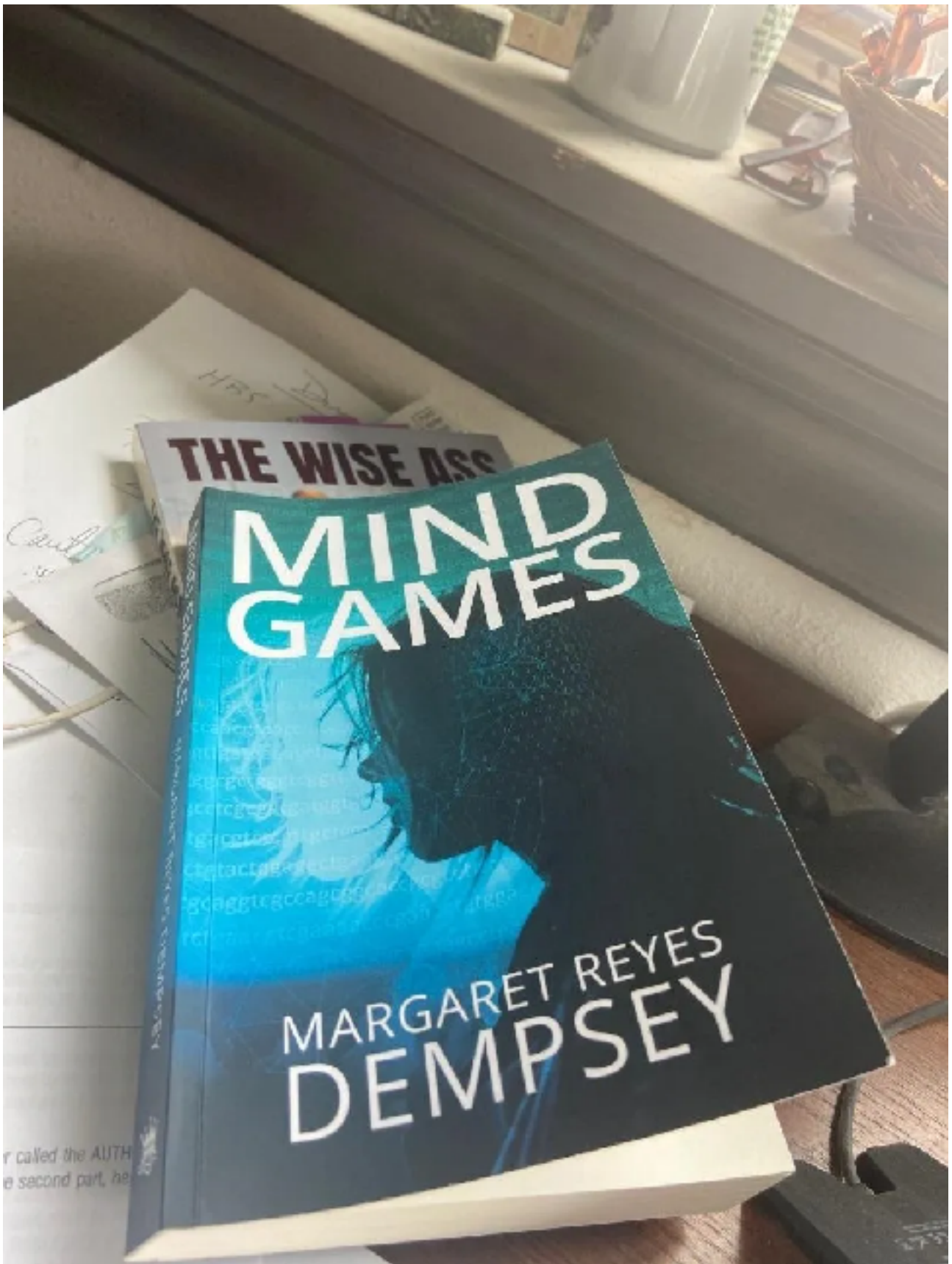
Thanks again.

Postscript: Yesterday, our adorable friend Dianne Rosenfeld, dropped by a gift of the very cool sign that, through Lisa's decree (who I suspect may have a gnome bloodline), now adorns my front door. It reads "Whatever you do. . . don't piss off the gnomes!" Absolutely love it.

Thanks Dianne!!!!

# FINISHED MIND GAMES - 5 STARS

May 19, 2021



THE WISE ASS

# MIND GAMES

MARGARET REYES  
DEMPSEY

r called the AUTH  
e second part, he



Rather than retype it, here's the cut and paste of yesterday's Amazon review: [https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B08P46SCFZ/ref=dbs\\_a\\_def\\_rwt\\_hsch\\_vapi\\_tkin\\_p1\\_i0](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B08P46SCFZ/ref=dbs_a_def_rwt_hsch_vapi_tkin_p1_i0)



T. McCaffrey

5.0 out of 5 stars **Smart, Daring and Clever**

Reviewed in the United States on May 18, 2021

**Verified Purchase**

I just finished this novel (when I should have been working). Could not put it down. I am in awe of this author's ability to juggle so many plot twists and turns in this incredible story. No loose ends, no dropped plot lines, no missteps. I cannot count the times when I stopped to exclaim Holy S\*\*t! There is a depth of knowledge reflected in the writing on so many subjects that you just cannot fake with just strong research skills. And while the writing is very visual (think Nelson DeMille), and could easily be a successful film, it doesn't give you that forced Hollywood ending. But it does leave you satisfied by its honesty, with enough threads hanging out there to allow for an amazing sequel. The writing is smart and witty and enjoyable. The female protagonist is constantly evolving and you find yourself rooting for her. There is action, thrills, family, happiness, love and tears. It is topical and interesting. As a native New Yorker, I loved revisiting the city through the protagonist's eyes. I cannot recommend this novel strongly enough. If the literary world does not discover this author it will be a crime.





I see that the Kindle version is still 3.99 (I bought the paperback). For those four other readers out there (I know Eileen C has read and is posting her own glowing review) I recommend you snap up the Kindle version while you can save a buck. Once you have done so, I expect more 5 star ratings on this web page and that you will all spread the word to everyone you know. Thank you in advance.

Rumor has it that there is a Sequel in the offing. I think MG would make one hell of a movie (a franchise), so if Hollywood is listening, take note.

Other good news on The Claire Trilogy front. Yesterday I signed the new contract for KMAG and the extensions for TWA and AAA with BRW. As with my mortgage, these agreements give me one more reason to keep on living for quite some time. Thank you Reagan. Blessings.

On the TWA front, the novel (in Kindle form) still holds firm at No. 1 on Amazon's Best Sellers in Humorous Dark Comedy list; No. 6 on Best Sellers Legal Thrillers Lists (Kindle Books) and No. 12 on Best Sellers Legal Thrillers Lists (Kindle Unlimited). I am actually right in front of John Grisham's A Time For Mercy on the two latter lists - somebody pinch me. Thank you to everyone who continues to support Claire's story and for all of you readers from all over the country who are reading TWA and posting positive reviews on Amazon.

Finally, I was blessed to hear from an old Riverdale friend, Cathy Tardibouno (sister of Chrissy, daughter of Chickie - all of Riverdale Bagels fame, Hi Enzo - will someone send me some of their bagels). Cathy is one of those characters who takes no prisoners but would help you bury a body in the back yard in the middle of the night. Indeed, she might bring you the body that needs a discreet burial. She was about to embark of the TWA literary journey and I told her,

given its placement on the Humorous Dark Comedy list, and knowing her familial sympathies for some of the characters in the novel, I could guaranty she will enjoy it. I can also guaranty that she will make an appearance at some point in The Riverdale Chronicles (unless Lenny writes it, in which case, I have no control). Cathy enjoy, looking forward to your review.

# REAGAN ROTHE ROCKS - Hi Mary Conneely O'Connor!

May 18, 2021



Yesterday was a wonderful day. TWA stayed at the No. 1 spot on the Amazon Dark Humor List for 24 hours (at least so far), and is now #6 in Amazon Legal Thrillers (books) and #13 (Kindle Unlimited). Thank you everyone who has been out there supporting it. Especially my dear friend Dianna Rosenfeld, who keeps buying copies for her multitude of friends, who then become my friends - hi Lori and Cherie! I am humbled and blessed beyond measure.

Thank you Minna Rothe for your BRW marketing genius. Speaking of Rothes, I also received a call from my publisher yesterday during which we agreed to enter into an agreement to publish KMAG and extend the length of all three contracts to coincide with a promising audiobook deal for all three novels. So the Claire Trilogy is a go and has found a long term home with BRW! I pray that the reader of the audiobooks has a great Bronx accent.

Thank you Reagan Rothe. You rock!

Heard from Steve Morley, one of The Ginger's best friends, who was always around the McCaffrey compound growing up and of course was part of the crossover members of the migrating hoards of Riverdale partiers that I grew up (well, almost) and partied (to excess) with. Steve is now a respectable citizen with a beautiful family. Congrats on the kids' Holy Communion and say hi to your mom! Someone send me some Arthur Avenue pastries!

I was also able to reconnect with another Riverdale friend named Mary (ne Conneely) O'Connor, through one of my Collins Clan cousins (love that alliteration), the infamous Eileen Cotto (who I have named a character after), and was thrilled to be able to send Mary an inscribed copy of TWA. I also mentioned in the inscription how Mary's name appears in the legendary Visitors book (See Photo Above -- more notorious than the Studio 54 VIP guest list) for Aunt Violet's Flop House (I can attest to this fact), presently maintained by Mark Lenahan, so that she is indeed part of an exclusive Riverdalian inner circle. You readers will have a more complete understanding of this reference by reading past blogs on the subject, or by waiting until either I (or Lenahan) write The Riverdale Chronicles (hopefully this Fall). Enough said (although I understand that Mark is charging a nominal fee to anyone who wishes to have their name expunged

from that book). My wife Lisa sends her warmest regards to Mary with the comment, "She was the sweetest girl who worked in the Food Emporium." Since Eileen C also worked there along with them, and was far more feisty than sweet, (I had worked there while it was still called Daitch Shopwell), she can and will attest to Lisa's assessment of Mary C.

Mary, please give my best to your husband John and your three children.

I also heard from Jack Vaughan, BC, and Joe Serrano (Stein has gone MIA). BC is practicing for his transition into a more non-binary, gender fluid personality named Mary because I have based a very, very evil character on him in Book 3, and he will probably have to change his name and leave town upon its publication. His long suffering wife, sweet Nan, will be well rid of him. The others also make their appearances in book 3. Enough said.

I also heard from my brothers Eddie (the oldest, yep, that one) and John (the youngest, yep, that one too). The Ginger (oh yeah) and v (her too) remain in the wind. I did hear from two of the Ginger's brood, Evan and Mac, thanks guys.

Finally, I have been reading (losing a race to the speed reader Eileen Cotto) of Mind Games, by that wonderful author, Margaret Reyes Dempsey. So far we both agree that it is amazing. Scary smart how her mind works.

Unfortunately for me my eyes were a bit strained analyzing a film for work so they just went blurry and I could not finish it yesterday. Hopefully today. Just also want to mention that Richard Lamb, Margaret's husband, is not only a talented writer himself, but is also a very talented media wizard who does everything from Web Design to Book Covers and everything in between. Check him out. <http://inspiredlambdesign.com/> He unfortunately is a Portsmouth

FC supporter, but we won't hold that against him. Cheeky bugger!

Also heard from my good man Colin Broderick, the brilliant author and auteur - so damn supportive and inspiring and a member of the select Lehman School of Writers - I highly recommend his books and films. Check him out. <https://www.colinbroderick.com/>. I would die to borrow his brogue for a reading.

Post Script shout out to my grand fur babies Jax and Ella, who have been so supportive of TWA and their cousin Claire, especially with postings on their very popular Instagram account.

# BACK ON TOP AND READ MIND GAMES

May 17, 2021



Search Amazon



Humorous Dark Comedy ▾

Best Sellers

New Releases

#1



The Wise Ass (The Claire Trilogy Book 1)

★★★★★ 73

\$4.99

#2



Managed Care

★★★★☆ 420

\$4.99

#3



Revenant: A Zombie Apocalypse LitRPG (Necrotic Apocalypse Book 2)

★★★★★ 23

\$4.99

#4



Moth Busters (Freaky Florida Mystery Adventures Book 1)

★★★★☆ 777





Really busy weekend with farriers, flowers, wheelbarrows of mule dung and bursts pipes in the basement ceiling. And I would not have it any other way. But I can face any Monday morning by looking at my Amazon lists and finding TWA back in the No. 1 slot in Best Sellers Humorous Dark Comedy; No. 8 in Best Sellers for Legal Thrillers (Kindle Books) and No. 15 in Best Sellers for Legal Thrillers (Kindle Unlimited). Don't just pinch me, kick me right in the ass. I want to make sure I'm awake.

**THANK YOU REAGAN ROTHE AND BRW!!!!!!!**

**THANK YOU EVERYONE WHO REACHED INTO THEIR POCKETS AND INVESTED IN TWA, I AM FOREVER IN YOUR DEBT!!!!!!!**

Now as I have painfully learned, these moments are like Sasquatch sightings; invigorating, amazing, totally unbelievable and over in an instant. So this time I took a better snapshot. See above.

But I had even more fun yesterday reading the first half of Margaret Reyes Dempsey's Mind Games. I would have stayed up past my late for me 9 p.m., but I didn't want to sleepwalk through the second half of the book.

MRD is an amazing writer on a technical level, but it is her complex story craft that keeps raising the bar. I consider myself an instant expert in most things, having been my calling card as a litigator. Every time MRD bumped the story up another level, something like adding a new chainsaw to a one handed juggler every couple of minutes, I kept wondering on an expertise level, how is she going to pull this off. And yet she does. Time and again. I quit last night at a major

**turning point in this story, and cannot wait to dig into the second half. Even if you missed the 99 Kindle deal this weekend, this book is worth full price of admission. Hats off to MRD.**

# BRW ROCKS AND BUY MIND GAMES

May 16, 2021

4:09



www.amazon.com



amazon  
prime



Search Amazon



Humorous Dark Comedy ▾

Best Sellers

New Releases

#1

kindleunlimited



Managed Care

★★★★★ 419

\$4.99

#2

kindleunlimited



The Wise Ass (The Claire Trilogy Book 1)

★★★★★ 68

\$4.99

#3

kindleunlimited



Revenant: A Zombie Apocalypse LitRPG (Necrotic Apocalypse Book 2)

★★★★★ 16

\$4.99

#4

kindleunlimited



Drunk on a Plane: The Misadventures of a Drunk in Paradise: Book 1

★★★★★ 1,100



While, as of this morning, I have returned to No. 2 on the Amazon Best Seller Dark Comedy list, I can accept the shift with magnanimity knowing that the book that replaced mine at No. 1 is also from the BRW stable - *Managed Care*, by Joe Barrett. Congrats Joe. So that confirms for me that BRW knows how to select their writers, and how to support and market their books. Now that does not mean that I will accept sitting in the No.2 spot for long, I told you I am competitive, but I am a team player (well, sort of), so kudos to my stable mate, Joe B, and the brilliant Reagan at BRW.

Respect. And Claire is still ahead of the Zombies. I take some solace in the fact that TWA continues to climb the Amazon Best Seller Legal Thriller Lists in both Kindle Books (#8), right behind John Grisham, and Kindle Unlimited (#17), sandwiched between two Grisham novels. I am in heaven.

I have started reading Margaret Reyes Dempsey's *Mind Games*, the paper back version of which arrived on my doorstep yesterday afternoon. I could tell from the first paragraph that this young lady knows how to write. I know this about a writer because I immediately feel jealous of their talent. I did this time, instantly. Unfortunately, I was begrudgingly forced to put the book down on page 30, only because of an extended visit for Lisa's pasta primavera and garlic bread by my three granddaughters, Scarlett, Savanna and Stella (Duggaristic ?), and their lovely mother, Georgie.

Nothing less would have torn me away from this novel. I have a bunch of chores to do today which includes having our wonderful farrier - Jason Bastemeyer - in for Claire and Honey's mani-pedis (which means a half hour of chasing Honey around the back property to get a halter on her - I

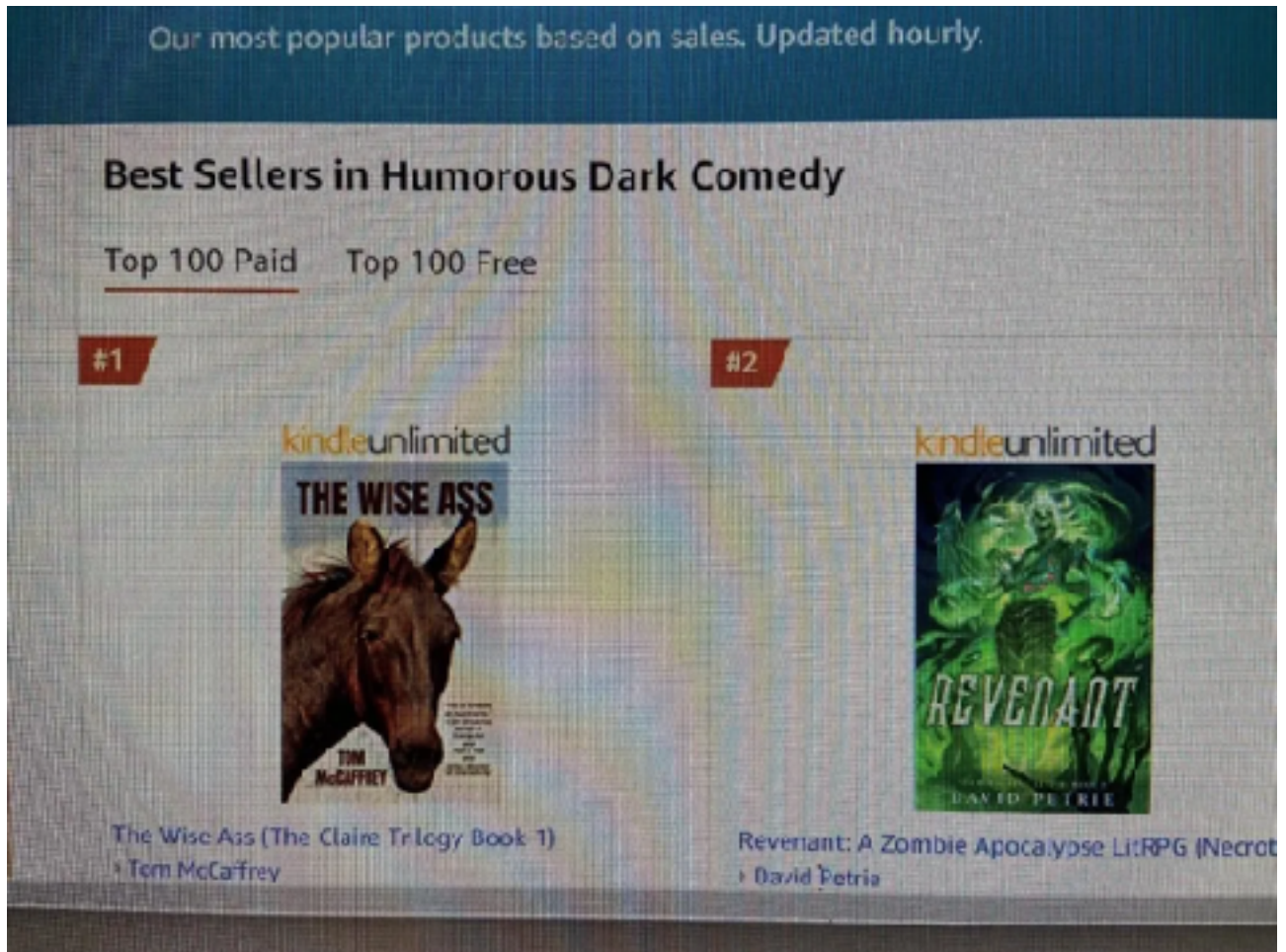
really hope no one ever films that - its not pretty and is accompanied by an expletive-filled sound track) followed by a few hours of picking up wheelbarrows full of mule dung, cleaning the water trough and refilling the hay bags, but I pray to be able to get back in front of this book by this afternoon. I am already a big fan of the Emily character, and I am interested to see if Jeremy finds redemption.

Enough said. Buy the book. You will not be disappointed. Don't forget that the Mind Games Kindle 99 cents special ends this weekend. And tell a friend. Come on, a dollar investment to discover a brilliant writer is a slam dunk. And if you enjoy the novel, which you will, post a 5 star review on Amazon.

Quick PS. I'm supposed to be fixing a water pipe in my basement ceiling, but snuck a few more pages while I let the water that just soaked me dry off: Well worth the break to come across a sentence that reads, "Schools of brightly colored fish slip by like ribbons through the water." That's it, the very first first opportunity, I'm stealing that line.

# No. 1 BABY!!!!

May 15, 2021



I know this is childish, but I am a man and therefore cannot help myself. This morning I awoke to find that Claire had finally vanquished the Zombies that had been sitting safely in the number 1 spot for quite some time. [https://www.amazon.com/Best-Sellers-Kindle-Store-Humorous-Dark-Comedy/zgbs/digital-text/7588840011/ref=zg\\_bs](https://www.amazon.com/Best-Sellers-Kindle-Store-Humorous-Dark-Comedy/zgbs/digital-text/7588840011/ref=zg_bs) I'm not sure how long we will retain the spot, but for this magic moment, I am indeed thrilled. Thank you all. Your support for TWA has been relentless and invaluable. I am humbled.

The overnight momentum has also impacted the other two lists as well:

#11 Best Sellers Legal Thrillers (Books) - [https://www.amazon.com/Best-Sellers-Books-Legal-Thrillers/zgbs/books/10487/ref=zg\\_bs\\_pg\\_1?\\_encoding=UTF8&pg=1](https://www.amazon.com/Best-Sellers-Books-Legal-Thrillers/zgbs/books/10487/ref=zg_bs_pg_1?_encoding=UTF8&pg=1)

#22 Best Sellers Legal Thrillers (Kindle) - [https://www.amazon.com/Best-Sellers-Kindle-Store-Legal-Thrillers/zgbs/digital-text/157321011/ref=zg\\_bs](https://www.amazon.com/Best-Sellers-Kindle-Store-Legal-Thrillers/zgbs/digital-text/157321011/ref=zg_bs)

Now I know these change by the hour, so when you click on it, they may be in different positions.

Which is why I snapped that above photo. This is indeed, a Hallmark moment for me.

Thank you again, my five readers, I am forever in your debt.



# Dear Dianne and Mon Cherie

May 14, 2021



Yesterday's afternoon of legal toil was magically interrupted by a visit from my dear friend Dianne Rosenfeld who brought along her dear friend from Florida (and now my new friend) Cherie (said with that great French "Sh" sound).

After giving Cherie the world-wind cook's tour of Casa Claire, pointing out all of the real counterparts to visuals in TWA, and meeting Claire and Honey from a distance (they were all the way out in the back of the field but Claire did take notice as soon as we came out onto the back deck) we had a wonderful chin wag about NYC, elevated subway

tracks and growing up in our generation and life in general.

We even talked about Son of Sam, which brought back memories of NYC in the seventies and Untermyer Park in Yonkers. Nothing like having two engaging and attentive women chatting around the dining room table to make the time fly. It was delightful. Of course I inscribed Cherie's copy of the novel and delivered a second one from my stash for Cherie's son Gerry (a fellow lawyer in NYC). I know I've had a memorable visit when I get more than one set of hugs and kisses on the way out the door (I am a hugger).

Yesterday was a wonderful visit. Dianne and friends are always welcome at Casa Claire.

Dianne must have gone shopping immediately for more copies of TWA after she left yesterday (Amazon actually cut her off once before, lol), because this morning's chart position for TWA's Kindle version dramatically improved from the last time I checked yesterday:

#2 Amazon's Best Sellers in Humorous Dark Comedy

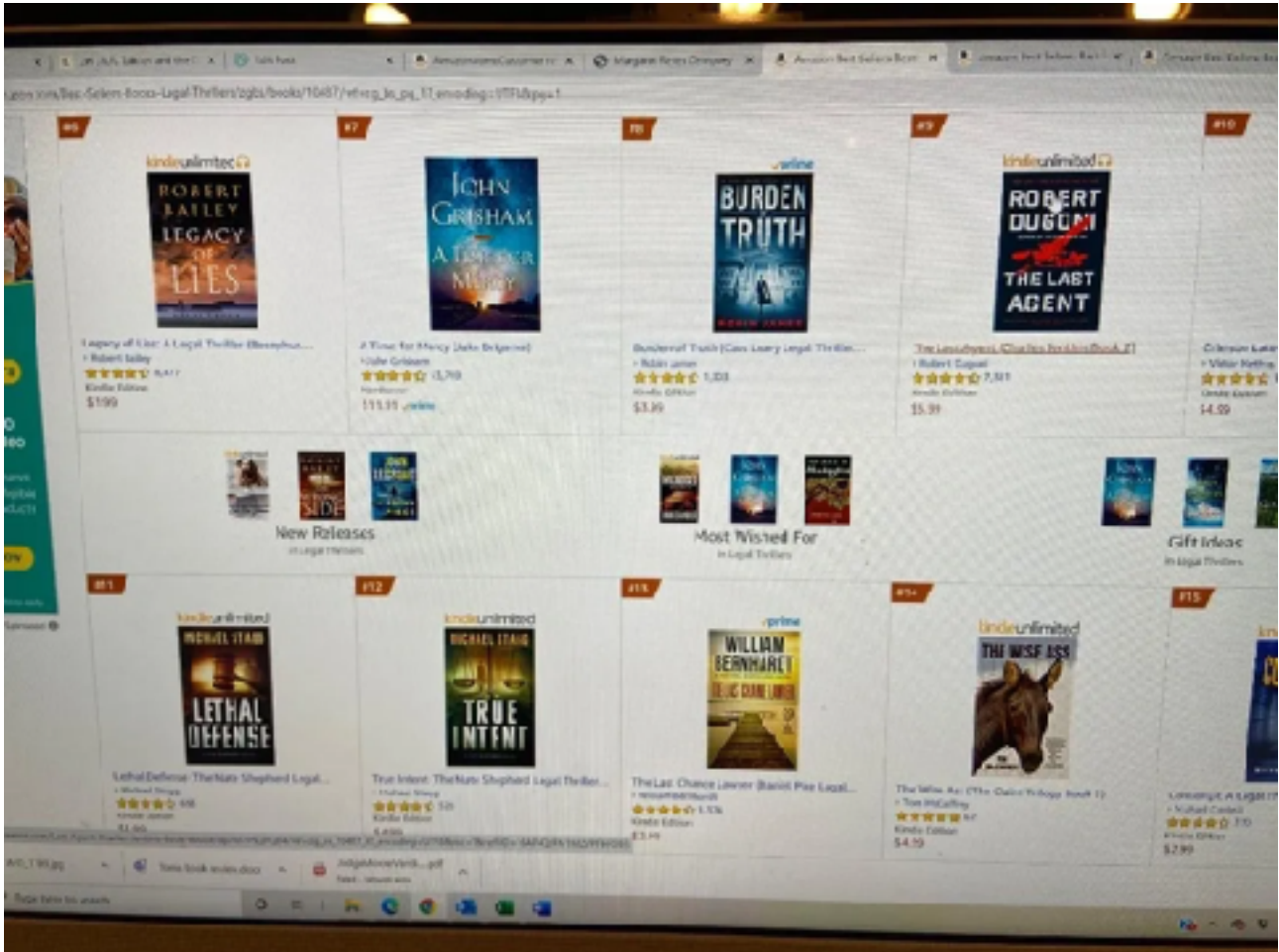
#11 Amazon's Best Sellers in Legal Thrillers (Books)

#23 Amazon's Best Sellers in Legal Thrillers (Kindle)

Heartfelt thanks to Dianne, Cherie and all of the other wonderful readers whose patronage continues to fuel the success of TWA, Thanks also to each new reviewer who makes the time to post their Amazon reviews. On-line whisper campaigns drive new sales. I am nothing without an audience.

# AMAZON CRACK LISTS

May 13, 2021



"Hi, my name is Tommy, and I am an Amazon Crack List Addict."

I'm weak. I'm flawed. But this morning I woke up and found the Kindle version of TWA doing really well on the three Amazon lists:

#2 on Best Sellers in Humorous Dark Comedy

#14 on Best Sellers in Legal Thrillers (books)

#28 on Best Sellers in Legal Thrillers (Kindle)

I know it changes hourly, and this is just a snapshot in time, but I'll take it.

Thank you all of the wonderful readers out there who have been purchasing TWA in both paperback and Kindle form. Thank you all of the wonderful readers out there who have made the time to post those reviews. I am forever in your debt.



# Margaret Reyes Dempsey

May 12, 2021



Just wanted to give a shout out to a fellow author who was kind enough to reach out to me through my website and also to post an amazing review of TWA on Amazon.

Margaret Reyes Dempsey writes psychological thrillers. Her two books, *The Benefactor* and *Mind Games* are available on all major on-line distribution channels, including Amazon. In fact, *Mind Games* is appearing as an Amazon Kindle Countdown deal starting on Friday, 5/14, and you can steal it for 99 cents over the weekend, but you better make

your moves as the price increases over the course of the following week. Don't let this opportunity slip.

Check out her web page: <https://margaretreyesdempsey.com>

Knowing how hard it is to make it in this business, I would appreciate it if all five of my readers check out her novels. I've ordered paperback versions of both books and have scheduled them for my "must read" list starting in June.

For those that follow real football, Margaret's poor husband, Richard, a truly cheeky bugger, is a Portsmouth FC supporter (although I stand by my initial impression that he could easily be a member of a Man U firm), so fingers crossed that they will someday return to the Premier League and play against real talented clubs like Man U and Chelsea.

As an additional factoid, Richard's dad was England's "Living National Treasure," Hugh Lamb, who single handedly kept the Victorian Gothic Horror Story genre alive in England since the 1970s. Absolutely amazing. Love literary families.

<https://margaretreyesdempsey.com/2019/03/03/farewell-to-my-dad-in-law-hugh-lamb/>

# SNOWY MONDAY IN MAY

May 11, 2021

Mondays suck. Rainy Mondays suck worse. Snowy Mondays suck just a bit more. Snowy Mondays in May suck off the charts. Mondays without sunshine are to psychiatrists what candy stores are to dentists. Client creators. Of course, Freud was right, the Irish cannot be psychoanalyzed. We do go to poetry, storytelling and escapism (and often drink) to heal our psyche.

Luckily, my mules were smart enough to get out of the inclement weather and hold up in the heated barn for the duration, which is also where I left their meal bowls so they would not get filled with water and turn their alfalfa and veggies into wasted mush. Although the bunnies and birds love when I have to dump a full bowl in the fields.

Of course the mules sought comfort after we spent twenty minutes in the wet, snowy weather chasing Honey around the back property until Lisa finally could put a halter on her and give Honey her medicine, which was fun. This includes Honey running in close circles around the large but stationary Claire, peeling off her pursuers. Honey can be worse than a spoiled four year old sometimes.

Okay, that's as close as I dare go to feeling blue.

Good news is that Jason Bastemeyer, the mules' farrier, has recovered from his bout with pneumonia and can come by this Sunday morning to trim their hooves. Glad you are feeling better Jason. Highly recommend his equine manipedis. 970-413-4364.

Best news was that my Toyota came back from the shop yesterday. It had been the victim of a sweet young girl's driving error as she backed out of a nose inward parking

space and into our passing vehicle, making the side of the Toyota look like the side of the Titanic. But it looks great again. Thanks to Dominique and Bob at Gerber Body and Glass off 287 in Loveland. 970-612-0370. Dominique, enjoy the novel and thank you for your past service in our military. Bob, thanks for doing a wonderful job on the Toyota and for telling me "I've never met an author before." That was my first time hearing that response. Call me anytime and I will come by and inscribe your copy when it arrives. And thank you Farmer's Insurance for being every bit as good as your interesting commercials. . . . bum de bum, bum bum bum bum!



# Mother's Day Mule Mischief

May 10, 2021



Yesterday, my wife and mother of my children, Lisa, was off working in her thankless but noble job as a nurse. Happy Mother's Day Sweetie! I was on the second day of my weekend honeydew list. At this point, I was cleaning the first floor bathroom (after cleaning the Tower bathroom and before cleaning the entire basement - which is entirely my mess) and my pit Blue starts going crazy at the front door. I figured she was just barking at some people going by with their dogs, a rabbit or the feral cat, Smokey, but she wouldn't let up, so, I came out from the bathroom cursing her high and low in perfect Bronxese and telling her to get back from the door. I had actually left the thick wooden front door open and there was only the glass storm door, which gives you a clear view of the closest end of the driveway.

Yesterday, it gave me a clear view of the closest ends of my two mules heading out my driveway towards Beverly Drive. While I don't have a photo of the event, I chose the above posted recent shot from my office window to give you a visual. I ran outside in my bare feet and then continued hopping and cursing in their general direction as my soft soles hit the sharp gravel on the driveway. But I soldiered on while Claire and Honey, hearing my expletives high tailed it (literally) out my driveway and made a left in the direction of the county road. Luckily, they figured they could ditch me by turning into my nearest neighbors' property and running out to their back pasture (which they must have been coveting over our common fence). So I ran home and grabbed a halter and put on my sneakers. When I returned, I chased the two damned mules around that pasture for 20 minutes feeling like the fat kid in a game of schoolyard tag.

They were in great form. I had not seen either of them run at full gallop for quite some time so it was nice to see they could still do it. But I was not catching either of them. So,

using my extraordinary intellect to combat their ultimately superior physical prowess, I ran home and returned with my halter and four large beets because I knew Claire has a hankering for beets. I walked out to the middle of my neighbors' property and held the beets up in the air so Claire could see them. She then came trotting over to me nice as you please and I managed to get the halter on her. I knew if I led her slowly back out of my neighbors' property towards home Honey would follow (at a distance). So, it took me about twenty more minutes to lead them both back around to my driveway, past my neighbors, Drew, Kelly, and their adorable brood, Quinn, Aida and Felix (Happy Mother's Day Kelly!), who were now standing in front of their home quite amused at the spectacle, (Quinn gave me a shout out - Hi Quinny!). I always put on a great show. Then, I led them both back through the large front gate at the back end of my driveway into their side paddock. The two mules trotted back down to their back property looking quite pleased with themselves, having given the old man a Mother's Day hard time. They would never have done that to Lisa. What's even more remarkable is that the small side gate through which they escaped had its bolt thrown with a lock still on it. Somehow Claire had Houdinied it open without breaking it. Damn mystical mule.

I apologized to Blue for my earlier blue language and gave her some extra treats for her vigilance.

Since I had no proof the event occurred, I received no dispensation from my Honeydew list. But I did get to collect one more story.

# Keurig Cups - And Happy Mother's Day!

May 9, 2021





To all of you mothers out there, especially my dear, sweet, and eternally patient wife, Lisa, Happy Mother's Day. It really is the toughest job in the world. You don't actually have to be a biological Mother to deserve the praise, or even a mother to humans. Birthed, adopted or fostered, all count. Any sentient creature that you have helped raise, nurtured, sacrificed for and given your love to puts you into contention. So well done one and all. Give yourselves a round of applause.

For example, my sister, Veronica, and her spouse, "b," may not have bore children, but they have both given more love and support in help raising my children than anyone could expect from the most perfect mother. So this Day is for you two as well. Thank you.

I drink a lot of coffee. Two or three cups of regular - I love Newman's Own - in the early hours (more if I'm writing) and then decaf - Dunkin' Decaf - during the rest of the day.

Using a practice I instituted long before I came out to Colorado, I collect the used K-cups in a couple of large pails until the containers are over flowing. I just cannot justify throwing away all of that plastic and foil into the garbage to go into a landfill. And every other month I gather them up, sit down outside and shuck each cup like a clam, emptying the coffee into a five gallon Home Depot pail, tossing the paper liners into the garbage and the foil tops and plastic cups into a recycling bag. I then take the used coffee and, employing a gardening technique I stole from Spaghetti, I place mounds of coffee around the base of whatever trees or plants I'm focusing on to use as fertilizer. Evidently the coffee is rich in nutrients that plants can use. I've been using the last year's worth of coffee around the five apple saplings I have been growing in what I have called "Big Eddie's Orchard," which sits in a perfect spot in a blank

corner patch of property protected by the wind by structures and yet which gets almost a full day's direct sunlight. I have two different kinds of apple tree, so that they can cross-pollinate. Last summer a couple of them actually bore fruit (which Claire got to share in) and this year they have all made it through the winter and are all budding nicely.

The only problem is that the shucking process takes about three hours of a weekend every couple of months. Some people consider it a waste of time. I find the repetitive hand movements, which I have it down to a science, to be therapeutic. And no sea creature is harmed in the process. Now the thing is that while the K-cups all have that little recycle triangle on their bottom, no. 5 it seems, there is no guaranty that they are treated as such by the Waste Management Company I use. However, they have been collecting them with my other recycling for the past four years (time flies) without giving me any snarky letters telling me not to do it, so I'm hoping for the best.

Honestly, I'm so into recycling, which is only collected every other week here, that I only have enough actual garbage (which is collected weekly) to put it out every other week when I put out the recycling, which is always more than three times the amount of the garbage I put out.

And yes, K-cup shucking is time consuming and a pain in the ass, and sometimes (like last night), after a day of it, my hands cramp up. But since the coffee drinking in this convenient fashion is my choice, for just my pleasure, I figure, why should the generations that follow me through this world have to pay for it.

Oh, and speaking of addictions, TWA continues to chart well on the Amazon Kindle Charts (No. 2 in Dark Humor and 19 in Legal Thrillers). So thank you all for your continued patronage and for those kind readers who take the time to



post those glowing reviews. As I said, I check both every morning.

# The Claire Trilogy

May 8, 2021



When I sat down to write TWA, I wrote it as a self-contained whole. I knew that I had more Claire and Jimmy related stories in my head, but since I had no idea whether or not TWA was ever going to be published, I did not plan on writing them. However, once BRW stepped up to publish TWA, in March 2020, I wanted to get all of the Claire centric stories out, each new one building off the prior stories.

Once AAA went into the hopper (due out 12/23/21) I wanted to make sure the trilogy was completed. You see, when you get to my age, in the world we live in, there are no

guarantees of tomorrow. I would have had enormous regret leaving this energy plain without having finished this story, so I have now completed the third installment of the trilogy, KMAG.

Reagan Rothe, my magnificent publisher (and his equally talented team), did not know any of this when he read and agreed to publish TWA. He believed that he had a strong, stand alone novel on his hands, but that it could easily have been a one-off. After TWA was in the hopper, I told Reagan that I was writing AAA as a sequel, and he agreed to consider it at the right time. Once TWA took off out of the gate (indeed before its release date), the right time became his last open slot in 2021, just before Christmas. The man is an accessible publishing genius.

Now AAA could have just been marketed as just the sequel to TWA. But once I had completed KMAG, I wanted to ensure that the AAA marketing tied the entire story together as a trilogy. So that AAA could build off of the strength of TWA from the moment it appeared for pre-sales, and at the same time allow its potential readers to know that there was another book in the pipeline to complete the trilogy. So all three books would build off the strength and existence of each other.

I have been sharing that information in these blogs, so I knew at least 5 people understood the game plan. It was risky because I started blogging just before TWA was released but after I had already written AAA. I had not written KMAG, but I knew if I publicly committed to doing it, I would do it. So I did and I have.

As I have been completing the housekeeping part of putting AAA to publishing bed, I have been discussing my marketing thoughts with Reagan. Yesterday, Reagan put those thoughts into action when he revised the Amazon web

pages for TWA and committed to the marketing concept that TWA is the first book in a Trilogy. In another leap of faith, he asked me what I wanted to call the Trilogy. I gave him my thoughts, figuring his marketing team would make the call by the time AAA hit the pre-sale market. This morning, I woke up to find that Reagan already had changed the web pages for TWA to read as follows:

# The Wise Ass (The Claire Trilogy Book 1).

Both Claire and I are thrilled. Thank you Reagan.

# Older New Writers

May 7, 2021

If you are still reading my blogs you'll know that I am in my mid sixties. I used to think that was old. Now I just think that is experienced. And I draw upon that wealth of experience to create my fictional worlds and characters.

You write what you know. And what I know now is what it takes to spend decades as a husband to one woman, a father to three very different children who are now, themselves, all successful adults, a grandfather, a friend to many people and animals along the way, and an attorney in the entertainment field. I have walked with peasants and kings, rock stars and construction workers. I have cleaned toilets, washed dishes, stocked shelves, waited tables, bartended, hauled wheelbarrows and tried legal cases. I have talked to the dead through psychics, and I have seen ghosts. I have experienced real magik in this world. This path has provided many experiences *that were not available to draw upon when I was a "young" writer. It has given me a perspective I just did not have as a young man. I may have always had the talent and passion for this profession, but now I finally have something to write about. And to tell you the truth, I think this is one of the reasons TWA is so popular. The protagonist is an older man who, despite having what many would say was already an interesting life and should be settling down, instead engages in new, life changing adventures in his sixties. There is something to be said to have lived in this world and survived. And what that says to my generation is to hang on, we are not dead yet. We can still find love, friendship, and adventure. We still have some fight left in us. We are still beautiful. As a*

*matter of fact, that we are still standing after so many decades in this crazy world is a testament that we have survived life's many attempts to take us out. Many a lot younger, brighter, stronger, better educated and more talented than we, are not here to make that claim. And there is some satisfaction in that.*

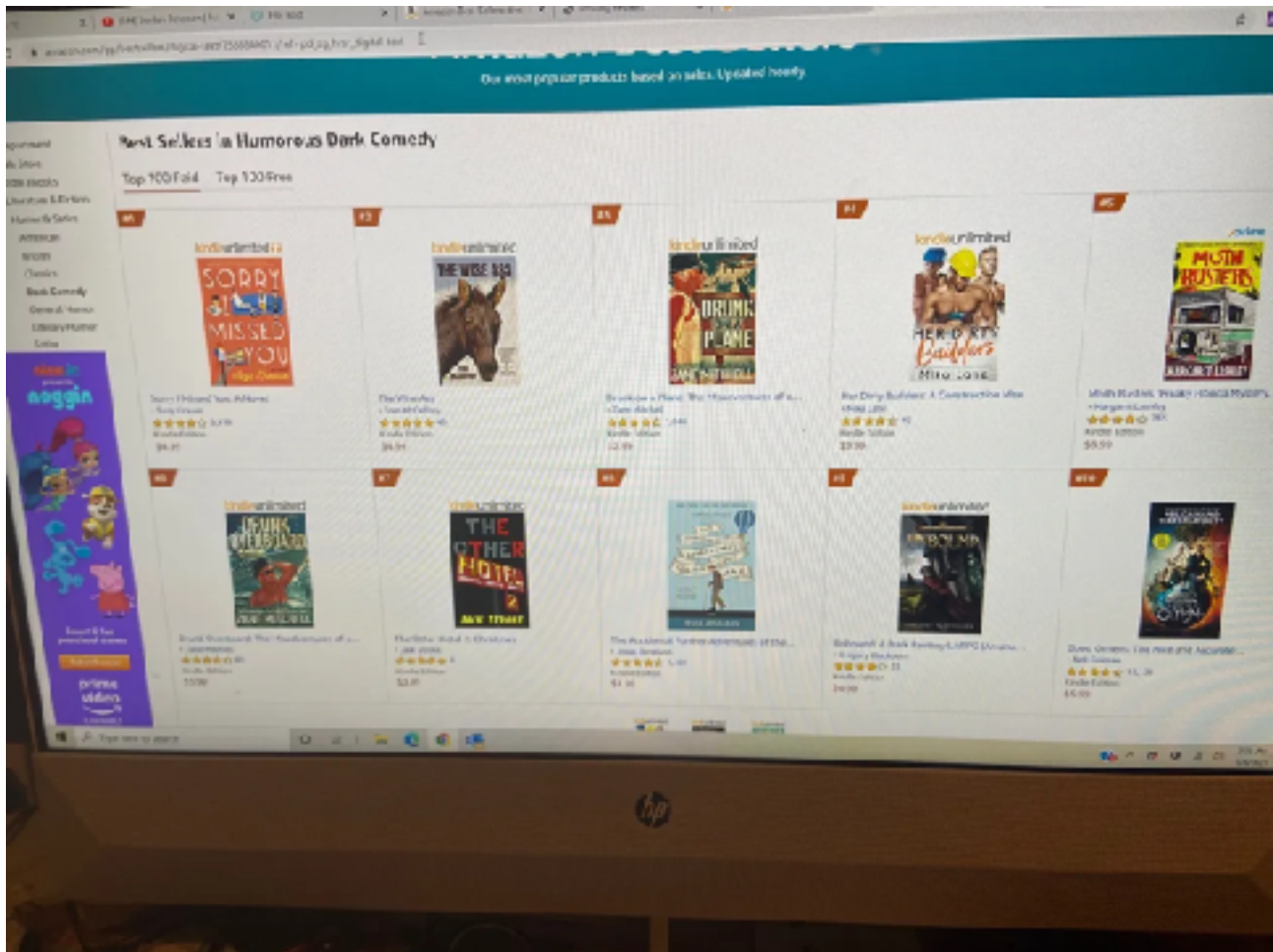
*That is why I love to see other more experienced retreads breaking into the literary world. You don't have to be as old as I am to make the list. You just have to have put in your time doing other things before you grab the golden ring.*

*Some examples for me are Elizabeth Allison and her "Emily" based series, Sara Read and her "Johanna" series and Christy Cooper-Burnett and her "Christine Stewart" time travelling series. You go ladies (maybe an anachronistic term but I'll own it). Respect.*

*So to the rest of you potential retreads out there, go for it. It doesn't have to be making it as a writer. Find something that speaks to your soul and go after it. Travel, paint, learn a new skill or language. Volunteer. Mentor someone younger. Channel your passion. You have earned that right. Why should the young folk have all the fun? Whatever you do, to quote DT, "[d]o not go gentle into that good night. . . ."*

# WELCOME TO AVIS TOWN - WE TRY HARDER

May 6, 2021



Thrilled to wake up to find that TWA is ranked #2 on Amazon's Humorous Dark Comedy List. Must have been a good closing at the end of the day, yesterday, as it has also dropped overnight to #18 Best Sellers Legal Thriller (in Books) and #40 Best Sellers Legal Thriller (in Kindle Store). I received a new 5 star review from "Bob" yesterday, which mentioned all of the various genres TWA appeals to and supports my hypothesis in yesterday's post that there is

some correlation between a steady stream of new strong reviews and upticks in my placement on the lists. I'm sure there are many more factors that go into getting a potential reader to the TWA home page on Amazon but if you arrive at someone's front door for a party and you peek through the window to see everyone inside having a great time, you are more likely to want to stick around and enjoy yourself.

So, thank you "Bob" and all of the other wonderful readers that took the time to give me 5 stars and provide a complimentary post about TWA. With any luck, there will continue to be more to come.



# Posting Reviews

May 5, 2021

I'm a big fan of posting reviews on the items I purchase on Amazon. I'll even answer those follow-up questions that are sometimes asked because I think it is important to help another purchaser out with making a decision based often only on faith alone in the world-wide marketplace. I will not post a bad review, because opinions are so personal, I do not want to take a shot at someone just because something they've created did not work for me. As my grandmother, Posie, would say, "if you can't say something nice . . . . " That's what the return button is for.

It can be lonely out there, and posting reviews is my way of telling the seller that they are on the right track and should not give up.

I read every single review that is posted about TWA. I adore those that personalize the review and talk about how the book made them feel part of the story. That was the game plan. I wanted to make a reader feel like they are sitting around a table with friends in their favorite pub having a few drinks and a good time and I come rushing in, all out of breath, throw myself into the one empty seat at the table, and begin "You'll never guess what just happened . . . . " I want each one of you to come along for the ride.

I also love to see when a reviewer responds to something that is unique to their own backgrounds. Sometimes its the subtle references to the magical quantum physics, or the Celtic folklore, or the Latin phrases, or the humorous quips.

Sometimes its the fact that the novel (and the entire Claire Trilogy) is dominated by very strong female characters or that the novel is LGBT friendly. That is the world I draw

from. Almost everyone likes the mafia angle and courtroom drama. Thank you Tony Soprano for humanizing the former, Law and Order for dramatizing the latter. For some, its the many different love stories. What can be better than love?

No matter how you slice it, it drives everything. Finally, many of the reviewers mention that they wish they could be part of a group like the merry band of misfits that inhabit the Claire Trilogy universe. And that is why I write it, so that for those few moments each day you are engrossed in the novels, you are a part of that universe. You are right there with me watching the story unfold around us. And if for that brief amount of time, I have helped you escape from everyday life, then I have done my job.

I write very visually because that is how the story plays out in my head. I do not think in words, I think in pictures. I just type what I see and hear in my head. I'll play a scene out over and over and over until I've written everything down.

So when I hear that a reviewer can see the story being made into a film, I am thrilled, because I know that I've gotten whatever I've seen in my head down on the paper. It has not all been positive. I've been frustrated by those who will only post less than a 5 star response without an accompanying review, and I do not see the purpose of that except to take an anonymous shot at the writer, just because you can, or someone who writes what reads like a wonderful review and still give it less than 5 stars, because they have some personal ethic that prevents them from awarding the highest mark based on principle alone. I can understand that. I had a professor like that in Lehman College. Told us the first day of class that no matter how well we perform we will not get better than a B. His class was my only B. As I've written in my earlier blogs, I am extremely competitive on a personal level so that kind of

thing is frustrating to me. I've seen one review posted on one of the other reviewing sites that gave me a 2 and 1/2 star review and wrote to say why, and, as much as I disagreed with him (and I did), he was within his first amendment rights to say what he said. I'm just not the author for him. I get that. You can't win them all. But those have been the outliers.

Thank God, the lion share of reviews have been extremely positive, my mother wouldn't have been nicer to me, and I thank each and every one of my reviewers for taking the time to post it. I have been told by some of my readers that reading the posted reviews are what led them to finally make the purchase. So thank you all for helping me make TWA a success. I greatly appreciate it.

# NEVER FORGET THIS IS RURAL

May 4, 2021

My son Luke, his wife Georgie, and their three daughters, Scarlett, Savanna and Stella, live two properties east of me on Beverly Drive. I've seen coyotes and foxes in the general area during my walks, seen a bear running along a close by county road, and I've gotten the warnings about mountain lions and bobcats on the local NextDoor App.

Then we have the eagles, red tail hawks and barn owls that are always overhead at different points of the day and night.

But yesterday one of those predators cleared the fence around Luke's chicken coop and slaughtered his chickens.

He was at work so I went over and cleaned up the carnage so his kids wouldn't accidentally spot it from their back porch.

There was no hole in the fence for a small fox or coyote to slip through, so I'm guessing it was a bobcat or mountain lion who could clear the fence in a leap. An eagle would have carried one of the chickens off and been done with it.

This predator took all their heads like voodoo practitioners and left the decapitated bodies strewn around the enclosure.

Not worried about my mules. They are renowned for their brutal dispatching of predators. They don't run like horses.

They face off and stomp their attackers.

They are kept by ranchers and farmers for the purposes of being a protector of their herds. Even around here, whenever I see large herds of horses on the major sized properties there is always a mule among their midst. There is a scene in season two of the great series, Yellowstone (I cannot more highly recommend binge watching this series),

where a rancher has lost a cow to a predator and Kevin Costner suggests he get himself a mule for protection of the rest of his herd. When the man asks him "What kind of mule?" Costner replies "A mean one."

Claire is not mean, but she's very protective of Honey (my mini mule), who stays within five feet of Claire at all times.

You know when Claire is in watch mule mode, because she makes this repeatedly loud snort, like a bugs bunny bull, and starts to patrol the fence line in a cantor (not the Jewish singing kind from back east). I pity the poor creature who tests her. If the outdoor guard dogs on some of the properties in the area start sounding off at night - it travels like smoke signals to all of the other dogs in the area - and Claire puts up her guard. And I keep a careful eye on Jeter when we go out, although Blue always stays close to Jeter when they are out, so I don't worry too much.

But I have to always remind myself not to get too complacent, because we live in a rural area where our first line of defense from things that go bump in the night is always ourselves.

# Whimsical Statuary

May 3, 2021



In a desperate attempt to avoid the Sunday addendum to the weekend Honeydew list (and my certain death), I distracted my wife with shopping for outdoor statuary to prepare for the spring. Luckily, Lisa is always willing to add to the whimsical statuary we already have around our property, but she is very choosy and there is always a vigorous debate and ultimate compromise (by me). It is hard to locate just the right concrete figures that will stand the test of time and survive Colorado's challenging weather (no resin for this magi). In exchange for the large young girl

with umbrella standing on the crescent moon and two large cement planters (which have to be heavy to withstand the gale force winds that often swoop through the area - last night was a perfect example) that sit on the retaining wall on either side of her along the west side of the below deck patio (we don't put out flowers around here before Mother's Day), I was able to land a sleeping dragon for out front of the house directly below Jack the Spruce (will show in future photos) and two guardian elves for the retaining wall. The Cherub at the far end of the retaining wall, who I named Mary after my mother-in-law, sits overlooking another set of three cement planters, and did a hell of a job watching over wonderful flowers last spring/summer/fall. She also keeps a watch over the back property, and always has Claire and Honey in her sights. Indeed, I often find the mules and cherub conversing over the back fence. I'm hoping Moon Girl provides similar success on the flower front, as she is in charge of the two new planters, and will add some bright colors to the area. Not sure if the two yet unnamed elf brothers are up to the guardian task. Time will tell. I may name the sleeping elf BC, as he shares a languorous appearance with a friend. The new, yet unnamed, sleeping young dragon (with one eye open) sits facing the front door and joins our other dragon "Tolkien" who sits on the other end of the front patio, along with Henri (said with a French accent) the Lion, watching over the far side of the driveway, Tinkerbell and Scarlett, the winged fairies who do a great job with the flowers out front, Buddy, the reclining, retired gnome, injured in the Storm, and Jack the Spruce, watching over the whole crew, adorned with all kinds of colorful trinkets, spinners and wind chimes - that sound whether or not the wind is blowing. You can feel the magic sitting there during morning coffee, listening to the gurgling water

fountain, and watching the birds enjoy the birdbath on gnome island. You can also watch all of the spinning whirligigs out on the front property. This magical statuary (only kind I will buy) make sure that only true believers pass through our doorway for a visit. I never enter or exit the house without feeling the whimsy, and that feeds my creative juices. I have my eye on a large dragon perched on a tree for the back corner of the front patio, to complete the front patio collection, although I would need the entire Claire Trilogy to appear on the NYT Bestseller list before I could afford that addition (and Lisa to go on a trip to visit the Wallen Witches for week so I can sneak the purchase).

Well, I have been on quite the magical roll, so never say never.



# YESTERDAY WAS A KILLER

May 2, 2021

I hate yard work, especially mowing. I have a riding mower which I have never used because it was borrowed by one of my children and now sits disabled in their back yard. So using a gas powered push mower around a very large front property, including the street edge gully - thank God the mules take care of the back mowing on their own - is an exhausting enterprise. I also had to take all of the deck furniture up from its winter quarters out in the art studio.

And it was 84 degrees.

This is what happens when I finish a writing project. My wife has her Honeydew list waiting to pounce. In all fairness, she waits until I do finish the writing project, but then there are no more excuses. And trust me, I am the master of making excuses. Bone idyll lazy.

But to give my wife her due, she was very nice to me once it was all done and even gave me a second helping of ice cream, and no, that is not a euphemism.

All the more reason to start on my next writing project before the grass grows back.

Good news is that TWA remains strong on the Amazon lists.

# CHRIS GLOVER - PENGUIN PRISON

May 1, 2021



I first met "Coach" Bob Glover back in the 80s. I did some legal work for him, but it was one of those situations where client quickly evolved into a long-term friendship. Bob is a famous long distance runner, inspirational running coach and an author of many books on the subject. <https://www.runnersworld.com/advanced/a20836338/bob-glover-coach-of-new-york>. Those books are pure gold for a

runner. <https://www.amazon.com/Runners-Handbook-Bestselling-Beginning-Intermediate/dp/0140469303>.

For decades, Bob ran the New York Road Runners' running classes leading thousands of would be marathoners over that time throughout the running trails of NYC's Central Park. It was through his intercession that my wife, Lisa, was able to train for and run the four NYC Marathons throughout the early 90s. He is as amazing as he is intense. He demands commitment but he will run through a brick wall for you. Love to his wife Shelly, also an incredible runner, coach and co-author.

Bob has one son who is absolutely famous in his own right - Chris Glover, professionally known as Penguin Prison. Look him up on the internet. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRbHh4qZK-7tuVy71-mg2wA>.

I first met Chris, through Bob, in the early 90s when my kids were being coached by Bob in an athletic program he ran at Asphalt Green in NYC's upper east side. Chris was an amazing runner and athlete as well as a talented musician.

My children, Luke, Jaclyn and Mark, were also amazing athletes (got it from their mother - but I could spot her talent so I get some credit) and participated in Bob's program.

Bob was instrumental in their general success as athletes and continued to train Jackie right up through her stint as a D1 basketball player, runner, and swimmer. Anyway, since we were raising Renaissance children, they also spent time being trained in the performing arts (as well as martial arts -- shout out to Pete Allende and Hector Maldonado - White Tigers Dojo on Avenue B) -- The Lee Strasberg Theatre & Film Institute (on 15th) -- and Luke attended Professional Performing Arts School in Manhattan in seventh and eighth grade, where Chris Glover and Alicia Keys were also in residence.

Anyway, Chris stayed with the performing arts and went on to study at Bard College, an elite, private, liberal arts college in the Catskill region overlooking the Hudson River in NYS.

It is known for its creative arts emphasis and has turned out many successful artists, including Chris Glover.

As I mentioned, Chris went on to become the talented artist Penguin Prison (<https://youtu.be/oELdVEIY0tM>). He is one of those rare musical polymaths that -- like Prince - writes his own music and lyrics, and plays most of the instruments on his recordings. He also produces and DJs. He even does voiceover work. He has toured all over the world and I have seen him perform live in Manhattan clubs, and he is electrifying. I love his remix of Lana Del Rey's Classic -- Blue Jeans (<http://raverrafting.com/best-lana-del-rey-remixes/2013/05/20>). Anyway, I just wanted to share that he has a new video out called "All Our Love" which amazingly recreates his appearance as a 12 year old (now as an adult) on Ed McMahon's Star Search. Its a must watch. Check it out.

<https://duckduckgo.com/?>

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