



NEIL TURNER READER'S CLUB

Happy Spring!

We may not quite be there yet, but I'm all in. I hope this finds you well and ready to ditch the parkas, break out the summer clothes, and get those snow tires off the cars! I'm looking forward to the next several months, which will see a new book release and some fun travel plans, including a visit to New York City to attend Thriller Fest, and a Baltic cruise. If any of you are familiar with Riga, Visby, Helsinki, Stockholm, or Kiel, I'd love to hear about your favorite spots to visit there. Do you have travel plans for 2023?

We have book news to share, including a brief excerpt from my upcoming release, *Nowhere to Hide*. I'll also recommend an excellent book and author, pull back the curtain for a quick peek behind the scenes and, as always, a free eBook is up for grabs in our monthly Q & A. You'll find it all below.

Read on!

The latest Tony Valenti news

Hot off the press!

We're in a race to the finish line! In the good news, bad news department, the editing process for *Nowhere to Hide* is taking longer than anticipated. The bad news is that our April 27th release date is in jeopardy, which is why I haven't yet put the novel into presale. The good news is that the delay is allowing me to correct a few weaknesses in the story. As I hope you know, I'm committed to making each novel the best it can be, so it was back to the drawing —writing?—board. We've come up with great fixes that



make the story stronger, so it's all good, *and* it creates tension about the release date. All thriller novels need tension, right? 😊

I'm not yet ready to throw in the towel on the planned release date, but it's dicey. I'll let you know when presale opens. Watch my social media feeds and my Goodreads page. I might even sneak in a quick Reader's Club Update. In the meantime, here's a brief excerpt to whet your appetite:

A pair of Dallas police officers step into our path as Pat answers.

"She has some pictures she wants us to see before court in the—" she begins. With her eyes on her phone, runs right into the larger of the two cops. She stumbles back a couple of steps and looks up in surprise.

"Pat O'Toole?" he asks in a baritone voice.

"That's me."

The cop grabs her arm and turns her out of the line of deplaning passengers, pushing her into an open area behind the gate counter.

I step into the cop's space. "What are you doing?"

His female partner gives me a not-so-gentle push to move me out of the way. "Step aside, sir. This doesn't concern you."

"The hell it doesn't. You don't grab people with no explanation."

The woman cop spins Pat around, pulling her hands behind her. "Patricia O'Toole, you're under arrest for contributing to the delinquency of a minor, aiding and abetting a minor to be unlawfully at large, and child endangerment."

The cop's mountainous partner smirks at me. "There's your explanation, pal."

Pat's eyes meet mine, wide and filled with fright. I imagine mine are filled with rage.

I block the way. "What the hell is this about?"

The arresting officer shoulders past me, pushing Pat ahead of her. "Not your concern."

The second cop places himself squarely between me and Pat.

"I'm her lawyer," I blurt before looping around him and jogging to get ahead of Pat.

The woman cop sneers as she slows and comes nose-to-nose with me. "Then you know better than to interfere with a

peace officer performing her duty. You can see your sweetheart after she's booked."

Well aware of the volcanic eruption building within me, Pat meets my gaze and shakes her head. "Don't, Tony."



A peek behind the curtain

Crime Writers of Canada

What is Crime Writers of Canada? It's many things: support to writers at all stages of their writing journeys; a source of visibility for authors; craft and publishing advice; legal and accounting

advice; publishing professionals, such as editors, designers, agents, and publishers; plus financial management information and tools. CWC advocates on behalf of writers with the government, booksellers, and the publishing industry. Equally important is how it fosters a sense of community among authors, which includes the occasional gathering. Medical plans are even available to full-time authors. If you're an author, check it out. Readers might find the author information and book selections of interest. If you're not in Canada, look for a similar organization in your country. Click on the logo to visit my home page, then browse the site. Note the new crime releases from, you guessed it - Canada.

The Bell in the Lake by Lars Mytting

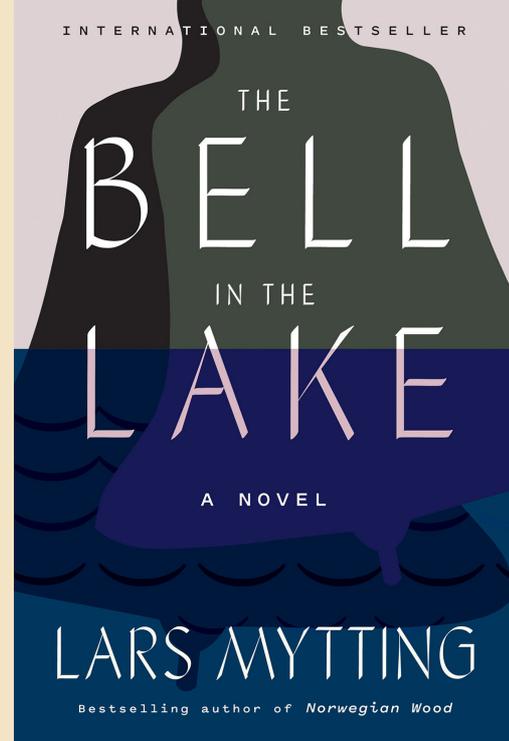
What's Neil reading?

The Bell in the Lake is the first book of a trilogy by Norwegian author Lars Mytting, one of the bright lights of Norwegian literature. It's a historical novel with a mystical twist, centered on the central role its stave church plays in village life. Countless mysteries are secreted within its walls and have been entrusted to

its priests over many generations, some of which come to light with explosive implications for the village and its inhabitants. The church itself offers a fascinating glimpse into Norway's past; its fate is a powerful statement on the price we pay to bulldoze our way to modernization. The characters are engaging and multi-faceted, the story is sprawling in its scope and ambition, yet the author draws you tightly into the milieu of the little mountain village at the center of events. In as large a compliment as I can pay to a historical novel,

The Bell in the Lake brings to mind Ken Follet's masterpiece, *The Pillars of the Earth*—high praise indeed!

I'd be remiss not to mention the excellent translation by Deborah Dawkin. I often explore European works and sometimes find myself pausing to puzzle out the meaning of a passage. I came across no such hiccups while reading *The Bell in the Lake*. It takes a rare talent to produce such a smooth, flowing translation.



Win a free book!

Monthly Readers Q & A

Q: What are common traps that aspiring writers fall into, such as writer's block, and how can we avoid or overcome them?

A: Gosh, this is going to be a long-winded answer. I'm going to reply with a few tips. I hope the problems and questions they

address will be self-evident, and that at least a few people find them useful.

Tip 1. The best way to learn how to write is by reading and writing, every day if possible. Don't wait for the muse to strike before you start writing, and don't fuss over every sentence and paragraph as you go. The goal is to *complete* the story, which many people fail to do. There will be plenty of time and opportunity to polish the writing during the editing process, which segues nicely into...

Tip 2. Self-edit ruthlessly. If a passage, scene, or chapter doesn't advance the story in a meaningful way, it has to go. I know how hard this can be, but it needs to be done. As you write more, you'll feel less trepidation about taking chunks out of a story. I park my excerpts for future use, which lessens the sting of ripping them out of my manuscript. Authors often refer to this process as "killing your babies." A bit over the top perhaps, but we writers tend to be a little protective of our work. I've removed entire storylines from novels, and have used many of them in subsequent books. Hack away!

Tip 3. Go easy on yourself, particularly when assessing your work. I'm very hard on myself—probably *too* hard at times—and this is true of most writers I know. You'd be surprised at some of the big names who express the same doubts with every book: *Oh dear, this is awful!* It's somewhat comforting to know that authors who sell millions of books suffer from the same insecurities we little folk lose sleep over.

Tip 4. Seek out *constructive* criticism through a writing critique group or something similar, then pay attention to the *constructive* feedback you receive. Expect to discover that you've made mistakes, we all do. Don't get defensive, and don't sweat it—it's all fixable. Beware of people who use critiquing to demonstrate how clever they are, often doing so at your expense. Never go back to people like that, but do sift through their comments; you'll often find a useful point or two. In time, you'll gather a group of people who will deliver an honest appraisal of what works and what doesn't work. If every reader struggles with the same thing, you've clearly gotten something wrong. Address it. Even if only one reader has an issue with something, pay attention to that, too. Perhaps you can tweak the prose to clarify that passage to remove ambiguity (unless it's intended). I find it helpful to recall how these hiccups affect me as a reader. We never want the reader to be pulled out of the story to ponder our meaning.

In conclusion, I'm going to return to Tip 1. There are plenty of excellent books about how to write, good courses on the topic, and an array of online groups devoted to writing. You may find a good group at your local community college or library. By all means, take advantage of this, but don't get lost in it. Writing fiction is a craft, and as is the case with most crafts, we learn best by doing. So, park your butt in front of your keyboard, typewriter, or pad of paper, and write.

Class dismissed!

Please send your questions via the *Contact* page on my [website](#) or send an email to info@neilturnerbooks.com. If you send an email, please type *Reader's Club Q & A* in the subject line. Thank you!

A late-breaking news note: I may join a first-in-series promotion with a number of other mystery, suspense, and thriller authors. The promotion will run throughout April. I'm still investigating the included novels to make sure I'm comfortable recommending them. If so, the binge readers among us may discover a treasure trove of new series. More to come ... maybe!

That's it for this month. Thanks for being a member of our Reader's Club!

Take care, be well, and happy reading,

Neil



Neil Turner Books

<https://www.neilturnerbooks.com>

332 - 900 Greenbank Road, Ottawa

Ontario K2J 4P6 Canada



[Privacy Policy](#)

You received this email because you signed up on our website or made a purchase from us.

[Unsubscribe](#)