

BOOKNEWS from

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MORE of a FABULOUS FEBRUARY...

AUTHORS ARE SIGNING...

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

Listen to some of our programs on our new [podcast channel](#)

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 20 7:00 PM Launch Party

Steven Saylor signs [The Throne of Caesar](#) (St Martins \$27.99)
Gordianus and the Ides of March. Our copies come with a collectible designed by Saylor!
Saylor will be in conversation with his longtime editor

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 21 7:00 PM Thriller!

Mark Greaney signs [Agent in Place](#) (Berkley \$27)
The Gray Man

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 22 7:00 PM

Hardboiled Crime discusses Joe Ide's [IQ](#) (\$16)

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 23 7:00 PM

James Sallis and the Three Legged Dog Band play

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 24 2:00 PM

Poisoned Pen Press Hosts:

Donis Casey signs [Forty Dead Men](#) (\$26.95 or \$15.95) *Little House on the Prairie*—with Murders

Dennis Palumbo signs [Head Wounds](#) (\$26.95 or \$15.95)
Pittsburgh Serial Killer Chiller with Daniel Rinaldi

Priscilla Royal signs [Wild Justice](#) (\$15.95) Medieval Mystery
And we will be remembering Fred Ramsay, much missed

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 25 2:00 PM

Rhys Bowen signs [The Tuscan Child](#) (Lake Union \$24.95 or \$14.95)

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 27 7:00 PM Launch Party

Joanne Fluke signs [The Raspberry Danish Murder](#)
(Kensington \$26) Baker Hannah Swensen #22

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 28 7:00 PM

Walter Mosley signs [Down the River Unto the Sea](#)
(Little Brown \$27)
Brilliant standalone

SATURDAY MARCH 3 2:00 PM Teen Event

Tom Leveen signs [Mercy Rule](#) (Sky Pony Press \$17.99)
Ages 14-18

SATURDAY MARCH 3 5:00-7:00 PM

Tommy Bahama Presents A Conversation with Ned Colletti
Q&A and Book signing included
15205 N Kierland Blvd. Scottsdale, AZ 85254 Retail Store:
(480) 607-3388

RSVP Events@TommyBahama.com

Colletti signs [The Big Chair](#) (Putnam \$28)

The Smooth Hops and Bad Bounces from the Inside World of the
Acclaimed Los Angeles Dodgers General Manager

SUNDAY MARCH 4 2:00 PM

Kent Anderson signs [Green Sun](#) (Mulholland \$27)

TUESDAY MARCH 6 7:00 PM

A conversation between two pros

Jack Carr signs [The Terminal List](#) (Atria \$26)

Debut thriller by and with a Navy SEAL

J Todd Scott signs [The Far Empty](#) (\$9.99)

EVENT BOOKS

Anderson, Kent. [Green Sun](#) (Mulholland \$27). **Out February 27, Signed here March 4.** This long awaited return of the powerful and talented Anderson will be our *March Hardboiled Crime Club Pick*. Patrick writes: “It’s been 22 years since the publication of *Night Dogs*, which James Crumley called “the best cop never ever written.” Now, Anderson returns with a brilliant and timely book that blows the dust off of genre conventions and breathes new life into the form. The time is the early 1980’s and Hanson, a former Special Forces sergeant, has returned to police work after a few years teaching English literature. He patrols the ghetto streets of East Oakland alone in his patrol car, and has managed to gain the respect of the community by his firm but humane enforcement of the social contract. Hanson, who had expected to die in Vietnam, has no fear of death but is highly attuned to the signs and omens all around him. In a series of unforgettable and sometimes hallucinatory episodes, Anderson presents a police novel unlike any you’ve read before. Don’t miss this one.” Or the Walter Mosley. The pendulum has swung from January and early February serial killer thrillers to splendid procedurals.

Bowen, Rhys. [The Tuscan Child](#) (Lake Union \$24.95 or \$14.95). In 1944, British bomber pilot Hugo Langley parachuted from his stricken plane into the verdant fields of German-occupied Tuscany. Badly wounded, he found refuge in a ruined monastery and in the arms of Sofia Bartoli. Hugo was badly wounded and need care. In time they fell in love. And then came an irreversible betrayal. Nearly thirty years later, Hugo’s estranged daughter, Joanna, has returned home to the English countryside to arrange her father’s funeral. Among his personal effects is an unopened letter addressed to Sofia. In it is a startling revelation. Still dealing with the emotional wounds of her own personal trauma, Joanna travels to Tuscany and soon discovers long-hidden secrets the locals want to stay that way. But she has come too far to let her father’s secrets go....

Carr, Jack. [The Terminal List](#) (Atria \$26). Our **March Thriller Club Pick** is fuelled by revenge. A veteran Navy SEAL (Carr actually is one), Lieutenant Commander James Reece, leads a team in Afghanistan that is wiped out in a prepared ambush, as is the air support crew sent in to rescue the survivors. Something is off. Truly off—on his homecoming Reece learns his family has been ambushed and murdered too. Brutally—and that all this is the work of homeland players, not foreigners. Learning that many of his men and he himself have developed deadly brain tumors, Reece resolves to spend his end days taking down the list of conspirators he’s compiled. And he brings his entire skill set to it. Nothing here is original in thrillers. The financier is heartless; the officials corrupt, the extra traitor inevitable. What distinguishes this start of a series is Carr’s authentic, so alive voice (the thing I always read for first), the wealth of experience he draws upon to create both characters and their actions (like Brad Taylor, no?), and his weapons expertise. Even Stephen Hunter who is a hard, hard critic of guys with guns, gives Carr a thumbs up. And, Carr’s sense of humor often lights this debut up. I see Carr as having a career of real promise.

Casey, Donis. [Forty Dead Men](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95 or \$15.95). I am a true fan of Charles Todd’s two series. The Inspector Rutledge mysteries draw their power—aside from their always amazing and puzzling plots—from the intense portraits of soldiers dealing with the aftermath of WWI battlefields. They are English. In her tenth novel, Casey takes this to America, right into the heart of Oklahoma. A review in *Mystery Scene* begins, “When AlafairTucker’s oldest son, George Washington Tucker, known as Gee Dub, returns to the family farm from the battlefields of World War I he looks unchanged, but his mother knows something is wrong. Post-traumatic stress disorder had a different name back then. They called it shell shock. Drifting and unsure after his military service, GeeDub finds a purpose when he volunteers to help Holly Johnson search for her missing husband, a soldier named Dan Johnson. When Dan’s body is discovered shot through the heart, though, Gee Dub becomes the prime suspect. Alafair does what any good mother would do; she sets out to defend her child and find the real killer. *Forty Dead Men* is populated with colorful and memorable characters,” the trademark of this always heartfelt series that began in 1907 and shows us America in transition as it moves through the early 20th Century, alongside a large family adapting to change with maturing parents and children. The issues—racism, suspicion of immigrants, a changing economy, small town dynamics as well as those in larger communities like Tempe, Arizona—are as alive today as another century has turned as then. I recommend starting with [The Old Buzzard Had It Coming](#) (\$9.99)—the first of a “Little House on the Prairie with murders”—and [ordering the rest](#).

Colletti, Ned. [The Big Chair](#) (Putnam \$28). “The Smooth Hops and Bad Bounces from the Inside World” of the Los Angeles Dodgers General Manager. Hey, it’s March and thus Spring Training....

Fluke, Joanne. [The Raspberry Danish Murder](#) (Kensington \$26). Hannah Swensen has felt as bitter as November in Minnesota since Ross vanished without a trace and left their marriage in limbo. Still, she throws herself into a baking frenzy for the sake of pumpkin pie and Thanksgiving-themed treats while endless holiday orders pour into The Cookie Jar. Hannah even introduces a raspberry Danish pastry to the menu, and P.K., her husband’s assistant at KCOW-TV, will be one of the first to sample it. But instead of taking a bite, P.K., who is driving Ross’s car and using his desk at work, is murdered. Was someone plotting against P.K. all along, or did Ross dodge a deadly dose of revenge?

Greaney, Mark. [Agent in Place](#) (Berkley \$27). It’s wonderful to see Greaney gain traction with his own work and thus other authors get a chance to boost their careers writing Clancy. In this latest Gray Man, fresh off his first mission back with the CIA, Court Gentry secures what seems like a cut-and-dried contract job: A group of expats in Paris hires him to kidnap the mistress of Syrian dictator Ahmed Azzam to get intel that could destabilize Azzam’s regime. Court delivers Bianca Medina to the rebels, but his job doesn’t end there. She soon reveals that she has given birth to a son, the only heir to Azzam’s rule—and a potent threat to the Syrian president’s powerful wife. You can order all of the [Gray Man thrillers](#).

Leveen, Tom. [Mercy Rule](#) (Sky Pony Press \$17.99). Brady just wants to get out. Go to college, play football, maybe reach the NFL. He definitely wants to stop waiting for his deadbeat mother to come home, sleeping on park benches, and going to bed hungry. But first he has to lead the team to the championships. It all adds up to a lot of stress. So who can really blame him when he and the football team turn their aggressions on the new freak? Even the quarterback needs to blow off steam sometimes. Coach turns a blind eye to his players' crimes—because this year, they're going to State. But maybe if Coach had paid more attention they could've caught it before it all happened. Maybe it could've been avoided...maybe. Ages 14-18

Mosley, Walter. [Down the River Unto the Sea](#) (LittleBrown \$27). Former NYPD detective Joe King Oliver, now the owner-operator of King Detective Service, investigates two cases of gross injustice in this excellent standalone from MWA Grand Master Mosley (*Charcoal Joe* and 13 other Easy Rawlins novels). Patrick reviews: "What can I say, I always drop whatever I'm reading when a new Mosley comes out. I admire the man so much, he's never content to go the predictable route but is always exploring and following his muse. This outstanding first in what appears to be a new series features a complicated and conflicted protagonist, private detective and former NYPD cop Joe King Oliver. Ten years ago, King was framed for assault by his enemies within the police department and thrown into solitary confinement at Rikers Island. The experience left him deeply scarred and it has taken him years to get back on his feet. Now, with the help of his teenage daughter Aja-Denise (who never turned her back on him), King runs his own detective agency, and one of his cases involves a Black radical journalist accused of killing two dirty cops who'd been dealing in drugs and women. Then, out of the blue, he gets a letter from the woman who admits she assisted in framing King a decade earlier..." I can't help but think of Don Winslow's *The Force*. And here is part of *Booklist's* Starred Review: "Mosley writes with great power here about themes that have permeated his work: institutional racism, political corruption, and the ways that both of these issues affect not only society at large but also the inner lives of individual men and women."

Palumbo, Dennis. [Head Wounds](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95 or \$15.95). "From the literal bang that starts off the story to its fiery conclusion, author Dennis Palumbo keeps the adrenaline and action flowing. *Head Wounds* is a fine example of cinematic storytelling—not a surprise, given Palumbo's previous work as a screenwriter. The psychological detailing of the killer's mind also rings true thanks to Palumbo's day job as a practicing psychotherapist. *Head Wounds*, possibly the author's best work yet, is a fantastic read, and one that I already predict will be hard to beat as a favorite thriller of 2018."—Jay Roberts, *Mystery Scene*. This 5th Daniel Rinaldi, Pittsburg clinic psychologist begins: Rinaldi, who consults for the Pittsburgh PD, is at home reviewing the file of the unsolved murder of his wife, Barbara, when someone takes a shot at him through his living-room window. Soon afterward, the police apprehend the shooter, Eddie Burke, the drunk, disaffected boyfriend of Daniel's attractive, well-to-do neighbor, Joy Steadman. Daniel does his best to comfort Joy, but when he returns to her house to check on her hours later, he finds her strangled body. Which makes him a suspect. But not for long.... "The author gets maximum suspense out of the buildup to each

killing, taking us along on a child kidnapping and grave robbing, until we get to an ending that has something to do with a Warren Zevon song. Yes, it makes a kind of sense, but it's the compelling craziness of the story that keeps us reading," says *Booklist*. Which is the point: the SK is truly crazy. [Order all 5 Rinaldis](#) starting with *Mirror Image* priced at \$9.99.

Royal, Priscilla. [Wild Justice](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95). Medieval Mystery #14, our **February History Paperback Pick**. No hardcover; Royal believes an elegant paperback with French Flaps better serves her readers. "Set in England in 1282, Royal's superlative 14th medieval mystery finds Prioress Eleanor traveling to Mynchen Buckland Priory, bearing a gift of money and a sealed letter from her brother, Baron Hugh of Wynethorpe, to a woman she has never met, Prioress Amicia. On arrival, Eleanor and her companions, Brother Thomas and Sister Anne, discover Prioress Amicia imprisoned, having been found guilty of murdering a gossiping widow from the village. When Eleanor talks to Amicia in her cell, she believes Amicia's claim of innocence. Determined to discover the real killer, the trio must investigate a house of nuns and monks who are variously fearful, furtive, and enraged. Royal meticulously depicts life at Mynchen Buckland, which was a part of the Hospitaller order, its pious mission intertwined with the military efforts of the Crusader knights. She also pays close attention to all three of the visitors-turned-sleuths. Instead of functioning as main-character sidekicks or listening posts, Brother Thomas and Sister Anne use their respective gifts to astutely unravel crucial strands to the mystery, helping to bring the story to a satisfying conclusion. Royal shows once again why she stands in the front rank of medieval mystery authors."—*PW* Starred Review. Order all the [Medieval Mysteries](#) starting with [Wine of Violence](#) (\$9.99).

Saylor, Steven. [The Throne of Caesar](#) (St Martins \$27.99). **Join us for a launch party with Saylor's longtime editor Keith Kahla in conversation with Saylor. And our copies come with an exclusive collectible designed by Saylor and a glimpse of him and Kahla from 2005.** The final Gordianus the Finder moves the series chronologically forward to a conclusion reveals what happened at the Ides of March, 44 BC. Gordianus is "A kind of Roman Sherlock Holmes." Julius Caesar, appointed dictator for life by the Roman Senate, has pardoned his remaining enemies and rewarded his friends. Now Caesar is preparing to leave Rome with his legions to wage a war of conquest against the Parthian Empire. But he has a few more things to do before he goes. Gordianus the Finder, after decades of investigating crimes and murders involving the powerful, has been raised to Equestrian rank and has firmly and finally decided to retire. But on the morning of March 10th, he's first summoned to meet with Cicero and then with Caesar himself. Both have the same request of Gordianus—keep your ear to the ground, ask around, and find out if there are any conspiracies against Caesar's life. And Caesar has one other matter of vital importance to discuss.... The *NY Times* finds that, "Saylor puts such great detail and tumultuous life into his scenes that the sensation of rubbing elbows with the ancients is quite uncanny."

I collect Saylor and am pleased to have them all. Some of his earlier books have risen in price in paperbacks; check our website to see the current levels.

Scott, J. Todd. [The Far Empty](#) (\$9.99). This 2016 First Mystery Club Pick is now in paperback. Dark, elegiac, and violent, it is a modern Western, a story of loss and escape set along the sharp edge of the Texas border. Told by a longtime federal agent who knows the region. Fans of Ace Atkins' Quinn will especially enjoy this even if it's Texas, not Mississippi. Scott returns March 24 to do a program with Willy Vlautin and sign his second, [High White Sun](#) (Putnam \$26).

SIGNED BOOKS

Blaedel, Sara. [The Undertaker's Daughter](#) (Grand Central \$26). I've mentioned this one before and quoted the [NY Times review](#) in the Enews which ends with, "Most amateur sleuths hold down professional jobs to support their unofficial detective work. Blaedel has come up with an especially challenging occupation for Jensen, but this 6-foot-tall Viking goddess is strong enough to carry it all by herself." Here it shows up as a favorite in Library Reads: "Widow Ilka Nichols Jensen's life in Copenhagen is rocked with the unexpected news that her estranged father has died in America. Furthermore, he's left her something in his will: his funeral home in Racine, Wisconsin. Hoping for closure and to settle her father's affairs, Ilka flies to Wisconsin. But once there, she stumbles upon an unsolved murder—and a killer who's very much alive."

Blaedel recently spoke at an event, saying: "About 25 years ago she "had my own small publishing house in Denmark, only publishing crime fiction. And that was way before any Scandinavian crime fiction wave hit anything, so it was so bad timing. But at the time I was driving around trying to charm booksellers, and what actually happened on my tours around was that they took me in. They gave me a chance, even though everyone knew this wasn't the best idea I ever had. But I think they felt pity because I was coming all around and so they said, 'Okay, give us two books of each' or something like that. So there my respect and love for booksellers started up." She has moved to the US the better to bring her work to you.

✠ Bradley, Alan. [The Grave's a Fine and Private Place](#) (Orion \$41). Set in England in 1952, Agatha-winner Bradley's outstanding ninth Flavia de Luce novel finds 12-year-old Flavia contemplating suicide in the wake of a family tragedy. To relieve the increased tension between Flavia and her two older sisters, Dogger, the de Luce family's long-serving and devoted servant, proposes an extended boat trip on the river. All is uneventful until the skiff nears the site where a notorious poisoner, Canon Whitbread, discarded the chalice he used in his crimes. Flavia's hand, trailing behind the boat, comes into contact with the corpse of the canon's son, Orlando. Only 3 Unreserved Copies left.

Cleveland, Karen. [Need to Know](#) (Random \$27). Only 5 Signed copies left of **February First Mystery Club Pick**. The Indie Next Pick: "Vivian Miller is good at her job, and dedicated. But what she discovers will blow apart everything she thought she knew about her life. What do you do when the choice is country or family? How do you protect your children — and Vivian cares deeply about her children — while walking a tightrope between two superpowers? There are twists and turns aplenty as Vivian steps into a dangerous game that could destroy everything she loves and values. Cleveland keeps the tension going right to the very last page." No peeking! I think this is a stand-alone but some of our staff wonder if there might be a sequel.

Ellis, Karen. [A Map of the Dark](#) (Mulholland \$28). I have recommended this series debut for FBI Agent Elsa Myers as a character for fans of Tana French and Gillian Flynn's first novel *Sharp Objects*... and as our copies were delayed, now do so again. The action goes down around NYC, mostly in Forest Hills, Queens, which is territory less familiar to crime fiction fans. Elsa has compartmentalized her life well but the structure begins to break down as she hunts for a potential serial killer while her father is dying in a hospital....

✠ Finch, Charles. [The Woman in the Water](#) (St Martins \$25.99). *The NY Times* reviews a new Finch, a prequel, **out now but not signed here until March 27. Why? Charles Finch really wanted to meet Jacqueline Winspear so they will be doing a joint event. Calendar it now!** "Prequels are fun because you get an intimate glimpse of your favorite detectives while they're still wet behind the ears and not so full of themselves. Charles Lenox, a gentleman sleuth who goes on to great things in the charming Victorian novels of Charles Finch, is a mere whippersnapper, fresh out of Oxford and determined to set himself up as a 'consulting detective' (a profession that barely existed in 1850). As a member of the aristocracy, Lenox has access to Metropolitan Police bigwigs, but to establish himself as a private consultant he must solve a case on his own — ideally, a cunning mystery like the one he and his clever valet, Graham, contend with here. The London newspapers have received a letter from someone who boasts of having executed 'the perfect crime' and promises more to come. Suspecting a string of homicides has already begun, Lenox gets permission to poke into a previous, possibly related murder. This young woman's 'well-kept teeth' indicate that she was not a prostitute but someone of substance, someone who might even have been a member of Lenox's own social circle."—*N.Y. Times* Series fans will be interested to meet the young woman who later becomes Lenox's wife.

✠ Griffiths, Elly. [Dark Angel](#) (Quercus \$39). Dr Ruth Galloway is flattered when she receives a letter from Italian archaeologist Dr Angelo Morelli, asking for her help. He's discovered a group of bones in a tiny hilltop village near Rome but doesn't know what to make of them. It's years since Ruth has had a holiday, and even a working holiday to Italy is very welcome! So Ruth travels to Castello degli Angeli, accompanied by her daughter Kate and friend Shona. In the town she finds a baffling Roman mystery and a dark secret involving the war years and the Resistance. To her amazement she also soon finds Harry Nelson, with Cathbad in tow. But there is no time to overcome their mutual shock—the ancient bones spark a modern murder, and Ruth must discover what secrets there are in Castello degli Angeli that someone would kill to protect. 10th in one of my favorite British mystery series. Love the archaeology and the Fens... Just a few Signed copies left so order without delay.

Gwin, Mimrose. [Promise](#) (Harper \$27). Two of our staff, John Charles and Sharon, are mad for this book. One or another, or all of us, will do podcast with Gwin when the books arrive. Meanwhile John has reviewed this title in his February Midmonth BookNotes. He says, in part, "A few minutes after 9 p.m. on Palm Sunday, April 5, 1936, a massive funnel cloud flashing a giant fireball and roaring like a runaway train careened into the thriving cotton-mill town of Tupelo, Mississippi, killing more than 200 people, not counting an unknown number of African-American citizens, one-third of Tupelo's population, who were

not included in the official casualty figures. Gwin, who grew up in Tupelo and remembers hearing stories about the tornado, uses this historical event as the backdrop for her eloquent and moving story,” which is also a March Indie Next Pick. Sharon adds, “This book felt real. I’ve never survived a devastating tornado, I’ve not lived in the south in 1936, I’ve never been a black washerwoman nor a white teenage girl in a segregated southern town, but I felt their lives and their thoughts and their survival experience after a natural disaster. The author told their stories in a manner that compelled me to keep reading in order to know they made it, to know what they went through, what happened to their families, to their town. The characters were vivid and alive—I was captured by them from beginning to end, and by the process of learning to know them and their stories. I also experienced a place and a time in our history while reading this book. A well written story, a thoroughly enjoyable and enlightening read ...”

Hannah, Kristin. [The Great Alone](#) (St Martins \$28.99). Already the #1 bestseller and **Signed for us by Hannah in a March 12 drop-by**. Please order now to secure a first print. A former Viet Nam POW comes home a volatile man, riven by PTSD (less well recognized then). After losing yet another job he impulsively moves his family to 1974 Alaska. It too is unpredictable...also unforgiving and untamed. Not the landscape where a family in crisis can deal. Will Leni, age thirteen, cope with it, her family... and survive?

Harper, Jane. [Force of Nature](#) (Flatiron \$25.99). I came late to reading Australian Harper’s international hit debut [The Dry](#) (\$15.95) but when I did... Wow! Her portrait of a landscape and community seared and scarred nearly to the breaking point by drought (and a cleverly conceived murder investigation) sticks in your mind. So her protagonist Aaron Falk is now back, and headed into the Victorian bush in the winter. Five women have been coerced into a corporate team-building exercise there. Five reluctant execs go in. Four come out. And each of them tells Falk and the team a different story....

Hart, John. [The Hush](#) (St Martins \$27.99). **Out now, Signed March 24**. I am not sure why the delay, but as ever am thrilled to have multi-Edgar-winner Hart come to do a program for you. To secure a first print, please buy it now. Hart presents an impressive sequel to his 2019 Edgar winner [The Last Child](#) (\$16). It continues the saga of Johnny Merrimon and his friend Jack—more evil awaits them.

Lescroart, John. [Poison](#) (Atria \$26.99). Heigh ho, this 17th Dismas Hardy investigation too is out now. **It will be signed March 20 when Lescroart joins Steve Berry in a program**. This time I do know why the delay—it’s spring training in March and Lescroart is a serious baseball fan who can thus catch a game or two. This review has just run in the *Washington Post* (and *Arizona Republic*) and sums up my take well: “Thoughts of retirement for attorney Dismas Hardy have to be put on hold when a former client begs for his help...Abby Jarvis did her time and, after being released, she found a job as a bookkeeper with Grant Carver and his prestigious company. When Carver kills himself, she finds herself about to get a huge windfall, thanks to his will. But a second autopsy reveals that he was murdered by a poison called aconite, and she becomes the No. 1 suspect. It doesn’t help her claims of innocence that she was embezzling funds from the company. Dismas Hardy feels compelled to help Jarvis, not only

because he truly believes that she didn’t kill Carver, but also because he can’t stay away from the courtroom. He was shot because of the last case he worked, and his wife doesn’t want him working at all, especially not on a murder case. Hardy has to balance his personal feelings and his family’s wishes against the pursuit of justice, even if it puts him back into a potentially dangerous situation. Lescroart’s characters play key roles in this marvelous mystery. In addition to Hardy playing the role of Perry Mason, police Lieutenant Abe Glitsky and private investigator Wyatt Hunt are also like their counterparts from the iconic series, with Hunt asking the tough questions from the potential suspects. The way the narrative flows also invokes key atmospheric moments paying a wonderful homage to the world created by Erle Stanley Gardner, while adding material to make it timely and relevant. While Dismas Hardy contemplates retirement, and his family encourages that decision, readers of this series won’t want to see him leave the courtroom anytime soon.” In a coincidence, aconite is the poison used in a terrific 1890 Paris mystery, Gary Inbinder’s [The Man Upon the Stair](#) (Pegasus \$25.95), reviewed in More New Books below.

Lippman, Laura. [Sunburn](#) (Harper \$28). Patrick writes this for the **February Hardboiled Crime Club Pick**: “As a longtime fan of James M Cain’s work I was intrigued when I read a piece by Lippman about this new novel in which she wrote about how she was inspired by *The Postman Always Rings Twice* and *Double Indemnity*. Polly has just ditched her husband and has tried to slip into an anonymous life in a 1995 small Delaware town. Adam, who claims to be just passing through, meets the alluring redhead has found work at the local tavern. They quickly fall into a steamy affair, but it soon becomes apparent that they’re both holding back some deep secrets from each other. Then Polly’s coworker at the tavern dies in what appears to be a horrible accident. Or was it an accident? Or maybe part of a plan? All I can say is check it out. This slippery and subversive book doesn’t do what you think it is going to do...”

I like this Library Reads take: “Polly leaves her husband and child while on a beach vacation and winds up in a small town in Delaware with almost nothing. She gets a job at the local bar and starts a relationship with Adam, someone who seems to have landed in the town by accident as well. As the novel progresses, we learn of Polly’s past and soon you won’t know what to believe. *Sunburn* is a twisted novel that will suck you in.”

Patterson, James. [Fifty Fifty](#) (Little Brown \$28). After Detective Harriet Blue is banished from working her brother’s murder case, she uncovers a plot to destroy an isolated mining village. Blue is certain that her brother is incapable of having committed these horrific crimes. Determined to clear his name, no matter the cost to her career, she attends Sam’s hearing. The outburst she unleashes earns her a reassignment—to the Outback. Will she make it out alive in time to save her brother from life in prison? Let’s call it “Fifty-Fifty...” By a lucky coincidence we are able to offer copies of this February release signed at The Pen by both Patterson and Australian coauthor Candice Fox. I add that you may notice the rise in the number of Australian authors, some of them visiting The Pen. I think of the tide of Scandinavian authors as a possible parallel. Think Jane Harper, Gary Disher, Kate Morton, Ben Sanders, and below, Paul Howard. **Fox signs her own novel [Crimson Lake](#) (Forge \$25.99) for us on March 9—more in the**

March Booknews. You can also order the March 26 Patterson, [Red Alert: NYPD #5](#) (Little Brown \$28) now for delivery then. **To meet James on March 10 for a size-limited event, call the store at 480 947 2974 or 888 560 9919 for details/tickets.**

Post, Steph. [Walk in the Fire](#) (Polis \$28). Patrick writes, “I can’t recall a new writer who has impressed me in recent years as much as Steph Post. The sequel to last year’s Hardboiled Club pick, [Lightwood](#) (\$15/99), this killer crime novel picks up the action as Judah Cannon, fresh out of a prison stint, returns to Silas, Florida intent on picking up the lead role in his family’s criminal enterprise. His father was gunned down in an epic gun battle between the Cannon clan, a psychopathic Pentecostal preacher and an outlaw biker club. Assuming his father’s mantle won’t be easy, however, as Judah soon finds himself up against a crazed drug runner nursing a decades-old vendetta against the Cannons. Add to the mix a disgraced ATF agent in town asking questions about the fire which destroyed Sister Tulah Atwell’s (truly, one of the most memorable villains in crime fiction) church, but hasn’t diminished the strange power she holds over the town. Post’s work reminds me a bit of Harry Crews with its infectious mix of backwoods noir and southern gothic.” Michael Connelly writes “Steph Post is a great new discovery. Her stories carry a dark pulse that keeps the perfect beat in a world where people put everything they’ve got on the line. *Walk In The Fire* is going to put Steph Post on the map.”

Vlautin, Willy. [Don’t Skip Out on Me](#) (Harper \$22.99). **Patrick recommends this February release, to be Signed here March 24, as our March Modern First Editions Club Pick.** But as first prints rapidly disappear these days, if you aren’t in the club please buy in now. “In this powerful novel, Vlautin (The Free) writes about characters whose big dreams and plans are often stunted by fate and circumstance, but who’ve managed to find a way to push through, bruised but with hard-won wisdom. Young Horace Hopper is half-Irish, half-Paiute Indian, and he has spent most of his life as a ranch hand. While herding sheep in the stark, isolated mountains near Tonopah, Nev., Hopper listens to heavy metal music and struggles with the shame of being abandoned by his parents. Hopper’s guardian, the aging rancher Eldon Reese, suffers crippling back pain and faces an uncertain future as his way of life becomes less and less tenable. Reese and his wife love Hopper dearly and consider him a son, but the young man soon leaves for Tucson to pursue his dream of becoming a professional boxer. Hopper, now calling himself “Hector Hidalgo,” finds a washed-up trainer and manages to get some fights throughout the Southwest and Mexico. A series of injuries, however, soon threaten to derail his career before it’s really off the ground. In this excellent novel, Vlautin’s reverence for the land recalls writers such as Jim Harrison and John Steinbeck.”—*PW* Starred Review. The UK’s *Guardian* reviewer calls this, “a meditation on loneliness.”

BRITISH LIBRARY CRIME CLASSICS

Edwards, Martin, ed. [Foreign Bodies](#) (Poisoned Pen \$12.95). The *PW* Starred Review: Edwards has done mystery readers a great service by providing the first-ever anthology of golden age short stories in translation, with 15 superior offerings from authors from France, Japan, Denmark, Austria, Germany, Holland, Mexico, Russia, and elsewhere; even Anton Chekhov makes a contribution (“The Swedish Match”). Many tales make creative

use of the conventions of Ronald Knox’s ten commandments for detective fiction. For example, Pierre Véry, a French author unaccountably ignored by American and British publishers, centers “The Mystery of the Green Room,” a clever and amusing homage to a locked-room classic, on an open-room puzzle. Another highlight is Koga Saburo’s “The Spider,” in which a zoology lab assistant looks into unsettling deaths connected with an odd laboratory shaped like a cylinder that rests on top of a towering pillar. Also notable is Jean-Toussaint Samat’s “Murder à la Carte,” which features poisoning by “nonpoisonous” substances.”

Farjeon, J. Jefferson. [Seven Dead](#) (Poisoned Pen \$12.95). Originally published in 1939, this reissue in the British Library Crime Classics series from Farjeon (1883–1955) is a standout, with a particularly horrifying opening. Ted Lyte, a small-time thief who usually contents himself with picking pockets, enters an apparently unoccupied house near the British coast only to encounter a grotesque tableau behind a locked door. The room he enters, whose shutters are not only bolted but nailed shut, contains seven emaciated corpses, six of them male; a mantelpiece is adorned by a silver vase supporting an old cricket ball. Lyte flees the scene in terror, only to run into the police. When Inspector Kendall arrives, along with freelance reporter Thomas Hazeldean, who saw Lyte run from the house, Kendall discovers further unsettling oddities, including a crumpled note under one of the dead men bearing the message: “with apologies from the suicide club.” Kendall and Hazeldean complement each other nicely as they work toward a satisfyingly logical solution to this ingenious locked-room mystery. Farjeon’s [Mystery in White](#) (\$12.95) has remained a bestseller since it republished in the BLCC series.

MORE FROM THE COLLINS DETECTIVE CLUB CRIME CLASSICS

Also available: Frank Richardson, [The Mayfair Mystery](#); Bernard Capes, [The Mystery of the Skeleton Key](#); Arthur B. Reeve, [The Adventuress](#) (\$15.95 each)

Conway, Hugh. [Called Back](#) (\$15.99). From the vaults of Harper-Collins, a reissue that involves a blind man who stumbles across a murder. As he has not seen anything, the assassins let him go, but he finds it is impossible to walk away from murder. “The Detective Story Club”, launched by Collins in 1929, was a clearing house for the best and most ingenious crime stories of the age, chosen by a select committee of experts. Now, almost 90 years later, these books are the classics of the Golden Age, republished at last with the same popular cover designs that appealed to their original readers. “By the purest of accidents the man who is blind accidentally comes on the scene of a murder. He cannot see what is happening but he can hear. He is seen by the assassins who, on discovering him to be blind, allow him to go without harming him. Soon afterwards he recovers his sight and later falls in love with a mysterious woman who is in some way involved in the crime.... The mystery deepens and only after a series of memorable thrills is the tangled skein unraveled.” *Called Back* by Hugh Conway, a pseudonym for Frederick John Fargus, was first published in 1883. It was a huge success, selling 350,000 copies in its first year, leading to a highly acclaimed stage play the following year. This new edition is introduced by novelist and crime writing expert, Martin Edwards. An earlier reissue by Conway: [Dark Days and Much Darker Days](#) (\$15.95). Love the pulpy British cover art.

Froest, Frank. [The Grell Mystery](#) (\$15.99). First published in 1913 and selected as one of the launch titles for the Detective Club in 1929. It was written by former Scotland Yard Chief Inspector Frank Froest, who had turned in retirement to writing successful and authentic crime novels. “If you like a thriller with plenty of exciting incident and a clever plot you will like this first-rate detective novel by Frank Froest. Chief Inspector Foyle was confronted with the most bewildering case of his career when Goldenburg, the crook, was found foully murdered in the flat of Robert Grell, millionaire. Here was what appeared to be a perfect crime without a clue that led anywhere. But Foyle was more than a match for the arch-criminal and his masterly deduction and determination brought him a splendid triumph.”

McRae, G. Roy. [The Passing of Mr. Quinn](#) (\$15.99). Who poisoned the cruel and sinister Professor Appleby? Derek Capel, his neighbor, in love with the Professor’s wife, Eleanor? Vera, the house-parlourmaid, Appleby’s mistress? Or was it Eleanor Appleby herself? All three could be reasonably suspected of a motive which would prompt them to poison the most hateful villain who ever crossed the pages of fiction... The first ever Agatha Christie film was a 1928 black and white silent movie, loosely based on her first ‘Harley Quin’ story. Although no script or print of the film survives, this rare novelization from the same year is a unique record of Christie’s first association with the motion picture industry – now in its remarkable tenth decade with the release of Kenneth Branagh’s *Murder on the Orient Express*. This new Detective Club edition includes an introduction by film and television historian Mark Aldridge, author of the authoritative *Agatha Christie On Screen* (2016), who reveals why the film’s harshest critic was Agatha Christie herself.

MORE FEBRUARY LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

Coben, Harlan. [Don’t Let Go](#) (\$16). Coben begins this with a Note about “two common legends about my hometown.” The second one inspired *Don’t Let Go*, he says, but both proved to be true. You can decide for yourself whether you should read the Note or move straight to page one (my vote). And into a story that begins with a young woman involved in a scam who finds herself an unexpected target. And then moves into the narrative of Nap (for Napoleon), a cop in dream suburb Westbridge who can’t move on with his own life. Why? He misses his twin, Leo, whose death in a hideous train accident with Leo’s girlfriend Diana, and the disappearance of Nap’s true love Maura, 15 years ago has stunted Nap’s life. His mentor on the force, Augie, the father of Diana, is another mourner. Nap has his job, his best friend Ellie, and now he has a surprise—Maura’s fingerprints showing up in a rental car of a suspected killer. At the heart of this tale, aside from teenaged stupidity, is what’s hidden out in the woods. No, this isn’t a Brothers Grimm tale, it’s a real thing. One we have to hope is truly obsolete. Also, remember –Trust No One!

Lansdale, Joe. R. [Rusty Puppy](#) (\$15.99). Edgar Award-winner Lansdale is at his page-turning best, tackling simmering racial tension and police brutality, and asking what it means when those who have sworn to protect and serve are actually not to be trusted—themes that are timelier than ever. Writing with hard-earned wisdom, humor, and heart, Lansdale is one of our literary national treasures. By now, readers are familiar with the opposites-attract partners—Hap Collins, a white-trash rebel, and Leonard Pine, a gay black Republican Vietnam vet—and they’ve

got another heated case to work on. A grieving mother turns to Hap to seek justice both for her murdered son—a straight-A student destined for better things than the projects, until he began asking too many questions about the racist police force—and for her daughter, who was sexually harassed by a bullying cop. Hap enlists the help of his best friend, Leonard, to navigate the murky waters of investigation. Lansdale returns to The Pen to sign a new Hap and Leonard on April 4.

✠Lovett, Charlie. [The Lost Book of the Grail](#) (\$16). This delightful bibliomystery set at Oxford not only won my heart but made our March, 2017, British Crime Club Pick. I can’t recommend it highly enough for those who love books, lost manuscripts (and found), the ancient role of the guardian, libraries, Oxford, a love story, mystery.... This is truly a book to get lost in.

MacBride, Stuart. [Dark So Deadly](#) (\$15.99). DC Callum MacGregor’s career was going pretty well until he covered up for a cock-up to protect his pregnant crime-scene tech girlfriend. Now Callum’s stuck on a squad with all the other misfits – the officers no one else wants but who can’t be fired. Never likely to get within reach of a decent case again. Until they accidentally get handed the biggest murder investigation Oldcastle has ever seen. When a mummified body is found in the local rubbish dump, the top-brass assumes pranksters have stolen it from a museum. But as Callum and his colleagues investigate, it starts to look less like student high-jinks and more like the work of a terrifying serial killer.... Hardboiled stuff in contrast to the tsunami of *Girl on the Train* domestic suspense from the UK. MacBride’s new US hardcover is [Now We Are Dead](#) (Harper \$25.99).

Mastai, Elan. [All Our Wrong Today’s](#) (\$16). The Canadian author excels himself with a witty and freewheeling time-traveling romance that packs an emotional wallop. Tom Barren is a time traveler from an alternate reality: a technologically perfect utopian 2016 where all disease has been eradicated, gender equality is a given, and technology takes care of humanity’s every need. But when Tom steals his scientist father’s time machine and travels back to 1965, he accidentally interferes with history and ushers in the comparatively dystopian 2016 we know today. In our 2016, Tom meets the love of his life and discovers a vastly improved version of the family he would have had. Given a chance to return to 1965, Tom is faced with an impossible, heartbreaking choice: go back and restore the utopian world he knows (and all the people in it), or remain in our relatively analog world with the woman he loves? “A thrilling tale of time travel and alternate timelines with a refreshingly optimistic view of humanity’s future.” —Andy Weir, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Martian*.

Tinti, Hannah. [The Twelve Lives of Samuel Hawley](#) (\$17). “Meet Samuel Hawley, a man in a constant struggle with his violent past, doing the best he can to raise his daughter. Meet Loo, his daughter, a girl with an obscure past and an uncertain future, on the cusp of adulthood. And meet Lily, the dead woman who connects them both. In this finely woven novel, the past and the present gradually illuminate the story of a man’s life through the bullet wounds he carries with him and makes readers consider what it is to be both good and evil.” “One part Quentin Tarantino, one part Scheherazade, and twelve parts wild innovation. Hannah Tinti proves herself to be an old fashioned storyteller of the highest order.” —Ann Patchett

✧Winspear, Jacqueline. [In This Grave Hour](#) (\$15.99). Sunday September 3rd 1939. In a London shadowed by barrage balloons, bomb shelters and the threat of invasion, within days another former Belgian refugee is found murdered. And as Maisie delves deeper into the killings of the dispossessed from the “last war,” a new kind of refugee — an evacuee from London — appears in Maisie’s life. The little girl billeted at Maisie’s home in Kent does not, or cannot, speak, and the authorities do not know who the child belongs to or who might have put her on the “Operation Pied Piper” evacuee train. They know only that her name is Anna. As Maisie’s search for the killer escalates, the country braces for what is to come....

MORE NEW BOOKS

Alsterdal, Tove. [The Forgotten Dead](#) (Harper \$14.99). “She is the John le Carré of Sweden.”—Åsa Larsson. A man’s body washes up on the beach. No-one seems to care. Patrick Cornwall is a highly acclaimed investigative journalist. His latest project: to uncover the plight of migrants trying to start new lives in Europe, and expose the corruption that runs to the highest levels of society. Patrick’s wife, Ally, is used to Patrick being out of contact. But she’s just discovered she’s pregnant, and she must track him down. Unable to reach him and starting to worry, she flies across the ocean to get answers. Still unable to find him, Ally delves into the secrets Patrick was determined to expose, and is drawn into an ever-deadlier web in “the dark underbelly of Europe.” Try this new Scandinavian author.

✧Beaton, M C. [Death of an Honest Man](#) (Grand Central \$25). It’s the 34th Hamish Macbeth mystery--they never pale. The Lochdubh, Scotland, policeman and his amiable sidekick, Constable Charlie Parker, drive to the neighboring village of Cnothan to welcome a new resident, retired banker Paul English, whose first words to Hamish are: “You gay men are always dyeing your hair.” Hamish protests that his deep red hair is natural. He and Charlie endure further insults from English before their abrupt departure. After someone murders English and dumps his body in a bog, the police have plenty of suspects, since most everyone who was a target of his insults hated him. Hamish navigates the various traps and trappings of his job with his usual ease. Beaton keeps this lighthearted series fresh by introducing several important changes for some recurring characters and assigning Hamish a surprising new assistant.

Boyce, Trudy Nan. [The Policeman’s Daughter](#) (Putnam \$28). The *NY Times*’ Marilyn Stasio writes, “Trudy Nan Boyce got my attention right away with her description of “one of the Atlanta Police Department’s finest vehicles,” a beat-up Crown Victoria with a hole in the floorboard that sucks up dust and blows it in the face of her series heroine, Sarah Alt. This new novel takes Alt, who goes by the nickname Salt, back to the beginning of her career, when she’s a beat cop patrolling the Homes, a housing project in what’s known as the War Zone that stockpiles 700 families in 200 buildings. At the end of her 4-to-midnight shift, Salt spots a strung-out addict named Shannell who says she took a knife to her man, Big D. The next day, which happens to be Mother’s Day, Shannell’s daughter finds her murdered. Solving that case will eventually elevate Salt into the homicide department; but for now, she’s our favorite street cop.” I am a mad fan of Boyce and am investigating an event or Signed books. Stay tuned.

✧Brody, Frances. [Death in the Stars](#) (St Martins \$25.99). I mentioned this new Yorkshire cozy in the Valentine’s Booknews. Now I add that any of you who were gripped by the Great Eclipse last year will love Brody’s depiction of the eclipse fever that gripped England in 1927 when Yorkshire was a prime viewing spot. The plot not only features early air travel on a small and personal scale, but takes the structure of a country house-school chapel observatory mystery worthy of an Agatha Christie. 9th in a very enjoyable series.

Cavanagh, Steve. [The Plea](#) (Flatiron \$25.99). “The Feds make Manhattan con-artist-turned-attorney Eddie Flynn, the hard-boiled hero of Cavanagh’s criminally entertaining sequel to 2016’s [The Defense](#) (\$9/99), an offer he can’t refuse: unless Eddie hustles just-arrested young tech billionaire David Child (who isn’t even his client yet) into pleading guilty to murdering his girlfriend as part of their plan to flip him against the respected but corrupt firm currently representing him, they will arrest Eddie’s estranged wife, Christine White, a lawyer there, for participating (unwittingly) in a vast money-laundering conspiracy. Eddie quickly hits a huge problem: despite the superficially slam-dunk evidence against David, he’s not convinced the terrified 22-year-old did it. Especially after a hit attempt nearly takes out the techie while he’s still in a holding cell. From there the action turns fast and furious as, with the preliminary hearing and Feds’ deadline looming, Eddie employs his very particular set of skills to try to keep David, Christine, and himself alive long enough to figure out who the real killer is—and how he’s going to prove it. This is perfect for anyone who likes a locked-room mystery wrapped inside a legal thriller on steroids.”—*PW* Starred Review

✧Clare Alys. [A Rustle of Silk](#) (\$17.95). ” Introducing physician-sleuth Dr Gabriel Taverner in the first of an intriguing series of mysteries set in early 17th century Devon. 1603. Former ship’s surgeon Gabriel Taverner is attempting to re-establish himself as a country physician in rural Devon. But it’s not easy to gain the locals’ trust, and a series of disturbing incidents, increasing in menace and intensity, convinces him that at least one person does not welcome his presence. Called out to examine a partially decomposed body found beside the river, Gabriel discovers that he has a personal connection to the dead man. Teaming up with Coroner Theophilus Davey to find out how the man died, Gabriel uncovers some darker aspects of the lucrative silk trade which operates from nearby Plymouth. The more he finds out, the more frighteningly apparent it becomes that the people closest to him have been keeping dangerous secrets.

✧Cornwell, Bernard. [Fools and Mortals](#) (Harper 27.99) . The author of the Sharpe series and the Saxon Tales series uses the somewhat devilish younger Shakespeare brother as a vehicle for a fun, amusing caper about the writing and first production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. While a part of William’s theater company, Richard is barely on speaking terms with his brother. Playing women’s parts (ladies were banned from being actors at that time), but quickly growing too old for those roles, Richard craves a greater place in his brother’s world. When a play written for the wedding of a patron’s granddaughter is announced, he jumps at a chance to play a man, and is accidentally thrust into a conspiracy to steal the play and ruin his brother’s career. Basically Cornwell is just having fun writing a caper, “a thrill ride through Elizabethan England where actors were knaves and puritanical mores were on the rise.”

Delany, Vicki. [Cat of the Baskervilles](#) (Crippen \$26.99). British transplant Gemma Doyle, the proprietor of a bookstore specializing in Sherlockiana in West London, Massachusetts, looks forward to doing extra business during a local theater festival's production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* starring aging actor Sir Nigel Bellingham. When Nigel pays a call at her store, his shaking hands, red nose, and whiskey-scented breath suggest to her that he has an alcohol problem. Gemma later discovers Nigel's body after he takes a fatal fall off a seaside cliff during afternoon tea at the posh estate of the play's producer and director. West London police officer Ryan Ashburton, Gemma's former beau, investigates, with help from her nemesis, Detective Louise Estrada. Cozy fans fond of Sherlock Holmes will have fun with this third in the Sherlock Holmes Bookshop mysteries. Delany is joining us from Canada on May 5, 1:00-4:00 PM, for Cozy Con.

Dolnick, Ben. [The Ghost Notebooks](#) (Pantheon \$25.99). A young Brooklyn couple elects to escape city life by becoming live-in caretakers of an historic house museum in upstate New York. The idyll turns fraught when one of them begins to have trouble sleeping and then goes missing. Could the answer to this tie in to the museum's namesake, Edmund Wright, a 19th-Century thinker with a, perhaps dangerous, taste for the occult? "The drawing looked like what a medieval person might have made of the solar system. Concentric circles, dotted lines, scribbled labels..."

✎Elliott, Lexie. [The French Girl](#) (Berkley \$26). Here's an extra push for our **February British Crime Club Pick** which I highly recommend for Elliott's lively voice and mastery of the various plot threads. "Six friends from Oxford University spend an idyllic week in the French countryside that ends with a missing neighbor, the enigmatic Severine. Fast forward ten years and Severine turns up. Or rather her skeleton does in a well on the property. All six friends are suspects. Will the loyalties hold and who put Severine in the well? This is a fun, taut thriller."

Evanson, Brian/Paul Tremblay. **Another Way to Fall** (Concord Free Press \$0). Yes, \$0. The book is free; If you order one you agree to give some sum you determine to a local charity or to a stranger on the street. It's your call. And then pass this nice trade paperback combining a short novel from each author on to someone else who repeats the donation. You can get more info, and report where you gave funds, at www.concordfreepress.com. In Evanson's *Baby Leg*, a mysterious man awakes one morning in an isolated cabin with no clue how he got there—or why he is missing a hand. In Tremblay's *The Harlequin and the Train*, a young engineer, a commuter train accident, and its disturbing aftermath are...surreal! Email us to order.

Freeman Gill, John. [The Gargoyle Hunters](#) (\$16.95). Both his family and his city are crumbling when thirteen-year-old Griffin Watts stumbles headlong into his estranged father's illicit architectural salvage business in 1970s Manhattan. Griffin clambers up the façades of tenements and skyscrapers to steal their nineteenth-century architectural sculptures—gargoyles and sea monsters, goddesses and kings. As his father sees it, these evocative creatures, crafted by immigrant artisans, are an endangered species in an age of sweeping urban renewal. Desperate for money to help his artist mother keep their home, and yearning to connect with his father, Griffin fails to see that his father's deepening obsession with preserving the treasures of Gilded Age New York endangers them all....

Goldberg, Paul. [The Chateau](#) (Picador \$26). "A master of dark, cutting humor, restless and allusive, Goldberg turns the Chateau, its Lexus-driving Russians, and a nearly 90-year-old American WWII veteran who drunkenly shoots at the ocean with his machine gun every night into a mad metaphor for Trump's America.... Following up his acclaimed 2016 debut, [The Yid](#) (\$16), Goldberg confirms his status as one of Jewish fiction's liveliest new voices, walking in the shoes of such deadpan provocateurs as Mordecai Richler and Stanley Elkin."—*Kirkus* Starred Review

✎Hannah, Mari. [The Silent Room](#) (St Martins \$25.99). Did he jump or was he pushed? Northumbria's Detective Sergeant Matthew Ryan frequently fields this question, but it's never been more pressing. Ryan's boss and friend Detective Inspector Jack Fenwick has been accused of harboring illegal firearms, and is caught on camera fleeing the prison van that was taking him to jail. Fenwick appears to be escaping, but Ryan is convinced his friend was abducted. Ryan intends to aid in the investigation; instead, Professional Standards' John Maguire, acting on a personal grudge, suspends Ryan on the grounds that he was AWOL when Fenwick disappeared. Maguire's fair-minded boss Eloise O'Neil supports the suspension, feeling obliged to consider the possibility that Ryan is Fenwick's co-conspirator. Determined to find Fenwick's missing notebooks and clear his friend's name, Ryan is hamstrung by his lack of access to the police station's incident room. Fortunately, Fenwick has earned loyalties beyond Ryan's... A stand-alone thriller from 2017 Dagger in the Library Award-winner Mari Hannah

Halpern, Sue. [Summer Hours at the Robbers Library](#) (Harper \$15.99). People are drawn to libraries for all kinds of reasons. Most come for the books themselves, of course; some come to borrow companionship. For head librarian Kit, the public library in Riverton, New Hampshire, offers what she craves most: peace. Here, no one expects Kit to talk about the calamitous events that catapulted her out of what she thought was a settled, suburban life. But then.... Library Reads finds that, "Kit is a librarian who closes herself off from emotions and people until she meets Sunny, assigned to the library for community service. Add in a group of regulars in the library and the result is an absorbing story of developing friendships and the unveiling of secrets. Kit's story unfolds as we meet many quirky characters in this story of love, loss, and hope."

Hart, Ellen. [A Whisper of Bones](#) (St Martins \$25.99). The MWA Grand Master pens another PI Jane Lawless mystery set in Minnesota's Twin Cities. Britt Ickles doesn't remember much from her only visit to her mother's childhood home when she was a kid, except for playing with her cousin Timmy and the eruption of a sudden family feud. That's why, when she drops by unannounced after years of silence, she's shocked when her aunts tell her Timmy never existed, that she must be confusing him with someone else. No way! Britt hires Jane Lawless, hoping the private investigator can figure out what really happened to her cousin. When a fire in the family's garage leads to the discovery of buried bones, well.... This is one of the longest-running series I know.

Hilmes, Oliver. [Berlin 1936: Sixteen Days in August](#) (Other Press \$24.95). Karen reviews: This is an account of the Olympics and some of the events during the sixteen days of the Games in Berlin. The stories are sometimes moving, sometimes sad,

sometimes frustrating, sometimes victorious. It's not just the games. The reader is taken into the German culture – the prejudice toward Jesse Owens, the love of one woman by Hitler and Goebbels, the everyday citizens living “ordinary” lives, the elites continuing to frequent the high end restaurants with flowing liquor and bad behavior. And there is the “the menacing presence of Hitler...staging the Games to deceive a global audience.” As noted by one reviewer, this book will appeal to the casual reader, like me, or the more accomplished historian. I found it most intriguing.

Howarth, Paul. [Only Killers and Thieves](#) (Harper \$26.99). As part of that Australian tilt I've mentioned in this Booknews, here is a debut set in the untamed frontier of 1880s Australia—reminiscent of Philipp Meyer's [The Son](#) (\$16.99) and the novels of Cormac McCarthy. In other words, brutal and unsparing fiction filled with tropes of our own West. “It does what great Westerns do, it drops you inside the ugliness and chaos of Australian frontier life, it educates and horrifies, but also it entertains. Howarth's debut is a powerhouse page turner,” says Willy Vlautin. And while well over a century earlier, it portrays the devastation of drought in the Outback with the same searing imagery as does Jane Harper in *The Dry*. Sixteen-year-old Billy McBride and his 14-year-old brother, Tommy, are orphaned when, they believe, their rancher father's disgruntled aboriginal stockman guns down their parents and younger sister in cold blood. Enlisting the help of neighboring rancher John Sullivan (with whom their father had a prickly relationship) and Edmund Noone, an inspector with the Native Mounted Police, the boys embark on a manhunt. Things quickly go awry when their confederates use evidence Billy fabricated as a pretext to slaughter the alleged culprit's entire tribe. This atrocity is emblematic of the novel's theme concerning the strained relations between white settlers and the natives whom they have displaced from their lands.

Inbinder, Gary. [The Man Upon the Stair](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). What a delight this “Mystery in Fin-de-Siècle Paris” is. For non-French speakers, this means “End of Century Paris” or the 1890s. In fact, September 1890. Achille Lefebvre, newly promoted to Chief Inspector, is forced to mull over if he really wants the job when events following the execution of an anarchist assassin by guillotine start to roll. One is personal—threats from colleagues of the assassin Moreau. Which creates a need for a police guard for Achille. And then there is the baffling case brought to him by a Baroness who has been pushy in making the acquaintance of Achille's wife. Baron de Livet, one of France's wealthiest men, has disappeared. An inveterate gambler who carried a Gladstone bag stuffed with cash, he was said to have boarded an express to Paris after winning huge stakes in the resort of Aix-Les-Bains—and fighting a duel with the man who accused him of cheating. It was purportedly a draw. This seems to be a missing persons case, not too complicated, but then the security police show up with talk of Russian spies, a de Livet servant dies of poison, the Baron doesn't arrive in Paris but his Gladstone bag is found...empty of its fortune in banknotes. There are real and well as fictional characters, the plot moves quickly, the dialogue is polished... I really enjoyed this and am ordering the first to Achille Lefebvre investigation *tout de suite!* [The Devil in Montmartre and The Hanged Man](#) (\$25.95 each). You should waste no time reading all three.

Lawson, Mike. [House Witness](#) (Grove \$26). Joe DeMarco is a fixer for Minority Leader of the House John Mahoney, a longtime political pro. DeMarco is less about the ethics than the results. Here Mahoney is blindsided by the shooting death in Manhattan of the son he fathered during a long-ago affair and has kept secret all these years. But he can't stand by so he sends DeMarco to NY to liaise with the prosecutor of the rich boy who has been arrested for the crime. It seems like a slam-dunk of a case until someone starts intimidating witnesses... a pattern repeated in cases across the country. So DeMarco's hunt is for another fixer, no? It's a great premise! And sadly, perhaps not fiction....

Lazar, Zachary. [Vengeance](#) (Catapult \$16.95). For the daring reader, a trip to Louisiana's Angola prison and the fate of one inmate who, despite his confession to murder, may well not belong there. Dark and postmodern, the story is unsparing and unsentimental. What's real? What's imagined? Why do these questions matter more right now than ever before?

Mamet, David. [Chicago](#) (Harper \$26.99). A glance at the ARC made me think this was nonfiction, but no—it's a novel! And a long-awaited one from the playwright/screenwriter/producer who once again brings his skills to fiction. Twenty years in the making, Chicago is in its dark, mobbed-up 1920s prime and filled with a spectacular array of characters, some drawn from real life. It's about Prohibition... and so much more. Think of Elmore Leonard and Loren Estleman on Detroit, or Lehane on Boston.

Matthews, Jason. [Red Sparrow](#) (\$17). If you missed the start of the Red Sparrow Trilogy, a 2013 First Mystery Club Pick and winner of the Edgar for Best First Novel, grab the movie-tie-in cover. And carry on with #2, [Palace of Treason](#) (\$16.99), and while Signed copies last, [The Kremlin's Candidate](#) (\$26.99). Russia and intrigue (meddling) remain synonymous.

Miller, Tom. [The Philosopher's Flight](#) (SimonSchuster \$26). I am stealing John's review from the February Midmonth Booknews as it intrigues me: Eighteen-year-old Robert Weekes is a practitioner of empirical philosophy—an arcane, female-dominated branch of science used to summon the wind, shape clouds of smoke, heal the injured, and even fly. Though he dreams of fighting in the Great War as the first male in the elite US Sigilry Corps Rescue and Evacuation Service—a team of flying medics—Robert is resigned to mixing batches of philosophical chemicals and keeping the books for the family business in rural Montana, where his mother, a former soldier and vigilante, aids the locals. When a deadly accident puts his philosophical abilities to the test, Robert rises to the occasion and wins a scholarship to study at Radcliffe College, an all-women's school. At Radcliffe, Robert hones his skills and strives to win the respect of his classmates, a host of formidable, unruly women. Robert falls hard for Danielle Hardin, a disillusioned young war hero turned political radical. However, Danielle's activism and Robert's recklessness attract the attention of the same fanatical anti-philosophical group that Robert's mother fought years before. With their lives in mounting danger, Robert and Danielle band together with a team of unlikely heroes to fight for Robert's place among the next generation of empirical philosophers—and for philosophy's very survival against the men who would destroy it. Billed by the publisher as part thriller, part historical novel, part fantasy, and part romance (that's a lot of moving parts!), this debut should appeal to fans of Lev Grossman's *The Magicians* series or Deborah Harkness's equally quirky [I would substitute magical for quirky] novels.

✂Powell, Laura. [The Unforgotten](#) (Gallery \$25.99). It is the summer of 1956, and fifteen-year-old Betty Broadbent has never left the Cornish fishing village of St. Steele or ventured far beyond the walls of the Hotel Eden, the slightly ramshackle boarding house run by her moody, unpredictable mother. But Betty's world is upended when a string of brutal murders brings London's press corps flooding into the village, many of whom find lodging at the Hotel Eden. She is instantly transfixed by one of the reporters, the mysterious and strangely aloof Mr. Gallagher—and he, fully twice her age, seems equally transfixed by her. The unlikely relationship that blooms between Betty and Mr. Gallagher is overlaid with longing and desire as it is with impropriety and even menace. And as the shocking death toll rises, both Betty and Mr. Gallagher are forced to make a devastating choice, one that will shape their own lives—and the life of an innocent man—forever. The narratives in this debut shift from 1956 to the present day and back, and might evoke *Broadchurch* for you.

✂Quincy, DM. [Murder in Bloomsbury](#) (Crippen \$26.99). World traveler Atlas Catesby and the widowed Lady Roslyn Lilliana Warwick investigate the sudden death of her maid's brother in Regency-era London. The coroner has ruled that Gordon Davis, a footman turned factory clerk, accidentally overdosed on the arsenic he took for medical reasons, but the form of arsenic in his body doesn't match the type he habitually used. Davis was a seductive schemer determined to marry into wealth. Many wished him dead... There is charm in this second mystery by Quinn but for me the anachronisms and other errors are spoilers. She is clearly not British and her editor hasn't helped. I much prefer the wonderful Regencies by CS Harris. Start with [Murder in Mayfair](#) (\$15.99). This publisher has plunged into multitudinous cozies with little push towards quality except as its authors provide it.

Riley, Lucinda. [The Pearl Sister](#) (Atria \$27). CeCe D'Aplie's has always felt like an outcast. But following the death of her father—the reclusive billionaire affectionately called Pa Salt by the six daughters he adopted from around the globe—she finds herself more alone than ever. With nothing left to lose, CeCe delves into the mystery of her familial origins. The only clues she holds are a black and white photograph and the name of a female pioneer who once traversed the globe from Scotland to Australia. Flashback: 100 years earlier, Kitty McBride, a clergyman's daughter, abandoned her conservative upbringing to serve as the companion to a wealthy woman traveling from Edinburgh to Adelaide. Her ticket to a new land brings the adventure she dreamed of... and a love that she had never imagined. And now, as CeCe comes closer to finding the truth of her ancestry, CeCe begins to believe that this untamed, vast continent could offer her what she's always yearned for: a sense of belonging.

Robb, JD. [Dark in Death](#) (St Martins \$27.99). You fans of Hitchcock's *Psycho* will recognize that a screening of it in a vid-theater in 2060s Manhattan provides the perfect cover for a killer wishing to strike an unsuspecting member of the audience in the neck with an ice pick. No one would have eyes off screen and on the audience, no? An author of police thrillers then comes to Lt. Eve Dallas of the NYPD with the odd news that she recognizes the stabbing as a scene she wrote in one of her crime thrillers. And this is not the first instance of a copycat killing.... I swear Robb, aka Nora Roberts, can think up a twisty plot a day whatever genre she is writing. Her vision of future living is fun and her occasional sex scene highly charged. This is fun to read and the pages turn quickly... good escape.

Sanders, George. [Lincoln in the Bardo](#) (\$17).) "Saunders' first novel has a steep entry curve. It's not a novel that reveals itself quickly and easily, but if you give it your attention, if you burrow deep into the book, you'll be eminently rewarded. There is a richness and depth of humanity here. There is the strange and wonderful. There is love and grief and mystery all brought together in the story of Abraham Lincoln's dead son, the Civil War, and what may happen to us all after we leave the mortal coil.

Schlink, Bernhard. [The Woman on the Stairs](#) (\$16.95). Karl Schwind was an unknown German artist when he painted *Woman on Staircase*, running off with the model, Irene Gundlach, and leaving the artwork to her husband, who had commissioned it. Not satisfied with winning the woman, Karl wants his painting returned. He and Irene hire our narrator, a naïve lawyer in thrall to Irene's beauty, to begin litigation against Gundlach. In the hapless attorney Irene sees an opportunity to outwit all three of these men, who want to claim her body and soul. Decades later, while in Sydney for business, the lawyer spots the long-missing painting on display in a museum. Although Irene used and humiliated him, he has never stopped imagining what might have been. Could she be here in Australia? In a fever of hope, he puts his legal skills to work, determined to find Irene and coerce an explanation for her disappearance from his life. IMHO translating this meditation on love, regret, choices, and a wish for redemption fails somewhat in its translation from German which naturally expresses these emotions and values in a different cultural context.

✂Sheridan, Sara. [London Calling](#) (\$15.95). The mysterious disappearance of eighteen-year-old debutante Rose Bellamy Gore, last seen outside a 1952 Soho jazz club in the company of a saxophone player named Lindon Claremont, has the London tabloids in a frenzy. When Lindon turns up in Brighton desperately seeking help, Mirabelle counsels him to cooperate with the authorities. But after the local police take the musician into custody and ship him off to Scotland Yard, former Secret Service employee Mirabelle Bevan and her best friend, Vesta Churchill, decide to take matters into their own hands. Pleasant reading.

Smith, Alexander M. [A Time of Love and Tartan](#) (Anchor \$15.95). 12th in the 44 Scotland Street series. When Pat accepts her narcissistic ex-boyfriend Bruce's invitation for coffee, she has no idea of the complications in her romantic and professional life that will follow. Meanwhile, Matthew, her boss at the art gallery, attracts the attention of the police after a misunderstanding at the local bookstore. Whether caused by small things such as a cup of coffee and a book, or major events such as Stuart's application for promotion and his wife Irene's decision to pursue a PhD in Aberdeen, change is coming to Scotland Street.

Swanson, Cynthia. [The Glass Forest](#) (Touchstone \$25.99). John Charles writes, "The charms of this novel somehow escaped me, but Swanson racked up plenty of raves from review sources for her latest psychological suspense novel." I totally agree. Reviewers are sometimes impelled by past work rather than keenly reading a new book. I ploughed along but couldn't find any credible reason for the character shifts in either husband, Paul or his brother Henry, unless we're supposed to write Henry off to WWII PTSD. And if young Ruby is supposed to be the damaged child of increasingly estranged parents, I don't think a lot of her eventual throwing in with her Uncle Paul in order to kill him while his ex, her aunt Angie, is apparently ok with this.

Verdan, Nicolas. [The Greek Wall](#) (Bitter Lemon \$14.95). A severed head found on the border of Greece and Turkey leads to a maverick investigation of human trafficking and rampant corruption by Intelligence Agent Evangelos. FYI: The Swiss Verdan was a prominent journalist before turning full-time to fiction. He splits his time between Switzerland and Greece. He won the *Prix Bibliomedia Suisse* 2006 for his first novel, *Le Rendez-vous de Thessalonique*, which was translated into Greek. Also the *Prix du Public de la RTS* 2012, *Prix Schiller 2012 et lauréat du Roman des Romands* 2012-2013 for his novel *Le Patient du docteur Hirschfeld*. The Greek Wall is his first work available in English.

W Winslow, Emily. [Look for Her](#) (Harper \$15.99). Lilling might seem like an idyllic English village, but it's home to a dark history. In 1976, a teenage girl named Annalise Wood disappeared, and though her body was later discovered, the culprit was never found. Decades later, Annalise maintains a perverse kind of celebrity, and is still the focus of grief, speculation, and for one young woman, a disturbing, escalating jealousy. When DNA linked to the Annalise murder unexpectedly surfaces, cold case detective Morris Keene and his former partner, Chloe Frohmann, hope to finally bring closure to this traumatized community. But the new evidence instead undoes the case's only certainty: the buried body that had long ago been confidently identified as Annalise may be someone else entirely, and instead of answers, the investigators face only new puzzles. Whose body was unearthed all those years ago, and what happened to the real Annalise? Honestly, when I got to the end I'd rather not have known. Winslow is a clever writer and stylish but her structure using multiple narrative voices gives me whiplash. She a writing buddy of Sophie Hannah so if you come March 12 to Sophie's event with Charles Todd and Francine Mathews, you can query her about this technique.

Wiebe, Sam. [Cut You Down](#) (Quercus \$26.99). This is the second for Vancouver PI David Wakeland. He's an interesting character, a former cop with some familiar PI tropes. The case begins when a professor, one Dana Essex, hires him to find a missing student from the nearby Surrey Polytech College. Essex claims a romantic interest but Tabitha, an econ major, had been caught up in a huge scandal over missing funds as the treasurer of the misappropriating group. Still, no prosecution had attached to her. The case evolves into something much more complicated... downright devious. I found it a bit overstuffed but it will work for you who like complicated plots. The big reason for reading this is the vivid portrait of one of Canada's major cities, not the Eden we might think. I'd recommend you first meet Dave in [Invisible Dead](#) (\$16.99) as the case becomes backstory in *Cut You Down*.