

Midmonth BookNotes

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Literary Treats not Tricks

Kensington Cozy Convention

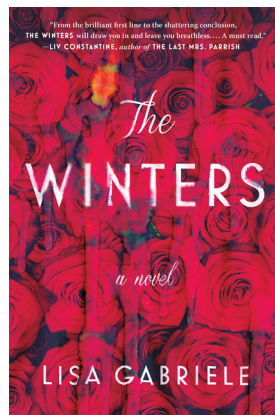
1:00 – 5:00 PM, Saturday, November 3, 2018

Looking for a new author to add to your reading list? Or, are you just interested in some fun conversation about mysteries? Then join cozy mystery writers Carlene O’Conner, Cheryl Hollon, Diane Freeman, Lee Hollis, JC Eaton, JR Ripley, and Rosemary Simpson for an afternoon of murder, mayhem, and mirth. Refreshments will be served and special raffle prizes will be offered! This will be the first time many of the authors attending will be at the Poisoned Pen, so join us and help make them feel welcome!

Everything Old Is New Again!

Gabriele, Lisa. [The Winters](#)
(Penguin \$26)

After a whirlwind romance, a young woman returns to her new husband’s opulent family estate only to find it is haunted by memories of his first wife. Sound familiar? If you guessed this might be *Rebecca*, you would be absolutely correct. However, it is also the plot of Gabriele’s new book *The Winters*, in which she pays careful homage to Daphne du Maurier’s classic novel of romantic suspense. Gabriele rings a few changes to bring the story into the 21st century. The heroine (unnamed as in *Rebecca*) was orphaned early on in life and now works for the money-grubbing (and some might say déclassé) owner of a charter boat and yacht business in the Cayman Islands. When American politician Max Winters shows up one day on vacation to rent a boat, he immediately falls



for our heroine. Despite warnings from her boss, the book’s narrator soon weds Max and is taken back by him to Asherley, his family’s home in the Hamptons. There our protagonist finds her every move shadowed by memories of Max’s first wife the impossibly beautiful and polished Rebekah as well as the efforts of Max’s teenage daughter Dani to drive her away. It is never easy to capture the essence of a classic novel and then transform that into something new and entertaining, but I think Gabriele did a terrific job (though, I am almost certain Barbara will disagree). Both PW and Library Journal were also fans of this novel with LJ concluding “Fans of du Maurier’s book or the 1940 Hitchcock film will admire how Gabriele plays with the elements, but anyone who appreciates solid, twisty “whom can I trust” narratives and female empowerment stories can enjoy.

Gardner, Erle Stanley. [The Count of 9](#)
(Titan \$9.95)

One of the Bertha Cool and Donald Lam mysteries Gardner wrote under the pseudonym A.A. Fair is now back in print again. In this early case for the unlikely partners in detection, Cool and Lam. Hired to protect

the treasures (including a jade Buddha and a blowgun) of a globe-trotting adventurer Dean Crockett, Bertha and Donald confront an impossible crime: how could anything be smuggled out of a dinner party – least of all a 6-foot-long blowgun – when the guests were X-rayed coming in and going out? But that’s nothing compared to the crime the partners face next when they are presented with an impossible murder of Crockett, who is found dead from a dart from the blowgun inside a locked room.

Harris, Robert J. [The Thirty-One Kings](#)
(WW Norton \$25.95)

Richard Hannay, last seen in John Buchan’s *The Thirty-Nine Steps* published more than 100 years ago, returns when he is called back into duty by the British government. In Paris, an individual code named “Roland” has disappeared and is assumed to be in the hands of Nazi agents. Only Roland knows the secret of The 31 Kings, a secret upon which the future of Europe depends. Hannay is dispatched to Paris to find Roland before the Germans overrun the city.

Heyer, Georgette. [Arabella](#)
(Sourcebooks \$15.99)

Daughter of a modest country clergyman, Arabella Tallant is on her way to London when her carriage breaks down outside the hunting lodge of the wealthy Mr. Robert Beaumaris. Her pride stung when she overhears a remark of her host’s, Arabella pretends to be an heiress, a pretense that deeply amuses the jaded Beau. Sourcebooks has released three of Heyer’s classic Regency romances as part of their new Georgette Heyer Signature Collection. Each title sports a bright and breezy new cover with some added bonus content including a glossary of Regency slang, a Reading Group Guide, and an Afterword by official biographer Jennifer Kloester sharing insights into what Georgette herself thought of her writing.

Heyer, Georgette. [Frederica](#)
(Sourcebooks \$15.99)

Determined to secure a brilliant marriage for her beautiful sister, Frederica seeks out their distant cousin the Marquis of Alverstoke. Lovely, competent, and refreshingly straightforward, Frederica



makes such a strong impression on him that to his own amazement, the Marquis agrees to help launch them all into society.

Heyer, Georgette. [The Grand Sophy](#)
(Sourcebooks \$15.99)

When Lady Ombersley agrees to take in her young niece, no one expects Sophy to sweep in and immediately take the world by storm. Sophy discovers that her aunt’s family is in desperate need of her talent for setting everything right: Cecelia is in love with a poet, Charles has tyrannical tendencies that are being aggravated by his grim fiancée, her uncle is of no use at all, and the younger children are in desperate need of some fun and freedom. By the time she’s done, Sophy has commandeered Charles’s horses, his household, and maybe even his heart.

Hughes, Dorothy. [The So Blue Marble](#)
(WW Norton \$15.95)

Griselda Satterlee, daughter of the princess of Rome, has left her career as an actress behind and is traveling to Manhattan to reinvent herself as a fashion designer. Once there, Griselda finds her fate entwined with that of the dashing Montefierrow twins when the three meet one evening during a walk, and their polite conversation quickly takes a menacing turn. The twins are seeking a rare and powerful gem and they believe it’s stashed in the unused apartment where Griselda is staying. Baffled by the request, she pushes them away, but they won’t take no for an answer. When they return, accompanied by Griselda’s long-estranged younger sister, the murders begin.

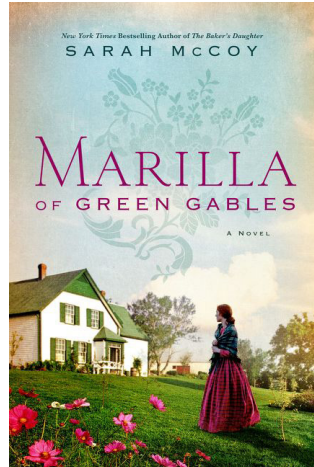
Marsh, Ngaio and Stella Duffy. [Money in the Morgue](#)
(Felony & Mayhem \$14.95)

Working on an undercover assignment to ferret out who may be sending radio transmissions to the Japanese at Mount Seager, a New Zealand military hospital, Inspector Alleyn finds himself mixed up in another murder investigation when a storm kills the electrical power, the payroll money the hospital’s matron has stashed in her safe goes missing and the matron’s body turns up later. Left unfinished by Marsh at her death, this case for her Golden Age sleuth Inspector Alleyn was completed by British playwright and novelist Stella Duffy. Reviews have been mixed, but I was quite charmed by result, which offers a vivid glimpse of life at a military hospital during World War II.

McCoy, Sarah. [Marilla of Green Gables](#)

(HarperCollins \$26.99)

What kind of life did Marilla Cuthbert have before orphan Anne arrived at Green Gables and what ever happened between her and neighboring farmer John Blythe? McCoy takes a loving look back at a young Marilla, whose life opens up in different ways when her maternal aunt Elizabeth “Izzy” Johnson shows up at Green Gables to help out while Marilla’s mother is pregnant. Unfortunately, Marilla’s mother dies unexpectedly in childbirth, and Marilla is forced to take on the responsibilities of cooking, sewing, keeping house, and overseeing the day-to-day life of Green Gables for her brother, Matthew and father, Hugh. At first it seems Marilla will be stuck in the same domestic rut that kept her mother busy, but then Marilla draws inspiration from her Aunt Izzy and seeks out new friends and new opportunities. Joining the Ladies Aid Society, she raises funds for an orphanage run by the Sisters of Charity in nearby Nova Scotia that secretly serves as a way station for runaway slaves from America. Her budding romance with John Blythe, the charming son of a neighbor, offers her a possibility of future happiness—Marilla is in no rush to trade one farm life for another. She soon finds herself caught up in the dangerous work of politics, and abolition—jeopardizing all she cherishes, including her bond with her dearest John Blythe. Now Marilla must face a reckoning between her dreams of making a difference in the wider world and the small-town reality of life at Green Gables.



Millar, Margaret. [An Air that Kills](#)

(Soho \$14.95)

The author of twenty-seven novels (and the wife of mystery writer Ken Miller better known as Ross MacDonald), Millar was an early pioneer in the field of psychological mysteries and suspense novels. Not only did Millar win the Edgar for her 1956 book *Beast in View*, she was named Grandmaster by the Mystery Writers of America for oeuvre of work. In this reprint, Ron Galloway’s friends have all arrived at his Ontario lakeside vacation lodge for a boys’ weekend without

their wives. But as the night wears on and the host himself doesn’t arrive, the party turns sour. Then Ron Galloway’s suspicious wife, convinced he is having an affair and trying to track him down, arrives on the scene, followed by the police. It is clear something is very wrong. In the hours and days that follow Ron Galloway’s disappearance, the secret of an ugly infidelity comes to light, tearing apart Galloway’s circle of friends and destroying two marriages. Did Ron Galloway commit suicide to escape his own unforgivable betrayals? What sinister set of circumstances brought him to his desperate end, and how will his survivors cope with the truth without tearing one another apart?

Palmer, Stuart. [The Puzzle of the Happy Hooligan](#)

(WW Norton \$14.95)

After plans for a grand tour of Europe are interrupted by Germany’s invasion of Poland, Miss Hildegard Withers, a New York City schoolteacher with an uncanny gift for detective work, heads to sunny Los Angeles instead, where her vacation finds her working as a technical advisor on the set of a film adaptation of the Lizzie Borden story. The producer has plans for an epic retelling of the historical killer’s patricidal spree—plans which are derailed when a screenwriter turns up dead. While the local authorities quickly deem his death accidental, Withers suspects otherwise and calls up a detective back home for advice. The two soon team up to catch a wily killer.

Queen, Ellery. [The Chinese Orange Mystery](#)

(WW Norton \$14.95)

The offices of foreign literature publisher and renowned stamp collector Donald Kirk are often host to strange activities, but the most recent occurrence—the murder of an unknown caller, found dead in an empty waiting room—is unlike any that has come before. Nobody, it seems, entered or exited the room, and yet the crime scene clearly has been manipulated, leaving everything in the room turned backwards and upside down. Stuck through the back of the corpse’s shirt are two long spears—and a tangerine is missing from the fruit bowl. Enter amateur sleuth Ellery Queen, who arrives just in time to witness the discovery of the body, only to be immediately drawn into a complex case in which no clue is too minor or too glaring to warrant careful consideration. Queen is the pseudonym chosen by cousins Frederic Dannay and Manfred Bennington Lee when the two launched

their series featuring the erudite sleuth in 1929. This is one of the detective's earlier cases, so be prepared for a sleuth in the manner of Lord Peter Wimsey or Philo Vance (or, in the opinions of some readers "a know-it-all snob") rather than the Queen portrayed in the mysteries penned by the authors after the late 1930s.

Rawson, Clayton. [Death from a Top Hat](#)

(WW Norton \$14.95)

Now retired from the tour circuit on which he made his name, master magician The Great Merlini spends his days running a magic shop in New York's Times Square and his nights moonlighting as a consultant for the NYPD. In the most recent case, two occultists are discovered dead in locked rooms, one spread out on a pentagram, both appearing to have been murdered under similar circumstances. The list of suspects includes an escape artist, a professional medium, and a ventriloquist, so it's clear that the crimes took place in a realm that Merlini knows well. But in the end, it will take his logical skills, and not his magical ones, to apprehend the killer. A panel of mystery experts in 1981 selected this tale by Rawson as one of top ten locked room mysteries of all time.

Rice, Craig. [Home Sweet Homicide](#)

(WW Norton \$14.95)

Unoccupied and unsupervised while mother is working, the children of widowed crime writer Marion Carstairs find diversion wherever they can. So when the kids hear gunshots at the house next door, they jump at the chance to launch their own amateur investigation—and after all, why shouldn't they? They know everything the cops do about crime scenes, having read about them in mother's novels. Plus, if the children solve the puzzle before the cops, it will do wonders for the sales of mother's novels. But this crime scene isn't a game at all; the murder is real, and when its details prove more twisted than anything in mother's fiction, they'll have to enlist Marion's help to sort them out. Or is that just part of their plan to hook her up with the lead detective on the case? Rice, who was the first mystery writer to ever get her picture on the cover of Time magazine, was given the sobriquet "the Dorothy Parker of detective fiction" for her acerbic sense of wit.

Rinehart, Mary Roberts. [The Red Lamp](#)

(WW Norton \$15.95)

Literature professor William Porter scoffs at the ru-

mors that Twin Towers, the seaside property he has inherited is haunted. However, convincing his more spiritually sensitive wife to spend the summer with him at the estate is not easy. Especially, once William begins seeing a shadowy figure illuminated by the red lamp that used to belong to his uncle Horace. Whether the figure is a ghost or a real person, William believes it is responsible for the rash of murders breaking out around the countryside. He is determined to prove there is a corporal person behind the bizarre locale incidents that lead to a rash of murders. Told in the format of entries from William's diary in 1922, this reprint has been called a hybrid of murder mystery and gothic romance that shows the "American Agatha Christie" at the height of her powers.

Schott, Ben. [Jeeves and the King of Clubs](#)

(Little Brown \$27)

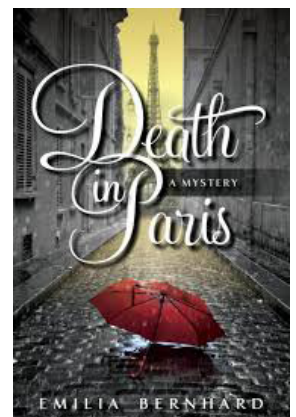
In this escapade, the Junior Ganymede Club (Jeeves's association of butlers and valets) is revealed to be an arm of the British intelligence service. Jeeves must ferret out a Fascist spy, and only his hapless employer can help. Unfolding in the background are school-chum capers, affairs of the heart, drawing-room escapades, antics with aunts, and sartorial set-tos. This new tale for P.G. Wodehouse's beloved duo of Jeeves and Wooster received the official stamp of approval from the author's estate. Not only does Schott capture the effervescent style of prose for which Wodehouse became known, reviews have been positive including the one by *PW* that ended with "this is an essential volume for Wodehouse fans."

Historical Fiction, Mysteries, Romance and More

Bernhard, Emilia. [Death in Paris](#)

(Crooked Lane \$26.99)

Rachel Levis knows there is no way her old paramour Edgar Bowen accidentally drowned in a bowl of soup because there was a bottle of rosé on the dining table when he died. Edgar loathed rosé, ergo he had to have been murdered. Unfortunately, without any concrete proof, the French police are



not willing to investigate, which means it is now up to Rachel and her best friend Magda to look into matters. With its vibrant evocation of Paris and its many charms, reviewers have been quick to compare this delightful debut to the mysteries of Cara Black, but I think it succeeds all on its own merits. Not only does Bernhard have a deft touch with characters, she completely gets the challenges an amateur sleuth faces when it comes to playing private detective. Put this together with a deliciously dry sense of Gallic wit with which the author infuses her writing, and you have a mystery that is *tres amusement*.

Bohnhoff, Maya Kathryn. [The Antiquities Hunter](#) (WW Norton \$25.95)

To flush out the person stalking her best friend Rose Delgado, an undercover agent about to testify in an upcoming case, San Francisco PI Gina “Tinkerbell” Miyoko takes her place working with archaeologist Cruz Veras. Gina soon finds herself plunged into a world of murder and illegal antiquities, fighting for her life to make it out of the jungle alive.

Callahan, Patti. [Becoming Mrs. Lewis](#) (Thomas Nelson \$25.99)

The love story of C. S. Lewis and his wife, Helen Joy Davidman Gresham, was improbable---and seemingly impossible. Their romance led to some of Lewis’s greatest works, yet Joy is most commonly known for how she died. *Becoming Mrs. Lewis* allows us to see how this brilliant and passionate woman lived--and why she stole Jack’s heart. Ever wonder about the woman behind the man who not only wrote *The Screwtape Letters* but also the much-loved *Chronicles of Narnia*? This fascinating historical novel – fittingly published by an inspirational press – will give you all the details.

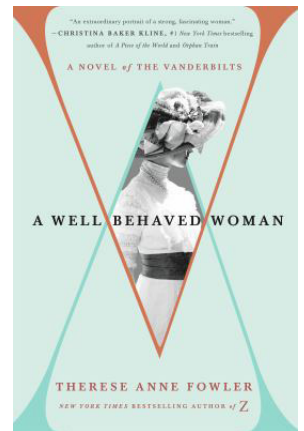
Cooperman, E.J. and Jeff Cohen. [The Question of the Dead Mistress](#) (Midnight Ink \$15.99)

As the owner of Questions Answered, Samuel Hoenig has one firm and fast rule: no cases involving cheating spouses. However, when Ginny Fontaine walks in and wants to know if her husband is two-timing her, it is something a bit different since Ginny thinks her husband is having an affair with a ghost. As far as Samuel is concerned, it is a moot point since ghosts do not exist and therefore Ginny’s husband can be

cheating with someone (or something) which is not real. Samuel’s associate, Janet Washburn, however, isn’t quite as easily convinced. However, soon after Janet begins researching their case, the husband in question winds up dead, leaving Janet and Samuel to wonder if they have a ghost of a chance of getting to the bottom of this case.

Fowler, Theresa Anne. [A Well-Behaved Woman](#) (St. Martin’s \$27.99)

Alva Smith, her southern family destitute after the Civil War, married into one of America’s great Gilded Age dynasties: the newly wealthy but socially shunned Vanderbilts. Ignored by New York’s old-money circles and determined to win respect, she designed and built 9 mansions, hosted grand balls, and arranged for her daughter to marry a duke. But Alva also defied convention for women of her time, asserting power within her marriage and becoming a leader in the women’s suffrage movement. Fowler, who wrote beautifully about F. Scott Fitzgerald’s wife Zelda in her novel *Z*, now tackles the marriage of convenience between Alva Smith and William Vanderbilt in a novel that had me spellbound. I think *PW* summed up this remarkable book best when it said “Though the novel’s lavish sweep and gorgeous details evoke a vanished world, Fowler’s exploration of the way powerful women are simultaneously devalued and rewarded resonates powerfully.”



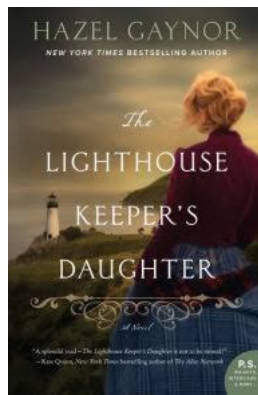
Fox, Hester. [The Witch of Willow Hall](#) (Graydon House \$15.99)

Two centuries after the Salem witch trials, there’s still one witch left in Massachusetts. But she doesn’t even know it. In the wake of a scandal, the Montrose family and their three daughters—Catherine, Lydia and Emeline—flee Boston for their new country home, Willow Hall. The estate seems sleepy and idyllic. But a subtle menace creeps into the atmosphere, remnants of a dark history that call to Lydia, and to the youngest, Emeline. All three daughters will be irrevocably changed by what follows, but none more than Lydia, who must draw on a power she never knew she possessed if she wants to protect those she

loves. For Willow Hall's secrets will rise, in the end. This intriguing debut is being marketed to fans of Deborah Harkness, but in some ways, it also reminded me of that classic children's Newberry award winning novel *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* by Elizabeth George Speare.

Gaynor, Hazel. [The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter](#) (HarperCollins \$16.99)

1838: Northumberland, England. Longstone Lighthouse on the Farne Islands has been Grace Darling's home for all of her twenty-two years. When she and her father rescue shipwreck survivors in a furious storm, Grace becomes celebrated throughout England, the subject of poems, ballads, and plays. But far more precious than her unsought fame is the friendship that develops between Grace and a visiting artist. Just as George Emmerson captures Grace with his brushes, she in turn captures his heart. 1938: Newport, Rhode Island. Nineteen-years-old and pregnant, Matilda Emmerson has been sent away from Ireland in disgrace. She is to stay with Harriet, a reclusive relative and assistant lighthouse keeper, until her baby is born. A discarded, half-finished portrait opens a window into Matilda's family history. As a deadly hurricane approaches, two women, living a century apart, will be linked forever by their instinctive acts of courage and love.



Guillory, Jasmine. [The Proposal](#) (Berkley \$15)

When freelance writer Nikole Paterson goes to a Dodgers game with her actor boyfriend, his man bun, and his bros, the last thing she expects is a scoreboard proposal. Saying no isn't the hard part--they've only been dating for five months, and he can't even spell her name correctly. The hard part is having to face a stadium full of disappointed fans. At the game with his sister, Carlos Ibarra comes to Nik's rescue and rushes her away from a camera crew. He's even there for her when the video goes viral and Nik's social media blows up--in a bad way. Nik knows that in the wilds of LA, a handsome doctor like Carlos can't be looking for anything serious, so she embarks on an epic rebound with him, filled with food, fun,

and fantastic sex. But when their glorified hookups start breaking the rules, one of them has to be smart enough to put on the brakes.

Maher, Kerri. [The Kennedy Debutante](#) (Berkley \$26)

In 1938, Kathleen "Kick" Kennedy, the daughter of the U.S. Ambassador to England, is the toast of the London, but unlike her older brothers Jack and Joe, Kick finds her social calendar much more constricted by the efforts of her strict mother Rose. Somehow, Kick does manage to meet Billy Hartington, the future Duke of Devonshire, and she is immediately swept off her feet. But their love is forbidden, as Kick's devout Catholic family and Billy's staunchly Protestant one would never approve their match. When war breaks like a tidal wave across her world, Billy is ripped from her arms as the Kennedys are forced to return to the States. Kick gets work as a journalist and joins the Red Cross to get back to England, where she will have to decide where her true loyalties lie--with family or with love.

McGeorge, Chris. [Guess Who](#) (Hanover Square \$26.99)

After solving a high-profile crime as a child which led into a series of daytime television gigs, Morgan Sheppard, the star of the reality television show *Resident Detective*, finds himself waking up, handcuffed, in a hotel room with five strangers and a corpse in the bathtub. A television in the room suddenly comes on and an announcer, disguised with a horse head mask informs Morgan that one of the five people in the room is a murderer and he has three hours to solve the crime or the hotel in which they are all being held captive will be blown up. A debut thriller by a British author.

Morton, Kate. [The Clockmaker's Daughter](#) (Atria \$27.99) SIGNED

In 1862, Edward Radcliffe and a group of artists descend on Birchwood Manor for an artist's retreat, but the retreat ends in murder and theft, and over a century later Elodie Winslow, a young archivist from London, tries to discover the manor's secret after she discovers a photograph of a woman in Victorian-era dress with a sketchbook featuring the twin-gabled house.

Picoult, Jodi. [A Spark of Light](#)

(Random House \$28.99)

Picoult has built her writing career by tackling hot-button issues in her novel. With her 2016 book *Small Great Things* it was the white supremacist movement. Now with *A Spark of Light*, she weaves the volatile subject of abortion rights into a compelling storyline in which a deranged gunman, whose teenage daughter had an abortion, forces his way into a women's reproductive health services clinic in Jackson, Mississippi, and takes hostages. When police hostage negotiator Hugh McElroy arrives on the scene, he discovers his daughter Wren is one of the hostages being held inside. Picoult takes an admirable even-handed approach to the topic, or as Bookpage says "Picoult approaches this divisive issue from all sides – not blaming or condoning, but shining a perceptive light into the lives of those now hoping to survive the hostage situation."

Swanson, Denise. [Die Me a River](#)

(Sourcebooks \$7.99)

While preparing for her twins' baptism, Skye Denison-Boyd investigates the murder of a representative of an insurance company that many Scumble Riverites are suing in the wake of a recent tornado and finds something much more sinister than she ever imagined. The latest entry in the author's reboot of her popular Scumble River series.

Ward, J.R. [Consumed](#)

(Gallery \$26.99)

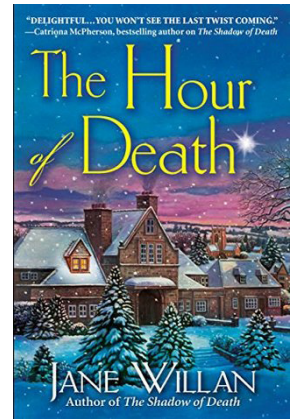
Demoralized arson investigator Anne Ashburn examines a suspicious series of fires that compel her partnership with Daniel "Dannyboy" Maguire, an elite firefighter who navigates his demons to protect her from a murderous arsonist. By the best-selling author of the Black Dagger Brotherhood series. Ward, author of the phenomenally popular Black Dagger Brotherhood series, launches a new series that delivers the brand of gritty, gripping and sexy-as-sin storytelling for which she became famous.

Willan, Jane. [The Hour of Death](#)

(Crooked Lane \$26.99)

Sister Agatha, a nun at the Gwenafwy Abbey in the charming Welsh village of Pryderi, once again finds herself putting into practice the detective skills she has been mastering as an aspiring mystery writer when Tiffany Reese, the president of the Village

Art Society, is found dead on the floor of the parish hall. With some assistance from Father Selwyn, who finds himself playing Watson to Agatha's Sherlock, the plucky nun vows to find Tiffany's killer before Christmas, but can Agatha pick out the murderer from a veritable smorgasbord of suspects? Willan wowed me with her charming debut *The Shadow of Death*, and I am delighted to report her second Sister Agatha mystery is every bit as delightful. From the charmingly cozy village setting to the endearingly quirky cast of secondary characters (including an abbey full of colorful nuns) to the marvelous little plugs Sister Agatha puts in for her favorite mysteries, this is the perfect holiday reading treat for any cozy mystery fan. As with Nancy Atherton's Aunt Dimity books, let go of your cynicism and suspend your willing sense of disbelief and simply give into the quiet joys of this sweet new series.



Nonfiction

Beschloss, Michael. [Presidents of War](#)

(Crown \$35)

Beschloss spent ten years researching and writing *Presidents of War* and it shows in every page of this clear, concise, and compelling look at the manner in which presidents from James Madison to Lyndon B. Johnson have taken our country into conflict and mobilized the nation for victory. For two centuries – from 1812 to the Vietnamese Conflict – Beschloss illuminates how the Commander-in-Chief handled his wartime responsibilities. The author brings readers into the room as these presidents debate strategy with their advisors and staff, and describes the influence each president's family had in the decision-making process to go to war. Beschloss's interviews with surviving participants in the drama and his findings in original letters, diaries, once-classified national security documents, and other sources help him to tell this story in a way it has not been told before. *Presidents of War* is the best kind of popular history: it is eminently readable and laudably even-handed when it comes to assessing each president's own strengths and weaknesses.

Lee, Ingrid Fetell. [Joyful](#)

(Little Brown \$27.99)

Former design director for the global innovation firm IDEO and founder of the popular blog The Aesthetics of Joy, counsels readers on how to cultivate a happier and healthier life by making small environment changes thus revealing the unexpected impact everyday spaces and objects can have on our moods. Or as the author puts it “every human being is born with the capacity for joy.”

McCartney, Jennifer. [The Little Book of Sloth Philosophy](#) (HarperCollins \$9.99)

McCartney takes a page out of the lives of sloths, who have mastered the art of “slowing down,” “chilling out,” and “embracing stillness.” Buried within the pages of this almost too cute to be believed how-to guide are some real smart words of advice about ways anyone of us can easily adopt and change our lives for the better. From embracing our lazy side (or as sloths think of it “mindfulness in action”) to tips for becoming more productive at work or school, the author firmly believes sloths have it all figured out. Now if only everyone would consider the sloth SLOW method of life – Sleep In, Leave Your Phone At Home, Opt Out, and What’s The Rush – what a more peaceful place the world would be.

Sides, Hampton. [On Desperate Ground](#)

(Doubleday \$30)

On October 15, 1950, General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander of UN troops in Korea, convinced President Harry Truman that the Communist forces of Kim Il-sung would be utterly defeated by Thanksgiving. The Chinese, he said with near certainty, would not intervene in the war. As he was speaking, 300,000 Red Chinese soldiers began secretly crossing the Manchurian border. Led by some 20,000 men of the First Marine Division, the Americans moved deep into the snowy mountains of North Korea, toward the trap Mao had set for the vainglorious MacArthur along the frozen shores of the Chosin Reservoir. What followed was one of the most heroic--and harrowing--operations in American military history, and one of the classic battles of all time. Faced with probable annihilation, and temperatures plunging to 20 degrees below zero, the surrounded, and hugely outnumbered, Marines fought through the enemy forces with ferocity, ingenuity,

and nearly unimaginable courage as they marched their way to the sea. Drawing upon years of archival research, which included look at unpublished letters, declassified documents, and interviews with scores of Marines and Koreans who survived the siege, Sides delivers a gripping account of this pivotal battle in the Korean War.

What’s Cooking

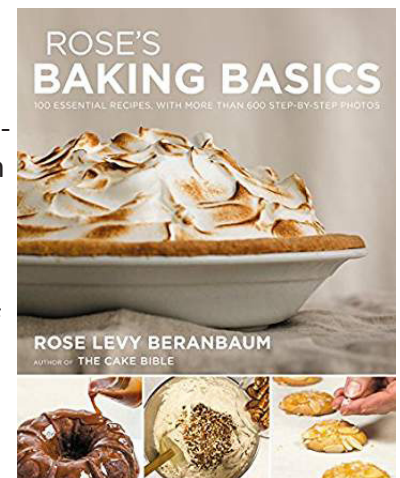
America’s Test Kitchen. [The New Essentials Cookbook](#) (America’s Test Kitchen \$40)

Whether you are a newly minted cook or someone who knows their way around the kitchen but could use some help sharpening your kitchen chops, this new book from the folks at America’s Test Kitchen is for you. Recipes include everything from the perfect roast chicken and a killer banana bread to a Roasted Zucchini and Eggplant Lasagna and luscious Chinese braised short ribs. Not only do the cooks behind America’s Test Kitchen provide the kind of detailed, step-by-step recipes that will ensure your own success, they also provide the insight as to why they have written the recipe exactly how they have. Tips about how to best seed a fresh chili to how to shape a corn tortilla without a tortilla press or rolling pin are also generously sprinkle throughout the book.

Beranbaum, Rose Levy. [Rose’s Baking Basics](#)

(HMH \$35)

Beranbaum is the author of a number of award-winning baking books including what is considered to be the “bible” of cake baking (appropriately entitled The Cake Bible). In her latest, Beranbaum aims to teach novice bakers all they need to know to succeed in the kitchen by offering up a wealth of no-fuss recipes broken down into a streamlined, simplified approach and with more than 600 mouthwatering and instructive photos to help guide you to the correct results. Recipes range from the basic such as perfect brownies and banana bread to Chocolate Sheet Cake with Ganache Frosting and Milk Chocolate Caramel Tart. This cookbook



is already garnering a galaxy of starred reviews including one from PW that concluded with “Beranbaum’s hand-holding is invaluable, especially for those apprehensive about baking.”

Garten, Ina. [Cook Like a Pro](#) (Potter \$35)

Despite authoring more than a dozen best-selling cookbooks and hosting a number of popular shows on the Food Network, Ina Garten – the Barefoot Contessa – is at heart a home cook. With that in mind, Ina knows that cooking and entertaining can be difficult, so to make her recipes simple and streamlined, she tests and retests each recipe until it’s as straightforward and delicious as possible. Now, in *Cook Like a Pro*, Ina shares some of her most irresistible recipes and very best “pro tips,” from the secret to making her custardy, slow-cooked Truffled Scrambled Eggs to the key to the crispiest and juiciest Fried Chicken Sandwiches. Ina will even show you how to make an easy yet showstopping pattern for her Chocolate Chevron Cake—your friends won’t believe you decorated it yourself! With beautiful photos and a treasury of pro tips that span prepping, making, and serving, as Ina says, “You don’t have to be a pro to cook like one!”

Lo, Anita. [Solo](#) (Knopf \$28.99)

Anita Lo puts the “Lo” in alone. The life of a Michelin-starred New York City chef is a solitary one—there’s not much time for dating or dinners with friends—so she’s perfected the art of cooking for one. In this delightful cookbook, Lo presents 101 accessible, contemporary, and sophisticated recipes for home cooks, most of which take less than 30 minutes to make. Drawn from her childhood, her years cooking around the world, and her extensive travels, these are globally-inspired, restaurant-quality dishes from Lo’s own repertoire. Think Steamed Seabass with Shiitakes; Smoky Eggplant and Scallion Frittata; Duck Bolognese; Chicken Pho; Slow Cooker Short rib with Caramelized Endive; Broccoli Stem Slaw; Chicken Tagine with Couscous; and Peanut Butter Chocolate Pie—even a New England clambake for one. (And should you find yourself with company, fear not! These recipes are easily multiplied by two.)

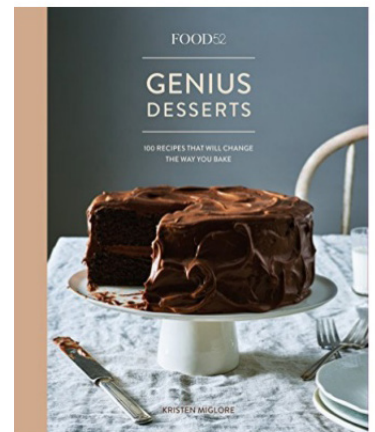
Ludwinski, Lisa. [Sister Pie](#) (Potter \$25)

At Sister Pie, Lisa Ludwinski and her band of sister bakers are helping make Detroit sweeter one slice

at a time from a little corner pie shop in a former beauty salon on the city’s east side. The granddaughter of two Detroit natives, Ludwinski spends her days singing, dancing, and serving up a brand of pie love that has charmed critics and drawn the curious from far and wide. No one leaves without a slice—those who don’t have money in their pockets can simply cash in a prepaid slice from the “pie it forward” clothesline strung across the window. With 75 of her most-loved recipes for sweet and savory pies—such as Toasted Marshmallow-Butterscotch Pie and Sour Cherry-Bourbon Pie—and other bakeshop favorites, the Sister Pie cookbook pays homage to Motor City ingenuity and all-American spirit.

Migiore, Kristen. [Food52 Genius Desserts](#) (Ten Speed \$35)

The genius of this collection is that Kristen Migiore, creative director of the popular Genius Recipes column and its Food52 community of bloggers, has scouted out and rigorously tested recipes from the most trusted dessert experts, finding over 100 of their stand-outs. Each recipe shines in a different way and teaches you something new, whether it’s how to use unconventional ingredients (like *Sunset’s* whole orange cake), how to make the most of brilliant methods (roasted sugar from Stella Parks), or how to embrace stunning simplicity (Dorie Greenspan’s three-ingredient cookies). With photographer James Ransom’s riveting images throughout, *Genius Desserts* is destined to become every baker’s go-to reference for the very best desserts from the smartest teachers of our time—for all the dinner parties, potlucks, bake sales, and late-night snacks in between.



Noyes, Brian. [Red Truck Bakery Cookbook](#) (Potter 25)

Down-home comfort-based desserts are the specialty of the Red Truck Bakery, located among the apple orchards and rolling hills of Virginia. Now Noyes, the bakery’s owner, has opened up his recipe box to share his customer’s favorites with you. From South-

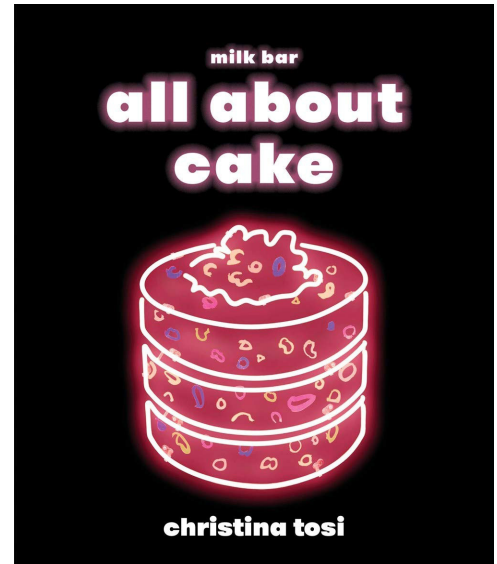
ern classics like Flaky Buttermilk Biscuits and Mom's Walnut Chews, to local favorites like the Shenandoah Apple Cake and Appalachian Pie with Ramps and Morels. Between the keepsake recipes are charming stories of the bakery's provenance and 75 gorgeous photographs of evocative landscapes and drool-worthy delectables. These blue-ribbon desserts and anytime snacks are sure to please!

Ottolenghi, Yotam. [Simple](#)
(Potter \$35)

London-based restaurateur Ottolenghi has already authored two cookbooks featuring his Middle Eastern-inspired flavors. However, with his latest, Ottolenghi's goal was to come up with a range of recipes that could be made in 30 minutes or less, with 10 or fewer ingredients, in a single pot, using pantry staples, and in some cases, be prepared ahead of time. From Braised Eggs with Leeks to Lamb and Feta Meatballs to Fig and Thyme Clafouti, he succeeds in delivering the kind of dishes that will become regulars on your own dinner night rotation list.

Tosi, Christina. [All About Cake](#)
(Potter \$35)

A two-time James Beard award winner, a judge on the MasterChef television series, and owner of the popular Milk Bark franchise, Tosi is known and loved for her outrageous flavor combinations (Tosi originated the idea of steeping cereal in milk to get that cereal bowl flavor for her cakes), and her third cookbook



showcases this to a tea. Recipes range from the basic and simple such as cherry cola Bundt cake to the more culinary challenging such as popcorn layer cake with salted caramel filling. Both novice and experienced bakers looking for a challenge will welcome this ingenious cookbook.