

BOOKNEWS from

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WARM UP THE REST OF JANUARY....

AUTHORS ARE SIGNING...

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

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 18 7:00 PM

Gregg Hurwitz signs [The Nowhere Man](#) (St Martins \$25.99)
Orphan X #2

FRIDAY JANUARY 20 7:00 PM

SciFi/Fantasy Club discusses NK Jimison's [Fifth Season](#) (Orbit
\$15.95)

SATURDAY JANUARY 21 10:30 AM

Croak & Dagger discusses Julia Keller, [A Killing in the Hills](#)
(\$15.99), first in the fabulous Bell Elkins series we recommend to
everyone

SUNDAY JANUARY 22 2:00 PM Boozy Treats

Beatriz Williams signs [The Wicked City](#) (Harper \$26.99) Jazz
Age Fizz

TUESDAY JANUARY 24 British Tea Party

Claire Mackintosh signs [I Let You Go](#) (\$16), her bestselling
debut

**Attendees (up to 40) will each receive a free Advance Reading
Copy of [I See You](#) (Berkley \$26) due out Feb. 21**

TUESDAY JANUARY 24 7:00 PM

Donis Casey signs [The Return of the Raven Mocker](#) (Poisoned
Pen \$26.95)

Frederick Ramsay signs [Copper Kettle](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95)
Ike Schwartz Prequel

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 25

Jeff Guinn signs [Silver City](#) (Putnam \$27) Cash McLendon #3

THURSDAY JANUARY 26 7:00 PM

Hardboiled Crime discusses Yuri Herrera's [Signs Preceding the
End of the World](#) (\$13.95)

SATURDAY JANUARY 28

Mindy Mejia signs [Everything You Want Me to Be](#) (Atria
\$26.99) Debut

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 17:00 PM

April Smith signs [Home Sweet Home](#) (Knopf \$26.95) Feb. Mod-
ern Firsts Club Pick

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 2 7:00 PM

Michael Gamble signs [Murder by Tango](#) (Dominus \$26.95)

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 4 2:00 PM

Betty Webb signs [Desert Vengeance](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95) Lena
Jones #9

A SPECIAL EVENING JANUARY 24

We have a group of excellent books for you in this *Booknews*. The two of my heart are by Casey and Ramsay who, by pure coincidence, each decided to portray the troubled hearts of a rural American community (Casey, Oklahoma; Ramsay, Virginia) in the aftermath of WWI, the service of family members and friends abroad, traditional ways broken and swept by the deadly influenza pandemic. And murder... As the editor of both I marveled at the powerful portraits of people set in their ways facing change, and the braiding of old ways and in Casey, old legends, into their stories. So they will appear together for a remarkable evening that speaks equally to the testing time we face now,

Casey, Donis. [The Return of the Raven Mocker](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95). What a great time to commit murder. During a major pandemic. Who's to know? Who's going to even notice? I'm fascinated with the way Donis Casey delves into big topics, topics alive in early 20th Century Oklahoma that are no less relevant today. Like the horrors of pandemics. And how the evils inflicted by disease may screen those visited by man upon his fellows. I'm not alone in admiration for Casey's mysteries as the *Kirkus* review for 2015's *All Men Fear Me* attests: "Casey's skill at making you care about the injustices of a time and place not often covered in history books is second to none. The admirable mystery is the cherry on top." In 1665 when the bubonic plague raged across England, the village of Eyam in Derbyshire, exposed to the fleas by a parcel of clothing arriving from London where some 100,000 people eventually died, made a brave decision. Rather than fleeing to neighboring towns, Eyam quarantined itself. Supplied with food dropped off in exchange for coins left in a water trough filled with sterilizing vinegar, the villagers did not starve although some 260 perished. And the last great bubonic outbreak did not spread across the north, which had so far largely escaped the pandemic. It was a remarkable sacrifice by the villagers. And in 1918 as the war in Europe was winding down, a terrible influenza pandemic spread around the world, killing more people than died in combat. In little Boynton, Oklahoma, sacks of mail arrive bringing with them the flu. In the spirit of Eyam, or perhaps more in the spirit of self-protection, Boynton closes its borders as best it might.

Alafair Tucker, living with her horse-trader husband and younger children on a nearby farm, knows about nursing and basic medical practices like hygiene and nutrition. And about country remedies (apply onions to the feet to draw out fever). With Cherokee blood in the family, she also knows the legend of the Raven Mocker, the most dreaded of the Cherokee wizards or witches, the evil spirit who takes to the air in a fiery shape to rob the old, the sick, and the dying of their lives. The plague surely is turning the area into a hunting ground for the Raven Mocker despite the town quarantine. But when Alafair moves into town to nurse her daughter Alice and son-in-law Walter Kelly and, as things worsen, the Kellys' next-door neighbor Nola Thomason and her son die—Alafair suspects poison, not flu—she wonders if a murderer is loose in Boynton, or is it the Raven Mocker at work? The contrast between the terrible events in Boynton and those Alafair fears her sons and sons-in-law are witnessing on Europe's battlefields adds power and poignancy to the story.

Alafair is in a battle she is determined to win, brushing off any dangers to herself and fiercely guarding her family. This at least she can do. The irony of the pandemic spreading death farther than did the war is not lost either. [The Return of the Raven Mocker](#) (\$15.95). [Order the whole series.](#)

Ramsay, Frederick. [Copper Kettle](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95). *PW* reviews: "Set in 1920, Ramsey's prequel to his contemporary Ike Schwartz series provides fascinating details of a soldier's life during WWI. Jesse Sutherlin has returned to his home on Buffalo Mountain in Virginia as a war hero. His experiences in the trenches have changed him, setting him apart from his hill-folk kin. He no longer shares their shoot-first-ask-questions-later attitude. When his shell-shocked army buddy and cousin, Solomon McAdoo, is found shot to death near the illegal still owned by Jesse's grandpa Big Tom McAdoo, trouble starts brewing. The McAdoos grab their guns and are ready to wreak vengeance on their longtime rivals, the Bruin clan. Jesse intercedes, telling his bellicose relatives that proof is needed before any bullets fly. Big Tom gives him four days to find Solomon's killer. It's a genuine pleasure to read a story of detection that depends purely on observation and logical deduction to reach its conclusions." *Kirkus Reviews* add, "A decorated World War I veteran returns to Buffalo Mountain, Virginia, dissatisfied with the life he finds there after he's seen Gay Paree and a whole lot more. ... This sort-of prequel to Ramsay's Ike Schwartz series ...[is] memorable for its powerful portrayal of the difficult lives of proud but poorly educated people too set in their ways to change." Also [Copper Kettle](#) (\$15.95). The Ike Schwartz most closely linked to [Copper Kettle](#) is the terrific chapter called [Buffalo Mountain](#) (\$14.95). [Order them all.](#)

OTHER EVENT BOOKS

Gamble, Michael. [Murder by Tango](#) (Dominus \$26.95). I've watched thrilling performances of tango in Argentina, on the streets, in theaters—it's dance and drama fused, pulsing with passion and rhythm yet performed with elegant style. Gamble has seized upon the tango community as the landscape of a revenge thriller. Star performer Miguel Zamotto has forsaken Buenos Aires for Manhattan so he can track down the killer of his sister. Entering the country illegally, he uses an alias to audition for one of the coveted spots in Spanish aristocrat Don Luis de Granada's dance company—the very company where Miguel's sister was the star *tanguera*, and was murdered. Aggie Jacobs is the other new hire but Miguel must stay focused on his resolve for revenge. As Don Luis favors Miguel he relates the history of a family which has been cursed for over 600 years, a curse associated with the forgery of the Hebrew bible known as the Aleppo Codex. Is Don Luis manipulating Aggie, and perhaps Miguel, in a scheme of his own?

Guinn, Jeff. [Silver City](#) (Putnam \$27). "Wonderful....This is a Western you have to love, and Killer Boots might be the most unnerving Western bad man since Blue Duck in Larry McMurtry's *Lonesome Dove*."—*Roundup Magazine*. Cash McLendon, reluctant hero of the epic Indian battle at Adobe Walls in [Buffalo Trail](#) (\$16), has journeyed to Mountain View in the Arizona Territory with one goal: to convince Gabrielle Tirrito that he's a changed man and win her back from schoolteacher Joe Saint. As they're

about to depart by stage for their new life in San Francisco, Gabrielle is kidnapped by enforcer Killer Boots, who is working on orders from crooked St. Louis businessman Rupert Douglass. Cash, once married to Douglass's troubled daughter, fled the city when she died of accidental overdose—and Douglass vowed he'd track Cash down and make him pay. Now McLendon, accompanied by Joe Saint and Major Mulkins, hits the trail in pursuit of Gabrielle and Killer Boots, hoping to make a trade before it's too late. Start this series with [Glorious](#) (\$16).

Hurwitz, Gregg. [The Nowhere Man](#) (St Martins \$25.99). Truly here is a book that demands you read series opening [Orphan X](#) (\$9.99) first to avoid spoilers, and also to get you in the game. Hurwitz put enormous energy into creating Evan Smoak and his world which is nifty for you. It was a 2016 bestseller and Thriller Club Pick encircling a coming-of-age story. "*Orphan X* blows the doors off most thrillers I've read and catapults the reader on a cat-and-mouse chase that feels like a missile launch. Read this book. You will thank me later." —David Baldacci, echoed by Robert Crais, Tess Gerritsen, Lisa Gardner...you get it. Here is the *PW* Starred Review for *The Nowhere Man*: "Evan Smoak (aka the Nowhere Man), who used to be an assassin for the Orphan Program, a covert U.S. government agency, now lives in a fortified penthouse overlooking Los Angeles, in bestseller Hurwitz's stellar sequel to 2016's *Orphan X*. Evan masquerades as an importer of industrial cleaning supplies, but he's actually atoning for his murderous past by saving persons in need of help. He only asks that each rescued person refer him to someone else who needs his services. Despite meticulous efforts to maintain his cover, Evan faces many enemies who wish him grievous harm. One of them is Charles Van Sciver, the most brutal of the Orphans, who's now running the program and is on a mission to hunt down former members of the organization. Evan's efforts to elude Van Sciver and company will keep readers on the edge of their seats, but it's Hurwitz's engaging, sympathetic characters who place this thriller above the pack."

Mackintosh, Clare. [I Let You Go](#) (\$16). In her debut, a 2016 British Crime Club Pick, Mackintosh, a former police detective and journalist, weaves a complex tale out of seemingly straightforward circumstances. "On a rainy night in Bristol, England, five-year-old Jacob is killed by a hit-and-run driver. The police are stymied by a lack of witnesses and the disappearance of his mother, who can't bear the guilt of having let her son run ahead toward their home. Jenna Gray escapes to the Welsh coast after that terrible night and slowly attempts to put the pieces of her life back together. Although she believes the accident has faded from police memories, there are two detectives who can't let it go. They pursue slim leads and scant evidence on their own time since the case has officially been declared cold. Their persistence pays off, but that's not the end of the story. "This UK best seller is a wonderfully layered thriller that skillfully builds from that one tragic event. It makes a good match for fans of Sophie Hannah," says the Library Journal Starred Review. The NY Times' Marilyn Stasio adds, "The big plot twist...is genuinely shocking. The jolts that follow, right up until the last page, are pretty good too. And if you're the kind of genre geek who jumps back to the beginning of a book to work out how you've been hoodwinked, you'll find that the author has played fair and square...[A] cunning psychological thriller..." Mackintosh signs and leaves behind for its February 21 release her second book: [I See You](#) (\$26).

Mejia, Mindy. [Everything You Want Me to Be](#) (Atria \$26.99). The discovery of the body of high school senior Hattie Hoffman, found stabbed in an abandoned barn in rural Pine Valley, Minn., kicks off this engaging, character-driven crime novel from Mejia (The Dragon Keeper), who examines the events leading up to the murder through three narrators—Sheriff Del Goodman, a Hoffman family friend; Peter Lund, a high school teacher who tries to escape his faltering marriage through an affair with Hattie; and Hattie herself. A natural actor, Hattie consciously plays roles to please other people. When she falls in love, though, she decides to be honest about her identity and desires—with devastating consequences. Mejia portrays the intensity and anguish of adolescence and the consequences that can devastate lives with real punch. Look for her as a new writing force.

Smith, April. [Home Sweet Home](#) (Knopf \$26.95). Old pro Smith, who's enjoyed success in screenwriting and crime fiction (FBI Special Agent Ana Grey), has found a passion in fiction based on actual 20th Century events. This powerful book, laced with irony, follows a family that relocates from post-war Manhattan in 1950 to a more honest life west and ends up on a cattle ranch in South Dakota. The shocking opener—the brutal murder of the Kuseks' son Lance and injuries to his family on Christmas Eve, 1985—brings his sister Jo to the Rapid City hospital where she ponders who could have committed the deed and whether the family's history might have engendered it. Could it somehow be connected to her family's ranch? Her father's political career? Her mother's brief time as a member of the Communist party? Her parents' trial to clear their reputations? Could it be someone she knows? Smith's novel weaves smoothly between Jo in the hospital nervously waiting for answers and her family's epic backstory. It is a moving tale of the Kuseks' trials and triumphs as Calvin Kusek becomes a rancher, politician, and lawyer, but it underscores the darkness of the McCarthy era and the persecution the Kusek family endures for their liberal beliefs. The film *Trumbo* showed you Hollywood in this era; Smith moves it to the Midwest. Given the parallels I see today, I've selected this terrific book as our **February Modern Firsts Editions Club Pick**.

Webb, Betty. [Desert Vengeance](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95). "An Arizona private detective who survived a childhood from hell becomes a suspect in the death of her abusers, Lena Jones spent years in the foster-care system, and the worst were the years she spent in the care of the Wycoffs. 'Papa Brian' raped her repeatedly, and Norma enabled him by denying it. Wycoff was finally arrested when Lena stabbed him and a long list of children testified to his abuse. Now that he's out of prison after almost 30 years, Lena's doing all she can to make her former foster parents' lives miserable. When Norma is shot in both eyes and dies, Lena's an obvious suspect. Yet there are so many others with reasons to hate the Wycoffs that the police, who have no love for child molesters, give her a pass on the murder. Jimmy, Lena's partner at Desert Investigations, does his best to get her to drop the case. But a GPS tracker she's planted on Wycoff's car allows her to follow him to Black Canyon City, where his sister, Grace, another enabler, fights her husband to let him stay in a trailer on their property even though she has an 8-year-old granddaughter. Lena checks into Debbie's Desert Oasis, whose owner and several current residents all have missing children who may have been victims of Wycoff. There's another murder, and as she tracks

down clues, Lena fights flashbacks from the days when she was still living with her parents, hoping the unwanted return of the past may help her decide what to do if she finds the killer. Webb, no stranger to hot-button issues, takes on child molestation in a page-turner that presents both her flawed heroine and the reader with plenty of challenges to their moral codes.”—*Kirkus Reviews*. Also [Desert Vengeance](#) (\$15.95). [Order the Lena Jones series](#).

Williams, Beatriz. [The Wicked City](#) (Harper \$26.99). Williams is in top form with a time jump tale from 1990s Greenwich Village to the same location in the Jazz Age. Illegal booze, speakeasies, a resolute revenue agent, a dangerous undercover op, plus sexy men and unconventional women, one of them Geneva, known as Gin.... John Charles adds, “Williams mixes up a potent literary cocktail composed of a cast of compelling characters, an engaging plot spiked with plenty of danger, and an expertly constructed historical setting richly embellished with fascinating period details. Williams then serves up this addictively readable libation with a generous splash of sexy romance and a few nice twists of sharp humor. While *The Wicked City* is the first in a new series for Williams, long-time fans of the author’s Schuyler family will be pleased to see how she works in a connection to those books as well. Exhilarating, escapist fun for anyone who enjoys historical fiction/women’s fiction.” Read more about Williams and a whole range of books in his excellent January BookNotes! [Order Williams earlier work](#).

SIGNED BOOKS

Barry, Brunonia. [The Fifth Petal](#) (Crown \$27.99). Barry will not be signing here until March 15, but to get a signed first, order yours now. The Indie Next Pick: “Barry takes her readers back to Salem with a mesmerizing tale filled with familiar characters from her previous works and new ones as well. Towner Whitney and John Rafferty come to the aid of Callie Cahill as they attempt to piece together the circumstances surrounding the brutal murder of her mother while trying to keep herself from becoming a victim as well. This is a beautifully written story, full of twists and turns. Fans of *The Lace Reader* will love *The Fifth Petal*, though the book stands on its own and can be recommended to all readers.”

Berenson, Alex. [The Prisoner](#) (Putnam \$28). Berenson won the Edgar for Best First Novel for his spy hero John Wells who here treats us to his 11th action thriller tapping into the geopolitical turmoil of our times. ISIS is old news by now, but Berenson takes Wells back full circle to the series’ early years when Wells disguised himself as an al Qaeda Jihadist to infiltrate the dangerous world of fanatics, using his spy craft to oil the machinery of his op aimed at unmasking a CIA mole. I like the way Berenson lures him back into the game from deep retirement and how it circles his life in a satisfying way. Recommended. If you’ve missed out on reading Wells, [order up](#) and binge on his thriller. *The Prisoner* publishes January 31 but will arrive slightly late from Berenson: also publishing January 31 is the paperback of his terrific 2016 Wells, [The Wolves](#) (\$9.99).

Dorsey, Tim. [Clownfish Blues](#) (Harper \$26.99). Dorsey signs here March 2 but it publishes now; to secure a Signed first, please order now. As he’s shooting an homage to the classic *Route 66* TV series (filmed partly in Florida), lovable Sunshine State maniac Serge A. Storms contends with money-laundering drug cartels, bent bodega owners, and weasely venture capitalists all

trying to game the state lottery system. There’s plenty of sharp cultural commentary (“The sidewalks were thick with street crazies talking to themselves, and executives with Bluetooths talking to themselves”).

Gardner, Lisa. [Right Behind You](#) (Dutton \$27). Polling her fans, Gardner goes with their vote for what book she should write for 2017. Here’s a Starred Review: “Bestseller Gardner’s edge-of-your-seat thriller brings back law-enforcement couple Pierce Quincy and Rainie Conner, last seen in 2008’s [Say Goodbye](#) (\$7.99). Quincy, a retired FBI agent, and Conner, an investigative consultant for the Bakersville County, Oregon, sheriff’s department, have been fostering 13-year-old Sharlah for three years and want to adopt her. When Sharlah was five, her father fatally stabbed her mother in a drunken rage. In self-defense, her nine-year-old brother, Telly, beat their father to death with a baseball bat. In the tragedy’s aftermath, the siblings were separately fostered. Now a security camera catches 17-year-old Telly shooting a clerk and a customer to death in a gas station. Telly’s foster parents are later found slain in their home. While Quincy and Conner work on protecting Sharlah and locating Telly, Sharlah makes plans of her own. Revealing chapters from the children’s point of view show them trying to match wits with adults. Devilishly clever twists propel Gardner’s tale of family bonds fractured, mended, and sometimes destroyed.” She really does pull the wool over your eyes with this, our **January Surprise Me Pick**.

Jonasson, Ragnar. [Rupture](#) (Orenda \$35). Note: this is the only hardcover edition of a U.K. paperback publishing at the same time. In 1955, two young couples move to the uninhabited, isolated fjord of Hedinsfjörður. Their stay ends abruptly when one of the women meets her death in mysterious circumstances. The case is never solved. Fifty years later an old photograph comes to light, and it becomes clear that the couples may not have been alone on the fjord after all... In nearby Siglufjörður, young policeman Ari Thór tries to piece together what really happened that fateful night, in a town where no one wants to know, where secrets are a way of life. He’s assisted by Ísrún, a news reporter in Reykjavik who is investigating an increasingly chilling case of her own. Things take a sinister turn when a child goes missing in broad daylight. With a stalker on the loose, and the town of Siglufjörður in quarantine, the past might just come back to haunt them. For the US edition of Jonasson’s first book, see [More New Books for January](#) below.

✂Kernick, Simon. [Bone Field](#) (Random UK \$35). When the bones of a 21-year old woman who went missing without trace in Thailand in 1990, are discovered in the grounds of an old Catholic school in Buckinghamshire, an enduring mystery takes on a whole new twist. Her boyfriend at the time, and the man who reported her missing, Henry Forbes, now a middle-aged university lecturer, comes forward with his lawyer and tells DI Ray Mason of the Met’s Homicide Command that he knows what happened to Kitty, and who killed her. So begins a complicated hunt...

King, Laurie R. [Mary Russell’s War](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95). Finally back in stock! *Booklist* gives it this recent review: Teenage Mary Russell literally stumbled over middle-age Sherlock Holmes a century ago (she had her nose in a book; he was recumbent, watching bees), leading to a meeting of minds and eventual marriage and spawning a delightful series of mysteries. Here King assembles previously published stories, half of them

available only electronically until now, and a new one; together, the stories trace the relationship of this long-lived literary couple. “Mary’s Christmas” describes Russell’s happy childhood, during which her family moved between California and Sussex, before the tragic 1914 accident in which her parents and brother died. As the pair’s collaboration grows into something more, “The Marriage of Mary Russell” details the complex wedding plans as she comments on their relationship: “Affection between us remained a private thing. Private even, occasionally, from one another.” In the new story, “Stately Holmes” (with the detective maintaining a stiff posture after throwing his back out), Russell and Holmes are “doomed to celebrate Christmas,” a holiday they generally ignore, as guests—along with their extended family—at an estate recently inhabited by a ghost. Suspense is secondary to delight here as readers learn more of the activities of Russell and Holmes. A treat for the series’ legion of fans. Note: collectors, this is the 2nd printing; we did warn that the first would sell out, and it did.

Lansdale, Joe R. [Coco Butternut](#) (Subterranean \$25). What could be more featherweight than a tale of dognapping? How about a dognapping whose victim is already dead and buried? *Coco Butternut* was the beloved pet of Jimmy Farmer’s late mother. Jimmy was very attached to the parent who left him a big chunk of the mortuary, cemetery, and pet cemetery she owned, and she was very attached to her prize dachshund. Nothing was too good for *Coco Butternut*, even after she died, so Ms. Farmer had her mummified and buried on the premises. Now someone has dug up the dead pooch and is holding her for ransom, and Jimmy wants Hap Collins and Leonard Pine, in their capacity as operatives for the detective agency owned and operated by Hap’s lover, Brett Sawyer (*Honky Tonk Samurai*, 2016), to exchange a satchel of cash for the purloined coffin. What could possibly go wrong? Check with Patrick: I believe this is a novella in trade paperback Lansdale can sign along with [Rusty Puppy](#) (\$26), Hap and Leonard #12, on February 27.

Lescroart, John. [Fatal](#) (Atria \$26.99). A few days after meeting at a dinner party in San Francisco, Kate Jameson, who’s married, phones lawyer Peter Ash about a private legal matter and suggests they rendezvous at a downtown hotel, where she has a room. After they end up having sex, Kate doesn’t want a repeat, but Peter becomes obsessed with her, another example of how hooking up isn’t always casual sex. Kate’s best friend is Kate, a SFPD Homicide cop, who has her work cut out for her when a body washes up. An excellent change of pace for bestseller Lescroart, author of 18 Dismas Hardy novels and other work, all of which I much admire. Out end of January, signed here February 9.

✦ Mark, David. [Dark Mercy](#) (Mulholland UK \$35). Three Irishmen went to America. One’s dead. One’s as good as. One is missing. . . . The missing man is Valentine Teague. Petty criminal, bare-knuckle fighter – and DS Aector McAvoy’s brother in law. Back home, Val’s being held responsible for the blood spilt in the snowy woods of upstate New York. If McAvoy doesn’t find out the truth, all hell will break loose, putting his own family in the crossfire. Investigating proves harder than he could have imagined. New York City is a different world, and the crime has been forty years in the making. 6th in an excellent British hardboiled policing series that should be far better known (and read) by you!

✦ Pinborough, Sarah. [Behind Her Eyes](#) (Flatiron \$25.99). The Indie Next Pick: “Louise meets a charming man in a bar and is

smitten. The attraction is mutual, but David confesses he is married. They go their separate ways ... until the next morning when Louise goes to work and realizes that the new psychiatrist who has been hired by the practice is David. Adele, David’s wife, is struggling to keep their marriage alive, but David has tired of her lies. A friendship begins between Adele and Louise. David and Louise are still attracted to each other and the triangle is complete. This is not your average thriller. It is absolutely riveting!” Out January 31; Signed here February 8. It’s all about the big reveal in the end game. . . . and how you feel about it. I’m not sure how I do. If we had a club for the unclassifiable, this novel would win the pick for sure.

Rankin, Ian. [Rather Be the Devil](#) (LittleBrown \$27). Out January 31; Signed here February 17 with Mark Pryor as host. As he settles into an uneasy retirement, Rebus has given up his favorite vices. There’s just one habit he can’t shake: he can’t let go of an unsolved case. It’s the only pastime he has left and up until now, it’s the only one that wasn’t threatening to kill him. But when Rebus starts reexamining the facts behind the unsolved murder of Maria Turquand, the wife of a wealthy banker with a penchant for sleeping around, at Edinburgh’s classy Caledonian hotel—the past comes roaring back to life with a vengeance. And as soon as Rebus starts asking questions about the long forgotten crime, a fresh body materializes. His inquiries reunite him with his old pals-Siobhan Clarke and Malcolm Fox-and, inevitably, Big Ger Cafferty. 2017 marks Rankin’s 30th year publishing his award-winning books. He celebrates the anniversary as a new Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. [Order his work.](#)

Reardon, Scott. [The Prometheus Man](#) (LittleBrown \$27). In Paris, Project Prometheus had been trying to engineer human killing machines. “At the core of Reardon’s complex plot is a classic doppelgänger: the protagonist, Tom Blake, hired on to work with the CIA, is not who he says he is. He’s really Tom Reese. Reese stole Blake’s identity as a CIA agent as a way to gain information that will lead him to whomever killed his brother. Reese is canny enough to know that it won’t be long before the CIA discovers he’s an imposter—they’re already pressing for a lie detector test. With a day or less before the agency discovers his cover ID, Reese is in a classic race against time. . . .”—*Kirkus Reviews*. This debut publishes January 24 and wends its way to us to become our **February Thriller Club Pick**. The writing is propulsive and the concept original (well, not entirely, Mary Shelley did a version of it 199 years ago). “A phenomenal debut, full of non-stop action and thrills. With this bioengineered twist on Jason Bourne, Reardon offers a dark vision of covert work that may be closer to the present than we think.”—Matthew Quirk. “Not only a stellar debut, it’s a rare find in the reading landscape: a fast-paced techno-thriller with well-realized characters and a beating heart. A lot of people are running around claiming to be the next Michael Crichton. Scott Reardon actually has the writing chops to pull it off.”—Brad Parks. Bottom line: the chase is key here more than textured characters.

Smith, Michael Farris. [Desperation Road](#) (LittleBrown \$27). Patrick makes the **January Hardboiled Crime Club Pick**, a knockout I endorse: “Eleven years ago, Russell Gaines made a serious mistake and a man ended up dead. After serving his time in Parchman penitentiary, Gaines has returned home to his small Mississippi town to face his fractured past. The woman he loved is now married with children, his mother has died, and the two

brothers of the man Gaines accidentally killed are out to get him. On the same day Gaines is released from prison, a young woman named Maben walks into town with her young daughter. Scarred by addiction and a string of abusive relationships, she seems unable to reverse her path of self destruction. When a crooked cop picks Maben up and forces her into his car, things go from bad to worse quickly. Of course, Russell and Maben's paths are fated to cross. I loved Michael Farris Smith's *Rivers* and this novel is even better. One of the best books I've read in a long time."

✧Theobald, John. [What the Raven Brings](#) (Headline \$36). #2 in the Ravenmaster Trilogy after [These Dark Wings](#) (\$32 Signed). Now it's 1942. After her mother was killed in an air raid, Anna Cooper was sent to live with her uncle, the Ravenmaster at the Tower of London. Now, he too is dead. His dying wish was for Anna to be the next Ravenmaster, keeper of the birds who, according to legend, guard the fate of the kingdom. But the Tower authorities won't stand for a female Ravenmaster, let alone one who is not yet sixteen years old. Denied her destiny, Anna is desperate to escape the Tower and join the war effort. She bluffs her way into the glamorous – and dangerous – world of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force. But no matter how high she flies, Anna can't escape her past... nor the secret that it conceals. A secret that could change the course of the war. Billed as fiction for teens but I find them fully intriguing.

✧Tobin, Sophia. [The Last Servant](#) (SimonSchuster UK \$32). Pure Bronte this one, a cross between *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*. I like it so well I'd make it a History/Mystery Club Pick but, given the price, instead I'm going with the terrific February Charles Todd with its surprising motives and twists. But if you love this genre, be sure to order the Tobin. Here's the score. On top of the Yorkshire Moors, in an isolated spot carved out of the barren landscape, lies White Windows, a house of shadows and secrets. Here lives Marcus Twentymen, a hard-drinking but sensitive man, and his sister, the brisk widow, Hester. When Annaleigh, a foundling who has fled her home in London, finds herself at the remote house, in service to the Twentymans, she discovers all is not as it seems behind closed doors. Isolated and lonely, Annaleigh is increasingly drawn to her master. And as their relationship intensifies, she soon realizes that her movements are being controlled and her life is no longer her own. And, if you are a Bronte fan, check the entry for Catherine Lowell's *The Madwoman Upstairs* in paperback in New Books. Note: we have a special price for our remaining 3 copies of Tobin's fine second novel: [The Widow's Confession Signed](#) (\$20). She's an interesting writer and scholar of historical fiction you should know.

MORE NEW BOOKS FOR JANUARY

Adiga, Aravind. [Selection Day](#) (Scribner \$26). If you are curious about cricket, how it's played and what it means culturally, particularly in India, this book is for you. Adiga's enthralling debut [White Tiger](#) (\$16), a 2008 Modern Firsts Club Pick which won the Booker Prize, is one not to miss.

✧Barton, Fiona. [The Widow](#) (\$16). This 2016 First Mystery Club Pick became a long-running US bestseller in the Trust No One genre. There's a lot Jean hasn't said over the years about the crime her husband was suspected of committing. She was too busy being the perfect wife, standing by her man while living with the accusing glares and the anonymous harassment. Now there's no reason to stay quiet. There are people who want to hear

her story. They want to know what it was like living with that man. She can tell them that there were secrets. There always are in a marriage. The truth—that's all anyone wants. But the one lesson Jean has learned in the last few years is that she can make people believe anything. We have 4 Signed firsts left: [The Widow](#) (\$26). A second book, *The Child*, releases June 27 but I have no information about signed copies yet.

Belle, Kimberly. [The Marriage Lie](#) (Mira \$15.99). Iris Griffith, a school psychologist, thinks she has the perfect marriage. She and her husband, Will, are each other's favorite person, they adore their downtown Atlanta home, they both like their jobs and they've recently started trying for a baby. But then, the day after their seventh anniversary, Will, a software engineer, purportedly leaves for a business trip to Orlando. A few hours later, a flight from Atlanta to Seattle crashes, killing everyone on board, and it turns out Will was on that flight instead. Iris is shocked and grieved, confused and increasingly furious. Simultaneously mourning Will, and angry that he lied about going to Orlando, she decides to use her psychology training to dig into Will's past—only to uncover darker secrets than she ever expected. Twisting and suspenseful, reminiscent of several recently popular thrillers, like *Gone Girl* or *The Girl on the Train*.

Bussi, Michel. [After the Crash](#) (\$15). A plane crashes in the Swiss Alps, with the sole survivor a three-month-old girl thrown from the wreckage before it bursts into flames. But which of the two infants on board is she? The families—one rich, powerful, and threatening—immediately start fighting. A riveting story from one of France's best known crime writers.

Costantini, Roberto. [Root of All Evil](#) (\$14.99). "For decades, Michele Balistreri, the volatile veteran detective now heading Rome's homicide squad, has avoided investigating the only murder that really matters to him: his mother's. But the day of reckoning for what befell Italia Balistreri—on a windswept Libyan cliff top hours before the August 1969 coup that installed Muammar Al Gaddafi as the country's dictator—can no longer be dodged in Costantini's suspenseful, at times savage, thriller, the second in his ambitious, politically steeped Evil trilogy (after 2014's [The Deliverance of Evil](#) (\$14.99)...Elegant prose and a diabolical plot (including some devilish misdirection) should captivate even readers new to the Balistreri chronicles."—*PW Starred Review*

Dazieri, Sandrone. [Kill the Father](#) (Scribner \$27). It takes Italian bestseller Dazieri 496 pages to narrate this chiller, his first novel to be translated into English. Interestingly it develops similar themes explored by Luca Veste in *Dead Gone*, reviewed below: psychological experiments giving play to monsters. The Nazis have been tagged with clinicians/serial murderers, but Americans don't get a free pass by either author. This engrossing story, promising, I hope, further investigations with warrior detective from Rome's major crime unit, Captain Colombia Caselli and (the damaged) Dante Torre who is roped in to work with her, earns lavish praise: "One of the nastier crimes in recent memory... There are twists aplenty as Dante and Colomba track down The Father, even as he spins an ever finer trap for them... A dark treat for mystery buffs." —*Kirkus Reviews*. "This ingenious thriller features a pair of protagonists with personal demons as unnerving as the vicious monster they're pursuing. And it's a wonderfully twisty and chilling pursuit, leading not only to the

monster's shocking identity but to his equally shocking links to powerful and dark enablers." —John Verdon. "A mind-bending, stunningly original page-turner that twists the concept of psychological thriller in a terrifying and wonderful way. In Dante and Colomba, Sandrone Dazieri has created two of the most memorable characters in modern crime fiction, a pair of damaged, noble heroes compelled to confront unimaginable evil. Bravo." —Jonathan Kellerman, whose own next mind-bender, [Heartbreak Hotel Signed](#) (28.99), Alex Delaware's 32nd case, publishes in February.

✚Delaney, JP. [The Girl Before](#) (Random \$27). In the pseudonymous Delaney's riveting psychological thriller, first Emma Matthews and then Jane Cavendish take up residence at One Folgate Street in London. The house, a masterpiece of minimalist architecture designed by the enigmatic Edward Monkford, is let only to tenants willing to abide by his stringent rules, which reduce life to its basics.... The Indie Next Pick: "A page turner that is sure to be a hit. Each chapter alternates between two time periods. Back 'then,' there is Emma, looking for the perfect flat. Her agent suggests One Folgate Street, built by architect Edward Monkford. In present day, Jane, a single thirty-something also ends up on Folgate Street. Both women learn the sinister history of the property and readers won't know who to trust as Delaney's debut clutches you by the throat and won't let you go." Movie rights to Universal with Ron Howard directing

Dugoni, Robert. [The Trapped Girl](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$15.95). "In Dugoni's outstanding fourth Tracy Crosswhite mystery, the Seattle homicide detective investigates the death of Andrea Strickland, a young woman whose body a fisherman finds in a crab pot raised from the sea. Andrea, who was reported missing after a treacherous mountain hike, was already presumed to be dead. The victim's husband is the prime suspect and the beneficiary of a sizable life insurance policy. As the plot twists and turns, Tracy is struck by the similarities between her own life and Andrea's: both suffered family tragedies and rigidly structured their lives to compensate for the loss. For Tracy, solving the case is personal—but on a different level than the murder of her sister years before. In less deft hands this tale wouldn't hold water, but Dugoni presents his victim's life in discrete pieces, each revealing a bit more about Andrea and her struggle to find happiness. Tracy's quest to uncover the truth leads her into life-altering peril in this exceptional installment." —*PW* Starred Review

✚Ellis, Kate. [A High Mortality of Doves](#) (LittleBrown \$29.99). 1919. The Derbyshire village of Wenfield is still reeling from four terrible years of war, and now, just when the village is coming to terms with the loss of so many of its sons, the brutal murder of a young girl shatters its hard-won tranquility. Myrtle Bligh is found stabbed and left in woodland, her mouth slit to accommodate a dead dove, a bird of peace. During the war Myrtle worked as a volunteer nurse with Flora Winsmore, the local doctor's daughter, caring for badly wounded soldiers at the nearby big house, Tarnhey Court. When two more women are found murdered in identical circumstances, Inspector Albert Lincoln is sent up from London, a man not only wounded in war but damaged in peace by the death of his young son and his cold, loveless marriage. Once in Wenfield, Albert begins to investigate the three recent murders and the Cartwright family of Tarnhey Court and their staff fall under suspicion as their hidden lives and secrets are

uncovered. The import from the UK is in very limited supply so order quickly.

✚Fowler, Christopher. [Bryant and May: Strange Tide](#) (Bantam \$27). Fowler has been heaped with awards and plaudits, and his popularity in North America is growing. This 13th crazy case for the Yard's Peculiar Crimes Unit takes for its London history and landscape the River Thames. Near the Tower of London, along the River Thames, the body of a woman has been discovered chained to a stone post and left to drown. Curiously, only one set of footprints leads to the tragic spot. "The Bride in the Tide," as the London press gleefully dubs her, has the PCU stumped. Why wouldn't the killer simply dump her body in the river—as so many do? Arthur Bryant wonders if the answer lies in the mythology of the Thames itself. Unfortunately, the normally wobbly funhouse corridors of Bryant's mind have become, of late, even more labyrinthine. The venerable detective seems to be losing his grip on reality. May fears the worst, as Bryant rapidly descends from merely muddled to one stop short of barking mad, hallucinating that he's traveled back in time to solve the case. There had better be a method to Bryant's madness—because, as more bodies are pulled from the river's depths, his partner and the rest of the PCU find themselves in over their heads. The dialogue is snappy, with occasional metafictional nods ("This isn't an Agatha Christie. Criminals don't leave annoying little puzzles for you to unravel"). I have loved them all, especially the second case, [The Water Room](#) (\$16), and recommend you [order them](#) so as to start at the beginning. Some paperbacks have to come from London. The next PCU case comes in March: [Bryant and May: Wild Chamber Signed](#) (Bantam UK \$36)

✚Garrett, AD. [Truth Will Out](#) (LittleBrown \$29.99). In 2013, writing as A.D. Garrett, Margaret Murphy began a new forensic series, featuring Professor Nick Fennimore and DCI Kate Simms with policing and forensics expert, Helen Pepper. A mother and daughter are snatched on their drive home from a cinema. The crime has a number of chilling similarities to a cold case Professor Nick Fennimore had been lecturing on. Then Fennimore begins receiving taunting messages - is he being targeted by the kidnapper? Meanwhile, a photograph emailed from Paris could bring Fennimore closer to discovering the fate of Suzie, his own daughter, now missing for six years. He seeks help from his old friend, DCI Kate Simms, recently returned from the US. But Kate is soon blocked from the investigation...

Geni, Abby. [The Lightkeepers](#) (\$16.95). I loved it on several levels. As always, I start with the writing – first rate. I have not yet read a book quite like this one. The Farallon Islands, aka the "Islands of the Dead," lie off the coast of California but are so rocky, remote, and weather-blasted they might almost be on the moon. Nonetheless a half dozen biologists rough it there, hooked by the islands' birds, sharks, seals, and passing whales, if not by the bird lice and the free-ranging mice (no natural predators). Even the ancient rock is rotting. Still despite the hellish landscape, its protected coves shelter the fauna if not the humans who make do crammed together in a very rough cabin for weeks, months on end. The ferry comes occasionally, a six hour trip, bringing supplies and carrying back messages. Forget the internet. However a helicopter can be summoned, along with officials, by sat phone. When photographer Miranda, whom the biologists call Melissa or "mouse girl," arrives on permit to photo-document the Faral-

lons, she's challenged from the beginning. Traumatized since 14 when her mother died in an accident, Miranda writes endless letters to her Mom, knowing they go to the USPS Dead Letters, as a form of therapy. It's bad enough coping with the wild life and landscape and the peculiarities of the cooped-up scientists, but then one assaults her. I would not call this a locked-room mystery, or crime fiction; the compelling and suspenseful narrative gains traction from the reliability, or not, of the narrator and the violence that builds in this strange community, changing the dynamic from peculiar to hostile. Three Signed Firsts left: [The Lightkeepers](#) (Counterpoint \$27).

Goodman, Carol. [River Road](#) (\$16). Perhaps best known for [The Lake of Dead Languages](#) (\$16), an atmospheric literary crime debut and 2002 First Mystery Club Pick, Goodman returns with the tale of a creative writing professor accused of killing a favorite student in a hit-and-run accident. In the days that follow, Nan finds herself shunned by the same community that rallied around her when her own daughter was killed in an eerily similar accident six years prior. When Nan begins finding disturbing tokens that recall her daughter's death, Nan suspects that the two accidents are connected. As she digs further, she discovers that everyone around her, including Leia, has been hiding secrets. But can she uncover them, clear her name, and figure out who really killed Leia before her life is destroyed?

Grebe, Camilla. [The Ice Beneath Her](#) (Ballantine \$27). Fans of Camilla Läckberg and Jo Nesbø, alert!! The decapitation of a young woman propels Grebe's exceptional solo debut, which examines three lives broken by failures to take responsibility in a Stockholm where "even the sky is crying." "The discovery of her corpse is doubly eye-opening, partly because the place belongs to clothing tycoon Jesper Orre, famous for his wealth, hard-nosed bargaining tactics, and uncertain temper, and partly because the corpses severed head was placed standing on the floor to stare at newcomers. The crime is so outrageous that the closest parallel homicide detective Manfred Olsson can come up with is a cold case he and his partner, Peter Lindgren, worked 10 years ago, the beheading of temp worker Miguel Caldern. In the absence of other leads, Manfred persuades Peter, a train wreck of a man who's particularly hard on women, to call once again on Hanne Lagerlind-Schn, the consulting psychologist who helped with that case. Manfred doesn't know that Peter and Hanne have had a fraught history since then; neither detective knows that Hanne is now struggling with early-onset dementia.... A tour de force that lifts its author to the front rank among the increasingly crowded field of Nordic noir."—*Kirkus* Starred Review (echoed by others).

Hall, Parnell. [A Puzzle to Be Named Later](#) (St Martins \$24.99). Crossword master and amateur sleuth Cora couldn't be happier: Matt Greystone was coming to town! The rookie sensation had just signed a huge contract with the Yankees, coming to the team from Arizona, where he won 17 games as a starting pitcher for the Diamondbacks. But an arm injury requiring rehab had sidelined his meteoric rise, and this was her chance to meet him! A diehard Yankee fan, Cora was delighted when Matt invited her to a weekend pool party. On the plus side, she got to meet Derek Jeter. On the minus side, she has a puzzle of her own to solve when a couple of the guests get killed. Hall interpolates a Sudoku or two... if you can't stand to write in a hardcover book, photocopy the page and enjoy.

✚Harris, Joanne. [Different Class](#) (Touchstone \$26). Harris, author of [Chocolat](#) (\$16)—remember, Valentine's Day is coming—first introduced St. Oswald's, a British private school for boys, in [Gentleman and Players](#) (\$15.95), which I highly recommend. *Kirkus* calls this new book, "A gripping fictional exposé of a tempest no teapot can contain." Roy Straitley is a relic of the English prep school past: he's taught Latin at St. Oswald's Grammar School for Boys for decades and otherwise leads a celibate and austere life in his nearby flat, his only luxuries being licorice candies, Gauloise cigarettes, and strictly moderate alcohol intake. But lately St. Oswald's is in turmoil. A new headmaster, Johnny Harrington, has arrived, flanked by consultants and spouting modern theories of branding, political correctness, and trigger warnings, to effect the academic equivalent of a corporate takeover. Smooth, impeccably turned-out Harrington manages to co-opt the school's older faculty by deluding them into thinking they have a future in the new St. Oswald's. Instituting the contradictory motto Progress Through Tradition, he ushers Straitley towards involuntary retirement. But Straitley is positive something more sinister is going on—and, he's right. We've lowered the price of the Signed UK edition to \$26, the better choice: [Different Class Signed](#) (Doubleday \$26)

✚Harris, Oliver. [House of Fame](#) (Harper \$15.99). I liked Harris' first two crime novels better than this 3rd, but as these reviews show, I am in the minority and you may ascribe my view to a preference for escape over bleakness at the moment. "British author Harris's stellar third crime novel featuring North London police detective Nick Belsey combines an intriguing and surprising plot with an uncompromisingly bleak worldview that fans of Cornell Woolrich's despairing noir fiction will relish. At one point, Belsey observes that everyone's "sick and evil; humanity's redeeming feature was its laziness—most people kept their malevolence in fantasies." Belsey's in a tough spot as the book opens—an allegation of gross misconduct has led to his suspension, and an anonymous call tips him off that the Independent Police Complaints Commission is about to lower the boom. He holes up at recently closed Hampstead police station, where Maureen Doughty, a woman needing his help, finds him. Belsey takes pity on Maureen, whose 41-year-old son, Mark, has disappeared. He accompanies her to her flat, where he finds disturbing indications of Mark's obsession with mega pop star Amber Knight, whose upcoming wedding has sparked a media frenzy. In his search for Mark, Belsey emerges as a memorably flawed protagonist."—*PW* Starred Review. Britain's *Telegraph* says, "A superb novel about the demonic detective who breaks all the rules.... Harris has a rare ability to combine storytelling that has a freewheeling, improvisatory feel with a plot that has been long hours in the concocting. Belsey...is fast becoming the best anti-hero in British crime fiction." Order *The Hollow Man* and *Deep Shelter* to get started.

Hewitt, Catherine. [The Mistress of Paris](#) (St Martins \$27.99). Hewitt's biography of a beautiful woman who rode a Big Lie in the second half of 19th Century Paris from the squalid backstreets of Paris where she was born to an unmarried peasant mother from Normandy to become one of the city's most celebrated courtesans makes me applaud Lucy's resolution, ambition, and daring. As the "Comtesse Valtessa de la Bigne" she was rumored to sleep with Napoleon III and the future Edward VII as well

as various luminaries. Zola immortalized her in his scandalous novel *Nana*, and she featured in gossip for years. Her chutzpah led her to commission portraits of “ancestors” bearing the (real) de la Bigne noble name and donate them to a museum in Caen, plus she mentored successful younger women, leaving a fortune to her heirs. It would be harder to bring this off today, but then again the Big Lie apparently will never die.

Hilleman, Andrew. [World Chase Me Down](#) (Penguin \$16). This is an excellent winter for Western Crime Fiction (Jeff Guinn, Robert Knott, etc). Hilleman’s debut, a kind of *True Grit* story, is based on the forgotten true story of a frontier Robin Hood who pulls off the first successful kidnapping for ransom in US history and incites a manhunt and media splash highlighting the gulf between the haves and the have-nots. Nothing really changes, no? Fans of Daniel Woodrell and David Joy will want to snag this one.

Hunt, Samantha. [Mr. Splitfoot](#) (\$14.95). Hunt’s ethereal third novel (after Orange Prize–finalist *The Invention of Everything Else*) is a nod to the mid-19th-century legend of the Fox sisters, mediums who conjured up a devilish spirit they called Mr. Splitfoot in order to separate the gullible from their money. The book deftly straddles the slippery line between fantasy and reality in a story that’s both gripping and wonderfully mystifying. Hailing from the Love of Christ! Foster Home, Farm, and Mission—a halfway house filled with damaged souls and run by a conniving religious kook—Ruth and Nat occupy their turbulent adolescent years pretending they can talk to dead people. When they reach 18, the two latch onto to a mysterious benefactor who convinces them to use their skill for cash. Decades later, a newly pregnant Cora—Ruth’s niece—awakens to find the long-absent Ruth standing by her bedside and is whisked off on a wild goose chase across New York. Where they’re going and why, the mute Ruth won’t say. Hunt’s use of a split narrative to measuredly disclose snippets of Ruth’s past and Cora’s present in alternating, interconnected chapters builds suspense while keeping readers guessing about what crazy turn might happen next.”—*PW* Starred Review. Gregory Maguire adds in the *NY Times*: “Hunt renders as ornate and magical the tired landscape of Troy and upstate New York—and I say this as a native of that area, with high regard for its quiddities... Hunt’s depiction of the seedy terrain of human relations is just as terrific... The novel moves not just in two time frames, told through two voices, a first-person narrator and a third-, but also... in the fourth dimension, stamping itself upon the reading mind. Hypnotic and glowing, *Mr. Splitfoot* insists on its own ghostly presence.”

Jonasson, Ragnar. [Snowblind](#) (Minotaur \$25.99). The publisher of Arnaldur Indridason brings you a new Icelandic author’s debut. Siglufjorour: an idyllically quiet fishing village in Northern Iceland, where no one locks their doors, accessible only via a small mountain tunnel. Ari Thor Arason is a rookie policeman on his first posting, far from his girlfriend in Reykjavik and with a past that he’s unable to leave behind. When a young woman is found lying half-naked in the snow, bleeding and unconscious, and a highly esteemed, elderly writer falls to his death in the local theater, Ari is dragged straight into the heart of a community where he can trust no one, and secrets and lies are a way of life. Past plays tag with the present and the claustrophobic tension mounts, while Ari is thrust ever deeper into his own darkness—blinded by snow, and with a killer on the loose. For Signed copies of his third crime novel, see Signed Books above.

Lee, JM. [The Boy Who Escaped Paradise](#) (Norton \$24.95) is the extraordinary story of a math savant, told from a prison hospital where he’s being held by U.S. officials on suspicion of murder and 11 international crimes. The son of an esteemed physician in North Korea, Ahn Gil-mo attends an excellent school catering to his mathematical gift until officials arrive at their home and drag Gil-mo’s parents away. His father returns long enough to collect him, and the two are banished to a prison camp because, as the boy learns, his father was discovered practicing Christianity. He never sees his mother again, and his father, like many others, dies from the hard labor and lack of food, leaving the son at the mercy of those who want to take advantage of his innocence and valuable skills. Gil-mo’s affinity for numbers lands him an easier job with Mr. Kang, working with foreign currency. It is here that Gil-mo makes the promise he spends his life fulfilling, no matter the cost: looking after Kang’s daughter, Yeong-ae. With regular allusions to Homer, Lee, author of First Mystery Club Pick [The Investigation](#) (\$25 Signed), takes his modern-day Odysseus on a journey of epic proportions after he escapes the camp in order to keep his promise to Kang.

✂Lowell, Catherine. [The Madwoman Upstairs](#) (\$16). The Indie Next Pick: “*The Madwoman Upstairs* is both a reference to the insane wife of Edward Rochester in *Jane Eyre* and to Samantha Whipple, who is the last remaining descendant of the Bronte sisters. This exciting literary debut is in part a study of literature, specifically the works of the Bronte sisters, and in part an exploration of the mystery of their legacy. Samantha cannot escape her past with their work, the world’s interest in her inheritance of previously undiscovered family treasures, and the current puzzle of artifacts mysteriously appearing in her room that may or may not answer some of her questions. For mystery and Bronte fans alike, this is a delightful romp by very clever author to watch.”

Mankell, Henning. [Quicksand: What It Means to Be a Human Being](#) (Vintage \$16.95). A memoir by the late Swedish author, a farewell to his fans and testament to life written after his January, 2014, diagnosis of lung cancer.

✂McCarthy, Rob. [The Hollow Men](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). Dr. Harry Kent is called to a hostage situation when Solomon Idris, a teenage gunman demanding a lawyer and a BBC reporter, needs medical attention. Before Kent can treat the patient for his respiratory distress, a gun is fired and police sharpshooters descend on the building. No one knows who pulled the trigger on that first shot, but Idris is left fighting for his life, and Kent is determined to find out what drove the youth to take such extreme measures. When Idris’ life is threatened again in the hospital, the stakes rise even higher and Kent suspects a fellow doctor is hiding skeletons unfit for anatomy class in his closet. McCarthy writes a gritty and intense British medical thriller.

Naughtie, James. [Paris Spring](#) (Overlook \$26.95). Paris in 1968 – seething with revolutionaries and spies – sees British spy-turned-politician Will Flemyng’s world turned upside down, after a mysterious encounter on the metro and a chance revelation from a rival operative. In a city alive with talk of revolution, Will finds himself in the thick of the action, a young spy whose first adventures behind the Iron Curtain have already given him a secret glamour. But now he gets news that threatens the closest and most complicated relationship in his life, with his younger brother. In the unforgettable weeks of a crisis that claims blood

and tests his deepest loyalties, Flemmyng lives and loves the tumult of a city in which his private fears teach him the secrets that lie beneath the raucous politics of the streets. This is the making of the man whose journey leads to [The Madness of July](#) (\$17.95), set in the late 1970s during the end game of the Cold War (and published first).

Oates, Joyce Carol. [Man Without a Shadow](#) (\$15.99). One of the most prolific writers working today, or at any time, Princeton's Oates fearlessly steps into varied literary arenas. Here's her story revolves around ethics and how the brain functions. In 1965, neuroscientist Margot Sharpe meets the attractive, charismatic Elihu Hoopes—the “man without a shadow”—whose devastated memory, unable to store new experiences or to retrieve the old, will make him the most famous and most studied amnesiac in history. Over the course of the next thirty years, Margot herself becomes famous for her experiments with E. H.—and inadvertently falls in love with him, despite the ethical ambiguity of their affair, and though he remains forever elusive and mysterious to her, haunted by mysteries of the past. Oates tracks the intimate, illicit relationship between Margot and Eli, as scientist and subject embark upon an exploration of the labyrinthine mysteries of the human brain. Where does “memory” reside? Where is “love”? Is it possible to love an individual who cannot love you, who cannot “remember” you from one meeting to the next? This subject matter tracks with the debut crime novels I note here in New Books by Dazieri and Veste.

Patterson, James/Candice Fox. [Never, Never](#) (Little Brown \$27.99). In Detective Harriet Blue #2, the top Sex Crimes investigator didn't see this coming: her own brother arrested for the grisly murders of three beautiful young women. New in paperback: [Games](#) (\$15.99).

Rhoades, JD. [Ice Chest](#) (\$15.99). Capers are fun. Clarissa Cartwright, the planet's most famous beauty, is about to take the stage wearing a fortune in jewels, and not much else. In the wings, a motley crew of bumbling crooks is scheming to make off with the biggest heist of their careers: five and a half million dollars in precious stones, used to create the world's most expensive piece of lingerie. But mix the glitz and glamour of the highest of high fashion with a team of crooks that would have trouble stealing a sandwich from a deli, and all bets are off....

Rogan, Charlotte. [Now and Again](#) (\$15.99). With Edward Snowden and Chelsea Manning in the news again asking for clemency, Rogan's topic, whistleblowing, is timely. *LJ* reviews: “The Red Bud, Oklahoma, munitions plant provides steady paychecks to half the town. So when secretary Maggie Rayburn sees a top-secret document indicating that faulty weaponry, emitting radioactive dust, is being supplied to soldiers in Afghanistan, she becomes an unpopular whistle-blower. Dolly Jackson, a midwife at an Oklahoma Veterans Affairs center, notices a disturbing number of birth defects among the soldiers' newborns, yet the attending physician is reluctant to tell anyone. And somewhere in an Afghan desert Capt. Penn Sinclair tries to maintain morale among troops whose tour has been unexpectedly extended. Hoping to take their minds off the bad news, Sinclair sends a convoy of men on a humanitarian mission and into a deadly trap. Rogan skillfully portrays characters who examine their consciences, working toward a more responsible way of living in the world. Power struggles ensue, families suffer, friendships are tested, and

wells of strength are tapped, yet the author offers no pat answers to life's difficult questions.” Rogan's debut, *The Lifeboat*, was honored with nominations for the IMPAC Dublin Literary Award and *The Guardian* first book award. “This morally complex story, part *Silkwood*, part *Redeployment*, should fare even better.”

Roth, Veronica. [Carve the Mark](#) (Harper \$22.99). The author of *Divergent* publishes a new science-fiction fantasy series with this first entry, a Romeo and Juliet story in a galaxy far, far away where everyone develops a currentgift, a unique power meant to shape the future. While most benefit from their currentgifts, Akos and Cyra do not—their gifts make them vulnerable to others' control. Can they reclaim their gifts, their fates, and their lives, and reset the balance of power in this world?

✂Veste, Luca. [Dead Gone](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). A dark debut exploring the ingenious murder of students at a university in Liverpool. The author, who lives there, delves deeply into the psychological experiment, hugely unethical, in play, and his cops, David Murphy and Laura Rossi, are well drawn. I found the writing somewhat mechanical except when Veste is writing about Liverpool and the Wirral Peninsula when he becomes almost poetic. So the chief value of this book is to acquaint yourself with a city, one of England's major ports, seldom portrayed in crime fiction.

Wilkshire, Nick. [Escape to Havana](#) (Dundurn \$15.99). I've just run across this Canadian spy series and, with Cuba so hot in the news, I selected it. With his career stalled and the office abuzz about his soon-to-be-ex-wife's indiscretions, Ottawa bureaucrat Charlie Hillier is desperate for a change. So when the chance at a posting to the Canadian embassy in Havana comes up, he jumps at it, grateful to get as far away as he can from his ex and his dead-end job at Foreign Affairs headquarters. At first, exotic Havana seems just the place to bury his past and start anew, but he didn't count on finding a couple of kilos of cocaine under his bedroom floor, the kidnapping of a fellow diplomat, or the unsettling connection he uncovers between the former occupant of his house and a Colombian drug-runner. Before long, Charlie's only concern is whether he'll survive his posting. Presumably he will since this is the first in the Foreign Affairs Mystery and a second, set in Moscow, is due out in November.

Wilson, Carter. [Revelation](#) (Oceanview \$26.95). “Harden Campbell, the hero of Wilson's enthralling thriller, awakens in pitch darkness lying on a dirt floor, unaware of how he got there. Feeling his way around, he bumps into a dead body. Then a light suddenly goes on, and he sees that he's in a locked room with the body of Derek, a friend with whom he recently celebrated his 21st birthday. Derek's throat is cut. Harden also sees a table with a typewriter; on top of a stack of paper is a sheet with the message: “Tell me a story.” Harden suspects that his psychopathic college roommate, Wiley 2“Coyote” Martin, is responsible for his captivity, angry that Harden was cooperating with the FBI to obtain information for the agency on Coyote's shady activities. Harden types out a mesmerizing tale describing how Coyote took inspiration from a short story that Harden wrote for a class to create and build an extremist religion, which Coyote uses for nefarious purposes, including ruining the lives of innocent people. Wilson infuses his terrifying plot with intricate twists and turns, all totally credible. “—*PW* Starred Review

☒Wilson, Edward. [A Very British Ending](#) (Arcade \$18).

Wilson's fine fifth novel featuring spy William Catesby focuses on Catesby's career from just after WWII to the mid-1970s. Throughout this Cold War period, Catesby and a few others, including his boss, Henry Bone, take it upon themselves to guard Great Britain from its most insidious enemies: far-right elements at home and those in America who see communists under every rock. Catesby and company view politician Harold Wilson, eventually a two-time prime minister, as a Red and will consider any means to topple him, up to and including a military coup. The author replaces the violence and mayhem of a typical American spy novel with backroom skullduggery, smear campaigns, innuendo, and dirty money from dodgy sources, pulling in everything from a deal in 1947 to sell Rolls-Royce jet engines to the Russians to England's World Cup victory in 1966, a victory the Red haters ascribe to a deal between Wilson and the Soviets. For Le Carré fans.

☒White, Katharine Elle. [Heartstone](#) (Harper Voyager, \$15.99).

Escape into a charming fantasy. The Indie Next Pick which I endorse: "A fun take on *Pride and Prejudice* in a fantasy setting. Merrybourne Manor has a gryphon infestation and has contracted with a band of Riders to kill them. As you can imagine, the main Rider is a little haughty and our heroine has a long memory. Familiar trials and tribulations occur with some detailed world-building, laying the groundwork for a sequel. Good for readers who don't mind literary re-imaginings, love *P&P*, and Anne McCaffery's Pern novels." And, I add, the wonderful dragon series by Naomi Novik.