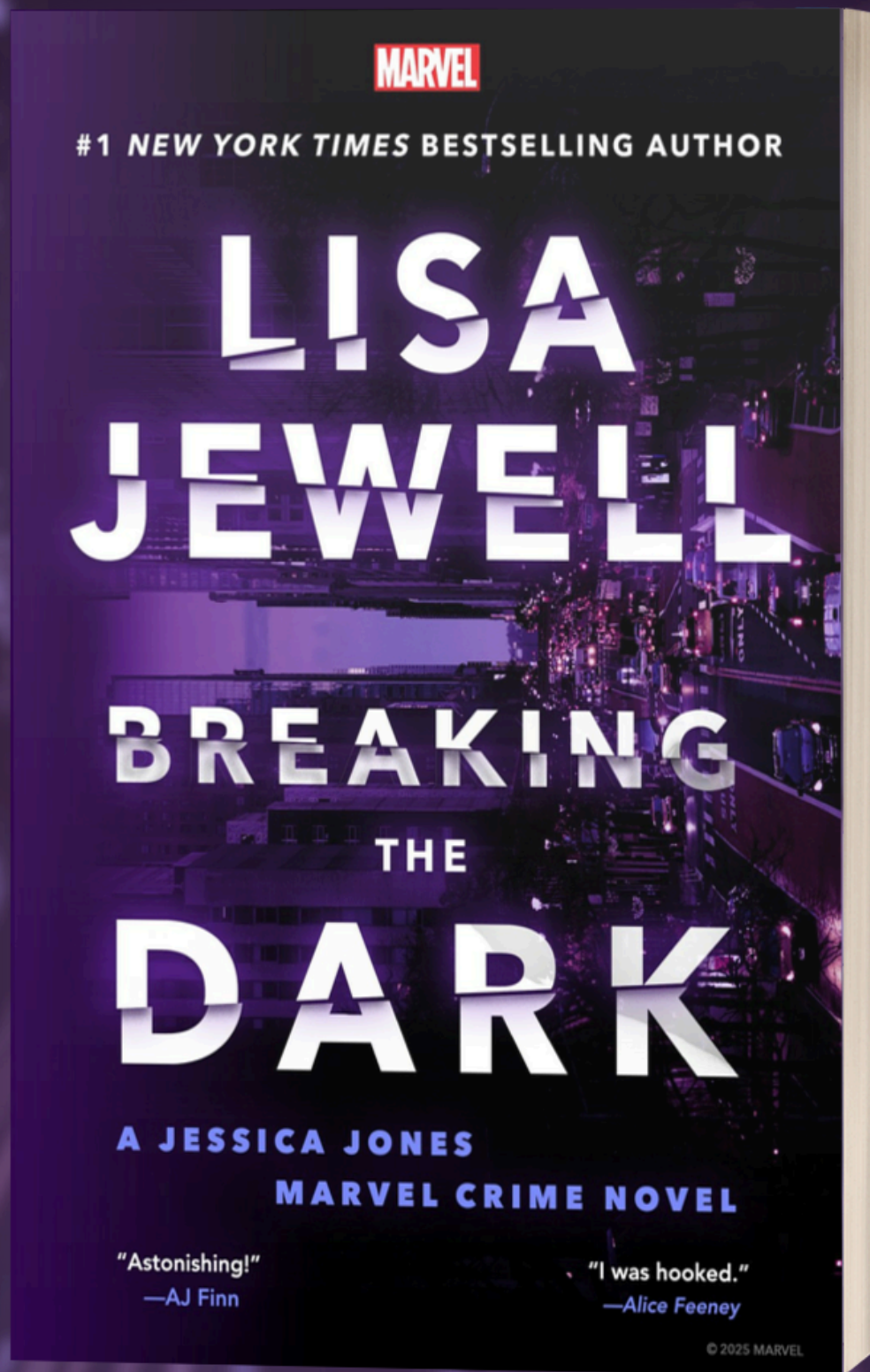


# BOOK CLUB KIT



**MARVEL**  
#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR

**LISA  
JEWELL**

**BREAKING  
THE**

**DARK**

**A JESSICA JONES  
MARVEL CRIME NOVEL**

"Astonishing!"  
—AJ Finn

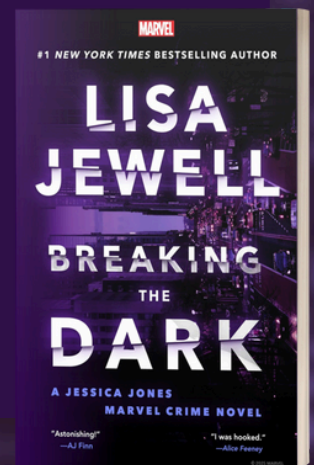
"I was hooked."  
—Alice Feeney

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CLICK THE PAGE TITLE TO BE TAKEN  
DIRECTLY TO THAT SECTION!



# NOTE TO READERS

## SPOILER WARNING

This kit was created for book clubs to use in their discussions of *Breaking the Dark* by Lisa Jewell and contains spoilers.

## CONTENT WARNINGS

Kidnapping

Unplanned pregnancy

Blood and violence

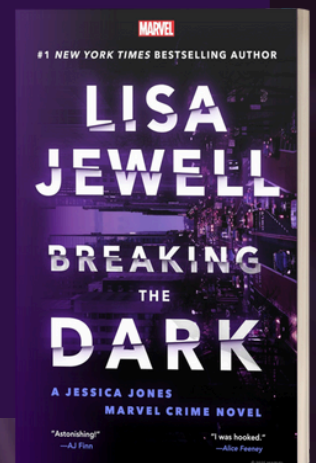
Murder

Brainwashing

Loss of autonomy

Death of children (past, off page)

For a full list of reader-submitted content warnings visit [The Storygraph](#)



# AUTHOR INTERVIEW

***Breaking the Dark* is the first in the Marvel Crime series! What was the process like of working with Marvel, and did it change the way you typically write or plot your books?**

When I told people that this was one of the most challenging books I'd ever written, many jumped to the immediate conclusion that maybe Marvel was prescriptive and exacting, but that could not have been further from the truth. Marvel was a dream to work alongside; helpful, encouraging, generous, and relaxed. Writing in a new genre was the real challenge, especially a genre with more elastic boundaries and more possibilities than I am used to. I found myself going too far down sci-fi rabbit holes and kept having to pull myself back and remember that first and foremost I was writing a 'Lisa Jewell' novel.

**What did it feel like to step into the shoes of an established character and world? Which elements did you most want to highlight about Jessica's character?**

The least challenging aspect of writing *Break the Dark* was, in fact, stepping into Jessica's shoes. There was no warming-up period; I just had an image of her chasing a cat through her apartment building during a thunderstorm and started there with her. She came naturally to me from the very first word I typed. I knew because of the timeline I'd chosen that she was about to find out she was pregnant, so that meant I wouldn't be writing about 'hard-drinking' Jessica, but 'struggling with not drinking' Jessica which was a fun direction to take her in. Drinking was Jessica's emotional crutch, her self-medication, so taking that away from her gave me the opportunity to give her some real moments of self-reflection and healing.

**You read Jessica Jones comics to prepare for this and decide where your story would fit in her timeline. What drew you to this particular moment where she discovers she's pregnant?**

It was actually a very practical decision in the end. I wanted to set my book during her Alias period when she was working as a private investigator. I read the full series of *Alias* comic books (brilliant, by the way!) and couldn't work out how I was going to lever a whole new story into her existing timeline. But then I noticed a graphic with the caption: six weeks later. I knew then that that was my spot! I had her for six weeks and could do whatever I wanted essentially without it impacting the rest of her timeline. In the comics, she hadn't had her pregnancy confirmed at that point, but as a woman, she would have started to feel the early signs and suspect strongly that she might be.



# AUTHOR INTERVIEW

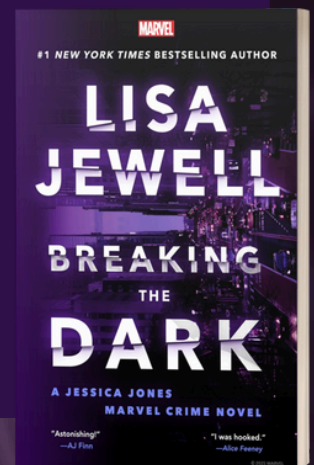
There's an interesting parallel at work here between Jessica's powers (which had been wielded by a villain for evil, but can be used by her for good) and technology (which we similarly see wielded for both good and evil within the book). Was that an intentional parallel you had in mind from the start or was it something that came out as you wrote?

It was very much something that came about during the writing process. I start all my books from a very random and vague jumping-off point, just a sense of where I want to start, usually something quite visual. For this book, I had the image of Jessica chasing the cat during the storm, and then the image of a wealthy woman coming to see her worried about what had happened to her twins in England over the summer. She tells Jessica that she thinks her children have been 'replaced' but it wasn't until I started writing that I worked out what might actually have happened, that there might have been a malign technological background to the changes. And because they were teenagers, it made sense for that tech to be somehow related to their smartphones.

What drew you to perfection as a theme? Jessica ends the book reframing what "perfect" means, did your own meaning of the word change in the writing of this book?

Living with teenage girls and being privy to the influences and pressures that they have grown up with, I was fascinated by the differences between their world and the world I grew up in. As a teenager in the 80s, I would backcomb my hair and wear cheap clothes and cheap makeup and carry a little extra weight and never for a moment think I needed to look perfect.

I see my girls contouring their faces and posing for hundreds of selfies on their smartphones and pursuing this idea of a perfect image, which is of course unattainable. The 'aha' moment was when the "Bold Glamor" filter went viral on Snapchat in 2023 and suddenly anyone could see what they would look like if they were perfect. It was really unnerving to see a perfect version of myself on my phone; tweaked and chiselled and polished. I couldn't imagine how unnerving that would be for a young person, still evolving.



# AUTHOR INTERVIEW

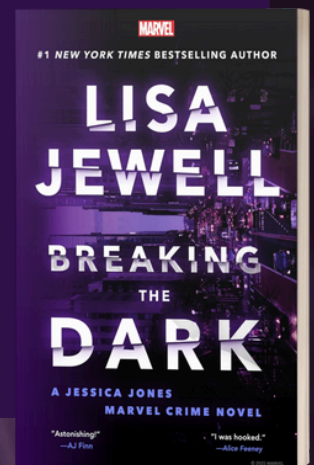
After you received an advance print copy of this book, on Instagram you shared, “I have never, or at least not since my first book, derived so much euphoria from holding one of my books in my hands.” What makes this book feel so special?

Twenty-two books into my career I had reached a point where I knew exactly what I was doing. I decided what I wanted to write about, started typing, hit a few bumps in the road, but basically stayed on course, trusted the process, and got the job done. The book I wrote before *Breaking the Dark* I wrote in five months, and it turned out to be one of my most popular and bestselling books ever. I had thought, given the ‘fun’ nature of the comic book genre and the Marvel Universe, that this book would also come together like a dream.

But I hadn't factored in the reality of leaving my comfort zone behind and I lost control of this book for many, many months. I kept coming up with more and more outlandish explanations for the strange changes to the twins, I was over-researching the Marvel Universe—which at times felt bigger than the actual universe!—and bringing in way too many clashing elements. I rewrote the book three times and deleted 90,000 words over the space of fourteen months. When the book finally coalesced into something that I could tell was working the relief was immense, so the sense of achievement I felt holding it in my hands after all that was quite overwhelming.

**If you could have a super-power, what would it be and why?**

Strength. Definitely. I am a post-menopausal woman who doesn't do any exercise, and this is the time in my life when I really, really should be focusing on building strength so I don't become a creaky old lady who needs to be helped out of cars and armchairs. But nothing bores me more than exercise. I hate it. So yes, I would love to be bestowed with the super-power of strength. Though maybe not Jessica Jones levels!



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) Share your knowledge of Jessica Jones and Marvel. If you came to the book already familiar with the character, did you feel like the book lived up to your expectations? If you're new to Jessica and her world, would you recommend this book as a good entry point?
- 2) Who are other superheroes you'd like to see get the Marvel Crime series treatment? Which authors would you want to write those books?
- 3) When an author is writing about an established character that they didn't create, what do you think is the most important thing for them to keep in mind?
- 4) What theories did you have about the twins, Debra, or Jessica's experiences with the little girl while you were reading?
- 5) Did this book make you think about technology, social media, or perfection in a new way? In what ways do you see the themes in the book mirrored in our current world?
- 6) Did you expect Polly to become as villainous as she did or were you surprised by the turn her story took?
- 7) What do you think about the role Ophelia and Arthur played in Polly's schemes? Do you think either of them could have stopped her? Did they truly want to?
- 8) In what ways did you see Jessica's pregnancy informing her decisions, growth, and internal thoughts during the novel?
- 9) Discuss how you see the theme of motherhood playing out throughout the novel through various characters.
- 10) If you could have one super-power what would it be and why?

Find more questions on the next page.



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Here are two questions from author Lisa Jewell:

9) Look at the character of Polly Devereux. What motivates her? What is the power that she holds over Debra and her family?

10) Talk about the dynamic between Jessica and the young people she comes across in this book: the twins, Malcolm, and Elliot. Do you think she feels softer and more nurturing towards them because of her state of impending motherhood? Does it bring something out of her that wasn't there before?

Write down any questions you or other members want to ask the group here:



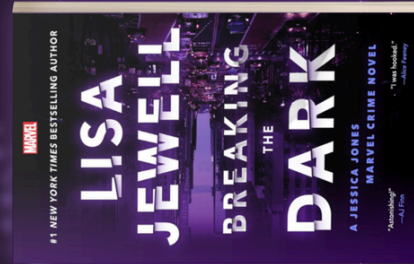


# PRINTABLE BOOKMARKS

DO YOU WANT TO BE  
**PERFECT?**

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“Perfect is what you are when you are listening only to the beat of your own heart, the sound of your own feet on the road ahead of you, the one pure voice that exists inside you telling you that you are fine, just the way you are.”



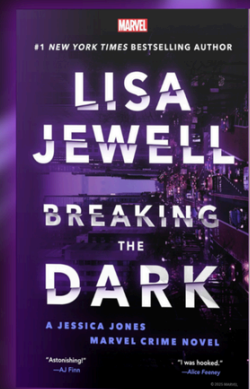
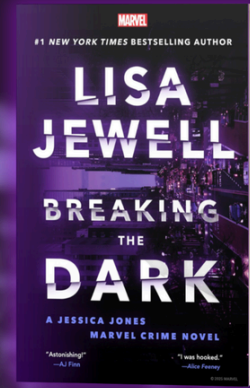
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# PRINTABLE BOOKMARKS

## ALIAS INVESTIGATIONS

JESSICA JONES *AND MALCOLM!*  
485 W 46TH ST  
NEW YORK, NY 10036

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# BITES & SIPS

Food is one of the most exciting parts of a book club meeting and it's always more fun when it's inspired by the book.

## Homemade Sausage Rolls

Jessica didn't have much time to sample the fare in England. But your book club is free to indulge in this delicious appetizer staple.

[thespruceeats.com/great-british-sausage-roll-recipe-435702](https://thespruceeats.com/great-british-sausage-roll-recipe-435702)

## Singapore Laksa

If you love dining on the same food as a book's protagonist, try making the Singapore Laksa that Jessica orders while out with Danny Rand.

[nomadette.com/singapore-laksa-noodles](https://nomadette.com/singapore-laksa-noodles)

## French Bread Rolls

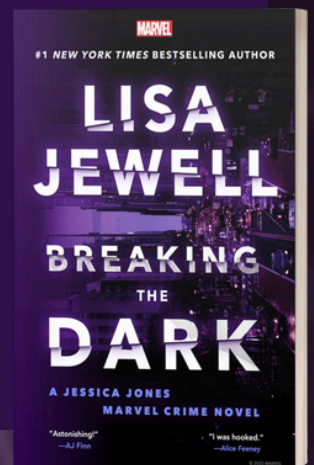
Warm fresh bread is a lifesaver for Jessica when out spying on Fox at the French restaurant the Bleeding Heart. Try your hand at making your own!

[melskitchencafe.com/french-bread-rolls](https://melskitchencafe.com/french-bread-rolls)

## Black and White Cookies

Dessert is a must at a book club meeting, and New York City has some of the best to choose from. We'd recommend making a batch of black and white cookies.

[sallysbakingaddiction.com/black-and-white-cookies](https://sallysbakingaddiction.com/black-and-white-cookies)



# BITES & SIPS

A fun beverage (or two) is a great treat for a book club meeting. Here are a few options inspired by Jessica's tastes and her travels.

## Coffee Station

Coffee is a go-to drink for Jessica. She drinks it black, but you can channel her love for it by creating a coffee station at an in-person meeting with various syrups or flavored coffees for members to choose from. Having a virtual meeting? Encourage everyone to BYOC and talk about their favorite coffee order.

## Mango Ginger Kale Green Smoothie

Jessica shocks Danny Rand when she orders a mango kale smoothie. But as she says, it's "a real fricking drink" and one that could be a refreshing addition to your meeting!

[minimalistbaker.com/mango-ginger-kale-green-smoothie](https://minimalistbaker.com/mango-ginger-kale-green-smoothie)

## Black Manhattan Mocktail

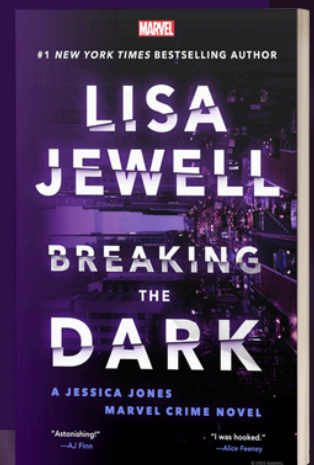
In honor of Jessica's life in New York City, try out a mocktail version of this classic cocktail, created at a Manhattan club in the mid-1870s.

[allthebitter.com/blogs/recipes/black-manhattan-non-alcoholic-mocktail-recipe](https://allthebitter.com/blogs/recipes/black-manhattan-non-alcoholic-mocktail-recipe)

## Lyre's Basil Gimlet Mocktail

If we have a drink for the Big Apple, we also need one for Jessica's trip to England! Try this non-alcoholic recipe of a beloved drink.

[lyres.com/products/gin-basil-gimlet-mocktail-recipe](https://lyres.com/products/gin-basil-gimlet-mocktail-recipe)





# ACTIVITIES

Once you're done discussing the book, try these activities to channel the mystery and thriller energy of *Breaking the Dark*.

## Plan a Murder Mystery Party

Tap into Jessica's investigative mindset by planning a murder mystery party. The best part about this activity is that there are kits available with everything you need from places like [Masters of Mystery](#)—and their games work for both in-person and virtual clubs!

## Play a Mystery Board Game

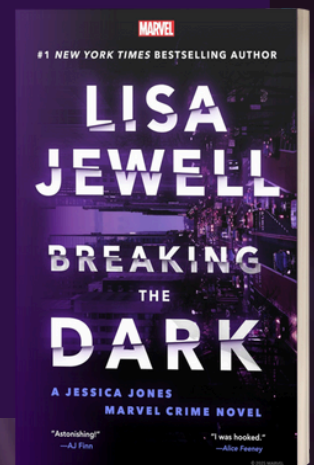
If your group loves board games as much as they love books (or are looking to try them out), consider supplementing your meeting with a game. Work together or alone to solve a crime in games like [Mysterium](#), [Clue](#), or [Deception](#)—or take on the role of a killer in [Deadly Dowagers](#).

## Host a Thrilling Movie Night

Toss some popcorn in the microwave and prepare to cozy up for a book club movie night inspired by your latest read! For a follow-up to *Breaking the Dark*, consider tech-thrillers such as *The Matrix* and *Ex Machina* or ones that focus on perfection and beauty such as *Black Swan* and *Last Night in Soho*. Looking for something lighter? Try *Clue* or *Death Becomes Her*.

## Play Guess That Book

This game is easy to play and requires no supplies. Tell everyone in the group to think of the title of a book, but to keep the title to themselves. On a member's turn, they offer one clue about the book they picked to the group, who is allowed to make guesses. If the group can't guess based on the first clue, a second one is given. The group can receive a maximum of three clues. You can choose to play with points for correct guesses or just for fun! Celebrate members who are the best at giving clues, guessing correctly, and stumping the group.



# WORD SEARCH

See if you can find the characters, locations, and more elements from *Breaking the Dark* in this word search.

s m e s l y f i u n p j e s o  
y e a a k n o c w o b e x w d  
s k n r i l x o n i e i a j z  
q p m o v l d z m x g x b c e  
e o e t j e e m u o a r l c h  
l c c c d a l h f t c u o q x  
d v a i k o c l p k e h o a j  
i v s r c l f i m o k t d l y  
d p b l g y e j s m u r l i w  
u l a c k r g s i s l a i a p  
w m y l l o p r x f e d g s u  
r d c l b e a u t y x j h t s  
u n a q g n e l l e b w t z m  
p r r u d g t s p n g d h y w  
k m h a r l e m v a m p i r e

Jessica Jones  
Luke Cage  
Malcolm  
Sly  
Speckles

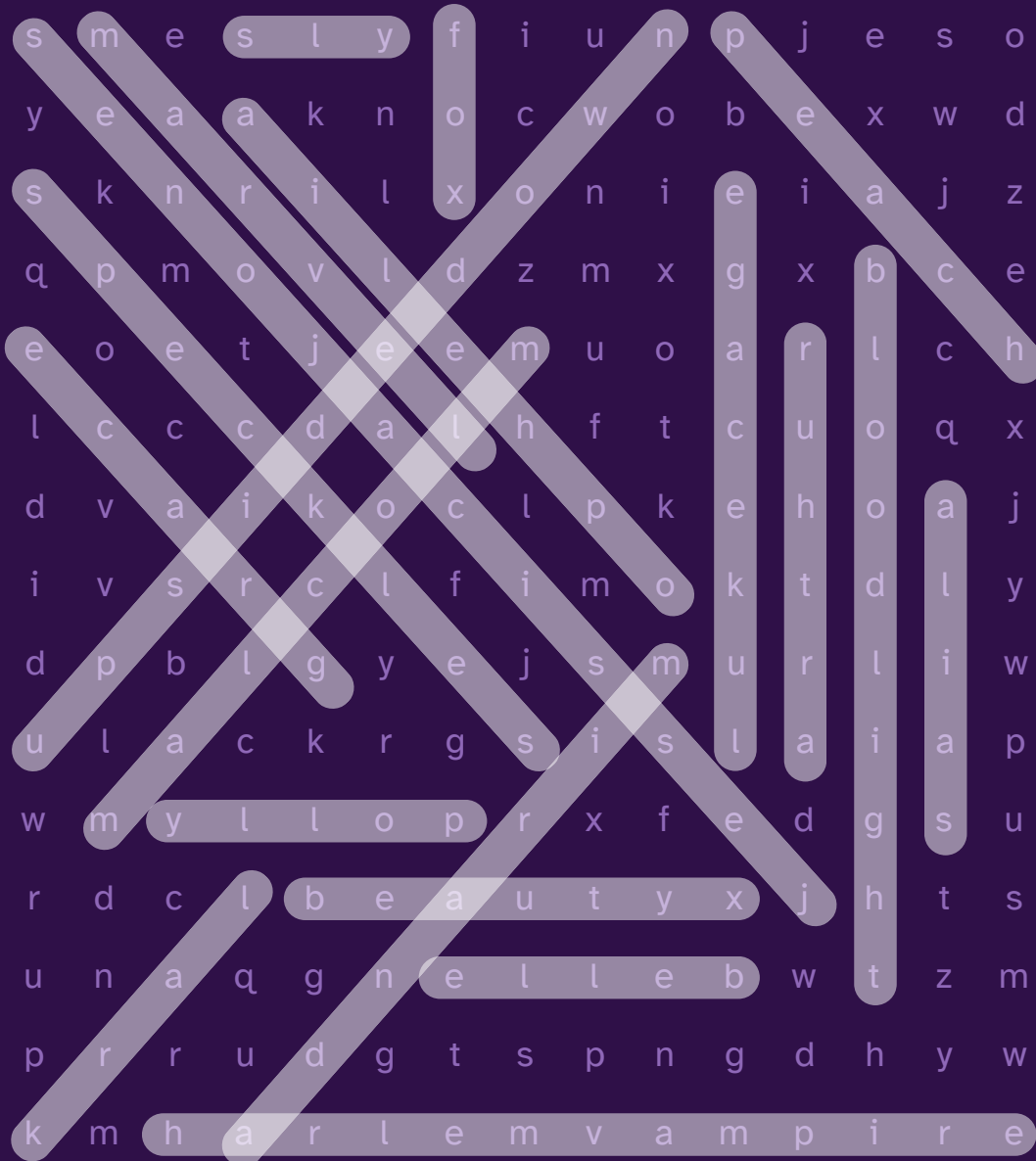
Fox  
Lark  
Polly  
Ophelia  
Arthur

Upside Down  
Beauty X  
Peach  
Blood Light  
Miranda

Belle  
Grace  
Harlem Vampire  
Marvel  
Alias

# WORD SEARCH: SOLUTION

Check out the solution to the word search here!



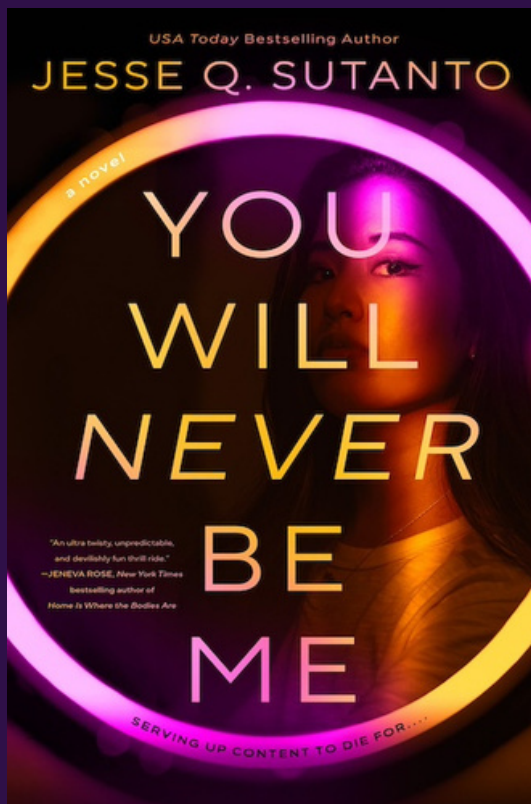
Jessica Jones  
Luke Cage  
Malcolm  
Sly  
Speckles

Fox  
Lark  
Polly  
Ophelia  
Arthur

Upside Down  
Beauty X  
Peach  
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Miranda

Belle  
Grace  
Harlem Vampire  
Marvel  
Alias

# WHAT TO READ NEXT

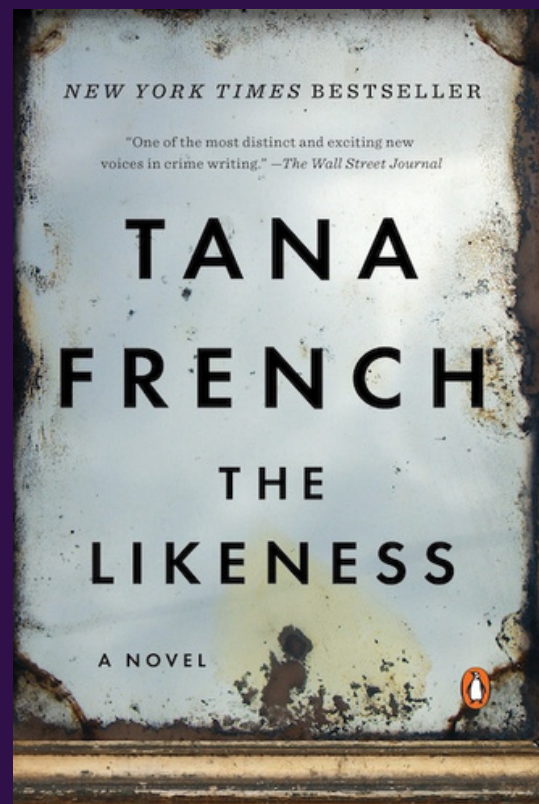


## *You Will Never Be Me* by Jesse Q. Sutanto

Social media drives Polly to dream up bigger and bigger schemes, and if you're looking for a thriller that explores that theme check out *You Will Never Be Me*. Mer taught Aspen everything she knows about social media and isn't about to just sit back and watch as Aspen's star rises to heights that belong to Mer alone. But the tables are turned when Mer vanishes and Aspen's perfect life begins to crumble.

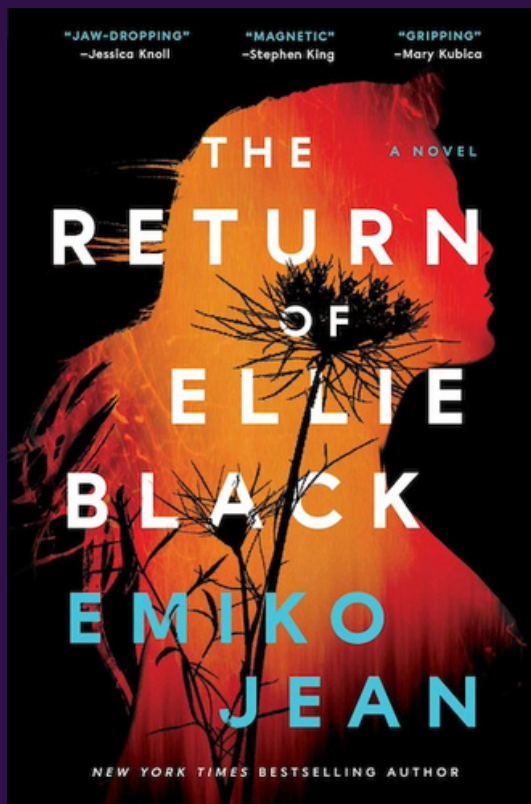
## *The Likeness* by Tana French

Readers hooked on Jessica's time undercover in Barton Wallop and the mystery surrounding the twins and Belle will get swept up in *The Likeness*. After discovering the body of a teenage girl who could be her twin, Detective Cassie Maddox assumes her identity in the hopes of finding the killer. Posing as Lexie, she begins living with Lexie's housemates and nearly loses herself in the strange closeness they all share.





# WHAT TO READ NEXT

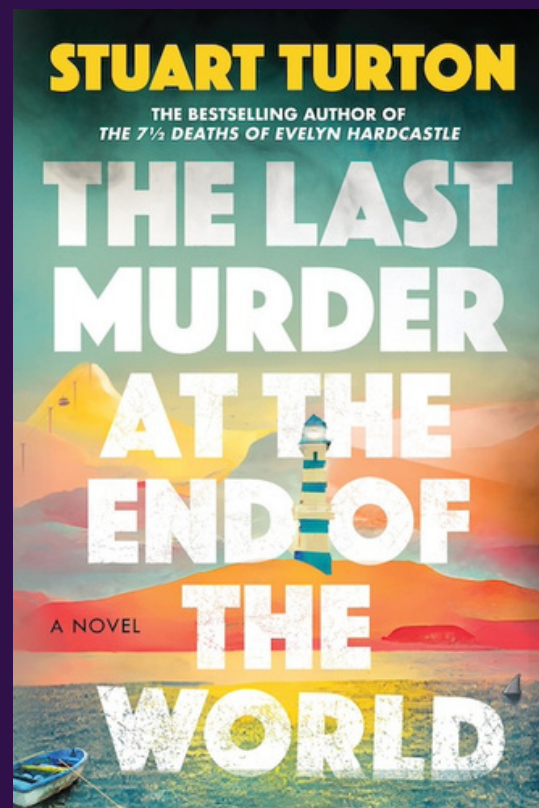


## *The Return of Ellie Black* by Emiko Jean

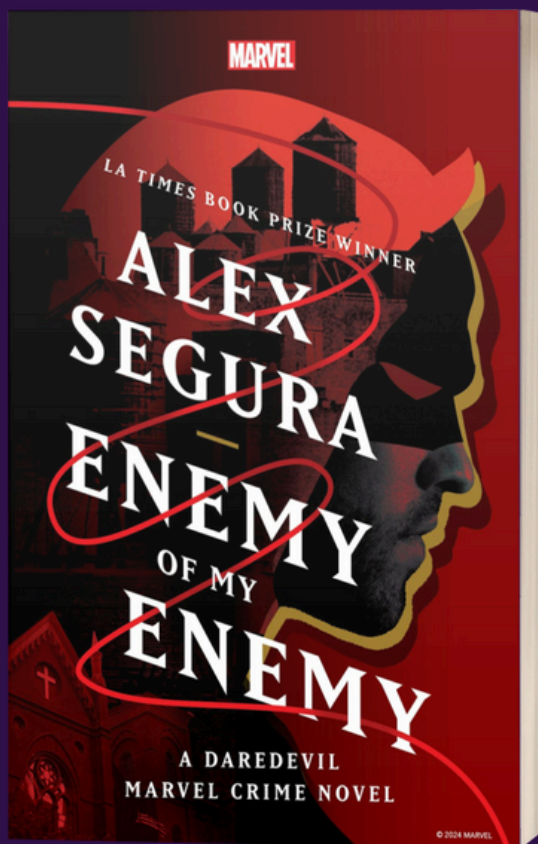
At the end of *Breaking the Dark*, Jessica acknowledges the long road ahead for the Dorian Gray Girls as they reenter the world. If that concept intrigued you, check out *The Return of Ellie Black*. Detective Chelsey Calhoun is shocked to hear that teenager Ellie Black has returned after being missing for two years. But Ellie won't say a word about where she's been and it's up to Chelsey to find out more and if it connects to her missing sister's cold case.

## *The Last Murder at the End of the World* by Stuart Turton

Jessica faces a challenge after her memories at the Old Farmhouse are wiped, and the citizens of this novel find themselves in the same predicament. How do you solve a murder on an island when every resident's memory has been erased? With a deadly fog moving in, the locals have a mere 92 hours to uncover who killed a local scientist and to try to restore the barrier that protects them from the outside world.



# NEXT IN THE MARVEL CRIME SERIES



*On sale: September 23rd, 2025*

**Los Angeles Times Book Prize winner Alex Segura (*Secret Identity*) pens an all-new streets-to-courtroom noir tale of the Punisher on trial for the murder of the Kingpin—with Matt Murdock as his defense attorney. Book two in the Marvel Crime series of thrillers for adult readers.**

When reports come in that the Kingpin and a police officer have been killed and that Frank Castle (aka the Punisher) has turned himself in for it, Matt Murdock senses holes in the narratives the media and the streets are quick to run with.

Both criminals have been Matt's nemeses when he dons the cowl of the Daredevil, and there's no denying that New York is better off without its Kingpin and with the

Punisher behind bars. And yet . . . while the Punisher is a murderous vigilante, he doesn't kill cops. And he doesn't turn himself in.

Castle certainly deserves prison for all of the *other* crimes he has committed in the past. However, Matt's indomitable sense of justice insists that nobody should be locked away for crimes they didn't actually commit. Representing the vigilante in court, Matt enters a contest of wills and guile with Castle to try and uncover the game beneath the game. And when Matt's girlfriend takes the stand and complicates matters, there's truly no rest for the wicked or the just. As the Kingpin's absence causes passion and ambitions to run hot in Hell's Kitchen, Matt must decide if justice means the letter of the law, what's best for the citizen on the streets, or where his heart leading him.

*Enemy of My Enemy* continues the Marvel Crime series that began with Lisa Jewell's *Breaking the Dark*, and brings fans into a grittier, street-level side of the Marvel Universe. Marvel Crime novels build on one another but do not require in-depth familiarity with Marvel or the other books in the series.



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lisa Jewell is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of nineteen novels, including *The Family Upstairs* and *Then She Was Gone*, as well as *Invisible Girl* and *Watching You*. Her novels have sold over 10 million copies internationally, and her work has also been translated into twenty-nine languages.

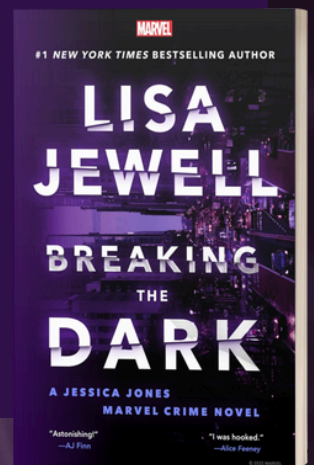


Photograph by Andrew Whitton

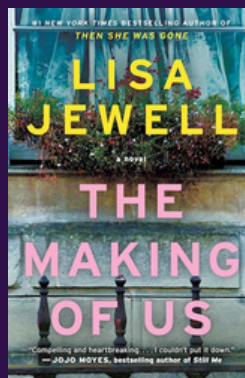
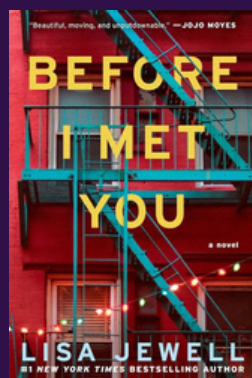
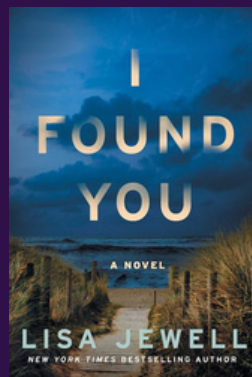
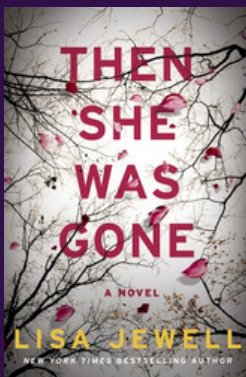
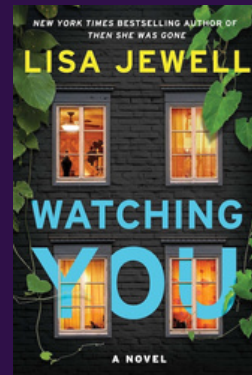
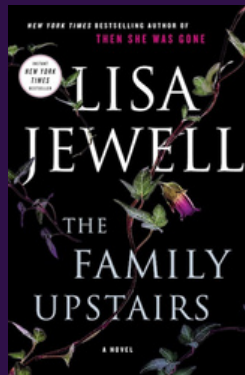
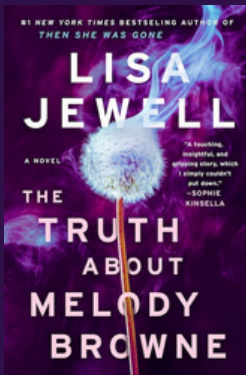
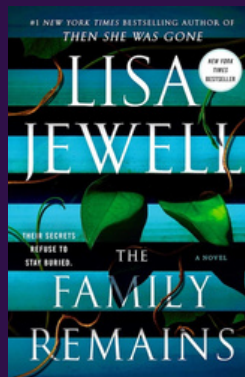
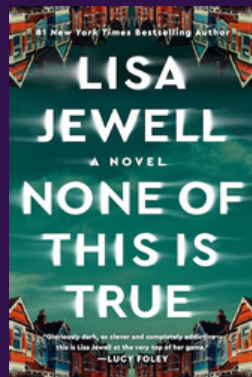
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 [LisaJewellUK](https://twitter.com/LisaJewellUK)

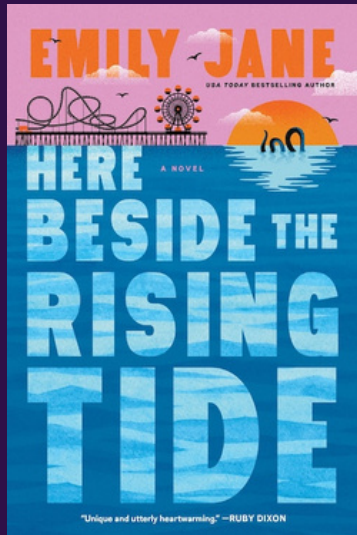


# MORE FROM LISA JEWELL





# MORE FROM HYPERION AVENUE



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On sale:  
April 15

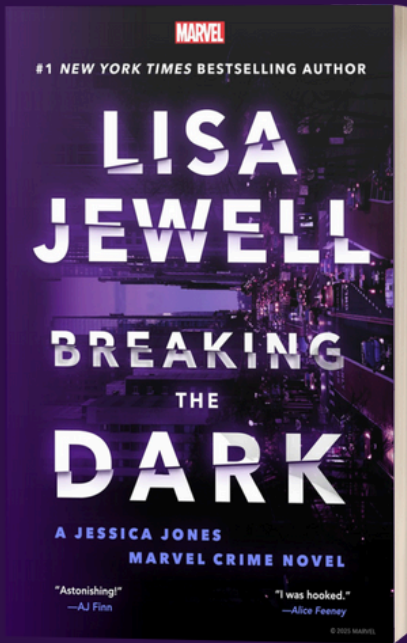


On sale:  
May 27



On sale:  
June 3

# ABOUT THIS KIT

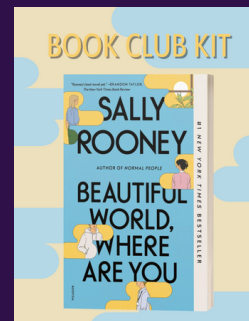
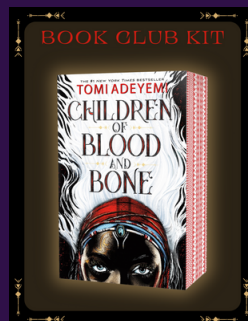
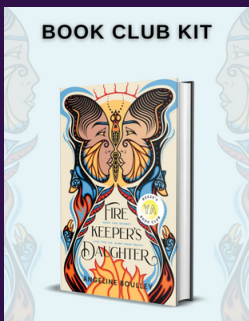
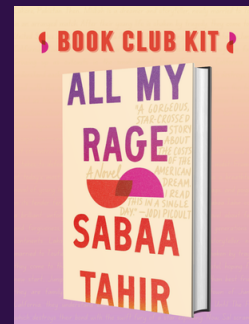
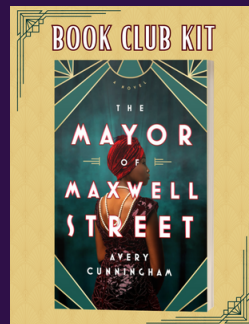


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