

BOOKNEWS from

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MAY: Mom, Murder, Madness

AUTHORS ARE SIGNING...

Some Events will be webcast on Facebook Live

Check out our new [YouTube Channel](#)

WEDNESDAY MAY 1 7:00 PM

Marc Cameron signs [Open Carry](#) (Kensington \$26)

A US Marshal on the hunt in Alaska

MONDAY MAY 6 7:00 PM

Daniel Suarez signs [Delta-v](#) (Dutton \$27)

May Thriller Book of the Month

TUESDAY MAY 7 7:00 PM

Laird Barron signs [Black Mountain](#) (Putnam \$26)

Isaiah Coleridge #2

Hilary Davidson signs [One Small Sacrifice](#) (Thomas & Mercer

\$24.95 or \$15.95)

WEDNESDAY MAY 8 7:00 PM

Berkley Historical Crime Night

CS Harris signs [Who Slays the Wicked](#) (Berkley \$26)

Regency Mystery, Sebastian St. Cyr #14

Anna Huber signs [An Artless Demise](#) (Berkley \$16)

Lady Darby Mystery #7

Victoria Thompson signs [Murder on Trinity Place](#) (Berkley \$26)

Gaslight Mystery #22

THURSDAY MAY 9 7:00 PM

Dana Haynes signs [St Nicholas Salvage & Wrecking](#)

(Blackstone \$26.99)

Thriller set on Cyprus and in Eastern Europe

Robert Knott signs [Robert B Parker's Buckskin](#) (Putnam \$27)

Hitch & Cole

SATURDAY MAY 11 1:00 PM Cozy Con!

Jessica Ellicott signs [Murder in an English Village](#) (\$15.95)

Beryl & Edwina #1

Jenn McKinlay signs [Dying for Devil's Food](#) (Berkley \$7.99)

Jill Orr signs [The Ugly Truth](#) (Prospect Park \$25.95 or \$16)

Riley Ellison #3

Paige Shelton signs [The Loch Ness Papers](#) (St Martins \$26.99)

Scottish Bookshop Mystery #4

Jane Willan signs [The Hour of Death](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99)

Wales' Sister Agatha/Father Selwyn #2

MONDAY MAY 13 7:00 PM

Jeffery Deaver signs [The Never Game](#) (Putnam \$27.99)

Colter Shaw #1

Chris Pavone signs [The Paris Diversion](#) (Crown \$27)

Kate Moore of [The Expats](#) returns. Our copies come with a map of Paris and a special interview with Chris

WEDNESDAY MAY 15 7:00 PM

Liz Constantine signs [The Last Time I Saw You](#) (Harper \$26.99)

High Society murder

THURSDAY MAY 16 7:00 PM

Nick Petrie in conversation with **Michael Koryta**

The M&M Event: Maine and Milwaukee

Koryta signs [If She Wakes](#) (LittleBrown \$27)

Petrie signs [Milwaukee Noir](#) (Akashic \$15.95) and [Tear It Down](#) (Putnam \$26) Peter Ash #4

TUESDAY MAY 21 7:00 PM

Larry Siegel in conversation with **Bill Eddy**

Eddy signs [Why We Elect Narcissists and Sociopaths—and How We Can Stop](#) (Berrett-Koehler \$24.95)

This isn't a political statement by Eddy or The Pen but a serious look at a global issue

WEDNESDAY MAY 22 Elevengedden

Our annual SciFi/Fantasy Bash, a work in progress

Attendees so far include Mike Cole, Ryan Dalton, Sarah Kuhn, Tosca Lee, Tom Leveen, Brian McClellan, Joanne Ruth Meyer, Sam Sykes, and Django Wexler. Please consult our website calendar and the Enews for updates

SATURDAY MAY 25 Triple Threat

Jayne Anne Krentz signs [Tightrope](#) (Berkley \$27)

Sujata Massey signs [The Satapur Moonstone](#) (Soho \$26.95)

Our copies come with a biography of the real life Bombay lawyer who inspired this award winning series

Meg Tilley signs [Cliff's Edge](#) (Berkley \$16)

TUESDAY MAY 28 7:00 PM

Janet Napolitano at the **Madison Center**

TICKETS: \$32 admits one with signed book; \$37 admits two

with one signed book; \$45 admits one with book to the VIP

signing line. 7:00 PM at the Madison Center at 16th and Missouri, Phoenix. Loads of on-site parking

[Info and to order tickets HERE](#)

The former Governor and Homeland Security Secretary signs

[How Safe Are We? Homeland Security since 9/11](#) (Public Affairs \$26)

WEDNESDAY MAY 29 7:00 PM

Juliet Grames in conversation with Francine Mathews
Grames signs [The Seven or Eight Deaths of Stella Fortuna](#)
 (Ecco \$27.99)
 Our June Modern Firsts Book of the Month

FRIDAY MAY 31 7:00 PM

James Sallis and Three Legged Dog

SATURDAY JUNE 1 7:00 PM

Douglas Preston signs [Talking to the Ground](#) (\$17)
 By horseback around Navajo desert sacred land

MAY DISCUSSION CLUBS

Coffee & Crime: Saturday May 11 10:30 AM:
 Paige Shelton, [The Cracked Spine](#) (\$7.99)

SciFi Friday: May 17 7:00 PM
 Emily Devenport, [Medusa Uploaded](#) (\$16.99)

Croak & Dagger: Saturday May 18 10:30 AM:
 Sarah Bailey, [The Dark Lake](#) (\$14.99)

Hardboiled Crime: Thursday May 30 7:00 PM:
 David Goodis, [Cassidy's Girl](#) (\$21.95)

EVENT BOOKS

Barron, Laird. [Black Mountain](#) (Putnam \$26 May 7). We first met Isaiah Coleridge in [Blood Standard](#) (\$9.99). Barron's second novel featuring retired mob strongman Isaiah Coleridge is as nasty as a cornered pit viper—and its plot is about as sinuous. It opens with a dark and potentially violent scene in rugged remote Alaska where Isaiah is a hitman for hire and the Chicago Outfit is a player. Then we switch to the Hudson River Valley, more beautiful country marred by violent deeds, where Isaiah is newly established as a PI, The Albany Syndicate hire him to investigate the murder of thug-for-hire Henry Lee. Someone removed Lee's head and hands with a serrated blade before dumping his corpse in the Ashokan Reservoir, a ghoulish dispatch that recalls the handiwork of Morris Oestryke—a psychopathic hit man and serial murderer, whose kill count is legendary and whose techniques border on the supernatural. The only problem is that Oestryke is supposed to have died in an explosion and/or been assassinated by the mob. Meanwhile, Isaiah discovers that Lee's girlfriend is the daughter of an industrialist mogul whose business concerns reek of black ops espionage and cover-ups. "Barron peppers the text with literary references and philosophical reflections that provide rich counterpoint to the violent bashing and bloodletting. Isaiah is the man for fans of hardboiled crime fiction and wiseguys vernacular.

Cameron, Marc. [Open Carry](#) (Kensington \$26 May 1). U.S. Marshal Arliss Cutter is a born tracker. Raised in the Florida swamplands, he honed his skills in the military, fought in the Middle East, and worked three field positions for Marshal Services. When it comes to tracking someone down—or taking someone out—Cutter's the best. But his newest assignment is taking him out of his comfort zone to southeast Alaska. Cold, dark, uninhabited forests often shrouded in fog. And it's the kind of case that makes his blood run cold... the shocking murder of a Tlingit Indian girl. But the murder is just the beginning. Now,

three people have disappeared on Prince of Wales Island. Two are crew members of the reality TV show, *Fishwives*. Cutter's job is to find the bodies, examine the crew's footage for clues, and track down the men who killed them. But it won't be easy, because the whole town is hiding secrets.... Cameron, who also writes in the Tom Clancy franchise, lives in Alaska and writes about it ferociously, beasts of all kinds, some of them human. A touch of Winslow in this one—a Cartel boss thinking he's invisible at an Alaskan getaway. Which considering the giant tourist push to the state is evidence of magical thinking.

Constantine, Liv. [The Last Time I Saw You](#) (Harper \$26.99 May 15), Constantine scored a big hit with the debut nail-biter [The Last Mrs. Parrish](#) (\$16.99). Now comes blueblood Baltimore pediatric cardiothoracic surgeon Kate English whose enviable life implodes with the shocking murder of her mother, a beloved philanthropist—followed by chilling texts insinuating she's next. To make matters worse, heiress Kate wants her architect husband—has he been cheating on her?—to move out of the family mansion. Simon digs in his heels, saying he can help protect her and their four-year-old daughter. About the only bright spot is Kate's unexpected reconciliation after the funeral with long-estranged childhood best friend Blaire Barrington, who offers to apply the detective skills she's acquired writing a bestselling mystery series to the case. Soon the nursery-rhyme-referencing threats mount, leading to a breach despite the round-the-clock security guards Simon's hired. Plenty of secrets unfold among this moneyed-set. What happens after a brutal high society murder? From the authors of bestseller *The Last Mrs. Parrish*.

Davidson, Hilary. [One Small Sacrifice](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$24.95 May 7) NYPD detective Sheryn Sterling is hit with an apparent suicide. A mysterious disappearance. Did one man get away with murder—twice? Davidson switches up from her Lily Moore series. "New York photo journalist Alex Traynor, the suspect at the center of this taut series launch from Anthony Award winner Davidson, suffers from PTSD due to his harrowing work in war zones around the world. Traynor's fiancée, surgeon Emily Teare, who has had her share of battlefield experience, has disappeared, and Det. Sheryn Sterling of the NYPD is convinced that Traynor is responsible. Sterling arrested Traynor the year before for the murder of Cori Stanton, a young woman who died as the result of a fall from the roof of the photographer's apartment building. Though Traynor was later released, Sterling clings to the idea that he's guilty. Traynor is menaced by Cori's grieving father, harassed by the police, and uncertain about his relationship with Emily. His PTSD symptoms, which include occasional blackouts and anxiety, make him vulnerable to self-doubt, and there are moments when he and the reader are not certain of his innocence in either crime. Davidson's ability to maintain the suspense bodes well for future installments," says one review. Also in paperback: [One Small Sacrifice](#) (\$15.95).

Deaver, Jeffery. [The Never Game](#) (Putnam \$27.99 May 13). Leave it to Deaver to create a new series lead with special, well-honed skills and drop him into a plot that is at once a kind of PI twister and a thriller where Colter Shaw, our hero, chases an elusive bad dude called The Whispering Man. While this opener takes place in Silicon Valley, Deaver has set him up as a kind of

Reacher, traveling around the US in a Winnebago RV with plenty of tech frills earning rewards for finding missing persons, fugitives, and “suspects who have not yet been identified or located.” He’s not a bounty hunter but a rewards claimer, a career abetted by two caretakers at his Florida base who winkle out leads and assignments. In the prologue, Colter attempts to rescue a kidnapped pregnant woman, Elizabeth Chabelle, from a sinking fishing vessel off the California coast. With Elizabeth’s fate in doubt, the action moves back two days, when Colter goes looking for 19-year-old Sophie Mulliner. Her father can’t get the authorities to take seriously his fear she’s been raped and/or kidnapped. In part because they’d argued about a sudden relocation before she vanished. Colter does his thing and locates evidence Fee’s dad was right. But that’s just the kick off to a cat-and-mouse game when murders ensue that Colter links to a dark video game called *The Whispering Man*. Deaver excels at mixing traditional investigating with high-tech tools in triple-twists plots that push the envelope of plausibility. And as he says, his Lincoln Rhyme thrillers are evidence-based while Shaw, who has a fascinating past with survivalist parents, reads people. Highly recommended.

Eddy, Bill. [Why We Elect Narcissists and Sociopaths—and How We Can Stop](#) (Berrett-Koehler \$24.95 May 21). The Scottsdale bestselling author, therapist, lawyer, and mediator describes how dangerous, high-conflict personalities have gained power in governments worldwide—and what citizens can do to keep these people out of office. Democracy is under siege. The reason isn’t politics but personalities: too many countries have come under the sway of high-conflict people (HCPs) who have become politicians. Most of these high-conflict politicians have traits of narcissistic personality disorder, antisocial (i.e., sociopathic) personality disorder, or both. This is the first and only guide for identifying and thwarting them. HCPs don’t avoid conflict, they thrive on it, widening social divisions and exacerbating international tensions. Eddy, the world’s leading authority on high-conflict personalities, explains why they’re so seductive and describes the telltale traits that define HCPs—he even includes a helpful list of forty typical HCP behaviors. historical examples from Hitler, Stalin, Mao, and Nixon to Trump, Maduro, and Putin, Eddy shows how HCPs invent enemies and manufacture phony crises so they can portray themselves as the sole heroic figure who can deal with them, despite their inability to actually solve problems. Note: this isn’t a political statement by Eddy or The Pen but a serious look at a global issue.

Grames, Juliet. [The Seven or Eight Deaths of Stella Fortuna](#) (Ecco \$27.99 May 29). The best way into Juliet Grames’ heartfelt and vividly written story of a woman and her family rooted in rugged, rural Calabria who emigrate from their village to America at the near-end of the interwar world wars years is to read Grames’ introduction to *Black Souls* by Gioacchino Criaco, a book she acquired and published for Soho Press. In it Grames lays out her own journey into Calabria and her family’s past, notably that of her grandmother who inspired the character of Stella Fortuna and the near-fatal misfortunes that marked her life. Stella’s is a tale filled with acts, slights, and secrets large and small and how they can follow someone across an ocean to split lives down generations in a new country. Ambitious and unsparing, yet unflinchingly tender, this is a remarkable debut and our **June Modern Firsts Book of the Month**.

Harris, CS. [Who Slays the Wicked](#) (Berkley \$26 May 8). Napoleon’s reign is drawing to a close, and the rest of the European powers are jockeying to fill the void left by France’s defeat. The Grand Duchess Catherine of Oldenburg and her retinue are in the middle of a formal visit to London when the body of the sadistic Lord Ashworth is found hacked apart in his bed. Ashworth, known to have exotic sexual habits, has recently married Stephanie, the beloved but troubled niece of Sebastian St. Cyr, Viscount Devlin. So naturally Sir Henry Lovejoy, the local magistrate, calls in Sebastian to help investigate Ashworth’s death. Sebastian wishes he could believe that Stephanie did not kill Ashworth, but is worried that she more than regretted her hasty marriage to the dissolute lord. On the other hand, he hears rumors that a certain Russian princess, part of Catherine’s household, shared Ashworth’s erotic interests and may have played a part in his demise. As Sebastian digs into Ashworth’s circle of friends and shady acquaintances, his wife, Lady Hero Devlin, continues on her quest to document the atrocities committed against London’s poorest denizens, much to the irritation of her father, Lord Jarvis. 14th in a dazzling [Regency series](#) that really has to be read from book one to this.

Haynes, Dana. [St Nicholas Salvage & Wrecking](#) (Blackstone \$26.99 May 9). Michael Patrick Finnigan was a New York cop and a US Marshal. Katalin Fiero Dahar was a soldier, spy, and assassin for Spain. For him following the rules didn’t get the job done. For her, breaking them failed. Together they joined up to create a (mostly illegal) bounty hunting operation based in Cyprus where banking has no rules. Their field of operations is Europe where they work the radar for the presiding judge of the International Criminal Court, clearing up and out really bad guys. One of them is the overprivileged jerk of a son of a corrupt Serbian who is trafficking refugees made into prostitutes to serve depraved tastes. Their target has the protection of high levels at the UN and within a battalion of the Kosovo military as well as corrupt Belgrade police. Did I mention Fiero is nearly unequaled as a sniper? The hunt takes them over really interesting grounds from Belgrade and Zagreb, to the Loire Valley and Milan, and to the plains of Kosovo. And they come to realize it puts the ICC Judge in the crosshairs of their targets.... Lots of action, unusual characters, and a tour of places you don’t ordinarily go.

Huber, Anna. [An Artless Demise](#) (Berkley \$16 May 8). There’s been a lot written lately about anatomists—even a museum exhibition of the Scots doctor, Hunter, and his specimens—and the various ways bodies were and are acquired for study. Some infamously. So the stigma attached to Lady Darby, forced into marriage with an elderly anatomist and to make drawings for him before his death, was very real. It’s 1831 in this 7th investigation and she and her new husband Sebastian Gage (she gets to keep her title) are back in London in November. A gang of body snatchers reminiscent of the work of Burke and Hare of Edinburgh appears to be killing street people for the profit of selling them to medical schools. Sitters for Kiera’s society portraits cancel but worse, someone tries to blackmail her or reveal details of her former husband’s involvement with burkers, details that will implicate her as well as Gage, and possibly harm the child they are expecting. When the young son of a noble family is killed a block from his home, his family asks Kiera and Gage to determine if the death was a failed attempt by the burkers, or someone

scapegoating them.... Best read the [Lady Darby Mysteries](#) in order starting with *The Anatomist's Wife*. The portrait painting is interesting too. As is this [article about the burkers](#).

Knott, Robert. [Robert B. Parker's Buckskin](#) (Putnam \$27 May 9). Parker came late to his Westerns but he clearly had huge fun with them, as does Knott. When gold is discovered in the foothills just outside of Appaloosa, it sets off a fight between two shrewd local business operations as their hired gun hands square off over the claim. First a young miner disappears, then another. And then one of the businessmen himself is killed, right on his front doorstep. Meanwhile, as Cole and Hitch try to put a stop to the escalating violence, another killer is making his way toward town in pursuit of a long-lost dream, and a mission of vengeance. Cole and Hitch will have their work cut out for them to keep the peace, especially when all these ruffians converge at the huge Appaloosa Days festival, where hundreds of innocent souls might get caught in the crossfire....

Koryta, Michael. [If She Wakes](#) (LittleBrown \$27 May 16). Koryta will be interviewed by Nick Petrie. At the start of this taut thriller from bestseller Koryta (*How It Happened*), the car in which Tara Beckley, a student at Maine's Hammel College, was driving Professor Amandi Oltamu before they parked on a bridge is struck by a car driven by Carlos Ramirez. Oltamu, who was on his way to deliver the keynote address at a talk related to his work on batteries and solar panels, is killed, and Tara ends up paralyzed, conscious but unable to communicate. Insurance investigator Abby Kaplan, who's employed by Hammel, probes the fatal collision. Why Tara chose to stop on a bridge nowhere near her destination is a puzzle. College officials are hoping to avoid any liability for Oltamu's death and Tara's injuries, a prospect that seems likely when Ramirez admits to having been on his cell phone at the time of the accident. But when Ramirez is shot to death, Abby begins to suspect that something more sinister is at work than distracted driving, and that Tara may have some answers. Adept at creating Hitchcockian moments, Koryta keeps the suspense high throughout.

Massey, Sujata. [The Satapur Moonstone](#) (Soho \$26.95). I selected the start of Massey's new series, [The Widows of Malabar Hill](#) (\$15.95), set in the 1920s and based upon the life of the fascinating, pioneering, Oxford-educated Cornelia Sorabji, a Parsi who served as the only female lawyer in Bombay, as a 2018 Historical Mystery Book of the Month. It has garnered tons of raves and awards including Edgar and Agatha nominations and won Best Historical Mystery at Left Coast Crime. And I'm choosing the sequel as our **May Historical Mystery Book of the Month**—its wealth of detail into the princely states that co-existed with British rule, the strictures of purdah and of the Parsi faith, its sympathetic portrait of the British Raj agent at Satapur, extend what we learned to a mesmerizing new level. And of course, there's the nod to Wilkie Collins with the moonstone and its role as a clue.

It's 1922, moving towards the end of the rainy season in the lush, remote Sahyadri mountains, where the princely state of Satapur is tucked away. A curse seems to have fallen upon Satapur's royal family, whose maharaja died of a sudden illness shortly before his teenage son was struck down in a tragic hunting accident. The state is now ruled by an agent of the British Raj on behalf of Satapur's two widowed maharanis, the dowager queen and her daughter-in-law. The royal ladies are in a dispute over the education of the young crown prince, and a lawyer's counsel is

required. However, the maharanis live in purdah and do not speak to men. Sir David Hobson-Jones, a top adviser to the governor of India, approaches gender-bucking Perveen on behalf of the Raj's Kolhapur Agency, to negotiate a settlement between Satapur's two maharanis who have divergent views in how the current maharajah, 10-year-old Jiva Reo, should be educated. Despite her misgivings at working for her country's occupiers—Perveen is much impressed by the work of one Ghandi—and the difficulties of travel for a single female, she accepts the assignment. She's surprised by how sympathetic the Agent, Colin, proves to be. And once admitted to the palace after various difficulties, she soon fears, as does his mother, that the young maharaja is at risk of his life.....

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 admits one with signed book; \$37 admits two with signed book; \$45 with book and admission to the VIP signing line. 7:00 PM at the Madison Center at 16th and Missouri, Phoenix. Loads of on-site parking. [Info and tickets are HERE](#)

Petrie, Nick. [Milwaukee Noir](#) (Akashic \$15.95). Petrie has a story in this new Urban Noir Series entry. Milwaukee bookseller and writer Hennessy does justice to the harsher aspects of his hometown in this fine anthology, which demolishes what he calls "the romanticized nostalgia that Happy Days and Laverne & Shirley created of Milwaukee." The 14 contributors show that violence is not a prerequisite to crafting a haunting depiction of despair. The volume's standout, Matthew J. Prigge's "3rd Street Waltz," about the last days of a decrepit porn theater, barely involves crime at all. By making the theater's closure a business decision by an amoral heir to the family real estate business, Prigge conveys the crushed spirits resulting from inner-city neglect without moralizing. Reed Farrel Coleman is typically on-point with a memorable revenge tale, "Summerfest '76," featuring a once unresponsive bystander to anti-Semitism. Nick Petrie's moody "The Neighbor" charts the feelings of a man who meticulously cares for his lawn about his neighbor who does the opposite. The selections make the different neighborhoods, seedy or otherwise, come to life, even for those who have never set foot in them. Petrie will also sign copies of his thriller series featuring [Peter Ash](#) including the latest, [Tear it Down](#) (Putnam \$26 or \$16).

Pavone, Chris. [The Paris Diversion](#) (Crown \$27 May 13). Before I say anything about the complex plot of Pavone's Le Carré-like spy thriller, let me say first that this is a book about Paris. Old Paris with its monuments and landmarks, tourist Paris, and today's Paris filled with security personnel and tech, with expectations of threats and worse, a Paris of protests, of mixed cultures and ethnicities, a Paris to be embraced and, almost, to be avoided. To help you navigate, **our copies come with a special map of the city**. All of this now more poignant after the Notre Dame fire.

On to the plot. Kate Moore of Pavone's Edgar winner (Best First Novel) [The Expats](#) (\$16), a 2012 First Mystery Book of the Month, is back. A CIA agent whose deep cover is that of wife and mother, the expert spy-handler prefers running her agents to domestic life and the hated drop-offs at the snobbish private school. Her shadow world comes alive when sirens wail: a jihadist wearing a bomb is standing in front of the Louvre. But

is he indeed a terrorist? (consider the title). And if not, what is going on? We do know that financier Hunter Forsyth believes this single day is about to elevate him to join the uber rich, and that Kate's cash-strapped husband Dexter, clueless about his wife, stands to make, or lose, a fortune in the world of speculative finance. The whole mix of characters is as rich as a French pastry.

You are in luck that Pavone appears at The Pen with Jeffrey Deaver, who says of *The Paris Diversion*: "Thriller writing at its absolute best. With echoes of Graham Greene and John le Carré, Pavone's novel accomplishes that rare feat of being both a nonstop adventure ride and a smart, stylish and compelling meditation on family, courage, responsibilities, and the relationships we create, for good and bad, throughout our lives. *The Paris Diversion* does far more than divert; it grips us from the very beginning and doesn't let go." This is a don't-miss evening on May 13 (and a good time to buy books for Father's Day). **Plus our copies also come with an interview with Chris about Why Go on Book Tour?**

Preston, Douglas. [Talking to the Ground](#) (Simon Schuster \$17).

Our copies include free shipping to US customers. One of my favorite Prestons is this true adventure, a precursor to that he made to write [The Lost City of the Monkey God](#) (\$15.99). In 1992 Preston and his wife and daughter rode horseback across 400 miles of desert in Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico. They were retracing the route of a Navajo deity, the Slayer of Alien Gods, on his quest to restore beauty and balance to the Earth. More than a travelogue, Preston's account of their "one tough journey, luminously remembered" (*Kirkus Reviews*) is a tale of two cultures meeting in a sacred land and is "like traveling across unknown territory with Lewis and Clark to the Pacific" (Dee Brown, author of *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*). Don't miss this entrancing, eloquent, and entertaining account of the author's journey on horseback through the Southwest in the heart of Navajo desert country with photos, some of them not seen before. **International customers may wish to order this gem held for shipment with Preston & Child's new series start featuring Nora Kelly, [Old Bones](#) (Grand Central \$28), signed for us on August 20.**

Quick, Amanda. [Tightrope](#) (Berkley \$27 May 25). Here is best-seller Jayne Ann Krentz, writing as Quick. Former trapeze artist Amalie Vaughn, a woman used to taking serious chances, moved to Burning Cove to reinvent herself, but things are not going well. After spending her entire inheritance on a mansion with the intention of turning it into a bed-and-breakfast, she learns too late that the villa is said to be cursed. When the first guest, Dr. Norman Pickwell, is murdered by his robot invention during a sold-out demonstration, rumors circulate that the curse is real.... Our John Charles adds that Quick "once again stylishly fuses an intriguing 1930s, Hollywood-kissed setting with a quicksilver paced plot and then wraps the whole thing up in writing richly imbued with her tart wit."

Suarez, Daniel. [Delta-v](#) (Dutton \$27 May 6). Our **May Thriller Book of the Month** is a real rocket ride—fun and scary. It's 2032 and a billionaire (like Branson or Bezos) wants to keep the world's money system expanding by mining for resources out in cis-space, from asteroids. Nathan Joyce recruits itinerant cave diver JT Tighe (pronounced Tie) who's proved himself well underground in the tense opener by leading most of his team up from the shattering earthquake deep under China to safety, an ef-

fort analogous to Shackleton's successful rescue of his Antarctic expedition. The concept here is huge and the science fascinating. Needless to say the space expedition does not go as expected, nor does the financing of the venture, which makes it a nail-biter. But also a chance to learn and speculate. **We are so excited that Suarez will make his first appearance at The Pen on Monday May 6 and sign *Delta-v* for you.**

Thompson, Victoria. [Murder on Trinity Place](#) (Berkley \$26 May 8). The strangling death of priggish dairy owner Clarence Pritchard, found on the grounds of Manhattan's Trinity Church on New Year's Day 1900, follows 2018's [Murder on Union Square](#) (\$7.99). Pritchard's bereft daughter, Theda Ellsworth, hires private detective Frank Malloy and his wife, Sarah, to find her father's killer because the police seem uninterested in solving the case. Sarah is eager to help, since the Malloys saw Pritchard behaving strangely on New Year's Eve, wandering around the crowd of celebrants in the street, trying to convince anyone who would listen that the new century actually begins in 1901. Frank discovers that Pritchard's son, Harvey, a compulsive gambler, is deep in debt to a mobster who's using the dairy's milk trucks to transport stolen goods. When Harvey turns up strangled as well, Frank's investigation is back to square one.

Tilly, Meg. [Cliff's Edge](#) (Berkley \$16 May 25). Eve Harris is all set to house-sit and run the bakery she shares with her sister while Maggie goes on her honeymoon, but there's one problem—the house is already occupied. By a movie star. He claims to be her brother-in-law's friend, and not only does he insist on staying, he also offers to help. Playing house has never been so tempting, but then a new complication rears up. John Charles adds, "Tilly may be best known for her acclaimed Golden Globe-winning performance in *Agnes of God*, as well as her work in *The Big Chill*, *Valmont*, and other movies, but her latest Solace Island novel proves she is equally talented at crafting a suspenseful, sexy, superbly entertaining romantic thriller."

COZY CON BOOKS FOR MAY 11

Ellicott, Jessica. [Murder in an English Village](#) (\$15.95). A deftly executed debut novel, in which two female amateur detectives, one American and one English, work together to solve an old mystery and a new murder in post-World War I England, is a delight from start to finish. The characters are interesting, the plot is intriguing, and there is the added attraction of a cute little dog. Carry on with [Murder Flies the Coop](#) (\$26).

McKinlay, Jenn. [Dying for Devil's Food](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Melanie Cooper has zero interest in catering her fifteen-year high school reunion, but Angie insists it's only right that they bask in the success of Fairy Tale Cupcakes—and Mel's engagement to the delicious Joe DeLaura is the cherry on top! Everything is going better than expected until Cassidy Havers, resident mean girl and Mel's high school nemesis, picks a fight. No longer willing to put up with Cassidy's bullying, Mel is ready to tell the former homecoming queen to shut her piehole and call it a night. But as Mel and Joe prepare to depart, Cassidy is found dead in the girl's bathroom, next to a note written in lipstick that points right to Mel. It's going to take every recipe the Fairy Tale Cupcake crew has to whip up a quick defense for Mel. 11th in the [Cupcake Bakery Mysteries](#).

Orr, Jill. [The Ugly Truth](#) (Prospect Park \$25.95 or \$16). There's been a shocking double murder in Tuttle Corner, Virginia, in-

volving high-profile players from Washington D.C. This brings national attention—and big-city competition for the story—to junior reporter Riley Ellison’s little corner of the world. Beloved café owner Rosalee is the prime suspect in the violent crimes, but she insists on her innocence. In exchange for protection, Rosalee gives Riley and her fellow reporter Holman exclusive information that incriminates a powerful person. Meanwhile, Personal Romance Concierge™ Regina H. is back, offering once-again-single Riley not just online dating expertise but also a new subscription self-care service that promises such benefits as “the sensation of emotional bravery on a micromolecular level.” Riley and Holman eventually begin to wonder if Rosalee is telling the truth. And so they head down separate investigative paths.... [The Good Byline](#) (\$16), Riley Ellison #1, is hilarious, a must read for cozy fans, followed by [The Bad Break](#) (\$16).

Shelton, Paige. [The Loch Ness Papers](#) (St Martins \$26.99). American Delaney Nichols, who works at the Cracked Spine Bookshop in Edinburgh, Scotland, is soon to be married—if the ceremony isn’t sunk by complications. First, the minister dies, leaving Delaney scrambling for a replacement; then the tailor shop folds, leaving her dressless; and finally her new friend met when interviewing a new minister, a sweet, eccentric old man who’s obsessed with the Loch Ness monster, is accused of murdering his greedy nephew. Delaney’s wedding plans take a back seat as she tries to prove, Norval Fraser innocent and find the real killer. Delaney’s friends and her family, who have traveled to Scotland from Kansas, are amazingly forgiving about being ditched while she’s off investigating this and the unusual return of a rare book stolen from the shop. The Nessie lore is a lot of fun. And while no Agatha Christie in plot, the root of Norwal’s tragedy is both sad and, sadly, not uncommon. This is the 4th in the cozy [A Scottish Bookshop Mysteries](#).

Willan, Jane. [The Hour of Death](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). As Yuletide settles upon Gwenafwy Abbey, the rural Welsh convent’s peace is shattered when Tiffany Reese, president of the Village Art Society, is found dead on the floor of the parish hall. Sister Agatha, whose interests lie more with reading and writing mystery stories than with making the abbey’s world-renowned organic Gouda, is not shy about inserting herself into the case. With the not-entirely-eager assistance of Father Selwyn, she begins her investigation. Sister Agatha has no shortage of suspects to check off her list... Yes, it’s late now for Christmas but one can shelve this until the 2019 holidays.

Meet the Sister and the Father first in [The Shadow of Death](#) (\$15.95). Gwenafwy Abbey is dwindling in human and financial resources as its religious age. It depends heavily on the income from its cheese, Heavenly Gouda. Sister Agatha, a die-hard mystery fan and eager listener to a podcast, How to Write a Mystery Novel, is forced to abandon fiction for reality when the Abbey’s sexton is found—murdered by an avalanche of the cheese. An excellent series for fans of GM Malliet.

SOME BOOKS FOR ELEVENGEDDEN MAY 22

Sykes, Sam. [Seven Blades in Black](#) (Orbit \$16.99) introduces an unforgettable outcast mage caught between two warring empires. Her magic was stolen. She was left for dead. Betrayed by those she trusts most and her magic ripped from her, all Sal the Cacophony has left is her name, her story, and the weapon she used to carve both. But she has a will stronger than magic, and knows

exactly where to go. The Scar, a land torn between powerful empires, where rogue mages go to disappear, disgraced soldiers go to die and Sal went with a blade, a gun, and a list of seven names. Revenge will be its own reward.

Wexler, Django. [Ship of Smoke and Steel](#) (Tor \$17.99). Here’s a YA epic fantasy adventure in which teen warrior Isoka faces deadly magic, super-powered combat, and unexpected feelings while trying to survive a legendary ghost ship. An adept of Melos, the Well of Combat, eighteen-year-old Isoka cares only survival and protecting her sister. But when her magic is discovered she’s given an impossible mission: steal Soliton, a legendary ghost ship—a ship from which no one has ever returned—or her sister’s life is forfeit. “From gory fights to unexpected romance, this has something for every fantasy lover. An alluring fierceness and charm will leave readers craving more.” —*Kirkus Reviews*, noting Brandon Sanderson fans will love this.

MAY BOOKS OF THE MONTH

British Crime Club One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Elliott, Lexie. [The Missing Years](#)

Cozy Crimes Club One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Page, Katherine Hall. [The Body in the Wake](#)

Discovery Club One paperback or hardcover per month

Arévalo, Daniel Sánchez. [Alice’s Island](#)

First Mystery Club One Signed First per month

Lelchuk, SA. [Save Me from Dangerous Men](#)

Hardboiled Crime Club One signed First per month

Fleischman, Jeffrey. [My Detective](#)

History/Mystery Club One Signed First per month

Massey, Sujata. [The Satapur Moonstone](#)

History Paperback One per month

Calkins, Susanna. [Murder Knocks Twice](#)

Modern First Editions One Signed First per month

Kim, Angie. [Miracle Creek](#)

SciFi/Fantasy/Horror Club One Signed First per month

Swyler, Erica. [Light from Other Stars](#)

Surprise Me! Club One Signed First Per Month

Lee, Patrick. [Dark Site](#)

Thriller Club One Signed First per month

Suarez, Daniel. [Delta-v](#) (Dutton \$27)

SIGNED BOOKS

✂Billingham, Mark. [Their Little Secret](#) (LittleBrown UK \$42). Sarah thinks of herself as a normal single mum. It’s what she wants others to think of her. But the truth is, she needs something new, something thrilling. Meanwhile, DI Tom Thorne is investigating a woman’s suicide, convinced she was driven to do it by a man who preys on vulnerable women. A man who is about to change Sarah’s life.

Brandman, Michael. [Wild Card](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95 out in May and Signed at The Pen on June 12). A serial killer and a Russian oligarch running roughshod over beach-front property rights. Sounds like enough to keep Sheriff’s Deputy Buddy Steel of Freedom, California, occupied. But...there’s more in a zinger

filled with surprises at a flying pace. IMHO a real step up for Brandman.

Fleischman, Jeffrey. [My Detective](#) (Blackstone \$27). A serial killer stalks the homicide detective pursuing her. Patrick reviews our **May Hardboiled Crime Book of the Month**: “Wow, what a pleasant surprise. This fresh and soulful update of the classic LA detective novel is set during today’s downtown renaissance, as builders and artists compete for a new vision for the city. Old school LAPD Detective Sam Carver catches the strange murder case of a prominent LA architect found with his throat slit. With mounting pressure from City Hall to close the case, Carver finds himself up against a ghost-like female killer who always seems one step ahead of him. The case takes a strange turn when another architect is found dead and a third has gone missing. Fleishman’s writing is crisp and alive, and his ear is tuned to the streets. He understands the shapeshifting metaphor of Los Angeles and the dark pulse beneath the glittery facade. Highly recommended to Michael Connelly fans.”

Harris, Thomas. [Cari Mora](#) (Grand Central \$28). We have a limited supply of a new book by the author of *The Silence of the Lambs*, etc. The title is the name of a woman, age 25 and fit, and Hans-Peter Schneider is the name of this generation’s Hannibal Lecter. He’s a man who makes a living fleshing out the unspeakable appetites of richer men. Cari Mora, in Miami on a “wobbly Temporary Protected Status” and thus subject to the whim of ICE, is the caretaker of a mansion beneath which \$25 million in Cartel gold lies hidden. It’s a classic duo between a psychopath and a target with more resistance and resources than he imagined. It all begins in Florida on a black boat berthed off Key Largo where Hans-Peter is on the phone with a man in Barranquilla, Colombia....

Jónasson, Ragnar. [The Island](#) (Joseph \$32). The island of Elliðaey sits off the Icelandic coast. Accessible only by boat its isolation makes it the perfect place to vanish. During a long, hot summer five friends visit the island. Only four will return. They each share a past, and a dark secret that could harm them all. As the days pass, tensions rise and loyalties are shed, one of them will commit murder. Detective Inspector Hulda Hermannsdóttir is sent to investigate and soon finds echoes with the case of a young woman found murdered ten years previously in the nearby Westfjords. Is there a patient killer stalking these barren outposts? As Hulda navigates a sinister game constructed of smoke and mirrors she is convinced that no one is telling the truth, including those closest to her. But who will crack first?

Kim, Angie. [Miracle Creek](#) (Farrar Strauss \$28). An arsonist sets a fire at a hyperbaric oxygen therapy tank in Miracle Creek, Virginia, killing two people in treatment and maiming more. It also torches the dreams of the Korean immigrant family operating the facility, as well as those looking for treatment for diverse issues like autism and male infertility. And makes a victim’s mother the principal suspect. *Miracle Creek* is a debut by a trial lawyer, but don’t expect Perry Mason. There is a trial, yes, and attendant courtroom theatrics filled with unreliable witnesses and the weight of legal procedure (not a Perry Mason hallmark), but don’t look for a tidy outcome. Instead this penetrating novel getting big buzz achieves its power by embracing the chaos of our time. Our **May Modern Firsts Book of the Month** could be a First Mystery Book of the Month as a legal thriller or even a pro-

cedural, but the issues and the immigrant experience it portrays make it more suitable for this club. I recommended it as an Indie Next Pick.

Here’s a comment from another reviewer: “The survivors of a medical device explosion discover the facts behind the tragedy as the trial of a patient’s mother moves forward. Kim’s writing is stunning in its depth and compassion. The light she shines on the difficulties of parenting a child with special needs and the immigrant experience in the U.S. is unflinching and multi-faceted, evidence that the pressures of life can go almost unnoticed until they detonate in an instant.”

Koontz, Dean. [Night Window](#) (Bantam \$28) is the 5th and final thriller for wrongly dishonored, widowed, and on-the-run FBI Agent Jane Hawk whose one-woman war comes to an explosive climax as she gambles everything against a terrifying conspiracy. The ruthless enemy, called the Techno Arcadians, have been scrubbing people of their memories and their identities with nanotech implants and turning many of them into robotic servants and sex slaves. To keep Travis safe while she goes after them, doing all she can to evade their sophisticated surveillance systems, Hawk has hidden him with friends in Arizona. Beautiful, brilliant, and super tough, she gains a valuable running partner in lovable pal Vikram Rangnekar, a recently resigned FBI employee who has acquired a pile of government secrets with his “back door” hacking skills. While they pursue the baddies, Jane in her latest disguise, the billionaire behind the conspiracy hunts a young filmmaker he has enticed to his Colorado spread for sport, à la “The Most Dangerous Game,” only on snowmobiles. Added to the plot is an Arcadian “missionary for the truth of random cruelty” who is after Vikram and a mob-connected misfit who has his own reasons for going after Travis. And some neat gadgets. It’s not always the case that the end of a story arc delivers on the promise of the beginning but Koontz brings it off and “revs it up with entertaining encounters and offbeat humor.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

Laukkanen, Owen. [Deception Cove](#) (LittleBrown \$28—may not deliver until June). Deception Cove, Washington., “a rainy-day kind of place” that’s the atmospheric setting of this fine stand-alone from Thriller Award finalist Laukkanen, is home to Jess Winslow, a Marine veteran whose service in Afghanistan left her with PTSD. Jess’s husband, Ty, drowned while drunk, and her only companion is Lucy, a therapy dog [Note: A major reason to read this is Lucy!]. Jess receives an unsettling late-night visit from a power-hungry local deputy, Kirby Harwood, who insists that Jess must know the location of a package belonging to him that Ty possessed. Harwood is unwilling to accept Jess’s protestations of ignorance, and his menacing posture prompts Lucy to attack him. When ex-convict Mason Burke, who just finished a prison sentence for homicide in Michigan, hears that Lucy has been designated for destruction after this incident, he’s sure that the dog he took pride in training behind bars wouldn’t have turned violent without good cause. Mason treks out to Deception Cove to save Lucy, a mission that inevitably puts him at odds with Harwood. A crackerjack plot enhances the moving portrayals of the leads’ inner lives. Laukkanen has never been better. If I hadn’t made his last thriller, [Gale Force](#) (\$27) a 2018 Book of the Month, I’d have chosen this one for 2019.

Lee, Patrick. [Dark Site](#) (St Martins \$29). Bestseller Lee’s riveting third Sam Dryden novel reads like an amped-up version of TV’s *Stranger Things*. While it’s a pure thriller with a rocket pace, it

is also full of surprises which makes it our **May Surprise Me! Book of the Month**. The action begins with a terrific scene in Brookings, Oregon, where Danica Ellis is set up by a young man and woman outside a convenience store for an abduction. Some scrapper, she escapes after killing the woman and, unable to imagine what the danger is, but recognizing there is an acute one, heads for her estranged retired FBI Agent-stepfather's home. Meanwhile Sam Dryden, a former Special Forces operative who lives in Malibu, California where he fixes up old houses to flip, has a near thing with a man with a pistol. Another wild escape scene follows and ends with Sam finding the man's cell phone and receiving a text. It connects him with Danica. And then we shift to 1988 and rural Iowa where we meet the kids Danica and Sam. The action shifts back and forth, all connected to Ashland, Iowa, not your typical small 1988 town but.... Sam and Danica, as adults, have no memory of having known each other then and part of the fun is learning why and then how they deal with it. A Starred Review calls this, "A compulsive, nail-biting, stay-up-all-night thriller." It's all (possibly) improbable but go for the ride. I read it in one sitting.

Lelchuk, SA. [Save Me from Dangerous Men](#) (Flatiron \$27.99). Our **May First Mystery Book of the Month** opens as a woman in tight jeans walks into a bar and gains the attention of every man in the joint when she crushes her opponent in games of pool for cash. Afterward, one admirer invites her to his place nearby. The woman goes. And proceeds to teach the man a lesson he won't forget: never lay a hand on his girlfriend again or he'll be signing his own death warrant. Meet Nikki Griffin, a motorcycle-riding, pugilistic guardian angel for abused women. Nikki is not only a badass but a book nerd—an irresistible combination. She owns a bookstore called the Brimstone Magpie (a Dickens reference) and can quote Kierkegaard as fast as she can make a violent thug cry uncle. She's part Lisbeth Salander, part Jack Reacher, part MacGyver. Before readers start thinking she's an unrealistic fantasy figure, Nikki points out she intentionally plays into men's images of an ideal woman in order to lure them to her. And she's far from perfect. By trade Nikki is a PI, hired by a tech CEO to follow an employee he suspects of stealing company secrets. Nikki discovers the case is much bigger—as in global—than what she's been told, and if she doesn't stop certain dangerous men, people will die, including her. Lelchuk, amazingly a guy, signed this at The Pen on April 20 for you.

Les Becquets, Diane. [The Last Woman in the Forest](#) (Berkley \$28). Our **March Surprise Me! Book of the Month** arrived late—the author was on tour all month—so I'm pushing it again as it's so good! 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 be devastated by news of his tragic death. And puzzled by the unsolved murders of at least four women. As the plot and pacing bend the timeline, the narrative provides an intriguing meditation on memory, intuition and the game of willful denial people play with themselves regarding the

all-consuming and powerful nature of love. When the past and the present finally collide, Marian must make a choice: to believe in her memories or trust her instincts. Les Becquets' first thriller [Breaking Wild](#) (\$16) is about a woman who goes missing in the Colorado wilderness.

MacBride, Stuart. [All That's Dead](#) (Collins \$40 shipping to us in June). Inspector Logan McRae was looking forward to a nice simple case – something to ease him back into work after a year off on the sick. But the powers-that-be have other ideas.... The high-profile anti-independence campaigner, Professor Wilson, has gone missing, leaving nothing but bloodstains behind. There's a war brewing between the factions for and against Scottish Nationalism. Infighting in the police ranks. And it's all playing out in the merciless glare of the media. Logan's superiors want results, and they want them now. Someone out there is trying to make a point, and they're making it in blood. If Logan can't stop them, it won't just be his career that dies with this 12th in a hardhitting Aberdeen-based police series.

Mina, Denise. [Conviction](#) (Harvill \$32). Anna McDonald, the heroine of this spellbinding thriller from Edgar finalist Mina, fled her personal problems in London and started over in Glasgow nine years earlier. She's now engrossed in true-crime podcasts such as "Death and the Dana" about a murdered family, a sunken yacht named the Dana, and a wrongful conviction. After Anna's partner, Hamish, runs away with her best friend, Estelle, she and Estelle's despondent husband, anorexic former rock star Fin Cohen, embark on a road trip, bingeing Death and the Dana while investigating its claims. Anna soon discovers that she has multiple ties to the tale. When a picture of her and Fin goes viral on social media, dangerous figures from Anna's past get on their trail. The mysteries of Anna's tragic history and the Dana's true fate unfold in tandem, with podcast transcripts peppering the colorful narrative. "Anna and Fin alternately bolster and antagonize one another, balancing introspections on modern life and human nature with laugh-out-loud humor. "Mina delivers a metafictional marvel that both endorses and exemplifies the power of storytelling."

Page, Katherine Hall. [The Body in the Wake](#) (Morrow \$27). I love this 25th book in the Faith Fairchild (catering) mysteries, our **May Cozy Crimes Book of the Month and superb for Mother's Day**. It reads perfectly as a standalone and celebrates summer on a Maine Island, food (recipes included), and mothers and daughters, warm and fraught parent-child relationships, and a wedding! Here's the *PW* Star: "In Agatha winner Page's tantalizing 25th Faith Fairchild, plans for a relaxing summer on Maine's Sanpere Island quickly go awry when caterer Faith and friend Sophie Maxwell find the body of an unknown man with an unusual tattoo floating in a pond. The death is only the beginning of trouble for the usually peaceful community. Also disrupting the peace are Pix and Sam Miller's new neighbors from hell, the Cranes, who are unlawfully cutting down trees on their property with loud chainsaws. Meanwhile, Pix and Sam have an uninvited guest, Alexandra Kohn, a high society snob and their daughter's future mother-in-law. Sophie's mother, Babs Harrington, one of society's *grandes dames*, deals with the imperious Alexandra, while the Millers battle it out with the Cranes. The discovery of another body raises the stakes, and Faith once again turns amateur sleuth. This long-running traditional mystery series is still as fresh as a cool pitcher of Faith's strawberry shrub." Amen. Page

is including bookmarks in our Signed copies. This makes the 25th Faith Fairchild she has signed for us, and thus for you.

Our blogger Lesa adds: “*The Body in the Wake* is a well-written traditional mystery, the twenty-fifth in a series that celebrates friends and family with a concluding wedding. However, the author emphasizes the opioid crisis, addiction, and the problem it has become for every community. While it doesn't take long to guess who the addict is in Faith Fairchild's circle, it's a dramatic scene when the moment of discovery occurs. And, the discussion of addiction is worth reading by itself.”

✂Parsons, Tony. [#taken: Wrong Time, Wrong Place, Wrong Girl](#) (Random UK \$33). When masked men attempt to kidnap the mistress of the biggest gangster in Europe, they make two fatal mistakes. They snatch the wrong woman. And they cross the wrong detective. He's on the murder team in West End Central which is reeling from the brutal death of a beloved colleague and they are all mourning in their own way. But when a young mother is kidnapped by unknown assailants, Max Wolfe and his colleagues suddenly have a dangerous job to do. As Wolfe investigates the connection between the kidnapped woman and the head of a crumbling criminal empire, the hunt takes him from New Scotland Yard's Black Museum to the glittering mansions of career criminals, from sleazy strip joints to secret dungeons, and from the murderous hatreds of today to the unspeakable crimes of half a lifetime ago. And as Max unravels the mystery of why someone would kidnap an innocent young woman, he is plunged into a dark world of family secrets, sexual jealousy and a lust for revenge. So, a good read for fans of Ian Rankin, no?

✂Shaw, William. [Deadland](#) (Riverrun \$40). Seventeen, the worst age, nothing to do but smoke weed; at least the two boys have each other. The day they speed off on a moped with a stolen mobile, they're ready to celebrate their luck at last. Until their victim comes looking for what's his—and ready to kill for it. On the other side of Kent's wealth divide, DS Alexandra Cupidi faces the strangest murder investigation of her career. A severed limb, hidden inside a modern sculpture in Margate's Turner Contemporary. No one takes it seriously, not even the artwork's owners, celebrity dealers who act like they're above the law. As Cupidi's case becomes ever more sinister, as she wrangles with police politics and personal dilemmas, she can't help worrying about those runaway boys. Alone, on the marshes, they're pawns in someone else's game. Two worlds are about to collide.

Stephenson, Neal. [Fall: Or Dodge in Hell](#) (Harper \$35). A wildly inventive science fiction thriller—*Paradise Lost* by way of Philip K. Dick—that unfolds in the near future, in parallel worlds.

Swyler, Erika. [Light from Other Stars](#) (Berkley \$27) Our **May SciFi/Fantasy Pick**. Eleven-year-old Nedda Papas is obsessed with becoming an astronaut. In 1986 in Easter, a small Florida Space Coast town, her dreams seem almost within reach—if she can just grow up fast enough. Theo, the scientist father she idolizes, is consumed by his own obsessions. Laid off from his job at NASA and still reeling from the loss of Nedda's newborn brother several years before, Theo turns to the dangerous dream of extending his living daughter's childhood just a little longer. The result is an invention that alters the fabric of time.

CLASSIC CRIMES

British Library Crime Classic

Gilbert, Michael. [Death in Captivity](#) (Poisoned Pen \$12.95). A Second World War Mystery written in 1952 with an Introduction by series editor Martin Edwards. A man is found dead in an escape tunnel beneath an Italian prisoner-of-war camp. Did he die in an accidental collapse—or was this murder? Captain Henry ‘Cuckoo’ Goyles, master tunneler and amateur detective, takes up the case. This classic locked-room mystery with a closed circle of suspects is woven together with a thrilling story of escape from the camp, as the Second World War nears its endgame and the British prisoners prepare to flee into the Italian countryside. Michael Gilbert was one of the longest-lived and prolific British crime writers, a lawyer who wrote while commuting to London by train.

Other Reissues

Note: The Collins Crime Club reissues often appear later than advertised

Carr, John Dickson. [The Mad Hatter Mystery](#) (\$15.95). Originally published in 1933. Chief Inspector Hadley consults Fell on the case of Sir William Bitton, a book collector who stumbled on the find of a lifetime, the manuscript of a lost Edgar Allan Poe story, believed to have been the first the author wrote. Someone has stolen the document from Bitton's London study, but before Fell and Hadley can investigate, they learn that one of the possible suspects has been found murdered at the Tower of London, killed with a crossbow bolt. The body was adorned with an opera hat that was stolen from Bitton previously, the second hat that had been stolen from him in a week. The hat robberies were part of a series of thefts committed by the person dubbed the Mad Hatter by Bitton's journalist nephew. Could the Mad Hatter also be the thief who stole the Poe manuscript? Readers may be moved to reread the book to note how artfully Carr (1906–1977) plants the clues to the killer's identity in plain sight.

Heyer, Georgette. [Duplicate Death](#) (Sourcebooks \$14.99). This splendid mystery has two features that make it a real favorite for me. First, the double murder takes place during a civilized game of Duplicate Bridge. Second, the plot is inspired by an actual change in British law that had, in real life, far-reaching consequences as well as torpedoing a cherished crime fiction plot premise. Inspector Hemingway has his work cut out for him. It grows even more complicated when the fiancée of the inspector's young friend Timothy Kane becomes Hemingway's prime suspect. Kane is determined to prove the lady's innocence—but when he begins digging into her past, he finds it's more than a little bit shady...

[A Blunt Instrument](#) (\$14.99). 7th in Heyer's mysteries. When Ernest Fletcher is found bludgeoned to death in his study, everyone is shocked and mystified: Ernest was well liked and respected, so who would have a motive for killing him? Superintendent Hannasyde, with consummate skill, uncovers one dirty little secret after another, and with them, a host of people who all have reasons for wanting Fletcher dead. Then, a second murder is committed, giving a grotesque twist to a very unusual case, and Hannasyde realizes he's up against a killer on a mission....

[Death in the Stocks](#) (\$14.99). In the dead of the night, a man in an evening dress is found murdered, locked in the stocks on the village green. Unfortunately for Superintendent Han-

nasyde, the deceased is Andrew Vereker, a man hated by nearly everyone, especially his odd and unhelpful family members. The Verekers are as eccentric as they are corrupt, and it will take all Hannasyde's skill at detection to determine who's telling the truth, and who is pointing him in the wrong direction. The question is: who in this family is clever enough to get away with murder? "*Death in the Stocks* is rare and refreshing."—*The Times*

Other reissued [Country House Mysteries](#) titles: *Footsteps in the Dark*; *Behold, Here's Poison*; *No Wind of Blame*; *They Found Him Dead* (\$14.95 each).

Wills Crofts, Freeman. [The Cask \(Detective Club Crime Classic\)](#) (Collins \$15.99). Collins has the greatest archive for British Crime fiction which includes the work of Agatha Christie and Dorothy L. Sayers. And the success of the British Library Crime Classics has spurred reintroducing a number of authors and works to you. One of them is Freeman Wills Croft whose [Mystery in the Channel](#), [Antidote to Venom](#), and [The Hog's Back Mystery](#) (\$12.95 each) are in fact BLCCs.

In *The Cask*, the unloading of a consignment of French wine from the steamship *Bullfinch* is interrupted by a gruesome discovery in a broken cask leaking sawdust and gold sovereigns. But when the shipping clerk returns with the police, the cask and its macabre contents have gone. Following the clues to Paris, Inspector Burnley of Scotland Yard enlists the help of the genial French detective M. Lefarge to check motives and alibis in their hunt for evidence of a particularly fiendish murder. This Detective Story Club classic is introduced by Freeman Wills Crofts himself in a unique preface from 1946 about *The Cask's* origins.

In [The Groote Park Murder](#) (Collins \$15.99), a signalman discovers a mutilated body inside a railway tunnel near Groote Park, it seems to be a straightforward case of a man struck by a passing train. But Inspector Vandam of the Middelorp police isn't satisfied that Albert Smith's death was accidental, and he sets out to prove foul play in a baffling mystery which crosses continents from deepest South Africa to the wilds of northern Scotland, where an almost identical crime appears to have been perpetrated. *The Groote Park Murder* was the last of Crofts' standalone crime novels, foreshadowing his iconic Inspector French series and helping to cement his reputation (according to his publishers) as 'the greatest and most popular detective writer in the world'. Like *The Cask*, here were a delightfully ingenious plot, impeccable handling of detail, and an overwhelming surprise 'curtain' from a masterful crime writer on the cusp of global success. This Detective Club classic is introduced with an essay by Freeman Wills Crofts, unseen since 1937, about "The Writing of a Detective Novel."

OUR MAY LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

✦ Atkinson, Kate. [Transcription](#) (\$16.99). In 1940, eighteen-year old Juliet Armstrong is reluctantly recruited into the world of espionage. Sent to an obscure department of MI5 tasked with monitoring the comings and goings of British Fascist sympathizers, she discovers the work to be by turns both tedious and terrifying. But after the war has ended, she presumes the events of those years have been relegated to the past forever. Ten years later, now a radio producer at the BBC, Juliet is unexpectedly confronted by figures from her past. A different war is being fought now, on a different battleground, but Juliet finds herself once more under threat "In her best work—a category in which her latest, *Transcription*, certainly belongs—she maneuvers the tropes

of the murder-mystery genre, of historical fiction, and of privileged white Britishness into a kind of critical salvage of women's work, women's lives..."—*New Yorker*

Baldacci, David. [The Long Road to Mercy](#) (\$15.99). Meet Atlee Pine, an FBI agent with special skills assigned to the remote wilds of the western United States who must confront a new monster...and an old nightmare. Ever since her twin sister was abducted by a notorious serial killer at age five, Atlee has spent her life hunting down those who hurt others. And she's the best at it. She could be one of the Bureau's top criminal profilers, if she didn't prefer catching criminals in the vast wilderness of the West to climbing the career ladder in the D.C. office. Her chosen mission is a lonesome one—but that suits her just fine. Now, Atlee is called in to investigate the mutilated carcass of a mule found in the Grand Canyon—and hopefully, solve the disappearance of its rider. But this isn't the only recent disappearance.

Black, Cara. [Murder on the Left Bank](#) (\$15.95). Aimée LeDuc, a new mother, reluctantly takes on a case when she discovers that her late father is implicated by information in a missing notebook compiled by aging accountant Léo Solomon—the nephew of the lawyer to whom the notebook had been entrusted for delivery to *la proc* (French for prosecutor) was murdered while on his errand. When the boy's body turns up on the street two days later, the police rule the death a drug-related homicide. Éric asks his friend Aimée to investigate. Aimée, a new mother, reluctantly takes on the case only when she discovers that her late father is implicated by information in the now-missing notebook. When a killer next threatens her daughter, Aimée is forced to accept help from the source she trusts least: her family. Once again Black combines a twist-filled mystery with a convincing look at the culture and politics of the City of Lights. Her knockoff designer clothes and shoes and the unexpected hidden gems of Paris are also a source of delight. You can order the whole [Aimee LeDuc series](#).

Child, Lee. [Past Tense](#) (\$17). Jack Reacher hits the pavement and sticks out his thumb. He plans to follow the sun on an epic trip across America, from Maine to California. He doesn't get far. On a country road deep in the New England woods, he sees a sign to a place he has never been: the town where his father was born. He thinks, what's one extra day? He takes the detour. At the same moment, in the same isolated area, a car breaks down. Two young Canadians had been on their way to New York City to sell a treasure. Now they're stranded at a lonely motel in the middle of nowhere. The owners seem almost too friendly. It's a strange place, but it's all there is. The next morning, in the city clerk's office, Reacher asks about the old family home. He's told no one named Reacher ever lived in town. He's always known his father left and never returned, but now Reacher wonders, Was he ever there in the first place? As Reacher explores his father's life, and as the Canadians face lethal dangers, strands of different stories begin to merge. Then Reacher makes a shocking discovery....

Connelly, Michael. [Dark Sacred Night](#) (\$16.99). "LAPD Det. Renée Ballard, first seen in 2017's *The Late Show*, makes a welcome return in this outstanding, complex police procedural. Relegated to the night shift at the Hollywood Station following a sexual harassment suit against her former lieutenant, Ballard works her cases with a quiet focus and intensity. Late one night, Ballard surprises a man looking through some old case files. It turns out to be retired LAPD detective Harry Bosch, now work-

ing cold cases for the San Fernando PD. After Bosch leaves, Ballard takes a look at the file, detailing the unsolved 2009 murder of Daisy Clayton, a 15-year-old runaway. The slain girl was the daughter of a recovering addict, who has been taken in by Bosch. Ballard is hooked, and begins working the case with Bosch. Meanwhile, Bosch's investigation into another cold case, the execution-style killing of a 52-year-old gang leader, has put the detective squarely in the sights of Varrio San Fer 13, one of the valley's most violent gangs. Bosch and Ballard, both outsiders with complicated pasts, form a perfect partnership in this high spot of Edgar-winner Connelly's long and distinguished career." And there is this: "Harry Bosch has had plenty of partners, but he might have met his match. . . none of them has clicked with Bosch in the way that Ballard does—like a master with a student who could become his equal." — *Tampa Bay Times*

Connolly, John. [The Woman in the Woods](#) (\$17). It is spring, and the semi-preserved body of a young Jewish woman is discovered buried in the Maine woods. It is clear that she gave birth shortly before her death. But there is no sign of a baby. Private detective Charlie Parker is engaged by the lawyer Moxie Castin to shadow the police investigation and find the infant, but Parker is not the only searcher. Someone else is following the trail left by the woman, someone with an interest in more than a missing child, someone prepared to leave bodies in his wake. And in a house by the woods, a toy telephone begins to ring....

✚Frear, Caz. [Sweet Little Lies](#) (\$16.99). This debut about an Irish cop with huge baggage working a dark beat in Islington for the Metropolitan Police is fine Brit Noir. It earns a Starred Review: "Detective Constable Cat Kinsella, the heroine of British author Frear's taut, psychologically twisted debut, always suspected that her father, Michael McBride, knew more than he let on about the disappearance of Maryanne Doyle, a teenager who went missing in 1998 when eight-year-old Kinsella and her family were on vacation in Mulderrin, Ireland. For one thing, Michael, a serial adulterer, was seen with Maryanne but later lied to the police about having had any contact with her. In 2016, Alice Lapaine, a part-time pub chef, is found murdered near the London pub frequented by Kinsella's father... As the case takes its own twists and unexpected turns, just as fascinating are the mental gymnastics that Kinsella performs in an effort to keep her personal and professional lives from colliding...." Patrick and I both recommend.

✚Herron, Mick. [London Rules](#) (\$15.95). A sixth round of troubles for the slow horses of Slough House, where burned-out, compromised, or incompetent members of Her Majesty's intelligence community have been banished, pits them against a group of terrorists who seem to be working from MI5's own playbook. It doesn't usually make headlines when a crew of uniformed men efficiently murder a dozen inhabitants of an isolated village, but when the target is Abbotsfield, in the shadow of the Derbyshire hills, attention must be paid. The time-servers at Slough House, the last group anyone in the know would expect to get anywhere near this outrage, are roped into it when Shirley Dander celebrates her 62nd drug-free day by saving her colleague Roderick Ho from getting run down by a car... "Just in case this all sounds uncomfortably menacing, a subplot concerning the threats posed to the nation's security by a cross-dressing Brexit partisan is uncomfortably comical. Herron shows once again that the United Kingdom's intelligence community is every bit as dysfunctional

and alarmingly funny as Bill James' cops and robbers."—*Kirkus Reviews*. Shortlisted for the 2018 Crime Writers' Association Gold Dagger; the 2018 Crime Writers' Association Ian Fleming Steel Dagger; and a Best Book of 2018 for the *Evening Standard*, *Daily Mail*, and *Irish Times*

✚Horowitz, Anthony. [The Word Is Murder](#) (\$16.99). "This spectacular series launch from bestseller Horowitz a scrupulously fair whodunit, features a fictionalized version of himself. The author's doppelgänger—who, like his creator, has written a Sherlock Holmes pastiche, [The House of Silk](#) (\$15), and a Tintin movie script for Steven Spielberg—is approached by Daniel Hawthorne, a former detective inspector who once consulted on one of his TV series. Hawthorne wants Horowitz to turn his 'real-life' cases into books, and eventually gets him to agree. Their first joint investigative venture concerns the strangulation of Diana Cowper in her London home, mere hours after she visited a funeral parlor and made detailed arrangements for her own funeral. An interrupted text Diana sent to her son shortly before her death leads the duo to look into a long-ago hit-and-run tragedy that claimed one twin child's life and seriously injured the other. Deduction and wit are well-balanced, and fans of Peter Lovesey and other modern channelers of the spirit of the golden age of detection will be delighted."

Maher, SJ. [Social Misconduct](#) (\$16). Candace Walker is thrilled when she lands a new job at a hip Manhattan tech company and gets a brand-new iPhone. She's more than ready to move on from creating click bait ads for weight-loss pills and herbal erection boosters, and is determined to dazzle the startup team she joins. A week later, though, everything is at risk: Candace is the target of a mysterious harasser and social media smear campaign. She tosses her new phone into the Hudson River, begins hiding out in her sister's storage locker in New Jersey, and can't think of a single person she can trust. But Candace hasn't come this far—and gone to such lengths—to submit to what is happening without a fight. Here is a thriller for this very moment, full of the ways our social conduct can be used against us. Is Candace a victim or master-manipulator?

McTiernan, Dervla. [The Scholar](#) (Penguin \$16). Galway's Detective Cormac Reilly's girlfriend, Emma Sweeney, a lab researcher for Darcy Therapeutics, calls him when she discovers the body of student Carline Darcy, a rising research star in the lab and the granddaughter of the company head, on the road near their workplace, the victim of a hit-and-run. In the subsequent inquiry into what develops into a murder case, departmental rivals of Emma, who suspect that she is somehow involved in Carline's death, try to push Reilly off the case. Meanwhile, the lab principals impede the investigation. Though the characters nearest to Carline are a bit too stereotyped, and the solution to the mystery is telegraphed too soon, the complexities of the relationships within the department, and the tensions between Reilly and Emma, are rich enough to carry the reader through this story and into the next one. McTiernan's cautionary tale about money, prestige, and the secretive world of pharmaceutical research will resonate with many. McTiernan's [The Ruin](#) (\$16) is a paperback bestseller here at The Pen.

Petrie, Nick. [Tear it Down](#) (\$16). Peter Ash's 4th unlikely adventure carried him to Memphis. Petrie writes, "For me, storytelling is a moving target. I planned *Tear It Down* as a kind

of disaster novel, set in Memphis because it's the largest city in the New Madrid Seismic Zone, home to four of the largest North American earthquakes in recorded history. Memphis also has a deep, rich, and troubled social history, so the story could begin with built-in conflict. Then I started developing characters. Wanda Wyatt, a photojournalist who'd spent most of her career covering war zones. Eli Bell, a young black street musician who gets himself in trouble with a Memphis gangster. Albert Burkitts, a white Mississippi farmer caught between his unpaid bills and his ex-con younger brother. And of course Peter Ash, our hero. But these characters and their challenges were so much fun to write about that the earthquake never showed up." Instead Peter arrives chez Wanda who's been suspecting some kind of stalker and finds a huge dump truck has just crashed into her home... Does it then become a tear down? If somehow you've missed the [Peter Ash thrillers](#), start now. Order this signed May 16th.

Slaughter, Karin. [Pieces of Her](#) (\$16.99). Andrea Cooper knows everything about her mother Laura. She's knows she's spent her whole life in the small beachside town of Gullaway Island; she knows she's never wanted anything more than to live a quiet life as a pillar of the community; she knows she's never kept a secret in her life. Because we all know our mothers, don't we? But all that changes when a Saturday afternoon trip to the mall explodes into violence and Andrea suddenly sees a completely different side to Laura. Because it turns out that before Laura was Laura, she was someone completely different. For nearly thirty years she's been hiding from her previous identity, lying low in the hope that no one will ever find her. But now she's been exposed, and nothing will ever be the same again. Twenty-four hours later Laura is in the hospital, shot by an intruder who's spent thirty years trying to track her down and discover what she knows. Andrea is on a desperate journey following the breadcrumbs of her mother's past. Read this plot description and tell me you're not dying to know who Laura really is!

White, Kate. [Such a Perfect Wife](#) (Harper \$16.99). Our blogger Lesa reviewing for *Library Journal* writes: "Shannon Blaine goes jogging one morning, and disappears. Naturally, because she's a beautiful blonde wife and mother, the search draws some media attention. When Bailey Weggins agrees to cover the case for an online magazine, she feels the adrenaline rush of investigating a case again. She teams up with Alice Hatfield, a local reporter from Lake George, New York, and the two quickly develop a grudging respect for each other. When Bailey receives an anonymous call, she trusts Alice enough to ask her to accompany her to an old retreat center. They discover Shannon Blaine's body, but they also uncover the bodies of two other victims. Once the news breaks, Bailey and Alice are both aware that they might have drawn the attention of a serial killer. However, both reporters are determined to uncover the truth in a riveting mystery with layers of stories and crimes. White's eighth book, following [Even If It Kills Her](#) (\$15.99), is an intense page-turner that never lets up. There's a feeling of menace in this intricately plotted mystery. Readers who appreciate investigative reporters caught up in dramatic stories, such as James Ziskin's Ellie Stone mysteries or Thomas Kies' Geneva Chase ones, will relish this latest from White."

MAY BOOKS FOR MOM

In addition to books Signed May 8 Historical Night and May 11 Cozy Con

Avon, Joy. [In Peppermint Peril](#) (\$15.99). In the run-up to Christmas Eve, organizer of book-themed tea parties Callie Aspen and her lovable Boston terrier will have to conquer threefold trouble—a mysterious will, a missing heirloom and a dead body—to restore the festive spirit to their small town. Starts a series.

Burdette, Lucy. [A Deadly Feast](#) (Crippen \$26.99). Key West, Florida, food critic Haley Snow is busy preparing for her wedding to police detective Nathan Bransford. But her job includes participating in a seafood walking tour organized by her friend Analise Smith. Composed mainly of tourists, the group visits a series of eateries and a brewery, and gets to know each other over fish tacos and conch salad. At the last stop, one dies, apparently of food poisoning. Analise laments the death could not only destroy her business but also ruin the reputation of every restaurant on the tour, so Haley, deeply shocked, adds investigating the death to her already full plate. Recipes for many of the tantalizing dishes mentioned in the text, including Mojito Cookies and Decadent Lobster Macaroni and Cheese, are included. Read this for the food, not the mystery.

Coyle, Cleo. [Brewed Awakening](#) (Berkley \$27). When coffeehouse manager Clare Cosi awakens on a bench in Washington Square Park, she has no idea she's been missing for the past week, or that her friends and family have been frantic with worry. Now that she's back, everyone is overjoyed, including a handsome NYPD detective who claims to be her fiancé. But to Mike Quinn's crushing distress, Clare doesn't remember him, or much of anything about the last decade of her life. Clare's missing memory is tied to a crime she witnessed. An acquaintance of Clare's elegant employer—and fellow member of an exclusive Gotham circle known as "The Ladies Who Brunch"—invited Clare to her posh hotel to sample gourmet wedding cakes. The pair took a stroll after their indulgent tasting and, according to security camera footage, a masked figure snatched the hotel heiress at gunpoint with Clare looking on. Then the camera went dark, just like Clare's memory. 18th in the *Coffeehouse Mysteries*.

Haines, Carolyn. [Game of Bones](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Dr. Frank Hafner is an archeologist working on excavating a new-found Native American temple site in the Mississippi Delta. He's also too handsome for his own good, and a bit of a flirt. Oddly enough, it's the first quality that gets him in trouble when he discovers the ritualistic murder of one of his archeological crew. When Coleman Peters, Sheriff and Sarah Booth's boyfriend, takes Dr. Hafner in for questioning in the murder, the accused doctor hires Sarah Booth to clear his name. Soon, Sarah Booth has uncovered a number of possible suspects, but she can't narrow them down fast enough to stem the continuing violence that seems to trace back to Dr. Hafner's dig. When Peter Deerstalker, a member of the Tunica tribe, mentions a curse, it doesn't seem so far-fetched—especially when a young graduate student on the site claims someone on the site is searching for something much more precious than ancient pottery.... 20th in this clever Southern cozy series. I enjoyed it for a long while but grew tired of Sarah Booth's love life.

Jaswal, Balli Kaur. [The Unlikely Adventures of the Shergill Sisters](#) (Morrow \$26.99). Why could Mum never return to India again? Three Punjabi sisters embarking on a pilgrimage to their homeland to lay their mother to rest. The British-born Punjabi Shergill sisters—Rajni, Jezmeen, and Shirnia—were never close

and barely got along growing up, and now as adults, have grown even further apart. Rajni, a school principal is a stickler for order. Jezmeen, a thirty-year-old struggling actress, fears her big break may never come. Shirina, the peacemaking “good” sister married into wealth and enjoys a picture-perfect life. On her deathbed, their mother voices one last wish: that her daughters will make a pilgrimage together to the Golden Temple in Amritsar to carry out her final rites. After a trip to India with her mother long ago, Rajni vowed never to return. But she’s always been a dutiful daughter, and cannot, even now, refuse her mother’s request. Jezmeen has just been publicly fired from her television job, so the trip to India is a welcome break to help her pick up the pieces of her broken career. Shirina’s in-laws are pushing her to make a pivotal decision about her married life; time away will help her decide whether to meekly obey, or to bravely stand up for herself for the first time. Arriving in India, these sisters will make unexpected discoveries—and learn the real story of Mum.

Page, Nora. [Read on Arrival](#) (Crippen \$26.99). “Page’s splendid sequel to 2018’s *Better Off Read* finds 75-year-old librarian Cleo Watkins, ‘the longest serving biblio-professional’ in Catalpa Springs, Georgia, ready to try again to get her nemesis, 65-year-old Dixie Huddleston, to return an overdue book, Luck and Lore: Good luck, death lore, and deadly omens of the Deep South, on which the fine is now approaching \$800. Selfish and mean-spirited Dixie has promised Cleo for decades that she’ll return Luck and Lore but has never followed through. Superstitious Dixie now believes that signs are pointing toward her impending demise and plans to make things straight with Cleo. When Cleo and her supportive gentleman friend, Henry Lafayette, go to recover the great white whale of overdue library books, they discover a dead Dixie at her house. It looks like murder, and since everyone in Catalpa Springs knows that Dixie was a thorn in Cleo’s side, the police regard her as the prime suspect. Skillful plotting and lively prose make this cozy a treat.”—LJ

Quinn, Holly. [A Crafter Knits a Clue](#) (\$15.99). When a heart-broken Samantha “Sammy” Kane returns to her hometown of Heartsford, Wisconsin, for her best friend Kate’s funeral, she learns that Kate’s much-loved craft store is in danger of perishing with its owner. Confounding all her expectations of the life she would live, Sammy moves back home with her golden retriever and takes over Community Craft. A few doors down Main Street, fellow new arrival Ingrid Wilson has just opened the Yarn Barn, a real “purl” of a shop. But when Sammy strolls over to see if Ingrid could use a little help, she finds Ingrid’s dead body—with a green aluminum knitting needle lodged in her throat. Detective Liam Nash is thrown for a loop as every single citizen of Heartsford seems to have a theory about Ingrid’s murder. And nearly everyone in town seems to be a suspect. For fans of Hechtman and Sefton.

Roy, Lori. [The Disappearing](#) (Dutton \$15) Former reporter Lane Fielding has returned to Waddell, Florida, after her divorce from Kyle Wallace, her husband of 20 years. Along for the ride are her daughters, 18-year-old Annalee and her younger sister, Talley. It’s not an ideal arrangement: Fielding Plantation has quite a past, and Lane’s mother, Erma, moves about the house like a wraith while her father, Neil, a shadow of the man he once was, has been investigated for the possible abuse of boys under his care at the reform school that he ran, which closed three years ago and happens to be adjacent to their home. The press attention hasn’t

waned, and it’s all Lane can do to keep her sanity, and her family, together. When Florida State University student Susannah Bauer goes missing, the community’s collective consciousness turns to the 1970s and a man named Ted, who whisked away a 12-year-old girl who was never seen again. When Annalee disappears, Sheriff Mark Ellenton, with whom Lane has a history, is a calming force, but Lane fears Annalee may have met a fate similar to Susannah’s. “Roy effortlessly weaves numerous plot threads together without sacrificing her characters, who are very flawed and all too human. Secrets and lies abound, and Lane’s struggle to be a good mother while fighting her own considerable demons will resonate with readers, as will the chilling finale. A twisted Southern gothic winner.”

And a special volume makes a wonderful gift:

Perry, Anne, ed. [Odd Partners: An Anthology](#) (Ballantine \$28). Unlikely pairs join forces to crack a slew of intriguing cases. Throughout the annals of fiction, there have been many celebrated detective teams: Sherlock Holmes and John Watson. Nick and Nora Charles. Hercule Poirot and Arthur Hastings. Thomas and Charlotte Pitt. That last pair is the creation of beloved mystery writer Anne Perry, who, as the editor of *Odd Partners* and in conjunction with Mystery Writers of America, has enlisted some of today’s best mystery writers to craft all-new stories about unlikely duos who join forces—sometimes unwillingly—to solve beguiling whodunits. From Perry’s own entry, in which an English sergeant and his German counterpart set out to find a missing soldier during World War I, to a psychological tale of an airplane passenger who wakes up unsure of who he is and must enlist his fellow passengers to help him remember, to a historical mystery about a misguided witch-hunt and the unlikely couple that brings it down, each story deals in the wonderful complexities of human interactions.

SOME NEW BOOKS FOR MAY

This is a huge month for both Mother’s Day and Early Summer Reads so please visit our [WebStore](#) for titles not included in this Booknews, many of them wonderful.

Altman, John. [The Korean Woman](#) (Blackstone \$26.99). North Korea’s deadliest weapon is sleeper agent Song Sun Young. During volatile negotiations between the White House and Pyongyang, Song is hurled back into a reality she had hoped to leave behind forever. Unbeknownst to her, the CIA has already broken her cover. Working with “retired” Israeli operative Dalia Artzi, they track the Korean agent as she relentlessly executes her mission, only to discover that Song has been the unwitting catalyst for a quickly unfolding disaster, and that she alone can stop it from engulfing the world.

Arévalo, Daniel Sánchez. [Alice’s Island](#) (Atria \$27). I really love this novel and for many reasons; the mystery (not what you expect), the island community near Nantucket, and for Alice, who is determined to hold on to the person she believed her husband Chris...she hopes. Alice Dupont, mother of two and wife of Chris, lives in a bubble of happiness. Then one night Chris doesn’t come home. Frantic hours later, Chris turns up dead in a car wreck, hundreds of miles away from where his last and loving text, and his work schedule, says he had been. Shocked, grieving, and then relentlessly determined to get an answer, Alice takes the kids to the place she determines holds the key to whatever Chris was concealing. And insinuates herself into the island

community to investigate. As she becomes increasingly involved in their private lives and worse, she transforms into a person she no longer recognizes. But take heart, this is no *Gone Girl*—Alice is amazing and the focal point of our **May Discovery Book of the Month**. Highly recommended!

Barenbaum, Rach. [A Bend in the Stars](#) (Grand Central \$26). Grounded in real history—and inspired by the solar eclipse of 1914. That summer, in Russia, as war with Germany looms and the Czar’s army tightens its grip on the local Jewish community, Miri Abramov and her brilliant physicist brother, Vanya, are facing an impossible decision. Since their parents drowned fleeing to America, Miri and Vanya have been raised by their *babushka*, a famous matchmaker who has taught them to protect themselves at all costs: to fight, to kill if necessary, and always to have an escape plan. But now, with fierce, headstrong Miri on the verge of becoming one of Russia’s only female surgeons, and Vanya hoping to solve the final puzzles of Einstein’s elusive theory of relativity, can they bear to leave the homeland that has given them so much? Before they have time to make their choice, war is declared and Vanya goes missing, along with Miri’s fiancé. Miri braves the firing squad to go looking for them both as the eclipse that will change history darkens skies

Benjamin, Melanie. [Mistress of the Ritz](#) (Bantam \$28). This impeccably researched, lyrically told historical about a brash American woman and her French husband during WWII is a remarkable achievement. Blanche Ross Auzello doesn’t care for being a proper, quiet wife, much to the dismay of her somewhat stuffy husband, Claude, the manager of Paris’s luxurious Hotel Ritz. In June 1940, Claude returns from military service to find that a host of high-ranking Nazi soldiers have commandeered the hotel as their Paris headquarters. For the next four years, he and Blanche play unwilling hosts to the Germans—and, unbeknownst to each other, both begin working in the French Resistance. They narrowly avoid disaster until immediately before the Americans liberate Paris, when Blanche gets into trouble Claude can’t resolve, and a shocking secret about Blanche’s past is revealed. Benjamin skillfully weaves in a host of historical figures—including Coco Chanel, alleged to be a Nazi sympathizer, and Ernest Hemingway—whose vibrant presences make Benjamin’s protagonists and engaging group of supporting characters shine all the more. You don’t need to be a fan of historical fiction to read this gripping tale.

✦Billingham, Mark. [The Killing Habit](#) (\$16). Here come wild-card detective Tom Thorne and straight-laced DI Nicola Tanner on a pair of lethally high-stakes cases. While Tanner investigates the deadly spread of a dangerous new drug, Thorne is handed a case that he doesn’t take too seriously, until a spate of animal killings points to the work of a serial killer. When the two cases come together in a way that neither could have foreseen, both Thorne and Tanner must risk everything to catch two very different killers.

Bowden, Mark. [The Last Stone: A Masterpiece of Criminal Investigation](#) (Grove \$27). “Bowden (*Black Hawk Down*) delivers a narrative nonfiction masterpiece in this account of fiercely dedicated police detectives working to close a cold case. In 1975, Sheila Lyon, 12, and her sister Katherine, 10, disappeared from a shopping mall in Maryland. Despite reported sightings and extortion attempts, the Lyon sisters’ fate remained a mystery for

decades. The break came in 2013, when Montgomery County detective Chris Homrock chanced upon a witness statement that he’d somehow missed. Shortly after the disappearance, then-teenager Lloyd Welch told the police that he’d seen a man talking to two young girls, who then left the mall with him. At the time, Welch was dismissed as a liar, and his account was forgotten. The police found Welch serving time in Delaware for sexually abusing a minor years earlier. Though he was initially viewed as a possible source to incriminate the man who was viewed as the leading suspect in the abductions, Welch’s contradictory stories, told over the course of multiple interrogations, ended up making him a person of interest. Bowden makes extensive use of taped recordings of those conversations to bring the reader inside the interrogation room as the detectives inch closer to the truth. This is an intelligent page-turner likely to appeal even to readers who normally avoid true crime.” Interestingly the *WSJ* reviewer thought Bowden was all over the place and inconclusive in his presentation. Again, judge for yourself.

Brandreth, Benet. [The Assassin of Verona](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). Brandreth’s excellent sequel to 2018’s [The Spy of Venice](#) (\$25.95), which featured a young William Shakespeare, opens with a prologue set in 1585 Rome, where the newly anointed Pope Sixtus V plots to depose the “heretic Queen Elizabeth” through a network of spies he’s established in England. Sixtus orders four priests to track down three Englishmen in Italy believed to know the identities of the papal agents, one of whom is William, and use any means necessary to protect these agents from exposure. In the previous novel, William joined a diplomatic mission of his countrymen to Venice as a spy, posing as the English ambassador’s steward. “While Brandreth keeps the intrigue at a high pitch, frequently placing his lead in harm’s way, he leavens the action with a moving subplot concerning William’s lover, poet Isabella Lisarro, whom the future playwright fears has been poisoned at the orders of the pope. Apt quotes from Shakespeare’s plays serve as chapter heads. Brandreth once again integrates vivid period detail into a well-crafted thriller plot.” How you like this depends in part on how you respond to Shakespeare.

✦Brandreth, Gyles. [Oscar Wilde and the Return of Jack the Ripper](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). Interest in Jack never dies with readers or authors. So here we are again in London, 1894. This 7th book in the series is the first not told in the voice of Wilde. Instead the narrator is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Six years after the notorious Jack the Ripper murders in London’s impoverished Whitechapel district, Chief Constable Melville McNaughton contacts the two amateur sleuths about a new murder that appears to be the work of the same psychopath. Except this murder has taken place in an alley behind Tite Street—where both Wilde and McNaughton have homes. With the permission of the police, the duo studies the case files of the first five victims and start eliminating previous suspects and interviewing new ones. Meanwhile, Wilde’s messy personal life brings him dangerously close to ruin... Wilde, like Beau Brummell before him, went steps too far. It ended badly for both.

Brown, Dale. [The Kremlin Strike](#) (Harper \$28.99). Brad McLanahan and the Iron Wolf Squadron must fight the Russians on a dangerous, untested battlefield: outer space.

Calkins, Susann. [Murder Knocks Twice](#) (St Martins \$17.99). Gina Ricci, a former restaurant worker, who takes a job as a cigarette girl at the Third Door, one of the city's most lavish speakeasies. There she replaces Dorrie Edwards, who was stabbed to death the month before. On her break one night, Gina stumbles on the club's photographer, Marty Doyle, being assaulted in the alley beside the premises. Marty begs her to hide his camera before dying of stab wounds. After Gina smuggles the camera away, she feels compelled to discover if his photographs link to his death, as well as Dorrie's similar demise. A handsome club habitué she knows only as Roark offers assistance, but when the apartment Gina shares with her widowed father is burgled and Gina is attacked in the street, she's not sure if anyone connected to the speakeasy is trustworthy. This is a bit of a slow start to a series exploring 1920s Chicago, its world of speakeasies and the highs and lows and opportunists of society who patronize them. I try to find different worlds and periods such as this for our **May Historical Mystery Paperback Book of the Month**,

Cantor, Jillian. [In Another Time](#) (Harper \$16.99,). The Indie Next Pick for a fine novel by an Arizona author: "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." Recommended by our own John Charles.

✂Cartmel, Andrew. [The Vinyl Detective—Flip Back](#) (Titan \$14.95). He is a record collector — a connoisseur of vinyl, hunting out rare and elusive LPs. His business card describes him as the "Vinyl Detective" and some people take this more literally than others. At the height of their success, the electric folk band Black Dog invited journalists to a desolate island for an infamous publicity stunt: the burning of a million dollars. But the stunt backfired and the band split up, increasing the value of their final album vastly. It's this album that Tinkler's got his eye on, and he hires none other than the Vinyl Detective and Nevada to hunt a copy down. Narrowly avoiding a killing spree, negotiating deranged Black Dog fans, and being pursued by hack celebrity Stinky Stammer and his camera crew, the Vinyl Detective and Nevada discover that perhaps all was not as it seemed on the island—and that in the embers of that fire are clues to a motive for murder.... 4th in a series where I loved the first entry, [Mysteries Written in Dead Wax](#) (\$14.95), and have not had a chance to read the rest. Rats.

Cleveland, Karen. [Keep You Close](#) (Random \$27). Early in this propulsive novel from bestseller Cleveland, 37-year-old single mother Stephanie Maddox finds a loaded handgun in the closet of her 17-year-old son, Zachary. Stephanie, who heads the FBI's Internal Investigations Section, knows she should alert the Washington, D.C., police, but when she confronts Zach, he professes ignorance. Stephanie assumes that one of Zach's friends stashed the gun without his knowledge, but then a fellow FBI agent warns her that the domestic terrorism squad suspects Zach is involved with an extremist group called the Freedom Solidar-

ity Movement. Zach denies the charge, prompting Stephanie to investigate. Either Zach isn't who she thought, or someone from Stephanie's past is working to frame him. Equal parts conspiracy thriller and paranoia tale, Cleveland's latest exploits the distance between parents and teenagers while exploring the lines a patriot will cross to protect kin. I recommend her 2018 First Mystery Book of the Month [Need to Know](#) (\$16) as well. Its adrenaline-soaked story of Vivian Miller, a high-powered CIA analyst who one day makes a discovery that rocks her universe is an excellent summer read.

✂Collins, Sara. [The Confessions of Frannie Langton](#) (Harper \$26.99). In an era of #MeToo and emphasis on diversity, this remarkable work of historical fiction illuminates the life, trial, and hanging of Frances Langton, known as Ebony Fran, a slave in the household of George and Marguerite Benham of Bedford Square London, 1826. Her crime: the murder of George and Marguerite on 27th January with "malice aforethought" and hence punished on the gallows. But the real story is both twisted, multi-layered, and shocking, framed as a confession by Frances written in the last hour of her life. It is bitterly ironic, too.

Cep, Casey. [Furious Hours](#) (Knopf \$26.95). Death surrounded the Reverend Willie Maxwell. Following his wife's mysterious murder in 1970, four more of Maxwell's family members were inexplicably found dead within seven years. Locals blamed voodoo, but a deeper investigation pointed to fraud: Maxwell, said Harper Lee, "had a profound and abiding belief in insurance," and he collected thousands in death benefits. He was a suspect in his wife's case (charged and curiously acquitted), but years later, before the police could make another arrest, he was killed in a public fit of vigilante justice. In a further twist, the same lawyer who helped clear Maxwell's name decided to represent his killer. Cep's debut recounts how a series of rural Alabama murders inspired Harper Lee to write again, true crime, years after the publication of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. I am skeptical (and unsupportive) of every attempt to profit off Lee, but the Maxwell story has weight of its own outside her work.

De Muriel, Oscar. [Loch of the Dead](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). "In de Muriel's excellent fourth Victorian mystery featuring the Commission for the Elucidation of Unsolved Cases Presumably Related to the Odd and Ghostly, the commission's two members, Scottish Inspector Ian Frey and his superior, Adolphus McGray, look into a particularly creepy case. In 1873, servant Millie Fletcher gives up her baby, Benjamin, the product of an assault by Maximilian Koloman, the brother of her employer, Konrad. In 1889, Maximilian signs a document on his deathbed recognizing Benjamin as his heir and asking Konrad to reunite the boy with Millie. Shortly afterward, Millie receives a note threatening her son's life. In return for Frey and McGray's help in protecting Benjamin, Millie offers to cure McGray's mentally ill sister. In search of answers, the pair travel to remote Loch Maree, the Koloman family home, which supposedly contains a healing well and which is also home to legends of Druidic rituals involving bathing in blood. There they soon have a murder to solve. De Muriel keeps the twists coming in the series' best entry to date."—*PW* Starred Review

Donlea, Charlie. [Some Choose Darkness](#) (Kensington \$26) pits forensic reconstructionist Rory Moore against a smart serial killer. In Chicago in the summer of 1979, five young women disappear, all

of them victims of a man known as the Thief. They're presumed murdered, but their bodies are never found. Angela Mitchell, who has "a gift and a curse to remember everything she ever saw," is able to identify the thief, but she goes missing before the police can question her. There's enough evidence, however, to convict the Thief of Angela's murder and send him to Illinois's Stateville Correctional Center, where he's a model prisoner. In 2019, the Thief is released on parole, and through circumstances beyond her control, Rory, a nonpracticing lawyer, becomes his attorney. Soon she's immersed in trying to figure out exactly what happened to Angela. "Donlea smoothly mixes red herrings and genuine clues. Notwithstanding some unanswered questions left hanging at the end, readers who relish a good puzzle will be rewarded."

Douglas, John/Mark Olshaker. [The Killer across the Table: Unlocking the Secrets of Serial Killers and Predators](#) (Dey Street \$26.99). And here is Douglas to tell us more about hunting down guys like Moore and more of the legacy of the FBI's Douglas, the man who inspired the hit Netflix show *Mindhunter*.

✚Dyer, Ashley. [A Splinter in the Blood](#) (\$15.99). After months of hunting a cold-blooded murderer that the press has dubbed the Thorn Killer, Detective Greg Carver is shot in his own home. His trusted partner, Ruth Lake, is alone with him. Yet instead of calling for help, she's rearranged the crime scene and wiped the room clean of prints. But Carver isn't dead. Awakening in the hospital, Carver has no memory of being shot, but is certain that his assailant is the Thorn Killer. Though there's no evidence to support his claim, Carver insists the attack is retaliation, an attempt to scare the detective off the psychopath's scent, because he's getting too close. Trapped in a hospital bed and still very weak, Carver's obsession grows. He's desperate to get back to work and finally nail the bastard, before more innocent blood is spilled. One person knows the truth and she's not telling. She's also now leading the Thorn Killer investigation while Carver recuperates....

✚Elliott, Lexie. [The Missing Years](#) (Berkley \$26). Who can resist a country house mystery set in the foothills of the Scottish Highlands with a Gothic touch and vibrant village dynamics? Not me. Nor should you skip this our **May British Crime Club Pick**. Ailsa Calder has inherited half of an old, eerie manor in the middle of what Londoners consider nowhere from her mother's estate. The other half belongs to her near-stranger half-sister. Ailsa thus returns to her childhood home and the sketchy memories of the past. And she can't ditch the claustrophobia blooming from a feeling that the house is watching her. Then the first night-time intruder shows up. Should she sell up or stay? Never fear, this is not a ghost story, and it immerses you in the rugged landscape (and equally rugged villagers), both foreign to urbanites. Elliott debuted with [The French Girl](#) (\$16), a suspenseful tale of six students from Oxford who go on summer holiday in a French farmhouse where a disappearance prompts an investigation back in London a decade later.

Evanovich, Jane. [The Big Kahuna](#) (Putnam \$28). Straight arrow FBI Agent Kate O'Hare and charming Con Man Nicholas Fox have a new assignment. The mysterious disappearance of the Silicon Valley billionaire, known as the Big Kahuna. Kate's is tasked to find him but no one seems particularly keen on helping...not his 26-year-old wife now an Instagram model, his stoner son living the dream with weed in Hawaii, his Czech oligarch partner, nor a missing unicorn....

Ferencik, Erica. [Into the Jungle](#) (Gallery \$26). Based on a real story Ferencik sets up a jungle epic with really really bad guys in Bolivia's forest. When the teaching job that lures scrappy 19-year-old foster care survivor Lily Bushwold, the narrator of this ferocious fever dream of a thriller, from Boston to Cochabamba, Bolivia, falls through, she decides to stay on. She soon falls hard for handsome mechanic Omar, and then, through the stories he tells, for the remote Amazonian jungle where his clan has lived for seven generations. So when Omar's brother Panchito arrives from Ayachero, the tiny village Omar left years earlier, to ask Omar to return to lead the hunt for the jaguar that has killed their four-year-old nephew, Lily begs to go with him—pythons, tarantulas, and menacing neighboring Tatinga tribe be damned. And that's not the half of it, Lily discovers once in Ayachero. Despite Lily's fluent Spanish, Omar's family and friends are none too welcoming to a *gringa* lacking any discernible skills to help a struggling community squeezed between ruthless poachers and the Tatinga, a tribe that harbors a real treasure. Ferencik's first is [The River at Night](#) (\$9.99) tearing up the Maine wilderness and good for Koryta fans.

Friis, Agnete. [Summer of Ellen](#) (Soho \$26.95). One evening in Copenhagen, architect Jacob Nielson, the embittered, alcohol-fueled, middle-aged narrator of this bleak standalone from bestseller Friis (who writes the Nina Borg series with Lena Kaaberbøl), shows up at the building where his ex-wife, Kirsten, lives and buzzes her apartment. Not surprisingly, Kirsten doesn't let him in. Soon afterward, Jacob receives a phone call from his great-uncle Anton Svenningsen, who lives on a farm in Djursland and with whom he's been out of touch for years. Anton wants his help finding a missing woman named Ellen, and Jacob agrees to return to the farm. Jacob hasn't spent time in that part of Denmark since the summer of 1978, when he was an excessively autoerotic 15-year-old obsessed with Ellen, a member of a hippie commune, and with the unsolved disappearance of a friend's sister. Friis alternates between that summer and Jacob's present-day search for Ellen, with the emphasis on the dual story of Jacob's coming-of-age and his midlife crisis. IMHO "bleak" is the operative word for this unappealing Nordic Noir.

Frost, Ronan. [White Peak](#) (St Martins \$27.99). This intriguing thriller from the pseudonymous Frost (*The Memory Man*, as Steven Savile) ventures into *Da Vinci Code* territory, complete with puzzles, the Holy Grail, and Nazis. Wealthy businessman Greg Rask, who's dying, offers Ryerson McKenna, a skilled mountaineer, the opportunity to avenge his wife's killing at the hands of mall shooter Matthew Langley. Rask arranges for Rye to spend a night in prison under a false name with Langley, and the next morning, Langley's body is found hanging from a pipe. In return, Rye joins Rask's team, which includes a thief, a linguistics expert, a former Soviet intelligence operative, a tech guru, and an African warrior, whose mission is to retrieve a sacred stone, which has been broken into three pieces and is located in a lost city in the Himalayas that a special unit of Hitler's SS discovered decades earlier. One piece has healing powers, with which Rask plans to cure himself. Meanwhile, members of an occult brotherhood try to kill Rye and crew to protect their ancient secrets. "The satisfying open ending promises more adventures to come. Credible characters and swift, unrelenting action make this a winner" for those who relish Brown-style adventure.

Graves, Tracey Garvis. [The Girl He Used to Know](#) (St. Martin's \$26.99). This may be my favorite book for May and yet it fits no category—hurray, so refreshing, so beautifully rendered, so riveting—so all I can do is rave. The best comparison I can make is to Graeme Simsion's bestselling [The Rosie Project](#) (\$16.99) and Mark Haddon's [The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime](#) (\$15), from which you will discern this is a story about someone born different and how she and her loved ones and friends cope. And how Annika loses Jonathan once, and then again (it's 2001) and how she translates resolve into action. The Indie Next Pick doesn't quite get it: "A college romance with an odd, quiet girl fades when she fails to follow him to New York after graduation as promised. Ten years later, a chance meeting in Chicago reunites them. An interesting story giving insight into the world of a high functioning autistic adult." The last 30 pages of this will floor you."

Goldsborough, Robert. [Death of an Art Collector](#) (Mysterious \$16.99). No matter how fabulously he's being courted, infamously dour "art hog" Arthur Wordell isn't keen on favoring the new Guggenheim Museum with his extensive collection. Even at the urging of his beloved daughter, Nadia. Then, the night after the museum's fête, Arthur takes a twenty-story plunge from the window of his Times Square office. Nadia thinks it's no mere coincidence. Eccentric, yes. Suicidal, no. Private investigator Nero Wolfe and his assistant, Archie Goodwin, agree. Especially after eyeballing Arthur's enemies and sycophants, including his ex-wife, a covetous curator, a troika of obsequious advisors, and an outré Greenwich Village artist anxious to see her work out of storage and on the walls of the "Guggie." For Wolfe, there's a problem: Arthur didn't leave a will. Without a beneficiary not a soul in Arthur's circle is set to benefit from his death. This 14th by Goldsborough is not inspired but IMHO any Nero Wolfe is fun to read.

✎Griffiths, Elly. [The Stone Circle](#) (Houghton \$27). Nelson has been receiving threatening letters telling him to 'go to the stone circle and rescue the innocent who is buried there'. He is shaken, not only because children are very much on his mind, with Michelle's baby due to be born, but because although the letters are anonymous, they are somehow familiar. They read like the letters that first drew him into the case of *The Crossing Places*, and to Ruth. But the author of those letters is dead. Or not? Meanwhile Ruth is working on a dig in the Saltmarsh—another henge, known by the archaeologists as the stone circle. Then bones are found on the site, and identified as those of Margaret Lacey, a twelve-year-old girl who disappeared thirty years ago. As the Margaret Lacey case progresses, more and more aspects of it begin to hark back to that first case of *The Crossing Places*, and to Scarlett Henderson, the girl Nelson couldn't save. The past is reaching out for Ruth and Nelson.... Love this series for its atmospheric landscapes and quirky characters although the "love story" is growing irksome. Best read in order: [order them all](#)

✎Hall, Araminta. [Our Kind of Cruelty](#) (\$17). This is a love story. Or is it? It's more a story of obsession—obsession, yes, and written from the point of view of the male lover. Mike Hayes did come from a brutal childhood into a lonely life before he met Verity Metcalf. V electrifies him, as does the sex game they play called the Curve. When things go wrong and later V becomes engaged to Angus... well.... Fantasists, an obsession...can a woman draw the line before behavior leads to murder, or is she

too guilty? Chilling, and disturbing. Charles Finch, reviewing in the *NY Times*, calls it "A searing, chilling sliver of perfection." Unsurprisingly, Gillian Flynn agrees.

Hewson, David. [The Savage Shore](#) (\$14). Roman police detective Nic Costa has been sent undercover to Italy's beautiful, remote Calabrian coast to bring in the head of the feared mob, the 'Ndrangheta, who has offered to turn state witness for reasons of his own. Hoping to reel in the biggest prize the state police have seen in years, the infamous Butcher of Palermo, Costa and his team are aware the stakes are high. But the constant deception is taking its toll. Out of their depth in a lawless part of Italy where they are the outcasts, not the men in the hills, with their shotguns and rough justice, the detectives find themselves pitched as much against one another as the mob. As the tension rises, it's clear the operation is in jeopardy.... I like the Costa series. But supply via this publisher can be very tricky so order early please.

✎Hornby, Nick. [State of the Union](#) (Riverhead \$15). Tom and Louise meet in a pub before their couple's therapy appointment. Married for years, they thought they had a stable home life—until a recent incident pushed them to the brink. Going to therapy seemed like the perfect solution. But over drinks before their appointment, they begin to wonder: what if marriage is like a computer? What if you take it apart to see what's in there, but then you're left with a million pieces? Unfolding in the minutes before their weekly therapy sessions, the ten-chapter conversation that ensues is witty and moving, forcing them to look at their marriage—and, for the first time in a long time, at each other. What will they do?

Jónasson, Ragnar. [The Island](#) (St Martins \$27.99). "Jónasson's masterly sequel to 2018's [The Darkness](#) (\$27.99) opens with a cryptic prologue set in a town just south of Reykjavík in 1988. A seven-year-old girl puzzles her parents after they return home one night by saying that both of her babysitters were kind, though only one babysitter had been with her. Flash back to a year earlier, when an unnamed 20-year-old woman takes her boyfriend, Benedikt, to her family's summer home on the island of Ellidaey down the coast from Reykjavík, where she tells him stories about Iceland's history of witch-burning in the 17th century. That outing ends in murder, and corruption mars the subsequent police inquiry. A decade later, Insp. Hulda Hermannsdóttir, who was passed over for promotion at the time of that flawed investigation, takes charge when another dead body turns up on Ellidaey with a connection to the previous murder. The link between the babysitter's mysterious companion and the murders gradually becomes clear as the plot builds to a shiver-inducing conclusion. Jónasson delivers a mind-bending look into human darkness that earns its twists."—*PW*. I tried to get the US edition of this Hulda Hermannsdóttir #2 here for April 25 and Jónasson's event at The Pen but the publication date of May 21 defeated me. For the Signed UK edition see Signed Books.

Kardos, Michael. [Bluff](#) (\$16). At twenty-seven, magician Natalie Webb is already a has-been. A card-trick prodigy, she started touring at seventeen, took first place at the World of Magic competition at eighteen, and never reached such heights again. Shunned by the magic world after a disastrous liaison with an older magician, she now lives alone with her pigeons and a pile of overdue bills in a New Jersey apartment. In a desperate ploy to make extra cash, she follows up on an old offer to write a feature

magazine article—on the art of cheating at cards. But when she meets the perfect subject for her article, what begins as a journalistic gamble brings into question everything Natalie thinks she knows about her talent, and herself. Natalie is dazzled by the poker cheat's sleight of hand and soon finds herself facing a proposition that could radically alter her fortune—to help pull off a \$1.5 million magic trick that, if done successfully, no one will ever even suspect happened.

King, Janna. [Malibu Bluff](#) (Norton \$25.95). I came across this and thought it sound like fun for summer. The Starred Review: “King’s sizzling sequel to 2018’s *The Seasonaires*, high fashion designer Lyndon Wyld invites aspiring clothing designer Mia, a veteran of her public relations extravaganza promotion on Nantucket the previous summer, to participate as a brand ambassador (or “seasonaire”) at the event she’s hosting next summer in California. It’s been a rough year for Mia and her brother, Sean, since the death of their mother; they face eviction from their home in a gritty South Boston neighborhood. Reluctantly, Mia, who’s still scarred by the death of a member of last summer’s group, accepts Lyndon’s generous offer and joins her handpicked group of influencers at a rented oceanfront Malibu mansion. All are thrown together in a cutthroat competition of promoting the Wyld brand and themselves. A whirlwind of parties and stunts keep the seasonaires in the public eye even as another death intrudes on the manic fun. King concocts a frothy mix of the intoxication of endless attention, jealousy, and millennial angst

King, Stephen. [The Colorado Kid](#) (Hard Case Crime \$12.95). On an island off the coast of Maine, a man is found dead. There’s no identification on the body. Only the dogged work of a pair of local newspapermen and a graduate student in forensics turns up any clues, and it’s more than a year before the man is identified. And that’s just the beginning of the mystery. Because the more they learn about the man and the baffling circumstances of his death, the less they understand. Was it an impossible crime? Or something stranger still... This is the story’s first appearance in bookstores in a decade, and first ever in trade paperback format. Featuring a new painted cover by Paul Mann and 20 new interior illustrations by Mann, Mark Summers, Mark Edward Geyer, and Kate Kelton. Afterword by Stephen King, introduction by Hard Case Crime editor Charles Ar dai. *The Colorado Kid* was the inspiration for the TV series *Haven*, which ran for 6 years on the SyFy Network. “A small masterpiece... deserves in both its conception and its execution a place beside the classic tales of Poe, Conan Doyle, Stevenson, and the 20th-century masters of pulps.” — *Village Voice*

Kirshenbaum, Bonnie. [Rabbits for Food](#) (Soho \$26). Kirshenbaum’s first novel in 10 years is “a tour de force about 43-year-old novelist Bunny’s descent into an abysmal clinical depression—is a remarkable achievement that expertly blends pathos and humor. Readers meet the self-effacing Bunny in a psych ward, waiting for a therapy dog that never arrives. From there, the narrative backtracks to follow Bunny’s trajectory from accomplished writer to being another one of the ‘lunatics.’ The death of her best friend tipped Bunny into her downward spiral, which bottoms out at a suffocating New Year’s Eve dinner that goes very bad. Soon, she’s checked in to a psych ward and under the care of doctors whose ideas about treatment diverge sharply from her own. There are hints of pending doom in flashbacks of Bunny’s childhood: she felt out of place as the middle child in

a middle-class home, and her outspoken (and generally caustic) observations were resented by her family. Amid the backstory and Bunny’s razor-sharp scrutiny of living in a mental hospital, Kirshenbaum sprinkles in Bunny’s brilliantly written and revelatory responses to the writing prompts given in the psych ward’s creative writing class. Elsewhere, Bunny’s cutting riffs on life in New York City, the psychiatrists she has seen throughout her life, and the effects of numerous medications, are eye-opening. Comparisons to *One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest* are obvious and warranted, but Kirshenbaum’s dazzling novel stands on its own as a crushing work of immense heart.”

Linden, Eugene. [Deep Past](#) (Rosetta \$25.99). Popular science author Linden makes his fiction debut with a fascinating thriller that asks the question: “If evolution could produce intelligence once, could it have produced it more than once?” A routine dig in Kazakhstan funded by the Delamain Foundation takes a radical turn for thirty-two-year-old anthropologist Claire Knowland when a stranger turns up at the site with a bizarre find from a remote section of the desolate Kazakh Steppe: five large bones unearthed by the powerful winds, which a Russian geologist assigned to Transsteppe believes are more than five million years old. Her initial skepticism of this mysterious discovery gives way to a realization that the find will shake the very foundations of our understanding of evolution and intelligence. Corrupt politics of Kazakhstan force Claire to take reckless chances with the discovery. Ultimately, Claire finds herself fighting not just for the discovery and her academic reputation, but for her very life as great power conflict engulfs the unstable region and an unscrupulous oligarch attempts to take advantage of the chaos. This international thriller draws on Eugene Linden’s celebrated non-fiction investigations into what makes humans different from other species. “*Deep Past* is an extraordinary novel on so many levels. It is a gripping thriller in terms of pacing, vivid characters and exotic settings, a book you won’t be able to put down.” —Douglas Preston on a novel that “does a masterly job of integrating intriguing speculative science into a page-turning plot.”

Manzini, Antonio. [Spring Cleaning](#) (Harper \$15.99). In the 4th in a hardboiled series set in Italy’s Aosta region, Rocco is still reeling from the death of his best friend’s girlfriend, who was murdered as she slept in his bed. There’s no doubt that she was in the wrong place at the wrong time and paid the ultimate price. With the identity of the hitman still unknown, a cloud lingers over Rocco, dulling his judgment and leaving this anti-hero exposed to other threats. For Rocco has stepped on one too many people’s toes over the years, namely the mafia that is still being rooted out in Aosta. To complicate matters, the kidnapped teenager that Rocco saved has not fully recovered. But all is not as it appears with that family.

⌘Masters, SR. [The Killer You Know](#) (Orbit \$15.99). “You need to kill at least three people, right? So that’s what I’ll do.” This debut psychological thriller kicks off here. When Will jokes about becoming a serial killer, his friends just laugh it off. But Adeline can’t help but feel there’s something more sinister lurking behind his words. Fifteen years later, Adeline returns to Blythe for a reunion of the old gang—except Will doesn’t show up. Reminiscing about old times, they look up the details of his supposed murder spree. But the mood soon changes when they discover two recent deaths that match. As the group attempts to track Will down, they realize that he is playing a sinister game that harks back to one they used to play as kids. Only this time there are lives at stake....

Maurensig, Paolo. [A Devil Comes to Town](#) (World Editions \$14.99). A Starred Review for a book I can't wait to read: "In Maurensig's crafty publishing fable, a Mephistophelean figure sows discord in a community of scribblers. A renowned novelist receives an unsigned manuscript about a certain Father Cornelius, the vicar of a small Swiss community, Dichtersruhe, which is in the midst of 'an episode of collective madness.' The insular town is remarkable because 'there was no other place in the world with such a high number of would-be writers.' The townspeople are content with their modest literary ambitions until a flashy Lucerne publisher arrives and offers a cash prize for the region's best manuscript. Dichtersruhe's citizens are overcome by vain-glory and envy (as well as a rabies epidemic). These ominous signs convince Father Cornelius that the out-of-towner is the devil himself, exploiting this 'pond teeming with disillusioned fish.' Has Father Cornelius really spotted the devil, or is he an unreliable narrator in thrall to his own infernal, Faust-inspired fictions? And is the widespread urge to write, to 'indelibly engrave ourselves on the metaphysical plate of the universe,' demonic or divine? This nested narrative is an entertaining exploration of the manifold powers—creative, confessional, corrupting—of fiction."

Mayes, Frances. [See You in the Piazza](#) (Crown \$27). I missed this lovely March release by the author of *Under the Tuscan Sun* and more. It's "a sparkling and irresistible view of Italy" in her eighth book, in which she and her husband explore the country from north to south. Mayes begins in Piedmont and ends in Catania, Sicily. Along the way she treats readers to "oh-pull-over" views, looks inside glorious churches, descriptions of innumerable meals (in Sardegna "the seafood *fritto misto* comes to us hot and crisp, and the grilled fish under a heap of chopped celery and tomatoes"), and recipes for the dishes they ate (e.g., gnocchi with wild hare from Friuli-Venezia Giulia). Mayes weaves into her narrative historical background (in mid-11th-century Puglia, Frederick II "built castle, mint, treasury and... brought twenty thousand Arab Muslims from Sicily" as troops) and practical travel tips, such as not checking luggage on planes and packing gold-colored sandals (they transform casual to dressy). Mayes has a wonderful eye for detail as she lyrically describes her surroundings, like a river that's "a long skein in the moonlight, as though a woman has unfurled her silvery gray hair." Travel, she explains, provides a chance to see life anew and helps form rich memories. Readers will want to take their time, savoring this poetic travelogue like a smooth wine. **This is a perfect pairing with David Wagner's loving Italian series featuring an American translator, nephew of a major Roman cop, as sleuth. Wagner joins us to sign [Roman Count Down](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95) on June 15. Yay.**

McMahon, Jennifer. [The Invited](#) (Doubleday \$25.95). Nate and Helen leave their teaching jobs to build their dream home in rural Vermont. Helen begins seeing ghosts, and Nate becomes obsessed with a white doe. The Gothic narrative frequently centers on a house with a tragic past all the way from Poe and DuMaurier to today. McMahon gives it a New England spin with a ghost in the woods.... See the April Book Notes for more.

Meyer, Deon. [The Woman in the Blue Cloak](#) (Atlantic \$22). Early on a May morning in the depth of South Africa's winter, a woman's naked body, washed in bleach, is discovered on a stone wall beside the N2 highway at the top of Sir Lowry's Pass, some thirty-five miles from Cape Town. The local investigation stalls,

so the case is referred to Captain Benny Griessel and his colorful partner Vaughn Cupido of the Hawks—the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigations. The woman proves to be Alicia Lewis, an expert in old Dutch Masters paintings specializing in the recovery of valuable lost art. Discovering the two men she had contacted before coming to South Africa reveals what she was seeking—a rare painting by Carel Fabritius, Rembrandt's finest student, not seen since it disappeared from Delft in 1654. But how Lewis died, why, and at whose hand shocks even the two veteran detectives. Terrific author Meyer writes a compact, atmospheric thriller.

✠ Monroe, JS. [The Last Thing She Remembers](#) (Pantheon \$15.99). A woman claiming not to know who she is shows up at the cottage of Laura and Tony Masters in a Wiltshire village. The woman seems to know everything about the cottage the newlyweds recently bought, but nothing about herself. Though she believes she just arrived from Berlin, she lacks any identification, and her suitcase contains only clothing. The woman's distraught appearance and amnesia touches the Masters, especially Tony, who decides to call her Jemma. It's "just a name," Tony tells her, though he may have been subconsciously thinking of a young woman named Jemma Huish who murdered her best friend 12 years earlier and was recently released from prison. The plot stalls while the woman, who accepts the Masters' invitation to stay with them temporarily, and the locals all try to discover her identity. Eventually, plenty of secrets and hidden agendas emerge on the way to the fascinating denouement.

Moore, Terrance. [66 on 66](#) (Schaffner Press \$27.95). As the highway that opened up the West to millions of travelers since its construction in the 1930s, Rte. 66, known as "The Mother Road," became the vital path for travelers, tourists, and fortune-seekers. However, after the advent of the superhighway and the Interstate system of the 1950s, Rte. 66 gradually fell out of use, leaving behind fascinating relics of a bygone era—roadside attractions, marvelous kitsch, storefronts, and the great neon artifacts that still light up the night along the highway. Terrence Moore has traveled and photographed this road since he first drove it with his parents in the 1960s. Though he has covered this subject for more than 40 years as a professional photographer, never before has his work been collected in book form. This volume highlights 66 of his finest 35mm color film images—a stunning chronicle of this storied road in states from Missouri to California.

Norris, Mary. [Greek to Me: Adventures of the Comma Queen](#) (Norton \$25.95). *New Yorker* copy editor Norris (*Between You and Me*), known for her Comma Queen videos on grammar and style, once again takes readers on an entertaining, erudite, and altogether delightful journey fueled by the love of language. Here, going beyond pencils and punctuation, she chronicles her passion for all things Greek, both classical and modern. Denied a chance to study Latin in fifth grade, Norris took that latent enthusiasm for the ancients and applied it to Greek as an adult, even convincing her *New Yorker* supervisors to subsidize her classical Greek classes as an aid to her copyediting duties. In addition to recounting her scholastic adventures, the book recounts her successive travels through Greece, which she explored with ever-increasing linguistic skill. Norris's lively travel log skillfully meshes autobiographical anecdotes, self-reflection, and explorations of mythology—on her first trip, she gets up early during an overnight ferry ride, hoping "to catch Homer's famed *rhododactylos*, the rosy

fingers of dawn.” At the center of it all is her passion for Greek, a language often “held to be impenetrable,” yet which gives her “an erotic thrill, as if every verb and noun had some visceral connection to what it stands for.”

Palmer, Daniel. [Saving Meghan](#) (St Martins \$27.99). I’ve always liked the domestic suspense novels penned by this son of the late bestseller of medical thrillers Michael Palmer. Here Daniel combines two Palmer fortes into the story of a family wracked by illness and suspicion. Fifteen-year-old Meghan has been in and out of hospitals with a plague of unexplained illnesses. When her situation takes a sharp turn, clashing medical opinions begin to raise questions about the puzzling nature of Meghan’s illness. Doctors suspect Munchausen syndrome by proxy, a rare behavioral disorder where the primary caretaker seeks medical help for made-up symptoms of a child. True? Or is there something even more sinister at hand? As parents Becky and Carl Gerards grow more and more suspicious of each other and their medical team, Becky must race against time to prove her daughter has a deadly disease. But first, she must confront her darkest fears and family secrets that threaten to not only upend her once-ordered life...but to destroy it.

Patterson, James. [Target: Alex Cross](#) (\$16.99). A sniper’s bullet strikes a target in the heart of DC. And Alex Cross’s wife, Bree Stone, newly elevated chief of DC detectives, faces an ultimatum: solve the case, or lose the position for which she’s worked her entire career. The Secret Service and the FBI deploy as well in the race to find the shooter. Alex is tasked by the new President to take a personal role with the FBI, leading an investigation.... 26th in the Alex Cross series.

Pattison, Eliot. [Savage Liberty](#) (\$16.95). The fifth installation of Eliot Pattison’s Bone Rattler series follows the exiled Scotsman Duncan McCallum to the stepping-stones of the American Revolution. Duncan McCallum is lead into a mystery of murder, treachery, and intrigue with Samuel Adams, John Hancock, and a secret society of American patriots organizing to resist the British throne.

Pike, Signe. [The Lost Queen](#) (\$17). For you *Outlander* fans, a tale of conflicted loves and survival set against the cinematic backdrop of ancient Scotland. One of the most powerful early medieval queens in British history, Languoreth ruled at a time of enormous disruption and bloodshed, when the burgeoning forces of Christianity threatened to obliterate the ancient pagan beliefs and change her way of life forever. Together with her twin brother Lailoken, a warrior and druid known to history as Merlin, Languoreth is catapulted into a world of danger and violence. When a war brings the hero Emrys Pendragon, to their door, Languoreth collides with the handsome warrior Maelgwn. Their passionate connection is forged by enchantment, but Languoreth is promised in marriage to Rhydderch, son of the High King who is sympathetic to the followers of Christianity. As Rhydderch’s wife, Languoreth must assume her duty to fight for the preservation of the Old Way, her kingdom, and all she holds dear in a novel bringing her to life.

Richardson, Kim Michele. [The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek](#) (Sourcebooks Landmark \$25.99). Thanks to Roosevelt’s Kentucky Pack Horse Library Project, Troublesome Creek’s got its very own traveling librarian, Cussy Mary Carter. Cussy’s not only a book woman, however, she’s also the last of her kind, her skin a shade of blue unlike most anyone else. Not everyone

is keen on Cussy’s family or the Library Project, and a Blue is often blamed for any whiff of trouble. If Cussy wants to bring the joy of books to the hill folks, she’s going to have to confront prejudice as old as the Appalachias and suspicion as deep as the holler. Inspired by the true blue-skinned people of Kentucky and the brave and dedicated Kentucky Pack Horse library service of the 1930s, this is a story of raw courage, fierce strength, and one woman’s belief that books can carry us anywhere — even back home. Library Reads recommends it thus: “Blue-skinned Cussie brings books via horseback to rural, racially intolerant Kentucky in the 1930s. Her efforts demonstrate that people crave intellectual stimulation even when they are poverty stricken in a food desert. For fans of Sandra Dallas and Lee Smith.”

✦Riley, Lucinda. [The Royal Secret](#) (Atria \$17). A fledgling reporter covering the funeral of famous Irish actor Sir James Harrison finds herself chasing the story of a lifetime—a story that many in power would kill to keep quiet. It begins when reporter Joanna Haslam spots a mysterious old lady at Sir James’s funeral. It puts her on the trail of what she at first assumes to be a sex scandal from the past. But when the old lady dies and her body goes missing, and Joanna’s own apartment is ransacked, she realizes she’s on to something. Riley’s tale is packed with romance, scandal, and the indiscretions of the British royal family. When it was first released in the UK in 2000, it was considered so scandalous and damning (despite being fiction) that many booksellers were hesitant to carry or promote it, lest they provoke the ire of the monarchy. At the novel’s center is a shocking secret that has been closely guarded for decades, and that MI5 will go to any lengths to protect. With Meghan Markle’s marriage to Prince Harry and popular shows like *The Crown*, American interest in the British royal family is higher than ever, and readers will enjoy the fictional echoes of the real royal family—including a young prince romantically involved with an up-and-coming actress.

Rose, Sarah. [D-Day Girls: The Spies Who Armed the Resistance, Sabotaged the Nazis, and Helped Win World War II](#) (Crown \$28) relates the untold story of three women recruited by the elite British Special Operations Executive in 1942 to help turn the tide and pave the way for Allied victory. “Gripping. Spies, romance, Gestapo thugs, blown-up trains, courage, and treachery (lots of treachery)—and all of it true.”—Erik Larson

✦Runcie, James. [Road to Grantchester](#) (Bloomsbury \$28). Runcie’s exceptional seventh novel featuring Sidney Chambers (after 2017’s Sidney Chambers and the Persistence of Love), a prequel, opens with an extended section set during WWII. In 1943, Sidney, and his best friend, Robert Kendall, who are soldiers in a Scots Guards battalion, are serving on the Italian front. Sidney’s efforts to survive the conflict, both physically and mentally, are aided by the Reverend Nev Finnie, a battlefield chaplain who proves crucial to Sidney’s search for meaning and purpose after the war. Runcie is equally effective in portraying Sidney’s decision to become an Anglican minister and his struggles about his feelings for Robert’s sister, Amanda. Superior prose is a plus (a stranger whom Sidney passes on the street has “a face that has grown into the idea that most people will ignore him”). While Sidney has only one passing mystery to solve, fans of Runcie’s sophisticated mixing of whodunit plots with explorations of the human psyche in prior entries will relish getting a fuller picture of Sidney’s path toward a life in the church. Also in paperback: [The Road to Grantchester](#) (\$17).

✂Sampson, Fay. [The Wounded Snake](#) (Severn \$28.99). Sampson's retired school teacher (and know-it-all) Hilary Masters and her widowed friend, Veronica Taylor, join wannabe mystery writers for a workshop weekend at 14th-century Morland Abbey near the Devon town of Totnes. The event is organized by Gavin Standforth, whose fame rests on his one bestselling novel. The real draw for the weekend is the 92-year-old queen of crime, Dinah Halsgrove, who each year turns out a mega-hit. While the other participants are enjoying a boat trip down the River Dart, Dinah remains behind in her room at the abbey. She's later discovered unconscious and rushed to the hospital. Was it a heart attack or something more sinister? The fervent minds of the fledgling crime writers start spinning likely scenarios. Then Hilary discovers a body of someone who was clearly murdered, and the speculation takes a serious turn. Those who value chills and thrills will have to look elsewhere, but readers interested in the history of Devon will find plenty to like. Ordered Upon Request.

Simenon, George. [Maigret and the Saturday Caller](#) (Penguin \$13). In the 59th reissue of this French series, Maigret is visited by a troubled man and asks him to keep in touch, hoping to curtail his criminal impulses. But when the man disappears, Maigret must investigate a crime that may or may not have occurred....

Souza, Joseph. [Pray for the Girl](#) (Kensington \$26). Lucy Abbott never pictured herself coming back to Fawn Grove, Maine. Yet after serving time in Afghanistan, then years spent as a sous chef in New York, she's realized her only hope of moving on from the past involves facing it again. But Fawn Grove, like Lucy herself, has changed. Lucy's sister, Wendy, is eager to help her adapt, almost stifling her with concern. At the local diner, Lucy is an exotic curiosity—much like the refugees who've arrived in recent years. When a fifteen-year-old Muslim girl is found murdered along the banks of the river, difficult memories of Lucy's time overseas come flooding back and she feels an automatic connection. At first glance, the tragedy looks like an honor killing. But the more Lucy learns about her old hometown, the less certain that seems. Souza presents a small-town setting and story elements akin to those in Owen Laukkanen's *Deception Cove* reviewed in Signed Books—but without the fabulous dog called Lucy.

Spann, Susan. [A Flask of the Drunken Master](#) (Seventh Street \$15.95). August 1565: When a rival artisan turns up dead outside Ginjiro's brewery, and all the evidence implicates the brewer, master ninja Hiro Hattori and Portuguese Jesuit Father Mateo must find the killer before the magistrate executes Ginjiro and seizes the brewery, leaving his wife and daughter destitute. A missing merchant, a vicious debt collector, and a female money-lender join Ginjiro and the victim's spendthrift son on the suspect list. But with Kyoto on alert in the wake of the shogun's recent death, a rival shinobi on the prowl, and samurai threatening Hiro and Father Mateo at every turn, Ginjiro's life is not the only one in danger. Will Hiro and Father Mateo unravel the clues in time to save Ginjiro's life, or will the shadows gathering over Kyoto consume the detectives as well as the brewer?

Struzan, Dylan. [A Bloody Business](#) (Hard Case Crime \$26.99). In 1919, the National Prohibition Act was passed, making it illegal across America to produce, distribute, or sell liquor. With this act, the U.S. Congress also created organized crime as we know it. Italian, Jewish, and Irish mobs sprang up to supply the suddenly

illegal commodity to the millions of people still eager to drink it. Men like Lucky Luciano and Meyer Lansky, Dutch Schultz and Bugsy Siegel, Al Capone in Chicago and Nucky Johnson in Atlantic City, waged a brutal war for power in the streets and on the waterfronts. But if you think you already know this story... think again, since you've never seen it through the eyes of one of the mobsters who lived it. Called "one of the most significant organized crime figures in the United States" by the U.S. District Attorney, Vincent "Jimmy Blue Eyes" Alo was just 15 years old when Prohibition became law. Over the next decade, Alo would work side by side with Lansky and Luciano as they navigated the brutal underworld of bootlegging, thievery and murder. Alo's later career included prison time and the ultimate Mob tribute: being immortalized as "Johnny Ola" in *The Godfather*, Part II.

The publisher says this is, "an irresistible read, full of can't-put-it-down stories of gangsters, bootlegging, mob battles, rub outs, heists, tommy guns, and personalities as big as Lucky Luciano and Al Capone. The book is lavishly illustrated with more than two dozen pieces of original art by the author's husband, Drew Struzan, who is one of the most acclaimed movie poster painters in Hollywood history (you know his work from Star Wars, Indiana Jones, Harry Potter, and more). And best of all, all the stories in the book were told to Dylan by an elderly ex-mobster, living in retirement in Florida, who was a teenager during Prohibition and actually lived through all the events in the book!"

Taylor, David C. [Night Watch](#) (Severn \$28.95). Lesa Holstine reviews: "In 1956, New York City police detective Michael Cassidy handles several Cold War-related investigations while also attempting to discover who is trying to kill him. During rush hour, someone tries to push Cassidy in front of a subway train. His partner brushes it off, saying he should know better than to stand in the front row during rush hour. Their first case is the death of a hansom cab driver in Central Park. It appears to be a mugging, but forensics says otherwise. Then, a biochemist throws himself through a window in the Astor Hotel, and the stories told by several of the man's acquaintances don't add up. As Cassidy, along with his lover, a reporter from The New York Post, ask questions, the same people seem to pop up. And, they seem to have powerful connections with the CIA. When Cassidy and his brother, Brian, a TV journalist, seem to be getting a little too close, his brother suddenly disappears. What's the link between a sniper shooting at Cassidy and his brother's disappearance? This action-packed story is a grim story of the CIA's actions in the U.S. during the 1950s and '60s. *Night Watch* is a suspenseful, frightening thriller filled with deaths, mysterious connections, and the ability of the government to make newspaper stories and connections disappear. Ordered Upon Request.

Thomas, Bev. [A Good Enough Mother](#) (Penguin \$26). Ruth Hartland is a psychotherapist with years of experience. But professional skill is no guard against private grief. The mother of grown twins, she is haunted by the fact that her beautiful, difficult, fragile son Tom, a boy who never "fit in," disappeared a year and a half earlier. She cannot give up hope of finding him, but feels she is living a kind of half-life, waiting for him to return. Enter a new patient, Dan—unstable and traumatized—who looks exactly like her missing son. She is determined to help him, but soon, her own complicated feelings, about how she has failed her own boy, cloud her professional judgment. And before long, the unthinkable becomes a shattering reality. This is a tale with a time bomb at its core.

✂Trent, Christine. [A Murderous Malady](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.95). It's August 1854, and a cholera epidemic is ravaging London's Soho district. Florence Nightingale's exalted friend, secretary at war Sidney Herbert, calls her away from her duties as superintendent of the Establishment for the Temporary Illness of Gentlewomen in Harley Street. Sidney informs her that the carriage that was carrying his wife and father-in-law has been attacked and the driver killed. Sidney, who is loath to tell the police for fear of creating a scandal, asks Florence to investigate. A short while later, Herbert's manservant, Fenton, arrives at the nurse's door suffering from cholera. Among the last words Fenton utters before he succumbs to the disease are "devil's dice." All this is before Florence heads to the Crimea...

Tursten, Helene. [Hunting Game](#) (Soho \$26.95). A Swedish moose-hunting party is torn asunder when two members go missing and one is found dead. Embla Nyström is 28, and has been plagued by anxiety for years, but manages to suppress most of her fears while on the job. She works as a detective inspector for a mobile unit in Gothenburg, Sweden, and her team is sent all over the country to help solve crimes. Embla is off-duty, happily participating in the annual moose hunt for which she has joined her uncle and his friends since she was a teenager. Unfortunately, a series of strange events begins to happen: a viper is found in the outhouse of the hunting cabin, a wounded fox is found in a steel trap and two of the moose hunt's participants go missing. One of them turns up with a broken neck soon thereafter. Embla, torn between searching as a cop and as a friend, finds the ensuing investigation difficult. Although Embla Nyström may not be quite as engaging as Irene Huss, you will root for her to see through the subterfuge and catch the killer.

✂Turton, Stuart. [The 71/2 Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle](#) (\$16.99). This debut is one to love or hate. **Turton comes to visit us from the UK on July 14** so my advice is read it beforehand so as to have a more meaningful discussion of an essay into meta-crime-fiction. "In this dizzying literary puzzle, the hapless protagonist is doomed to relive the same day over and over unless he can solve a murder at a masquerade ball. The narrator, Aiden Bishop, wakes up in a forest outside Blackheath House, 'a sprawling Georgian manor house,' not knowing who or where he is—or why he's screaming the name Anna. A man in a beaked plague-doctor mask brings him up to speed: For eight days, Aiden will wake up in the body of a different witness to the shooting of young beauty Evelyn Hardcastle. If at the end of that extended week, during which Aiden will remember all that occurs, he fails to identify the killer and break the bizarre murder cycle, he will have his memory wiped and be forced to start from the beginning."—*Kirkus Reviews*. I question whether this Mobius-strip of a story can fairly be compared to an Agatha Christie. John Charles of our staff loves it.

✂Weir, Alison. [Anna of Kleve](#) (Ballantine \$28). Henry VIII's 4th Queen, the lucky divorced one who outlived him. He fell for her portrait while searching for a new bride after Jane Seymour died in childbirth. I think it was by Hans Holbein. But Anne didn't live up to her image. Lucky for her this wasn't enough for Henry to take her head. Weir's Six Tudor Queens series presents each of Henry's wives, one by one. If you want to order a Signed UK copy (\$44) please ask us.

Wortche, Thomas, ed. [Berlin Noir](#) (Akashic \$15.95). A must for fans of the late Philip Kerr who would have enjoyed this collection of 21st Century stories that are less about traditional crime and more likely to involve gentrification, immigrants, or AirBnB. Contemporary social themes are present, such as in Max Annas' "Local Train," in which a clumsy attempt by a group of immigrants to take revenge on a neo-Nazi thug comes to an unexpected conclusion, or Katja Bohnet's "Fashion Week," in which a woman retaliates against an abusive lover less for his personal violence than for his exploitation of foreign workers. Dark comedy is found in Susanne Saygin's "The Beauty of Kenilworth Ivy," which features a Dexter-like serial killer with a botanical bent, and in Robert Rescue's "One of These Days," a romp through the challenges of dealing with a suicide's inconvenient corpse. Rob Alef's "Dog Tag Afternoon" is one of the few stories to make use of the city's dramatic history, linking a contemporary homicide to the Berlin Airlift.

Young, David. [Stasi Wolf](#) (\$14.95). East Germany, 1975. Young takes recently divorced, professionally marginalized Karin Müller of the People's Police from East Berlin to Halle-Neustadt, a new town intended to showcase the socialist dream, to look into the disappearance of newborn twins. Karin's inquiry is handicapped by male reluctance to accept a woman boss; the ominous Ministry of State Security (aka the Stasi), whose leaders want to hush up the whole affair; and her personal insecurities. After one baby is found dead, the case seems deadlocked. As more tiny skeletons are unearthed, flashbacks to the 1960s chart the perpetrator's gradual derangement. "A new love interest for Karin and her search for her biological family provide some relief from the dismal portrayal of East Germany's repressive society. Only the gruesome finale rings false. Fans of mysteries with Cold War settings will appreciate Young's dead-on recreation of life under Communist rule."

NONFICTION FOR MAY

Comey, James. [A Higher Loyalty](#) (\$17.99)

Hessler, Peter. [The Buried: An Archaeology of the Egyptian Revolution](#) (Penguin \$28)

Holt, Jim. [When Einstein Walked with Godel: Excursions to the Edge of Thought](#) (\$17)

Magee, Mike. [Code Blue](#) (Grove \$27) Inside America's Hospital Complex

Mezrich, Ben. [Bitcoin Billionaires](#) (Flatiron \$27.99)

O'Connor, M R. [Wayfinding](#) (St Martins \$26.99) The Science and Mystery of How Humans Navigate the World

Russo, Richard. [The Destiny Thief](#) (\$16) Essay on Writing, Writers, and Life

Stevens, Johnaul. [The Making of a Justice](#) (LittleBrown \$35). Reflections of My First 94 Years

OUR MAY SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Andrews, Donna. [Toucan Keep a Secret](#) (\$7.99). Meg Langslow #23. Locking up after an event at the Trinity Episcopal Church, Meg Langslow discovers the body of an elderly parishioner, who had threatened to reclaim his wife's ashes from the church crypt, and uncovers local secrets with the help of The Reverend Smith's foster toucan. *PW* was just one of the review sources giving

Andrews props saying “This long-running cozy series shows no signs of losing its freshness.

Atkins, Ace. [Robert B Parker’s Old Black Magic](#) (\$9.99). Spenser #50. When paint chips from a valuable stolen painting arrive at the desk of a Boston journalist, Spenser is hired by a hopeful museum to delve into the black-market art scene and investigate a cold-case art heist involving hidden secrets, jailhouse confessions and decades-old murders. *Kirkus* had this to say: “Atkins, in his best imitation of Parker’s voice to date, never gets lazy. Readers who approach the last chapter anticipating relief at finally seeing the case solved should be warned that a final twist virtually guarantees a sequel.”

Barclay, Linwood. [A Noise Downstairs](#) (\$9.99). Battling PTSD and depression after an accidental stumble into a murder scene, a college professor begins writing his novel on a vintage typewriter that he comes to believe is possessed and somehow linked to the crime he survived. *LJ* ended its rave review with, “Prepare to be blindsided by an ending you didn’t see coming. Barclay’s nerve-wracking tale will have readers scared to close their eyes at night.”

Carlisle, Kate. [Buried in Books](#) (\$7.99). Bibliophile #12. Book restoration expert Brooklyn Wainwright finds her surprise bridal shower complicated by the arrival of her two feuding former besties, the discovery of a rare book forgery and an untimely murder. *PW* summed up the appeal of this charmingly cozy series succinctly when they said, “Book lovers are in for a treat.”

Coes, Ben. [Bloody Sunday](#) (\$9.99). Dewey Andreas #8. CIA top special forces operative Dewey Andreas goes undercover in Macau, where he must foil Iran and North Korea’s plot to acquire nuclear and long-range attack capabilities. *LJ* was just on their review sources giving this thumbs up ending with, “The appealing combination of tense situation-room action and thrilling combat scenes allows readers to witness both behind-the-scenes intrigue and edge-of-your-seat military operations. Readers of military and political thrillers will have a tough time putting this one down.”

Deaver, Jeffery. [Cutting Edge](#) (\$9.99). Lincoln Rhyme #14. Returning to New York City after their Italian honeymoon, Lincoln Rhyme and Amelia Sachs investigate a new killer who targets newly engaged couples terrorizing the city. *PW* concluded with, “Deaver keeps the twists and surprises coming in this roller-coaster ride of a thriller.”

Goldman, Matt. [Broken Ice](#) (\$9.99). The disappearance of two teens from a hockey community becomes more urgent when one of the girls is found dead, pitting Minneapolis private detective Nils Shapiro against dangerous small-town secrets. *PW* concluded with, “Nils is a deeply flawed by good-hearted everyman. He’s supported by a cast of wonderfully quirky characters, including the former Canadian Football League player turned nurse practitioner hired by his ex-wife to care for his wounded shoulder. Readers will look forward to seeing more of Nils and crew.”

Hollis, Lee. [Death of a Wedding Cake Baker](#) (Kensington \$7.99). Food and Cocktails #11. When the nasty wedding cake baker – the bride’s cousin – is poisoned to death, Matron of Honor Hayley Powell, while dealing with the groom who is getting cold feet, vows to catch a killer before her best friend walks down the aisle.

McKinlay, Jenn. [Dying for Devils Food Signed](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Cupcake Bakery #11. When she is accused of murdering resident mean girl and her high school nemesis at their 15-year reunion, cupcake store owner Mel Cooper must quickly find out who iced Cassidy Havers.

Thor, Brad. [Spymaster](#) (\$9.99). Scott Harvath #17. When a secret organization begins attacking diplomats throughout Europe at the same time a foreign ally demands the identity of a highly placed covert asset, counterterrorism operative Scot Harvath works without his mentor to prevent an all-out war. More Thor June 30.

MAY SMALL PAPERBACKS

Adams, Ellery. [Murder in the Reading Room](#) (Kensington \$7.99). Book Retreat #5. In order to save her boyfriend, who has been kidnapped, Jane Steward is forced to lead his captor to a historic estate that he believes houses Ernest Hemingway’s lost suitcase, a search that leads instead to murder.

Andrews, Mary Kay. [Beach Town](#) (\$8.99). Given a last chance to salvage her career after being wrongly blamed for property damage, movie location scout Greer Hennessy confronts environmentally-minded mayor Eben Thibadeaux in a sleepy Florida Gulf Coast community.

Ashdown, Isabel. [Little Sister](#) (\$9.99). After 16 years apart, sisters Jessica and Emily are reunited. With the past now behind them, the warmth they once shared quickly returns and before long, Jess has moved into Emily’s comfortable island home. But when baby Daisy disappears while in Jess’s care, the perfect life Emily has so carefully built starts to fall apart. Was Emily right to trust her sister after everything that happened before?

Blaedel, Sara. [The Daughter](#) (\$7.99). Receiving an unexpected inheritance from the father who abandoned her, forty-year-old widow Ilka Nichols Jensen impulsively travels from Copenhagen to her late father’s mortuary in Wisconsin and begins to comb through his estate before stumbling on an unsolved murder.

Bond, Larry. [Arctic Gambit](#) (Forge \$9.99). Jerry Mitchell #6. After an American submarine is sunk in the waters near Russian territory, Commodore Jerry Mitchell must find a way to destroy a new stealthy Russian weapon and avoid a nuclear catastrophe.

Brennan, Allison. [Nothing to Hide](#) (Simon Schuster \$8.99). Lucy Kincaid #17. Called in by the FBI to help find a link between the murders of three married men, Lucy Kincaid and her team, after catching the widows in a lie, discover that things are not what they seem and that the killer is much smarter, and more dangerous, than anyone thinks.

Brown, Sandra. [Play Dirty](#) (\$9.99). Reissue. Disabled millionaire Foster Speakman hires disgraced football hero Griff Burkett to impregnate his wife Laura, a plan that results in an obsessive love affair and life-threatening consequences.

Cooper, Ellison. [Caged](#) (Simon Schuster \$7.99). Focusing on her research after the death of her fiancé, FBI neuroscientist Sayer Altair investigates the torturous murder of a senator’s daughter before discovering that the dangerously obsessed killer has abducted a second victim.

Cussler, Clive. [The Gray Ghost](#) (\$9.99). Fargo #10. The grandson of a man who was wrongly accused of stealing a recovered Rolls Royce prototype a century earlier hires husband-and-wife team Sam and Remi Fargo to solve the mystery and clear his grandfather’s name.

Jensen, Louise. [Sister](#) (Grand Central \$7.99). Grace is haunted by her best friend Charlie's last words, and in a bid for answers, opens an old memory box of Charlie's. It soon becomes clear there was a lot she didn't know about her best friend.

Konrath, J. A. [Endurance](#) (Kensington \$7.99). A group of Iron Woman athletes arrive at the Rushmore Inn in the hills of West Virginia where they band together to fight a terror that can kill mere mortals.

Wait, Lea. [Thread on Arrival](#) (Kensington \$7.99). Mainly Needlepoint #8. When Ike Hamilton, a down-on-his-luck member of their community, is stabbed to death, needlepointing partners Angie and Sarah must unravel the clues and get this case sewn up before the killer strikes again.

Woods, Stuart. [The Money Shot](#) (\$9.99). Teddy Faye #4. Disguising himself as a stuntman to investigate blackmail threats against an actress starring in a new production, Teddy Fay discovers that the perpetrators are looking for something other than money.