

BOOKNEWS from

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ANOTHER AMAZING APRIL....

AUTHORS ARE SIGNING...

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

SATURDAY APRIL 1 2:00 PM

Donis Casey signs the [The Old Buzzard Had It Coming](#) (Poisoned Pen \$9.99)

The 1st Alafair Tucker Mystery

Mary Anna Evans signs [Burials](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95)

Faye Longchamp #10

SUNDAY APRIL 2 2:00 PM

Cindy Brown signs [Macdeath](#) (Henery \$15.99) and other titles

Ann Montgomery signs [The Scent of Rain](#) (Amphorae \$12.95)

WEDNESDAY APRIL 5 7:00 PM

Jared Shurin, ed., signs [The Djinn Falls in Love and Other Stories](#) (Solaris/Simon Schuster \$15.95)

THURSDAY APRIL 6 7:00 PM 7:00 PM

Lisa See signs [The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane](#) (Scribner \$27)

SATURDAY APRIL 6 10:30 AM

Coffee & Crime discusses Laura Bradford's [The Silence of the Flans](#) (\$7.99)

Emergency Dessert Squad #3

MONDAY APRIL 10 7:00 PM

Steve Berry signs [The Lost Order](#) (St Martins \$28.99)

Cotton Malone #16

TUESDAY APRIL 11 7:00 PM

Philip Kerr signs [Prussian Blue](#) (Putnam \$27) Bernie Gunther

WEDNESDAY APRIL 12 7:00 PM

Anne Hillerman signs [Song of the Lion](#) (Harper \$27.99)

Manuelito/Chee/Leaphorn #3

THURSDAY APRIL 13 7:00 PM

Matthew Quirk signs [Dead Man Switch](#) (LittleBrown \$26)

John Hayes

SATURDAY APRIL 15 10:30 AM

Croak & Dagger discusses Lisa See's first Red Princess Mystery [Flower Net](#) (\$16)

MONDAY APRIL 17 7:00 PM

Greg Iles signs [Mississippi Blood](#) (Harper \$28.99)

Natchez Burning #3

TUESDAY APRIL 18 7:00 PM

Jeffrey Deaver signs [The Burial Hour](#) (Grand Central \$28)

Lincoln Rhyme #13

THURSDAY APRIL 20 7:00 PM

Stuart Woods signs [Fast and Loose](#) (Putnam \$28)

Stone Barrington #41

FRIDAY APRIL 21 7:00 PM

SciFi/Fantasy Club discusses Joe Hill's [Nos4a2](#) (\$17.99)

SATURDAY APRIL 22 1:00-4:00 PM

Cozy Con: Panels and Book Signing

Tessa Arlen signs [Death by Any Other Name](#) (St Martins \$25.99)

Hannah Dennison signs [Murderous Mayhem at Honeychurch Hall](#) (St Martins \$25.99)

CS Harris signs [Where the Dead Lie](#) (Berkley \$26)

Francine Mathews signs [Death in a Mood Indigo](#) (Soho \$15.95)

Jenn McKinlay signs [Caramel Crush](#) (Berkley \$7.99)

Jennifer McMahon signs [Burntown](#) (Random \$25.95)

Megan Miranda signs [Perfect Stranger](#) (SimonSchuster \$25)

Renee Patrick signs [Dangerous to Know](#) (Forge \$24.99)

Paige Shelton signs [Of Books and Bagpipes](#) (St Martins \$25.99)

MONDAY APRIL 24 7:00 PM

Shetland TV video excerpts

Ann Cleeves signs [Cold Earth](#) (St Martins \$25.99)

Shetland Islands #7

TUESDAY APRIL 25 7:00 PM Book Launch

John Sandford signs [Golden Prey](#) (Putnam \$29)

Lucas Davenport #27

Sandford is joined by **David Joy** who signs [The Weight of This World](#) (Putnam \$27)

WEDNESDAY APRIL 26 7:00 PM

Hosted by Robert Anglen

Jeff Guinn signs [The Road to Jonestown](#) (SimonSchuster \$28)

SATURDAY APRIL 27 7:00 PM

Hardboiled Crime discusses Adrian McKinty's [The Cold, Cold Ground](#) (\$15.95)

Belfast cop Sean Duffy #1

TUESDAY MAY 2 7:00 PM

Gini Koch signs [Alien Education](#) (DAW \$7.99) Alien #15

SATURDAY MAY 6 2:00 PM

Dana Stabenow signs [Less Than a Treason](#) (Zeus \$26.95)

Kate Shugak #21

SUNDAY MAY 7 Poisoned Pen Press 20th Party 2:00 PM

Annie Hogsett signs [Too Lucky to Live](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95) Debut

Tammy Kaehler signs [Kiss the Bricks](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95)

Kate Reilly #5

Thomas Kies signs [Random Road](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95 or \$15.95) Debut

AND

Diane DiBiase and other contributors sign [Bound by Mystery](#) (Poisoned Pen 18.95) PPP 20th Anniversary Anthology

EVENT BOOKS

Arlen, Tessa. [Death by Any Other Name](#) (St Martins \$25.99). In her 3rd investigation, the elegant Lady Montfort and her redoubtable housekeeper Mrs. Jackson are impelled into investigating a neighbor's household after a cook is framed and dismissed for poisoning a guest of the visiting Hyde Rose Society. Promising to help her regain her job and her dignity, the pair treks out to the country home of one of the newly rich hosting a mixed bag of guests. The whole happens in roughly eight days leading up to Britain's declaring War in August, 1914. The rosarians are quarrelsome and quirky and underscore how soon the bloom of Edwardian days will die—and how the rituals of upper-crust country life patterning days will forever be disrupted. [Order all 3 Lady Montfort Mysteries.](#)

Berry, Steve. [The Lost Order](#) (St Martins \$28.99). Our copies come with a handsome gold bookplate created for this by the Smithsonian. Order now to secure yours as our supply is limited. The Knights of the Golden Circle was the largest and most dangerous clandestine organization in American history. It amassed billions in stolen gold and silver, all buried in caches across the United States. Since 1865 treasure hunters have searched, but little of that immense wealth has ever been found. Now, 160 years later, two factions of what remains of the Knights of the Golden Circle want that lost treasure—one to spend it for their own ends, the other to preserve it. Thrust into this battle is former Justice Department agent Cotton Malone, whose connection to the knights is deeper than he ever imagined. At the center is the Smithsonian Institution-linked to the knights, its treasure, and Malone himself through an ancestor, a Confederate spy named Angus "Cotton" Adams, whose story holds the key to everything. Complicating matters are the political ambitions of a reckless Speaker of the House and the bitter widow of a United States Senator, who are planning radical changes to the country. And while Malone and Cassiopeia Vitt face the past, ex-president Danny Daniels and Stephanie Nelle confront a new and unexpected challenge, a threat that may cost one of them their life. [Order Berry's earlier thrillers](#) and binge.

Brown, Cindy. [Macdeath](#) (Henary \$15.95). Like every actor, Ivy Meadows knows that Macbeth is cursed. But she's finally scored her big break, cast as an acrobatic witch in a circus-themed production of *Macbeth* in Phoenix, Arizona. And though it may not be Broadway, nothing can dampen her enthusiasm—not her flying caldron, too-tight leotard, or carrot-wielding dictator of a director. But when one of the cast dies on opening night, Ivy is sure the seeming accident is "murder most foul" and that she's the perfect person to solve the crime (after all, she does work part-time in her uncle's detective agency). Undeterred by a poisoned Big Gulp, the threat of being blackballed, and the suddenly too-real curse, Ivy pursues the truth.... Order two other cozies by Brown here. Also available: [Oliver Twisted](#) and [The Sound of Murder](#) (\$15.95 each).

Cleeves, Ann. [Cold Earth](#) (St Martins \$25.99). The ground shifts in more ways than one for Detective Inspector Jimmy Perez in CWA Diamond Dagger—winner Cleeves's 7th Shetland mystery. He's one of the mourners at the funeral of old Magnus Tait, who

was once accused of murder but absolved by Perez's investigation (an excellent entry in the TV series). As Tait's body is lowered into its grave, the rain-soaked hillside above the cemetery gives way and nearly buries the few mourners under a massive landslide. No one is hurt, but the body of a woman in a red dress is spotted in the ruins of a cottage in the slide's path. Who is she? Jimmy's obsession with uncovering her identity only deepens when he learns that she was strangled before the landslide occurred. The Scottish oil boom brings many outlanders to the island, but Jimmy suspects the killer is someone close to home and sets about unraveling a tangled web of relationships among the locals. The stark Shetland landscape provides an atmospheric backdrop for Cleeves' complex, relatable characters, especially Perez, a kind man dealing with his own tragic past. This series is brilliant television where a few changes are made (the age of Jimmy's stepdaughter). [Order all the Shetland Mysteries.](#)

And Cleeves write another sleuth made into TV, unorthodox police officer Vera Stanhope of Northumberland, another rich landscape to infuse the characters and plots. The first, [The Crow Trap](#) (\$27.99 or in paper @ \$16.99) has never been published in the US but is now available. It's best to start the Stanhopes here. You can watch both TV series via Netflix and Acorn.

Deaver, Jeffery. [The Burial Hour](#) (Grand Central \$28). The abduction of a business executive on Manhattan's Upper East Side by a man calling himself the Composer kicks off the 13th novel featuring forensic expert Lincoln Rhyme. A witness finds a small hangman's noose at the scene, as well as a torn currency exchange receipt, which suggests to Rhyme that the man was intending to leave the country. When the Composer later kidnaps a traveler at a remote bus stop near Naples, Italy, he leaves a little noose hanging from the bus stop bench. Rhyme and his lover, the NYPD's Amelia Sachs, wing off to Naples where they join forces with the Italian investigating team led by hard-nosed prosecutor Dante Spiro, who's initially dismissive of Rhyme. There's an excellent young officer in the Forestry Service who takes a role after being foiled in arresting a truffle trafficker. Meanwhile, Charlotte McKenzie, a legal liaison with the U.S. State Department, needs Rhyme's help with the case of an American college student in Naples who's been arrested....

Dennison, Hannah. [Murderous Mayhem at Honeychurch Hall](#) (St Martins \$25.99). When the only copy of Ravished, Iris Stanford's new manuscript, never arrives at her London publisher's office, her daughter Kat investigates the tiny local village post office, where it appears the package never left the building. Iris is on tenterhooks—not only is her novel gone with the wind, but she's deathly afraid that Muriel Jarvis, the postmistress and notorious busybody, will expose her secret identity as the bestselling romance writer Krystalle Storm. Meanwhile, Muriel has her own problems with the sudden death of her husband Fred, which has left her heavily in debt. That's the set up for the 4th in this charming, clever series. [Order them all.](#)

DiBiase, Diane D., ed. [Bound by Mystery](#) (Poisoned Pen 18.95). Celebrating 20 years of PPP, many of its authors contribute original stories including: Kerry Greenwood, Laurie R. King, James Sallis, the long-missing Tim Maleeny (illness), and our two new

Australians Sulari Gentill and J.M. Donellan (who mentions sacrificing a kangaroo to celebrate publishing with PPP... no wait, kidding...). *PW* reviews: "This wide-ranging anthology boasts 34 entertaining new stories from novelists published by Poisoned Pen, the pioneer small press devoted to mysteries. The locations of the tales, a few of which are not mysteries, are as varied as the provenance of their authors, and include Canada (Vicki Delany's "Her Mama's Pearls"), Australia (Sulari Gentill's "The Stranding"), Italy (David P. Wagner's "Disguise"), and England (Zoe Burke's "Game, Set, Match"). The periods vary, too, from Ancient Roman times (Jane Finnis's "Wild by Name, Wild by Nature") and the Byzantine era (Mary Reed and Eric Mayer's "Time's Revenge") to the Great Depression (Reavis Z. Wortham's "Gold Digger") and the contemporary (Steven Axelrod's "Nantucket Plunder"). A preface from each contributor describes how he or she came to be associated with Poisoned Pen. These serve as the volume's unifying thread, offering readers a peek behind the curtain at the trials and tribulations of fledgling writers. Some of these brief intros are outright love letters to the editors who helped shape the authors' ideas. Cheers to Poisoned Pen on its 20th anniversary!"

Evans, Mary Ann. [Burials](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95 or \$15.95). "Evans' enjoyable 10th Faye Longchamps mystery takes the archeologist and her husband, Joe Mantooh, from Florida to Oklahoma. Faye is doing a consulting gig for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, whose members plan to build a park on tribal land. As soon as she arrives at the site, someone fires gunshots in Faye's vicinity. Digging uncovers the skeletal remains of archeologist Sophia Townsend, who was the leader of a team exploring the same site three decades earlier. Skull fractures suggest that she was hit with a blunt instrument. Faye and Joe get caught up in tribal police chief Roy Cloud's subsequent murder investigation. Why was Sophia never reported missing? And where did the grave goods found with her remains come from? When the site claims another victim, the tension mounts. "Evans sensitively explores the issue of how to balance respecting cultural heritage and gaining knowledge of the past through scientific research." Also [Burials](#) (\$15.95). Evans, now a Professor in Oklahoma, will be joined by Donis Casey for her event at The Pen. [Order earlier Faye mysteries](#) and note the first, [Artifacts](#), has a new edition @\$9.99.

Guinn, Jeff. [The Road to Jonestown](#) (SimonSchuster \$28). The volatile religious leader and his Peoples Temple are the focus of *The Road to Jonestown*. The former investigative journalist records the electrically charged history of events that led up to November 1978's horrific mass suicide. How could a tragedy of such scale occur in apparent devotion to one man? With the same methodical research and meticulous prose that he brought to the chilling biography *Manson*, Guinn unravels the bewildering rise and fall of the American cult that inadvertently spawned the admonition *Don't drink the Kool-Aid!* "Entering the minds of megalomaniacal mass murderers is a talent of Jeff Guinn's. Nearly 40 years after the fact, he carefully examines how a reckless obsession with power greedily destroyed those in its sway." —Dave Wheeler

Harris, CS. [Where the Dead Lie](#) (Berkley \$26). It's London 1813. Sebastian St. Cyr, Viscount Devlin, is shocked by the torture and murder of a boy dumped on the grounds of an abandoned factory. It's the first alert to a pattern of missing children and will ask too much of his physician friend Paul who's still fighting wounds

and PTSD from engaging with the French, as well as risking his own life. His tiger, his wife Hero, his child, his various relations all play their roles. And I am pleased that there is a resolution to on-going personal conflict in an otherwise dark story. [12th in an excellent series.](#)

Hillerman, Anne. [Song of the Lion](#) (Harper \$27.99 April 12). Bernie Manuelito is having an sports fan evening out when a bomb blows up a car in the Shiprock High School parking lot and leaves a horribly wounded young Navajo. With only a rookie with attitude to assist her until help arrives, she works to contain the scene and keep the SRP crowd inside the gym contained. The dynamics of it all are interesting. The young Navajo man dies and a number of mysteries open up for Bernie, her Navajo Tribal cop husband Jim Chee, and the legendary Lieutenant Joe Leaphorn, requiring them to journey back into the past as well as search the present for a killer. If you're new to the Hillerman mysteries set almost entirely in New Mexico and Arizona by Anne and her legendary father Tony, start with [The Blessing Way](#) and [read forward](#).

Hogsett, Annie. [Too Lucky to Live](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95). Lonely and broke, Cleveland divorce-survivor Allie Harper believes all her problems would be solved if she could find a nice, smart, hot guy and enough money to get her car fixed. The hot guy arrives first: he's in a crosswalk clutching a bag of groceries while a blonde in a Hummer is learning hard on her horn. How has this woman missed that fact that the man is blind? From the curb, an outraged Allie jumps to his rescue, rebagging the groceries as well. The money is next—It's (literally) in the bag. Thomas Bennington III has bought a MondoMegaJackpot ticket along with canned tomatoes. Soon every scheming weasel in Cleveland will be after Tom's millions. It's murder. Here is the *LJ* Starred Review for this Clever Contemporary Mystery debut: "Lonely, divorced Allie Harper comes to the rescue of a handsome blind man caught in the crosswalk after he's startled by the honking of a Hummer on a Cleveland street. She drags Thomas Bennington III home, makes dinner, and is enjoying his company when he learns he's won over \$500 million on a lottery ticket. Yet a downcast Tom had bought the ticket to prove to a young boy that gambling doesn't pay off. Unfortunately, too many people know he won and think they deserve a share of the money. The couple gets to know each other quite well as they go on the run and do everything they can to stay alive, while the people around them end up dead. In this entertaining, sexy debut, Allie is a sharp Stephanie Plum paired up with a hot partner. She quickly learns how adept a blind man can be in dealing with trouble. The original voice, humor, and unusual premise will appeal to Janet Evanovich readers."

Iles, Greg. [Mississippi Blood](#) (Harper \$28.99). The concluding (and massive) volume in his Natchez Burning trilogy "is a sweeping story that remains intimate. The Double Eagles, a savage KKK splinter group, have declared a personal war on Penn Cage, a former prosecutor who's now the mayor of Natchez, Miss., necessitating 24-hour security protection for him and his family. The toxic bigotry escalates as Penn's father, Tom, once a respected physician, goes on trial for the murder of his former nurse and one-time lover, Viola Turner, an African-American who was suffering from terminal cancer. Penn teams with Serenity Butler, a famous black author who plans to write about Tom's case. Together, they look into the secrets of the Cage family, the

Double Eagles, and the South. Though a side plot about J.F.K.'s assassination stretches credibility, relentless pacing keeps the story churning, with unexpected brutality erupting on nearly every page. The trial scenes are among the most exciting ever written in the genre." Start [with Natchez Burning](#) and [The Bone Tree](#) (\$9.99 each), Penn Cage #4 and #5, but a trilogy within the Cage series.

Joy, David. [The Weight of This World](#) (Putnam \$27). Joy had to cancel due to illness in March and so joins Sandford for an evening exploring Southern criminals—Sandford calls his gang Dixie Hicks but Edgar nominee and First Mystery Club Pick [Where All Light Tends to Go](#) (\$16) author Joy takes a different tack. Here's the *NY Times* review: David Joy's bleakly beautiful tales of the rapacious drug culture of the Appalachian mountain dwellers of Jackson County, N.C., have a dreadful consistency. Every day, it seems, there's "another story of another man killing another man in another godforsaken town." A boy like Aiden McCall knows that "in time he would become his father" — a man who told his wife he loved her before shooting her in the head and killing himself. That alone should explain why Aiden would choose a brute like Thad Broom for his best friend, remaining loyal even when Thad returns from military service "malformed and hardened by bitterness and anger." Their friendship forms the spine of this gorgeously written but pitiless novel about a region blessed by nature but reduced to desolation and despair.

Kaehler, Tammy. [Kiss the Bricks](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95). Race car driver Kate Reilly can qualify for the Indianapolis 500 for the second time if she does well enough in the trials. She's shocked when she puts in the fastest time in the first practice session only to hear her achievement brings out the worst in a misogynist group of men who think women shouldn't be racing at all. Rude, sexist comments and hateful news stories compare her to PJ Rodriguez, the first woman to have the fastest time back in 1987—a woman who never got to race in the 500 because she reportedly jumped off a building. When PJ's mother and brother, aware of Kate's sleuthing experience, beg her to prove that PJ was murdered, she can't say no "As usual, Kaehler combines a credible group of suspects with some detailed racing lore. Even readers who don't care about cars may well be hooked by the feminist angle."—*Kirkus*. *PW* adds, "The supercharged spectacle of the Indianapolis 500 race provides the backdrop for Kaehler's engaging fifth Kate Reilly mystery. Beautiful, assertive racer Kate is attracting a lot of notice during the preliminaries for the Indy, thanks to her superior skill and her loyal pit crew, but speedway old-timers recall how in 1987 rookie PJ Rodriguez was making a similar impression—until she apparently committed suicide. Now a wave of nasty innuendo about inherently unstable female race car drivers combines with PJ's family's attempts to get Kate involved in the decades-old case by insisting that their loved one must have been murdered. Kaehler handles the mystery well enough, but the main interest for readers is watching Kate and her entourage painstakingly comb the list of suspects while also experiencing the pre-race hoopla, which is both exhausting and thrilling. Kate herself is a charmer, and so is this book." I love the Kate Reillys; [order them all](#).

Kerr, Philip. [Prussian Blue](#) (Putnam \$27). The *PW* Starred Review: "Edgar-finalist Kerr's stunning 12th Bernie Gunther novel races along on two parallel tracks. In the first, set in 1956, Bernie, who's been working as a hotel concierge in Cannes, flees

France because he bailed out of performing a hit for Stasi chief Erich Mielke, killing a Stasi agent in the process. The hazardous journey takes him by train, bicycle, and foot toward West Germany. In the main narrative, set in April 1939, SS Gen. Reinhard Heydrich, Bernie's boss, orders him to Berchtesgaden, Hitler's mountain retreat. A sniper has fatally shot Karl Flex, a civil engineer in Martin Bormann's employ, on the deck of Hitler's villa, the Berghof. Bernie has mere days to solve the crime before Hitler returns to Berchtesgaden to celebrate his 50th birthday. Trying to identify Flex's killer and bring him to justice proves to be the least of Bernie's worries. Kerr once again brilliantly uses a whodunit to bring to horrifying life the Nazi regime's corruption and brutality." Truly, it was a hideous crew led by Hitler. For you preferring the UK edition: [Prussian Blue](#) (\$44). [Order All the Bernie Gunthers](#). And note the William Christie thriller in Signed Books.

Kies, Thomas. [Random Road](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95 or \$15.95). *Library Journal* names this mystery its Debut of the Month with this Starred Review: "Reporter Geneva Chase has written hundreds of stories, but what brings her back to Sheffield, Connecticut, and her hometown newspaper, isn't a news piece, it's her alcoholism. Yet this may be her chance at professional redemption, as she investigates one of the most grisly murder scenes of her career. Probing the brutal slaughter of six people at an exclusive gated community, the intrepid journalist also uncovers all kinds of secrets, from a young man whose father bribes a judge to let him off on a hit-and-run charge to a swingers' club. At the same time, Geneva also tries to hide her drinking problem from the newsroom. A chance encounter at an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting will change her life, but not before it's jeopardized by her connecting the dots and tracking down a vicious killer. Kies' debut mystery introduces a reporter with a compelling voice, a damaged woman who recounts her own bittersweet story as she hunts down clues. This suspenseful story will appeal to readers who enjoy hard-nosed investigative reporters such as Brad Parks' Carter Ross."

Koch, Gini. [Alien Education](#) (Daw \$7.99). It's a typical day of bureaucracy and stress for President and First Lady Jeff and Kitty Katt-Martini, in part because Kitty's been tapped to represent Earth in the Galactic Council. Kitty feels that's a bad idea, and she might be right. When her first official TV morning show goes awry, it's only the quick thinking of the actor determined to make the *Code Name: First Lady* movie a reality that saves the day. It also forces Kitty to work with Hollywood. Dealing with the assimilation of the aliens who have come to Earth, while fending off advances from a variety of Hollywood types, seems like Kitty's biggest challenge. But then she and Jeff discover that Stephanie Valentino—Jeff's niece and the true Heir Apparent to the original Mastermind—is back. [Order all the Alien Novels](#).

Mathews, Francine. [Death in a Mood Indigo](#) (Soho \$15.95). My late mother and I fell hard for Mathews' Nantucket mysteries, her first published work. This is the third and has been updated, like the other Merry Folgers, from the 1990s for continuity with a 5th Folger, [Death on Nantucket](#) (Soho \$24.95), to publish in June (when Mathews returns to sign it). In [Death in the Off-Season](#) (\$9.99) and [Death in Rough Water](#) (\$15.95), rookie detective Merry Folger proved to herself and to her father, Nantucket police chief John Folger, that she had what it takes to solve a murder. Now her savvy is being put to the test again. Word trav-

els fast in Nantucket when two children and their dog discover a skeleton in the dunes of the cold Sconset beach. Could the dead woman be the latest victim of the serial killer who has been terrorizing mainland Massachusetts? The FBI seems to think so and sends their forensic psychiatrist to the scene. But Merry has her own suspicions, and starts looking into a cold case that has long baffled Nantucket police: the disappearance of a beautiful Harvard-educated psychiatrist seven years ago. When Merry starts inquiring into the tenuous leads in that long-cold case, she stumbles into a web of violent passions and buried crimes, a web that continues to ensnare victims.

McKinlay, Jenn. [Caramel Crush](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Love is in the air at Fairy Tale Cupcakes as Angie prepares for her wedding, but co-owner, Mel, is preparing for a breakup. Her old friend, Diane Earnest, is dumping her fiancé after discovering he's only marrying her for her money. She wants Mel to personally deliver a batch of caramel breakup cupcakes to the louse and give her a play-by-play of his reaction. When Mel finally tracks the man down, the look on his face isn't the reaction she was expecting: he's dead. After the police arrive and see the incriminating cupcakes, Diane becomes their prime suspect. . . . [Order the whole set](#) of Cupcake Bakery Mysteries of which this is #9.

McMahon, Jennifer. [Burntown](#) (Random \$25.95). Ashford, Vermont, might look like your typical sleepy New England college town, but to the shadowy residents who live among the remains of its abandoned mills and factories, it's known as "Burntown." Eva Sandeski, known as "Necco" on the street, has been a part of this underworld for years, ever since the night her father Miles—whose mother was murdered in front of his eyes—drowned in a flood that left her and her mother Lily homeless. A respected professor, Miles was also an inventor of fantastic machines, including one so secret that the plans were said to have been stolen from Thomas Edison's workshop. Lily believes it was the machine that got Miles murdered. When Lily too dies, and Necco's boyfriend is murdered, skeptical Necco is convinced her mother was telling the truth. You the reader will have to suspend disbelief over the machine and its power but unmasking the murderer is on solid ground.

Miranda, Megan. [The Perfect Stranger](#) (SimonSchuster \$25). Miranda scored a major bestseller with [All the Missing Girls](#) (\$16), one of our March Large Paperback Picks. A new beginning is exactly what Leah Stevens needs after a devastating incident shatters her journalism career in Boston. Confronted by a restraining order and the threat of a lawsuit, she prepares to get out of Boston when she runs into an old friend, Emmy Grey, who has just left a troubled relationship. Emmy proposes they move to rural Pennsylvania, where Leah can get a teaching position and both women can start again. But their new start is threatened when a woman with an eerie resemblance to Leah is assaulted by the lake, and Emmy disappears days later. Determined to find Emmy, Leah cooperates with police officer Kyle Donovan and the inevitable question in the Trust No One genre arises: Did Leah know Emmy at all? Was Emmy even Emmy? "Fans of Gillian Flynn, Chevy Stevens, and Jennifer McMahon will devour this relentlessly paced and deftly plotted thriller."

Montgomery, Ann. [The Scent of Rain](#) (Amphora \$12.95). Rose Madsen will do anything to keep from being married off to one of the men in her Fundamentalist Mormon (FLDS) community,

even endure the continued beatings and abuse of her mother. But when her mentally handicapped baby sister is forced to strangle the bird she loves at the behest of the Prophet, Rose frees the bird and runs away. Adan Reyes will do anything to escape the abusive foster care system in Phoenix, even leaving his good friends and successful high school athletic career behind him. Ill-prepared for surviving the desert, Adan hits the road only to suffer heat stroke. Found by a local handyman, he catches a glimpse of a mysterious girl, Rose, running through town, and follows her into the mountains where they are both tracked and discovered by the men of the FLDS community. Will they be stronger together and succeed in breaking away? For fans of Betty Webb's *Desert Wives* and *Desert Lost* (\$15.95 each).

Patrick, Renee. [Dangerous to Know](#) (Forge \$24.99). Set in December 1938, Patrick's sassy second mystery takes the reader on an exhilarating ride through Hollywood in its heyday. Trouble may be brewing in Europe, but in Hollywood it seems to be business as usual. The biggest question in most people's minds is: who will David O. Selznick choose to star in *Gone with the Wind*? Lillian Frost, social secretary to one of the most prominent men in Los Angeles, is a friend of Paramount's premier costume designer, Edith Head. When Edith asks her to do a little favor for Marlene Dietrich, how can she refuse? Her brief is simple: find pianist Jens Lohse. The more she noses around, the more dangerous her life becomes. Real-life celebrities such as Billy Wilder, Dorothy Parker, Errol Flynn, Jack Benny, and George Burns populate this meticulously researched book, in which the most outlandish incidents are verifiably true. Lovers of old movies, fabulous gowns, and historical gossip will be enchanted. We are. Start with the first Frost/Head investigation [Design for Dying](#) (\$15.99).

Quirk, Matthew. [Dead Man Switch](#) (LittleBrown \$26). A deadly fall on a rugged stretch of California coast. A home invasion gone wrong in Brittany. No one connects the killings because the victims are living under cover, their true identities closely-held secrets. They are members of America's most select kill/capture team, which combines special operations lethality with CIA tradecraft. They are the last line of defense against foreign threats, and someone is assassinating them one by one where they sleep, taking family and innocent bystanders to make the deaths seem like accidents. Captain John Hayes, a special operations legend, has left the military and spent the past year at home with his family. Once he uncovers the pattern behind the killings, he returns to the field to protect the men and women he once worked with. One of those women, Claire Sutherland, draws suspicion for her brilliant abilities as an assassin, and vanishes into thin air. Meanwhile, the attacks on Hayes's team members grow bolder and circle in on NY. Meet Hayes in the pulse-pounding [Cold Barrel Zero](#) (\$15.99), a 2016 Thriller Club Pick, filled with double-crosses, and government conspiracies.

Sandford, John. [Golden Prey](#) (Putnam \$29). Our copies will come with a collectible yet to be determined. Lucas Davenport is now a US Marshal with a wide remit. He gets to pick his own cases, whatever they are, wherever they lead him. And where they've led him this time is into real trouble. A Biloxi, Mississippi, drug-cartel counting house gets robbed, and suitcases full of cash disappear, leaving behind five bodies, including that of a six-year-old girl. Davenport takes the case, which quickly spirals

out of control, as cartel assassins, including a torturer known as the “Queen of home-improvement tools” compete with Davenport to find the Dixie Hicks shooters who knocked over the counting house. Things get ugly real fast, and neither the cartel killers nor the holdup men give a damn about whose lives Davenport might have saved; to them, he’s just another large target. [Here are](#) all the previous Davenports.

See, Lisa. [The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane](#) (Scribner \$27). This stunning novel illuminates the fascinating world of small tea farms in China during the economic reforms of the 1980s and ‘90s. The customs of western China’s Akha minority serve as the backbone of a gripping story “that contributes historical and social insight into the Akhas, an animistic people who lived modestly and virtually untouched by modernity in the mountains of China, and tea production in an increasingly globalized world. A growing taste for pu’er, a rare tea, has led entrepreneurs to seek out the ancient crop cultivated in remote Yunnan. Li-Yan, the intelligent but rash daughter of a village midwife, serves as the link between one such entrepreneur and her people, transforming their way of life. With strong female characters, See deftly confronts the changing role of minority women, majority-minority relations, East-West adoption, and the economy of tea in modern China. The Indie Next Pick: “This captivating story is set in a remote Yunnan village where, for many years, the Akha people have followed the rituals and cycles of harvesting tea leaves. When Li-yan gives birth to a baby out of wedlock, she wraps her baby in a blanket along with a package of the rare tea and leaves her in a city where she will be taken to an orphanage. Over the years, mother and daughter dream of finding one another again. Brew yourself a cup of tea and settle down to read this tale of family and the search for answers in different places and cultures.” See’s giant bestseller [Snow Flower and the Secret Fan](#) (\$18) was a 2005 Modern Firsts Club Pick; if you missed it, order the paperback and she can sign it. (I keep trying to talk her into writing a 4th mystery but no joy so far).

Shelton, Paige. [Of Books and Bagpipes](#) (St Martins \$25.99). Edwin MacAlister, owner of the Edinburgh bookshop the Cracked Spine, dispatches his American assistant, Delaney Nichols, to Castle Doune, a well-preserved ruin in the countryside, where she’s to meet a mystery man with a 1930s comic book to sell, Oor Wullie. Atop the battlements, Delaney finds her contact lying dead, dressed in medieval costume. Spotting the copy of Oor Wullie near the body, Delaney impulsively hides it in her jacket. The victim turns out to have a complicated link to Edwin’s past and the four members of a secret society from Edwin’s college days. But who would kill over a comic book, and what’s its connection to Edwin and his college chums? Delaney once again turns sleuth, putting her life in peril in a way she could never have imagined before moving from Kansas to Scotland. Fortunately, handsome pub owner Tom Fletcher is on hand to provide some romantic interest amid the dark doings. 2nd in the Scottish Bookshop Series after [The Cracked Spine](#) (\$7.99).

Shurin, Jared, ed. [The Djinn Falls in Love and Other Stories](#) (Solaris/Simon Schuster \$15.95). I loved this anthology! And so does the *NY Times* reviewer: “As humans sit around a campfire, pondering their foibles and aspirations amid the dancing of numinous flames and shadows, we may be catching ‘a look into the other world; a glimpse into beings who are like us and not us, made of a smokeless fire that can consume us.’ These then

are not Disneyfied tales of wish-granting tricksters, but stories of people burning like djinn and djinn as fiery people. The collection ranges widely in style and perspective, making room for the title poem by the Egyptian writer Hermes (translated from Arabic by Robin Moger) as well as poetic prose by the Canadian writer Amal El-Mohtar and a distinctly feminist take on wizards and harem intrigue by the British fantasy writer Claire North. Several stories are set painfully in the present, like Sami Shah’s “Reap,” which involves an American Air Force officer conducting remote surveillance in Pakistan. Others find parallels in secondary worlds, as in K.J. Parker’s “Message in a Bottle.” In a nod to the dance of djinn through different cultures, the editors retain the creatures’ various translated names: jinn, genie, ifrit and more. This choice highlights the collection’s range. Nearly all of the stories are haunting, reflective and firelight-beautiful, but there are standouts.” Authors are: Neil Gaiman, Amal El-Mohtar, Catherine King, Claire North, E. J. Swift, Hermes, Jamal Mahjoub, James Smythe, J. Y. Yang, Kamila Shamsie, Kirsty Logan, K.J. Parker, Kuzhali Manickavel, Maria Dahvana Headley, Monica Byrne, Nnedi Okorafor, Saad Hossein, Sami Shah, Sophia Al-Maria and Usman Malik

Stabenow, Dana. [Less Than a Treason](#) (Zeus \$26.95). Kate Shugak 21 brings the lives of Kate’s circle forward and contains some of Dana’s best writing about Alaska. *PW* agrees with me in this Boxed and Starred Review: “Edgar-winner Stabenow’s richly nuanced, highly entertaining 21st Kate Shugak mystery finds the Alaskan PI, who’s recovering from a gunshot wound she suffered months before, enjoying her solitude at her isolated cabin at the foot of the Quilak Mountains when some unwelcome visitors, who call themselves “orienteers,” pass by. One of them, a woman whose looks remind Kate of Audrey Hepburn in Sabrina, seeks Kate’s aid after she tumbles off a ridge—and falls on a heap of human bones. The intrepid Kate packs up the scanty remains, which a variety of animals have picked clean, and heads for the nearest town. Soon a woman hires Kate to find her missing husband, and the plot goes off in some surprising directions from there. The book is sprinkled with wit, studded with exquisite descriptions of the rugged landscape, and filled with opinionated and endearing characters, including reality TV show producers, park rangers, geologists, and barkeeps. The dialogue is smart, authentic, and reminiscent of Elmore Leonard, had he trained his shrewdly ironic eye on the wilds of Alaska rather than the seamier side of Detroit. A line from a Robert Frost poem provided the title.”

Woods, Stuart. [Fast and Loose](#) (Putnam \$28). Stone Barrington survives a number of close calls, starting with a collision between his yacht and another, larger boat in Maine’s foggy Penobscot Bay. Fortunately, this accident results in Stone’s becoming friends with the other boat’s owners, a family of doctors named Carlsson, of the Carlsson Clinic, “a famous hospital, with locations in several cities, like the Mayo Clinic.” Stone ends up helping the Carlssons thwart a takeover of their clinic, thereby antagonizing the schemer behind the takeover attempt.... Check out [all the Stone Barrington thrillers](#), such fun.

SIGNED BOOKS

Albert, Susan Wittig. [The Last Chance Olive Ranch](#) (Berkley \$27). Max Mantel, the killer McQuaid put away years ago, has busted out of the Huntsville prison and appears to be headed for

Pecan Springs. McQuaid knows there's only one way to stop the vengeful convict—set a trap with himself as bait. China wants to stay by her husband's side and keep him from harm. But McQuaid insists that she get out of town and go to the Last Chance Olive Ranch, where she's agreed to teach a workshop on herbs. When China and her best friend arrive at the ranch, she learns the owner, Maddie Haskell, has her own troubles. She inherited the ranch and olive oil business from the late matriarch, Eliza Butler, but Eliza's nephew is contesting the will. While China throws herself into helping Maddie, McQuaid's plan backfires when Mantel executes a countermove he never saw coming. 25th in an engrossing series filled with herb and Texas lore —[order all 25](#).

Backman, Fredrik. [Beartown](#) (Atria \$26.99). Tip-ins from the Swedish author. People say Beartown is finished. A tiny community nestled deep in the forest, it is slowly losing ground to the ever encroaching trees. But down by the lake stands an old ice rink, built generations ago by the working men who founded this town. And in that ice rink is the reason people in Beartown believe tomorrow will be better than today. The bestselling author of *A Man Called Ove* tells a poignant story of a hockey town paralyzed by scandal. Backman asks, "Why does everyone care about hockey? Because hockey tells stories." This is the story not just of hockey, but of a 15-year-old named Maya Anderson, whose father, Peter, the general manager of the hockey club, loves hockey, but loves his family more. Seventeen-year-old Kevin Erdahl is the star of Beartown, with a chance to go professional. One night, after a huge win, Maya goes to a raucous party at Kevin's house and is thrilled at his attention, but things get out of hand, and what takes place changes Beartown forever. Lest readers think hockey is the star here, it's Backman's rich characters that steal the show and his deft handling of tragedy. Backman is the author of [A Man Called Ove](#) and other bestsellers. "Backman's most complex novel to date takes place in the small, hockey-crazed village of Beartown. He deftly weaves together the stories of the players, the coaches, the parents, and the fans as Beartown's hockey team chases its dream of winning a championship. Weighty themes are explored. How high a price is too high for success? How deadly is silence? Who can you trust with your secrets? How far will you compromise your beliefs in the name of friendship? There are no easy answers. A great book club choice."

Baldacci, David. [The Fix](#) (Grand Central \$30). Detective Amos Decker witnesses a murder just outside FBI headquarters. A man shoots a woman execution-style on a crowded sidewalk, then turns the gun on himself. Even with Decker's extraordinary powers of observation and deduction, the killing is baffling. Decker and his team can find absolutely no connection between the shooter—a family man with a successful consulting business—and his victim, a schoolteacher. Nor is there a hint of any possible motive for the attack. Enter Harper Brown. An agent of the Defense Intelligence Agency, she orders Decker to back off the case. The murder is part of an open DIA investigation, one so classified that Decker and his team aren't cleared for it. But they learn that the DIA believes solving the murder is now a matter of urgent national security.... Writing a political thriller in the age of Trump has loads of risk (irrelevant, dated, etc....)

✎Beckett, Simon. [The Restless Dead](#) (Bantam UK \$32). It was on a Friday evening that forensics consultant Dr David Hunter took the call: a Detective Inspector Lundy from the Essex force. Just

up the coast from Mersea Island, near a place called Backwaters, a badly decomposed body has been found and the local police would welcome Hunter's help with the recovery and identification. Because they would like it to be that of Leo Villiers, the 31 year-old son of a prominent local family who went missing weeks ago, and they are under pressure to close the case. Villiers was supposed to have been having an affair with a married woman, Emma Derby. She too is missing, and the belief is that the young man disposed of his lover, and then killed himself. If only it was so straightforward. But Hunter has his doubts about the identity of the remains. The hands and feet are missing, the face no longer recognizable. Then further remains are found – and suddenly these remote wetlands are giving up yet more grisly secrets. 5th for David Hunter, only some of which are available.

✎Bolton, Sharon. [Dead Woman Walking](#) (Random UK \$32). Just before dawn in the hills near the Scottish border, a man murders a young woman. At the same time, a hot-air balloon crashes out of the sky. There's just one survivor. She's seen the killer's face – but he's also seen hers. And he won't rest until he's eliminated the only witness to his crime. Alone, scared, trusting no one, she's running to where she feels safe – but it could be the most dangerous place of all. Bolton is one of my favorite rising stars in British crime. [Her earlier work](#) was published as SJ Bolton. She's one of the most inventive voices in British crime and a great favorite of mine.

Christie, William. [A Single Spy](#) (St Martins \$27). Thriller writer Christie chooses an historical subject centered on the 1943 Tehran Conference bringing together Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin. But it begins earlier when the luck of a Russian orphan and thief runs out and instead of further surviving under the Soviet system he is caught and transported to the NKVD HQ. At 16, Alexsi Ivanovich Smirnov is given a choice: agree to be trained and inserted as a spy into Nazi Germany using the ID of a long-lost nephew of a high-ranking Nazi official as cover—or disappear forever. It's no choice, really. But Alexsi learned his skills well and one of them is the ability to disappear. Nonetheless off he goes into Germany and in time comes Operation Long Jump, a Nazi plan to assassinate the three leaders at Tehran. A plan that was thwarted by a Soviet intelligence officer who had infiltrated German intelligence, or so the record says. In theory German commando Otto Skorzeny commanded Long Jump, but he left no record; in fact, the Germans say it didn't happen. The Russians say it did. The Allies think it may have been a Russian ploy to get FDR to stay at the Soviet Embassy in Tehran, the better to spy on him. As Christie says, "It was a classic intelligence wilderness of mirrors, and for me, the perfect opportunity to write... a fictional story, yet absolutely correct in every single historical detail." You may recall Francine Mathews wrote of the Tehran Conference and potential plot in [Too Bad to Die](#) (\$16), involving Ian Fleming. Alexsi reminds me of the fabulous young Russian in David Benioff's brilliant bestseller [City of Thieves](#) (\$16), set in Leningrad during the Nazi siege. **Our May History Club Pick**, due in the very end of April, gets these other raves: "Part *bildungsroman*, part history lesson, part political exposé, Christie's enthralling novel defies expectations while striking all the chords that make spy fiction so enjoyable." —*Kirkus* Starred Review. "With detailed historical events, compelling characters, and plenty of heart-grabbing moments, this novel is intensely engaging from the first page." —*Library Journal* Starred Review.

Connolly, John. [Game of Ghosts](#) (Hodder \$40). In deepest winter, the private detective named Jaycob Eklund has vanished, and Charlie Parker is dispatched to track him down. Parker's employer, Edgar Ross, an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, has his own reasons for wanting Eklund found. Eklund is no ordinary investigator. He is obsessively tracking a series of homicides and disappearances, each linked to reports of hauntings. Now Parker will be drawn into Eklund's world, a realm in which the monstrous Mother rules a crumbling criminal empire, in which men strike bargains with angels, and in which the innocent and guilty alike are pawns in a game of ghosts.... 15th in the always surprising Charlie Parker series.

✠Cotterell, TA. [What Alice Knew](#) (Black Swan UK \$35). A UK debut. How far would you go to keep a secret? Alice has a perfect life—a great job, happy kids, a wonderful husband. Until he goes missing one night; she receives a suspicious phone call; things don't quite add up. Alice needs to know what's going on. But when she uncovers the truth she faces a brutal choice. And how can she be sure it is the truth? Sometimes it's better not to know.

Dahl, Julia. [Conviction](#) (St Martins \$28). The Starred Review: "In Dahl's outstanding third novel featuring Brooklyn freelance reporter Rebekah Roberts, Rebekah agrees to help DeShawn Perkins, who claims he's innocent of the crime that sent him to prison at age 16—murdering his foster parents and foster sister in 1992. DeShawn claims that a cop, who unquestioningly accepted a crack addict's ID of him, coerced his confession. The narrative alternates between the original murder investigation in Crown Heights, where riots pitted Orthodox Jews and black residents against each other, and Rebekah's present-day sleuthing in the quickly gentrifying neighborhood. Many of the case's original players are still out there, including Rebekah's formerly Orthodox ex-cop friend, Saul Katz; the woman in line to be the next Brooklyn DA; and the highly dubious eyewitness, all of whom have something to fear from Rebekah's probing. Dahl excels at revealing the inner workings of enigmatic subcultures while maintaining peak suspense. She also provides a terrific 'whoa, I didn't see that coming' moment." Author Lisa Lutz writes: "*Conviction* is New York City crime at its very best: gritty, realistic, culturally complex and sometimes really terrifying, but ultimately full of hope, with a heroine you can't help but root for. I couldn't put the damn thing down." [Order all three](#) of Rebekah's investigations including the Edgar-nominated *Invisible City*. Faye Kellerman is the obvious analog but Dahl has much to say about the newspaper industry that is worth noting.

Davis, Lindsey. [The Third Nero](#) (Hodder \$46). Flavia Albia's day-old marriage is in trouble – her new husband may be permanently disabled and they have no funds. So when Palace officials ask her to help expose a plotter in their midst she is obliged to accept their commission. The plot could not be bigger. Ever since he died in AD 68, apparently by his own hand, Rome has been haunted by reports that the Emperor Nero is in fact very much alive and about to return to claim his throne. Two Nero pretenders have emerged in the East and met grisly fates. But now, as the Emperor Domitian, whose tyrannical, paranoid reign grows ever more unpopular, fights a war in faraway Dacia, there emerges a far more sinister contender. What's more the rumor is that this false Nero is already in Rome. Plunged into the conspiracy, Flavia must infiltrate the house of the Parthians who have smuggled in this new impostor, negotiate with spies, dodge the assassins

sent by the Palace traitor, and somehow cope with her stricken husband. If somehow you have missed Davis' Roman mysteries lose no time in immersing yourself in them.

De Castell, Sebastien. [Tyrant's Throne](#) (Quercus \$46). Falcio val Mond, First Cantor of the Greatcoats, is on the brink of fulfilling his dead King's dream: Aline is about to take the throne and restore the rule of law once and for all. But for the Greatcoats, nothing is ever that simple. In neighboring Avars, an enigmatic new warlord is uniting the barbarian armies and even worse, he is rumored to have a new ally: Falcio's old nemesis Trin. With the armies of Avars at her back, she'll be unstoppable. Falcio, Kest and Brasti go racing north to stop her, but in those cold, treacherous climes they discover something altogether different – and far more dangerous: a new player plans to take the throne of Tristia, and the Greatcoats, for all their determination and skill, may not be able to stop him. 4th in this high fantasy series.

✠Evans, Claire. [The Fourteenth Letter](#) (Sphere UK \$32). One balmy June evening in 1881, Phoebe Stanbury stands before the guests at her engagement party: this is her moment, when she will join the renowned Raycraft family and ascend to polite society. As she takes her fiancé's hand, a stranger holding a knife steps forward and ends the poor girl's life. Amid the chaos, he turns to her aristocratic groom and mouths: 'I promised I would save you.' The following morning, just a few miles away, timid young legal clerk William Lamb meets a reclusive client. He finds the old man terrified and in desperate need of aid: William must keep safe a small casket of yellowing papers, and deliver an enigmatic message: *The Finder knows*. With its labyrinth of unfolding secrets, Claire Evans' riveting debut is for fans of Kate Mosse, Carlos Ruiz Zafon and Jessie Burton and is our **April History/Mystery Club Pick** (sometimes books from London are slow to arrive).

✠Hawkins, Paula. [Into the Water](#) (Doubleday UK \$34). Here's the sophomore suspense from the author of [The Girl on the Train](#). I haven't read a copy, but since *TGOTT* was a First Mystery Club Pick in the Signed UK edition, you will want to follow up with this. Women in a small British town have been drowning since 1679. Danielle Abbott, an award-winning writer and photographer who's also the single mother of a teenager—is one. She was writing a coffee-table book about the spot the people of Beckford call the Drowning Pool where she learned to swim and which is now her grave. She left behind a pile of typewritten pages and a daughter whose best friend also drowned just a few months ago. Danielle's estranged sister returns to town to identify the body, and it goes from there... US edition Unsigned pubs in early May: [Into the Water](#) (Penguin \$28).

Hill, Sasscer. [Flamingo Road](#) (St Martins \$27). Our **April Surprise Me! Club Pick** takes a Baltimore cop under fire (after firing her own weapon and killing a guy in the process of strangling a woman who then clams up and disappears) down to her brother's estate in Florida to help cope with his teen-age daughter who's running wild). The brother's home is located near Gulfstream Park. Jilly, Fia McKee's niece, is horse-mad and loves her young horse who one night is brutally slaughtered for meat by marauders from Cuban gangs living nearby off the grid. It all results in Fia agreeing to a leave of absence from the Baltimore PD and going to work undercover for a new enforcement agency, the Thoroughbred Racing Protective Bureau or TRPB (real).

She'll be an exercise rider at Gulfstream where two workers are under suspicion of illegal activities. Also their horses outperform expectations. This is a tensely plotted tale with lively characters, interesting twists, a look at unconventional bad guys, and well written. A kind of American Dick Francis thriller. Hill was an amateur steeplechase jockey and bred and owned racer horses for years. Her first novel was nominated for both the Agatha and Macavity Awards. This is the start of a series.

Jones, Stephen Mack. [August Snow](#) (Soho \$27). Patrick makes the **April Hardboiled Crime Club Pick**: "August Snow is a survivor. The son of a Mexican-American mother and an African-American father, Snow straddled both worlds growing up in Detroit's Mexicantown. After he was run out of the Detroit police force after attempting to expose some corrupt cops, Snow fought back against the city and won a wrongful dismissal lawsuit, earning him a \$12 million settlement and persona non grata status. After a wilderness year spent mostly drinking and carousing all over the world, Snow is back living in his mother's old house and investigating the suspicious death of a wealthy business magnate. This is a very solid debut, and Jones does a great job of depicting modern day Detroit, in all of its embattled, contradictory glory." I add that I think this is a top notch debut and urged Patrick to read it since it fits his club so well. While the obvious analog authors for Detroit are Estleman and Leonard, I feel that Chandler is an inspiration to this author, Jones' affection for Detroit akin to Chandler's for Los Angeles.

Kerr, Philip. [Prussian Blue](#) (Quercus \$44). The latest Bernie Guenther for those who want the UK edition. See Event Books for a review.

Kovac, Christina. [The Cutaway](#) (Atria \$26). "Washington, D.C., TV producer Virginia Knight, the narrator of TV journalist Kovac's nail-biting first novel, takes an interest in the case of a missing woman, attorney Evelyn Carney, who was last seen running out of a Georgetown restaurant after a public fight with her husband. When Evelyn's body is found in a cove on the Maryland side of the Potomac, Virginia applies her reporter instincts and nose for a good story to investigate the murder. Meanwhile, she's beleaguered by Nick Mellay, a new manager at her station, who starts firing members of her staff and takes over her job, supposedly temporarily. Still, she manages to follow leads from police commander Michael Ledger, an ex-boyfriend of hers, and from Paige Linden, a law firm colleague of Evelyn's, which point toward Ian Chase, an assistant U.S. attorney, as a person of interest. As Virginia starts uncovering information being withheld from the investigation and irregularities in witness statements, she's left in doubt about whom to trust. Readers will want to see more of this tenacious, lovable heroine."—*PW* Starred Review for our **April First Mystery Club Pick**.

Leon, Donna. [Earthly Remains](#) (Heinemann \$42). The Venetian policeman is at headquarters one hot July day, questioning an arrogant lawyer accused of drugging a young woman he met at a party who subsequently died. When Brunetti has a heart seizure during this contentious interview, he winds up in the hospital. Prescribed complete rest, he later takes his wife's suggestion of staying at a villa on a sparsely inhabited island in the Venetian Lagoon. There he befriends Davide Casati, the villa's caretaker and a keeper of bees, some of which are mysteriously dying. Then, during a fierce storm, Davide disappears. Brunetti under-

takes a search that leads to the discovery of his friend's body and boat. Was Davide's death an accident? He had been grief stricken since his wife's death, Brunetti learns, and recently remorseful over the demise of his beloved bees. Along the way to the poignant ending, Brunetti develops insights into nature and humankind's failure to protect it, as well as the nature of guilt and its role in a man's life. Leon's own weariness with Venice as a cruise ship icon overrun with tourists and with the Italian bureaucracy has been showing for some time in her work and is reflected in Brunetti.

MacBride, Stuart. [A Dark So Deadly](#) (Collins \$44). Welcome to the Misfit Mob... It's where Police Scotland dumps the officers it can't get rid of, but wants to: the outcasts, the troublemakers, the compromised. Officers like DC Callum MacGregor, lumbered with all the boring go-nowhere cases. So when an ancient mummy turns up at the Oldcastle tip, it's his job to find out which museum it's been stolen from. But then Callum uncovers links between his ancient corpse and three missing young men, and life starts to get a lot more interesting...

Masterman, Becky. [A Twist of the Knife](#) (St Martins \$27). Ex-FBI agent Brigid Quinn, now happily settled in Tucson, doesn't visit her family in Florida much. But her former partner on the force, Laura Coleman, a woman whose life she has saved and who has saved her life in turn, is living there now. So when Laura calls about a case that is not going well, Brigid doesn't hesitate to get on a plane. On leave from the Bureau, Laura has been volunteering for a legal group trying to prove the innocence of a man who is on death row for killing his family. Laura is firmly convinced that he didn't do it, while Brigid isn't so sure—but the date for his execution is coming up so quickly that they'll have to act fast to find any evidence that may absolve him before it's too late... Tucson's Masterman's debut, a First Mystery Club Pick, *Rage Against the Dying*, was nominated for an Edgar and CWA Gold Dagger. [Order them all](#).

Paretsky, Sara. [Fallout](#) (Harper \$27.99). The 19th VI Warshawski novel sends VI from Chicago to Kansas, first Fort Riley, then Lawrenceville, on the trail of an aged, fading African-American film star and a missing young Chicago film student known to be working on a documentary of Emerald's career. It's concern for the missing Black auteur that brings clients to VI and starts off her quest, with the support also of the young man serving as Emerald's trustee. She's driving, so she sends the younger dog Mitch to board in Wisconsin and takes the older, Peppy along. Which turns out to be a good idea. The two track the missing Emerald and August from the military base to the university town which, despite Kansas' history, turns out to have been deeply racist. And a hub of missiles and biological research. As she turns over one secret after another she decides Lawrenceville is as dangerous as Chicago but its secrets can be mined. They embrace a wide range of people. The professor and his wife are particularly repulsive, and the law includes a sheriff, a police chief, and a Colonel. And echoing throughout is VI's strained relationship with her musician lover Jake, who is spending a year in Switzerland. I quite understand his position...and VI's. People who do dangerous stuff are dangerous to love.

Parsons, Tony. [Die Last](#) (Random UK \$32). As dawn breaks on a snowy February morning, a refrigerated lorry is found parked in the heart of London's Chinatown. Inside, twelve women, ap-

parently illegal immigrants, are dead from hypothermia. 12 girls, 13 passports. So he's off on a hunt for the missing woman. And the question is: what would you, anyone really, do for a home? This terrific series doesn't duck hot button issues for Brexit or indeed, arising anywhere. Dana Stabenow and I recommend this series highly. [Order away.](#)

✦Rhys, Rachel. [A Dangerous Crossing](#) (Doubleday UK \$32). 1939. Europe is on the brink of war. Lily Shepherd leaves England on an ocean liner for Australia, escaping her life of drudgery for new horizons. She is instantly seduced by the world onboard: cocktails, black-tie balls and beautiful sunsets. Suddenly, Lily finds herself mingling with people who would otherwise never give her the time of day. But soon she realizes her glamorous new friends are not what they seem. The rich and hedonistic Max and Eliza Campbell, mysterious and flirtatious Edward, and fascist George are all running away from tragedy and scandal even greater than her own. By the time the ship docks, two passengers are dead, war has been declared, and life will never be the same again. A whole host of British authors have praised this so either it's a terrific book or Rhys is well connected...it's hard to know which until I read it

Scottoline, Lisa. [One Perfect Life](#) (St Martins \$29). On the surface, it tells the tale of the struggling single mother of a high-school pitcher, a shy kid so athletically talented that he's being recruited for a full-ride scholarship to a Division I college, with a future in major-league baseball. But the mother fears that she's losing her grip on her son because he's being lured down a darker path by one of his teammates, a secretly disturbed young man from an affluent family, whose excellent grades and fun-loving manner conceal his violent criminal plans. Add a handsome stranger who comes to town and infiltrates the high school, posing as a teacher but with a hidden agenda all his own. The mix becomes combustible when a beloved faculty member turns up dead as a suicide, in circumstances equally consistent with murder. Only then is the true identity of the fake teacher revealed, and the single mother must gird for battle.... Scottoline's spring books might be called "family dramas" but they are just as suspenseful, twisting on surprising premises and events, as her "mysteries."

✦Searle, Nicholas. [A Traitor in the Family](#) (Viking UK \$25). The author of UK bestseller [The Good Liar](#) (\$15.99) comes up with another tricky premise. While her husband prepared to murder a young man he had never met, Bridget O'Neill completed her packing for Christmas with her in-laws. Francis O'Neill is a terrorist, trained to kill for his cause. Bridget is his wife, expected to be loyal and stand by her husband. She has learned not to hope for much more, until the day she glimpses, for the first time, the chance of a new life. A life without violence, without secrets, and without knocks on the door in the dead of night. A life without her husband. But what if freedom for Bridget means grave danger for Francis? If you like Ruth Ware, she raves about Searle.

Sigurdardottir, Yrsa. [The Legacy](#) (Hodder \$36). The first in an exciting new series from the author of *The Silence of the Sea*, winner of the 2015 Petrona Award for best Scandinavian Crime Novel. The murder was meant as a punishment – but what sin could justify the method? The only person who might have answers is the victim's seven-year-old daughter, found hiding in the room where her mother died. And she's not talking. Newly

promoted, out of his depth, detective Huldar turns to Freyja and the Children's House for their expertise with traumatized young people. Freyja, who distrusts the police in general and Huldar in particular, isn't best pleased. But she's determined to keep little Margret safe. It may prove tricky. The killer is leaving them strange clues: warnings in text messages, sums scribbled on bits of paper, numbers broadcast on the radio. He's telling a dark and secret story – but how can they crack the code? And if they do, will they be next? [Order Yrsa's earlier books.](#)

Suarez, Daniel. [The Change Agent](#) (Dutton \$29). This outstanding speculative thriller from bestseller Suarez imagines a future of "living technology—a fourth industrial revolution of synthetic biology and genetic editing," as the author puts it in an opening note to the reader. In 2045, Kenneth Durand mines data for Interpol's Singapore-based Genetic Crimes Division, using algorithms to locate labs that cater to parents-to-be seeking to give their progeny a better life via illegal genetic therapies. The targeted genetic edits were initially intended to eliminate birth defects, but their potential for improving mental and physical capacity attracts those looking to provide their children with as many advantages as they can afford. An even more frightening prospect is realized when Durand himself is injected with a change agent that edits enough of his cells to make him the image of the criminal mastermind he's been pursuing. "His quest to get his life back integrates a classic Hitchcockian theme into a terrifying brave new world. The depth and sophistication of Suarez's dystopian world—not to mention his facility at making complex science intelligible to the nonexpert—rivals anything Michael Crichton ever did." So this excellent book will be our **May SciFi/Fantasy Club Pick**. [Order his earlier thrillers.](#)

Tinti, Hannah. [The Twelve Lives of Samuel Hawley](#) (Random \$27). As his beloved daughter, Loo, hits adolescence, longtime criminal Samuel Hawley forswears life on the run and moves with her to the coastal Massachusetts town where her late mother Lily was raised. Though father and daughter both struggle to adjust, Samuel finds a place in the town's fishing industry as Loo experiences first love with the quirky son of environmentalists who oppose it. But the consequences of Samuel's violent past continue unfolding, while Loo's quest to understand the truth of her mother's death by drowning may fracture her bond with her father forever. Alternating chapters chronicle Samuel's past—traced through the 12 bullet wounds that scar his body—and Loo's attempts to find an authentic self and a future. As the story lines converge, Tinti's imagery evokes time, space, the sea, and the myth of Heracles without losing the narrative's sure grounding in American communities and culture. This is a convincingly redemptive and celebratory novel: an affirmation of the way that heroism and human fallibility coexist, of how good parenting comes in unexpected packages, and of the way that we are marked by our encounters with each other and the luminous universe in which we dwell. The Indie Next Pick for a book arriving in April but our **May Modern Firsts Club Pick**: "Hannah Tinti has accomplished something rare in *The Twelve Lives of Samuel Hawley*: she has written a book too exciting to put down, but too well written to race through or, heaven forbid, skim. Her novel, however, is more than just a treat for those of us who love literary thrillers; it is also a provocative exploration of violence and the extremes to which men and women will go to defend those they love. " Author Ann Patchett adds, "One part Quentin Tarantino,

one part Scheherazade, and twelve parts wild innovation. Hannah Tinti proves herself to be an old fashioned storyteller of the highest order.”

✠Underdown, Beth. [The Witchfinder's Sister](#) (Penguin UK \$32). This debut historical novel is a well-written dramatization of witch hunting in Europe during the 17th century, horrifying and in its last sentence, bitterly ironic. Based loosely on the life of a real English witch finder named Matthew Hopkins, the story is narrated by his sister, Alice, who, pregnant, must return to her brother's household in the village of Manningtree after the death of her husband in London. As Matthew's ward, Alice can only watch as her brother's behavior spirals into fanaticism and cruelty. She knows childhood trauma informs his actions—not only was his face disfigured in a mysterious accident as a child, but he was denied the opportunity to follow in their father's footsteps as a minister. As Matthew coldly and methodically goes about the business of “watching” several local women, keeping them awake and bound for hours on end while waiting for their devilish imps to appear, Alice becomes desperate to get to the bottom of what is compelling him. As the hysteria, and his influence, grows, Matthew is called to other communities, forcing Alice to accompany him. After witnessing his failure to stop one particularly unspeakable act, she finally rebels, and he turns on her. Underdown paints a realistic, grim portrait of fanaticism which has its modern echoes like the witch hunt of Senator Joseph McCarthy. One hopes there won't be similar or worse to come. Likely to arrive in early May.

Vidich, Paul. [The Good Assassin](#) (Atria \$26). I so liked Vidich's [An Honorable Man](#) (\$16) that it was a 2016 First Mystery Club Pick. He delivers a second spy story set in 1958 Cuba and loosely based on the life of American William Morgan who fought with the Castro-led revolution in a spirit of idealism and ended up executed at age 32 for his supposed role as a CIA spy. Thus Vidich brings in the role of the Mafia in Cuba, rivalry between the CIA and the FBI, US support for Batista, even Ernest Hemingway as former CIA agent George Mueller, now retired and teaching at Princeton (and bored) lands in Havana in 1958 on an ambiguous mission proposed by the director, once his boss. The mission is to probe the activities of one Toby Graham, a CIA officer suspected of sympathies with the rebel forces. It's all Graham Greene and a touch of Le Carré and different ground than that worked by Joseph Kanon (see June). I am pleased to read anything shedding light on those murky days and the fiasco that followed.

BRITISH LIBRARY CRIME CLASSICS

Rolls, Anthony. [Scarweather](#) (Poisoned Pen \$12.95). First published in 1934, this idiosyncratic work of psychological suspense from British author Rolls (a pseudonym of C.E. Vulliamy) spans the years 1913–1928. John Farringdale, the narrator, retains a likable innocence as he matures from university student to barrister. Playing Holmes to his Watson is Frederick Ellingham, a brilliant polymath at Cambridge University. Through Farringdale's cousin Eric Foster, he and Ellingham meet eccentric archeologist Tolgen Reisby and his attractive young wife, Hilda. All become friendly, though the growing bond between Eric and Hilda perturbs her husband. While visiting the Reisbys at Scarweather, their remote home on the British coast, Eric disappears, presumed drowned. Ellingham suspects foul play, but WWI intervenes before he can test his theories. Only when Farringdale and Ellingham visit

Scarweather again to witness the increasingly volatile Reisby's excavation of a site called the Devil's Hump are hidden truths revealed. “This entry in the British Library Crime Classics series appeals as much for its evocative glimpse of its period and witty depiction of archeologists' quirks as for its suspense.”—*PW*. Due in May by Rolls: [Family Matters](#) (Poisoned Pen \$12.95)

OUR APRIL LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

Abbott, Megan. [You Will Know Me](#) (\$15.99). “The wrong kind of ambiguity in a crime novel can be fatal. Abbott judges it impeccably here. The murder mystery component of the story has all the essential ingredients: clues, red herrings, twists and an answer, in the end, that leaves no room for doubt about who did what and why. It's only every other element that grows increasingly bewildering as the narrative progresses. There's a stroke of genius in this: The reader appreciates the satisfaction of the solution, which is simple, shocking and perfect. At the same time, the purpose of solving the mystery is, arguably, to undermine the idea that mysteries can ever be solved in a meaningful way. When the murder is committed...it appears to take place in a familiar landscape populated by people we know. We imagine we have our bearings, and then the murder knocks us off course. Then with each new fact that emerges, a piece of what we thought we knew is dislodged, leaving in its place a mystifying blank patch. By the end of the novel, everything apart from the events specifically surrounding the killing is an unanswerable question. All of this Abbott pulls off with breathtaking skill.”—Sophie Hannah on one of Patrick's favorite author's 2016 book.

✠Chisholm, PF. [A Clash of Spheres](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95). I love historical crime but this swashbuckling Elizabethan Sir Robert Carey series carrying the Queen's cousin (on the illegitimate side) from the Scottish borders to London, Oxford, and back north now in this 8th entry has no peer. Sir Robert is a real person brought to dramatic life along with an irresistible cast. As Sharon Kay Penman wrote to me on reading this, “Honestly, Barbara, I don't know how she does it.” Diana Gabaldon, another enthusiast, wrote an entire essay in praise of this story that brings Carey and Sergeant Dodd and a formidable spy or two into the court of James VI at Edinburgh where (to my amazement and delight) a learned debate of the Ptolemaic vs. Copernicium theory of the solar system leads to a shattering climax. Start with [A Famine of Horses](#) (\$9.99) and [order the rest](#) to read in order. Look for the link to the Gabaldon essay in New Books below.

✠Cleverly, Barbara. [Diana's Altar](#) (\$15.95). It's Cambridge, 1933, All Hallow's Eve. Doctor Adelaide Hartest, fresh from a death bed scene at the mansion of Sir Gregory Pertinax where a young woman called a housekeeper but clearly a high-end prostitute has died of arsenic poisoning, stops at the old All Hallow's Church where she finds a man dying of a knife to the gut. Suicide, he claims before he goes. His name brings in Scotland Yard and Assistant Commissioner Joe Sandilands who has both asked Adelaide to marry him and tangled with Superintendent Adam Hunnyton of the local squad. Hunnyton is known to Joe as a thorough rogue. And so is Sir Gregory. But much more is to come involving... this is Cambridge, remember... secrets and communists and worse. There is a fascinating historical note from the author at the end. This excellent series begins with Joe serving in India and keeps moving the clock forward. This series starts in British India and moves Sandilands along in time and space. [Order it all.](#)

Doerr, Anthony. [All the Light We Cannot See](#) (\$17). This mega-bestseller, a 2014 Modern Firsts Club Pick, finally moves into paperback. The basics: a blind French girl's and a German boy's paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II. But it's much more than that and takes you through places as well as lives in upheaval: Paris, and its Museum of Natural History; the old fortified city of Saint-Malo on the Channel. I like this comment: "There is a fairytale quality to the book—the girl and her father must flee to a rickety old house by the sea; the boy must march with monsters and yet retain his humanity." And not all fairy tales have happy endings....

Hamilton, Steve. [The Second Life of Nick Mason](#) (\$16). John Charles reviews this start to a new series by Edgar-winner Hamilton: When Nick Mason entered the Illinois State Penitentiary, he was scheduled to serve 25 years to life for his crimes. Thanks to fellow inmate Darius Cole, Nick is walking out with a clean record after spending only five years behind bars. Not only is Nick free, Darius has lined up a lucrative job as an assistant manager at one of his restaurants in Chicago, and he is letting Nick live in his palatial home in Lincoln Park West. The only thing Nick has to do in return is immediately answer the cell phone given to him by one of Darius' business associates when it rings and reply "yes" to whatever he is asked to do. Nick soon discovers he has traded one kind of prison for another. The book's fast-paced, high adrenaline plot races along like one of the souped-up classic cars Nick loves to drive.

Hannah, Kristin. [The Nightingale](#) (\$16.99). Here is another massive bestseller now in paperback. Like the Doerr, it too is staged in WWII France but in the Loire Valley which is filling with refugees from Occupied France. It's a gripping story of invasion, siblings who clash, and an extraordinary rescue operation of the Resistance shepherding downed Allied airmen across the Pyrenees to Spain code-named the Nightingale. The novel begins in 1995 when an elderly unnamed widow living in Oregon is invited back to France to attend a ceremony honoring *passeurs*: people who aided the escape of others during the war....

✱Kinsey, TE. [In the Market for Murder](#) (Thomas \$15.95). Lady Hardcastle returns, oh joy, following her British Crime Club Pick [A Quiet Life in the County](#) (\$15.95), one of my favorite 2016 mysteries. Spring, 1909, and Lady Hardcastle, amateur sleuth and all-round eccentric, is enjoying a well-deserved rest. But a week after a trip to the cattle market, Spencer Caradine, a local farmer, turns up dead in the pub, face-down in his beef and mushroom pie. Once again, it is up to Lady Hardcastle and her maid, Florence, to solve the case. Armed with wit and whimsy, not to mention Florence's mean right hook, the pair set out to discover what really happened and why. Was it poison or just ill luck? As they delve further into their investigation, they encounter a theft where nothing is stolen, a séance with a troubled ghost, and an ever-increasing number of Spencer's family and friends who might just have motive for murder.

Longworth, M L. [The Curse of La Fontaine](#) (Penguin \$15). Provence Magistrate Antoine Verlaque and law professor Marine Bonnet are wed. Sigisbert Valets, known as Bear, the chef at a popular restaurant in the newlywed couple's neighborhood in Aix-en-Provence, France, wants to expand into a historic courtyard—but finds himself running up against some powerful neighbors who are outraged at the idea of diners in their communal

space. Bear barrels ahead with his plan, but while digging near the courtyard's ancient fountain, he uncovers the skeleton of a murder victim and triggers what locals believe is a centuries-old curse: the fountain dries up with murders. Bonnet goes undercover into a royalist group to learn about their possible connection to the murder, while Verlaque investigates the victim's family—and the threats now being delivered to Valets. Longworth evokes the pleasures of France in delicious detail—great wine, delicious meals, and fine company. And our newlywed law professor and judge evolve as a couple. [Order them all!](#)

Rader-Day, Lori. [The Day I Died](#) (Harper \$14.99). The Indie Next Pick: "In this story, the devil is, indeed, in the details. You think you're being distracted, only to learn that Rader-Day is actually building layers of evidence for the reader, connecting a framework of apparent incidentals to reach a pinnacle of suspense. Almost anyone can be guilty, but only one is a villain. You unexpectedly feel sympathy for certain characters, partly because they're so genuine. I neglected things because I HAD to finish this book. You will, too."

Scott, Gavin. [The Age of Olympus](#) (Titan \$14.95). Duncan Forrester #2, the sequel to the exciting 2016 British Crime Club Pick [The Age of Treachery](#) (\$14.95) set in post-war Britain and Norway. If you missed it, start there and now carry on to Greece. Forrester is there hot to recover the ancient Cretan stone he discovered during the war while part of an SOE mission to kidnap a Nazi commander. While in Athens, however, he witnesses the poisoning of a Greek poet who may have been an accidental target—the real one being a general who has been approached to lead BLAS, the military arm of the Greek Communists. With Greece on the brink of civil war and the general's life in danger, Forrester knows he must step up and intervene.... Excellent writing, plus great research and feel for the history of this tumultuous time.

Smith, Dominic. [The Last Painting of Sara De Vos](#) (\$16). "Gliding gracefully from grungy 1950s Brooklyn to the lucent interiors of Golden Age Holland and the sun-splashed streets of contemporary Sydney, the novel links the lives of two troubled, enigmatic, and hugely talented young women, one of them an artist, the other, her forger. A page-turning book with much to say about the pain and exhilaration of art and life." —Geraldine Brook. Like Susan Vreeland's classic *Girl in Hyacinth Blue*, it traces the sole surviving work of a gifted Dutch painter. The painting is fictional since no work of the actual artist survives. This April 2016 Surprise Me! Club Pick in hardcover is also recommended to fans of *The Goldfinch*.

Swinson, David. [Second Girl](#) (\$15.99). Patrick writes of a 2016 Hardboiled Crime Club Pick: "*You'd be surprised at what most of us are capable of*, says Frank Marr, the protagonist of David Swinson's impressive debut. Marr, a celebrated DC detective, cleared more cases than anyone else but took his retirement a few years early, the official reason being exhaustion due to job stress. His closely guarded secret is that Marr has been a 'functioning' drug addict for a long time. Now working as a private investigator for a defense attorney, Marr steps into some serious business when he breaks into a known drug house intending to re-up his own dwindling supplies but finds a naked teenage girl, bound and gagged in an upstairs bathroom. His reptile brain cries out 'drugs first, girl second' but his sanity momentarily prevails and

he somehow manages to get the girl out and sells his old police colleagues a story that convinces them. But then the parents of a second missing girl approach Marr and he is forced to take the case. Will he be able to find her before his devastating addiction overcomes him? Swinson is the real deal and this is one tough, uncompromising novel. Not to be missed.” Order the sequel, [Crime Song](#) (Mulholland \$27 SIGNED) now, due here in early May.

✦Todd, Charles. [The Shattered Tree](#) (\$14.99). Continuing our theme, we are in wartime Paris, but 1918, where British nurse Bess Crawford is hunting for a man she briefly nursed—and suspects might be a German although dressed in an American uniform—across the city and even into its suburbs. There is a lot going on: a splintered family, a possible old murder, a priest doing a cover-up (or does he wish an exposé, and if so, of what?), an American officer on the hunt for a deserter, and the thread running throughout ties to the history of Alsace-Lorraine, a province in the east of France that changed hands to Germany in its 1870 war with France, which Germany won. Also a giant siege gun aimed at Paris and possibly made more devastating by a mole supplying data. This is a splendid series, well plotted and illustrating both the meticulous record-keeping of the combatants (English anyway) and the war’s intimacy—most of it was fought in a limited territory so warriors of all stripes could move back and forth across the Channel. Order the Bess Crawfords [here](#).

PLANNING YOUR TRIP

Two useful guides by Eric Henze:

[A Complete Guide to the Grand Circle National Parks](#) (Gone Beyond Guides \$21.95). Covering Zion, Bryce Canyon, Capitol Reef, Arches, Canyonlands, Mesa Verde, and Grand Canyon National Parks.

[Top Trails of Arizona](#) (\$19.95). Includes Grand Canyon, Petrified Forest, Monument Valley, Vermilion Cliffs, Havasu Falls, Antelope Canyon, and Slide Rock

TWO NONFICTION STUDIES OF KILLERS

Arntfield, Michael/Marcel Panesi. [Murder in Plain English](#) (Prometheus \$24). I don’t think anything adequately explains mass and serial killers but I recommend this effort by a criminologist and an anthropologist to grasp the narrative impulse that drives these men (and some women) into horrendous acts. Do such killers perceive their acts as telling stories? And if so are they driven to commit them to writing? By the records through notes left at crime scenes or behind, ciphers, memoirs, plus videos killers now make and interviews with them, reading the words of the killers has terrific impact. Whether or not this approach is always limited to after the fact or whether it will prove a useful preventive tool is a question not answered.

Cannell, Michael. [Incendiary: The Psychiatrist, The Mad Bomber and the Invention of Criminal Profiling](#) (Minotaur \$26.99).

Called “A riveting thriller” by Linda Fairstein, this is an immersive, impressive, and intriguing study of some of the major accomplishments of criminal profiling pioneer Dr. James Brussel, a pretty scary guy himself. Or, I should say, uncanny. 1950s New York City lived in fear of a serial bomber. Three men came together to capture him, changing the face of detective work and marking a turning point in fighting crime. Fascinating!

SOME NEW BOOKS

As always we urge you to go to our WebStore www.poisonedpen.com and check out our lists of books for more than I can cover here

Allan, Barbara. [Antiques Frame](#) (Kensington \$25). Despite its name, the Mississippi River town of Serenity, Iowa, where Vivian Borne and her daughter, Brandy, run an antiques shop and host the reality TV show *Antiques Sleuths*, has been plagued by an unusual number of crimes. But all has been going well lately—even Brandy’s Shih Tzu, Sushi, is no longer blind—until Camilla, the estranged wife of Brandy’s beau, Police Chief Anthony Casato, moves to town. Suddenly Camilla, who’s opened her own antiques store, starts outbidding the pair at auctions and making a general nuisance of herself, especially to Tony, who mistakenly thought she’d signed divorce papers. Brandy runs into Camilla at another antiques store and auction house and sees her change prices on a picture frame but decides to say nothing... a mistake.

Anders, Charley Jane. [All the Birds in the Sky](#) (\$15.99). A 2016 SciFi/Fantasy Club pick now in paperback. An ancient society of witches and a hipster technological startup go war as the world from tearing itself. To further complicate things, each of the groups’ most promising followers (Patricia, a brilliant witch and Laurence, an engineering “wunderkind”) may just be in love with each other. As the battle between magic and science wages in San Francisco against the backdrop of international chaos, Laurence and Patricia are forced to choose sides. “What a magnificent novel—a glorious synthesis of magic and technology, joy and sorrow, romance and wisdom. Unmissable.” —Lev Grossman, author of *The Magicians*

Andrew, Sally. [Satanic Mechanic](#) (Harper \$26.99). Food heals, arouses, coerces, and kills in Andrew’s tasty second psychological cozy featuring South African agony aunt Tannie Maria van Harte, which also offers an immersion course in a polyglot post-Apartheid culture. Afrikaans and Xhosa spice the luminous English sentences; skin is just another detail. Still, old grudges survive. When Bushman leader Slimkat is poisoned with honey-mustard sauce on the kudu kebabs, Maria suspects the white cattle baron whose land the Supreme Court awarded to Slimkat’s people. Hunky cop Hank Kannemeyer fears losing Maria and demands she quit sleuthing, but he needs her forensic taste buds. Another murder at an exotic PTSD workshop, which Maria’s attending because of her guilt over her abusive husband’s death, quashes her thrumming desire for Henk. Tannie Maria’s authentic recipes, for which Andrew credits many sources, are easy to make far from the veldt. Her food wisdom is universal, unassailable: potato salad eases worry; warm orange pudding makes one feel whole. Start with the charming [Recipes for Love and Murder](#) (\$15.95).

Arnold, Elana. [A Boy Called Bat](#) (Harper \$16.99). It may be a story for ages 6-10 but any fan, like me, of Mark Haddon’s [The Curious Incident of the Boy in the Nighttime](#) (\$14.95) will be interested in Bixby, nicknamed Bat, a boy on the autistic spectrum, who finds life full of inexplicable surprises. One of them is the baby skunk his veterinarian mother brings home to nurture so she can hand him on to a wild animal shelter. Bat meets baby and instantly resolves to keep him as a pet. “Written in third person, this engaging and insightful story makes readers intimately aware of what Bat is thinking and how he perceives the events and

people in his life”—navigating them is complicated. Although narrating in third person, the author nevertheless lets us experience life through Bat’s voice, leaving us intimately aware of what Bat is thinking and how he perceives the events and people in his life and struggles with emotions and keeping clues. First of a planned series. Highly recommended.

Barracough, Eleanor Rosamund. [Beyond the Northlands](#) (Oxford \$39.95). In TV series from *Vikings* to *Game of Thrones*, the icy wastes of the north provide the backdrop to dramatic, often violent, stories of kings and warriors, dragons and trolls. The source for many of these dramas is the Icelandic sagas. In her new book, historian Barracough explores Viking Voyages and the Old Norse Sagas, teasing fact from fiction to show that there was much more to the Norse peoples than rape and pillage. The idea of the Vikings being the bad boys in the medieval world goes right back to the medieval world. The first big Viking raid took place around A.D. 793 on the island of Lindisfarne, home of the Lindisfarne Gospels. But it’s important to think about how we know of this raid...So from the start we have the idea of the Viking raiders somehow being God’s punishment for sins committed. When we say “Vikings,” we think of any inhabitant of the medieval Nordic world. But Viking literally means raider; it’s a job title. The people living in the Nordic world during the Viking age did raid and pillage. But there was much more to them than that. Check it out in the full [National Geographic article](#).

Barry, Sebastian. [Days Without End](#) (Viking \$26). Patrick reviews: “I’ve been a fan of this modern Irish writer’s work since he first arrived on the scene with *The Whereabouts of Eneas McNulty*, but had kinda lost track of him until I read the synopsis for this remarkable new novel. Thomas McNulty, like so many of his generation, has fled the Great Famine in Ireland. With his friend John Cole, McNulty signs up for the US Army and goes on to fight in the Indian Wars of the 1850’s. Ultimately, the two friends end up fighting in the Civil War, witnessing firsthand the horror and exhilaration of violence... While others (Cormac McCarthy, Phillip Meyer, James Carlos Blake come to mind) have written beautifully about this period and it’s far reaching resonance in the making of modern America, Barry brings his own unique artistry and insight into the fray, and the results are unforgettable.”

Bell, Albert. [Fortune’s Fool](#) (Perseverance Press \$15.95). Pliny, who was once engaged to Livilla, has married her older sister, Livia, whose first husband died under suspicious circumstances. He is in love, however, with his servant, Aurora. Livia suspects that he’s being unfaithful to her, and Pliny feels compelled to arrange a sham marriage for Aurora to assuage Livia’s concerns. When his entire entourage visits one of his family villas on the shore of Lake Comum in the Alps, Pliny gets immersed in a murder mystery after skeletal remains are found in a wall that have signs of blunt force trauma. The 6th Pliny the Elder mystery by Bell is not his best but if you revel in Roman, here it is.

Brown, James William. [My Last Lament](#) (Penguin \$26). Aliko, one of the last lamenters in Greece, is dragging the weight of her life behind her. To lessen this burden, Aliko begins to tell the story of her life, speaking into a tape recorder left by a sociologist studying the art of Greek laments. As her memories unfold and unpack themselves, her recounting evolves into a lament itself, for all that she has loved and lost in her long life. In the present day, Aliko serves as a village lamenter, singing and chanting for

the dead in tribute to their lives. As a child, she lived through the German occupation of Greece during World War II, witnessing the execution of her father and a brutal massacre in her village. But for Aliko—and indeed, the Greek people—the horrors of war did not end with the Allied liberation of Greece. A vicious and bitter civil war raged throughout the 1940s, catching Aliko in its clutches as she continued to search for a safe place to call her own. By framing the story as a kind of oral memoir, Brown has crafted a classic Greek tragedy of love and loss.

Buntin, Julie. [Marlena](#) (Holt \$26). The Indie Next Pick: “I can’t believe this is a debut novel: the writing is so assured; the prose so exquisite. Buntin is a master of word choice, and every sentence felt deliberate and precise. I quickly got sucked into this story about a pair of teenage girls, one doomed, one not. It was a quick read, but one I found myself lingering over. I’d recommend Marlena to fans of Megan Abbott’s dark, twisty books about girlhood — this is a similarly fierce read!”

Camilleri, Andrea. [The Revolution of the Moon](#) (Europa \$16). Still Sicily, but not Inspector Montalbano. Sicily, April 16 1677. From his deathbed, Charles III’s viceroy, Aniello de Guzmán y Carafa, marquis of Castle Rodrigo, names his wife, Doña Eleonora, as his successor. Eleonora de Moura is a highly intelligent and capable woman who immediately applies her political acumen to heal the scarred soul of Palermo, a city afflicted by poverty, misery, and the frequent uprisings they entail. The Marquise implements measures that include lowering the price of bread, reducing taxes for large families, re-opening women’s care facilities, and establishing stipends for young couples wishing to marry—all measures that were considered seditious by the conservative city fathers and by the Church. The machinations of powerful men soon result in Doña Eleonora, whom the Church sees as a dangerous revolutionary, being recalled to Spain. Her rule lasted 27 days—one cycle of the moon. Based on a true story.

Cavanagh, Steve. [The Defense](#) (\$14.99). “Irish author Cavanagh’s stellar debut provides everything a reader could ask for in a thriller—nail-biting suspense, a Russian nesting doll of a plot, and an original and compelling lead. Con-artist-turned-defense-attorney Eddie Flynn must pull off a miracle to save the life of his 10-year-old daughter, Amy, who’s being held hostage by brutal gang leader Olek Volchek. Volchek is about to stand trial for murder in Manhattan for ordering the hit of a subordinate. In addition to taking over representing Volchek, Eddie must smuggle a bomb into the courtroom to be planted under the witness chair in time to blow up the government’s key witness against the mobster. Eddie decides to pretend to cooperate in order to buy time until he can rescue Amy. Even if he were to do the unthinkable and murder the witness, he knows Volchek will kill him and Amy anyway. Cavanagh makes Eddie’s wide range of talents completely plausible, starting with an impressive and withering cross-examination, with little prep time, of a handwriting expert...” —*PW* Starred Review

Carter, M.J. [Devil’s Feast](#) (Putnam \$27). “A mystery with possible political ramifications drives Carter’s superlative third Victorian historical featuring Jeremiah Blake and Capt. William Avery. In 1842, Blake has been working regularly as a private inquiry agent for Theophilus Collinson, a man “quietly influential in London’s highest political and social circles,” but Blake chafes at being considered a hired hand and refuses a new assignment. Claiming

that Blake was already paid for work unperformed, Collinson has the stubborn detective arrested and imprisoned for debt. With his sleuthing friend in the Marshalsea prison, Avery ends up having to take the lead when an MP, Charles Rowlands, is poisoned at a fancy dinner party at the Reform Club. Since the club is soon to be the site of a banquet for an Egyptian minister at a time when the Russians are trying to draw Egypt into an alliance against Turkey and ignite a Mideast war, identifying Rowlands' killer is a national priority. Carter again has crafted an ingenious, fast-moving plot with emotional depth and plausible surprises.” — *PW* Starred Review for the 3rd in a series that begin with First Mystery Club Pick and 2016 Edgar nominee [The Strangler Vine](#) (\$16).

✠Chapman, Julia. [Date with Death](#) (St Martins \$25.99). If your inner Peter Robinson yearns for more mystery set in the Yorkshire Dales, you will overlook the weak points in a debut village mystery. Delilah Metcalfe is struggling to make a go of The Dales Dating Agency. Her perilous finances are reason to accept a tenant for her office space. Samson O'Brien has been dismissed from the police and is facing prosecution. Why not return to his home village and set up a detective agency while he fights to clear his name? So Dales Dating and Dales Detective make uneasy neighbors made more so when Samson uncovers a string of deaths the lead to the Dating Agency's door? So so, but it's a series start and may strengthen.

✠Chisholm, PF. [A Clash of Spheres](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95). Fan Diana Gabaldon writes a full page essay on this 8th Sir Robert Carey; see below. And here is this from *Kirkus*: “The court of Elizabeth I once more outpaces today's politicians for cunning, effrontery, and vengeful machinations. Handsome, brave, clever Sir Robert Carey is doubly related to the queen as the son of Lord Hudson, who was the by-blow of Henry VIII and Mary Boleyn. Carey has just been appointed Deputy Warden on the Scottish border country, home to his longtime henchman Henry Dodd, who's become his enemy since Carey avoided a battle in which Dodd's blood enemies, the Grahams, would have been slaughtered. In addition, Carey spies for Sir Robert Cecil, the queen's privy councilor. Scotland is awash in plots to kill Elizabeth's heir apparent, King James of Scotland, who refuses to get rid of the Catholic lords plotting with Spain to invade England. Carey arrives in Edinburgh with Simon Anricks, a Jewish philosopher and dentist bearing a secret letter from England, who's set to debate another philosopher before the king on the weighty matter of how the solar system works. Dodd has accepted money to kill Carey. Just to make things more interesting, Lord Spynie, the king's former favorite, is also plotting to kill him along with the elderly husband of Carey's love, Lady Elizabeth Widdrington. The court is packed during the Christmas season with all manner of people, some of them eager to see James himself dispatched.... As usual, Chisholm moves effortlessly from fascinating historical background to philosophical musings to violent action. Although this latest installment can be read as a stand-alone, untutored readers might want to start the series from the beginning.” Chisholm lives in Budapest and London so Signed copies are not possible for this book. [Read a brilliant essay](#) on this book and the Sir Robert Carey series by Diana Gabaldon.

Clark, Mary Higgins. [All By Myself, Alone](#) (SimonSchuster \$26.99). Fleeing a disastrous and humiliating arrest of her husband-to-be on the eve of their wedding, Celia Kilbride, a

gems and jewelry expert, hopes to escape from public attention by lecturing on a brand-new cruise ship—the Queen Charlotte. On board she meets eighty-six-year-old Lady Emily Haywood, “Lady Em,” as she is known throughout the world. Immensely wealthy, Lady Em is the owner of a priceless emerald necklace that she intends to leave to the Smithsonian after the cruise. Three days out to sea Lady Em is found dead—and the necklace is missing. Perfect: a country house murder with limited suspects moved to a cruise ship.

Dawson, Janet. [Water Signs](#) (Perseverance \$15.99). The gentrification of Oakland, Calif., forms the backdrop of Dawson's solid 12th Jeri Howard mystery in which the PI faces off against real estate developers while looking into the death of security guard Cal Brady, a former colleague of hers whose body is found floating in the Oakland Estuary. Cal's college student daughter, Madison, doesn't believe those who claim that her dad was drinking on the job and fell into the water. Madison asks Jeri, who recently saw Cal drinking sparkling water at a memorial service, to investigate. Maybe he was onto something shifty and paid a fatal price for his snooping. Private investigative work requires a lot of pavement pounding and coffee shop meetings, and as Jeri slogs through the slender chain of clues that Cal left behind, she's more and more convinced he was murdered.

Speaking of Oakland, enjoy a new Akashic anthology: [Oakland Noir](#) (\$14.95) filled with new names and our old friend Eddie Muller editing with Jerry Thompson.

✠Dennison, Hannah. [Killer Ball at Honeychurch Hall](#) (\$15.99). Dennison's 3rd English manor house charmer indulges her passion for such homes, home restoration like Elizabethan plastering (burst pipe, collapsed ceiling, no funds to fix), and the English Civil War. Antiques appraiser Kat Stanford, now residing at the manor and coming to terms with her widowed mother's secret life as a hit romance novelist with offshore bank accounts, now has to come to terms with Mum's unorthodox childhood as part of a touring tribe of entertainers who summered at Honeychurch Hall. Add in a priest hole, a game of Smee, and a treasure hunt and you have... fun. Begin with [Murder at Honeychurch Hall](#) and [Deadly Desires at Honeychurch Hall](#) (\$15.95 each). For the 4th Honeychurch, see Event Books.

✠Duncan, Elizabeth. [Murder Is for Keeps](#) (St Martins \$26.99). The title is a play on words since the scene of the crime(s) is a castellated Victorian country house called Gwrych being slowly restored outside Penny Brannigan's north Wales village. The mystery isn't much, the charm lies in the gardens and grounds, how they fell into ruin, where the bits went, and how people are coming together to bring Gwrych back to life. I admit I grow tired of Duncan's weak ploys to keep Penny and (retired) Chief Inspector Gareth Davies from forming a romantic couple. Why Duncan feels this is necessary is... a mystery.

El Akkad, Omar. [American War](#) (Knopf \$26.95). What if there were a second Civil War when American turns its most fearsome policies and weapons on itself? Add a devastating plague. Biological warfare, drones as killing machines, and state fighting against state contribute to make this a prescient novel. Multiple narration and differing viewpoints combine to make this an absorbing, shocking read of what could be. The Indie Next Pick: “Omar El Akkad has delivered a stunning debut. He imagines a world in a not-too-distant future where Americans are at war with

each other once again. The characters in this story are fully developed and individual, yet their histories — their stories — extend into the histories of all those displaced and affected by the forces of war. The title, *American War*, is a shape-shifter. At once, it means that America is again at war, but at times reflects the ways in which the true, actual wars that America has perpetrated on Earth have affected the lives of millions of people. This will be one of the most discussed books of the year, and I cannot wait to put it in the hands of all readers looking to be changed.”

✠Forry, Lauren A. [Abigale Hall](#) (Skyhorse \$24.99). From the first paragraph of British author Forry’s debut, readers know they have entered a gothic novel unsparing with the horrors. It’s very dark. And the surprise is this is not Victorian drama but a story set in the years following the end of WWII. London is a city still suffering the aftereffects of the war: food shortages, ration books, unemployment, and the collective memories of bombings and blackouts. Seventeen-year-old Eliza Haverford and her 12-year-old sister, Rebecca, have lost their parents and are now in the care of their sullen Aunt Bess, who’s more than willing to ship the girls off to Wales to work as servants. They therefore find themselves escorted by dour Mr. Drewry to Thornecroft, an isolated and dilapidated manor house, whose grimy, shabby interior and labyrinthine layout provide the ideal setting for exaggerating fears and hiding appalling truths. For the strong of mind and stomach.

Grann, David. [Killers of the Flower Moon](#) (Crown \$28.95). Patrick writes: “After oil was discovered underneath their Oklahoma reservation, the small Osage tribe (who shrewdly maintained their mineral rights) became the wealthiest people per capita in the world. Many lived in extravagant mansions, owned multiple automobiles, and kept servants. Then, during the early 1920’s they began to die off under suspicious circumstances. Mollie Burkhart, one wealthy tribe member, became the last living member of her tribe after her mother and three sisters were murdered. The fledgling FBI, under the leadership of a young J Edgar Hoover, sent in former Texas Ranger Tom White to investigate. As he was researching this dark chapter in American history, bestselling journalist David Grann discovered that the notorious Osage “Reign of Terror” was in fact far more widespread than previously known.”

Grant, Richard. [The Cave Dwellers](#) (Knopf \$27.95). Set in prewar Germany in 1937–1938, Grant’s intricate spy novel focuses on a young German army lieutenant sent to America on a dangerous and doomed intelligence mission. Grant (Another Green World) tells a clever story of suspense and treachery as growing resistance to Hitler and the Nazis force desperate opponents to act. Lt. Oskar Langweil is recruited into the Abwehr, military intelligence, by a rumpled naval officer named Jaap. His first overseas mission is to contact Tobias Luga, a fixer for a sympathetic and powerful U.S. Senator, but Oskar is betrayed and barely escapes. Desperate to return to Germany, Oskar and a socialist named Lena travel as husband and wife on a German ocean liner. On the voyage they meet the senator’s son and the son’s SS bodyguard; however, no one is who they seem, and the Gestapo is very interested. All four run for their lives from a brutal SS colonel who wants them dead. Jaap and a motley collection of eccentrics are the only ones who can save them and, they hope, thwart Hitler’s plan to invade Czechoslovakia. Pursuits, shoot-outs, surprising plot twists, and an exciting showdown at

an alpine mountain lodge complete this remarkably tense and well-crafted thriller

Greenwood, Kerry. [Ruddy Gore](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95). A reminder that this as well as [all the Miss \(Phryne\) Fisher Mysteries](#), such a huge hit on TV, are just waiting for you to discover them! Greenwood has a new story in [Bound by Mystery](#) (Poisoned Pen \$18.95) and is reported to be writing a new Phryne after illness shut her down for a bit.

Gyasi, Yaa. [Homegoing](#) (\$16). One of the most prestigious literary debuts of 2016 and a Modern Firsts Club Pick appears in paperback. It traces three centuries in Ghana and along the way becomes an astonishing American story. Awesome! In 18th century Ghana, the lives of two half-sisters, Effia and Esi, diverge in drastically different directions. While Effia is married to an Englishman and lives in the Cape Coast Castle, Esi is sold into the slave trade and imprisoned in the same castle’s dungeons. From there, half of the novel follows Esi and her descendants through hundreds of years of American history, as the other half focuses on Effia’s descendants as they struggle through centuries of warfare, colonization and the slave trade in Ghana. Rarely does a grand, sweeping epic plumb interior lives so thoroughly. “Gyasi’s characters are so fully realized, so elegantly carved—very often I found myself longing to hear more. Craft is essential given the task Gyasi sets for herself—drawing not just a lineage of two sisters, but two related peoples. ... I think I needed to read a book like this to remember what is possible...” — Ta-Nehisi Coates

✠Harris, Gregory. [The Endicott Evil](#) (Kensington \$15). Adelaide Endicott—elderly sister of Lord Thomas Endicott, a senior member of Parliament—has plummeted to her death from the third-floor window of her bedroom at Layton Manor. Did she take her own life—or was she pushed? Although Scotland Yard believes it is a clear case of suicide, Adelaide’s sister Eugenia is convinced otherwise. Intrigued by the spinster’s suspicions, Pendragon and Pruitt look into the victim’s troubled mental state while simultaneously exploring who might have had a motive to push Adelaide to her death. As they begin to uncover a family history involving scandalous secrets, abuse, and trauma, mounting evidence suggests that there is evil lurking behind the closed doors of Layton Manor.... [Order earlier Pendragon/Pruitts.](#)

✠Harvey, John. [Mitchell #1](#) and [Mitchell #2](#) (\$14.95 each). From the Limehouse docks to the nightclubs of Soho, Scott Mitchell is at home in the darkest corners of London. A hardboiled private investigator in the tradition of Philip Marlowe and Lew Archer, Mitchell first appeared in *Amphetamines and Pearls* (1976). With that novel and its sequels—*The Geranium Kiss* (1976), *Junkyard Angel* (1977), and *Neon Madman* (1977)—he introduced the American hardboiled style to England, ensuring the British Isles would never be the same. The Mitchells are now collected into two paperback editions of two cases each.

Heubusch, John. [The Shroud Conspiracy](#) (Howard \$26). I kinda miss the days of the DaVinci Clones so a new thriller with a religious artifact at its heart is welcome. The prickly hero is forensic anthropologist Dr. Jon Bondurant who sets out to prove that the Shroud of Turin is a fake. What if it isn’t? (Let’s mention the influence of beautiful Domenika Jesef, a beautiful and devout Vatican representative.) And what if a sample of blood taken from the Shroud, blood purportedly that of Jesus Christ, vanishes? Blood with the power to clone a new Jesus? And then Domenika

vanishes too.... Ian Caldwell's 2015 [The Fifth Gospel](#) (\$9.99) is a must-read companion to this with its murder at a Vatican museum and revelation about the church's most controversial holy relic."

Hockensmith, Steve. [Give the Devil His Due](#) (Midnight Ink \$14.99). Alanis McLachlan gets a major-league shock when her con-man surrogate father, Biddle, shows up at the White Magic Five and Dime, the store Alanis inherited from her late con-artist mother, in Berdache, Arizona. Alanis believed he died 30 years earlier after angry gangsters took him for a walk into an Ohio cornfield from which he never returned. Biddle's resurrection coincides with the odd disappearance of a customer, who vanished after asking to use the White Magic's restroom. And Alanis, who narrowly escapes being run down by a car, becomes a person of interest to the local police after another customer, who identified himself to her as Mike Brown, CPA, is found dead with one of her business cards in his possession.

✦Hogan, Ruth. [The Keeper of Lost Things](#) (Harper \$26.99). The mysteries behind unclaimed treasures, those who have lost them and the man determined to reunite possession and owner are the carefully tended threads of a rich and heartfelt first novel. Seventy-four-year-old Anthony Peardew, an unmarried British writer, resides in a charming mansion. Forty years earlier his beloved fiancée, Therese, as a token of her love, gave him her Communion medallion embossed with a tiny picture of St. Therese of the Roses. Soon thereafter, Peardew lost the medallion on the same day that Therese died unexpectedly. As atonement for the eerie timing of the lost medal, he made it his purpose in life to gather, meticulously label and give a loving home to a "sad salmagundi" of lost objects—jigsaw puzzle pieces, hair bobbles, gemstones and even a biscuit tin containing cremation remains, which he stored in his large study. But objects aren't the only things in life that can get lost. People, too, often lose their way and need someone to rescue them. Laura, Peardew's devoted housekeeper and a childless divorcee, finds asylum in his home. And after he dies, she teams up with his neighbor Sunshine and Freddy the gardener to carry on Peardew's legacy. Hogan's prose is thoughtful and elegant." Readers are bound to discover joy and hope in this quietly moving, tender story that examines how serendipity often plays a pivotal role in human interconnectedness."

Irby, Lee. [Unreliable](#) (Doubleday \$26.95). In this mind-bending psychological thriller, the charming narrator could be a lecherous killer or a lovelorn victim, but he's definitely a liar. From beginning to end, the only reliable truth is that the narrator is a liar. Edwin Stith is a mild-mannered, unassuming English professor at a "leafy liberal arts school" in Ithaca, N.Y., whose failed writing career, recent divorce and sexual impotency provide ready fodder for sympathy. A dutiful son, he's headed home to Richmond, Virginia, for his mother's wedding. However, he's aware this story in and of itself has no teeth, so he mentions to the reader that he may also be on the run for murdering his ex-wife, Bev. Or maybe he didn't. Or maybe he killed a waitress at a truck stop—or maybe not. Maybe Eddie himself is the murder victim. "It doesn't much matter," he devilishly assures us. "Mine, hers, his. You want a body and I want to give you one." To find out, readers must come along for the ride, abandoning logic for the experience. It's not my kind of book but it will be fun for some.

Jego, Yves. [The Sun King Conspiracy](#) (Gallic \$14.95). **Our April History Paperback Pick** is in the vein of Dumas: a tale of

religious brotherhoods, corruption, romantic intrigue and political scheming at the court of Louis XIV. 1661 is a year of destiny for France and its young King, Louis XIV. Cardinal Mazarin, the Chief Minister who has governed throughout the King's early years, lies dying. As a fierce power struggle develops to succeed him, a religious brotherhood, guardian of a centuries-old secret, also sees its chance to influence events. Gabriel de Pontbriand, an aspiring actor employed as secretary to Molière, becomes unwittingly involved when documents stolen from Mazarin's palace fall into his hands. The coded papers will alter Gabriel's life forever, and their explosive contents have the power to change the course of history for France and the Sun King himself.

✦Kasasian, MRC. [The Secrets of Gaslight Lane](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). The unabashedly arrogant personal detective Sidney Grice, and his beleaguered ward, Miss March Middleton, are hired by a beautiful woman to solve the bloody locked-room death of her father in a house that was the scene of a notorious mass murder a decade ago. The relationship between the irascible and overly literal Sidney and independent and tetchy March continues to evolve, and Sidney's strong-minded maid Molly, prone to malapropisms, plays a major part in this fourth adventure set in 1880s London. I liked the first two entries in the Gower Street series a lot but as is often true with humorous or satirical fiction, further entries can falter or turn into caricature. Gower Street #3, a step down, is new in paperback: [Death Descends on Saturn Villa](#) (\$15.95).

Kostova, Elizabeth. [The Shadow Land](#) (Ballantine \$28). Twentysomething Alexandra heads to Bulgaria to teach English and attempt to escape the pain of losing a family member. The Indie Next Pick: "This is one of the most engrossing novels that I've read in a while. It is ultimately a road trip through the beautiful haunted land of Bulgaria. An American woman arrives to teach English and inadvertently picks up the wrong bag while getting into a taxi. The bag holds a beautiful wooden box containing human remains. Her helpful, enigmatic taxi driver takes her into Bulgaria's unsettled present in search of the family that surely wants the urn back. It is the fleshing out (pun intended) of the person embodied by the ashes that makes this work intriguing and heart-wrenching. This novel about self-discovery and historical reconciliation is thrilling, introspective, and very well paced." Kostova made her bones with her massive 2005 bestseller [The Historian](#) (\$16), a First Mystery Club Pick focused on Vlad the Impaler, aka Dracula.

Kurlansky, Mark. [Havana](#) (Bloomsbury \$26). For those interested in traveling to Cuba or visiting it via a good book, bestseller Kurlansky pens an insider's view of "the elegant, tattered city he has come to know over more than thirty years. Part cultural history, part travelogue, with recipes, historic engravings, photographs, and Kurlansky's own pen-and-ink drawings throughout, Havana celebrates the city's singular music, literature, baseball, and food; its five centuries of outstanding, neglected architecture; and its extraordinary blend of cultures." Like all great cities, Havana has a rich history that informs the vibrant place it is today - from the native Taino to Columbus's landing, from Cuba's status as a U.S. protectorate to Batista's dictatorship and Castro's revolution, from Soviet presence to the welcoming of capitalist tourism. Havana is a place of extremes: a beautifully restored colonial city whose cobblestone streets pass through areas that have not been painted or repaired since long before the revolution. Kurlansky

shows Havana through the eyes of Cuban writers, such as Alejo Carpentier and Jose Marti, and foreigners, including Graham Greene and Hemingway. He introduces us to Cuban baseball and its highly opinionated fans; the city's music scene, alive with the rhythm of Son; its culinary legacy.

Lamott, Anne. [Hallelujah Anyway: Rediscovering Mercy](#) (Riverhead \$20). The Indie Next Pick for this powerful, small hardcover: "*Hallelujah Anyway* completely consumed me. The world has changed so much in the last year and it seems overwhelming at times. Lamott's new book is the answer to that despair, hopelessness, and futility. It's exactly what the title says — mercy through difficult times, kindness when it's not deserved, and singing hallelujah anyway. Lamott writes with such refreshing honesty. This book is now what I like to refer to as 'well-loved' — underlined, dog-eared, and slightly worn. I suspect I'll revisit my favorite passages for years to come."

✎ Lagercrantz, David. [The Fall of Man in Wilmslow](#) (\$16). The Swedish author picked to continue the Stieg Larsson Millennium series takes as his subject Alan Turing, early computerist and a driving force at wartime Bletchley Park, who was hounded post-war for being homosexual and spiraled down into a tragic death in June, 1954, in a sleepy suburban Wilmslow. Perhaps suicide by poisoned apple. The paranoid Cold War atmosphere, the secret Bletchley op, all cause DC Leonard Correll who, once aspiring to a career in higher mathematics, to learn quickly when he starts to investigate the suicide theory that loose cannons cannot be tolerated and he might even be viewed as a threat to national security. Season 9 of *Foyle's War* illuminates some of this era.

Lapidus, Jens. [Stockholm Delete](#) (Knopf \$16.95). The author of the Stockholm Noir trilogy uses a violent but enigmatic crime scene as the entrée to layer upon layer of criminal intrigue, past, present, and future. It's only natural to assume that the young man found bloodied and comatose behind the wheel of the car outside a house on a Stockholm island has killed the even bloodier and more inert man inside. But nothing else about the crime is obvious. It's impossible to tell who the dead man is. It's impossible to question the suspect, Benjamin Emanuelsson, who revives just enough to request Emelie Jansson as his attorney. It's impossible to tell why Benjamin would be so intent on engaging this particular novice, who's just barely passed the bar and whose white-shoe firm is dead-set against her involvement. And although it seems obvious that the killing has some connection to the 2006 abduction of Benjamin's father, Mats, it seems impossible to know more. Gloomy and repetitive, its focus on Serbian immigrants, this is best read by those who can't get enough Swedish noir. Knopf is the publisher of Stieg Larsson so...

Leon, Donna. [Earthly Remains](#) (Grove \$25). See Signed Books for a review of the 26th Commissario Brunetti mystery set in Venice.

Maazel, Fiona. [A Little More Human](#) (Graywolf Press \$16). The Indie Next Pick: "*A Little More Human* kept me up way past my bedtime. Fiona Maazel's seamless novel draws you in subtly and irresistibly. I just had to know how Phil Snyder (nursing assistant, professional superhero impersonator, and actual mind-reader) ended up on a horse with splashes of blood on his clothes and no memory of how he got there. Uncovering secrets in snippets along with Phil reminded me of his own mind-reading talent and built the suspense beautifully page by page. Another clever literary masterpiece from Fiona Maazel!

Maberry, Jonathan. [Dogs of War](#) (\$15.99). For you fans of Brad Thor and James Rollins. A freelance terrorist uses the latest generation of robot dogs to deliver WMDs into cities across America. Ultra-realistic robots in the sex industry are used to spread designer plagues. Sophisticated military weapons systems turn on their human masters. A technological apocalypse is coming and we may be too late to stop it. Joe Ledger and a newly rebuilt Department of Military Sciences square off against this new and terrible threat. *Dogs of War* pits Joe against a merciless new enemy and an army of techno-terrorists in a race to prevent a global destruction.

Mackenzie, Jassy. [Bad Seeds](#) (Soho \$25.95). Another dark, brisk, engrossing case for South African PI Jade de Jong who, after brushes with law enforcement in Joburg, is trying to operate within the law doing low-profile cases. Then her remarkably attractive new employee, Ryan Gillespie, tasks her with finding a missing security official following a breach at his nuclear energy plant employer. Carlos Botha is a threat, dangerous, and a skilled operative. And she's not the only one looking for him—someone has put a hit out on the man. Which leads Jade to form an unlikely alliance with her mark where she conceals her mission under the guise of friendship? Well written and lively, a good book for fans of hardboiled African fiction rather than the *No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency* genre. See Sally Andrew above for a fine example of the African cozy.

✎ Malliet, GM. [Devil's Breath](#) (St Martins \$25.99). I am a fan of the Max Tudor mysteries, enjoying the blend of his MI5 past with his role as Vicar Max in the village of Nether Monkslip. His police confrere is DCI Cotton. And by now the handsome and so eligible bachelor cleric is married to an unlikely if loveable wife, a cookbook author. Still, this story that begins on a luxury yacht heading towards Monkslip super Mare and circles around aging movie star Margot Browne whose corpse is recovered from the waters disappoints. In a long series, this can happen. If you haven't read the Max Tudors, [order up the paperbacks](#) and enjoy the fun of the village mystery.

McCrumb, Sharyn. [Prayers the Devil Answers](#) (\$16). "A prophetic mountain game rooted in age-old superstitions about how to find a husband sets the stage. Ellie and Albert are unassuming mountain folk trying to survive in a sleepy Tennessee town after the end of the First World War. After coming down from the mountain settlement, away from their families, at the promise of steady work, Albert quickly finds himself elected sheriff of their small hamlet—a position of respect and a path to acceptance. Ellie is proud of him, but she's not used to the town folk and maintains her mountain ways. Unfortunately, she has to make do and get used to town quickly after Albert dies of pneumonia and she is appointed to finish his term as sheriff. Though captivating in its scope and detail, a distinct wordiness and repetition may pull readers out of McCrumb's richly textured world." Whatever, the *Ballad Mysteries* gain a new entry. It's good to see McCrumb writing of her region.

✎ McElwain, Julie. [A Twist in Time](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). I missed [A Murder in Time](#) (\$14.95) where time-traveling FBI Agent Kendra Donovan is stranded in 1858 England. It would clearly be better to begin there. In the sequel, she's still there, still in the household of the Duke of Aldridge. When her confidante and potential lover, Alec, the duke's nephew and heir, is accused of mutilat-

ing and murdering his former mistress, beautiful Lady Dover, a woman with many lovers, Kendra teams up with Bow Street Runner Sam to work through the list of suspects in hopes of clearing Alec's name. Kendra must also decide whether to stay in the past with Alec or to continue to try to find a way back to the present. One can see the influence of *Outlander* here. The novels are fun in one sense but the author is no student of the Regency, Kendra speaks in ways that wouldn't have been tolerated ("Sure," "Okay," "Call me Kendra") in a noble household or understood in an ignoble one. This is fiction for those who are looking for a costume romp rather than historical fiction.

McKevett, GA. [Every Body on Deck](#) (Kensington \$25). When famed mystery writer Natasha Van Cleef invites the Moonlight Magnolia Detective Agency on an Alaskan cruise in exchange for some personal protection, Savannah is instantly onboard with the idea. The voyage goes smoothly—at least, until Natasha and her husband flee the ship without explanation and get killed in a suspiciously explosive crash. Awash in regret, PI Savannah Reid and the MM crew won't return home to San Carmelita until they expose whoever caused the fatal "accident." But Savannah and her team have their work cut out for them when they discover that Natasha's life was far more dramatic than any of her bestsellers. Not only was her marriage and literary career splattered with bad blood, but the author also had a crazed fan tracking her every move....

Meyers, Randy Susan. [The Widow of Wall Street](#) (Atria \$26) opens in 2009 with a visit to the Ray Brook Federal Correctional Institution, where Phoebe Pierce's husband, Jake, is imprisoned on fraud charges following the discovery of the elaborate Ponzi scheme upon which he built their fortune. The novel follows Phoebe from the beginnings of her relationship with Jake in the summer of 1960 when her parents worried she was moving too fast to marry him through the present day, living with her husband's notoriety and the world's censure and suspicion, reminding readers with that sparkly city skyline that all that glitters is not gold as it explores the dynamics of the 20th-century bedroom and boardroom. "Meyers paints a brutal, revealing tale of a woman with everything to lose."

Millar, Margaret. [Collected Millar](#) (Soho \$17.99). Five acclaimed novels from the Golden Age of Suspense, including the Edgar Award-Winning Novel *Beast in View*. Introduction by Tom Nolan, *WSJ* Crime Critic, who is also a scholar of Canadian Millar's husband, Ross Macdonald.

☞ Monroe, JS. [Find Me](#) (Mira \$26.99). Jarlath "Jar" Costello, a London-based Internet click-bait content writer and the hero of Monroe's thrilling debut, has started seeing a dead person. Specifically, he's been seeing glimpses of Rosa Sandhoe, his girlfriend who leapt to her death into the sea off Norfolk in 2012 when she was a student at Cambridge University. Five years later, Jar is certain of two things: that Rosa and he are soul mates and that she's still very much alive. A body was never recovered. When he gets hold of an encrypted file containing Rosa's journal, his faith is confirmed and his search for her kicks into high gear. The story unfolds in taut chapters alternating between Rosa's journal entries and Jar's frantic quest. Monroe adds more voices in the book's second half, keeping the guess-who's-crazy/guilty ball in the air until the reveal. Pacing is crisp and the plot is credible, but it's the cast of expertly crafted, psychologically ambiguous characters that rivets. As for me I liked the scenes in Cambridge best and

marvel at the pharmaceuticals. Monroe is the pseudonym of a well-known British author and journalist. If we can get enough copies this will be our April British Crime Club Pick.

Nakamura, Fuminori. [The Boy in the Earth](#) (Soho \$23.95). "Crime fiction that pushes past the bounds of genre, occupying its own nightmare realm . . . Guilt or innocence is not the issue; we are corrupted, complicit, just by living in society. The ties that bind, in other words, are rules beyond our making, rules that distance us not only from each other but also from ourselves." —*Los Angeles Times*. The narrator has quit his sales job at a company that produces educational materials and now works as a taxi driver in Tokyo. For no obvious reason, he picks a fight with a group of motorcyclists and, predictably, ends up badly beaten. He gives Sayuko, a former work colleague and the one person he regularly interacts with, no chance to express sympathy; they go to bed, but she shows no emotion during intercourse. Later, the narrator gets a jolt from news of the parents who abandoned him 20 years earlier: his mother has died, but his father is still alive. He can't help wondering whether he could have led a different life if he had been given reason to believe that his parents actually hoped he would grow up to be a good person. Bit by bit, Nakamura fills in some of the details of his lead's backstory, making a character who will initially seem alien to most readers less so. The action builds to a devastating conclusion that explains the title. New in paperback: [The Kingdom](#) (\$14.95). Zen-Noir master Nakamura returns to the Tokyo of *The Thief*, where a young grifter who runs cons as a prostitute named Yurika finds herself in a dangerous game of cat-and-mouse with the shadowy crime lord Kizaki.

Neuhaus, Nele. [I Am Your Judge](#) (\$16.99). New from the German bestseller. Karen is a fan. A Starred Review: "German author Neuhaus combines an intense hunt for a serial killer with characters that readers will care about in her superior fourth mystery to be published in the U.S. featuring German detectives Pia Kirchhoff and Oliver von Bodenstein, of the Hofheim criminal police. Pia's plans for a getaway with her new husband are thwarted when a murderer shoots elderly Ingeborg Rohleder with a high-powered rifle while the woman is walking her dog. Later, the sniper shoots 64-year-old Margarethe Rudolf in her kitchen in front of her granddaughter. The working theory that these are random shootings comes under question when the killer sends an obituary for the first victim to the police. Signed "the Judge," the note states that Ingeborg "had to die" because her daughter denied someone assistance and was thus an "accessory to negligent manslaughter." Sections told from the killer's vantage point ratchet up the suspense as he narrows in on his next target. Neuhaus does a superb job of portraying the search for a link between the dead women, and her willingness to let her characters make mistakes gives the plot even more plausibility." [Order Neuhaus' other crime novels.](#)

Neuvel, Sylvain. [Waking Gods: Book 2 of the Themis Files](#) (Del Rey \$28). Library Reads declares: "The sequel to *Sleeping Giants* contains just as much action and page-turning suspense. The story begins four years later and is told through interviews, memos, and news reports relating to the first robot, after Themis, lands in London. Soon Earth is in an uproar and Themis and her crew are once again called upon to make contact. Read the first book before you tackle this one but the good news is that you will have a shorter time than the rest of us waiting for the next installment."

Norman, Howard. [My Darling Detective](#) (Houghton \$26). Jacob Rigolet, a soon-to-be former assistant to a wealthy art collector, looks up from his seat at an auction—his mother, former head librarian at the Halifax Free Library, is walking almost casually up the aisle. Before a stunned audience, she flings an open jar of black ink at master photographer Robert Capa's "Death on a Leipzig Balcony." Jacob's police detective fiancée, Martha Crauchet, is assigned to the ensuing interrogation. Norman delivers a fond nod to classic noir, as Jacob's understanding of the man he has always assumed to be his father unravels against the darker truth of Robert Emil, a Halifax police officer suspected but never convicted of murdering two Jewish residents during the shocking upswing of anti-Semitism in 1945. The denouement, involving a dire shootout and an emergency delivery—it's the second Rigolet to be born in the Halifax Free Library in a span of three decades—is Howard Norman at his "provocative...haunting, and uncannily moving best."—Janet Maslin, *NY Times*. I wanted to love this one more than I did.

Owen, David. [Where the Water Goes: Life and Death along the Colorado River](#) (Riverhead \$28). Owen offers a wealth of engrossing and often surprising details about the complicated nature of water rights, recreational usage (worth \$26 billion a year), and depletion threats from climate change and the fracking industry. With water shortages looming across the globe, Owen's work provides invaluable lessons on the rewards and pitfalls involved in managing an essential natural resource." —*Booklist*. "An important work that brings the questions surrounding water use in the American Southwest forward to the era of climate change. With humor, an acute eye, and un-showy skill, Owen has written a book that deserves to stand with Marc Reisner's classic, *Cadillac Desert*." —Ian Frazier

Pastor, Ben. [The Road to Ithaca](#) (Bitter Lemon \$14.95). In May 1941, Wehrmacht officer Bora is sent to Crete, recently occupied by the German army, and must investigate the brutal murder of a Red Cross representative befriended by SS-Chief Himmler. All the clues lead to a platoon of trigger-happy German paratroopers, but is this the truth? Bora takes to the mountains of Crete to solve the case, navigating his way between local bandits and foreign resistance fighters. With echoes of Claus von Stauffenberg, Bora is torn between his duty as an officer and his integrity as a human being. 5th in the Martin Bora Mystery series; good reading alongside Kerr this month. Rave reviews from the *Sunday Times* and *PW* which finds this to be a "disturbing mix of detection and reflection."

Patterson, James/David Ellis. [Black Book](#) (Little Brown \$28). Billy Harney was born to be a cop. The son of Chicago's chief of detectives, whose twin sister is also on the force, Billy plays it by the book. Alongside Detective Kate Fenton, Billy's tempestuous, adrenaline-junkie partner, there's nothing he wouldn't sacrifice for his job. Enter Amy Lentini, a hard-charging assistant state's attorney hell-bent on making a name for herself—who suspects Billy isn't the cop he claims to be. They're about to be linked by more than their careers. One missing black book. A horrifying murder leads investigators to an unexpected address—an exclusive brothel that caters to Chicago's most powerful citizens. There's plenty of incriminating evidence on the scene—but what matters most is what's missing: the madam's black book. Chicago has never been more dangerous (and you can tell this is a David Ellis story, no?).

Perez-Reverte, Arturo. [What We Become](#) (\$17). In 1928, aboard the *Cap Polonio*—a lavish transatlantic cruise ship bound for Buenos Aires—Max Costa locks eyes with Mecha Inzunza across the first-class ballroom. They are an unlikely match. He is a thief, sleek and refined, hired to dance with unaccompanied passengers. She is the elegant wife of an accomplished composer, accustomed only to luxury. Yet as quickly as their affair begins, the two lovers are torn apart. In Nice, 1937, Max and Mecha's lives intersect for a second time and they rekindle their dalliance with ease. But in the wake of a perilous mission gone awry, Mecha looks after her charming paramour until a deadly encounter with a Spanish spy forces Max to flee. Decades later in Sorrento at the height of the Cold War, Max once again runs into trouble—and Mecha. Their attraction is undeniable but with KGB agents on Max's trail, the small glimmer of hope is becoming increasingly dim. This novel is an interesting and elegant version of *Trust No One*. [What We Become Signed](#) (\$28).

Prebble, Stuart. [The Bridge](#) (LittleBrown \$26). The madman terrorizing London by dancing along before picking up a passing child on Waterloo Bridge and tossing it into the Thames—the first of such random acts—is a killer premise for this psychological thriller by the author of the super suspense story [The Insect Farm](#) (\$15.99). These events disrupt the idyll building between Michael who's fallen hard for Alison. And disrupt the façade Alison's maintained over a terrible secret. What is it that Michael's grandmother knows and is keeping from him? In short, what happens if the woman of your dreams isn't what she seems?

Ratner, Vaddey. [Music of the Ghosts](#) (Touchstone \$26). A survivor of the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia presents a powerful second novel. Teera returns to Cambodia for the first time since her terrifying escape as a child refugee. She's looking for her father who disappeared in the Khmer Rouge prison 25 years ago. She carries a letter from someone signing himself "the Old Musician" who claims to have known her dad. Arriving in Phnom Penh she discovers that perps and victims of genocide now live side by side (note, you can as a tourist visit the "killing fields"—I chose not to. And that the country is on a fraught and fragile path to reconciliation. But the Old Musician is there, anticipating the confession he must make.... The Khmer Rouge wreaked havoc with the kind of militant fanatical dedication to communism we see today in ISIS. [In the Shadow of the Banyan](#) (\$16).

Rickman, Phil. [All of a Winter's Night](#) (Atlantic \$27.95). Merrily Watkins is drawn into a conflict centered on one of Britain's most famous medieval churches, its walls laden with ancient symbolism. It begins in the fog, with a bleak village funeral. In the early hours of the following morning, Merrily Watkins and her daughter Jane are made aware that Aidan Lloyd, son of a wealthy farmer, will not be resting in peace. A rural tradition is displaying its sinister side as an old feud re-ignites. It's already a fraught time for Merrily, her future threatened by a bishop committed to restricting her role as deliverance consultant, or diocesan exorcist. Suddenly there are events she can't talk about as she and Jane find themselves potentially on the wrong side of the law. Meanwhile, DI Frannie Bliss, investigating a shooting, must confront the growth organized crime which is contaminating the countryside. On the Welsh border, the old ways are at war with the modern world. Diana Gabaldon and I are fans of Rickman's unusual and atmospheric mysteries.

Russell, James. [The Dragon Hunters, Book 1](#) (Sourcebooks \$16.99). Living on an island means life is full of adventure for brothers Flynn and Paddy. So when a dragon swoops out of the sky and nabs their beloved dog, Coco, Flynn and Paddy know it's up to them to bring her home. That night, they pack their bags, make some terrible sandwiches, and set off on an epic adventure... See the map in this book come alive! Includes BONUS Dragon Brothers map in 3D for your phone or tablet! Download the free AR Reads app on your Android—or iOS—compatible smartphone or tablet to see and hear dragons fly, geysers gush, and get a glimpse of your favorite characters in action! Illustration by Link Choi. New volumes this summer. Ages 4-8. Fabulous art work.

Ryan, Tom. [Will's Red Coat](#) (Morrow \$25.99). It's nearly impossible to resist the miniature Schnauzer sporting his warm red wrap-around coat in this new memoir of life with a dog by Ryan. Atticus is still with him in their Jackson, New Hampshire, home where the forest and the White Mountain peaks offer endless allure. But Ryan sees a notice about an old, blind, deaf dog called Will who'd been left in a kill shelter in New Jersey. Time was ticking. Should Ryan take this 15-year-old into his life with Atticus and disrupt it? Dogs had saved Ryan, and so Ryan decides to save the dog. And despite all his handicaps including his by now savage temper and urge to bite, Will gradually choose to live again and enjoys over two years in what becomes his family. He really loves flowers. If you're a dog lover, this is for you. But it also says a lot about people and how we choose to live.

Sanders, Ben. [Marshall's Law](#) (St Martins \$25.99). A New Zealand author presents another adrenaline-fueled thriller, his second after the acclaimed *American Blood*. It opens with the kidnapping of U.S. marshal Lucas Cohen near Santa Fe, New Mexico. Cohen's abductors want to know only one thing—ex-NYPD cop Marshall Grade's location. After killing one kidnapper and escaping, Cohen phones Marshall to warn him. Marshall and Cohen go to New York City to discover who has put the price on Marshall's head. The prime suspect is Chloe Asaro, a woman whom Marshall once loved and also once shot. Meanwhile, Dexter Vine, who's leading the various small-time criminals searching for Marshall, hopes to use the \$5 million bounty to pay off Chinese mobsters. "No one emerges from this story unscathed, and the brutal violence features duct tape and shattered glass almost as prominently as blood and bullets. Amid all the mayhem, Sanders takes care to develop his viewpoint characters as distinct individuals. Hollywood has optioned *American Blood*, and this sequel continues that novel's cinematic level of action and excitement."

Seay, Martin. [The Mirror Thief](#) (\$17.99). "With near-universal appeal... Seay's debut novel is a true delight, a big, beautiful cabinet of wonders that is by turns an ominous modern thriller, a supernatural mystery, and an enchanting historical adventure story." Set in three cities in three eras, it calls to mind David Mitchell and Umberto Eco in its mix of entertainment and literary bravado. The core story is set in Venice in the sixteenth century, when the famed makers of Venetian glass were perfecting one of the old world's most wondrous inventions: the mirror. An object of glittering yet fearful fascination—was it reflecting simple reality, or something more spiritually revealing?—the Venetian mirrors were state of the art technology, and subject to industrial espionage by desirous sultans and royals world-wide. But for any of the development team to leave the island was a crime punish-

able by death. One man, however—a world-weary war hero with nothing to lose—has a scheme he thinks will allow him to outwit the city's terrifying enforcers of the edict, the ominous Council of Ten... Meanwhile, in two other Venices—Venice Beach, California, circa 1958, and the Venice casino in Las Vegas, circa today—two other schemers launch similarly dangerous plans to get away with a secret...

Sharratt, Mary. [The Dark Lady's Mask](#) (\$14.99). Aemilia Bassano Lanier is beautiful and accomplished, but her societal conformity ends there. She frequently cross-dresses to escape her loveless marriage and to gain freedoms only men enjoy. Then a chance encounter with a ragged, little-known poet named Shakespeare changes everything... "The idea of a smart, beautiful, artistic Renaissance woman telling Shakespeare, 'We shall write comedies, you and I' is as heady as the elderflower wine Aemilia's household staff brews."—*Washington Post*

Shattuck, Jessica. [The Women in the Castle](#) (Harper \$26.99). The #1 April Indie Next Pick: "Three war widows and their children help each other survive at the end of World War II in this engaging novel filled with rich period details. Their husbands died as members of the resistance, but aside from that common thread, Marianne, Benita, and Ania bring very different backgrounds to their makeshift home in the castle's kitchen. They also face repercussions from past choices and current secrets. Jessica Shattuck brings us into their world and shows us that the rules for love and loyalty are different in wartime." I found this a difficult book to read both in the context of its time and ours; the prevailing sadness and dismal choices are stark reminders that lives are determined by timing as well as character.

✽Sheridan, Sara. [London Calling](#) (Kensington \$25). "Set in 1952, Sheridan's satisfying second Mirabelle Bevan mystery opens with the disappearance of debutante Rose Bellamy Gore, who was last seen at a London jazz club in the company of saxophonist Lindon Claremont. Lindon, a childhood friend of Vesta Churchill, Mirabelle's partner in the debt collection agency that the pair run in Brighton, calls at their office the day after Rose goes missing for advice. He agrees he should cooperate with the police, who regard him with extra suspicion because he's black. Lindon returns to London, where he subsequently dies in police custody, an apparent suicide. Tough and glamorous Mirabelle, who worked for British intelligence during WWII, travels with Vesta to London, where she calls on police acquaintances and former war colleagues for clues; she also visits some jazz clubs. The story grows progressively darker as Sheridan delves into issues of race and class—not to mention loyalty and abuse of power—in this extraordinarily rich historical."—*PW* on the sequel to [Brighton Belle](#) \$15). The author lives in Britain.

Shreve, Anita. [The Stars Are Fire](#) (Knopf \$25.95). In October 1947, after a summer long drought, fires break out all along the Maine coast from Bar Harbor to Kittery and are soon racing out of control from town to village. Five months pregnant, Grace Holland is left alone to protect her two toddlers when her husband, Gene, joins the volunteer firefighters. Along with her best friend, Rosie, and Rosie's two young children, Grace watches helplessly as their houses burn to the ground, the flames finally forcing them all into the ocean as a last resort. The women spend the night frantically protecting their children, and in the morning find their lives forever changed: homeless, penniless, awaiting

news of their husbands' fate, and left to face an uncertain future in a town that no longer exists. In the midst of this devastating loss, they find gains....

Smith, Alexander. [My Italian Bulldozer](#) (Knopf \$25.95). When writer Paul Stewart heads to the idyllic Italian town of Montalcino to finish his already overdue cookbook, he expects it to be the perfect escape from stressful city life. But when he arrives, things quickly take a turn for the worse. His hired car is nowhere to be found, and with no record of a reservation at the car-rental counter and no other cars are available, it appears that Paul will be stuck at the airport—that is, until an enterprising stranger offers him an unexpected alternative: a bulldozer. With little choice in the matter, Paul accepts, and so begins a series of laugh-out-loud adventures as he trundles through the Tuscan countryside. A story of unexpected circumstances and making the best of what you have.

Smith, Wilbur. [War Cry](#) (Harper \$28.99). The 14th chapter in the legendary South African Courtney family finds big-game hunter Leon Courtney raising daughter Saffron alone in 1920s Kenya after his wife's death. Spies and adventurers swirl through in the buildup to World War II, threatening their very survival.

Stamper, Kory. [Word by Word: The Secret Life of Dictionaries](#) (Pantheon \$26.95). Stamper presents a smart, sparkling and often profane and hilarious valentine to the content and keepers of dictionaries in "a paean to the craft of lexicography and a sometimes bemused exploration of the 'Escher-esque logic of English.'" Stamper started college in pre-med, came a cropper in organic chemistry, and moved on to medieval Icelandic sagas, which led to classes in Old English, where she fell for "this wild, vibrant whore of a language." That love affair has continued with her work for Merriam-Webster as a lexicographer and editor. Stamper neatly and wittily covers grammar, defining philosophy (recording language as people use it vs. guarding the purity of the language); "wrong" words, like *irregardless* and *unravel*; dialects (where marginalization of same can have dire results, as in the Trayvon Martin trial); the history of dictionaries; adding new words (with the standard resultant carping about the decline of civilization); revising (constant); etymology (many origin stories, like those for "posh," are false); dating ("OMG" can be traced back to 1917); pronunciation; and the sociolinguistic implications of "nude" (whose skin?). She obviously loves working with words, in spite of her frustration when wrestling with three weeks of compiling citations for the verb "take." "Lexicography moves so slowly that scientists classify it as a solid." But it's not a job, it's a calling, which is a plus if a lot is at stake: when defining slurs, for instance—painful lexical interactions can be fraught with disagreement....

✦ Taylor, Andrew. [The Ashes of London](#) (Harper \$26.99). London, September 1666. The Great Fire rages through the city, consuming everything in its path. Even the impregnable cathedral of St. Paul's is engulfed in flames and reduced to ruins. Among the crowds watching its destruction is James Marwood, son of a disgraced printer, and reluctant government informer. In the aftermath of the fire, a semi-mummified body is discovered in the ashes of St. Paul's, in a tomb that should have been empty. The man's body has been mutilated and his thumbs have been tied behind his back. Under orders from the government, Marwood is tasked with hunting down the killer across the devastated city. But at a time of dangerous internal dissent and the threat of

foreign invasion, Marwood finds his investigation leads him into treacherous waters – and across the path of a determined, beautiful and vengeful young woman.

Tesh, Jane. [Baby, Take a Bow](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95). Tesh's 5th Grace Street Mystery maintains the quirky Southern charm. "In Tesh's gratifying fifth Grace Street mystery, PI David Randall looks for a missing baby on behalf of Rufus Jackson, a fellow boarder at friend John Camden's rooming house in Parkland, N.C. Rufus's ex-wife, Bobbi, recently contacted him and revealed she gave birth to his child, but now she has been killed, and the baby has disappeared. Suspecting an illegal adoption ring, David enlists the help of Kary Ingram, another boarder, with whom he's in love but whose desire for motherhood threatens her objectivity. Meanwhile, Camden's psychic powers draw David into a case of a ghost trapped in a historic mansion and a haunted hot dog stand. Though the plot can be convoluted, readers seeking a cozy, feel-good mystery will enjoy this outing to Grace Street. The delightful characters navigate their worldly and otherworldly challenges with affection and humor, and Tesh maintains a whimsical tone that doesn't detract from the serious subject matter." *LJ* likes "the surly ghosts." [Order all five.](#)

Van Reet, Brian. [Spoils](#) (LittleBrown \$26). The Indie Next Pick: "Borne of his experience fighting in Iraq, Brian Van Reet's *Spoils* is a clear-eyed, gritty, and tension-filled story of young soldiers caught up in impossible circumstances. At the heart of the story is Cassandra, a 19-year-old machine gunner who is captured by the enemy. Her ordeal as a captive along with two fellow soldiers is harrowing, but also provides insight into the character of soldiers and their captors. Recent and current conflicts have inspired some excellent fiction and *Spoils* ranks with the best of it."

✦ Ware, Ruth. [The Woman in Cabin 10](#) (\$16). Ware's two novels of suspense have been bestsellers, lots of good reviews—and neither does a thing for me. This one is set up as a Christie-style locked room (cabin) at sea but sinks once travel writer Laura Blacklock, stepping in for her pregnant boss, reports she heard the sound of a body hitting the water en route to Norway and is not believed.... I didn't like [In a Dark, Dark Wood](#) (\$16) either, finding the premise implausible and liking no one.

Welsh, Kate. [The Wages of Sin](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). Sarah Gilchrist, the tenacious protagonist of Kaite Welsh's gripping debut thriller, *The Wages of Sin*, knows how seedy Edinburgh, Scotland can get—and she learned it the hard way. In 1882, when few women worked as doctors, Sarah has enrolled in Edinburgh's medical school, where male classmates harass her mercilessly. Between trying to study and finding her resolve to stay in school, she volunteers at an infirmary. There she meets Lucy, a young prostitute carrying an unwanted baby. A few days later, Lucy reappears in Sarah's life, as a corpse on her school's examination table. No one except Sarah has noticed the signs of murder on the dead woman's body, and she is determined to find the killer. What follows is an exhilarating and atmospheric mystery set mostly in the gas-lit streets of Edinburgh. Welsh adroitly captures details of the time—the cobbled streets, a whalebone corset—while making space for Sarah's more contemporary sensibilities. Indeed, Sarah, with her radical (for the time) notion that women like Lucy deserve police protection, reads as a spokesperson for modern-day feminism. In the hands of a lesser writer, Sarah's anachronistic qualities would clang with inauthenticity. But here, Welsh, who is also a columnist

for the Daily Telegraph, balances her protagonist's progressive inclinations with a self-awareness that enables her to play the roles (good niece, demure dinner guest) that the era demands.

Yocum, Robin. [A Welcome Murder](#) (Seventh Street (\$15.9)). The *PW* Starred Review for our **April Fresh Fiction Pick**: "Memorable oddball characters, whose ambitions collide with results ranging from comic to fatal, populate Yocum's exceptionally clever novel set in Steubenville, Ohio, a once-thriving town near the West Virginia border. Johnny Earl, an ex-con who was once destined for a great pro baseball career, returns home from Pittsburgh hoping to retrieve his hidden nest egg. Sheriff Francis Roberson has dreamed since childhood of becoming president of the United States, and he has a plan. Roberson's wife, Allison, has one driving goal—to get out of Steubenville. Dena Marie Conchek Androski Xenakis, former homecoming queen, she of multiple marriages and affairs, is still in love with Johnny. Dena's insecure husband, Smoochie Xenakis, has put up with insults and abuse all his life. The murder of unsavory Rayce Daubner, who's intimately connected with all the others, initiates the chaos, which one seemingly minor character quietly manages. Yocum (*A Brilliant Death*) has produced a rollicking tale sure to appeal to Donald Westlake and Elmore Leonard fans." Yocum's 2016 book, [A Brilliant Death](#) (\$15.95) is up for a 2017 Edgar and enjoyed equally strong reviews.

OUR APRIL SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

✂Hawkins, Paula. [The Girl on the Train](#) (\$9.99) Just in case you missed this runaway, twisty bestseller in hardcover and trade paperback....Obsessively watching a breakfasting couple every day to escape the pain of her losses, Rachel witnesses a shocking event that inextricably entangles her in the lives of strangers. *PW*'s review of the hardcover nailed the appeal of the book ending with "Hawkins, formerly deputy personal finance editor of the *Times* of London, deftly shifts between the accounts of the addled Rachel, as she desperately tries to remember what happened, Megan, and, eventually, Anna, for maximum suspense. The surprise-packed narratives hurtle toward a stunning climax, horrifying as a train wreck and just as riveting."

Kope, Spencer. [Collecting the Dead](#)(\$9.99) Working for the FBI as a tracker who uses his unique form of synesthesia to trail suspects, Magnus "Steps" Craig recognizes common hallmarks from two murder scenes at the same time he is targeted by a killer he has been pursuing for more than a decade. *Kirkus*, among other review sources, loved this say "Crammed with characters who will capture readers' attention and writing that leaves much of the field in the dust, Kope's novel features a character, who is different, talented, sympathetic, and gifted with great heart. He's surrounded by both ultra-competent investigative staffers and the worst criminals humanity has to throw at him. The combination is a winning one. Kope's fascinating debut will place Steps Craig alongside Walt Longmire, Jack Reacher, and Charlie Parker as an enduring literary hero."

Koryta, Michael. [Last Words](#) (\$7.99) Mark Novak #1. Grieving the death of his wife, private investigator Mark Novak reluctantly accepts a case from a suspected murderer who may or may not be innocent. *PW* ended their review with "Koryta sensitively portrays regret and grief while plunging the reader into exciting, claustrophobic scenes deep inside the massive cave."

Leeson, Gayle. [Silence of the Jams](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Down South Café #1. While making pies and cakes for Winter Garden, Virginia's Independence Day celebration, Amy Flowers goes up against Chamber of Commerce director George Lincoln, who wants to buy her café and tear it down, but when he is poisoned to death, she must find a way to prove that it wasn't her food that killed him. Leeson is a pseudonym for Gayle Trent, who also writes the national bestselling Embroidery Mystery series as Amanda Lee.

Levine, Laura. [Murder Has Nine Lives](#) (\$7.99) *Jaine Austen* #14. Looking forward to a vacation, a new job, and a budding relationship with a potential beau, freelance writer Jaine Austen is surprised by her finicky cat's selection to appear in a commercial before the creator of the cat food being advertised dies on the set, placing Jaine under suspicion. *Kirkus* had this to say about Levine's latest "Jaine's flair for the well-turned phrase puts her in the top tier of do-it-yourself detectives."

McDermott, Andy. [The Midas Legacy](#) (Bantam \$9.99) *Wilde and Chase* #12. When their daughter turns two, American archaeologist Nina Wilde and her husband/ex-SAS bodyguard Eddie Chase return to work and soon become embroiled in a case in which a woman has apparently been turned to gold, leaving them to wonder if it can be related to the legend of Midas. Fans of Cussler's Dirk Pitt books will find this British author to be equally skilled at composing an adrenaline-fueled plot filled with plenty of action and adventure along with a generous dollop of entertaining history.

McKinlay, Jenn. [Caramel Crush Signed](#) (Berkley \$7.99) *Cupcake Bakery* #9. When her friend, Diane, asks her to deliver a batch of breakup cupcakes to her soon-to-be ex-fiancé, Mel finds the recipient dead and must whip up a batch of clues to clear Diane's name and make sure that the real killer gets his or her just deserts.

Preston, Douglas/Lincoln Child. [The Obsidian Chamber](#) (\$9.99) *Pendergast* #16. With special agent Pendergast missing and presumed dead and his ward Constance taken captive by a shadowy figure from the past, Pendergast's bodyguard, Proctor, begins an international pursuit of Constance's kidnapper. *LJ* ended their review with "This twisty and bizarre 16th series installment will puzzle and delight fans as well as readers who enjoy locked-room mysteries, international intrigue, shadowy characters with ambiguous moral compasses, and tales that confound and entertain."

Sandford, John. [Extreme Prey](#) (\$9.99) *Lucas Davenport* #26. Invited to join the presidential campaign of his friend, the governor, Lucas Davenport discovers that the governor is being stalked by a would-be assassin who proves lethal to anyone in the way of his target. *PW* concluded their review with "the plot follows a familiar path toward the dramatic resolution that suggests a new direction for the long-running series. Readers who are looking for yet another assassination thriller that paints within the lines will be satisfied." For the new Davenport, see Event Books.

NEW IN SMALL PAPERBACKS

Albert, Susan W. [Blood Orange](#) (\$7.99) *China Bayles* #24. When the nurse renting her guest cottage ends up in a coma after discovering evidence that a patient was murdered, China Bayles races to identify the person responsible. See Signed Books for *China Bayles* #25

Allan, Barbara. [Antiques Fate](#) (\$7.99) Trash 'n' Treasures #10. When the owner of a theater where her mother, Vivian, is to perform drops dead while giving Vivian the grand tour, Brandy Borne must find the killer.

Anderson, Kurt. [Resurrection Pass](#) (Kensington \$9.99) When a group of miners in a remote valley in the Canadian wilderness unwittingly release an all-consuming force of nature, half-Cree guide Jake Trueblood and a young ecologist must not only confront the nightmarish creature but also a local group of murderous Cree infuriated by their presence.

Blackwood, Grant. [Tom Clancy Duty and Honor](#) (\$9.99) Jack Ryan investigates an attempt on his life and stumbles onto the trail of a philanthropist and human rights advocate, who Jack believes is about to make a drastic move in order to secure his place among the global powers.

Brown, Sandra. [Deadline](#) (\$9.99) Already coping with battle fatigue following his return from Afghanistan, journalist Dawson Scott receives a tip he cannot ignore about a potentially huge story involving the son of terrorists at-large for forty years.

Brown, Sandra. [Low Pressure](#) (\$9.99) When Bellamy Lyston writes a novel under a pseudonym about her sister's murder eighteen years earlier and the tornado that destroyed the crime scene, she becomes the target of a stalker after a tabloid newspaper discovers the truth.

Bryan, Mollie Cox. [No Charm Intended](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Cora Crafts #2. While leading their guests in nature hikes, rock painting and making clay charms during a "wildcrafting" retreat at their Victorian home, Cora Chevalier and her business partner, Jane, search for the truth surrounding the disappearance of a nanny, whose boyfriend is the number one suspect.

Cameron, W Bruce. [Repo Madness](#) (\$8.99) Juggling the possible loss of his job, a romantic estrangement and court-ordered medication, Michigan repo man Ruddy McCann learns that the tragedy that defined his life may be a lie, a possibility that compels his investigation into a string of local disappearances.

Campbell, Rick. [Ice Station Nautilus](#) (\$9.99) After an American and a Russian nuclear submarine collide below a polar ice cap, a team of Navy SEALs must establish an ice camp and race to rescue the men trapped in the disabled craft before the Russian army can reach them.

Clark, Mary Higgins. [As Time Goes By](#) (\$7.99) A news reporter tries to find her birth mother just as she is assigned to cover the high-profile trial of a woman accused of murdering her wealthy husband.

Day, Maddie. [When the Grits Hit the Fan](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Country Store #3. After hosting a dinner for Indiana University's Sociology Department at her restaurant, Pans 'N Pancakes, Robbie Jordan must flip over the clues to prove that her friend, graduate student Lou, did not kill Professor Charles Stilton, a man who seemed to thrive on heated exchanges with his students and peers.

Gregory, Lena. [Occult and Battery](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Bay Island Psychic #2. To attract more customers to her psychic shop, Cass Donovan decides to host a murder-mystery weekend, complete with a séance, in a supposedly haunted mansion that becomes all-too real when one of the guests is found dead and a blizzard traps everyone inside with a murderer.

Haines, Carolyn. [Rock-A-Bye Bones](#) (\$7.99) Southern Belle #16. Coping with a broken heart and the attack on Scott Hampton's blues club, Sarah Booth Delaney discovers a baby in a basket on her porch and bloody footsteps leading to her driveway, a situation that places her in the same danger as a troubled mother running for her life.

Hannah, Sophie. [The Wrong Mother](#) (\$9.99). Reissue. Last year, a work trip Sally Thorning had planned was canceled at the last minute. Desperate for a break from juggling her job and a young family, Sally didn't tell her husband that the trip had fallen through. Instead, she treated herself to a secret vacation in a remote hotel. While she was there, Sally met a man—Mark Bretherick. All the details are the same: where he lives, his job, his wife Geraldine and daughter Lucy. Except that the photograph on the news is of a man Sally has never seen before. And Geraldine and Lucy Bretherick are both dead.

Harper, Karen. [Falling Darkness](#) (Mira \$7.99) After surviving a plane crash with her ex-husband, young daughter, and new love, forensic psychologist Claire Britten must enter the witness protection program to keep her family safe from the criminal mastermind who is out to get her boyfriend.

Harris, Sherry. [Good Day to Buy](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Garage Sale #4. When her estranged brother, who was undercover investigating a story, disappears after the discovery of a murdered Vietnam vet—her client Mr. Spencer—Sarah Winston discovers that all sales are final as she tries to figure out who killed Mr. Spencer so that she can find her brother, all while keeping this from her ex, the chief of police.

Haywood, BB. [Town in a Maple Madness](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Candy Holiday #8. During Cape Willington, Maine's Maple Madness weekend, one of blueberry farmer Candy Holliday's friends is accused of stealing sap from a rival's maple trees and landscaper Mike Rilke is found dead, forcing Candy to tap into his life to catch a killer.

Hilton, James. [Search and Destroy](#) (\$7.99) Brothers Danny and Clay Gunn both served in the military, and both know how to kill, taking work as private military contractors and freelance 'fixers'. But when they save a female journalist in the Nevada desert, it is they who become the targets, stalked by a paramilitary team known only as The Presidents, under orders from the heart of government. To stay alive they must turn the tables, stop running, and become hunters once again.

Jance, JA. [Downfall](#) (\$9.99) Joanna Brady #17. Juggling her pregnancy, family deaths, her daughter's imminent departure for college and a reelection campaign, Cochise County Sheriff Joanna Brady investigates two suspicious falling deaths that may be the work of a serial killer.

Perry, Marta. [Echo of Danger](#) (Harlequin \$7.99) When she and her young son unwittingly become prisoners of her controlling father-in-law's power, widow Deidre Morris finds hope in the form of attorney Jase Glassman until a murder rocks the quiet community of Echo Falls and she discovers Jase's ulterior motives.

Reilly, Linda. [A Frying Shame](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Deep Fried #3. When the competition in a sweet and savory cooking contest is found dead, Talia Marby must find out who will stop at nothing—not even murder—to win the \$25,000 in prize money.

Tanenbaum, Robert. [Infamy](#) (\$9.99) Karp #28. New York District Attorney Butch Karp and his crime-fighting wife, Marlene, place their lives in danger to seek justice for a murdered FBI associate while exposing security-compromising corruption at the highest levels of government.

Unger, Lisa. [Ink and Bone](#) (\$7.99) Possessing a psychic ability to dream about events before they occur and then make supernatural things happen, Finley Montgomery requests help from her seer grandmother to control her gift when she lands in the middle of an investigation involving a little girl's disappearance.

Wait, Lea. [Tightening the Threads](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Mainly Needlepoint #5. When her long-lost half-brother, Ted Lawrence, a wealthy old artist and gallery owner in town, is poisoned to death after he announces plans to leave her his museum-worthy heirloom paintings, antique dealer Sarah Byrne is accused of the crime and must unravel the clues to find the real killer.