

## A few quotes

You're braver than you believe,  
stronger than you seem,  
and smarter than you think.

— Winnie the Pooh

All cruelty springs from weakness.

— Lucius Annaeus Seneca

Reality doesn't care what you believe.

— Iain Banks

Scar tissue is stronger than regular tissue.

Realize the strength, move on.

— Henry Rollins

Never underestimate the power of human stupidity.

— Robert A. Heinlein

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## Volume 1 December 2025

A zine by Michele & Michael



## From Michele's Quilting Sketchbook



## Top Five Video Games Played in 2025

Dune Awakening – 160 sessions  
 Pax Dei – 47 sessions  
 Baldur's Gate – 10 Sessions  
 The Outer Worlds 2 – 8 Sessions  
 Throne and Liberty – 5 Sessions

## Top Television Shows We Liked in 2025

#1 – Andor  
 #2 – The Lowdown  
 #3 – Shrinking  
 #4 – Slow Horses  
 #5 – Murderbot

## Michele's Favorite Kona Cotton Solids

#1019 – Black  
 #1387 – White  
 #1039 – Bordeaux  
 #860 – Acid Lime  
 #480 – Pickle

## Made a bunch of videos

Number of YouTube videos made: 17  
 Number of TikTok videos made: 64  
 Most views of a TikTok video: 340.7K (How to make beef jerky)

## Recipe for beef jerky marinade (from my dad)

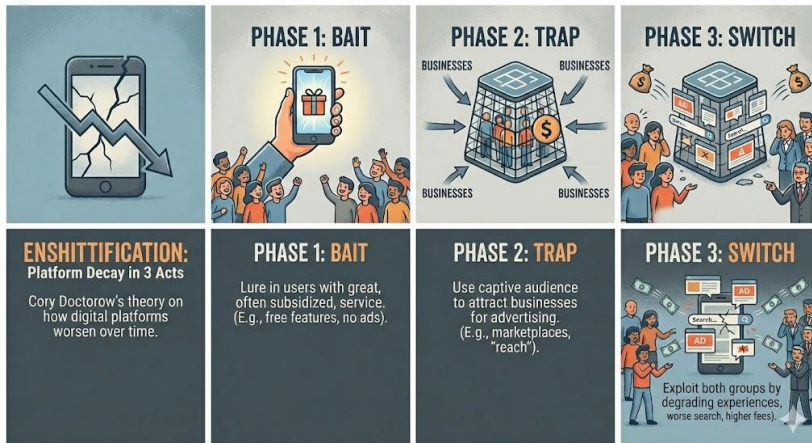
1 ½ cup Soy Sauce  
 ½ cup Worcestershire Sauce  
 1 cup light brown sugar  
 ½ teaspoon garlic salt  
 1 teaspoon onion powder

## Cannoli's Favorite Treats

Better Belly Proteins Rolls with Real Venison

## Enshittification

Cory Doctorow's 3 Phases of Platform Decay



Cory Doctorow's concept of platform decay better known as 'enshittification' describes the predictable lifecycle of many digital platforms as they decay from user-friendly services into frustrating profit-extracting machines.

**Bait** - Platforms begin by baiting users with generous, often subsidized experiences, free features, minimal friction, and little to no advertising to rapidly build scale and lock in habits.

**Trap** - Once users are effectively trapped, the platform pivots to courting businesses, promising access to that captive audience through ads, marketplaces, or algorithmic "reach."

**Switch** - Having made both users and businesses dependent, the platform degrades the experience for everyone, flooding feeds with ads, manipulating visibility, raising fees, and worsening core functionality, all to extract maximum short-term profit, even as the underlying value of the platform steadily erodes.

## Our Favorite Books of 2025

### Michele's Books

**Service Model by Adrian Tchaikovsky** – A smart and darkly funny book about a murderous robot trying to figure out its purpose.

**All Fours by Miranda July** – A surprising and engaging story about a woman completely blowing up her life.

**The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue by V.E. Schwab** – A beautiful story that moves through time, following a woman who makes a deal with the devil. I loved it so much I also listened to the audiobook.

### Michele's Audiobooks

**The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue by V.E. Schwab** – Just as good in audio and a wonderful way to revisit the story.

**The Spy Who Came in from the Cold by John le Carré** – A classic spy novel, wonderfully read by Simon Vance.

**What Could Go Wrong? by Scott Z. Burns** – An eye-opening look at Hollywood and AI.

### Michael's Books

**Cyber Mage by Saad Z. Hossain** – A great blend of teenage hackers, video games, and powerful Djinn. The first in the series, Djinn City, is also wonderful and Djinn-filled.

**The Dead Cat Tail Assassins by P. Djèlí Clark** – Dark fantasy about assassin guilds using undead magic. What's not to love? Toss in a who-dun-it and it's fantastic.

**Everything Is Tuberculosis by John Green** – An interesting non-fiction about the history of tuberculosis and the modern-day failure to prevent its continued spread. Not dry, it's an easy read.

## On Buying a New Television

Due to being a professional broadcast television engineer, I often get asked by friends and family about buying a new television.

**Here's the tl;dr:**

**Most TV specs don't matter for the average viewer.**

**The two things that do matter are your budget (LED vs. OLED) and the smart TV interface, because a bad UI will make you miserable every day.**

My advice is usually unexpected, as I don't really get into the numbers and details of the various models. The truth is that most of the specifications are meaningless to the average person at home.

The truth is that most people won't notice the subtle differences in those details because they won't be watching in a room suitable to see those things.

If you have lights on in the room with glare reflections on the TV, or you aren't sitting at the proper viewing distance, or the room is too bright, or anything else that makes the room not exclusively focused on viewing television, you can't see the subtle differences.

There is one big technical choice to make that does make a difference. That is the choice between a LED TV and an OLED TV. OLED TVs are noticeably better and command a much higher price, usually at least \$1,000 more than an LED version of the same screen size.

So to begin with, you have to choose what you want to spend. If you want to spend under \$1,000 go with an LED TV, if you want to spend more than ~\$1,250, go with an OLED TV.

The budget decision is key and the first one you need to make.

Once you've decided that, it's all about smart/streaming app TV aspects of the television.

Unfortunately, most of the major TV manufacturers are terrible software companies and their smart app operating system is terrible. It's no secret that the user interfaces of Samsung (Tizen) and LG (webOS) are terrible. Slow, unintuitive, and buggy, these platforms are a headache to operate.

One option is using an external streaming device like Fire TV, Chromecast, Roku, or Apple TV. If you like using an external device, the main thing you want to look at is how the TV behaves when you turn it on.

Does it instantly bring up the external device? Is it easy to navigate changing the HDMI input? Does the TV make you click through their menus every time you want to use the external device?

IMHO, the simplest and most powerful choice is a television that runs the streaming device software natively.

There is a wide range of TVs that use this software, mainly Android TVs (Google), Fire TVs (Amazon), and Roku TVs. This usually provides a faster, more usable UI, and in addition, it often allows you to do everything with a single remote instead of switching between remotes, a common headache.

Personally, I think that Roku TVs are the best choice for most people as they are simple for non-tech-savvy people.

So, IMHO, choosing a new TV comes down to two real choices.

1) How much do I want to spend?  
(Under ~\$1,000 = LED; Above ~\$1,250 = OLED)

2) What smart TV interface appeals to me?

Stick to those two questions, believe nothing a salesperson tells you, and make your choice on the UI you are most comfortable using **for years.**