

Midmonth BookNotes

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Contact:

email: sales@poisonedpen.com

phone: (888) 560-9919

(480) 947-2974

<https://poisonedpen.com>

4014 N Goldwater Blvd. #101

Scottsdale, AZ 85251

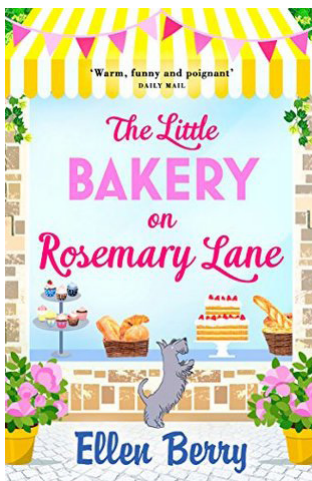


Cornucopia of Good Reading

Balogh, Mary. [Someone to Wed](#)

(Berkley \$7.99)

When heiress Wren Heyden makes him an offer he cannot refuse, the new Earl of Riverdale, whose estate is on the brink of ruin, enters into a marriage of convenience with this beautiful businesswoman, who soon has him questioning everything he thought he knew about love.



Berry, Ellen. [The Little Bakery on Rosemary Lane](#)

(HarperCollins \$12.99)

Fashion editor Roxanne Cartwright lives for her job. But when a new boss decides to shake things up at work, Roxanne heads back home to Burley Bridge, the quiet little Yorkshire village where she grew up. But it seems even Burley Bridge is in the midst of changes, including a new bakery, whose owner Michael, is everything Roxanne doesn't want in a man. So why then is Roxanne spending so much time there? Think of Berry's books as the romance equivalent of cozy mysteries.

Bradford, Barbara. [Secrets of Cavendon](#)

(St. Martins \$27.99)

For years things have run smoothly at Cavendon Hall, with very few quarrels, dramas, or upsets among the Inghams and the Swanns. But since the end of World War II, things have changed. The Secrets of Cavendon picks up in the summer of 1949, with the new generation of the estate at the forefront of the scandal and intrigue. With romance, betrayal, heartbreak, and possible murder threatening to tear them apart, the Inghams and Swanns will have to find a way to come together and protect each other in the face of unpredictable threats.

Carlisle, Kate. [Eaves of Destruction](#)

(Berkley \$7.99)

Lighthouse Cove's annual Victorian Home and Garden tour always brings out a fierce competitive spirit among homeowners, which means contractor Shannon Hammer's services are in high demand. Fortunately, Shannon has just hired a fantastic new carpenter, so she thinks she will be able to keep up with the workload until a murder throws a wrench in the works. Lighthouse Cove's corrupt building inspector has been found dead on one of Shannon's jobsites. Since everyone in town – including Shannon – had good cause to want to see him dead, Shannon calls on her team of close friends and devilishly astute thriller writer Mac to help her nail down the details and build a case against the killer before the door shuts on someone else – for good.

Fitch, Janet. [The Revolution of Marina M.](#)

(Little Brown \$30)

Fitch's first novel, *White Oleander*, was an early Oprah Book Club pick when it debuted. Now the author, who spent decades studying Russian literature and history, turns her sights to the past with the story of Marina Makarova, a young woman of privilege coming of age in 1916 St. Petersburg, who finds her life and ambitions upended by historical events that ultimately result in her joining the cause for workers' rights, falling in love with a radical poet, and navigating devastating betrayals. In an interview with Bookpage, Fitch offered this pithy comment "We are living in a revolutionary period right now . . . not the cataclysm that the Russian Revolution was, but we're living through a time of extreme change," says Fitch. "Revolutions don't stop, that's the most important thing you can take away from *The Revolution of Marina M.* Once the wheel gets turning, it keeps turning. In Russia, it's still turning."

Gates, Suzanne. [The Glamorous Dead](#)

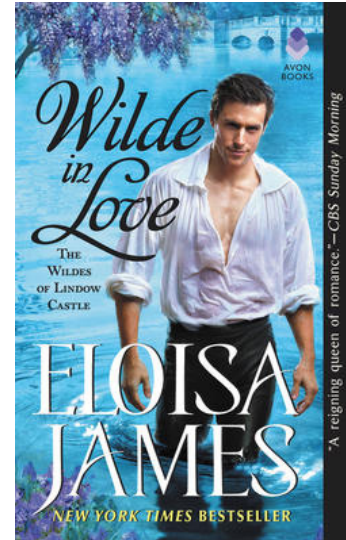
(Kensington \$15)

When her best friend (and fellow aspiring starlet) Rosemary Brown's body – sans one thumb – is found behind the Florentine Gardens nightclub, the first thing the police try to do is pin the crime on Penny Harp. But Penny is equally determined to prove her innocence without revealing the personal secrets Rosemary confided in her. Now with some help from famous queen of film noir Barbara Stanwyck, Penny sets out to find the real killer without winding up dead herself. This marvelously atmospheric debut mystery garnered a number of rave reviews including one from PW, which concluded with "Glamour takes a back seat to lust, lies, and greed in this well-wrought mystery."

Hieber, Leanna Renee. [The Eterna Solution](#)

(Tor \$28.99)

After defeating the demonic pretender to the British throne, the now-united forces of the Eterna Commission and the Omega Department arrive in America to stop a new threat—an evil that is rapidly spreading across the country. This is the third in a series which began with *The Eterna Files* and *Eterna and Omega*.



James, Eloisa. [Wilde in Love](#)

(Harper \$7.99)

When famous explorer Lord Alaric Wilde arrives home after spending years abroad, he is shocked to discover that his novelizations of his adventures are hot property among the women of London. Well, almost every woman except the well-read Miss Willa Ffynche. RITA award-winning James launches a new Georgian-set historical series that will be literary catnip to readers who like their romances to be both smart and sexy.

McKinley, Jenn. [Death in the Stacks](#)

(Berkley \$25)

After meeting Olive Boyle, Briar Creek Library Director Lindsey Norris is positive OZ must be missing a wicked witch. Lindsey hoped to have a good working relationship with Olive, the new president of the library board, but Olive, for some inexplicable reason, seems to be determined to make Lindsey's professional life miserable. However, when Olive begins targeted Lindsey's staff that is where Lindsey draws the line. So when Olive is murdered during the library's annual big fundraiser, everyone assumes Lindsey or her staff had something to do with it, which leaves Lindsey no other choice but to once again become involved in a murder investigation. The latest in McKinley's Library Lover's series is another entertaining, marvelously funny mix of comedy and crime. As an added bonus, fans of McKinley's other mystery series will love the cameo appearances from characters in her *Hat Shop* and *Cupcake Bakery* books.

Miller, Louise. [The City Baker's Guide to Country Living](#)

(\$16)

After losing her job at an exclusive Boston dinner club, pastry chef Olivia Rawlings escapes to her best friend's Vermont hometown, where her mouthwatering desserts give way to a new job, a blue-ribbon competition, a potential relationship, and new understandings about belonging.

Moreno-Garcia, Silvia. [The Beautiful Ones](#)

(St. Martin's \$26.99)

Determined to shed her scandalous past and learn the proper ways of society, Antonia Beau-lieu, gifted with telekinesis, finds it increasingly difficult to conform to society's ideals for women, especially when she falls under the spell of dazzling telekinetic performer Hector Auvray. Readers who enjoy a mix of fantasy and historical fiction that is lighted with a dash of romance will definitely enjoy this stunning start to a new series.

Nathan, Amy Sue. [Left to Chance](#)

(\$15.99)

Six years after abruptly leaving Chance, Ohio, photographer Teddi Lerner returns at the request of her late best friend's 12-year-old daughter who wants her to photograph her father's wedding, and, while looking through her camera's lens, Teddi truly sees the hurt she had caused and tries to find a way to fix all the damage she has done.

Reay, Katherine. [The Austen Escape](#)

(Nelson \$15.99)

When Mary Davies's estranged childhood friend, Isabel Dwyer offers her a two-week 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 now 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.

Rodale, Maya. [It's Hard Out Here for a Duke](#)

(Avon \$7.99)

All Meredith Green wants is one night of passion. After that, Meredith promises herself she will return to her perfectly respectable (and perfectly dull) life as a firmly-upon-the-shelf lady's companion. All it takes is some outrageously forward flirting with a handsome stranger in the public room of the Queen's Head Tavern and Coaching Inn, and Meredith does get her perfect night of passion. Once she returns to her post with the Dowager Duchess of Durham, Meredith never expects to see her mystery lover again. However, things become a bit awkward when the Dowager Duchess introduces Meredith to the new Duke of Durham, American horse breeder James Cavendish, and Meredith realizes he just happens to be her one-time lover.

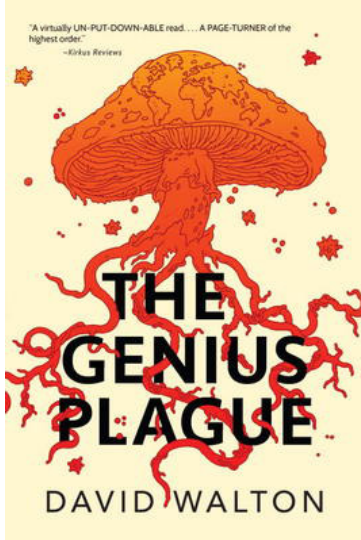


Swan, Karen. [The Paris Secret](#)

(HarperCollins \$14.99)

While assessing objects d'art in a Paris apartment that has been abandoned since WWII, high-powered fine art agent Flora Sykes is thrown into the glamorous world of the Vermeils family until she makes a discovery that brings about scandal and places her in the eye of a storm that carries her from London to the glittering coast of Provence. Lots of glitz and glam (and a dollop of sex) in this book, which makes it perfect for readers

who miss those old novels of Judith Krantz and Judith Michael.



Walton, David. [The Genius Plague](#)
(Pyr \$14.95)

When his brother Paul, a mycologist, returns home to Maryland from a research trip to the Amazon, he comes back with more than just some tacky tourist nik naks. The fungal infection Paul picked up while he was in Brazil, has suddenly cleared up leaving Paul with some enhanced new capabilities including a super memory and the ability to communicate on a whole new level. NSA code breaker Neil Johns is certain there is something fishy going on not only with Paul but with some other travelers who have returned home from the Amazon with the same infection. But could it really be the next step in human evolution? This sci fi thriller got rave reviews from many including PW, which said " Paired with relentless pacing, an action-packed narrative, and a cast of interesting characters, Walton's fluid writing style and tightly constructed plot produce a virtually un-put-down-able read."

Wright, Julie. [Lies Jane Austen Told Me](#)
(Shadow Mountain \$15.99)

Breaking up with someone is never easy especially if you have been together a long time. But Emma Pierce realizes that it is time she and Jane Austen part company. Emma once believed that Jane's books held the answers to every romantic

question in her life until the night Emma showed up at her boyfriend Blake Hampton's family home expecting to receive a proposal only to find Blake busy serving his famous grilled fish to another lady. Throwing herself into her work seems like a logical way for Emma to get over her heartbreak until Emma discovers the new consultant her boss just hired to help her out is none other than Blake's brother Lucas Hampton.

Mysterious and Romantic Holiday Reads

Andrews, Donna. [How the Finch Stole Christmas](#)
(Minotaur \$25.99)

When her husband organizes a full-scale production of A Christmas Carol with a famous veteran actor Malcolm Haver in the starring role, Meg Langslow finds herself acting as assistant director in order to keep the play on track. Tasked with keeping Malcolm sober, Meg has no choice but to follow him when she spots him sneaking out of the theater one night. The trip ends in a barn filled with animals of all sorts, where Meg spots Malcolm trying to acquire some home-made spirits from a local bootlegger. However, when the bootlegger is later found murdered, Meg can add finding the killer to her list of holiday duties.

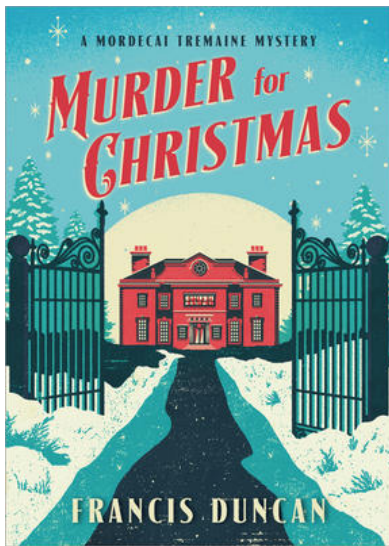
Colgan, Jenny. [Christmas at Little Beach Street Bakery](#)
(HarperCollins \$14.99)

The holiday season in the Cornish coastal village of Mount Polbearne finds Polly Waterford busy with seasonal demands at her bakery, but when a dangerous storm cuts them off from the mainland, she must team up with her neighbors to safeguard everyone.

Cruz, Melissa De La. [Pride and Prejudice and Mistletoe](#)
(St. Martin's \$18.99)

Super successful businesswoman Darcy Fitzwilliam's never fallen in love, never has time for anyone else's drama, and never goes home for Christmas if she can help it. But when her mother falls ill, she comes home to Pemberley, Ohio, to spend the season with her family.

Her parents throw their annual Christmas bash, where she meets one Luke Bennet, the smart, sardonic slacker son of their neighbor. Luke is 32-years-old and has never left home. He's a carpenter and makes beautiful furniture, and is content with his simple life. When Darcy and Luke fall into bed after too many egg-nogs, Darcy thinks it's just another one night stand. But why can't she stop thinking of Luke? What is it about him? And can she fall in love, or will her pride and his prejudice against big-city girls stand in their way?



Duncan, Francis. [Murder for Christmas](#)
(Sourcebooks \$14.99)

When Mordecai Tremaine arrives at Benedict Grame's country retreat in the sleepy village of Sherbroome on Christmas Eve, all he can see is a rather jolly house party setting with a group of people ready to enjoy Christmas in a really old-fashioned way. But underneath all the holiday cheer is an undercurrent of tension among the guests that more than one person has pointed out to Mordecai. When midnight on Christmas Eve strikes, everyone is all set to open their presents, but it turns out that gifts are not the only things nestled under the tree. The guests discover their host, dressed as Father Christmas, murdered under the Christmas tree. Now with snow falling and suspicions flying, it's up to Mordecai to sniff out the culprit—and prevent anyone else from getting murder for Christmas. Do you yearn for the good, old days when you could be guaranteed a Christie for Christmas?

This reprint of one of the Mordecai Tremaine mysteries by Duncan, originally published in 1949, may be the next best thing. The good news is that reprints of more titles in the series are in the works!

Gray, Shelley S. [The Gift: The Amish of Hart County](#)
(Harper \$12.99)

When a series of suspicious accidents reveals that someone is trying to scare away her family, Susanna, a newcomer to Hart County, wonders about the guilt or innocence of a man who is grieving the loss of his farm to Susanna's family.

Hazel, Gaynor and Heather Webb. [Last Christmas in Paris](#)
(HarperCollins \$14.99)

After seeing her brother Will and his best friend Thomas Harding off to the front in August 1914, Evie Elliott, tries to become more involved in the conflict and begins working at her father's newspaper business. Everyone in England expected the war to be over before Christmas but instead the war drags on for four more years. During that time Evie does keep in contact with Thomas through letters, but will the bond they forge become a casualty of the war? This epistolary novel is a moving and richly emotional look at World War I. If you loved *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* don't miss this equally heart-warming book.

Honigford, Cheryl. [Homicide for the Holidays](#)
(Sourcebooks \$15.99)

A hidden key that opens a drawer locked for the past eight years, a mysterious envelope filled with cash, and a threatening note... none of this is what rising radio star Vivian Witchell expects to find in her late father's office. Now with the handsome and maddeningly practical private detective Charlie Haverman at her side, Vivian spends the holiday season uncovering the details of the last weeks of her father's life, following a sinister trail of clues that leads her directly to one of the most notorious mob bosses of all time, Al Capone. Terrific period details and some fascinating snippets about the radio biz make this a stellar choice for historical mystery mavens. Start with *Darkness Knows*, which introduces Vivian.

Hornak, Francesca. [Seven Days of Us](#)

(Berkley \$26)

Spending the holidays with your family is bad enough, but what if you were literally stuck in the same house with your closest relatives for an entire week? Looking forward to a Christmas family reunion for the first time in years, the Birch family is upended by the news that their physician-activist daughter has been exposed to a foreign virus that forces the entire family into quarantine for a week; a week which is also shaped by respective anxieties, past glory and a shocking secret. This debut wasn't really quite my cup of literary tea, but it did garner a number of rave reviews including this one from Kirkus, which concluded with "Hornak skillfully juggles each character's distinct point of view and creates a family that readers will grow to love. This holiday read is perfect for fans of cozy Christmas films like *Love Actually* and *The Family Stone*. An emotional but ultimately uplifting holiday story."

Hughes, Anita. [Christmas in London](#)

(SimonSchuster \$15.99)

Jumping at the chance to star in the annual Christmas Eve dinner TV special at Claridge's baker Louisa finds herself drawn to production assistant Noah, while producer Kate has a run in with an old flame that threatens to shake up her world.

Kleypas, Lisa. [A Christmas to Remember](#)

(Harper \$7.99)

Celebrating the magic of the holiday season, a heartwarming collection of romances includes "I Will" by Lisa Kleypas, Lorraine Heath's "Deck the Halls With Love," "No Groom at the Inn" by Megan Frampton, and "the Duke's Christmas Wish" by Vivienne Lorret.

Macomber, Debbie. [Merry and Bright](#)

(Random \$20)

Enduring a challenging year of constant work and family care, Merry Knight struggles to take a break from her everyday responsibilities by creating an online dating profile and striking up an online friendship with a charming stranger who turns out to be someone she recognizes.

Meier, Leslie. [Holiday Murder](#)

(Kensington \$9.95)

This special release brings back into print two earlier Lucy Stone mysteries including *Mistletoe Murder*, the first in the series, in which Lucy's holiday job working at the mail-order company Country Cousins may be canceled when she discovers the business's founder, Sam Miller, dead in his car from an apparent suicide, and *Christmas Cookie Murder*, in which an accusation of recipe theft from among the members of the Tinker's Cove Cookie Exchange leads to murder.

Roberts, Sheila. [Christmas in Icicle Falls](#)

(Mira \$7.99)

When author and Christmas expert Muriel receives a disappointing Christmas tree that she ordered online, she makes it into a craft project and begins to learn the power of potential as she inspires her friends and sees her grumpy neighbor in a new light. I loved the whole premise of Roberts' latest heartwarming holiday book, which centers on the idea of the ugly little tree in *A Charlie Brown Christmas* and how it was transformed by some care and kindness into something special. Roberts deftly applies that same idea to the "ugly-tree" people in our lives.

Silva, Samantha. [Mr. Dickens and His Carol](#)

(Flatiron \$24.99)

When his successful world is threatened by poor reviews about his latest book, writer Charles Dickens is given a one-month ultimatum by his publisher to write a successful, nostalgic Christmas book, a challenge that is complicated by worldly associates, self-doubt and the hardships of an impoverished young woman and her son.

Terry, Candis. [Tangled Up in Tinsel](#)

(Avon \$7.99)

While preparing to open his new restaurant just in time for his brother's Christmas wedding, Parker Kincade is distracted from the task at hand by Gabriella Montani, who wants Parker to make her his new head chef and who is willing to do anything to prove she is up to the task. Looking to heat up your holidays a bit? Terry's contemporary romances offer plenty of sensual heat to warm you up.

Wilde, Lori. [Cowboy, It's Cold Outside](#)
(Avon \$7.99)

Wearing a too-tight "Santa Baby" costume held in by a double pair of Spanx, Paige MacGregor runs headlong into a gorgeous, grey-eyed hunk of a long, tall cowboy. And not just any cowboy, but country-western star Cash Colton, visiting Twilight to perform in a charity concert. Most women would melt at his feet, but Paige knows all too much about self-assured men with cocky attitudes, so she tells him to get lost. Cash, however, not only thinks he has found his muse in the person of Paige but his true love as well.

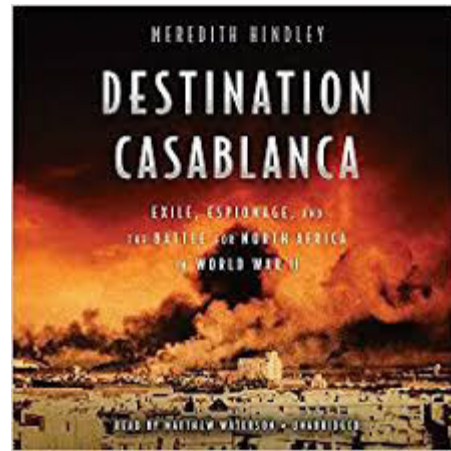
Nonfiction

Dalrymple, William and Anita Anand.
[Koh-I-Noor](#)
(Bloomsbury \$26)

Historians Dalrymple and Anand trace the true history of the diamond and disperse the myths and fantastic tales that have long surrounded this awe-inspiring jewel including that of a curse upon its owners who "have variously been blinded, slow-poisoned, tortured to death, burned in oil, threatened with drowning, crowned with molten lead, assassinated by their own family and bodyguards, or have lost their kingdoms and died in penury." The resulting account of the diamond also known as "Mountain of Light" tells a true tale of greed, conquest, murder, torture, colonialism, and appropriation that shaped a continent and the Koh-i-Noor itself.

Fraser, Rebecca. [The Mayflower](#)
(St. Martin's \$29.99)

Fraser, noted British historian and daughter of Lady Antonia Fraser examines the voyage of the Mayflower and the founding of Plymouth Colony through the lens of the Winslow family, whose patriarch Edward was the colonist whose personal relationship with the Wampanoag helped keep the Puritans from perishing from starvation their first winter in America.



Hindley, Meredith. [Destination Casablanca](#)
(Public Affairs \$40)

The Moroccan city of Casablanca has played important and different roles during World War II. After the German invasion of France, refugees sought safety and rival French political groups jockeyed for power in the city. In November 1941, Operation Torch brought the Americans and the British to Casablanca as the Allied forces sought to take control of Africa back from the Germans. And in 1943, Churchill and Roosevelt chose Casablanca as the setting for the conference that further cemented the Anglo-American alliance. Hindley's richly researched and impeccable detailed account of Casablanca will enlighten those who wish to more about a fabled city that just also happen to serve as the backdrop for one of the most romantic films in history.

Hollywood, Paul. [A Baker's Life](#)
(Bloomsbury \$36)

Known to many as the grumpy judge on the Great British Baking Show, Paul Hollywood was the son of a baker who learned the trade in the family's bakery before going off to spend six years working in a top hotel in Cyprus. Hollywood then went on to land jobs as Head Baker at a number of different exclusive (i.e. incredibly expensive) hotels in the U.K. including Cliveden and the Dorchester. Chronologically arranged chapters provide step-by-step instructions for 100 of Hollywood's favorite recipes including garlic baguettes; feta and chive bread; chorizo and chilli Scotch eggs; mum's ginger biscuits; and double chocolate Danish twists;

Homer. [Odyssey](#)

(Norton \$29.95)

The first great adventure story in the Western canon, *The Odyssey* is a poem about violence and the aftermath of war; about wealth, poverty, and power; about marriage and family; about travelers, hospitality, and the yearning for home. In this fresh, authoritative version by Emily Wilson—the first English translation of *The Odyssey* by a woman—this stirring tale of shipwrecks, monsters, and magic comes alive in an entirely new way. Written in iambic pentameter verse and a vivid, contemporary idiom, this engrossing translation matches the number of lines in the Greek original, thus striding at Homer’s sprightly pace and singing with a voice that echoes Homer’s music. While there are plenty of translations of Homer from which to choose, LJ’s review of Wilson’s work concluded with “a fluent, straightforward, and accessible version of the Homeric epic; a solid reading edition.”

Kramer, Jane. [The Reporter’s Kitchen](#)

(St. Martin’s \$26.99)

For the first time, Kramer’s beloved food pieces from *The New Yorker*, where she has been a staff writer since 1964, are arranged in one place—a collection of definitive chef profiles, personal essays, and gastronomic history that is at once deeply personal and humane. *The Reporter’s Kitchen* follows Kramer everywhere, and throughout her career—from her summer writing retreat in Umbria, where the journalist and her anthropologist husband host memorable expat Thanksgivings—in July—to the Nordic coast, where Jane and acclaimed Danish chef Rene Redzepi, of Noma, forage for edible sea-grass.

Midorikawa, Emily. [A Secret Sisterhood](#)

(Houghton Mifflin \$27)

Male literary friendships are the stuff of legend; think Byron and Shelley, Fitzgerald and Hemingway. But the world’s best-loved female authors are usually mythologized as solitary eccentrics or isolated geniuses. Coauthors and real-life friends Emily Midorikawa and Emma Claire Sweeney prove this wrong, thanks to their discovery of a wealth of surprising collaborations: the friendship between Jane Austen and one of the family servants, playwright Anne Sharp; the

daring feminist author Mary Taylor, who shaped the work of Charlotte Brontë; the transatlantic friendship of the seemingly aloof George Eliot and Harriet Beecher Stowe; and Virginia Woolf and Katherine Mansfield, most often portrayed as bitter foes, but who, in fact, enjoyed a complex friendship fired by an underlying erotic charge.

Swift, Daniel. [The Bughouse](#)

(Farrar Straus and Giroux \$27)

In 1945, the American poet Ezra Pound was due to stand trial for treason for his broadcasts in Fascist Italy during the Second World War. Before the trial could take place, however, he was pronounced insane. Escaping a possible death sentence, he was sent to St. Elizabeths Hospital near Washington, D.C., where he was held for more than a decade. Swift’s book traces Pound’s life at the hospital, which he called the “Bughouse,” through the eyes of those who treated him and lived with him as well as his visitors, who included T.S. Eliot, Elizabeth Bishop, Robert Lowell, and John Berryman.