

BOOKNEWS from

ISSN 1056-5655, © The Poisoned Pen, Ltd.
Volume 29, Number 14
December Booknews 2017
sales@poisonedpen.com tel (888)560-9919
http://poisonedpen.com

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



Happy Holidays!

AUTHORS ARE SIGNING...

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



SATURDAY DECEMBER 2 2:00 PM

Dana Stabenow signs [Silk and Song Trilogy Limited Edition](#)
(Zeus \$30)

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 and catch tomorrow’s stars, today.

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 6 6:30 PM

Phoenix Sherlockians—The Transfixed Correspondence—
meet up at The Pen for discussion and fun. The Pen will be their new meeting location. The story is Conan Doyle’s “The Adventure of the Cardboard Box”

FRIDAY DECEMBER 8 7:00 PM

Judge Frederic Block signs [Race to Judgment](#) (Select Books \$24.95)

SATURDAY DECEMBER 9 10:30 AM

Coffee and Crime Holiday Party

SATURDAY DECEMBER 9 2:00 PM Christmas Tea

Shannon Baker signs [Dark Signal](#) (Forge \$25.99) **Kate Fox #2**

Eileen Brady signs [Chained](#) (Poisoned Pen (\$26.95 or \$15.95))

Kate Turner #3

Chris Goff signs [Red Sky](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.95)

Raisa Jordan #2

Margaret Mizushima signs [Hunting Hour](#) (Crooked Lane \$25.95)

Timber Creek K-9 #3

Carrie Smith signs [Unholy City](#) (Crooked Lane \$27.99)

NYPD’s Clare Codella #3

SUNDAY DECEMBER 10 2:00 PM

Steven Cooper signs [Desert Remains](#) (Seventh Street \$15.95)
Starts a police procedural series focused on Phoenix

xTHURSDAY DECEMBER 14 7:00 PM Holiday Party

Hardboiled Crime Club discusses the books it’s read over 2017

SCIFI FRIDAY DECEMBER 15 7:00 PM Holiday Party

The SciFi Club discusses two novellas: Seanan McGuire’s “Every Heart a Doorway” and Paul Cornell’s “Witches of Lychford”

SATURDAY DECEMBER 16 10:30 AM Holiday Party

Croak & Dagger discusses MC Beaton’s [A Highland Christmas](#) (\$6.99)

SATURDAY DECEMBER 16 2:00 PM

Sam Sykes signs [God’s Last Breath](#) (Orbit \$16.99) and [Brave Chef Brianna](#) (Boom! Comics \$14.99) for young readers

EARLY CLOSING December 24 and December 31 @ 4:00 PM

CLOSED DECEMBER 25 and JANUARY 1

THURSDAY JANUARY 4 7:00 PM

Thomas Perry signs [The Bomb Maker](#) (Mysterious Press \$26)

Jeff Siger signs [An Aegean April](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95 or \$15.95)

SATURDAY JANUARY 6 2:00 PM

Jennifer Ashley signs [Death Below Stairs](#) (Berkley \$15)

Jenn McKinlay signs [Every Dog Has His Day](#) (Berkley \$7.99)

SUNDAY JANUARY 7:00 PM

Sujata Massey signs [The Widows of Malabar Hill](#) (Soho \$26.95)

TUESDAY JANUARY 9 7:00 PM

Brad Taylor signs [Operator Down](#) (Dutton \$27)

DECEMBER EVENT BOOKS

Baker, Shannon. [Dark Signal](#) (Forge \$25.99). Having divorced her husband over his affair, Kate Fox ran against him for Sheriff—and won! She has just been sworn in as Grand County, Nebraska, Sheriff when a horrific railroad leaves the train’s engineer Chad Mills dead and, his conductor Bobby Jenkins in shock. Despite the unbelievable cold, Kate digs deeper at the crash site and sees a most unusual murder weapon. But who would want to kill Chad? He’d made a few enemies as president of the railroad workers union. And he and his wife were living posh for the Sandhills—on what? The widow has wealthy family and the support of neighbor Josh Stevens. While her loud and meddling family conspires to help Kate past her divorce, State Patrol Officer Trey closes in on Josh Stevens as the suspect. Kate doesn’t buy it.... Book Two after [Stripped Bare](#) which likewise has an explosive start.

Block, Frederic. [Race to Judgment](#) (Select Books \$24.95). Linda Fairstein calls this novel based on actual cases/experience by Judge Block “a riveting thriller about truth and justice, from a courtroom pro who has viewed the bench from both sides.” Reed Farrel Coleman says the Judge’s blend of fiction with facts (detailed in the novel’s Epilogue) “is the inside skinny on the justice system from a man who lives it every day, but it’s the story that shines.” The setting is Brooklyn where Judge Block has served over two decades on the bench. It tracks the rise of the fictional African-American civil rights protagonist Ken Williams (in real life, the recently deceased Brooklyn DA Ken Thompson) from his days as an Assistant United States Attorney through his meteoric rise to unseat the long-term, corrupt Brooklyn DA because of a spate of phony convictions against black defendants, as well as another (real) case, the murder (in real life by one JoJo) of a Hasidic rabbi. Williams’ dramatic courtroom antics (with the aid of his colorful private eye) results in JoJo’s exoneration after 16 years behind bars. In addition, Williams defends a young black guidance counselor accused of killing the rabbi’s son many years ago, and champions the cause of a young Hasidic woman raped by her father. As a hobby, Williams plays jazz piano and writes country songs written by the author, himself a composer, which are reproduced in the book and can be heard on e-books and the Internet. Judge Block has presided over a number of high-profile cases, including the trials of former Bear Stearns hedge fund managers Ralph Cioffi and Matthew Tannin, Kenneth “Supreme” McGriff, Peter Gotti, Lemrick Nelson and nightclub magnate Peter Gatien. He also co-authored the 1985 off-Broadway musical *Professionally Speaking* (music and lyrics).

Brady, Eileen. [Chained](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95). A client’s chance encounter with a bone involves veterinarian Kate Turner in yet another murder case in her beautiful but apparently not so peaceful Hudson Valley town. It begins with the discovery in the woods of the remains of Flynn Keegan, who everyone in Oak Falls, assumed left for Hollywood after graduating from high school a decade earlier. Since Kate has plenty on her plate, she stays out of the investigation until Flynn’s family asks for her help. Then she starts chatting up pet owners about Flynn during client visits. Some recount tales of an earnest young man with big

dreams, others are reticent to discuss the past, and a few are only too happy to gossip about the teen and his effect on the town’s ladies. As Kate’s digging turns up more secrets and long-buried lies, she finds too many suspects and too little evidence. Then comes a new murder.... If you wonder why there’s a bear on the cover, I won’t spoil it for you by revealing the answer... but the bear has the last word. ”Brady keeps the suspense high through the surprising ending,” says one reviewer. *Kirkus* adds, Brady’s years of experience as a veterinarian supplies plenty of amusing stories and helpful hints for animal owners while her complicated heroine investigates a tricky case.” Also in paperback: [Chained](#) (\$15.95)

Cooper, Steven. [Desert Remains](#) (Seventh Street \$15.95). Someone is filling the desert caves around Phoenix with bodies—a madman who, in a taunting ritual, is leaving behind a record of his crimes etched into the stone. With no leads and no suspects, Detective Alex Mills sees a case spinning out of control. City leaders want the case solved yesterday, and another detective wants to elbow Mills out of the way. As the body count rises, Mills turns to Gus Parker, an “intuitive medium” whose murky visions sometimes point to real clues. It’s an unorthodox approach, but Mills is desperate. “Accomplished... Witty banter, colorful characters, and a strong sense of place give life to this intricately plotted procedural... Riveting subplots and a shocking twist pave the way for an electrifying conclusion.”—*PW*. Author Hallie Ephron notes, “A literature-loving homicide detective and a reluctant psychic stalk a psychopath who signs his gruesome crime tableaux with petroglyphs in *Desert Remains*, an ingenious and promising series debut.”

Goff, Chris. [Red Sky](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). When People’s Republic Flight 91 crashes in northeastern Ukraine with a U.S. diplomatic agent onboard, U.S. Diplomatic Security Service Agent Raisa Jordan is sent to investigate. The agent was escorting a prisoner home from Guangzhou, China, along with sensitive documents, and it quickly becomes apparent that the plane was intentionally downed. Was it to silence the two Americans onboard? To avoid a diplomatic incident, Jordan must discover what the Americans knew that was worth killing hundreds to cover up. With Russia deeply entangled in the Ukraine and the possibility that China could be hiding reasons to bring down its own plane, there are plenty of possible players.... Meet Raisa first in [Dark Waters](#) (\$14.99).

Mizushima, Margaret. [The Hunting Hour](#) (Crooked Lane \$25.99). When Deputy Mattie Cobb and her K-9 partner Robo get called to track a missing junior high student, they find the girl dead on Smoker’s Hill. But that’s only the start of trouble in Timber Creek, because soon another girl goes missing—and this time it’s one of Cole’s daughters. Knowing that each hour a child remains missing lessens the probability of finding her alive, Mattie and Robo lead the hunt while Cole and community volunteers join in to search everywhere. To no avail. It seems that someone has snatched all trace of the Walker girl from their midst, including her scent. Grasping at straws, Mattie and Robo follow a phoned-in tip into the dense forest, where they hope to find a trace of the girl’s scent and to rescue her alive. But when Robo does catch

her scent, it leads them to information that challenges everything they thought they knew about the case. The [Timber Creek K-9 Mysteries](#)—this is the 3rd—are very popular with Pat King and the Saturday staff.

Rollins, James. [The Demon Crown](#) (Harper \$28.99). A new Sigma Force thriller, **signed for you on the Monday before pub day and with custom-designed collectible included (while supply lasts)**. Those bones encased in amber and buried in the nation's capital by a group of concerned scientists, with Alexander Graham Bell in the lead? Sure, they contain the secret of life after death, but they are also linked to an unimaginable horror from the past that could wipe out humankind. Off the coast of Brazil, a team of scientists discovers a horror like no other, an island where all life has been eradicated, consumed and possessed by a species beyond imagination. Before they can report their discovery, a mysterious agency attacks the group, killing them all, save one: an entomologist, an expert on venomous creatures. Strangest of all, this inexplicable threat traces back to a terrifying secret buried a century ago beneath the National Mall: a cache of bones preserved in amber. The artifact was hidden away by a cabal of scientists—led by Alexander Graham Bell—to protect humankind. But they dared not destroy it, for the object also holds an astonishing promise for the future: the very secret of life after death. I add the cover shimmers with gold, very eye-catching.

Smith, Carrie. [Unholy City](#) (Crooked Lane \$27.99). Despite their rocky history, Detective Claire Codella and Precinct Detective Brian Haggerty come together when senior churchwarden Philip Graves's bloody body is found lying in the herb garden of historic St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Manhattan's Upper West Side just two days before Good Friday. Upon first glance, it looks like a random act of big city violence, but it soon becomes clear churchwarden Philip's death was the result of a meticulously calculated ploy by someone who knew him. There are five vestry members and a choir director in addition to the ten homeless men asleep in the church basement. Any one of them could have done it. The stakes rise with the subsequent discovery of the body of vestry secretary in her car on the church grounds. The case soon spirals into a whirlwind of salacious secrets, and Codella and Haggerty are in the eye of the hurricane. Strong writing and interesting characters propel this story which illuminates rarely discussed issues. This was a contender for the December Surprise Me Club Pick. I've tried to stock the first two in this series so you can try to [Order all three](#).

Stabenow, Dana. [Silk and Song Trilogy Limited Edition](#) (Zeus \$30). A beautifully packaged edition of the trilogy in one volume with a map, ribbon—so elegant. And so reasonably priced—an excellent gift for the lover of adventure and historical fiction. Dana published this 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!

AND for those who might have missed Kate Shugak's 21st case, we now have Signed copies of [Less Than a Treason](#) (\$26.95), which brings Kate and her mates into a very modern investigation yet tied to events, people, and landscapes of her past.

Sykes, Sam. [God's Last Breath](#) (Orbit \$16.99). Pat King writes: "Sam Sykes brings us the exciting conclusion to the Bring Down the Heaven trilogy. At the end of [The Mortal Tally](#) (\$15.99), Lenk

has managed to free the great demon Khoth-Kapira in the hopes of fixing a broken world. However, as Lenk travels under Koth-Kapira's banner not everything is what it appears. Will Lenk be able to save the world or will he be the catalyst to save the world or destroy it? Sykes has developed a rich and exciting world and has created a satisfying conclusion to this trilogy that started with [The City Stained Red](#) (\$16) in which he has created a world filled with the most likeable unlikeable heroes ever invented. Filled with action, humor and surprisingly sentimental moments, Bring Down the Heaven trilogy contains a world that you can't wait to get back."

Sykes writes for younger readers in [Brave Chef Brianna](#) (Boom! Comics \$14.99), one of the Poisoned Pen's favorite graphic novels of 2017. It follows Brianna as she strives to become the greatest Chef in Monster City and thereby winning her father's cooking empire. Not only does Brianna have to deal with the unusual tastes of those living in Monster City, she has to compete with her talented brothers and the delightfully evil Madame Crone. Selina Espiritu's illustrations and Sam Sykes talented writing creates a wonderfully touching and exciting series. Pat adds, "Its level of depth and beautiful art style reminds me of the award winning cartoon, Stephen Universe. It's an ideal book for any comic enthusiast and an ideal gift for the Holiday season."

EARLY JANUARY EVENT BOOKS

I haven't been able to read up on authors we host from January 4-9 so below are quotes from those who have. More from me in the New Year. In addition to the authors below, we have a fabulous lineup of Deanna Raybourn and Lauren Willig with Tasha Alexander; Nick Petrie and Andrew Grant with Hank Phillippi Ryan; and Douglas Preston with Lincoln Child January 14-16. Plus more fun such as John Sandford flying over to converse with Mick Herron on Jan. 28. Plan now!

Ashley, Jennifer. [Death Below Stairs](#) (Berkley \$15). The *PW* Starred Review: "Set in 1881, this exceptional series launch from Ashley introduces Kat Holloway, a brilliant cook employed in the lavish London home of Lord Rankin. The cast of distinctive, well-drawn characters includes Lady Cynthia, Lord Rankin's cross-dressing sister, who embodies the plight of Victorian women forced into lives that don't fit them; Daniel McAdam, a charming, secretive delivery man who helped Kat in a time of great need before she joined Lord Rankin's household; and James, Daniel's sweet, fiercely independent 15-year-old son. Kat and Daniel, aided by James and Lady Cynthia, investigate the murder of a young servant, battle Fenians, and race to thwart an act of terrorism. Kat's displays of her knowledge of food and preparation techniques add to the story's appeal. Readers will look forward to this fascinating lead's further adventures"—as do we for our **January History Paperback Club Pick** signed January 6. I add that Mrs. Beeton served as a partial inspiration for the character of Mrs. Holloway.

Massey, Sujata. [The Widows of Malabar Hill](#) (Soho \$26.95). Yet another Starred Review: "Set in India in 1921, this outstanding series launch from Agatha-winner Massey introduces Perveen Mistry, Bombay's first female solicitor, who works for her father's law firm, handling contracts and estate work. Faisal Mukri, the trustee of the estate of recently deceased textile-mill owner Omar Farid, writes to the Mistry firm to request changes in the estate settlement, claiming that Farid's three widows want

to donate all their assets to a charitable foundation that would benefit the needy while paying them an annuity. The paperwork documenting the widows' intentions appears suspect, and Perveen's visit to their home and her conversation with Mukri only strengthen her conviction that something irregular is at work. Her due diligence in insuring that the widows' interests are protected eventually enmeshes her in a murder investigation. The period detail and thoughtful characterizations, especially of the capable, fiercely independent lead, bode well for future installments." And yet another Star: "In addition to getting an unusual perspective on women's rights and relationships, readers are treated to a full view of historical downtown Bombay—the shops and offices, the docks and old fort, and the huge variety of conveyances, characters, and religions—in an unforgettable olio that provides the perfect backdrop to the plot and subplots. Each of the many characters is uniquely described, flaws and all, which is the key to understanding their surprising roles in the well-constructed puzzle." —*Booklist*. Many of have read and enjoyed Massey's Rei Shimura mysteries in the past.

McKinlay, Jenn. [Every Dog Has His Day](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Bluff Point brewery owner Zachary Caine wants nothing to do with commitment. His wild bachelor lifestyle suits him perfectly—until a foster kitten named Chaos makes him a reluctant hero. Now he's BFFs with the kitten's two little girls and finds himself falling for their gorgeous mother, who couldn't think less of him. Divorced mother Jessie Connelly wants nothing to do with men like Zach. He's sexy and charismatic and bad news, just like her ex. But her girls adore him, and he's doing a good job filling in for their deadbeat dad. Then a snowstorm brings out the best in both neighbors, who, it turns out, have more in common than their mutual attraction. So when Jessie's past threatens her and her girls, Zach is determined to do whatever it takes to protect them.... 3rd in the Bluff Point series.

Perry, Thomas. [The Bomb Maker](#) (Mysterious Press \$26). "A gripping, clock-ticking plot, awash in fascinating details about bomb making and detection." powers a classic Thomas Perry. "An explosive (pun intended) new book from an old pro. Thomas Perry has skillfully captured the super stressful world of the LAPD Bomb Squad, and gotten deep into the head of a mad bomber. This is the ultimate cat-and-mouse game, a story so tense and riveting that you'll find yourself holding your breath as the timer ticks off the seconds. *The Bomb Maker* is a unique achievement, a wonderful mix of psychological thriller and high-tech entertainment. Perry always delivers."—Nelson DeMille. Movie rights are already sold, too.

Siger, Jeffrey. [An Aegean April](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95 or \$15.95). Siger's ripped-from-the-headlines ninth mystery featuring Chief Insp. Andreas Kaldis combines a convincing police procedural with lurid thriller elements. When an elderly Greek philanthropist is sliced in half with a sword on Lesbos, the police grab Ali Sera, who works at a refugee-aid NGO on the island, as a handy scapegoat. Dana McLaughlin, Ali's feisty boss, isn't convinced. Neither are Kaldis and his tough Athens-based team of cops, who begin a tortuous investigation that must not only deal with physical evidence but also work around government corruption and the distrust between Greece and Turkey. Meanwhile, a crazed but clever assassin, who calls himself Aryan, has decided he wants to take over the refugee-smuggling racket in the eastern Mediterranean and is eliminating the Turkish gangsters who stand in his

way. When Aryan returns to Greece to get rid of Dana, Kaldis and the other police struggle to stay ahead of the madman. "Vivid local color, agreeable central characters, and exciting action scenes make this a winner." And a book well worth discussing in a book club. I recommend reading this wonderfully crafted series set in modern Greece but always referencing the country's past in order: and [you can order them all](#).

Taylor, Brad. [Operator Down](#) (Dutton \$27). "Former Delta Force officer Taylor relies on his familiarity with modern combat logistics to create credible characters and complex plots that pulse with intense intrigue, authenticity, and realism. Fans of military thrillers will enjoy how this narrative mirrors current events in the worldwide war on terror."—*LJ*. What starts as a surveillance job for Pike, pal Knuckles, and sidekick and love interest Jennifer—all members of the extralegal counterterrorism group known as Taskforce—takes a deadly turn after a coup in the African kingdom of Lesotho. Diamonds are involved, as is an arms dealer who's bartering trigger components for nuclear devices to pay for the coup. Meanwhile, Pike's Israeli spy friend, Aaron Bergmann, gets captured and needs to be rescued. Shoshana, is always entertaining, as she can be counted on to kill, in the most horrific manner, anyone who gets in her way or threatens her beloved Aaron. Pike has been partially tamed by Jennifer, but he's still happy to go off reservation when needed, much to the dismay of his Taskforce boss—and much to the delight of series fans. Order all the [Taskforce thrillers](#).

POISONED PEN GIFT IDEAS

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 to join. And think of giving a membership in a club to yourself as a gift. Who better than you?

THE POISONED PEN STAFF SUGGESTS FAVORITES FROM 2017

Here are recommendations from our staff that will aid you in both selecting books and asking one who matches your taste for recommendations:

John Charles, customer service, reviewer, baker, women's fiction and romance specialist who often surprises us by the books he loves (read his BookNotes which post mid-month)

Arlen, Tessa. [A Death by Any Other Name](#) (\$25.99 Signed). Miss *Downton Abbey*? Try Tessa's superb historicals.

Higgins, Kristan. [On Second Thought](#) (\$15.99). You'll laugh and you'll cry but you will be glad you read this.

Patrick, Renee. [Dangerous to Know](#) (\$25.99 Signed). More fun than binge watching TCM. Plus Edith Head, *costumier par excellence*, is fun to watch too.

Richmond, Michelle. [The Marriage Pact](#) (\$27). *The Firm* meets *The Stepford Wives* in this stunning thriller.

Lesla Holstine, our blogger, a librarian and reviewer and book lover who reads widely and appreciatively

Adams, Ellery. [The Secret Book and Scone Society](#) (Kensington \$25 Signed) is an intense, riveting mystery. Nora Pennington, owner of the local bookstore, has a passion and knowledge of books that is unbelievable. She matches people with the books they need. But, when a man dies after talking with her about books, she teams up with three other strong women, who all have secrets. I'm recommending Ellery Adams' new series, beginning with *The Secret Book & Scone Society*, to everyone who loves Adams' Books by the Bay mysteries, readers who love Sarah Addison Allen, and all of us who love books about books.

Hogsett, Annie. [Too Lucky to Live](#) (\$15.95). This is a handsome trade paperback original. And *Too Lucky to Live* is a treat. The debut introduces Allie Harper's refreshing voice, and a sexy, hot couple. When Allie, the narrator says, "I have always felt that with some training, I'd make an excellent P.I. A cross between V.I. Warshawski and Kinsey Millhone, with a dash of Stephanie Plum, Bounty Hunter, thrown in for insouciance", she hits the nail on the head. When she teams up with blind college professor Thomas Bennington III, who discovers he won the lottery's big prize, it's a match made in heaven in the rollicking mystery.

Johnson, Craig. [The Western Star](#) (\$28 Signed). The latest Longmire mystery will appeal to fans of Agatha Christie and train buffs and ties into *Murder on the Orient Express* in Wyoming way.

Quincy, DM. [Murder in Mayfair](#) (\$26.99). Fans of Georgette Heyer's Regency romances or Charles Finch's Charles Lenox mysteries will want to try D.M. Quincy's debut historical mystery, *Murder in Mayfair*. The wit, clothing and setting bring Regency London to life in a mystery with satisfying twists. Adventurer Atlas Catesby rescues a woman by buying her when her husband auctions her off. However, the two become suspects when her husband is murdered.

Pat King, administrator of our Mystery of the Month Club and our SciFi/Fantasy enthusiast who also loves crime fiction

Beck, Haylen. [Here and Gone](#) (\$26)

Doctorow, Cory. [Walkaway](#) (\$26.99 Signed)

Price, Daniel. [Song of the Orphans](#) (\$28 Signed)

Sternberg, Adam. [The Blinds](#) (\$26.99)

Tracy Kingsley, customer service. Always on the lookout for a strong female character. "If I like a character I will follow them anywhere. A big believer in reading a series in order—always!"

Colbert, Stephen. [Stephen Colbert's Midnight Confessions](#) (\$19.99). Fast and very funny read—perfect for Christmas!

Gunn, Elizabeth. [Denny's Law](#) (special order). Set in Tucson—nice sense of place.

Harper, Jane. [The Dry](#) (\$25.99). A twisty little Australian mystery with a character returning to his home town to face his history

Quinn, Spencer. [The Right Side](#) (\$26 Signed) makes a wonderful change of pace by the author of the Chet and Bernie mysteries.

Sharp, Zoe. [Fox Hunter](#) (\$27.99 Signed). The newest entry in the terrific Charlie Fox series with a strong female lead

Sharon Leonard, customer service, reads mostly fiction, some more "character-driven" mysteries versus hard crime (Diana Gabaldon, Lisa Scottoline, Kate Atkinson ...), and loves historical fiction where you can learn as well as enjoy a good story.

Lodato, Victor. [Edgar and Lucy](#) (\$18). A gripping tale of two disturbing characters who you grow to admire and even love as they face their own personal tragedies.

Ng, Celeste. [Little Fires Everywhere](#) (\$27). A compelling tale about race and privilege, the bonds of motherhood and how they are defined, and the question of past faults and their impact on the future.

Ward, Jesmyn. [Sing Unburied Sing](#) (\$26). A searing portrait of a southern family—an imperfect mother, a boy on the verge of being a man, and a wandering unsettled ghost who has to impart his ugly truths and wisdom before he can rest.

Dana Miles, our webmaster and social media guru, reads across a wide spectrum. She's joining me in adding podcasts to our Facebook Live and Livestream videos.

Fisher, Carrie. [The Princess Diarist](#) (\$16)

Gaiman, Neil. [Norse Mythology](#) (\$25.99)

Hanson, Hart. [The Driver](#) (\$26)

Harper, Jordan. [She Rides Shotgun](#) (\$28)

Hill, Joe. [Strange Weather](#) (\$27.99)

Locke, Attica. [Bluebird, Bluebird](#) (\$26)

Patrick Millikin, lover of dark crimes, true crimes, and books about the West among his widely ranging passions which you can see in his 2017 Best list:

Blauner, Peter. [Proving Ground](#) (\$25.99)

Coleman, Reed Farrel. [What You Break](#) (\$27 Signed)

Connelly, Michael. [The Late Show](#) (\$28 Signed)

Everett, Percival. [So Much Blue](#) (\$16)

Harper, Jordan. [She Rides Shotgun](#) (\$28)

Ide, Joe. [Righteous](#) (\$26)

Kent, Kathleen. [The Dime](#) (\$26)

Locke, Attica. [Bluebird, Bluebird](#) (\$26)

Machado, Carmen. [Her Body and Other Parties](#) (\$16)
Mullen, Thomas. [The Lightning Men](#) (\$26)
Post, Steph. [Lightwood](#) (\$25.99)
Smith, Michael Farris. [Desperation Road](#) (\$27)

Karen Shaver, customer service. Scandinavian noir (she's from Duluth) and psychological suspense and a sense of place or history—and strong storytelling

Child, Lee, ed. [Matchup](#) (\$27)
Goldman, Matt. [Gone to Dust](#) (\$25.99)
Grann, David. [Killers of the Flower Moon](#) (\$28.95)
Green, Layton. [Written in Blood](#) (\$15.95)
Hall, Rachel Howell. [City of Saviors](#) (\$26.99)
McDermid, Val. [Insidious Intent](#) (\$26)
Palmer, Matthew. [Enemy of the Good](#) (\$28)
Sullivan, Mark. [Beneath a Scarlet Sky](#) (\$14.95 Signed)

Smith, William. Bill is our newest shipping and back room stalwart. And he loves books.

Saunders, George. [Lincoln in the Bardo](#) (\$28)

Wingfield, Erika. Erika is one of our two new staff members and settling in to working both in customer service and in shipping operations

Thomas, Sherry. [A Study in Scarlet Women](#) (\$15)

And if you are looking for another Best List, here is the [Washington Post's](#)

SIGNED BOOKS

Axelrod, Steven. [Nantucket Red Tickets](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95). Our **December Surprise Me Club Pick** riffs on Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, and so makes an excellent holiday read and gift! "Even though Henry Kennis has been Nantucket's chief of police for several years, he's still viewed as a relative newcomer on "the Rock," especially by the families who've lived on the island for generations. And for the working people who can barely meet expenses while the superrich off-islanders are pouring in to build bigger and bigger mansions, the annual holiday lottery of red tickets—offering \$5,000 in prizes donated by local businesses—is a coveted opportunity to brighten up the holidays. Meanwhile, a missing Santa Claus, stolen Toys for Tots that supposedly contain treasures, and a series of drug buys keep Kennis and his staff hopping, along with the discovery that someone may be rigging the red tickets. Plus the daughter of the town crier gets food poisoning, recently exhumed skeletal remains start looking more and more like those of a murder victim, and the island's very own Scrooge maneuvers to avoid the consequences of a 20-year-old crime. "But with the help of Kennis—the shrewd, street-wise cop who writes poetry on the side and is willing to break the rules to get the best results for the most people—fans can keep wishing for an outcome worthy of Dickens and the holiday season. In the fourth installment of this seabound series, Axelrod and his protagonist bring an amused, judicious, and ultimately tolerant eye to the foibles large and small of a mixed Santa's bag of characters."—*Kirkus Reviews*

Burke, James Lee. [Robicheaux](#) (Simon Schuster \$27.99). **On sale January 2**; best to order now! Five years after his last case in far-off Montana (*Light of the World*, 2013), sometime sheriff's detective Dave Robicheaux returns to Iberia Parish, Louisiana. Jimmy Nightingale's silver-tongued charm may destine him for

the Senate, but he's certainly mixing with some dark powers along the way, most notably his backer Fat Tony Nemo, who's made his bones in politics, porn, and drugs. As part owner of a financial company that's issued a reverse mortgage on the house owned by Dave's old buddy Clete Purcel, Tony ends up with a fistful of Clete's markers, squeezes him hard, and isn't impressed when Dave borrows money of his own to retire the debt. Jimmy himself seems invincible until he's accused of rape by Rowena Broussard, the painter and photographer whose husband is eccentric novelist Levon Broussard, whose Civil War fiction Tony would love to film. When Jimmy indignantly protests his innocence, Dave points out, "People do things when they're drunk that they would never do sober." And Dave should know. During a murder investigation, Dave Robicheaux discovers he may have committed the homicide he's investigating, one which involved the death of the man who took the life of Dave's beloved wife. As he works to clear his name and make sense of the murder, Robicheaux encounters a cast of characters and a resurgence of dark social forces that threaten to destroy all of those whom he loves. *Kirkus* comments, "The intimations of mortality that have hovered over this series for 30 years have never been sharper or sadder."

Chakraborty, SA. [City of Brass](#) (Harper Voyage \$25.99). Our **December SciFi/Fantasy Club Pick** is compared to many strong established books such as *Ember in the Ashes* and *The Golem* and the *Jinni*, both of which do share potential audiences with it. "However, given *City of Brass*' extensively detailed and imaginative *Arabian Nights* world-building, the series it really calls out to for a comparison is Stroud's Bartimaeus quartet. The two books share many core elements, an ascending scale of beings of power. Djinn, Ifrits and Marids, that is. They both employ King Solomon and his mighty ring as a key figure in human and Djinn relations. Finally each book considers the mechanisms of Djinn slavery to human masters and the role of their interplay in the politics of class. *Bartimaeus* and *City of Brass* are made of the same elements, one might say, and their strikingly original and independent characteristics do them each honor. The key aspect of *City of Brass* which distinguishes it from *Bartimaeus* lies in its interpretation of King Solomon. Solomon used his ring to bind Djinn to mortal bodies, dramatically changing their nature. He also divided them into four tribes several of which embraced these changes as a gift, and yet there was opposition. As a result Djinn are long lived, powerful magic wielders and yet they are not only mortal but can mate with humans, though that is not looked well upon. The use of tribes to particularize abilities, along with a brilliantly realized political history of the Djinn, who largely live apart from humans in *The City of Brass*, sets up a world into which the book's central character, 20-year-old Nahri, a Cairo grifter whose preternatural healing abilities were inexplicable to her until she summons a Daeva accidentally and learns her true nature and parentage."

Crais, Robert. [The Wanted](#) (Putnam \$28). **Publishes December 26** and may arrive even later. When single mother Devon Connor hires private investigator Elvis Cole, it's because her troubled teenage son Tyson is flashing cash and she's afraid he's dealing drugs. But the truth is devastatingly different. With two other partners in crime, he's been responsible for a string of high-end burglaries, a crime spree that takes a deadly turn when one of

them is murdered and Tyson and his girlfriend disappear. They stole the wrong thing from the wrong man. Determined to get it back, he has hired a team that is smart and brutal, and to even the odds, Cole calls in his friends Joe Pike and Jon Stone. But even they may be overmatched....

Erdrich, Louise. [The Future Home of the Living God](#) (Harper \$28.99). The No. 1 November Indie Next Pick: "Powerful, prophetic, and absolutely pertinent to our times, Louise Erdrich's new novel is a horrifying, haunting story about the lengths the government will go to control women's reproductive rights and ensure the success of mankind as we know it. Riveting, repulsive, and revealing at the same time, Erdrich captures the essence of Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and spins a new twist sure to tantalize and terrorize readers' thoughts and play on their fears. Once again, Erdrich challenges societal constraints and conceives a novel guaranteed to leave you guessing.

Hall, Tarquin. [The Delhi Detective's Handbook](#) (\$15). This charmer of a small hardback channels a conceit that Vish Puri, the Delhi Detective, has written it. Thus, see the entry below under Puri, Vish.

Jonasson, Ragnar. [Whiteout](#) (Orenda \$35). Two days before Christmas, a young woman is found dead beneath the cliffs of the deserted 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, twenty-five years earlier... "A modern take on an Agatha Christie-style mystery, as twisty as any slalom..." Ian Rankin on this latest entry in the award-winning Dark Iceland series.

Lawton, John. [Friends and Traitors](#) (Grove \$26). This fall has been rich in spy thrillers both modern and historical. One of my favorite British sleuths, Chief Superintendent Frederick Troy—first met in the brilliant blitz-set novel [Black Out](#) (\$14) when Troy was a Detective Sergeant and which is focused on the difficulties of policing London in wartime—is in Vienna. There he runs across an old acquaintance, noted spy and traitor Guy Burgess, who wants to come back to Britain. And after a MI-5 agent is gunned down, Troy finds himself the main suspect.

Maguire, Gregory. [Hiddensee: A Tale of the Once and Future Nutcracker](#) (Morrow \$26.99 Signed). The Indie Next Pick: "This origin story of the *Nutcracker*'s creator blurs the lines of fantasy. In it, we are treated to the best commentary on mythology, whether Greek or Germanic. Resurrected from death at a young age, Dirk Drosselmeier returns to the living with a gift from the great god Pan. As he grows older, Dirk remains young at heart and becomes a master figurine and toy maker. Maguire's gift at fleshing out characters of beloved and classic tales is so evident in *Hiddensee* that it will keep you reading at all costs."

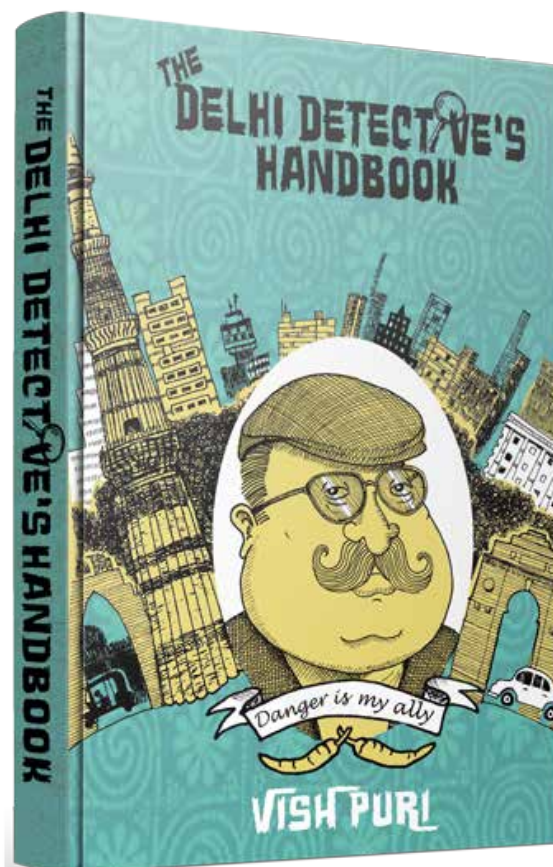
Page, Katherine Hall. [The Body in the Casket](#) (Harper \$27). Agatha-winner Page's 24th Faith Fairchild mystery is a cracking good traditional manor house mystery. Faith isn't enthusiastic about leaving her family for three days to cater the birthday celebration of legendary Broadway impresario Maxwell Dane—at least not until Max offers to pay her more than she has ever earned for a single event. But Max wants Faith for her sleuthing

ability as much as for her catering skills. Someone recently had a coffin delivered to Rowan House, Max's mansion in Havencrest, Mass., and he suspects the grim warning came from one of the people who had roles in his last and most ignominious Broadway production, a spectacular flop entitled *Heaven or Hell*. Who wants Max dead? Is it the director Max fired, the embittered set designer, the slighted actress who should have had the lead, or one of the other artists whose careers were never the same again? The recipes are a treat but the real delight is Page's assured and stylish prose and the way she digs into Faith's Manhattan roots and sensibilities, and the world of theater. Plus the menus she cooks for the house party are amazing! Highly recommended.

Pochoda, Ivy. [Wonder Valley](#) (Ecco \$26.99). "Destined to be a classic L.A. novel."—Michael Connelly. In the *City of Angels*: here's Ren, in search of his mother. There's Owen and James, teenage twins whose father Patrick holds a powerful sway over his disciples. There's Britt, harboring secrets of her own, who captures Patrick's attention. There's Tony, a bored and unhappy lawyer, and there's Blake, a violent drifter hiding in the desert, whose path collides with Patrick's in a shocking way. Our Patrick has selected this for the **December Hardboiled Crime Club Pick**.

Preston, Douglas/Lincoln Child. [City of Endless Night](#) (Grand Central \$28). A new Agent Pendergast publishes January 16 when Doug joins us in a program with Lincoln. Our copies are signed by both authors. It's never too early to reserve your copy.

Puri, Vish [Tarquin Hall]. [The Delhi Detective's Handbook](#) (\$15 Signed). Alexander McCall Smith says, "These books are little gems. They are beautifully written, amusing, and intensely readable." And you can easily pack one if you travel to India. A clever small hardcover (boards, not a jacket) written by Tarquin Hall



really, and with illustrations. How to groom the perfect mustache. Where to eat on a stakeout. And so much more. Plus there is a terrific video about Vish Puri's *Handbook* with a tour of Delhi to view on [Tarquin's website](#). If you have missed the Vish Puri mysteries which I have raved about over and over, [buy all four of them](#) for just the right holiday (or anytime) reading. Read in order starting with one of my favorite debuts of this century: [The Case of the Missing Servant](#). Tarquin dropped off our Signed copies of VP's handbook in London and has promised me he is writing a new case for Vish that will publish in 2018! These are such a delight, cozy but with edge and drawing a keen portrait of the Indian city. For a video treat I recommend you turn to Acorn and *The Good Karma Hospital*, Season 1. Great cast which includes the women who played the housekeeper in *Downtown Abbey* and Amanda Redman who was the first police squad leader in *New Tricks*.

Ritter, Krysten. [Bonfire](#) (Crown \$26). "In this fast-paced thriller, successful environmental lawyer Abby Williams is brought back to her small Indiana town for work, where Optimal Plastics, a company that has helped rebuild the town and its economy, is under suspicion for water pollution. While investigating the pollution claims, Abby also becomes obsessed with discovering what happened to a classmate who disappeared 10 years earlier after a scandal that left many unanswered questions — a disappearance that has haunted her for years. In both cases, the search for truth leads Abby down a dark path of corruption and secrets. This is a remarkable debut novel and the must-read thriller of this fall." And our **December First Mystery Club Pick**.

Sharp, Zoe. [Fox Hunter](#) (Pegasus \$27). Special Forces soldier-turned-bodyguard Charlotte "Charlie" Fox can never forget the men who put a brutal end to her military career, but a longtime ago she vowed she would not go looking for them. But now her boss Sean is missing in Iraq, and when one of her long-ago adversaries is found murdered, Charlie fears that Sean maybe pursuing a twisted vendetta on her behalf.

Smith, Alexander McCall. [A Distant View of Everything](#) (Pantheon \$25.95). In the 11th Isabel Dalhousie, a new baby brings joy to Isabel and her husband, Jamie—but almost-four-year-old Charlie is none too keen on his newborn brother. In fact, he refuses to acknowledge Magnus, and Isabel must find a way to impress upon her older son the patience and understanding that have served as guiding principles in her own life. These are the very qualities that bring Bea Shandon, an old acquaintance of Isabel's, to seek her help in a tricky situation. Something of a matchmaker, Bea has introduced a wealthy female friend to a cosmetic surgeon at her most recent dinner party. Then new information comes to light about the surgeon that causes Bea to doubt his motives and the auspiciousness of the match. Isabel agrees to find out more, but as her enquiries take an unexpected turn, she starts to wonder whom exactly she should be investigating.

We have a new supply of Smith's [The House of Unexpected Sisters](#) (\$25.95), the latest No. 1 Ladies Detective Club mystery set in Botswana.

⌘Upson, Nicola. [Nine Lessons](#) (Faber \$32). Our **December History/Mystery Club Pick** lovingly explores 1937 Cambridge with Josephine Tey who has come to join her lover Marta Fox in a flat. Only Marta is called to America and Josephine finds herself with twin burdens: one a secret that may shatter her oldest friend, DCI

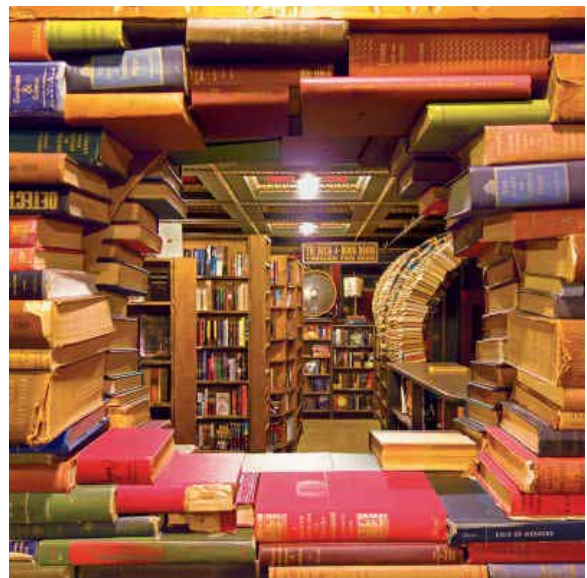
Archie Penrose; the other an attack/rape of a neighbor, a promising nursing student. Archie in fact arrives in Cambridge propelled by a hideous crime—a church organist beaten and buried alive in a North London graveyard—where the clue points to King's College and more specifically, its famed choir prior to WWI. As a series of horrific murders follows, seemingly mirroring ghost stories by the eminent Cambridge don MR James, Archie's and Josephine's lives and investigations twist and twine around one another, and around the present and the past. This book is a real pleasure to read and brings life in England between the two World Wars vividly to life. The Signed edition may sell out before you read this but you can order the US edition: [Nine Lessons](#) (\$26.99).

Westerson, Jerri. [Booke of the Hidden](#) (Diversions \$14.99). This is a paperback original taking Westerson in a new direction. To get a fresh start, Kylie Strange moves across the country to open a shop in a seemingly quiet town in rural Maine. During renovations on Strange Herbs & Teas, she discovers a peculiar and ancient codex, the *Booke of the Hidden*, bricked into the wall. While puzzling over the tome's oddly blank pages, Kylie gets an unexpected visitor—Erasmus Dark, an inscrutable stranger who claims to be a demon, knows she has the book, and warns her that she has opened a portal to the netherworld. Kylie brushes off this nonsense, until a series of bizarre murders put her, the newcomer, at the center. With the help of the demon and a coven of witches she befriends while dodging the handsome but sharp-eyed sheriff, Kylie hunts for a killer. "Westerson creates an utterly believable history of witches, demons, and magic for her claustrophobic New England village including a heroine with enough spark, smarts, and stubbornness to keep both the bad guys and the deliciously dangerous love-interest on their toes." —Kat Richardson, author of the Greywalker series

MORE BOOKS ABOUT THE WORLD OF BOOKS AND PRINTING

I listed several in the Holiday Booknews. Here are several more. But first, love this jigsaw puzzle

[The Bookshop Puzzle](#) (\$14.95). And also [The Paris Library Puzzle](#) (\$17.95).



Edwards, Martin. [The Story of Classic Crimes in 100 Books](#) (\$29.95 or \$15.95)

Sssh... I'll let you in on a little secret. Count the books as you read your way right through this charmer which looks at books published during the first half of the 20th Century. Here's a spot-on review from a reader: "This book is a discussion of crime fiction published during the first half of the twentieth century in 100 books. I've become very interested in the history of the genre in which I write over the past couple of years, and this book is very illuminating, especially when discussing the origins of the Golden Age, the Great Detectives and some more obscure titles that until more recently (thanks to the efforts of the author and the British Library) were forgotten about along the way. Entertaining and informative, this book has me adding lots of titles to my toppling TBR list."

Garfield, Simon. [Just My Type](#) (\$17). This is one of my very favorite books. It ranges far afield over aspects of life you might not even consider in terms of type and icons, which grow ever more important in an age of global travel. Garfield's discussion of selecting the right type for the London underground is brilliant. A capsule summary: Fonts surround us every day, on street signs and buildings, on movie posters and books, and on just about every product that we buy. But where do fonts come from and why do we need so many? Who is behind the businesslike subtlety of Times New Roman, the cool detachment of Arial, or the maddening lightness of Comic Sans (and the movement to ban it)? Simon Garfield's mission is to answer questions, and reveal what may be the very best and worst fonts in the world.

Guran, Paula. [Ex Libris](#) (\$12.95). This captivating compilation of science fiction and fantasy short fiction showcases stories of librarians-mysterious curators, heroic bibliognosts, arcane archivists, catalogers of very special collections-and libraries-repositories of arcane wisdom, storehouses of signals from other galaxies, bastions of culture, the last outposts of civilization in a post-apocalyptic world . . . grand adventures and small sagas of the magical places we call libraries and the wizards who staff them! You can search our webstore for library/book mysteries by Kate Carlisle, Eva Gates, and Jenn McKinlay.

Hammer, Joshua. [The Bad-Ass Librarians of Timbuktu](#) (\$16). A real thriller this as we follow a race to save some of the world's most precious manuscripts from destruction by fanatics. I recommend a very entertaining look at Timbuktu as a center for books as well as learning about the journeys of the amazing 12th Century explorer Ibn Battuta as found in the mystery [Sherlock Holmes, The Missing Years; Timbuktu](#) (\$15.95 or \$26.95).

McNeil, Paul. [The Visual History of Type](#) (King \$85). This one is really for professionals in design and publishing but it's fascinating, displaying "more than 320 faces, from the mid-1400s to today, in their initial design and early printing. Some fonts have veritable biographies. Some did "not survive the technological transitions to machine composition, phototyping, or the digital error." Who knew that the fate of a font could be poignant or, for that matter, than type fonts could look so original?"—*WSJ*

Romney, Rebecca. [Printer's Error](#) (Harper \$26.99). A funny and entertaining history of printed books as told through absurd moments in the lives of authors and printers, collected by television's favorite rare-book expert from HISTORY's hit series Pawn Stars. Since the Gutenberg Bible first went on sale in 1455, print-

ing has been viewed as one of the highest achievements of human innovation. But the march of progress hasn't been smooth; downright bizarre is more like it. *Printer's Error* chronicles some of the strangest and most humorous episodes in the history of Western printing, and makes clear that we've succeeded despite ourselves.

Stamper, Kory. [Word by Word: The Secret Life of Dictionaries](#) (Pantheon \$26.95). Few may realize that the process of writing dictionaries is, in fact, as lively and dynamic as language itself. With sharp wit and irreverence, Kory Stamper cracks open the complex, obsessive world of lexicography, from the agonizing decisions about what to define and how to do it, to the knotty questions of usage in an ever-changing language. She explains why small words are the most difficult to define, how it can take nine months to define a single word, and how our biases about language and pronunciation can have tremendous social influence. And along the way, she reveals surprises—for example, the fact that "OMG" was first used in a letter to Winston Churchill in 1917.

To repeat those recommended in the Holiday Booknews:

Carrión, Jose. [Bookshops: A Cultural History](#) (Biblioasis \$24.95). This is the perfect book for those who feel compelled to visit every bookstore they see

De Hamel, Christopher. [Meetings with Remarkable Manuscripts](#) (Penguin \$35). De Hamel, a renowned British authority on medieval manuscripts, reveals his devotion to his trade in a glorious book about 12 documents.

DK. [Remarkable Books](#) (DK \$30). A beautifully illustrated guide to more than 75 of the world's most celebrated, rare, and seminal books and handwritten manuscripts ever produced, with discussions of their purpose, features, and creators.

Puchner, Martin. [The Written World](#) (Random \$32). Harvard Professor Puchner covers the subject of *The Written World: The Power of Stories to Shape People, History, Civilization*. Circling the globe and spanning human history from the invention of writing to the Internet age, Puchner's book is a lively account of how literature has transformed humanity.

FICTION ABOUT THE BOOK WORLD

Adams, Ellery. [The Secret Book and Scone Society](#) (Kensington \$25 Signed). In the spirit of Carolyn G Hart's *Death on Demand Mysteries* or Joan Hess' bookseller Claire Malloy series, a cozy referencing all sorts of mysteries as the owner of Miracle Books in Miracle Springs, NC, investigates the murder of a potential customer who thus never gets a chance for Nora to prescribe the perfect book for him....

Cogman, Genevieve. [The Invisible Library](#) (\$15). Collecting books can be a dangerous prospect in this fun, time-traveling, fantasy adventure from a spectacular debut author. Irene is a professional spy for the mysterious Library, a shadowy organization that collects important works of fiction from all of the different realities. Most recently, she and her enigmatic assistant Kai have been sent to an alternative London. Their mission: Retrieve a particularly dangerous book. The problem: By the time they arrive, it's already been stolen. London's underground factions are prepared to fight to the death to find the tome before Irene and Kai do, a problem compounded by the fact that this world is chaos-infested—the laws of nature bent to allow supernatural creatures and unpredictable magic to run rampant. To make mat-

ters worse, Kai is hiding something—secrets that could be just as volatile as the chaos-filled world itself. [Continue the fun with Cogman](#) in *The Burning Page*, *The Masked City*, and in January, *The Lost Plot*.

Connolly, John, ed. [Books to Die For](#) (\$17). The world's most beloved mystery writers celebrate their favorite mystery novels in this entertaining collection, featuring essays by Lee Child, Michael Connelly, Kathy Reichs, Ian Rankin, and more.

Dunning, John. [Booked to Die](#) (\$17). Still our bestselling paperback ever (followed by Walker's Bruno, Chief of Police, but that's off topic...). No one who loves mysteries and books should miss this classic, set in Denver among book collectors, and embracing nearly every genre of crime fiction from the police procedural to the amateur sleuth. Plus, there's a genuine MacGuffin (Google it if you don't know about MacGuffins, which are rare). Read on to explore other aspects of the book world including forgery with [Cliff Janeway](#), Dunning's sleuth. A brain tumor cut short the career of this beloved author, an expert on books and crime who fell down a rabbit hole or two in pursuit of other passions so we have fewer Janeways.

George, Nina. [The Little Paris Bookshop](#) (\$15). Monsieur Perdu calls himself a literary apothecary. From his floating bookstore in a barge on the Seine, he prescribes novels for the hardships of life. Using his intuitive feel for the exact book a reader needs, Perdu mends broken hearts and souls. The only person he can't seem to heal through literature is himself; he's still haunted by heartbreak after his great love disappeared. She left him with only a letter, which he has never opened. After Perdu is finally tempted to read the letter, he hauls anchor and departs on a mission to the south of France, hoping to make peace with his loss and discover the end of the story. Joined by a bestselling but blocked author and a lovelorn Italian chef, Perdu travels along the country's rivers, dispensing his wisdom and his books.

Penzler, Otto, ed. [Bibliomysteries](#) (Pegasus \$26.95). This anthology of Crimes in the World of Books and Bookstores includes stories by some of today's iconic crime writers.

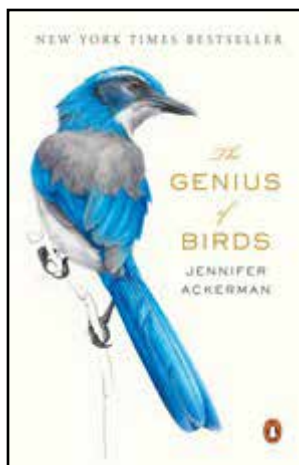
Pryor, Mark. [The Paris Librarian](#) (\$15.95) presents a murder in the library—the American Library in Paris, with a hint of a locked-room puzzle. But begin with the first Hugo Marston, [The Bookseller](#) (\$15.95), where the famed Left Bank bookshops play into the mystery.

Sloan, Robin. [Mr. Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore](#) (\$15). This 2012 Modern Firsts Club Pick retains its magic and mystery, plus it's a love affair with books. The Great Recession has shuffled Clay Jannon away from life as a San Francisco web-design drone and into the aisles of Mr. Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore. But after a few days on the job, Clay discovers that the store is more curious than either its name or its gnomic owner might suggest. The customers are few, and they never seem to buy anything—instead, they “check out” large, obscure volumes from strange corners of the store. Suspicious, Clay engineers an analysis of the clientele's behavior, seeking help from his variously talented friends. But when they bring their findings to Mr. Penumbra, they discover the bookstore's secrets extend far beyond its walls. Winner of the Alex Award, a finalist for the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize for First Fiction, named a Best Book of the Year by NPR, *Los Angeles Times*, and *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Sullivan, Matthew. [Murder at the Bright Ideas Bookstore](#) (Scribner \$26—I'd wait for the January paperback edition @ \$17). This debut novel got a lot of attention but didn't captivate me. In part because I had no empathy at all for the killer. When a bookshop patron commits suicide, his favorite store clerk must unravel the puzzle he left behind which means investigating his life. The weight of sadness and selfishness in this book can be overwhelming.

Zevin, Gabrielle. [The Storied Life of AJ Fikry](#) (\$14.95). I love this 2014 Modern Firsts Club Pick. AJ Fikry lives alone, his bookstore is experiencing the worst sales in its history, and now his prized possession, a rare collection of Poe poems, has been stolen. But when a mysterious package appears at the bookstore, its unexpected arrival gives Fikry the chance to make his life over—and see everything anew. “This novel has humor, romance, a touch of suspense, but most of all love—love of books and bookish people and, really, all of humanity in its imperfect glory.” —Eowyn Ivey

A FEW MORE GIFT IDEAS



Ackerman, Jennifer. [The Genius of Birds](#) (\$17). A beautiful package makes this a splendid gift for a bird lover or really anyone.

Bonné, Jon. [The New Wine Rules](#) (Ten Speed Press \$14.99). This is a zingy little stocking stuffer for the wine lover, or for someone interested in exploring wine with food. It's a small size hardcover so portable, as in taking it to a restaurant, too. “Now, becoming a happier, more confident wine drinker is easy. The first step is to forget all the useless, needlessly complicated stuff the

“experts” have been telling you. In *The New Wine Rules*, acclaimed wine writer Jon Bonné explains everything you need to know in simple, beautifully illustrated, easy-to-digest tidbits. And the news is good! For example: A wine's price rarely reflects its quality. You can drink rosé any time of year. Don't save a great bottle for anything more than a rainy day.” I like this wisdom: no two bottles of wine are alike, not even two of the same wine.

Farjeon, JJ. [Mystery in White](#) (\$12.95). A UK bestseller on its rerelease and now available in the US is a classic Christmas mystery akin to the murderous house party of Agatha Christie's *Hercule Poirot's Christmas*. On Christmas Eve, heavy snowfall brings a train to a halt near the village of Hemmersby. Several passengers take shelter in a deserted country house, where the fire has been lit and the table laid for tea – but no one is at home. Trapped together for Christmas, the passengers are seeking to unravel the secrets of the empty house when a murderer strikes in their midst. Farjeon's classic is now republished for the first time since the 1930s with an Introduction by Martin Edwards.

Kix, Paul. [The Saboteur](#) (Harper \$27.99). An incredible true spy thriller featuring a French aristocrat from a storied ancient family who, age 16 when the Nazis invaded his country, trained in Scotland and became one of the major saboteurs of the French Resistance. Even more amazingly, despite the many perils and

killings of his wartime, he lived to 2012. Here's a [link to his obituary](#) which shows you that he was more James Bond than Bond, although he married and produced a family. His publishers says, Robert La Rochefoucauld's untold story "is also a deep dive into an endlessly fascinating historical moment, telling the untold story of a network of commandos that battled evil, bravely worked to change the course of history, and inspired the creation of America's own Central Intelligence Agency."

This is a gift for a WWII or history buff, Francophiles, James Bond fans, etc, etc. I also recommend a novel based on another astonishing WWII hero, a Norwegian, as recounted thrillingly in Andrew Gross' [The Saboteur](#) (\$27 Signed, and comes with two short deleted chapters in our remaining copies).

Koehn, Nancy. [Forged in Crisis: The Power of Courageous Leadership in Turbulent Times](#) (Scriber \$35). Historical—and inspirational? Harvard Business School historian Koehn spotlights five masters of crisis: polar explorer Ernest Shackleton [in contrast to Scott where all attempting the South Pole died, Shackleton brought his men home]; President Abraham Lincoln; legendary abolitionist Frederick Douglass; Nazi-resisting clergyman Dietrich Bonhoeffer; and environmental crusader Rachel Carson. What do such disparate figures have in common? Why do their extraordinary stories continue to amaze and inspire? In delivering the answers to those questions, Nancy Koehn offers a remarkable template by which to judge those in our own time to whom the public has given its trust.

LeGuin, Ursula. [No Time to Spare](#) (Houghton \$22). with an introduction by Karen Joy Fowler, a collection of thoughts—always adroit, often acerbic—on aging, belief, the state of literature, and the state of the nation. Ursula K. Le Guin has taken readers to imaginary worlds for decades. Now she's in the last great frontier of life, old age, and exploring new literary territory: the blog, a forum where her voice—sharp, witty, as compassionate as it is critical—shines. [No Time to Spare](#) collects the best of it. I will never forget the impact of reading her Earthsea Trilogy... in library school when in my thirties. You're never too old for this seminal fantasy.

Pamuk, Orhan. [Istanbul, Deluxe Edition](#) (Knopf \$45). One of my favorite cities, one I'm happy to have visited often and long. This a deluxe, updated version of the original published in 2005. Packed with more than 400 black-and-white photographs and drawings, it is a bittersweet, melancholic ode to the city's glorious past, when it was known as Constantinople, the capital of the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. Istanbul is no longer the capital but it is still the economic, cultural and historical center of Turkey, an enticing blend of East and West, straddling the Bosphorus strait, which separates Europe and Asia. Dense and fascinating, Istanbul is an emotional and multi-layered history of the city and the author's family. He "wistfully visits the city's chaotic streets, colorful markets, neglected gardens, decrepit palaces and intricately decorated mosques, in the 'accidental grace' of the city. With intimate storytelling and stark photography, Pamuk evokes the lost grandeur and magical energy of the city, its rich past and its complicated present.

Stewart, Stanley. [Ashford Castle](#) (Assouline \$95). About a decade ago Rob and I were planning a trip to Ireland and John Connolly offered to arrange it for us. Rob was a bit dubious that John would "get me" well enough for this to be a success, but when

we drove through the gates of Ashford Castle, the first thing Rob saw was its motto: "Excellence since 1228." This gorgeous property with its lakeside strolls, falconry, locavore cuisine, and "all mod cons" as well as ancient glories is a magnificent hotel, the kind that hosts posh affairs and the average traveler with equal aplomb. Ever since our stay they send the most elegant and gorgeous greeting cards for holidays. Now you can visit it in this elegant book by boutique publisher Assouline which I found via an email from the castle's gift shop but discovered is located in New York. Bonus: Ashford Castle provided one of the locations for the quintessential Irish movie (for US fans anyway): *The Quiet Man*.

Since I am listing a book by Assouline, a publisher dedicated to making its Ultimate Collection an homage to the art of luxury bookmaking—"with books that are hand-bound using traditional techniques, with color plates hand-tipped on art-quality paper, each page of this limited-edition series bears the unique imprint of the artisan"—here are other Assouline gift ideas:

Lea, Robyn. [Dinner with Georgia O'Keeffe](#) (\$50). The artist purchased homes in Ghost Ranch and Abiquiú, designing and refinishing them with special emphasis on the kitchen and garden spaces that would prove to be integral to her artistic process. She reveled in being able to forage for and gather the wild ingredients in the high desert landscape that surrounded her. For O'Keeffe, food was elevated to an art form, both as a frequent subject in her work, and in its preparation and consumption. It was a conduit to her beloved Irish and Hungarian heritage, as well as a culinary memoir of her childhood on the family farm in Wisconsin. Food was also used as the primary tool in the artist's life to promote health and well-being. Featuring recipes collected from O'Keeffe's preferred cookbooks with her handwritten notes, and prepared for her by cooks and caretakers including Christine Taylor Patten and Margaret Wood. Assouline points out, it's a really pretty and practical cookbook. Goes well with a Tequila Cocktail—choose among several in another killer book, [Tequila Cocktails](#) (\$50) by Brian van Flandern.

Peper, George. [The Impossible Collection of Golf](#) (\$945—Alas, not available until Dec. 28 but we can send a gift card). Comes in a case with a surface resembling a golf ball's texture, and with a handle. Peper, former editor in chief of *Golf* magazine and 2016 PGA Lifetime Achievement Award winner for Journalism, takes readers on an incomparable golf journey as he travels the world detailing the 100 most significant, historically noteworthy, and architecturally paramount courses. Describing intricate holes that have confounded the game's best, revisiting tournaments that have made and broken champions, and elucidating the unique and truly special characteristics of each course makes Peper the perfect golf partner as he walks readers through the clubhouses, fairways, and bunkers. From greens as old and hallowed as St Andrews to courses celebrating their first anniversary such as Nova Scotia's Cabot Cliffs, from the island mountain course of China's Shanqin Bay to the Hamptons' Maidstone Club, *Golf: The Impossible Collection* is the ultimate gift to a golfer.

BRITISH LIBRARY CRIME CLASSICS

Melville, Alan. [Quick Curtain](#) (Poisoned Pen \$12.95). "Originally published in 1934, this satisfying entry in the British Library Crime Classics series from Melville (1910–1983) presents a vivid picture of London's theater world. On the opening night of a musical comedy operetta called Blue Music, the show's producer,

Douglas B. Douglas, pulls out all the stops to ensure its success, but the leading man, Brandon Baker, is shot dead, and it looks as if the show will fail. Scotland Yard Inspector Wilson—who happens to be in the audience—takes up the case with his journalist son, Derek. Melville (the pseudonym of scriptwriter and radio producer William Caverhill) uses his inside knowledge of the theater to skewer just about everyone in the business, from the actors to the critics, and satirizes popular detective fiction. The interplay between Wilson and Derek is reminiscent of that between Holmes and Watson, and a journey into a country village finds the place filled with gossips and inept policemen.”—*PW*

Melville, Alan. [Death of Anton](#) (Poisoned Pen \$12.95). Originally published in 1936, this sparkling entry in the British Library Crime Classics series by Melville (1910–1983) centers on a traveling circus. Detective Inspector Minto of Scotland Yard comes to a small unnamed English town to attend his sister’s wedding, arriving at the same time as Joseph Carey’s World-Famous Circus and Menagerie. When Anton, the circus’s tiger tamer, is found shot to death in the tiger cage, Carey urges Minto to investigate. The suspects include Dodo the clown, whose ripped costume is found near the body; Lorimar, the trapeze artist, who suspects Anton of having had an affair with his wife; Miller, who was once Anton’s partner and would like his old job back; and Carey himself, who’s clearly hiding something. Melville slowly reveals a complex web of crime encompassing most of the circus folk and even Minto’s sister’s fiancé. Readers in search of escapist entertainment need look no further

OUR DECEMBER LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

Bannalec, Jean-Luc. [Murder on Brittany Shores](#) (\$14.99). You don’t have to be a Francophile to love the Commissioner Dupin series set in the mysterious, hilly former duchy with its lengthy, rugged coastline extending into the Atlantic and its culture with nods to the Celts, a wealth of prehistoric menhirs, serious fishing, and landscapes seducing artists. Readers of the bestseller [All the Light We Cannot See](#) will know Brittany’s ancient port of St. Malo. is the sequel to one of my favorite 2015 debuts: [Death in Brittany](#) (\$15.99), which sweeps you to the picturesque coast of Brittany, a French province rooted in the Celtic (Tristan and Iseult) mythology with millennia of a fishing and boating culture (two tiny islands off the coast of Canada make up a part of this province). And into the orbit of Commissaire Georges Dupin, a Parisian-born caffeine junkie who’s been exiled to the region. His second investigation begins one day in May when three mangled corpses are found on one of the fabled Glénan Islands, a kind of archipelago that floats, sometimes completely swamped by the Atlantic, off the coast. Who are they and how did they get there? Plus how will he get there (boat or helicopter, neither his favorite). His superior is pushing, so working from a superb local bistro (great coffee, and the local lobster is superb) doesn’t pan out. Instead Dupin is drawn deeply into a region full of myths and traditions, and into its history. To get to the bottom of the case, he must tangle with treasure hunters, militant marine biologists, and dangerous divers. The investigation leads him further into the perilous, beautiful world of Glénan. The pace is slow so you can savor this fascinating landscape and the constant complexities facing Dupin as tragedies unroll.

Casarett, David. [Missing Guests of the Magic Grove Hotel](#) (Red Hook \$15.99). Fans of Alexander McCall Smith’s No. 1 Ladies

Detective Agency series will feel at home with Casarett’s stellar sequel to 2016’s [Murder at the House of Rooster Happiness](#) (\$15.99). Ladarat Patalung serves as the nurse ethicist for Chiang Mai University’s Sripat Hospital in northern Thailand. Her duties include reviewing the circumstances of deceased patients to assess whether they had “good deaths.” She has the ability to see what others do not, as well as a deep reserve of empathy to rival that of Smith’s Mma Ramotswe, qualities that come in handy when Wiriya Mookjai, her detective friend in the Chiang Mai Royal Police, asks her to help look into the disappearance of at least eight tourists, all connected to a hotel known as the Magic Grove. Ladarat visits the Magic Grove, where the reaction of the foreign proprietor to her inquiries about the most recent missing guest only fuels her suspicions that something untoward has been going on. A refreshingly admirable lead, Ladarat feels an ethical imperative to put aside her own needs to comfort those she sees in distress. Start with [Murder at the House of Rooster Happiness](#) (\$15.99).

Engel, Amy. [Roanoke Girls](#) (\$16). For me a Gothic should unfold inside a mystery-laden house: here it’s the Roanoke family homestead in isolated rural Kansas. The mystery, or rather mysteries, is why several female family members have disappeared, the latest, the one in this generation, being 15-year-old Allegra, which has baffled local law. And it pulls back her cousin Lane Roanoke, who had fled to LA as a teen shortly after her mother’s suicide during a summer where Lane and Allegra hung out. Clearly there is a serpent in what should be paradise and Lane will need to nerve herself to discover it. For me it’s not about the girls and what happened, but about one crucial characterization... Dysfunction morphing into suspense and stunning self-rationalization.

☞Hare, Cyril. [An English Murder](#) (\$14.95). Joy, a classic country house murder. Here is our **December History/Mystery Club Pick**. The snow is thick, the phone line is down, and no one is getting in or out of Warbeck Hall. All is set for a lovely Christmas, with friends and family gathered round the fire, except as the bells chime midnight, a murder is committed. But who is responsible? The scorned young lover? The lord’s passed-over cousin? The social climbing politician’s wife? The Czech history professor? The obsequious butler? And perhaps the real question is: Can they survive long enough to find out? Cyril Hare” is the *nom de plume* of Alfred Gordon Clark, one of the most influential names in English “Golden Age” crime writing. One of the few sitting judges to write crime fiction, he was serving as a county judge when he wrote this one. He died in 1958. He is the author of one of my five favorite mysteries ever: *A Tragedy at Law*. I hope Faber will reprint it.

☞Herron, Mick. [Spook Street](#) (\$15.95). Radioactive secrets and unfinished business go with the territory on Spook Street: David Cartwright’s always known there would be an accounting. And he’s not as defenseless as they might think. Jackson Lamb worked with Cartwright back in the day. He knows better than most that this is no vulnerable old man. ‘Nasty old spook with blood on his hands’ would be a more accurate description. ‘The old bastard’ has raised his grandson with a head full of guts and glory. But far from joining the myths and legends of Spook Street, River Cartwright is consigned to Lamb’s team of pen-pushing no-hopers at Slough House. So it’s Lamb they call to identify the body when Cartwright’s panic button raises the alarm at Service HQ. And Lamb who will do whatever he thinks necessary, to protect an agent in peril. Slough House is an excellent and strongly

reviewed spy series that gets less splash than warranted. [Order them all](#) and await Herron's first appearance at The Pen on January 28 in conversation with John Sandford, a serious fan.

✦McDermid, Val. [Out of Bounds](#) (\$16). When a teenage joyrider crashes a stolen car and ends up in a coma, a routine DNA test reveals a connection to an unsolved murder from 22 years before. Finding the answer to the cold case should be straightforward. But it's as twisted as the DNA helix itself. Meanwhile, Inspector Karen Pirie finds herself irresistibly drawn to another mystery that she has no business investigating, a mystery that has its roots in a terrorist bombing two decades ago. And again, she finds that nothing is as it seems. "Readers will easily connect with Karen, whose unwavering confidence is tempered by a strong dose of kindness and sense of justice ... Satisfying investigative detail, swift pacing, and realistic mysteries steeped in the intricacies of Scottish law; a sure fit for fans of Tana French and of Denise Mina's Alex Morrow series." —*Booklist* Starred Review

Moore, Jonathan. [The Dark Room](#) (\$14.99). A new work from Bram Stoker Award finalist Moore is as long on noir atmosphere as its predecessor, 2016's spellbinding psychological thriller [The Poison Artist](#) (\$14.95). It appears to be the middle of a kind of triptych featuring SFPD homicide inspector Gavin Cain. "A dying man's video confession leads to exhuming a body buried in 1985, with horrifying results: lying on top of the embalmed corpse is the body of a woman who was buried alive. Cain is pulled off this case to work one involving Mayor Harry Castelli, who has just received several incriminating photographs of a woman, with a note promising more—unless he kills himself. The mayor claims no knowledge of the woman in the photos, but since Cain's boss has hitched her star to the mayor, Cain is immediately assigned to the Castelli case, while still keeping an eye on the exhumation. Inevitably, the two cases become intertwined; meanwhile, Cain's delving into the nefarious activities of an outlawed Berkeley fraternity in the 1980s puts those dearest to him at great risk. Former medical examiner Henry Newcomb, a major player in *The Poison Artist* plays a small but key role here, as forensics puts the seal on dogged police work.

✦Morrell, David. [The Ruler of the Night](#) (\$15.99). The railway has irrevocably altered English society, effectively changing geography and fueling the industrial revolution by shortening distances between cities: a whole day's journey can now be covered in a matter of hours. People marvel at their new freedom. But train travel brings new dangers as well, with England's first death by train recorded on the very first day of railway operations in 1830. Twenty-five years later, England's first train murder occurs, paralyzing London with the unthinkable when a gentleman is stabbed to death in a safely locked first-class passenger compartment. In the next compartment, the brilliant opium-eater Thomas De Quincey and his quick-witted daughter, Emily, discover the homicide in a most gruesome manner. Key witnesses and also resourceful sleuths, they join forces with their allies in Scotland Yard, Detective Ryan and his partner-in-training, Becker, to pursue the killer back into the fogbound streets of London, where other baffling murders occur. Ultimately, De Quincey must confront two ruthless adversaries: this terrifying enemy, and his own opium addiction. *Entertainment Weekly* avers that the De Quincey novels "evoke Victorian London with such finesse that you'll hear the hooves clattering on cobblestones, the racket of dustmen, and the shrill calls of vendors." [Order all 3.](#)

Simpson, Rosemary. [What the Dead Leave Behind](#) (\$15.95). John Charles writes, "Simpson's splendid debut is the perfect blend of history and mystery with a sleuthing couple, who could easily pass as a younger version of Charlotte and Thomas Pitt. Combine this with a vividly evoked Gilded Age setting, and you truly have the start of very special new series for historical mystery lovers and historical fiction fans alike." The death of Gilded Age Judge Thomas MacKenzie leaves his daughter, Prudence, a wealthy heiress—and at the mercy of his rapacious second wife, Victoria. A few short weeks before Prudence is to marry and come into her inheritance, her fiancé, Charles Linwood, dies in an apparent accident during the monster snowstorm of spring, 1888. Realizing that she has only herself to count on in her battle with Victoria, strong-willed minor Prudence exchanges her drugged drinks for tea and, with backup from Geoffrey Hunter, Charles' old school friend, quietly searches the house for evidence that might free her from Victoria...

Taylor, Brad. [Ring of Fire](#) (\$16). Shortly before 9/11, the about-to-go-under CEO of a small Florida-based aircraft maintenance firm filled an emergency order for a Saudi prince and made a buddy of the son of a Saudi financier. One thing led to another good thing and eventually Dexter scraped together a bribe Tariq would forward that would allow Dexter to become a player in the defense industry. It works, Dexter rises in power, but then come the Panama Papers with their exposure of illicit offshore financing and Dexter knows they could prove his undoing. So he sets in motion a plan to stop the anticipated next leak. This same data theft has left the Taskforce vulnerable and potentially compromised. So as they are back in the good graces of the president, Pike Logan and Jennifer Cahill are tasked with damage control. But unbeknownst to either Dexter or the Taskforce, the Saudi has been using the shell company to fund terrorists all over the world, and he has a spectacular attack planned, coinciding with the fifteenth anniversary of 9/11. Up to the minute, pertinent, and gripping, this is the 11th in former Delta Force officer Taylor's thrillers. [You can order #1-10.](#) See Event Books for Taskforce #11.

✦Todd, Charles. [Racing the Devil](#) (\$14.99). On the eve of the dreadful Battle of the Somme, five British officers accidentally gather for drinks, share a love for motorcars, and vow that if they survive the war, they will meet in Paris and race their vehicles to Nice. In 1919 they do. En route one man is nearly run off the road...deliberately so. A year later, a rector of a Sussex church borrows the car of one of the five bettors, without permission, crashes on a dark, rainy road, and is killed. The local constable, suspicious that another vehicle was involved, calls in the Yard, which sends Inspector Ian Rutledge to work his 19th investigation.

Williams, Beatriz. [Wicked City](#) (\$15.99). John Charles writes, Williams is in top form with a time jump tale from 1990s Greenwich Village to the same location in the Jazz Age. Illegal booze, speak-easies, a resolute revenue agent, a dangerous undercover op, plus sexy men and unconventional women, one of them Geneva, known as Gin.... John Charles adds, "Williams mixes up a potent literary cocktail composed of a cast of compelling characters, an engaging plot spiked with plenty of danger, and an expertly constructed historical setting richly embellished with fascinating period details. Williams then serves up this addictively readable libation with a generous splash of sexy romance and a few nice twists of sharp humor. While *The Wicked City* is the first in a new series for Williams, long-time fans of the author's Schuyler family will be pleased to see how she works in a connection to those books as well.

DECEMBER NEW BOOKS

Ahnhem, Stefan. [The Ninth Grave. A Fabian Risk Novel](#) (St Martins \$28.99). “[A] scathing... novel. Ahnhem exposes the greed and corruption at the highest levels of society and government. Fans of Scandinavian noir won’t want to miss this disturbing thriller.” This is an interesting comment from a Starred Review as I did not warm up to this doorstep (586 pages). What we have is an unusual set of murders, serial crimes by a killer who is taking missing body parts. Not your serial killer scenario but more of someone on a mission. It begins when the Swedish minister of justice disappears while on a short walk, continues with the wife of a famous Danish TV star struck down in her luxury home north of Copenhagen, and then... The Danish murder brings in Risk’s Danish counterpart to work the crimes together. This story is set six months before Fabian debuted here in [Victim without a Face](#) (\$28.99) which won both a Swedish and a German crime fiction award.

Arden, Katherine. [The Girl in the Tower](#) (Del Rey \$27). I’m into fantasy for this holiday month. Like this one. “An extraordinary retelling of a very old tale . . . A Russian setting adds unfamiliar spice to the story of a young woman who does not rebel against the limits of her role in her culture so much as transcend them.”—Robin Hobb. Arden continues her rich, imaginative narrative following Vasya and her siblings through medieval Russia. With her faithful horse, Solovey, and a grit unheard of in most women of the time, Vasya will travel through cities and countryside, meeting princes, saving maidens, and discovering more about the ties that bind her to Morozko, the Winter King. Arden’s retelling of Russian fairy tale is absolutely enchanting.

Arellano, Robert. [Havana Libre](#) (Akashic \$15.95). Arellano, nominated for an Edgar for [Havana Lunar](#) (\$14.95), returns with a noir set in post-Soviet Cuba where things were grim. A series of 1997 bombings have set people on edge (there’s a great opening scene where the bomber moves through Customs). The attacks appear to be aimed at crippling the communist power structure, hitting densely populated tourist areas, but what if this is really about Cuban exiles? A pediatrician invited to attend a medical meeting in Miami is vulnerable to pressure by Colonel Perez of the Revolutionary police force who offers to expedite Dr. Rodriguez’s exit paperwork if in turn he goes undercover there, faking his own defection. However his contact in Miami turns out to be the father who abandoned Rodriguez and his family three decades ago.... This is a novel that can be difficult to read (the interrogation scene in particular) but it is rich in political critique and in its landscape for those who are interested in learning more about the island’s history.

Axelrod, Steven. [Nantucket Red Tickets](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95). A fast-paced, well plotted Nantucket version of A Christmas Carol—with crimes, some of them not what you might think. Police Chief Henry Kennis is not Bob Cratchit but he conducts his investigations in much the same spirit. Highly recommended. See Signed books for more on our December Surprise Me! Club Pick.

Bardugo, Leigh. [The Language of Thorns](#) (Imprint \$18.99). Wow, the cover art is nifty but it’s the art inside that grows and twines with each of the stories that kept me glued to this gem. It’s intended for ages 12-18 but if you love folklore then regardless of age, this deliciously atmospheric collection of short stories filled

with betrayals, revenge, sacrifice, and love is a real treat. I’ve ordered two boxed sets of Bardugo’s gorgeous work also: [The Grisha Trilogy](#) (\$32.99) and [The Six of Crows Duology Boxed Set](#) (\$37.98).

Block, Lawrence, ed. [Alive in Shape and Color](#) (Norton \$25.95). 17 paintings by great artists and the stories they inspired. Any number of artists has produced evocative work, paintings that could trigger a literary response. But none came to mind who could equal Hopper in turning out canvas after canvas. If no single artist could take Hopper’s place, how about a full palette of them? Suppose each author was invited to select a painting from the whole panoply of visual art—From the cave drawings at Lascaux to a contemporary abstract canvas on which the paint has barely dried. And what a dazzling response! Joyce Carol Oates picked *Le Beaux Jours* by Balthus. Warren Moore chose Salvador Dali’s *The Pharmacist of Ampurdam Seeking Absolutely Nothing*. Michael Connelly, who sent Harry Bosch to Chicago for a close look at Nighthawks, has a go at *The Garden of Earthly Delights* by Harry’s namesake Hieronymous Bosch. S. J. Rozan finds a story in Hokusai’s *The Great Wave*, while Jeffery Deaver’s “A Significant Find” draws its inspiration from—yes—those prehistoric cave drawings at Lascaux. And Kristine Kathryn Rusch moves from painting to sculpture and selects Rodin. In artists ranging from Art Frahm and Norman Rockwell to René Magritte and Clifford Still, the impressive concept goes on to include Thomas Pluck, Sarah Weinman, David Morrell, Craig Ferguson, Joe R. Lansdale, Jill D. Block, Justin Scott, Jonathan Santlofer, Gail Levin, Nicholas Christopher, and Lee Child, with each story accompanied in color by the work of art that inspired it.

Bolton, Guy. [Pictures](#) (Oneworld \$24.99). Bolton’s compelling and evocative hardboiled noir, salutes the best of Chandler and Ellroy. “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. Bolton’s tightly paced mystery vividly re-creates 1930s Hollywood and is enriched with complicated, fascinating and flawed characters.” —Kevin Howell

✚Brett, Simon. [The Liar in the Library](#) (Severn \$28.99). Brett’s entertaining 18th mystery set in the West Sussex seaside town of Fethering opens at an author evening at the Fethering public library. The speaker is Burton St. Clair, who has finally achieved bestseller status with his ninth novel, *Stray Leaves in Autumn*—a

mawkish, old-fashioned romance, in the opinion of Jude Nichol, who's in the audience and knew Burton years before, when he was self-publishing his books under his real name, Al Sinclair. When Burton, who's allergic to walnuts, dies after drinking red wine tainted with walnut at the event, Jude, who was aware of his allergy, becomes a prime suspect in his murder. Naturally, she turns for help proving her innocence to fellow amateur sleuth Carole Seddon, her old friend and neighbor. Brett takes delightful potshots at the publishing world, writers, and village life, all the while providing a top-notch whodunit plot with loads of red herrings and eccentric suspects. Ordered Upon Request.

Burns, VM. [The Plot is Murder](#) (Kensington \$15). "Samantha Washington's late husband always dreamed of opening a mystery bookstore in North Harbor, Michigan, but she really wanted to write a British cozy mystery. Now Samantha is doing both, writing at night and preparing to open Market Street Mysteries in the brownstone she bought after a legal battle with the shady realtor Clayton Parker. Her problems with Clayton come to a head when she finds his body in her backyard. Police believe Samantha had reasons to kill him, but her grandmother Nana Jo has other ideas. She and "the girls" from the retirement village team up with Samantha to uncover the truth. In alternating chapters, the plot of Samantha's 1930s mystery unfolds. This debut cleverly integrates a historical cozy within a contemporary mystery. In both story lines, the elder characters shine; they are refreshingly witty and robust, with formidable connections and investigative skills. Readers of Carolyn Hart will appreciate the lively seniors, the humor, and the bookstore environment."—*LJ* Starred Review

Butler, Dave. [Full Curl](#) (Dundurn \$14.99). From a small Canadian publisher, the start of a series set in and around Banff National Park. Ranger Jenny Willson is a caustic and quick-witted warden, not afraid of poachers and ladder-climbing bureaucrats nor of the animals that roam the territory, although she has a health respect for them and mostly goes armed. Her mission: to protect the park. When she finds a gunshot bull elk in Moose Meadow, his impressive rack sawn from his skull and his carcass food for scavengers, she vows to catch the culprit. As more animals are killed or disappear, and a human victim emerges, Willson finds herself criss-crossing the US/Canadian border and crossing professional lines, all in the name of her mission. For those who love this magnificent territory like me, Butler's debut is a welcome December read. The title relates to the horn of the bighorn sheep.

Celestin, Ray. [Dead Man's Blues](#) (Pantheon \$25.95). Set largely in 1928 Chicago in the months leading up to the landmark championship heavyweight boxing match between Gene Tunney and Jack Dempsey (moved forward from 1927 for dramatic purposes), British author Celestin's gripping sequel to 2015's [The Axeman](#) (\$14.99) chronicles the evolution of jazz and organized crime in early-20th-century America. The narrative can be unwieldy at times with its intricately intertwined story lines (two Pinkerton detectives seek a missing heiress, a crime scene photographer investigates a gruesome murder, and Al Capone brings a heroin-addicted fixer back to Chicago to find the rat in his organization), but the rich description and meticulous attention to historical detail more than compensate. Louis Armstrong's journey to Chicago and his role in revolutionizing jazz is a highlight. Celestin's portrayal of the Prohibition-era city—from the widespread political corruption to the rampant racism—gives the story a sobering foundation.

Chiaverini, Jennifer. [Enchantress of Numbers](#) (Dutton \$27). If one were to make up for fiction the life of Ada Byron King, Countess of Lovelace, critics and readers would mock it or call it fantasy. Instead, Chiaverini bases her novel on the true story of this extraordinary woman. Estranged from Ada's father, George Gordon Byron, 6th Baron Byron of Rochedale, the poet who was infamously "mad, bad, and dangerous to know," Ada's mathematician mother is determined to save her only child from her perilous Byron heritage. Banishing fairy tales and make-believe from the nursery, Ada's mother provides her daughter with a rigorous education grounded in mathematics and science. Any troubling spark of imagination—or worse yet, passion or poetry—is promptly extinguished. When Ada is introduced into London society as a highly eligible young heiress, she at last discovers the intellectual and social circles she has craved all her life. But her delightful new friendship with inventor Charles Babbage—brilliant, charming, and occasionally curmudgeonly—will shape her destiny. Intrigued by the prototype of his first calculating machine, the Difference Engine, and enthralled by the plans for his even more advanced Analytical Engine, Ada resolves to help Babbage realize his extraordinary vision, unique in her understanding of how his invention could transform the world. All the while, she passionately studies mathematics—ignoring skeptics who consider it an unusual, even unhealthy pursuit for a woman—falls in love, discovers the shocking secrets behind her parents' estrangement, and comes to terms.

Connolly, Sheila. [Cruel Winter](#) (\$15.99). Maura Donovan, the American proprietor of Sullivan's Pub in the Irish village of Leap who inherited the pub from a friend of her late grandmother, has a knack for helping other people solve their life's problems. In this 5th installment, that person is Diane Caldwell, an English woman whose travel plans are disrupted by a snowstorm. A local man tells Maura, who moved from Boston nine months earlier, that Diane was suspected, but never charged, in the murder of a woman in a nearby village some 20 years before. Diane tells her story to her captive audience at Sullivan's. Coincidentally, a member of the gardaí is present to share some little-known details of the police investigation—and it turns out his wife has information she's never divulged. Connolly is one of the writers who published cozies in \$7.99 paperbacks, some of which can still be ordered.

Diner, Hasia R. [Julius Rosenwald: Repairing the World](#) (Yale University Press \$25). New in Yale's Jewish Lives series and being heavily reviewed in major media. Here's a short summary: "Julius Rosenwald (1862–1932) rose from modest means as the son of a peddler to meteoric wealth at the helm of Sears, Roebuck. Yet his most important legacy stands not upon his business acumen but on the pioneering changes he introduced to the practice of philanthropy. While few now recall Rosenwald's name—he refused to have it attached to the buildings, projects, or endowments he supported—his passionate support of Jewish and African American causes continues to influence lives to this day. This biography of Julius Rosenwald explores his attitudes toward his own wealth and his distinct ideas about philanthropy, positing an intimate connection between his Jewish consciousness and his involvement with African Americans. The book shines light on his belief in the importance of giving in the present to make an impact on the future, and on his encouragement of beneficiaries to become partners in community institutions and projects. Ros-

enwald emerges from the pages as a compassionate man whose generosity and wisdom transformed the practice of philanthropy itself.” I add this: “At last, a full-bore biography of the American colossus Julius Rosenwald, innovative businessman philanthropist and avatar of three great missions: Jewish opportunity; African American progress; and advancement of the national ideal of exceptionalism. Hasia Diner’s richly told and long overdue Julius Rosenwald: Repairing the World, is a masterpiece.”—David Levering Lewis

Disher, Gary. [Signal Loss](#) (Soho \$26.95). The winner of Australia’s Ned Kelly Award (crime) demonstrates in his 7th Inspector Hall Challis case that mean streets need be neither urban nor American, and that the meth epidemic is a global issue and again, not an urban phenomenon. Challis works with Sergeant Ellen Destry and their beat is the peninsula below Melbourne. A meth-related crime has Challis on his backfoot, while Destry hunts down an elusive serial rapist. The Indie Next Pick: “Set in Australia, the seventh in Disher’s Challis and Destry series is just as action-packed and exciting as the previous books. Meth kingpins, hit men, and a serial rapist are the villains of this installment, and the Australian location adds interest and flavor.” Highly recommended to you fans of hardboiled crime.

Dunnett, Kaitlyn. [X Marks the Scot](#) (Kensington \$25). The old Chadwick mansion on the edge of Moosetookalook, Maine, has been shrouded in mystery for generations—until Scottish Emporium owner Liss MacCrimmon uncovers a forgotten family secret—what appears to be a treasure map tucked behind the painting of a Scots piper. She’s even more intrigued when she links the scroll to an early Chadwick who smuggled goods across the Canadian border.

Estleman, Loren. [The Ballad of Black Bart](#) (Forge \$24.99). Equally the story of Charles Bolton, aka the outlaw Black Bart, and James B. Hume, Wells Fargo’s chief of detectives, this well-researched historical novel transports readers to San Francisco in the late 1800s. Both men have reputations to uphold: Black Bart as the mannerly, poem-writing outlaw who robs Well Fargo stagecoaches on foot; Hume as the straight-up sleuth who uses files and investigative methods instead of guns to catch a thief. The Spur- and Shamus Award-winning Estleman (“Valentino” and “Amos Walker” mysteries) infuses plenty of humorous anecdotes as he outlines the eight-year career of the flour-sack-masked bandit who signs his notes “Black Bart, The Po8.” The tone shifts to serious as Hume is portrayed as a man sharing similar features and history with his target but who stays squarely on the right side of the law. “More character-driven than other Estleman titles, this title is peppered with clever turns of phrase, literary allusions, and plenty of vernaculars from the time period. This low-key tale of a legendary outlaw and his pursuer will delight the author’s fans as well as readers who fancy Westerns about notorious figures of the Old West.”—LJ

✠Fowler, Christopher. [Bryant and May Wild Chamber](#) (Bantam \$27). Our story begins at the end of an investigation, as the members of London’s Peculiar Crimes Unit race to catch a killer near London Bridge Station in the rain, not realizing that they’re about to cause a bizarre accident just yards away from the crime scene. And it will have repercussions for them all... One year later, in an exclusive London crescent, a woman walks her dog – but she’s

being watched. When she’s found dead, the Peculiar Crimes Unit is called in to investigate. Why? Because the method of death is odd, the gardens are locked, the killer had no way in – or out – and the dog has disappeared. So a typical case for Bryant & May. But the hows and whys of the murder are not the only mysteries surrounding the dead woman – there’s a missing husband and a lost nanny to puzzle over too. And it seems very like that the killer is preparing to strike again. As Arthur Bryant delves in to the history of London’s ‘wild chambers’ – its extraordinary parks and gardens, John May and the rest of the team seem to have caused a national scandal. If no-one is safe then all of London’s open spaces must be closed... With the PCU placed under house arrest, only Arthur Bryant remains at liberty – but can a hallucinating old codger catch the criminal and save the unit before it’s too late? This imaginative, cleverly conceived series is one of the best British going: [order them all](#).

Gaines, Ernest J. [The Tragedy of Brady Sims](#) (\$15). After Brady Sims pulls out a gun in a courtroom and shoots his own son, who has just been convicted of robbery and murder, he asks only to be allowed two hours before he’ll give himself up to the sheriff. When the editor of the local newspaper asks his cub reporter to dig up a “human interest” story about Brady, he heads for the town’s barbershop. Where he learns Brady Sims is an honorable, just, and unsparing man who with his tough love had been handed the task of keeping the black children of Bayonne, Louisiana in line to protect them from the unjust world. And when his own son makes a fateful mistake, it is up to Brady to carry out the necessary reckoning. In the telling, we learn the story of a small southern town, divided by race, and the black community struggling to survive even as many of its inhabitants head off northwards during the Great Migration. A novella that fits into the recent wave of republishing past work.

Greenwood, Kerry. [Dead Man’s Chest](#) (\$15.95). Traveling at high speed in her beloved Hispano-Suiza accompanied by her maid and trusted companion Dot, her two adoptive daughters Jane and Ruth, and their dog Molly, The Hon. Miss Phryne Fisher is off to Queenscliff. She’d promised everyone a nice holiday by the sea with absolutely no murders, but when they arrive at their rented accommodation that doesn’t seem at all likely.... 18th in the amazing Miss Fisher Mysteries.

Griffin, WEB. [Death at Nuremberg](#) (Putnam \$29). Clandestine Operations #4 doesn’t publish until December 26 but do order it early. When Jim Cronley hears he’s just won the Legion of Merit, he figures there’s another shoe to drop, and it’s a big one: he’s out as Chief, DCI-Europe. His new assignments, however, couldn’t be bigger: to protect the U.S. chief prosecutor in the Nuremberg trials from a rumored Soviet NKGB kidnapping, and to hunt down and dismantle the infamous Odessa, an organization dedicated to helping Nazi war criminals escape to South America. It doesn’t take long for the first attempt on his life, and then the second. NKGB or Odessa? Who can tell? The deeper he pushes, the more secrets tumble out: a scheme to swap Nazi gold for currency, a religious cult organized around Himmler himself, an NKGB agent who is actually working for the Mossad, a German cousin who turns out to be more malevolent than he appears— and a distractingly attractive newspaperwoman who seems to be asking an awful lot of questions. Which one will turn out to be the most dangerous? Cronley wishes he knew.

Guild, Nicholas. [The Macedonian](#) (Forge \$32.50). Most people have heard of Alexander the Great, but do you know the story of his father who paved the way for Alexander's career? On a cold night in the ancient Greek kingdom of Macedon, a son named Philip is born to the king's principal wife. His mother hates him for being his father's child, and his father hardly notices him. With two elder brothers, obscurity seems his destiny and the boy is sent off to be raised by servants. Yet, in a moment of national crisis, when his kingdom is on the verge of being torn apart, the prince-among-servants finds himself proclaimed the king. This is the story of Philip, the forgotten prince who rose to save his country and became a legend in his own lifetime. His extensive military conquests across the Greek peninsula would pave the way for expansion under his son.

Hammett, Dashiell. [The Big Book of the Continental Op](#) (Vintage \$25). If nostalgia for past classics has overtaken you, this compendium of the Op's cases is just the ticket. And makes a nifty gift.

Harrison, Mette. [For Time and All Eternities](#) (\$15.95). Using a Mormon bishop's wife, Linda Wallheim, as her lead character, Harrison is never afraid to tackle difficult and divisive issues in Utah that resonate further. So when Linda's son Kenneth becomes engaged, and his fiancée, a medical student he met at a "Mormons Anonymous" meeting, belongs to a family that practices polygamy, Harrison takes the Wallheims to meet them. In exploring the life of Carter père and his five wives and many children—and a murder—Harrison works to highlight various points of view, but for me the result is unconvincing, or should I say muddled, for plural marriage? [The Bishop's Wife; His Right Hand](#) (\$15.95 each).

Helprin, Mark. [Paris in the Present Tense](#) (Overlook \$28.95). In the midst of a time of life to enjoy days bright with music, family, rowing on the Seine—seventy-four-year-old Jules Lacour—a maître at Paris-Sorbonne, cellist, widower, veteran of the war in Algeria, and child of the Holocaust—is confronted headlong and all at once by a series of challenges to his principles, livelihood, and home. It all forces him to grapple with his complex past and find a way forward. He risks fraud to save his terminally ill infant grandson, matches wits with a renegade insurance investigator, is drawn into an act of savage violence, and falls deeply, excitingly in love with a young cellist a third his age. Against the backdrop of an exquisite and knowing vision of Paris and the way it can uniquely shape a life.

Hindley, Meredith. [Destination Casablanca](#) (Public Affairs \$30). Well worth reading in its own right as WWII history—Operation Torch, etc—this fine book is a must for fans of James R Benn's Billy Boyle. And of course, for the classic movie with Bogart and Bergman currently celebrating its 75th year. Aileen Baron, an author who was professionally familiar with North Africa via archaeology, wrote a very fine mystery tied to Operation Torch in [The Torch of Tangier](#) (\$14.95) where American archaeologist Lily Sampson uses her profession as cover for a secret mission. You can meet Lily next in [The Scorpion's Bite](#) (\$14.95) which has her investigating murder in Petra and Wadi Rum, Jordan, 1943.

Jónasson, Ragnar. [Nightblind](#) (St Martins \$25.99). Jónasson's Dark Iceland series caught on first in Britain (maybe it's the weather bond?). I prefer it to many Scandinavian noirs and

recommend it to fans of Indridason and Sigurdson—the series has fans like Ian Rankin. In this second entry after [Snowblind](#) (\$9.99), Ari Thór is passed over for the position of inspector in the small Icelandic town of Siglufjörður, a setback mitigated by his reunion with his girlfriend, Kristín, and the birth of their son, Stefnir. When Herjólfur, the man who got the inspector's position, dies after being blasted at close range by a shotgun near an abandoned house, Ari Thór's former superior, Tómas, oversees the investigation. Ari Thór and Tómas step on some powerful toes as they follow leads pointing to the town's mayor, Gunnar Gunnarsson, but is there more going on than municipal corruption? "Ari Thór soon begins to feel like a 'stranger in a place where everyone was connected and no one could be trusted completely.' Jónasson plants clues fairly before a devastatingly unexpected reveal, without sublimating characterization to plot." See Signed Books for the newest Ari case.

Kaaberbol, Lene. [Lady in Shadows](#) (Atria \$16). For anyone who's studied the Dreyfus Affair or read Émile Zola, here's a book set in the same French period where the prejudice is not to Jews but to professional (etc) women. "Kaaberbol's exhilarating sequel to [Doctor Death](#) (\$16) finds budding forensic pathologist Madeleine Karno shaken by the discovery of a woman's mutilated body in a coal yard, the corpse's abdomen sliced open. As the streets of Varbourg, France, erupt in violence following the assassination of President Marie François Sadi Carnot by an Italian anarchist in 1894, Karno, who's also just been accepted as a physiology student at the local university, and with the Commissaire des Morts attempt to first identify the victim, then solve the woman's brutal murder. Newspapers jump on the similarities to the murders of London's Jack the Ripper, and fear ripples through the community at the thought that France might have its own Ripper. Karno eventually identifies the victim as Rosalba Lombardi, one of the city's numerous prostitutes. As her clandestine investigation continues, Karno discovers disturbing facts about the murder that bring up female rights issues as relevant then as they are today. Kaaberbol has created a genuinely tough, empathetic female heroine in an era when women were meant to be seen and not heard."—*PW* Starred Review

✚Kasasian, MRC. [Dark Dawn Over Steep House](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). I was hooked on Kasasian's first Gower Street Mystery, 2014's [The Mangle Street Murders](#) (\$15.95). The design of a genius (though socially challenged) Victorian sleuth and his younger female ward is not new (Mary Russells), but Kasasian gave it his own spin. Sidney Grice is much ruder than Holmes or Will Thomas' Cyrus Barker. But alas, it's been downhill for me with each subsequent entry. In this, the fifth, Grice is more unpleasant than unusual although March, his ward, is more mature. (It is the curse of the comic that it easily turns into caricature). But the nature of the case is truly revolting, involving rape, treachery, arson, incest, murder, and an appearance by what I suppose is a version of Jack the Ripper. In contrast to me, whoever wrote the *PW* Starred Review ends with, "The twisted solution to the case ranks as one of the series' most terrifying, and classic whodunit fans will appreciate Kasasian's playing fair with them." I point this out since I often quote Starred Reviews when I agree (and it saves me typing), or when I have not gotten a reading copy and have nothing else to go on. I try to make it clear which. And as here, when I disagree, but give you another point of view.

Keller, Julia. [The Dark Intercept](#) (Tor \$17.99). The author of the Bel Elkins West Virginia mystery series writes a book for the teen audience. When the state controls your emotions, how hard will you fight to feel free? In a radiant world of endless summer, the Intercept keeps the peace. Violet Crowley, the sixteen-year-old daughter of New Earth's Founding Father, has spent her life in comfort and safety. Her days are easy thanks to the Intercept, a crime-prevention device that monitors emotion. But when her long-time crush, Danny Mayhew, gets into a dangerous altercation on Old Earth, Violet launches a secret investigation to find out what he's hiding. An investigation that will lead her to question everything she's ever known about Danny, her father, and the power of the Intercept. "A chilling and thought-provoking look at the power of weaponized emotions" characterizes this sci-fi adventure.

Land, Jon. [Strong to the Bone](#) (Forge \$26.99). Fifth generation Texas Ranger Caitlin Strong, finds herself pursuing the killer her father never caught in the most personal case of her career—a conspiracy stretching from that Nazi POW camp to a modern-day neo-Nazi gang. Its leader, Armand Fisker, has an army at his disposal, a deadly bio-weapon, and a reputation for being unbeatable. But he's never taken on Caitlin Strong and her outlaw lover, Cort Wesley Masters.

Lee, Min Jin. [Pachinko](#) (\$15.99). "A powerful meditation on what immigrants sacrifice to achieve a home in the world. Pachinko confirms Lee's place among our finest novelists." — Junot Díaz. "An addictive family saga packed with forbidden love, the search for belonging, and triumph against the odds." — *Esquire*, Best Books of 2017 (So Far)

✎Lloyd, Catherine. [Death Comes to the School](#) (Kensington \$25). This post-Waterloo village series is very well done. Three years have passed since Major Sir Robert Kurland and Lucy Harrington, the rector's daughter, became husband and wife. Having established a measure of contentment among the gentry of Kurland St. Mary, the couple lately has found an unsettling distance grown between them. But when the small-village peace is disrupted by the arrival of an anonymous letter accusing Lucy of witchcraft, her as yet unfulfilled desire to be a mother becomes the least of her worries, especially after she learns she is not the only one to have received such a malicious letter. Speculation in the village only escalates when the local schoolteacher, Miss Broomfield, is discovered murdered at her classroom desk. Was the unlikeable teacher the letter writer, and if so, who killed her and why? It is best to read about the Major and Lucy's fraught courtship and investigations in order starting with *Death Comes to the Village*. [Order them all](#).

Lockridge, Frances. [Murder Out of Turn](#) (Mysterious \$12.99). As part of the revivals wave, here is a reprint of a Mr. and Mrs. North. In a remote cabin far from New York City, Jerry and Pamela North are getting killed. On the brink of annihilation, they grit their teeth and battle back. In a minute, the fight is finished—and the Norths are named mixed doubles champions. It's a happy moment during a splendid vacation, but off the tennis court, all is not well. Following an afternoon of fun and games, the evening's entertainment will be murder. Mr. and Mrs. North have invited their closest friends—an ex-aviator, a mysterious doctor, and NYPD's own Lt. William Weigand—to join them on this glittering retreat, but the joviality ends when Weigand finds Helen Wilson lying across the path, a knife buried in her neck....

✎Lovesey, Peter. [Beau Death](#) (Soho \$27.95). Only Lovesey creates plots like this, our **December British Crime Club Pick!** A wrecking ball crashes through the roof of a terraced cottage in Bath and exposes a skeleton in eighteenth-century clothes. Can these possibly be the remains of Beau Nash, the so-called King of Bath, whose body is said to have ended up in a pauper's grave? Peter Diamond, the city's most experienced detective, is ordered to investigate, but grappling with historical events causes ructions in his team until everyone is diverted by a modern killing during a fireworks display on the Royal Crescent lawn. Yet Beau Nash refuses to be ignored—and when astonishing new facts emerge about the case, Bath's history is rewritten and mysteries ancient and modern are fused in a devastating climax. The thing about Lovesey is that no matter how wild the hare he courses, it's all possible. And infused with humor.

The CWA Dagger winner edits a holiday gem: [The Usual Santas](#) (Soho \$19.95) Signed by Tim Hallinan who contributes one of the delightful seasonal stories. With a foreword by Lovesey, this festive anthology contains holiday tales with settings ranging from a Korean War POW camp to a Copenhagen refugee squat, from a palatial hotel in 1920s Bombay to a crumbling mansion in Havana by authors including James R. Benn, Cara Black, Timothy Hallinan, Ed Lin, and Stuart Neville, and Mick Herron (who signs a new book for us January 28 hosted by John Sandford). The perfect stocking stuff for mystery readers and our **December Fresh Fiction Club Pick**.

✎Maxwell, Alyssa. [A Pinch of Poison](#) (Kensington \$15). I would call this a middling English cozy. In the spring of 1919, 20-year-old Lady Phoebe Renshaw organizes a luncheon at the Haverleigh School for Young Ladies to benefit needy Great War veterans and their families. Tragically, the miniature cake specially made for headmistress Henrietta Finch is laced with cyanide. When Constable Miles Brannock urges Phoebe and her maid, Eva Huntsford (herself once a Haverleigh scholarship student), to interview students and staff, they find motives aplenty for Finch's murder. Her progressive philosophy has ruffled feathers, a grading scandal is brewing, and the school's nurse and handyman hide secrets.

✎McDermid, Val. [Insidious Intent](#) (Grove \$26). In the north of England, single women are beginning to disappear from weddings. A pattern soon becomes clear: Someone is crashing the festivities and luring the women away—only to leave the victims' bodies in their own burned-out cars in remote locations. Tony Hill and former police officer Carol Jordan go on the hunt for a serial killer....

✎Mosby, Steve. [You Can Run](#) (Pantheon \$25.95). This fusion of mystery, police procedural, and noir thriller from CWA Dagger Award-winner Mosby is pure crime fiction gold. A serial killer who has been abducting women from an unspecified area of England for almost two decades is identified after a car accidentally crashes into his garage and reveals a nearly-dead victim. Det. Insp. Will Turner, whose first love was one of the victims, vows to capture the man whom the media has dubbed the Red River Killer. The search is complicated by the husband of one of the victims, who appears to know more than he should about the case, and by a strange set of notes allegedly from the killer sent to the police that may indicate the involvement of another person. The narrative is powered by darkly lyrical prose and a cast of nu-

anced characters, but it's the bombshell plot twists at novel's end that will leave readers more than satisfied. This is one of those exceedingly rare novels that is virtually impossible to put down.

✠Mozley, Fiona. [Elmet](#) (Algonquin \$15.95). The family thought the little house they had made themselves in Elmet, a corner of Yorkshire, was theirs, that their peaceful, self-sufficient life was safe. Cathy and Daniel roamed the woods freely, occasionally visiting a local woman for some schooling, living outside all conventions. Their father built things and hunted, working with his hands; sometimes he would disappear, forced to do secret, brutal work for money, but to them he was a gentle protector. Narrated by Daniel after a catastrophic event has occurred, *Elmet* mesmerizes even as it becomes clear the family's solitary idyll will not last. When a local landowner shows up on their doorstep, their precarious existence is threatened... "Part fairy tale, part coming-of-age story, part revenge tragedy with literary connections, Mozley's first novel is a shape-shifting, lyrical, but dark parable of life off the grid in modern Britain. Mozley's instantaneous success . . . is a response to the stylish intensity of her work, which boldly winds multiple genres into a rich spinning top of a tale."—*Kirkus* Starred Review. This is another Starred book that did not light me up.

Neumeier, Rachel. [Winter of Ice and Snow](#) (Saga \$27.99). Aha, a perfect seasonal title for a fantasy rating a Starred Review: "In a lush and deliciously imaginative world where the land itself gives rise to powers—powerful but not omnipotent entities that strain to become gods—the human rulers who have magical connections to those powers are critical to ensuring their peoples' well-being. Kehera is the heir to her country's throne and has a deep tie to the gentle power of her land. A cruel king demands her hand in marriage; if he doesn't get it, he'll destroy her land's powers and leave them exposed to the dangerous winter dragons. Reluctantly, Kehera accepts his demands and gives up her tie to save her people. This decision takes her on a journey that will put her in the path of strange powers, resilient sorcerers, and the ambitious but dangerously alluring Wolf Duke of Eäneté. The story is tense throughout, with attention focused on its characters and the implications of its worldbuilding. Kehera's resolute devotion to fighting against the odds even as the world shifts and realigns around her carries through to the cosmically satisfying ultimate battle."

Oust, Gail. [Ginger Snapped](#) (St Martins \$27.99). That's not a fish floating in Brandywine Creek's local fishing hole but the body of Realtor of the Year Shirley Randolph, and townsfolk think Police Chief Wyatt McBride may be responsible, given his romantic interest in Shirley. Piper. "Oust deliciously upends a cozy trope—amateur sleuth vs. professional cop—in her fifth Spice Shop mystery. They were seen sharing chili fries; suddenly he's a suspect. Even before the death is tagged homicide, he's suspended without pay. Interim chief Sgt. Beau Tucker likes the top badge for the crime and only halfheartedly investigates. But Piper would bet her last ginger rhizome that gorgeous, widowed Wyatt is innocent. Ginger lore and simple recipes are spicier than the murder...."

Patterson, James/Maxine Paetro. [16th Seduction](#) (\$15.99). Fifteen months ago, Detective Lindsay Boxer's life was perfect—she had a beautiful child and a doting husband, Joe, who helped her catch a criminal who'd brazenly detonated a bomb in downtown San Francisco, killing twenty-five people. But Joe wasn't everything

that Lindsay thought he was, and she's still reeling from his betrayal as a wave of mysterious, and possibly unnatural, heart attacks claims seemingly unrelated victims across San Francisco. As if that weren't enough, the bomber she and Joe captured is about to go on trial, and his defense raises damning questions about Lindsay and Joe's investigation....

Rivera, K. Arsenault. [The Tiger's Daughter](#) (Tor \$15.99). I agree with this Indie Next Pick for an exciting fantasy debut: "Badass ladies slaying demons, defying conventions, and saving the world on their own terms? Count me in. *The Tiger's Daughter* is an honest-to-goodness sweeping epic fantasy unlike any I have read. I don't remember ever being so excited for a new series. The characters in this story are so fully realized, the landscapes so vivid, I didn't even realize I'd been so swept away until I turned the last page. I endured with O Shizuka, princess, the divine made flesh, and finest blade in all Hokkaro; I raged with Barsalai Shefali Alsharyaa, demon slayer, horse whisperer, and infamous Qorin warrior. I didn't want to leave them, and I can't wait for the next installment."

✠Robinson, Peter. [Not Safe After Dark: And Other Stories](#) (Harper \$15.99). One of today's masters, a Yorkshire man dividing his time between his shire and Toronto, has produced wonderful stories as well as novels. Perfect for the holidays, a collection of 20 of them—most never before published in the US, and one of them an Edgar winner—which also features three Inspector Banks tales. I will never forget sitting with Peter at the Edgars ceremony where he won his Poe award after several nominations—it was thrilling. Enjoy!

Roberts, Nora. [Year One](#) (St Martins \$27.99). I always admire a bestseller who takes a gamble. And here Roberts leaps into space... The Indie Next Pick: "This new novel from legendary romance author Nora Roberts feels entirely fresh and utterly compelling. A plague that starts on a small farm manages to destroy almost the entire human population on Earth, and those who are left find themselves changed—some for better, some for worse. The scattered bits of humanity that remain struggle to fight the chaos that descends, as some characters—Lana and Max, Arlys and Fred, and Rachel and Jonah—find themselves immune to the plague. This fabulous departure from Roberts' usual storytelling is refreshing and compulsively readable!"

Rowe, Rosemary. [Price of Freedom](#) (Severn \$28.99). This is the 17th! Investigation for Libertus of Roman Britain in a series I've always enjoyed. Having been inveigled into standing for the local curia, responsible for the submission of all local tax, Libertus discovers that any shortfall must be made good by the councilors themselves. So when news arrives that a tax-collector from a nearby outpost has committed suicide, having gambled everything away, Libertus is dispatched to make enquiries, in the hope of recovering at least some of the missing revenue. He has also been asked to attend a wedding, in place of his patron, who is expecting a visit from an Imperial Legate. But the assignment which should have seen Libertus for once treated as an honored guest begins to take grisly and unexpected turns. Ordered Upon Request.

✠Rowland, Laura Joh. [The Ripper's Shadow](#) (\$15.99). "The whopper of all serial killers, Jack the Ripper, like fire, is to be handled with care, and luckily Rowland knows just how to do it, putting a new twist on old tropes with her witty sleuth, while never sacrificing historical integrity."—*LJ* Starred Review

Schaffhausen, Joanna. [The Vanishing Season](#) (St Martins \$24.99). I had to choose between this debut, winner of the Minotaur Books/Mystery Writers of America First Crime Novel Competition, and the one under Signed books by Ritter. In the end I thought Ritter was more original in concept. Here's the Indie Next Pick for Schaffhausen: "Officer Ellery Hathaway is the ultimate damaged character. Kidnapped at age 14 and tortured by a serial killer before being rescued by FBI agent Reed Markham, Hathaway is now a woman who fiercely protects her privacy. But, every year on her birthday, three people have disappeared, and no one, including the sheriff, believes they are connected. To get to the bottom of the mystery, Hathaway reaches out to Markham. *The Vanishing Season* is a thriller, a police procedural, and a psychological study of PTSD and workforce burnout. It is a look at serial killers and the impossibility of knowing who will become one and why. But, most of all, *The Vanishing Season* is a terrific read that you won't be able to put down once you start."

Simenon, George. [Maigret's Mistake](#) (Penguin \$13). When a young woman with a dark past is found dead on the streets of Paris, Inspector Maigret is on the case. This is the 43rd book in the new Penguin Maigret series.

Smiley, Patricia. [Outside the Wire](#) (Midnight Ink \$15.99). This is a very good police procedural where LAPD Homicide Detective Davie Richards is called to the scene of the shooting of a retired US Army Ranger. It's been staged to look like a robbery in the airport parking garage but then she notices that there's just one military dog tags (not the usual two) around the dead ranger's neck. Then this one murder becomes two and then.... Is this some kind of serial killer taking mementos of the kills, or is something more systematic at work? Like T Jefferson Parker's new PI Roland Ford, Davie Richards ties her case into veterans and crimes arising in surprising ways from service.

Smith, Alexander McCall. [Chance Developments: Stories](#) (Knopf \$16). Inspired by antique photographs, these five stories capture the surprising intersections of love and friendship. For two recent Smith books in two series, see Signed Books.

☞Thomson, E. [Dark Asylum](#) (Pegasus \$29.95). Jem Flockhart as she looks into a murder within the confines of a lunatic asylum. A female apothecary in Victorian London, she has lived her entire life disguised as a man. Jem has no love for Angel Meadow Asylum, a dark, hulking facility whose halls echo with the screams of its disturbed inmates. However, when abusive, phrenology-obsessed superintendent Dr. Rutherford is found dead with his ears removed and stuffed into his sewn-shut mouth, his own calipers sticking out of his head, Jem and her best friend and roommate, Will Quartermain, investigate. Suspicion falls on beautiful, vivacious Susan Chance, a young woman who at the age of 10 killed the man her mother sold her to, and became the ward of another Angel Meadow doctor. Jem and Will remain unconvinced that Susan would kill again—Will troubled to think a woman would commit such a crime and Jem taking a compassionate view of the girl's original crime. As they unravel the truth, Jem and Will move through the filth and stench of London's Dickensian era, when women and children without protectors were destined for prostitution, or worse. The duo find that the staff of Angel Meadow have secrets as dark and dirty as the city itself, and Rutherford is not the only target. Amidst all this, a thread of

scenes follows the tragic life a woman who grew up in London's slums and slowly illuminates her connection to the crimes. *Dark Asylum* does for Victorian psychology (if such a word even applies to practices of the era) what [Beloved Poison](#) (\$15.95) did for Victorian medicine, exposing the ignorant cruelty and indignities inflicted upon the mentally ill in a time when the idea of taking patients outside for leisure was revolutionary.

Tursten, Helene. [Protected By the Shadows](#) (Soho \$26.95). I've enjoyed Sweden's Irene Huss investigations in book and TV series form and am sad to see this one called the last installment. Irene, a Detective Inspector in the Göteborg's PD, fears for her family's safety when someone plants a bomb under her chef husband's car. Fearing for her family's safety when it appears that biker gang culture is linked to the bomb and is exploding into warfare, she sends Krister and their two daughters off into remote Finland and moves herself from home to a colleague's department. Will it be enough? And where is the information leak, or rather, from whom?

OUR DECEMBER SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Castillo, Linda. [Gone Missing](#) (\$7.99) Kate Burkholder #4. Investigating the disappearance of an Amish teenager, chief of police Kate Burkholder and state agent John Tomasetti stumble on a dead body at the same time another girl goes missing before discovering sinister links to numerous cold cases. *LJ* said this "Devotees of this series won't want to miss it, and this entry should gain Castillo new fans as well."

Cavanagh, Steve. [The Defense](#) (\$9.99) Using skills gleaned from a past as a confidence man to pursue a legal career, Eddie Flynn turns his back on the legal system after a disastrous case only to be drawn back to the courtroom when the Russian mob in New York kidnaps his young daughter.

Crichton, Michael. [Dragon Teeth](#) (\$9.99) This posthumously published novel is set in the Wild West during the golden age of fossil hunting follows the exploits of two ambitious paleontologists who sabotage each others' careers in a rivalry that came to be known as the Bone Wars. Here is what *Kirkus* said "Crichton takes a sympathetic view of American Indians and their plight, and his appreciation of the American West, and its harsh beauty, is obvious. Falls short of Crichton's many blockbusters, but fun reading nonetheless, especially for those interested in the early days of American paleontology."

Delany, Vicki. [Hark the Herald Angels Slay](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Year-Round Christmas #3. When her ex-fiancé, who has returned to Rudolph, New York, to do a feature on the Christmas in July festivities, is murdered, Merry Wilkinson, the owner of Mrs. Claus' Treasures, must catch a killer who is definitely on the naughty list.

Koontz, Dean. [The Silent Corner](#) (\$9.99) When her successful husband inexplicably commits suicide, Jane Hawk searches for answers and discovers that a dangerous and powerful group is somehow forcing accomplished people to take their own lives. *LJ* loved this follow up to last year's *Whispering Room* saying "This new (series!) heroine from Koontz is bound to be an immediate hit. While there are no supernatural elements here, Jane Hawk is fighting a gripping terror realistic enough to keep readers up at night and talking about the book long after putting it down."

Matthews, Olivia. [Mayhem & Mass](#) (Kensington \$7.99) When her friend, Maurice Jordan, the guest speaker for the St. Hermione of Ephesus Feast Day, is murdered, Sister Lou takes matters into her own hands and teams up with a local reporter to find a killer, which just may take a miracle. Miss those old Sister Mary Teresa Dempsey mysteries by Monica Quill (I know I do)? Then you will love this new series debut by Matthews.

Ould, Chris. [Blood Strand](#) (Forge \$7.99) When his estranged father is found unconscious with a shotgun by his side and a murder victim's blood at the scene, British police detective Jan Reyna returns to the Faroes he left as a child looking for answers about the crime and his family's past. *LJ* concluded their review with "UK screenwriter and novelist Ould weaves family loyalties, human nature, and old secrets into a compelling and tightly crafted work. For fans of Ann Cleeves' mysteries set in the Shetland Islands, this excellent atmospheric series launch is a natural complement. [

Paretsky, Sara. [Fallout](#) (\$9.99) V.I. Warshawski #19. V.I. Warshawski travels to Kansas to investigate the disappearances of a young film student and a faded Hollywood star, but long-simmering racial tensions stir up more mysteries as the body count rises. *LJ* was just one review source that loved Paretsky's latest saying "True to V.I. form, she follows her investigation to wherever it leads, no matter how bumpy or dangerous. Paretsky's novels are never dull, but this one, marking the author's debut with a new publisher, is particularly involved and multifaceted. Mystery/detective/crime novel fans will relish this satisfyingly hefty tale.

Pavone, Chris. [Accident](#) (Crown \$9.99) Feverishly paging through a disturbing anonymous manuscript that she believes has world-changing potential, New York literary agent Isabel Reed catches the attentions of Copenhagen veteran station chief Hayden Gray, who resolves to keep the book's secrets from being exposed. *PW* concluded their review with "Despite the far-fetched conceit, Pavone makes the story credible, and the suspense is palpable."

Shelton, Paige. [Comic Sans Murder](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Dangerous Type #3. After a world famous author finds a disembodied foot on the ski slopes, Clare Henry, the owner of the snowy Star City oasis, goes on the hunt for the rest of the body with the help of the police, determined to track down a killer before another victim gets wiped out.

Taylor, Brad. [Ring of Fire](#) (\$9.99) Pike Logan #11. Learning of an imminent terrorist attack on the U.S., Pike Logan, Jennifer Cahill and the Taskforce race against time to stop catastrophic events in multiple locations. *PW* concluded their review with "Pike and his crew have a few too many "just missed 'em" moments and rely on convenient technology for assistance, but the ever-escalating chaos will leave fans breathless for the next installment."

✶Weaver, Ashley. [Murder at the Brightwell](#) (\$9.99) Amory Ames #1. Regretting her marriage to a notorious playboy, wealthy young Amory Ames agrees to help her former fiancé, Gil Trent, prevent his sister's marriage to a disreputable man, only to be embroiled in a murder investigation that places her relationships and safety in jeopardy. Shortlisted for the Edgar when it came out in hardcover, this series start earned a number of rave reviews including *Kirkus*, ended their review with "A spunky heroine, a tense romance and red herrings galore make Weaver's debut a pleasant read for nostalgia buffs who miss Agatha Christie."

DECEMBER SMALL PAPERBACKS

Archer, Winnie. [Crust No One](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Bread Shop #2. While apprenticing under Olaya Solis, the master baker and owner of Yeast of Eden, Ivy Culpepper comes to the aid of her ex-boyfriend Miguel Baptista when his produce supplier goes missing, and gets some help from her octogenarian sidekick and the loose-lipped Blackbird Ladies who rise to the occasion.

Black, Lisa. [Unpunished](#) (Kensington \$9.99) Forensic expert Maggie Gardiner continues her uneasy partnership with vigilante homicide detective Jack Renner to investigate the murder of a newspaper copy editor.

Blum, Christine. [Full Bodied Murder](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Starting a new life in coastal Southern California, Halsey, who ends up at the wrong place at the wrong time, finds herself accused of murder and must rely on the eclectic talents of ladies in her new Wine Club to pour over the clues and clear her name.

Bush, Nancy. [No Turning Back](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Child psychologist Liz Havers made a mistake 16 years ago, and she's ready to face it, and that means confronting Detective Hawthorne "Hawk" Hart, who's come back to Woodside, Washington, after a case in LA went tragically wrong.

Cahoon, Lynn. [Of Murder and Men](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Cat Latimer #3. When her business partner Shauna's wealthy landowner boyfriend is found dead, Cat Latimer, while trying to keep her writer's retreat running, investigates the murder and soon discovers that the scandalous lifestyle he led left many willing to kill for revenge.

Carter, Chris. [I Am Death](#) (Picador \$9.99) A follow-up to *An Evil Mind* finds LAPD's Ultra Violent Crimes Unit lead detective, Robert Hunter, racing to stop a serial killer whose past secrets rival Hunter's own.

Childs, Laura. [Egg Drop Dead](#) (\$7.99) Cackleberry Club #7. Visiting a local dairy farm to pick up some cheese for the Cackleberry Club cafe, Suzanne stumbles on the body of farmer Mike Mullen, and she and her fellow cafe co-owners Petra and Toni vow to find the murderer.

Dyer-Seeley, Kate. [In Cave Danger](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Pacific Northwest #5. Embarking on a subterranean adventure to cover a debate over the use of public lands for Northwest Extreme magazine, Meg Reed must call upon her journalistic instincts to solve the murder of a Forest Service employee before the killer reaches the surface.

Griffin, WEB. [Curtain of Death](#) (\$9.99) Clandestine Operations #3. When two WACs are accosted by Soviet NKGB agents from an officers' club in 1946 Munich and kill three of their attackers to escape, the incident triggers shock waves that have major repercussions throughout a fledgling CIA.

Haddock, Nancy. [A Crime of Poison](#) (Berkley \$7.99) While organizing the Fall Folk Art Festival and Bake Sale in Lilyvale, Arkansas, crafter and store owner Leslee Stanton Nix must piece together the clues to prove the innocence of two members of the Silver Six, her aunt's group of friends, when they are accused of killing a local troublemaker.

Haseldine, Jane. [Duplicity](#) (Kensington \$9.99) A follow-up to *The Last Time She Saw Him* finds Detroit reporter Julia Gooden struggling to overcome past demons and support a high-profile

case against a drug trafficker who has orchestrated a bombing that has left Julia's assistant district attorney husband critically injured.

Hiebert, Michael. [Thorn Among the Lilies](#) (Kensington \$9.99) Detective Leah Teal, after being told by a psychic to look into a series of grisly murders, finds a connection among them and races to prevent another killing.

Hollon, Cheryl. [Etched in Tears](#) (Kensington \$7.99) When her old flame Dennis Lansing, a celebrated glass artist who has returned to St. Petersburg, Florida, for an exhibition of his work, is found murdered with an old reference letter from her father in his pocket, Savannah must carefully piece together the clues to catch a killer before someone else's life is shattered.

Jackson, Lisa. [Final Scream](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Returning home to Prosperity, Cassidy Buchanan is forced to confront her tragic past when a similar fire to that had destroyed her family years ago engulfs the local mill, leading her to Brig McKenzie, who was accused of the crime and is the only man who can help her find the killer.

Kopfler, Pamela. [Better Dead](#) (Kensington \$7.99) When the ghost of her cheating husband appears as an unwelcome guest, B&B owner Holly Davis agrees to help him bust up the drug smuggling he was involved with if he'll make a showing of haunting the B&B to draw in customers, which works all too well.

Leeson, Gayle. [Honey-Baked Homicide](#) (Berkley \$7.99) When struggling beekeeper and Southern café owner Amy's new business partner, Stuart Landon is murdered, Amy investigates and finds herself in a sticky situation as the list of suspects grows longer, causing quite a buzz in the community.

✶Mackintosh, Clare. [I Let You Go](#) (\$9.99) Devastated by a hit-and-run accident that has ended the life of her young son, Jenna moves to the remote Welsh coast to search for healing while two dedicated policemen try to get to the bottom of the case.

McConnon, Maggie. [Bel, Book, and Scandal](#) (SimonSchuster \$7.99) Belfast McGrath #3. Wedding caterer Bel McGrath, who has a penchant for trouble, after a visitor leaves behind a photograph that is related to her past, decides to investigate the disappearance of her best friend, Amy, long ago and unearths old secrets that shed new light on those around her.

Rosenfelt, David. [One Dog Night](#) (\$9.99) Andy Carpenter #9. For six years Noah Galloway has lived with a horrible secret and the fear that his rebuilt life could be shattered at any moment. Now his dread has become a certainty, and he has been arrested for the arson murder of twenty-six people. What he needs now is defense lawyer Andy Carpenter, who most definitely is not in the market for a new client. So Noah plays his hole card: a shared love for Andy's golden retriever, Tara, and the knowledge of what her life was like before Andy rescued her....

Ross, Barbara. [Stowed Away](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Maine Clambake #6. When her old prep school rival, Wyatt Jayne, is accused of murdering her billionaire boyfriend, Julia Snowden is drawn into the private world of the mega-rich where nothing—and no one—is what it seems to clear Wyatt's name.

Tata, A J. [Besieged](#) (\$9.99) While checking on a colleague's daughter, former Delta Captain Jake Mahegan is on site when a school is attacked and an autistic girl is kidnapped, sending him

on a rescue mission that uncovers a plan for a devastating terrorist attack on the U.S.

Tate, Clover. [Live and Let Fly](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Kite Shop #2. Determined to win the annual kite festival to boost her handmade kite business, Emmy Adler instead finds herself the prime suspect in the murder of a contest judge and must find the real culprit before she is gone with the wind.

Truman, Margaret. [Margaret Truman's Deadly Medicine](#) (\$8.99) Assisting a medical researcher whose father has been murdered for his experiments involving a breakthrough painkiller that is cheaper, safer and more effective, private detective Robert Brixton and his associates investigate suspects including the victim's lab tech, a new boyfriend, Big Pharma lobbyists and a shady Georgia senator.