

BOOKNEWS from

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

4014 N. Goldwater Blvd.
Scottsdale, AZ 85251
480-947-2974



Happy Thanksgiving to all....

AUTHORS ARE SIGNING...

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

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 2 7:00 PM

Michael Connelly signs [Two Kinds of Truth](#) (LittleBrown \$29)
Joe Ide signs [Righteous](#) (\$26), the sequel to [IQ](#) (\$16)
The Doubletree Hilton 5401 N Scottsdale Road 85250
Doors Open 6:00 PM Program 7:00 PM
Cash Bar. Free Valet Parking. Admission to the signing line only with the purchase of *Two Kinds of Truth* from The Poisoned Pen

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 5 2:00 PM

Diana Gabaldon signs [Dragonfly in Amber 25th Anniversary Edition](#) (Random \$40)
The Doubletree Hilton 5401 N Scottsdale Road 85250
Doors Open 1:00 PM Program 2:00 PM
Cash Bar. Free Valet Parking. Admission to the signing line only with purchase of *Dragonfly 25* from The Poisoned Pen

MONDAY NOVEMBER 6 7:00 PM Peru with Photos

Natasha Pulley signs [The Bedlam Stacks](#) (Bloomsbury \$26)
November History Club Pick

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 7 6:30 PM

Clive Cussler and Boyd Morrison sign [Typhoon Fury](#) (Putnam \$29)
Casablanca Rooftop Lounge 7134 E Stetson Dr., 3rd Floor, Scottsdale, AZ 85251
Cash bar. Mix and mingle, book signing.
Admission for two comes only with the purchase of *Typhoon Fury* from The Poisoned Pen.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 11 10:30 AM

Coffee and Crime discusses Charlaine Harris' [Real Murders](#) (\$7.99) Aurora Teagarden #1

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 11 2:00 PM Wine and Crime

Ellen Crosby signs [The Vineyard Victims](#) (St Martins \$25.99)
Wine Country Mysteries #8

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 15 7:00 PM

Steven Coonts signs [The Armageddon File](#) (Regnery \$27.99)
Tommy Carmellini
Barrett Tillman signs [On Wave and Wing](#) (Regnery \$29.99)
The 100 Year Quest to perfect the aircraft carrier

SCIFI FRIDAY NOVEMBER 17 7:00 PM

SciFi Club discusses Erin Morgenstern's [The Night Circus](#) (\$16)

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 18 10:30 AM

Croak and Dagger discusses Lori Rader Day's [Little Pretty Things](#) (\$15.95)

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 19 2:00 PM Holiday Party

Hosted by Donis Casey and Barbara
Rhys Bowen signs [The Ghost of Christmas Past](#) (St Martins \$24.99) Molly Murphy
Kate Carlisle signs [Eaves of Destruction](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Fixer-Upper Mystery
Timothy Hallinan signs [Fool's River](#) (Soho \$26.95), Bangkok's Poke Rafferty, and [Fields Where They Lay](#) (\$15.95), Junior Bender Christmas romp
Carolyn G. Hart signs [Ghost on the Case](#) (Penguin \$26)
Jenn McKinlay signs [Death in the Stacks](#) (Berkley \$25) Library Lover's Mystery
Daryl Gerber Wood signs [A Deadly Éclair](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99) A French Bistro Mystery

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 23

Happy Thanksgiving – We are Closed to Celebrate

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 25 10AM-6 PM

Small Business Saturday – specials and giveaways
12-2 PM Dana Stabenow and Barbara recommend books

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 28 Thrillers!

Leo Banks signs [Double Wide](#) (Brash Books \$16.99)
Marc Cameron signs [Tom Clancy Power and Empire](#) (Putnam \$29.95)
Matt Coyle signs [Blood Truth](#) (Oceanview \$26.95)

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 29 7:00 PM

Steven Havill signs [Easy Errors](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95 or \$15.95)
A Posadas County Mystery Prequel

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 30 7:00 PM

Hardboiled Crime discusses Reed Farrel Coleman's [Where It Hurts](#) (\$16)

SATURDAY DECEMBER 2 2:00 PM

Dana Stabenow signs [Silk and Song Trilogy Limited Edition](#) (Zeus \$29.95)

MONDAY DECEMBER 4 7:00 PM

James Rollins signs [The Demon Crown](#) (Harper \$28.99)
Sigma Force

TUESDAY DECEMBER 5 7:00 PM

ASU Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing students read their final manuscripts

“Tomorrow’s Stars, Today!” Your Novel Year, The Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing at Arizona State University’s online certificate program, is where the next generation of Young Adult authors hone their craft. Come join us as graduating students read from their final manuscripts.

EVENT BOOKS

Banks, Leo. [Double Wide](#) (Brash Books \$16.99). Banks' strong noir debut will remind many of early Joe Lansdale. Prospero "Whip" Stark, a former professional baseball pitcher, has retreated to a trailer park, population eight, in the Arizona desert, after a drug bust led to his doing time in a Mexican jail. One hot, stormy summer day, he opens a box that mysteriously appeared outside his trailer. Inside is a severed hand that he recognizes as that of former catcher Rolando Molina, a close friend, whom he last saw two years earlier outside a rehab center in Malibu, where Rolando was being treated for cocaine addiction. Whip and neighbor Opal Sanchez follow car tracks to a bluff, where he discovers a body that at first appears to be Rolando's—but it's not missing a hand. Whip later joins forces with reporter Roxanne Santa Cruz to find his baseball buddy, dead or alive. Opal's disappearance raises the stakes. "Since he's new to this kind of work, Whip turns to his vast library of pulp detective fiction for guidance. Smart dialogue helps propel the tight plot."

Bowen, Rhys. [The Ghost of Christmas Past](#) (St Martins \$24.99). Molly Murphy Sullivan is suffering from depression after a miscarriage following her adventure in [Time of Fog and Fire](#) (\$16) set mostly in San Francisco during the earthquake of 1906. She and baby Liam are nursing Daniel's mother at her grand house up the Hudson while Daniel is on assignment in DC and she looks forward to a family Christmas. Then Mrs. Sullivan (senior) gets an invitation from a longtime friend to spend Christmas at another family's mansion and Molly returns to Greenwich Village only to find her friends there are invited to Christmas elsewhere. And the specter of losing their Irish ward to her widowed father looms. Just as her spirits sink lower the whole family are invited to join the senior Mrs. Sullivan's house party and they gratefully accept, expecting a peaceful and relaxing holiday season. Fat chance—a child went missing ten years ago there, never found! [Order all the Mollys](#) including her other Christmas investigation [Away in a Manger](#) (\$16).

Cameron, Marc. [Tom Clancy Power and Empire](#) (Putnam \$29.95). A newly belligerent Chinese government leaves US President Jack Ryan with only a few desperate options.... Some of you may deplore the continuation of the Jack Ryan and other legacy series, but Putnam is doing a nice job passing it around to writers who can not only breathe new life into it but, often, continue to publish their own work, too. Mark Greaney, booked in February 21 with a new Gray Man thriller, is an excellent example.

Carlisle, Kate. [Eaves of Destruction](#) (Berkley \$7.99). At the annual Victorian Home and Garden Tour, Lighthouse Cove, California, contractor Shannon Hammer is in high demand among rival homeowners, who will do anything to win Best in Show. One-upmanship and even espionage break out among neighbors, construction crews, decorators, and landscapers. Thanks to several new hires, Shannon is sure she can handle the extra load—until murder throws a wrench in the works. The small town's corrupt building inspector is found dead on one of Shannon's jobsites, and soon plenty of suspects are coming out of the woodwork. And then.... 5th in the Fixer-Upper Series. [Order them all](#). Don't miss [Framed For Murder](#), a Hallmark Movies & Mystery Original starring Jewel, based on the Fixer-Upper Mystery series!

Connelly, Michael. [Two Kinds of Truth](#) (LittleBrown \$29). Harry Bosch, the retired Los Angeles homicide detective is hunting through a cold-case file. This one is infamous. A woman who vanished from her home 15 years ago, leaving her infant in a crib. He gets a warning text. Investigators from the LAPD and the District Attorney are coming for him. They have questions about a murder case Bosch put down years ago. New facts have emerged along with allegations that Bosch planted evidence. All of this and you haven't even finished the first chapter of Michael Connelly's new breakneck thriller, *Two Kinds of Truth*. By chapter two, Bosch is wading through the gore of a double homicide at a San Fernando family pharmacy that will send him into the world of prescription drug abuse, pill mills and opiate addiction. This book continues the evolution of Bosch since leaving the LAPD. He now splits his time between private investigations and volunteer work at the tiny San Fernando Police Department. "It is a reflection of Connelly's talent that after 19 books chronicling Bosch's career, this iteration feels fresh and authentic. This is Bosch at his F-you best, pursuing his mission, seeking justice and speaking for the dead," writes Robert Anglen. [Read the full review](#), then join us November 5. And you can [order the first 19](#) and binge read yourself up to speed. [Two Kinds of Truth UK Edition](#) (Orion \$45)

Coonts, Stephen. [The Armageddon File](#) (Regnery \$27.99). After one of the most contentious and divisive elections in American history, the new president is finally settling into the West Wing. Now, in this second headline-inspired thriller—[Liberty's Last Stand](#) (\$27.99) published last year—with a conservative slant, Coonts "sets his sights on the question of whether the 2016 election was rigged. Billionaire businessman Vaughn Conyer, a populist who's never held elective office, has defeated Cynthia Hinton, who was "the establishment candidate, promising more of the same," in an upset victory. Coonts' series lead, CIA director Jake Grafton, assigns his agent sidekick, Tommy Carmellini, to an FBI task force investigating election fraud. Hinton's supporters are claiming that foreign governments meddled in the election. Tommy is working with Maggie Miller, the special agent in charge of the task force, when they receive notice that a voting machine technician, Junior Sikes, has been jailed in Pennsylvania on kiddie porn charges and is willing to talk about his part in the voting machine chicanery. Before Junior can squeal, he and three others are whacked. Soon the body count stands at seven..." New in paperback: [The Art of War](#) (\$9.99).

Coyle, Matt. [Blood Truth](#) (Oceanview \$26.95). Rick Cahill, hard-boiled PI and one-man wrecking ball, is surprised and uneasy about his new client—Kim, who broke off their relationship to marry someone who would make a life with her rather than just stall like Rick, suspects her husband is having an affair. Rick reluctantly follows the man to a La Jolla hotel and gets photographic evidence of a meet with a gorgeous woman. But maybe it isn't as it seems. This case dovetails into Rick's resolve to search for the truth about his police officer father who'd been kicked off the LJPD without explanation 27 years ago and drank himself to death. Rick determines to find the truth even if it proves the one thing he's always feared. Steve Hamilton notes, "Matt Coyle's protagonist, Rick Cahill, is haunted both by the sins of his father

and by his own mistakes—but he’s driven to find the truth, no matter where it takes him, and that’s what makes this story so compelling.” [Order Rick’s earlier cases.](#)

Crosby, Ellen. [Vineyard Victims](#) (St Martins \$25.99). “In Crosby’s full-bodied eighth Wine Country mystery, Virginia vintner Lucie Montgomery has to swerve on a rain-slick road to avoid a head-on collision with a speeding car driven by her neighbor Jamie Vaughn, the unsuccessful U.S. presidential candidate in an earlier Vineyard Mystery.” When Jamie slams—without braking—into a stone pillar at the entrance to her property, Lucie leaps from her vehicle deploying her cane but she can’t open the door and he resists exiting the wreckage which is about to burst into flame. His dying words to her: “Tell Rick I need him to forgive me.” It appears to have been a tragic accident to everyone but Lucie, who is hounded by the media while trying to avoid them. When Jamie’s nearest and dearest begin acting suspiciously, Lucie becomes determined to find Rick and deliver Jamie’s message. The intrigue grows, as does the danger to herself, after Lucie learns that Rick was an old friend of Jamie’s who’s now on death row for the murder some 30 years earlier of a brilliant doctoral student at the University of Virginia. Crosby keeps the reader guessing and delivers fascinating information about Big Pharma, Virginia festivals, its court system and wrongful conviction procedures, and the very rare Norton grape (new to me). [Order the Wine Country Mysteries](#) and check out the different varietals and vintages.

Cussler, Clive. [Typhoon Fury](#) (Putnam \$29). Bestseller Cussler’s fast-paced 12th Oregon Files novel follows 2016’s [The Emperor’s Revenge](#) (also coauthored with Morrison) and opens in the midst of the second battle of Corregidor in 1945. During a U.S. attack on one of the mountainous island’s many caves, Captain John Hayward, who’s searching for a secret Japanese laboratory, observes that the enemy soldiers who pour out of the cave’s tunnels are furious fighters who don’t drop even when grievously wounded by gunfire. After finding the secret lab, Hayward succeeds in grabbing a file marked Project Typhoon just before the place blows up. In the present, Juan Cabrillo, the captain of the intelligence ship Oregon, is involved in a mission whose object is to find a memory stick containing the names of all Chinese secret agents operating in the U.S. No surprise, Juan’s present-day operation connects to the secret project on Corregidor, and soon he and his crew are fighting to recover thousands of doses of a potent compound that turns men into supersoldiers. “Expertly drawn characters and a well-constructed plot,” a hallmark of this series. We have a large inventory of books by Cussler, many of them Signed. [Check them out here](#)

Gabaldon, Diana. [Dragonfly in Amber 25th Anniversary Edition](#) (Random \$40). Gorgeous in a bronze “padded leather” cover with a gold silk bookmark, a Foreword by Gabaldon, and a reader’s guide at the back. Patrick reports the binding is really solid as well as handsome. Order it with [Outlander 20th Anniversary Edition](#) (\$40) which comes with a new Foreword and map and a CD of *Outlander, the Musical*, bound similarly in red, and wait for *Voyager 25* next.

Hallinan, Timothy. [Fool’s River](#) (Soho \$26.95). The two most difficult days in Bangkok writer Poke Rafferty’s life begin with an emergency visit from Edward Dell, the almost-boyfriend of Poke’s teenage daughter, Miaow. The boy’s father, Buddy, a late-

middle-aged womanizer who has moved to Bangkok for happy hunting, has disappeared, and money is being siphoned out of his bank and credit card accounts. So begins *Poke Rafferty #8*, IMHO one of the most interesting and brilliantly executed series going. Here’s a Starred Boxed Review: At one point in Hallinan’s outstanding eighth thriller set in Bangkok and featuring American expat Poke Rafferty, Rose, Poke’s Thai wife, muses, “People never knew until it was too late... whether the place where they pitched their tent was on the banks of some Fools’ River.” That noirish metaphor is central to the missing-persons case that travel writer Poke, who has a reputation for solving problems outside official channels, takes on through his teenage daughter, Miaow.... Poke soon learns that a dozen other men, most of them foreigners, have recently disappeared, only to be found floating in a canal with casts on at least one leg. Perhaps Buddy has fallen victim to the same criminal or criminals. Hallinan makes the most of his chosen setting, as well as the challenges his ethical lead faces to save a life, despite the indifference of a corrupt police force.”

Tim will also be signing the paperback of his hilarious holiday comedy for burglar Junior Bender: [Fields Where They Lay](#) (\$15.95). It’s hard to imagine a more perfect stocking stuffer! [Here’s a link](#) to all the Junior Benders/

Hart, Carolyn. [Ghost on the Case](#) (Penguin \$26 Nov. 19). Bailey Ruth Raeburn finds herself comforting a distraught sister when she’s sent to Adelaide, Oklahoma, on her latest mission. Susan Gilbert receives a \$100,000 ransom demand for her younger sibling. When the caller wants Susan to pay a visit to her wealthy boss and take the cash from his safe, Bailey Ruth follows Susan to the home. But she finds herself in a quandary, knowing that robbery is hardly a Heavenly pursuit. While Susan waits to hear back from the kidnappers, Bailey Ruth attempts to piece together how the criminals targeted Susan and how they know about her boss’s money... Order the other [Bailey Ruth Ghost Novels](#). The MWA Grand Master has surprised us with a family trip to Scottsdale for Thanksgiving so we’ve put together a Holiday Party Nov. 19 to celebrate along with Rhys Bowen, Tim Hallinan, Jenn McKinlay, and Daryl Gerber Wood. Hart claims this really is her last book, so please join us to salute her.

Havill, Steven F. [Easy Errors](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95). The *Booklist* Starred Review for a Las Posadas procedural prequel, our **December Thriller Club Pick** as we should have one outstanding cop novel in the 2017 thrillers mix. “It’s 1986, and Robert Torrez, fresh out of the police academy, is at the scene of a single-car crash that Torrez and Undersheriff Bill Gastner check out a report that a water tank has been shot to pieces and find the body of a girl who was supposed to have been in the SUV. Are the crash and the girl’s death connected? Why was she left behind? Why was the SUV going so fast? Were the kids going to get help for the girl? The twenty-second entry in Havill’s Posadas County, New Mexico, series is a prequel. In the recent installments, Gastner is mostly retired, and Torrez is the sheriff. Fans of the long-running series will be drawn to the backstory here, which fills in gaps in the stories of both Torrez and Gastner. They will also respond to the qualities that have made this series so appealing over the years: meticulous plotting, multidimensional characters, sharp dialogue, and a vivid sense of place. This is #22, one of the very best entries in a consistently excellent series.” And one of my all time favorites. You can [order them all](#) start-

ing with the first to publish if not the first in an increasingly fluid chronology: *Heartshot*.

Ide, Joe. [Righteous](#) (Mulholland \$26), the sequel to [IQ](#) (\$16). Ide was just here to launch his second amazing crime novel with John Sandford. I remind you *IQ* has been nominated for an Edgar and won the Anthony, Macavity, and Shamus Awards and been reviewed twice in the *NY Times*, also in the *Wall Street Journal*, and the UK's *Guardian* which names it a Pick of the Month. And it was a 2016 First Mystery Club Pick. I've not seen a first novel get this much ink in a long time. The concept of a streetwise Sherlock Holmes in South Los Angeles, and no WASP he, shows how durable the Sherlock concept is and how refreshingly it can be adapted to unlikely as well as conventional milieus. Here's another reviewer's take: "As the incredibly smart but socially challenged IQ works on the cases, Ide more deeply crafts his dynamic character and the internal conflicts that plague him. Interacting with his dog, Ruffin, and his old friend TK, the young introvert takes on strong definition, allowing readers to fortify their connection to him. The arrival of a mysterious, dog-loving artist named Grace adds more dimension to the already rich plot while presenting IQ with a new quandary. Like Ide's first novel, *Righteous* is dark, smart and layered. It also displays brilliant humor."

McKinlay, Jenn. [Death in the Stacks](#) (Berkley \$25). In McKinlay's exuberantly entertaining eighth Library Lover's mystery, Olive Boyle, a skeletally thin, middle-aged bully, who has insinuated herself into the political life of Briar Creek, Conn., turns her beady eye on the local library. As the newly elected president of the library board, Olive demands staff changes, dress codes, and the firing of the director, Lindsey Norris, a friend of the person Olive beat in the election. A few hours after a very public argument between Olive and Lindsey at the annual Dinner in the Stacks fundraising event, Olive is found stabbed to death in the library. When a young staff member is implicated in the crime, Lindsey steps in to investigate. She discovers that Olive, besides knowing the dark secrets of practically everyone in Briar Creek, had a few murky secrets of her own. Once again, McKinlay invites the reader into an appealing world inhabited by kind, intelligent people and only the occasional nasty villain. You can [order the entire Library Lover series](#).

Pulley, Natasha. [The Bedlam Stacks](#) (Bloomsbury \$26 Nov. 6). This incredible narrative of a disabled adventurer's journey through 19th-century Peru in search of quinine trees perfectly captures the disorientation of altitude sickness and culture shock in a setting where the nature of the fantastical elements remains ambiguous until the very end. This astonishing adventure, mystery, and slightly fantastic novel by the British author of the acclaimed [The Watchmaker of Filigree Street](#) (\$16)—a 2015 Pick—will be our **November History Club Pick** when she visits The Pen on November 6 where we will also enjoy a travelogue of Peru.

"The Peru that Markham and Tremayne encounter is a sheer fantastical delight. Exploding 'whitewood' trees, lamps made of glowing pollen, moving statues and rock formations of pure glass. Pulley also has a Tolkienian appreciation of the importance of coziness: centrally heated ships' cabins, snug inns and lashings of hot coffee. What's more, she writes elegantly and plots like a pro."—*The Times*. "It's a fast-paced adventure story

with great characters and a message about colonialism and discovering new worlds. Filled with wondrous images, from moving statues to exploding trees."—*The Glasgow Herald*.

Rollins, James. [Demon Crown](#) (Harper \$28.99). A new Sigma Force thriller, **signed for you on the Monday before pub day and with an as yet undetermined collectible included**. The *PW* Starred Review: "Readers with insect phobias may want to avoid bestseller Rollins's terrific 13th Sigma Force novel. In 1903, Alexander Graham Bell is on a mission to Italy to retrieve the bones of James Smithson, the man who founded the Smithsonian Institution. Along with Smithson's skeleton, Bell finds a pumpkin-sized chunk of amber containing a small dinosaur with a tiny crown of bones. Smithson's diary warns: 'what the Demon Crown holds is very much alive and ready to unleash the very hordes of Hell upon this world.' Sure enough, in the present, the secret cabal known as the Guild is about to unleash a massive infestation of giant killer wasps that, once established, will bring the world to its knees. Sigma Force Commander Grayson Pierce and partner Seichan are on the beach in Hawaii when the first masses of unrelenting, venomous wasps swarm ashore. Soon all of Sigma Force is working to defeat the evil plan. The chapters written from the wasps' point-of-view are particularly bone-chilling."

Stabenow, Dana. [Silk and Song Trilogy Limited Edition](#) (Zeus \$29.95). A beautifully packaged edition of the trilogy in one volume with a map, a silk ribbon bookmark—so elegant. And so reasonably priced—an excellent gift for the lover of adventure and historical fiction. Dana published this at first in three parts (in paperback) which you fans may already own, but give them away and buy this beautiful book instead. I'm proud she dedicated *Silk and Song* to me!

Tillman, Barrett. [On Wave and Wing](#) (Regnery \$29.99). Military historian (and sometime novelist) Tillman presents The 100 Year Quest to Perfect the Aircraft Carrier. What defended the U.S. after the attack on Pearl Harbor, defeated the Soviet Union in the Cold War, and is an essential tool in the fight against terror? Aircraft Carriers. For seventy years, these ships remained a little understood cornerstone of American power. Tillman sheds light on the history of these floating leviathans and offers a nuanced analysis of the largest man-made vessel in the history of the world.

Wood Gerber, Daryl. [A Deadly Éclair](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). It's always been Mimi Rousseau's dream to open her own bistro, but it seems beyond her grasp since she's been chased back home to Nouvelle Vie in Napa Valley by her late husband's tremendous debt. Until her best friend Jorianne James introduces her to entrepreneur Bryan Baker who invests in promising prospects. Now, working the bistro and inn until she's able to pay it off and call it her own, Mimi is throwing the inn's first wedding ever. The wedding will be the talk of the town, as famous talk show host Angelica Edmonton, daughter of Bryan's half-brother, Edison, has chosen the inn as her perfect venue—until Bryan is found dead with an éclair stuffed into his mouth.

SIGNED BOOKS

Akunin, Boris. [All the World's a Stage](#) (Orion \$46). Eliza Altairsky-Lointaine is the toast of Moscow society, a beautiful actress in an infamous theatre troupe. Her love life is as colorful as the parts she plays. She is the estranged wife of a descendant of

Genghis Khan. And her ex-husband has threatened to kill anyone who courts her. He appears to be making good on his promise. Erast Fandorin is contacted by concerned friend—the widowed wife of Chekhov—who asks him to investigate an alarming incident involving Eliza. But when he watches Eliza on stage for the first time, he falls desperately in love.... Can he solve the case and win over Eliza without attracting the attentions of the murderer he is trying to find?

Archer, Jeffrey. [Tell Tale](#) (Macmillan \$32). Find out what happens to the hapless young detective from Naples who travels to an Italian hillside town to find out ‘Who Killed the Mayor?’ and the pretentious schoolboy in ‘The Road to Damascus’, whose discovery of the origins of his father’s wealth changes his life in the most profound way. Revel in the stories of the woman who dares to challenge the men at her Ivy League university during the 1930s in ‘A Gentleman and a Scholar’, and another young woman who thumbs a lift and gets more than she bargained for in ‘A Wasted Hour’. These wonderfully engaging and always refreshingly original tales prove not only why Archer has been compared to Dahl and Maugham, but why he was described by *The Times* as ‘probably the greatest storyteller of our age’.

Adams, Ellery. [The Secret Book & Scone Society](#) (Kensington \$25). A gentle cozy to enjoy during the holidays features a librarian with a tragic past who is reinventing herself as the owner of Miracle Books, located in a converted railroad station in the small resort town of Miracle Springs, N.C. Nora has an uncanny ability to help her patrons solve their problems by recommending the perfect books for them to read, which gives Adams plenty of chances to share favorites with you readers. A chance encounter on a park bench prompts Nora to invite troubled Neil Parrish to the store, but Neil turns up dead on the railroad tracks before he can take her up on the offer. The death is ruled a suicide, but Nora suspects murder, so she and three other women form the Secret, Book, and Scone Society to try and discover the truth about Neil’s death—and perhaps to form a bond of trust strong enough to let them share their own painful secrets. With Carolyn Hart having wound down her Death on Demand mysteries, here’s a new series start to try.

Baldacci, David. [End Game](#) (Grand Central \$30). Through every mission, one man has always had Will Robie and Jessica Reel’s backs: their handler, code-named Blue Man. But now, Blue Man is missing. Last seen in rural Colorado, Blue Man had taken a rare vacation to go fly fishing in his hometown when he disappeared off the grid. With no communications since, the team can’t help but fear the worst. Sent to investigate, Robie and Reel arrive in the small town of Grand to discover that it has its own share of problems. But lying in wait in Grand is an even more insidious and sweeping threat...

Barclay, Linwood. [Parting Shot](#) (Doubleday Canada \$27). The Canadian edition, with a Signed Bookplate sent to us by Barclay, elicits this *PW* Starred Review: “Brian Gaffney, a confused young man who was picked up by the police wandering around downtown Promise Falls, has a strange tale to share with Det. Barry Duckworth, in bestseller Barclay’s outstanding fourth thriller set in the upstate New York town (it’s a bonus Barclay tells me he didn’t plan but couldn’t resist writing). Brian has no idea where he has been for two days, and someone has tattooed a threatening message onto his back. Meanwhile, PI Cal

Weaver has recently returned to town, and one of his first clients, Madeline Plimpton, wants his advice on how to safeguard her 18-year-old great-nephew, Jeremy Pilford. Jeremy is receiving death threats via revenge websites because he received only probation after being convicted of killing a young woman while driving drunk, based on the defense that he was too pampered to know right from wrong. Barclay adroitly blends themes of internet vitriol and simmering societal rage with a taut plot full of sly hints, unexpected twists, and red herrings. With access to both investigations, readers can make some connections before the characters do, but Barclay has surprises in store for readers and his leads alike.” I read this on the train from NY to Toronto and nearly missed the border stop for customs/immigration (well, almost, Canada has muscled up so we had to de-train, most likely in response to the American “welcome” for Canadians traveling to the US).

Chakraborty, SA. [City of Brass](#) (Harper Voyage \$25.99). Library Reads reviews: “A wonderful fantasy debut set in an 18th century Cairo and featuring a young woman, Nahri, who has no relatives and who lives by her wits as a con artist. Her odd supernatural healing talents and ability to understand and speak languages come in handy as she struggles to survive day by day while trying to save up money for medical training. Unfortunately, during one job, she accidentally calls up inimical ifrits and a wily, handsome djinn that turn her life upside down. Action packed, with interesting folklore and an evocative setting.” In its Starred Review, *PW* adds, Chakraborty combines the plot’s many surprises with vivid prose (“The cemetery ran along the city’s eastern edge, a spine of crumbling bones and rotting tissue where everyone from Cairo’s founders to its addicts were buried”), and leavens the action with wry humor. There is enough material here—a feisty, independent lead searching for answers, reminiscent of *Star Wars*’ Rey, and a richly imagined alternate world—to support a potential series.” This lovely novel will arrive sometime in November and is our **December SciFi/Fantasy Club Pick, continuing my aim to make all our December Book Buyers Club Picks heart-lifting in their way holiday reading.**

Child, Lee, ed. [MatchUp](#) (SimonSchuster \$27). Wow, we now have a small supply of copies of this collection of 11 stories where thriller authors (one man, one woman) pair up with their lead characters to produce a really fun ride signed by a number of contributors: CJ Box, Nelson DeMille, Diana Gabaldon, Andrew Gross, JA Jance, Michael Koryta, Kathy Reichs, John Sandford, Lisa Scottoline, Karin Slaughter

Child, Lee. [The Midnight Line](#) (Bantam \$30). Both the US and the [UK editions](#) (\$44) publish November 7. Expect some delay for signed copies for each. This thriller emphasizes various Reacher traits. After the end of a romance, Reacher’s response is to get on a bus and ride it to wherever it is going where his curiosity and sense of righting wrongs will present a new quest (think the knights of old). He may have left the Army MPs—terminal at Major—but he’s West Point and loyal to the core. So when he spots a WP class ring, a very small size so surely earned by a female, in the window of a pawn shop, his gut tells him the soldier who earned it would not easily have given it up. Was it voluntarily, or was she forced? And three, this investigation runs from Rapid City into Laramie and south and really is a Wyoming book. So if you are a CJ Box or a Craig Johnson fan and have never reader Lee Child, this is the book to give him a try. You

will feel perfectly at home in those wide, wild spaces. I especially like the Japanese-American woman cop, also tiny, in the Rapid City PD who stays in the game; the client of the PI whose own quest bumps into Reacher's (she's a twin and her sister went to West Point); the PI himself; and the Superintendent, a General, at West Point who ends up feeding Reacher information. It's the Army, but it's Semper Fi all the way. And the final point of interest is the ruthless portrayal of opioid addiction, non-judgmental but hair-raising. All in all, this is a superior and unconventional page turner.

Coel, Margaret. [Man Found Dead in Park](#) (ASAP \$28). A Deluxe Limited Edition (330) novella Signed by Coel, Anne Hillerman who writes the Introduction, Keith McCafferty who writes the Afterword, Craig Johnson who writes the cover piece, and illustrator Phil Parks. Arapaho attorney Vicky Holden and Denver reporter Catherine McLeod, and moves between Denver and the Wind River reservation. Along the way are murders, mystery, some downright scary characters (they even scared me a bit) and quite a few decent folks who see that, in the end, justice is done. This is a small press publication so there's no jacket cover or writeup in our webstore, but the clickable link is the way to order the book.

✎Cornwell, Bernard. [Fools and Mortals](#) (Collins \$46). A dozen left as I write this. This marvelous book is something new and different for Cornwell who made his bestselling bones writing historical/military fiction. He's still in historicals but, drawing on some ten years of acting with a Massachusetts theater company, he's drilled into the Shakespeares—Will and the lead character here, his brother Richard—for a look inside the Lord Chamberlain's Men, at Queen Elizabeth as a drama junkie, and at the evolution of some of the plays. You fans of Edward Marston's wonderful historicals featuring bookholder Nicholas Bracewell and Lord Westfield's Men will eat *Fools and Mortals* up, as will anyone with interest in Will Shakespeare. There's a terrific Historical Note to add to the pleasure. And what we see about the staging, acting (men playing women, etc), and theater politics enriches anyone's experience in attending theater today.

Dolan, Harry. [The Man in the Crooked Hat](#) (Putnam \$27). **Our November Surprise Me! Club Pick publishes November 28 and thus may not arrive until early December.** Private investigator Jack Pellum has spent two years searching for the man who he believes murdered his wife—strangled her near the Huron River; a man he last saw wearing a pea coat and a fedora. Months of blanketing Detroit with fliers and combing through crime records yield no leads and renders Jack some kind of crazy. Then a local writer commits suicide, and he leaves a bewildering message that may be the first breadcrumb in a winding trail of unsolved murders.... This is an unusual and slow-building tale. "An unpredictable mystery with an off-kilter plot and distinctive characters... with deft dialogue propelling its plot."—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. *PW* ends is Starred Review by saying, "Superior prose, plotting, and characterization put Dolan in the top rank of crime novelists. Dolan's first, [Bad Things Happen](#) (\$16), was a 2009 First Mystery Club Pick. I've always been a sucker for his writing.

Erdrich, Louise. [Future Home of the Living God](#) (Harper \$28.99) explores the possibility of evolution reversing and is told from the perspective of a pregnant woman who is writing a journal

to her unborn child. Along the way we meet her adoptive parents, her birth mother, and she reports on society unraveling and detaining pregnant women. Erdrich provides compelling characters and a strong storyline about a near future in this piece of innovative dystopian fiction."

Evanovich, Janet. [Hardcore Twenty Four](#) (Bantam \$28). Professional grave robber and semi-professional loon, Simon Diggery, won't let Stephanie Plum take him in until she agrees to care for his boa constrictor, Ethel. Plum's main qualification for babysitting an extremely large snake is that she owns a stun gun—whether that's for use on the wandering serpent or the petrified neighbors remains to be seen. Events take a dark turn when headless bodies start appearing across town. At first, it's just corpses from a funeral home and the morgue that have had the heads removed. Then a homeless man is murdered and dumped behind a church.

Green, John. [Turtles All the Way Down](#) (Dutton \$19.99). Sixteen-year-old Aza never intended to pursue the mystery of fugitive billionaire Russell Pickett, but there's a hundred-thousand-dollar reward at stake and her Best and Most Fearless Friend, Daisy, is eager to investigate. So together, they navigate the short distance and broad divides that separate them from Russell Pickett's son, Davis. Aza is trying. She is trying to be a good daughter, a good friend, a good student, and maybe even a good detective, while also living within the ever-tightening spiral of her own thoughts. In his long-awaited return, John Green, the award-winning author of *Looking for Alaska* and *The Fault in Our Stars*, shares Aza's story. "A thoughtful look at mental illness and a debilitating obsessive-compulsive disorder that doesn't ask but makes you feel the constant struggles of its main character. . . . *Turtles* explores the definition of happy endings, whether love is a tragedy or a failure, and a universal lesson for us all: 'You work with what you have.'" — *USA Today*

✎Griffiths, Elly. [The Vanishing Box](#) (Quercus \$38). What do a murdered Brighton flower seller, the death of Cleopatra and a nude tableau show have in common? One thing's for sure—it could be the most dangerous case yet for Stephens and Mephisto. Christmas, 1953. Max Mephisto and his daughter Ruby are headlining Brighton Hippodrome, an achievement only slightly marred by the less-than-savory support act: a tableau show of naked 'living statues'. This might appear to have nothing in common with DI Edgar Stephens' investigation into the death of a quiet flower seller, but if there's one thing the old comrades have learned it's that, in Brighton, the line between art and life—and death—is all too easily blurred... #4 in the [Magic Men Mysteries](#) by the author of the Ruth Galloway series, one of my very favorites from the UK.

Hearne, Kevin. [Squirrel on the Train](#) (Subterranean \$25). Oberon the Irish wolfhound is off to Portland to smell all the things with canine companions wolfhound Orlaith and Boston terrier Starbuck, and, of course, his human, ancient Druid Atticus O'Sullivan. The first complication is an unmistakable sign of sinister agendas afoot: a squirrel atop the train. But an even more ominous situation is in store when the trio plus Atticus stumble across a murder upon arrival at the station. They recognize Detective Gabriela Ibarra, who's there to investigate. But they also recognize the body—or rather that the body is a doppelganger for Atticus himself. The police, hampered by human senses of smell

and a decided lack of canine intuition, obviously can't handle this alone. Not with Atticus likely in danger. Oberon knows it's time to investigate once more—for justice! For gravy! And possibly greasy tacos! Alongside his faithful Druid, Oberon and the other loyal hounds navigate by nose through Portland to find a bear-shifter friend with intel, delicious clues at the victim's home, and more squirrels. Always more squirrels! But will our hungry band of heroes be able to identify the culprit before someone else is murdered? A novella, such fun for the holidays.

Ignatius, David. [The Quantum Spy](#) (Norton \$28). Will the U.S. or China build the world's first quantum computer? That's the question at the heart of this fine espionage thriller from DC journalist Ignatius. The Americans appear to have the edge through a company in Seattle—actually a front for the CIA—that's developing the superfast technology. But the Chinese are just a step behind thanks to corporate theft and good old-fashioned tradecraft; they have managed to turn a disgruntled CIA officer into a spy for the Ministry of State Security. Meanwhile, Harris Chang, an American interrogation specialist new to Langley, uses his Chinese heritage to infiltrate Beijing's intelligence operations in the U.S. and secretly keep tabs on the Chinese efforts to achieve dominance. In past books, Ignatius has been better at characterization; Chang, for example, at times behaves in ways that seem too naive for a well-trained professional. Still, Ignatius's realistic peek into the inner workings of the CIA and its Chinese counterpart shows why he's at the top of the thriller pack. And our **November Thriller Club Pick**.

Jonasson, Ragnar. [Whiteout](#) (Orenda UK \$35). Two days before Christmas, a young woman is found dead beneath the cliffs of the deserted Icelandic village of Kalfshamarvik. Did she jump, or did something more sinister take place beneath the lighthouse and the abandoned old house on the remote rocky outcrop? With winter closing in and the snow falling relentlessly, Ari Thor Arason discovers that the victim's mother and young sister also lost their lives in this same spot, 25 years earlier.... Best to read Jonasson's earlier [Dark Iceland Mysteries](#) starting with *Snowblind* first. Also check out the new Arnaldur Indridason crime novel in New Books below.

✦Kernick, Simon. [The Hanged Man](#) (Random UK \$32). The second installment in The Bone Field series featuring DI Ray Mason and PI Tina Boyd. A house deep in the countryside where the remains of seven unidentified women have just been discovered. A cop ready to risk everything in the hunt for their killers. A man who has seen the murders and is now on the run in fear of his life. So begins the race to track down this witness before the killers do.... We have one Signed 1st left of [The Bone Field](#) (\$32).

Kilmeade, Brian. [Andrew Jackson and the Miracle of New Orleans](#) (Second \$28). Here's a thoughtful read and a gift for a history buff. The War of 1812 saw America threatened on every side. Encouraged by the British, Indian tribes attacked settlers in the West, while the Royal Navy terrorized the coasts. By mid-1814, President James Madison's generals had lost control of the war in the North, losing battles in Canada. Then British troops set the White House ablaze, and a feeling of hopelessness spread across the country. Into this dire situation stepped Major General Andrew Jackson. A native of Tennessee who had witnessed the horrors of the Revolutionary War and Indian attacks, he feared that President Madison's men were overlooking the most im-

portant target of British aggression: New Orleans. If the British conquered New Orleans, they would control the mouth of the Mississippi River, cutting Americans off from that essential trade route and threatening the previous decade's Louisiana Purchase. The new nation's dreams of western expansion would be crushed before they really got off the ground. So Jackson had to convince President Madison and his War Department to take him seriously, even though he wasn't one of the Virginians and New Englanders who dominated the government. He had to assemble a coalition of frontier militiamen, French-speaking Louisianans, Cherokee and Choctaw Indians, freed slaves, and even some pirates. And he had to defeat the most powerful military force in the world—in the confusing terrain of the Louisiana bayous. There is real irony in how this played out... look it up if you don't know.

Koontz, Dean. [The Whispering Room](#) (Bantam \$28). Our June Thriller Club Pick, [The Silent Corner](#) (\$28 Signed), was my favorite read of that month—pair it with this one for an excellent Gift to someone. It introduced a really kickass woman on-the-run called Jane Hawk, a woman driven by grief and love for her lost husband and fear for the small son she's sent into hiding. Jane, now an unstoppable predator, is back, two months early such a hit as she was in June, and the author has sent me an advance copy to read. The sneak peek is: “No time to delay. Do what you were born to do.” These are the words that ring in the mind of mild-mannered, beloved schoolteacher Cora Gundersun—just before she takes her own life, and many others', in a shocking act of carnage. When the disturbing contents of her secret journal are discovered, it seems certain that she must have been insane. But Jane Hawk knows better. In the wake of her husband's inexplicable suicide—and the equally mysterious deaths of scores of other exemplary individuals—Jane picks up the trail of a secret cabal of powerful players who think themselves above the law and beyond punishment.... [The Silent Corner](#) (\$9.99) is now in paperback.

✦Lyle, HB. [Irregular](#) (Hodder \$26.99). With the Unsigned US edition publishing we are selling our last signed UK firsts at the same price. “Lyle's ambitious first novel, a Sherlock Holmes spin-off with a fresh angle, centers on the events leading to the establishment of the British Secret Service. In 1909, Holmes recommends Wiggins, who was the leader of the Baker Street Irregulars as a boy and is now scratching out a living as a debt-collector, to Vernon Kell, the head of a counterespionage unit for the War Office. Wiggins at first refuses to work for Kell, but he changes his mind after his closest friend, a police constable, is gunned down while attempting to apprehend two robbers—and he finds evidence, in the form of a “small brass eight-pointed star, inlaid with red enamel,” that makes him doubt the official theory of the crime. Kell is eager to have Wiggins's assistance in identifying the foreign power he believes funded the criminals. James Bond fans will appreciate that in the end Kell decides to call Wiggins “agent double 0” (“You can call me C,” Kell tells him).”

MacBride, Stuart. [Now We Are Dead](#) (Collins \$35). Detective Chief Inspector Roberta Steel got caught fitting up Jack Wallace—that's why they demoted her and quashed his sentence. Now he's back on the streets and women are being attacked again. Wallace has to be responsible, but if Detective Sergeant Steel goes anywhere near him, his lawyers will get her thrown off the force for good. The Powers That Be won't listen to her, not after what

happened last time. According to them, she's got more than enough ongoing cases to keep her busy. Perhaps she could try solving a few instead of harassing an innocent man? Steel knows Wallace is guilty. And the longer he gets away with it, the more women will die...

✎Marston, Edward. [The Christmas Railway Mystery](#) (Allison \$19.95). December 1860. Headed for the morning shift at the Swindon Locomotive works is an army of men pouring out of terraced houses built by the GWR, a miniature own and planned community that aims to provide for its employees from cradle to grave. Unfortunately, boiler smith Kenneth Rodman is headed for the grave sooner than he'd expected, or he will be once his missing head is found. Colbeck, the Railway Detective, finds his investigation into Rodman's murder mired in contradictions. Was the victim a short-tempered brawler, or a committed Christian and chorister who aimed to better himself? On the trail of Rodman's enemy as the season starts to bite, Colbeck finds little festive cheer in the twists and turns of this peculiar case.

Also by Marston in his Home Front Series: [Under Attack](#) (Allison \$41), the latest Inspector Marmion Mystery.

✎Perry, Anne. [The Christmas Return](#) (Ballantine \$20). The Starred Review: "One day in December 1896, octogenarian Mariah Ellison, the sensitive, fully fleshed-out star of bestseller Perry's exceptional 15th Christmas-themed mystery (after 2016's *A Christmas Message*), receives an unusually heavy Christmas pudding at her house in London. Inside there's a small cannonball. This odd gift reawakens painful memories of 20 years earlier, when Cullen Wesley, whom Mariah secretly loved, died under mysterious circumstances. Cullen was the lawyer defending Owen Durward, who was charged with the murder of 14-year-old Christina Abbott in Haslemere, Surrey. Before Owen's trial, Cullen quit the case; hours later, he died when struck by an ornamental cannonball in a bizarre accident in his study. Owen was eventually acquitted of killing Christina. But now, according to the note from Cullen's grandson Peter that arrives the same day as the pudding, Owen has returned to Haslemere, bent on regaining his reputation, and may be a threat to Cullen's widow, Rowena. Peter believes Mariah is the only person who can save his grandfather's good name, and Mariah decides to journey to Surrey to help. Perry unobtrusively incorporates insights about the true meaning of the season into the engrossing plot."

Ritter, Krysten. [Bonfire](#) (Crown \$27). Advance notice of a debut that makes our **December First Mystery Club Pick**. There are a limited number of Signed copies available. It has been ten years since Abby Williams left home and scrubbed away all visible evidence of her small-town roots. Now working as an environmental lawyer in Chicago, she has a thriving career, a modern apartment, and her pick of meaningless one-night stands. But when a new case takes her back home to Barrens, Indiana, the life Abby painstakingly created begins to crack. Tasked with investigating Optimal Plastics, the town's most high-profile company and economic heart, Abby begins to find strange connections to Barrens' biggest scandal from more than a decade ago, involving the popular Kaycee Mitchell and her closest friends—just before Kaycee disappeared for good. Abby knows the key to solving any case lies in the weak spots, the unanswered questions. But as she tries desperately to find out what really happened to Kaycee, troubling memories begin to

resurface and she begins to doubt her own observations.

Scarrow, Simon. [Day of the Caesars](#) (Headline \$46). 54 AD. The Emperor Claudius is dead. Nero rules. His half-brother Britannicus has also laid claim to the throne. A bloody power struggle is underway. All Prefect Cato and Centurion Macro want is a simple army life, fighting with their brave and loyal men. But Cato has caught the eye of rival factions determined to get him on their side. To survive, Cato must play a cunning game, and enlist the help of the one man in the Empire he can trust: Macro. As the rebel force grows, legionaries and Praetorian Guards are moved like chess pieces by powerful and shadowy figures. A political game has created the ultimate military challenge. Can civil war be averted? The future of the empire is in Cato's hands. No. 16 in this historical series.

Smith, Alexander McCall. [The House of Unexpected Sisters](#) (Knopf \$25.95). No. 18 in the No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency series set in Botswana. Mma Ramotswe and Mma Makutsi are approached by their part-time colleague, Mr. Polopetsi, with a troubling story: Charity Mompoloki, accused of being rude to a valued customer, has been wrongly dismissed from her job at an office furniture store. Never one to let an act of injustice go unanswered, Mma Ramotswe begins to investigate, but soon discovers unexpected information that causes her to reluctantly change her views about the case. And Precious's chance discovery of a hitherto-unknown relative, a nurse named Mingie Ramotswe, initially causes her a great deal of angst. Precious, who's so good at helping others in need, suddenly has serious personal problems, and her gentle husband, Mr. J.L.B. Maketoni, can provide only limited solace. "On the way to the surprising resolution, Smith delivers some important lessons about human frailty and the value of charity."

✎Tyler, LC. [Fire](#) (LittleBrown UK \$44). 1666. London has been destroyed by fire and its citizens are looking for somebody, preferable foreign, to blame. Only the royal Court, with its strong Catholic sympathies, is trying to dampen down the post-conflagration hysteria. Then, inconveniently, a Frenchman admits to having started it together with an accomplice, whom he says he has subsequently killed. John Grey is tasked by Secretary of State, Lord Arlington, with proving conclusively that the self-confessed fire-raiser is lying. And a body has been discovered that appears in every way to match the description of the dead accomplice. Grey's 4th investigation takes him and his companion, Lady Pole, into the dangerous and still smoking ruins of the old City. Danger! I like these a lot.

✎Walters, Minette. [The Last Hours](#) (Allan & Unwin UK \$43). June, 1348: the Black Death enters England through the port of Melcombe in the county of Dorsetshire. Unprepared for the virulence of the disease, and the speed with which it spreads, the people of the county start to die in their thousands. In the estate of Develish, Lady Anne takes control of her people's future—including the lives of two hundred bonded serfs. Strong, compassionate and resourceful, Lady Anne chooses a bastard slave, Thaddeus Thurkell, to act as her steward. Together, they decide to quarantine Develish by bringing the serfs inside the walls. With this sudden overturning of the accepted social order, where serfs exist only to serve their lords, conflicts soon arise. Ignorant of what is happening in the world outside, they wrestle with themselves, with God and with the terrible uncertainty of their futures. Lady Anne's people fear starvation but they fear the pestilence

more? And how safe is anyone in Develish when a dreadful event threatens the uneasy status quo?

GREAT GIFT IDEAS

A special Holiday Issue Booknews is coming in mid-November with ideas for Books as Gifts, more Great Fits, and a large Holiday Reading section written by John Charles and me, Barbara. Meanwhile here are some ideas for you:

No. 1: **A Poisoned Pen Gift Card. In any amount, can be**



emailed anywhere or given as a physical card. Click [HERE](#) to purchase or check your balance if you have been given a card.

No. 2: **Poisoned Pen Merchandise all with our logo**

[Book Bags](#) (\$13.95) – book bags make great gift wrap if you choose books to go inside as gifts

[Caps](#) in black, white, or red (\$14.95)

[Mugs in black](#) (\$8.99) or [Mugs in red](#) \$8.99) or [Mugs in white](#) (\$8.99)

[A Pen](#) (\$19.95), classy in black

[A Pen](#) (\$7.95), ballpoint in red and black

[Tee Shirts](#) in black, red, or white S-XL \$17); XXL (\$18)

We also have single note cards with a painting of the store (\$2.50 each) and in packs of 7 (\$14.95) you can request. Add one or a pack to a pen for a gift

No. 3: **Membership in our Mystery of the Month Club**

(tailored to individual tastes, billed by the month to the donor's credit card). Email pat@poisonedpen.com to sign you or someone up, and for details as well as filling out the member's preferences form.

No. 4: **Membership in any of our Book Clubs** where one carefully selected title ships to all members each month and is charged each month to the donor's credit card. A six months' membership comes at the conclusion with a \$25 Gift Card to spend on anything. Choices are **British Crime; Cozies; Discovery; History** (one paperback or occasional unsigned hardcover per month). **Or First Mysteries; Hardboiled Crime; History/Mystery; Modern First Editions; SciFi/Fantasy; Surprise Me!; Thriller** (one signed hardcover per month). This club gives a gift with a much longer shelf life than say, the Fruit of the Month or Flower of the Month Club. Email sales@poisonedpen.com.

[com](#) to join. And think of giving a membership in a club to yourself as a gift. Who better than you?

WINE AND CRIME

November is a month where we feature cook books. Look for some new recommendations in the upcoming Holiday Issue Booknews. And to go with, here are some wine-and-crime combinations to savor:

Crosby, Ellen. [The Champagne Conspiracy](#) (\$7.99). The 7th Wine Country Mystery. For the 8th, see Event Books. They are all set in Virginia where, you may recall, Thomas Jefferson tried with no luck to grow grapes and create wines back in his day. Crosby unites her love of history and historical landmarks with a fractious family owning a vineyard, equally fractious neighbors into their own agendas, politics, winemaking techniques and lore, and a rocky love story between Lucie Montgomery, the current head of the Montgomery Estate vineyard, and winemaker Quinn Santori. Each title is derived from a specific wine. Book 8 features the Norton grape which all by itself fascinated me.

Dueñas, Maria. [The Vineyard](#) (Atria \$26). Another lush, large historical from the Spanish novelist who brought us one of the most unusual WWII stories, *The Time in Between* (\$17), where a young Spanish dressmaker, abandoned in Morocco by her lover, returns to Madrid as a couturier and assists Allied espionage by hiding messages in dress patterns. But there was a wealth more. As is true here, where Mauro Larrea's career forms the spine of a story that ranges from Mexico City to Havana to Jerez, heart of the sherry trade, during the mid-19th Century. Larrea, a self-made, hard-charging entrepreneur who made a killing in Mexico's silver mines and lost it in a gamble with an American who fell at Bull Run, has to reinvent himself. He gets a boost from his daughter's mother-in-law and eventually gambles the last of his money on a play that wins him an abandoned house and vineyard in Andalusia. There he meets Soledad Montalva, the wife of a London wine merchant, who is bent on protecting her family's legacy. And it goes from there. This is a rich read—take your time.

Easley, Warren. [Blood for Wine](#) (\$15.95; some Signed hardcovers too). The wine in question is Merlot. Lawyer Cal Claxton's old farmhouse sits high in Oregon's Red Hills where some of the finest and most coveted acreage for growing the premier pinot noir grape are located. When the owner and gifted vintner of an up and coming winery is accused of murdering his wife, his property is put in play, and when a blackmail plot is hatched against the owner of adjacent land, it begins to look like a brutal game of Monopoly. Cal agrees to defend the vintner, a good friend, and is pulled reluctantly into the blackmail plot. Can he rid his beloved Hills of this murderous threat or will he become the next target of a vicious, cunning killer?

Hellman, Peter. [In Vino Duplicitas](#) (The Experiment \$25.95). This remarkable true story makes a great gift for any wine lover as well as a satisfying read for the true crime buff. At stake is the rise and fall of a wine forger extraordinaire. Rudy Kurniawan, an unknown twentysomething from Indonesia, was blessed with two gifts that opened doors: a virtuoso palate for wine tasting, and access to a seemingly limitless (if mysterious) supply of the world's most coveted wines. He parlayed his gifts into the exclusive world of billionaires and ultra-fine wines where, unsurprisingly, no one wants to lose face. Thus he conned his targets unchecked. What felled him? In April 2008, his lots of Domaine

Ponsot Clos Saint-Denis red burgundy—dating as far back as 1945—were abruptly pulled from auction. Read why. Rudy's downfall reminds me of a "rare" book dealer who sold many an autographed first printing to collectors until he made the error of putting a Signed copy of *A Conspiracy of Dunces* up for sale (it was a posthumous publication). If you are greedy and a crook, you have to do your homework, no?

And to read with it, a Peter Mayle mystery: [The Vintage Caper](#) (\$15.99). The voice of Provence presents a wonderful wine caper (with culinary treats too). It begins high above Los Angeles with a world-class heist at the impressive wine cellar of lawyer Danny Roth. Enter Sam Levitt, former lawyer and wine connoisseur, who follows leads to Bordeaux and Provence. The unraveling of the ingenious crime is threaded through with Mayle's seductive renderings of France's sensory delights—from a fine Lynch-Bages to the bouillabaisse of Marseille. I love a good caper as much as a murder mystery.

Hubbard, Janet. [Burgundy: Twisted Roots](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95) completes a trilogy set in three of France's premier wine regions. Along with solving three murder investigations with associated crimes, the trilogy follows the relationship between Max, daughter of a NYPD honcho and one of its cops herself, and Olivier Chaumont, a French *magistrat*. "Steeped in wine lore, this [third in the series] entry has an authentic feel for the wines and people of Burgundy. Great meals and great wines accompany the mystery. Series fans will thoroughly enjoy its elegant, satisfying finish." —*Publishers Weekly*. "Hubbard expounds on the ways winemaking and drinking are deeply embedded in French culture while her charming protagonists solve murders—in this case, a complex puzzle that touches on the threat of terrorism lurking throughout France today." —*Kirkus Reviews*. Whether you read crime or romance or just like wine and time spent in France, order [Champagne](#) (\$14.95), #1; [Bordeaux, The Bitter Finish](#) (\$14.95), #2; and [Burgundy](#) for a personal treat or an elegant gift.

Walker, Martin. [Bruno, Chief of Police](#) (\$16). Our bestselling paperback series begins here. Each of the Brunos celebrates the wine and cuisine of France's Périgord region as well as interesting history. Perfect reading for teens on up whether they like mysteries or not. [Order a set](#) for yourself or as a gift.

BRITISH LIBRARY CRIME CLASSICS AND OTHERS TOO

Sims, George. [The Last Best Friend](#) (Poisoned Pen \$12.95). "First published in 1967, this entry in the British Library Classic Thrillers series does a splendid job of evoking London in the mid-'60s, both swinging and decidedly criminal. When art dealer Ned Balfour's Corsican holiday is interrupted by a telegram informing him of the apparent suicide of his friend, fellow art dealer Sam Weiss, he returns home to London. Ned is convinced that Sam, a Dachau survivor, couldn't possibly have jumped voluntarily off a tall building. A part-time writer and full-time collector of rare books, Sims (1923–1999) takes the reader on a journey to a long-gone world where entire streets of London were devoted to the trade of rare books—items valuable enough to attract the most nefarious of mobsters. Sims captures the mood of these places with an insider's knowledge, while keeping the brief novel moving with a plot that travels all over London, a city

at both the end and beginning of an era." —*PW*

Sims, George. [The End of the Web](#) (\$12.95). Leo Selver, a middle-aged antiques dealer, is stunned when the beautiful and desirable Judy Latimer shows an interest in him. Soon they are lying in each other's arms, unaware that this embrace will be their last. Popular opinion suggests that Leo murdered the girl, a theory Leo's wife—well aware of her husband's infidelities—refuses to accept. Ed Buchanan, a former policeman who has known the Selters since childhood, agrees to clear Leo's name. Selver and his fellow antique dealers had uncovered a secret and it is up to Ed to find the person willing to kill in order to protect it. This exhilarating and innovative thriller was first published in 1976.

Other Classics Back in Print

Gardner, Erle Stanley. [Turn on the Heat](#) (Titan \$9.95). From the publisher: At the time of his death, Gardner, author of the Perry Mason series, was the best-selling American author of all time, with hundreds of millions of books in print. Among those books were the 29 cases of the brash, irresistible detective team of Bertha Cool and Donald Lam. Last year, Hard Case Crime brought out the first new Cool and Lam novel in decades, [The Knife Slipped](#) (\$9.95), lost for 77 years after Gardner's publisher refused it. Now, we're bringing you the book Gardner wrote to replace it, often considered the best in the series:

Gilbert, Anthony. [Sequel to Murder](#) (Crippen Lost Classics \$29 or \$19 paperback). Gilbert was the pen name of Lucy Beatrice Malleon, an English crime writer born in 1899. She also wrote non-genre fiction as Anne Meredith. As Gilbert her Arthur Crook mysteries numbered at least 51 plus 19 other crime novels. That's all I know right now other than there is a Gilbert story in the British Library Crime Classic anthology [Capital Crimes: London Mysteries](#) (\$12.95) edited by Martin Edwards.

Hoch, Ed. [All But Impossible: The Impossible Crimes of Dr. Sam Hawthorne](#) (\$19). Northmont, Connecticut, seemed to be haunted by ghosts, ghouls, and impossibilities, until Dr. Sam Hawthorne explained the seemingly impossible. *All But Impossible* contains fifteen of Dr. Sam's most extraordinary cases solved between 1936 and 1940, including a newly murdered corpse in a sealed tomb in a cemetery, a jug that turns water into wine; a room that appears and vanishes; and 12 other ingenious problems for Dr. Sam. This volume includes a tribute to Edward Hoch by Crippen & Landru publisher (and friend of Hoch,) Douglas Greene.

Morrell, David. [First Blood](#) (Grand Central \$15.99). This remarkable novel published first in 1972 pits a young Vietnam veteran against a small-town cop who doesn't know whom he's dealing with—or how far John Rambo will take him into a life-and-death struggle through the woods, hills, and caves of rural Kentucky. Millions have seen the Rambo movies, but those who haven't read the book are in for a treat.

Reeve, Arthur B. [The Adventuress \(The Detective Club\)](#) (Harper \$15.99). The success of the British Library Crime Classics has prompted Harper Collins to open its vaults and reissue some of its classics. All I know about this one is: Marking 100 years since publication, *The Adventuress* was the first full-length novel to feature 'scientific detective' Craig Kennedy, who was dubbed "the American Sherlock Holmes" and the first fictional detective to use forensic science.

TWO NEW URBAN NOIR COLLECTIONS

Mallo, Ernesto. [Buenos Aires Noir](#) (Akashic \$15.95) and McFetridge, John, [Montreal Noir](#) (\$15.95). As ever these anthologies present an opportunity to read authors unfamiliar to most of us and to explore fascinating cities.

OUR NOVEMBER LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

✚Airth, Rennie [The Death of Kings](#) (\$16). On a hot summer day in 1938, a beautiful actress is murdered on the grand Kent estate of Sir Jack Jessup, close friend of the Prince of Wales. The arrest of an ex-convict and his subsequent confession swiftly bring the case to a close, but in 1949, the reappearance of a jade necklace raises questions about the murder. Was the man convicted and executed the decade before truly guilty? Though happily retired from the police force, John Madden is persuaded to investigate the case afresh. In a story of honor and justice that takes Madden through the idyllic English countryside, post-war streets of London, and into the criminal underworld of the Chinese Triads in a grand novel perfect for fans of Philip Kerr. This brilliant series began with one of our all-time favorite and bestselling First Mystery Club Picks, [River of Darkness](#) (\$16). I urge you to [order them all](#) and binge your way through some very fraught years for the British.

Armstrong, Kelli. [A Darkness Absolute](#) (\$15.99). In Armstrong's gripping follow-up to 2016's [City of the Lost](#) (\$15.99), Detective Casey Duncan and Deputy Will Anders find themselves stranded during a snow storm while trying to track down a cabin-fever stricken member of Rockton, an isolated, off-the-grid town deep in the Canadian Yukon. Forced to shelter overnight in a cave, Duncan and Anders make a horrific discovery—a woman thought killed has instead been held captive in a pit for more than a year. Further exploration of the cave system leads them to discover the bodies of two women, with signs pointing to the same perpetrator. Duncan and Sheriff Dalton have reason to believe that this time the threat comes from outside the borders of Rockton, which serves its residents as a haven. But the investigators can't escape the fact that members of their own tiny community have dark—and potentially dangerous—secrets hidden in their pasts. The unusual setup and isolated location increase tension in a fast-paced thriller with a nifty landscape not often seen in crime fiction. Plus all the characters are fascinating.

Brookmyre, Christopher. [Black Widow](#) (\$16). This 7th Jack Parlabane case won the 2016 McIlvanney Prize for Scottish crime book of the year with its story of a woman who thought she was too late for love, the man who falls for her ambition, and the secret selves that are poised, at any moment, to end everything. Diana Jager is clever, strong, and successful, a skilled surgeon and fierce campaigner via her blog about sexism in medicine. Yet it takes only hours for her life to crumble when her personal details are released on the internet as revenge for her writing. Then she meets Peter. He is kind, generous, and knows nothing about her past—the second chance she's been waiting for. Within six months, they are married. Within six more, Peter is dead in a road accident, a nightmare end to their fairy-tale romance. But Peter's sister Lucy doesn't believe in fairy tales, and tasks rogue reporter Jack Parlabane with discovering the dark truth behind the woman the media is calling the Black Widow. Still on the mend from a turbulent divorce, Jack's investigation into matters of the heart takes him to hidden places no one should ever have to go. [Order all the Jack thrillers](#).

✚Crombie, Deborah. [Garden of Lamentations](#) (\$14.99). Can it really be #17 in the Duncan Kincaid/Gemma James series? Amazingly, yes. And again it's set in London where both coppers work and live (although Deb is taking them to the Cotswolds next book for a change up). This story also finalizes a story arc about police corruption which has embroiled Kincaid in many ways as he and Gemma each pursue a different investigation. Hers begins in a private garden in Notting Hill. I recommend you [read the whole series](#) to get to #17 if you haven't yet had the pleasure. Among its joys are tours of various English landscapes and cultures.

✚Duncan, Francis. [Murder for Christmas](#) (Sourcebooks \$14.99). Our British Crime Club Pick for November is a reissue no doubt inspired by the success of our British Library Crime Classics. *LJ* writes, "The release of this holiday tale marks the relaunching of British golden age mystery author Duncan's 1950s "Mordecai Tremaine" series. Tremaine has been invited to spend Christmas at a country estate in the little English village of Sherbroome, but the holiday brings a rather ghastly surprise as the house guests awake to a dead Father Christmas under the tree. In his retirement, the former tobacconist with a penchant for romance novels has taken up the hobby of amateur investigator and become friendly with Scotland Yard, so, of course, he surreptitiously begins questioning the guests and looking for clues to the murderer. Sporting his pince-nez and making astute observations, Tremaine adeptly solves the mystery. Fans of Agatha Christie and Dorothy L. Sayers will enjoy Tremaine's exploits. Pair with Mavis Doriell Hay's [The Santa Klaus Murder](#) (\$1295) for a double shot of golden age yuletide mystery."

✚Finch, Charles. [The Inheritance](#) (\$15.99). The 10th Charles Lenox Victorian mystery opens in 1877. Retired MP Lenox has received a cryptic plea for help from an old Harrow schoolmate, Gerald Leigh, his only friend there, but when he looks into the matter he finds that his friend has suddenly disappeared. As boys they had shared a secret: a bequest from a mysterious benefactor had smoothed Leigh's way into the world after the death of his father. Lenox, already with a passionate interest in detective work, made discovering the benefactor's identity his first case—but was never able to solve it. Now, years later, Leigh has been the recipient of a second, even more generous bequest. Is it from the same anonymous sponsor? Or is the money poisoned by ulterior motives? Leigh's disappearance suggests the latter, and as Lenox tries, desperately, to save his friend's life, he's forced into confrontations with both the most dangerous of east end gangs and the far more genteel denizens of the illustrious Royal Society... Not the best Lenox, but IMHO any Lenox is a pleasure to read for its elegant prose. [Order them all](#) for relaxing holiday break reading.

Green, Layton. [Written in Blood](#) (Seventh Street \$15.95). This interesting blend of police procedural, serial killer hunt, and literary themed clues is our **November Fresh Fiction** (soon to be renamed The Discovery Club) **Pick**. After a decade on homicide at the Atlanta PD, famed cop Joe Everson suffered a breakdown that derailed his stellar career. So he's come home to Creekville, NC, a bohemian artsy community near university center Chapel Hill, to reboot. Nicknamed "Preach" for his years as a prison chaplain before he turned cop, Joe is quickly tested with the first murder the community has suffered in years. The victim is the owner of a local bookstore and the crime has been committed to mirror the murder of the pawnbroker in Dostoevsky's *Crime and*

Punishment. Is this coincidence or is some modern-day Raskolnikov at work? Law student and ardent bibliophile Ariana Hale provides a guide to the local literary community where, as they question members, a second body is found. This crime scene has been made to resemble Poe's *Murders at the Rue Morgue*. And then.... OK, I'm a sucker for bibliomysteries, I admit it.

Hansen, Ron. [The Kid](#) (\$16). Patrick and I are both fans of Hansen. Here is his "perfectly compelling and fast-paced story" (*San Francisco Chronicle*) about an iconic American criminal of the old West: legendary outlaw, Billy the Kid. Born Henry McCarty, the Kid was a diminutive, charming, blond-haired young man who, growing up in New York, Kansas, and later New Mexico, demonstrated a precocious dexterity at firing six-shooters with either hand—a skill that both got him into and out of trouble and that turned him into an American legend of the old West. His spree of crimes and murders has been immortalized in dime westerns, novels, and movies. But the whole story of his short, epically violent life has never been told as it has been here.

✎James, PD. [Mistletoe Murder and Other Stories](#) (\$15). "These hitherto unpublished stories grant us the boon of fresh material from James. "A Christmas present to be treasured....Rekindles the pleasure of experiencing [James's] imagination, her intellect and her integrity." —*Richmond Times-Dispatch*

✎Mackintosh, Clare. [I See You](#) (\$16). Every morning and evening, Londoner Zoe Walker takes the same route to the train station, waits at a certain place on the platform, finds her favorite spot in the car. Like other commuters, her routine is predictable. On her way home one night she glances through the paper and is shocked to see a grainy photo of her own face in an advertisement for a website called FindTheOne.com. Other women begin appearing in the same ad, a different one every day. That's the premise. Where it goes is less surprising than who the placers of the ad turn out to be...and why. I like Mackintosh's summation of Zoe too; unusual in his genre. Mackintosh's first bestseller is [I Let You Go](#) (\$16).

Smith, April. [Home Sweet Home](#) (\$16). This powerful book, laced with irony, follows a family that relocates from post-war Manhattan in 1950 to a more honest life west and ends up on a cattle ranch in South Dakota. The shocking opener—the brutal murder of the Kuseks' son Lance and injuries to his family on Christmas Eve, 1985—brings his sister Jo to the Rapid City hospital where she ponders who could have committed the deed and whether the family's history might have engendered it. Could it somehow be connected to her family's ranch? Her father's political career? Her mother's brief time as a member of the Communist party? Her parents' trial to clear their reputations? Could it be someone she knows? Smith's novel weaves smoothly between Jo in the hospital nervously waiting for answers and her family's epic backstory. It is a moving tale of the Kuseks' trials and triumphs as Calvin Kusek becomes a rancher, politician, and lawyer, but it underscores the darkness of the McCarthy era and the persecution the Kusek family endures for their liberal beliefs. The film *Trumbo* showed you Hollywood in this era; Smith moves it to the Midwest.

✎Tyler, LC. [A Cruel Necessity](#) (\$14.95). The year is 1657, Oliver Cromwell is in power in England, and joy has been outlawed. A young lawyer with a taste for beer and pretty women, John Grey finds pleasures enough, even in this backwater Essex town, but

he'd be wise to keep his amusement to himself: A Royalist spy has been found dead in a local ditch, and Cromwell's agents make it clear this is nothing to laugh about. This is the first John Grey. For the most recent, see [Signed Books](#) above.

Whittle, Tina. [Reckoning and Ruin](#) (\$15.95). I have just edited *Necessary Ends*, Whittle's 6th Tai Randolph scheduled for April 2016 and realize to my horror that I never ordered or reviewed the paperback of this, the fifth, and a true Southern Gothic! "What makes this such an outstanding read is the unique relationship between Tai and Trey. Trey's struggle to reorganize his life in a manner his brain can accept is as fascinating as the interactions between these two troubled individuals. Tai prides herself on her independence, and her immense control issues have her battling with Trey as much as she empathizes with him. The year of loving Trey has made Tai all too aware of his flaws, and frustration often has her emotionally striking out to the point of no return. They are stronger together than apart though, and this unique mystery highlights fascinating characters and the Low Country Savannah setting. The result is a compelling and outstanding mystery series." Best to [read this compelling series in order](#) and trace both Trey's injuries and coping skills and the progress of the unorthodox Tai/Trey relationship. The first, *The Dangerous Edge of Things*, published to all Starred Reviews.

SOME NEW BOOKS FOR NOVEMBER

Abarbanell, Stephan. [Displaced](#) (Harper \$26.99). This debut takes you to Palestine, 1946, where elderly author Elias Lind disbelieves reports that his scientist brother Raphael died in a Nazi concentration camp. Too frail to search for himself, he puts pressure on a contact in the Jewish resistance to send someone to Europe in quest of Raphael. Lilya did not join the resistance to spend her time on what she thinks is a fruitless chase across still-war-ravaged Europe rather than helping to form a Jewish state, but her orders are clear. Traveling as a member of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, a major aid organization for Jewish survivors, she gets going. From Whitehall to Munich and Berlin, through camps of displaced persons where the British quell immigration to Palestine, in time she learns she isn't the only one searching for Raphael. In fact, someone is mirroring her every move. This is a scenario we don't often meet and one crafted by a German author now living in Potsdam.

Backman, Fredrik. [The Deal of a Lifetime](#) (Atria \$18). This novella begins with a father telling a story to his son on Christmas Eve. But this isn't your typical Christmas story. The father admits to his son that he's taken a life but he won't say whose—not yet. One week earlier, in a hospital late at night, the man met a five-year-old girl with cancer. She's a smart kid—smart enough to know that she won't beat cancer by drawing with crayons all day, but it seems to make the adults happy, so she keeps doing it. As the man tells his son about this plucky little girl, he slowly reveals more about himself: while he may be a successful businessman, idolized by the media and his peers, he knows he failed as a parent. Overwhelmed by the responsibility of fatherhood, he took the easy way out and left his wife and little boy twenty years ago to pursue professional success. Now he is left wondering if it's too late to forge a relationship with his son, who seems to be his opposite in every way—prizing happiness over money, surrounded by loving friends in a cozy town where he feels right at home. Face to face with the idea that something is missing, the

man is given the unexpected chance to do something selfless that could change the destiny of the little girl in the hospital bed. But before he can make the deal of a lifetime, he needs to find out what his own life has actually been worth in the eyes of his son. And so, he seeks him out and tells him this story....

Banville, John. [Mrs. Osmond](#) (Knopf \$26.95). Banville's sequel to Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady* is a delightful *tour de force* that channels James with ease. The rich and measured prose style is quintessentially Jamesian: the long interior monologues perfectly capture the hum of human consciousness, and the characters are alive with psychological nuance. Readers join James's heroine where his classic left her; Banville's Isabel Archer Osmond is now a sedate, proper matron, who bitterly rues her marriage to deceitful Gilbert Osmond. She retains her high-minded principles, however, and has determined to live with her guilt at having ignored the advice she had received against marrying him. Gilbert is a cruel, arrogant man who condescends to Isabel in cutting language, lives off her fortune, and demands her complete loyalty. Having defied Gilbert when he forbade her to leave their home in Rome to hurry to her dying cousin's bedside in England, Isabel feels the first stirrings of freedom. Almost capriciously, she withdraws a large amount of money from the bank in the hopes of having it free to spend as she sees fit without the interference of her husband and his malign mistress, Madame Merle. After Isabel's redoubtable lady's maid, Staines, discloses some astonishing news, the narrative takes a suspenseful turn. Some of the other characters from *The Portrait of a Lady*—including Isabel's aunt, Mrs. Touchett; Pansy Osmond, Gilbert's daughter; and American journalist Henrietta Stackpole—appear again. It is clear the freedom and social clout that money bestows in the 19th-century settings of London, Paris, Florence, and Rome, all described in lush detail. As in James' novel, Banville incorporates a wonderful sense of irony; the result is a novel that succeeds both as an unofficial sequel and as a bold, thoroughly satisfying standalone.

Beagle, Peter. [Overneath](#) (Tachyon \$15.95). With sharp, lean elegance, Beagle effortlessly chronicles the lives of unicorns, trolls, magicians, and adventurers in 13 poignant stories, many of which caution readers about magic gone awry and temperamental creatures. Cultivating his extensive knowledge of mythical beasts, Beagle travels the world in "The Story of Kao Yu," in which a *chi-lin* (Chinese unicorn) passes the final judgment, and in "My Son Heydari and the Karkadann," in which a Persian teenager nurses a dangerous karkadann. Beagle also recalls the themes of his classic novel [The Last Unicorn](#) (\$16) with stories about misplaced love and misfortune around summoning a demon. "This enchanting collection employs simple humor and affectionate sarcasm and will enchant any reader who still believes in magic."

Ben-David, Mishka. [Forbidden Love in St Petersburg](#) (Overlook \$16.95). A former Mossad officer writes convincingly of spycraft and of torn loyalties. Yogev Ben-Ari was sent to the Russian city ostensibly to set up business connections. The life of the spy is necessarily a lonely one and so it is for Yogev until he meets the mysterious Anna. Their passionate affair does not fit the Mossad plan—the agency hatches a dark scheme to drive the two lovers apart, which puts the now anguished Yogev at an impossible crossroads, pitted against his own agency. We've seen this sce-

nario in American and British spy thrillers; Ben-David gives us a new point of view and again, a timely one as Russian intrigues are spotlighted.

Blakeslee, Nate. [American Wolf: A True Story of Survival and Obsession in the West](#) (Crown, \$28) The Indie Next Pick finds Blakeslee "uncovers the true legacy of the American wolf's survival after its reintroduction into the Rockies after nearly becoming extinct in the 1920s. The book focuses on renowned wolf Six-O, who's unlike any female wolf that Yellowstone park ranger Rick McIntyre has ever seen. Many of Six-O's survival challenges are directly linked to the larger issue between those against the reintroduction of wolves and those who see wolves as an integral part of our ecosystem. Nate Blakeslee's *American Wolf* is an essential read for anyone interested in a fascinating piece of American history and learning more about an important issue that continues to plague the West."

Bolton, Guy. [The Pictures](#) (Oneworld \$24.99). Bolton's compelling and evocative hardboiled noir, set in 1939 Hollywood, salutes the best of Chandler and Ellroy. *The Pictures*, is a hardboiled delight: a fascinating, twisted puzzler with well-developed characters. It's 1939, and Los Angeles police detective Jonathan Craine is a Hollywood studio "fixer"—covering up domestic abuses, back-alley abortions, illicit affairs and drunken car crashes that might tarnish the reputations of movie stars and executives employed by the city's biggest and most profitable industry: the movie studios. After months away from his post following the suicide of his actress wife (spun as a "dreadful accident"), Craine is immediately embroiled in two crimes that threaten the production of *The Wizard of Oz*. Called to the scene of a young woman's brutal murder, Craine's kneejerk reaction is to downplay the savage violence at the scene and instead reframe the crime as a botched robbery. The following morning, MGM studio head Louis B. Mayer summons him to help cover up the suicide of Herbert Stanley, a producer and husband to one of the studio's biggest stars, Gale Goodwin. When Craine is paired with rookie detective Patrick O'Neill (who has his own issues as the son of a famous police officer), Craine begins to awaken from his grief and complacency. Instead of brushing aside inconsistencies in the two cases, the two detectives decide to investigate the seedy links between the deaths. *The Pictures* is a compelling and dazzling debut for fans of Raymond Chandler and James Ellroy. Bolton's tightly paced mystery vividly re-creates 1930s Hollywood and is enriched with complicated, fascinating and flawed characters. —Kevin Howell

Bond, Mike. [The Tibetan Cross](#) (Macmillan \$15.99). An American Himalayan climber in 1973 stumbles on a shipment of backpack nuclear weapons headed into Tibet for use against China. Pursued by spy agencies and other killers across Asia, North Africa, Europe and the United States, he is captured then rescued by a beautiful woman with whom he forms a deadly liaison. They escape, are captured and escape again, death always at their heels.

Brown, Rita Mae. [Crazy Like a Fox](#) (Random \$27). It's fall, the hunting season for real around Charlottesville, Virginia, Brown's longtime home. I love this series; it is more real than the Sneaky Pie mysteries. As the calendar turns, the crisp October winds bode well for this year's season. But before the bugle sounds, Sister Jane takes a scenic drive up the Blue Ridge Mountains for a board meeting at the Museum of Hounds and Hunting. Brim-

ming with colorful stories and mementos from hunts of yore, the mansion is plunged into mystery when a venerable hunting horn is stolen right out of its case. The only clue, on a left-behind cell phone, is what seems to be a “selfie” video of the horn’s original owner, Wesley Carruthers—deceased since 1954. Odder still, Wesley’s body was never found. When Sister makes a discovery that may explain his unsolved disappearance, it leads her back to the Jefferson Hunt at midcentury, with her faithful hounds at her side. But as the clues quickly mount, Sister is no longer sure if she’s pursuing a priceless artifact, a thief, Wesley’s killer... or a ghost. The only certainty is that someone wants to put Sister off the chase—perhaps permanently. 10th in series.

Bruen, Ken. [The Ghosts of Galway](#) (Grove \$25). “Jack Taylor, Bruen’s perennially tortured protagonist, suffers new levels of angst in his 13th noir outing. Recovering from a failed suicide attempt after a mistaken diagnosis of terminal cancer, Taylor is trying to live the quiet life in Galway, working as a security guard and looking after his dog, Storm. Trouble, however, has a way of finding him. When his boss offers him a job searching for The Red Book, a lost heretical text apparently in the possession of an ex-priest hiding in Ireland, Taylor initially scoffs at the “Dan Brown lite” scheme, but he needs the money and ultimately accepts. Meanwhile, a series of slain animals are found in Galway’s Eyre Square accompanied by cryptic notes left by an ultra-right-wing group that aims to return to an earlier era of conservative religion. When Emily, the chameleon-like sociopath who’s flitted in and out of Jack’s life, turns out to be mixed up in the plot, things get really nasty. Bruen is in top form, and, although everything Taylor touches seems to turn to ash, he embodies such humanity that readers will be unable to resist rooting for him.”—Starred Review. New in paperback, Taylor #12: [The Emerald Lie](#) (\$16), wherein an Eton and Cambridge graduate who becomes murderous over split infinitives, improper punctuation, and any other sign of bad grammar.

Canadeo, Anne. [Knit to Kill](#) (Kensington \$25). As Black Sheep Knitters member Lucy Binger prepares to tie the knot, the tight group decides it needs a weekend to unwind before the big day. Suzanne Cavanaugh has just the spot—her friend Amy lives in a luxury New England community on Osprey Island, renowned for its famous cliff walk and spectacular ocean views, and she would be happy to host the knitters. But shortly after their arrival, the body of a prominent resident of Osprey Shores is discovered on the rocky coastline below the cliffs and evidence suggests his fatal misstep was no accident. Although there are suspects aplenty, the investigation focuses on Amy’s husband. So the knitters step in to untangle the clues. 9th in [a cozy series](#).

Clark, Mary Higgins. [Every Breath You Take](#) (SimonSchuster \$26.99). Clark and Alafair Burke are back with their fourth book in the Under Suspicion series. It follows television producer’s Laurie Moran investigation of the unsolved Met Gala murder—in which a wealthy widow was pushed to her death from the famous museum’s rooftop. Alafair signs her own new book here on January 25 so if you come you can ask her to sign this too.

☒Ellicott, Jessica. [Murder in an English Village](#) (Kensington \$25). I am not as enamored of this as the reviewer I quote, but it is indeed a cozy version of the world that Charles Todd portrays in the Ian Rutledge mysteries, one shaped, indeed twisted out of the old order by the Great War. If one were to update it to 1939 it has

much of the feel of *Home Front*, a terrific TV series set in a village near Chester which inexplicably has been cancelled by ITV before a third season. Grrr. Google it and then sign the petition in support. But here’s the review for Ellicott: “Set in 1920, Ellicott’s spectacular series launch reunites two old schoolmates in the U.K. When forthright American Beryl Helliwell, who attributes her youthful appearance to a “love of quality gin and an adamant refusal to bear children to any of her ex-husbands,” spots the ad for a lodger placed by her friend Edwina Davenport, a proper Englishwoman who has run short of funds, she can’t believe her luck. Retiring to the quiet hamlet of Walmsley Parva is just the reprieve Beryl wants from her madcap life, as well as from Prohibition back in America. Beryl surprises Edwina by crashing her car into one of the stone pillars flanking the drive to Edwina’s house. Soon after Beryl settles in, someone attacks Edwina while she’s walking her dog in her garden. After the friends discover a young woman’s body in a field, they take it upon themselves to fill the gaps left by the local constable’s inadequate investigation. Reflections on the changes in post-WWI society lend substance to this light mystery. Ellicott is a pen name of Jessica Estevao, author of the Change of Fortune series.”

Ernst, Kathleen. [Mining for Justice](#) (Midnight Ink \$15.99). I read mysteries in part to learn things and this 8th in the Chloe Ellefson series by Ernst set in both 1983 and 1827-38 Mineral Point, Wisconsin, is a real winner both for story and for history—which is why it’s our **November History/Mystery Paperback Pick**. Chloe is the curator of collections for Old World Wisconsin. Her main squeeze is Roelke McKenna, a police officer for the Village of Eagle. Chloe is excited to be on temporary assignment at Pendarvis, an historic site in charming Mineral Point where Cornish immigrants came for mining. While exploring an old Cornish cottage, Roelke discovers long-buried human remains in the root cellar. Chloe reluctantly agrees to mine the community’s historical records in the hope of shedding light on his investigation. And she soon finds herself in the center of a heated controversy that threatens to close down Pendarvis, a controversy that turns deadly in the present (ie, 1983). Ernst is an adept storyteller whose pace and nuance characters fit both reconstructing the past and solving crimes. Wisconsin may not have the glamour of some historic sites, but it’s well worth an exploration under Ernst’s guidance. Not all of the early Chloes are in print.

Fedarczyk, Jan. [Fidelity](#) (\$16). This was a 2016 Thriller Club pick in hardcover—and now could not be more timely! Fedarczyk, former assistant director in charge of the FBI’s New York office, combines an insider’s sense of authenticity with a singular attention to detail in this debut novel. Russian double agents are disappearing, and it’s obvious there’s a mole in the CIA, so the agency takes its problem to the FBI’s counterintelligence unit to help find the leak. That’s where FBI Special Agent Kay Malloy comes in. Attached to the Baltimore field office, where she mostly works drug gangs with Torres, her partner of 18 months, Malloy lets a drug kingpin slip through her hands only to end up in a gunfight with him later. Afterward, she’s transferred to the New York counterintelligence unit, supervised by a woman known to most as “Frowny.” Susan Jeffries, legendary head of the branch, sets up a team to look into the CIA’s mole, and before too long, Black Bear, as the operation’s known, begins to bear fruit. But while the Black Bear project attempts to recruit a Russian operative in order to identify the mole inside the CIA, the

Russians are themselves targeting Malloy through her brother, Christopher. Fedarcyk keeps all the right balls in the air while painting an interesting and accurate portrayal of how the FBI and the world of counterintelligence work.

Fridlund, Emily. [History of Wolves](#) (\$16). Teenage Linda lives with her parents in the austere woods of northern Minnesota, where their nearly abandoned commune stands as a last vestige of a lost counter-culture world. Isolated at home and an outsider at school, Linda is drawn to the enigmatic Lily and new history teacher Mr. Grierson. When Mr. Grierson is faced with child pornography charges, his arrest deeply affects Linda as she wrestles with her own fledgling desires and craving to belong. And then the young Gardner family moves in across the lake and Linda finds herself welcomed into their home as a babysitter for their little boy. But with this new sense of belonging comes expectations and secrets she doesn't understand and, over the course of a summer, Linda makes a set of choices that reverberate throughout her life. "History of Wolves isn't a typical thriller any more than it's a typical coming-of-age novel; Fridlund does a remarkable job transcending genres without sacrificing the suspense that builds steadily in the book . . . [it] is as beautiful and as icy as the Minnesota woods where it's set, and with her first book, Fridlund has already proven herself to be a singular talent." — NPR

Goldstone, Lawrence. [Deadly Cure](#) (Norton \$25.95). As often happens when a social issue excites attention, authors draw upon it in crafting stories. Goldstone's latest historical mystery, set in New York City in 1899, is akin to the new Lee Child, *The Midnight Line* (see Signed Books) in that each is dealing with opioid supply and addiction. For Goldstone's era here the underbelly of the Big Pharma of its day is patent medicines. The more dangerous because there was no oversight in their formulations and no understanding of the potential risks of taking what were touted as aids to better health. The story begins with young Dr. Noah Whiteside is flattered when a society matron neighbor appears at his door begging him to attend her five-year-old son. The boy is suffering abdominal pain but his symptoms reveal to Noah some kind of drugging. He administers two small drops of laudanum to calm the boy and let him rest, then goes to attend other patients. When he returns the boy is sharply worse, and dies. His influential family—the father is one of the heroes who fought with Admiral Dewey at Manila—blame Noah. Desperate to clear his name and save his career, Noah begins to investigate and discovers the Anschutz's regular family doctor might be connected to a patent-medicine-peddling cabal. But perhaps that's too simple a solution.... This is an action book blending fact with compelling fiction.

As does Goldstone's [The Astronomer](#) (\$15.95) where "he has produced a thinking person's suspense novel, a moral thriller whose plot is propelled along by ideas as much as by action. The novel's hairpin turns lead us through the history of astronomy, the politics of religion, questions of loyalty and faith, and the grubby labyrinth that was sixteenth-century Paris." —Ross King

Greenwood, Kerry. [Queen of the Flowers](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95). Australia, 1928. The circus is in town, and St Kilda is having its first Flower Festival, which includes a parade. Phryne Fisher, the flamboyant flapper and amateur sleuth, has been chosen to be Queen of the Flowers for this year's Flower Parade. But, Phryne

can't seem to do anything without landing herself in the midst of a mystery.... A reissue with a tie-in cover to TV's *Miss Fisher Mysteries*.

Hayes-McCoy, Felicity. [The Library at the Edge of the World](#) (Harper Perennial, \$15.99). "Much like a cup of tea and a cozy afghan, this first in the Finfarron Peninsula series provides a respite from regular life. Prepare to be transported to Ireland with Hannah Casey as she moves back to her hometown after a wrenching divorce and becomes the local librarian, driving her mobile library van between villages of Ireland's West Coast. Hannah's daily challenges include dealing with an abrasive mother, an infuriating building contractor, and noise in the library. A series of events leads Hannah to help rally the Lissbeg community to come together, changing the town, the library, and Hannah.

Havill, Steven. [Easy Errors](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99). The simultaneous paperback release of a new Las Posadas Mystery. See Event Books for the hardcover to be signed November 29 here.

Higashino, Keigo. [A Midsummer's Equation](#) (\$15.99). Rob is a serious fan of the intricate mysteries crafted by this Japanese bestseller. Manabu Yukawa, the physicist known as "Detective Galileo," has traveled to Hari Cove, a once-popular summer resort town that has fallen on hard times, to speak at a conference on a planned underwater mining operation, which has sharply divided the town. The night after the tense panel discussion, one of the resort's guests is found dead on the seashore at the base of the local cliffs. The local police at first believe it was a simple accident—that he wandered over the edge while walking on unfamiliar territory in the dark. But when they discover that the victim was a former policeman and that the cause of death was carbon monoxide poisoning, they begin to suspect he was murdered, and his body tossed off the cliff to misdirect the police. As the police try to uncover where Tsukahara was killed and why, Yukawa finds himself enmeshed in yet another confounding case of murder.

Hoffman, Alice. [The Rules of Magic](#) (Scribner \$27.99). The Owens women aren't like other women. Descendants of a highly unusual family, they have certain powers and gifts, but they also struggle against a longstanding family curse. Despite Susanna Owens's best efforts to raise her three children in a non-magical, non-accursed fashion, one summer spent with their great-aunt Isabelle in Massachusetts will change everything. Like many fairy tales, this story begins with "Once upon a time," and the narration does have a timeless quality. Wild birds fly into Franny's hand; daffodils bloom in all seasons under Jet's; Vincent discovers a mysterious book with powers he doesn't quite understand. But the characters also feel complex and sympathetic, especially when they wrestle with the weight of the Owens legacy. Their fierce, often fractious love for each other proves to be their greatest strength when tragedy strikes not once, but many times. Our signed copies for the final Modern First Editions Club Pick of 2017 have sold out.

Hunter, Megan. [The End We Start From](#) (Grove \$22). The Indie Next #1 Pick: "As the floodwaters rise on London, a first-time mother takes her newborn son and flees for higher ground, seeking a safe haven from the environmental collapse and the chaos that will follow it. Luminous and sparse, heartbreaking yet hopeful, *The End We Start From* is a lyrical rumination on environ-

ment, normalcy in the midst of crisis, new motherhood, unavoidable endings, and tentative beginnings. A slim and stunning debut whose echoes will be thunderous.”

Indridason, Arnaldur. [Shadow District](#) (St Martins \$25.99). The *PW* Starred Review: “This outstanding series launch from Indridason (the Inspector Erlendur series) opens with the police entering the Reykjavík apartment of pensioner Stefán Thórdarson, who has died in his bed, apparently of old age. The subsequent autopsy reveals that he was smothered. Only some old newspaper clippings, about a crime dating back to 1944, offer a clue, which is pursued by a retired policeman who grew up as a poor kid in the Reykjavík neighborhood that gives the book its name. Flash back to Reykjavík in 1944. The city is teeming with American soldiers, who are dating Icelandic women. One such courting couple discovers the body of a young woman named Rósamunda; the two policemen who investigate determine that she was murdered. Another case, in the countryside, has similarities, and is connected to Icelandic folklore, notably the *huldufólk*, mythological “hidden creatures.” What happened to Rósamunda and the other woman? And what’s the link to Thórdarson’s murder? Indridason provides a great window into Icelandic culture as he explores his recurring themes of greed and abuse of power. With nicely tense pacing and a vivid portrayal of life in modern and wartime Iceland, fans of atmospheric investigations will undoubtedly welcome Indridason’s latest offering.”

✚James, PD. [Sleep No More: Six Murderous Tales](#) (Knopf \$24). The selections in this solid second posthumous collection from MWA Grand Master James explore variations of the theme of looking back on past violent incidents. In “The Murder of Santa Claus,” the recollections of writer Charles Mickledore—the creator of an aristocratic sleuth dismissed by critics as “a pallid copy of Peter Wimsey”—about a long-ago murder case alternate with those of elderly Det. Insp. John Pottinger. James pokes fun at herself when Mickledore remarks, “I’m no H.R.F. Keating, no Dick Francis, not even a P.D. James.” The standout is “The Victim,” in which the cuckolded first husband of Princess Ilsa Mancelli, who was a film and TV star before marrying into royalty, plots revenge. James (1920–2014) was just as gifted an author of short stories as she was a novelist. As you can see in [The Mistletoe Murder and Other Stories](#).

Jennings, Maureen. [Let Darkness Bury the Dead](#) (McClelland \$22.95). A Canadian trade paperback is the latest in the Murdoch Series by Jennings (a TV success). She has chosen to age the detective to his mid-fifties, made him a widower, and brought his son home from the trench warfare of WWI. What follows is a deep look into service in the fighting by Canadians with all the ramifications of surviving or dying in trench warfare, choosing not to fight, the penalties of that and desertion, etc., as part of Murdoch’s murder investigation. I am reminded of Laurie King’s wrenching Mary Russell [Justice Hall](#) (\$16)—this is the book I wanted King to title *Statley Holmes*; to make me get off her back she did a story by that title in [Mary Russell’s War](#) (\$15.95 Signed, an excellent gift idea), which is a wonderful compendium of Russells not otherwise published—and of course of the two Charles Todd series as well as Anne Perry’s quintet set during the war.

Jones, Darynda. [Trouble with Twelfth Grave](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Ever since Reyes Farrow escaped from a hell dimension in which Charley Davidson accidentally trapped him, the son of Satan has

been brimstone-bent on destroying the world his heavenly Brother created. His volatile tendencies have put Charley in a bit of a pickle. But that’s not the only briny vegetable on her plate. While trying to domesticate the feral being that used to be her husband, she also has to deal with her everyday life of annoying all manner of beings—some corporeal, some not so much—as she struggles to right the wrongs of society. Only this time she’s not uncovering a murder. This time she’s covering one up. Add to that her new occupation of keeping a startup PI venture—the indomitable mystery-solving team of Amber Kowalski and Quentin Rutherford—out of trouble and dealing with the Vatican’s inquiries into her beloved daughter, and Charley is on the brink of throwing in the towel and becoming a professional shopper. Or possibly a live mannequin. But when someone starts attacking humans who are sensitive to the supernatural world, Charley knows it’s time to let loose her razor sharp claws. 12th in this paranormal series.

Lee, Fonda. [Jade City](#) (Orbit \$26). Award-winning author Fonda Lee explodes onto the adult fantasy scene with an epic saga reminiscent of *The Godfather* with magic and kungfu, set in an Asia-inspired fantasy metropolis. Magical jade—mined, traded, stolen, and killed for—is the lifeblood of the island of Kekon. For centuries, honorable Green Bone warriors like the Kaul family have used it to enhance their abilities and defend the island from foreign invasion. Now the war is over and a new generation of Kauls vies for control of Kekon’s bustling capital city. They care about nothing but protecting their own, cornering the jade market, and defending the districts under their protection. Ancient tradition has little place in this rapidly changing nation. When a powerful new drug emerges that lets anyone—even foreigners—wield jade, the simmering tension between the Kauls and the rival Ayt family erupts into open violence. The outcome of this clan war will determine the fate of all Green Bones—from their grandest patriarch to the lowliest motorcycle runner on the streets—and of Kekon itself. *Jade City* begins an epic tale of family, honor, and those who live and die by the ancient laws of jade and blood.

Lemaitre, Pierre. [Three Days and a Life](#) (Quercus \$26.99). Lemaitre’s searing novel of psychological suspense rests on a terrible tragedy: in 1999, in the French village of Beauval, an angry 12-year-old, Antoine Courtin, hits a little boy, Rémi Desmedt, with a tree branch, accidentally killing him. Terrified, Antoine hides Rémi’s body and is wracked with guilt as the people of Beauval desperately hunt for the boy they believe was stolen by a stranger. Twelve years later, Antoine has settled in Paris, where he’s a successful doctor working in humanitarian aid and engaged to be married, though he’s still haunted by what he did to Rémi. On a reluctant visit back to Beauval, a sexual encounter with a childhood crush and news of local redevelopment threaten to destroy his carefully constructed life. From Antoine’s inner torment, Lemaitre devises an unusual page-turner, driven not by the cause-and-event of incident but the push-and-pull of guilt and memory, which spins toward a final revelation that leaves the reader with stark questions about punishment, culpability, and the psychic consequences of long-held secrets.

Littlejohn, Emily. [A Season to Lie](#) (St Martins \$25.99). The small Colorado town of Gemma Monroe’s first investigation in [Inherit the Bones](#) (\$16.99) and now the sequel is vibrantly alive along with its surrounding landscape. If you’re a fan of wide

open spaces—see the new Reacher by Lee Child in Signed books for another new example—you will enjoy Littlejohn and Cedar Valley. Police officer Monroe survived both solving a 40-year-old murder and her late pregnancy. Now a nursing mom but on the job, she's called out on a cold and dark February night to the Valley Academy where an anonymous someone has called in a report of a prowler. Gemma and her partner expect it's a prank but they find a man stabbed in the gut fastened to a tree. His identity proves to be a big surprise, explanations for why he was at the Academy are varied, and... I won't spoil the payoff. Crime fiction fans have encountered this kind of motive for murder before which doesn't detract from its use in this story.

Mankell, Henning. [After the Fire](#) (Vintage \$16.95). On a rocky, remote private island in a Swedish archipelago, 70-year-old Fredrik Welin wakes to a searing light. He stumbles outside, recovering only a raincoat and two left boots on the way, and watches helplessly as his house burns to its foundations. This final novel from Mankell (the Kurt Wallander series), posthumously published in a stunning English translation, questions what happens to a person who has lost everything—and who considers himself too old to rebuild. Fredrik hardly has time to grieve the memories that burned along with the house's contents; when investigators arrive to inspect the smoking ruins, they discover clear signs of arson. Could it be insurance fraud? Or does the responsibility lie with one of Fredrik's neighbors, whom he's known for years and who showed up in their boats to battle the flames? And how will Fredrik's daughter—pregnant and harboring secrets of her own—react to the loss of her inheritance?

Morrow, Bradford. [The Prague Sonata](#) (Grove \$27). In the early days of the new millennium, pages of a worn and weathered original sonata manuscript—the gift of a Czech immigrant living out her final days in Queens—come into the hands of Meta Taverner, a young musicologist whose concert piano career was cut short by an injury. To Meta's eye, it appears to be an authentic eighteenth-century work; to her discerning ear, the music rendered there is commanding, hauntingly beautiful, clearly the undiscovered composition of a master. But there is no indication of who the composer might be. The gift comes with the request that Meta attempt to find the manuscript's true owner—a Prague friend the old woman has not heard from since the Second World War forced them apart—and to make the three-part sonata whole again. Leaving New York behind for the land of Dvorák and Kafka, Meta sets out on an unforgettable search to locate the remaining movements of the sonata and uncover a story that has influenced the course of many lives, even as it becomes clear that she isn't the only one after the music's secrets. This is a big, generous book invoking characters and history spanning decades and countries all the way to America.

Niederhoffer, Galt. [Poison](#) (St Martins \$26.99). I didn't like the voice narrating this suspenseful story. But Niederhoffer comes up with a truly nifty (and terrifying) murder method in her portrait of the toxic disintegration of a marriage and the ferocious dedication to her children of the wife/mother.

Parker, KJ. [The Two of Swords](#) (Orbit \$15.99). An empire, similar but not identical to ancient Rome, has split down the middle and is ravaged by a civil war in Parker's brilliant first Two of Swords fantasy. A simple farm boy, Teucer, who happens to be good at archery, is conscripted into the army; Telamon, a spy

and assassin, uses dazzling intelligence and esoteric knowledge to recruit a young thief; the generals of the Eastern and Western empires, brothers bound by their intentions to kill each other, circle in eternal, bloody stalemate. And everything, including the novel itself, is structured around the imagery and placement of the Tarot-like mystical cards wielded throughout the world by a mysterious and powerful secret lodge. Parker's plot is a delight, full of successive revelations; his characters earn sympathy even at their most pragmatically ruthless, and his sparkling prose and sardonic humor help build the dazzling shape of a game larger than two empires. Parker delivers a consistently enjoyable and unpredictable ride, with the firm promise of more in the future.

Patterson, James. [The People vs. Alex Cross](#) (LittleBrown \$29). Charged with gunning down followers of his nemesis Gary Soneji in cold blood, Cross is being turned into the poster child for trigger-happy cops who think they're above the law. Cross knows it was self-defense. But will a jury see it that way? As Cross fights for his professional life and his freedom, his former partner John Sampson brings him a gruesome, titillating video tied to the mysterious disappearances of several young girls. Despite his suspension from the department, Cross can't say no to Sampson. The illicit investigation leads them to the darkest corners of the Internet, where murder is just another form of entertainment. As the prosecution presents its case, and the nation watches, even those closest to Cross begin to doubt his innocence

Pochoda, Ivy. [Wonder Valley](#) (Harper \$26.99). The Indie Next pick: "A man running naked among the gridlocked cars of an L.A. freeway is the catalyst for this dark tale set in the rough neighborhoods of a decidedly unglamorous Los Angeles. In this version of the city, it's not only the poor and the powerless who are desperate; even the better-off characters turn out to be broken sinners who crave hope and redemption. The gritty beauty of Pochoda's writing, whether about cruelty and violence or about love, no matter how desperate, pulled me into the characters' lives and compelled me to keep reading all night."

Reay, Katherine. [The Austen Escape](#) (Nelson \$15.99). Christian publishers such as Thomas Nelson have embraced the "wholesome" Regency, such as this one by Reay. Mary Davies finds safety in her ordered and productive life. Working as an engineer, she genuinely enjoys her job and her colleagues. But when Mary's estranged childhood friend, Isabel Dwyer offers her a stay in a gorgeous manor house in England, she reluctantly agrees in hopes that the holiday will shake up her quiet life in just the right ways. But Mary gets more than she bargained for when Isabel loses her memory and fully believes she lives in Jane Austen's Bath. While Isabel rests and delights in the leisure of a Regency lady, attended by other costume-clad guests, Mary uncovers startling truths about their shared past, who Isabel was, who she seems to be, and the man who now stands between them. Outings are undertaken, misunderstandings arise, and dancing ensues as this company of clever, well-informed people, who have a great deal of conversation, work out their lives.

Rice, Anne/Christopher. [Ramses the Damned: The Passion of Cleopatra](#) (Anchor \$16). Ramses the Great, former pharaoh of Egypt, is reawakened by the elixir of life in Edwardian England where he seeks to wed an heiress of great beauty to whom he's given the same elixir that made him immortal. The two are then swept up in a fierce and deadly battle of wills and psyches against

the once-great Queen Cleopatra. Ramses has reawakened the dangerous queen with the same perilous elixir whose unworldly force brings the dead back to life. But as these ancient rulers defy one another in their quest to understand the powers of the strange elixir, they are haunted by a mysterious presence even older and more powerful than they, a figure drawn forth from the mists of history who possesses spectacular magical potions and tonics eight millennia old.... A paperback original by mother and son Rice.

Schmidt, Sarah. [See What I Have Done](#) (Atlantic \$26). The Indie Next Pick finds this to be “a spellbinding historic reimagining of a Gothic tale many of us grew up knowing about. Schmidt brings to life all the characters in Lizzie Borden’s world and takes the reader on an adventure through time and the investigation into the murder of her parents. Schmidt uses context to make the moment in history as much of a character as the people in the story, and the lively characters will keep you transfixed on the murder mystery. It is hard to say that a book about a murder is delightful, but *See What I Have Done* is a delightful, suspenseful, and satisfying read.”

Simenon, George. [Maigret Is Afraid](#) (Penguin \$13). Maigret stumbles upon a series of murders in Fontenay-le-Comte while visiting an old school friend. This is the 42nd book in the new Penguin Maigret series.

Thompson, Victoria. [City of Lies](#) (Berkley \$26). Set in 1917, this winning series launch introduces quick-witted and audacious con artist Elizabeth Miles. In Washington, D.C., Elizabeth and her brother, Jake, are running a scam on Oscar Thornton, a vindictive businessman. When the hustle is discovered, Thornton’s thugs brutally beat Jake and set off after Elizabeth, who infiltrates a crowd of women protesting for the right to vote outside the White House. The suffragettes are arrested and sentenced to the Occoquan Workhouse in Virginia, where Elizabeth is protected from Thornton’s wrath. Once freed, she heads for New York City, only to find that Thornton knows she’s staying at the home of one of her suffragette companions. Her best hope of remaining alive is to perpetrate an elaborate caper that will put Thornton out of commission for good.

Thomson, E. S. [Dark Asylum](#) (Pantheon \$25.95). It’s 1851 at the Angle Meadow Asylum where the principal physician to the insane, Dr. Rutherford, is found horribly dead. The horrified police fix upon the inmates for suspects, but apothecary Jem Flockhart, a woman going disguised as a man in order to pursue her profession, and his aide-de-camp Will Quartermain look elsewhere. Surely this is a calculated crime of retribution (ears cut off, lips and eyes sewn shut), rather than an act engendered by madness which would almost surely be messier....

It would be easy to flinch from the horrors of Victorian treatment of mental illness, just as one would when reading Thomson’s first: [Beloved Poison](#) (\$15.95). Ramshackle and crumbling, trapped in the past and resisting the future, St. Saviour’s Infirmary awaits demolition. Within its stinking wards and cramped corridors, the doctors bicker and backstab. Ambition, jealousy, and loathing seethe beneath the veneer of professional courtesy. Always an outsider, and with a secret of her own to hide, apothecary Jem Flockhart observes everything but says nothing. And then six tiny coffins are uncovered, inside each a handful of dried flowers and a bundle of moldering rags. When Jem comes across

these strange relics hidden inside the infirmary’s old chapel, her quest to understand their meaning prides open a long-forgotten past—with fatal consequences.

Tursten, Helene. [Who Watcheth](#) (\$15.95). “The ninth Inspector Irene Huss investigation by this popular Swedish writer is a solid ‘people procedural’: we get perception and empathy towards victims, suspects, witnesses and police colleagues as Huss investigates an elusive and particularly nasty serial killer in Göteborg.”—*The Sunday Times*. I am a fan of this spare-no-punches series and Rob and I both of the TV series on MHz-TV.

Weiner, Matthew. [Heather, The Totality](#) (LittleBrown \$25). “In a landscape of despair, stuck in the logjam of the dull round of work, marriage, and raising a child, other emotions can command so much attention. This beautifully structured, spare study is Chekhovian, noirish, and quietly fraught. The minimal writing style is beautiful, and the tension is so carefully modulated that the aesthetic of rising unease is oddly comforting. But there is dread in the inevitable climax, and a thriller’s tautness to the possible resolutions that steadily arise. A reader’s delight—well-managed prose, excellent plotting, psychological suspense, and insightful character-building make this perfect for a winter night’s reading.”

Weir, Andy. [Artemis](#) (Crown \$27). Jazz Bashara grew up in Artemis, the moon’s only city, where she dreams of becoming rich. For now, she works as a porter, supplementing her legal income by smuggling contraband. She hopes that her situation can improve drastically after she’s offered an impossible-to-refuse payday by wealthy entrepreneur Trond Landvik, who has used her in the past to get cigars from Earth. Trond asks Jazz to come up with a way to sabotage a competitor so that he can take over the moon’s aluminum industry. She develops an elaborate and clever plan that showcases her resourcefulness and intelligence, even as she continues to have misgivings about her client’s true agenda, suspicions borne out by subsequent complications. The sophisticated world-building incorporates politics and economics, as well as scientifically plausible ways for a small city to function on the lunar surface. The independent, wisecracking lead could easily sustain a series, unlike the hero of Weir’s bestseller [The Martian](#) (\$15). Matt Damon introduces some humor into the movie but Weir runs with it more in *Artemis*.

OUR NOVEMBER SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Brookes, Adam. [The Spy’s Daughter](#) (\$9.99) When she discovers what her parents intend her to become, 19-year-old academic prodigy Pearl Tao places her trust in two British spies who agree to help her escape despite the danger they will face. Brookes’ debut novel, *Night Heron*, was nominated for the 2014 CWA John Creasey Dagger and appeared on best of the year lists in the *TLS*, *Kirkus* and *NPR*; its follow-up *Spy Games* was nominated for the CWA Ian Fleming Steel Dagger. *The Spy’s Daughter* is his third novel.

Carlisle, Kate. [Eaves of Destruction Signed](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Fixer-Upper #5. While preparing for Lighthouse Cove’s annual Victoria Home and Garden Tour, handywoman Shannon Hammer must investigate the murder of a snarly building inspector. Carlisle’s Fixer-Upper series has recently begun showing up on Hallmark’s Mystery Channel so now you have another way to enjoy this fun series!

Eaton, J.C. [Ditched 4 Murder](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Sophie Kimball #2. While helping her 74-year-old Aunt Ina prepare for her wedding, Sophie Kimball, who works for a private investigator, gets drawn into a murder case that is linked to Ina's fiancé and must catch the killer before her aunt walks down the aisle. J.C. Eaton is the pseudonym for the local wife and husband writing team of Ann I. Goldfarb and James E. Clapp. Their new series, which began with [Booked 4 Murder](#), is set in the Valley of the Sun and is just the ticket for readers who like their cozies served up with a generous dash of humor.

Hurwitz, Gregg. [Nowhere Man](#) (\$9.99) Evan Smoak #2. After reinventing himself as the Nowhere Man, Evan Smoak finds himself murderously pursued by the new head of the Orphan program and turns the tables on captors who find themselves trapped with Smoak in a virtual cage. *PW* was just one of the review sources raving about this series saying "Hurwitz's engaging, sympathetic characters place this thriller above the pack."

Jonasson, Ragnar. [Snowblind](#) (\$9.99) Ari Thøror Arason, a rookie policeman on his first posting in a Northern Iceland fishing village, confronts the secrets and lies of a community he cannot trust after a young woman is found bleeding and unconscious in the snow and an elderly writer falls to his death. *PW* loved this first mystery stating "The 2008 financial crash provides the backdrop for Jónasson's sterling debut, a tale of past and present revenge, which combines the power of extreme climate and geography with penetrating psychological analysis."

McBride, Michael. [Subhuman](#) (Kensington \$9.99) At a research station in Antarctica, five of the world's top scientists, while trying to solve one of the greatest mysteries in human history, unwittingly spawn a long-extinct life form whose instincts are fiercer, more savage, than any predator alive. *PW* loved this saying "Building on the success of 2015's *Subterrestrial*, thriller powerhouse McBride begins his Unit 51 series with meticulous quasiscientific conceptual groundwork, drawing readers into a satisfyingly slow-building, intellectualized mystery." Sounds like something all you James Rollins and Douglas Preston/Lincoln Child fans might want to give a whirl.

McKinlay, Jenn. [Better Late Than Never](#) (\$7.99) Library Lovers #7. When the Briar Creek Public Library holds its first overdue amnesty day to collect numerous unreturned books, director Lindsey Norris is shocked by the appearance of a long-missing book checked out 20 years earlier to a murdered teacher whose killer was never found. If this doesn't scare you into returning your library books on time, I don't know what will.

Sandford, John. [Escape Clause](#) (\$9.99) Virgil Flowers #9. Virgil Flowers' investigation into the theft of two rare Siberian tigers from the Minnesota zoo is complicated by a summer visit from his girlfriend's sister, who aims to seduce him. *Kirkus* concluded their take on this with "Perfect entertainment for readers whose hearts skip a beat when they worry that the hero won't be in time to rescue that remaining tiger from certain death."

NEW IN SMALL PAPERBACKS

Abbott, Kristi. [Assault and Buttery](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Popcorn Shop #3. After discovering an old diary in the wall of her popcorn shop, Rebecca Anderson, the prime suspect in the murder of a local busybody whom the police believe was poisoned by her popcorn, discovers a startling connection between the diary writer and the murdered man.

Cates, Bailey. [Potions and Pastries](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Magical Bakery #6. When her Aunt Lucy's friend Molly Black, one of town's most colorful characters, is murdered, baker Katie Lightfoot, her coven and her firefighter boyfriend team up to find out what happened to the unfortunate fortune-teller.

Connolly, Sheila. [A Late Frost](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Orchard Mysteries #11. When newcomer Monica Whitman falls ill and dies, supposedly due to food poisoning, orchard owner Meg Corey Chapman investigates and soon discovers that Monica was murdered.

Coonts, Stephen. [The Art of War](#) (\$9.99) Jack Grafton #11. Elevated to the head of the CIA when his predecessor is assassinated, Jake Grafton races against time to halt a conspiracy involving a nuclear weapon hidden by Chinese sleeper agents at Norfolk, Virginia's massive naval base.

Davis, Krista. [Not a Creature Was Purring](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Paws and Claws #5. When Holly Miller, while preparing for the town's Christkindl Market, and dealing with an unexpected love triangle, stumbles upon the corpse of a pet-clothing tycoon, she, along with her dedicated pet detectives, must sniff out a killer.

Farrow, Sharon. [Blackberry Burial](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Berry Basket #2. While surveying the Sunderling farm for the annual road rally in honor of the local art school's centenary celebration, Marlee Jacob, the owner of The Berry Basket, stumbles upon skeletal remains and must unravel this mystery before a killer gets away with murder—again.

Forstchen, Will. [The Final Day](#) (\$9.99) Continues the story of America's efforts to rebuild in the aftermath of an electromagnetic pulse that wipes out all electricity and plunges the country into darkness, starvation and violence that began with *One Second After*.

Greaney, Mark. [Tom Clancy True Faith and Allegiance](#) (\$9.99) Jack Ryan #14. Investigating a massive data breach that threatens the security of every U.S. intelligence operative in the world, President Jack Ryan confronts an impossible choice when the data is obtained and exploited by the Chinese government.

Griffin, Laura. [A Touch of Red](#) (Pocket \$7.99) Searching for a witness to a murder, crime scene investigator Brooke Porter teams up with homicide detective Sean Byrne, and—as their investigation, and relationship, heats up—they must try to keep their personal lives and work separate, especially when the killer sets his sights on Brooke.

Kelly, Diane. [Death, Taxes, and a Shotgun Wedding](#) (St Martins \$7.99) Death and Taxes #12. When she begins receiving death threats as she is preparing for her wedding, IRS agent Tara Holloway must sift through past cases to find the culprit, while dodging attempts on her life and tracking down a con artist who is ripping people off for thousands of dollars, before she can say "I do."

Leslie, Barbra. [Unhinged](#) (Titan \$7.99) After the events in Rehab Run, Danny Cleary is clean, running a gym, and finally free to enjoy quality time with her nephews. But when the boys' father turns up one night, beaten to a pulp and with the name of a stripper on his lips, Danny is tangled into a series of secrets that will lead her to the final showdown and a discovery of the ultimate betrayal.

Meier, Leslie. [Eggnog Murder](#) (\$7.99) Collects holiday-themed novellas by three fan-favorite authors including "Eggnog Murder"

by Leslie Meier which a gift-wrapped bottle of eggnog proves to be a killer concoction for a Tinker's Cove local, and Lucy Stone must seek out the murdering mixologists well as "Death by Eggnog" by Lee Hollis and "Nogged Off" by Barbara Ross.

Simon, Misty. [Cremains of the Day](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Cleaning houses to make ends meet, former socialite Tallulah Graver is plagued by a series of strange events that end in murder and she must clean up this mess before another victim is swept under the rug.

Smith, Karen Rose. [Slay Bells Ring](#) (Kensington \$7.99) When a Vietnam vet is found murdered on Santa Lane, leaving behind his loyal malamute and lots of unfinished business, Caprice De Luca must discover who is on the naughty list before the yuletide killer strikes again.

Wait, Lea. [Thread the Halls](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Mainley Needlepoint #6. When his demanding movie-star mother brings her entourage home for the holidays, Patrick West gets some much-needed help from Angie Curtis and the Mainely Needlepoints when a Christmas cookie disaster and an even worse tragedy strike.

Wallace, Aurale. [Ring in the Year with Murder](#) (St Martins \$7.99) Otter Lake #4. When a Gatsby-themed party is plagued by a slimy PR agent, a séance and spilled drink containing antifreeze, Erica Bloom and her friends at Otter Lake Security ring in the New Year knocking heads instead of clinking glasses.

Weiss, Kirsten. [The Quiche and the Dead](#) (Kensington \$7.99) When a customer keels over after eating one of her quiches, which was poisoned, pie shop owner Valentine Harris and her flaky, 70-something pie crust maker must catch the crusty culprit before someone else's pie hole is shut for good.