



***November 23, 2024***

Greetings Fellow Reader!

Remember that I'm eager to hear your thoughts, so don't hesitate to hit reply or click the buttons below to write me back.

### ***Life Stuff***

So. A lot's happened since my last newsletter. Some of us are grieving. Others of us are celebrating. Some are confused and angry. Some are jubilant and feeling vindicated. Among the many feelings I'm having is a renewed appreciation for the value of stories. One of the joys of writing and reading fiction is the experience of walking in another person's shoes, having the opportunity to look at the world through an unexpected lens. This moment in history feels like the good time to extend that exercise of the imagination to my friends and loved ones, particularly those seeing the implications of current events very differently than I am.

***Our true wealth is found in the quality of our relationships.***

What fictional character has made you question or change your way of thinking?  
Click here and share your thoughts.



*Saylie* seems to be feeling kind of like I am right now.

Photo by *Colette Freedman*

## *Historical Yummy*

There's something romantic about the term "enthralled." It speaks to awe, delight, or fascination. But the word's root, "thrall," is derived from Old Norse and means "slave." In Viking days between the 8th and 11th centuries, the Norse dominated the European slave trade and just about every society in Europe and North Africa held a lot of people "enthralled."

In the 9th century, Christianity was also spreading relentlessly north. One convert to the new religion was "*Aud the Deep Minded*" who thought very differently from those around her.

Image from The Viking Herald web site



Aud was married to the son of the Viking king in charge of the Viking's newly established slave trading port at Dublin. After her husband was killed in battle, Aud accompanied her son when he successfully conquered much of Scotland. But he was later killed in a revolt that left her stranded in a hostile country. Under Aud's capable direction, her followers and slaves secretly built a large ferry ship in the forest enabling her to escape Scotland with her grandchildren, entourage, slaves and significant wealth.

Captaining her ship, Aud fled to Iceland, where two of her brothers lived. At the new settlement she founded, the pious Aud built crosses on several hills overlooking the sea where she worshiped in her still unpopular religion. In another uncommon move, she freed her slaves after her farmstead was built, giving them and her crew land in thanks for their loyalty and service.

Aud was both a slaveholder and freer of slaves. Of the two truths, it was her act of conscience that earned her place in history.

*What makes us choose to sacrifice some of our own wealth or comfort to ensure another's rights and freedom?*

## *Fantasy Treat*

The dramatic dichotomy of experience we're currently living through brings to mind the Slavic folklore character of **Baba Yaga**.

While she appears in many variations, the common thread is living in the forest in a hut with chicken legs and flying around in a wooden mortar while gripping a pestle.

In some stories, she is a fearsome old woman who entraps, cooks and eats children—clear inspiration for the witch in "Hansel and Gretel."





While in others, she is a kindly old woman who provides assistance along a heroine's journey.

Like the famous drawing below, which is either a the crone or a young woman, depending how you look at it, Baba Yaga is either a demon or savior.

Or is she both?



Does someone real or fictional come to your mind who embodies two opposing impulses?

[Click here and share your thoughts.](#)

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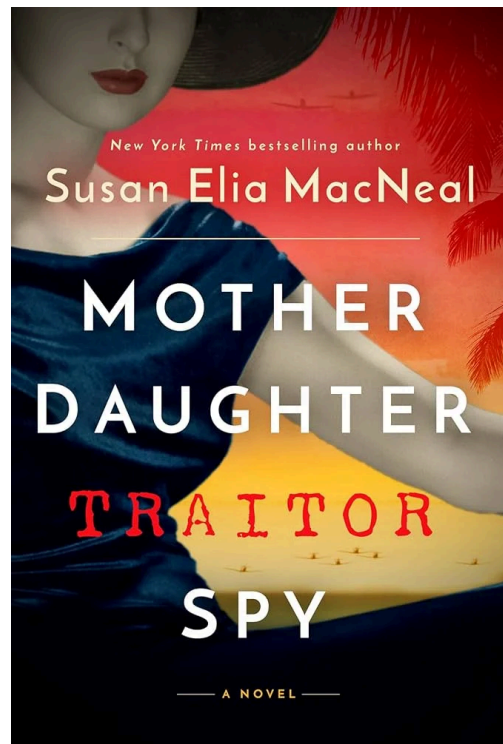
***The Nightstand***



***Mother Daughter Traitor Spy*** by

Susan Elia MacNeal is based on the true story of a young woman and her mother in 1940 Los Angeles. World War II was underway overseas but the U.S. was resistant to entering the fray. Nazis in America were openly recruiting.

In this charged setting, recent college grad Veronica finds herself blackballed from the career in New York journalism she'd dreamed of.



She and her widowed mother, Violet, both of German descent, move to Los Angeles where blonde, blue-eyed Veronica gets a job as a typist only to discover she's working for a vicious propagandist looking to promote the Nazi cause. With the help and encouragement of a friend of her Navy commander father, Veronica keeps her job and becomes an informant. Soon her mother joins her in socializing with the Nazis in their clandestine effort to gather enough proof of the Nazis' danger to force the disinterested FBI into action.

Excellent written, this novel is suspenseful and inspiring. These two real women acted with bravery and principle in circumstances where those in power ignored the danger of the violence inherent in fascist ideology.

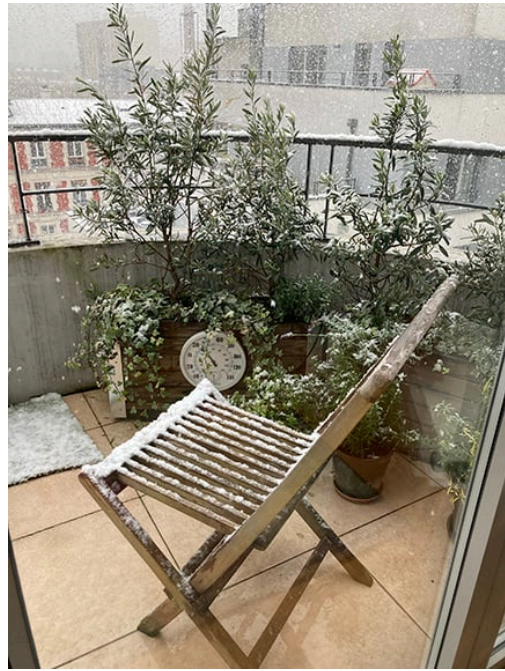
***What makes us risk our lives and well-being to thwart efforts  
to deprive others of their rights and freedom?***

[Click here to tell me what you're reading.](#)

***Pretty Pix***

Its snowing on our balcony while I'm writing this newsletter. Makes me want to curl up in a blanket with a good book.

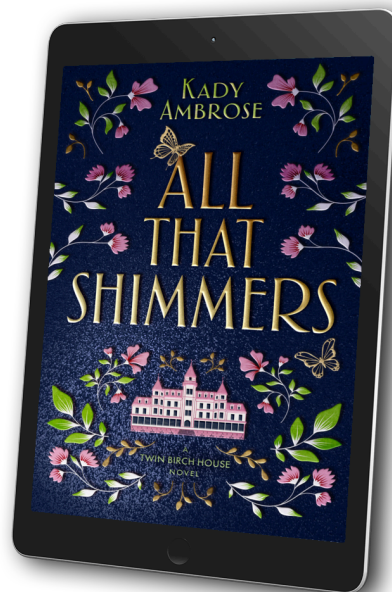
But then, that pretty much describes how I feel every day!



## *Behind the Curtain*

The most exciting development on the author front is that ALL THAT SHIMMERS, will be released on **May 13, 2025** and the Ebook is officially **available for pre-sale on Amazon** at the introductory price of \$3.99. The price will be going up to \$7.99 after a short promotional period.

I'll let you know when the print version becomes available for pre-sale, anticipated in February 2025.



Here's the description:

*Your destiny is a man of silver and gold ...*

*By a woodland fairy, her future is foretold.*

While World War I rages in Europe, Vanessa Perkins, a vivacious nanny with a whimsical imagination, enjoys summering with her wealthy Boston employers at a glamorous lakeside resort. There she meets Avery, a gentle botanist, and Ned, a dashing aristocrat.

Raised in a brutal orphanage, Vanessa dreams of being part of a close family like Avery's, but Ned's charm and privileged world are intoxicating. While confronting an agonizing decision, she discovers an enchanted grove in the forest, where enigmatic water nymphs and a fairy's prophecy inspire her to be bold. But there's a price for breaking society's rules.

And when the Spanish Flu starts killing people she cares about, Vanessa's choices will either bring her closer to the love and family she craves or drag her into more danger than she ever imagined.

### **Like to be an Advance Copy Reader / Reviewer?**

I'm gathering readers of advance copies of the book so that during Launch Week in May 2025, the Amazon page and other platforms will be flooded with reviews. If you'd be interested in a free advance copy so that you can be one of those fabulous early reviewers, just click the button below to shoot me an email and I'll send your digital Advance Reader Copy asap.

Send me my Advance Reader / Reviewer Copy please!

And feel free to share this opportunity with any *friends or family* who you think might enjoy this romantic historical fantasy novel. They can use this link: [bit.ly/AllThatShimmersARC](https://bit.ly/AllThatShimmersARC) to go directly to the page on BookFunnel where they can sign up for my newsletter and download their copy.

### **New to *A Quill's Life*?**

Feel free to read past editions of *A Quill's Life* and access all free subscriber giveaways by clicking [HERE](#). It's a page on my web site exclusively for subscribers. (*I've removed the exclusive content from [LinkTree](#) so that it can be public.*)

If a friend forwarded you this email, I invite you to subscribe for yourself and get a free historical fantasy short story in the world of Twin Birch House by clicking here:

Subscribe me & send my free short story!

### ***Exclusive Freebie***

This month's freebie for subscribers is the mood board I put together for the world of Twin Birch House, the grand hotel setting for my debut novel and short story

give-away. Enjoy!

[Click here to download the mood board](#)

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1) *If you use gmail and this email showed up in the 'promotions' tab at the top, drag the email across to the 'primary' tab so future issues don't get lost among the advertisements.*

2) *Add kady@kadyambrose.com to your "safe senders" or "whitelist" so your newsletter doesn't get blocked as spam.*

Talk with you again next month!

Warmest Wishes & Happy Reading,

***Kady***

***Kady Ambrose*** Writing in Paris, France



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