

BOOKNEWS from

ISSN 1056-5655, © The Poisoned Pen, Ltd.
Volume 31, Number 4
March Booknews 2019
sales@poisonedpen.com tel (888)560-9919
http://poisonedpen.com

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



MARCH MADNESS AND MYSTERY

AUTHORS ARE SIGNING...

Some Events will be webcast on Facebook Live

Check out our new [YouTube Channel](#)

MONDAY MARCH 4 7:00 PM

Phillip Margolin signs [The Perfect Alibi](#) (St Martins \$27.99)

Our March Surprise Me! Book of the Month

Harriet Tyce signs [Blood Orange](#) (Grand Central \$26)

March First Mystery Book of the Month

WEDNESDAY MARCH 6 7:00 PM

Steve Berry signs [The Malta Exchange](#) (St Martins \$28.99)

Cotton Malone #14

Our copies come with a collectible created and signed by Berry

FRIDAY MARCH 8

Isabella Maldonado signs [Death Blow](#) (Midnight Ink \$15.99)

Veranda Cruz police procedural #3

MONDAY MARCH 11 7:00 PM

Kerr Cultural Center 6110 N Scottsdale Rd 85253 (enter via Rose Lane, take first left to the Kerr)

CJ Box signs [Wolf Pack](#) (Putnam \$27)

Joe Pickett #19

Our copies come with art that CJ Box describes as "having a nice creepy feel to it and has always been one of my favorites"

WEDNESDAY MARCH 13 7:00 PM

Deanna Raybourn signs [A Dangerous Collaboration](#)

(Berkley \$26)

Victorian Veronica Speedwell #4

THURSDAY MARCH 14 7:00 PM

Betty Webb signs [Desert Redemption](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.99)

10th and final Lena Jones mystery

SATURDAY MARCH 16 2:00 PM

Glen Erik Hamilton signs [Mercy River](#) (Harper \$26.99)

Van Shaw

Brad Parks signs [The Last Act](#) (Dutton \$26.95)

MONDAY MARCH 18 7:00 PM

William Kent Krueger hosts John McMahon

Krueger signs [Desolation Mountain](#) (Atria \$26)

McMahon signs [The Good Detective](#) (Putnam \$27)

Debut set in Georgia

TUESDAY MARCH 19 7:00 PM

Greg Iles signs [Cemetery Road](#) (Harper \$28.99)

WEDNESDAY MARCH 20 7:00 PM

The Janet Cussler Car Collection

16055 North Dial Boulevard, Suite 16, Scottsdale 85260

Clive and Dirk Cussler sign [Celtic Empire](#) (Putnam \$29)

Dirk Pitt #25

THURSDAY MARCH 21 7:00 PM

Joe R. Lansdale signs [The Elephant of Surprise](#)

(LittleBrown \$26)

Hap & Leonard

FRIDAY MARCH 22 7:00 PM

Lisa See signs [The Island of Sea Women](#) (Scribner \$27)

TUESDAY MARCH 26 7:00 PM

Jacqueline Winspear signs [The American Agent](#)

(Harper \$27.99)

And [What Would Maisie Do?](#) (\$17.99) An illustrated companion to the Maisie Dobbs mysteries

WEDNESDAY MARCH 27 7:00 PM

Linda Fairstein signs [Blood Oath](#) (Dutton \$28)

Alexandra Cooper #25

Jane Stanton Hitchcock signs [Bluff](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.99)

Our April Thriller Club Pick

WEDNESDAY APRIL 3 7:00 PM

JA Jance signs [The A List](#) (Gallery \$27.99)

Ali Reynolds #14

MARCH DISCUSSION CLUBS

Coffee & Crime: Saturday March 9 10:30 AM:

Jane Willan, [The Shadow of Death](#) (\$15.99)

SciFi Friday: March 15 7:00 PM:

John Scalzi, [The Collapsing Empire](#) (\$9.99)

Croak & Dagger: Saturday March 16 10:30 AM:

Attica Locke, [Bluebird, Bluebird](#) (\$15.99)

Hardboiled Crime: Thursday March 28 7:00 PM:

Ross Macdonald, [The Underground Man](#) (\$15)

EVENT BOOKS

Berry, Steve. [The Malta Exchange](#) (St Martins \$28.99 March 6). Cotton Malone has cleared his US case load and headed to Europe where the background to his 14th investigation begins at Lake Como in April, 1945, when partisans shot the fleeing Benito Mussolini and his mistress. Some of the dictator's loot went missing and now Cotton is at the site musing on the dilemmas Mussolini faced and the fate of 7 letters written by Churchill to the Italian that first Churchill and then MI6 were intent on recovering. (Berry has done some deep homework here). Meanwhile the Pope has unexpectedly died from a brain bleed and time is counting down until the conclave of Cardinals assembles to elect a successor. One of them is a Maltese, an ambitious man. And another, the head of the Holy See's secret intelligence agency, the Entity for short, is bent on finding a legendary document purportedly written by Constantine the Great that could also rock the Church. It's important in all this to distinguish between the Vatican as a city state and the Holy See. And, as we learn, between the physical and spiritual authority of today's Knights of Malta who are actively seeking the Nostra Trinità too. There is a large cast of players with agendas in the mix which Berry keeps briskly stirring for nearly 400 pages as the clock ticks towards the conclave. Lots of action, lots of history, and fresh eyes on some of it distinguish our **March Thriller Book of the Month**. Our copies come with a postcard from Malta designed by, and with a message from, Berry.

Box, C.J. [Wolf Pack](#) (Putnam \$27 March 11 – the day before publication date). Scottsdale as a hunting field? The Poisoned Pen Bookstore as bait? A deadly assassin bedded down at the Hotel Valley Ho? Yes, all that, but this 19th Joe Pickett thriller opens with a big drone spooking mule deer high up in Wyoming Game Warden Katelyn Hamm's territory. Joe Pickett, both surprised and relieved to be back at his old post, and quartered in a new and more spacious home after the old one was burned to the ground, responds to her call. Neither warden will accept such bad behavior on their turf and Joe muscles in—only to have the FBI and the DOJ ask Joe to stand down. Hmm...what will be the role of Nate Romanowski when something takes to the sky besides his falcons? Meanwhile there's that wolf pack on the prowl in Scottsdale. How do these two plot strands come together? Is Joe's younger daughter heading for heartbreak dating? At least Joe's mother-in-law Missy is off on a surprise round-the-world cruise as events from book #18 still shake out. Our copies will come with a custom collectible designed by Box reinforcing the idea of it takes a wolf to take down a wolf....

Cussler, Clive/Dirk. [Celtic Empire](#) (Putnam \$29 March 20, Signed by both authors March 20 at a ticketed event at The Janet Cussler Car Collection). *PW* reviews: "In bestseller Cussler and son Dirk's rousing 25th Dirk Pitt adventure, a series of maritime disasters catch the attention of Pitt and other members of the National Underwater and Marine Agency. Where these attacks have occurred, a deadly outbreak of a cholera-like illness has followed. BioRem Global Limited, a bioremediation company ostensibly using bioengineered bacteria to clean up these so-called accidents, has instead orchestrated them to revive an ancient disease, genetically enhanced to cause an evolutionary genocide, for which there is no modern cure. Pitt's son and daughter, Dirk Jr. and

Summer, discover the source: an ancient Egyptian plague still viable in the DNA of royal mummies. Fortunately, there's hope for a treatment. In 1334 BCE, Maritaten, an Egyptian princess, fled her homeland across the seas to Ireland, bringing along an extinct herbal curative. The authors overly rely on convenience to get Pitt and company out of jams, but then again, that does keep the plot barreling along toward its satisfying finish. This series remains as fresh as ever."

Fairstein, Linda. [Blood Oath](#) (Dutton \$28 March 27). Can it be Linda's 20th Alexandra Cooper investigation? Wow, it seems like yesterday she was here debuting the first, *Final Jeopardy*. I've always enjoyed the nuggets of NYC history in Alex's cases as well as touring various landmark institutions. Here, it's Manhattan's Rockefeller University, "a center for scientific research, primarily in the biological and medical sciences, that provides doctoral and postdoctoral education," and includes a hospital. BTW, Rockefeller is the oldest biomedical research institute in the United States. So Coop is back on the job at the Manhattan Sex Crimes Unit, still working on her physical recovery from the traumas of her last case and reverting to merely social drinking. Her romance with the NYPD's Mike Chapman is no longer under wraps. When Lucy surfaces, a young woman who once testified at a landmark federal trial, and a judge who is a known abuser is involved, Lucy's contention that she was sexually assaulted by an official at that federal trial is...contentious. Soon Coop, Chapman, and Mercer sail into uncharted territory at the Rockefeller.... Order [Alexandra Cooper's earlier cases](#).

Hamilton, Glen Erik. [Mercy River](#) (Harper \$26.99 March 16). When his friend Leo Pak is arrested on suspicion of murder and armed robbery, Van Shaw journeys to a remote Oregon county to help his fellow Ranger. Van had been Leo's sergeant when they served with the 75th Regiment in Afghanistan, and back in the States, Leo had helped Van when he needed it most. Arriving in the isolated town of Mercy River, Van learns that his troubled friend had planned to join a raucous three-day party that dominates the place for one weekend each year. Attended by hundreds of former and active Rangers, the event is more than just a reunion; it's the central celebration of a growing support network called the Rally, founded and led by a highly decorated Special Operations general named Macomber. But there's more going on in Mercy River than just a bunch of Army hard cases blowing off steam.... [Order earlier in series here](#).

Hitchcock, Jane Stanton. [Bluff](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.99 March 27). Huge advance buzz and 5 Star reviews for this social noir that is at once a superb caper as well as our **April Thriller Book of the Month**. The *PW* Star begins, "An aging debutante and card shark commits the perfect revenge crime in Hitchcock's noir. When "Mad" Maud Warner walks into the Four Seasons and shoots Sun Sunderland, "the Pope of Finance," then drops the gun and walks out again undetected, the upper-class grapevines in New York and Washington begin working overtime...Hitchcock pokes fun at the gossipy upper class, at the verbal tics of crass hangers-on, at the street-smart capability of former strippers and former advertising executives alike. The biggest takeaway: He who underestimates women of a certain age certainly does so at his own peril."

You don't need to know a thing about cards to love Maud, her acerbic wit, her unapologetic posture and her nimble mind. Maud is a 56 year-old badass who has had enough. There's a metaphor here of course: as an expert poker player, Maud knows how to plan and how to bluff, and soon the shooting is revealed to be part of a much larger plot. With a backbone of feminist steel, a plot structured like a hand of poker, and a pace as quick-moving and intricate as any heist movie. I add that *Bluff* is based on the real story of a con man who fleeced the author's mother out of a fortune and the author's years-long campaign to get him disgraced and jailed, during the course of which she took up poker to keep sane.

We will have copies of her earlier gems [Social Crimes](#) (\$6.99) and [Mortal Friends](#) (\$13.99)—“Murder, blackmail, and betrayal, all set against the glittering backdrop of Washington society.” —*The Today Show*

Iles, Greg. [Cemetery Road](#) (Harper \$28.99 March 19). When Marshall McEwan left his hometown at age eighteen, he vowed never to return. The trauma that drove him away ultimately spurred him to become one of the most successful journalists in Washington D.C. But just as the political chaos in the nation's capital lifts him to new heights and winning the Pulitzer Prize (by telling a lie) news that his father is terminally ill pushes him to return to Bienville, Mississippi, in spite of his boyhood vow. While his father is dying, his mother is struggling to keep the family newspaper from failing, and Bienville is in the midst of an economic rebirth that might be built upon crimes that reach into the state capitol—and perhaps even to Washington. But the underlying pulse is Marshall's path towards recognizing it's time to put away childish things, and love. “I never meant to kill my brother. I never set out to hate my father. I never dreamed I would bury my own son, nor betray the childhood friend who saved my life. Am I indeed an honorable man?” And does “the real world await”—but not without working through loyalties and betrayals and pain? Iles give himself 591 pages to find out.

The *NY Times* adds this: “There's something about Bienville that rings true, something about the plight of small towns all over the South struggling to remain relevant in a modern economy. In fiction, if not in life, all they need is a hometown hero like Marshall McEwan to revive them. ‘I'm a good Southern boy at heart,’ Marshall says, explaining why he has returned to care for his aged father and rescue both the family newspaper and the town itself.

Lansdale, Joe R. [The Elephant of Surprise](#) (LittleBrown \$26 March 21). Patrick reviews: I always drop everything to read a new Lansdale novel. His singular voice, storytelling mastery, and his uncanny ability to touch on important themes of friendship, race and class, all while making you laugh out on loud on every page... just irresistible and so much fun. Over the course of his long-running Hap and Leonard series, Lansdale has taken his two heroes on quite a journey. Now, things have changed a bit—Hap and his longtime love Brett have finally tied the knot and they've settled into something akin to domestic bliss. Amidst the worst flood East Texas has seen in years, the two run across a woman who's had her tongue nearly cut out, pursued by a heavily armed pair of goons. Turns out the girl survived a mob hit, and the boss has come to clean up the mess. On a chase that blows even the East Texas swamp grass back, Hap and Leonard must save the

girl, and vanquish her foes, before the foes get them first. With a new case to solve, and a brand-new challenge to their relationship, will Hap and Leonard's friendship survive? Will Hap and Leonard survive? [Order their earlier adventures.](#)

Maldonado, Isabella. [Death Blow](#) (Midnight Ink \$15.99). “If you're in the mood for a nonstop exposé of every fear you've ever had about cartel crime, Veranda Cruz is the woman to follow.”—*Kirkus Reviews*. Phoenix homicide detective Veranda Cruz is on a mission. After Hector Villalobos tried to destroy her family, Veranda vowed to take down his powerful crime syndicate. Beautiful, shrewd, and lethal, Daria Villalobos is on a mission of her own. Determined to be the first woman to take the reins of her father's notorious cartel, she hatches a plot to eliminate Veranda. When the investigation blows up in Veranda's face, the hunt is on to stop a bomber. Veranda battles her department and her personal demons as she takes on Daria. To survive her most cunning adversary yet, will she make a pact with a killer? 3rd in this [Phoenix police procedural series](#).

Margolin, Phillip. [The Perfect Alibi](#) (St Martins \$27.99 March 4). A young woman accuses U of Oregon football superstar Blaine Hastings of rape. The evidence against him is overwhelming. Which inadvertently works for him when a second rape occurs and the DNA evidence once again points to him—only he was in prison during the second crime. Truly, a perfect alibi. So what is going on? Young defense attorney Robin Lockwood, in her second appearance for lawyer Margolin, gets involved. Hastings gets a new lawyer, who secures him a new trial, and he's soon out on bail. But the subsequent murder of the law partner of the college athlete's original lawyer creates a whole new spin. This is more a mystery than a legal thriller and is not without flaws but I will say that the reveal of the motive came as an original and stunning surprise! I like Robin too and hope to see more of her. You can meet her in [The Third Victim](#) (\$9.99) from 2018.

McMahon, John. [The Good Detective](#) (Putnam \$27 March 18). This unusually accomplished debut is the first in a projected series; with Marsh still having demons to deal with, the table is set for much more compelling, character-centric stories to come. Crime-fiction fans are advised to get in at the start.”—*Booklist*. “Southern gothic mingles with modern noir...”—*Kirkus*. “Tight, fast and addictive, I blistered this book in a single day. It has everything top-drawer crime fiction demands: murder, conflict, and a damaged, compelling hero, all delivered in prose so crisp and clean McMahon presents like an old pro. If he had a second novel on the shelves, I'd be reading it right now.”—John Hart. I lead with those quotes as this debut did not light me up. It might be the lynching, or I'm overloaded with racially charged reads right now. Or I'm still overwhelmed with 700 pages of Greg Iles' Mississippi noir. I'm steering Patrick to evaluate this and Kent Krueger who will host McMahon. Check the Enews and March Booknews for an update.

Parks, Brad. [The Last Act](#) (Dutton \$26 March 16). Parks rolls out a terrific concept with his newest standalone suspense—put an actor on the inside to gather intelligence from fellow inmates. Tommy Jump, once a child star, now an over-the-hill musical theater actor at 27. He's contemplating the end of his career when he's offered the role of a lifetime. A childhood friend, now an FBI agent, wants him to impersonate a convict in a minimum-security prison and to buddy up to a man responsible for laundering

money for a Latin American drug cartel, with the hope he'll reveal the location of incriminating documents detailing the cartel leader's activities. Tommy, with an artist girlfriend and a baby on the way, agrees. If ever an offer cried out it's too good to be true, this is it. The set up is more Winslow than Parks who is a gentler sort of writer.

Raybourn, Deanna. [A Dangerous Collaboration](#) (Berkley \$26 March 13). When fearless Victorian lepidopterist Veronica Speedwell returns from her several months sojourn in France having deliberately discouraged Stoker from joining her, she's dealing with one man in the sulks and another, his elder brother with the title, enticing her away to an island off Cornwall where a friend is still mourning the disappearance of his bride 3 years past on their wedding night. She has never been found. An irritated Veronica succumbs to the lure of bringing back a very rare glasswing butterfly, found now only on the island, to her London quarters. Stoker refuses the treat but unsurprisingly turns up when it's time to board the small boat for the last leg of the journey. The castle is impressive, the herb garden and glasswings enchanting, and the bride is still missing. And then.... This is a classic country house murder with DuMaurier twists and a true surprise in the end game. 4th in a delightful series—can't wait for #5. But you can read it as a standalone. [Order the first 3 Veronicas](#), read the series in order.

See, Lisa. [The Island of Sea Women](#) (Scribner \$27 March 22). You may have read many novels of the Second World War. There are so many wartime theaters, so many tragic and often beautiful stories to tell full of courage, dark deeds, love, action, survival. But I bet very few of you—including me until I read this—have any knowledge of what life under Japanese occupation was like for the community of women wresting food and a living for themselves and their families on the inhospitable Korean island of Jeju. Lisa See beautifully portrays the bonds that bind and sunder two women in particular, both of them missing their dead mothers, both caught up in tragedy. You can read this as history. Or as an agenda-free novel of female empowerment and friendship. Or as a war story ranging from the Japanese colonization of Jeju from the 1930s through the war and on to 2008 with its cell phones and easy travel wherein the Jeju women still harbor wounds and seek reconnections. But I also urge you to read the Acknowledgements detailing See's impressive, deep diving research into the incredible culture of the women divers, their biological adaptations, their raw courage and stoic acceptance of risk, and wonder what will be their future. See provides a transportive experience for you in this her 10th novel. I'm a fan of every one of her books from *Gold Mountain*, a family history, through her three mysteries, to her historical fiction. And I will never look at abalone as a benign (and delicious) sea creature again!

Tyce, Harriet. [Blood Orange](#) (Grand Central \$26 March 4). A toxic marriage, a murder trial, and questions about who is and who isn't a good mother are at the center of Tyce's debut domestic thriller. After 15 years on the job, Alison Wood, a London barrister on the rise if she doesn't crater, is handed her first murder case. Her task is to defend Madeleine Smith, who was found with her clothes covered in blood next to the body of her husband, Edwin. Alison's excited about her case, but she's distracted by excessive drinking with her colleagues and rough and dirty sex with Patrick Saunders, a legendary philanderer and her instructing solicitor in the murder case. Madeleine confesses that she

stabbed Edwin, but Alison isn't sure Madeleine's telling the truth. In addition to being an alcoholic, Alison is an unfaithful wife to her husband, Carl Bailey, and a neglectful mother to their 6-year-old daughter, Matilda. When Alison receives a series of anonymous, vulgar, and accusatory text messages, she falls deeper into her toxic habits. But, she's a bull dog working the case. This is not a comfortable read; the challenge for Tyce, I'm guessing, is to make so unsympathetic character her lead. Tyce was a student of Ian Rankin who finds her "very promising" so I elected to push the comfort zone and make this our **March First Mystery Book of the Month**. I was torn between it and the debut by Choo above, but Choo is only in part a murder mystery along with being superb historical fiction.

Webb, Betty. [Desert Redemption](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95 March 14). "In Jones's electrifying 10th and final Lena Jones mystery, Scottsdale, Arizona., PI Lena is approached by Harold Slow Horse, one of Arizona's leading artists, who insists that she investigate the Kanati Spiritual Center, a compound promoting a mishmash of Native American symbolism and philosophy, where his flighty ex-wife, Chelsea, has taken up residence. Lena reluctantly agrees, and discovers that Chelsea is thriving on the fresh air, sunshine, and gourmet cuisine on offer at the center. When the body of a woman with a possible link to the center turns up in the desert, Lena begins to think that there is 'something more horrific than religious plagiarism going on at Kanati.' Lena gets on a trail that leads her at long last to answers about her troubled past: 'I was an orphan... I'd been found comatose on a Phoenix street at the age of four with a bullet in my head. No one came forward to claim me.' The resolution will satisfy series fans, though they'll be sad to see the last of Lena."—*PWI*. [Order all 10 Lena Jones'](#) investigations starting with *Desert Noir*.

Winspear, Jacqueline. [An American Agent](#) (Harper \$27.99 March 26). We move on from the Bore War into the actual London Blitz of 1940 when the US stood "neutral" and American correspondents like Edward R Murrow reported from London and shaped American thinking. Catherine Saxon is one such, a brave and pretty young woman who one night worked on the ambulance team of Maisie Dobbs and her friend Priscilla. The next day Catherine is found dead in her digs but news of the murder is concealed by British authorities. Scotland Yard comes to Maisie along with Mark Scott of the US Department of Justice, the man who helped her in Munich back in 1938. Robert MacFarlane of the Yard asks Maisie to work with Scott on the mystery of Saxon's death. Maisie, hopeful of passing muster to adopt a young evacuee called Anna, is reluctant but knows her duty.... I have to say here, not at the event, that I cannot see the point of having killed off James and their unborn child only to give Maisie a possible new lover and a living child, but then I don't believe Winspear originally intended to write the series into the new war. And I do think she has some terrific material about 1940 Americans and attitudes here.

Winspear also signs [What Would Maisie Do?](#) (\$17.99). Readers have shared with author Jacqueline Winspear how Maisie's stories have resonated with them or helped them through difficult times. Fans have been inspired by the heroine's resilience and endurance, repurposing her strength in their own lives in a way perhaps best embodied by the phrase "What Would Maisie Do?" Anchored by thirty of Maisie's most timeless quotes,

coupled with Winspear's inspiration for each nugget of wisdom, these reflections offer readers additional insight into the world of Maisie Dobbs

SIGNED BOOKS

Benedict, Marie. [The Only Woman in the Room](#) (Sourcebooks \$25.99) "is the story of a woman who recreated herself several times over the course of her lifetime, as an actress who was a constant disappointment to her mother, a wife who learned state secrets about the Nazis, a refugee who convinced a movie mogul to cast her in his films, and a genius who developed a system to track German torpedoes but was turned away by the U.S. military because they believed she was too beautiful to be smart. The story of Hedy Lamarr is so much more than that of a Hollywood actress and war refugee. The fictional account Marie Benedict has woven is insightful, moving, and impossible to put down!" so says the Indie Next Pick for our **March Modern Firsts Book of the Month**.

Choo, Yangze. [The Night Tiger](#) (Flatiron \$28). This is truly a brilliant novel centered on five individuals connected to a series of deaths in Malaysia's Kinta Valley. In 1930s Malaya, 11-year-old house servant Ren accepts the dying request of his master, Dr. MacFarlane, to find his dismembered finger (it was amputated after an accident) and bury it in his grave. The task must be completed within 49 days or else, according to lore, the doctor's spirit is doomed to wander Earth forever. Thus Ren begins to work for William Acton, the British surgeon who amputated MacFarlane's finger years before. As Ren desperately searches Acton's home and the nearby hospital for the finger, the body of a young woman is discovered, her scattered remains presumably the work of a man-eating tiger. Meanwhile, Ji Lin, a dressmaker's apprentice who secretly works at a dance hall, happens upon a preserved finger in the possession of an unsavory customer. Ji enlists the help of her step-brother, Shin, to discover the origin of the finger, but uncanny tragedies and mishaps follow in their wake. Mythical creatures, conversations with the dead, lucky numbers, Confucian virtues, and forbidden love provide the backdrop for Choo's superb murder mystery. Mining the rich setting of colonial Malaysia, Choo wonderfully combines a Holmes-esque plot with Chinese lore. A plus—it's a coming of age story twice over. **This debut is the April Modern Firsts Book of the Month. Club members will be rung up then; non-club members should order soon to avoid disappointment.**

Coben, Harlan. [Run Away](#) (Grand Central \$29). She's addicted to drugs and to an abusive boyfriend. And she's made it clear that she doesn't want to be found. Then, by chance, her father Simon is directed towards Central Park's Strawberry Field where she is busking for money with a guitar.—the guitar Simon bought her for her 16th birthday before she went away to school, before she met a toxic guy, before she got hooked on drugs. Right now Paige is not the girl Simon remembers, a girl who would be unfamiliar to his physician wife Ingrid. And who is living on the edge, frightened, and clearly in trouble. He can't stop himself from approaching her, begging her to come home. She runs. And he follows...right into putting himself, his life, and his whole family on the line in what may well be a last futile quest to save his runaway daughter....

Friedman, Matti. [Spies of No Country](#) (Algonquin (\$26.95). The four spies at the center of this story were part of a ragtag unit

known as the Arab Section, conceived during World War II by British spies and Jewish militia leaders in Palestine. Intended to gather intelligence and carry out sabotage and assassinations, the unit consisted of Jews who were native to the Arab world and could thus easily assume Arab identities. In 1948, with Israel's existence in the balance during the War of Independence, our spies went undercover in Beirut, where they spent the next two years operating out of a kiosk, collecting intelligence, and sending messages back to Israel via a radio whose antenna was disguised as a clothesline. While performing their dangerous work these men were often unsure to whom they were reporting, and sometimes even who they'd become. Of the dozen spies in the Arab Section at the war's outbreak, five were caught and executed. But in the end the Arab Section would emerge, improbably, as the nucleus of the Mossad, Israel's vaunted intelligence agency. *Spies of No Country* is about the slippery identities of these young spies, but it's also about Israel's own complicated and fascinating identity. Signed copies of this are a bonus since the author lives in Israel but visited us on March 1.

✚Fowler, Christopher. [Bryant and May: The Lonely Hour](#) (Doubleday \$39) #17 in the eccentric, aging London coppers series. On a rainy winter night outside a run-down nightclub in the wrong part of London, four strangers meet for the first time at 4:00am. A few weeks later the body of an Indian textile worker is found hanging upside down inside a willow tree on Hampstead Heath. The Peculiar Crimes Unit is called in to investigate. The victim was found surrounded by the paraphernalia of black magic, and so Arthur Bryant and John May set off to question experts in the field. Not likely to ship in until April but please order early to avoid disappointment.

✚Goddard, Robert. [One False Move](#) (Random UK \$41). How Joe Roberts does what he does is a mystery. He has a brain that seems able to outperform a computer. To a games company like Venstrom, that skill promises big profits if his abilities can be properly exploited. So they send Nicole Nevinson to track him down and make him an offer too good to refuse. But Venstrom aren't the only people interested in Joe....

Hearne, Kevin. [Death and Honey Signed Numbered Edition](#) (Subterranean \$45). In this blood-soaked collection of fantasy novellas tied to larger series, three otherwise unconnected tales are linked by the thematic inclusion of murder and bees. Kevin Hearne's "The Buzz Kill" returns to the Iron Druid Chronicles after the events of 2018's *Scourged*. As narrated by the faithful sausage-loving wolfhound Oberon, druid Atticus O' Sullivan investigates the mysterious death of a man deep in the wilds of Tasmania. In the weird west story "Grist of Bees" by Lila Bowen, retired monster-hunter Rhett Walker (last seen in 2018's *Treason of Hawks*) is tempted back into service to rescue a kidnapped girl from a malevolent oracle on a mountain, a quest that leads the reluctant hero to face elements of his checkered past. Meanwhile, Chuck Wendig checks in on the world of Miriam Black in "Interlude: Tanager," which features Wren, a psychic teenager unable to escape her life as a hunter of serial killers. While all three stories rely heavily upon previous knowledge of their respective series, they're still accessible for newcomers. Established fans and completionists will undoubtedly enjoy seeing what these characters are up to now. Hearne and Delilah Dawson sign [No Country for Old Gnomes](#) (Del Rey \$28) on April 19 but please order this now before we sell out.

Hood, Ann. [Kitchen Yarns: Notes on Life, Love, and Food](#) (Norton \$24.95). Jacques Pepin praises Hood's "voyage through a life of food" that "reminds us that the visceral taste of memories of our past are essential benchmarks for our life, and that the stories of a family are always best felt and expressed through those dishes." Hood is a woman with two bad marriages, a daughter unexpectedly dead at five, and the more usual detritus of a life before she is fortunate enough to get to the right place. Her 27 essays (with recipes, largely based on her Italian-American heritage) map it out. Having had a complicated life myself, I believe that it's incredibly fortunate to have a happy ending, to get to the person and the place your heart belonged all along. It takes courage, tenacity, introspection, and hard-won forgiveness. And the strength of grandmothers and mothers. **So this is an early recommendation for Mother's Day gifting or reading.**

Ifkovic, Ed. [Run Cold](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95). I think this comment in one of the Net Galley 5-Star reviews for *Run Cold* is spot on: "Grief can push folk into madness," says one of the characters, and this simple pronouncement is at the heart of the story. With all gathered in the hotel that is also almost a character, Edna relates a story of vengeance and aftermath, and how the past shapes the future in unforeseeable and horribly sad ways." The *PW* Starred Review: "Set in 1957, Ifkovic's excellent 10th and final Edna Ferber mystery takes the Pulitzer Prize-winning writer to Alaska, the setting of her forthcoming (and last) novel, *Ice Palace*. In Fairbanks, Edna meets old, cantankerous Jack Mabie, who bills himself as "the meanest man in Alaska" and claims to have killed dozens of men decades earlier during the gold rush era. "Takes a lot of gumption and spit to get folks to hate your guts, ma'am," he tells Edna, who replies: "Strangely, I get my enemies to hate me simply by being myself." Jack's subsequent beating death suggests someone bore him a serious grudge. When two people with ties to Jack die violently, Edna believes the crimes are linked to an incident in the past: 'Nothing lies buried under Arctic snow for very long. The crevasses eventually spit up their secrets.' Distinctive characters, intelligent dialogue, and a credible solution to the crimes ensure that the series ends on a strong note. Fans will be sorry to see the last of Edna's sleuthing adventures." I certainly am. This is our **March History/Mystery Book of the Month** in part because its issues of identity, diversity, what US statehood actually means, could not be more relevant to the absurdities of the moment as engineered by a man bent on distraction rather than governing. Order [Edna Ferber's earlier investigations](#); read them in any order.

Johnson, Tim. [The Current](#) (Algonquin \$27.95). Johnson writes, "In *Descent*, it was actually the Rockies that inspired the story. I didn't know how essential the river would become to the story, other than as the locale of the drowning of two young women, 10 years apart. But as I got deeper into the lives of the survivors of those two tragedies, the river became a bridge across time—or through time; it freezes and thaws and flows and freezes again, but it never stops reminding them of what connects them, and what they've lost. The Indie Next Pick: "Tim Johnston's brand of storytelling is a curious hybrid of conventional crime fiction and observation of human nature that demands attention. In *The Current*, Johnston goes beyond the sensational and asks relevant questions when tragedy strikes, addressing real topics that come with the loss of a loved one and the questions that follow a horrific crime. As with Johnston's previous novel, *Descent*, his latest concludes with a wallop you will not see coming."

Leon, Donna. [Unto Us a Son Is Given](#) (Heinemann \$44). Brunetti's father-in-law, the Count Falier, urges Brunetti to investigate and intervene in the seemingly innocent plan of the Count's best friend, the elderly Gonzalo Rodríguez de Tejada, to adopt a much younger man as his son. Under Italian inheritance laws this man would become heir to Gonzalo's entire fortune, a prospect Gonzalo's friends find appalling. For his part, Brunetti wonders why the old man can't be allowed his pleasure in peace. Not long after Gonzalo unexpectedly passes away, one of Gonzalo's oldest friends, just arrived in Venice for the memorial service, is strangled in her hotel room. Now with an urgent case to solve, Brunetti is drawn reluctantly into Gonzalo's stubborn pursuit of love and the both unsurprising and surprising consequences—two murders. Fatherhood in various aspects takes center stage in this 28th novel in a brilliant series depicting various aspects of Venice with a cynical but sapient eye. Note: there is no Signed US edition.

Les Becquets, Diane. [The Last Woman in the Forest](#) (Berkley \$28). Longing, like Patrick, for something truly different I found it in this Les Becquets' second novel, our **March Surprise Me! Book of the Month**. The frozen Alberta landscape, the terrific working dogs, the evolution of the damaged Marian Engstrom who finds her true calling working to protect endangered wildlife in harness with trained rescue dogs—a career that is not a job but a lifestyle, and never in a comfortable berth...the bodies, all that I've seen before. But Les Becquets' portrait of a psychopath is mesmerizing as is the unfolding story of how Marian Engstrom, stranded on a roadside en route to her new job, is initially wary of a rescuer who then becomes her mentor. She grows to love the dazzling Tate, only to devastated by news of his tragic death. And puzzled by the unsolved murders of at least four women.... Les Becquets' first thriller [Breaking Wild](#) (\$16) is about a woman who goes missing in the Colorado wilderness.

Napolitano, Janet. [How Safe Are We? Homeland Security Since 9/11](#) (Public Affairs \$26 Signed May 28 at a ticketed event at the Madison Center). Out at the end of March, the former Governor and Homeland Security Secretary's thoughts on a pressing and divisive issue. Tickets: \$32 with signed book; \$45 with book and admission to the signing line, will go on sale shortly. Please consult the Enews or our website calendar. 7:00 PM at the Madison Center at 16th and Missouri, Phoenix. Loads of on-site parking.

Novak, Brenda. [Unforgettable You](#) (\$7.99). Jada Brooks couldn't have known how her life would change when she fell for bad boy Maddox Richardson back in high school. She couldn't have known his troubled brother would leave hers forever crippled. Or that she'd be forced to shun Maddox completely—only to discover she was carrying his child. Although Maddox was devastated by the events that transpired that fateful night, losing Jada was the worst of it. He's back in Silver Springs, ready to make amends and provide the kind of youth outreach that once saved him. If he'd known Jada was in town, too, he would never have come. Jada has returned to Silver Springs to be with family after her father's death. But when she sees Maddox, every tough decision she's made concerning their now twelve-year-old daughter begins to haunt her.

Pattison, Eliot. [Bones of the Earth](#) (St Martins \$29). I am sad that this brilliant series, one of my very favorites since First Mystery Book of the Month [Skull Mantra](#) (\$17.99) published and won the

Edgar (Best First Novel), is coming to an end although Pattison assures me Shan will “return” in some form. Here’s a Starred Review” “Edgar winner Pattison incorporates the political realities of Tibetan life under Chinese occupation into a page-turning whodunit in his 10th Shan Tao Yun thriller. Shan was once a respected inspector in Beijing, until he investigated ‘the wrong people’ and was exiled to a Tibetan prison. After he provided unofficial help to the area’s governor, Colonel Tan, he was released and given constabulary duties. Needing Shan’s help again, Tan promotes him to special inspector to facilitate his inquiry into the Five Claws Dam, the biggest construction project the Chinese government has ever made in the region. Meanwhile, Shan is forced to witness the execution of Metok Rentzig, an engineer assigned to the project, who was charged with corruption. Shan finds evidence that Metok was framed and judicially murdered, perhaps to cover up others’ culpability in the deaths of two archeologists who were attempting to protect Tibetan antiquities from destruction at the dam site. Pattison has never been better in depicting a brave man’s dangerous pursuit of justice in a ‘land of broken places and broken people.’” I recommend reading the [Inspector Shan Tao series](#) in order, all ten.

Rosenfelt, David. [Black and Blue](#) (St Martins \$28). NJ State Police Officer Doug Brock struggles with the amnesia stemming from getting shot in the line of duty. He’s coming back slowly and feeling his way working with partner Nate and Jessie, the girl he can’t remember breaking up with. When a cold case heats up, Doug has to retrace steps he can’t remember taking 18 months ago after Walter Brookings was shot dead in the heart. Another man has just been similarly gunned down and the ballistics in the two murders are a match. For fans like me of Rosenfelt’s Andy Carpenter series the real suspense here may come from wondering if this time Andy’s client (Andy works in Paterson so he’s a presence in this book as a defense attorney) might actually be guilty! But there is a very clever plot underlying the chuckles. Plus there are dogs and Andy’s usual gang wandering through the action.

✚Runcie, James. [The Road to Grantchester](#) (Bloomsbury \$35). It is 1938, and eighteen-year-old Sidney Chambers is dancing the quickstep with Amanda Kendall at her brother Robert’s birthday party at the Caledonian Club. No one can believe, on this golden evening, that there could ever be another war. Returning to London seven years later, Sidney has gained a Military Cross, and lost his best friend on the battlefields of Italy. The carefree youth that he and his friends were promised has been blown apart, just like the rest of the world—and Sidney, carrying a terrible, secret guilt, must decide what to do with the rest of his life. But he has heard a call: constant, though quiet, and growing ever more persistent. To the incredulity of his family and the derision of his friends—the irrepressible actor Freddie, and the beautiful, spiky Amanda—Sidney must now negotiate his path to God: the course of which, much like true love, never runs smooth.

Shannon, Samantha. [The Priory of the Orange Tree](#) (Bloomsbury \$39) starts an epic high fantasy series in our **March SciFi Fantasy Book of the Month**. The House of Berethnet has ruled Inys for a thousand years. Still unwed, Queen Sabran the Ninth must conceive a daughter to protect her realm from destruction—but assassins are getting closer to her door. Ead Duryan is an outsider at court. Though she has risen to the position of lady-

in-waiting, she is loyal to a hidden society of mages. Ead keeps a watchful eye on Sabran, secretly protecting her with forbidden magic. Across the dark sea, Tané has trained to be a dragonrider since she was a child, but is forced to make a choice that could see her life unravel. Meanwhile, the divided East and West refuse to parley, and forces of chaos are rising from their sleep. Shannon’s first standalone novel takes place in a women-led world of dragons and mage-craft.

“*The Priory of the Orange Tree* isn’t our grandfathers’ epic fantasy novel. It is a clever combination of Elizabethan England, the legend of St. George and Eastern dragon lore, with a dash of Tolkien with enough detailed world-building, breathtaking action and sweeping romance to remind epic fantasy readers of why they love the genre in the first place. The major story draws to a definite close, but much work remains for the characters at the conclusion. Readers will beg for a sequel that explores more of this mythos-rich setting from dragon-back.” –Jaclyn Fulwood

Wilkinson, Lauren. [American Spy](#) (Crown \$29). Wilkinson’s unflinching, incendiary debut, our **February First Mystery Book of the Month**, combines the espionage novels of John le Carré with the racial complexity of Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*. Marie Mitchell, the daughter of a Harlem-born cop and a Martini-can mother, is an operative with the FBI in the mid-’80s peak of the Cold War. Marie is languishing in the bureaucratic doldrums of the agency, a black woman stultified by institutional prejudice relegated to running snitches associated with Pan-African movements with Communist links. All this changes when she is tapped by the CIA to insinuate herself with Thomas Sankara, the charismatic new leader of Burkina Faso, in a concerted effort to destabilize his fledgling government and sway them toward U.S. interests. Now the key player in a honeypot scheme to entrap Sankara, Marie finds herself questioning her loyalties as she edges closer to both Sankara and the insidious intentions of her handlers abroad. In the bargain, she also hopes to learn the circumstances surrounding the mysterious death of her elder sister, Helene, whose tragically short career in the intelligence community preceded Marie’s own. Written as a confession addressed to her twin sons following an assassination attempt on her life, the novel is a thrilling, razor-sharp examination of race, nationalism, and U.S. foreign policy that is certain to make Wilkinson’s name as one of the most engaging and perceptive young writers working today. Marie is a brilliant narrator who is forthright, direct, and impervious to deception—traits that endow the story with an honesty that is as refreshing as it is revelatory. This urgent and adventurous novel will delight fans of literary fiction and spy novels alike. Plus I learned so much about Africa and the US role there I didn’t know.

MARCH BOOKS OF THE MONTH

British Crime Club One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Patrick, Renee. [The Secretary](#)

Cozy Crimes Club One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Perkins, SC. [Murder Once Removed](#)

Discovery Club One paperback or hardcover per month
Shalit, Jonathan de. [A Spy in Exile](#)

First Mystery Club One Signed First per month
Tyce, Harriet. [Blood Orange](#)

Hardboiled Crime Club One signed First per month
Parks, Alan. [February's Son](#)

History/Mystery Club One Signed First per month
Ifkovic, Ed. [Run Cold](#)

History Paperback One per month
Heyer, Georgette. [Footsteps in the Dark](#)

Modern First Editions One Signed First per month
Benedict, Marie. [The Only Woman in the Room](#)

SciFi/Fantasy/Horror Club One Signed First per month
Shannon, Samantha. [The Priory of the Orange Tree](#)

Surprise Me! Club One Signed First Per Month
Les Becquets, Diane. [The Last Woman in the Forest](#)

Thriller Club One Signed First per month
Berry, Steve. [The Malta Exchange](#)

BRITISH LIBRARY CRIME CLASSIC

Lorac, ERC. [Murder by Matchlight](#) (Poisoned Pen \$12.95). “A terrifically atmospheric puzzler...the ending is a stunner...like the best Golden Age crime fiction.” —*Booklist* Starred review. London, 1945. The capital is shrouded in the darkness of the blackout, and mystery abounds in the parks after dusk. During a stroll through Regent’s Park, Bruce Mallaig witnesses two men acting suspiciously around a footbridge. In a matter of moments, one of them has been murdered; Mallaig’s view of the assailant but a brief glimpse of a ghastly face in the glow of a struck match. The murderer’s noiseless approach and escape seems to defy all logic, and even the victim’s identity is quickly thrown into uncertainty. Lorac’s shrewd yet personable C.I.D. man MacDonald must set to work once again to unravel this near-impossible mystery. Order earlier titles by Lorac for a spring reading treat.

Other Classics reissued

Armstrong, Charlotte. [The Unsuspected](#) (\$15.95). The note discovered beside Rosaleen Wright’s hanged body is full of reasons justifying her suicide—but it lacks her trademark vitality and wit, and, most importantly, her signature. So the note alone is far from enough to convince her best friend Jane that Rosaleen was her own murderer, even if the police quickly accept the possibility as fact. Instead, Jane suspects Rosaleen’s boss, New York theater impresario Luther Grandison. Armstrong’s 4th mystery inspired the 1947 film.

✠Crispin, Edmund. [Beware of the Trains](#) (\$16). First published in 1953, *Beware of the Trains* is a collection of sixteen short mysteries. Fen must link a missing train conductor to the murder of a thief, decipher cryptograms to solve the death of a cipher expert and puzzle out a locked-room mystery on Boxing Day. Erudite and complex, these Gervase Fen cases are a treat by my favorite Golden Age sleuth, written by an Oxford don who like others of his colleagues wrote commercial fiction using a pseudonym. His most celebrated mystery is [The Moving Toyshop](#) (\$16) but back in print are [The Case of the Gilded Fly](#); [Frequent Hearses](#); [Fen Country](#), and [The Glimpses of the Moon](#) (\$16 each). I hope the rest will follow; they are very Oxonian, very clever—maybe too clever for some taste—and very atmospheric.

Gardner, Erle Stanley. [The Case of the Careless Kitten](#) (\$15.95). Helen Kendal’s woes begin when she receives a phone call from her vanished uncle Franklin, long presumed dead, who urges her to make contact with criminal defense attorney Perry Mason; soon after, she finds herself the main suspect in the murder of an unfamiliar man. Her kitten has just survived a poisoning attempt, as has her aunt Matilda, the woman who always maintained that Franklin was alive in spite of his disappearance. Lucky that Helen took her uncle’s advice and contacted Perry Mason....

✠Heard, HF. [A Taste for Honey](#) (\$15.95). In a quiet village far from the noise of Victorian London, Sydney Silchester lives the life of a recluse led by two passions: privacy and honey. He gives up the former only when his stores of the latter run low. But when his honey supplier is found stung to death by her hive, the search for a new beekeeper takes Sydney to Mr. Mycroft, a brilliant man who has retired to Sussex to take up precisely this occupation, and who shares many traits with the great detective, Sherlock Holmes. Upon hearing of the tragic death of the village’s other beekeeper, Mycroft, himself no stranger to crime-solving, immediately senses the bloody hand of murder. But what villain would have the mad intelligence to train an army of killer bees? With Sydney at his side, Mycroft embarks on a life-threatening search for the perpetrator of this most diabolical crime.

✠Heyer, Georgette. [Footsteps in the Dark](#) (\$14.99). Published in 1932, this is the first of Heyer’s ingenious, atmospheric “Country House Mysteries” republished by Sourcebooks which publishes Heyer’s classic Regencies as well (the book cover art can make all of them look like romances, but don’t be deceived). Our **March History/Mystery Paperback Book of the Month**—if you read it some time ago, enjoy rereading as I will—begins when locals claim the house is haunted and refuse to put a single toe past the front door, but to siblings Peter, Celia, and Margaret, the Priory is nothing more than a rundown estate inherited from their late uncle—and the perfect setting for a much-needed holiday. But when a murder victim is discovered in the drafty Priory halls, the once unconcerned trio begins to fear that the ghostly rumors are true and they are not alone after all! With a killer on the loose, will they find themselves the next victims of a supernatural predator, or will they uncover a far more corporeal culprit? Start reading the series here, [order more](#). [They Found Him Dead](#) (\$14.99). See Our Marge Large Paperback Picks Below.

✠Household, Geoffrey. [Rogue Male](#) (NY Review of Books Classics) (\$14.95). One of my favorite thrillers opens in 1930-something. A professional hunter is passing through an unnamed Central European country that is in the thrall of a vicious dictator. The hunter wonders whether he can penetrate undetected into the dictator’s private compound. He does. He has the potential target in his sites and is wondering whether to pull the trigger when security catches up with him. Imprisoned, tortured, doomed to a painful death, the hunter makes an extraordinary and harrowing escape, fleeing through enemy territory to the safety of his native England. But that safety is an illusion in this harrowing cat-and-mouse game. *Rogue Male* is a classic thriller and a triumph of suspense. Described by Household as a “bastard offspring of Stevenson and Conrad,” the book is no less remarkable as an exploration of the lure of violence, the psychology of survivalism, and the call of the wild.

Lockridge, Frances. [Death on the Aisle](#) (\$15.95). Mr. and Mrs. North live as quiet a life as a couple can amidst the bustle of New York City. For Jerry, a publisher, and Pamela, a homemaker, the only threat to their domestic equilibrium comes in the form of Mrs. North's relentless efforts as an amateur sleuth, which repeatedly find the duo investigating murders and sundry other crimes. So when the wealthy backer of a play is found dead in the seats of the West 45th Street Theatre, the Norths aren't far behind...

Macdonald, Ross. [The Underground Man](#) (\$15). Just a reminder in PI Lew Archer's 16th case that this marvelous writer, 1940s-1983, remains in print. As a mysterious fire rages through the hills above a privileged town in Southern California, Archer tracks a missing child who may be the pawn in a marital struggle or the victim of a bizarre kidnapping. What he uncovers amid the ashes is murder—and a trail of motives as combustible as gasoline....

Queen, Ellery. [The Dutch Shoe Mystery](#) (\$15.95). When Ellery Queen is invited by his friend, a doctor, to witness an operation, he accepts the offer in hopes of furthering his capabilities as an amateur detective, but soon ends up testing those same skills. The patient who is about to undergo the delicate procedure is Abigail Doorn, the richest and most famous woman in America; the doctor who will perform it is her protégé, one of the leading surgeons on the East Coast. It will all take place in the main operating theater of the vast hospital that she founded. When the patient is wheeled into the operating room, she is already dead....

Quentin, Patrick. [A Puzzle for Fools](#) (\$15.95). Broadway producer Peter Duluth sought solace in a bottle after his wife's death; now, two years later and desperate to dry out, he enters a sanitarium, hoping to break his dependence on drink—but the institution doesn't quite offer the rest and relaxation he expected. Strange, malevolent occurrences plague the hospital; and among other inexplicable events, Peter hears his own voice with an ominous warning: "There will be murder." It soon becomes clear that a homicidal maniac is on the loose along with the bevy of idiosyncratic staff and patients....

OUR MARCH LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

Anderson, Kent. [Green Sun](#) (\$16.99). Patrick writes of this 2019 Edgar nominee: "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."

Bannalec, Jean-Luc. [Fleur De Sel Murders](#) (\$17.99). France's mysterious and beautiful province of Brittany combines with clever plots and an interesting sleuth—the somewhat dour but always dogged (and frequently inspired) Commissaire Dupin. And in his third investigation here he is at harvest time on the ancient salt marshes of the Guerande Peninsula. Legend has it the violet

scent of the Fleur de Sel (the salt carefully evaporated over time from the drying pans) can cause hallucinations. But surely not the bodily attacked Dupin suffers in the salt works where he was doing a bit of poking around at the behest of Lilou Breval, a journalist he admires. Then Lilou disappears. His secretary Nolwenn helps him overcome jurisdictional issues so he can work the case but Sylvaine Rose, the local and formidable cop, assumes command. Their uneasy team runs into false alibis, personal feuds, conflicts of commercial interests, and ancient Breton legends, all fascinating stuff. [Death in Brittany; Murder on Brittany Shores](#) (\$15.99 each). The tone is more in line with the French mysteries by Fred Vargas than by Martin Walker and Cara Black, who both visit us in June.

And here are a few shows on MHZ-TV to watch: *Blood on the Vine*, 4 seasons set in French wine locations; *Chefs*, 2 seasons in the cut-throat Paris restaurant scene, somewhat of a soap but the food is amazing!; *Murder in...* 9 episodes, each investigation set in a different province (one is Brittany); Season 2 just beginning; *Captain Marleau...* one season so far, a kind of *Columbo* with episodes still to come, the first in Perpignan. And *Dolmen*, a short-term soap with crime also set in Brittany. It will hook you.

✦Bradley, Alan. [The Grave's a Fine and Private Place](#) (\$16). 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. Unperturbed, Flavia uses her handkerchief to swab liquid from the dead man's lips, and she and Dogger jury-rig a forensic lab to examine the sample. Though disappointed when the evidence shows Orlando was drowned instead of poisoned, Flavia persists with her amateur detecting, even as she runs afoul of the local constable.

Brodsky, Joanna Max. [The Wolf and the Whale](#) (Orbit \$15.99). Moving from modern-day Manhattan to the icy arctic of second-century Northern Canada, Jordanna Max Brodsky tells the epic tale of an Inuit girl born with the soul of a man. For much more please go to Sterling New SciFi/Fantasy below.

✦Heyer, Georgette. [They Found Him Dead](#) (\$14.99). "Miss Heyer's characters and dialogue are an abiding delight to me? I have seldom met people to whom I have taken so violent a fancy from the word 'Go'."—Dorothy L. Sayers. Fan of Heyer's Regencies would agree, but may not know of her many classic mysteries which her husband, a judge, reputedly helped her to plot. They are being republished with covers more suited to romance so don't let that fool you. Inspector Hannasyde is put to the test with ingenious puzzles to solve. This one begins when Silas Kane's sixtieth birthday party is marred by argument and dissension amongst his family, and then the next morning, Kane is found dead. The coroner's verdict of death by misadventure would seem to confirm that Silas accidentally lost his way in the fog. But then his heir is shot, and threats are made against the next in line to inherit his fortune. All clues point to an 80-year-

old woman.... See Classics above for more information on the 12 mysteries penned by Heyer, who ranks with the best of the Golden Age crime writers.

Howe, KJ. [Skyjack](#) (\$14.99). In the sequel to 2017 First Mystery Club Pick [The Freedom Broker](#) (\$16.99), international kidnap expert Thea Paris is escorting two former child soldiers on a plane from an orphanage in Kanzi, Africa, to adoptive parents in London when the Boeing Business Jet is hijacked and forced to land on a deserted airstrip in the Libyan desert. On the ground, Thea comes face-to-face with a former nemesis, a Sicilian don who wants something, or someone, on that plane. As an ace negotiator, what can she do when the Sicilian don imprisons her in a hanger and flies away with the boys and the passengers, refusing to return them until she hijacks a truck for him. What is the don really after? And how can Thea possibly thwart him without a massacre of those on the plane? Thea is part of that cadre of damaged yet unbowed women who has some interesting baggage.

Jennings, Luke. [Killing Eve: No Tomorrow](#) (LittleBrown \$14.99). This is really fun if violent, an unusual twist on a spy story. In fact, a modern twist on Household's *Rogue Male* recommended above in Classics. Villanelle (a codename, of course) is one of the world's most skilled assassins. A catlike psychopath whose love for the creature comforts of her luxurious lifestyle is second only to her love of the game, she specializes in murdering the world's richest and most powerful. But when she murders an influential Russian politician, she draws a relentless foe to her tail. Eve Polastri (not a codename) is a former MI6 operative hired by the national security services for a singular task: to find and capture or kill the assassin responsible, and those who have aided her. Eve, whose quiet and otherwise ordinary life belies her quick wit and keen intellect, accepts the mission. The ensuing chase is a classic cat and mouse scenario albeit with an unexpected conclusion. Sandra Oh starts in the TV adaptation. Start with [Killing Eve: Codename Villanelle](#) (\$14.95). You won't regret it. Don't let the book cover art fool you into thinking this is anything other than how I describe it.

Kerr, Philip. [Greeks Bearing Gifts](#) (\$16). "In his 13th adventure, ever imperiled German detective Bernie Gunther investigates a string of murders in Greece with possible ties to Nazi war crimes. The year is 1957. The one-time Commissar of Berlin's Murder Commission is now hiding out in Munich as morgue attendant 'Christof Ganz,' happy to be "far away from Bernie Gunther and everything to do with him." That includes the common (wrong) assumption that since Bernie worked among loathsome Nazis during the war, he was one. After escaping a lethal trap set by a dirty cop from his past, Gunther accepts a job as claims adjuster for a powerful insurance company through influential attorney Max Merten. Sent to Athens to assess the sinking of a ship, he encounters a serious setback when its owner, former Wehrmacht Navy man Siegfried Witzel, is found shot through the eyes. Recognizing the M.O. as identical to the one used by a murderer during the war, a Greek cop named Leventis makes Gunther stay on the case, which points back to the confiscation of valuables from tens of thousands of Jews from Salonika who were sent to Auschwitz. In typical top form, Kerr provides valuable insights into the times, exposing the moral failings of Adenauer's amnesty for Nazi war criminals and the widespread hatred of Germans in Greece, which in the face of Germany's so-called economic miracle has yet to receive a penny in reparations. As ever,

Gunther's mordant witticisms run through the book."—*Kirkus Starred Review*.

The late Kerr's final novel, [Metropolis](#) (Putnam \$28), an origin story for Bernie set in 1928 during his first weeks on Berlin's Murder Squad, publishes in April. How we shall all miss Bernie (and Phil)!

Lansdale, Joe R. [Jackrabbit Smile](#) (\$15.99). Perpetual bad boys" Hap and Leonard are reunited once more to solve another caper: investigating the disappearance of a revivalist cult leader's daughter. As polar opposite as Hap and Leonard may be, each is the best friend the other has in this world. The story opens with a backyard barbecue celebration, as Hap marries his longtime girlfriend (and boss), Brett. But Hap and Brett's newfound marital bliss is interrupted by a couple of Pentecostal white supremacists. Though Judith Mulhaney and her son stand on the opposite side of the cultural divide, they are a family in need, and are ready to pay for the service. Judith's daughter, affectionately nicknamed Jackrabbit for her large, pearly white teeth, has been missing for five years, and time is running out to find her. Despite their feelings about Judith and her son, Hap and Leonard take on the head-scratching case. It isn't long until they find themselves up against New South segregationists, a wealthy populist businessman who's not what he seems, and, worst of all, their old hometown.

Ryan, Hank. [Trust Me](#) (\$14.99). An accused killer insists she's innocent of a heinous murder. A grieving journalist surfaces from the wreckage of her shattered life. Their unlikely alliance leads to a dangerous cat and mouse game. "Mesmerizing! Hank Phillippi Ryan has outdone herself in this taut thriller of damaged lives, uneasy alliances and deadly cat and mouse. Who can you trust indeed? It will take you till the final page to figure out!"—Lisa Gardner

Scottoline, Lisa. [After Anna](#) (\$17.99). The April 2018 Indie Next Pick: "The twists and turns of Scottoline's new family thriller kept me captivated as a reader, spouse, and parent. After Anna is the story of a family torn apart by the return of the wife's beautiful teenage daughter, Anna, who then is brutally murdered. With this event, Maggie not only loses her daughter, but her world is turned upside down by the possibility that her husband might be the killer. After Anna kept me guessing about who was telling the truth in this once-normal marriage. Scottoline is a master thriller writer, and her dazzling prose breathes life into her vibrant characters. Not only will the author's extensive fan base love *After Anna*, but new readers will enjoy it as well." Scottoline signs her new book [Someone Knows](#) (Putnam \$27) April 11 with Robert Dugoni.

Sharpe, Tess. [Barbed Wire Heart](#) (\$12.99). Harley McKenna, only daughter of North County's widowed drug king Duke McKenna, was brought up hating the Springfields, their competitors in the drug trade on the other side of the river. In order to survive, and to protect the abuse survivors at the women's safe house she runs with Native American woman Mo, Harley embarks on a clandestine campaign to put the McKennas and the Springfields out of commission. In particular, she blows up meth labs on both sides in the hope that each will blame the other. A smart feminist who's relentlessly tough and profoundly compassionate, Harley takes advantage of the gender stereotyping that causes men to underestimate her, while protecting those who have been hurt by its effects. This is a deeply affecting story, an April 2018 First

Mystery Book of the Month, about the complex family dynamics of growing up in the midst of a drug-trade blood feud.

Urrea, Luis Alberto. [The House of Broken Angels](#) (\$16.99).

Urrea describes the novel as “the story of an American family—one that happens to speak Spanish and admire the Virgin of Guadalupe. Imperfect and glorious, messy and hilarious, sometimes heroic.” Inspired by the death of his brother, Urrea’s novel mines his own family history here. Miguel Angel de La Cruz, a.k.a. “Big Angel,” is dying. The beloved and rapidly declining patriarch of the de La Cruz clan, he assembles his relatives for a final, epic birthday bash. Days before the party, however, his mother, nearly a hundred herself, passes away, resulting in an extended farewell fete. Over the course of a weekend, the family members reminisce under the San Diego sun and stars, sharing stories about growing up in Mexico, leaving Mexico, and making a home in the United States. “No matter where you live, whether you were born in the United States or grew up elsewhere, this affectionate, passionate, flawed family will likely remind you in some way of your own.”

FOR ST PATRICK’S DAY

Connolly, Sheila. [The Lost Traveller](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99).

Boston expat Maura Donovan came to Ireland to honor her grandmother’s last wish, but she never expected to stay in provincial County Cork—much less to inherit a house and a pub, Sullivan’s, in the small village of Leap. After a year-long struggle to stay in the black, Sullivan’s is finally thriving, and Maura has even brought back traditional Irish music to the pub. With a crop of new friends and a budding relationship with handsome Mick Nolan, Maura’s life seems rosier than ever. Then Maura discovers of a body in the ravine behind the pub. And then, the Garda reveals that the victim’s face has been battered beyond recognition.

New in paperback: [Many a Twist](#) (\$15.99). Maura hasn’t seen her mother for over twenty years, so when she suddenly shows up in Maura’s pub, Maura’s not sure what to expect. Her mother has moved back home and has taken a position working with the new owners of the Crann Mor hotel just outside Skibberreen. Creating a new lift for herself was working out fine—until her new boss is found dead in the gardens, dumped down the hillside behind the hotel. Now, Maura must leave no stone unturned to clear her mother’s name and rebuild their fragmented relationship. However, in County Cork, things are rarely as they seem. 6th in the County Cork series.

Griffin, Anne. [When All Is Said](#) (Forge \$26.99). The Indie Next Pick: “Dark and unflinching yet packed with heart and humanity, *When All Is Said* is Irish storytelling at its best. Maurice Hannigan sits in a bar on a Saturday night and toasts five people who have been important in his life and who have left him, either through death or distance. The 84-year-old widower spools out his story like tangled fishing line, raising one glass to each of his departed loved ones. It all leads up to a startling yet inevitable end to an unsettling yet satisfying story.” This is a moving and tender story where a widower whose children want him to move into care refuses to relinquish his own terms for living his life. And it’s a love story.

Keefe, Patrick. [Say Nothing](#) (Knopf \$28.99). A riveting retelling of the Troubles through the 30-year mystery of the abduction

and presumed murder of a young Irish mother. *New Yorker* staff writer Keefe incorporates a real-life whodunit into a moving, accessible account of the violence that has afflicted Northern Ireland. The mystery concerns Jean McConville, a widowed mother of 10, who was snatched from her Belfast home by an IRA gang in 1972. While Keefe touches on historical antecedents, his real starting point is the 1960s, when advocates of a unified Ireland attempted to emulate the nonviolent methods of the American civil rights movement. The path from peaceful protests to terrorist bombings is framed by the story of Dolours Price, who became involved as a teenager and went on to become a central figure in the IRA. True crime can have all the suspense and momentum of a thriller.

Kiernan, Olivia. [Too Close to Breathe](#) (\$16). In a quiet Dublin suburb, within her pristine home, Eleanor Costello is found hanging from a rope. Detective Chief Superintendent Frankie Sheehan would be more than happy to declare it a suicide. Four months earlier, Frankie’s pursuit of a killer almost ended her life and she isn’t keen on investigating another homicide. But the autopsy reveals poorly healed bones and old stab wounds, absent from medical records. A new cut is carefully, deliberately covered in paint. Eleanor’s husband, Peter, is unreachable, missing. A search of the couple’s home reveals only two signs of personality: a much-loved book on art and a laptop with access to the Dark Web. When another woman is found dead with similar paint on her corpse, it’s clear that the way forward is to unravel Eleanor’s life....

McDonnell, Caihm. [Angels in the Moonlight](#) (McFari Ink \$12.99). Highly recommended to me as a humorous thriller and as the prequel to his Dublin Trilogy. Detective Bunny McGarry’s life is complicated, and it is about to get more so. It’s 1999 and his hard won reputation amongst Dublin’s criminal fraternity, for being a massive pain the backside, is unfortunately shared by his bosses. His partner has a career-threatening gambling problem and, oh yeah, Bunny’s finally been given a crack at the big time. He’s set the task of bringing down the most skilled and ruthless armed robbery gang in Irish history. So the last thing he needs in his life is yet another complication. Her name is Simone. She is smart, funny, talented and, well, complicated. When her shocking past turns up to threaten her and Bunny’s chance at a future, things get very complicated indeed. If the choice is upholding the law or protecting those he loves, which way will the big fella turn?

Meier, Leslie. [St Patrick’s Day Murder](#) (\$12.95). Not many people in Tinker’s Cove, Maine, knew Old Dan Malone. The grizzled barkeep’s social circle was limited to the rough-hewn lobstermen and other assorted toughs that frequented his bar. But when his body is found bobbing in the town’s icy harbor, Lucy Stone makes getting to know more about Old Dan a priority. A reissue, Lucy Stone #14.

Nugent, Liz. [Lying in Wait](#) (\$16). A Starred Review for Irish author Nugent’s second after her terrific 2017 debut [Unraveling Oliver](#) (\$16), which I highly recommend. “Late on the night of November 14, 1980, judge Andrew Fitzsimons and his wife, Lydia, rendezvous with troubled 22-year-old prostitute Annie Doyle on a deserted Dublin beach for unspecified reasons. When Annie threatens blackmail, the couple kills her. Lydia orders Andrew to

bury the body in their garden and forget it, but then Annie's family reports her missing and a media circus ensues. Andrew panics, arousing the suspicion of the couple's 17-year-old son, Laurence, who becomes obsessed with Annie. Also fixated is the victim's 19-year-old sister, Karen, who remains dedicated to finding Annie even after the police lose interest. This tragic tale unfolds over five years from the perspectives of Lydia, Laurence, and Karen, allowing Nugent to develop character while exploring the crime's ripple effect. Annie's connection to the Fitzsimonses is the mystery on which the plot hangs, but Lydia is the most intriguing puzzle; equal parts victim and villain, she simultaneously inspires pity, outrage, and horror."

O'Connor, Carlene. [Murder in an Irish Pub](#) (Kensington \$26). In the small village of Kilbane in County Cork, for a cuppa tea or a slice of brown bread, you go to Naomi's Bistro, managed by the many siblings of the lively O'Sullivan brood. For a pint or a game of darts—or for the poker tournament that's just come to town—it's the pub you want. One player's reputation precedes him: Eamon Foley, a tinker out of Dublin, called the Octopus for playing like he has eight hands under the table. But when Foley is found at the end of a rope, swinging from the rafters of Rory Mack's pub, it's time for the Garda to take matters into their own hands. Macdara Flannery would lay odds it's a simple suicide—after all, there's a note and the room was locked. But Siobhán suspects foul play, as does Foley's very pregnant widow... Start this cozy Irish series with [Murder in an Irish Village](#); [Murder in an Irish Churchyard](#), and [Murder at an Irish Wedding](#) (\$7.99 each

Tremayne, Peter. [Bloodmoon](#) (Headline \$25 Signed UK edition, 3 copies). Ireland. AD 671. Sister Fidelma has a mission, and she is sworn by oath to reveal her purpose to no other. The secret investigation leads Fidelma and her companions to the abbey of Finnbar to question the abbot. But before they have a chance to speak to him, the abbot is found murdered—and the young girl suspected of the crime has fled the scene. Despite their protests, Fidelma's cohorts agree to accompany her in pursuit of the girl for answers. But as vicious rumors spread, accusing Fidelma's family, the Eóganacht, of conspiring to assassinate the High King and abduct his wife, Sister Fidelma's life is placed in mortal danger. This is the only available edition. Look for [Blood in Eden](#) (Headline \$46) in July. This wonderful Irish medieval series has fostered a festival in Cashel and began in 1995 with [Absolution by Murder](#) (\$7.99) which I recommend.

Here are some books we've recommended before

Banville, John. [Time Pieces: A Dublin Memoir](#) (Knopf \$26.95). And Black, Benjamin. [Christine Falls](#) (\$17) the first of a cracker-jack 1950s Dublin-based mystery series by Banville, writing as Black.

Benn, James R/ [Evil for Evil](#) with Billy Boyle, focused on The Troubles as s Daniel Silva's [The Marching Season](#) with Michael Osborne.

Bowen, Rhys. [Murphy's Law](#) (\$16), the multi-award winning first in the turn-of-the-Twentieth-Century Molly Murphy Series

Bruen, Ken. [Dublin Noir](#) (Akashic \$15.95). An anthology of stories in the Urban Noir series by a variety of first-rate authors including Bruen, Eoin Colfer, Jason Starr, Laura Lippman, Olen Steinhauer, Peter Spiegelman, Kevin Wignall, Jim Fusilli, John

Rickards, Patrick J. Lambe, Charlie Stella, Ray Banks, James O. Born, Sarah Weinman, Pat Mullan, Gary Phillips, Craig McDonald, Duane Swierczynski, and Reed Farrel Coleman.

And if you never read Bruen's first for Galway cop Jack Taylor, start with [The Guards](#) (\$16.99), still one of the most arresting series starts I recall.

Joyce, James. [The Dubliners](#) (\$12.99), in case you missed it. Or [A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man](#) (\$12.99). I have never wrapped my head around [Ulysses](#) (\$17).

McConnon, Maggie. [Bel, Book, and Scandal](#) (Tor \$7.99). The third adventure for Irish-American culinary artist Bel, turned amateur sleuth.

McKinty, Adrian and Stuart Neville, eds. [Belfast Noir](#) (Akashic \$16.95). The choices made by editors McKinty and Neville celebrate lowlifes, convicts, hookers, private eyes, cops and reporters, and, above all, the gray city at the heart of each story. Contributors include Lee Child and Brian McGilloway.

McKinty's remarkable crime novels set in and around Belfast have won numerous awards. The latest, Sean Duffy #6, is [Police at the Station and they Don't Look Friendly](#) (\$15.95). Neville, another noir master with several under his belt, most recently wrote [So Say the Fallen](#) (\$15.95), #2 for DCI Serena Flannigan but labeled Belfast Novels #6; start the [Belfast Novels](#) with [The Ghosts of Belfast](#) (\$9.99).

Taylor, Patrick. [An Irish Country Doctor](#) (\$7.99) and numerous other novels. The most recent is [An Irish Country Cottage](#) (Forge \$27.99). And search for novels by the late Maeve Binchy.

SOME NOTABLE NONFICTION

Abe, Naoko. [The Sakura Obsession](#) (Knopf \$26.95). The incredible story of a plant hunter embraces the 1,200-year history of the Japanese cherry blossom tree—saved from extinction by an English gardener who in 1907 brought cuttings back to England.

Davis, Margaret. [The Lost Gutenberg](#) (Penguin \$27). For rare-book collectors, an original copy of the Gutenberg Bible—of which there are fewer than 50 in existence—represents the ultimate prize. Here, Margaret Leslie Davis recounts five centuries in the life of one copy, from its creation by Johannes Gutenberg, through the hands of monks, an earl, the Worcestershire sauce king, and a nuclear physicist to its ultimate resting place, in a steel vault in Tokyo. Estelle Doheny, the first woman collector to add the book to her library and its last private owner, tipped the Bible onto a trajectory that forever changed our understanding of the first mechanically printed book.

Schultz, Howard. [From the Ground Up](#) (Random \$28). His journey begins poor in the public housing projects of Brooklyn and leads to the boardroom of Starbucks. More than a memoir or compilation of business lessons, it's "a compelling story about how character and values can spur positive change in people's lives." However much a political disrupter Schultz may prove to be, here is "a clear reminder that success is not achieved through individual determination alone, but through partnership and community."

Thomas, Evan. [First: Sandra Day O'Connor](#) (Random \$30). A biography of America's first female Supreme Court justice, drawing on exclusive interviews and first-time access to Justice O'Connor's archives—by the *New York Times* bestselling author

Wilson, Lee, Edward. [The Catalogue of Shipwrecked Books](#) (SimonSchuster \$30). I had no idea what to expect from this title. It proved to be a glorious surprise: a combination of history (Christopher Columbus, his voyages, his life, his family and especially his illegitimate son Hernando, a visionary who traveled widely including on his father's final voyage to the New World, and who amassed after dad's death in 1506 a staggering library of books and ephemera, everything he could find that had been printed. And more remarkably, organized this trove in a new way, a precursor of both the card catalogue, and today, Google. Tragically much of the 15,000 plus collection has been reduced to fewer than 4,000, housed in Spain and poorly curated. But this gem of a book is also a love letter to bibliophiles, a plunge into the information revolution brewing in 16th Century Europe thanks in large part to Mr. Gutenberg, a travel diary, and a portrait of family dynamics, royal and ordinary. Highly recommended!!

SPRING FLINGS

Benke, Karen. [Rip All the Pages](#) (Shambala \$12.95). 52 Tear-Out Adventures for Creative Writers. Explore creativity in a new way. Ages 7+

Galland, Richard. [Pride & Prejudice & Puzzles](#) (Charlesbridge \$14.99). Enter the world of *Sense & Sensibility*, *Mansfield Park*, and *Persuasion* through the portal of "Ingenious Puzzles and Vexing Dilemmas" inspired by the novels.

Ward, Jennifer. [I Love Birds](#) (\$15.95). With Spring Break coming up, here's an idea. Prowl for owls by ear, discover the science of feathers, and become familiar with the birds in your neighborhood and beyond—52 activities for kids ages 4 to 8

A TRIO OF UNCONVENTIONAL, GRIPPING SPY THRILLERS

...one of them true

Friedman, Matti. [Spies of No Country Signed](#) (Algonquin (\$26.95)). The four spies at the center of this story were part of a ragtag unit known as the Arab Section, conceived during World War II by British spies and Jewish militia leaders in Palestine. Intended to gather intelligence and carry out sabotage and assassinations, the unit consisted of Jews who were native to the Arab world and could thus easily assume Arab identities. In 1948, with Israel's existence in the balance during the War of Independence, our spies went undercover in Beirut, where they spent the next two years operating out of a kiosk... See Signed Books for more.

Jennings, Luke. [Killing Eve: No Tomorrow](#) (LittleBrown \$14.99). This is really fun if violent, an unusual twist on a spy story. In fact, a modern twist on Household's *Rogue Male* recommended above in Classics. Villanelle (a codename, of course) is one of the world's most skilled assassins. A catlike psychopath whose love for the creature comforts of her luxurious lifestyle is second only to her love of the game, she specializes in murdering the world's richest and most powerful. But when she murders an influential Russian politician, she draws a relentless foe to her tail. Eve Polastri, an MI6 operative... For more see our March Large Paperback Picks.

Shalit, Jonathan de. [A Spy in Exile](#) (Atria \$27). This mesmerizing thriller, our **March Discovery Book of the Month**, kept me reading every word right to the end, a luxury I seldom allow myself these days of massive numbers of new books. It's a must-read for Daniel Silva fans filled with high-stakes intrigue in

Israel's top intelligence agency and spycraft out in the field. Plus the first assignment for the fledgling team is a lulu, fomented by Putin and recreating past terrorist attacks. For more see Some New Books for March below. Highly recommended.

SOME NEW BOOKS FOR MARCH

March and November are always the two biggest sales months of the year here and from this jam-packed Booknews you can see why: more books, more visits by authors, more people visiting Scottsdale. Enjoy

Akunin, Boris. [The Coronation: A Fandorin Mystery](#) (Grove \$26). After five years spent abroad building up a business as something of a private investigator, the handsome, stuttering Fandorin is back in Moscow—and in for a case that entangles him with the highest echelons of Romanov royalty.

New in paperback: [The State Counsellor](#) (\$16). Erast Fandorin is "a devastatingly attractive combination of Sherlock Holmes, Lord Peter Wimsey and James Bond"—*The Guardian*. Now, Moscow's premier sleuth returns in 1891. The new Governor General of Siberia has been secreted away on a train from St. Petersburg to the former Russian capital. Out of a raging blizzard emerges a mustachioed official who introduces himself as State Counsellor Erast Fandorin, who thrusts a dagger into the general's heart then flees. When the Department of Security arrests Fandorin for 12/ murder, he must find the imposter to save his own life. As the trail leads to the fearless machinations of terrorist revolutionaries, corruption among his fellow officials, and the seductions of a young nihilist, Fandorin's mission is becoming rather dangerous.

Balasubramanyam, Rajeev. [Professor Chandra Follows His Bliss](#) (Dial Press \$27). "When Chandra fails to win the Nobel Prize in Economics, again, then suffers a heart attack, he decides to make changes in his life. Professor Chandra is as unbending a curmudgeon as one could wish to find scowling from the pages of a novel." A humorous journey of self-discovery—British humor—similar to *Major Pettigrew's Last Stand* and *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry*."

Bartz, Andrea. [The Lost Night](#) (Crown \$27). If ever a book is New York centric and targeted to Millennials, this debut is it. Based in Brooklyn and a veteran journalist and of blogs, she sets up a young group of recent graduates living in a druggy world of Calhoun Lofts whose shining star was the mercurial Edie. When Edie commits suicide at the end of a drunken night, it spits the unbelieving circle up. A decade later the nervous Lindsay has settled into a magazine career but begins to play detective with her own life and with what actually happened the night Edie died.

Benjamin, Chloe. [The Immortalists](#) (\$16). It's 1969 in New York City's Lower East Side, and word has spread of the arrival of a mystical woman, a traveling psychic who claims to be able to tell anyone the day they will die. The Gold children—four adolescents on the cusp of self-awareness—sneak out to hear their fortunes. The prophecies inform their next five decades. Named a Best Book of 2018 by *The Washington Post*, NPR, *Entertainment Weekly*, Real Simple, *Marie Claire*, New York Public Library, LibraryReads, The Skimm, Lit Hub....

Blaedel, Sara. [Her Father's Secret](#) (Grand Central \$26). Ilka Jensen has moved from Denmark to Racine, Wisconsin, to inherit her estranged and now deceased father's failing funeral home. Its

last funeral is for a woman who was shot in her own house, and Ilka learns that the murder victim had been blackmailing Ilka's father for 20 years. As Ilka tries to understand why her father mysteriously abandoned her over 30 years earlier, she meets a handful of his friends and enemies, including his cold ex-wife (not Ilka's mother) and his best friend, who has been accused of felony fraud. "Blaedel does a fine job of fleshing out each of these characters, and readers will enjoy watching Ilka transform from frustrated and confused to utterly confident in her sleuthing as she discovers some of her father's painful secrets. Several questions remain unanswered. Nevertheless, the book's cliffhanger ending will make readers look forward to the next set of secrets for Ilka to unravel." Second in Blaedel's Family Secrets series. Blaedel herself has relocated from Denmark to the US.

Boyle, William. [A Friend Is a Gift You Give Yourself](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). "Comic crime capers are fun. Comic crime capers starring women are even more fun. William Boyle delivers some choice laughs and a terrific trio of felons. This jaunty escapade begins in Brooklyn when Rena Ruggiero, the 60-year-old widow of a departed wise guy, slugs Enzo, her 80-year-old neighbor, for putting the moves on her. Thinking she's killed him, Rena jumps into Enzo's spiffy '62 Chevy Impala and heads for her daughter Adrienne's house in the Bronx. For good reason, Adrienne can't go on the lam, but her 15-year-old daughter, Lucia, thinks grandma is cool. With the addition of an ex-porn star, Lacey Wolfstein, the Chevy is full of adventurous females and good to go on a road trip that's so much fun you don't want it to end."—*NY Times*. We add that when Lucia discovers that Adrienne is planning to hit the road with her ex-boyfriend Richie, she figures Rena's her only way out of a life on the run with a mother she can't stand. But Richie has massacred a few members of the Brancaccio crime family for a big payday, and he drags even more trouble into the mix in the form of an unhinged enforcer named Crea.

✎Brightwell, Emily. [Mrs. Jeffries Delivers the Goods](#) (Berkley \$16). On a cold night in February, the popular Lighterman's ball festivities are cut short when a guest of honor, Stephen Bremmer, goes into spasms and abruptly collapses. Once again Inspector Witherspoon returns to the Wrexley Hotel to investigate a murder where Mrs. J and the staff reluctantly welcome him. The victim was considered a boorish snob who felt entitled to anything and anyone he wanted. Yet despite his Oxford education, he was barely literate, lazy, and prone to make stupid mistakes – his last mistake turned out to be crossing a killer. 37th in a cozy Victorian mystery series.

Buffa, DW. [Necessity](#) (Polis \$16.95). When renowned lawyer Joseph Antonelli—the defense attorney who has never lost a case—takes on the most shocking and controversial case of his storied career, he has no idea of the depths of trouble he's about to get into. A man has murdered the President of the United States, but has invoked the "Law of Necessity," which states that a crime is justified if it serves the greater good and thus prevents a greater harm from occurring. "The author draws on his own experience as a criminal defense attorney to render realistic courtroom proceedings. Highly recommended for lovers of legal and political thrillers." —*LJ Starred Review*

Cantor, Jillian. [In Another Time](#) (Harper \$16.99). The Indie Next Pick: "For fans of *The Time Traveler's Wife* and *Somewhere*

in Time, In Another Time will sweep you through pre-war and post-war Berlin, London, Paris, and Vienna as you follow Hanna Ginsberg, 'the one who plays the violin like fire,' and her magnificent Stradivarius violin. It begins in Germany in 1931, when bookshop owner Max Beissinger meets Hanna. As they fall in love, Germany falls under the power of Hitler. While Hanna is Jewish and Max is not, Max has a secret that may help save Hannah when the time comes. Cantor reminds us that even in terrible times, books, music, and love can prevail. Not to be missed."

Childs, Laura. [Broken Bone China](#) (Berkley \$26). Theodosia and her friend Drayton are catering a formal tea at a hot air balloon rally when the sky starts to fall—literally. A drone starts buzzing menacingly close to the balloons, and suddenly crashes into an occupied vessel. Sparks begin to fly and an explosion erupts, causing the balloon to plummet to the earth, killing all three of its passengers. Upon delivering her testimony to the police, Theodosia learns that one of the victims was the CEO of local software company SyncSoft. With a vast fortune to his name, not to mention a rare piece of Revolutionary War memorabilia in his possession, police suspect that the tech mogul was the target of the attack and that the killer hit a bull's eye. Theodosia's fierce sense of curiosity can't be contained as she sets out on her own investigation, and her list of suspects seems to grow exponentially larger.... Includes recipes and tips for tea time.

✎Clare, Alys. [The Rufus Spy](#) (\$17.95). It's 1093. Clare's engrossing eighth Aelf Fen mystery finds mystic and apprentice healer Lassair filled with conflicted feelings for Jack Chevestrier, whom she saved from death in 2016's *The Night Wanderer*. When she leaves Chevestrier's Cambridge for her home in the fens, she unwittingly puts herself in the killing zone of a vengeance-obsessed stranger. One young man is already dead, and while she's staying in the fens another, Sibert, is attacked. No one knows why. When her former lover, Rollo, a spy for King William Rufus, asks Lassair to accompany him in his effort to evade the violence, she agrees.

Collins, Max Allan. [Girl Most Likely](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$15.95). In Galena, Illinois, twenty-eight-year-old Krista Larson has made her mark as the youngest female police chief in the country. She's learned from the best: her father, Keith, a decorated former detective. But as accustomed as they are to the relative quiet of their idyllic tourist town, things quickly turn with Krista's ten-year high school reunion. With the out-of-towners holed up in a lakefront lodge, and news of a stabbing in Florida months ago, it doesn't take long to stir up old grudges and resentments...and murder. A standalone mystery.

Collins also releases [Mike Hammer—Murder, My Love](#) (Titan\$22.99). Hammer is summoned to a meeting with Jamie Winters, United States Senator from New York, and Jamie's lovely, very smart wife, Nicole, considered by many to be the power behind the throne. Winters is being blackmailed, and Hammer is given a list of suspects who may be behind the threats to the Senator's career. Then suspects begin to drop like flies....

Criaco, Gioacchino. [Black Souls](#) (Soho \$25.95). The family of Juliet Games, editor of Soho, hails from Calabria. On visiting the remote Aspromonte Mountains in its southern district she entered into the rugged landscape, the trauma of villages relocated to lower seaside locations disrupting hundreds of years of local life, and the power of the 'Ndrangheta, Calabria's ubiquitous,

ruthless, inescapable mafia. Criaco, born in Africo on Calabria's Ionian coast, the son of shepherds, is a graduate of the University of Bologna and practiced law in Milan until he published this novel in 2008, now translated into English. It will draw you into its violent world where boys are sucked into the Ndrangheta via three youth, best friends, who embark on a life of crime to escape poverty and orchestrate new criminal projects ranging from robbery to kidnapping to heroin dealing to contract killing. But it also paints a remarkably vivid picture of centuries of rebellion, mythology, and brigand culture. Grames' own debut which she signs here May 29 frames the story of a remarkable woman of Calabrian parents who emigrate to the US.

Daugherty, Christie. [A Beautiful Corpse](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Savannah, a colorful historic city, thrust into the limelight and heart of tourism by John Berendt's huge bestseller [Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil](#) (\$15)—if you missed this true-crime thriller, grab it at once—truly lives and dies by its tourist trade. So when a woman is brutally killed one night on River Street, the whole city demands the crime be solved quickly. For crime reporter Harper McClain the murder is personal for the corpse has a familiar face. Naomi Scott was a law student just getting started changing the world. There are three suspects—all men who claim to love Naomi. As the *Savannah Daily News* faces more layoffs and Harper's job and her boss's may be on the line, not to mention the continuing unsolved murder of Harper's mother, the pressure builds like the steamy August engulfing the old river port. New in paperback: [The Echo Killing](#) (\$16.99), Harper's first investigation. [The Echo Killing](#) (\$24.99) was a 2018 First Mystery Book of the Month; 3 Signed copies remain.

Dennis, Ralph. [Atlanta Deathwatch](#) (Brash Books \$16.99). From the 1970s here again is the first entry in a series, Jim Hardman is hired by a wealthy man to follow his daughter, Emily Campbell. Hardman is ambushed by two hoods and warned off the girl with a thumping hard enough to make an impression and he quickly drops the job. But when Emily is murdered, her boyfriend, a top level black mobster known as The Man, hires Hardman to find the killer. The trail leads to unexpected places; from Atlanta's criminal underbelly to its leading citizens. There is everything one expects from a private eye novel: exceptional characterization, strong and vigorous prose, and a glimpse into a place and time that has long since disappeared. It also introduces Hardman's partner, Hump Evans, a former professional football player and his series long and often complex relationship with his girlfriend, Marcy.

Hardman returns in [The Charleston Knife is Back in Town](#) (\$16.99), with an elderly woman for a client and his best friend and partner, Hump Evans, as a victim. When Hump is invited to a high-flying party in one of Atlanta's best neighborhoods he, and every other guest, is robbed at gunpoint. Unfortunately for the robbers, the guest list is a who's-who of big-time gamblers and gangsters. The take is large enough, estimated at \$200,000, that the local mafia wants to send a message to any other would-be robbers as much as it wants the money back. An out-of-town psycho, a short blond man who goes by the name The Charleston Knife, is brought to Atlanta to find and then messily and very publicly kill the robbers. Hardman's client believes her grandson is involved with the robbery gang and she wants him back home and unharmed.

⌘Doherty, Paul. [The Godless](#) (Severn \$28.99). Sir John Cranston, Lord High Coroner of London, needs Brother Athelstan's help in Doherty's outstanding 19th historical featuring the Dominican parish priest. In 1381, someone has been slashing the throats of prostitutes, stripping their corpses, and adorning their heads with a red wig before leaving the bodies in a skiff on the Thames. While some believe the red wig symbolizes the victims' profession, Athelstan and Cranston think it's connected with events from 1363 when a masked figure known as the Oriflamme, who dressed in women's clothing and wore a red wig, led a company of Englishmen who plundered the French countryside and abused their female victims before killing them. The stakes rise when a royal ship, which was supposed to deliver treasure to the English garrison in Calais, instead explodes in the Thames. The sole survivor, the ship's master, claims to have seen the Oriflamme on board. Doherty keeps the action brisk, the crimes baffling, and the deductions and solution fair.

Downing, David. [Dark Clouds Shining](#) (\$16.95). This spy quartet began with [Jack of Spies](#) (\$9.99)—a Do Not Miss This One for sure. And now it ends. London, 1921: Ex-Secret Service spy Jack McColl is in prison serving time for assaulting a cop. McColl has been embittered by the Great War; he feels betrayed by the country that had sent so many young men to die needlessly. He can't stomach spying for the British Empire anymore. He's also heartbroken. The love of his life, radical journalist Caitlin Hanley, parted ways with him three years earlier so she could offer her services to the Communist revolution in Moscow. Then his former Secret Service boss offers McColl the chance to escape his jail sentence if he takes a dangerous and unofficial assignment in Russia, where McColl is already a wanted man. He would be spying on other spies, sniffing out the truth about MI5 meddling in a high-profile assassination plot. The target is someone McColl cares about and respects. The MI5 agent involved is someone he loathes. With the knowledge that he may be walking into a death trap, McColl sets out for Moscow, the scene of his last heartbreak. My recommendation: [buy the four](#) and read them in order. You will be entertained and learn stuff you don't get in Charles Todd and other WWI novels.

Downing, Samantha. [My Lovely Wife](#) (Berkley \$26). There's no month without at least two dozen books in this mode for me to review. If you only read a couple a year they can stay fresh and exciting, but many a month is beyond boring. Plus it's hard to spend a lot of time with people you don't like which is characteristic of books turning on betrayal and the question of who will survive? And in this debut, who will survive is the key question when a couple married some years with two kids decides to inject risk into their lives. As can happen, sex spirals into murder. Here's a Library Reads recommend: "An incredible, dark, twisty psychological thriller with two of the most seemingly normal but disturbingly depraved people you will read about in fiction. This brilliant debut needs to be at the top of your must-read list. For readers who like taut suspense and works by Gillian Flynn, B.A. Paris, and Mary Kubica." I did like the last sentence....

⌘Elliott, Lexie. [The French Girl](#) (\$16). They were six university students from Oxford—friends and sometimes more than friends—spending an idyllic week together in a Dordogne farmhouse. It was supposed to be the perfect summer getaway...until they met Severine, the girl next door. A decade later, Severine's body is found behind the farmhouse. Questioned along with her

friends, Kate Channing stands to lose everything she's worked so hard to achieve for her head-hunting firm. Desperate to resolve her unreliable memories, which are ratcheted up by the return of two men, Tom and Seb, from years in America, Kate wonders how well she knows the group of friends. They provide a group of suspects as well as shifting group dynamics, perceptions, and, again, memories.

Elo, Elisabeth. [Finding Katarina M](#) (Polis \$28). Here we are in the Siberian tundra lying down with exiles, escapees from gulags, in Sakha villages and with endless vodka toasts in company with Natalie March, a respected surgeon working in Washington, DC. The why of it is wonderful. When a young Russian dancer claims to be her cousin and know the whereabouts of her grandmother, Natalie must face a surprising truth: her grandmother, Katarina Melnikova, is still very much alive. However, Saldana has a darker motive for making contact. She pleads for Natalie's help to defect, and Natalie soon finds herself caught in a web of shocking family secrets that will pit her against both the Russian FSB and people within her own government.

Finn, AJ. [The Woman in the Window](#) (\$16.99). A lonely woman in New York spends her days guzzling merlot, popping pills, and spying on the neighbors—until something she sees sucks her into a vortex. Reclusive Dr. Anna Fox hides away in her New York apartment watching old movies, and looking out the window, most recently at the husband, wife, and teenage son who just moved in across the way. Then she sees—or thinks she sees—something shocking, and what follows is reminiscent of Hitchcock's *Rear Window*, an inevitable comparison. The shocking revelations about the author—Finn is a pseudonym for former editor Dan Mallory who has been an unreliable narrator of his own life—add an extra dimension to reading this bestseller debut in the Trust No One genre.

Fox, Candice. [Redemption Point](#) (Forge \$25.99). In the sequel to the gripping [Crimson Lake](#) (\$9.99), Australian author Fox returns us to the Queensland rain forest and the tortured life for former cop Ted Conkaffey. After he was wrongly accused of abducting Claire Bingley and acquitted, he hoped the town of Crimson Lake would be a good place to disappear. But nowhere is safe from Claire's devastated father. Dale Bingley has a brutal revenge plan all worked out. Meaning if Ted doesn't help find the real abductor, he'll be its first casualty. Meanwhile, in a dark roadside hovel called the Barking Frog Inn, the bodies of two young bartenders lie on the beer-sodden floor. It's Detective Inspector Pip Sweeney's first homicide investigation, complicated by the arrival of private detective Amanda Pharrell to "assist" on the case. Amanda's conviction for murder a decade ago has left her with some odd behavioral traits, top-to-toe tats—and a keen eye for killers. For Ted and Amanda, the hunt for the truth is, well, killer.... In scenarios like this, the question of whether a resolution in favor of the hero or heroine will return him to his old life or if he'll stick to his new community. Definitely start with *Crimson Lake*, a strong entry in the rising Australian crime wave I keep mentioning.

Freeman, Brian. [The Crooked Street](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$24.95). San Francisco homicide detective Frost Easton hadn't seen his estranged friend Denny in years. Not until he dies in Frost's arms uttering a final inexplicable word: Lombard. Denny appears to be the latest victim in a string of murders linked by a distinctive

clue: the painting of a spiraled snake near the crime scenes. Is it the work of a serial killer? Or is Denny's death more twisted and personal? To find the answer, Frost reaches into a nest of vipers—San Francisco's shady elite—where the whispered name of Lombard is just one secret. Now, drawn into a cat-and-mouse game with an enemy who knows his every move, Frost finds there is no one he can trust. 3rd in a series by the author of the terrific Jonathan Stride series.

Gates, Eva. [Something Read, Something Dead](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). 5th in the Lighthouse Library Series by Vicki Delany writing as Gates. Book lovers will envy Lucy's dream of a life, working in a wonderful library, surrounded by amusing friends, not to mention a fine feline companion and a handsome suitor. Cozy fans will be delighted too.

George, Elizabeth. [The Punishment She Deserves](#) (\$17). "Best-seller George's stunning 20th Thomas Lynley novel finds the detective inspector running things at New Scotland Yard in London while his partner, DS Barbara Havers, and his boss, DCS Isabelle Arbery, investigate allegations of police malfeasance in Ludlow, England. Six weeks earlier, community support officer Gary Ruddock arrested Ian Druitt on suspicion of child molestation. Ruddock then brought Druitt to the unmanned Ludlow police station, where Druitt hanged himself. The Independent Police Complaints Commission cleared Ruddock of criminal wrongdoing, but Druitt's influential father wants a second opinion or he'll sue. To Arbery, the review is a formality; Havers, however, believes that Druitt was murdered and asks to reopen the case. When Arbery refuses, Havers consults Lynley, who can't resist getting involved. George tackles a number of emotionally charged social issues with sensitivity and grace."

Giordano, Mario. [Auntie Poldi and the Vineyards of Etna](#) (Houghton \$26). Here's an example of how a voice that lights up some readers (and other authors) doesn't work for everyone. I've tried to find the humor (it may be the translation from German is too heavy handed for me) in the adventures of a lusty widow who moves from Bavaria to Sicily. Her family, uncomfortable with whatever roguish elements come into play for Auntie Poldi in the little town of Torre Archirafi, sends one of its young men to stay in her guest and keep an eye on her. And on the local Polizia di Stato's chief homicide inspector, Vito Montana, to stem any romance. When her neighborhood's water supply is cut off and someone poisons a dog, can it be the local Mafia is flexing its muscle? And what about the body in the vineyard? I will say the mix of wine and murder can tickle the palette in a series that began with [Auntie Poldi and the Sicilian Lions](#) (\$14.99).

Goodman, Carol. [The Night Visitors](#) (Harper \$15.99). A gothic thriller from Mary Higgins Clark Award winner Goodman opens on a bus heading through Upstate New York on a cold and snowy December day. Alice, a frightened woman in her 30s, and Oren, a 10-year-old boy with a passion for Star Wars and Greek mythology, are fleeing from Oren's abusive father Davis, who has threatened to kill Alice, his lover, and reclaim Oren. They arrive at the little town of Delphi, where they are met by Mattie, "a woman on the wrong side of fifty," who acts as a volunteer at a women's shelter and is charged with taking the two to a safe house. Instead, she abandons protocol and takes them back to her home, an elegant, if dilapidated, Victorian pile. Mattie doesn't reveal that Oren reminds her of her brother, who died years before at age 10. Alice in turn has her own secrets

Grebe, Camilla. [After She's Gone](#) (Ballantine \$27). "In Grebe's stellar crime novel, psychological profiler Hanne Lagerlind-Schön is found suffering from hypothermia and amnesia in the forest outside Ormberg, Sweden, where she was investigating a cold case with her partner, Peter Lindgren. A young woman wearing a gold sequined dress who might have witnessed what happened to Hanne was spotted in the vicinity, but can't be located. In fact, the potential witness is cross-dressing, bullied teenager Jake Olsson, who has found Hanne's diary. Peter's disappearance adds to the mystery. Police detective Malin Brundin, a native of Ormberg, returns to his hometown to help with the various inquiries, which reveal, in part through excerpts from Hanne's diary, the betrayal that the locals feel after the government resettled a hundred Arab refugees in the forest. That all the factories have shut down and moved to Asia is another source of resentment. Grebe delivers an unflinching, heart-wrenching message about the plight of refugees in this scorching thriller."—*PW* on what sounds like a Nordic Noir of note.

Heller, Peter. [The River](#) (Knopf \$25.95). The Indie Next Pick: "Heller can take you on a journey through nature like no other writer. *The River* is the story of two close friends wanting nothing more than to enjoy their time together on a trip through the Canadian wilderness, and fly fishing has never been so beautifully portrayed nor has the serenity of water and nature. But the peacefulness slowly wanes and the tension begins to build as the trip becomes a race against encroaching forest fires and an attempt to save the life of the mysterious woman they have picked up along the way. Heller has created a story of friendship and survival that should not be missed." Heller is fluid in his choice of genres but consistent in the excellence of his prose. Here's another take: "A love letter to the great outdoors. Both adventure story and elegant nature writing. Two college students on a canoe trip face a wildfire, white-water rapids, and two mysterious strangers. For fans of Tim Johnston and Dave Eggers." I can't recommend his last, [Celine](#) (\$16), a terrific and original mystery, enough.

✎Knight, Renee. [The Secretary](#) (Harper \$26.99). On reading our **March British Crime Book of the Month** many of you will pick up on the testimony of Michael Cohen v. Trump and the dynamic Cohen has tried to describe. Here we get Christine Butcher, a wife and mother, drawn in to that very British post of "PA" or personal assistant to Mina Appleton, a woman determined to topple her father's control of a grocery chain and create an empire. The PA is expected to be absolutely loyal, have absolute discretion, fulfill the principal's every whim, anticipating need. And to remember that the PA is never a friend, never an equal despite the perks that may be bestowed. For twenty years Christine performs almost invisibly, absorbing all Mina's secrets, executing Mina's unspoken as well as direct requests, lying when necessary as Mina grabs at power. At what point does the loyalty cross over to obsession? At what cost does a person devote a life to someone else's benefit? And when someone like Christine is pushed to the limit, will she turn out to be the most dangerous person in the room? I must say I did not anticipate the full scale of Christine's action plan and end game. And I heard definite echoes of the UK version of *House of Cards* so brilliantly led by the late actor Ian Richardson. Knight is the author of bestselling thriller [Disclaimer](#) (\$15.99).

✎Knox, Joseph. [The Smiling Man](#) (Crown \$26). If you like Brit Grit, this second Manchester-based police procedural is for you. Detective Constable Aiden Watts is back on the night shift (think Michael Connelly's Renee Ballard of *The Late Show*), a beat for those cops too screwed up for regular work. Then he and his partner, a man addicted to the low life of the shift, are called to investigate a break-in at the Palace, an immense, empty hotel where they find the body of a man stripped of all identity tags, even his teeth and fingerprints. But he's smiling. And working the case somehow makes Aiden some kinds of target for a wide range of players, and of his own past.

Start with Watts' first case, [Sirens](#) (\$16) "Knox, taking a cue from legendary Manchester band Joy Division's doom-laden romanticism, is brilliantly in command of the book's unusual blend of horrific and hopeful. And in what other crime novel are you going to learn that ultraviolet lighting is used in certain clubs so addicts wanting to shoot up can't see the veins in their arms? A powerfully assured debut by a British novelist who has the potential to be a leading player in modern noir."—*Kirkus Reviews*. For fans of Val McDermid, Ian Rankin, and their ilk.

✎Lanchester, John. [The Wall](#) (Norton \$25.95). You can't read this speculative fiction by the British bestseller without Brexit thrumming in the background. Or, our own debate over a wall. Ravaged by the Change, an island nation in a time very like our own has built the Wall—an enormous concrete barrier around its entire coastline. Joseph Kavanagh, a new Defender, has one task: to protect his section of the Wall from the Others, the desperate souls who are trapped amid the rising seas outside and are a constant threat. Failure will result in death or a fate perhaps worse: being put to sea and made an Other himself. Beset by cold, loneliness, and fear, Kavanagh tries to fulfill his duties to his demanding Captain and Sergeant, even as he grows closer to his fellow Defenders. A dark part of him wonders whether it would be interesting if something did happen, if they came, if he had to fight for his life...

Leon, Donna. [Unto Us a Son is Given](#) (Grove \$26). The *NY Times* writes, "There's bound to be talk when Gonzalo Rodríguez de Tejada, the rich Spanish godfather of Brunetti's wife, Paola, adopts his lover and makes the young man his legal heir. Things turn ugly when Gonzalo unexpectedly dies on a visit to his family in Madrid, and uglier still when his best friend, who has traveled from Yorkshire to Venice for the funeral, is strangled at her hotel. Of course, Brunetti has seen crimes like this before, but this cop is neither jaded nor callous, and he has that rare quality Italians would call *un cuore d'oro*, a heart of gold." See my review in Signed books for this new Commissario Guido Brunetti, a complicated stories about fathers and lovers. I'm on the track of Signed tip-ins for you.

✎Liardet, Frances. [We Must Be Brave](#) (Putnam \$27). December 1940. In the disorderly evacuation of Southampton, England, newly married Ellen Parr finds a small child asleep on the backseat of an empty bus. No one knows who little Pamela is. Ellen professed not to want children with her older husband, and when she takes Pamela into her home and rapidly into her heart, she discovers that this is true: Ellen doesn't want children. She wants only Pamela. Three golden years pass as the Second World War rages on. Then one day.... "Grab the tissues before you crack open this beautiful novel. It's about love, loss, and chosen

families in World War II-era England, and will definitely make you hug your own loved ones a little tighter.” “Lovely, unshowy prose. . . gives lyrical life to the countryside, the seasons, and to Ellen’s sensitivities during a long span of endurance and profound emotion. Intense passion is concealed behind a facade of British modesty in this understated yet blazing story of hearts wounded and restored.”—*Kirkus* Starred Review

✠ Lovesey, Peter. [Bertie, The Complete Prince of Wales Mysteries](#) (Soho \$29.95). Any work by the peerless Diamond Dagger, etc, winner Lovesey is a delight. His three mysteries featuring Edward VII, aka Bertie, as sleuth in late Victorian England republish in time for Lovesey’s appearance as Lifetime Achievement Honoree at the [2019 Bouchercon](#) in Dallas, Texas, in late October. Lovesey is additionally the winner of the Grand Prix de Littérature Policière, the Anthony, the Ellery Queen Readers’ Award and is Grand Master of the Swedish Academy of Detection—and for years, of my heart whether it’s Sergeant Cribb, Superintendent Peter Diamond of Bath, various standalones, or Bertie.

✠ Macintosh, Claire. [Let Me Lie](#) (\$16). Last year, Tom and Caroline Johnson chose to end their lives, one seemingly unable to live without the other. Their daughter, Anna, is struggling to come to terms with her parents’ deaths, unwilling to accept the verdict of suicide. Now with a baby herself, Anna feels her mother’s absence keenly and is determined to find out what really happened to her parents. It would have been safer to let things lie...

Maren, Melissa. [Sugar Run](#) (Algonquin \$26.95). Patrick reviews: “Back in 1989, seventeen-year-old Jodi McCarty is sentenced to life behind bars for manslaughter. Now, eighteen years later, she is suddenly released but with no real prospects of a new life. Before heading back to her mother’s home in the Appalachian mountains, McCarty decides on a detour to search for someone she left behind all those years ago. On the way she meets and falls for Miranda, a young mother who is dealing with her own troubles. While the outside world has changed a lot, time seems to have frozen in small town West Virginia, and it is a harsh place for two young women making a break for a new life. This is the kind of book I’m always hoping to find. Maren’s longing sensibility and gorgeous, spare prose reminds me a bit of writers such as Woodrell and Vlautin. Can’t think of much higher praise than that...” If he can swing Signed firsts this will be the Hardboiled Crime Book of the Month.

Martinson, T J. [The Reign of the Kingfisher](#) (Flatiron \$27.99). Fans of superhero tales will relish Martinson’s energetic debut, in which the Kingfisher legend looms large over Chicago 30 years after the shadowy vigilante supposedly died. The city mourned and thousands attended his high-profile funeral, but debate persists on whether the superhero really died. Also at issue is whether the Kingfisher was the consummate crime fighter, dispatching bad guys who deserved their fate—or a criminal himself who took the law into his own hands. In a video sent anonymously to the police, a masked man shoots one of several hostages dead and threatens to kill more of them unless the police admit that they forced the Kingfisher to fake his death. Three strangers—retired journalist Marcus Waters, who wrote a book about him; policewoman Lucinda Tillman, whose father admired Kingfisher; and Wren, a hacker affiliated with the activist group Liber-teens—unite in an effort to find out the truth. Martinson ratchets up the tension and keeps the suspense high to the end.

MaCallister, Greer. [Woman 99](#) (Sourcebooks \$25.99). Charlotte Smith’s future is planned to the last detail, and so was her sister’s—until Phoebe became a disruption. When their parents commit Phoebe to a notorious asylum, Charlotte knows there’s more to the story than madness. Shedding her identity to become an anonymous inmate, “Woman Ninety-Nine,” Charlotte uncovers dangerous secrets. Insanity isn’t the only reason her fellow inmates were put away—and those in power will do anything to keep the truth, or Charlotte, from getting out. A vivid historical thriller for those who enjoyed Laurie R King’s [Island of the Mad](#) (\$28), a similar story set in Venice for Mary Russell, or the Wilkie Collins classic, [The Woman in White](#) (\$12), should grab this. Interestingly new evidence suggests that Charles Dickens tried to use connections to put his wife and mother of his ten children away in an asylum when he fell for his mistress, actress Ellen Ternan.

Milton, Giles. [Soldier, Sailor, Frogman, Spy, Airman, Gangster, Kill or Die: How the Allies Won on D-Day](#) (Holt \$30). A groundbreaking gripping account of the first 24 hours of the D-Day invasion told by a symphony of incredible accounts of unknown and unheralded members of the Allied – and Axis – forces by one of the world’s most lively historians. Seventy-five years have passed since D-Day, the greatest seaborne invasion in history. The outcome of the Second World War hung in the balance

Mukherjee, Abir. [Smoke and Ashes](#) (Norton \$25.95). 1921 Calcutta, in his superior third mystery featuring the all-too-human Capt. Sam Wyndham, of the British Imperial Police, and his Indian assistant, Sgt. “Surrender-Not” Banerjee (after 2018’s *A Necessary Evil*). Wyndham’s drug addiction puts him in a tight spot when the opium den he’s visiting is raided by his colleagues. In the course of escaping, he comes upon a dying Chinese man, whose eyes have been gouged out and who has been stabbed in the chest. Wyndham doesn’t report the encounter in order to keep his substance abuse a secret from his superiors, but that choice becomes problematic when another person is murdered in the same way. His efforts to catch the killer, which aren’t welcomed by the military for some reason, are complicated by the threat of mass peaceful demonstrations, timed to coincide with a visit to the city by the Prince of Wales, which would embarrass the British Crown. Mukherjee, who only gets better and better with each book, has established himself as a leading historical mystery writer.

Natt, Dag Och. [The Wolf and the Watchman](#) (Atria \$27). Named Best Debut Novel of 2017 by the Swedish Academy of Crime Writers, and our February History/Mystery Book of the Month in the Signed UK edition. One morning in the autumn of 1793, watchman Mikel Cardell is awakened from his drunken slumber with reports of a body seen floating in the Larder, once a pristine lake on Stockholm’s Southern Isle, now a rancid bog. Efforts to identify the bizarrely mutilated corpse are entrusted to incorruptible lawyer Cecil Winge, who enlists Cardell’s help to solve the case. But time is short: Winge’s health is failing, the monarchy is in shambles, and whispered conspiracies and paranoia abound. Winge and Cardell become immersed in a brutal world of guttersnipes and thieves, mercenaries and madams. From a farmer’s son who is lead down a treacherous path when he seeks his fortune in the capital to an orphan girl consigned to the workhouse by a pitiless parish priest, their gruesome investigation peels back layer upon layer of the city’s labyrinthine society. The rich and

the poor, the pious and the fallen, the living and the dead—all collide and interconnect with the body pulled from the lake.

Patterson, James/Brendan DuBois. [The Cornwalls Are Gone](#) (LittleBrown \$28). In her career as an Army intelligence officer, Amy Cornwall has seen haunting sights half a world away. None compare to the chilling scene at her Virginia home. It is empty. A phone rings with a terrifying ultimatum: locate and liberate an unnamed captive in forty-eight hours, or her kidnapped husband and ten-year-old daughter are dead. Now, and in open defiance of Army Command, Amy must employ every lethal tactic she has to save them. New in paperback: [The First Lady](#) (\$16.99) and [Juror 3](#) (\$15.99).

Patrick, Phaedra. [The Library of Lost and Found](#) (Park Row \$24.99). Librarian Martha Storm has always found it easier to connect with books than people—though not for lack of trying. She keeps careful lists of how to help others in her superhero-themed notebook. And yet, sometimes it feels like she's invisible. All of that changes when a book of fairy tales arrives on her doorstep. Inside, Martha finds a dedication written to her by her best friend—her grandmother Zelda—who died under mysterious circumstances years earlier. When Martha discovers a clue within the book that her grandmother may still be alive, she becomes determined to discover the truth. As she delves deeper into Zelda's past, she unwittingly reveals a family secret that will change her life forever. Who doesn't love a book about books? For fans of Elizabeth Berg and Fredrik Backman, Robin Sloan, so many more....

Perkins, SC. [Murder Once Removed](#) (St Martins \$26.99). A smart and charming debut makes our **March Cozy Crimes Book of the Month**, kicking off an Ancestry Detective series sure to appeal to genealogists. Lucy Lancaster is one of them. Her home ground is Austin and it is there that one day she does the unexpected, enjoys a three-martini lunch, which leaves her looking blotchy when on live TV her Austin billionaire client announces that Texas Senator Caleb Applewhite was responsible for the murder of Seth Halloran, the billionaire's ancestor. Back in 1849. Sober, Lucy resolves to work the case, but she's unprepared for the very modern murder that next occurs. Lots of tasty tidbits here for you interested in ancestry. And Austin. Winner of the 2017 Malice Domestic Best First Traditional Mystery competition.

Quinn, Kate. [The Huntress](#) (Morrow). I gave this a strong push in February. It deserves another: "A Russian night witch and a British war correspondent turned Nazi hunter join forces to track a ruthless. From the pre-war wilds of the Soviet Union to the streets of a war-torn Germany to the bustle of Boston, Quinn masterfully mixes the past with a post-war present, and it's phenomenal. Fans of *The Alice Network* and *The Nightingale* will love this fantastically fast-paced and utterly exhilarating historical fiction."

Reich, Christopher. [Crown Jewel](#) (LittleBrown \$27.99). Simon Riske is a freelance industrial spy with a criminal past robbing armored trucks, doing daring car chases, until he was busted and did time. Then graduated from the Sorbonne as an investment and problem-solving genius. He's familiar with Monte Carlo and its lavish casinos so when a group of crooked gamblers target them and kidnap the son of a German heiress, who better than Simon to foil these dastardly deeds? As he sets out to do in the sequel to [The Take](#) (\$9.99) which is a spiffy first caper for Riske.

Russell, Craig. [The Devil Aspect](#) (Doubleday \$26.95). Scottish author Russell imagines a truly dark serial killer thriller set in 1935 Czechoslovakia. Viktor, a psychiatrist who trained under Carl Jung, arrives at the infamous Hrad Orlu Asylum for the Criminally Insane, located in a medieval mountaintop city near Prague. On his way he had an encounter of some interest. And in Prague a fearsome phantom SK known as "Leather Apron" is on the hunt mirroring the crimes of Jack the Ripper. Could this psychotic potential Ripper copycat be one of the six patients at the asylum, treacherous killers who might share a common archetype of evil? Viktor thinks maybe so against the twin dark backdrops of ancient folklore and the rise of the Nazis. If I say that this plot is somewhat twinned with a February bestseller I shouldn't spoil it for you. Deeply atmospheric and disturbing, this is a *tour de force* for Russell.

⌘Savage, Vanessa. [The Woman in the Dark](#) (Grand Central \$26). A British debut, another psychological thriller about a young wife called Sarah, happy with her husband Patrick but spiraling into depression when the mother with agoraphobia Sarah could never cope with dies alone. Patrick insists on a fresh start in a seaside home where he grew up, a home now called the Murder House after the slaughter 15-years-ago of the family living there. Patrick insists it can be there dream home even if it's wildly beyond their budget so they and their teenagers move in. And, surprise in this genre, neither the town nor the house nor, possibly, Patrick are as perfect as they seem. I wonder if this kind of plot can only work in England where "keeping oneself to oneself" is a kind of virtue.

Shalit, Jonathan de. [A Spy in Exile](#) (Atria \$27). This mesmerizing thriller, our **March Discovery Book of the Month**, kept me reading every word right to the end, a luxury I seldom allow myself these days of massive numbers of new books. It's a must-read for Daniel Silva fans filled with high-stakes intrigue in Israel's top intelligence agency and spycraft out in the field. After Ya'ara Stein is forced out of her job at the Mossad—the secret intelligence service of Israel—for assassinating a target against orders, the Prime Minister summons her for a deep cover, black-ops post. Her aptitude, beauty, and deadliness are assets, but it's her relentless attention to detail and craft that causes him to task her with leading a unit answerable only to him, not to the Office. Filled with bright young men and women recruited for that something extra, a lack of fulfillment, and trained by Stein, the cadets are being readied when Stein is asked to meet an old colleague in Germany spycraft who confesses to an unwise liaison with a young woman. This leads Stein to a scenario orchestrated by descendants of the lethal militant Red Army Faction who have imagined a nightmare recreation of past terrorist acts. And that's only the new team's first assignment.... In truth there is no tidy conclusion to a plot woven of several threads. Instead events pull the team, and the reader, towards the future. Start with 2018's [Traitor](#) (\$16).

Simenon, George. [Maigret and the Lazy Burglar](#) (Penguin \$13). When the body of Honoré Cuendot, an old burglar acquaintance of Maigret's, is found in the Bois de Boulogne with his face bashed in, Maigret is appalled that his superiors consider it a mere gangland killing. And there's a personal element to this case as well: Maigret rather liked Cuendot. Instead of concentrating on the flashy bank robberies occupying the rest of his department, Maigret decides to inquire into Cuendot's life—and finds himself tied up in the bank robberies, too, along the way. #57 in the Maigret series.

Stone, Michael H/Gary Brucato. [The New Evil: Understanding the Emergence of Modern Violent Crime](#) (Prometheus \$18). Building off of Dr. Stone's 22-level Gradations of Evil Scale, the authors expand and deepen our understanding of each often gruesome tier and use dozens of new cases to exemplify the categories along the continuum. The authors examine the biological and psychiatric factors behind serial killing, serial rape, torture, mass and spree murders, and other severe forms of violence. And also presents compelling evidence that, since a cultural tipping-point in the 1960s, certain types of violent crime have emerged that in earlier decades never or very rarely occurred.

Swanson, Peter. [Before She Knew Him](#) (Morrow \$26.99). A young suburban wife with a history of psychological instability harbors fears about her new neighbor could lead them both to murder. Hen and her husband Lloyd have settled into a quiet life in a new house outside of Boston, Massachusetts. Henrietta is an illustrator and works out of a studio nearby, and has found the right meds to control her bipolar disorder. Finally, she's found some stability and peace. But when they meet the neighbors next door, that calm begins to erode as she spots a familiar object displayed on the husband's office shelf. The sports trophy looks exactly like one that went missing from the home of a young man who was killed two years ago. Hen knows because she's long had a fascination with this unsolved murder—an obsession she doesn't talk about anymore, but can't fully shake either. Could her neighbor, Matthew, be a killer? Or is this the beginning of another psychotic episode like the one she suffered back in college? Swanson writes the Trust No One novel in the manner of Harlan Coben and Linwood Barclay.

Thomas, Wendall. [Drowned Under](#) (Sourcebooks/Poisoned Pen \$15.95). “In Thomas' zany sequel to 2017's [Lost Luggage](#) (\$15.99, Brooklyn travel agent Cyd Redondo, whose Balenciaga handbag has a Mary Poppinsesque capacity for holding everything from tampons to Tasmanian tiger cubs, is asked by Barry Manzoni, her ex-husband, to look into the disappearance of his elderly parents, who have not been heard from since they booked a cruise on the Tasmanian Dream from Sydney, Australia, to Hobart, Tasmania. Eager to get out of Brooklyn and avoid a stressful Christmas holiday, Cyd agrees to investigate. She books herself on the Tasmanian Dream and sets off on a wild adventure that includes being lowered from a helicopter to the ship, finding a dead body in her cabin, running into her former grade school teacher dancing with a bow-legged gigolo, and stopping villains with one well-aimed kick of her Stuart Weitzman patent stiletto heels. For fans of Janet Evanovich's Stephanie Plum.”—*PW*

Ward, Annie. [The Beautiful Bad](#) (Park Row \$26.99). The Indie Next Pick: “We follow Ian and Maddie from their first meeting in the war-torn Balkans to New York City and end up in suburban Kansas, witnessing their story unfold, twisting and turning along the way, until it ultimately implodes. What really happened and who can you believe?”

Wilkinson, Ellen. [The Division Bell Mystery](#) (\$12.99). This is a British Library Crime Classic I put here to call attention to an attribute essential to understanding the situation re Brexit in Parliament: how it works. While solving the almost locked-room murder that takes place in a private dining room in the House of Commons, what is compelling is the way Wilkinson—a Labour

Party MP who served as Minister of Education from July 1945 until her early death—illuminates the roles of the Parliamentary Private Secretary, the Minister, the Prime Minister, and the oddly privileged people with access to the politicians who also help shape events. Also the way the police work. It's fascinating stuff and explains much about why Britain seems unable to extricate itself from the mess it's in. Not that the US is doing better, it's just doing it differently. The plot is clever, too.

Wilson, G. Willow. [The Bird King](#) (Grove \$26). “Lush and wonderful language, characters, and world-building make this an enjoyable read for fans of historical fantasy. The relationship between concubine Fatima and mapmaker Hassan is multifaceted and compelling. A good choice for readers who liked *Uprooted* and *City of Brass*.” The Indie Next Pick: “Fatima is a concubine of the sultan of the last emirate in the Iberian Peninsula to submit to the Spanish Inquisition. When her dearest friend, Hassan, a mapmaker who can map places he has never seen (and that do not always exist), is singled out by the Inquisition, she flees with him and a jinn, following the trail of the elusive and mythical Bird King, who may or may not be able to grant them sanctuary. Wilson's latest novel is rich with the historical detail, lush description, and fantastical elements that we have come to know and love from her. A story of resistance, freedom, seeking, and strength, and a true fable for our times.”

STERLING NEW SCIFI

Bear, Elizabeth. [Ancestral Night](#) (Saga \$25.99). Anyone who enjoys space opera, exploration of characters, and political speculation will love this outstanding novel, Bear's welcome return to hard SF after several years of writing well-received steampunk (*Karen Memory*) and epic fantasy (the *Eternal Sky* trilogy). As an engineer on a scrappy space salvage tug, narrator Haimey Dz has a comfortable, relatively low-stress existence, chumming with pilot Connla Kuruscz and AI shipmind Singer. Then, while aboard a booby-trapped derelict ship, she is infected with a not-quite-parasitic alien device that gives her insights into the universe's structure. This makes her valuable not only to the apparently benevolent interstellar government, the Synarche, but also to the vicious association of space pirates, represented by charismatic and utterly untrustworthy Zanya Farweather. While fleeing Zanya, Haimey and her crew discover a gigantic, ancient alien space ship hidden at the bottom of a black hole at the center of the galaxy, and at that point, things start getting complicated. This exciting story set in a richly detailed milieu is successful on many levels, digging into the nature of truth and reality, self-definition vs. predestination, and the calibration of moral compasses. Amid a space opera resurgence, Bear's novel sets the bar high.”

Brodsky, Joanna Max. [The Wolf and the Whale](#) (Orbit \$15.99). Moving from modern-day Manhattan to the icy arctic of second-century Northern Canada, Jordanna Max Brodsky tells the epic tale of an Inuit girl born with the soul of a man. Omat's destiny is decided the night her widowed mother dies while giving birth to her. The Inuit believe a baby comes into the world with the soul of an ancestor, and Omat's is her brave hunter father. That soul, combined with the spirit of a wolf, means she is destined to succeed her grandfather and lead her tribe as their angakkuit, or shaman. However, Omat's tribe is isolated in the frozen wilderness, and their food supplies are dwindling. They

are slowly starving with no help in sight. When Omat's tribe encounters another nomadic Inuit group, they celebrate, hoping their newfound friends will help things change for the better. In reality they bring deception and evil, then carry Omat away, where she ultimately encounters a band of Viking warriors and even greater consequences. All along her journey, Omat fights for her survival and the survival of her tribe. "The human relationship with nature is dissected through the tribe's taboos, their rituals and the way they live. Meticulously researched to bring the audience as close to her magical realm as possible, *The Wolf in the Whale* is suspenseful, engaging and thought-provoking."

Correia, Larry. [House of Assassins](#) (Baen \$25). Correia piles on the intrigue, action, and cliffhangers in the invigorating second Saga of the Forgotten Warrior epic fantasy after [Son of the Black Sword](#) (\$8.99). In a land without gods, Inquisitors and Protectors work to keep life secular while scheming for personal advancement. Ashok Vadal was once a Protector, before he met Thera Vane and heard the unearthly Voice that uses her to deliver prophecies. With Thera kidnapped by the shape-changing wizard Sikasso, who hopes to steal her power, and Ashok himself hunted by the Lord Protector Devedas, there's plenty of excitement. Correia also weaves in elements that question the value of belief and the cost of giving authority to those who find more profit in preying on the weak. Rebellion and betrayal complicate matters as Ashok and Thera strive to survive. Brisk fight scenes, lively characters, and plenty of black humor continue to make this series a real pleasure.

Dozois, Gardner, ed. [Very Best of the Very Best](#) (St Martins \$30). 35 Years of the Best. The 38 stories in this culling of the last 15 annual anthologies edited by the late Dozois testify to the breathtaking scope of science fiction and the diversity and talent of its writers....Forward-looking as all the stories are, several are tributes to the groundbreaking genre fiction of Ray Bradbury, H.P. Lovecraft, and Edgar Rice Burroughs by, respectively, Kage Baker, Elizabeth Bear and Sarah Monette, and Allen M. Steele. Dozois was one of the great editors of science fiction over the last 50 years, and this book features some of the best science fiction written in the 21st century.

Durst, Sarah Beth. [The Deepest Blue](#) (Harper \$21.99). "In the island nation of Belene, the spirits are as wild as they are on the mainland (subject of Durst's "Queens of Renthia" trilogy). Here, too, a queen and her heirs provide protection. Women with powers over the spirits must turn themselves over for testing or be charged with treason. Unfortunately, the risk of death is about the same in both cases. When Mayara is found to have abilities during an attack on her home village on her wedding day, she's given a choice: forsake her past or attempt to survive and become an heir. Mayara chooses the test and discovers that the conditions of training are a matter of literal survival. Making friends with other trainees leads her down a path she would have never chosen herself, for if the Deepest Blue awakes, no one in Belene will survive. This intriguing dive into the powers that attempt to control Renthia yields an action-packed fantasy."—LJ

Leckie, Ann. [The Raven Tower](#) (Orbit \$26) is the first epic fantasy from SF author Leckie. We see "the best-laid plans of gods and mortals collide, throwing a nation into turmoil and setting the stage for a divine conflict that's been brewing for centuries. The

tale spins out in past and present, narrated by the rockbound god known as the Strength and Patience of the Hill. The god is speaking to Eolo, a transgender warrior in service to Mawat, a young noble whose uncle has usurped his rightful role as ruler of Iraden. As the god recounts its ancient history (the narrative is told in second person, a technical challenge that Leckie surmounts with aplomb), it also relates Eolo's attempts to determine what happened to Mawat's supposedly vanished father and how this connects to their patron god, the Raven, whose power seems on the wane. With foreign gods taking an active interest in the kingdom, political intrigue brewing, and Mawat taking ever-bolder actions, Eolo must uncover Iraden's greatest secret. Through this unorthodox approach to the relationships between gods and their followers, Leckie's tale takes on a mythic, metafictional quality; the Strength and Eolo truly inhabit their roles, and the story's elements weave into a stunning conclusion. This impressive piece of craftsmanship cements Leckie's place as a powerful voice in both SF and fantasy."—PW Starred Review

Martine, Arkady. [A Memory Called Empire](#) (Forge \$25.99). This space opera focuses on a young woman from a small mining colony who comes to the Emperor's palace to find out what happened to her predecessor—and gets caught up in a coup. "Layered, nuanced, and startlingly imaginative, it's got the deep politics and cultural awareness of Iain M. Banks, the intrigue and linguistic play of Ann Leckie, and the brisk pacing and satisfying action of James S.A. Corey—and yet still possesses a voice uniquely its own.

Schwab, V.E. [The Near Witch](#) (Titan \$19.99). An all-new deluxe edition of an out-of-print gem, Schwab's debut, containing in-universe short story "The Ash-Born Boy" and a never-before-seen introduction from V.E. Schwab. If the wind calls at night, you must not listen. The wind is lonely, and always looking for company. There are no strangers in the town of Near. These are the truths that Lexi has heard all her life. But when an actual stranger, a boy who seems to fade like smoke, appears outside her home on the moor at night, she knows that at least one of these sayings is no longer true.

OUR MARCH SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Bryndza, Robert. [Girl in the Ice](#) (\$7.99). When a young boy discovers the body of a woman beneath a thick sheet of ice in a South London park, Detective Erika Foster is called in to lead the murder investigation. Fans of British procedurals may want to sample this striking debut to a new series.

Campbell, Michele. [It's Always the Husband](#) (\$9.99). Kate, Aubrey, and Jenny first met as college roommates and soon became inseparable, even though they are as different as three women can be. Twenty years later, one of them is standing at the edge of a bridge, and someone else is urging them to jump. How did things come to this? PW gave this a starred review stating "Demonstrating diabolical plotting chops and an ability to convincingly conjure settings, Campbell crafts a twisty page-turner."

Chien, Vivien. [Murder Lo Mein](#) (St Martins \$7.99). Noodle Shop #3. When a judge for Cleveland's Best Noodles Contest is found dead, face down in a bowl of lo-mein, Lana, an employee at the Ho Lee Noodle House, launches her own investigation and receives a deadly fortune that gets her into hot water. Readers who crave expertly crafted culinary cozies will want to order all three of Chien's lightly humorous books.

Cussler, Clive. [The Rising Sea](#) (\$9.99). NUMA Files #15. Investigating an alarming rise in the world's sea levels, Kurt, Joe and the rest of the NUMA scientific team uncover a diabolical plot to upset the Pacific balance of power by triggering natural disasters to displace billions of people. *PW*'s review ended with "A far-fetched ending involving perfect android replicas of Austin and Zavala attempting to assassinate the prime minister of Japan strains credulity, but otherwise readers are deep in Cussler territory, and the water's fine."

Fredericks, Mariah. [A Death of No Importance](#) (\$9.99). Jane Prescott #1. Highly skilled ladies' maid Jane Prescott uses her insider knowledge of her entitled employer's family to investigate the class-driven case of her mistress' brutally murdered playboy fiancé. *PW* loved this debut saying "The novel's voice, plotting, pace, characterization, and historical background are all expertly crafted, while the resolution – which feels both surprising and convincing – will leave readers hungry for more."

Gibbins, David. [Inquisition](#) (\$9.99). Jack Howard #10. While investigating a wreck off the Cornish coast, marine archaeologist Jack Howard finds clues to the location of the Holy Grail and sets off to the sunken ruin of Port Royal, Jamaica, all the while hunted by those who seek the Grail for nefarious purposes. *PW* ended their review with "Steve Berry fans eager for an intelligent blend of suspense and reality, including some horrific contemporary developments, will be rewarded."

Kellerman, Jonathan/Jesse. [A Measure of Darkness](#) (\$9.99). Clay Edison #3. Attending the scene of a mass shooting at a West Oakland party, Alameda County Coroner's Deputy Clay Edison discovers a mysterious victim and is drawn into a bizarre counterculture world of blurred moralities.

Kent, Kathleen. [The Dime](#) (\$7.99). A woman from a family of take-no-prisoners police detectives relocates from Brooklyn to Dallas, where she tackles adversaries ranging from drug cartels and cult leaders to difficult vagrants and society wives before a first major investigation is challenged by unruly subordinates, a stalker, a criminal organization and an unsupportive girlfriend. *Kirkus* concluded their rave review with "Violent, sexy, and completely absorbing, Kent's detective is Sam Spade reincarnated — as a brilliant, modern woman."

Maden, Mike. [Tom Clancy Line of Sight](#) (\$9.99). Orchestrating a surprise for his mother, Jack Ryan Jr. searches for Aida, whose eyesight was restored by his mother years earlier, but when she is abducted in front of him, Jack finds himself pitted against mobsters and paramilitary units. *Kirkus* had this to say "There's plenty of action, but readers looking for gore will have to settle for Bulgarian body parts in a kimchi jar and a poor fellow "shredded...like creamed chipped beef." Fast-moving and exciting, this one reads like it came from Clancy himself."

Preston, Douglas/Lincoln Child. [The Pharaoh Key](#) (\$8.99). Gideon Crew #5. When his former employer goes missing, Gideon Crew, reeling from his terminal diagnosis, pursues the long-awaited translation of the Phaistos Disk, an ancient tablet that could end or save his life. *PW* weighed in with "The authors keep the tone light and the reader guessing right up to the open ending, which leaves some major plot points unresolved. Fans of the Indiana Jones movies will find plenty to like."

Sandford, John. [Twisted Prey](#) (\$9.99). Lucas Davenport #28. Fed-

eral marshal Lucas Davenport confronts an old nemesis in U.S. senator Taryn Grant, a rich psychopath who he has resolved to bring to justice for her role in three murders that he cannot prove. *PW* concluded their review with "Davenport and Grant, aided by their respective allies, engage in a deadly cat-and-mouse game that will keep the reader turning the pages up to the exciting climax. This long-running series shows no sign of losing steam."

Turow, Scott. [Testimony](#) (\$9.99). Assigned to investigate the unsolved disappearance of an entire Gypsy refugee camp during the Bosnian War, Bill ten Boom, a disillusioned American prosecutor, navigates a host of suspects while uncovering disturbing alliances and betrayals. *Kirkus* responded with "Bill's journey to find the culprits initially moves by fits and starts, frequently interrupted by subplots only tenuously connected to his quest. A tightly written action set piece at midpoint snaps the readers to attention, and Turow largely keeps them there as he moves on to a complicated, trenchant, and pertinent finish."

NEW IN SMALL PAPERBACKS

Albert, Susan Wittig. [Queen Anne's Lace](#) (\$7.99) China Bayles #27. When a series of strange occurrences happen in the building of Thyme and Seasons, China Bayles uncovers a story about a young, widowed lacemaker who died under suspicious circumstances.

Allan, Barbara. [Antiques Wanted](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Trash n' Treasures #12. A series of unexplained deaths, beginning with the elderly aunt of a political opponent, send mother and daughter team Brandy and Vivian Borne and their loyal and clever shih tzu, Sushi, scrambling to find the culprits.

Baldacci, David. [The Fallen](#) (\$9.99) Amos Decker #4. When Amos and his journalist friend Alex visit Alex's sister in Baronsville, Pennsylvania, Amos discovers two dead men in a nearby house, but finds the police and unseen forces are stonewalling the investigation.

Beaton, M C. [Death of an Honest Man](#) (\$7.99) Hamish Macbeth #34. When an insensitive newcomer to the village of Cnothan is found dead, Sergeant Hamish Macbeth confronts a bewildering array of suspects at the same time his clumsy police sidekick, Charlie, resigns in protest of his treatment by Chief Inspector Blair. Cartmel, Andrew. [Vinyl Detective—The Run-Out](#) (Titan \$7.99) Vinyl Detective #2. His first adventure consisted of the search for a rare record; his second the search for a lost child. Specifically, the child of Valerian, lead singer of a great rock band of the 1960s, who hanged herself in mysterious circumstances after the boy's abduction. Along the way, the Vinyl Detective finds himself marked for death at the wrong end of a shotgun, and unknowingly dosed with LSD as a prelude to being burned alive. And then there's the grave robbing.

Clark, Mary Higgins. [I've Got My Eyes on You](#) (\$8.99). After her eighteen-year-old sister is found murdered at the bottom of the family pool, Aline unknowingly makes herself a target when she teams up with the prosecutor's office to uncover the truth.

Collins, Max Allan. [Mike Hammer—The Goliath Bone](#) (Forge \$7.99). Halting a violent robbery attack on a pair of college sweethearts who inadvertently stumbled on a giant femur in the Valley of Elah, Private Investigator Mike Hammer postpones his marriage to Velda to take on Islamic Terrorists and Israeli extremists bent on recovering the relic for their own agendas. If anybody

can drag Mike Hammer into the 21st century it would have to be award-winning mystery novelist – and #1 Mickey Spillane fan – Max Allan Collins.

Coulter, Catherine. [The Sixth Day](#) (\$9.99) Brit in the FBI #5. When a series of high-profile deaths are found to be well-constructed assassinations, the Cover Eyes team is tasked with bringing the killer to justice.

Deveraux, Jude. [A Willing Murder](#) (Mira \$7.99). After two bodies are found in a quiet Florida community, old secrets and deadly grudges are exposed, prompting retired novelist Sara Medlar, her niece Kate, and long-term houseguest Jackson to team up to try to unmask the killer. 1st in a new series by romance legend Deveraux.

Donlea, Charlie. [Don't Believe it](#) (Kensington \$9.99). Making a successful documentary to prove the innocence of a woman who has spent a decade in prison, filmmaker Sydney receives a mysterious letter saying that she was wrong and begins to worry that she helped set a killer free.

Griffo, J D. [Murder in Tranquility Park](#) (Kensington \$7.99). While out jogging, Alberta Staglione and her granddaughter, Jinx, stumble upon a play house hidden in the trees and a dead body underneath it, and they must exercise extreme caution as they set out to solve this mystery.

Hesse, Jennifer. [May Day Murder](#) (Kensington \$7.99). After her friend Erik's witch of an ex-girlfriend is found dead, attorney Keli Milanni finds her own Wiccan worldview called into question when she, while trying to clear her name, tangles with the dark arts.

Hooper, Kay. [Hold Back the Dark](#) (Berkley \$9.99) FBI Special Crimes Unit #18. Called in to a small North Carolina town where residents are acting out their nightmares and waking up with no memory of their actions, the Special Crimes Unit uncovers a pattern that pits their skills against an unprecedented darkness.

Kavanagh, Emma. [The Missing Hours](#) (Kensington \$7.99). Detective Constable Leah Mackay and her brother, Detective Sergeant Finn Hale, investigate two linked cases in their quiet jurisdiction—the suspicious disappearance and reappearance of a kidnapping expert and the stabbing death of a well-respected lawyer.

Lotz, Sarah. [The White Road](#) (\$7.99). Desperate to attract subscribers to his fledgling website, ex-adrenaline junkie Simon Newman undertakes two life-risking ventures, one in the notorious Cwm Pot caves and another scaling Everest, that force him to test the limits of his morality and wits in order to survive.

McKevett, GA. [Hide and Sneak](#) (\$7.99). Savannah Reid #23. Savannah Reid of the Midnight Magnolia Detective Agency takes on the case of a rising-star actor whose wife and toddler went missing right before their nanny was found murdered.

Mofina, Rick. [Missing Daughter](#) (Mira \$9.99). Years after their daughter went missing, the Lane family, fearing that she is gone forever, is plunged into a world of buried secrets and lies when a stunning twist in the case sends shockwaves through their tight-knit community.

Murray, James S. [Awakened](#) (Harper \$9.99). Construction of a beautiful new subway line in New York City unearths an ancient dark horror that threatens the balance of civilization.

O'Brien, Kevin. [Watch Them Die](#) (Kensington \$9.99). In the city of Seattle, no single woman is safe. From afar he watches the ones he so desperately wants. Willing to do whatever it takes to prove his love. But should his latest obsession betray him, he will have no choice but to punish her. By finding new and brutal ways to teach her a lesson. And by finally loving her—to death.

Palmer, Michael. [The First Family](#) (\$9.99). Called in to provide a second opinion on a mysterious illness affecting the president's teenage son, Dr. Lee Blackwood's race for a cure uncovers betrayals that breach the highest levels of national security.

Ripley, J R. [Towhee Get Your Gun](#) (Kensington \$7.99). While performing in a local production of *Annie, Get Your Gun*, Birds & Bees shop owner Amy Simms, as the play is plagued by bad luck and then murder, steps into the role of sleuth, deciding to find the truth before a cagey killer takes flight.

Roberts, Nora. [Come Sundown](#) (\$8.99). When danger lurks in the mountains around Bo's idyllic ranch and resort in western Montana, she turns to new hire Callen Skinner after they discover her estranged aunt badly injured and another woman murdered.

Robertson, L F. [Madman Walking](#) (Forge \$7.99). Called in to work on a post-conviction investigation, Janet Moodie finds a client who is uncooperative and likely schizophrenic, but her investigation into the sordid murder-for-hire case could be the difference between life and death for the woman.

Simple, Maria. [Where'd You Go Bernadette?](#) (\$7.99). When her talented, troubled, and agoraphobic mother goes missing, teenage Bee begins a trip that takes her to the ends of the earth to find her.

Sennefelder, Debra. [The Hidden Corpse](#) (Kensington \$7.99). A former reality TV baking show contestant and recent divorcee, food blogger Hope Early stumbles upon a recipe for murder and must stir the pot when her neighbor perishes in a house fire and a second body is found in the basement.

Slater, K L. [Blink: Includes the Bonus Novel](#) (Grand Central \$7.99). Believing that her daughter is still alive, Toni, trapped in a world of silence finally pieces together the memories of that fateful day five years ago and must find a way to be heard to save both herself and her daughter.

Smith, Ian K, M. [The Ancient Nine](#) (\$9.99). Going from urban Chicago to the ivy-clad campus of Harvard University, Spencer Collins is surprised to be invited to apply to one of the school's elite final clubs, until he finds out that the club hides a shadowy group of powerful men.

Souza, Joseph. [The Neighbor](#) (Kensington \$9.99). After moving her family from Seattle to Maine, a lonely stay-at-home mom, Leah, becomes obsessed with her stylish next-door neighbors, and begins sneaking into their home and taking small objects, including a diary, which points at something sinister.

Swallow, James. [Nomad](#) (\$9.99). When his fellow MI6 agents are killed in a brutal attack, agent Marc Dane is wrongly branded a traitor and teams up with Rubicon operative Lucy Keyes to clear his name and foil a terrorist plot.

Swanson, Denise. [Leave No Stone Unturned](#) (Sourcebooks \$7.99) Chef-to-Go #2. Normalton University is marred by murder; and if Dani's Chef-to-Go business is going to keep its college-aged clientele, she must team up with the handsome head of university security to find the killer.