

Jennifer Lyons Literary Agency 2026 Frankfurt HIGHLIGHTS

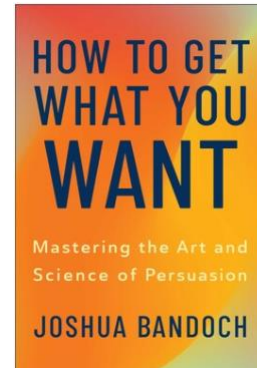
HOW TO GET WHAT YOU WANT

Mastering the Art and Science of Persuasion

Nonfiction

Joshua Bandoch

BenBella Books, Spring 2026 (Hardcover) Brilliance, (Audio book)



- High ratings on Amazon (4.7) and Goodreads (4.66)
How to Get What You Want was ranked the #1 new book on negotiation on Amazon.
- Over 5,000 copies sold
- Translations underway in Spanish, Portuguese, and Korean.
- Audiobook published through Brilliance.
- Bandoch has been featured on over 30 business, leadership, negotiation, communication, general interest, and public policy podcasts around the world, including *Art of Charm*, *Influence Anyone*, *Brainy Business*, and *The American Business Podcast*, with more scheduled.
- Positive reviews in places like *Library Journal*, *Communications Intelligence*, and *Book Freak*.
- Bandoch has been invited to deliver keynotes and workshops on the book to corporate clients, universities, elected officials, public policy organizations, and nonprofits.
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“This book gives readers confidence to advocate for themselves, whether interacting with family members, business associates, or even politicians. A solid roadmap to successful persuasion techniques.” —Library Journal

Joshua Bandoch, Ph.D. brings a unique blend of mastery applying insights from a wide range of fields to any persuasion situation and extensive practical communications work as a speechwriter, consultant, elite university instructor, and policy advocate as Head of Policy at the Illinois Policy Institute to teaching anyone how to become a persuasion genius.

As politics and technology increasingly divide us, we’re losing the ability to communicate and persuade others. In political discussions,

we dismiss anyone who doesn’t think like us, making constructive conversation, let alone agreement, impossible. As technology gets better every day at sucking us in, we’re forgetting how to even talk to each other. Far from being persuasive, we push people away or don’t even interact with them in the first place. Most books on persuasion either double down on how to make your point and move on if someone doesn’t agree or offer surface tactics that quickly dissipate.

HOW TO GET WHAT YOU WANT is different. It combines groundbreaking research with practical experience persuading at the highest levels to give you a fresh approach that will get you what you want and need when it matters. It has three simple steps. Adopt the “persuader’s mindset.” Use knowledge of how our brains work to your advantage. And apply tested techniques to any situation. Whether you’re trying to get a job, negotiate a salary, have a tough conversation, reduce your rent, deal with a lawyer, score a great price on a new car, or get a free room upgrade at check in, Persuasion Genius teaches you how to navigate any political, professional, or personal situation more effectively to get what you want and need each and every day.

Excerpt from HOW TO GET WHAT YOU WANT

Take a piece of paper, roll it up into a ball, throw it at someone, and try to make it stick to them. Did it? Nope. It just annoyed and maybe offended them.

And yet, that’s how we usually try to “persuade.” We take our logic, roll it up, then throw it at others, certain it’ll stick. If we hit someone in the head with our logic-rock, we’ll knock something loose and make them start thinking like us. If we just collect enough data, discern the “truth,” get our logic locked and loaded, then fire it at our opponent, we’ll win, making them a loser in the process, which will motivate them to join us and become a winner.

Totally unrelated question: Has anyone ever persuaded you of anything this way? Nope.

We like to think persuasion is a “rational” endeavor. After all, if reason doesn’t guide us, what does? Irrationality? The “Age of Reason” that reigned a few centuries ago during the Enlightenment held up reason as the ideal, and the best means of improving the world.

There’s just one minor problem with viewing “persuasion” as primarily “rational”: it fundamentally misunderstands the human mind, so it’s counterproductive. An abundance of neuroscience and psychology research definitively shows reason doesn’t come first in our cognitive processes. Which means our persuasive endeavors can’t start with it.

The crucial upshot of this misunderstanding is that we focus on being “right,” which prevents of us from making a difference, which is what persuasion is all about.

So: How does persuasion happen?

It starts with feelings. How come? Because our cognitive sequence always (yes, always) works like this: We feel first, then reason. Reason is never first. All human brains are wired this way.

Sure,
sometimes we feel then, a fraction of a second later, reason. Often, though, there’s a notable delay

before reasoning kicks in. Reasoning frequently arrives too late to matter in what we think, say,
and
do; sometimes, it never arrives. Just think of a time you were so overcome with anger you could
only
feel, and did something you still regret.

About the Author

[Joshua Bandoch](#) is the Head of Policy at the Illinois Policy Institute. His policy research focuses on empowering people to rise out of poverty, increasing social mobility, improving housing affordability, and removing barriers to opportunity (e.g. burdensome regulations). His writing has appeared in popular outlets like *National Review*, *Real Clear Policy*, *Real Clear Markets*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Crain's Chicago Business*, *The Washington Examiner*, *The Washington Times*, and *Discourse*. He is the author of *The Politics of Place: Montesquieu, Particularism, and the Pursuit of Liberty* (University of Rochester Press, 2017). He was a postdoctoral fellow at Brown University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He earned his bachelor's in Government and Politics from the University of Maryland, College Park, and his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Notre Dame.

Agent: Jennifer Lyons

Materials Available: Finished manuscript

Rights sold: World English

International rights sold: Korean, Spanish, Portuguese

Audio book: World, English

SALTWATER COWBOYS: A NOVEL

Elizabeth Becker

Zibby Books, Spring 2027

- Atmospheric and emotionally rich novel about facing grief, owning up to the past, and the healing power of coming home
- Inspired by the *Misty of Chincoteague* books by Marguerite Henry and the legend of the *Juno*, a Spanish ship filled with gold that sank off the coast of Virginia in 1802, leaving millions of dollars on the bottom of the sea, and one survivor.
- For fans of *The Cliffs* by J. Courtney Sullivan and *The Last Romantics* by Tara Conklin

JACKET ART TK

A disgraced memoirist returns to her childhood home off the Eastern Shore of Virginia to confront her siblings and grief and to rescue her career, but uncovers a secret history related

to a sunken Spanish ship that may hold the key to professional redemption and personal salvation.

Frances Lunn grew up running free on Assateague Island, a place made famous by wild ponies and haunted by whispers of lost treasure in her bloodline. Frances hasn't been back in years, not since the success of her best-selling memoir was cut short after her sister Maeve told a journalist it was nothing more than lies. With the 100th anniversary of the annual pony swim approaching, their dad's old friend and infamous treasure hunter Murphy Sullivan, resurfaces. He's looking for a map in a Lunn family bible, and Frances' brother begs her to help him get there first, promising he can convince Maeve to retract her statement. Hoping to rebuild her reputation and put rumors of the treasure to rest for good, she agrees.

But just like when they were kids, Frances is swept up in the hunt for clues, chasing the treasure without considering the consequences. As they hit another dead end, secrets between the siblings begin to surface, and the past Frances has tried to outrun comes rushing in with the tide. Face-to-face with the siblings she abandoned and the love she left behind, Frances will have to confront the loss of her father if there's any hope of making amends with those she loves.

Excerpt from SALTWATER COWBOYS

Assateague belonged to the wild things, and we were the wildest of them all.

We raced into the foaming ocean like sandpipers, oblivious to the cold of the Atlantic even in the heart of winter. We held court with the horses who roamed the island in bands, who like us, had saltwater in their veins, who swam through the black night of a shipwreck to emerge in the pink dawn, wet and shivering but free.

We were at home amidst the bayberry thickets, the pine strewn clearings where gnarled cedars stood like sentinels, in the marsh mud and shimmering green cord grass, on land that shifted and migrated with the tides.

We were the rulers of our own dominion, feasting on the clams we found with our toes, on plump, briny oysters, on the tiny silver fish we caught in nets in the shallows, on the sweet ripe blackberries that left our hands sticky and stained dark purple.

Regal herons and egrets considered us their equals. Mallards allowed us to pet their jeweled feathers. Even the stallions, feral and unbroken, turned docile in our presence, as gentle as house cats.

Our childhood was vast and incandescent, without boundaries. We pitied the children who lived in yards and playgrounds, who didn't run free on soft white dunes, or kayak across still blue water dotted with moon jellies, or sit under skies overflowing with stars, who had never touched a single part of the world truly wild.

And it was our salvation. The narrow strip of sand, with its gentle coves and inlets, the barrier island that had protected Chincoteague for centuries from countless storms. It sheltered us too, when my father went out on his boat on a June day that started with blinding clarity, only to turn dark and violent as a storm careered across the ocean.

It became our home when he never came back.

About the Author

Elizabeth Becker is the author of *THE MOONLIGHT HEALERS* (Graydon House, February 2025), which has sold internationally in Spanish (Harper-Spain), Portuguese (Harper-Brazil), Russian (Azbooka-Atticus), and Serbian (Balans Knjige) – Handled by Harlequin). A former pediatric nurse and Pushcart Prize-nominated writer, she has worked as a correspondent for *Richmond Magazine* and the *Richmond Times Dispatch*, and her award-winning essays have been featured on national sites including [OprahDaily.com](https://www.oprah.com), *Motherwell*, *Scary Mommy*, *Motherly*, *Swamp Pink* (formerly *Crazy Horse*), and *Winning Writers*. She received a degree in creative writing from the College of Charleston before earning a bachelor's degree in nursing. She lives in Charlottesville, Virginia, with her husband and four young children. Find her on Instagram, @elizabethbeckerbooks.

Agent: Jennifer Lyons

Materials Available: Finished manuscript

Rights sold: World English;

International rights sold: Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian

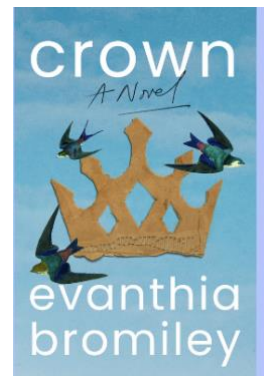
CROWN: A NOVEL

Evanthia Bromiley

Grove Press, June 17 2025

Nominated in 2025 by National Book Critics Circle for fiction

A suspenseful, lyrical debut novel tracking three days leading up to the eviction of a pregnant single mother and her nine-year-old twins from a trailer park in the American Southwest.



Jude Woods is on the brink of eviction. Pregnant, jobless, and mother to Evan and Virginia, she has three days to box up her family's life and find a safe place to live. In the Woods' quiet trailer park, neighbors keep to themselves, but it's no secret Jude and her twins are in jeopardy—the eviction notice slapped on their front door like a white shout.

When Jude's contractions flare just as their power is shut off, she rushes to the hospital instructing Evan and Virginia to hide in their car in the surrounding fields. If the children are discovered outside alone, they will be taken from her. Jude labors through the night in a crowded emergency room while the twins, desperate in the heat of the cramped car and spurred by their wild imaginations, strike out along the dangerous riverbank in search of a new home for their growing family.

As night hurtles toward morning lockout, both mother and children reckon with what it means to live and dream in a modern America insistent on slamming doors. Poetic and distinct, the voices of the three Woods open to a chorus of waitresses and oil men, veterans and graffiti artists as CROWN trawls the laundromats, public bus systems, and waiting rooms of a forgotten blue-collar city. In this mesmerizing, singular debut, the tenacious spirit of a young family and their community comes to profound and moving life.

Praise for CROWN

"Lyrical, unflinching, and emotionally compelling. Evanthia Bromiley has a particular strength in the way she portrays this family in jeopardy, never skimping on their emotional lives, but instead creating complex, layered scenes and moments of deep characterization. She has found opportunities to render beauty within otherwise bleak circumstances." —Dominic Smith, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Last Painting of Sara de Vos*

"Bromiley debuts with a remarkable portrait of a jobless single mother as she navigates an impending eviction, pregnancy, and the watchful gaze of child protection services. In lyrical and pared-down prose, Bromiley toggles between the complex points of view of each family member . . . It's a knockout." —Publishers Weekly (starred review)

"Virginia and Evan's quest to get home through unknown territory builds to a taut climax that will leave readers breathless. Bromiley is also a master of the rhythms and realities of working-class life, in which keeping yourself together is a daily negotiation with bureaucracy and a chafing reminder that others have it worse. Though this is a story of contemporary life, it lives within the rich tradition of the literature and song of American struggle. This could be a story of the Dust Bowl or a city shelter; Jude could be the mother in Dorothea Lange's indelible photo. Full of ordinary royalty, shining with the triumph of staying human and extending grace even in deprivation." —Kirkus Reviews

About the Author

Evanthia Bromiley is a graduate of the Warren Wilson MFA Program for Writers and the recipient of scholarships from the Aspen Institute, a Lighthouse Fellowship, a Lisel Mueller scholarship, and Elizabeth George and Carol Houck-Smith awards. Her short fiction and creative nonfiction can be found in *AGNI*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Five Points*, and elsewhere. When not writing, she works in impacted schools with young writers and their teachers as they sharpen

their craft and voices, telling stories of growing up in the American Southwest. She lives in Durango, Colorado.

Agent: Jennifer Lyons

Materials Available: Finished Book

Rights Sold: North American Grove/Atlantic; French Rights Crown

All other translation rights available

THE PARENTING PARADOX

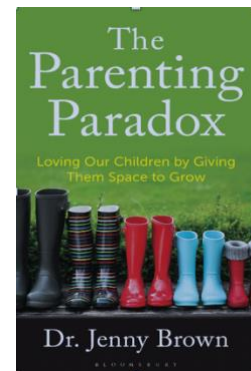
Loving Our Children by Giving Them Space to Grow

Dr. Jenny Brown

Nonfiction

Bloomsbury, June 2026

- For parents who have read Jonathan Haidt's *The Anxious Generation* and are feeling more anxious themselves
- Foreword from Dr. Kathleen Smith, author of *True To You & Everything Isn't Terrible*
- With empathic writing, exercises, and examples based on real families, Dr. Jenny Brown presents a way for parents to find balance in supporting and connecting with their children while also fostering independence.



Parenting is a paradox: to truly love our children, we must also give them the space to grow.

Many committed parents instinctively step in to protect and guide their children, yet struggle knowing when to step back. While “helicopter parenting” is widely discouraged, parents are often left without clear, practical alternatives.

In *THE PARENTING PARADOX* Dr. Jenny Brown offers a new perspective—not about loving less, but about shifting the anxious energy that often comes with deep parental care to a more constructive type of love. Grounded in Family Systems Theory, her vision emphasizes the power of self-awareness and emotional steadiness in the parent–child relationship. Dr. Brown sheds light on the cultural forces shaping today’s intensive parenting norms and invites fresh thinking about how well-meaning professional advice can, at times, unintentionally undermine a parent’s own growth and confidence. Through real-life experiences and professional insights, she challenges the message that constant intervention is necessary for a child to flourish and instead provides a thoughtful, long-term approach to fostering resilience and independence. This book will guide parents in developing awareness of relationship patterns and gaining clarity about their role, so they can become the loving leaders they aspire to be.

Rather than offering a quick fix or the latest parenting trend, *The Parenting Paradox* provides a sustainable path forward, helping parents navigate their own fears while giving space for their children to develop the confidence, strength, and independence they need to thrive.

Excerpt from THE PARENTING PARADOX

Truly loving our children means not loving or focusing on them too much. It requires knowing ourselves in our parenting relationships, recognizing our responsibility, and understanding when and how to step aside so they can grow.

This book aims to make sense of the age of anxious, intensive parenting in a way that helps today's parents reclaim their clarity and confidence. It won't advocate for a sentimentalized return to previous eras. Parents of every generation have had their versions of self-doubt about their role, and today's societal landscape is dramatically different for families. Instead, it will help parents channel their conscientiousness effectively, allowing their child to develop age-appropriate independence and coping skills. It will help parents to become proficient observers of themselves in their relationships so they can make informed choices about what to adjust.

About the Author

Jenny Brown, Ph.D., has worked in child and family mental health for the past four decades. She is regularly sought out as a thought leader in children's mental health through her research, writings, social media, and speaking platforms. Dr. Brown developed The Parent Hope Project that provides psychoeducation for parents and training for professionals to use a unique intervention method for parents with a struggling child. Dr. Brown is also the author of *Growing Yourself Up: How to Bring Your Best to All of Life's Relationships*.

Agent: Jennifer Lyons

Materials Available: Final PDF and book available

Wordcount: 82,000 words

Rights Sold: North American to Bloomsbury/Rowman & Littlefield

Rights Available: AUS, UK, Translation, Film/TV

BECOMING JULIA CHILD

Diana R. Chambers

Sourcebooks/Landmark, Autumn 2027

World English

- A sequel to the international bestseller THE SECRET WAR OF JULIA CHILD
- A tense and romantic story set in Paris following World War II

JACKET ART TK

Agent: Pamela Malpas/JLLA

Materials Available: edited manuscript expected December 2026

Rights sold: option publishers in Italy, Hungary, Ukraine; all other translation rights available

Film/TV rights via Amy Schiffman at Echo Lake Entertainment

THE SECRET WAR OF JULIA CHILD

Diana R. Chambers

Sourcebooks/Landmark (World English) October 2024

- **NATIONAL BESTSELLER (*USA Today*)**
- **INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER (*Globe & Mail*)**
- **On the *Washington Post*'s list of Best Historical Fiction of 2024**
- **74,000+ copies sold**
- **Popular book club/reading group selection**
- **Italian translation forthcoming October 2026**
- **Sequel, *BECOMING JULIA CHILD*, forthcoming from Sourcebooks in 2027**

It's a little-known fact that before she became America's first television cooking star, Julia Child worked in the secrets trade in Asia during World War II.



Single, 6 foot 2, and thirty years old, Julia McWilliams took a job working for America's first espionage agency, years before cooking or France entered her mind. *The Secret War of Julia Child* traces Julia's transformation from ambitious Pasadena blue blood to Washington, DC file clerk, to head of General "Wild Bill" Donovan's secret File Registry as part of the Office of Strategic Services (precursor to the CIA).

The wartime journey takes her to the Far East, to Asia's remote frontlines of then-Ceylon, India, and China, where she finds purpose, adventure, self-knowledge – and love with mapmaker Paul Child. The spotlight has rarely shone on this fascinating time in the life of ("I'm not a spy") Julia Child. It is the world of a woman in a World War II spy station who has no idea of the impact she'll eventually have on the world. Her journey will delight both historical fiction fans and lovers of America's most beloved home chef.

Agent: Pamela Malpas/JLLA

Materials Available: finished books

Rights sold: Italian (Slow Food Editore); Hungarian (Kossuth, sold at auction); Ukrainian (Fabula-One More Page); all other translation rights available

Film/tv rights via Amy Schiffman at Echo Lake Entertainment

PRAISE for Diana R. Chambers:

"A compelling example of how fiction can create an alternate narrative ... brings to life a forgotten period of Asian history." – *Financial Times* (Sri Lanka)

"The celebrated chef's zest, humor and generous spirit come through brilliantly in this captivating fictional take on her WWII work in Asia for a U.S. spy agency." – *People* magazine

"a work of alternative history as delectable as Child's coq au vin" – *The Washington Post*

"Fans of romance novels will spot the makings of an enemies-to-lovers tale...the sweet, slightly old-fashioned romance is fueled by lots of spicy, delicious-sounding food." – *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*

"Deeply researched and written with verve, this imagining of a little-known part of chef Julia Child's life—one rife with courage and resilience—shines." – *The Toronto Star*

"Written with flair and charm, Chambers's novel really heats up whenever sex, danger, or dinner come into view." -- *Library Journal*

"Chambers excels at explaining the complex geopolitics of wartime Asia and describing the landscape and delicious foods found there" – Booklist "Chambers excels at explaining the complex geopolitics of wartime Asia and describing the landscape and delicious foods found there" – *Booklist*

"At turns charming, funny, and inspiring, *The Secret War of Julia Child* is a vividly written and deeply imaginative new take on World War II. By letting us see this historic moment through the eyes of a beloved American icon, Chambers beautifully captures the spirit of the women of the greatest generation." — Dr. Lena Andrews, author of nationally bestselling *VALIANT WOMEN, The Extraordinary American Servicewomen Who Helped Win World War II*

"Riveting twists and turns ... not only a vivid exploration of a lesser-known chapter in the life of one of America's most beloved personalities, it's also an impeccably researched roller-coaster ride, with spies, danger, deception and heroics." Susan Elia MacNeal, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Mr. Churchill's Secretary*

"In this gripping novel, a young and intrepid Julia Child tumbles headlong into espionage and romance in World War II Asia. Diana Chambers merges little-known details from Child's personal history with true wartime events to build a dynamic story. More, please!" —Sujata Massey, award-winning author of *The Mistress of Bhatia House*

"An exciting, little-known reveal of the story behind Julia Child's WWII service. A must read." – Rhys Bowen, bestselling author of *The Paris Apartment*

"This novel has everything I love—romance, intrigue, mouthwatering food, and a woman who makes no apologies for her voracious appetite for life!" —Kim Fay, bestselling author of the national bestseller *Love & Saffron*

"Chambers' impressive research informs this engaging novel—and yes, the food is spectacular!"
— Laura Kalpakian, author of *The Great Pretenders*

Excerpt from THE SECRET LIFE OF JULIA CHILD

It was already hot in the postage-stamp studio she'd been lucky to find in overcrowded Washington. When she leaned over the sink to push up the window, a blast of humid air bounced off the dawn-streaked alley wall, almost near enough to touch. A long diagonal crack down the bricks reminded her of the Italian coastline, those valiant fellows preparing to wade out of their landing craft into the Salerno surf—and the unknown. Last night, she'd learned of Italy's imminent surrender, but also of German forces massing outside Rome.

She sniffed. Coffee boiled is coffee spoiled, their cook often declared. Turning to the hotplate, she sniffed again. Burnt toast. "Oh, my."

Mother Caro used to say she could burn water, but with such tenderness Julia felt embraced rather than criticized. Feeling the warmth of her smile, she closed her eyes. With your bright future, Jukie, you need never step into a kitchen. You'll be too busy to cook. She dropped the toast in the waste bin. Fortunately, the OSS cafeteria produced delicious, deep-fried doughnuts.

~

"Scuttlebutt I picked up last night at Hotel Galle is there's some rivalry between US and British clandestine services." Jane zipped her lips.

"Whoever fed you that line obviously had too much to drink." Julia looked into her glass. "Speaking of which, I could use a refill."

As a fragrant breeze wafted through the open doors, moist but pleasant, skin warm, a couple splashed around the swimming pool, tossing a ball and laughing. Betty's husband was chasing down intel in the Burmese jungles, while they were drinking cool gin-and-tonics, cosseted in colonial luxury.

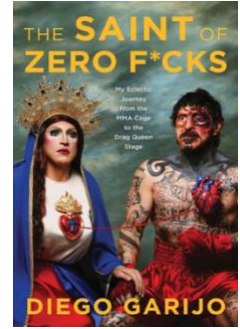
But Julia had her own intel to pursue. Intel that might inform the decisions of the President of the United States. She pushed her drink aside.

THE SAINT OF ZERO FVCKS: My Eclectic Journey from the MMA Cage to the Drag Queen Stage

By Diego Garijo

BenBella Books, Coming Spring 2027

- A memoir from professional MMA fighter turned drag-queen
- Garijo's memoir is Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime* meets *Trejo* by Danny Trejo, and for readers who enjoyed Julia Fox's *Down the Drain*



Professional fighter, artist, and drag queen Diego Garijo—aka Lola Pistola—shares an unpredictable (and often hilarious) journey from an undocumented child immigrant and criminal to unexpected celebrity . . . with a killer winged eyeliner.

In the ring, he's Diego "Dos Pistolas" Garijo—an MMA fighter and bareknuckle boxer with more than 15 years of experience. On stage, she's Lola Pistola, "The Saint of Zero F*cks," a drag queen diva born out of a desire to challenge toxic masculinity.

And at the end of the day, Diego is a father and multimedia artist known for challenging expectations, embracing creative expression, and living fully, boldly, and freely.

But Diego's art, passion, and self-acceptance are rooted in a life of poverty, struggle, and exploring the shadows. Raised in Guadalajara, Mexico, by a struggling single mother, Diego was smuggled into the United States when he was seven years old. Undocumented and unable to legally work, he fell into a cycle of crime, violence, and drugs, convinced he was locked into life as a career criminal. Instead, Diego followed jail time with gym time—and traded his uniform for mascara, MMA gloves and paint brushes.

From day laborer to professional fighter, and from falling in love to learning to walk in high heels, *The Saint of Zero F*cks* reveals the chaotic ups and downs of Diego's career in combat sports, and his path to self-expression through painting, drag, and tattoo art.

Bombastic, brutally honest, and frequently hilarious, this two-fisted memoir bucks stereotypes of race and gender and offers an eye-opening testament to the power of art, identity, and reinvention.

Excerpt from THE SAINT OF ZERO F*CKS

I won't lie; I'm not a great drag queen.

I'm a two-hundred-pound muscular man riddled with injuries, a wide back, a tree-trunk neck, and a penchant for savagery. I can be rough and careless, so I'll never be the most graceful dancer on stage, but I'm surprisingly not bad either. In fact, that's half of the entertainment value I bring to this spectacle. Just imagine squeezing my mangled feet that I

have broken multiple times at the gym or in a fight into a narrow woman's high heel. It doesn't matter what size shoes I find; they are always too narrow. I feel like I'm trying to squeeze a sausage into a toothpaste tube. When I'm Lola, I'm dead fvcking serious about being Lola, like everything else I've ever done.

....

I have two birth certificates, one with my father's name, and one with my grandfather listed as my father. It wasn't a mistake at the hospital, my parents had two different stories of how my life began.

My mother and father met in a brothel. Picture the Mexican version of *Pretty Woman* if Julia Roberts was an alcoholic and Richard Gere was a fascist dictator. I was born in Guanajuato, Mexico in 1979. They were married when they had me, but I have no memory of ever seeing them in the same room together. Guanajuato was a small bicycle town in those days known for its colorful houses and underground museums filled with hundreds of mummies. It was also the birthplace of my namesake, famed artist Diego Rivera.

...

This is where the tale of two Diegos begins. My father's Diego was kidnapped as an infant by my mother's father and hidden until my father paid a handsome ransom for my return. My mother's Diego was whisked away in the middle of the night to escape a father who was abusive. Years later I would discover neither story was exactly true.

About the Author

Diego Garijo was born in Leon Guanajuato, Mexico and smuggled into the United States when he was seven years old. A multi-disciplinary artist, professional fighter, and drag queen with a cult following, Diego has been featured in a number of print, radio, podcast, and television news and feature stories, most recently in [VICE magazine](#) and on BBC radio. He lives in Los Angeles.

Agent: Jennifer Lyons

Materials Available: Re-Delivered Manuscript, Accepted Expected May 1, 2026

Wordcount: 82,000 words

Rights Sold: World English; Spanish Language Rights Penguin/Random House

Audio Rights Sold: Brilliance

Rights Available: Translation, Film/TV

THE WINTER FOLK

By Jen Julian

Orbit/Run For It, July 2026



- Eerie, atmospheric, and fantastical, THE WINTER FOLK is a tale steeped in nostalgia
- Like *Succession* meets *Spirited Away*, set in the Appalachians
- A story of one young woman's obsession and longing for something greater than the hand she's been dealt and what she'll give up to be special
- Perfect for fans of Alix E. Harrow, and T. Kingfisher

A woman returns to the mysterious lodge in the woods where she once worked, and to the inscrutable creature that bound her there, in this haunting Appalachian gothic horror from singular voice Jen Julian.

This is the story of Moth, who earned her name working for the Winter Folk.

Every year, the Winter Folk gather at a secret lodge in the Appalachians, a place known as Deerhaven, refuge for the time-worn and weary. As a child, Moth heard warnings from her mother: *They are heartless, wild creatures—and they got no concern of us.* At twenty-one, Moth is a college dropout, indebted, impoverished, and desperate for better things. She falls instantly for Deerhaven's beautiful antlered host, the mild-mannered Mr. Oslin. When he offers her a housekeeper's contract—one wish granted for a winter of service—she signs without question.

But Deerhaven is a dangerous place. Staff must follow strict rules or else face dire consequences, and the guests can be unpredictable and savage. And yet, Moth endures, enticed by a rumor that Mr. Oslin is looking for a protégé. A singular worker who would stay with him forever and be transformed.

Decades later, Moth returns to Appalachia with her husband and teenage daughter. Banished from Deerhaven twenty years ago, she can't shake the feeling she needs to return. As she hunts for a way in, her haunting memories and harrowing experiences come roaring back — her friends and rivals, her growing obsession with Mr. Oslin, and her mysterious exile.

A door exists in the dark of the woods. After so long away, what has Deerhaven become?

Excerpt from WINTER FOLK

My name is Moth.

Let me say that a different way. I would prefer, listener, that you *think* of me as Moth.

Moth is the name I received while serving the Winter Folk, the only name in the world that has ever felt like it belonged to me, much more so than Vera, the schizophrenic great-aunt my mother named me after, or Stoker, handed down through my father's erudite Germanic kin, or Whitfield, my husband's name, which I carry around now the way one carries ID, with perfunctory privilege. My mother said it was a curse to let the Winter Folk name you, but she stopped telling those kinds of stories before I was even old enough to know how valuable they were. I've lost count of how many of her lessons I ignored since then.

As I tell you this story, I'm vacationing in the same place I fled over twenty years ago, renting an Airbnb with my husband and our daughter, Cass. Our cabin is on the south side of a mountain called Piggin's Peak. The cabin's name—which greets us on a smug signpost at the bottom of a windy gravel driveway—is "Once Upon a Pine."

It is not lost on me that I've become one of those bourgeois assholes I always despised.

About the Author

Jen Julian is the author of RED RABBIT GHOST (Orbit/Run For It, 2025) and her previous publications include a short story collection, Earthly Delights and Other Apocalypses (Press 53, 2018), which was the winner of Press 53's Short Fiction Prize, as well as work in numerous literary journals, most recently a story in Third Coast Magazine, which received distinction in Best American Short Stories 2023. Jen holds a PhD in English from the University of Missouri and an MFA in Fiction from UNC Greensboro. A 2016 Clarion Alumna, she has contributed fiction both to the Sewanee Writers' Conference and the Texas Book Festival. These days, Jen lives in the mountains of North Georgia with her enormous ginger cat and teaches creative writing at Young Harris College.

Agent: Jennifer Lyons

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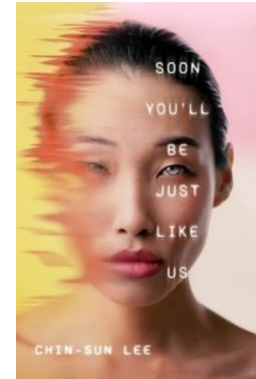
Rights Available: UK, Translation, Film/TV

SOON YOU'LL BE JUST LIKE US

Chin-Sun Lee

Creature Publishing (World English) May 2027

- Creature Publishing is a new publisher of feminist horror, with books that have been finalists for the Bram Stoker Award, and an author list that includes You-Jeong Jeong (*The Good Son*, etc.)
- Chin-Sun Lee's debut novel *UPCOUNTRY* was one of Publishers Weekly's "Big Indie Books of Fall 2023"
- A novel for fans of Frances Cha's *If I Had Your Face* and Ira Levin's *Stepford Wives*



In near-future, dystopian Los Angeles, struggling journalist Lily Han is desperate to save herself from career failure and deportation when the tabloid show *Off-Ramp* offers an unbelievable proposition. She agrees to undergo extensive cosmetic surgery—more popular than ever, and the subject of unsettling protests by fringe feminist group #AsIs—and chronicle its effects on her life.

Lily's surgery grants her beauty and influence, but she's no safer. #AsIs's activism grows bloodthirsty, and her new connections draw her further into a tangle of experimental technology and chilling malpractice. She can only trust herself—that is, if you can trust someone you no longer recognize.

Marrying psychological and body horror, *Soon You'll Be Just Like Us* confronts feminism, patriarchy, identity, and the ethics of survival at any cost.

PRAISE for Chin-Sun Lee

"A novel I'll never forget. Chin-Sun Lee has masterfully crafted a relentless descent into the darkest night. Don't forget to breathe." —Maggie Su, author of *Blob*

"A sinister and eerie novel: This futuristic gem is intriguing, and its deft, nuanced explorations of identity are especially rich. Chin-Sun Lee is an author to watch." —Sierra Greer, author of *Annie Bot*

"Chin-Sun Lee's *Soon You'll Be Just Like Us* is an explosive, twisty thriller that filled me with dread. And yet I had a total blast reading it. I grieved--and cheered--as I read its final shocking pages. *Soon You'll Be Just Like Us* will stick with me for a long time to come." —Lindsay Hunter, author of *Hot Springs Drive*

"*SOON YOU'LL BE JUST LIKE US* is a propulsive, wildly inventive novel about surviving in a body, a city, and a world that keeps asking you to become someone else. Chin-Sun Lee writes with dark, dazzling precision about the terrible things we'll do to survive. Unsparring, unsettling, and wholly unique." —Kimberly King Parsons, author of *Black Light*

Excerpt from SOON YOU'LL BE JUST LIKE US

"Come see your new face, Lily."

She stands and walks toward the mirror. From the corner of her eye, she glimpses a stranger in a hospital gown.

Someone rushes to her side and steadies her. "Lily?" Alice says. "I'm here. It's okay."

"Gwenchana," Ryung echoes, taking her other arm as they lead her to the mirror. "Yeppeuda, okay?" And then, for emphasis, "Areumdapda."

Beautiful. She's saying she is beautiful, and the impossibility of that fact finally compels Lily to lift her eyes.

The shape of her face is completely altered—oval instead of square, her jaw and chin delicately pointed. The hollows of her cheeks are more pronounced. Her nose still has a bridge, but it's smaller and thinner. Her lips are cushy and pouty, even with her mouth gaping in shock.

"Holy shit," she whispers. Something inside her cracks open, and everything floods in: relief, awe, and a strange kind of terror. How the hell did he do it? She stretches her mouth, smiles and frowns, observing her new expressions. Then she leans in close to examine her eyes. They're larger, with a pleasing fold on the upper lid, but still long and almond-shaped, as she requested. Not the big doe eyes of the template. Staring into the depths of her pupils, she can recognize herself. Except for her jaw and chin, she sees the genesis of her original features. She looks completely different, but as she keeps staring, not entirely unfamiliar.

Minsoo comes up behind her, smiling, to join the other girls.

"You're so pretty, Unnie," she says, calling her by the respectful, affectionate term they use. It means "sister." Lily gasps, seeing their four faces in the mirrored panels, the different angles reflected and multiplied. And it's true. They look like sisters. They could all be identical sisters.

About the Author

Chin-Sun Lee is the author of *Upcountry* (Unnamed Press 2023), listed among *Publishers Weekly's* Big Indie Books of Fall 2023 and Debutiful's Best Debut Books of 2023. She's also a contributor to the *New York Times* bestselling anthology *Women in Clothes* (Blue Rider Press/Penguin 2014). Her work has appeared in *Electric Literature*, *Literary Hub*, *The Georgia Review*, and *Joyland*, among other publications. She writes, edits, and teaches in New Orleans.

Agent: Pamela Malpas/JLLA

Materials Available: e-galley

All translation rights available

WE NEVER CALLED IT FRISCO: A NOVEL

Jed Perl

Coffee House Press, September 8, 2026

A candid novel about the art, artists, and their tempestuous relationships in the countercultural movement of the 50's and 60's, by one of America's most celebrated art critics.



During intermission at a modern dance performance in San Francisco, esteemed and incorrigible cultural critic Marcia Lang collapses into a banquette and dies on the spot. Her lover, Burt, soon discovers that Marcia willed him her entire estate. His windfall includes her correspondence, her stilted redwood house in Marin County, and an incomplete draft of her unpublished memoir, *We Never Called It Frisco*. As he processes Marcia's death alongside their cadre of Berkeley bohemians, Burt begins to reconstruct Marcia's work in progress as an elegiac collage for the friend he's lost and the city that found her.

In his first novel, Jed Perl guides his reader down the back alleys of a mid-century San Francisco populated with painters, puppeteers, paperback revolutionaries, and the writers like Marcia who determined their positions in the cultural ecosystem. Through energetic and immersive prose, *We Never Called It Frisco* tests the structural limits of the novel as a site of reconstitution and remembrance.

Praise for WE NEVER CALLED IT FRISCO

"In his delectably wry and canny first novel, esteemed art critic Perl revels in his quixotic, complicated characters and their conflicts while created a finely distilled and picturesque portrait of postwar San Francisco's kaleidoscopic enclave of artists and outsiders." —Booklist

"Art done with passion, saved from materialism, and redemptive of life: this is what matters most to Jed Perl, both in his criticism and in this, his first novel—a beautifully besotted portrait of the American avant-garde. Perl's metafictional and even metacritical novel is a wised up and poignant paeon to the Bay Area bohemia of the 1940s and 50s, with ambitions realized and thwarted, loves lost and regained, art, dance, and youth's ineluctable drift." —Joshua Cohen

"In a poignant attempt to hold a time, a place, a world all but vanished, Jed Perl writes an elegant, intimate novel of love and affection—a tribute, a retrieval, a resuscitation and reunion." —Carole Maso

"We Never Called It Frisco is a mesmerising imaginative recreation of a lost time and a lost

world—this really must be what it was like to be on the West Coast ‘art scene’ in what we now realise was an age of innocence. Among the many pleasures the novel offers is the narrator's lavish and mischievous name-dropping. Smart, shrewd and vastly entertaining.” —John Banville

“This novel evokes wonderfully the middle-class bohemia of San Francisco in the 1950s when a significant group of people assumed attitudes which, in the words of one of its characters, were 'in almost equal parts authentic, artificial, and absurd.' The result is smart, thoughtful, and affectionate.” —Vivian Gornick

Praise for Jed Perl

“[Jed Perl is] an almost solitary, essential voice.” —John Ashbery

“All artists are critics but very few critics are artists. Jed Perl is one of those few. He has the critical imagination to imagine Calder’s imagination.” —Fran Lebowitz

“Jed Perl writes precisely and ecstatically.” —Jonathan Safran Foer

“Perl, a celebrated art critic who has charted the course of more than one movement himself, provides an expert’s eye for the nuance of both the art’s making and its philosophy.” —Kirkus

About the Author

Jed Perl is a regular contributor to *The New York Review of Books*. The poet John Ashbery has called him “an almost solitary, essential voice,” and a reviewer in *The Atlantic* observed of his most recent essay collection, *Magicians and Charlatans*, that he “may be the finest American critic at work today in any field.” Perl was the art critic for *The New Republic* for twenty years and a contributing editor at *Vogue* for a decade. Writing about his two-volume biography of the American sculptor Alexander Calder—*Calder: The Conquest of Time* and *Calder: The Conquest of Space*—the novelist Fran Lebowitz observed that “all artists are critics, but very few critics are artists. Jed Perl is one of those few.”

Agent: Jennifer Lyons

Materials Available: Final edited PDF available

Rights Sold: North American to Coffee House Press

All translation rights available

WE WERE NEVER MEANT TO SURVIVE THIS

Jesse Sherwood

Blackstone Publishing, Inc., November 10, 2026

A stunning debut from Jesse Sherwood, *We Were Never Meant to Survive This* is a dystopian thriller that will leave readers on the edge of their seats.



The end of the world is just the beginning ...

Jaime, a web developer, is disillusioned by humanity's immersion in the digital world and his own hand in its creation. When a colleague returns from a survival school hidden in the Catskill Mountains, Jaime decides what the hell, why not?

Making fire with sticks, butchering animals, crafting a bow--these are just a few things Jaime learns. All the while, the school's enigmatic founder, A, whispers of Day Zero, her prophecy that the world will end and be born anew.

As the other students become more fervent, the day arrives and civilization outside of the school collapses, just as A had foreseen. In the aftermath, as A's grip tightens and she forces her followers into obedience, Jaime begins to understand that she will do anything to sculpt her vision into reality, even as blood begins to spill.

Praise for *WE WERE NEVER MEANT TO SURVIVE THIS*

"*We Were Never Meant to Survive This* is a thrilling novel that's made for this moment. Urgent and timely, it's cut from a tradition of novels that beckon you to witness a true American specimen. Like *Gatsby*, or Owen Wister's *Virginian*, the novel's enigmatic guru, A, is a particular strain of American idealism personified—remake yourself in your own image. As always, the question remains: What's real, what's myth, and what's pure fabrication?" —Christopher Blackman, author of *Three-Day Weekend*

"David Hume, Fran Lebowitz, Homer Simpson, add Jesse Sherwood to the list of skeptics who know the end of the world is indeed always nigh ... and will be for eons. Smart, cliché-free, and scarily outdoorsy, this novel is a must-read for anyone finding themselves looking for answers--and in this case, a powerful book." —Paul Beatty, National Book Critics Circle Award and Man Booker Prize-winning author of *The Sellout*

"Gripping and grimly prophetic, *We Were Never Meant to Survive This* is one of those rare thrillers that races at a breakneck pace while tackling big questions head-on. The impact will transfix and later chill you. By pitting our basest instincts for survival against the hubris and folly

of modernity, Sherwood compels us to consider what from today truly merits preserving for tomorrow.”—Jakob Guanzon, National Book Award-nominated author of *Abundance*

“Propulsive and richly imagined, *We Were Never Meant to Survive* asks what, beyond air, water, and food, is essential, while laying bare what makes us human and keeps us alive. Through the allure and danger of a wilderness camp and its mysterious leader, Jesse Sherwood's visceral, compelling debut confronts what it means to exist in a complex, often lonely world.” — Francesca Giacco, author of *Six Days in Rome*

About the Author

Jesse Sherwood is a writer from Western New York. He has been published in *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Guernica*, and *McSweeney's Internet Tendency*. *We Were Never Meant to Survive* is his debut novel.

Agent: Jennifer Lyons

Rights Sold: World English (Blackstone)

Materials Available: Final edited PDF

Audio: Brilliance

Film Rights: Brendan Deenan/Blackstone

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OLD SOLDIERS: A STORY OF REUNION

Mo Yan (2012 Winner, Nobel Prize for Literature)

Translated by Michael Berry

Yale University Press/Margellos,

Thirteen years after fighting in the Sino-Vietnamese War, Major Zhao Jin returns to his hometown to visit family. As he attempts to cross a bridge over a rushing river, Zhao encounters a long-lost figure from the past—an old childhood friend and former comrade-in-arms from his war years, Qian Yinghao. Qian is perched in the crown of a tree beside the bridge and he encourages Zhao to climb up so they can catch up. As their conversation unfolds, memories from the past come rushing back but something is off...the resourceful and fearless Qian Yinghao died thirteen years earlier during the war after coming under enemy fire. Later Zhao encounters another old soldier from his days in the army, Guo Jinku. Guo, who was discharged after the war, returned to his village where he lived a life of poverty and despair, all the while clinging to his memories of what he experienced during the war. *Old Soldiers*, which has been hailed as a great anti-war novel and exploration of posttraumatic memories, is centered around Zhao Jin's travels and his dialogue between the living and the dead, gradually revealing the rifts between reality and memory, this world and what lies beyond.



About the Author

Mo Yan is the penname of Guan Moye, a Chinese novelist and dramatist who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2012 and is generally regarded as China's most critically acclaimed contemporary novelist. Best known for his novels such as *Red Sorghum*, *The Garlic Ballads*, *Big Breasts & Wide Hips*, *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* and *Frog*, Mo Yan has crafted his own unique literary voice which combines Chinese legends, folk tales, magical realism, and modern history with a deep attachment to his hometown of Northeast Gaomi County. His work has been translated into dozens of languages and adapted for film, television and stage, most notably Zhang Yimou's 1987 film *Red Sorghum*. Mo Yan has also written several works for stage, including *Crocodile* and adaptations of several of his earlier novels.

About the Translator:

Michael Berry Professor of Contemporary Chinese Cultural Studies and Director of the Center for Chinese Studies at UCLA. He has written and edited more than a dozen books on Chinese literature and cinema, including *Speaking in Images* (2006), *A History of Pain* (2008), *Jia Zhangke on Jia Zhangke* (2022) and *Translation, Disinformation and Wuhan Diary: (2022)*. A Guggenheim Fellow (2023) and a two-time National Endowment for the Arts Translation Fellow (2008, 2021), Berry has received Honorable Mentions for the MLA Louis Roth Translation Prize (2009) and the Patrick D. Hanan Book Prize (2020). Berry's book-length translations include *The Song of Everlasting Sorrow* (2008) by Wang Anyi, shortlisted for the Man Booker International Prize, *To Live* (2004) by Yu Hua, a selection in the National Endowment for the Arts Big Read library, and three books by Fang Fang, including the controversial *Wuhan Diary* (2020) and the critically acclaimed novel *Soft Burial* (2025). He is also the recipient of 2025 Baifang Schell Book Prize for Outstanding Literature on or from China and the Sinophone World.

Agent: Jennifer Lyons

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