

YULETIDE SALE at [Prose and Letters](#) - November 23 to December 7



## The Prose Dispatch

*Bringing you news from my writing desk and drawing table*

### A Darksome New Moon

The new moon in Sagittarius arrives tonight, bringing the lunation which will take us right up to the winter festivals. At Thanksgiving, we are betwixt: Hallowtide still echoing in the long shadows, the festivals of light not yet here. The veil between this world and the next is thin, they say, and ghosts are abroad. They will continue to call through Yule, also a time of ghosts. Remember that Dickens' *Christmas Carol* is a ghost story, Scrooge haunted by the dead and by the three temporal spirits.

As the days darken earlier and the nights become cold, I draw a blanket of words around me, reading stories, writing them. An author who knew ghosts well (more below) wrote, "What's to be done with the lost, the dead, but write them into being?"

This season I am glorying in the pomegranate, a much-storied fruit in many spiritual traditions. The Greek goddess of the grain, Demeter, grieves her abducted daughter by withholding warmth and light from the world until Persephone comes home after many moons. But during her captivity, Persephone has eaten six of the pomegranate's blood red seeds and so must [descend to the underworld](#) for half the year to take her place beside the god Hades as Queen of the Dead. When she returns in the spring the land blooms again. It is the story of our seasonal round, every year, dark and light and dark again.

In this newsletter, I invite you to come visit my new craft section for reading writers, enjoy a farewell reverie to summer, revisit a great author's memoir, and stop by the storefront for my annual Yuletide sale.



As we celebrate the American Thanksgiving, know that I am grateful for you, dear readers. May the holidays bring you quiet moments, good stories, and bright joys.



## A Writer Reads

### The Speed of Light

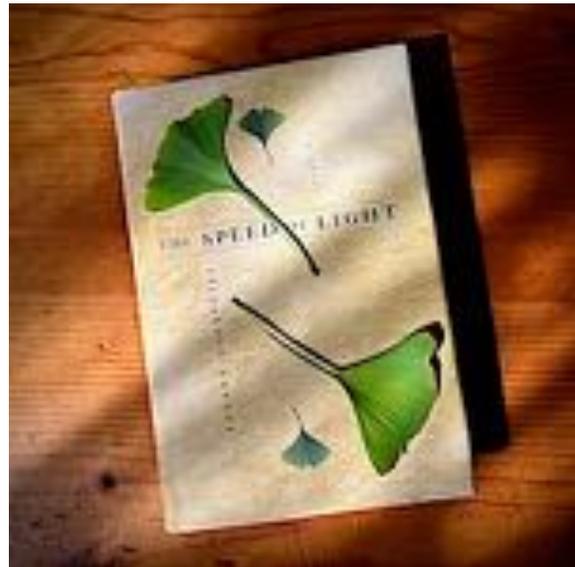
“The changes began on a Wednesday, *miércoles*, the day that sounds like miracles.”

I wonder if miracles are still profound when you know they are coming. This was my first thought after reading the opening line of Elizabeth Rosner’s 2001 book *The Speed of Light*.

This foreshadowing at the outset begins a journey of curiosity about and growing faith in the author. And she delivers: Although I knew a miracle was coming, it didn’t dilute the sheer joy I felt when I reached the end of the book awash in tears.

I almost didn’t read *The Speed of Light* when I learned it dealt with the most horrific of traumas. Books get under my skin and enter my dreams. Did I want to let this one in? But the subject, the mysterious transmission of intergenerational pain, and the device Rosner uses to tell her story, three voices written in the first person, drew me in. I know a book is good when I can’t wait to get back to it.

*Continue . . .*



## In the Journal

31 August 2022

### Holy Chillin' by the Seashore

I go to the seashore to be in a different rhythm, to order my days around my creative



swells and dips, to remember myself as a young woman walking along this same shoreline, searching and despairing and learning who I was.

I go to walk with myself. To get clear in my mind, the kind of spaciousness that can come to me with an extended stretch of silence. To let memory come in. To lay down some ocean time in my skin. To work, walk, write. To let wonder in.

I grew up landlocked in central Ohio. How do we come to yearn for the sea when we have never seen it? It is a primal longing, for the ocean was our first mother, and we remember

it as we would our oldest ancestor, without words, in the blood.

*Continue . . .*



## A Good Book

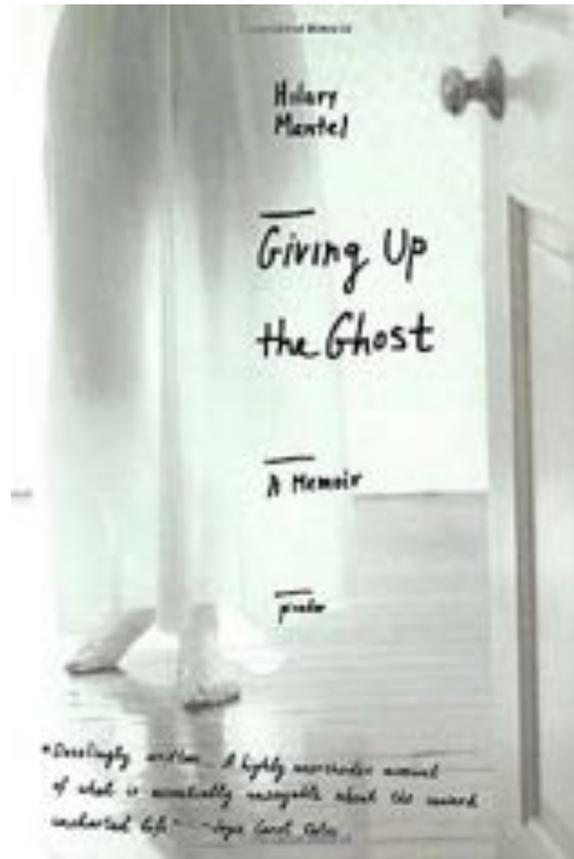
The passing of the extraordinary author Hilary Mantel on 22 September of this year brought me back to her 2003 memoir, *Giving Up the Ghost*.

Hilary Mantel wrote brilliantly about the unseen world. She said once her true genre was horror, which she first encountered as a child when she saw something indescribable, an apparition in what she ever after called "the secret garden." Called Little Miss Neverwell by the unseeing grownups around her, her sensitive disposition and years of living in pain with undiagnosed endometriosis established a voice unlike any other.

She is best known for her series of three books about the historical Thomas Cromwell, King Henry VIII's "fixer," who figured large in the tragedy of Anne Boleyn and the ensuing English Reformation. *Wolf Hall*, along with its

sequel, *Bring Up the Bodies*, was made into a television mini-series.

But it is her memoir that I return to again and again. Here is her voice, in a kind of manifesto for how and why she writes.



“

Ghosts are the tags and rags of everyday life, information you acquire that you don't know what to do with, knowledge that you can't process ... It's just the little dead, I say to myself, kicking up a fuss, demanding attention by the infantile methods that are the only ones available to them.

...

I am writing in order to take charge of the story of my childhood and my childlessness; and in order to locate myself, if not within a body, then in the narrow space between one letter and the next, between the lines where the ghosts of meaning are. Spirit needs a house and lodges where it can ... each morning it is necessary to write myself into being—even if the writing is aimless doodling that no one will ever read, or the diary that no one can see till I'm dead. When you have committed enough words to paper you feel you have a spine stiff enough to stand up in the wind.

”



## In the Storefront



### YULETIDE SALE!

:: GREETING CARDS ::

:: ARTIST'S BOOKS ::

:: PRINTS ::

:: CALLIGRAPHY KITS ::

Add anything from my storefront to your cart and subtract \$10 off your order of \$68 or more!

Enter discount code YULETIDE at checkout.

Two weeks only, November 23 to December 7.

#### > **New listing!**

Discover **Calligraphy and Illumination**, my hard-to-find calligraphy kit with instructional booklet and supplies was produced in 2006. I have only 5 kits in stock, and I will include a special bonus with your order.

> **Winter Solstice cards** now available in 10-packs at a 25% markdown, on top of the volume discount, while supplies last.

**The Holly and the Ivy :: The Horn Dance :: Let Union Be :: The Longest Night**

> **As always**, mix and match any 10 greeting cards (maximum 36) to get the website-only price, 25% off at checkout.

#### **PLEASE NOTE!**

Prose and Letters storefront will **close** for the holiday on December 17 and will **reopen** on January 2, 2023.

Check out the sale



Thank you for reading!

**Cari Ferraro**

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