

BOOKNEWS from

ISSN 1056-5655, © The Poisoned Pen, Ltd.

Volume 27, Number 3

March Booknews 2015

sales@poisonedpen.com tel (888)560-9919

<http://poisonedpen.com>

4014 N. Goldwater Blvd.

Scottsdale, AZ 85251

480-947-2974



A Marvelous March...

AUTHORS ARE SIGNING...

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

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 Sebastian St Cyr Regency Series

Gregory Harris signs [The Connicle Curse](#) (Kensington \$15) Colin Pendragon #3

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

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

\$30 one ticket plus one/book: \$35 for two tickets plus one/book
Reservations: 480 947 2974 or 888 560 9919

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

SATURDAY MARCH 14 10:30 AM

Coffee and Crime Club discusses Aaron Elkins' [The Dark Place](#) (\$7.99) My late Mother's favorite Dr. Gideon Oliver forensic anthropology mystery

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 as space is limited. Free to attend

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) Joe Coughlin

THURSDAY MARCH 19 7:00 PM An Exciting Trio

David Joy signs [Where All the Light Tends to Go](#) (Putnam \$25.95) Appalachian Noir and First Mystery Club Pick

Owen Laukkanen signs [The Stolen Ones](#) (Putnam \$26.95) Stevens/Windermere #4

Bryon Quertermous signs [Murder Boy](#) (Polis \$14) Hardboiled debut

FRIDAY MARCH 20 7:00 PM

Hardboiled Crime Club discusses Jim Thompson's [A Swell Looking Babe](#) (\$15)

SATURDAY MARCH 21 10:30 AM

Croak and Dagger Club discusses Harry Bingham's [Talking to the Dead](#) (\$15)

SATURDAY MARCH 21 2:00 PM

Carrie LaSueur signs [The Home Place](#) (\$14.99) Montana legal thriller

SUNDAY MARCH 22 2:00 PM

Brian Freeman signs [Season of Fear](#) (Quercus \$26.99)

TUESDAY MARCH 24 7:00 PM

Joseph Kanon signs [Leaving Berlin](#) (Atria \$27) 1949 Berlin

WEDNESDAY MARCH 25 7:00 PM Two Victorian Noirs

David Morrell signs [The Inspector of the Dead](#) (Mulholland \$26) De Quincey #2

Dan Simmons signs [The Fifth Heart](#) (LittleBrown \$28) Holmes/Henry James/Jack the Ripper

THURSDAY MARCH 26 7:00 PM

Randy Wayne White signs [Cuba Straits](#) (Putnam \$26.95) Doc Ford

FRIDAY MARCH 27 4:00 PM Young Readers Event

Ridley Pearson signs [Kingdom Keepers VIII: The Syndrome](#) (Disney \$12.99)

FRIDAY MARCH 27 6:30 PM

Ridley Pearson signs [Kingdom Keepers VIII: The Syndrome](#) (Disney \$12.99)

And at 7:00 PM

Harlan Coben signs [The Stranger](#) (Dutton \$27.95)

SATURDAY MARCH 28 1:00 PM

Leslie Dana Kirby signs [The Perfect Game](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95) First Mystery Pick: legal thriller with baseball (Diamondbacks) background

SATURDAY MARCH 28 2:00 PM

Patricia Bracewell signs [The Price of Blood](#) (Viking \$28.95) Queen Emma #2

EVENT BOOKS

Barry, Dave. [Live Right and Find Happiness](#) (Putnam \$26.95 March 12). In these brand-new, never-before-published pieces, Dave passes on home truths to his new grandson and to his daughter Sophie, who will 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 March 5). 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/>. All copies of the first printing will contain a bound-in entry ticket, illustrated endpapers, and official sweepstakes rules at the back. Subsequent printings will NOT include the ticket, special endpapers, or contest information.

Bowen, Rhys. [The Edge of Dreams](#) (St Martins \$25.99 March 5). 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, C J. [Endangered](#) (Putnam \$26.95 March 15). Joe Pickett had good reason to dislike Dallas Cates, even if he was a famous local son/rodeo champion, and now he has even more—Joe's 18-year-old daughter, April, ran off with him. And now body of a girl has

been found in a ditch along the highway—barely alive, a victim of a vicious beating. 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 Joe doesn't know is what kind of clan Cates sprang from. What if he's the best of the bunch? And what will Nate Romanowski, last seen in custody regarding an assassin-for-hire cabal, make of his pledge to protect the Pickett family? I will say that Box has a penchant for creating monstrous women. In other news, Box reports, "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." Order Box's earlier work by [clicking here](#). He returns in August with another new book.

Bracewell, Patricia. [The Price of Blood](#) (Viking \$28.95 March 28). A real-life *Game of Thrones* and a reminder that the Tudors figure into a chain of royal soap operas centered on dynastic battles. "Bracewell returns to 11th-century England with this second entry after *Shadow on the Crown* in her historical trilogy about Emma of Normandy. Queen and bride to King Æthelred and mother of the heir to the English throne, Emma struggles to unite a country ravaged by war and a royal family beset with mistrust and false alliances. Illness, unfortunate luck, and bad counsel lead the king to ignore his wife, his sons, and his councilors as he tries to buy peace with the raiding Danes. Emma reaches beyond the traditional roles for women by strategizing ways to lessen the impact of the king's misjudgments... Battles, treacherous plots, and desperation are multiplied in this tense novel. The reader sympathizes with the fiery and compassionate Emma as she fights off both external enemies who approach England's shores and ones who scheme from within. Historical fiction fans looking for a new noble heroine will embrace this excellent saga."—*LJI*. Start this trilogy with [Shadow on the Crown](#) (\$16).

Caldwell, Ian. [The Fifth Gospel](#) (SimonSchuster \$25.9 March 11). The Indie Next Pick for our **March Thriller Club Pick**, a terrific novel ten years in the making: "A murder on Vatican property begins this tale of religion, politics, and family. Two brothers, both priests, struggle to make sense of their friend's murder. When one is accused, the other must go to extreme lengths to prove his brother's innocence. Caldwell's second novel is a book to savor. This is a heart-wrenching book you will want to read more than once." Another reviewer writes, "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) written with Dustin Thomasin.

Coben, Harlan. [The Stranger](#) (Dutton \$27.95 March 27). Adam Price has a lot to lose: a comfortable marriage to a beautiful woman, two wonderful sons, and all the trappings of the American Dream: a big house, a good job, a seemingly perfect life. Then he runs into a mysterious stranger. When he learns a devastating secret about his wife, Corinne, he confronts her, and the mirage of perfection disappears as if it never existed at all. Soon Adam finds himself tangled in something far darker than even Corinne's deception, and realizes that if he doesn't make exactly the right moves, the conspiracy he's stumbled into will not only ruin lives—it will end them. Coben has been doing domestic suspense for years and lends a male perspective to the current deluge of female narrators of these dramas. [Click here](#) to order bestseller Coben's extensive backlist.

Cussler, Clive/Justin Scott. [The Assassin](#) (Putnam \$28.95 March 3). 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."

Freeman, Brian. [Season of Fear](#) (Quercus \$26.99 March 22). A fast-paced first in a new crime series from Edgar-finalist Freeman. It starts with a bang: an assassin fatally shoots Birch Fairmont, a congressional candidate from the newly formed Common Way Party, and two others at a political fund-raiser in Lake Wales, Fla. Ten years later, Birch's widow, Diane Fairmont, is running for governor of Florida as a member of the same third party. When evidence surfaces that Diane might be a killer's target, Candice Dean, the executive director of a foundation affiliated with the Common Way Party, hires detective Cab Bolton to look into the earlier unsolved murders, but she balks when his investigation doubles back on Diane's relationship with Birch and her drug-addict son. Meanwhile, campaign staffer Peach Piper, whose boyfriend and coworker was found dead two weeks earlier, is also worried about an assassination attempt, and starts asking uncomfortable questions.

Harris, CS. [Who Buries the Dead](#) (NAL \$24.95 March 4). 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 March 4). 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 March 10). 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).

Joy, David. [Where All the Light Tends to Go](#) (Putnam \$25.95 March 19). Joy's first novel after publishing stories and creative nonfiction in publications like *Drafthorse Literary Journal* is billed as Appalachian noir (Joy's term) and, alternately, *Winter's Bone* meets *Breaking Bad*. You can see why: in Cashiers, NC, killing a man is a rite of passage for the meth-dealing McNeely family, but when 18-year-old Jacob blows his chance, he must decide between placating his angry father and abandoning the mountains with the girl he loves. This is not an easy read; it's definitely noir, perhaps semiautobiographical? You will like it—or not, which is part of the point of the First Mystery Club: to expose members to all kinds of new voices. PW says this: "Engaging characters, a well-realized setting, and poetic prose establish Joy as a novelist worth watching." I say Joy's debut makes a contrast to the quieter domestic suspense flooding the market place in the wake of *Gone Girl*. The Indie Next Pick for this First Mystery Club Pick adds: "This beautifully written novel juxtaposes the glory of the Appalachians against the despair of everyday life. Jacob McNeely recognizes his family's brutality, but Maggie, the love of his life, gives him hope. Achingly told, the visceral prose will stay with readers long past the conclusion. Fans of the Southern fiction of Ron Rash and Wiley Cash will fall in love with this new voice." As did we so this is a **First Mystery Club Pick**.

Kanon, Joseph. [Leaving Berlin](#) (Atria \$27 March 24). There are several books for March I refuse to rush through, they are such treats in store, so this being one, here's the *LJ* Starred Review: "In his seventh thriller, Kanon (*Istanbul Passage*) turns to postwar Berlin and in particular to the Soviet sector during the difficult months of the blockade (1948–49). Noted author Alex Meier fled Germany for the United States when the Nazis began persecuting Jews. Now, he has been invited back, along with other renowned authors, as culture becomes part of the cold war between East and West. But Alex's situation is precarious. He was actually forced to leave America (and his young son) owing to his intransigence when facing the congressional witch hunt for communists. Recruited as a spy with the promise of exoneration, Alex soon finds himself dealing with issues of trust and his own survival as the East German secret police force him to become an informer. Kanon's evocation of Berlin in ruins is masterly, but his most striking trait is his depiction of characters under stress, not only Alex but all those he must entangle, including family members who survived the war. A pleasure from start to finish, blending literary finesse with action, this atmospheric historical thriller will appeal not only to Kanon's many fans but to those who enjoy Alan Furst, Philip Kerr, and other masters of wartime and postwar espionage fiction." I am wild about all Kanon's work: [click here](#) to order it.

Kearsley, Susanna. [A Desperate Fortune](#) (Sourcebooks \$16 April 6). Order Kearsley's wonderful time-jump backlist including one of our bestsellers, *The Shadowy Horses*, by [clicking here](#).

Kirby, Leslie Dana. [The Perfect Game](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95 March 28). A Phoenix author gets a *PW* Starred Review for her debut, a **First Mystery Club Pick**: "Kirby, a practicing clinical psychologist, makes her debut with an exceptional mystery that reveals the dark side of the lucrative, glitzy world of professional baseball. When Lauren Rose, an emergency-medicine intern at Phoenix Good Samaritan Hospital, learns that her sister, Liz, has been murdered, she quickly becomes a suspect in the case. Liz's handsome husband, Jake Wakefield, a pitcher for the Arizona Diamondbacks, is also implicated. Wakefield protests his innocence while striking up an inappropriate flirtation with Lauren, who makes matters even worse when the results of her police-ordered lie detector test are ruled inconclusive. The investigative work of two Scottsdale PD detectives ensures an arrest and courtroom trial. Both prosecution and defense introduce damning evidence, including surprise witnesses, deleted Internet searches, and video surveillance. Kirby elevates what could have been a straightforward court-case drama into a game of strategy and cunning that's a cut above the rest." *Kirkus Reviews* adds: "Kirby delivers a debut that's trickier than an R.A. Dickey knuckleball." Also [The Perfect Game](#) (Poisoned Pen \$14.95).

LaSueur, Carrie. [The Home Place](#) (\$14.99 March 21). "Billings, Montana, is Alma Terrebonne's hometown. A corporate lawyer, she lives in Seattle and rarely talks to what is left of her family. She harbors survivor guilt after walking away unharmed from a car accident that killed her parents right before she left for college. When Alma's younger sister Vicky, a waitress, single mom, and drug user, is found battered to death one icy winter morning, Alma returns to Billings. Taking her niece, Brittany, under her wing, she plans to move into the old homestead her grandparents had built out in the country. But first the police must roust a methamphetamine dealer from the house. Slowly the

desperate details of Vicky's life are revealed, and Alma begins to put together the terrible web of events that led to her sister's death."—*Library Journal* on a 2014 First Mystery Club Pick (ask for Signed HC edition in case we acquire any) now in paperback.

Laukkanen, Owen. [The Stolen Ones](#) (Putnam \$26.95 March 19). In their fourth outing, Kirk Stevens of the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Investigation and FBI agent Carla Windermere are working on a case involving sex trafficking of women "stolen" from Romania and other Eastern European countries. Hellishly transported in cargo containers to New Jersey, these women are distributed by truck like so much produce to places far and wide, including Walker, MN, where the escape of one of two sisters held in the "box" eventually results in the downfall of the entire operation. The escaping older sister, Irina Milosovici, meets up with Stevens in Walker after the police suspect her in the killing of a local deputy. She provides valuable information..."Here it is not the criminals who are intriguing, but rather the victims who turn out to be far stronger and more remarkable than originally anticipated. Recommended for fans of well-written, thought-provoking thrillers."—*LJ* Starred Review. *Kirkus* adds, "The two agents have worked together before and if there's justice in the literary world, they will team up on many more cases. Just keep them out of the same bed, and their chemistry will be great. Thriller fans will enjoy this one. Laukkanen is a first-class storyteller." The verdict is that Laukkanen is back to the fabulous form of First Mystery Pick *Kill Fee*. This is another reading treat in store for me. Order Laukkanen's first three thriller by [clicking here](#).

Lehane, Dennis. [The World Gone By](#) (Morrow \$27.99 March 18). Patrick writes, "A beautifully-written, poignant final act to his epic Joe Coughlin trilogy. Lehane is a modern master and he is at the top of his game here." "Here" is Cuba and Ybor City, Florida, during World War II. 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 former crime kingpin Joe 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. The Indie Next Pick: "In the prologue, Lehane describes his main character but certainly captures his own abilities as well: 'Joe Coughlin had a gift for bringing the beacons of the city into contact with her demons and making it all seem like a lark.' This is Lehane's great gift: creating characters with the full scope of human dimensions — our inner angels and devils, our passions and our crimes — and immersing them in the timeless trials of our world while disguising his feat as the entertainment of a 'good read.' Lehane is a magician, a maestro, and a master of the written word." Joe appears in 1926 Boston in [Live by Night](#) (\$16.99); the Coughlin clan earlier in [The Given Day](#) (\$16.99). To order earlier novels by Lehane, [click here](#).

Morrell, David. [The Inspector of the Dead](#) (Mulholland \$26 March 25). Morrell is clearly loving writing historical thrillers. He's always liked research and his skills take him into an interesting aspect of Victoria's reign: the several assassins who tried to kill her (or did they, all of them?). Victoria, Albert, Lord Palmerston and others are real; so is Thomas De Quincey, the

“opium eater” (addicted to a degree hard to imagine, but you could buy the stuff off the shelf at the time) who at age 69 is still going strong and enjoys sleuthing as a way of diffusing his drug-fueled energy. His bloomer-wearing daughter is his principal sidekick. “Fans of sophisticated historicals will embrace Macavity Award-winner Morrell’s second suspense novel featuring Thomas De Quincey and his grown daughter, Emily... Convincing period detail complements the fascinating story line.” —*Publishers Weekly* (starred). “Ripping good fun at every delicious twist and turn... De Quincey makes for an offbeat but entirely credible protagonist in the Sherlock Holmes mold. It’s a potent formula, with genuine thrills and a satisfying mystery leavened with well-observed and meticulously researched details of Victorian life and attitudes.” —*Kirkus Reviews*. “Delivers a cast of compellingly crafted characters. De Quincey, in particular, is a brilliant creation, an amateur sleuth, writer, and drug addict who both repels and intrigues us at the same time. Top-notch entertainment.” —*Booklist*. De Quincey, so eccentric and a druggie, influenced Poe and the character of Sherlock Holmes. Morrell won the Nero Wolfe Award and various nominations for [Murder as a Fine Art](#) (\$16) a History/Mystery Club Pick in 2013.

Pearson, Ridley. [Kingdom Keepers VIII: The Syndrome](#) (Disney \$12.99 March 27). When Amanda travels east to Orlando on a hunch, she’s met with the worst news possible. Kingdom Keeper Finn Whitman is missing. Calling on her own gift (she’s telekinetic), her sister Jess’s ability to dream the future, and their fellow Fairlie Mattie Weaver’s unexplained ability to read minds through physical contact, the three gifted girls must navigate treachery, deception, and the stubborn, unwilling parents of the missing Keepers if they’re to save their friends. As a special bonus, an excerpt of *Disney Lands*, the first book in the new Kingdom Keepers series, *The Return*, is included! For Kingdom Keepers adventures I-VII, [click here](#).

Quertermous, Bryon. [Murder Boy](#) (Polis \$14 March 19). Dominick Prince is out of options. He’s lived in Detroit long enough to use his experiences of crime and poverty to fuel his writing, but he’s ready to move on to bigger and better things. Dominick’s thesis advisor, the elitist Parker Farmington, refuses to let Dominick pass his class, thinking the genre of potboilers beneath him. Which means rather than becoming the next literary sensation, Dominick will spend his life asking customers if they’d like fries with that. And if that’s the only plan, kidnapping doesn’t seem like such a bad plan B. So if Farmington won’t pass him willfully, Dominick will make him do it forcefully. And once he has Farmington’s signature, fame and fortune are within Dominick’s grasp. But while Dominick may have a devious and brilliant mind on the page, in reality he’s more Betty White than Walter White. “...a black comedy with heart.”—Laura Lippman. “Quertermous has the thing that every writer strives for and many never find: a truly unique voice. His writing is crisp and clean, his storytelling sense is honed, but it’s the voice that holds the magic. The balance of the comedic and the dramatic in his work is a rare treat, reading like a deliciously blood-soaked crime novel rewritten by Christopher Moore.”—Michael Koryta. Polis is a new independent press.

Simmons, Dan. [The Fifth Heart](#) (LittleBrown \$28 March 25). Delightful, a treat from the varied and prolific Simmons. Here’s one of the Starred Reviews: “In Paris in 1893, Sherlock Holmes and Henry James join forces in this outstanding novel from Simmons, who has concocted something far from the usual

pastiche, with a historical figure standing in for Dr. Watson. James, the distinguished American author, is about to kill himself by plunging into the Seine, overcome by crippling depression. Just before stepping off *le pont Neuf*, he notices a man with an aquiline profile standing nearby; he quickly ascertains that the man is actually Holmes, believed to have perished with Professor Moriarty at the Reichenbach Falls two years earlier. James is shocked to learn that Holmes was himself on the verge of taking his own life—because the detective has discovered that he’s merely a “literary construct.” His evidence? [not telling, you should read this for yourself to find out]. This chance meeting dissuades both men from committing suicide, and they resolve to travel to America and investigate the purported suicide of diplomat Henry Adams’s wife, Clover, in 1885. Simmons knows the Holmes canon and uses that expertise in the service of a highly original reimagining of the beloved sleuth.” Simmons never quits surprising us, no?

White, Randy Wayne. [Cuba Straits](#) (Putnam \$26.95 March 26). A trove of revealing private documents, rumors concerning a political assassination, a trip to Cuba—it’s either today’s newspaper or Dr. Marion Ford’s 22nd adventure. The former dictator of Masagua, “a tiny country that exported bananas and revolution,” turns to Ford for help after he temporarily “loses” Figueroa Casanova, a Cuban baseball player he smuggled into the U.S. Casanova wandered off from his St. Petersburg, Fla., motel, carrying a briefcase full of letters written by Fidel Castro to the dictator’s mistress from 1953 to 1963. Ford’s unpredictable sidekick, Tomlinson, manages to locate Casanova and decides to return him and the Castro letters to Cuba. When Ford learns that a Russian spy, among others, is after the letters, he heads to Cuba to find Tomlinson. More than one distraction diverts Ford from his mission, including investigating the legend that three American ballplayers buried their new motorcycles in Cuba the day Castro took power. White smoothly combines history, action, and colorful characters into a savory concoction in this latest of White’s quest novels for Ford. Plus he’s always loved baseball! Let’s see how his view of Cuba holds up as real events unfold this year. [Click here](#) to order earlier Doc Fords.

Winspear, Jacqueline. [A Dangerous Place](#) (Harper \$26.99 March 17). The breathtaking efficiency with which Winspear sets up this new Maisie Dobbs will both impress and dismay you. It’s now Spring 1937. Maisie did indeed journey to India after closing her business. She replied to James. She moved along. But now events have propelled her back to the hills of Darjeeling until her stepmother demands she come home: her aging father, Frankie Dobbs, is not getting any younger. Aboard ship, Maisie realizes she isn’t ready to return and, against the captain’s advice, she disembarks in Gibraltar. 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 professional acquaintance... Coincidentally, Rob and I are visiting Gibraltar in early April. Order earlier Winspears (all but one are Maisie Dobbs) by [clicking here](#).

AWARDS UPDATES

2015 Agatha Award Nominees

Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient:

Sara Paretsky

Best Contemporary Novel:

Donna Andrews, [The Good, the Bad, and the Emus](#) (\$24.99)

GM Malliet, [A Demon Summer](#) (25.99)

Hank Phillippi Ryan, [Truth Be Told](#) (\$24.99)

Louise Penny, [The Long Way Home](#) (\$27.99)

Margaret Maron, [Designated Daughters](#) (\$29 Signed)

Best Historical Novel:

Rhys Bowen, [Queen of Hearts](#) (\$25.95 Signed)

DE Ireland, [Wouldn't It Be Deadly](#) (\$24.99)

Victoria Thompson, [Murder in Murray Hill](#) (\$25.95)

Charles Todd, [Hunting Shadows](#) (\$14.99)

Charles Todd, [An Unwilling Accomplice](#) (\$28 Signed)

2015 CWA/Cartier Diamond Dagger

Catherine Aird

2015 Hammett Prize Nominees

James Lee Burke, [Wayfaring Stranger](#) (\$27.99 Signed)

Krista Foss, *Smoke River*

Tod Goldberg, [Gangsterland](#) (\$26)

Stephen King, [Mr. Mercedes](#) (\$16)

Peyton Marshall, [Goodhouse](#) (\$26)

OUTLANDER UPDATE

Gabalton, Diana. [The Outlandish Companion Volume 1 Revised Signed](#) (Random \$40). Covering the four volumes of the Outlander series, revised and updated in sync with the TV series on STARZ. Gabalton's time is so limited she will not be personalizing copies of the Revised Companion. [The Outlandish Companion Volume 2](#) (Random \$40) publishes Oct. 27. We carry all the Outlander novels in Signed hardcovers (*Written in My Own Heart's Blood* is still in first prints).

MORE OF THE CELTS FOR MARCH

John Charles highlights some St. Patrick's Day Reading (first novels in crime series)

Bateman, Colin. [Divorcing Jack](#) (\$14.95). When his wife catches Belfast journalist Dan Starkey wrapped in the arms of another woman, Dan's troubles are just starting.

Black, Benjamin. [Christine Falls](#) (\$16). When Dublin pathologist Quirke stumbles back to his office after a night of drinking, he is shocked to discover his brother-in-law is there and tampering with the file of a dead woman. Black is the pseudonym for Booker award-winning John Banville.

Bowen, Rhys. [Murphy's Law](#) (\$7.99). The Agatha and other Award-winning start to a series about an Irish lass who emigrates to NY around the turn of the 20th Century. While not set in Ireland Molly's links to her home country, her relatives, and a trip back later make this excellent reading for St. Patrick's Day. See Event Books for Molly #16.

Bruen, Ken. [The Guards](#) (\$15.99). After being dismissed from The Guards (Ireland's police force) Jack Taylor is sitting in a bar staring at the world through the bottom of his beer mug when a woman walks in and wants to hire him based on his talent for "finding things."

Connolly, Sheila. [Buried in a Bog](#) (Berkley, \$7.99). Maura Donovan heads to Clare County to visit the small village where her late Gran was born only to realize she might have relevant information about the recent discovery of a one-hundred-year-old body in a nearby bog.

Hart, Erin. [Haunted Ground](#) (\$16). Archaeologist Cormac O'Callaghan and pathologist Nora Gavin become entangled in a web of mystery and Irish lore when they discover a connection between the recent disappearance of a mother and her child and the decapitated body of a woman found in the bog.

McKinty, Adrian, ed. [Belfast Noir](#) (Akashic \$15.95). Northern Ireland's capital city is the setting for this collection of dark-edged crime stories. Look for the fabulous new McKinty crime novel in *Where in the World* in this *Booknews*.

Meier, Leslie. [The St. Patrick's Day Murder](#) (\$6.99). Not a series start but #14 in the holiday-themed cozies set in a small Maine town where reporter Lucy Stone cracks crimes.

Neville, Stuart. [The Ghosts of Belfast](#) (\$14). Haunted by the ghosts of the victims he killed as a "hard man," former IRA killer Gerry Fegan decides the only way he will gain any peace in his life is by killing the men, who gave the orders to have others killed.

Non-Mystery Irish Reading

Binchy, Maeve. [Chestnut Street](#) (\$15.95). A series of linked short stories about the residents of Dublin's Chestnut Street. Binchy was a beloved Irish novelist, playwright, and columnist, whose sixteen novels (*Light a Penny Candle*, *Circle of Friends*, etc.) celebrated the quiet joys and small pleasures of everyday life in Ireland.

Roberts, Nora. [Born in Fire](#) (\$7.99). Best-selling romance writer Roberts is known for her love of Ireland. Here we have glassmaker Maggie Concannon, whose solitary life is thrown for a loop by sexy gallery owner Rogan Sweeney. This is the first in a trilogy (*Born in Ice*, *Born in Shame*) about three Irish sisters.

Taylor, Patrick. [An Irish Country Doctor](#) (\$7.99). Recent medical school graduate Barry Laverty joins a small rural medical practice in Ballybucklebo, Northern Ireland, where he meets his new superior: cantankerous Dr. Fingal Flahertie O'Reilly. This is the first in a heartwarming series about Laverty and the residents of Ballybucklebo. [Click here](#) for further titles.

FIRST NOVELS

Anolik, Lili. [Dark Rooms](#) (Morrow \$25.99). *The Secret History* meets *Sharp Objects* in this stunning debut about murder and glamour set in the ambiguous and claustrophobic world of an exclusive New England prep school. Connelly and Hurwitz praise it: *PW* Stars it: "The bullet that snuffs out the life of 16-year-old wild child Nica Baker hits her family like a hollow-point, especially psychologically enmeshed big sister Grace, in this suspenseful, sad, and shattering first novel from Vanity Fair contributing editor Anolik. Only a year older, and the yang to Nica's yin, good girl Grace had been relying on her sister's charisma and cool to smooth Grace's way through the emotional minefields of Chandler Academy, the precious Hartford, Conn., private school where their parents both teach. In fact, Grace just can't let Nica go, repeatedly seeing, hearing, and talking with her during the grief-swamped, drug-muddled months that follow.

When a fellow student's suicide-confession officially closes the case, Grace doesn't buy it. Deferring her enrollment at Williams, she sifts through the wreckage of their lives, ostensibly to figure out who really killed Nica, but, even more crucially, to find herself. As she starts to penetrate the myriad lies and secrets, the picture that emerges is far from pretty, with a lengthy list of suspects. Whether or not you believe in ghosts, Anolik's debut will haunt you"

Block, Sandra. [Little Black Lies](#) (Grand Central \$15). The story is interesting – Dr. Zoe Goldman is doing a psychiatric residency while negotiating her own deficits and the haunting childhood memories of the fire that killed her birth mother and the increasing dementia of the mother who raised her. Her quest reveals surprising holes in her adoptive mother's story and in time puts Zoe in mortal danger from an unexpected source. But the real reason to read this debut is the deft and knowledgeable way the author handles treatment, drugs, and the culture of psychiatric medicine.

Carter, M J. [The Strangler Vine Signed](#) (Putnam \$26.95 April 3). Every now and then I make a **First Mystery Club Pick** out of historical crime, generally when it has some relevance to the present day. And with the echoes of colonialism all around us, this account of deeds in 1830s India before the Raj, when it was still governed by the East India Company, plus the myth busting element, this debut certainly does. Young William Avery, a soldier in the service of the British East India Company in 1837 India, receives an unexpected assignment. He is to accompany Jeremiah Blake, a secret political agent with an astonishing talent for languages and Sherlock Holmesian disguises, on a mission to find the scandalous British writer Xavier Mountstuart, who is missing. Each twist and turn of the duo's journey draws them deeper into the mystery of the sinister Thuggee cult and closer to uncovering the shocking truth at the heart of the puzzle of Mountstuart's disappearance. If you haven't run into an account of this cult, you will be even more surprised to read this novel. Recall that two earlier FMC Picks, historicals, won Edgars: David Liss' *A Conspiracy of Paper* and Jason Goodwin's *The Janissary Tree*, so follow my lead!

Chapin, Andrea. [The Tutor Signed](#) (Riverhead \$29). **A 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!

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..."

Crawford, Susan. [The Pocket Wife](#) (Morrow \$25.99). "Dana is a "pocket wife" in her estimation because her lawyer husband jams his cell phone with her calls into his pocket, cutting her off. One afternoon, she drunkenly argues with her neighbor Celia, takes a nap, then wakes to find Celia dead. Could she have murdered Celia? Dana, suffering from manic episodes, tries to solve her friend's murder before she loses all self-control. The Indie Next Pick says, "Highly recommended for fans of *Gone Girl*." That last sentence is true, but the rest by that bookseller misrepresents the book. Dana is so drunk she can't remember what happened after she walked over to Celia's. Maybe she killed Celia. The alcohol accelerates the slide Dana is already making into the manic phase of her bipolar condition. There's a lot more backstory that leaks in as the front story progresses, but I would like to say that my sympathies in this are with the lawyer who married Dana in total ignorance of her history and has been coping, sometimes badly, ever since. There is a good twist in the plot but...I really disliked this book for using the husband as a fall guy.

But the illness is terrible and tragic; a magnificent book, a memoir of madness reviewed in the *NY Times*, [click here](#) to read, delivers a stunning account of it: Mimi Baird, [He Wanted the Moon](#) (Crown \$25). Pat Conroy says, "*He Wanted the Moon* is one of the most disturbing and profoundly moving books I've read in years, and one of the great father-daughter books of our time. It will take its place as a classic in the literature of breakdown, alongside Kay Redfield Jamison's *An Unquiet Mind* and William Styron's *Darkness Visible*. The brilliant Dr. Perry Baird's memoir lets you see up close what it is like to go through the most manic phases of bipolar disorder—it is a nightmare, but this book is a damn wonder. Through it, Mimi Baird has finally given her father the credit he was due."

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 goes humor—it's been an Australian bestseller—and likes the child narrator. One could think of Mark Haddon's young protagonist. A huge bestseller in Davis' native Australia.

Ellison, Jan. [A Small Indiscretion](#) (Random \$27). Here's a debut domestic suspense novel, but while there are betrayals and twists, there's no marital battlefield. Instead Annie Black, who narrates the story to her first child, son Robbie, a brilliant young student with a beckoning future who is gravely injured in a car accident, let's her story begin twenty years back in her native England when she had that recklessness that comes with untried youth. She moves on to her Bay Area home where she's a wife, mother of three, and lighting designer with a thriving business. Robbie's renal artery is compromised and tests to find a suitable kidney donor compromise just about everything. I like Annie's voice, her gift for introspection, her quiet determination, and I like Jonathan a lot. Generally these kinds of stories don't end well, which is a spoiler but the reason to read this is to see how it works out.

Joy, David. [Where All the Light Tends to Go Signed](#) (Putnam \$25.95). A novel for fans of Daniel Woodrell draws this March Indie Next Pick for a First Mystery Club Pick: "This beautifully written novel juxtaposes the glory of the Appalachians against the despair of everyday life. Jacob McNeely recognizes his family's brutality, but Maggie, the love of his life, gives him hope. Achingly told, the visceral prose will stay with readers long past the conclusion. Fans of the Southern fiction of Ron Rash and Wiley Cash will fall in love with this new voice." Joy himself calls this debut "Appalachian Noir."

Kornegay, Jamie. [Soil Signed](#) (SimonSchuster \$26). If Dostoevsky were dropped into the present-day Mississippi Delta where an idealistic young family man/farmer conceives a revolutionary idea for agriculture that leads to his ruin, he'd run with this. When a corpse appears in the soil, the farmer, desperate to hang onto his wife and son, and his work, convinces himself he's being set up. He steps into "a maze of misperceptions and personal obsessions" where a predatory deputy, an itinerant criminal, even his estranged wife, play roles. Think Tom Franklin too, maybe Faulkner. So not my book, but Patrick is bound to love it.

Repino, Robert. [Mort\(e\) Signed](#) (Soho \$26.9). 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!."—*PW* Starred Review. 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." **A Modern Firsts Club Pick.**

Nikolaidou, Sophia. [The Scapegoat](#) (Melville House \$23.95). Winner of the 2011 Athens Prize for Literature and now translated into English, this searing crime novel is based upon the real murder, unsolved, of CBS reporter George Polk in 1948 while in Greece investigating corruption in the right-wing government's embezzlement of US aid. In modern Greece a young and disaffected high school student is given finding the truth of Polk's death as a school project. The result is a narrative told by key players of the time including that of Manolis Gris, the Greek journalist arrested and convicted for Polk's death who, upon his release 12 years later, claimed he was tortured into confessing and repudiated his guilt. The compelling narrative mirrors both turbulent post-war Greece and the country today.

Swanson, Cynthia. [The Bookseller](#) (Harper \$25.99). The Indie Next Pick: "In 1962, 38-year-old Kitty Miller lives unconventionally. She's an unmarried working woman who is running a bookstore with her best friend. But at night, in her dreams, it's a different story. There, Kitty (now Kathryn) explores the path not taken. She's the married mother of three. It's the life that might have been, and the novel explores both Kitty's waking and dream lives in alternating chapters. Swanson's enjoyable debut really gets interesting when the lines between waking and dreaming, fantasy and reality, begin to blur."

BRITISH BOOKS

Airth, Rennie. [The Reckoning](#) (\$16). It's now 1947 and two baffling and seemingly unconnected murders, one of a bank manager, one of a doctor, call retired John Madden of the Yard out of retirement. The legendary detective has no memory of meeting the first victim despite a letter the man left concerning Madden. But Madden is glad to help his protégé, the Yard's DI Billy Styles. Then a third murder is executed in similar manner... shot in the head. Airth's Madden mysteries are among my favorite British crime novels. [Click here](#) to order all four.

Bauer, Belinda. [Shut Eye Signed](#) (Bantam \$36). 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? Wicked suspense from the Dagger Award winner.

Bradford, Barbara Taylor. [The Cavendon Women](#) (St Martins \$27.99) follows the Inghams' and the Swanns' journey from a family weekend in the summer of 1926 through to the devastation of the Wall Street crash of 1929. It all begins on a summer weekend in July of 1926 when, for the first time in years, the earl has planned a family weekend. As the family members come together, secrets, problems, joys, and sorrows are revealed, and the women must rally everyone. The sequel to [Cavendon Hall](#) (\$7.99). Bradford's charming family saga filled with "manor house mayhem" is for the Downton crowd.

Craig, James. [Man of Sorrows](#) (Constable \$16). While investigating a priest who has engaged in less-than-pious activities, Carlyle comes head to head with an old adversary: Christian Holyrod, the Mayor of London. The mayor is hosting an upcoming visit from the Pope and is determined to keep any scandals involving the Catholic Church out of the public eye. But Carlyle, never one to let bad behavior go unpunished, faces off against church and state.

Delaney, Luke. [Jackdaw Signed](#) (Collins \$45). The victims' crimes are broadcast to the watching thousands who decide the verdict – a click on the like icon for a vote of guilty; a click on the dislike icon for a vote of not guilty. Once the jury has decided, The Jackdaw will be the judge and executioner. DI Sean Corrigan and his Special Investigations Unit immediately inherit the case, and come under political pressure to solve it quickly. But as The Jackdaw's popularity grows, Sean realizes he's hunting a clever and elusive adversary. DI Sean Corrigan #4 in a series for readers of Stuart MacBride, Peter James, Mark Billingham.

Finch, Charles. [The Last Enchantments](#) (\$15.99). Selling briskly here during Finch's Feb. 21-28 week as our Writer in Residence, this is a standalone outside his Victorian series for Charles Lenox. Author William Barnhardt says, "Finch achieves that rarest of tributes to Oxford University, fond but still clear-sighted... The heart of *The Last Enchantments* is his Bright Young Things—too young for their own good, let loose upon the medieval city of sherry-sodden intellectuality and rain-soaked romantic debacle, bright about everything except love and life. A witty, touching coming-of-age tale in a town that never ages."

Forbes, Elena. [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.

Hayder, Mo. [Pig Island](#) (\$15). Reissue of one of Hayder's dark thrillers, one of the darkest actually, filled with a cult, its isolated founder, beaches filled with toxins and pigs' skulls, and a man who makes his living exposing so-called supernatural hoaxes. What is the nature of evil lies at the book's heart.

Haynes, Elizabeth. [Behind Closed Doors](#) (Harper \$15.99). The wave of suspense novels about vanished children shows no signs of retreating. Ten years ago teen Scarlett Rainsford vanished while on a family holiday in Greece. Working the case, and failing to solve it, is the big regret of (then constable) Lou Smith's career. And now Louis shocked to learn that Scarlet has been found—when Special Branch raided a brothel in the UK's Briarstone. Where has she been? What happened? Why is her family, other than her troubled sister Juliette, unwelcoming? I found the prickly Lou and her evolving relationships the most interesting feature of this entry in the Briarstone crime series.

Herron, Mick. [Down Cemetery Road](#) (\$14.95). A reissue of Herron's debut introducing Sarah Tucker who, bored with domesticity begins a quest when a young girl who goes missing when a house explodes in a quiet Oxford suburb. Herron is one of best unread British authors I know, writing elegant, unusual, quiet sorts of books that have in time won him a Dagger Award and reintroduction to the US from Soho Press. Look for more of his work this spring.

Hornby, Nick. [Funny Girl](#) (Riverhead \$27.95). *NY Times* critic Janet Maslin writes, "Nick Hornby uses the story of a reluctant beauty queen from Blackpool as the hook for a rambunctious cultural history of British television comedy 50 years ago. As befits a novel about a popular sitcom, this novel packs in lots of laughs, but it's also got more heft than Mr. Hornby's readers may expect." I like Barbara Parker, queen for only a day before spurning her crown and moving to London hoping for the big time in TV. Barbara is inevitable for a "Barbie doll" moniker but in fact as her life unrolls you realize she's much more than that.

Morton, Andrew. [17 Carnations The Royals, The Nazis, and The Biggest Cover Up in History](#) (Grand Central \$28). Andrew Morton tells the story of the feckless Edward VIII, later Duke of Windsor, his American wife, Wallis Simpson, the bizarre wartime Nazi plot to make him a puppet king after the invasion of Britain, and the attempted cover-up by Churchill, General Eisenhower, and King George VI of the duke's relations with Hitler. In this impressive revisionist history, "royal watcher Andrew Morton uncovers telling evidence of the naïve Duke of Windsor's collaboration with Hitler, even as plans for a German takeover of England began to unfold. *17 Carnations* also reveals the more literal entanglement of Mrs. Simpson with the Nazi foreign minister." Depressing stuff really, but info that busts the mythos of the royal romance as a fairy tale and makes one glad it removed Edward from the throne.

Murthy, Vasudev. [Sherlock Holmes, The Missing Years: Japan](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95 or \$14.95). Still wondering what the great detective was doing between his reported death in 1891 and his reappearance in 1894? Actually, he was working closely with Shigeo Oshima, director of Intelligence Research for Emperor Meiji of Japan, on the shadowy Operation Kobe55. Or rather, working his way toward Japan, since two-thirds of this knockabout tale has passed before Holmes and Watson steam into Nagasaki Bay. After surviving his confrontation with Professor Moriarty at Reichenbach Falls, Holmes sends Watson a cryptic note and a ticket on the North Star, departing Liverpool for Yokohama, and the game is afoot... The most original contribution from Murthy is a series of footnotes in which Watson protests, among other things, his highhanded treatment

by a young female editor at his American publisher's office..." ~*Kirkus*. Love it: only in fiction can I be described as "a young" female editor.

Rankin, Ian/Peter Florence. [Oxcrimes: 27 Killer Stories](#) (Profile15.95). As part of their fundraising efforts, Oxfam has put together an incredible collection of short stories from 27 of the world's leading mystery authors. Comprised almost entirely of original stories with a sprinkle of some adapted from earlier works. Contributors include George Pelecanos, Neil Gaiman, Simon Lewis, Val McDermid, Anthony Horowitz, Walter Mosley, Fred Vargas, Ian Rankin, Stuart Neville, Stella Duffy, John Harvey, Peter James, Denise Mina, Adrian McKinty, James Sallis, Maxim Jakubowski, Christopher Fowler, Louise Welsh, Peter Robinson, Anne Zouroudi, Ann Cleeves, Martyn Waites, Alexander McCall Smith, Phil Rickman, Mark Billingham, John Connolly, and Yrsa Sigurdardottir. Introduction by Rankin, edited by Mark Ellingham and Peter Florence, the latter the director of the Hay Festival in the UK. No Signed copies although you keen fans can collect some as some contributors appear here.

Shemilt, Jane. [The Daughter](#) (Morrow \$14.99). Jenny is a successful family doctor, the mother of three great teenagers, married to a celebrated neurosurgeon. But when her youngest child, fifteen-year-old Naomi, doesn't come home after her school play, Jenny's seemingly ideal life begins to crumble. The authorities launch a nationwide search with no success. Naomi has vanished, and her family is broken. As the months pass, the worst-case scenarios—kidnapping, murder—seem less plausible. The trail has gone cold. Yet, for a desperate Jenny, the search has barely begun. More than a year after her daughter's disappearance, she's still digging for answers—and what she finds disturbs her. Everyone she's trusted, everyone she thought she knew, has been keeping secrets, especially Naomi. Piecing together the traces her daughter left behind, Jenny discovers a very different Naomi from the girl she thought she'd raised. Jenny knows she'll never be able to find Naomi unless she uncovers the whole truth about her daughter... The publisher compares this to Rendell and French.

Souhami, Diana. [Gwendolen](#) (Holt \$16). I put this in for you fans of George Eliot and her novel *Daniel Deronda*. The 19th Century Englishwoman who narrates her story is writing to Deronda. Exceptionally beautiful, Gwendolen is gambling boldly at a German spa when she learns from her twice-widowed mother that the family fortune has been lost. As the eldest of a family of sisters, it's up to Gwendolen to use what she has—looks, prowess in archery and as a horsewoman—to secure their futures. And so she marries a hugely wealthy aristocrat who suddenly proposes.... how that goes we learn as the course of her life unfolds.

Tobin, Sophia. [The Widow's Confession Signed](#) (SimonSchuster UK \$36). Why is this book listed here and not in History/Mystery since it is set in Broadstairs, Kent, 1851? Although the period is Victorian the landscape and plot are really contemporary in depicting an insular community, village secrets, dark pasts creating crimes. So really the story is like Belinda Bauer, SJ Bolton's early work, Simon Brett's seaside village mysteries. And of course it reflects the Prince Regent's transformation of Brighton in Regency times when a sleepy fishing village becomes a select sea-bathing resort, 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. 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).

Tope, Rebecca. [Ambleside Alibi](#) (\$16.95). Tope exposes a darker side to the beautiful, atmospheric Lake District in this new series featuring florist Persimmon Brown, who delivers a bouquet of flowers with a mysterious message attached. When an elderly woman is found murdered in her own home, Simmy is drawn into the center of the murder investigation after the prime suspect names her as an alibi. Also: [The Windermere Witness](#) (\$16.95).

Watson, SJ. [Second Life Signed](#) (Doubleday UK \$36). I'm not confessional. I don't do social media. But if ever a book underlines the danger of keeping secrets, this is it. Julia loves her surgeon husband Hugh. And her son Connor, who's her sister Kate's boy. She's doing well as a portrait photographer. She's been off drink for so long. Her life is safe and ordered. And then Kate is murdered, in a Paris alley. And Julia is driven to discover why and who? Which drives her into her past and into... well you have to read this to discover whether Julia gets a second life—and if she wants it... The long-awaited second novel from the author of First Mystery Pick and international bestseller [Before I Go to Sleep](#) (\$15.99).

Wodehouse, PG. [The Essential Jeeves and Wooster](#) (Overlook \$45). A gorgeous boxed set with special editions of three of Wodehouse's most beloved masterpieces. Wodehouse (1881-1975) spent much of his life in Southampton, New York, but was born in England and educated in Surrey. He became an American citizen in 1955. In a literary career spanning more than seventy years, he published more than ninety books and twenty film scripts, and collaborated on more than thirty plays and musical comedies. This is a nifty gift idea.

WHERE IN THE WORLD?

Adler-Olsen, Jussi. [The Alphabet House](#) (Dutton \$27.95). The bestselling author of the Department Q thrillers delivers his first stand-alone novel, a psychological thriller set in World War II Nazi Germany and 1970s England. British pilots James Teasdale and Bryan Young have been chosen to conduct a special photo-reconnaissance mission near Dresden, Germany. Intelligence believes the Nazis are building new factories that could turn the tide of the war. When their plane is shot down, James and Bryan know they will be executed if captured. With an enemy patrol in pursuit, they manage to jump aboard a train reserved for senior SS soldiers wounded on the eastern front. In a moment of desperation, they throw two patients off the train and take their places, hoping they can escape later. But their act is too convincing and they end up in the Alphabet House, a mental hospital located far behind enemy lines, where German doctors subject their patients to daily rounds of shock treatments and experimental drugs. The pilots' only hope of survival is to fake insanity until the war ends, but their friendship and courage are put to the ultimate test when James and Bryan realize they aren't the only ones in the Alphabet House feigning madness.

Bilal, Parker. [The Burning Gates](#) (Bloomsbury \$27). “Set in Cairo in 2004, Bilal’s riveting fourth Makana mystery plunges the intrepid investigator into the world of art dealers and high-stakes art theft. Fellow exile and artist/automobile restorer Ali Shibaker introduces Makana to Aram Kasabian, a rich and well-connected art dealer who, it appears, is on the lookout for certain modern masterworks that disappeared during the Nazi regime—but have somehow resurfaced in connection with the notorious Col. Khadim al-Samari of the Iraqi armed forces. Kasabian employs Makana to locate al-Samari, a fugitive on America’s most-wanted list, who may be secretly in Egypt thanks to his cronies in the army. Makana’s quest takes him to shabby bars, discreet nightclubs, and even to mosques. More than one gruesome death helps propel the twisty plot to a Pyrrhic conclusion.”—*PW*

Caldwell, Ian. [The Fifth Gospel Signed](#) (SimonSchuster \$25.99). A marvelous work set at the Vatican where a married Orthodox priest leads an unusual life, complicated by a murder and by events surrounding the Shroud of Turin. See Event Books. If you missed Caldwell’s heralded debut in [The Rule of Four](#) (\$16) ten years ago written with Ian Thomasin, here’s a good time to catch up.

De Beauvoir, Jeannette. [Asylum](#) (St Martins \$25.99). This mystery by novelist and poet De Beauvoir has two terrific pluses: an engaging, “wonderfully likeable” sleuth who has no business crime solving; “a fine job of evoking the ambiance of Montreal, with its fascinating neighborhoods, bilingualism, and political tensions.”—*PW*. Indeed the city is a powerful character and also a focus because protecting its “cachet as a tourist destination by tracking down a killer whose handiwork is trashing the city’s reputation. Martine LeDuc is nobody’s idea of a detective. As *directrice de publicité* for Mayor Jean-Luc Boulanger, her job is public relations, not homicide investigation. But when a fourth woman is found reclining on one of the city’s park benches, naked, raped and dead, Martine’s boss calls on her to coordinate communications between Police Director François Desrocher and his own office because everyone else is too busy. Martine, faced with a particularly awkward situation because her deputy, Richard Rousseau, had been seeing research librarian Danielle Leroux, the most recent victim, partners with Détective-lieutenant Julian Fletcher of the city police to track down the murderer. Even though the four victims were of different ages, social classes and walks of life, they all had a connection to the notorious Cité de Saint-Jean-de-Dieu Asylum...”—*Kirkus*. I read every word of this book and urge you to do so as well. Very good for readers of Kathy Reichs and Louise Penny as well as Ken Bruen.

Drndic, Dasa. [Trieste](#) (Houghton \$15.95). “A palimpsest of personal quest and the historical atrocities of war...Undeniably raw and mythical...Trieste evolves as a novel in the documentary style of the German writer W.G. Sebald, but also as a memorial of names, and as a novel about one woman’s attempt to find order in her life. And as a book of events that have made the last century infamous for the ages, a book that, if it moves you as it moved me, you will have to set down now and then, to breathe, to blink and blink and say to yourself and whatever gods you might believe in, please, oh, please please, please, never again.”—Alan Cheuse, NPR, on the Croatian author’s searing narrative. “*Trieste* achieves a factographical poetry, superbly rendered

by Ellen Elias-Bursac, implying that no one in Axis-occupied Europe stood more than two degrees from atrocity.”—*Times Literary Supplement*. As anti-Semitism rears its head again in Europe, *Trieste* bears witness to horror.

Fossum, Karin. [I Can See in the Dark](#) (\$14.95). Riktor doesn’t like the way the policeman storms into his home without even knocking. He doesn’t like the arrogant way he walks around the house, taking note of its contents. The policeman doesn’t bother to explain why he’s there, and Riktor is too afraid to ask. He knows he’s guilty of a terrible crime and he’s sure the policeman has found him out. But when the policeman finally does arrest him, it’s for something totally unexpected—a crime he didn’t commit.

Fuller, Alexandra. [Leaving Before the Rains Come](#) (Penguin Press \$26.95). The Indie Next Pick. “Fans of Fuller’s African adventures will be thrilled to find she is back with another engaging memoir, and new readers will want to read her previous works... Fuller tells of her unraveling marriage and her realization that she is a person truly between countries, living in the U.S. with her husband and children while her heart and soul remain in Africa. Her experiences in the States change her, and when she returns to Africa she discovers that she no longer fits in as she previously had. Fuller must face some tough questions about who she is and where she belongs, and she does so with her usual intelligence and wit.” Fuller’s [Don’t Let Goes to the Dogs Tonight](#) (\$16) is so exceptional that nothing she can say later will match it. Sometimes it’s better to stop after such a book.

Grenier, Robert L. [88 Days to Kandahar: A CIA Diary](#) (SimonSchuster \$28). Grenier, former director of CIA’s counterterrorism center and station chief in Islamabad, writes of how the American campaign in Afghanistan began (but does not comment on bin Laden).

Holliday, Graham. [Eating Viet Nam: Dispatches from a Blue Plastic Table](#) (Harper \$26.99). We all enjoy travel writing. Here a journalist takes us on a colorful and spicy gastronomic tour through Việt Nam in this entertaining, offbeat travel memoir.

Kallentoft, Mons. [Spring Remains](#) (\$16). Spring has finally arrived, filling the Swedish countryside with sunshine and flowers after a long, dark winter. The beautiful weather is lost on Detective Investigator Malin Fors, though, troubled as she is by the unexpected death of her emotionally distant mother and what it might mean for her own fragmented and dysfunctional family. But when an explosion rocks the town square, killing two young girls, leaving their mother fighting for life, and terrifying the entire community, Malin has to focus on the future of her city over her family.

Kanon, Joseph. [Leaving Berlin Signed](#) (Atria \$2). The Indie Next Pick: “In 1949, WWII has been over for four years but the world continues to fume as suspicion wages a new kind of conflict in Joe McCarthy’s America and the German people starve behind a barrier that has made them victims of the Cold War. When Alex Meier returns to Berlin to attempt to ‘earn’ his way back to the U.S. by spying for the fledgling CIA, life quickly begins to unravel and Meier is thrown into a turmoil that he could not have imagined. Can he betray the love of his youth by remaining loyal to his pledge to help his new country? Readers will be on the edge of their seats in expectation,” Kanon’s forte is the immediate aftermath of WWII whereas Furst generally plunges you into it.

Kearsley, Susanna. [A Desperate Fortune Signed](#) (Sourcebooks \$16 April 6). Not on sale until April 6 but here's your chance to order early! For nearly 300 years, the mysterious journal of Jacobite exile Mary Dundas has lain unread—its secrets safe from prying eyes. Now, amateur codebreaker Sara Thomas has been hired by a once-famous historian to crack the journal's cipher. But when she arrives in Paris, Sara finds herself besieged by complications from all sides: the journal's reclusive owner, her charming Parisian neighbor, and Mary, whose journal doesn't hold the secrets Sara expects. As Mary's tale grows more and more dire, Sara, too, must carefully choose whom to trust...and whom to fear.

King, Laurie and Barbara Peters. [Not in Kansas Anymore Toto Signed by Both](#) (Perfect Niche \$16). Written during our research trip for King's new Mary Russell/Sherlock Holmes adventure [Dreaming Spies Signed](#) (Bantam \$26), it's just for fun. Laurie describes it as: "A cultural exploration of the Japanese bath-room, (toilet and bath) with side-excursions into shoes, maps, irrigation pipes, the effects of earthquakes on architecture, the problems of finding a bed during cherry-blossom time, and the uncooperative nature of diesel fuel when mixed with gasoline (by Rob)."

Leon, Donna. [By Its Cover](#) (\$15). When several valuable antiquarian books go missing from a prestigious library in the heart of Venice, Commissario Brunetti is immediately called to the scene. The staff suspects an American researcher has stolen them, but for Brunetti something doesn't quite add up. Taking on the case, the Commissario begins to seek information about some of the library's regulars, such as the ex-priest Franchini, a passionate reader of ancient Christian literature, and Contessa Morosini-Albani, the library's chief donor, and comes to the conclusion that the thief could not have acted alone. However, when Franchini is found murdered in his home, the case takes a more sinister turn and soon Brunetti finds himself submerged in the dark secrets of the black market of antiquarian books. Alongside his ever-faithful team of Ispettore Vianello and Signorina Elettra, he delves into the pages of Franchini's past and into the mind of a book thief in order to uncover the terrible truth. The 23rd case for Brunetti. [Click here](#) to order earlier Brunettis and one or two others sorts of books by Leon. The new Brunetti: [Falling in Love](#) (Grove \$26 Signed tip-ins) or the Signed UK first, [Falling in Love Signed](#) (\$40 April).

MacBride, Stuart. [A Song for the Dying](#) (\$14.99). Tartan Noir from the author of the Aberdeen Logan McRae crime series. Eight years ago, 'The Inside Man' murdered four women and left three more in critical condition – all of them with their stomachs slit open and a plastic doll stitched inside. And then the killer just ... disappeared. Ash Henderson was a Detective Inspector on the initial investigation, but a lot can change in eight years. His family has been destroyed, his career is in tatters, and one of Oldcastle's most vicious criminals is making sure he spends the rest of his life in prison. Now a nurse has turned up dead on a patch of waste ground, a plastic doll buried beneath her skin, and it looks as if Ash might finally get a shot at redemption. At earning his freedom. At revenge. The latest McRae is [The Missing and the Dead Signed](#) (\$40). [Click here](#) for earlier titles.

Mai Jia. [Decoded](#) (\$16). All the attention to codecracking in *The Imitation Game* – and see the new Kearsley novel about an 18th Century challenge—makes this novel from China of extra

interest. I think it's terrific. Here is *Booklist's* Starred Review: "Yan Shi, an aging Chinese code-cracker, views his life labor as "a sort of madness that pulls you close to insanity and to genius." Readers skate the line separating insanity from genius in Mai Jia's riveting tale of cryptographic warfare. At the center of Mai Jia's taut novel, the mathematical genius Rong Jinzhen is spirited away as a young man to China's secretive Unit 701, an elite cadre of code masters. There Jinzhen encounters the hero who broke WWII Japanese ciphers, now a helpless, chess-playing lunatic. Such is the peril Jinzhen faces as he launches his own lonely assault on PURPLE, the fiendish brainchild of his own former professor. In a narrative challenging readers to do their own decoding of its ruptures and inversions, readers see the brilliant protagonist survive daunting psychological dangers as he unravels PURPLE, inspired by a dream about the Russian chemist Mendeleev. A denouement at once heartbreaking and thought-provoking leaves readers pondering the collective sanity of a world shrouding knowledge in enigmas. Gifted translators bring English-speaking readers a Chinese literary treasure."

Massey, Sujata. [The Kizuna Coast](#) (Ikat Press \$16). When a devastating earthquake rocks Japan's northeast coast, a tsunami follows. As does an SOS from Rei Shimura's friend, the antiques dealer, Yasushi Ishida, who's trapped among the displaced, injured and dead on the Tohoku coast. Rei rushes from Honolulu to Tokyo and discovers that Ishida-san's dog has been abandoned and the shop may have been burglarized. She takes the dog, Hachiko, with her on volunteer bus to the ravaged town of Sugihama. But Mr. Ishida's got more work for her. He's lost contact with his antiques apprentice, Mayumi, and is frantic with worry. He won't leave Sugihama without knowing the fate of the troubled 19-year-old girl from a famous lacquer-making family. Calling on disaster survivors and volunteers—and her own knowledge of Japanese manners and history—Rei investigates the suspicious journey. From Sugihama's muddy shops and shelters to the buzzing bars and bathhouses of Tokyo, it's a suspenseful journey. But as Rei draws closer to the truth, she realizes that she's being stalked. 11th in the Rei Shimura series. Ordered Upon Request.

McKinty, Adrian. [Gun Street Girl](#) (Seventh Street \$15.95). What a pleasure to read McKinty's arresting juxtaposition of elegant, often erudite prose with street language, the f-bomb, cop talk interspersed with literary references. Irresistible! Belfast's DI Sean Duffy who polices during the Troubles as a Catholic cop in the Protestant Royal Ulster Constabulary, stationed in Carrickfergus, makes a welcome return after the completion of the Troubles Trilogy. It's 1985 and historical events form the background: the Anglo-Irish Agreement, Oliver North and missiles, a helicopter crash. For Duffy, watching a real cock-up of a joint operation to capture American gun-runners down on a beach, then it begins with the double murder of a couple in their home. Their son and his fancy car are missing so it's hard to avoid the obvious conclusion. But Duffy senses something is not right and won't sign off on the case.... A terrific book recommended for fans of Stuart Neville, Brian McGilloway, and also Ian Rankin (for style).

Nikolaidou, Sophia. [The Scapegoat](#) (Melville House \$23.95). Winner of the 2011 Athens Prize for Literature and now translated into English, this searing crime novel is based upon the real murder, unsolved, of CBS reporter George Polk in 1948. See *First Novels* for more.

Ohlsson, Kristina. [The Disappeared](#) (\$16). A young woman on her way to a party vanishes without a trace, and it's not until two years later that her body turns up. Mercilessly dismembered, it has deteriorated considerably in its lonely burial spot on the edge of a forest. The forensic team is able to identify the body as that of Rebecca Tolle, a student at the nearby university. Investigative analyst Fredrika Bergman and her team are assigned to solve the case but more bodies are found in the same stretch of forest... 3rd in the Bergman series.

Phelan, Tom [What the Mushroom Pickers Told](#) (Arcade \$24.95). "Tom Phelan's sixth novel, is a masterful portrait of Irish village life disguised as a murder mystery. Journalist Patrick Bracken heads back to the small rural town where he grew up. He visits the home of former lawyer Sam Howard and his witty wife, Elsie, to talk about two near-simultaneous deaths in 1951 that Patrick and his best friend Mikey Lamb witnessed. The two deaths had been officially ruled accidental, but Patrick knows better. The narrative toggles back and forth between Patrick's revealing conversation with the Howards in the present day and the events as they unfolded in the early '50s. Phelan finds humor and warmth in every poignant moment, with a clear eye to the reasons no one has ever come clean about the murders, even though most intelligent villagers know the truth." —Rob LeFebvre on this wry portrait of Irish village life.

Podell, Albert. [Around the World in 50 Years](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Podell developed not one but two consuming goals. One was to set the record for the longest automobile journey ever made, which he did in 1965-66. The other was to visit every country on earth. *LJ* evaluates: Even the most jaded armchair traveler will enjoy these breezy anecdotal vignettes from Podell's 50 years of journeying. He accomplished this [visiting every country] with good cheer and buckets full of stamina during hundreds of trips by car, jeep, minivan, camel, elephant—you name it. This is absolutely not a travel guide but rather a shout-out to those who crave adventure from someone who persists with good luck and no fear of the unknown. From his work as an editor and writer at *Playboy* and national outdoor magazines, Podell knows how to keep the reader's attention. Photographs are sprinkled throughout the book." Podell is more a first world guy than some of the great travel writers, but then most of us are....

Rosbottom, Ronald C. [When Paris Went Dark](#) (\$18). "A riveting account of one of the most resonant hostage-takings in history: the 1,500 days when a swastika flew from the Eiffel Tower. Rosbottom illuminates every corner of a darkened, heartsick city, exploring the oddities, capturing the grisly humor, and weighing the prices of resistance, accommodation, collaboration. The result is an intimate, sweeping narrative, astute in its insight and chilling in its rich detail." —Stacy Schiff

Townsend, Tim. [Mission at Nuremberg](#) (\$15.99). Henry Gerecke, a Lutheran minister from St. Louis serving as an Army Chaplain at the close of WWII, received a startling opportunity: ministering to the Nazis who would be charged with war crimes at the Nuremberg Trials. Gerecke, who had given well-attended sermons for years, had also struggled during the war to bridge the divide between his country and his faith, refusing a request from Office of Strategic Services officials to extract information from prisoners during confession....Townsend's account is full of surreal moments Gerecke witnessed during his

time in Nuremberg, from watching a congregation full of Nazis singing "Silent Night" on Christmas to Goering's last letter to his daughter, an innocuous note wishing her a happy birthday. Townsend's accessible account captures the strangeness and horror of Gerecke's assignment, and examines what it's like to spend the day around men who had committed such monstrous acts. A nonfiction companion to new books by Kanon and Kerr and Furst's new paperback.

Weiss, Jan Merete. [A Few Drops of Blood](#) (\$15.95). Naples has long been ruled by the Camorra in nearly all aspects of city life. Weiss, from Puerto Rico, has made the ancient city her own in portraits taking no sides but sparing no details in cases worked by Captain Natalia Monte of the Naples Carabinieri. When the bodies of two men are found, shockingly posed, in the garden of an elderly countess, Natalia is assigned the case. Soon she finds herself shuttling between Naples' decadent art galleries and violent criminal underworld. If she is to succeed in solving the heinous crime, Natalia must deal with not only her own complicated past and allegiances, but also those of the city as a whole. Her BFF, helpful, is also a leader in a powerful Camorra family, promising serious shoals ahead for both women. This is an absorbing read for those wishing not just to visit a major Italian city but to experience ambiguous justice.

White, Michael. [Travels in Vermeer](#) (Persea \$17.95) is a thoroughly user-friendly piece of art education, but it is even better as a thoughtful, spare memoir of pain and recovery, unusually formatted and exquisitely moving. Poet White lost his first wife to cancer and his second to a searing divorce/custody fight. For a companion piece, consider White's previously published book of poetry inspired by the same journey, entitled *Vermeer in Hell*. Read with Tracy Chevalier's [Girl with a Pearl Earring](#) (\$16) and Susan Vreeland's [The Girl in Hyacinth Blue](#) (\$15).

Wilkinson, Toby. [The Nile: Travelling Downriver Trough Egypt's Past and Present](#) (\$17.95). Egyptologist Wilkinson leads us through space and time from the Pharaohs through the Arab Spring. A wonderful book for fans of Elizabeth Peters, Michael Pearce, or those interested in the Burton/Speke affair.

OUT OF THIS WORLD...

Bledsoe, Alex. [Wisp of a Thing](#) (\$15.99). This is a lovely book, especially if you love the Smoky Mountain region (Sharyn McCrumb, Sandra Parshall among other authors who portray it). Touched by a very public tragedy, musician Rob Quillen comes to Cloud County, Tennessee, in search of a song that might ease his aching heart. All he knows of the mysterious and reclusive Tufa is what he has read on the internet: they are an enigmatic clan of swarthy, black-haired mountain people whose historical roots are lost in myth and controversy. Some people say that when the first white settlers came to the Appalachians centuries ago, they found the Tufa already there. Others hint that Tufa blood brings special gifts. Rob finds both music and mystery in the mountains. Close-lipped locals guard their secrets, even as Rob gets caught up in a subtle power struggle he can't begin to comprehend. A vacationing wife goes missing, raising suspicions of foul play, and a strange feral girl runs wild in the woods, howling in the night like a lost spirit.

Bova, Ben. [Mars, Inc](#) (\$15). How do you get to the Red Planet? Not via a benighted government program. No, what it will take is a helping of adventure, science, corporate power plays,

seduction—both in and out of the boardroom—and money, money, money! Art Thrasher knows this. He is a man with a driving vision: send humans to Mars. The government has utterly failed, but Thrasher has got the plan to accomplish such a feat: form a “club” of billionaires to chip in one billion a year until the dream is accomplished. These are men and women addicted to a profitable bottom-line. But Thrasher is a billionaire himself. The man for the job has arrived. Art Thrasher is prepared to do whatever it takes to humans on Mars—or die trying!... Does one glimpse Richard Branson here?

Connolly, John. [Conquest: Book 1, The Chronicles of the Invaders](#) (\$15) introduces a world where young rebels must unlock their powers to rescue humankind from a powerful alien rulership. Earth has been invaded by the Illyri—a beautiful, civilized, yet ruthless alien species. But humankind has not given up the fight, and Paul Kerr is one of a new generation of young Resistance leaders waging war on the invaders. Syl Hellais is the first of the Illyri to be born on Earth. Trapped inside the walls of her father’s stronghold, hated by the humans, she longs to escape. But on her sixteenth birthday, her life will change forever. Syl becomes an outcast, an enemy of her people, for daring to save the life of one human... YA on up.

Holcombe, Larry. [Presidents and UFOs](#) (St Martins \$27.99). A veteran Ufologist draws on 50 years and load of documents, some newly declassified, to examine many facets of UFOs and conspiracy theories. Frustratingly he doesn’t reach any definitive conclusion.

Jones, Stephen. [Dark Detectives: An Anthology of Supernatural Mysteries](#) (Forge \$14.95). 18 tales including ones by Clive Barker, Neil Gaiman, Brian Lumley, Peter Tremayne, and the entire “Seven Stars” saga by Kim Newman, pitting the Diogenes Club against an occult object with the power to ultimately annihilate mankind!

Klavan, Andrew. [Werewolf Cop](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). You may be surprised to find a new novel by Edgar winner Klavan here, but his 24 novels embrace all kinds of stories. And here Zach Adams, nicknamed Cowboy, is a Houston homicide cop known for his courage. And he’s now on a federal task force to hunt down Dominic Abend, a European gangster rising in America, but on the move in Germany and even edging into the supernatural. In an ancient forest under a full moon, Zach is assaulted and transformed into....

Martin, George RR. [Old Venus](#) (Random \$30). Veteran editors Martin and Dozois assemble an entertaining array of 16 new SF stories recalling the heady days of the pulps while exploring provocative themes of alienation, morality, and discovery (of Venus). The stories range widely in tone: there’s a Wild West vibe to Lavie Tidhar’s “The Drowned Celestial”; Mike Resnick’s “The Godstone of Venus” is straightforwardly nostalgic; Ian McDonald’s “Botanica Veneris: Thirteen Papercuts by Ida Countess Rathangan” is a neo-Victorian traveler’s tale; and Matthew Hughes’s “Greeves and the Evening Star” is a droll Wodehouse pastiche. Eco-disasters and technical catastrophes drive protagonists to dire straits in Gwyneth Jones’s “A Planet Called Desire” and Elizabeth Bear’s “The Heart’s Filthy Lesson,” while rescue missions reveal the dark extremes of human behavior in Allen M. Steele’s “Frogheads” and Garth Nix’s “By Frogsled and Lizardback to Outcast Venusian Lepers.”

Mosley, Walter. [Inside a Silver Box Signed](#) (Tor \$28). “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

Pratchett, Terry. [A Blink of the Screen: Collected Shorter Fiction](#) (Knopf \$26.95) spans Pratchett’s long career from schooldays to Discworld and on to today. Four decades worth.

Richtel, Matt. [The Doomsday Equation](#) (Harper \$14.99). What would you do if you had a machine that predicted World War III was coming in 3 days... and nobody believed you? If you’re Jeremy Stillwater, you try to save the world yourself. Jeremy Stillwater is a genius with computers, not so much with people. Painfully self-righteous, he’s alienated his girlfriend, and infuriated business partners and government agents who saw military promise in his innovation: a program that seemed to be able to predict war. Even Jeremy has begun to doubt the algorithm’s capabilities. Then, one day, his computer has a message for him. War is coming. Three days and counting until massive nuclear conflict. Is it real? A malicious joke? A bug? Isolated, peeling back layers, Jeremy uncovers an ancient conspiracy, a powerful malice that would see mankind’s end. It’s nothing a single person should try to defeat. And it will take every bit of Jeremy’s stubborn ingenuity to survive another minute, let alone save the world. Part Michael Crichton, part Independence Day.

Sanderson, Brandon. [Firefight](#) (Random \$18.99). #2 in his Reckoners Series after *Steelheart*. For Ages 12+.

Unsworth, Simon Kurt. [The Devil’s Detective Signed](#) (Dutton \$34). When an unidentified, brutalized body is discovered, the case is assigned to Thomas Fool, one of Hell’s detectives, known as ‘Information Men’. But how do you investigate a murder where death is commonplace and everyone is guilty of something? What about those touristy angels led by one called Adam? This astonishing debut, a **SciFi/Fantasy/Horror Club Pick** calls on Dante and Milton in the creation of a vision of Hell that is truly...amazing! Think John Connolly crossed with John Milton and you get an idea of his imaginative fiction where angels descend into hell... [The Devil’s Detective](#) (Knopf \$25.95)

Wilson, Daniel H. [Robogenesis](#) (\$15.95). It’s been three years since the global uprising of the world’s robots, three long years in which ordinary people waged a guerilla war that saved humankind from the brink of annihilation. But a horrific new

enemy has emerged, and the resistance is called to fight once again. And in a world where humanity and technology are pushed to the breaking point, their one hope may reside with their former enemy—Archos R-14. Start with [Robocalypse](#) (\$15.95).

MARCH TRADE PAPERBACK PICKS

✚Bolton, Sharon. [A Dark and Twisted Tide](#) (\$16.99). To write of London is to write of the Thames. This case begins in the river. One morning police officer Lacey Flint, out for an unlawful swim off her houseboat, finds the body of a shrouded young woman at the old King's Wharf. She assumes the discovery was one of chance. But what if the body had been left near the mouth of Deptford Creek for Lacey to find? The story highlights the cultural/racial mix of London and provides a surprise killer. Bolton is one of my favorite contemporary British crime writers and this new Lacey Flint confirms her skills (earlier books are written as SJ Bolton). Bolton is one of my favorite contemporary British crime writers and this new Lacey Flint confirms her skills (earlier books are written as SJ Bolton). Bolton is a Mary Higgins Clark Award and ITW Thriller Award winner, and a CWA Gold Dagger nominee. [Click here](#) to order her earlier work.

Connelly, Michael. [The Burning Room](#) (\$16). Harry Bosch mixes it up with mariachi musicians the LAPD's Open-Unsolved Unit gets an unusual case: not many murder victims die almost a decade after the crime. So when a man succumbs to complications from being shot by a stray bullet nine years earlier, the body is still fresh, but all other evidence is virtually nonexistent. Bosch pairs up with rookie Detective Lucia Soto to work what turns out to be a highly charged, politically sensitive case.

Corby, Gary. [The Marathon Conspiracy](#) (\$15.95). In his 4th investigation, Classical Athens' crimebusters Nicolaos and his fiancée, the shrewd and feisty former priestess Diotima, have their hands full negotiating their wedding. Difficult parents, social classes, etc. Diotima was once a student at the Sanctuary of Artemis, the most famous school for girls. When a student is killed—bear!—and another disappears, Diotima is asked to investigate, which involves a lot of cross-city travel. Meanwhile the discovery of a skull in a nearby cave appears to be that of the city's last tyrant, the one so hated the Athenians battled the invading Persians at Marathon to prevent the tyrant's return. Supposedly the tyrant died 30 years ago in Persia. Surely there's a connection to the two students, one dead, one missing, as they made the discovery of the skull.... A lively and interesting story forged of real history and imagined events and characters. [Click here](#) to order the earlier cases.

Crosby, Ellen. [Multiple Exposure](#) (\$16). When photojournalist Sophie Medina returns to London from an overseas assignment, she discovers that her husband, Nick, a geologist and covert CIA operative, has been abducted and assumed dead. Three months later, a friend in the British government relays that Nick has been spotted in Moscow, but Sophie is allowed little joy before the news turns dark—Nick is accused as a suspect in his boss's murder and rumors circulate that he's involved in illicit Russian oil deals. With her every step closely watched, Sophie moves to Washington, DC. And there.... "This one is right up my alley—Fabergé eggs, Russians, and political intrigue—all of which keeps you absolutely intrigued, ready for the gut punch. Ellen Crosby certainly has a talent for making the conventional wholly

unconventional."—Steve Berry, who signs [The Patriot Threat](#) (St Martins \$27.99), a new thriller for Cotton Malone, here April 7.

Dahl, Julia. [Invisible City](#) (\$15.99). A 2015 Edgar nominee and First Mystery Club Pick. Reporter Rebekah Roberts mother, a Hasidic Jew from Brooklyn, abandoned her Christian boyfriend and newborn baby to return to her religion. Neither Rebekah nor her father has heard from her since. Now a recent college graduate, Rebekah has moved to New York to follow her dream of becoming a big-city reporter. But she's also drawn to the idea of being closer to her mother, who might still be living in the Hasidic community in Brooklyn. Then Rebekah is called to cover the story of a murdered Hasidic woman. Rebekah's shocked to learn that, because of the NYPD's habit of kowtowing to the powerful ultra-Orthodox community, not only will the woman be buried without an autopsy, her killer may get away with murder. Rebekah can't let the story end there... "Dahl's convincing dialogue and perfect pacing make for a real page-turner. And her storytelling skills illuminate the intriguing worlds of the tabloid press, Hasidism, the NYPD, and Brooklyn's 20-somethings—as well as the fragile boundaries of family, religion, and life itself."—*Publishers Weekly*.

Davidson, Hilary. [Blood Always Tells](#) (\$15.99). Dominique Monaghan just wanted to get even with her two-timing, married boyfriend, a washed-up boxer stuck in a toxic marriage to a dangerously spoiled socialite. But an elaborate blackmail scheme soon lands her in the middle of an unexpected kidnapping... and attempted murder. But who is actually out to kill whom? Desmond Edgars, Dominique's big brother, has looked out for his wayward sister ever since their mother was convicted of murdering Dominique's father many years ago, so when he receives a frantic phone call from Dominique in the middle of the night, he drops everything to rush to the rescue. But to find out what has really happened to his sister, the stoic ex-military man must navigate a tangled web of murder and deception, involving a family fortune, a couple of shifty lawyers, and a missing child, while wrestling with his own bloody secrets.... [Click here](#) to order her earlier work.

DeSilva, Bruce. [Providence Rag](#) (\$15.99). In 1992, when Mulligan is still handling the sports beat for the *Providence Dispatch*, an editor assigns him to help cover a gory double murder. Mulligan succeeds in getting more information from the police about the slaughter of Becky Medeiros and her 4-year-old daughter, after the paper's lead crime reporter fails. Two years later, a similar crime claims three more lives—a mother and her two daughters, ages 8 and 12. Mulligan ends up cracking the case, but the main action concerns the fate of the convicted killer, who is due to be released after six years thanks to a legal fluke. When a colleague discovers that efforts to lengthen the incarceration may have been unethical, Mulligan must find a way to balance his passion for the truth with his desire to protect the public."—*PW Starred Review*. I add, Serial killer fans, alert! DeSilva lays out one's evolution in horrifying detail. 3rd in the Edgar-winner's series.

Furst, Alan. [Midnight in Europe](#) (\$16). Furst, whom Vince Flynn has called "the most talented espionage novelist of our generation," now gives us a taut, suspenseful, romantic, and richly rendered novel of spies and secret operatives in Paris and New York, in Warsaw and Odessa, on the eve of World War II.

Cristián Ferrar, a brilliant and handsome Spanish émigré, is a lawyer in the Paris office of a prestigious international law firm. Ferrar is approached by the embassy of the Spanish Republic and asked to help a clandestine agency trying desperately to supply weapons to the Republic's beleaguered army—an effort that puts his life at risk in the battle against fascism. Joining Ferrar in this mission is a group of unlikely men and women: idealists and gangsters, arms traders and aristocrats and spies. From shady Paris nightclubs to white-shoe New York law firms, from brothels in Istanbul to the dockyards of Poland, Ferrar and his allies battle the secret agents of Hitler and Franco. The tapestry Ferrar has created from myriad aspects of the war forms a singular literary achievement. [Click here](#) to order the earlier books.

La Seur, Carrie. [The Home Place Signed](#) (\$14.99). Under “a big sky full of a million stars,” the hard, cold realities of Billings' Terrebonne family loom large. Alma, emotionally shut down for years, must find new strengths to face escalating horrors. Wallowing in suspense, drama, rage, and remorse, this debut is an accomplished literary novel of the new West. See Event Books.

Lescroart, John. [The Keeper](#) (\$15). On the evening before Thanksgiving, Hal Chase, a guard in the San Francisco County Jail, drives to the airport to pick up his step-brother for the weekend. When they return, Hal's wife, Katie, has disappeared without a clue. By the time Dismas Hardy hears about this, Katie has been missing for five days. The case strikes close to home because Katie had been seeing Hardy's wife, a marriage counselor. By this time, the original Missing Persons case is being treated as a homicide. Hal is the prime suspect. The lawyer he wants for his defense is none other than Hardy himself. And the man Hardy wants working with him is former Homicide Chief Abe Glitsky.... I've always liked the Hardy/Glitsky partnership and here, with Glitsky no longer bound by police procedure, it ramps up. Check out earlier Hardys by [clicking here](#), beginning with *Dead Irish*.

Mina, Denise. [The Red Road](#) (\$15). “Edgar-finalist Mina's fourth novel featuring Glasgow Det. Insp. Alex Morrow is perhaps her finest yet, a brilliantly crafted tale of corruption, ruined lives, and the far-reaching ripple effects of crime. Morrow is called to testify against Michael Brown, a recidivist offender whose prints have been found on confiscated guns. During the trial, Brown's prints turn up at a brand new murder scene. Have they been somehow planted by Brown from prison in a ruse to discredit evidence? Morrow follows a complex trail that leads back to two murders in 1997. One of the murders involved a teenage girl, Rose Wilson, who stabbed her abusive pimp to death; the other was 14-year-old Michael Brown's brutal slaying of his older brother, John “Pinkie” Brown. Wilson now works for her benefactor, elderly attorney Julius McMillan, as a nanny for McMillan's grandchildren. Meanwhile, Robert, Julius's son, has gone missing after an elaborate money-laundering scheme has turned south. Are these decades' old crimes somehow connected?

⌘Perry, Anne. [Death on Blackheath](#) (\$16). As Victoria's reign draws to an end. Britain's wealth and power are global. It's a charmed era for its Empire, but greed and corruption ever coil in its heart. Thomas Pitt, risen to commander of the powerful Special Branch (MI6), is charged with keeping Britain safe from spies and traitors. Why is he ordered to investigate the blood, hair, and shards of glass discovered outside the home of

naval weapons expert Dudley Kynaston, and the simultaneous disappearance of Mrs. Kynaston's beautiful lady's maid? Maybe the key lies in the mutilated body of an unidentified young woman soon found near the scientist's home....

Quirk, Matthew. [The Directive](#) (\$16). What a pleasure to read a fast-paced, intelligent thriller that isn't about the fate of nations or global disaster or the coming apocalypse but instead pits a guy against greed. Quirk brought this off in his 2013 First Mystery Club Pick [The 500](#) (\$15.99), and yay, he's done it again, and again with lawyer/political fixer Mike Ford who is still romancing fellow lawyer Annie, a woman of my heart—although Mike is so not the choice of Annie's powerful father. That's because Harvard Law grad Mike comes from a world of small-stakes con men, his father having done time, his brother Jack your basic outlaw. Now, framed for murder, Mike is forced to play front man in a scheme to steal—before its release—the top-secret directive regularly issued by the Federal Reserve to guide U.S. economic policy. Hedged by betrayals, your heart hopes that Mike and Annie will find the steel not to succumb to the bad guys or to their relatives.

Unger, Lisa. [In the Blood](#) (\$15). “Bestseller Unger returns to the Hollows, the secluded upstate New York town that served as the setting for *Fragile* and *Darkness*, *My Old Friend*, for this gripping novel of psychological suspense. Ace student Lana Granger, with a new name and appearance, sequesters herself at small Sacred Heart College, where no one knows that her father is on death row for killing her mother. At the urging of a compassionate psychology professor, Lana takes a job with Rachel Kahn babysitting her volatile 11-year-old son, Luke. Mother and son have recently moved to the Hollows, where Luke is enrolled at a school for troubled kids. While Lana is drawn into a bizarre game manipulated by Luke, who has discovered her secrets and threatens to expose her, her best friend, Beck Miller, disappears after the two of them argue. A mystery woman's revealing diary augments the tense, surprise-laden plot.”—*PW* Starred Review for a 2014 Surprise Me Club! Pick. Just out, more Hollows suspense in [Crazy Love You Signed](#) (Touchstone \$25.99).

CLASSICS REDUX

We have a large inventory of Stark House Press' excellent reissues of classic crimes. You can search for books by [clicking here](#), or emailing sales@poisonedpen.com. Two new volumes are listed below.

Holding, Elisabeth Sanxay. [Speak of the Devil /The Obstinate Murderer](#) (Stark House \$17.95). Holding has been hailed by such wide-ranging tastes as that of Raymond Chandler, Ed Gorman, Sarah Weinman and Christopher Morley. Her novels have been filmed, her stories collected into year's best anthologies. Here we present two more of her superlative suspense classics, the first one a story of murder aboard a cruise ship, the second the story of an aging alcoholic who is called in to solve a murder that hasn't happened yet.

Michener, James A. [The Covenant](#) (Random \$20). Michener's trademark fiction tracing the history of a place—here, what we call South Africa today—down the ages. First, the Bushmen and their spare, stark survivalist culture. In time, traders. The Dutch. The English. The Boer trekkers. Wars. And, this being Michener's last novel, he leaves us under apartheid. Fascinating reading.

Rohmer, Sax. [Fu-Manchu: The Shadow of Fu-Manchu](#) (Titan \$9.95). World War II has ended. The United States is locked in a Cold War with the Eastern Bloc. It's the time of mutually assured destruction, yet the atomic bomb isn't the only weapon to fear. And the Soviets have another enemy with whom to contend. Dr. Morris Craig has developed an energy weapon with the potential for unlimited destruction—whoever controls it could tip the balance of global power. The quest for Craig's invention once again brings Fu-Manchu to New York City, his mission to prevent the Communists from acquiring the device. But who can keep it out of the hands of the Devil Doctor himself?

Trinian, John. [North Beach Girl/Scandal on the Sand](#) (Stark House \$19.95). Two vintage California novels from the author of *Once a Thief* and episodes of *The Rockford Files*. *North Beach Girl* is set in the world of San Francisco's beatniks, and *Scandal* is the story of a dozen strangers thrown together on an isolated stretch of beach with a sadistic cop. As author Ed Gorman reviewed it, "*Scandal* offers just about everything I ask for from a novel."

NEW BOOKS

Bailey, Frankie Y. [What the Fly Saw](#) (St Martins \$25.99). We're in Albany, 2020, where biracial detective Hannah McCabe works her second case. The morning after a blizzard downs the city, Kevin Novak is found shot with an arrow in the basement of his funeral home. It came from his own hunting bow. He had no known enemies. He was said to have been depressed because his best bud had died suddenly of a heart attack—why would Novak blame himself just for playing a hard game of tennis with him? There are however several suspects for McCabe who is distracted by a trio of personal problems, to pursue. And there's some actual history like Spiritualism in upstate NY as well as a bit of near-future technology. Something different. Meet Hannah in [The Red Queen Dies](#) (\$24.99).

Baker, Shannon. [Tattered Legacy](#) (Midnight Ink \$14.95). Readers of the Thurlos can refocus on the same landscape but with a Hopi focus. This third investigation for Nora Abbott is set in Moab and Canyonlands National Park where Nora enlists her friend Lisa Taylor to create a documentary film to encourage Congress to expand the park's boundaries. Then Nora learns that Lisa had died in an alleged accident while working on the film... [Click here](#) for all three books in the Nora Abbott series.

Baldacci, David. [The Escape](#) (\$16). A combat veteran and special agent with the U.S. Army, John Puller is the man they call to investigate the toughest crimes facing the nation. But all his training, all his experience, all his skills will not prepare him for his newest case, one that will force him to hunt down the most formidable and brilliant prey he has ever tracked: his own brother.

Blake, James Carlos. [The House of Wolfe Signed](#) (Grove \$24 April 2). The *PW* Starred Review: "In Blake's masterly third Border Noir (after 2013's *The Rules of Wolfe*), a female member of the American branch of the Wolfe family (a large clan of outlaws who operate numerous legitimate businesses and deal in illegal arms on both sides of the U.S./Mexican border) finds herself in big trouble. In Mexico City, kidnappers led by El Galán, an up-and-coming gangster intent on making a name for himself, abduct college-age Jessie Juliet Wolfe, along with an entire 10-person wedding party, and demand payment of a \$5 million ransom within 24 hours. With aid from Los Jaguaros, as

the Mexican Blake family's criminal network is known, Rudy Max Wolfe, a cousin of Jessie's, and Charlie Fortune, another cousin, hope to slip into Mexico undetected and rescue Jessie, but of course everything goes to hell quickly. Blake convincingly portrays modern-day Mexico City as a beautiful and surreal landscape, and he lets the wealthy elite and the desperately poor share the stage, often with violent and tragic results. As always, the writing is both poetic and visceral, and the mostly present-tense narrative keeps the reader engaged as the action rushes toward a surprising and fully satisfying conclusion."

Boyle, T. Coraghessan. [The Harder They Come](#) (Ecco \$27.99) The Indie Next Pick: "If you were up all night reading Lionel Shriver's *We Need to Talk About Kevin*, take a nap before starting T.C. Boyle's new book. The novel addresses two difficult and timely topics: gun violence and society's treatment of the mentally ill. Parents Sten and Carolee Stenson are faced with balancing their love for their unstable adult son, Adam, and the safety of others as his behavior becomes increasingly erratic and threatening. Boyle is a masterful storyteller and this is his best book yet."

Brandt, Harry. [The Whites](#) (Holt \$28). Richard Price, writing as Harry Brandt, "is one whale of a storyteller by any name, as evinced by the debut of his new brand—okay, Brandt—a gripping, gritty, Greek tragedy of cops, killers, and the sometimes-blurry line between them. The sprawling tale centers on stoic police sergeant Billy Graves, banished to the purgatory of the NYPD's night watch since his role in a racially charged, politically explosive double shooting a decade earlier. Despite the adrenaline-pumping emergencies that routinely erupt during his 1–8 a.m. tour, he has time to obsess over his troubled wife, Carmen; his increasingly demented father, Billy Sr., a retired former chief of patrol; and, most of all, his "White" (that's what Billy, with a harpoon salute to Melville's tormented mariner, calls the one who got away): triple-murderer Curtis Taft. He's the elusive monster Billy is fated to hunt, probably even after retirement—to judge from the way Billy's former colleagues in the Bronx, a group calling themselves the Wild Geese, continue to hunt their own Whites. Suddenly, one of Billy's friends' Whites turns up murdered amid a St. Patrick's Day scrum at Penn Station. Soon a second disappears. And then it starts to look as if someone is stalking Billy's family."—*PW* Starred Review. We have maybe 3 Signed copies unsold as I write this.

Chang, Henry. [Death Money](#) (\$14.95). Soho Press, specializing in foreign settings, includes NY's Chinatown among them (as it does Alaska...). When the body of an unidentified Asian man is found in the Harlem River, NYPD Detective Jack Yu is pulled in to investigate. The murder takes Jack from the benevolent associations of Chinatown to the take-out restaurants, strip clubs, and underground gambling establishments of the Bronx, to a wealthy, exclusive New Jersey borough. It's a world of secrets and unclear allegiances, of Chinatown street gangs and major Triad players. And he works the case with the help of an elderly fortune teller and an old friend, the unpredictable Billy Bow.

Clarkson, John. [Among Thieves](#) (St Martins \$25.99). Fans of Lehane, Block, and Blauner will enjoy this tale set in Brooklyn's Red Hook where James Beck, made rich by an unjustly imprisoned lawsuit, operates a bar as more or less his private club. He strives to avoid trouble although he's ruthless when it comes calling (as in an opening scene). But he accepts a pitch

to aid Olivia Sanchez, a driven woman who worked her way up the ranks of a NY brokerage firm only to be unjustly fired, then blackballed. To do so Beck turns to her cousin, ex-con Manny Guzman, and assembles a team not to hit back but to fix Olivia's situation. What a lot of surprises lay in store.... Clarkson displays a mastery of schemes here that draws praise from Thomas Perry for the resultant Brooklyn battlefield, and from me.

Essbaum, Jill Alexander. [Hausfrau Signed](#) (Random \$28). Our **March Modern Firsts Pick** updates a classic... not telling which one and try to avoid reviews and blurbs that tell you because the book has much greater impact if you just rock along not knowing! Here is the Indie Next Pick: "In this powerful, affecting novel, Essbaum has written an ode to desire and the destructive choices we make. There is a grace in Essbaum's writing that leads the reader to love Anna, to befriend her, and to be endlessly protective of her. Whatever it is that a poet does with words — the arranging, the building of something that is more than the sum of its parts — Essbaum, an accomplished poet, does with the emotions and the honesty in this work. It is brave, vulnerable, and filled with love, passion, and the kind of lust that one never speaks about. This is something special."

Fields, Tricia. [Firebreak](#) (St Martins \$25.99). A winner of the Tony Hillerman Prize carries you into the dry landscape of West Texas in her fourth mystery for Police Chief Josie Gray. A season of wild fires forces Josie to evacuate the citizens of Artesia—but not everyone makes it out alive. A body is found in the house of a local country music singer alongside a syringe tainted with heroin. It appears the victim shot up, then missed the evacuation. But....

Goodman, Marc. [Future Crimes](#) (Doubleday \$27.95). Global security ace Goodman takes you deep into the digital underground, the dark net, where the three Cs—criminals, corporations, countries—are using new and emerging technologies in ways that make us vulnerable in unimaginable ways. I resolve part of this issue by not participating in any social media other than through The Pen. Clearly I miss a lot from this choice, some of it good, but some of it bad....

Hamilton, Glen Erik. [Past Crimes: A Van Shaw Novel](#) (Morrow \$26.99). Many a crime novel draws upon Americans with Irish roots, from Boston's Parker to Lehane, to Buffalo's community in Talty. Here we go west to Seattle. From the time he was six years old, Van Shaw was raised by his Irish immigrant grandfather Donovan to be a thief—to boost cars, beat security alarms, crack safes, and burglarize businesses. But at eighteen, Dono's namesake and protégé suddenly broke all ties to that life and the people in it. Van escaped into the military, serving as an elite Army Ranger in Iraq and Afghanistan. Now, after ten years of silence, Dono has sent a message: "*Tar abhaile, más féidir leat*"—Come home, if you can. Taking some well-earned leave, Van heads to the Pacific Northwest, curious and a little unnerved by his grandfather's request. But when he arrives at Dono's house in the early hours of the morning, Van discovers the old thief bleeding out on the floor from a gunshot to the head. The last time the two men had seen each other Dono had also been lying on the floor—with Van pointing a gun at his heart. With a lifetime of tough history between him and the old man, the battle-tested Ranger knows the cops will link him to the crime. To clear his name and avenge his grandfather, Van must track down the shooter. Odds are strong that Dono knew the person.

Heller, Peter. [The Painter](#) (\$15.95) Jim Stegner shot a man in a bar years ago. The man lived, Jim did time, and now he masters his dark impulses in rural Colorado. His work commands high prices in Santa Fe; he goes fishing, doesn't drink, and has a lovely model. Then one day he sees a man beating a small horse, tackles him, and learning the man's cruel history, goes out the next night and kills him. Now he must navigate his conscience, evade the police, and escape the members of the dead man's clan who are bent on revenge.... Heller is often compared to Cormac McCarthy.

Henderson, Smith. [Fourth of July Creek](#) (\$15.99). "Dedicated social worker Pete Snow lives in remote, impoverished Tenmile, Montana, in part because he's hiding out from the fallout of his own fractious divorce and in part because he knows that poverty breeds dysfunctional families, and there are plenty of kids who need his care. When he is summoned to open a file on Benjamin Pearl, a nearly feral 11-year-old boy who is suffering from malnutrition, he comes into contact with the boy's father, Jeremiah, a paranoid survivalist who mints his own money and is convinced that the end-time is near. Pete soon learns that the FBI is also interested in Jeremiah, targeting him as a homegrown terrorist. Meanwhile, Pete's own family is in crisis; his teenage daughter has vanished, and his ex-wife can't do much more than drink and pray. First-novelist Henderson not only displays an uncanny sense of place—he clearly knows rural Montana..."—*Booklist* Starred Review.

Ishiguro, Kazuo. [The Buried Giant Signed](#) (Knopf \$26.95 tip-ins). His first novel in over a decade is a fable set in post-Arthurian Britain. The Romans have long since departed and Britain is steadily declining into ruin. But, at least, the wars that once ravaged the country have ceased. Axl and Beatrice, a couple of elderly Britons, decide that now is the time, finally, for them to set off across this troubled land of mist and rain to find the son they have not seen for years, the son they can scarcely remember. The Indie Next Pick for his first novel in a decade: "Ishiguro's new novel is a work of wonder, transport, and beauty. A recurrent theme in his earlier books, always shown with great originality, is the matter of what happens after we have lost our way. Ishiguro explores losing direction, memory, and certainty, as the primary characters cling to remnants of codes of behavior and belief. Which is the way through the forest? Where might our son be? And where is the dragon, and who shall seek to slay her? Set in the time just after King Arthur's reign, Ishiguro's tale, with striking, fable-like rhythm and narrative, shows how losing and finding our way runs long, deep, and to the core of things."

Kelly, Mary Louise. [The Bullet](#) (Gallery \$26). Caroline Cashion, goes for an MRI to assess what could be causing a persistent pain in her wrist, and is startled when the technician asks her how she came to have a bullet in her neck. Though Caroline chalks it up to a mistake, further x-rays reveal that, yes, she really does have a bullet in her neck—and absolutely no memory of how it got there. She naturally turns to her parents, with whom she is very close, for an explanation, and gets really rocked by what she learns about the bullet and how it got there. This knowledge is a dividing point in Caroline's life: before the bullet, she was a play-by-the-rules professor of French literature at Georgetown who had weekly dinners with her parents. After the bullet, she realizes she is, at age 37, no longer certain who she is... and so the plot starts rolling in Kelly's second novel. Most reviews will

tell you too much about what Caroline learns, which is a mistake since you want to be surprised too. So, I left it out. An interesting premise for a novel more women's fiction than actual mystery, but intriguing.

Kuhn, Shane. [The Intern's Handbook](#) (\$15). Interns are invisible. That's the secret behind HR, Inc., the elite "placement agency" that doubles as a network of assassins for hire who take down high-profile targets that wouldn't be able to remember an intern's name if their lives depended on it. At the ripe old age of almost twenty-five, John Lago is already New York City's most successful hit man. He's also an intern at a prestigious Manhattan law firm, clocking eighty hours a week getting coffee, answering phones, and doing all the grunt work actual employees are too lazy to do. He was hired to assassinate one of the firm's heavily guarded partners. His internship provides the perfect cover, enabling him to gather intel and gain access to pull off a clean, untraceable hit. Part confessional, part DIY manual, here is John's final assignment, a twisted thrill ride in which he is pitted against the toughest—and sexiest—adversary he's ever faced: Alice, an FBI agent assigned to take down the same law partner he's been assigned to kill.

Larsen, Reif. [I, Radar Signed](#) (Penguin \$29.95). We scored some signed copies of Larsen's second imaginative novel, "a big, fat, enticing-looking epic that begins with a hauntingly surreal moment. In Elizabeth, N.J., a place not known for strokes of magic, a woman named Charlene is in a hospital, giving birth to her first son. Her husband, a Serbian refugee named Kermin, is with her. But during the birth, the hospital experiences a power failure, and the frightened doctor has only a flashlight to aid him during the delivery. Even so, the doctor can tell something strange is happening. This is how Radar Radmanovic makes his entry into 'I Am Radar.' It would be an eerie scene under any circumstances, but there's an extra element of mystery. Although both of his parents are white, Radar comes out of the darkness with jet-black skin, which seems a sure sign that there is something otherworldly about him. At the very least, it guarantees that his birth will make tabloid fodder and yield a lot of gags about the Radmanovics' milkman.... So 4-year-old Radar, who sounds like a happy kid before his mother starts making a mess of him, is hauled off on the first of many fraught expeditions. This one takes the family to Arctic Norway, where a scientist may be able to use certain experimental treatments (you electrocute him?" Charlotte asks) to whiten the boy. And on it goes... Read Janet Maslin's whole review [here](#).

Lippman, Laura. [Hush Hush Signed](#) (Morrow \$26.99). 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. Why is this so challenging? Davis is a mother who murdered her child. Why? Post-partum depression. And now she's back wanting to reconnect with her other children and has brought a documentary filmmaker along to record events. This is not my book but it has earned many fine reviews. I conclude that I read more and more for entertainment and not to explore searing questions that keep me up at night. Color me shallow.

Macdonald, Helen. [H Is for Hawk](#) (Grove \$25). The Indie Next Pick. "This is a superbly crafted memoir, incredibly original in its depth and visceral impact. The author swings back and forth

between her own desire to train a goshawk and her research of that same need documented by T.H. White. Self-deprecating humor vies with wonder and grief as Macdonald manages to make the reader see, hear, and feel every aspect of this incredible journey. A marvelous read." The *PW* Starred Review: "Already the winner of multiple literary prizes and a bestseller in the U.K., this elegant synthesis of memoir and literary sleuthing features an English academic discovering that training a young goshawk helps her through her grief over the death of her father. With her three-year fellowship at the University of Cambridge nearly over, Macdonald, a trained falconer, rediscovers a favorite book of her childhood, T.H. White's *The Goshawk* (1951), in which White, author of *The Once and Future King*, recounts his mostly failed but illuminating attempts at training a goshawk, one of the most magnificent and deadly raptors. Macdonald secures her own goshawk, which she names Mabel, and the fierce wildness of the young bird soothes her sense of being broken by her father's untimely death. The book moves from White's frustration at training his bird to Macdonald's sure, deliberate efforts to get Mabel to fly to her. Macdonald describes in beautiful, thoughtful prose how she comes to terms with death in new and startling ways as a result of her experiences with the goshawk."

McGuane, Thomas. [Crow Fair: Stories Signed](#) (Knopf \$25.95 tip-ins). Set in Big Sky country, these stories attest to the generous compass of his fellow feeling, as well as to his unique way with words and the comic genius that has inspired comparison with Twain and Gogol. The ties of family make for uncomfortable binds: A devoted son is horrified to discover his mother's antics before she slipped into dementia. A father's outdoor skills are no match for an ominous change in the weather. But complications arise equally in the absence of blood, as when lifelong friends on a fishing trip finally confront their deep dislike for each other. Or when a gifted traveling cattle breeder succumbs to the lure of a stranger's offer of easy money.

Mitchell, Judith Claire. [The Reunion of Ghosts](#) (Harper \$26.99). The Indie Next Pick: "'The sins of the fathers are visited upon the children to the third and fourth generations.' These are the words that the Alter sisters live by and the reason they have chosen to die at their own hands. Lady, Vee, and Delph Alter have written a suicide note that turns out to be a family history. The sisters are descendants of Lenz, a chemist and the creator of the poison gas that was first used in WWI, and his wife, Iris, the first woman to earn a Ph.D. in chemistry and the first in the family to commit suicide. *A Reunion of Ghosts* is a captivating chronicle of a family and the weight of consequences that grow heavier with time."

Nicholson, William. [Amherst](#) (SimonSchuster \$26). Aspiring screenwriter Alice travels from the UK to New England to research her idea for a screenplay: the true story of the scandalous, adulterous love affair that took place between a young, Amherst college faculty wife, Mabel Loomis Todd, and the college's treasurer, Austin Dickinson, in the 1880s. Austin, twenty-four years Mabel's senior and married, was the brother of the reclusive poet Emily Dickinson, whose house provided the setting for Austin and Mabel's trysts. Alice travels to Amherst, staying in the house of Nick Crocker, a married English academic in his fifties. As Alice researches Austin and Mabel's story

and Emily's role in their affair, she embarks on her own affair with Nick, an affair that, of course, they both know echoes the affair that she's writing about in her screenplay. The time-jump narrative structure is interspersed with Alice's complicated love story is the story of Austin and Mabel created from letters and diaries, the whole flavored with the poems of Emily.

Pandian, Gigi. [The Accidental Alchemist](#) (Midnight Ink \$14.99). When Zoe Faust, herbalist, alchemist, and recent transplant to Portland, Oregon, begins unpacking her bags, she can't help but notice she's picked up a stow away: a living, breathing, three-and-half-foot gargoyle. Dorian Robert-Houdin is no simple automaton, nor is he a homunculus; in fact, he needs Zoe's help to decipher a centuries-old text that explains exactly what he is. Zoe, who is trying to put her alchemical life behind her, isn't so sure she can help. But then a murder victim is discovered on her front porch... includes recipes. A whimsical cozy starts a series.

Patterson, James/Marshall Karp. [NYPD Red 3](#) (LittleBrown \$28). NYPD Red is a special task force charged with protecting the interests of Manhattan's wealthiest and most powerful citizens. When a world-famous movie producer is poisoned on the first day of a Manhattan film festival called Hollywood on the Hudson, they are the first ones called. Then an actor is killed on the set of a film. And a Molotov cocktail explodes at a movie premiere. Detective First Grade Zach Jordan and his new partner—and ex-girlfriend—Detective Kylie MacDonald are assigned to the case.... I admire the crime fiction Karp wrote on his own.

Reardon, Bryan. [Finding Jake](#) (Harper \$26.99) told from the point of view of the father of a boy who is unaccounted for when a head count is made in the aftermath of a school shooting. Simon Connolly and his lawyer wife made a decision some years back that she would practice and he would parent. Simon's anguish that he has failed at the task grows as all the children are accounted for but Jake. Where is he? What happened? Did Simon know his son? While this is billed as "in the vein of *Reconstructing Amelia* and *Defending Jacob*," it's a different story, no less tragic, but more hopeful. Crime critic Marilyn Stasio of the *NYTBR* agrees with me. [Click here](#) to read her review.

Robotham, Michael. [Life or Death Signed](#) (Morrow \$26). Karen reviews: "Audie Palmer has spent ten years in a Texas prison for robbery and no one knows what happened to the money. On the day before he is to be released, he vanishes. The question is, why escape with only a day left on his sentence? He has endured years of abuse from guards and inmates alike, trying to get him to reveal the location of the stash, but he has never given up the information. Now that he is free, more people join in the hunt for him and the money, but with no success. Robotham is in his usual form of creating sudden turns going down unexpected paths, keeping the reader guessing and turning pages." I'm a big fan of Robotham's British crime novels; here he switches landscapes and into something closer to Donald E. Westlake mode with a criminal with a code of ethics trying to save someone else's skin. [Click here](#) to order his other excellent work much touted by Laurie R. King, another of his fans.

Russell, Mary Doria. [Epitaph Signed](#) (Ecco \$26.99 April 18). In this follow-up to [Doc](#) (\$15), a 2011 Modern Firsts Club Pick, Russell "uses what must have been a staggering amount of research. She wants to reveal truth where it has been

obfuscated for more than a century. Exposing consumption's crippling of alleged sharpshooter Doc Holliday, the sterility and addiction suffered by the virtually unknown Earp wife (or rather, "wives"), and even the ineptitude of President Chester Arthur's administration, Russell shows how the gunfight at the OK Corral is not the end of a hero's tale but just 30 terrible seconds in a decades-long, nationwide struggle to evolve out of ignorance into enlightenment. The multitude of points of view exemplifies the best of third-person omniscience, revealing innermost secrets, hopes, and fears. Readers of Lyndsay Faye's *Gods of Gotham* are sure to enjoy this novel, and fans of Westerns ready to branch out beyond Louis L'Amour and Max Brand might see it as a breath of fresh air"—*LJ* Starred Review, and *Kirkus* also. Robert B. Parker readers will enjoy this different take on Josie presented in his novel [Gunman's Rhapsody](#) (\$7.99).

Scottoline, Lisa. [Keep Quiet](#) (\$15.99). In a month of novels where mothers murder their children, here is one, like Reardon's above, where a father is the focus of parenting. "Busy father Jake Whitmore is finally enjoying some quality time with his 16-year-old son, Ryan, when the boy convinces him to let him drive, even though he only has his learner's permit. Tragically, Ryan hits a jogger. What happens next causes their lives to spiral out of control. Jake's immediate instinct is to take the blame, but then when he realizes Ryan had been smoking marijuana earlier in the day, he makes the split-second decision to simply leave the scene. The two are wracked with guilt. Jake's wife, Pam, is suspicious and worried. And unfortunately, there was a witness, who decides to blackmail Jake—and that's when things start to get really complicated."—*Booklist*

See, Lisa. [China Dolls](#) (\$16). San Francisco, 1938, the Golden Age of Chinese nightclubs. New to me: the Chop Suey Circuit, part of a story that unspools from try-outs at Treasure Island in 1938 to the Ed Sullivan Show and beyond. "In the beginning of See's stellar ninth book, three young women, Grace, Helen, and Ruby, meet and form an unlikely but strong bond... The story alternates between their viewpoints, with each woman's voice strong and dynamic, developing a multilayered richness as it progresses. The depth of See's characters and her winning prose make this book a wonderful journey through love and loss."—*PW* Starred Review. Their circumstances, so different. The bond they forge, so tenacious. The betrayals they visit on each other along with friendship, so deep. Richly textured, lively storytelling. [Click here](#) to buy all of See's outstanding books.

Simon, Clea. [Kittens Can Kill: A Pru Marlowe Pet Noir](#) (Poisoned Pen \$14.95). "Animal whisperer Pru Marlowe arrives at a client's house, only to find a kitten next to the owner's body. Pru's gift of being able to understand animals helps her decipher what the kitten knows about the dead man and his feuding family. While trying to sort out the issues behind the victim's death—Was it really just a heart attack?—Pru must revisit her own past to find a pattern in all the human and animal activities. Simon's renderings of what the animals are thinking tend at times to push the boundaries of reason, but this quirky series has a devoted following among the Animal Planet crowd, and the unique premise has its own appeal."—*Booklist*. For readers of Rita Mae Brown. [Click here](#) to order earlier Pet Noirs by Simon.

Spillane, Mickey/Max Allan Collins. [Mike Hammer: Kill Me, Darling](#) (Titan \$22.99). PI Mike Hammer's secretary and partner

Velda has walked out on him without explanation just as Hammer surfacing from a four-month bender. But then an old cop turns up murdered, an old cop who once worked with Velda on the NYPD Vice Squad. What's more, Hammer's pal Captain Pat Chambers has discovered that Velda is in Florida, the moll of gangster and drug runner Nolly Quinn. Hammer hits the road and drives to Miami, where he enlists the help of a horse-faced newspaperman and a local police detective. But can they find Velda in time? And what is the connection between the murdered vice cop in Manhattan, and Hammer's ex turning gun moll in Florida?

Steinhauer, Olen. [All the Old Knives Signed](#) (St Martins \$25) brings together two ex-coworkers – who are also ex-spies and ex-lovers – reuniting one last time over dinner. This relatively short zinger where every word counts kept me mesmerized until late one night—which of the narrators is the more unreliable?—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*

Swierczynski, Duane. [Canary Signed](#) (Little Brown \$27). Patrick reviews our **March Surprise Me Club Pick**: “I've been a fan of Swierczynski's work from the very beginning, but this irresistible novel is in my estimation the best thing he's done yet. College honor's student Sarie Holland is trying to maintain her sanity and her GPA a short while after her mother's death. She and her grief-numbed father and younger brother are doing their best to go on, and the last thing Sarie needs is to get caught up in a bunch of drama. Things get complicated fast when Sarie gives a cute guy a ride somewhere and falls under the radar of Philadelphia narcotics cop, Ben Wildey, who has been tracking the mid-level dealer that Sarie's new friend has gone to see. When the boy skips out and leaves Sarie holding the bag (literally), Wildey makes a deal with her to avoid jail time by becoming a confidential informant. Trouble is, this naive inexperienced college girl turns out to be a lot smarter than anyone thinks, and soon has Wildey and the criminal underworld, running in circles. Swierczynski does a superb job of letting Sarie relate her own narrative via long letter's to her deceased mother. A multi-layered page turner from a writer at the top of his game.”

Treadway, Jessica. [Lacy Eye](#) (Grand Central \$26). Karen reviews: “Hanna and Joe always had concerns about their younger daughter. When she introduces her new boyfriend they experience mixed feelings about her new-found happiness with a young man who makes them uncomfortable. When Hanna and Joe are brutally beaten, killing Joe and seriously injuring Hanna, a re-examination of the family dynamics and the easy forgiveness of past missteps bring a new perspective to the totality of what has happened. In the tradition of *We Need to Talk About Kevin* and *Defending Jacob*, it is a sensitive look at how we deceive ourselves into missing the quiet clues of daily life that should lead us to action.”

Truss, Lynne. [Cat Out of Hell](#) (Melville House \$24.95). The Indie Next Pick. “Cat lover or hater, you'll be caught up in this quirky mystery from the author of *Eats, Shoots and Leaves*. Roger is a most unusual, talented, and enigmatic feline, and the humans he involves in a case worthy of Sherlock Holmes. Can Roger be trusted? Is Wiggy Winterton, the human aiding him, perhaps going ‘wiggy’? You decide. It's a darkly funny hoot!” This is one of those books that will tickle some senses of humor, and not others. It is not my cup of tea at all.

Urrea, Luis Alberto. [Tijuana Book of the Dead](#) (Soft Skull Press \$15.95). “Urrea's facility with language (he writes in English and Spanish, at times in the same poem) and with sound is absolutely striking.... Readers won't dispute Urrea's storytelling ability, as many of these poems are efficiently packaged narratives of seemingly real people at the real border, burdened with desire and pain and oppression, and even routine; nor will they be able to dispute this book's tremendous, thumping heart.” —*Library Journal*

White, Dave. [Not Even Past](#) (\$14). After leaving the private investigation business, he's looking toward the future — and getting married to Kate Ellison. Donne is focused on living the good life — planning the wedding, finishing college, and anticipating a Hawaiian honeymoon — until he receives an anonymous email with a link and an old picture of him on the police force. Once Donne clicks the link, nothing else in his life matters. Donne sees a live-stream of the one thing he never expected. Six years ago, his fiancée, Jeanne Baker died in a car accident with a drunk driver. Or so Donne thought. He's taken to a video of Jeanne bound to a chair, bruised and screaming, but very much alive. He starts to investigate, but quickly finds out he's lost most of his contacts over the years. The police hold a grudge going back to the days when he turned in his corrupt colleagues, and neither they nor the FBI are willing to believe a dead girl's been kidnapped. Donne turns to Bill Martin — the only man to love Jeanne as much as he did — for help. And that decision could cost him everything.

FOR YOUNG READERS

Hoffman, Alice. [Nightbird](#) (Random \$16.99). Hoffman delivers a layered tale of fear and faith as 12-year-old Twig Fowler seeks to free her family from a centuries-old curse. Twig knows she's to accept no invitations and keep to herself. But she doesn't know why her mother left New York City without Twig's father and returned to her hometown of Sidwell, Massachusetts. Gradually, readers learn the source of the Fowlers' secrecy: Twig's nearly 17-year-old brother, James, has wings—thanks to a curse placed on their family 200 years ago by Agnes Gate, when Twig's four-times-great-grandfather stood her up on their wedding day. Then one day, the Hall family moves into Agnes Gate's abandoned cottage with a girl Twig's age named Julia, and a 16-year-old beauty named Agate. Attempting to get a closer look at the new neighbors, Twig falls from her favorite tree and the Halls rush her to the hospital. Even then, Twig avoids them—until Julia tells Twig she's seen her brother through the attic window! “No simple star-crossed love story, Hoffman's novel layers on multiple meaningful connections and mysteries.”

Rockliff, Mara. [Mesmerized](#) (Candlewick \$17.99). See History/Mystery below. Rockliff wraps up this charming, informative story with a coda: Franklin returned to America to win the

Revolution (“with the help of France”), and his “‘blind’ test” is still in use. She further elucidates the placebo effect (Bruno cleverly places the text on bottle labels, with “placebo” most prominent), and explains the state of “hypnosis” and that “we still use the word *mesmerized* when somebody seems to be in a trance.” For history buffs, science enthusiasts, and fans of a good story, this one hits all the marks—regardless of your age.

Ryan, Pam Muñoz. [Echo](#) (Scholastic \$19.99). From the author of *Esperanza Rising* and other award-winning multicultural bestsellers comes a new tale of music, magic and maybe even a real-life miracle. Echo opens in a forbidden forest, where Otto meets three strange sisters who set him on a quest. A harmonica is the instrument that brings together a trio growing up before and during WWII. “A grand narrative that examines the power of music to inspire beauty in a world overrun with fear and intolerance, it’s worth every moment of readers’ time.” — *Kirkus Reviews*, starred review, one of 3 for this update of timeless fairy tales. Grades 5-8 (and older, readers like me).

Reichs, Kathy and Brendan. [Terminal: A Virals Novel](#) (Putnam \$17.99). *Kirkus* reviews: “The final installment finds Tory and her friends at a turning point: If they don’t take action soon, their world will change beyond their control. Tory and her fellow Virals are happy with their life on an isolated island in Charleston harbor, commuting to school on the mainland, participating in sports—and spending their free time communing with Tory’s pet wolf cub and exploring their own virus-generated wolflike traits. But just when it seems that life is settling down, they find that they are not unique; there’s another pack of Virals in town, determined to mark the territory as theirs and theirs alone. And worse is yet to come: It seems that a secret government agency is tracking both packs down, fully intent on capturing them and learning all their secrets.... This series conclusion has all the ingredients that made the first four installments so easy to read: solid character development, a viable plot incorporating both teenage angst and teenage adventure, and high stakes readers can believe in. A worthy coda to a gripping multivolume adventure.” [Click here](#) to order all five YA thrillers.

Wein, Elizabeth E. [Black Dove, White Raven](#) (Diamond \$17.99). The *PW* Starred Review: “Delia and Rhoda are stunt pilots, barnstorming the American countryside in the 1920s, each with a child in tow. When Delia is killed during an air show, Rhoda commits to fulfilling their dream of raising Teo, whose father was Ethiopian, in a place where he won’t be discriminated against because of his skin color. Rhoda resettles Teo and her own daughter, Emilia, at an Ethiopian coffee plantation just as Haile Selassie takes power—and as Mussolini’s troops prepare for an invasion. The novel, which opens with the knowledge that Teo is missing, is constructed as a series of letters, school essays, flight logs, and excerpts of fantasy stories written by Teo and Emilia, all of which Emilia is sending to Selassie in a plea for help. While the conceit tests credulity, Wein brings this fascinating period in history to life with several well-engineered plot twists, lots of high-flying, nail-biting tension, and meticulous research. Ages 12–up.”

MARCH MASS MARKET PAPERBACK PICKS

Barr, Nevada. [Destroyer Angel](#) (\$9.99). Anna Pigeon #18. Joining her paraplegic friend Heath; Elizabeth, Heath’s teenaged

daughter; Leah, a rich designer of outdoor equipment, and Leah’s teenager Katie, Anna embarks on an autumn camping trip in Minnesota’s Iron Range. Part of the plan is for Heath to test Leah’s gear, but this thriller winds up testing all the women when a group of armed thugs descends on the campers while Anna is floating solo, and unobserved, out on the river... A wilderness thriller.

Box, C J. [Stone Cold](#) (\$9.99) Joe Pickett #14. Pickett has his old job back courtesy of Wyoming governor Spencer Rulon, but now Joe must go undercover to investigate a retired billionaire hedge fund owner turned rancher, whose new hobby just might be heading up a murder-for-hire operation. The *PW* review of the hardcover edition has this to say about the latest addition to this perennially popular series “Box does a good job of working in the backstories of characters and situations, so even new readers should have no problem following along.”

Brown, Duffy. [Demise in Denim](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Consignment Shop #4 Running her consignment shop is a full-time job for Reagan Summerside, but she finds herself taking on the added duties of amateur detective when Walker Boone, the Savannah attorney who took Reagan to the cleaners in her divorce, is framed for murder. Brown’s Consignment Shop mysteries are a wonderful mix of Southern charm and sly wit.

Butcher, Jim. [Skin Game](#) (\$9.99) Harry Dresden #15. Dresden’s new boss Mab, the Faerie Queen of Air and Darkness, loans him out to Nicodemus Archleone, Knight of the Blackened Denarius, who wants Harry to lead a raid on the vault of Hades, Lord of the Underworld. Three out of four of major review sources (which is something like four out of five dentists) loved Harry Dresden’s latest genre-blended novel with *LJ* stating “This is urban fantasy par excellence, with magical action, moral dilemmas, and a wonderful cast. Series fans will love this, and there is enough backstory for newcomers.”—

Cameron, Marc. [Day Zero: A Jericho Quinn Thriller](#) (Kensington \$9.99) Flying anywhere today is almost always a headache, but Jericho Quinn really is on the flight from hell when he books a nonstop flight from Anchorage, Alaska to Vladivostok, Russia for himself and his daughter on an Airbus A380. All Quinn wants to do is to get out of the country so he can clear his name of murder, but instead another passenger on the flight is murdered, Quinn is mistaken for a terrorist, and then someone decides to set off a bomb. Readers who like their thrillers with plenty of adrenaline (or anyone who enjoyed the movie *Air Force One*), will enjoy this white knuckle novel, but just don’t take it with you to read on the plane!

Childs, Laura. [Steeped in Evil](#) (\$7.99) Tea Shop #15. As the owner of Charleston’s Indigo Tea Shop, Theodosia Browning knows teas not wine, but she is more than happy to accompany her friend and business partner Drayton Conneley to a tasting at Knighthall Winery. Everyone is in high spirits until a new barrel of red wine is opened, and the body of the owner’s son suddenly spills out. *Kirkus* weighed in with “Fans addicted to Childs’ tea-shop tales and unfazed by the transparent mystery will gobble up her charmingly rendered main characters, loving descriptions of Charleston and appended recipes”

✦Harris, C S. [Why Kings Confess](#) (\$7.99) Sebastian St. Cyr #9. In the latest installment in this impeccably crafted historical

series, St. Cyr, Viscount Devlin, investigates the grisly murder of French doctor Damion Pelletan, whose body – sans heart – is found in a seedy London neighborhood. *PW* called this Harris’s “best Regency whodunit yet.” If you love Stephanie Barron’s Jane Austen mysteries or enjoyed the late, great Kate Ross’s Julian Kestrel series and haven’t discovered Harris’s books, you are in for a treat.

Henshaw, Mark. [Red Cell](#) (Picador \$5.99) After a disastrous mission in Venezuela, rookie CIA agent Kyra Stryker is reassigned to the Red –a government think tank—to work with the less than welcoming analyst Jonathan Burke. However, when a diplomatic flare-up between Taiwan and China heats up, the two must find a way to work together to smuggle a deep cover CIA agent with answers about a secret new weapon out of China before things turn nuclear. The author drew upon his own experiences working as a CIA analyst in a think tank for this terrific book, which appeared in hardcover in 2012 at which time *PW* said “Henshaw’s assured debut, an exciting espionage thriller, puts him solidly in the ranks of the top writers of the genre. The masterfully handled air-and-ship battle at the end is worthy of Tom Clancy.”

Hoffman, Alice. [The Dovekeepers](#) (\$7.99). In an ambitious (and some might say audacious) move, Hoffman takes a break from her well-known magic-infused contemporary novels to tell the story of the mass suicide of the Jews at Masada. Of the more than 900 people living at Masada, only two women and five children survived the Roman siege in 73 C.E. The book is told through the voices of four different women, who work in the dovecotes at Masada. *Booklist* had this to say: “This is both a feminist manifesto and a deeply felt tribute to courageous men and women of faith, told with the cadence and imagery of a biblical passage.”

Orgain, Diane. [First Date with Death](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Love or Money #1. Georgia Thornton thought that going on her friend’s reality dating show *Love or Money* would introduce her to Mr. Right. Instead, Georgia’s first date takes a fatal bungee jump off the Golden Gate Bridge, forcing Georgia to team up with her former fiancé, an undercover cop, in order to find out who is bumping off bachelors. Orgain is the author of the “Maternal Instincts” mysteries, and this new series launch is perfect for anyone who likes cozy crime novels with sleuthing couples and a dash of romance (or for that matter, anyone, who never misses an episode of *The Bachelor*).

Preston, Douglas. [Lost Island](#) (\$8) Gideon Crew #3. Gideon’s latest mission for Effective Engineering Solutions, a company “specializing in failure analysis,” begins with Gideon stealing a page from a priceless illuminated manuscript on exhibit in New York City and ends up with a sailing trip to the Caribbean to locate a legendary plant with near mystical healing properties. *PW* had this to say “Gideon refreshingly doesn’t fit the superhero mold, and the enigmatic Amy is more than his equal in daring and intelligence. Fans of H. Rider Haggard and Edgar Rice Burroughs will find a lot to like.”

Rosenfelt, David. [Without Warning](#) (\$7.99). After a hurricane destroys a nearby dam, newspaper publisher Katie Sandford and her staff decide to check on the time capsule the town buried five years earlier for water damage. What they discover next to the capsule are the remains of a body as well as set of “predictions”

about future crimes that will take place in the town of Wilton. What is even more shocking is that several of the mysterious predictions – including the one that Katie’s husband would murder the police chief Jake Robbins’ wife – turned out to be true. This is a terrifically spooky standalone suspense novel from the Edgar award-winning author better known for his “Andy Carpenter” series.

Tanenbaum, Robert K. [Fatal Conceit](#) (\$9.99) Butch Karp #26. Right before he is scheduled to testify about a government cover-up involving the death of Bin Laden, the Director of the CIA is murdered leaving D.A. Roger “Butch” Karp with the task of finding out who didn’t want the man to talk. The latest installment in Tanenbaum’s long-running series definitely has that “ripped from the headlines” flavor, but your own reaction as a reader to *Fatal Conceit* will depend a great deal on exactly where you fall on liberal to conservative political spectrum (hint: *PW* says “Those outraged by how the government handled the 2012 debacle in Benghazi will find a lot to like”).

Stewart, Fran. [Wee Murder in My Shop](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Scotshop #1. While searching Scotland for hidden treasures to sell in her own shop, Peggy Winn comes across a beautiful, old tartan shawl that she can’t resist buying, but the shawl comes with an unexpected bonus: the ghost of a 14th century Scotsman. However, Peggy’s new spectral friend comes in quite handy when she returns home to Vermont and finds her ex-boyfriend’s body cluttering up the floor of her shop. If you loved *The Ghost and Mrs. Muir* and wondered what might happen if that unusual couple tried solving mysteries, you will definitely want to cozy up with this charming debut.

NEW IN MASS MARKETS

Bradford, Laura. [Suspended Sentence](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Amish Mystery #4.

When the skeleton of a young woman is found during a barn raising in the Amish community of Heavenly, PA, shop owner Claire Weatherly teams up with Detective Jakob Fisher to solve the murder.

Budewitz, Leslie. [Assault and Pepper](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Spice Shop #1. Seattle spice and tea shop owner Pepper Reece works to clear her employee’s name of murder when a panhandler named Doc is found dead on the store’s doorstep.

Cass, Laurie. [Borrowed Crime](#) (NAL \$7.99) Bookmobile Cat #3. Bookmobile driver Minnie Hamilton and her furry feline co-pilot Eddie look into the murder of one of Minnie’s volunteers.

Clark, Mary Higgins. [I’ve Got You Under My Skin](#) (\$7.99) Television producer Laurie Moran has her own first-hand experience with murder ever since her husband was killed five years ago, and the murderer was never found. Now Laurie’s new project is *Under Suspicion*, a series that recreates cold cases and tries to solve the crime.

Cussler, Clive. [Bootlegger](#) (\$9.99) Isaac Bell #7. Prohibition leads to bootlegging in 1920s America, and the Van Dorn Detective Agency is helping the Coast Guard chase rumrunners. When Joseph Van Dorn is nearly killed in a battle with bootleggers, Isaac Bell sets out to find his boss’s assailant.

Fiedler, Chrystle. [Garden of Death](#) (Picador \$7.99) Natural Remedies #3. Willow McQuade must root out the real killer when Dr. Charles White, another contestant in Greenport’s annual Maritime Festival competition, is found dead in her medicinal garden.

Fifield, Christy. [Murder Ties the Knot](#) (Berkley \$7.99)

Haunted Souvenir Shop #4. When Glory Martine tries to pick up the wedding quilt she ordered as a gift, she discovers that not only is the quilt missing but also the quilt shop owners as well.

Fletcher, Jessica. [Murder She Wrote Aloha Betrayed](#) (\$7.99)

Jessica Fletcher #41.

While in Maui giving a lecture on community involvement in police investigations (a topic on which she wrote the book!), Jessica Fletcher once again stumbles into another murder investigation when another professor is found dead.

Gross, Andrew. [Everything to Lose: A Novel](#) (\$9.99)

Down-on-her luck single parent Hilary Blum is the first to arrive on the scene of car crash involving a man texting while driving. Hilary is tempted into taking the \$500,000.00 in the car only to later discover that someone else will stop at nothing – including murder – to get the money back.

Hale, Rebecca M. [How to Catch a Cat](#) (Berkley \$7.99)

Cats and Curios #6. A serial killer with a taste for City Hall interns is on the loose in San Francisco, and only Rebecca and her two cats can stop the madness.

Hillier, Jennifer. [Butcher](#) (Picador \$7.99)

When up-and-coming chef and restaurateur Matt Shank begins renovating the old family Victorian, he discovers a locked crate with some disturbing evidence regarding the “Beacon Hill Butcher” killings, a series of grisly murders Matt’s retired police chief grandfather was credited with solving. Jeffrey Deaver calls Hillier “a top of the line thriller writer,” but you will definitely need a strong stomach to read this creepy novel.

Johansen, Iris. [Sight Unseen](#) (SimonSchuster \$7.99)

In this sequel to *Close Your Eyes*, Dr. Kendra Michael’s acute senses of smell and hearing as well as her uncanny crime scene reading skills tell her that a three car automobile accident on San Diego’s Cabrillo Bridge is really a murder scene.

Kelly, Diane. [Death, Taxes, and Cheap Sunglasses](#) (St Martins \$7.99) Tara Holloway #8.

IRS Special Agent Tara Holloway’s fellow agent (and boyfriend) Nick Pratt goes deep undercover on a joint task force with the DEA designed to bring down a powerful Mexican drug cartel while Tara is stuck in Houston tracking down tax dodgers.

Leotta, Allison. [Discretion](#) (\$5.99) Reissue

Assistant U.S. Attorney Anna Curtis investigates when one of Washington D.C.’s highest-paid escorts falls to her death. If you enjoy Linda Fairstein’s “Alexandra Cooper” books you might want to give Leotta’s series a try, the first three of which are being re-released in paperback to tie into the hardcover publication of *A Good Killing* in May.

Leotta, Allison. [Law of Attraction](#) (\$5.99) Reissue

When a woman is battered to death by her boyfriend, the case lands on Curtis’s desk.

Leotta, Allison. [Speak of the Devil](#) (Picador \$5.99) Reissue

Human trafficking and a vicious street gang led by Diablo add up to trouble for Curtis.

McKenzie, Sophie. [Close My Eyes](#) (\$7.99)

Ever since her baby’s stillbirth eight years ago, Geniver Loxley’s life has been on hold, but now a woman tells Gen that not only is her baby alive, her husband knew all about it.

Morrigan, Laura. [Horse of a Different Killer](#) (Berkley \$7.99)

Call of the Wild #1 When her sister is accused of murdering her abusive ex-husband, animal behaviorist Grace Wilde uses her psychic abilities with animals to track down the real killer.

Picoult, Jodi. [Vanishing Acts](#) (\$7.99)

Search and rescue expert Delia Hopkins puts her upcoming wedding on hold in order to look into a kidnapping case that took place 28 years ago.

Preston, Douglas. [Gideon’s Corpse](#) (\$8) Reissue: Gideon Crew #2.

After a standoff between a scientist from Los Alamos and an innocent hostage ends violently, Gideon Crew must track down a rogue nuclear device.

Preston, Douglas. [Gideon’s Sword](#) (\$8) Reissue Gideon Crew #1.

With one year to live, rogue operative Gideon Crew scours the globe for the person who framed and murdered his father.

Robb, J D. [Festive in Death](#) (\$7.99) Eve Dallas #41.

Lieutenant Eve Dallas must juggle holiday plans with a murder investigation involving a personal trainer, who did quite a bit of “special work” off the clock.

Swanson, Denise. [Dying for a Cupcake](#) (NAL \$7.99) Devereaux

Dime Store # 4. Devereaux Sinclair is convinced that someone in Shadow Bend iced cupcake entrepreneur Kizzy Cutler.

SciFi/Fantasy/Horror/Western

Andrews, Ilona. [Magic Breaks](#) (Berkley \$7.99)

Former mercenary Kate Daniels has just 24 hours to find the shapeshifter, who murdered a Master of the Dead.

Bova, Ben. [Transhuman: A Novel](#) (Tor \$8.99)

In this scientific thriller, cellular biologist Luke Abramson dodges the FBI while trying to get his granddaughter the untested treatment she needs to recover from a brain tumor.

Correia, Larry. [Monster Hunter Nemesis](#) (\$7.99) Reissue.

Monster Hunter #5. Agent Franks of the U.S. Monster Control Bureau breaks ties with his employers after he discovers the government has secretly been creating genetically enhanced soldiers.

Goss, James. [Haterz](#) (\$7.99)

In this darkly humorous crime novel, one man tries to rid the internet of haters, trolls, and flammers even if it means he must resort to murder.

Hunt, Stephen. [Jack Cloudie](#) (\$9.99) Jackelian #5.

Jack Keats and Omar Ibn Barir find themselves on opposite sides when their respective countries go to war. Patrick O’Brian meets Jules Verne in this Steampunk historical adventure novel.

Rule, Adi. [Strange Sweet Song](#) (\$9.99)

In this gothic-tinged teen fantasy novel, Sing da Navelli, the daughter of famous musicians, hopes that the elite and mysterious Dunhammond Conservatory holds the key to her own future.

Sanderson, Brandon. [Words of Radiance](#) (\$9.99)

This sequel to *The Way of Kings* finds Dalinar leading human armies into an escalating war with the Parshendi while Shallan and Jasnah search for a mystical city and Kaladin struggles to master his Windrunner powers.

Yancey, Rick. [Monstrumologist](#) (Saga Press \$7.99).

A monster-hunting doctor and his apprentice face off against a plague of monsters in the first book of a terrifying series. Horror lovers will be rapt.

ROMANCE READING FROM JOHN CHARLES

March is National Women's History Month, and tucked among the romances here are several outstanding historical novels that celebrate some of the remarkable women of history.

Berg, Elizabeth. [The Dream Lover](#) (Random \$28). She was born Aurore Dupin, but the world knew her better as George Sand: the first female best-selling writer in France and the lover of Frederic Chopin (among others). Berg, who made a literary name for herself with her contemporary women's fiction like the Oprah Book Club pick *Talk Before Sleep*, takes on the challenging task of narrating Sand's complicated life journey in dreamy, leisurely-paced, lush prose of which Sand herself would almost certainly approve.

Carr, Robyn. [One Wish](#) (Mira \$8.99). Flower shop owner Grace Dillon is perfectly happy with her all-work-and-no-play existence, but high school history teacher Troy Headly is convinced that Grace's life can use some shaking up. So Troy appoints himself as Grace's new "fun coach." The latest entry in Carr's "Thunder Point" series is another sweetly satisfying contemporary romance that delivers all the small-town charm and emotional warmth readers of this and the author's Virgin River series have come to expect. Carr will be joining us at the Poisoned Pen on Wednesday April 8th for afternoon tea.

✦Chase, Loretta. [Lord of Scoundrels](#) (Harper \$7.99). Published twenty years ago and now reissued to celebrate its anniversary, Chase's *Lord of the Scoundrels* consistently hits the top ten of every "best romance of all time" lists. In this wickedly witty historical, Jessica Trent's plans to remove her nitwit brother away from the bad influence of the notorious Sebastian Ballister go wonderfully awry.

Chiaverini, Jennifer. [Mrs. Grant and Madame Jule](#) (Dutton \$26.95) With her last few historical novels, Chiaverini has been working her way through famous women of the Civil War era. In her latest richly detailed book, the author focuses her attention on the complex relationship between Missouri belle Julia Dent and her childhood maid Jule, who accompanies her mistress when Julia leaves home to marry U.S. Army officer Ulysses S. Grant.

Evanovich, Stephanie. [Sweet Spot](#) (\$14.99). Rubenesque restaurant owner Amanda Cole isn't looking for Prince Charming. So when sexy pro baseball player Chase Walker tries putting the romantic moves on her, she is all set to strike him out until he throws her a curveball by telling her is in love with her.

Gortner, Christopher W. [Mademoiselle Chanel](#) (Morrow \$26.99). Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel gave the world the indispensable "little black dress" as well as the most famous perfume in history. In his latest engaging historical novel, Gortner details the iconic fashion designer's rags to riches life as well as her assorted love affairs (including one with a British nobleman and another with a penniless Romanov) and her friendships with the likes of Stravinsky, Picasso, and Churchill. Those expecting a critical look at the designer's chameleon-like loyalties during World War II may be disappointed, but anyone who enjoys historical fiction dressed up with an abundance of glamour and a dash of romance should be pleased.

Macomber, Debbie. [Last One Home](#) (Random \$26) While they were growing up, Cassie Carter and her sisters Karen and Nichole couldn't have been closer, but now they hardly speak

to each other. However, when Cassie receives a letter from her sister Karen one day, she thinks it might provide her with the chance to reconcile with her siblings she desperately wants. Macomber's latest standalone contemporary romance is a tender, heartwarming story of the importance of family bonds as well understanding, forgiveness, and trust.

✦McQuiston, Jennifer. [Diary of an Accidental Wallflower](#) (Harper \$7.99). Clare Westmore has concocted the perfect plan to meet (and eventually marry) the future Duke of Harrington. But her plan takes an unexpected turn when Clare sprains her ankle and is forced to sit out most of the social season per the orders of one very stubborn Dr. Daniel Merial. McQuiston's engaging historical romances always have some unexpected twist, and in this case it's the novel's terrific hero, who isn't the usual toffee-nosed toff found in Regency historicals

Moran, Michelle. [Rebel Queen](#) (Touchstone \$26). Unlike many of her fellow rulers, Queen Lakshmi, the Rani of Jhansi, refused to surrender to the British when they came knocking at her kingdom's doorway in the mid-19th century. Instead, Lakshmi raised two armies – one composed of men and one of women – who fought back against the Brits. Told from the viewpoint of Sita Bhosale, who serves in the Durga Dal (an elite group of the Rani's most trusted female guards), *Rebel Queen is a truly remarkable novel that will sweep you away to the exotic and fascinating world of India under the Raj and introduce you to a fascinating woman, who gave up everything for her country.*

Pataki, Allison. [The Accidental Empress](#) (Howard \$26). In 1535, Elisabeth "Sisi," Duchess of Bavaria agrees to accompany her older (and much shyer) sister Helene to on a journey to Austria to meet Helene's intended fiancé Franz Joseph the Emperor of the Hapsburgs. However, once Sisi and Helene arrive at Franz Joseph's summer home, it quickly becomes apparent that the young emperor only has eyes for Sisi. Pataki landed on the best-seller lists with her debut novel *The Traitor's Wife* (the story of Benedict Arnold and his wife Peggy), and *The Accidental Empress* proves she is no one-hit wonder. Pataki's meticulously crafted novel about Sisi's fairy-tale marriage to Franz and her later celebrity-like status (she became famous for her hair, among other things) captures both the glittering and darker sides of life in the court of one Europe's most powerful ruling families.

Ryan, Jennifer. [At Wolf Ranch: A Montana Men Novel](#) (Harper \$7.99). Believing that her sister Ella hid proof of their uncle's fiscal wrongdoings somewhere in the family ranch, Ella Wolf heads out to Montana and right into the arms of former rodeo star Gabe Bowden. This fast-paced and sexy contemporary romance may remind you a bit of *Dallas with an extra murder or two thrown in for good measure.*

Staub, Wendy Corsi. [Black Widow](#) (Harper \$7.99). After spending five years mourning the death of her marriage and her young son, Gabriela Duran decides it is time to dip her toe back into the dating pool. Joining InTune is easy and so many other people seem to be doing it (including Gaby's ex-husband Ben). Gaby knows that finding the right man can take time, but what she doesn't realize is that someone else is logging on to InTune to find a date, and this person won't stop until they find the "perfect" match. Staub's latest is perfect for readers who like their romantic suspense served up with plenty of spooky chills.

Thorland, Donna. [Mistress Firebrand](#) (Penguin \$15) American Jennifer Leighton finds her plan to cozy up to playwright turned General John Burgoyne thwarted by British intelligence officer Severin Devere, who doesn't want the general distracted from his military duties by another pretty actress. When Jennifer and Severin cross paths months later, Jennifer is on the top of Britain's list of enemies for writing seditious plays for the Rebels, and Severin discovers he just may have fallen in love with a spy for the enemy. Thorland's latest novel is tailor-made for anyone captivated by the book *Washington's Spies* or who enjoyed the television series *Turn*.

Webb, Heather. [Rodin's Lover](#) (Penguin \$15). Camille Claudel finds herself torn between her desire to become a famous sculptor and her desire for legendary artist Auguste Rodin in this evocative historical novel. Webb deftly explores the tumultuous relationship between Claudel and Rodin and shows how Claudel's passion for both her lover and her art eventually drove her mad. *Rodin's Lover* not only offers a fascinating look at the explosive creative milieu of Belle Époque France but also illustrates the tremendous challenges faced by a woman, who wanted her art to be judged with the same criteria and respect given to works created by men.

HISTORY/MYSTERY

✚Bilyeau, Nancy. [The Tapestry](#) (Touchstone \$26.99). Former Dominican novice Joanna Stafford is called to King Henry VIII's court owing to her tapestry-weaving skills. Why would someone, or someones, be trying to kill her? It's a time of religious passions not unlike those raging today, and one where survival for displaced nuns, priests, and monks means learning to live outside the cloister. Start with [The Chalice](#) (\$16).

✚Blake, Robin. [The Hidden Man](#) (St Martins \$25.99). Georgian England is less well populated in crime fiction than Tudor or Victorian, but it's a fabulous, fascinating period. Here it's 1742 in Preston, Lancashire, and the town is facing a financial crisis if funds entrusted to pawnbroker and would-be banker Philip Pimbo are missing. Pimbo has been shot inside his locked office, presenting first as a suicide. But Coroner Titus Cragg and Dr. Luke Fidelis, on evidence of the man's missing wig, call it murder. The egotistical and pompous Mayor Grimshaw rages after the missing money needed to support the Guild's upcoming every-20-years festival day. Also missing is Zadok Moon, a partner in Pimbo's venture into raising serious capital both to finance a local bank and his possible marriage. From this we learn a lot about shares in merchant ships, maritime insurance, the three-legged trade in goods, slaves, and sugar (Liverpool, Guinea, the West Indies, and home), rising instruments of a capitalist economy, town treasure missing since Cromwell... and a canny, determined investigation into various crimes. [Click here](#) for *A Dark Anatomy* and *Dark Waters*, also gems.

✚Bracewell, Patricia. [The Price of Blood Signed](#) (Viking \$28.95 March 28). A real-life *Game of Thrones* and a reminder that the Tudors figure into a chain of royal soap operas centered on dynastic battles. "Bracewell returns to 11th-century England with this second entry after [Shadow on the Crown](#) (\$16) in her historical trilogy about Emma of Normandy. See *Event Books* for more.

Butler, Susan. [Roosevelt and Stalin: Portrait of a Partnership](#) (Knopf \$35). Making use of previously classified materials from the Russian State Archive of Social and Political History, and the Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation, as well as the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library and three hundred hot war messages between Roosevelt and Stalin, Butler tells the story of how the leader of the capitalist world and the leader of the Communist world became more than allies of convenience during World War II. Butler reassess in-depth how the two men began to shape the world's political stage. Knowing how things developed doesn't make this less fascinating and as ever a question arises (as with the death of Lincoln): how would that stage differ if the President had not died?

Califano, Joseph A. [The Triumph & Tragedy of Lyndon Johnson](#) (Touchstone \$30). A reassessment of his White House Years.

✚Calkins, Susanna. [From the Charred Remains](#) (\$15.99). [Murder at Rosamund's Gate](#) (\$15.99) introduced Lucy Champion who, like many Londoners, is strategizing after the Great Fire of 1660. Lucy, a maid in a magistrate's house, now has no mistress and no purpose there although the household still welcomes her. Circumstances allow Lucy to apprentice herself to a printmaker (and become a sort of bookseller), and also draw her, once again, into helping the local constable with a murder investigation—a man is dead not from fire or plague but from the knife plunged into his chest.

Carter, M J. [The Strangler Vine Signed](#) (Putnam \$26.95). A debut set in India under the Raj and exploring the Thuggee sect. A First Mystery Club Pick to be signed here April 3. See *First Novels* for more.

Chiaverini, Jennifer. [Mrs. Grant and Madame Jule](#) (Dutton \$26.95) continues to explore the intimate lives of First Ladies through the eyes/voice of an unlikely confidante. Julia Dent owned a slave called Jule and depended on Jule to cover her very poor eyesight. When she met Grant in 1844 and married him in 1848, little did any of them know what lay ahead, making it tough to keep the Grants' vow never to be separated. However Jule was another story....

Churchill, David. [Devil Signed](#) (Headline \$36). The noble families of Europe are tearing themselves apart in their lust for power and wealth. Emma, Queen of England, is in agony over the succession to her husband Canute's throne while the sons of her brother, the Duke of Normandy, battle in the wake of his death. Robert, the younger son, has been cheated of Normandy's mightiest castle and sets out to take it by force. He emerges from a bloody siege victorious and in love with a beautiful—and pregnant—peasant girl. Robert's child will be mocked as William the bastard. History has another name for him—Conqueror. The first installment in the *Leopards of Normandy* trilogy, goes with Patricia Bracewell's book above.

✚Clark, Cassandra. [The Dragon of Handale](#) (St Martins \$26.99). 5th in a series about Abbess Hildegard of Meaux. The nun has been on pilgrimage to Compostela (Spain) and now returns to Swyne. The abbess there feels Hildegard could use some reassessment (she had renounced her vows) before rejoining the ranks of the religious and suggests she go north to Yorkshire's Handle Priory for this purpose. Barely welcomed at Handle, Hildegard deals with secrets, mistrust, and murder.... I feel

that she, and the author, floundered in this one which lacks the gripping emotional hold of the earlier books as well as the suspense over whodunnit, although the vulnerability of the victims is poignant. Read Priscilla Royal's marvelous medieval mysteries instead—all 11. [Click here](#) to order.

✚Clements, Rory. [The Queen's Man](#) (\$16). The 6th investigation for John Shakespeare, older brother of Will and a sleuth for fans of CJ Sansom and SJ Parris among others. It is 1582, and the conflict between Protestant and Catholic threatens to tear the country in two. While Queen Elizabeth I holds the reins of power, there are those whose loyalty lies with her imprisoned cousin, Mary Queen of Scots. On his first major mission for Sir Francis Walsingham, the young John Shakespeare is ordered to discover a conspiracy to free the Stuart queen from Sheffield Castle. All too soon, he realizes that the tentacles of the plot reach deep into his native Warwickshire and threaten his own friends and family. His duty lies with Elizabeth—but how far will he go to protect those he loves? Carry on with #7, [The Holy Spy Signed](#) (Hodder \$45). Clements is the fiction pseud for historian Ian Mortimer who's written some wonderful guides to life in earlier times we've promoted. He's won the Ellis Peters Dagger for his John Shakespeare series which began with *Martyr*. [Click here](#) to order.

Corby, Gary. [The Marathon Conspiracy](#) (\$15.95). The rollicking fourth book in the Nicolaos and Diotima mystery series set in Classical Athens, and one I urge you to read. Fabulous! See Our March Trade Paperback Picks.

✚Dunn, Carola. [Death at Wentwater Court](#) (\$14.99). Reissue of the first Daisy Dalrymple mystery in a series that has grown in strength and depicts a post-WWI England staggered by loss and rapid social change. It's 1923 and the Honorable Daisy shocks her relatives by leaving the Dower House and her mother to support herself as a writer. Good for Phryne Fisher and Maisie Dobbs readers although Daisy is uniquely herself.

✚Emerson, Kathy Lynn. [Murder in the Queen's Wardrobe](#) (Severn \$29.95). Emerson is back in the Tudor mystery game with a new sleuth. London, 1582: Mistress Rosamond Jaffrey, a talented and well-educated woman of independent means, is recruited by Queen Elizabeth I's spymaster, Sir Francis Walsingham, to be lady-in-waiting to Lady Mary, a cousin of the queen. With her talent in languages and knowledge of ciphers and codes, she will be integral to the spymaster as an intelligence gatherer, being able to get close to Lady Mary just at the time when she is being courted by Russia's Ivan the Terrible. However, there are some nobles at court who will do anything they can to thwart such an alliance. First a courtier is murdered. Then an attempt is made on her life and that of Lady Mary. Ordered Upon Request.

✚Harris, CS. [Who Buries the Dead Signed](#) (NAL \$24.95 March 4). 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. See Event Books for more. [Click here](#) to order the whole series which I recommend reading in order to avoid relationship spoilers.

✚Harris, Gregory. [The Connicle Curse](#) (Kensington \$15 March 4). 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... See Event Books.

Heidler, David S. [Washington's Circle: The Creation of the President](#) (Random \$35). George became president in 1798 and forged a template for the office and a foundation for an enduring constitutional republic, even one splintering into factions as it is today. Here's a reminder to read Federalist Paper #10 which shows our Founding Fathers were not naïve about the dangers ahead.

Kaaberbøl, Lene. [Doctor Death](#) (Atria \$25). Set mainly in 1894 in provincial Varbourg, France, Kaaberbøl's excellent first in a new historical series introduces Dr. Albert Karno and his scalpel-sharp 20-year-old daughter, Madeleine, who must figure out who murdered lovely 17-year-old Cecile Montaine. Days later, Father Abigore, the Montaine family priest, is murdered as well, and his body is stolen during a violent attack on the hearse transporting it. The investigation pushes passionate aspiring physician Madeleine well beyond conventional expectations for a proper young woman. She goes to Heidelberg to seek the aid of a dashing academic, and later to the forest-ringed Bernardine convent where Cecile was attending school until her disappearance. Deftly exploring such themes as the struggles between mind and body, science and spirit—without detracting from a gripping plot. For another review in the *NY Times*, [click here](#).

Larsen, Erik. [Dead Wake](#) (Crown \$27.99). The Indie Next Pick: "With the taut storytelling form that is Larson's trademark, *Dead Wake* recounts the tragedy of the sinking of the passenger ocean liner *Lusitania*. The torpedoing of a passenger liner by a German submarine shocked and horrified the world and served to mobilize American popular opinion in favor of entering World War I. Larson carefully sets the stage for the tragedy, and with dramatic effect recreates the tension of the chase, the horror of the attack, and the tragic aftermath, pulling the reader in and evoking a visceral response of outrage and sadness — the same response most Americans had upon first hearing the news in 1915."

Lehane, Dennis. [The World Gone By Signed](#) (Morrow \$27.99). Joe Coughlin effortlessly mixes with Tampa's social elite, U.S. Naval intelligence, the Lansky-Luciano mob, and the mob-financed government of Fulgencio Batista. See Event Books for more.

✚Maitland, Karen. [Raven's Head Signed](#) (Headline \$46). Vincent is an apprentice librarian who stumbles upon a secret powerful enough to destroy his master. With the foolish arrogance of youth, he attempts blackmail but the attempt fails and Vincent finds himself on the run and in possession of an intricately carved silver raven's head. Any attempt to sell the head fails until Vincent tries to palm it off on the intimidating Lord Sylvain—unbeknown to Vincent, a powerful Alchemist with an all-consuming quest. Once more Vincent's life is in danger because Sylvain and his neighbors, the menacing White Canons, consider him a predestined sacrifice in their shocking experiment. Maitland writes darkly of the Dark Ages.

Mallinson, Allan. [Words of Command Signed](#) (Transworld \$44). January 1830. It's one of the hardest winters in memory. And the Prime Minister, the Iron Duke, is resisting growing calls for parliamentary reform, provoking scenes of violent unrest in the countryside. But there are no police outside London and most of the yeomanry regiments, to whom the authorities had always turned when disorder threatened, have been disbanded as an economy measure. Against this inflammable backdrop Lieutenant-Colonel Matthew Hervey, recently returned from an assignment in the Balkans, takes command of his regiment, the 6th Light Dragoons. His fears that things might be a little dull are quickly dispelled by the everyday business of vexatious officers, difficult choices over which NCOs to promote not to mention the incendiaries on the doorstep of the King himself. But it's when the Sixth are sent to Brussels for the fifteenth anniversary celebrations of the battle of Waterloo and find themselves caught up in the Belgian uprising against Dutch rule that the excitement really starts. 12th in series.

Margolin, Phillip. [Worthy Brown's Daughter](#) (\$14.99). Recently widowed attorney Matthew Penny has come to the newly settled Oregon frontier to start a new life. He encounters the most challenging case of his career when a former slave, Worthy Brown, asks him to save his teenage daughter from the man who owned them. Based on a true story, one dear to Portland lawyer Margolin's heart.

Moran, Michelle. [Rebel Queen](#) (Touchstone \$26). It's easy to buy into the romance of the Raj, to take the British perspective. Moran instead looks at the fractured subcontinent that was no match for a growing Empire. But when English soldiers arrived at the kingdom of Jhansi, they met up with Queen Lakshmi, a warrior reading to defend her kingdom, or die. She raises two armies, one male, one female, and takes on the invaders. The fact that she loses doesn't make her story any less powerful. It's told from the perspective of a soldier in her all-female army.

✎Morrell, David. [The Inspector of the Dead Signed](#) (Mulholland \$26). "From the shockingly brutal murders at the start to the stunning conclusion, De Quincey and his fellow investigators race against time to discover who is killing prominent Londoners as a prelude to assassinating Queen Victoria..."—*Library Journal*. "Riveting! I literally thought I was in 1855 London. With this mesmerizing series, David Morrell doesn't just delve into the world of Victorian England—he delves into the heart of evil, pitting one man's opium-skewed brilliance against a society where appearances are everything... and the most vicious killers lurk closer than anyone thinks." —Lisa Gardner. De Quincey, so eccentric and a druggie, influenced Poe and the character of Sherlock Holmes. Morrell won the Nero Wolfe Award and various nominations for [Murder as a Fine Art](#) (\$16) a History/Mystery Club Pick in 2013.

✎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...

✎Murthy, Vasudev. [Sherlock Holmes, The Missing Years: Japan](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95). I wrote this description for the book but it leaves out the playful metafiction elements: footnotes, a letter by Dr. Watson complaining about his "young and inexperienced editor" (me—clearly this is fiction!). As an editor part of my task was to translate this delightful novel which is getting very good reviews from an Indian culture (it was written for Harper Collins India) to an American audience. Perhaps some of the humor and metafiction reflects that. Here's my summary: It's 1893. King Kamehameha III of Hawaii declares Sovereignty Restoration Day... Tension grows between China and Japan over Korea... The Bengal Famine worsens ... A brilliant scientist in Calcutta challenges the system... The senior priest at Kyoto's Kinkaku-ji temple is found dead in mysterious circumstances. Dr John H. Watson receives a strange letter from Yokohama. He sets sail from Liverpool. His cabin mate, the quiet, distinguished Mr. Hashimoto, is murdered on the voyage out to Bombay. Did the assassin enter the locked room via the port hole? What is afoot? In bustling Indian cities and the back alleys of Tokyo, sinister men hatch evil plots. Professor Moriarty stalks the world, drawing up a map for worldwide dominion. Only one man can outwit the diabolical Professor. Has Sherlock Holmes survived the Reichenbach Falls? Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson find their match in more than one man (or indeed, woman) as a clock set in Tokyo inexorably ticks. History, mystery, romance, and conspiracies blend with knife-edge tension as we experience shipboard murder, dangerous train trips, perils in Bombay and Calcutta, careening carriages in Cambodia, a further sea voyage, and skullduggery in Japan's monasteries and royal palace—all part of a thrilling global chase as the *Sherlock Holmes: The Missing Years* series begins. The trade paperback edition (\$14.95) is out **March History/Mystery Paperback Pick**.

✎Plampin, Matthew. [Will and Tom Signed](#) (Collins \$36) offers a glimpse into the life of the infamous artist JMW Turner as a young man during a week spent in 1797 at Harewood House, West Yorkshire, fighting for a commission against his childhood friend and rival Tom Girtin. When Will Turner arrives at the invitation of aristocrat Beau Lascelles, his intention is to do no more than sketch the house and grounds, receive his commission, and return to London. But Will is not the only artist here: he is one of two men that will make up a Cockney Project. His fellow artist? Childhood friend and now rival, Tom Girtin, dressed up as much as his meager wallet can allow, billing and cooing amongst the esteemed guests. But Will is not so easily distracted. He wants to get the job done and get out. As neither servant nor hallowed guest, Will finds few allies, but is content to be cloistered in his room with no distractions – ensuring the expedience of his work. But the servant halls are alive with whispers of scandal and when Will ventures to sketch the local ruins he instead witnesses something that will threaten both his commission and his friendship. Alive with intrigue, artistic rivalry and society scandal, and by chance it ties in with *Mr. Turner*, the movie.

Rockliff, Mara. [Mesmerized](#) (Candlewick \$17.99). *PW Stars* a book it calls, "a playful narrative that explains the origin of the word 'mesmerized' as it details Benjamin Franklin's role in debunking a miracle cure of the day. Dr. Franz Mesmer's secretive 'medicine' is taking Paris by storm. In a gesture of

indebtedness to King Louis XVI, Franklin demystifies Mesmer's techniques using the scientific method, revealing that the man's 'cures' reside in the patients' heads. Bruno's realistic, digitally colored illustrations contrast Franklin's unadorned American sensibilities with the fancier stylings of pre-French Revolution Paris (embellishments include curlicues, bold and flowery typefaces, and optical illusions on the endpapers). A lengthier retelling of the story is included, along with descriptions (printed on old-fashioned medicine bottles) of the placebo effect and how a 'blind' scientific study works. A stylish and humorous exploration of the scientific method and the mysteries of the human mind." This is aimed for Ages 6–9 but IMHO it's for adults like me. See For Young Readers for an interesting coda.

Rose, M J. [The Witch of Painted Sorrows](#) (Atria \$25). The Indie Next Pick: "Set in Belle Époque Paris, an American socialite flees from her husband in New York to the home of her courtesan grandmother in Paris. There, she uncovers family secrets, discovers both her talent as an artist and her own erotic nature, and confronts the witch La Lune, an ancestor who threatens to possess her. Rose proves herself once again to be a consummate storyteller in this provocative and entertaining novel."

[Collector of Dying Breaths](#) (\$16). Florence, Italy, 1533: An orphan named René le Florentin is plucked from poverty to become Catherine de Medici's perfumer. Traveling with the young *duchessina* from Italy to France, René brings with him a cache of secret documents from the monastery where he was trained: recipes for exotic fragrances and potent medicines—and a formula for an alchemic process said to have the potential to reanimate the dead. In France, René becomes not only the greatest perfumer in the country, but also the most dangerous, creating deadly poisons for his Queen...

@Simmons, Dan. [The Fifth Heart Signed](#) (LittleBrown \$28). A terrific tale from the versatile Simmons combines Sherlock Holmes, Henry James, and Jack the Ripper. See Event Books for more.

Strauss, Barry. [The Death of Caesar](#) (SimonSchuster \$27). An historian assesses the (in)famous assassination.

✂Sykes, Sarah. [Plague Land](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). If you missed this 2014 History/Mystery Pick in the UK Signed edition, grab this. The *PW* Starred Review: "Set in 1350, British author Sykes's debut provides everything a reader would want in a historical mystery: a gripping plot, vivid language, living and breathing characters, and an immersive depiction of the past. With England still in the grip of the plague, callow 18-year-old Oswald de Lacy unwillingly assumes the mantle of Lord Somershill after the disease claims his father and brothers. Oswald departs the monastery where he's been residing and returns home to Kent, where the burdens of overseeing his estate are complicated by the discovery of the body of Alison Starvecrow, a tenant's daughter, in a neighboring wood. The parish priest, John of Cornwall, insists that a dog-headed man, an emissary of Satan himself, slit the girl's throat. Cornwall whips the locals into a hysterical fury, impeding Oswald's efforts to discover the truth. From the opening line, "If I preserve but one memory at my own death, it shall be the burning of the dog-headed beast," Sykes grabs the reader by the throat." *LJ* adds, this: With political intrigue and the social barriers of the Middle Ages in play, Sykes adds an intricate and intriguing debut to the ever-widening pool of medieval-era mysteries. Thrilling plot twists and layered characters abound in this rich tale of murder and mystery in 14th-century Kent." For an excellent review in the *NY Times*, [click here](#).