

Through the Power of Words
July 2026 Terri Maue Newsletter



“The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.”
- Mark Twain

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***Dark Mirror* wins a 5-Star Rating from Readers’ Favorite!**



I'm thrilled to announce that *Dark Mirror* has won a 5-Star rating from Readers' Favorite. The site has earned the respect of renowned publishers such as Random House, Simon & Schuster, and Harper Collins, and has received the "Best Websites for Authors" and "Honoring Excellence" awards from the Association of Independent Authors. Readers' Favorite is also fully accredited by the BBB (A+ rating), which is a rarity among Book Review and Book Award Contest companies.

Here's a portion of the review that accompanied the 5-Star rating:

The author builds suspense through a maze of red herrings, unreliable witnesses, and escalating physical threats. Dark Mirror delivers superb storytelling with fast-paced action that never sacrifices the emotional depth of the characters, and the story skillfully transitions from the investigation to Zee's vigil at her dying father's bedside to a prickly, evolving romance.

You can read the entire review here: <https://readersfavorite.com/book-review/dark-mirror>.

Reminder: Ratings and reviews are crucial to help bring *Dark Mirror* to the attention of more readers. If you enjoyed *Dark Mirror*, please rate and review it.

Thanks!

What I've Been Up To



Recently I was excited to be scheduled for an interview by the Jenn and Rob, podcasters who produce *MythBehaving*. However, the technology gods seem to

become displeased with us. We've had to reschedule, after Rob sacrifices a goat or something to get his internet working.

I did check the internet (mine is working fine) to see if there was a deity in charge of technology that we could appeal to. Not surprisingly, there is. His Greek name is Hephaestus (Roman Vulcan). He's known for his technological creations, female robots being one of them. This leads me to think that rather than a goat, he might respond to machinery or tools as offerings. Maybe Rob can take a hammer to his router or modem or whatever?

When the interview becomes available, Hephaestus willing, I'll send an email with information about how to watch it.



I also got together with several other authors at the Coffee Press at Paseo Verde Library. A writer's life can feel lonely at times. It's always a lift to my spirits to spend time with other people who love—and struggle with—the writer's life!

Where to Find Me Next

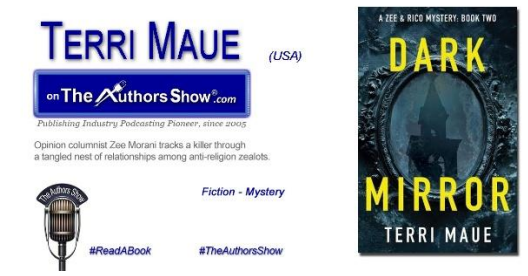
Personal appearances are few right now, but you can find me on the internet.

April 16, 1 p.m.: *A Bookish Moment with Terri Maue | Psychic Mysteries, Spiritual Secrets, and Small-Town Suspense*. This is a 30-minute YouTube livestream interview series, with a Q&A opportunity for listeners. Here's the zoom link. <https://www.youtube.com/live/4Y6lqnRQPk8>



The Authors Show:

<https://terrimaue.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Terri-Maue-Final.mp3>



The Inside Scoop:

How do you know when you have just the right word? (A question that has plagued writers ever since there were words.)

Warning: English teacher content ahead.

Words have two types of definitions:

The denotation is the dictionary definition. It's straightforward, even though there can be several definitions, as when a word can be used as a verb or a noun.

The connotation is the feeling or the tone of the word. We all understand it. Some words evoke a joyful, lighthearted feeling. Others bring us down, depress us.

Here's a fun way to explore connotation. In the sentence below, swap one word at a time for the underlined word and notice how the meaning changes.

He walked to the podium.

strode, stumbled, staggered, dashed

Just the right verb can illuminate a character or a situation more clearly than ten adjectives. That's why writers obsess over getting exactly the word they want.

So you say, just check the thesaurus. Not a terrible idea, but words in a thesaurus are emphatically not interchangeable. If you look up walked, you'd find some of the words in the list are suggested as alternatives.

Mark Twain had it right. You don't want a cute insect when you're trying to describe a destructive force of nature.

The Great Pastry Hunt: Chewy Oatmeal Cookies



I had so much fun last month with the thyme-lemon shortbread that I decided to carry on the bake-at-home theme. This recipe caught my eye because I love oatmeal cookies, but I struggle to make them chewy without underbaking them, an error worse than overbaking.

This recipe delivered on its promise.

The edges of the cookie are lightly crisp, providing a delightful crunch. Once inside the crust, the true glory of these cookies comes through. Hearty, rich oat flavor releases more with each chew, enlivened by a spark of cinnamon. Brown sugar sings maple-caramel on my tongue. As it fades, a sweet buttery smoothness lingers, and I'm ready for the next bite.

These came out larger than I expected, but that just makes them the perfect size for an anytime treat.

If you want the recipe, just email me: terri@terrimaue.com

I'm still researching bakery goods for Zee. If you have a bakery suggestion or a favorite recipe you'd like me to try, send it along! Email your suggestions to terri@terrimaue.com. Maybe your choice will be featured in a future book!

Thanks for reading!

See you in August!

I know people's lives change, and I don't want to bother you. If you no longer want to receive this newsletter, please email me at terri@terrimaue.com and I will unsubscribe you.