

## Martha Fosse in *Dispatches from Pluto*

Richard Grant's friend, Martha Foose, is the first character introduced in *Dispatches from Pluto* and serves as a vehicle to help the reader experience the Mississippi Delta. Foose's name is mentioned on more than forty pages, meaning she figures significantly in fourteen percent of the book.

Foose is an important character, and Grant continues to describe her at each mention, which is what we should do as people appear multiple times throughout our stories.

Here are notes I took in preparing for the December 20, 2022, master class on layering in character details.

### Pages 3-4

- Grant's friend of several years
- cookbook writer
- lives in Greenwood, Mississippi, in Mississippi Delta
- good sense of humor about where she lives – “dating down the food chain”
- author of *Screen Doors and Sweet Tea* – first cookbook – full of stories and recipes, published in 2008
- attended cooking school in Paris
- won James Beard Award for American Cooking in 2009
- has Southern drawl

### Page 21

- smoked cigarettes
- drank sweet iced tea
- said how she lived in Delta, “Compartmentalize, compartmentalize, and then compartmentalize some more...and carry on till you find their good side”

### Page 30

- raised by Lucy Neal

### Page 37

- has son named for a black man, Joseph Newton

**Pages 64-65**

- enjoys craziness of Mississippi Delta
- “broad definition of enterprise”
- irony and gallows humor
- type of speech, “...the whole thing is just freaking crazy I can’t even.”

**Pages 78-83**

- brings Grant food when goes to pick him up – oat bran muffin
- “loved to rattle off scientific names of obscure diseases with dire outcomes”
- told stories all the time – sounded like music
- pretty Southern accent
- used map – GPS no good in the Delta
- language, “culture vulture”
- doesn’t drink beer

**Pages 146-147**

- seldom left house in winter
- watched Sundance documentary about man having sex with horse
- humor – focus on what kind of drink he should have had
- trying to write an essay, “Loaves and Fishes” about husband and friend losing jobs in bread and fishing industries

**Page 148**

- not opposed to Walmart coming in, became Delta-ized

**Page 159**

- cheeky sense of humor
- interested in Parchman prison farm-to-table operation

**Page 174**

- “grudgingly” sent son to segregated school because of poor performing desegregated school
- not prejudiced

**Pages 194, 203**

- held crawfish boil
- poured out crawfish on table