

Novels By Russ Fine

September, 2025

I'm pleased to announce that a hardcover edition of *The Artifact* is now available. Also, a hardcover edition of *Janus* is available on Amazon and will be available at the signing event at Harriman.

If you are interested in purchasing a signed copy of any of my novels you can do that by scanning the QR code below or by visiting: locallysigned.com/russell-fine-2/.

This month's newsletter includes a very short story titled *A Really Bad Day*. There is also a recipe for Chewy Coconut Squares. It was one of the best selling cookies at my bakery.

If you would like to read any of my previous newsletters they are all available on my website.

As always, if you have any comments or suggestions regarding my novels please let me know. I look forward to hearing from you.

Russell Fine

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 Locally Signed

Book Signing Events

September 12 - 13

11:00 - 3:00

Kroger

244 S. Hall Road

Alcoa, TN 37701

September 26 - 27

11:00 - 3:00

Kroger

1820 Roane State Hwy.

Harriman, TN 37748

A Really Bad Day

I remember that awful morning as if it was yesterday. Actually, now that I think about it, it was yesterday. Time seems to move at a different pace when you're in the hospital.

It rained all night. The lightning and thunder were constant. My dogs were petrified, and spent the entire night next to me shivering with fright. As a result, I got no sleep. The power shut off a little after 1:00. So, now I was lying in bed, surrounded by frightened dogs, one of whom decided to occasionally howl in response to the thunder. With no air conditioning, or fan, the temperature and humidity were rising, and so was my anger over a situation I could do absolutely nothing about.

I usually leave for work at six o'clock, but since the power was out the digital clock next to my bed was useful only as a paper weight. I kept looking at my phone to see the time, and after what seemed like twenty hours the phone indicated it was a few minutes to five.

The lightning and thunder continued unabated, so the dogs followed me into the bathroom. While I was in the shower one of the dogs apparently decided that the bathroom rug was the perfect place to relieve himself. If only I had seen the pile of crap before I stepped out of the shower. Unfortunately, I found it with my right foot.

I quickly stepped back into the shower, cleaned my foot, and cautiously stepped out again. I picked up the rug, shook the remaining crap off into the toilet, and put the rug in the washing machine. I wanted to yell at the dog that left the deposit on the floor, but since I have three dogs, all about equal in size, it would have been impossible to find the culprit without doing a DNA test.

Anyway, I got dressed, put on a rain coat, and attempted to take the dogs for a quick walk. Just as I opened the front door a bolt of lightning struck a tree in the field across the street from my house. The thunder was so loud it scared me, and the dogs. Fortunately, I was able to control my bladder, unfortunately the dogs were not. Now I had another mess to clean up.

On the bright side, there was no longer any reason to walk the dogs. So, after I cleaned up the mess I decided it was time to go to work. I walked into the garage, but the light that always goes on automatically didn't turn on because there was no power. I pushed the button to open the garage door, which has a battery backup, but the door wouldn't open. I should have walked back into the house to get a flashlight, but instead I decided to feel my way to my car and open the door, which would have given me some light so I could see what I was doing.

I cautiously took a few steps in the direction of the car and quickly discovered the garage floor was covered with water. That was when I discovered that the floor was slippery too. I don't remember falling. I guess I was unconscious for a while. When I woke up my head hurt and I was unable to get up. I called 911, told them what happened, and that my front door was unlocked. I also told them about the dogs.

Anyway, they took me to the hospital. I was diagnosed with a broken tibia, and a mild concussion. They must have given me something that put me to sleep because I don't remember anything else about yesterday, which is probably a good thing.

I'm sure today will be a better day. It finally stopped raining.

Chewy Coconut Squares

350 degrees

For Crust:

- 2 Cups sifted flour
- 1/2 Cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 2/3 Cup soft butter (5.25 Ounces)

For Topping:

- 1/2 Cup sifted flour
- 2 Cups brown sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 2 tsps. Vanilla extract
- 2 2/3 Cups sweetened flaked coconut
- 2 Cups chopped walnuts

For crust, combine flour and brown sugar. Add butter and mix until thoroughly blended. Press firmly into ungreased 13 x 9 inch pan and bake for 15 minutes.

For topping, beat eggs until light. Add sugar gradually, beating constantly until mixture is light and fluffy. Fold in flour and baking powder. Add vanilla, coconut, and nuts. Mix thoroughly.

Spread topping evenly on baked crust in pan and return to oven. Bake 20 to 25 minutes longer, or until lightly browned.

Allow finished cookies to cool for 30 minutes then remove from baking pan and use a sharp knife to cut into squares.

