

# The Sanity Update

Volume 1, Issue 2

February 17, 2016



## TV STUFF:

- *The Walking Dead*
- *Pretty Little Liars*
- *Sleepy Hollow*
- *Super Girl* (plus more!)

## Book Stuff:

- *The Mystery of Mercy Close* by Marian Keyes
- *Choose Yourself* by James Altucher
- *Pipedreams: A Freak Tale* by Stephen Hartford and Michael Harmon

In my greeting for the [first installment of \*The Sanity Update\*](#), I spoke of the winter weather, and how it could be quite disagreeable. You know, cold and snow and the like. This last weekend was crazy cold. Tom and Dave were supposed to do the ALF Lover your Liver 16 mile run, but it was canceled because of the weather. Disappointing, but right decision, just dangerously cold. (And I was supposed to be at a water stop as well—so I was glad it was canceled.)

At this moment the current temperature is 1°. ONE DEGREE! (as of Monday 2/15/16). That is Damn cold. My husband's truck was not starting well, our dishwasher isn't working, and my legs are cold! Funny thing, two weeks ago the average temperature was about 50ish. Truly! In New England! And by the time you're reading this, the New England temperature is forecasted to be back in the 40s and 50s. Is this due to climate change? It could be, but the point is, weather is just insane, changeable, and unpredictable. (Not dissing the meteorologists, they are smart and do their best, especially our friend [Matt Noyes at NECN](#).)

Consider this, that like the weather, our lives change in wildly crazy ways. But when the tornados of chaos strike, or a lightning bolt of fate nearly blinds us, we can still find ways to keep moving through the storm.

Shanti and Shalom

# What's The News

PEOPLE, EVENTS, AND OTHER COOL THINGS THAT HELP IN THE SANITY SEARCH

**Shout Out Time!** This issue would like to recognize the group [Guitars Not Guns](#). Their mission is to: **“PROVIDE GUITARS AND LESSONS TO FOSTER CHILDREN AND AT-RISK YOUTH IN A CLASSROOM SETTING WITH QUALIFIED TEACHERS AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO VIOLENCE.”** In particular, I want to recognize the Monterey, CA chapter, and it's president, Stephen Vagnini. Steve has combined his love of music, he's long-time music promotor, with his concern for children, to advance this mission of lessening gun violence, and encouraging a love of music.

There are chapters in 11 states, plus Washington, DC, and Canada.



Guitars Not Guns Monterey County Chapter



**My second acknowledgement is for a local friend, Judy Murphy.** Besides being a fun-loving and good looking woman, Judy has an amazing heart. Her social media pages routinely announce her involvement in some sort of charity or another.

But Judy is not publicizing these efforts for her own ego, rather she's hoping to raise money for all sorts of good causes. And many times these fundraising campaigns involve a STRENUOUS amount of physicality. Oy! Most recently Judy participated in the American Lung Association's "Fight for Air" climb. This meant that she raised over \$800 for the cause, plus climbed the stairs at One Boston Place. (that's a LOT of stairs). This marked her sixth year of involvement.

Judy has also participated in numerous 5Ks, some for fun, some for charity. Another event she's done is "SmithFest" a unique charitable campaign that sets up Amazing Race style scavenger hunts and obstacle courses the Merrimack Valley and Southern New Hampshire communities. Her photos of these events are always fun.

There is one particular cause that Judy has been vigorously working on recently, it's for her own cousin, Nancy. Judy started a Go Fund Me page, called "[For the Love of Nancy](#)" and the story is both heartbreaking and uplifting. Nancy has suffered from several kinds of cancer beginning with a diagnosis of Hodgkin's Lymphoma when she was just 18. For several years she was clear of any cancer, but then was hit with breast cancer in both breasts, followed by thyroid cancer. Unbelievably Nancy was also dealt a blow with an additional diagnosis of kidney cancer, and now brain cancer. Unreal.

I've been following Nancy's story through Judy's Facebook posts and it's all quite humbling. Please do two things for me, consider donating to Nancy's fund, and also be grateful that there are people like Judy out there, fighting fights for many who cannot. Hey, one more thing. **Be a Judy now and then!**

AND PLEASE DON'T FORGET MY TWO FAVORITE RUNNERS! My son Tom, and my husband Dave who are both trying very hard to raise funds for the American Liver Foundation. I mentioned them in the last issue, and they both need to hit their respective goals of \$5,000. each.

[TOM'S PAGE](#)

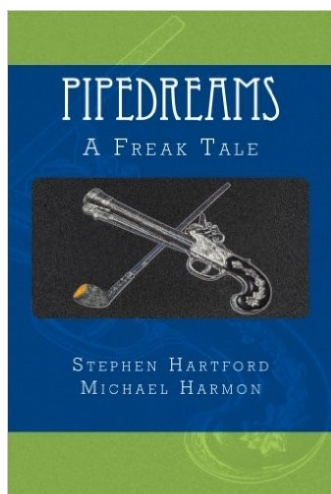
[DAVE'S PAGE](#)

# BOOK STUFF

## WHAT I'VE BEEN READING

### ***The Mystery of Mercy Close* by Marian Keyes**

Alright, so I've just started this one, and I'm anticipating liking it very much. Keyes has written several novels that feature the same characters, the Walsh sisters. Mostly, each book tends to focus on just one sister at a time, and the tales are usually quite funny. But whether from the Walsh series, or other titles, Keyes has great skill weaving some serious themes throughout her stories, memorably *This Charming Man*, *Anybody Out There*, and of course, *Rachel's Holiday*.



### ***Pipedreams: A Freak Tale* by Stephen Hartford and Michael Harmon**

This one is a mystery to me. I had the book. Misplaced the book. Found it! Lost it. Sad Face. I know I will find it again, I think I know which floor it's on. Or not. At least I got to read a good part of this definitely freaky and fun novel. (It's had much better luck than the Dean Koontz book. I got it last year as a gift, and lost it the same day. I think I've looked under all the chairs and whatnot. It's vanished.)

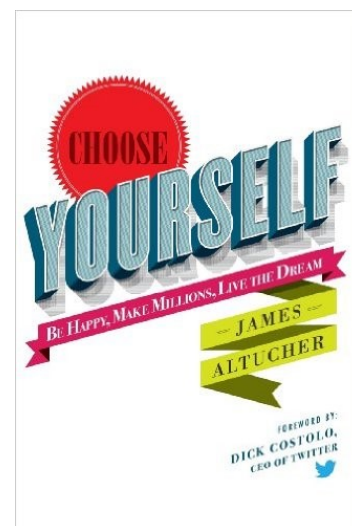
Regardless, the book remains partially read, but I can still say with confidence that it's definitely worth it, if you are inclined towards an HBO styled gritty dystopian comedy. Hartford and Harmon are skilled at characterization, imagination, and plot, and *Pipedreams* will be a companion you won't want to lose.

"It is a masterfully told tale of good versus evil, with many surprising twists and unexpected turns that grip the reader until the very last pages. It has the classic ingredients of intrigue, action, love interest, nonstop inventiveness and, for a book set in 2468, multiple atmospheric reminders of 1968." *The Rochester Times*.

### ***Choose Yourself* by James Altucher.**

Disclaimer—I have not read this book. Yet. It is described as an examination of the dismantling of the American Dream, but offers hope despite personal loss, economic or otherwise. *Choose Yourself* has been recommended by people I like and trust, but that still didn't make me go out and get it. Then I read some essays and other thoughts by Altucher on LinkedIn and Quora, and I realized I liked the cut of his jib. Smart. Succinct. Kind. I'm trying not to keep getting distracted by Shiny Objects, but there you go. I think this one is worth it. So, I don't have it. I would like it. Sure, that can be a hint.

(I realized that none of those books has been completely read by me. But trust me, won't you? I think we'll like these together! )





# TV STUFF

## MY PICKS FOR THIS ISSUE



***Sleepy Hollow.* (Friday, 8:00pm ET, Fox)** Boy, Third Season Second Half opening was elusive to find. Is it me, or did so many shows take FOREVER to start up again after Christmas? And that's another thing. Don't you think the "Fall Finale" and "Winter Finale" of so many shows start to feel...kind of contrived? The reality is, it's all one damn season, just a very long break in the middle. In the "old days", that's when they used to start showing repeats.

Anyway, Abbie (Nicole Beharie) is stuck in a tree. Not in the branches, she's gone into some kind of other realm. It's all a bit creepy, and part of the earlier episodes lost me, but mostly it's still great fun. Tom Mison's Ichabod Crane is a delight as he either discusses history from his original time, the late 1700s or as he gets to go back and interact with George Washington or Ben Franklin. And this season has included Shannyn Sossamon. She's always appealing. Check it out!

***Pretty Little Liars.* (Tuesdays 8:00pm ET, Freeform)** OK, I wasn't imagining things, Spencer and Caleb have like—totally hooked up! Not in a sleazy way, but one thing is obvious, the creators are really capitalizing on the five year time jump. Before sex was either implied, or depicted with brief glimpses, not much flesh. Now—well—things are much more grown up. And they can legally drink!



Since last time—Toby might propose to Yvonne. Ashley steals a surveillance video from a security storage facility. Aria suspects that Ezra killed Charlotte, but his 9 iron is not missing. But Byron golfs! His club is missing! Didn't we do this in Season Three? Also, Byron and Ella have been acting funny, turns out they've been sneaking around—seeing each other! They are engaged? More repeat behaviors come up as Spencer and Ali sneak into Sara's hotel room and see a bizarre collection of gloved hand prosthetics. Emily tries to sell her eggs, but has a scary experience as she comes out of anesthesia. Stay tuned.



***The Walking Dead.* (Sundays 9:00pm ET, AMC)** It's funny that I'm even listing it here. Here's the story, my family has been watching the show since the beginning, and every now and then I've caught an episode with them. Me and my annoying questions, because I'm not up on the whole TWD mythology. But I enjoyed what I saw. And naturally, my sons always ask if "I'm going to watch this week" and I usually don't, because I've got my own favorite Sunday night shows. Bottom line, it's a great show.

**EXTRAS: *Supergirl:* (Mondays 8:00pm ET, CBS)** A lot of fun despite the sometimes clichéd writing.

***Teachers:* (Wednesdays 10:30pm ET, TV LAND)** You might not want these ladies to teach your children, but they are a non-PC, very funny group of crazy chicks.

***Quantico:* (Sundays 10:00pm ET, ABC)** Despite the fact that it must follow the ABC rules of glitz and cleavage, it's a smart show (It returns on March 6th).

# Sanity Smörgåsbord

## OTHER STUFF TO SHARE

**GOT AN APP FOR THAT!** - I will occasionally highlight here what I think are useful device apps for either finding sanity (no, not quite an emotional GPS), or whatever else I think is grand.

First up is a cool app that my friend Heather turned me on to, called [buddhify](#). If you've read [my take on mediation](#) at *The Sanity Search*, you'll see that I'm not super good at it, but I think it's still a good practice. This award winning application is available for both Android and iOS. I have the paid version, but I think it was no more than \$5.00. It has lots of guided meditations for all sorts of situations, but the one I tend to use most is about going to sleep (or insomnia). Most times I never hear the end of the guided talk, I'm asleep. Win!

What is also good about listening to these guided meditations is that the narrator gives you plenty of permission to not "get it right." What I mean is, when unbidden thoughts pop in your head, that is OK. Part of meditation is realizing that you needn't be afraid of those thoughts, just acknowledge them and let 'em go.

Give it a try!



There's something else cool, and I still need to educate myself further, but I'm starting to get interested in something called "binaural beats"

The concept is if you are exposed to a particular frequency of a sound, which must be below 1500 Hz in one ear, and simultaneously hear another tone at a different Hz (still below 1500), then your brain interprets a third tone, which is an illusion. This must be done with headphones. The point is, listening to this can be calming and healing.

There is also something called "Isochronic Tones" that is also supposed to be good for focus. I've found a bunch of different YouTube channels for both of these, and listening to them while I work, even without headphones, I've found I could focus better.

A [recent article in Forbes](#) gives an intriguing look at the uses for this kind of technology. I do have an app on my phone called Binaural Beats and Relaxation by Systems USA. I have only listened to it a couple times, and I'm not sure what I'm supposed to be feeling. There are different levels or applications, and one is for Out of Body Experiences, specifically for Lucid Dreaming and Astral Projection. While I think that stuff is fascinating, I'm not sure I'm ready for the OOB stuff right now.

Shanti and Shalom!

Hey Friends: Why don't you come hang out with me at: [The Sanity Search](#).

You are on the list mostly because I thought you'd appreciate the publication. However, you can unsubscribe at any time.

If you'd like to share this with a friend, go [here to add them as a subscriber](#).

Thanks!

