

BREAKING NEWS...

This edition of the *Anty Boisjoly* newsletter — soon to be retitled the *Anty Boisjoly / Teddy Quillfeather Joint Newsletter and Cartoon Syndication Periodical* (something of a working title) — has been superceded by a special edition.

Reaction to this cover reveal has been, speaking euphamistically, mixed, and readers are at this very moment voting on the final cover of *Hardy Haul at Hardy Hall*.

You can [have your say here](#) (voting open until Sunday).

PJ Fitzsimmons

the Boisjoly Bulletin

April 2024 ★ Special Cover Reveal Edition ★ All content hand-inspected for your safety

TRUE CONFESSIONS

In accordance with strict editorial policy, this newsletter contains no fewer than two exclusive news items, the first of which is the best sort of exclusive — a confession.



I design my own covers.

There's a firm axiom in the independent publishing community similar to one in the shark community — a lawyer who represents himself has a fool for a client. We're not supposed to design our own covers because we're writers, and writers write or do handyman work to make ends meet but they don't design covers.

For better or worse, I do, and now you know I do. The first covers for *Anty Boisjoly Mysteries* were not stellar, I confess, and I probably should have hired a professional. No excuses. But looking back, I learned a great deal about readability, font and colour choices, structure, balance, negative space, and internalising public embarrassment. I'm not entirely without training in the graphic arts (bonus confession! I do the cartoons, too) and my work has steadily improved to the point that, if I were desperate and my prices were reasonable, I'd hire me.

Cover Reveal!

Which brings us to the second exclusive item — a cover reveal of *Hardy Haul at Hardy Hall*, the first book in the Teddy Quillfeather Mystery series. The look of the book is lifted very unsubtly from a famous painting by Tamara de Lempicka, an artist whose work I admire very much and who for me is the bridge between high-concept cubism and the Poirot opening credits sequence.

I think it immediately conveys the era and the attitude in a way that an artist like, say, Edwin Landseer, would not.

So I've adapted a famous painting for my cover, but I did it myself, vector-for-vector, and I added a penguin.

For comparison to real talent, here is the original self-portrait by Tamara de Lempicka.



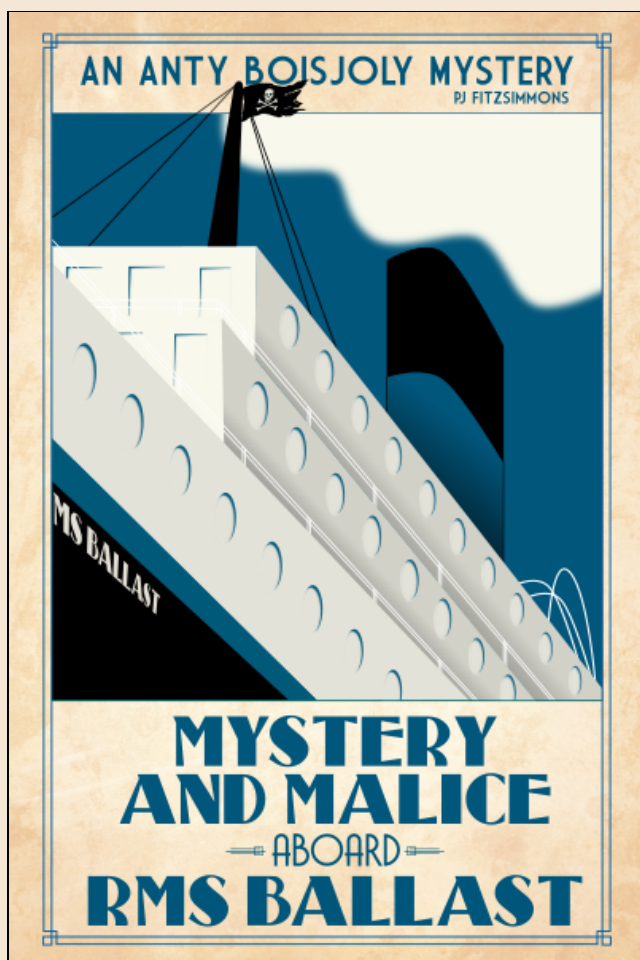
Lempicka.

Degenerative AI

I'm not going to get into the whole artificial intelligence debate. I'll just say that generative AI is a corrupt abdication of the creative process which will one day prove to be the most regrettable development in human history, and leave it at that. I'm staying neutral.

But it's not for me. And a very significant problem with engaging cover artists these days is that you may or may not end up paying for an AI prompt. Right now, you can tell, I think, and the ghoulish, doughy-edged 3D mashups do not meet current requirements. In the future, who knows, so I'm glad that I've onshored this particular aspect of the publishing process, hiccoughs and all, and have reached a level of competence matching and maybe even occasionally exceeding that of a mindless image-munging database.

I say this not to incite debate but to address any suggestions that my brilliant forgery is anyone's fault but my own — no copyrights were whitewashed during the making of this or any of my covers, cartoons, content, or anything else that I do.



Today's Cryptic Clue is for the final extra twist at the end of *Mystery and Malice aboard RMS Ballast*

It's not how, but when the island got its name that matters.

Oh, and there's a new series

... which doesn't count, technically, as an exclusive news item for those who saw the announcement at the end of *Mystery and Malice aboard RMS Ballast*, in which Teddy makes her debut. For the rest of you, there's a new series!

Theodora 'Teddy' Quillfeather is a stylish, coquettish stiletta of the golden age and very much a citizen in good standing of the *Anty Boisjoly* world of whimsy, but she's no *Anty Boisjoly* and he's no Teddy Quillfeather. For one thing, as locked room murders are to *Anty* the clever caper is to Teddy — for whatever reasons, she encounters much less murder and a great many more heists, swindles, cons and counterfeits, and the villains tend to learn in the end that when their game is graft they're playing to Teddy's strengths.



CONSTABLE: "And why was you allowin' the penguin to drive?"

TEDDY: "Well, Constable, if you call that driving it's no wonder they only let you have a bicycle."

This cartoon isn't really a preview of *Hardy Haul at Hardy Hall*, but it's something that could theoretically have occurred between chapters.



I said, did you hear anything unusual at the time of the incident?

Similarly, this scene doesn't occur anywhere, but it's strongly inspired by characters and events in *Foreboding Foretelling at Ficklehouse Felling*.

Pass it on

There's going to be another newsletter followed by a proper public announcement before *Hardy Haul at Hardy Hall* (code name Ha Ha) is released in a few weeks, so if you think there might be someone in your circle who would appreciate advance warning, please don't hesitate to share this newsletter and corresponding signup:

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