

# Joyce's Journal

A monthly dispatch from Joyce A. Miller, Writer



## PAPERHAND PUPPET PROJECT!

Every August I attend the Paperhand Puppet Project Summer Show in Chapel Hill, NC. To call it a puppet show doesn't really do it justice, it's more of a pageant. The production features giant papier mache masks, stilt walkers, shadow puppets, and illuminated creatures along with live, original music by the Paperhand band. The show is outdoors in a stone amphitheater. The title of this year's show is **Wild Wisdom of the World**, and I'll be going on August 21<sup>st</sup>. Each year Paperhand does a Kickstarter promotion to raise the money necessary to put on the show; and I always back them with a donation. My reward this year was to have my name put on a piece of papier mache in one of the puppets. They told me the puppet was named **FEET**, so I'm excited to see what kind of puppet that is!

On Tuesday, July 14, I attended the book launch for Rachel Beanland's new novel, **The Half Life**. Rachel drew on her own childhood on La Maddalena, a remote Italian island where her father, a U.S. Navy officer, was stationed in the 1980s, as well as her mother's experience as a Navy wife. The launch featured a conversation with Richmond-born author Kevin Powers, whose new book, **Children of the Wild**, is set against the Virginia mountains and the trenches of World War I and follows two friends whose bond deepens even as they vie for the same woman's affection. Two wonderful picks for anyone who loves historical fiction.

A GLIMPSE OF  
WHAT'S INCLUDED:

**A link to How Can  
You Love Me?**

I also took part in the Rolling Ladders RVA Gilded Golden Hour Book Fair on Friday, July 17. The day began under a Code Purple air-quality alert, with smoky, hazy skies from the Canadian wildfires, likely part of why turnout was steady but short of the 300 people organizers had hoped for. Still, one moment made my day: a young man stopped at every table, including mine, then circled back to buy the books that had caught his interest. He asked to take **Mrs. Cari Melchers** to the sitting area to read a chapter, then came back to purchase it, saying he appreciated the level of detail in my writing. Knowing my words reached someone in that way reminded me why I love doing this. That kind of connection with a reader is worth more than any sales number.

As a bonus for this month's newsletter, I'm including the YouTube link to my friend Nadeya Ward's new song **How Can You Love Me?** She has a beautiful voice. Stream it anywhere you listen to music.

[https://youtu.be/OQVSMjwYIU?si=0AUB4RuXAN\\_DbRtP](https://youtu.be/OQVSMjwYIU?si=0AUB4RuXAN_DbRtP)

I live in the Church Hill section of Richmond, VA with my husband and my retired racing greyhound. Before I started writing, I worked for 30 years at a nuclear physics research laboratory.

Do what you came here for!



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