

# BOOKNEWS from

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## Happy Valentine's Day to All...

### AUTHORS ARE SIGNING...

Some Events will be webcast at <http://new.livestream.com/poisonedpen>.

#### TUESDAY FEBRUARY 3 7:00 PM A Cozy Duo

Kate Carlisle signs [This Old Homicide](#) (Signet \$7.99)

Eva Gates signs [By Book or By Crook](#) (Signet \$7.99)

#### WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 4 11:30 AM-1:00 PM First of two Art Programs

Dianne Hales signs [Mona Lisa: A Life Discovered](#)

(SimonSchuster \$28) and gives an illustrated talk

#### WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 4 7:00 PM The Second Art Program

Paul Perry shows a documentary he's made about Catalan surrealist Salvador Dali: *Salvador Dali's Great Secret: The Story Behind the Painting That Changed Dali's Life*. Copies are for sale (\$19.95).

#### THURSDAY FEBRUARY 5 7:00 PM Safari Night

Come at 6:30 and I'll talk about the South African Safari

Tess' Botswana safari is part of the plot: Rob provides some photos

Tess Gerritsen signs [Die Again](#) (Ballantine \$27) Rizzoli & Iles

#### SUNDAY FEBRUARY 8 2:00 PM

Lisa Gardner signs [Crash and Burn](#) (Dutton \$27.95) Tessa Leon

#### TUESDAY FEBRUARY 10 7:00 PM

Kristin Hannah signs [The Nightingale](#) (St Martins \$27.99) Feb. Modern Firsts Club Pick

#### WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 11 7:00 PM Killer Thrillers

James Rollins signs [Blood Infernal](#) (Harper \$27.99) Order of the Sanguines #3

Are you clever enough to decode a scripture of the Blood Gospel? Order using this link and receive an exclusive print from the authors written in the Enochian language.

Michael Sears signs [Long Way Down](#) (Putnam \$26.95) Jason Stafford #3

#### THURSDAY FEBRUARY 12 7:00 PM Caribbean Crime

Timothy Williams signs [The Honest Folk of Guadeloupe](#) (Soho \$26.95) Inspector Anne Marie Laveaud #2

#### SATURDAY FEBRUARY 14 10:30 AM

Coffee and Crime Club discusses Graeme Simsion's [The Rosie Project](#) (\$15.99)

#### SATURDAY FEBRUARY 14 2:00 PM Valentine Cupcakes & Chocs

Jenn McKinlay signs [At the Drop of a Hat](#) (Berkley \$7.99) English Hat Shop #3

#### TUESDAY FEBRUARY 17 7:00 PM

Ian Hamilton signs [The Water Rat of Wanchai](#) (Picador \$16) 1st Ava Lee

#### SATURDAY FEBRUARY 21 10:30 AM

Croak and Dagger Book Club discusses John Connolly's [Every Dead Thing](#) (\$7.99)

#### SATURDAY FEBRUARY 21 1:00 PM !

Mary Russell Day with Charles Finch: Japan and Oxford Kimonos, snacks, King's photo show re our Japan Trip

Laurie R. King signs [Dreaming Spies](#) (Random \$26) Russell & Holmes

#### SUNDAY FEBRUARY 22 1:00 PM with Charles Finch

Priscilla Royal signs [Satan's Lullaby](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95) Medieval Mystery

#### TUESDAY FEBRUARY 24 Launch Party

Joanne Fluke signs [Double Fudge Brownie Murder](#) (Kensington \$26) Hannah Swensen

#### THURSDAY FEBRUARY 26 2:00 PM British Tea with Charles Finch

Tessa Arlen signs [Death of a Dishonorable Gentleman](#): (St Martins \$25.99) Debut

#### THURSDAY FEBRUARY 26 6:30 PM

Sunrise Mountain Library 21109 N 98th Ave. Peoria 85382 623-773-8650 for reservations

Charles Finch signs [The Laws of Murder](#) (St Martins \$25.99) Charles Leno

#### THURSDAY FEBRUARY 26 7:00 PM

Hardboiled Crime Club discusses Ross Macdonald's [The Blue Hammer](#) (\$15)

#### SATURDAY FEBRUARY 28 2:00 PM

##### Fleming into Bond

Jeffery Deaver interviews Francine Mathews

Mathews signs [Too Bad to Die Signed](#) (Riverhead \$27.95) Ian Fleming

Deaver signs [Carte Blanche](#) (\$9.99) James Bond

**TUESDAY MARCH 3 7:00 PM**

**Clive Cussler and Justin Scott** sign [The Assassin](#) (Putnam \$28.95) Isaac Bell

**WEDNESDAY MARCH 4 7:00 PM**

**CS Harris** signs [Who Buries the Dead](#) (NAL \$24.95) 10th in her Sebastian St Cyr Regency Series

**Gregory Harris** signs [The Connicle Curse](#) (Kensington \$15) Victorian PI Colin Pendragon

**THURSDAY MARCH 5 7:00 PM**

**Rhys Bowen** signs [The Edge of Dreams](#) (St Martins \$25.99) Molly Murphy

**Cara Black** signs [Murder on the Champ De Mars](#) (Soho \$27.95) Aimée LeDuc

**MONDAY MARCH 9 7:00 PM**

**Olen Steinhauer** signs [All the Old Knives](#) (St Martins \$23.99) Spies!

**TUESDAY MARCH 10 7:00 PM**

**JA Jance** signs [A Cold Betrayal](#) (Touchstone \$25.99) Ali Reynolds

**WEDNESDAY MARCH 11 7:00 PM**

**Ian Caldwell** signs [The Fifth Gospel](#) (SimonSchuster \$25.99) March Thriller Club Pick

**THURSDAY MARCH 12 7:00 PM Humor**

Peoria Center for the Arts 8355 West Peoria Avenue Peoria, AZ 85345

Reservations: 480 947 2974 or 888 560 9919

**Dave Barry** signs [Live Right and Find Happiness](#) (Putnam \$26.95)

**SUNDAY MARCH 15 2:00 PM**

**CJ Box** signs [Endangered](#) (Putnam \$26.95) Joe Pickett

**MONDAY MARCH 16 7:00 PM**

**CJ Box and Jackie Winspear** sign their new books at Sunrise Mountain Library 21109 N 98th Ave. Peoria 85382. 623-773-8650 for reservations

**TUESDAY MARCH 17 7:00 PM Book Launch Party**

**Jacqueline Winspear** signs [A Dangerous Place](#) (Harper \$26.99) Maisie Dobbs

**WEDNESDAY MARCH 18 7:00 PM**

**Dennis Lehane** signs [The World Gone By](#) (Morrow \$27.99)

⊕ = British      *PW*=Publishers Weekly      *LJ*=Library Journal

**EVENT BOOKS**

Arlen, Tessa. [Death of a Dishonorable Gentleman](#): (St Martins \$25.99). A British Crime Club Pick inspired the author to come and do an event. She teams up with our Writer in Residence Charles Finch for a British Tea on Feb. 26, 2:00 PM. And we'll discuss her elegant Edwardian country house murder mystery, a debut updating the Golden Age crime classics. The narrators are the Countess and her housekeeper, very *Downtown* but a lot more accurate—and nuanced.

Barry, Dave. [Live Right and Find Happiness](#) (Putnam \$26.95). brand-new, never-before-published pieces, Dave passes on home truths to his new grandson and to his daughter Sophie, who will

**GABALDON/POISONED PEN WRITER IN RESIDENCE: Charles Finch**

**Diana Gabaldon and The Poisoned Pen announce their first jointly sponsored Writer in Residence Program.** Charles Finch will spend eight days in Scottsdale hosting author events (Laurie R. King, Priscilla Royal, Tessa Arlen), do an event for his own work in Peoria February 26 7:00 PM, and teach two Writer's Workshops (see P. 2). Finch is the bestselling author of the Charles Lenox mystery novels, set in Victorian England and nominated for the Nero and Agatha Awards—the latest is [The Laws of Murder](#) (St Martins \$25.99)—as well as a standalone literary novel about a group of students at Oxford, [The Last Enchantments](#) (St Martins \$24.99). He regularly writes about books for *The New York Times*, *Slate*, *USA Today*, and the *Chicago Tribune*, his hometown newspaper.

**SUNDAY FEBRUARY 22 2:00-5:00 PM at The Pen \$50. Registration required. Limited to 30 participants Getting Your Novel Off the Ground**

Finch will offer an introduction to getting a novel started—the basic elements of story, character, and planning that are necessary to take a book from your mind to the page. How much plotting should you do in advance? What's the best way for a book to begin? What are the crucial characteristics of memorable characters? When should you start seeking publication? Requirements: A sample of between 500 and 1200 words, preferably from a first chapter; a one-page synopsis.

**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 28 10 AM-1:00 PM****With a follow up from 3:30-4:30 PM after the scheduled author event with Jeffery Deaver and Francine Mathews \$50. Registration required. Limited to 30 participants Story Structure Masterclass**

Drawing on the proven techniques of the novel and the screenplay, this daylong workshop from author Charles Finch will offer an in-depth examination on the mechanics of storytelling, and how they can improve your novel. What are the most classic types of story arc? Where should your plot begin? Where do stories go wrong, or lose the reader? And how can you fix a broken story? Requirements: A two-page story synopsis for your novel, screenplay, or other work; a 400-800 word sample of the actual work.

be getting her learner's permit in 2015 ("So you're about to start driving! How exciting! I'm going to kill myself"). He explores the hometown of his youth, where the grown-ups were supposed to be uptight fifties conformists, but seemed to have a lot of fun (like *Mad Men*)—unlike Dave's own Baby Boomer generation, which was supposed to be wild and crazy, but somehow turned into neurotic hover-parents. He dives into everything from the inanity of cable news and the benefits of Google Glass... Enjoy Barry's brand of humor.

Black, Cara. [Murder on the Champ De Mars](#) (Soho \$27.95). Paris, April 1999: Aimée Leduc has her work cut out for her—running her detective agency and fighting off sleep deprivation as she

tries to be a good single mother to her new bébé. The last thing she has time for now is to take on a personal investigation for a poor *manouche* (Gypsy) boy. But he insists his dying mother has an important secret she needs to tell Aimée, something to do with Aimée's father's unsolved murder a decade ago. How can she say no? The dying woman's secret is even more dangerous than her son realized. When Aimée arrives at the hospital, the boy's mother has disappeared. She was far too sick to leave on her own—she must have been abducted. What does she know that's so important it's worth killing for? And will Aimée be able to find her before it's too late and the medication keeping her alive runs out? [Click here](#) to order earlier titles. Remember that buying this one puts you in to a Win a Trip to Paris contest <http://carablack.com/>

Bowen, Rhys. [The Edge of Dreams](#) (St Martins \$25.99). Love this *PW* review, so suspenseful! "The extremely tricky plot of Bowen's 14th Molly Murphy mystery will keep even veteran whodunit readers guessing. It's 1905, and Molly has ostensibly retired from private-detective work since marrying NYPD Capt. Daniel Sullivan, but she can't help using her intuition and intelligence to solve crimes, even after motherhood. Daniel is under pressure to solve a series of murders that appear to be connected only through taunting notes that are addressed to him at Mulberry Street police headquarters. When Molly and their nearly year-old son, Liam, survive an elevated-railway accident in which others perish, Daniel fears that the killer engineered the derailment to target his wife and child. Despite being seriously injured, Molly presses ahead with aiding her husband in his investigation. Bowen makes Molly's continued sleuthing plausible, even under her changed personal circumstances, and deftly plants clues so that the surprising final revelation makes perfect sense." Lots here about Freud and interpretation of dreams (so shocking). [Click here](#) to order Molly's earlier cases.

Box, CJ. [Endangered](#) (Putnam \$26.95). She was gone. Joe Pickett had good reason to dislike Dallas Cates, even if he was a rodeo champion, and now he has even more—Joe's eighteen-year-old daughter, April, has run off with him. And then comes even worse news: The body of a girl has been found in a ditch along the highway—alive, but just barely, the victim of blunt force trauma. It is April, and the doctors aren't sure if she'll recover. Cates denies having anything to do with it—says she ran away from him, too—and there's evidence that points to another man. But Joe knows in his gut who's responsible. What he doesn't know is the kind of danger he's about to encounter. Cates is bad enough, but Cates's family is like none Joe has ever met before. Joe's going to find out the truth, even if it kills him. But this time, it just might.... Box adds, "There are currently two television projects underway in different stages of development. One includes the Joe Pickett series with Executive Producer Robert Redford. The other is based on the Cody Hoyt/Cassie Dewell novels with Producer David E. Kelley. Neither series is currently cast, in production, or scheduled." [Click here](#) to order the earlier Joe Picketts.

Caldwell, Ian. [The Fifth Gospel](#) (SimonSchuster \$25.99). The Indie Next Pick for our **March Thriller Club Pick**. We are thrilled to be hosting this author. "One of the great mysteries of the Catholic Church, The Shroud of Turin, has inspired one of the great writers of our time to create this masterful thriller. Two brothers — Alex, a Greek Catholic priest, and Simon, a Roman Catholic priest — are drawn into the intrigue surrounding the Shroud and the origins of the Church following the murder of

their friend Ugo, an eccentric curator obsessed with the Shroud who was preparing a major exhibit in the Vatican Gallery. Alex and Simon are dedicated brothers and priests, yet as different in temperament and faith as they are similar in conviction and loyalty. Caldwell unveils much about the world behind the Vatican walls, even as the intricate plot builds to a climax. A spectacular achievement!" Caldwell had a major bestseller some years ago with [The Rule of Four](#) (\$16).

Cussler, Clive/Justin Scott. [The Assassin](#) (Putnam \$28.95). It's 1905. The Amazon of its time, the Octopus, aka Standard Oil, is chewing up all the independent companies that stand in the way of Standard Oil's complete domination of the oil market, making sworn enemies out of many of the owners, in particular revenge-driven Bill Matters. "A fiendishly clever assassin, who's a superb sniper, has been killing the men who Matters has marked as his enemies. It's Bell's job to protect Rockefeller, help the U.S. government investigate Standard Oil for violating the Sherman Antitrust act, bring the mysterious assassin to justice, and keep himself alive in the process. An exciting trip to Russia and a whiz-bang ending compensate for the places where the action bogs down. A surprise epilogue set in 1940 will please series fans."—*PW*. Hiring an assassin to do a hit on Bezos... hmm.

Fluke, Joanne. [Double Fudge Brownie Murder](#) (Kensington \$26). "Bestseller Fluke's lively 18th Hannah Swensen mystery finds the Lake Eden, Minn., baker a murder suspect, after she discovers the dead body of Judge Colfax in his chambers. She has solved plenty of crimes in the past, but can she clear herself? Fortunately, family lawyer Howie can keep her out of jail, and her relatives can operate the bakery while Hannah searches for the real killer. It takes a lot of digging to unravel the mystery of the murder of Judge Colfax, but fortunately she can rely on the help of sisters Michelle and Andrea, as well as an assist from an exciting visitor from her past. In her spare time, Hannah always manages to come up with new recipes for loyal readers to try, close to 20 of them this time. Add the big surprise ending, and fans will be more than satisfied."—*PW*. [Click here](#) for earlier titles by Fluke, some of them not Hannahs.

Hannah, Kristen. [The Nightingale](#) (St Martins \$27.99). John Charles reviews: "When war with Germany once again threatens France, fate brings sisters Isabelle Rossignol and Viann Mauriac back together again when Isabelle is sent by her father to stay with Viann at her home in the Loire valley. Ever since their mother's death years ago, the gulf between Isabelle and Viann has only gotten wider. Now both women clash once again when it turns out they have decidedly different ways of dealing with the Germans now occupying France. Ultimately, the great personal sacrifices both Isabelle and Viann make to save other lives prove the two sisters are more alike than they ever could have imagined. Kristin Hannah is known for her best-selling and award-winning romance and women's fiction novels. Her latest emotionally gut-wrenching historical is a powerful tribute to the courage and compassion exhibited by women living in France during World War II. Danger and deception, heartbreak and hope, family and friendship, love and loss, all of these literary ingredients are expertly mixed by Hannah into the plot of *The Nightingale*. The end result is a remarkable novel that will linger in the reader's memory long after the book is finished." ***The Nightingale* is the #1 Indie Next Pick for February and also our Modern Firsts Club Pick.**

Hamilton, Ian. [The Water Rat of Wanchai](#) (Picador \$16). Hamilton is the author of the bestselling Ava Lee novels, including *The Red Pole of Macau*, *The Disciple of Las Vegas*, *The Wild Beast of Wuhan*, and other titles not yet available in the US. The first, *The Water Rat of Wanchai*, won the Arthur Ellis Award for Best First Novel in 2012. Ava Lee is a young Chinese-Canadian forensic accountant who works for an elderly Hong Kong-based “Uncle,” who may or may not have ties to the Triads. At 115 lbs., she hardly seems a threat. But her razor-sharp intellect and resourcefulness allows her to succeed where traditional methods have failed. She Ava travels across continents to track \$5 million owed by a seafood company. But it’s in Guyana where she meets her match: Captain Robbins, a huge hulk of a man and godfather-like figure who controls the police, politicians, and criminals alike. In exchange for his help, he decides he wants a piece of Ava’s \$5 million action and will do whatever it takes to get his fair share. . . Hamilton’s books have been published in more than 20 countries around the world and are currently being adapted into a television series by the CBC. He notes: “There is a sentence I use in the Ava Lee novels on a frequent basis: “People always do the right thing for the wrong reason.” It is a belief that Ava’s mentor, Uncle, often states, and she takes it as her own. I use the Chinese word *guanxi* often in my books. It doesn’t have a precise definition but can be loosely described as having influence through connections. It is interpersonal networking on the largest human scale, and cuts across every social and economic group and hierarchy in Chinese societies. Ava’s mentor, Uncle, and her friend May Ling Wong, both have *guanxi* and it comes to her aid many times. And, one of the signs that Ava is developing her talents as an operator in Asia is when people start referring to the strength of her *guanxi*.” [Click here](#) to order what Ava’s we can provide (only those published by Picador).

Harris, CS. [Who Buries the Dead](#) (NAL \$24.95). 10th in one of the very best historical mystery series, set in the Regency and featuring complex investigations and even more complex relationships including an absconding wife, bastard children, a “forbidden” love that turns out not to be, an unexpectedly happy marriage, a formidable *Éminence Grise* (reread *The Three Musketeers*) who is our hero’s antagonistic father-in-law, and politicians plus the by-now dissolute Prince Regent. The plot revolves around the murder on a deserted bridge of a collector of objects connected to famous people, the discovery of the coffin of Charles I (currently missing his head) atop those of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour at Windsor, an impatient Prince, a sniper, and a return of a villain from Sebastian St. Cyr’s past who presents a real present threat now in 1813 London. One suspect in the bridge murder is the banker Henry Austen whose sister Jane is visiting his mortally ill wife Eliza. . . [Click here](#) to order the whole series which I recommend reading in order to avoid relationship spoilers.

Harris, Gregory. [The Connicle Curse](#) (Kensington \$15). When wealthy Edmond Connicle suddenly disappears, his distraught wife enlists the services of master sleuth Colin Pendragon and his loyal partner, Ethan Pruitt. Already on the case, however, is Scotland Yard’s Inspector Varcoe. He suspects the Connicles’ West African scullery maid of doing in her employer, especially when a badly burned body is discovered on the estate grounds with a sack of Voodoo fetishes buried beneath it. But all is not as

it seems, and as more bodies are found, the pressure mounts on Varcoe, forcing him to forge an uneasy alliance with his nemesis, Pendragon. At the same time, Mrs. Connicle’s fragile mental state appears increasingly more precarious. Could madness, not black magic, be at the root of these murders? [Order](#) the first two Pendragons *The Arnifour Affair*; *The Bellingham Bloodbath* (\$15 each).

Jance, JA. [A Cold Betrayal](#) (Touchstone \$25.99). Ali Reynolds’s longtime friend and Taser-carrying nun, Sister Anselm, rushes to the bedside of a young pregnant woman hospitalized for severe injuries after she was hit by a car on a deserted Arizona highway. The girl had been running away from The Family, a polygamous cult with no patience for those who try to leave its ranks. Something about her strikes a chord in Sister Anselm, reminding her of a case she worked years before when another young girl wasn’t so lucky. Meanwhile, married life agrees with Ali. But any hopes that she and her husband, B. Simpson, will finally slow down and relax now that they’ve tied the knot are dashed when Ali’s new daughter-in-law approaches her, desperate for help. The girl’s grandmother, Betsy, is in danger: she’s been receiving anonymous threats, and someone even broke into her home and turned on the gas burners in the middle of the night. But the local police think the elderly woman’s just not as sharp as she used to be. So two women who need help sets up the kind of novel at which Jance excels. [Click here](#) for earlier Ali Reynolds, a series set around Prescott, Jerome, Sedona, and metro Phoenix (with an occasional excursion elsewhere).

King, Laurie R. [Dreaming Spies](#) (Random \$26). The long-awaited account of Russell’s and Holmes’ visit to Japan combines with an exciting, code-breaking adventure at Oxford circling the Bodleian Library and Russell’s home there. Rob and I toured Japan with King so this novel is dedicated to us. King is a favorite of librarians who recommend it, saying: “Considering that King is one of the finest mystery authors writing today, it’s no surprise that the latest in the Russell/Holmes series is an engaging read. Intrigue follows the duo as they board a liner bound for Japan and meet up with a known blackmailer and a young Japanese woman who is not all that she seems. Great historical research and rich atmosphere!” Charles Finch will join me interviewing King—he’s an Oxford man. And all three of us have hung out in the Bodleian and taken the famous “no fire” oath. [Click here](#) to order earlier Russells.

Lehane, Dennis. [The World Gone By](#) (Morrow \$27.99). We’re in Cuba and Ybor City, Florida, during World War II. Joe Coughlin must confront the cost of his criminal past and present. Ten years have passed since Joe Coughlin’s enemies killed his wife and destroyed his empire, and much has changed. Prohibition is dead, the world is at war again, and Joe’s son, Tomás, is growing up. Now, the former crime kingpin works as a consigliere to the Bartolo crime family, traveling between Tampa and Cuba, his wife’s homeland. A master who moves in and out of the black, white, and Cuban underworlds, Joe effortlessly mixes with Tampa’s social elite, U.S. Naval intelligence, the Lansky-Luciano mob, and the mob-financed government of Fulgencio Batista. He has everything—money, power, a beautiful mistress, and anonymity But success cannot protect him from the dark truth of his past.

Mathews, Francine. [Too Bad to Die](#) (Riverhead \$27.95). The Starred Review: “Mathews (*Jack 1939*) delivers a literate and sophisticated what-if historical thriller. In 1943, Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin gather in Tehran, where the ostensible allies must find common ground in the fight against Nazi Germany, despite their mutual mistrust. Alan Turing, the head of Britain’s secret Enigma project, discovers that a German operative known as the Fencer plans to murder all three leaders during the conference, but Turing is able to offer relatively few clues to the Fencer’s identity. The burden of foiling the German agent falls to future James Bond creator Ian Fleming, a Naval Intelligence officer who’s frustrated at having been relegated to desk duty. Fleming’s task is made even more daunting when his superiors view his warning with some skepticism. Mathews makes the historical figures come to life, and even though readers know the Fencer doesn’t succeed, they will be caught up in suspense reminiscent of Frederick Forsyth’s *The Day of the Jackal*.”

Rollins, James. [Blood Infernal](#) (Harper \$27.99). ). **Are you clever enough to decode a scripture of the Blood Gospel? Order using this link and receive an exclusive print from the authors written in the Enochian language.** As an escalating scourge of grisly murders sweeps the globe, archaeologist Erin Granger must decipher the truth behind an immortal prophecy foretold in the Blood Gospel, a tome written by Christ and lost for centuries: The shackles of Lucifer have been loosened, and his Chalice remains lost. It will take the light of all three to forge the Chalice anew and banish him again to his eternal darkness. With the Apocalypse looming, Erin must again join forces with Army Sergeant Jordan Stone and Father Rhun Korza to search for a treasure lost for millennia. But the prize has already fallen into the hands of their enemy, a demon named Legion, before whom even the walls of the Vatican will fall. The search for the key to salvation will take Erin and the others across centuries and around the world, from the dusty shelves of the Vatican’s secret archives to lost medieval laboratories, where ancient alchemies were employed to horrific ends. The third volume in the Order of the Sanguines trilogy. Order the first two [here](#).

Royal, Priscilla. [Satan’s Lullaby](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95). Set in the autumn of 1278, this is the 11th novel in a series that has won multiple Starred reviews, award nominations, and acclaim from colleagues like Sharon Kay Penman and Sharan Newman and is a bestseller in the UK and Australia. For Prioress Eleanor, dark times arrive early in Norfolk. The head of her order, Abbess Isabeau, has sent Father Etienne Davoir from its headquarters in France to inspect all aspects of Tyndal Priory from its morals to its roofs. Surely the Abbess would not have chosen her own brother for this rare and thorough investigation unless the cause was serious and she had reason to fear intervention from Rome. Prioress Eleanor knows something is terribly amiss. The situation turns calamitous when Davoir’s sick clerk dies from a potion sent by Sister Anne, Tyndale’s sub-infirmarian. Is Sister Anne guilty of simple incompetence—or murder? Or, Davoir asks, did Prioress Eleanor order the death to frighten him away before he discovered the truth behind accusations she is unfit for her position? When Davoir himself is threatened, the priest roars for justice. Even expectant father Crowner Ralf, the local representative of the king’s justice, has lost all objectivity. The most likely suspects are Anne, the woman Ralf once loved, the

prioress he respects, and the Tyndal monk, Thomas, who is his closest friend. That’s my review. As true for 10 of her 11 novels, Royal earned a *PW* Starred Review for this. [Satan’s Lullaby](#) (\$14.95).

Sears, Michael. [Long Way Down](#) (Putnam \$26.95). I like Jason Safford, financial high-wire guy who fell (into a prison term among other things) off the Wall Street cliff. His ex was murdered, and he has custody of his son, a six-year-old with autism known as the Kid. Safford has a father with a history as well. So he has a lot to manage even though he has an income stream from a CEO he’s bailed out. A simple request from millionaire engineer Philip Haley balloons into jeopardy for all that Safford has when Haley’s wife Selena is murdered. If nothing else this blend of finance and thriller underlines that the rich are truly different including how hard it is to let the money go... Shamus winner Sears Shamus has also been nominated for the Edgar, Thriller, and Anthony Awards. Order *Black Fridays* and *Mortal Bonds* [here](#).

Steinhauer, Olen. [All the Old Knives](#) (St Martins \$23.99) brings together two ex-coworkers – who are also ex-spies and ex-lovers – reuniting one last time over dinner. This zinger has a great movie deal and has earned 4 Starred Reviews: “This genre-bending spy novel takes Hitchcockian suspense to new heights. Over the course of a meal with flashbacks, the eternal questions of trust, loyalty, and authentic love are deftly dissected. Readers drawn to the story of a loving couple trapped in a terrible embrace will be thrilled to follow Henry and Celia’s tortured pas de deux.” –*Library Journal*. “Terrific standalone thriller... There’s great narrative energy in the thrust and counterthrust of the dinner conversation, as well as in the re-creation of the Viennese events; Steinhauer is a very fine writer and an excellent observer of human nature, shrewd about the pleasures and perils of spying.” –*PW*. “A compelling spy story that takes place at a restaurant table... it delivers intrigue, suspense, and a heart-stopping finale. In his acknowledgments, Steinhauer tells us he wrote it in one month. You’ll devour it in one night.—*Booklist*. “Masterfully plotted and suspenseful stand-alone... Steinhauer expertly shifts perspectives between the two spies in both their present and past lives, when Henry was a rough-and-tumble field agent and Celia wielded power behind a desk. It’s an understatement to say that nothing is as it seems, but even readers well-versed in espionage fiction will be pleasantly surprised by Steinhauer’s plot twists and double backs.” –*Kirkus*

Winspear, Jacqueline. [A Dangerous Place](#) (Harper \$26.99). Spring 1937. In the four years since she left England, Maisie Dobbs has experienced love, contentment, stability—and the deepest tragedy a woman can endure. Now, all she wants is the peace she believes she might find by returning to India. But her sojourn in the hills of Darjeeling is cut short when her stepmother summons her home to England: her aging father, Frankie Dobbs, is not getting any younger. On a ship bound for England, Maisie realizes she isn’t ready to return. Against the wishes of the captain who warns her, “You will be alone in a most dangerous place,” she disembarks in Gibraltar. Though she is on her own, Maisie is far from alone: the British garrison town is teeming with refugees fleeing a brutal civil war across the border in Spain. And the danger is very real. Days after Maisie’s arrival, a photographer and member of Gibraltar’s Sephardic Jewish community, Sebastian Babayoff, is murdered, and Maisie becomes entangled

in the case, drawing the attention of the British Secret Service. Under the suspicious eye of a British agent, Maisie is pulled deeper into political intrigue on “the Rock”—arguably Britain’s most important strategic territory—and renews an uneasy acquaintance in the process. At a crossroads between her past and her future, Maisie must choose a direction... Coincidentally, Rob and I are visiting Gibraltar in early April. [Click here](#) to order the earlier Maisie Dobbs.

### FIRST NOVELS

✚Chapin, Andrea. [The Tutor Signed](#) (Riverhead \$29). **Our February History/Mystery Club Pick.** You might think I chose it because of the role of William Shakespeare as a tutor to the de L’Isle family children (they are Lancashire Catholics with a constant threat of persecution hanging over them). It’s an interesting view of him during the “lost years”—here 1590. Not laudatory, and certainly complex. But no, I chose it because of the role of Robert Smythson, a “master mason” or builder who was in fact the architect of many great Elizabethan houses. He was big into windows which were heavily taxed and so a real statement by the homeowner. His Hardwick Hall still stands, one of my favorite National Trust properties. It belonged to the Devonshires for centuries, one of the two dukedoms founded and funded by Bess of Hardwick who was maybe richer than Good Queen Bess by the time she finished marrying up. The Devonshires had to sell it to pay death duties in the 1950s and keep Chatsworth. I love the irony that its fabulous windows, so bold then, are today covered up to protect the needlework of Mary Queen of Scots housed at Hardwick Hall, needlework preserved from when Bess of Hardwick was Mary’s jailor. Smythson is one of my heroes. But flowing along under the relationships, romances, and sonnets viewed from the perspective of the widow Katharine, niece to Sir Edward de L’Isle, a woman of remarkable learning and wit, yet vulnerable to someone like Will, is a nifty, deceptive murder mystery you will enjoy discovering. Highly recommended!

Cornwell, Jessica. [The Serpent Papers Signed](#) (Quercus \$36). Barcelona, Summer 2003. Three women are sacrificed to an unknown purpose, skin carved with a cryptic alphabet, tongues cut from their mouths. Sent beautiful, sinister letters—clues, or confessions?—Inspector Fabregat cannot decipher the warnings within. As Barcelona explodes in revelry on the Festival of St Joan, Natalia Hernandez, flower of the National Theatre and Catalan idol, lies broken on the steps of the Cathedral. The city bays for blood as Fabregat chases a shadow-like suspect and that whisper of secrets beyond his grasp. Barcelona, Winter 2014. Anna Verco—academic, book thief, savant—unearths letters hidden for centuries from a lightning-struck chapel in Mallorca. What they reveal compels her and Fabregat to reignite the Hernandez investigation. Every page she turns conceals a coded message; every street she treads leads her deeper into the labyrinth. As Fabregat baits her with suspects, and threats darken her steps, Anna hunts her own prey: the book that began it all, a medieval revelation written in the language of witches and alchemists: *The Serpent Papers*. Anna believes this book will unlock the mystery. **A First Mystery Club Pick** by the daughter of John Le Carré (David Cornwell).

Davis, Brooke. [Lost and Found Signed](#) (Hutchinson \$34). Seven-year-old Millie and octogenarians Agatha and Karl set out to

find Millie’s mum who left red-boot-wearing Millie all alone in women’s underwear in a ginormous department store. Millie’s kept a list of Dead Things: #28 is DAD, which you come to see is the springboard for her abandonment. How she copes and who helps her, two elderly people who find each other thus, form the narrative. Marketing pitches humor—it’s been an Australian bestseller—and likes the child narrator. One could think of Mark Haddon’s young protagonist. I don’t find a comparison to *The Rosie Project* apt. Actually I could not get into this although the Afterword from the author makes it clear that this is his way of writing through grief, grief over the death of his mother, and viewing it through this lens appeals more to me than calling it comedic.

Ekbäck, Cecilia. [Wolf Winter Signed](#) (Hodder \$36 March). The Signed UK edition will be our **March History Pick** from an author born in Sweden who resides in Calgary (the signing logistics in global publishing can be challenging!). It’s 1717 in Sweden’s Lapland where a family has arrived from their native Finland to take over an uncle’s farm. There are six homesteads on Blackåsen Mountain. A day’s journey away lies the empty town. It comes to life just once, in winter, when the Church summons her people through the snows. Then, even the oldest enemies will gather. But now it is summer. It is their two young daughters who find the dead man, not half an hour’s walk from their cottage. The father, a man oddly traumatized, is away. And whether stubborn, or stupid, or scared for her girls, the mother will not let it rest. To the wife who is not concerned when her husband does not come home for three days; to the man who laughs when he hears his brother is dead; to the priest who doesn’t care; she asks and asks her questions digging at the secrets of the mountain. They say a wolf made those wounds. But what wild animal cuts a body so clean? True Nordic Noir dropping back nearly three centuries but curiously contemporary. The unsigned US edition is out in Feb.: [Wolf Winter](#) (Weinstein \$26).

✚Flanders, Judith. [A Murder of Magpies](#) (St Martins \$24.99). A social historian, essayist, and bestselling author of *The Invention of Murder*, publishes her first novel (UK paperback called *Writers’ Block*), an absolute charmer about the UK publishing scene, international finance, libel civil and criminal and a mix of law firms, a missing author, the murder of a courier, and some delightfully spiky relationships. The policeman is wonderful. Loved it and so it becomes our **March British Crime Club Pick** but out Feb. 24 in case you want it early.

Hulse, SM. [Black River](#) (Houghton \$24). In this spare but rich first novel, troubles loom for her stoic hero, Wes Carver, and his family like the glacial mountains surrounding their small Montana prison town—mountains that to Wes “looked like the hands of giants, or maybe of God... two clenched fists about to collide.” The Indie Next Pick: “This debut set in the American West follows Wes Carver, a former corrections officer whose passion in life was playing the fiddle until his hands were ruined during a prison riot. Years later, following the loss of his wife to cancer, Wes returns to the small prison town in Montana to scatter his wife’s ashes and speak at the parole hearing of the inmate who ruined his life. He struggles to accept the possibility that the inmate has found God, especially as his own faith is hanging on by a thread. Hulse’s writing is like the river at the center of her novel, a quiet surface covering raging emotions underneath, and her descriptions of music are breathtakingly

beautiful. Discover a wonderful new talent!” In its Starred Review, *PW* adds, “But for Hulse’s restraint and literary talent, it would be easy for these waves of woe to turn into melodrama. An MFA graduate of the University of Oregon, she has already mastered a Raymond Carver-like precision of description.”

Israel, Steve. [The Global War on Morris](#) (SimonSchuster \$26 later printings of this surprise bestseller). As a fan of *Person of Interest* (why wasn’t Jim Caviezel selected to play Jack Reacher?), this debut speaks to me. Pharmaceutical salesman Morris Feldstein walks the straight and narrow in his tediously routine life. He avoids conflict at all costs and follows the philosophy “don’t make waves.” Victoria D’Amico is a recently single, lonely receptionist on Morris’s sales route. She lures Morris—who is in a rare state of weakness—to lunch and seduces him into a single, pitiful illicit rendezvous. Thanks to a zany chain of innocent encounters, the government is scrutinizing Morris even before he reaches the seedy motel. Spies and surveillance systems feed misinterpreted information about Morris into a supercomputer that determines he is a serious threat to national security. Morris Feldstein’s routine life is turned upside down with no sign of being righted. Israel’s wicked sense of humor highlights the absurdity of his subject matter... “Readers will doubtlessly find analogs to Israel’s exaggerated characters among their coworkers, neighbors, maybe even family. Like his salesman protagonist, Israel has something to pitch: the belief that Americans must stop allowing fear to govern them.”—Jen Forbus

✚Marr, Andrew. [Head of State](#) (Overlook \$27.95). “Former BBC political editor Marr makes his fiction debut with a terrific satirical thriller reminiscent of the movie *Wag the Dog*. In 2017, the U.K. anxiously awaits the results of a referendum to determine whether it will leave the European Union. Prime Minister Bill Stevenson has made a vote to stay in the union the most important priority of his career, but as the election nears, the outcome is very much in doubt. He’s opposed by his former home secretary, Olivia Kite, who promises the “gift of freedom” if the country votes to leave. Three days before the referendum, investigative reporter Lucien McBryde dies from a fall, ending up in the morgue next to a man’s corpse that lacks hands and a head. Marr gradually reveals the circumstances of both deaths, and how they connect with a nuclear bomb of a conspiracy whose disclosure would all but cinch the vote for one side. Clever dark humor, witty prose, and a rigorously constructed plot add up to a thought-provoking read.” Both *PW* and *Kirkus* star this debut which fans of the British *House of Cards* will relish.

Repino, Robert. [Mort\(e\) Signed](#) (Soho \$26.95). With sly references to Orwell’s *Animal Farm*, Repino “puts a nicely modern postapocalyptic overlay on the fable of animals taking over the world. Enraged by the anthropocentrism of humans, ant queen Hymenoptera develops a race of super ants while simultaneously releasing a pheromone causing all animals to become humanlike. Former house cat Sebastian, now over six feet tall and capable of handling firearms, adopts the name Mort(e) and becomes a ruthless soldier for the revolution. Steering clear of allegorical artifices, Repino effectively harnesses animal emotions within the anthropomorphic context, using Mort(e)’s quest to rescue a canine playmate from his former life to introduce the all-too-human messiah complex that will doom Hymenoptera’s vision of a post-human world. This is an affecting, intriguing shift from the traditional “power corrupts”

destruction of utopia, allowing an empathetic melancholy to rise along with Mort(e)’s disillusionment as supposedly free animals begin to commit suicide. Even horrific Hymenoptera, ferociously single-minded in the face of endless unpredictability, reveals an aching loneliness in her absolutism.”—*PW* Starred Review. Sebastian, the housecat-turned-hero Mort(e), is a lovely conception (conjure up an image of Puss in Boots in *Shrek*), and his devotion to the dog Sheba is dogged (sorry) and touching! **This debut is our overdue December Modern Firsts Club Pick. I wanted something unusual and special to end 2014 but ended up having to wait for this January publication.** The Indie Next Pick adds: “Are the dictatorial ants truly better than the humans with their germ warfare? Laced with humor, this action-packed thriller is thought-provoking.”

Vaillant, John. [The Jaguar’s Children](#) (Houghton \$26). The Indie Next Pick: “Vaillant has established his reputation as an accomplished writer of nonfiction, and he now brings his considerable talent to this debut novel. There are no easy moments in this story told by Hector, a young man engaged in an illegal border crossing inside a sealed tanker truck. Vaillant uses Hector’s narration to bring the frequent brutality of the illegal immigration experience to light in visceral detail, engaging both the reader’s sympathy and revulsion, which linger long after the last page is turned.”

Walsh, MO. [My Sunshine Away](#) (Putnam, \$26.95). The Indie Next Pick: “This debut author offers a wonderfully written story about a boy coming of age in the late ’80s in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. It is narrated by a 14-year-old boy who, along with all of the other young males in the neighborhood, is infatuated by 15-year-old Lindy Simpson. Everything changes that summer, when Lindy is brutally raped and no one is ever charged with the crime. Told with a sense of humor, some sadness, and, at times, a wisdom beyond the narrator’s 14 years, the story focuses on all of the suspects and shows how suspicion and violence can change lives forever.” Librarians also pick it. I wasn’t as enraptured as I can grow impatient with the whole Southern culture thing....

Zander, Joakim. [The Swimmer](#) (Harper \$27.99). Called an “electrifying debut thriller”, the action, tension, and suspense is non-stop. Karen reviews: “It begins with a CIA operative and moves from 1980 to the present. The chapters alternate among the characters, some who have involuntarily entered a world they don’t understand, a cause that has not been defined, to refuse participation in the mission is not an option. Lives are out in jeopardy due to the choices of others and as sound as plans may be, the players fall victim to the unexpected and become outlaws in order to survive. Fellow author, Chris Pavone, calls this a “terrific globe-trotting page-turner.” The environment is described with intensity, the characters engaging and, for the most part, likeable. Nothing is predictable, the twists and turns will keep the reader guessing.” We originally carried this spy story in a Signed UK edition, sold out last July.

#### BRITISH LIBRARY CRIME AND SPY CLASSICS

Farjeon, J. Jefferson. [Mystery in White](#) (British Library \$15). A captivating puzzle mystery involving strangers thrown together by chance in a nearly snowbound British country house. First published in 1937. A brief introduction accompanies this new release. It’s a classic puzzle, timeless even in its charming historic setting. A group of strangers gather in a third-class train

compartment a few days before Christmas. When relentless snow shuts down the tracks, they flee an apparent murder on the train into the “strange fairyland” of whiteness outside. They happen upon a fine country estate, but the danger only mounts. The door is unlocked, fires lit and tea set out; though no one appears to be home, the kettle is boiling over. This setting is not the closed environment it seems: in their investigations, members of the party tramp about in the snow only to find their footprints fade quickly and paths are obscured. The danger of losing oneself in the blizzard is added to the danger of knife-wielding lurkers. Farjeon increases the pace and plays out suspense with an expert hand. His characters are appealing, their plight both picturesque and distressing; there is just a hint of the ghost story to this whodunit. *Mystery in White* is, in short, an elegantly, enchantingly entertaining tale to be enjoyed on a chilly evening while safely indoors. This month we’ll be adding other volumes in the British Library Crime and Spy Classics to our inventory. Poisoned Pen Press begins publishing them in May.

### BRITISH BOOKS

Archer, Jeffrey. [Mightier than the Sword: The Clifton Chronicles](#) (Macmillan \$46 only a very few available). When Harry Clifton visits his publisher in New York, he learns that he has been elected as the new president of English PEN, and immediately launches a campaign for the release of a fellow author, Anatoly Babakov, who’s imprisoned in Siberia. Babakov’s crime? Writing a book called Uncle Joe, a devastating insight into what it was like to work for Stalin. So determined is Harry to see Babakov released and the book published, that he puts his own life in danger. His wife Emma, chairman of Barrington Shipping, is facing the repercussions of the IRA attack on the Buckingham. Some board members feel she should resign, and Lady Virginia Fenwick will stop at nothing to cause Emma’s downfall. Sir Giles Barrington is now a minister of the Crown, and looks set for even higher office, until an official trip to Berlin does not end as a diplomatic success. Once again, Giles’s political career is thrown off balance by none other than his old adversary, Major Alex Fisher, who once again stands against him at the election. But who wins this time? In London, Harry and Emma’s son, Sebastian, is quickly making a name for himself at Farthing’s Bank in London, and has proposed to the beautiful young American, Samantha. But the despicable Adrian Sloane, a man interested only in his own advancement and the ruin of Sebastian, will stop at nothing to remove his rival. [Mightier Than the Sword](#) (St Martins \$27.99). For the earlier Cliftons, [click here](#).

Bannister, Jo. [Deadly Virtues](#) (\$15.99). Recovering mental patient Gabriel Ash looks pathetic and vulnerable as he rambles through the town of Norbold while talking to his dog. One day, at the local police station, where he’s recovering from a beating, Gabriel receives a cryptic message from a man who’s then killed by a crazed prisoner. Gabriel forces himself back into contact with normal humanity because he feels he ought to do something about the crime. Rookie policewoman Hazel Best is also dissatisfied with the official explanation of the tragedy. And so the three—the traumatized beating victim, the idealistic young cop, and the dog—begin sniffing under the pristine surface of the virtually crime-free town. They have no idea how dangerous good intentions can be. *PW* notes, “Bannister’s plotting is neat and her characterization smooth, with just enough irony to keep people from seeming ostentatiously noble.”

Bauer, Belinda. [The Shut-Eye Signed](#) (Bantam UK \$36 March). Five footprints are the only sign that Daniel Buck was ever here. And now they are all his mother has left. Every day, Anna Buck guards the little prints in the cement. Polishing them to a shine. Keeping them safe. Spiraling towards insanity. When a psychic offers hope, Anna grasps it. Who wouldn’t? Maybe he can tell her what happened to her son... But is this man what he claims to be? Is he a visionary? A shut eye? Or a cruel fake, preying on the vulnerable? Or is he something far, far worse?

Beaton, M C. [Death of a Liar](#) (Grand Central \$25). Reading Beaton is for me one of those guilty pleasures like reading Stuart Woods. And why read a book just for fun? This is the 30th Hamish Macbeth. He is alarmed to receive a report from a woman in the small village of Cronish in the Scottish Highlands. She has been brutally attacked and the criminal is on the loose. But upon further investigation, Hamish discovers that she was lying about the crime. So when the same woman calls him back about an intruder, he simply marvels at her compulsion to lie. This time, though, she is telling the truth—her body is soon found in her home... So here is a version of “the boy who cried wolf...”

Brody, Frances. [Woman Unknown](#) (St Martins \$25.99). I have truly enjoyed this intelligent 1920s Yorkshire series featuring Mrs. Kate Shackleton, a woman whose doctor husband has never been found or confirmed as dead these five years since WWI ended. To fill her time she’s become an investigator with a former copper as a sidekick. Here in her 4th case we get one of those nobly born younger sons with no title or fortune. He married an American heiress who, fed up with Everett’s on-going liaison with an equally impoverished daughter of nobility, is divorcing him and returning to Boston. But Everett is found strangled in bed next to the wife (she’s earning money to support her ill mum) of a local printer in the Hotel Metropole during an arranged tryst to provide grounds for the divorce. I like the plot but Brody has run into that difficulty of a series—do you cut off or continue romantic relationships (also the missing husband sub-plot)? I find her way too contrived. [Order](#) the earlier Kates.

Casey, Jane. [Bet Your Life](#) (\$18.99). Jess Tennant has now been living in a tiny town on the English seaside for three months, and is just beginning to relax and think of it as home after the traumatic events of last summer. But in the small hours of Halloween night, a teenage boy is left for dead by the side of the road. Seb Dawson has a serious head injury and may not survive. Jess might not have liked Seb much, but surely he didn’t deserve this. The police don’t seem to be taking the attack very seriously, but Jess can’t just let it go. As she investigates, Jess discovers that Seb was involved in some very dangerous games as a secret predator around girls... For YA and adult readers.

Cleeves, Ann. [Dead Water: A Shetland Mystery](#) (\$16.99). This is an excellent continuation of the Gold-Dagger winning Inspector Jimmy Perez series, set in the Shetlands. When the body of a journalist is found, Detective Inspector Willow Reeves is drafted from outside to head up the investigation. Perez has been out of the loop, but his local knowledge is needed in this case, and he decides to help Willow. The dead journalist had left the islands years before to pursue his writing career. In his wake, he left a scandal involving a young girl. When Willow and Jimmy dig deeper, they realize that the journalist was chasing a story that



many Shetlanders didn't want to come to the surface. Really didn't want.... didn't want....

Dunsany, Lord. [The Last Revolution](#) (Talos \$12.99). In a time before computers were a mainstay of our lives, Lord Dunsany tells the story, which takes place in England, about the revolution of self-reproducing machines. Known to have a profound distaste for the Industrial Revolution, prolific author Dunsany touches on a topic we know all too well today: What happens if the computers take over?

Flanders, Judith. [A Murder of Magpies](#) (St Martins \$24.99). A social historian, essayist, and bestselling author of *The Invention of Murder*, publishes her first novel (UK paperback called *Writers' Block*), an absolute charmer about the UK publishing scene, international finance, libel civil and criminal and a mix of law firms, a missing author, the murder of a courier, and some delightfully spiky relationships. The policeman is wonderful. Loved it and so it becomes our **March British Crime Club Pick** but out Feb. 24 in case you want it early. Very sly and with a clever plot. Chuckled all the way through although it's no cozy. Jan. and Feb. have two terrific **British Crime Club** choices in Tess Arlen's *Death of a Dishonorable Gentleman* (see Event Books) and Phil Hogan's [A Pleasure and a Calling](#) (St Martins \$25). I try to give you a variety of voices and subjects from the dark to the edgy to the elegant and traditional. The Indie Next Pick for Flanders: "The acerbic narrator is 40-year-old British book publishing editor Samantha, whose best author goes missing after writing a tell-all book about a famous French fashion designer who died under suspicious circumstances. Very funny, and great secondary characters as well."

Forbes, Elena. [The Jigsaw Man Signed](#) (Quercus \$42). DI Mark Tartaglia spends a night in a west London hotel with a woman he has just met. When he is called out to the same hotel the next morning to investigate a murder, he realizes it must have taken place while he was there. If things weren't already complicated enough, the investigation takes a new and horrifying turn when he recognizes the young female victim. Still reeling from the shock, he learns that another case he has been investigating—the body of a homeless man found in a burnt-out car—is also not what it seems. Tests reveal that the corpse has been assembled from the body parts of four different people. Under mounting pressure from the media and unsure where his loyalties lie, Tartaglia must solve this new macabre puzzle before the Jigsaw Killer strikes again.

Hannah, Sophie. [The Orphan Choir](#) (Picador \$15). "This stand-alone novel, a break from Hannah's series of psychological police procedurals featuring Charlie Zailer and Simon Waterhouse, is a riveting story in which suspense snowballs to a climax that is all the more dire for its everyday contemporary English setting. Absolutely haunting, in every sense of the word."—*Booklist* on a book that makes mayhem in a boys' choir and in an idyllic village called Swallowfield.

Haynes, Elizabeth. [Under a Silent Moon](#) (\$15.99). "On the same day that Polly Leuchars is bludgeoned to death in a village near London, her neighbor Barbara Fletcher-Norman is found dead in a car that went over a nearby cliff. Forensics links the two cases into a single operation, the first investigation to be headed by newly promoted Detective Chief Inspector Louisa "Lou" Smith of Major Crimes. Beautiful, blonde, 27-year-old Polly, a groom at the horse farm owned by wealthy, crime-connected Nigel

Maitland, started sexual relationships casually with both men and women (among them Maitland, his daughter Flora, and Fletcher-Norman's widower), spurning the commitment that some of her lovers sought. While a quick and simple solution to the case presents itself early on, Smith and her team keep digging, despite her discomfort at working closely with DC Andy Hamilton, with whom she had a pre-promotion fling. After three stand-alone novels, real-life police analyst Haynes debuts a promising procedural series."—*Booklist*

Herron, Mick. [Nobody Walks](#) (Soho \$25.95). Here is one of those writers few know but everyone should. I'm a big fan. He hasn't seized on big scale plots (one reason I like his work) but here he does. Check this review for this book from *Library Journal*: "The Brits seem to have a lock on clapped-out intelligence agents, and this savvy literary stand-alone by the author of the 2013 Crime Writers' Association Gold Dagger-winning [Dead Lions](#) (\$14.95) is an affectionate nod to the likes of John le Carré." Tom Bettany, an ex-spook who's been working in a meat-processing plant in France, learns via voicemail from an unknown Englishwoman that his estranged son is dead, having fallen from a balcony while smoking pot. Off he goes to England where guilt drives him to ask if this is what happened, or if there is some labyrinthine plot afoot.... Did Tom leave MI5 behind when he skipped, or does no one ever really walk away?

Hornby, Nick. [Funny Girl](#) (Riverhead \$27.95). Witty Hornsby skewers Britain's Swinging Sixties with a novel about Barbara Parker, crowned Miss Blackpool in 1964. Preferring an identity as her heroine Lucille Ball instead of that of beauty queen, she hops it for London where she works behind a cosmetics counter while attending casting calls. In time she meets an agent, is renamed Sophie Straw, and secures a role in what becomes a hit comedy series. As the decade progresses, though, despite the sitcom's popularity, and her own, she finds the dynamics of teamwork fray and the mess of real life intrudes. What life does she want for herself? Sly but also sweet...and sensible.

Maitland, Barry. [The Raven's Eye](#) (\$15.99). Another fabulous London police procedural. See Our February Trade Paperback Picks.

Marr, Andrew. [Head of State](#) (Overlook \$27.95). Political satire propels this debut (Sept. 2014 in the UK) focused on 10 Downing Street and Whitehall. See First Novels. (We tried to interest you in the Signed UK edition, now sold out).

Rhodes, Kate. [Winter Foundlings](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Psychologist Alice Quentin has been looking forward to a break from her hectic London life. She has vowed to stay clear of police work. The previous cases she helped the police with have left her scarred. So, when Alice is given the rare opportunity to study treatment methods at Northwood high-security hospital outside of London, she is eager to get to work. But then a young girl is discovered, dressed all in white, on the steps of the Foundling Museum. Four girls have recently gone missing in North London—this is the third to be found, dead. The fourth may still be alive, and Alice Quentin may be able to help. Britain's most prolific child killer, Louis Kinsella, has been locked up in Northwood for over a decade. Yet, these recent kidnappings and murders are clearly connected to Kinsella's earlier crimes. I didn't like Alice's first case, [Crossbones Yard](#) (\$14.99), finding it derivative, but will give this one a try.

Riordan, Kate. [Fiercombe Manor](#) (Harper \$26.99. In 1933, 22-year-old Alice is pregnant, unmarried, and disgraced. She can no longer share her parents' London home, so her desperate mother concocts a cover story and begs her old friend, Mrs. Jelphs, for help. The housekeeper at rural Fiercombe Manor, Mrs. Jelphs is moved by Alice's "plight" as a new widow and agrees to watch over her in the secluded English countryside until the baby is born and given up for adoption. Because the manor house's owners, Lord and Lady Stanton, no longer live there, Alice's only company will be Mrs. Jelphs and her skeleton staff. Thirty years before Alice's arrival, Lady Elizabeth Stanton awaits the birth of her second child, fervently hoping he will be the boy her husband desires. But as her time nears, she is increasingly tormented by memories of what happened with her first baby and terrified that history will repeat itself...with devastating consequences. At first, Fiercombe Manor offers Alice a welcome relief from her mother's disapproving gaze. But she begins to sense that all is not well in the picturesque Gloucestershire valley. "Borrowing from gothic literature staples Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* and Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Riordan creates a visceral and lively narrative that seizes the reader's attention. Readers...will applaud and welcome this addition." –*LJ Starred Review*. My go-to for Gothic these days is Kate Morton.

Robotham, Michael. [Watching You](#) (\$15). See our February Trade Paperback Picks.

Shaw, William. [Kings of London](#) (LittleBrown \$26). The "Swinging Sixties" have become historical... London, November 1968. Detective Sergeant Breen has a death threat in his inbox and a mutilated body on his hands. The dead man was the wayward son of a rising politician and everywhere Breen turns to investigate, he finds himself obstructed and increasingly alienated. Breen begins to see that the abuse of power is at every level of society. And when his actions endanger those at the top, he becomes their target. Out in the cold, banished from a corrupt and fracturing system, Breen is finally forced to fight fire with fire in this darkly humorous sequel to [She's Leaving Home](#) (\$15).

Smith, Alexander McCall. [Bertie's Guide to Life and Mothers](#) (\$15). An entry into his 44 Scotland Street series.

Watson, SJ. [Second Life Signed](#) (Doubleday UK \$36). She loves her husband. She's obsessed by a stranger. She's a devoted mother. She's prepared to lose everything. She knows what she's doing. She's out of control. She's innocent. She's guilty as sin. She's living two lives. She might lose both... The long-awaited second novel from the author of First Mystery Pick and international bestseller [Before I Go to Sleep](#) (\$15.99). We have a limited number of signed copies so don't delay.

Wolff, Isabel. [Shadows Over Paradise](#) (Bantam \$15). Jenni Clark is a ghostwriter. She loves to immerse herself in other people's stories—a respite from her own life, and from a relationship that appears to be nearing its end. Jenni's latest assignment takes her to a coastal hamlet in England, where she's agreed to pen the memoir of an elderly farm owner named Klara. Jenni assumes the project will be easy: a quiet, ordinary tale of a life well lived. But Klara's story is far from quiet. She recounts the tale of a family torn apart by World War II, and of disgraceful acts committed against a community in the Japanese prison camps on the Pacific island paradise of Java, and then secrets begin to emerge...

## WHERE IN THE WORLD...

Blaedel, Sara. [The Forgotten Girls](#) (Grand Central \$26). Karen reviews: "Blaedel is known as the "Queen of Crime" in her native Denmark, and this title leaves no doubt that is accurate. An unidentified body is found, but no missing report has been filed to fit the description. When a photo is released to the public, it opens up an investigation that goes back to the old mental institutions that existed around the country. The body found was a girl who had a twin; both were issued death certificates years ago. Louise Rink, Commander of the Missing Persons Department, begins an investigation which, eventually, comes close to home, and shows the brutal solutions that were enforced on the inhabitants of those institutions. Blaedel wins high praise from fellow authors, Michael Connelly, Karin Slaughter and Camilla Lackberg. If you want a good read to come home to, this is perfect!"

Boyne, John. [A History of Loneliness](#) (FSG \$26). Set in Ireland, Father Odran Yates was assigned to join the priesthood after a tragic family accident. His first appointment was as a chaplain at a boys' school where he found great contentment in his duties of teaching, tending to the library, and counseling the young men. When a new assignment comes along, one of serving in a parish that had been tended to by his best friend, he is thrust into a world far from his comfort zone. As scandal assaults the church, Odran is faced with the challenge of wearing the collar in a hostile world and facing the times in his life when he ignored his own instincts to the detriment of others. His harshest lesson comes from his former friend, who spares no words in educating Odran in the ways when we choose to ignore the not-so-obvious events in our lives. Boyne uses humor, believable characters, and strong themes to make this a thoughtful and satisfying read.

Brekke, Jorgen. [Dreamless](#) (St Martins \$25.99). Chief Inspector Odd Singsaker, of the Trondheim Police Department, still recovering from brain surgery—see his debut in *Where Monsters Dwell* (\$15.99)—gets another odd case once again hooked to events in the past, specifically the fate of a 17th century balladeer. Married to Felicia Stone, the American cop he met while tracking down a serial killer, Odd's new case begins with the disappearance of a young girl known for her lovely singing voice while she's out walking her dog one night....

Browder, Bill. [Red Notice: A True Story of High Finance and Murder](#) (SimonSchuster \$27.99). A real-life political thriller about an American financier in the Wild East of Russia, the murder of his principled young tax attorney, and his dangerous mission to expose the Kremlin's corruption. It starts with Bill Browder from Chicago's South Side onto hedge fund investing in the 1990s via Stanford Business School and ends when Putin had him expelled from Russia in 2005. But that's the least of it....

Carey, Peter. [Amnesia](#) (Knopf \$25.95). Carey plumbs the fractured political past of his homeland, Australia, to tell a dark, suspenseful, and funny story that journeys to the place where the cyber underworld collides with international power politics.. Beginning with the controversial Constitutional Crisis of 1975, Carey examines political lethargy in modern Australian life and those who seek to upend the status quo. When Gaby Baillieux releases the Angel Worm into Australia's prison computer system, hundreds of asylum-seekers walk free. And because the Americans run the prisons (let's be honest: as they do in so many parts of her country) the doors of some five thousand jails

in the United States also open. Is this a mistake, or a declaration of cyber war? And does it have anything to do with the largely forgotten Battle of Brisbane between American and Australian forces in 1942? Or with the CIA-influenced coup in Australia in 1975? Felix Moore, known to himself as “our sole remaining left-wing journalist,” is determined to write Gaby’s biography in order to find the answers—to save her, his own career, and, perhaps, his country. But how to get Gaby—on the run, scared, confused, and angry—to cooperate? Bringing together the world of hackers and radicals with the “special relationship” between the United States and Australia, and Australia and the CIA, *Amnesia* is a novel that speaks powerfully about the often hidden past—but most urgently about the more and more hidden present.

Lackberg, Camilla. [The Scent of Almonds and Other Stories](#) (Collins \$16). It’s less than a week until Christmas and policeman Martin Mohlin is begrudgingly accompanying his girlfriend to a family reunion on the tiny island of Valön outside of Fjällbacka. The connection to the mainland is cut off by a snowstorm and when the domineering patriarch Ruben collapses during Christmas dinner, Martin is forced to intervene. He soon establishes that Ruben was murdered and since they are completely isolated on the island, one of the family members must be murderer... A paperback original; the price may not be a firm one.

Le Carré, John. [First Three Novels](#) (Bloomsbury \$30). *Call for the Dead; A Murder of Quality; The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* in one 576 page hardcover.

Meade, Glenn. [The Last Witness](#) (\$16). After a massacre at a Bosnian prison camp, a young girl is found alone, clutching a diary, so traumatized she can’t even speak. Twenty years later, the last witness to the prison guards’ brutal crimes must hunt down those responsible to learn what happened to her family

Molay, Frederique. [The City of Blood](#) (Le French Book \$16.95). Nico Sirsky, chief of police in Paris, knows from the moment he turns on the television that a complicated case is headed his way. Thirty years earlier, famous artist Samuel Cassian buried the remainders of a huge banquet in the La Villette park. Now, what is billed as “the first archeological dig of modern art” is underway, to see what the intervening years have done to the leftovers. But the archeologists and reporters present are shocked when, amidst the goblets and plates, a skeleton is found. Within days of the discovery, several men are attacked and killed in La Villette, upping the ante for the officers investigating. Juggling his concern over his mother’s poor health, the intense scrutiny that the case’s publicity has caused and the dilemma of how to catch a murderer when the statute of limitations is long over, Sirsky must carefully direct his team as they investigate Cassian and his history and try to determine if there is a link between the skeleton and the modern victims. With frequent asides about the history of La Villette (which formerly housed Paris’s abattoirs) and snippets of information on French police procedure.

Sigurdardottir, Yrsa. [Someone to Watch Over Me](#) (St Martins \$25.99). Karen and I admire this author’s work. Karen reviews: “An assisted living facility has burned to the ground taking five of the residents with it. Jakob, who has Down’s Syndrome and survives the calamity, comes under suspicion almost immediately. He has always made it known he was not happy with this placement and wants to go home. But questions come

up and attorney, Thora Gudmundsdottir, is hired to re-examine the case. Through study of the documentation and interviews, she finds some problems. Communicating with disabled people is challenging and easily misunderstood. One resident had been receiving some unconventional therapy that seemed to be beneficial. That resident’s father had a connection with the attorney who had been hired to defend Jakob against the charges of a criminal act. The defense had been ineffective and Jakob was sentenced to a psychiatric facility. As she delves into the case, Thora handles Jakob and his mother with sensitivity and patience. Sigurdardottir easily weaves in a culture that is in financial crisis, the issues of mental illness and the struggle to care for this population. The author has been labeled as “Iceland’s answer to Stieg Larsson”. This title, like others by the author, keeps the reader engaged with sympathetic characters, careful plotting and a satisfying conclusion. I’m a big fan of this author and hope the next one is translated too.”

Smith, Tom Rob. [Child 44](#) (\$16). John Charles reviews the book becoming a movie: “In Stalinist Russia, MGB (State Security) officer Leo Demidov pieces together the morbid clues left by a serial killer working along the Trans-Siberian Railroad. When this was first published, *Child 44* racked up the starred reviews as well as winning the CWA Ian Fleming Steel Dagger. Critics loved the way the author captured the flavor and feel of the Soviet Union in the 1950s as well as the compelling plot, which was based on a real life Soviet serial killer executed in 1994. One word of caution, however, this is definitely not a book for the faint-of-heart reader (one review describes it as “grisly, gruesome, and gory”). The book’s recent re-release is due to the upcoming film by Ridley Scott.”

Steinhauer, Olen. [The Cairo Affair](#) (\$16). This terrific novel is reviewed in our February Trade Paperback Picks.

Taylor, Patrick. [Wily O’Reilly: Irish Country Stories](#) (\$14.99). Prep for Saint Pat....

Tursten, Helene. [The Beige Man](#) (Soho \$26.95). Rob and I enjoy the Detective Inspector Irene Huss series on MHZ-TV, which is in content ahead of the US publications. This 7th in the Göteborg, Sweden, series earns two Starred Reviews for “Huss’ excellent seventh mystery. Discovering the culprits behind the hit-and-run that killed Torleif Sandberg, a retired police officer, is straightforward, but the strangulation murder of an abused 12-year-old girl found in an abandoned root cellar requires Huss and her fellow officers to investigate a much larger issue: human trafficking and sex crimes. After questioning pimps in Sweden, Huss and company travel to the island of Tenerife, where DI Juan Rejón wants their help with some local murders. In a bizarre meeting with one of the traffickers, Huss witnesses a shockingly violent encounter between rival gangs, but most of the action involves diligently looking for clues in the usual procedural fashion. Cleverly, Tursten doesn’t reveal the significance of the beige man of the title until the last page”—*PW*. *LJ* adds: “Fans of Henning Mankell and Håkan Nesser will enjoy Tursten. For readers new to the series, there is no need to start at the beginning. Allow yourself time, this can be easily read in one sitting.” [Click here](#) to order Huss’ other cases.

Williams, Timothy. [Big Italy](#) (\$15.95). 5th in Williams’ wonderful Italian mysteries, brought back into print by Soho (Williams signs here Feb. 10). Northern Italy, 1993: After what seems like

several lifetimes as a policeman in the Questura, Commissario Trotti is ready for retirement. Soon, he'll be able to fulfill his dream of moving to the countryside villa he co-owns with his cousin, where his daily business will be tending to goats and chickens. But despite Trotti's stubbornly old-fashioned investigative methods and his disregard for social niceties, there are several people trying to talk him out of retirement. Trotti's boss offers him a golden opportunity as head of the Questura's new child abuse division. Meanwhile, Fabrizio Bassi, a reckless, womanizing private detective who worked under Trotti years ago before being kicked off the force, approaches him for help. Bassi has been investigating the death of a murdered doctor, and he has a conspiracy theory that extends to the highest reaches of government. Trotti declines, annoyed by the request. But when Bassi is found in a ditch with a bullet in his head, Trotti decides to take on one last murder case after all. Rereleased in January: [Black August](#) (\$15.95). [Click here](#) to order the rest to read while you are waiting for the new Donne Leon, [Falling in Love Signed](#) (\$40), in March.

Zander, Joakim. [The Swimmer](#) (Harper \$27.99). The Indie Next Pick: "This Swedish thriller with its roots in the Middle East features a burnt-out CIA agent, a couple of incredible young women, and a rogue company of villains that contracted with the CIA to do 'enhanced' interrogation in Iraq and Afghanistan. With untrustworthy colleagues, a greedy, self-interested lobbyist, and shifting alliances, Klara Waldeen, a lawyer working in an EU office in Brussels, finds herself enmeshed in a cover-up with deadly elements. Her tribulations, after a terrifying chase around Europe, culminate on Christmas Eve on an island off the coast of Sweden." See First Novels for Karen's review.

Zourkova, Krassi. [Wildalone](#) (Morrow \$25.99). "Thea, a piano prodigy determined to leave Bulgaria for America, has just discovered she is a 'ghost child,' someone raised in the shadow of a dead sibling. Her sister, Elza, attended Princeton, also as a piano prodigy, but was found dead with no known cause. Eighteen years later, as Thea learns of this tragedy for the first time, she is determined to solve the mystery of her sister's death, but two brothers, as handsome as they are mysterious, are determined to keep the bizarre circumstances of her sister's death secret. Enter the world of *samodivi*, or 'wildalones,' forest witches who entrap men and 'daemons' who ensnare young girls. Ancient Greek mythology meets Bulgarian legend in this shadowy, sensuous world of magic, mystery, and romance." So says the Indie Next Pick.

### OUT OF THIS WORLD

Carr, Viola. [The Diabolical Miss Hyde](#) (Harper \$16.99). Forensic science, magic, mystery, and romance mix in this edgy steampunk fantasy—a retelling of the horror classic, in which Dr. Eliza Jekyll, daughter of the infamous Dr. Henry Jekyll—pursues a dangerous murderer in an alternate Victorian London. See John Charles' comments in Valentine Reading.

Connolly, John/Jennifer Ridyard. [Empire: Book 2](#) (Atria \$26). She is the trophy of a civilization at war with itself. He is its rebel captive. Separated by millions of light years, they will fight to be united... Earth has been conquered and occupied. The war is lost. The Resistance still fights the invaders, but they are nothing more than an annoyance to the Illyri, an alien race of superior technology and military strength. When caught, the

young rebels are conscripted. Part soldiers, part hostages, they join the Brigades, sent to fight at the edges of the growing Illyri Empire. Paul Kerr is one such soldier—torn from his home and his beloved Syl Hellais. She is the first alien child born on Earth, a creature of two worlds—and a being possessed of powers beyond imagining. Now both must endure the terrible exile that Syl's race has deemed just punishment for their love. Oops, there is another species involved, known only as the Others... Book II in the Chronicles of the Invaders Series.

De La Cruz, Melissa. [Vampires of Manhattan: The New Blue Bloods Coven](#) (Hyperion \$26). A new novel that explores the battle between good and evil, in the city that never sleeps.

Schwab, VE. [A Darker Shade of Magic](#) (Tor, \$25.99). Fantasy fans should enjoy this atmospheric novel, where London is the link between parallel universes, and magician Kell is one of two Travelers who can move between them. Now something sinister is disturbing their equilibrium, and Kell must try to unravel the plot with only feisty street thief Delilah Bard as an ally.

Stross, Charles. [The Revolution Trade](#) (Tor \$17.99). An omnibus edition of the fifth and sixth novels—*The Revolution Business* and *Trade of Queens*—in Charles Stross' Merchant Princes series.

Tidhar, Lavie. [The Violent Century](#) (St Martins \$25.99). They never meant to be heroes. For 70 friends, bound together by a shared fate. Until one night in Berlin, in the aftermath of the Second World War, and a secret that tore them apart... This alternate history from a World Fantasy Award winner elicits raves and at least one pan—maybe it depends on how much you like superheroes. Judge for yourself.

### FEBRUARY TRADE PAPERBACK PICKS

Abani, Chris. [The Secret History of Las Vegas](#) (Penguin \$16). Mea culpa. I can't get to every book and this Penguin Paperback Original from 2014 got by me. It's a 2015 Edgar nominee. *Booklist* has this to say: "Instead of revolving around glitz and glamour, Abani's novel, set in contemporary Las Vegas, focuses on guilt, vengeance, and political and personal power. It brings together two very different characters: a crass, hotheaded Las Vegas detective named Salazar and Sunil Singh, originally from South Africa, who is researching psychopathic behavior for the U.S. Army. Entwined in the story are Singh's memories of apartheid South Africa, especially Soweto, where he grew up in poverty amid the political upheaval of the 1970s. The two men met previously when Salazar called on Singh to help him with a case: bodies of homeless men being dumped in a remote area of the city. That case was never solved. Now the body of a teenage girl has turned up in the same area, and Salazar is determined to reopen the case. He immediately finds two suspects... conjoined twins Fire and Water. When the twins stubbornly refuse to cooperate, Salazar calls on Singh to evaluate their mental health. What follows is an intricate braid of story strands, enriched by vivid descriptions, intriguingly dysfunctional characters, and abundant metaphors. Expect the unexpected."

Barbieri, Maggie. [Once Upon a Lie](#) (\$15.99). Barbieri takes a break from her Murder 101 series with what starts out as a standard suburban mystery but evolves into an unexpectedly riveting tale of ordinary cruelty and complicated heroism. When Sean Donovan, a pillar of the Farringville, N.Y., community, is brutally murdered, his cousin Maeve Conlon, an overworked

baker and divorced mother of two, finds herself dragged into the investigation after the police begin to suspect her father, Jack Conlon, of committing the crime. Det. Rodney Poole refuses to disclose why he believes Jack, a genial ex-cop with severe Alzheimer's, killed his nephew. Desperate to protect her family, Maeve responds by fabricating an alibi for Jack. Then Maeve's troubles worsen..."—*PW* Starred Review. For Barbieri's new hardcover, see New Books.

Black, Benjamin. [The Black-Eyed Blonde](#) (\$16). John Banville writing as Black gives you a Philip Marlowe novel where, in Raymond Chandler style, Marlowe is pulled into a case by a seductive young heiress.... "...[Black] does an uncannily good job of filling Marlowe's legendary gumshoes...*The Black-Eyed Blonde* includes winks and nods to ardent Chandler fans, but the book will work as first-rate noir for anyone...It's remarkable how fresh this book feels while still hewing close to the material on which it's based..."—*NY Times*

Black, Cara. [Murder in Pigalle](#) (\$14.95). June, 1998: Paris's sticky summer heat is even more oppressive than usual as rowdy French football fans riot in anticipation of the World Cup. Private investigator Aimée Leduc has been trying to slow down her hectic lifestyle—she's five months pregnant and has the baby's well-being to think about now. But then disaster strikes close to home. A serial rapist has been terrorizing Paris's Pigalle neighborhood, following teenage girls home and attacking them in their own houses. Zazie, the 13-year-old daughter of the proprietor of Aimée's favorite café, has disappeared. The police aren't mobilizing quickly enough, so Zazie's desperate parents approach Aimée for help... See Event Books for the sequel.

Brody, Frances. [Murder in the Afternoon](#) (\$15.99). This intelligent 1920s series set in Yorkshire is just the ticket for fans of Jacqueline Winspear and Charles Todd. Kate Shackleton is neither wife nor widow: her husband, a doctor, has never been located since serving in the WWI front. She hasn't given up looking for him among the men with shattered bodies or minds, but by 1923 she has a lover, a London chief inspector. Kate, well off and not liking to be idle, has begun doing some private investigations, assisted by a retired copper. So when a woman from Great Appplewick comes to her Leeds' office with a request she investigate a mystery revolving around a stone mason, she listens. And learns her new client is her sister (Kate was put up for adoption when a baby by her impoverished parents). Start with [Dying in the Wool](#) (\$14.99); [A Medal for Murder](#) (\$15.99); and Kate's 4th is in this issue's British Books.

Gaedon, Alena. [The Word Exchange](#) (\$15.95). The 2014 Indie Next Pick for a First Mystery Club Pick: "In the near-future, books and other printed-matter have become obsolete. Anana Johnson and her father are preparing to publish the last printed edition of the *North American Dictionary of English Language*, both of them saddened by this end of an era. But then Doug goes missing, leaving only a single clue: ALICE. Soon Anana finds herself racing along subterranean passageways and investigating a secret society for clues. Fans of Robin Sloan's *Mr. Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore* and Jedediah Berry's *The Manuel of Detection* will be thrilled."

Janeway, Jane. [The Magician's Daughter](#) (\$14.95). Starts an edgy, humorous series. See New Books for more and for the Signed hardcover edition.

Maitland, Barry. [The Raven's Eye](#) (\$15.99). How I love Maitland's wonderfully plotted procedurals for London coppers Brock and Kolla. Every one presents intricate twists and surprises, and rich character development. He's one of the most under-known crime writers; possibly because he lives in Australia and is seldom seen. This is Brock and Kolla's 12th investigation and in it they, once again, go up against bureaucracy, here Commander Fred Lynch who regards a look at Vicky Hawke's apparently accidental death from carbon monoxide on her rented houseboat on London's Regent Canal as a timewaster compared to the urgency of capturing Jack Bragg, a vicious gang leader who fled England to avoid prosecution but has now been drawn back home by his wife's infidelity. Do these events, and the surprising role of Vicky's sister, link up? If you're a fan of British TV's *New Tricks* as am I, then you should gobble up Maitland. Not all are in print: [click here](#) to see what you can order. I especially love *Chelsea Mansions*.

Moore, Christopher. [The Serpent of Venice](#) (\$15.99). Three prominent Venetians await their most loathsome and foul dinner guest, the erstwhile envoy from the Queen of Britain: the rascal Fool Pocket. This trio of cunning plotters—the merchant, Antonio; the senator, Montessoro Brabantio; and the naval officer, Iago—have lured Pocket to a dark dungeon, promising an evening of sprits and debauchery with a rare Amontillado sherry and Brabantio's beautiful daughter, Portia. But their invitation is, of course, bogus. The wine is drugged. The girl isn't even in the city limits. Desperate to rid themselves once and for all of the man who has consistently foiled their grand quest for power and wealth, they have lured him to his death. (How can such a small man be such a huge obstacle?). But this Fool is no fool... and he's got more than a few tricks (and hand gestures) up his sleeve. Greed, revenge, deception, lust, and a giant (but lovable) sea monster combine to create a riotous tale.

Nesbø, Jo. [The Son](#) (\$15.95). Sonny is a model prisoner. He listens to the confessions of other inmates, and absolves them of their sins. But then one prisoner's confession changes everything. He knows something about Sonny's disgraced father. He needs to break out of prison and make those responsible pay for their crimes. Whatever the cost. So he does.... A standalone hardboiled thriller from Norway's Raymond Chandler.

Owen, Lauren. [The Quick](#) (\$16). What we have is a kind of Dickens or Sarah Walters Victorian—and vampires. A darker, wilder version of Setterfield's [The Thirteenth Tale](#) (\$16) and, appropriately, set in the wilds of Yorkshire where an orphaned brother and sister are bound by tragedy. Then there's London and luxurious rooms of the mysterious Aegolius Club whose members are among the richest, and most ambitious, men in England. At some point, a trapdoor will open, changing the contours of reality....

Quartey, Kwei. [Murder at Cape Three Points](#) (\$14.95). At Cape Three Points on the beautiful Ghanaian coast, a canoe washes up at an oil rig site bearing a dead middle-aged couple—the man gruesomely decapitated. The Smith-Aidoos, pillars of their community, are mourned by everyone, but especially by their niece Sapphire, a successful pediatric surgeon in Ghana's capital, Accra. She is not happy that months have passed since the murder and the rural police have made no headway. The Ghanaian federal police finally send Detective Inspector Darko Dawson of

the Accra police force to investigate. The Indie Next Pick for our March 2014 Fresh Fiction Pick: “Quartey portrays the country of Ghana with all its charms and quirks, a culture that stands at the brink of the modern world, yet has not lost its tribal traditions. The result is a thoroughly fascinating book.”

Rankin, Ian. [Saints of the Shadow Bible](#) (\$16) has been nominated for a 2015 Edgar Award for Best Novel. Edinburgh’s Rebus aged out and retired. Happily Scotland really changed retirement age so Rankin brought Rebus back to work. But meanwhile he created Malcolm Fox, a cop working in Complaints (Internal Affairs), who’s terrific. It’s inevitable that when Rebus and his attitude rejoin the force, suffering a demotion, he’d run afoul of Fox, no? Rebus is investigating a car accident when news arrives that a case from 30 years ago is being reopened. Rebus’ team from those days is suspected of helping a murderer escape justice to further their own ends. Malcolm Fox, in what will be his last case as an internal affairs cop, is tasked with finding out the truth. And so the scene is set for the two to butt heads... Rankin took last year off from writing novels but he should be back at it. [Click here](#) to order his work.

✚Robotham, Michael. [Watching You](#) (\$15). Although he lives in Australia, wizard writer Robotham’s psychologist/sleuth Joe O’Laughlin is based in London. His cases have exacted a toll on him physically and mentally, as well as on his family. How they cope is part of the journey book to book. In his 8th case Joe gets a troubled new patient called Marnie. He’s tenderhearted and supports her claim of innocence when she becomes a murder suspect. But Marnie may be a better psychologist than Joe... “Robotham slowly, expertly begins tightening the screws... Revelations increase rather than release tension until the last page...It will be a long time before memories of this one retreat back into the shadows.” —*Booklist*(starred review). We’ll have Signed copies of [Life or Death](#) (Mulholland \$26) in April.

Steinhauer, Olen. [The Cairo Affair](#) (\$16). The CIA in Cairo is turning Egyptian secret service members; the Egyptians spy on the other services and have sources in many foreign embassies; and there is a leak of the Libyan plan that points to an American diplomat who is murdered. Plenty of intrigue, unreliable sources, shifting allegiances, and philosophy — Steinhauer manages it all superbly. This is a fabulous book; all of his books are in fact. I think of him as John Le Carré as was, back in Smiley’s day. For his earlier books, [click here](#); for his new thriller, see Event Books.

#### VALENTINE READING: John Charles Reviews

Every romance reader has his or her own favorite Heyer. For some it may be *Venetia*, in which infamous rake Lord Damerel pursues the hopelessly romantic Venetia. Then there are those who claim *The Grand Sophy* is Heyer’s best romance. Fortunately, you don’t have to limit yourself to just one, because all of Heyer’s sparkling, spirited Regencies have recently been republished in new trade paperback editions. But wait, there’s more! Heyer’s Golden Age mysteries have been republished as well. If you like those bright and breezy murder mysteries from the 1930s and 1940s and haven’t read Heyer’s detective novels, you are in for a treat. The Poisoned Pen currently carries all of these titles, and even if some other reader should snatch up your favorite copy from the shelf, we can easily order another copy for you.

PS from Barbara: Heyer fans indeed each have favorites, but the very best Heyer IMHO is [A Civil Contract](#) (\$13.95). Not romance, not a cozy, not a social document but a story of compromises (with excellent historical underpinnings) that touch you to the core. I never once have visited NY’s Metropolitan Museum without stopping to view the *sang du boeuf* porcelain in tribute to Mr. Jonathan Chawleigh, a “vulgar” City man and father of the brave Viscountess Lynton.

✚Balogh, Mary. [Beyond the Sunrise](#) (NAL \$15). Eleven years after they flirted and fell in love with each other as teenagers at Haddington Hall, Jeanne Morisette and Robert Blake meet again in Portugal. There are just two things keeping them apart: Jeanne, now the widowed Joana da Fonte, doesn’t recognize Robert, and Robert thinks his first love is now a spy for the French. Balogh is known for her subtle characterization, elegant writing, and impeccable use of period details, so if you missed this title when it first debuted in 1992, now’s your chance to pick it up.

✚Carr, Viola. [The Diabolical Miss Hyde](#) (Harper \$16.99). As a forensic investigator, Dr. Eliza Jekyll uses her knowledge of science to help the London Metropolitan Police catch killers, but sometimes a murderer eludes justice. That’s when Miss Lizzie Hyde takes over. Inspired by the classic Robert Louis Stevenson tale, Carr puts Jekyll’s daughter in a dark-edged, Victorian Steampunk setting, where the government is determined to stamp out any sign of magic or supernatural chicanery. This is a terrific, wildly imaginative debut novel that is jam-packed with danger and desire.

Dimon, Helenkay. [Playing Dirty: Bad Boys Undercover](#) (Harper \$7.99). Property manager Shay Alexander has just found out that Ford Decker, the new hottie she is sleeping with, is actually an undercover agent looking for her cousin. Don’t you just hate it when that happens?

✚Guhre, Laura Lee. [Catch a Falling Heiress](#) (Harper \$7.99). In order to keep American heiress Linnet Holland from accepting Frederick Van Hausen’s offer of marriage, Jack Featherstone finds himself proposing to her instead. Guhkre’s “An American Heiress in London” series, of which this the third addition, focuses on the historical cash for titles phenomena that went on in the late Victorian era between wealthy American brides and impoverished British noblemen (which, if you watch *Downton Abbey* is how Robert and Cora got married).

Harper, Elizabeth Hoyt. [Once and Always](#) (Grand Central \$6). For Maisa Burnsey, the latest speeding ticket she gets from small-town cop Sam West is just the beginning when she finds herself tangled up in dangerous scheme involving mistakenly swapped suitcases, pink diamonds, the Russian mafiya, and the possibility of a long-term relationship with Sam. Harper’s latest contemporary romance has plenty of action and danger, enough eccentric secondary characters to film an episode of *Fargo*, and love scenes that are hot enough to melt permafrost.

Kendrick, Beth. [New Uses for Old Boyfriends](#) (NAL \$15). Newly divorced and cash strapped Lila Alders returns home to Black Dog Bay to spend the summer with her recently widowed mother Daphne only to find her mother is in the same financial boat as Lila. While attempting to turn her mother’s cache of vintage couture into an income stream, Lila bumps into her old high-school boyfriend Ben. Getting back together with Ben

seems like the perfect idea until Lila realizes the man she really has unfinished business with is dishy ex-Marine Malcolm Toth. Local author Kendrick has a wicked sense of wit, which she wields with great effect in her latest laugh-out-loud contemporary romance. The charming small-town setting, the sweetly quirky characters, and some fascinating snippets about high fashion clothing provide the perfect foundation upon which *New Uses of Old Boyfriends* is built.

Marek, Lillian. [Lady Elinor's Wicked Adventures](#) (Sourcebooks Casablanca, \$7.99). Lady Elinor Tremaine is delighted to learn that Harry de Vaux, and old family friend, will be accompanying the Tremaines on their trip to Italy. However, while exploring the Etruscan ruins outside Rome, Elinor discovers something she never expected to find: love. The spunky heroine and archaeology-laced plot will remind some readers of the Amelia Peabody books and then factor in just a tad more sexual heat.

Palmer, Liza. [Girl before a Mirror](#) (Harper \$14.99). What do women want? Advertising executive Anna Wyatt believes that if she can just discern the answer to this age-old question, it will provide her with the key to lock up the Lumineux Shower Gel account. Deciding to use mega-selling romance writer Helen Brubaker's self-help book *Be the Heroine, Find Your Hero* as the inspiration for her campaign, Anna heads out to Phoenix to research the world of romance fiction at a conference. While at the conference, every one of Anna's biases about romance readers and romance novels are shattered, but will Anna have the courage to take what she learns and apply it to her own life? Palmer writes with great insight about what romance fiction brings to the literary table as well as why these books matter so much to readers. In addition, Palmer also has a sharp sense of humor ("So when people say Phoenix is a dry heat, they clearly mean this is what it feels like to be cremated."), and her visitor's take on Phoenix in general and the Biltmore in particular is a wonderful added bonus.

Quinn, Julia. [The Secrets of Sir Richard Kenworthy](#) (Harper \$7.99). Sir Richard Kenworthy has four weeks to find a woman to marry. Fortunately for Richard, he thinks he may have found the perfect candidate in the person of Iris Smythe-Smith. Quinn's Regency-set historical romances are filled with plenty of witty dialogue and sexual sizzle. If you enjoy the historical parts of Lauren Willig's "Pink Carnation" books, you might want to give Quinn a whirl.

Robards, Karen. [Hush](#) (Gallery Books, \$25). At first Riley Cowan didn't believe her ex-husband Jeff when he told her someone was killing people close to his father. After Riley discovers Jeff's dead body hanging in their palatial home, she realizes Jeff may be right. Riley's ex father-in-law swindled a lot of people out of a lot of money and now it looks like one of those ex-investors will stop at nothing – including murder – to get their money back. Fortunately, sexy FBI agent Finn Bradley seems to believe Riley, but can Finn keep her safe? Robards has been a mainstay on the best-seller lists for almost two decades, and *Hush* (with its Bernie Madoff-esque inspired plot) is a smooth mix of sexy and suspenseful.

Rose, Karen. [Closer Than You Think](#) (NAL \$7.99). To escape a crazed stalker, psychologist Faith Corcoran moves back to her grandmother's old home in Cincinnati only to find herself in even more danger since a serial killer has taken up residence in the

neighborhood. Rose's latest is a nerve-jangling tale of romance and suspense that will definitely appeal to fans of television shows like *Criminal Minds* or *The Following*.

## NEW BOOKS

Alcott, Kate. [A Touch of Stardust](#) (Knopf \$25). "With the background of the making of *Gone with the Wind*, this is a delightful read that combines historical events with the fictional career of an aspiring screenwriter. Julie is a wide-eyed Indiana girl who, through a series of lucky breaks, advances from studio go-fer and assistant to Carole Lombard to contract writer at MGM. A fun, engaging page-turner!" –from a list of recommendation by librarians. I thought this might be a cheesy Hollywood piece but it's smart, insightful and fun, filled with how the movie was made and the many problems it encountered. While all its stars appear warts and all, the joy of this book is Carole Lombard who was not in *Gone with the Wind* but did finally get to marry her lover Gable whose wife was paid off as part of his contract. The tragedy of her 1943 death is later than the book's finish, but you mourn her loss.

Barclay, Alex. [Harm's Reach](#) (Harper \$14.99). When Special Agent Ren Bryce discovers the body of a young woman in an abandoned car, solving the case becomes personal. But the more she uncovers about the victim's last movements, the more questions are raised. Why was Laura Flynn driving towards a ranch for troubled teens in the middle of Colorado when her employers thought she was hundreds of miles away? And what did she know about a case from fifty years ago, which her death dramatically reopens? As Ren and cold case investigator Janine Hooks slowly weave the threads together, a picture emerges of a privileged family determined to hide some very dark secrets – whatever the cost.

Berenson, Alex. [Twelve Days Signed](#) (Putnam \$27.95). Professional commitments keep Berenson from visiting The Pen this month. But you can enjoy this new John Wells thriller which has a haunting opening on a flight rising up out of Mumbai. One of the key players is surely inspired by a real billionaire US casino mogul muscling into politics (an ardent supporter of Israel). No surprise that real life would inspire Berenson, a *NY Times* reporter. But what he does with it is all his own. Salome, the woman long in love with the billionaire gambling czar Duberman and the agent of a sweeping plot, first introduced in [The Counterfeit Agent](#) (\$9.99), is memorable. Wells seems more dour and disillusioned than ever, and you may, as did I, question one or two of his decisions. This doesn't detract from the gut punch this story, all too plausible, delivers. India, Iran, Israel, and South Africa are just some of the landscapes for this global thriller.

Berney, Lou. [Long and Faraway Gone](#) (Morrow \$14.99). Looking for contemporary noir? Edgar and Barry Awards nominee Berney does it well. Roll back to 1986 and two tragedies rocking Oklahoma City: a teenage girl vanishes from the state fair, never to be seen again; armed robbers invade a movie theater and gun down six employees. Wyatt is the one teenager who survives. 25 years later he's a PI working in Las Vegas. A case drops him back into OC and a past he's tried to escape and drags him into the unsolved robbery and the girl's disappearance, the latter because her surviving sister Julianna is not going to let things go any longer without getting answers. Why were Wyatt and Julianna left behind that long-gone

summer? As is so often true, in life and books, the no-thought decisions made by teens produce unimagined consequences.

Bertsch, David Riley. [River of No Return](#) (Scribner \$26.99). High season is coming to an end, and fishing guide Jake Trent suddenly has some time on his hands. As the ex-lawyer ponders rekindling his romance with park ranger Noelle Kimpton, a surprise call from a long-lost love lights up his phone. It's been years since law school graduation, when Jake's last seen Divya Navaysam. Now a DC lobbyist, Divya wants Jake to come to Washington for a consulting job—immediately. Meanwhile, back in Jackson, Jake's best friend and occasional employee, JP, is dealing with his own romantic woes. After years of bad luck in love, JP has fallen for Esma. But after a perfect summer, JP's new girlfriend is now back in her native Mexico—and before long, she seems to have gone off the grid completely. When local police offer little help, a distraught JP turns to Jake. To find Esma, Jake must navigate a heated relationship with his ex-flame in Washington. Jake's renegade investigation leads him to a remote cabin in Idaho—and a series of discoveries that point to a conspiracy bigger than anything anyone could have imagined.

Brown, Sandra. [Mean Streak](#) (\$15). Dr. Emory Charbonneau, a pediatrician and marathon runner, disappears on a mountain road in North Carolina. By the time her husband Jeff, miffed over a recent argument, reports her missing, the trail has grown cold. Literally. Fog and ice encapsulate the mountainous wilderness and paralyze the search for her. While police suspect Jeff of “instant divorce,” Emory, suffering from an unexplained head injury, regains consciousness. She doesn't yet know if her secretive captor is the kidnapper of her nightmares or the romantic rescuer of her dreams.

Cooper, Tom. [The Marauders Signed](#) (Crown \$28) “is a wild pirogue ride through the post-Katrina, post-oil spill bayous of Barataria, outside New Orleans. His characters are the soul of this first novel, a sometimes hilarious, sometimes heartbreaking “swamp noir” gumbo with echoes of John Kennedy Toole, Larry Brown and Daniel Woodrell”—Bruce Jacobs. Patrick adds this for his **March Hardboiled Crime Club Pick**: “Set in and around the Louisiana Gulf Coast town of Jeanette during the fallout from the BP oil spill, this exceptional novel is a spot-on portrayal of post-Katrina desperation, where shrimpers and fishermen eke out a hardscrabble living in a decimated industry. One-armed, oxycontin-snorting Gus Lindquist does his damndest to stay afloat after a pair of psychotic twin brother drug lords, Reginald and Victor Toup, steal his prosthetic arm. The only thing keeping Lindquist going is his obsession with finding the lost treasure of pirate Jean Lafitte. Then there's Wes Trench, a young shrimper whose mother was swept away in the flood and remains estranged from his father, who he blames for her death. Then there's a pair of small-time hoods, Cosgrove and Hanson, who come across a hidden cache of loot in an old woman's attic that may or may not lead to the same treasure Lindquist seeks. Cooper is a great storyteller and his tale is part picaresque, part tragedy and part black comedy, mixed with a seething violence that threatens to erupt at any moment. Not to be missed...”

Dorsey, Tim. [Shark Skin Suite Signed](#) (Morrow \$28). Dorsey's new novel earns a Starred *PW* review: “Florida serial killer Serge A. Storms is still going strong, as shown by bestseller Dorsey's

18th entry in this brilliantly funny series. Accompanied by stoner friend Coleman, Stoner rockets around the state reveling in little known tidbits of Florida history, uncovering scams both blatantly obvious and stunningly subtle, and meting out inventive and inspired punishments to evil-doers. All of this is done with a razor sharp wit that skewers human foibles and follies illustrated by instantly recognizable character types. Big banks are engaging in mortgage fraud (‘Florida has the highest foreclosure rate in the nation’), but the main human interest is with Brook Campanella, a newly minted lawyer and a former girlfriend of Serge's. Brook wages a losing war in the courtroom against powerful Consolidated Financial, until Serge appoints himself attorney for the plaintiff and makes a memorable courtroom appearance. Consolidated fights dirty, but that's Serge's specialty.”

Estleman, Loren D. [The Confessions of Al Capone: A Novel](#) (\$16.99), or rather, a fictionalized portrait of the Chicago mob guy. It's 1944: Al Capone is living with his family in Florida and suffering from advanced syphilis. J. Edgar Hoover orders FBI agent Peter Vasco to pose as a priest and get close to the infamous American gangster, so he can obtain information that might help the Bureau nab members of Capone's Chicago Outfit. Vasco and Capone bond over card games, lunches, and even a trip to Wisconsin, and Capone spills secrets that expose in vivid detail this monster who was the most iconic figure in 20th-century crime. More impressive is the breadth of research and psychology the tireless Estleman brings to his astonishing level of work.

Freveletti, Jamie. [Robert Ludlum's The Geneva Strategy](#) (\$16). This exciting entry in the Covert-One series is Thriller Award-winner Freveletti's second contribution to the Ludlum franchise after [The Janus Reprisal](#) (\$8). On one evening in Washington, DC, several high-ranking members of government disappear in a mass kidnapping. Among the kidnapped is Nick Rendel, a computer software coding expert in charge of drone programming and strategy. He is the victim with the most dangerous knowledge, including confidential passwords and codes that are used to program the drones. If revealed, his kidnappers could reprogram the drones to strike targets within the United States. Jon Smith and the Covert One team begin a worldwide search to recover the officials, but as the first kidnapping victims are rescued, they show disturbing signs of brainwashing or mind-altering drugs. Smith's investigation leads him to Fort Detrick, where a researcher, Dr. Laura Taylor, had been attempting to create a drug to wipe memory from soldiers suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome. But Dr. Taylor's research was suspended almost a year ago... Freveletti is a fine writer with the chops for this franchise.

Gaiman, Neil. [Trigger Warning: Short Fictions](#) (Morrow \$27.99). “We each have our little triggers . . . things that wait for us in the dark corridors of our lives.” So says Neil Gaiman in his introduction to 25 stories and poems that explore the transformative power of imagination. In “Adventure Story”—a thematic companion to *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*—Gaiman ponders death and the ways in which people take their stories with them when they die. “A Calendar of Tales” is comprised of short pieces about the months of the year—stories of pirates and March winds, an igloo made of books, and a Mother's Day card that portends disturbances in the universe. Gaiman offers his own ingenious spin on Sherlock Holmes in his award-nominated mystery tale “The Case of Death and Honey.”



Also included is “Nothing O’Clock,” a very special Doctor Who story that was written for the beloved series in 2013, as well as the never-before-published “Black Dog,” a haunting new tale that revisits the world of *American Gods* as Shadow Moon stops in at a village pub on his way back to America.

Gore, Steven. [Night is the Hunter](#) (Harper \$14.99). A jury convicted Israel Dominguez of first-degree murder for shooting Edgar Rojo in an apparent gang war 20 years ago. Now Ray McMullin, the judge who put Dominguez on death row, wants Donnally to re-examine the case. Besides reading trial transcripts and arrest reports, Donnally interviews everyone he can find connected with the event, including the judge, witnesses, arresting officers, prosecutor, and DA. Donnally gets wildly different versions of what transpired (and the reasons for it), as well as pushback, since everyone has something to hide. The law may be clear, but human motivations can have bizarre results. Gore not only puts a face on the difficulties of serving justice but also illustrates their immensity.

James, Miranda. [Arsenic and Old Books](#) (Berkley \$25.95). Lucinda Beckwith Long, the mayor of Athena, has donated a set of Civil War-era diaries to the archives of Athena College. The books were recently discovered among the personal effects of an ancestor of Mrs. Long’s husband. The mayor would like Charlie to preserve and to substantiate them as a part of the Long family legacy—something that could benefit her son, Beck, as he prepares to campaign for the state senate. Beck’s biggest rival is Jasper Singletary. His Southern roots are as deep as Beck’s, and their families have been bitter enemies since the Civil War. Jasper claims the Long clan has a history of underhanded behavior at the expense of the Singletarys. He’d like to get a look at the diaries in an attempt to expose the Long family’s past sins. Meanwhile, a history professor at the college is also determined to get her hands on the books in a last-ditch bid for tenure. But their interest suddenly turns deadly and leaves Charlie with a catalog of questions.... 6th in a cozy series.

Harrison, Jim. [The Big Seven](#) (Grove \$26). The sequel to [The Great Leader](#) (\$15) sends Detective Sunderson to confront his new neighbors, a gun-nut family who live outside the law in rural Michigan. Detective Sunderson has fled troubles on the home front and bought himself a hunting cabin in a remote area of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. No sooner has he settled in than he realizes his new neighbors are creating even more havoc than the Great Leader did. A family of outlaws, armed to the teeth, the Ameses have local law enforcement too intimidated to take them on. Then Sunderson’s cleaning lady, a comely young Ames woman, is murdered, and black sheep brother Lemuel Ames seeks Sunderson’s advice on a crime novel he’s writing which may not be fiction. Sunderson must struggle with the evil within himself and the far greater, more expansive evil of his neighbor.

Janeway, Judith. [The Magician’s Daughter Signed](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95). It’s always a joy to discover a new voice. That of Judith Janeway was honed to a sharp, lively edge in romance, and translates superbly to the start of a mystery series featuring magician Valentine Hill, daughter of an amoral, compulsive con woman. Valentine has no idea who her father is. Or even when she was born, or where. All she knows is her mother said her father was a magician. Desperate to learn her own story, Valentine has been searching (vainly) for her mother for years,

supporting herself by busking, doing street performances of a skilled, solo magic act. No grifter like her mother, the scrupulous Valentine takes pride in always paying her way and never telling a lie. Which is a real handicap when she’s robbed of her stake while busking in Vegas. She chases it to San Francisco where a series of odd events reunites her with her mother who, Valentine is sure, despite her respectable façade, is playing one of the city’s super rich. And Valentine quickly enters a world where truly nothing is what it seems. A socialite is a ruthless criminal, a car mechanic a psycho killer, and a cab driver a seductive gangster. After a friendly FBI agent is killed, Valentine forces herself into adopting a grifter’s role to put the criminals—and her mother—away. Or at the very least, get what she wants from mom. Not given to self-pity, nor to trust, the progress of her quest charts a change in Valentine who learns she can’t be entirely self-reliant. But she retains her hard-won confidence, not losing her edge, even to grief—or to panic. She’s a wonderful character with whom to spend a few hours. [The Magician’s Daughter](#) (\$14.95).

Kardos, Michael. [Before He Finds Her](#) (Grove \$25). Everyone in the quiet Jersey Shore town of Silver Bay knows the story: on a Sunday evening in September 1991, Ramsey Miller threw a blowout block party, then murdered his beautiful wife and three-year-old daughter. But everyone is wrong. The daughter got away. Now she is nearly eighteen and tired of living in secrecy. Under the name Melanie Denison, she has spent the last 15 years in small-town West Virginia as part of the Witness Protection Program. She has never been allowed to travel, go to a school dance, or even have internet at home. Precautions must be taken at every turn, because Ramsey Miller was never caught and might still be looking for his daughter. Yet despite strict house rules, Melanie has entered into a relationship with a young teacher at the local high school and is now ten weeks pregnant. She doesn’t want her child to live in hiding. And so... “Brilliant. *Before He Finds Her* is one of the most innovative and compelling thrillers to come along in recent years. Read the first page and kiss the next 24 hours goodbye. Bravo!”—Jeffery Deaver

Kellerman, Jonathan. [Motive](#) (Random \$28). Even having hundreds of closed cases to his credit can’t keep LAPD police lieutenant Milo Sturgis from agonizing over the crimes that don’t get solved—and the victims who go without justice. Victims like Katherine Hennepin, a young woman strangled and stabbed in her home. A single suspect with a solid alibi leads to a dead end—one even Alex Delaware’s expert insight can’t explain. The only thing to do is move on to the next murder case—because there’s always a next one. This time the victim is Ursula Corey: a successful, attractive divorcée who’s been gunned down—not a robbery but an execution, a crime that smacks of simple, savage revenge. And along with that theoretical motive come two strong contenders for the role of perp: the dead woman’s business partner/ex-husband and her divorce lawyer/secret lover. But just as Alex and Milo think they’re zeroing in on the most likely suspect, a bizarre new clue stirs up eerie echoes of the unsolved Hennepin murder. And the discovery of yet another crime scene bearing the same taunting signature raises the specter of a serial killer... Kellerman is traveling and can’t sign this one, but he will sign a new standalone for us on August 28.

Keneally, Thomas. [Shame and the Captives](#) (Atria \$26). You are in a World War II prison camp, where Japanese prisoners resolve to take drastic action to wipe away their shame. Alice

is a young woman living on her father-in-law's farm on the edge of an Australian country town, while her husband is held prisoner in Europe. When Giancarlo, an Italian anarchist at the prisoner-of-war camp down the road, is assigned to work on the farm, she hopes that being kind to him will somehow influence her husband's treatment. What she doesn't anticipate is how dramatically Giancarlo will expand her outlook and self-knowledge. But what most challenges Alice and her fellow townspeople is the utter foreignness of the thousand-plus Japanese inmates and their culture, which the camp commanders fatally misread. Mortified by being taken alive in battle and preferring a violent death to the shame of living, they plan an outbreak, to shattering and far-reaching effects on all the citizens around them

Kerley, JA. [The Apostle](#) (Collins \$17.50). The Reverend Honus Schrum, a nationally renowned minister and owner of a broadcasting empire, tells the media he has come home to Key West to die. Meanwhile, Detective Carson Ryder is investigating the ritualistic murders of young women with checkered pasts, discovering the killings have religious overtones. Simultaneously, a newly retired Harry Nautilus takes a job as a driver/bodyguard for Richard Owsley, an ambitious pastor in Mobile. They come to Florida, where Owsley meets with Schrum and is enlisted to complete a special and mysterious 'project' Schrum has promised a billionaire benefactor. As Carson digs deeper into the murders, Harry, interest piqued by all the hush-hush goings-on of his new employer, begins to covertly investigate the strange project. And their independent investigations begin to merge...

Kurzweil, Allen. [Whipping Boy](#) (Harper \$27.99). During his single year at a boarding school in Switzerland, sixth-grader Allen Kurzweil roomed with a boy improbably named Cesar Augustus, who bullied him physically and emotionally. Then Allen moved on, lived all over the world, found a successful career in journalism and writing, married a French anthropologist and had a son. But throughout those intervening years, Allen was bothered by the memory of Cesar. In researching Cesar's likely whereabouts, Allen dismisses false leads and relives old trauma. Eventually, he finds his childhood tormentor in a nearly unbelievable narrative: Cesar was sentenced to three years in prison for his role in a criminal scam so outlandish that it reads like a novel. *Whipping Boy* is a work of nonfiction, with no names changed; just when it starts feeling like a thriller, it gets stranger than fiction. Kurzweil is obsessed with Cesar, his "menace and muse." He wants to right wrongs, to avenge himself and to solve a mystery. He also wants to stick up for his son, also bullied at a young age. Along the way, he is distracted—as is the reader—by the monstrosity and incredibility of con men who claim to be royalty, with costumes and jewelry to match, who manage to defraud eminent savvy businesspeople; and he is forced to consider questions about the nature of memory. But in the end, courage and closure are the rewards for a heartfelt, very funny, poignant and extremely weird story to which Kurzweil's self-deprecatory voice is perfectly suited." —Julia Jenkins on an unusual work of True Crime.

Lange, Richard. [Sweet Nothing Stories Signed](#) (LittleBrown \$27). Patrick reviews: "I've been a fan of Lange's fiction since his debut collection, *Dead Boys*. Equally adept as a novelist and short story writer, Lange returns to the short form in this amazing collection of stories set in and around Los Angeles. With each

story, we see the underbelly of the American Dream, in which men and women from different backgrounds and situations must confront their own personal demons and fears. There's an ex-con trying to maintain the straight life as a security guard who stumbles across a burglary plot, a young married man who seemingly has it all but is paralyzed by fear of losing his fragile set-up and finds himself blackmailed. The artificial glare of Hollywood and the film industry looms in the background of many of these pieces. Lange's writing is firmly in the tradition of great Los Angeles storytellers such as Nathanael West, John Fante, and Horace McCoy but with a modern sensibility and edge that is all his own." Novelist TC Boyle finds: "Richard Lange's stories are a revelation. He writes of the disaffections and bewilderments of ordinary lives with as keen an anger and searing lyricism as anybody out there today. He is Raymond Carver reborn in a hard cityscape. Read him and be amazed."

Larsen, Reif. [I Am Radar](#) (Penguin \$29.95). Radar is a young, love-struck black radio-operator kid who was mysteriously born to and raised by white parents in New Jersey. As the story unfolds, Radar becomes involved with a secret international society of scientists and puppeteers that perform avant-garde shows about particle physics for populations suffering from genocide.

Lethem, Jonathan. [Lucky Alan and Other Stories Signed](#) (Knopf \$24.95). Lethem's third collection of stories uncovers a father's nervous breakdown at SeaWorld in "Pending Vegan"; a foundling child rescued from the woods during a blizzard in "Traveler Home"; a political prisoner in a hole in a Brooklyn street in "Procedure in Plain Air"; and a crumbling, haunted "blog" on a seaside cliff in "The Dreaming Jaw, The Salivating Ear." Each of these locates itself in Lethem-land, which can be discovered only by visiting.

Link, Kelly. [Get in Trouble: Stories](#) (Random \$25). It has been more than 10 years since Kelly Link—whom Michael Chabon called "the most darkly playful voice in American fiction"—published a collection of stories. Link is the founder and publisher of Small Beer Press. Think Karen Russell and Neil Gaiman.

Lippman, Laura. [Hush Signed](#) (Morrow \$28). In what I call a creepy coincidence, the springboard for this plot, and the plot, twin with Lisa Unger's new novel below. I read them back to back purely by chance. Where each goes with the engine for the narrative is of course very different. I can't say much more without huge spoilers. What fascinates me is that the major book reviewers all award this Starred Reviews. I do not. But maybe I don't want to dwell on questions of not only who is mad, what is madness, but what comes after. And spend any time with mothers who murder their children. This is Baltimore PI Tess Monahan's 12th case and she has a new partner along with the task of providing security to Melisandre Harris Davis—without judging her.

Littell, Robert. [A Nasty Piece of Work](#) (\$15.99). Spymaster Littell turns to crime. Former CIA agent Lemuel Gunn left the battlefield of Afghanistan for early retirement in the desert of New Mexico, where he works as a private investigator from the creature comforts, such as they are, of a mobile home. Into his life comes Ornella Neppi, a thirtysomething woman making a hash out of her uncle's bail bonds business. The source of her

troubles, Emilio Gava, was arrested for buying cocaine. She has reason to believe he is planning to jump bail. For \$95 a day plus expenses (not to mention the pleasure of her company), Gunn agrees to help Ornella track down the wayward suspect. Curiously, no photographs of Gava seem to exist, and once Gunn begins his manhunt, he starts to wonder whether Gava himself existed in the first place.... "I want to rave about the plot, but I don't want to spoil any of it for you. But then, Littell is so gifted a creator of intelligent entertainment that I could give away almost everything and still not spoil your pleasure in reading this neat, new genre novel by one of our best." —Alan Cheuse, NPR

Lotz, Sarah. [The Three](#) (\$16). Four planes crash within hours of each other on different continents. There doesn't seem to be a correlation between the crashes, except that in three of the four air disasters, a single child is the sole survivor. Dubbed "the three" by the press, these "miracle children" achieve international celebrity. Things take a dark turn when a fanatical preacher starts insisting that the young survivors are three of the four harbingers of the apocalypse. As the children's behavior grows increasingly disturbing, even their loved ones start to suspect there could be some truth behind the conspiracy theory. And then a survivor from the fourth accident is found....

Mason, Jamie. [Monday's Lie Signed](#) (Gallery \$26). Mason's Surprise Me Club Pick [Three Graves Full](#) (\$16) impressed me with its wild originality and arresting voice. I feel that here she's too influenced by *Gone Girl* as she portrays children raised by a covert ops asset mother. Can they ever connect with the real world despite mom's tough lessons? And will Dee Aldrich, who rebelled against her off-center upbringing when she married the most conventional man she could imagine, find her marriage to Patrick sabotaged by what? Who she is, or who he becomes? It's a quiet battleground... nothing like normal life, which Dee may in fact not really either want or be equipped to negotiate.

Mayo, Michael. [Jimmy the Stick](#) (Mysterious \$14.99). Young Jimmy Quinn is delivering a bribe for the infamous racketeer Arnold Rothstein when a bomb goes off on Wall Street, killing thirty people and scaring every banker in the city right down to his spats. Twelve years later, Rothstein is dead, and Jimmy is doing his best to stay out of trouble, running a quiet little Manhattan speakeasy. At a particularly bad moment for him and his favorite waitress, a blast rocks the alley outside and draws him right back into the madness of a dozen years ago. That morning, a strange package came in with his liquor shipment: four plain books filled with cryptic numbers. It seems this bombing may have had the same motive as the one that shook Wall Street more than a decade ago: money. The incident sets Jimmy off on a mad race to stay out of the line of fire, taking him from the heights of the Chrysler Building to the depths of New York's 1920's-30's underworld.

Meister, Ellen. [Dorothy Parker Drank Here](#) (Putnam \$26.95). A kind of ghost, Dorothy Parker wanders the famous halls of the Algonquin Hotel, drink in hand, searching for someone, anyone, who will keep her company on this side of eternity. After forty years she thinks she's found the perfect candidate in Ted Shriver, a brilliant literary voice of the 1970s, silenced early in a promising career by a devastating plagiarism scandal. Now a prickly recluse, he hides away in the old hotel slowly dying of cancer, which he refuses to treat. If she can just convince him

to sign the infamous guestbook of Percy Coates, the ticket to hanging around after death, Dorothy Parker might be able to persuade the jaded writer to spurn the white light with her. Ted, however, might be the only person living or dead who's more stubborn than Parker, and he rejects her proposal outright. When a young, ambitious TV producer, Norah Wolfe, enters the hotel in search of Ted Shriver, Parker sees another opportunity to get what she wants. There's a wicked form of revenge revealed in the tale." Meister's Dorothy Parker is just as sharp, witty and pleasantly mean as fans would expect. Her humanity shines through, though, along with her humor. Her obvious loneliness... make[s] this a surprisingly emotional novel. Not even death can keep Dorothy Parker down in this sad and funny story." —*Kirkus*.

Moore, Lisa. [Caught](#) (\$15). Time spent in prison has done nothing to quell David Slaney's desire to deal drugs. So when he breaks out of the slammer, the 25-year-old's number-one goal is not to revel in his newfound freedom but rather to track down his old business partner, Hearn, and get back in the marijuana game. It's not as easy as he had thought. His manic journey across Canada forces him to adopt numerous guises to avoid getting caught. Alas, there is at least one person he wishes he could "catch": his ex-lover Jennifer. A "propulsive, adrenalin-drenched" (*Globe and Mail*) novel from 2013 Writers' Trust Engel/Findley Award winner Lisa Moore, which brilliantly captures a moment in the late 1970s before the almost folkloric glamour surrounding pot smuggling turned violent. Newfoundland Noir.

Mosley, Walter. [Inside a Silver Box](#) (Tor \$25.99). "In this terrific genre-defying work, Mosley uses an eons-old battle for control of existence as a backdrop for a character-driven novel of philosophy and social commentary. Ages ago, the Laz created the Silver Box to inflict torture on other life forms, but the Silver Box rebelled and imprisoned the Laz within itself. In the present day, black thug Ronnie Bottoms kills white Columbia student Lorraine Fell in Central Park, above the Box's resting place. Lorraine's spirit draws Ronnie back to her body and he resurrects her using the artifact's power, but a sliver of the Laz escapes, so the Silver Box calls upon the unlikely duo to "try to save the Earth" and sends them on a journey to gain superpowers. Mosley really pulls out all the stops, managing with improbable success to combine a struggle for the fate of all existence with a story about two New Yorkers from very different backgrounds coming to understand each other and address the mistakes they've made in their own lives. Wild concepts and deep thoughts sit comfortably alongside the musings of ordinary people undergoing radical changes in this top-notch tale." —*PW Starred Review*

Murphy, Shirley Rousseau. [The Cat, The Devil, The Last Escape](#) (Morrow \$24.99). The author of the Joe Grey feline sleuthing writes her second novel with her husband, a retired probation specialist. What we get is Misto, the ghost cat, mixing it up with the devil, a deceitful criminal, a father framed for murder who makes a bargain with a wily old con, and a vulnerable young girl and her devastated mother to save.

Pinker, Steven. [The Better Angels of Our Nature](#) (\$20). Despite the daily barrage of bad news, Pinker explodes myths and argues that we are living in the most peaceful era for our species. Think of this as comfort reading....

Pyne, Daniel. [Fifty Mice Signed](#) (Blue Rider \$26.95). One minute, average guy Jay Johnson is helping an elderly lady collect her spilled groceries on a Los Angeles subway platform. The next, he's lost his phone and wallet, and a mysterious, attractive woman is jabbing him with a syringe before abducting him in broad daylight. From this point on, the life Jay once knew will be entirely erased. But why? He has no idea—and no one else wants to tell him. Welcome to an edgy unusual thriller by author, screenwriter, and director Daniel Pyne. In keeping with the spirit of the films he has written (*Fracture*, *Pacific Heights*, the widely lauded 2004 remake of *The Manchurian Candidate*) and his previous books (*Twentynine Palms*, *A Hole in the Ground Owned by a Liar*), this is a gripping, strange, and smart story. Fans of brainy noir will find much to love in this highly satisfying, big-screen-ready book." *LJ Starred Review*. "Exceedingly clever, expertly timed, and dripping with paranoia, the nightmarish scenario at the center of this thrilling story turns on a kick-ass dime."—Karin Slaughter

Pyper, Andrew. [The Damned](#) (SimonSchuster \$25). Most people who have a near-death experience come back alone... (If there is such a thing as near-death that is more than the brain sending out sparks as it shuts down). After he survived a fire that claimed the life of his twin sister, Ashleigh, Danny Orchard wrote a bestselling memoir about going to Heaven and back. But despite the resulting fame and fortune, he's never been able to enjoy his second chance at life. Ash won't let him. In life, Danny's charming and magnetic twin had been a budding psychopath who privately terrorized her family—and death hasn't changed her wicked ways. Ash has haunted Danny for twenty years and now, just when he's met the love of his life and has a chance at real happiness, she wants more than ever to punish him for being alive—so she sets her sights on Danny's new wife and stepson. Danny knows what Ash really wants is him, and he's prepared to sacrifice himself if he can return to the dead and make sure she stays there.... This is not so much paranormal as an imaginative and horrifying account of a psychopath and the damage done. The parents can't get a grip, reflecting parents of actual psychopaths all too often in the news. This award-winning Canadian author was writing Gillian-Flynn sorts of plots before Flynn herself... He's a wonderful stylist.

Robb, JD. [Obsession in Death Signed](#) (Putnam \$27.95 tip-ins). Eve Dallas has solved a lot of high-profile murders for the NYPSPD and gotten a lot of media. She—and her billionaire husband—are getting accustomed to being objects of attention, of gossip, of speculation. But now Eve has become the object of one person's obsession. Someone who finds her extraordinary, and thinks about her every hour of every day. Who believes the two of them have a special relationship. Who would kill for her—again and again? With a murderer reading meanings into her every move, handling this case will be a delicate—and dangerous—psychological dance. Robb is the crime pseudonym for Nora Roberts.

Schwegel, Theresa. [The Good Boy](#) (\$15.99). An excellent hardboiled story set in Chicago and with a K9 and his cop, Officer Pete Murphy. At first it seems that working with the dog is punishment detail, but then a shaky arrest reignites scandal and triggers a huge lawsuit. And Pete's 11-year-old son Joel is worried about his older sister who seems to disappear... into trouble. So Joel borrows Butchie the K9 and embarks upon an under-the-radar investigation.... Lord!

Smith, Lachlan. [Lion Plays Rough](#) (\$14). Leo Maxwell always lived in the shadow of his older brother Teddy but is now an ambitious criminal defense attorney in his own right, practicing in Oakland under Teddy's ex-wife. When a mysterious woman nearly runs Leo down, then appears at his office and asks him to defend her brother on a murder charge, Leo thinks he's found the case that will make his name. One problem: he hasn't actually met the client. And after taking a series of photographs that seem to blow the lid on corruption in the police department, Leo quickly learns that all is not as it seems—beginning with the alluring woman who hired him. Leo's "client" is actually represented by one of Oakland's most renowned gangland lawyers and claims never to have heard of him. Between the notorious lawyer and certain elements within the Oakland police, Leo realizes that he has unwittingly made himself enemy number one within the criminal community as well as the police department. Both sides want him silenced... A very fine book.

Spindler, Erica. [First Wife](#) (St Martins \$25.99). As a child, Bailey Browne dreamed of a knight in shining armor swooping in to rescue her and her mother. As she grows older, those dreams transform, becoming ones of a mysterious stranger who will sweep her off her feet and whisk her away from her ordinary existence. Then, suddenly, there he is. Despite the ten year difference in their ages, her working class upbringing and his of privilege, Logan Abbott and Bailey fall deeply in love. Marriage quickly follows. But when Logan brings her home to his horse farm in Louisiana, a magnificent estate on ninety wooded acres, her dreams of happily-ever-after begin to unravel. A tragic family history she knew nothing about surfaces, plus whisperings about the disappearance of his first wife, True, and rumors about the women from the area who have gone missing—and when another woman disappears, all signs point to her husband's involvement—a man she loves but hardly knows?.

Swanson, Peter. [The Kind Worth Killing Signed](#) (Morrow \$25.99). From the author of 2014 First Mystery Club Pick [The Girl with a Clock for a Heart](#) (\$14.99), a twisted new tale where no one is really who they seem. I saw the first deception, but not the second. On a night flight from London to Boston, Ted Severson meets the stunning and mysterious Lily Kintner. Sharing one too many martinis, the strangers begin to play a game of truth, revealing very intimate details about themselves. Ted talks about his marriage that's going stale and his wife Miranda, who he's sure is cheating on him. Ted and his wife were a mismatch from the start—he the rich businessman, she the artistic free spirit—a contrast that once inflamed their passion, but has now become a cliché. But their game turns a little darker when Ted jokes that he could kill Miranda for what she's done. Lily, without missing a beat, says calmly, "I'd like to help." After all, some people are the kind worth killing, like a lying, stinking, cheating spouse... Back in Boston, Ted and Lily's twisted bond grows stronger as they begin to plot Miranda's demise. But there are a few things about Lily's past that she hasn't shared with Ted, namely her experience in the art and craft of murder, a journey that began in her very precocious youth. Suddenly these co-conspirators are embroiled in a chilling game of cat-and-mouse, one they both cannot survive... with a shrewd and very determined detective on their tail. "Chilling and hypnotically suspenseful ... could be an instant classic."—Lee Child. "If you're engaged to get married, by all means read something else."—Chris Pavone.

Tesh, Jane. [Just You Wait](#) (Poisoned Pen \$14.95). David Randall, a private detective short of work, invites his psychic friend Camden into a case. Miss Viola Mitchell, an aging local actress, has recently been reported missing. The Parkland PD's Jordan Finley objects to Randall and Cam inspecting Viola's home, claiming the police don't need their help. Moments later, despite the array of birds and cats perfuming the residence, Cam advises Finley, "Check the basement." Viola is neatly planted there in a square of dirt. Who would kill her? Why? Are others targeted? Is a local performer twisted by jealousy? Could a role in a Parkland Little Theatre production, maybe *My Fair Lady* or *Arsenic and Old Lace*, have caused her death? Cam goes undercover at the theater while rejecting demands from his fiancée that they marry this month. His psychic gifts have expanded to levitate objects, make garbage cans dance in the street, and restrain a car from hitting a lady. He fears for their children. She wants to put him on television. Meanwhile, a new Grace Street client, owner of popular BeautiQueen Cosmetics, is searching for her arrogant, absconding partner. Randall tracks him to Clearwater, Florida, and soon finds himself chasing shoplifters stealing pharmaceuticals and helping a jazz musician woo his woman while failing to woo his own love, Kary. 4th in the Grace Street Mysteries, replete with Carolina charm.

Tyler, Anne. [A Spool of Blue Thread Signed](#) (Knopf \$25.95). In her 20th novel, Tyler anchors the story of four generations of one family to their Baltimore house. The Whitshanks are one of those families that radiate togetherness: an indefinable, enviable kind of specialness. But they are also like all families, in that the stories they tell themselves reveal only part of the picture. Abby and Red and their four grown children have accumulated not only tender moments, laughter, and celebrations, but also jealousies, disappointments, and carefully guarded secrets. From Red's father and mother, newly arrived in Baltimore in the 1920s, to Abby and Red's grandchildren carrying the family legacy boisterously into the 21st Century, enjoy the Whitshanks.

Unger, Lisa. [Crazy Love You Signed](#) (Touchstone \$25.99). Graphic artist Ian lives in Manhattan on his successful comics series *Fatboy and Priss*. Fans can't know he's writing out his unhappy childhood in the Hollows, New York State, and that Priss was his only friend and protector when he was an overweight geeky kid. Priss is still trouble. The booze, the drugs, the sex—Ian is growing tired of late nights together trying to keep the past at bay. Especially now that he's met sweet, beautiful Megan, whose love makes him want to change for the better. But Priss doesn't like change. Change makes her angry. And when Priss is angry, terrible things begin to happen... See my comments on Laura Lippman's new book above. Unger's book works much better for me but this is where I remind you about individual tastes, no rights, no wrongs, just what it is.

Wisniewski, Mark. [Watch Me Go Signed](#) (Putnam \$28). Patrick reviews his February Hardboiled Crime Club Pick: Jan Price, a young white woman, comes to visit Douglas "Deesh" Sharp, a 37 year-old black man in prison, claiming that she has the proof that will exonerate Deesh of the murder of jockey Tom Corcoran. This visit in prison shifts to alternating first person narratives that recount the often tragic set of circumstances that precede their unlikely meeting. Deesh tells how he and two buddies are paid a thousand dollars to transport and dispose of a sealed metal canister, that, although it is never explicitly stated, they greatly

suspect contains a body. The three friends dump the barrel and head for the local track, hoping to make even more of a grub stake on their winnings before splitting town. Jan's chapters deal with her own dreams of becoming a jockey following her father's death, and her descent into the world of addictive gambling. An ambitious novel that manages to address themes of loss and disappointment and yet is far from being a downer. I hesitate to use the N word ("noir," of course) as it has been co-opted and rendered almost meaningless, but Wisniewski definitely grapples with the existential in this superb novel.

#### FOR YOUNG READERS

Dobson, M. Evonne. [Chaos Theory](#) (Poisoned Pen \$10.95). Seventeen-year-old Kami is into science, way smarter than she should be, a little obtuse, and born to investigate. The kind of girl who excels in Martial Arts and runs a chaos theory experiment in her locker. Kami finds a way to focus her talents when she meets Daniel, whose younger sister Julia died from an overdose of prescription drugs—drugs that the cops think came from Daniel's stash. First Daniel turns up at Kami's MA class, and later she saves him from a couple of drug dealers at the local skate park. Neither episode endears him to her, but Kami views life as a series of data points, and in Daniel's case, the data do not add up. Her theory turns out to be correct, so Kami assembles a team to help Daniel deal with... Debuts a YA series.

Kagawa, Julie. [Talon](#) (Harlequin Teen, \$17.99). Talon revisits the age-old concept of dragons and mankind living together. Ember, a dragon, is chosen to blend into society by 'shifting' into human form. When a 16-year-old girl befriends a soldier from Talon's enemy, St. George, she discovers that the bonds of love are far more powerful than any forces drawing them apart."Told through multiple first-person views, this novel blows *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent* out of the water!" The Talon Saga #1.

#### OUR FEBRUARY MASS MARKET PAPERBACK PICKS

Abbott, Jeff. [Inside Man](#) (\$6) Sam Capra #4. After his best customer – and his best friend- is murdered outside his Miami bar, ex-CIA agent Sam Capra infiltrates one of the city's most powerful (and dangerous) families to find the killer. The latest installment in Abbott's award-winning, fast-paced Sam Capra series gives a nod to King Lear as Sam finds himself in the middle of siblings battling for control of the family shipping empire. *PW* notes "Abbott injects enough of Sam's back story to make his intricate plot believable, judiciously spices his tale with tasteful but usually interrupted romance, and convincingly makes Sam a genuine contemporary "chevalier."

Baldacci, David. [The Target](#) (\$10) Will Robie #3. It's mission impossible for CIA assassins Will Robie and his partner Jessica Reel when the President of the United States asks them to assassinate the dangerous and unpredictable leader of North Korea. Reviewers were especially impressed with the vivid manner in which Baldacci wove the brutal conditions of life for those in North Korean prison camps into the book's ripped-from-the-headlines plot.

☞Beaton, M C. [Death of a Policeman](#) (\$8) Hamish Macbeth #30. Detective Chief Inspector Blair sends Constable Cryil Sessions to Lochdubh to spy on Sgt. Hamish Macbeth in the hopes that Sessions will find something that will allow Blair to fire Macbeth. But when Sessions winds up dead, Macbeth must find the real killer or his boss will really have a good reason to get rid of

Macbeth. *LJ* says “Cozy readers, while they might be surprised by the grisly deaths and the high body count, will enjoy reading about the charming and tenacious Hamish Macbeth.”—

Berenson, Alex. [The Counterfeit Agent](#) (\$9.99) John Wells #9. Renegade former CIA agent John Wells finds himself going undercover and traveling around the globe in a last-ditch effort to keep Iranian hostiles from successfully smuggling a nuclear bomb into the United States. The *LJ* reviewer was particularly thrilled with the latest installment by concluding “working with plot elements that are terrifyingly realistic, research that rings as true as today’s headlines, and characters that brim with integrity and swagger, Berenson puts John Wells right up there with the best of espionage fiction’s greatest heroes.” The good news for fans of the series is that the less-than-neatly tied up conclusion of *Counterfeit Agent* hints at yet another adventure for Wells.

Berry, Steve. [The Lincoln Myth](#) (\$9.99) Cotton Malone #10. Retired Department of Justice agent Cotton Malone is called back into action by his old boss when a rogue US senator and a cabal of Mormons tries to use a secret document that has been passed from President to President as leverage that will let Utah to succeed from the union. If you like your thrillers fast paced and served up with a generous side dish of history, Berry’s books are just the ticket. The latest installment brings in a new, younger side-kick agent, who injects a bit of hipness to the plotline.

Coben, Harlan. [Missing You](#) (\$9.99). NYPD Detective Kate Donovan comes across her ex-fiance’s photo on a dating website, she thinks it might be fun to try and re-connect with him. Boy, is that a mistake! Coben has a whole shelf of writing awards – Edgar, Shamus, and Anthony—so he obviously knows what he is doing when it comes to creating a thriller that will keep you up past your usual bedtime.

Deaver, Jeffery. [The October List Signed](#) (\$8). If Gabriela McKenzie wants to see her daughter alive again, she must come up with \$400,000.00 in cash and a document known only as the “October List.” The unusual structure of Deaver’s latest – it starts at the end of the story and works its way back to the beginning – got mixed reactions, but *Kirkus* loved the book stating “Perhaps the cleverest of all Deaver’s exceptionally clever thrillers. If you’ve ever wished you could take the film *Memento* to the beach, here’s your chance.”

Reichs, Kathy. [Bones Never Lie](#) (\$9.99) Tempe Brennan #17. When a serial murderer responsible for a string of kidnappings and murders in Canada surfaces in the US, Forensic Anthropologist Tempe Brennan finds herself engaging in a deadly battle of wits with a killer, who eluded her once before. The latest entry in the long-running series focuses more on the personal side of Tempe as the author continues to develop the relationship between Tempe and her sometime partner, sometime lover police detective Andrew Ryan as well as giving Tempe’s mother Daisy a role to play in the story.

Silva, Daniel. [The Heist](#) (\$9.99) Gabriel Allon #14. Gabriel Allon, full-time art restorer and part-time spy for Israel must find a lost Caravaggio painting if he wants to keep an old friend from taking the rap for the murder of a former English diplomat found dead. *Kirkus* has this to say about the latest Allon adventure: “In erudition, action and temperament, Silva has made Allon the modern-day covert warrior extraordinaire. With “a fallen British

spy, a one-eyed Italian policeman, a master art thief, [ and] a professional assassin from the island of Corsica,” Allon’s 14th caper is a fun read.”

Slaughter, Karin. [Cop Town](#) (\$9.99). On her first day on the job at the Atlanta Police Department, rookie cop Kate Murphy is teamed up in a manhunt for a cop killer with Maggie Lawson, who, Kate quickly discovers, has her own ax to grind. Slaughter’s first stand-alone novel is in the running for an Edgar award for best mystery this year and was a hit with critics including *Booklist*, which had this to say “Slaughter graphically exposes the rampant racism, homophobia, and misogyny of cop culture in the 1970s, made all the more jarring by its contrast with Kate’s cultured upbringing. Winning leads, the retro setting, and a riveting plot make this one of Slaughter’s best.”

Thoft, Ingrid. [Identity](#) (\$9.99) Fina Ludlow #2. Private investigator Fina Ludlow’s latest case involves tracking down the identity of a confidential sperm donor for single mother Renata Sanchez, but when the donor is found bludgeoned to death, Fina thinks there might be more to the matter than a simple family reunion. *LJ* says “Fina is mercurial, dogged, somewhat snarky, and rarely takes no for an answer. Fans of Sara Gran’s Claire DeWitt, Bill Loehfelm’s Maureen Coughlin, or readers who like their heroines rough around the edges yet with plenty of heart will enjoy this very entertaining and surprising series” We would also add in fans of Sara Paretsky and those of Linda Barnes’ Carlotta Carlyle books might also want to give Thoft a try.

White, Randy Wayne. [Bone Deep](#) (\$9.99) Doc Ford #2. Doc Ford travels to Florida’s Bone Valley to find a stone fetish that disappeared from a Crow Indian tribe and finds himself tangling with black marketers as well as the owners of a billion dollar strip-mining phosphate company. Like Carl Hiaasen, White’s love of Florida and his ability of create colorful yet totally believable characters definitely plays an important part in this series. *Booklist* loved the latest installment stating “Masterfully seeding the plot with information on Florida’s ancient natural history and its contemporary environmental challenges, White delivers a novel that perfectly blends story and landscape.” There is a Doc Ford Series in production at CBS

#### NEW IN MASS MARKETS

Aames, Avery. [As Gouda as Dead](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Cheese Shop #6.

If Charlotte Bessette wants to marry artisanal cheese maker Jordan Pace she is going to have to find out who murdered bar owner name and left him on Jordan’s farm. Agatha award-winning

Abbott, Jeff. [Adrenaline](#) (\$6) Sam Capra #1.

Branded a traitor, CIA agent Sam Capra goes on the run to find his pregnant wife.

Abbott, Jeff. [Last Minute](#) (\$6) Sam Capra #2.

Sam Capra must commit an impossible assassination or his son will be killed.

Abbott, Jeff. [Downfall](#) (\$6) Sam Capra #3.

A terrific series when it first came out; now is your chance to catch up.

Arlington, Lucy. [Played By the Book](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Novel Ideas #4.

Literary agent Lila Wilkins tries to dig up the dirt on a clever killer after she finds a skull buried in her flowerbeds.

- Bell, Ted. [Warriors: An Alex Hawke Novel](#) (\$9.99) Alex Hawke #8. Superspy Alex Hawke must find and rescue a kidnapped American scientist before the United States and China trade nuclear missiles. If Brad Thor and Brad Taylor (or any of the Brads who write thrillers) are on your must read list and you somehow missed Ted Bell, you should start penciling his Alex Hawke books in right away.
- ☞Brightwell, Emily. [Mrs. Jeffries and the One Who Got Away](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Mrs. Jeffries #33  
Inspector Witherspoon once again needs a bit of sleuth help from his housekeeper Mrs. Jeffries when a dead body in a cemetery may be connected to one of his old cases.
- ☞Cleland, Anne. [Murder in Retribution](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Doyle and Sinclair #  
Chief Inspector Michael Sinclair and rookie detective Kathleen Doyle's personal and professional lives collide when they try to solve a series of murders linked to the Russian Mafia and an Irish terrorist group.
- Collins, Kate. [Root Awakening](#) (NAL \$7.99) Flower Shop #16. The couple that sleuths together, stays together. Right? Which is why flower shop owner Abby Knight decides to undertake her own secret investigation after her new husband Marco is hired to find the person who pushed a construction worker to his death.
- Connolly, Sheila. [Early Wake](#) (Berkley \$7.99) County Cork #3. Pub owner Maura Donovan's plans to restore live music to Sullivan's hits a sour note when she stumbles across a dead musician in the pub's back room.
- Cook, J J. [Fry Another Day](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Biscuit Bowl Food Truck #2.  
The competition is really murder when food truck owner Zoe Chase enters nationally televised food truck race.
- Daheim, Mary. [Alpine Yeoman](#) (\$7.99) Emma Lord #25. Alpine Advocate editor and publisher Emma Lord investigates a murder near the state fish hatchery. Alpine Zen (what else would you use for the 26th entry in this series?) publishes in hardcover in April.
- Ferris, Monica. [Drowning Spool](#) (\$7.99) Needlecraft #17. Crewel World needlecraft shop owner Betsy Devonshire agrees to teach a needlework class at the local senior complex and then picks up another job when one of the residents asks her to investigate when the body of a young woman is found floating in the complex's therapy pool.
- Hamilton, Donald. [Intriguers](#) (Forge \$7.99) Matt Helm #1. Matt Helm is on vacation in Mexico when someone tries to shoot him in the back, so now it is back to work for the world's greatest secret agent.
- Hannibal, James R. [Shadow Maker](#) (Berkley \$9.99) Nick Baron #3.  
When a suicide bomber tries to take out the White House, undercover Cerberus operative Nick Baron and his Triple Seven Chase unit are called into action.
- Haywood, B B. [Town in a Sweet Pickle](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Candy Holiday #6.  
Local farmer and pickler extraordinaire Candy Holiday shoots to the top of the police's list of suspects when a popular cookbook author pops off after eating a poisoned pickle (try saying that three times fast!).
- Hiaasen, Carl. [Bad Monkey](#) (\$8).  
Key West police officer Andrew Yancy believes he can say goodbye to Health Inspection duties and welcome back to real police work if he can just prove the human arm stored in his freezer is connected to a murder case.
- Hughes, Mary Ellen. [License to Dill](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Picked and Preserved #1.  
Piper Lamb finds herself in quite the pickle when her ex-boyfriend shows up in Cloverdale at the same time her new beau Christmas tree farmer Will Burchett is accused of murder.
- Jackson, Lisa. [Close to Home](#) (Kensington \$7.99).  
Sarah MacAdams decides to make a fresh start by moving back home to Blue Peacock Manor with her two daughters even though the place is rumored to be haunted and teenage girls are disappearing in the neighborhood.
- Ludlum, Robert. [The Matlock Paper](#) (\$9.99) Reissue.  
After his brother dies from an overdose of heroine, college professor James Barbour Matlock agrees to help the Justice Department destroy the organization supplying drugs to the students of Carlyle University. Originally written in 1973 by Ludlum – known at the time as the “King of Thrillers – and now reprinted.
- McHugh, Mary. [Flamenco, Flan, and Fatalities](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Happy Hookers #2  
The high-kicking Happy Hoofers—Tina, Janice, Pat, Mary Louise, and Gini—have been booked to flaunt their fabulous flamenco footwork on a luxury train traveling through Spain, but when another traveler is found dead, the group must kick into high gear and find the killer. Readers who are fans of Maddy Hunter's “Passport to Peril” series may want to give this newer cozy series a try.
- ☞McKinlay, Jenn. [At the Drop of a Hat Signed](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Hat Shop #3.  
When one of their customers is accused of murdering her boss, hat shop owners and cousins Scarlett Parker and Vivian Tremont set aside their needles and scissors and put on their sleuthing caps in order to clear the girl's name.
- McLaughlin, Staci. [Healthy Homicide](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Blossom Valley #4.  
Dana Lewis, owner of The O'Connell Organic Farm and Spa, doesn't have to worry about the swanky new spa that opens up in Blossom Valley being much competition after its owner is found drowned in a mud bath.
- Patterson, James. [Private LA](#) (\$10).  
Private investigators Jack Morgan and Justine Smith battle their attraction to each other while looking into the disappearance of Hollywood's biggest superstar couple.
- Rucka, Greg. [Bravo](#) (\$8) Jad Bell #2  
Former Delta Force operative Jad Bell and his team are tasked with finding the terrorist who tried to blow up a theme park, but once they have the man in custody, Jad discovers there is an even bigger attack planned.
- Ryan, Annelise. [Stiff Penalty](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Mattie Winston #5. Assistant medical examiner (and newly pregnant) Mattie Winston deals with the return of her estranged father while investigating the murder of a high school math teacher stabbed with a barbecue fork.
- Suarez, Daniel. [Influx](#) (\$9.99).  
Particle physicist Jon Grady is on the verge of a major scientific breakthrough involving gravity when a group of radical, Luddite terrorists break into his lab and kill everyone (or at least that is what the “terrorists” want the world to

think). This is an absolutely terrific thriller that brilliantly mixes cutting edge science and cinematic plotting. If you miss Michael Crichton's older books like *Sphere* or enjoyed *Lincoln Child's Deep Storm*, you might like this.

#### Sci/Fi/Fantasy/Horror/Westerns

Bishop, Anne. [Murder of Crows](#) (NAL \$7.99) Others #2

Cassandra-like Meg Corbyn finds herself caught in the middle between humans and the Others when the appearance of two addictive new drugs result in murder for both parties.

Briggs, Patricia. [Night Broken](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Mercy Thompson #8

Coyote shape-changer Mercy Thompson's new marriage to alpha werewolf Adam Hauptman is threatened by the arrival of Adam's manipulative ex-wife Christy, when she temporarily moves in to avoid a stalker.

Feehan, Christine. [Viper Game](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Ghostwalkers #11

Ghostwalker (a type of genetically enhanced soldier) Wyatt Fontenot has sworn off contact with all women until Pepper walks into his life.

Frost, Jeaniene. [Bound By Flames](#) (Harper \$7.99) Night Prince #3

Marriage to the world's most famous vampire Vlad Tepesh does have its downside as Leila Dalton discovers when an old nemesis of her husband comes back into the picture.

Galenorn, Yasmine. [Panther Prowling](#) (Berkley \$7.99)

Otherworld #17

P.I. Delilah D'Artigo (who also happens to be a werecat and Death Maiden) is attending a birthday party for her sister Camille, when their cousin Daniel shows up with a stolen Viking sword.

Koontz, Dean. [The City](#) (\$9.99)

Koontz's latest in paperback is stand-alone, character-driven tale of piano man Jonah Kirk, who reflects back on the terrible and wonderful events that occurred in 1967 including his encounter with a mysterious woman, who claims she is the "city."

Shearin, Lisa. [Dragon Conspiracy](#) (Berkley \$7.99) SPI Files #2

Makenna Fraser, a seer for Supernatural Protection and Investigations, latest case involves a trio of harpies, who steal seven cursed diamonds known as the "Dragon Eggs." Run out of Jim Butcher books to read? Try this new series.

#### HISTORY/MYSTERY

Bayard, Louis. [Roosevelt's Beast](#) (\$16.99). It is 1914 and Teddy

Roosevelt and his son, Kermit, along with other members of a scientific expedition, are traveling deep into the jungle to map Brazil's Rio da Duvida, the River of Doubt. Kermit and Teddy are kidnapped by a mysterious Amazonian tribe, and the head tribesman explains that the tribe needs their help to kill 'The Beast with No Tracks,' which has been killing jaguars as well as humans, but has never been seen. Although the instigating incident for Kermit is down in the jungle, his eventual disintegration, where the book starts and ends, is in WWII Alaska.

Bowen, Rhys. [The Death of Riley](#) (\$14.99). Reissue of a Molly Murphy. See Event Books for the new Molly.

✎Brody, Frances. [Woman Unknown](#) (St Martins \$25.99) and [Murder in the Afternoon](#) (\$15.99). See British Books and for the paperback, Our February Trade Paperback Picks. I love this 1920s Yorkshire series.

✎Chapin, Andrea. [The Tutor Signed](#) (Riverhead \$9). 1590 Lancashire where Catholics conceal their faith. The widow

Katharine de L'Isle doesn't much care for her uncle's children's new tutor, Will Shakespeare, a married man with children who flirts. But they bond over sonnets. One of England's first architects, Robert Smythson, is my favorite character in this debut and **History/Mystery Pick**. See First Novels for more.

✎Clements, Rory. [The Holy Spy Signed](#) (Hodder \$36). In London's smoky taverns, a conspiracy is brewing: a group of wealthy young Catholic dissidents plot to assassinate Elizabeth, free Mary Queen of Scots—and open England to Spanish invasion. But the conspirators have been infiltrated by Sir Francis Walsingham's top intelligencer, John Shakespeare. Shakespeare, however, is torn: the woman he loves stands accused of murder. In a desperate race against time he must save her from the noose and the realm from treachery. And then it dawns that both investigations are inextricably linked—by corruption very close to the seat of power. This is a terrific series that has won the author the Ellis Peters Dagger for Best Historical Mystery. I will be adding his older books in UK paperbacks to our inventory this month.

Ekbäck, Cecilia. [Wolf Winter Signed](#) (Hodder \$36 March). In 1717, the Swedish Laplands are home to indigenous nomadic Laplanders and a mere sprinkling of Christian settlers. A new family has just arrived, fleeing an enigmatic unpleasantness in their native Finland, to take over a vacant homestead on the shoulder of beautiful but harsh Blackåsen Mountain. Frederika is 14, Dorotea six; their mother, Maija, is strong and resourceful, while their father, Paavo, is so crippled by vaguely defined fears that he seems to disappear even in the ever-present light of summer. In the opening pages of Cecilia Ekbäck's debut novel, *Wolf Winter*, the girls discover a dead body on the mountain: a man, with his torso torn open.... See First Novels for more on our **March History/Mystery Pick**.

Donoghue, Emma. [Frog Music](#) (\$17). Donoghue scored big with [Room](#) (\$14.99), which I liked so well it was a Modern Firsts Club Pick. But I could not get into this muddled story set in the summer of 1876 in San Francisco, a city in the grip of a heat wave and of smallpox. Through the window of a railroad saloon, a young woman named Jenny Bonnet is shot dead. The survivor, her friend Blanche Beunon, is a French burlesque dancer. Over the next three days, she will risk everything to bring Jenny's murderer to justice... Sometimes a writer of a bestseller gets more favorable reviews than are merited.

✎Farjeon, J Jefferson. [Mystery in White](#) (British Library \$15). I will be adding other titles from the British Library Crime and Spy Classics to our inventory this month and will list some in March. In May, Poisoned Pen Press will begin to publish them and you will love them!

Finn, Alan. [Things Half in Shadow](#) (Gallery\$16). The death of a famous medium forever changes a reporter's life in the first book of a proposed historical series. Edward Clark, a crime reporter who is secretly the son of a disgraced magician in prison for murder, explains the novel is a "chronicle, or memoir, or whatever you care to call it." He details the high-profile investigation into the 1869 death of Lenora Grimes Pastor, a famous Philadelphia medium murdered during a séance Clark attended. The case alters Clark's existence in ways he never could have imagined. Finn not only draws on the period's obsession with spiritualism, ghosts and those who speak with the



dead but also creates a distinct setting incorporating the Eastern State Penitentiary, destructively muddy and rutted roads, wire bridges and the Underground Railroad. Forensic techniques and investigative practices of the postbellum period combine with the paranormal elements. I would like this better without the paranormal. The history is interesting and the narrative straightforward. Finn is the pseudonym for author Todd Ritter.

✦Franklin, Ariana. [The Siege Winter](#) (Morrow \$25.99). The late Ariana Franklin and her daughter Samantha Norman publish a medieval mystery that breaks into Ellis Peters territory, for Brother Cadfael lived during the long wars between Matilda and Stephen that ended with the ascension of Henry II to the English throne. 1141. England is engulfed in war as King Stephen and his cousin, the Empress Matilda, vie for the crown. In this dangerous world, not even Emma, an eleven-year-old peasant, is safe. A depraved monk obsessed with redheads kidnaps the ginger-haired girl from her village and leaves her for dead. When an archer for hire named Gwyl finds her, she has no memory of her previous life. Unable to abandon her, Gwyl takes the girl with him, dressing her as a boy, giving her a new name—Penda—and teaching her to use a bow. But Gwyn knows that the man who hurt Penda roams free, and that a scrap of evidence she possesses could be very valuable. Gwyl and Penda make their way to Kenilworth, a small but strategically important fortress that belongs to fifteen-year-old Maud. Newly wedded to a boorish and much older husband after her father's death, the fierce and determined young chatelaine tempts fate and Stephen's murderous wrath when she gives shelter to the empress. Aided by a garrison of mercenaries, including Gwyl and his odd red-headed apprentice, Maud will stave off Stephen's siege for a long, brutal winter that will bring a host of visitors to Kenilworth—kings, soldiers . . . and a sinister monk with deadly business to finish. The Indie Next Pick adds: "The story conveys the brutality of the period without sacrificing the complex nature of the time and the people."

✦Gregory, Susanna. [The Cheapside Corpse](#) (LittleBrown UK \$50). London in the spring of 1665 is a city full of fear. There is plague in the stews of St Giles, the Dutch fleet is preparing to invade, and a banking crisis threatens to leave Charles II's government with no means of paying for the nation's defense. Amid the tension, Thomas Chaloner is ordered to investigate the murder of Dick Wheler, one of the few goldsmith-bankers to have survived the losses that have driven others to bankruptcy—or worse. At the same time, a French spy staggers across the city, carrying the plague from one parish to another. Chaloner's foray into the world of the financiers who live in and around Cheapside quickly convinces him that they are just as great a threat as the Dutch, but their power and greed thwart him at every turn. Meanwhile, the plague continues to spread across the city, and the body count from the disease and from the fever of avarice starts to rise alarmingly...

Hannah, Kristin. [The Nightingale Signed](#) (St Martins \$27.99). Staffer John Charles' review is in Event Books. Staffer Karen loves it too. Here is her review: "Set in Nazi-Occupied France during WW II, a time when people were in constant fear of betrayal by their neighbors and, even family, this is the story of the courage of those who chose to defy the enemy, some in more obvious ways than others. Isabelle and Viann are sisters, Isabelle being the more outspoken, rebellious of the two. When

the Nazi's begin their occupation, both sisters, along with the rest of the community, decide how to deal with the intimidation of the foreigners. Isabelle takes a rebellious posture, fighting with a resistance group and taking risks not always assigned to a woman. Viann falls into her tasks quietly and, unintentionally. Neither sister knows about the other's work and family issues nurture their suspicions of one another. As presented in other novels, the reader might wonder what they would do given the same circumstances and choices. The author suggests "In love we find out who we want to be, in war we found out who we are." Well written, suspenseful, strong characters are all part of this engrossing read. You won't want to put it down."

Hickson, Joanna. [The Tudor Bride](#) (Harper \$14.99). King Henry V's new French Queen, Catherine, dazzles the crowds in England but life at court is full of intrigue and her loyal companion, Mette, suspects that the beautiful Eleanor Cobham, protégée of the Duke of Gloucester, is spying for him. Catherine believes herself invincible as she gives birth to an heir. But then young King Henry is struck down by fever. Unable to outwit those who seek to remove the new (infant) king from her care, Catherine retires from court, comforted by the King's Harper, Owen Tudor (a descendant of John of Gaunt and Katherine Swynford). At the secluded manor of Hadham they become lovers which leads to...a Tudor dynasty with Henry VI. For the Philippa Gregory crowd.

Lambdin, Dewey. [Kings and Emperors: An Alan Lewrie Naval Adventure](#) (St Martins \$25.99). His 21st adventure finds Lewrie still in Gibraltar, his schemes for raids along the coast of Southern Spain shot to a halt. He is reduced to commanding a clutch of harbor defense gunboats in the bay while his ship, *HMS Sapphire*, slowly grounds herself on a reef of beef bones! Until Napoleon Bonaparte's invasion of peaceful Portugal and his so-called collaborative march into Spain change everything, freeing *Sapphire* to roam against the King's enemies once more! New in paper: [King's Marauder](#) (\$17.99).

Middlekauff, Robert. [Washington's Revolution: The Making of America's First Leader](#) (Knopf \$30) profiles George Washington before his presidency. The historian shows how, from the 1760s to 1783, Washington went from being a "Virginia provincial" to a national leader, one who "held together the political structures that constituted the United States" by integrating state militias. He devotes about one quarter of his book to the French and Indian War, and three quarters to the Revolutionary War.

✦Marston, Edward. [Shadow of the Hangman Signed](#) (Allison \$43). In this first installment of the Regency-era Bow Street Rivals series a riot breaks out in Dartmoor prison, enabling some American inmates to escape. The twin detectives Peter and Paul Skillen catch wind of a projected assassination but the target is unknown. Trouble ensues when a woman from the Home Office vanishes; a mysterious lady turns up at the archery shooting gallery; and Paul's gambling addiction worsens...

✦Owen, Lauren. [The Quick](#) (\$16). A debut for book lovers. See Our February Trade Paperback Picks.

Pearce, Michael. [The Mouth of the Crocodile](#) (Severn \$28.95). "Pearce's 18th mystery set in early 20th-century Egypt is replete with his dry sense of humor. Gareth Owen, the head of the Khedive's Secret Police, agrees to protect a royal pasha carrying some sensitive documents after the pasha is attacked on the train

he's riding to Khartoum. The assault is followed by the suspicious death of a member of the pasha's entourage, who drowns in the Nile. Owen accompanies the pasha, who may not be exactly what he purports to be, on his return train trip to Egypt, but the travelers are stymied by a severe sandstorm that strands them in the middle of nowhere. The investigator is aided by two unlikely, but engaging, younger assistants: Jamie Nicholson, a railway official's son, and Aisha al-Jawad, a government lawyer's feisty daughter. This variation on the snowbound train full of suspicious characters is nicely done, and Pearce is adept at subtly injecting the English-Egyptian tensions of the time."—PW Starred Review

✦Penman, Sharon Kay. [King's Ransom](#) (\$16). Penman flung herself into a literary affair with Richard, Coeur-de-Lion, the warrior king who spent most of his reign outside England, married but produced no heir, and inspired legends (think of Robin Hood as we know him). The favorite of his mother, Queen Eleanor, but not of Henry II, his father, Richard's life, and that of his sibs, was shaped by his family. His brother and heir, John, did not measure up. But Penman's task in two volumes is to portray Richard and she does an ace job. Start with [Lionheart](#) (\$16).

Rowe, Rosemary. [The Fateful Day](#) (Severn \$28.99). Libertus is passing the villa of his patron, Marcus Septimus Aurelius, when he sees an elaborate travelling carriage which has pulled up outside and is now blocking the road. Recognizing that this may be an important visitor, Libertus approaches the carriage, intending to explain that Marcus is away, gone to Rome to visit his old friend Pertinax, who has recently been installed as Emperor. However, for his efforts, Libertus instead receives a torrent of abuse and the carriage-driver almost runs him down as he departs. Libertus is badly shaken, but goes back to the villa the next day to find out why there was no gate-keeper in evidence to deal with the stranger. There he finds a gruesome discovery: the man is dead and hanging in his hut, and none of the other house-slaves are to be found. Worse things are to follow as news arrives from Rome. 15th in a series set in today's Gloucester. Ordered only Upon Request.

✦Royal, Priscilla. [Satan's Lullaby Signed](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95). Prioress Eleanor governs Tyndal Priory and its double house structure (one for monks, one for nuns) in Norfolk. The Order's mother house is in France. And the Order's Abbess Isabeau, answerable to the Pope, has the right to investigate how the houses she governs are run. We met her when Henry III was on the throne. Now it's his son, Edward I. In *Satan's Lullaby*, Abbess sends her brother, the stern Father Etienne Davoir, to Tyndal. Prioress Eleanor knows something is suspected to be terribly amiss—but what? (The medieval period had its own population of “trolls” and rumor-mongers: the envious, the ambitious, the traitorous, people influenced by politics and the personal). Then Davoir's clerk takes sick and dies from a potion sent him by Tyndale's sub-infirmarian... Set in the autumn of 1278, is the 11th novel in a series that has won multiple Starred reviews, award nominations, and acclaim from colleagues like Sharon Kay Penman and Sharan Newman and is a bestseller in the UK and Australia. [Satan's Lullaby](#) (\$14.95)

✦Sansom, C J. [Lamentation](#) (LittleBrown \$27). “Years before Hilary Mantel, C. J. Sansom had embarked on a brilliantly inventive Tudor fiction sequence, whose five novels have brought him an enormously enthusiastic and widespread readership,

too. Like Mantel's, Sansom's first two novels — *Dissolution* (2003) and *Dark Fire* (2004) — are set during Cromwell's time as Henry VIII's chief minister. But, in contrast to her mannered approach and enthralled fixation on Cromwell, his fiction has a far faster narrative pace and fans out across a much broader field. Ingeniously, it achieves this by combining a keen scholarly intelligence with the suspense and surprises of the detective genre. A Scottish historian who had a career in law before turning to fiction, Sansom finds an ideal protagonist in Matthew Shardlake, the humane hunchbacked lawyer-sleuth in his Tudor novels. He also finds the Tudor period intensely congenial to his imagination.... [*Lamentation* is]Partly a detective story as Shardlake solves the how and why of the theft, partly a thriller with casualties mounting in the search for the book's whereabouts, partly a panoramic re-creation of the turbulent London of 1546, from the court's gilded warren of intrigue to publishers' makeshift huts in the shadow of St Paul's, *Lamentation* is sure to give Sansom's many fans further cause for jubilation.”—*The Sunday Times*. I agree, finding myself bored by Mantel's *Wolf Hall*.

Schaffert, Timothy. [The Swan Gondola](#) (\$16). In autumn 1898, the elderly Egan sisters are enjoying an evening cup of tea in their Nebraska prairie farmhouse when they are jolted out of their chairs by a hot-air balloon crashing on their roof. They rescue Ferret Skerritt from the basket and mend his broken leg. While he recuperates, he tells a fantastic story of his life at the Omaha World's Fair (he is a ventriloquist) and why he stole the balloon. Ferret describes a world of colorful eccentrics, astonishing scientific wonders, and even a visit from President McKinley as he relates his pursuit of the beautiful but elusive Cecily. Cecily is an actress in the Chamber of Horrors, where she gets beheaded four times a day, and he courts her with romantic midnight rides in the swan gondola on the boat lagoon. “Deciphering Cecily's many secrets, including the contents of her mysteriously heavy carpet bag, is just the first challenge Ferret faces in courting her: soon William Wakefield, the fair's wealthy patron, sees Cecily and decides he wants her for himself. Schaffert's picture of the fair is enchanting.” This is his 5th novel.

✦Skidmore, Chris. [The Rise of the Tudors](#) (SimonSchuster \$21.99). From Owen Tudor's affair with the widowed Queen Catherine of Valois to the Battle of Bosworth to Henry VII. The enduring fascination of the Tudor soaps seems endless.

✦Tobin, Sophia. [The Widow's Confession Signed](#) (SimonSchuster UK \$34). Broadstairs, Kent, 1851. Once a sleepy fishing village, now a select sea-bathing resort, this is a place where people come to take the air, and where they come to hide. Delphine and her cousin Julia have come to the seaside with a secret, one they have been running from for years. The clean air and quiet outlook of Broadstairs appeal to them and they think this is a place they can hide from the darkness for just a little longer. Even so, they find themselves increasingly involved in the intrigues and relationships of other visitors to the town. But this is a place with its own secrets, and a dark past. And when the body of a young girl is found washed up on the beach, a mysterious message scrawled on the sand beside her, the past returns to haunt Broadstairs and its inhabitants. As the incomers are drawn into the mystery and each others' lives, they realize they cannot escape what happened here years before... The sequel to [Silversmith's Wife](#) ((\$18), for fans of Tracy Chevalier.

✂Thomas, Sam. [The Harlot's Tale](#) (\$15.99). An excellent series set in York during the Puritan years which I recommended in January. This is book #2 of, so far, 3. It is August, 1645, one year since York fell into Puritan hands. As the city suffers through a brutal summer heat, widowed Lady Bridget Hodgson and her servant Martha Hawkins are drawn into a murder investigation more frightening than their last. In order to appease God's wrath—and end the heat-wave—the city's overlords have launched a brutal campaign to whip the city's sinners into godliness. But for someone in York, this is not enough. First a prostitute and her client are found stabbed to death, then a pair of adulterers are beaten and strangled. York's sinners have been targeted for execution. [Click here](#) for the other two.

Turner, Nancy E. [My Name is Resolute](#) (\$17.99). Tucson's Turner is a terrific historical novelist. She's been focused on the Southwest but here she moves back in time and out in scope. The year is 1729, and Resolute Talbot and her siblings are captured by pirates, taken from their family in Jamaica, and brought to the New World. Resolute and her sister are sold into slavery in colonial New England and taught the trade of spinning and weaving. When Resolute finds herself alone in Lexington, Massachusetts, she struggles to find her way in a society that is quick to judge a young woman without a family. As the seeds of rebellion against England grow, Resolute is torn between following the rules and breaking free. Resolute's talent at the loom places her at the center of an incredible web of secrecy that helped drive the American Revolution.

✂Weir, Alison. [The Marriage Game](#) (Ballantine \$26). A novel of Queen Elizabeth's dance around marriage from Robert Dudley on. A monarch's first duty is to provide an heir—so why did Elizabeth refuse? There are many theories but, we'll never know. Read it with Whitelock.

✂Weir, Ian. [Will Starling](#) (Steerforth \$17). **Our February History Paperback Pick** gets this Starred Review: "What is this world's true calling, after all, save the driving of its denizens mad?" Such is the tenor of 19th-century London when filtered through Weir's magnificent new novel. (Daniel O'Thunder was shortlisted for multiple awards, including the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for First Book). An exuberant yarn related by young Will himself — "Your Wery Umble Narrator" — it is a sumptuous Frankensteinian potboiler of knockabout slang, scientific lore, rollicking personalities and atmosphere thick as fog. After the Napoleonic Wars, Will finds himself working as a surgeon's assistant in London's grungy Cripplegate district, where "sunlight itself is sullied." As intelligent as he is inquisitive, Will becomes well acquainted with unsavory elements of medicine, especially the grave robbers who keep the College of Surgeons in cadavers. He also learns of orphans disappearing; of corpses refusing death; and of Dionysus Atherton, a charismatic surgeon who, Will believes, is intrinsically linked to the city's evils. Weir's gift with idiom is without peer; as his narrative gambols about, the deft wordplay breathes grimy life into a wretched London."

✂Whitelock, Anna. [The Queen's Bed An Intimate History of Elizabeth's Court](#) (Picador \$20). Historian Whitelock depicts Elizabeth and her court through the women who were her official bedmates, custodians so to speak of her body which represented the State.

Wilcox, John. [Treachery in Tibet Signed](#) (Allison \$46 2 copies left). 1903. Tibet, the mountainous region on the Raj's borders, irritates Viceroy Lord Curzon: the Dalai Lama never replies to his letters and border disputes multiply. Curzon decides to invade and recruits Simon Fonthill, veteran of so many of 'Queen Victoria's Little Wars,' to lead 2000 men over the ice-bound Himalayan passes to Lhasa. Fonthill sets out on another expedition with his wife Alice, reporting for the *Morning Post*, and his old comrade, '352' Jenkins. It is machine guns against muskets as the cruel and brave monks, fighting on their own terrain among the clouds, oppose the invasion. When Alice is captured, treachery is revealed, and Fonthill and Jenkins must gallop to her aid.