

# L.A. STARKS



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## L. A. Starks Newsletter, Spring 2011

Welcome to my semi-annual newsletter.

### Writing:

The first professional draft of the second book is complete and in the hands of an editor! While I await the editor's comments I'm starting on the third book, giving talks about energy, and launching an energy economics website.

My critique partner, Gary Vineyard, has completed his first book. It's an excellent cross between historical mystery and Larry McMurty-style western literary fiction with an overlay of dry humor. Keep him in your good wishes as he begins queries.

### Energy:

I'm pleased to announce the launch of the Starks Energy Economics (SEE) website. <http://starksenergyecon.com> The website features quarterly discussions of current energy topics in the free section. SEE also has a subscription section (\$59/quarter or \$199/year) that offers twice-monthly energy topic detail with financial metrics for small groups of energy companies.

We've seen oil prices swing high and then begin to drop on reduced global economic activity. Economists' shorthand for this is “high prices bring low prices,” at least if oil prices are allowed to translate to gasoline prices. (This is true in the US but not all countries.) Because of the characteristic known as “long-term elasticity,” we are seeing gasoline demand respond and prices fall more quickly than in 2008, in part precisely because of long-term adjustments consumers made due to high 2008 prices.

While I don't consult for the CIA, perhaps they will keep my books on their reading list since, as a thriller author, I focus on high-stakes issues. But even for me, it was startling to learn about al-Qaeda plans to target oil tankers—exactly the plot of my “Gumbo Filé” short story.

Publicist Diane Feffer has joined her efforts to mine, along with website pro Clara Mizenko. In the last four months, Diane has arranged talks with several groups from alternative energy enthusiasts to management accountants. These have given me the opportunity to talk synergistically about energy economics and thriller writing.

#### Books, Anthology, Short Stories, Publishing:

E-editions and print copies of [13 DAYS](#) and [DREAMSPELL NIGHTMARES](#) are selling well. In the last few months, publisher L&L Dreamspell added Nook and Overdrive platforms to its presence on Kindle, multi-format Fictionwise, Kobo, and OmniLit. A list of my fiction in print, including ISBNs (like Social Security numbers for books), is at the end of the newsletter.

Because e-books are less expensive to produce and “inventory” than print books, readers can expect to see more books published in e-book format alone. Additionally, the ease of publishing e-books (known in business jargon as “low or no barriers to entry”) has led to many more works being published, disrupting normal channels and relationships between authors, agents, publishers, bricks-and-mortar bookstores, and readers. While this creative destruction is volatile for the industry generally and me as an author, it's a net gain for readers of e-books. We benefit from many more choices, available at lower prices.

#### Reading:

Of the twenty books I've read in 2011 to date, in literary fiction I most like Teá Obreht's **The Tiger's Wife**. Taking place in eastern Europe, the novel has a

dreamlike aspect contrasting with the harsh reality of its setting. I've read two of Nobel Prize-winning author Mario Vargas Llosa's novels, **Death in the Andes** and **The Bad Girl**. I'm starting **The Feast of the Goat**, set in the Dominican Republic. So far it's my favorite of his works.

I continued reading Russian noir by Martin Cruz Smith: **Polar Star**, **Red Square**, and **Havana Bay**. Readers of Brad Taylor's book **One Rough Man: Pike Logan** will appreciate the no-holds-barred female sidekick, an alumna of Cirque de Soleil. And despite its clichéd villain, Dallas author Taylor Stevens gives readers extraordinary African (and Texas) settings, good characters, and a complex plot in **The Informationist**.

Until next time,

L. A. Starks, <http://lastarksbooks.com>

Fiction by L. A. Starks:

**13 DAYS: THE PYTHAGORAS CONSPIRACY**, by L. A. Starks

- Print ISBN 978-1-933285-45-0, published by Brown Books Publishing Group, May 2006.
- E-book ISBN 978-1-60318-357-4, published by L&L Dreamspell, October 2010. Available from Kindle, Nook, multi-format Fictionwise (twelve e-reader platforms including the popular ePub standard), Overdrive for libraries, Kobo, and OmniLit.

**"Gumbo Filé,"** in **DREAMSPELL NIGHTMARES** anthology, edited by Lisa René Smith

- Print ISBN 978-1-60318-150-1, published by L&L Dreamspell, October 2010.
- E-book ISBN 978-1-60318-151-8, published by L&L Dreamspell, October 2010. Available from Kindle, Nook, multi-format Fictionwise (twelve e-reader platforms including the popular ePub standard), Overdrive for libraries, Kobo, and OmniLit.

**Back-Story Short Stories** on Amazon Kindle

- **"Robert and Thérèse Guillard: Choices"** involves an alternate

subplot for 13 DAYS' Parisian antagonist and how it feels to fly in a wingsuit. 2007. ASIN: B003NE6D74.

- **"A Time for Eating Wild Onions"** introduces two key characters in the second book. The tragedy that befalls them profoundly shapes the next generation. 2007. ASIN: B



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