



NEIL TURNER READER'S CLUB

Greetings,

I hope this finds all of you well (and warm!). Has anyone seen the sun lately? We're getting to that time of year in Ottawa when daylight hours grow significantly fewer each day as we count down to Winter Solstice. Argh. Looking on the bright side, we have it much better than those poor souls above the Arctic Circle who are lucky to get so much as a glimpse of the sun during the depths of winter. Mind you, they're treated to spectacular Aurora Borealis displays on a regular basis. Speaking of which, how many of you have been treated to one or more unexpected Northern Lights shows this year? As always, this month's Reader's Club Update gives you the lowdown on the latest deals to be had on the Tony Valenti Thrillers, and we'll peek behind the curtain to explore a snippet of writing craft. It's time to break out your recipe books, folks! That's right—it's time for another one of our periodic Food Fight features, with a gift card up for grabs. And to wrap things up, we'll announce a winner *and* offer someone else a chance to win a free book in our monthly Q & A feature. Read on!

The latest Tony Valenti news

Hot off the presses

We'll start with an update on the progress of the ninth Tony Valenti Thriller. The story continues to inch its way forward—let's hope the wait is



worth it! The audiobook of *The Secrets She Buried* will be released on November 19th, but you don't have to wait that long to line up your copy as it's currently in presale. Check it out [here](#). If eBooks are your thing, we have some deals for you too! *A House on Liberty Street* was selected as a Kindle Monthly Deal in the Australian

Kindle store, where you can pick it up for only \$1.49 AUD until November 30th (or read it for free in Kindle Unlimited). *Nowhere to Hide* will be a Kindle Countdown Deal in the United States and the United Kingdom from November 22nd through the 29th ... I have griped to Amazon about the lack of Kindle Countdown deal availability elsewhere—I imagine they’ve jumped right on that. If you’re looking for new books that are finished and available, check out the hot new releases from my writing pals Steve Penner and Bonnie Traymore.



Win an Amazon gift card

Food Fight!

There are food sampling events (rib fests and the like) in many places these days. The event pictured here is the Taste of Chicago—Yum!—everyone

should go at least once! For those of you who haven’t heard of such a thing, it’s an outdoor festival where local food vendors set up booths to sell samples of their goodies. While the City of Chicago’s event is massive; most of these festivals are more modest in nature. I’m looking to craft something along these lines for Cedar Heights, to take place in Independence Park during Book 9—a festival that invites professional and a select few amateur kitchens to set up. Our fictional event will feature awards for the best commercial, amateur, and overall dishes. And that’s where you come in! I’m looking for a recipe that can be served up by an amateur entrant, something that will knock everyone’s socks off. It could be an ethnic dish, a unique twist on an old favorite, or an extraordinary family specialty. Send me anything you think fits the bill. The winner will see their recipe in the novel—spoiler alert!—their entry is *guaranteed* to win! If our winner wants to see his or her name in print (or the name of someone else they choose), no problem! I’ll either create a character by that name to win the event, or an existing character will win and name check *our* contest winner (or designate) as the source of the recipe. As I haven’t yet finalized this scene, I’m not yet sure how that detail will develop. But wait! Our winner will also receive an Amazon gift card! Please submit entries with the subject line “Food Fight!” to info@neilturnerbooks.com.

Take a peek behind the scenes

Behind the Curtain

I sometimes get questions about writing craft, which are fun to answer. I try to address topics I think might be of interest to readers as well as writers. I'm going to tackle the topic of foreshadowing here, something I'm sure we're all familiar with



to some extent. Foreshadowing is a literary device (commonly used in many art forms) that suggests or plants the idea that something is going to happen further along in the story. Foreshadowing is generally used to create or enhance narrative tension. You'll often find it at the end of a scene or chapter, as it helps draw the readers into the next scene. Sometimes foreshadowing is quite obvious and immediately creates tension—e.g. *how was I to know this would be the last time I would see my beloved alive!* It can also be very subtle, planting a seed that in retrospect helps us make sense of a future event as or after it happens. One of my favorite ways to use the device is by having someone do something that doesn't seem to fit or make sense, perhaps causing the reader to wonder *why* that just happened. After all, it could have disastrous consequences—better read on to see how it plays out! As a reader, it can be fun to know more than the character does and/or to know that something is off kilter—we don't know exactly what it means, but we *know* something is afoot. A classic example is where a character is about to open a door behind which the reader knows trouble awaits. "Don't open the door!" we want to shout. Of course, we readers also like to be surprised, don't we? So, it can be fun as a writer to set up that scene and then add a twist that readers don't see coming: the characters already know one another, they're secretly in cahoots, it's the person entering who poses the real danger ... the possibilities are endless. As much as I love foreshadowing, the fact that I write the Tony Valenti thrillers in first person, present tense point of view really restricts my options. After all, with Tony as the narrator and the story unfolding in the moment, he can only be aware of what has been revealed to him at any given point in time, so he absolutely *cannot* deliver the line I used above to kick off my answer—*how was I to know this would be the last time I would see my beloved alive!* Masochist that I am, I kind of enjoy the additional challenge. Have a peek at some of my chapter endings to see if you can spot examples of foreshadowing.

Win a free eBook

Reader's Club Q & A



What's on your mind? Ask away! I'll answer one reader question in every Reader's Club Update. If I choose yours, I'll send you a free eBook copy of one of my novels! 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!

Here's this month's question and answer:

Q: "I would like to ask if you have done anything unusual in the name of research?" Great question, and thanks to reader Debby for submitting it.

A: Like many writers, I now do the majority of my research online. I've gone down some rabbit holes with topics and people I abhor, reading biographies, interview or testimony transcripts and the like—many by some pretty appalling human beings. It's been frightening at times, but also instructive. I've gained a deep appreciation for the people who confront the world's ugliness and pain in ways many of us can't imagine. I also interview people to get a feel for how events impact them; police, reporters, paramedics, even a doctor or two. I want to get inside their skin in an effort to understand what they feel and experience in the moment, allowing me to relate that emotion to readers. Is success a jubilant Eureka! moment, or something quietly satisfying? What if they hit a dead end or a lead doesn't work out, or perhaps they lose a patient? What do they feel in those moments? Frustration, anger, perhaps a sense of forward momentum if they learn something useful in the process? Then there's the usual crime author search for unique ways to kill people and get away with it, how to destroy evidence, misdirect investigators, frame others ... all of which leads to a tired old writer joke: *I never want the police to see my internet search history!* At the risk of disappointing Debby, I'm afraid I haven't (yet) killed anyone to test a thesis ... well, at least that's my story and I'm sticking to it. 😊

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

Take care, be well, and happy reading (or listening!),

Neil



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332 - 900 Greenbank Road, Ottawa

Ontario K2J 4P6 Canada

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