

# Midmonth BookNotes

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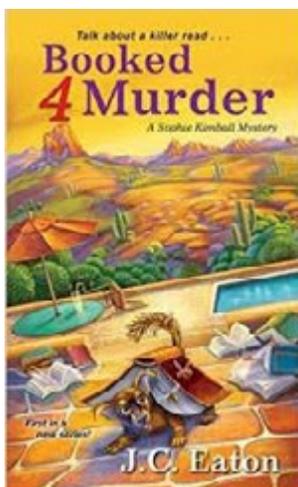
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## Celebrate Summer with a Good Book Appearing Soon at the Pen



### *Easton, J.C.* [Booked 4 Murder](#)

(Kensington \$7.99)

“Undoubtedly, retirement had given my mother a new occupation – busybody. I made a mental note to keep working until I collapsed at my desk or was carted off on a gurney.” *Booked 4 Murder* is told from the viewpoint of Sophie “Phee” Kimball, and this sentence gives you a great idea of her engaging sense of humor. Phee is perfectly happy working in Mankato as an accounts clerk for the police, when she receives a phone call (actually several, if you count the ones she has been ducking) from her mother Harriet Plunkett, who is convinced that a “cursed” book is killing off members of her Sun City West book club. Despite her best efforts to convince her mom there is no such thing as a cursed book, Phee finds herself taking some vacation time and heading west to “investigate.” What surprises Phee the most, however, is that once she arrives in Arizona, she begins finding evidence that someone might really be knocking off little old ladies

in the retirement community. If you like your cozy mysteries served up with plenty of laughs, *Booked 4 Murder* should definitely be on your must-read list. J.C. Eaton, a husband and wife writing team will be at the Poisoned Pen on Saturday July 29<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM to talk about and sign copies of their debut mystery.

### *MacNeal, Susan Elia.* [The Paris Spy](#)

(Bantam \$26)

Special Executive Operations agent Maggie Hope has two very good reasons for being in German-occupied Paris: Elise Hess and Erica Calvert. Maggie desperately wants to find her half-sister Elise, a German resistance fighter, and it is vital that Maggie track down Erica, a fellow SEO agent, who has been gathering mission critical information for the upcoming Allied invasion of Europe. Disguised as Paige Kelly, an Irishwoman in Paris to buy her wedding trousseau, Maggie finds herself frantically searching the fashionable *ateliers* as well as the dangerous back allies of Paris for the women before time for them all runs out. With *The Paris Spy*, the seventh superb installment in her Maggie Hope series, MacNeal once again deftly mingles fact and fiction and history and mystery into one seamlessly plotted, deeply satisfying story. MacNeal writes with great eloquence and sharp clarity about the rampant corruption and casual brutality of life in Paris under the Germans, but she also skillfully incorporates into her plot some unforgettable examples of the courageous sacrifices -as well as the subtle acts of defiance – made by ordinary people determined to fight back against a government, whose evil knew no boundaries. Put this gripping plotline together with the book’s impeccably researched setting and

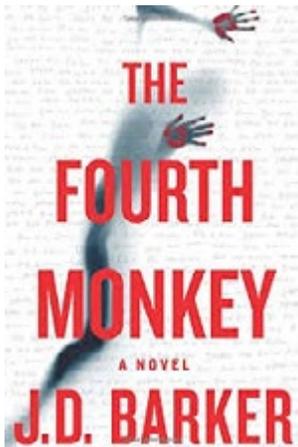
realistically nuanced characters, and you have an extraordinary historical mystery that fans of this sterling series will treasure. Susan will be making her debut visit to the Poisoned Pen on Saturday August 12<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM. Don't miss this chance to hear her talk!

### New Mysteries, Romance and More

#### *Ahrnstedt, Simona. [Falling](#)*

(Kensington \$15)

When humanitarian worker Isobel Sørensen finds out that playboy Alexander de la Grip is withholding desperately needed funds from her aid foundation, the two push each other's boundaries – both professional and personal - to the breaking point. Best-selling Swedish author Ahrnstedt's second entry in her High Stakes series is filled with plenty of glitz and glam, a decadently sexy bad-boy hero, and tons of steamy sexual chemistry.



#### *Barker, J.D. [The Fourth Monkey](#)*

(HMH \$26)

After five years of living in terror, the residents of Chicago breathed a sigh of relief when the police find the body of the notorious Four Monkey Killer, who in the past first sent one of his victim's ears (hear no evil), then the eyes (see no evil), then the tongue (speak no evil) and finally the corpse (do no evil). However, the police, including Detective Sam Porter, quickly discover that the FMK may have left behind another victim, the illegitimate daughter of a real estate mogul, who may still be alive but missing an ear (which the police discover in a box addressed to Arthur Talbot, the real estate mogul). Now Sam must use a diary found in the killer's pocket to try and find the psychopath's final target before time runs out. Horror writer Barker has won the Bram Stoker Award

so you know he can write dark and twisted novels, which is exactly how his debut thriller reads. The publisher bills it as *Seven* meets *The Silence of the Lambs*, which is pretty close to the mark.

#### *Booth, Claire. [Another Man's Ground](#)*

(Minotaur \$25.99)

Everyone in Branson County warned Hank Worth, the new sheriff, not to mess with the Kinney family. However, when Hank is called out to investigate a bizarre crime – someone has stripped the bark off trees – on Vern Miles land, he discovers the crime is not confined to Vern's property but extends onto the neighboring Kinney land. However, once Hank and his deputies begin searching the Kinney property, they discover something even more disturbing: a child's skeleton in a sinkhole. If this isn't enough on Hank's plate, its re-election time and Hank must learn how to play politics fast if he wants to keep his job. Booth introduced Hank in her debut mystery *The Branson Beauty* last year, and the second book in the series is every bit as good as the first with an addictive combination of engaging characters, a nicely realized small-town setting, and a good dose of wry humor. If you love Steven Havill's Posadas County mysteries or enjoy Margaret Maron's Deborah Knott books, you will definitely want to consider adding Booth to your reading list.

#### *Brockmann, Suzanne. [Some Kind of Hero](#)*

(Ballantine \$27)

When his teenage daughter Maddie disappears, Navy Seal Lieutenant Peter "Grunge" Green enlists the help of his new neighbor Shayla Whitman in tracking Maddie down before she gets into some serious trouble. As a single mom of two teenage boys, Shayla knows how difficult raising a kid can be, so she is more than happy to lend a hand when Peter commandeers her car on his private mission. What neither expects is that while they are working together, a much more personal connection would develop between them. The 17<sup>th</sup> installment in award-winning Brockmann's Troubleshooter books has everything fans of the series love including lost of fast-paced action, characters you care about, and plenty of sexy romance.

#### *Camerota, Alisyn. [Amanda Wakes Up](#)*

(Viking \$26)

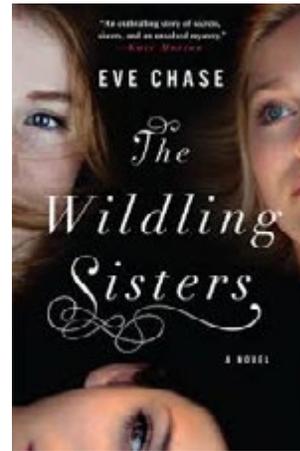
Finally landing a coveted job as a morning anchor for

a big-time cable news station, Amanda Gallo finds her ambitions and love life turned upside-down by impossible standards and a hotly contested elections. Camerota, who is host of *New Day* at CNN, certainly knows her way around a news camera, and her debut novel is rife with insider knowledge about the cable news biz. *Amanda Wakes Up* has a wonderfully snappy, chick sense of humor, and the author delivers an entertaining look at one woman's attempts to climb the ladder at work while still maintaining her journalistic ethics.

**Cantero, Edgar.** [Meddling Kids](#)

(Doubleday \$26.95)

The Blyton Summer Detective Club (of Blyton Hills, a small mining town in Oregon's Zoinx River Valley) solved their final mystery during the summer of 1977 and unmasked the elusive Sleepy Lake monster—another low-life fortune hunter trying to get his dirty hands on the legendary riches hidden in Deboën Mansion. Now it's 1990, and the former detectives have grown up and apart, each haunted by disturbing memories of their final night in the old haunted house. There are too many strange, half-remembered encounters and events that cannot be dismissed or explained away by a guy in a mask. And Andy, the once intrepid tomboy now wanted in two states, needs answers. To find them she locates Kerri, the one-time kid genius and budding biologist, now drinking her ghosts away in New York with Tim, an excitable Weimaraner descended from the original canine member of the club. They will also have to get Nate, the horror nerd currently residing in an asylum in Arkham, Massachusetts. Luckily Nate has not lost contact with Peter, the handsome jock turned movie star who was once their team leader . . . which is remarkable, considering Peter has been dead for years. The time has come to get the team back together, face their fears, and find out what actually happened all those years ago at Sleepy Lake. Imagine the cast of Scooby Doo (or an older version of Alfred Hitchcock's Three Investigators) involved in Lovecraft an mystery and you have some idea of the literary flavor of this wildly inventive novel by Cantero, who you quickly can tell is a big fan of pop culture since he gives plenty of sly nods to a number of different icons including famous British children's author Enid Blyton in this decidedly original and definitely different book.



**Chase, Eve.** [Wildling Sisters](#)

(Putnam \$27)

When fifteen-year-old Margot and her three sisters arrive at Applecote Manor in June 1959, they expect a quiet English country summer. Instead, they find their aunt and uncle still reeling from the disappearance of their daughter, Audrey, five years before. As the sisters become divided by new tensions when two handsome neighbors drop by, Margot finds herself drawn into the life Audrey left behind. When the summer takes a deadly turn, the girls must unite behind an unthinkable choice or find themselves torn apart forever. Fifty years later, Jesse is desperate to move her family out of their London home, where signs of her widower husband's previous wife are around every corner. Gorgeous Applecote Manor, nestled in the English countryside, seems the perfect solution. But Jesse finds herself increasingly isolated in their new sprawling home, at odds with her fifteen-year-old stepdaughter, and haunted by the strange rumors that surround the manor. Gothics are back in literary vogue, and Chase's latest is a deliciously spooky tale of secrets, sisters, and a forbidding house with an old mystery. If you never miss a book by Kate Morton, Eve Chase is a good bet for an equally entertaining take on the kind of addictively readable novels Daphne Du Maurier once dreamed up.

**Dave, Laura.** [Hello, Sunshine](#)

(Simon and Schuster \$25)

On her 35<sup>th</sup> birthday, You Tube cooking sensation Sunshine Mackenzie's life went to hell in a hand basket. First, someone hacks into Sunshine's twitter account and reveals her whole professional persona as a southern farmer's daughter who cooks from the heart to be nothing but a lie. In quick succession, Sunshine loses her upcoming contract for a show with the Food

Network, her millions of fans, her home, and her husband. With nowhere to go, Sunshine heads back home to Montauk, NY to her estranged sister, whom she hasn't seen in years. Because the way Sunshine now figures it, once you hit rock bottom the only place to go is up. Dave's previous novel *800 Grapes* was set in the California wine industry, and now she tackles the celebrity culinary biz with equally entertaining results. If you enjoy women's fiction novels about fresh starts and second chances, this warmly engaging and wonderfully witty novel makes for perfect summertime reading.

*Davis, Fiona.* [The Dollhouse](#)

(Dutton \$16)

Built in 1922, the Barbizon Hotel for Women was an iconic part of New York City landscape for decades until it was turned into condos at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The hotel was designed as a safe residence for professional women and over the course of the years such notables as Joan Crawford, Grace Kelly, and Sylvia Plath lived there. (Plath modeled the Amazon Hotel in her *Bell Jar* after the Barbizon). In Davis' superbly entertaining debut novel, journalist Rose Lewin is living at the Barbizon when she meets Darby McLaughlin, one of the 4<sup>th</sup> floor ladies (older, former residents of the Barbizon, who have been given rent-controlled apartments in the building). Fascinated by the always veiled, always silent Darby, Rose decides to do some investigating only to stumble across a story that could bring her writing career back from the dead. Davis toggles back and forth between 1952 when Darby first arrives at the Barbizon from Ohio to attend secretarial school and the present day as Rose digs into the past and discovers the unlikely friendship between Darby and Esme Castillo, a maid at the hotel. A friendship that ended when Esme fell to her death from one of the upper floors of the Barbizon. Davis' book has it all: history, mystery, and a generous dash of romance all rolled into one engaging story. If you enjoy novels by authors like Paula McLain, Melanie Benjamin, or Beatriz Williams, don't miss out on this wonderful first novel, which is now just out in trade paperback.

*Garwood, Julie.* [Wired](#)

(Dutton \$27)

Needing to recruit a top-notch computer expert who can help him identify a mole, a hotshot FBI agent encounters difficulties coordinating with a beautiful

computer hacker who is hiding secrets that she does not want revealed. The subject of Garwood's latest romantic suspense novel is certainly topical.

*Goss, Theodora.* [The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter](#)

(Saga Press \$24.99)

Mary Jekyll, alone and penniless following her parents' death, is curious about the secrets of her father's mysterious past. One clue in particular hints that Edward Hyde, her father's former friend and a murderer, may be nearby, and there is a reward for information leading to his capture... a reward that would solve all of her immediate financial woes. But her hunt leads her to Hyde's daughter, Diana, a feral child left to be raised by nuns. With the assistance of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, Mary continues her search for the elusive Hyde, and soon befriends more women, all of whom have been created through terrifying experimentation: Beatrice Rappaccini, Catherin Moreau, and Justine Frankenstein. When their investigations lead them to the discovery of a secret society of immoral and power-crazed scientists, the horrors of their past return. Now it is up to the monsters to finally triumph over the monstrous. Goss, winner of a World Fantasy Award, reworks one of her own short stories to create her debut novel, which is a madly original mix of historical fiction and mystery with just the right dollop of fantasy and horror thrown in for good measure.

*Grant, Sofia.* [The Dress in the Window](#)

(Harper \$15.99)

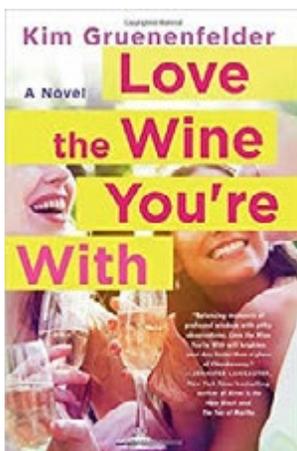
World War II has ended and American women are shedding their old clothes for the gorgeous new styles. Voluminous layers of taffeta and tulle, wasp waists, and beautiful color—all so welcome after years of sensible styles and strict rationing. Jeanne Brink and her sister Peggy both had to weather every tragedy the war had to offer—Peggy now a widowed mother, Jeanne without the fiancé she'd counted on, both living with Peggy's mother-in-law in a grim mill town. But despite their grey pasts they long for a bright future—Jeanne by creating stunning dresses for her clients with the help of her sister Peggy's brilliant sketches. Together, they combine forces to create amazing fashions and a more prosperous life than they'd ever dreamed of before the war. But sisterly love can sometimes turn into sibling jealousy. Always playing second fiddle to her sister, Peggy yearns to

make her own mark. But as they soon discover, the future is never without its surprises, ones that have the potential to make—or break—their dreams.

*Gray, Shelley S.* [His Guilt: The Amish of Hart County](#)

(Harper \$12.99)

Two years ago, after being wrongly accused of assault, Mark Fisher left the Amish community in Hart County, though he never forgot his home. Now when Waneta “Neeta” Cain - the one person who had helped him through his rough times - asks for help, Mark returns to Hart home. While Neeta is one of the few people in Hart County who doesn’t believe Mark is guilty of hurting anyone, his worldliness and tough exterior do make her uneasy. But as she begins to see the real person behind the façade as well as all the gossip and prejudice, Neeta wonders if he is the man for her. Just when Mark starts to believe a new life is possible, however, a close friend of Neeta’s is attacked. Once again, everyone in the community seems to believe he is guilty. Can Mark find the real culprit before Neeta completely loses trust in him forever? If you love Linda Castillo’s Amish mysteries, Gray’s books give an equally intriguing glimpse at the Amish and their world.



*Gruenenfelder, Kim.* [Love the Wine You're With](#)

(St Martins \$15.99)

When they agree to make a major change in each of their lives, three best friends—Nat, who is in love with a married man; Jessie, whose boyfriend gets cold feet at the last moment; and Holly, an actress who is forced to grow up—open a wine bar in Echo Park, LA, where they encounter the triumphs and failures

of dating, love and life. If you love Beth Kendrick’s brand of snappy contemporary romances/women’s fiction, don’t miss this fun and fizzy novel.

*Heaney, Katie.* [Public Relations](#)

(Grand Central \$14.99)

When her boss leaves town and a young, hot, internationally famous British singer-songwriter demands that she be his publicist, PR star Rose Reed finds herself way in over her head and is forced to choose between risking her reputation or letting the sweet pop star she’s grown to love go.

*Henry, Patti Callahan.* [The Bookshop at Water’s End](#)

(\$16)

Bonny Blankenship’s most treasured memories are of idyllic summers spent in Watersend, South Carolina, with her best friend, Lainey McKay. Everything was perfect until the night that changed everything, the night that Lainey’s mother disappeared. Now, in her early fifties, Bonny is desperate to clear her head after a tragic mistake threatens her career as an emergency room doctor, and her marriage crumbles around her. With her troubled teenage daughter, Piper, in tow, she goes back to the beloved river house, where she is soon joined by Lainey and her two young children. During lazy summer days and magical nights, they reunite with bookshop owner Mimi, who is tangled with the past and its mysteries. As the three women cling to a fragile peace, buried secrets and long ago loves return like the tide.

*Monroe, Mary Alice.* [Beach House for Rent](#)

(Gallery \$26)

When Cara Rutledge rents out her quaint beach house on Isle of Palms to Heather Wyatt for the entire summer, it’s a win-win by any standard: Cara’s generating income necessary to keep husband Brett’s ecotourism boat business afloat, and anxiety-prone Heather, a young artist who’s been given a commission to paint birds on postage stamps, has a quiet space in which to work and tend to her pet canaries uninterrupted. It isn’t long, however, before both women’s idyllic summers are altered irrevocably: the alluring shorebirds—and the man who rescues them—begin to draw Heather out of the shell she’s cultivated toward a world of adventure, and maybe even love; at the same time, Cara’s life reels with sudden tragedy, and she wishes

only to return to the beach house that had once been her port amidst life's storms. When Heather refuses to budge from her newfound sanctuary, so begins the unlikeliest of rooming situations. While they start out as strangers, as everything around the women falls apart they learn that the only thing they can really rely on is each other. All of Monroe's novels have a strong sense of place as well as a concern for the environment (in this case, it's the rapidly declining population of shore birds and what it means for us).

*Moriarty, Liane. [Truly Madly Guilty](#)* (\$16.99)

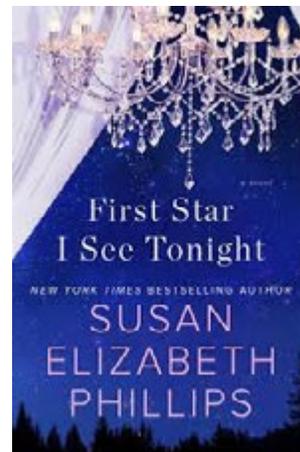
Sam and Clementine have a wonderful, albeit, busy life: they have two little girls, Sam has just started a new dream job and Clementine, a cellist, is busy preparing for the audition of a lifetime. If there's anything they can count on, it's each other. Clementine and Erika are each other's oldest friends. A single look between them can convey an entire conversation. But theirs is a complicated relationship, so when Erika mentions a last minute invitation to a barbecue with her neighbors, Tiffany and Vid, Clementine and Sam don't hesitate. Having Tiffany and Vid's larger than life personalities there will be a welcome respite. Two months later, it won't stop raining, and Clementine and Sam can't stop asking themselves the question: What if we hadn't gone? I absolutely hated Moriarty's *The Husband's Secret* when it came out and swore I would never read another book by this author again. Well, so much for that literary vow. I have to admit that I was mesmerized by *Truly, Madly, Guilty* and the manner in which the novel explores parenting, marriage, and friendship, and how guilt and resentment can slowly erode all of these building blocks in life. There is almost a claustrophobic feel to the story and the pacing is definitely on the glacial side, but I now see why so many readers have fallen for Moriarty's books.

*Morton, Kate. [The Lake House](#)* (\$17)

Decades after the disappearance of her toddler brother shatters her family, successful author Alice Edevane is approached by a young London police force detective who triggers a series of events that lead to a shocking revelation. No one does good old-fashioned gothic suspense like Morton.

*Pataki, Allison. [Where the Light Falls](#)* (Random \$27.99)

Three years after the storming of the Bastille, Paris is emboldened with the ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity. The monarchy of King Louis and Marie Antoinette has been dismantled and a new nation, for the people, is rising up in its place. Jean-Luc St. Clair, a young optimistic lawyer, moves his wife, Marie, and their infant son from their comfortable life in Marseilles to Paris, inspired by a sense of duty to contribute to the new order. Andr e Valiere, the son of a former wealthy Duke, sheds his privileged upbringing to fight in the unified French Army with his roguish brother, Remy. Sophie de Vincinnes, a descendent of a wealthy aristocratic family and niece of a militant uncle, embarks on her own fight for independence. But underneath the glimmer of hope and freedom, chaos threatens to undo all the progress of the revolution and the lives of these compatriots become inextricably linked. History purists may find a few nits to pick with the Patakis (Allison writes many of her novels with her brother Owen), but readers who miss those doorstep-size historical novels turned out by James Michener and James Clavell, will find this to be an equally sweeping, immersive experience.



*Phillips, Susan. [First Star I See Tonight: A Chicago Star](#)* (\$7.99)

Cooper Graham has cracked her cover! That is the first thing private investigator Piper Dove thinks when the former Super Bowl winning quarterback has her hauled into his private office at the swanky Chicago nightclub he now owns. However, despite his best efforts to get Piper to reveal who paid her to tail him,

she remains mum. Impressed by her professional integrity, Cooper decides to hire Piper to do some security work at his nightclub with the idea that the more time they spend together, the easier it will be for him to get Piper to talk. After all, Cooper is used to getting his way with women. But then again, Piper isn't one of Cooper's typical "fans." Writing with a deceptively easy sense of grace that is equally enhanced with her distinctively dry sense of wit, Phillips continues her popular Chicago Stars series with another irresistibly sexy love story that is guaranteed to hit every romance reader's sweet spot.

*Pielmeier, John Leonard.* [Hook's Tale](#)  
(Scribner \$25)

Ever wonder what could have happened that would turn an ordinary ship's captain into a one-handed scourge of Neverland? Golden Globe nominated screenwriter Pielmeier believes Barrie got everything wrong and he sets about correcting the record by using a diary he finds to rewrite the life story of the much maligned Captain James Cook (a.k.a. Captain Hook). From Hook's early days growing up in London and the time he spends at Eton to his finding of a treasure map that leads Hook to "Never-isle and future he never would have imagined for himself." Pielmeier gives all the familiar characters – including the crocodile – from Barrie's classic novel his own unique twist making this a good bet for fans of Gregory Maguire.

*Quinn, Kate.* [The Alice Network](#)  
(HarperCollins \$16.99)

It's 1947 and American college girl Charlie St. Clair is pregnant, unmarried, and on the verge of being thrown out of her very proper family. She's also nursing a desperate hope that her beloved cousin Rose, who disappeared in Nazi-occupied France during the war, might still be alive. So when Charlie's parents banish her to Europe to have her "little problem" taken care of, Charlie breaks free and heads to London, determined to find out what happened to the cousin she loves like a sister. Charlie's only clue to Rose's possible whereabouts is an address in London, but when Charlie shows up at the ramshackle townhouse, the only person she finds is cranky Eve Gardiner. More than thirty years earlier, Eve was recruited by the British government in their fight against the Germans, and she was sent to enemy-occupied France, where she received her training by Lili – code name Alice – the "queen of the spies." Now forever haunted

by the betrayal that shattered the Alice Network, Eve finds herself reluctantly agreeing to help Charlie on a new mission that reveals a connection between the two women neither one ever could have imagined. Quinn is the author several other historical novels set in ancient Rome and Borgia Italy, so she knows a thing or two about creating a vivid historical setting. Put this together with a crackerjack plot and a richly nuanced, marvelously compelling cast of characters, and you have the kind of exemplary historical spy story that will have you up way past your regular bedtime. Fans of Jacqueline Winspear and Susan Elia MacNeal (as well as anyone who gobbled up Francine Mathews' historical spy novels) will not want to miss this terrific book!

*Rosen, Jane L.* [Nine Women, One Dress: A Novel](#)  
(Knopf \$15.95)

Natalie is a Bloomingdale's salesgirl mooning over her lawyer ex-boyfriend who's engaged to someone else after just two months. Felicia has been quietly in love with her happily married boss for twenty years; now that he's a lonely widower, she just needs the right situation to make him see her as more than the best executive assistant in Midtown Manhattan. Andrea is a private detective specializing in gathering evidence on cheating husbands—a skill she unfortunately learned from her own life—and can't figure out why her intuition tells her the guy she's tailing is one of the good ones when she hasn't trusted a man in years. For these three women, as well as half a dozen others in sparkling supporting roles—a young model fresh from rural Georgia, a diva Hollywood star making her Broadway debut, an overachieving, unemployed Brown grad who starts faking a fabulous life on social media, to name just a few—everything is about to change, thanks to the dress of the season, the perfect little black number everyone wants to get their hands on. Think of this as an adult spin on the popular *Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants* books.

*Schultz, Ricki.* [Mr. Right-Swipe](#)  
(Grand Central \$14.99)

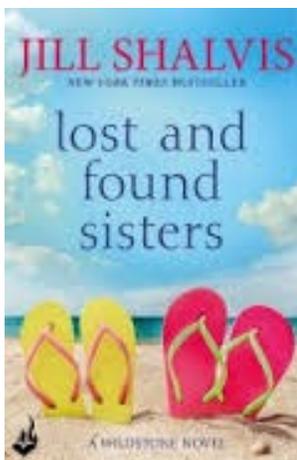
Rae Wallace would rather drown in a vat of pinot greezh and be eaten by her own beagle than make another trip down the aisle—even if it is her best friend's wedding. She's too busy molding the minds of first graders and polishing that ol' novel in the drawer to waste time on any man. But when her best friends stage an intervention, Rae is forced to give in.

After all, they've hatched a plan to help her find love the 21st century way: online. She's skeptical of this electronic chlamydia catcher, but she's out to prove she hasn't been too picky with men. However, when a familiar fella's profile pops up--the dangerously hot substitute teacher from work--Rae swipes herself right into a new problem

*Schutt, Bill and J.R. Finch. [The Himalayan Codex](#)*

(HarperCollins \$26.99)

The strange skull of a mammoth (it seems to have had two trunks) and some pages from a codex about a mysterious race of beings living high in the Himalayas that were written by Pliny the Elder prompt the U.S. government to send a small team led by zoologist and World War II hero Captain R.J. MacCready off to investigate in Tibet, where they discover the humanoids – think yeti - living there may have discovered a way to “speed up” evolution. Schutt and Finch introduced MacCready and company in *Hell's Gate*, and their latest is another rip-roaring, wildly inventive kind of adventure story that blends history, danger, and an exotic setting much in the vein of James Rollins and Michael Crichton.



*Shalvis, Jill. [Lost and Found Sisters](#)*

(HarperCollins \$25.99)

Quinn Weller appears to have it all: a loving family, a dream job in one of L.A.'s hottest eateries, and a gorgeous boyfriend dying to slip an engagement ring on her finger. So why does she feel so empty, like she's looking for a missing piece she can't find? The answer comes when a lawyer tracks down Quinn and reveals a bombshell secret and a mysterious inheritance that only she can claim. Romance superstar Shalvis makes her first move into women's fiction territory with this

emotionally engaging novel about family, friends, and love.

*Sykes, Lucy. [Fitness Junkie](#)*

(Doubleday \$25.95)

When Janey Sweet, CEO of a couture wedding dress company, is photographed in the front row of a fashion show eating a bruffin—the delicious lovechild of a brioche and a muffin—her best friend and business partner, Beau, gives her an ultimatum: Lose thirty pounds or lose your job. Sure, Janey has gained some weight since her divorce, and no, her beautifully cut trousers don't fit like they used to, so Janey throws herself headlong into the world of the fitness revolution. However, as Janey now eschews delicious carbs, pays thousands of dollars to charlatans for quick-fix fitness cures, and is harassed by her very own fitness bracelet, she can't help but wonder: Did she really need to lose weight in the first place? Sykes, whose sister is author Plum Sykes of *Party Girls Die in Pearls*, has a lot of fun gleefully skewering all the ridiculous trends in fitness and dieting.

*Wilson, Andrew. [A Talent for Murder](#)*

(Atria Books \$26)

If you wanted to plot the perfect murder, whom would you consult? Agatha Christie, of course! So when sociopathic Dr. Patrick Kurs decides to do away with his wife, he naturally thinks of Mrs. Christie. By threatening to release incriminating letters from Agatha's husband Archie to his recent paramour unless she helps him, Patrick gets Christie to agree to become his “partner in crime. But then Christie mysteriously “disappears and suddenly all bets are off. Wilson's latest is set just before Christmas in 1926, when the real life Agatha Christie mysteriously disappeared for eleven days, and it's obvious he has done his research. Readers get a definite feel for Christie's mood at the time as well as possible explanation for her reasons for vanishing from society. Despite a rather cranky review from *Kirkus* (which by the way totally missed an important point in the book's plot), I enjoyed this intriguing glimpse into the life of the Queen of Crime.

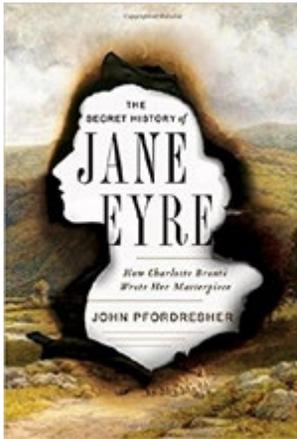
**Those Wild and Wacky Brontes**

*Pennington, Miranda K. [A Girl Walks into a Book](#)*

(Da Capo \$16.99)

How many times have you heard readers argue about

which is better, *Jane Eyre* or *Wuthering Heights*? The works of Charlotte, Emily, and Anne continue to provoke passionate fandom over a century after their deaths. Bronte enthusiasts, as well as those of us who never made it further than those oft-cited classics, will devour Miranda Pennington's delightful literary memoir. Pennington's father gave her *Jane Eyre* at the age of 10, sparking what would become a lifelong devotion and multiple re-readings. Pennington began to delve into the work and lives of the Brontes, finding that the sisters were at times her lifeline, her sounding board, even her closest friends. Pennington traces the development of the Brontes as women, as sisters, and as writers, as she recounts her own struggles to fit in as a bookish, introverted, bisexual woman. In the Brontes and their characters, Pennington finally finds the heroines she needs, and she becomes obsessed with their wisdom, courage, and fearlessness.



*Pfordresher, John.* [The Secret History of Jane Eyre](#)

(Norton \$26.95)

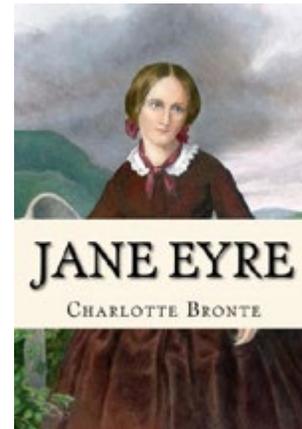
Why did Charlotte Brontë go to such great lengths on the publication of her acclaimed, best-selling novel, *Jane Eyre*, to conceal its authorship from her family, close friends, and the press? In *The Secret History of Jane Eyre*, John Pfordresher tells the enthralling story of Brontë's compulsion to write her masterpiece and why she then turned around and vehemently disavowed it (Charlotte once scolded William Makepeace Thackeray when he introduced her to his friends at a party as the author of *Jane Eyre*). Pfordresher connects the people Brontë knew and the events she lived to the characters and story in the novel, and he explores how her fecund imagination used her inner life to shape one of the world's most popular novels.

*Shoemaker, Sarah.* [Mr. Rochester](#)

(Grand Central \$27)

For romance readers, Edward Fairfax Rochester has always been a maddeningly enigmatic hero. Who was the man who captured the heart of plucky Jane Eyre? In her debut novel, Shoemaker sets out to answer this and other questions by going back to the beginning introducing readers to a young Edward growing up at Thornfield Hall, who is soon set away to school by his forbidding father. With Thornfield Hall reserved for his elder brother Rowland, Edward journeys around England eventually winding up in Jamaica, where Edward soon finds himself tangled up in a passionate affair with ravishing heiress Antoinetta Bertha Mason.

**In addition to the above new books about the Brontes and their books, we also have these other titles to tempt Bronte fans**



*Brontë, Charlotte.* [Jane Eyre](#)

(Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition \$18)

After a sad and neglected childhood as an orphan, Jane Eyre is hired by Edward Rochester as governess for his ward. Jane is pleased with the quiet country life at Thornfield, with the beautiful old manor house and gardens, with the book-filled library, and with her own comfortable room. But there are stories of a strange tenant, a woman who laughs like a maniac, and who stays in rooms on the third floor. The moody Rochester rebuffs her attempts to find discover more, ordering her to keep silent on the matter. An unlikely relationship blooms between the two, however, and Jane is thrilled to accept Rochester's proposal of marriage. But the quiet ceremony is shockingly halted by a stranger who claims that Rochester was already married—to the raving maniac Jane had heard crying in the house. If you have never read Brontë's best-known romance, this elegant new edition by Penguin,

which features cover art by famed fashion illustrator Ruben Toledo, is stunning.

**Bronte, Emily.** [Wuthering Heights](#)

(Penguin \$18)

In *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Brontë tells the story of Lockwood, the new tenant of Thrushcross Grange on the bleak Yorkshire moors, who is forced to seek shelter one night at Wuthering Heights, the home of his landlord. There he discovers the history of the tempestuous events that took place years before: of the intense passion between the founding Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw, and her betrayal of him. As Heathcliff's bitterness and vengeance is visited upon the next generation, their innocent heirs must struggle to escape the legacy of the past. This new edition also features an atmospheric cover by Ruben Toledo.

**Case, Alison.** [Nelly Dean](#)

(Pegasus \$25.95)

Debut author Case re-imagines life at Wuthering Heights through the eyes of the Earnshaws's loyal servant, young Nelly Dean. Nelly grows up with the Earnshaw children Cathy and Hindley but when orphan Heathcliff is adopted into the family, she finds herself pushed to the sidelines. Nelly later becomes the housekeeper to the Earnshaws and then tragically becomes romantically involved with Hindley, who never fulfills his promise that he will marry her. Fortunately, the local doctor's son is on hand to provide wise counsel and friendship. *Nelly Dean* is a fascinating, if leisurely paced, take on Emily Brontë's classic novel, and it gives readers a different perspective on the tragic family while also succeeding as novel in its own right.

**Coakley, Lena.** [Worlds of Ink and Shadow](#)

(Amulet \$17.95)

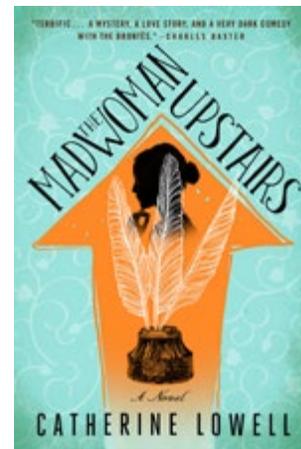
Charlotte, Branwell, Emily, and Anne. The Brontë siblings find escape from their constrained lives via their rich imaginations. The glittering world of Veropolis and the romantic and melancholy world of Gondal *literally* come to life under their pens, offering the sort of romance and intrigue missing from their isolated parsonage home. But at what price? As Branwell begins to slip into madness and the sisters feel their real lives slipping away, they must weigh the cost of their powerful imaginations, even as the characters they have created—the brooding Rogue and dashing Duke of Zamorna—refuse to let them

go. This interesting mix of fact and fiction opens up a window into the Brontë family dynamics as well as their creative processes.

**Faye, Lyndsay.** [Jane Steele](#)

(Putnam \$16)

In Faye's wildly inventive reimagining of *Jane Eyre*, sensitive orphan Jane Steele is tired of suffering at the hands of cruel family members and brutal school administrators, and so she murderously retaliates against her abusers. However, when Jane discovers her childhood home has a new master, Charles Thornfield, who needs a governess, she decides to apply for the position only to find herself working with mysterious servants while falling in love with her employer. *Jane Steele* was nominated for a Best Novel Edgar in 2017.



**Lowell, Catherine.** [The Madwoman Upstairs](#)

(Touchstone \$16)

As the last remaining descendant of the Brontë family, Samantha Whipple is rumored to have inherited a vital, mysterious portion of the Brontës literary estate—diaries, paintings, letters, and early novel drafts—a hidden fortune that's never been shown outside of the family. But Samantha has never seen this rumored literary treasure, and as far as she knows, it doesn't exist. But everything changes when Samantha enrolls at Oxford University and bits and pieces of her past start mysteriously arriving at her doorstep, beginning with an old novel annotated in her father's handwriting. As more and more bizarre clues arrive, Samantha soon realizes that her late father has left her an elaborate scavenger hunt using the world's greatest literature. With the aid of a handsome and elusive Oxford professor, Samantha must plunge into a vast literary mystery and an untold family legacy, one that can only be solved by decoding the clues hidden within the Brontë's own writing. Brontë fans will gobble

up this debut novel, which includes some interesting theories on the author's part about the family of writers. However, even if you have never read *Wuthering Heights* and have no idea who Heathcliff is, you can still enjoy Lowell's novel as a fun biblio-mystery seasoned with a generous dash of romance.

## Nonfiction

### *Bianco, Chris.* [Bianco](#)

(HarperCollins \$34.99)

When Phoenix based Chris Bianco started Pizzeria Bianco inside the back corner of a neighborhood grocery store in 1988, he had no idea that he would be a driving force in the artisanal pizza movement. All he knew was that his food would be the result of his relationships with farmers, local producers, customers, and staff, reflecting the respect and sincere intention that he brings to each of his recipes. Now the owner of a legendary pizza Mecca and a James Beard award-winning chef, Chris Bianco has written a cookbook that explains the fundamentals of pizza making as well as sharing recipes for a variety of "pies" from classic Margherita to Pizza Rosa as well as recipes for pasta dishes, vegetable-based main dishes, and a few desserts.

### *Brown, Eleanor.* [A Paris All Your Own](#)

(Putnam \$16)

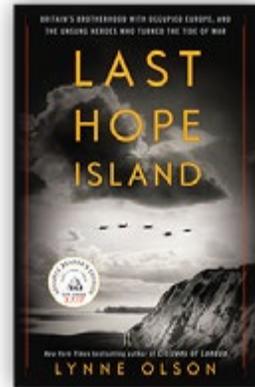
Eighteen best-selling authors – including Paula McLain, Cara Black, Susan Vreeland, and Lauren Willig – share their personal experiences with the City of Light in the form of essays ranging from meditative to humorous. This is the perfect little gift for any fan of these authors or for armchair travelers wanting to take a quick literary jaunt to Paris.

### *Hunt, Patrick.* [Hannibal](#)

(Simon and Schuster \$28)

During the second Punic War, the name Hannibal put fear into the hearts of every living Roman citizen. Born in 247 B.C., Hannibal Barca was one of the greatest generals of the ancient world. In 218 B.C., Hannibal invaded Italy by crossing the Alps with an army assembled from African and Iberian soldiers and a corps of war elephants. The general from Carthage then led his troops to three battle victories over the Romans culminating in the Battle of Cannae in 216 B.C., which left more than 50,000 Roman soldiers dead. Eventually, the Romans regained the upper

hand with a new general named Scipio, whose defeat of Hannibal at Zama in 202 B.C. forced Carthage to surrender. Hunt's biography of Hannibal covers not only his early years growing up in Carthage but also his later years after Zama when Hannibal worked as a freelance military consultant for Prusias of Bithynia.



### *Olson, Lynn.* [Last Hope Island](#)

(Random \$30)

Last Hope Island is what Polish pilots who joined the RAF during World War II called England. For more than a dozen European nations whose countries had been overrun by the Nazis, England represented not just a place of refuge but a base of operations from which they could regroup and fight back against the Germans. In this epic, character-driven narrative, acclaimed historian Lynne Olson takes us back to those perilous days when the British and their European guests joined forces to combat the mightiest military force in history. Here we meet the courageous King Haakon of Norway, whose distinctive "H7" monogram became a symbol of his country's resistance to Nazi rule, and his fiery Dutch counterpart, Queen Wilhelmina, whose antifascist radio broadcasts rallied the spirits of her defeated people. Here, too, is the Earl of Suffolk, a swashbuckling British aristocrat whose rescue of two nuclear physicists from France helped make the Manhattan Project possible. Olson also writes with verve and energy about the formation of Britain's SEO group as well as the efforts of the Allies to dupe the Germans while planning for the Normandy invasion was underway. Anyone who sees the movie *Dunkirk* this summer will also appreciate the way Olson sets the record straight about the Belgians efforts during the war. Both Churchill and many of the French leaders accused the Belgium army, led by King Leopold II (the "good" Leopold) of abandoning the field to the Germans and withdrawing from battle

without informing the Allied forces, but the truth is that Leopold and Belgium battled valiantly to slow down the Germans giving everything they had before they were forced to retreat. Anyone interested in World War II or who enjoys history written in a lively manner much like Eric Larsen, will find Olson's book to be a real treat.

*Spence, Charles.* [Gastrophysics](#)  
(Viking \$27)

Why do we consume 35 percent more food when eating with one other person, and 75 percent more when dining with three? How do we explain the fact that people who like strong coffee drink more of it under bright lighting? And why does green ketchup just not work? The answer is gastrophysics, the new area of sensory science pioneered by Oxford professor Charles Spence. Now he's stepping out of his lab to lift the lid on the entire eating experience—how the taste, the aroma, and our overall enjoyment of food are influenced by all of our senses, as well as by our mood and expectations. Lots of fun for foodies who want to understand the science behind what they eat.

*Worsley, Lucy.* [Jane Austen at Home](#)  
(St. Martin's \$29.99)

Take a trip back to Jane Austen's world and the many places she lived as historian Lucy Worsley visits Austen's childhood home, her schools, her holiday accommodations, the houses--both grand and small--of the relations upon whom she was dependent, and the home she shared with her mother and sister towards the end of her life. In places like Steventon Parsonage, Godmersham Park, Chawton House and a small rented house in Winchester, Worsley discovers a Jane Austen very different from the one who famously lived a 'life without incident'.

### Teen Fiction

*Buxbaum, Julie.* [What to Say Next](#)  
(Random \$18.99)

When an unlikely friendship is sparked between relatively popular Kit Lowell and socially isolated David Drucker, everyone is surprised, most of all Kit and David. Kit appreciates David's blunt honesty—in fact, she finds it bizarrely refreshing. David welcomes Kit's attention and her inquisitive nature. When she asks for his help figuring out the how and why of her dad's tragic car accident, David is all in. But neither

of them can predict what they'll find. Can their friendship survive the truth?

*Crowley, Cath.* [Words in Deep Blue](#)  
(Random \$17.99)

Returning to the city and bookstore of her youth, years after tucking a love letter to her crush, Henry, within the pages of his favorite book, Rachel embarks on a revelatory correspondence with Henry as she works alongside him at the bookstore and finds herself falling in love with him all over again. This teen novel has garnered a number of stellar reviews including one from *PW*, which concluded with "Filled with soul searching and philosophical quips, this book is for thinkers and lovers of literature who, like Rachel and Henry, are passionate about ideas and searching for answers."

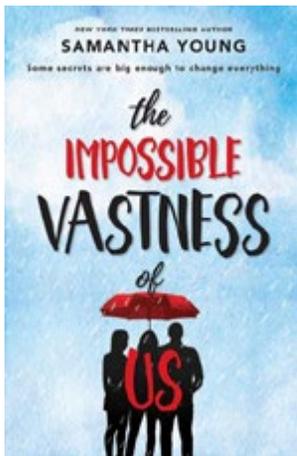
*Foody, Amanda.* [Daughter of the Burning City](#)  
(Harlequin \$19.99)

Sixteen-year-old Sorina has spent most of her life within the smoldering borders of the Gomorrah Festival. Yet even among the many unusual members of the traveling circus-city, Sorina stands apart as the only illusion-worker born in hundreds of years. This rare talent allows her to create illusions that others can see, feel and touch, with personalities all their own. Her creations are her family, and together they make up the cast of the Festival's Freak Show. But no matter how lifelike they may seem, her illusions are still just that illusions, and not truly real. Or so she always believed until one of them is murdered. Desperate to protect her family, Sorina must track down the culprit and determine how they killed a person who doesn't actually exist. Her search for answers leads her to the self-proclaimed gossip-worker Luca. Their investigation sends them through a haze of political turmoil and forbidden romance, and into the most sinister corners of the Festival. But as the killer continues murdering Sorina's illusions one by one, she must unravel the horrifying truth before all her loved ones disappear.

*Worsley, Lucy.* [Maid of the King's Court](#)  
(Candlewick \$16.99)

Clever, headstrong Elizabeth Rose Camperdowne knows her duty. As the sole heiress to an old but impoverished noble family, Eliza must marry a man of wealth and title — it's the only fate for a girl of her standing. But when a surprising turn of events lands

her in the royal court as a maid of honor to Anne of Cleves, Eliza is drawn into the dizzying, dangerous orbit of Henry the Eighth and struggles to distinguish friend from foe. Is her glamorous flirt of a cousin, Katherine Howard, an ally in this deceptive place, or is she Eliza's worst enemy? And then there's Ned Barsby, the king's handsome page, who is entirely unsuitable for Eliza but impossible to ignore. Worsley is the Chief Curator at historic royal palaces in Great Britain as well as being the author of several books (including *The Art of English Murder*) and a television personality who has hosted such BBC/PBS series as *Secrets of the Six Wives*.



*Young, Samantha.* [The Impossible Vastness of Us](#)

(Harlequin \$18.99)

After her mother remarries, India Maxwell is forced to move across the country from California to Boston, where she must start all over when it comes to securing her place on the social ladder at school. India's new stepsister Eloise isn't interested in helping her a bit when it comes to introducing India to her clique of friends –including her gorgeous boyfriend Finn - at school making India feel like an unwelcome intrusion both at home and at school. However, as India gets to know Eloise and Finn better, she discovers no one is exactly who they seem to be, and that everyone has past they are trying to work through.