

# BOOKNEWS from

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Our Podcasts are now downloadable on [Google Music](#) and [iTunes](#)

## MAY 1-4 CLOSED FOR INVENTORY

Note: All the times are Scottsdale time, 3 hours later than EDT

Our Virtual Events can be viewed on [Facebook Live](#) on the date/time given and anytime thereafter, and also the next day on [YouTube](#)

*Please look for pop up book chats with authors and editors and who knows what from time to time on our Home Page and then moved to Facebook. Also Tori Eldridge reading a short story produced for Virtual Independent Bookstore Day is on our Facebook Page for you to enjoy.*

### WEDNESDAY MAY 6 5:00 PM

The first 100 purchasers of our signed book stash get an invitation to the Zoom event

This event will not be available for public view on Facebook or our YouTube

Christopher Moore chats about [Shakespeare for Squirrels](#) (Harper \$28.99)

### THURSDAY MAY 7 1:00 PM

Mary Kay Andrews chats about [Hello, Summer](#) (St Martins \$28.99)

Signed books available. Please order quickly to secure yours

### THURSDAY MAY 7 2:00 PM

Jordan Farmer chats about [The Poisoned Flood](#) (Putnam \$26)

Signed books available. Please order quickly to secure yours

### FRIDAY MAY 8 5:00 PM

Brian Panowich chats with Patrick about [Hard Cash Valley](#) (St Martins \$26.99)

### SATURDAY MAY 9 2:00 PM

#### A Mother's Day Treat

Amanda Quick (Jayne Ann Krentz) chats with John about [Close Up](#) (Berkley \$27)

Signed books available. Please order quickly to secure yours

### MONDAY MAY 11

A book chat with Ian Rankin direct from Cromarty, Scotland.

Look for it to post on our Home Page in the afternoon, and then Facebook Live during the week.

### MONDAY MAY 11 5:00 PM

#### Virtual Book Launch

Jeffery Deaver chats about [The Goodbye Man](#) (Putnam \$28)

Colter Shaw #2

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### TUESDAY MAY 12 5:00 PM

#### Virtual Book Launch

Scott Turow chats about [The Last Trial](#) (Grand Central \$29)

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### WEDNESDAY MAY 13 5:00 PM

Walter Mosley chats with Patrick about [Trouble Is What I Do](#) (Mulholland \$26)

Leonid McGill

Signed books in stock now.

### WEDNESDAY MAY 14 2:00 PM

Hillary Davidson chats with Patrick about [Don't Look Down](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$24.95/\$15.95)

Signed books in stock now

### FRIDAY MAY 15 6:00 PM

Tom Leveen chats with Patrick King about his first adult novel [Omnihumans within a Concrete Labyrinth](#) (\$28.99)

### MONDAY MAY 18 4:00PM

Kate White chats about [Have You Seen Me?](#) (Harper \$26.99)

Signed books available. Please order quickly to secure yours

### MONDAY MAY 18 5:00 PM

#### Virtual Book Launch

Liv Constantine chats about [The Wife Stalker](#) (Harper \$27.99)

Signed books available. Please order quickly to secure yours

View a [video trailer](#) for the book

### TUESDAY MAY 19 5:00 PM On Instagram Live

Jessica Knoll chats about [The Favorite Sister](#) (\$16.99)

Sara Sligar chats about our April First Mystery Book of the Month [Take Me Apart](#) (FSG \$27)

Signed copies again available

### TUESDAY MAY 19 5:30 PM

#### Virtual Book Launch

Ivy Pochoda chats with Patrick about [These Women](#) (Ecco \$27.99)

Signed books available. Please order quickly to secure yours

### THURSDAY MAY 21 5:00 PM

Editor Keith Kahla chats with his author Jennifer Hillier, winner of the 2019 Best Thriller Award, about her new novel

[Little Secrets](#) (St Martins \$26.99)

Jennifer lives in Canada so Signed Bookplates it is for our copies

**SATURDAY MAY 23 2:00 PM**

**Virtual Book Launch**

**Robin Burcell** chats about her last full collaboration with Clive Cussler in [The Wrath of Poseidon](#) (Putnam \$30)

Sam & Remi Fargo #12

Books Signed only by Burcell available. Please order quickly to secure yours

**MONDAY MAY 25 Time TBA**

**Martin Walker** chats about [The Shooting at Chateau Rock](#)

(Knopf \$25.95)

Bruno, Chief of Police

No signed books but Walker hopes to visit from the EU in September

**TUESDAY MAY 26 5:00 PM**

**Virtual Book Launch**

**Michael Connelly** chats about [Fair Warning](#) (Little Brown \$29)

Jack McEvoy #3

Signed books available. Please order quickly to secure yours

**WEDNESDAY MAY 27 5:00 PM**

**David Baldacci** chats about [Walk the Wire](#) (Grand Central \$29)

This is a Father's Day special so while supplies last we include a free Father's Day card already stamped for you with US postage

**SATURDAY MAY 30 2:00 PM**

**Kristen Ashley** chats with John about [Dream Maker](#) (Grand Central \$7.99)

Plus June 2: **JA Jance** June 3: **David Pepper** June 6 **Laurie R King** June 7 **Stephanie Barron** June 9 **Mike Maden**

**SIGNED BOOKS**

Andrews, Mary Kay. [Hello, Summer](#) (St Martins \$28.99). Before she became the Queen of Summer Reading, bestseller Andrews worked as a journalist throughout the southeast and wrote terrific mysteries as Kathy Trochek. Here's her new Andrews book.

Sarah "Conley" Hawkins left her family and their hometown newspaper *The Silver Bay Beacon* behind her years ago in pursuit of a bigger life—and career. When an unfortunate turn of events leaves her unexpectedly unemployed, she's forced to return home and lick her wounds. At home, she's faced with unfinished business: a resentful older sister who sacrificed her own dreams to take over the family business; an aging grandmother; an old friend whose feelings run deeper than friendship; and trauma from her past that she's never addressed. As she struggles to find a new job, she agrees to work for her sister at *The Beacon*. Soon, she finds herself covering a tragic accident that resulted in the death of a revered local politician, but the facts aren't adding up. She goes in search of answers and in doing so reveals a number of skeletons in the Congressman's closet. As truths about his dark past emerge, the story catches the attention of national press, launching Conley back into the spotlight—but not without danger and difficult decisions.

Ashley, Kristin. [Dream Maker](#) (Grand Central \$7.99). Local author Ashley presents a sexy contemporary romance spin-off from the bestselling author of the Rock Chick and Dream Man

series. Evan "Evie" Gardiner has spent her whole life being the responsible one in her family, but enough is enough. It's time to pursue her own dreams. Evie's finally going to finish that engineering degree she's been working toward. But first she needs to come up with the money to pay for tuition. Working as a dancer at Smithie's club seems like the perfect solution to her problems...until her family lands in yet another scrape and comes to Evie for help. Only, this time, her family's recklessness is risking more than her dreams—it's endangering her life. Daniel "Mag" Magnusson knows a thing or two about desperation and disappointment, but no one notices that his good looks and quick wit hide the painful memories that haunt him. When Evie's family puts her in danger, Mag realizes he'll need to come face-to-face with his demons if he is to protect her.

Baldacci, David. [Walk the Wire](#) (Grand Central \$29). This is a Father's Day special so while supplies last we include a free Father's Day card already stamped for you with US postage. I've reviewed this newest thriller by Baldacci before so here's a customer's take: "Amos Decker—the FBI consultant with a perfect memory—is working with his partner Alex Jamison to solve a murder that is so much more than just a small town murder. There's so much going on, you could get whiplash just reading, but to say it's edge of the seat exciting is an understatement. And – spoiler here – Will Robie and his sidekick Jessica Reel make their appearances at just the right time. This foursome makes for an awesome problem-solving team. There are so many bodies, so many people, and so many different crimes happening concurrently, it's hard to track, but track we do. And it adds up to Baldacci having hit a home run again. So what's Decker up to next? Only time will tell."

Connelly, Michael. [Fair Warning](#) (Little Brown \$29). **Note: the first 180 to order will get a real signed book, not a tip-in, thanks to Mike's kindness in signing one shipment for us. Order early thus.** Veteran reporter Jack McEvoy has taken down killers before, but when a woman he had a one-night stand with is murdered in a particularly brutal way, he realizes he might be facing a criminal mind unlike any he's ever encountered. Jack investigates – against the warnings of the police and his own editor – and makes a shocking discovery that connects the crime to other mysterious deaths across the country. Undetected by law enforcement, a vicious killer has been hunting women, using genetic data shared by the victims themselves to select and stalk his targets. Uncovering the murkiest corners of the dark web, Jack races to find and protect the last source who can lead him to his quarry. But the killer has already chosen his next target... "The *London Times* writes, "He's stumbled on an amazing story. From a murdered young woman to a mind-boggling extrapolation of the dark destinations that DNA testing might lead to"

Constantine, Liv. [The Wife Stalker](#) (Harper, \$27.99). "Piper Reynard has moved to Connecticut to start over. She meets Leo, a handsome and successful lawyer who is married to Joanna, who has been waiting for Leo to start focusing on her and the kids again for quite some time. Joanna is determined to find the truth out about Piper, but no one wants to believe what she uncovers. For fans of B.A. Paris and A.J. Finn."

Cussler, Clive/Robin Burcell. [The Wrath of Poseidon](#) (Putnam \$30). Her last full collaboration with Clive Cussler, Signed only by Burcell. Ten years ago, a chance meeting at the Lighthouse Café in Redondo Beach led Sam Fargo and Remi Longstreet on the adventure of a lifetime, hunting the legendary riches stolen from the Persian King Croesus in 546 B.C. But they weren't the only ones. Someone else is after the gold, and he's willing to kill anyone who gets in his way. When Sam and Remi run afoul of a criminal drug-running operation, their hopes of finding the treasure are dashed. But with Sam's ingenuity and Remi's determination, they survive their confrontation with the drug runners, and manage to send one of the key players to prison. Though the cache of gold is never found, life goes on. Sam and Remi marry—and years later return to Greece to find the one treasure that got away. Time becomes their enemy when the kingpin they helped send to prison over a decade ago is released—and he has two goals in mind. Find the legendary hoard of King Croesus, and kill Sam and Remi Fargo!

Deaver, Jeffery. [The Goodbye Man](#) (Putnam \$28). Deaver's outstanding sequel to 2019's [The Never Game](#) (\$9.99) takes career reward seeker Colter Shaw into wilderness in Washington State where he battles an unscrupulous fellow hunter, a corrupt sheriff's department, and the Osiris Foundation touting its ability to turn lives around into happy and productive futures. The trigger is a hate crime, setting the rival reward claimers in pursuit of Adam Harper and Erick Young, two youths accused of first burning a cross on a church lawn and then shooting two people. Shaw's superior tracking skills enable him to locate Harper and Young, but ends with a disturbing suicide. Shaw's puzzlement and sense of guilt leads him to the Osiris HQ in rugged terrain. He's skeptical of the Foundations claim and becomes more so after he discovers that a reporter who'd mentioned it in an article about cults was murdered, supposedly by a hold-up man who was subsequently shot to death by the police. In fact, another suicide? "Deaver balances suspense and plausibility perfectly" as he sends in Shaw undercover to suss out Osiris and fill in the stories of a complicated cast. As ever with Deaver, there are chapter hooks and many surprises.

Farmer, Jordan. [The Poison Flood](#) (Putnam \$26), our **May Fantastic New Fiction Book of the Month**, is a complex story about the influence of music, the power of art, and the complexities of luck. "In his narrator, Hollis Bragg, Jordan Farmer has created a compelling character whose personal story and damaged body becomes emblematic of a whole region devastated by environmental destruction. *The Poison Flood* is a timely and important novel."—Ron Rash. So, Hollis Bragg is a man who prefers to stay out of the public eye. Some of this is due to his discomfort in his own body: "Back forever crooked forward, forcing my stomach into permanent lines, flesh left sagging from being unable to perform even modest exercise." And some of it has to do with his complex relationship with former band mate Angela—now a successful musician for whom Hollis writes songs in secret. He's haunted by other memories as well, including some from his childhood in his father's church, its congregation mostly "strange hill folk whom the starched-shirt preachers in town wouldn't want to touch long enough to baptize in the creek." Hollis' life changes when Russell Watson, a young musician, shows up at his house with a burgeoning appreciation for Hollis' musical history. Russell is the son of a wealthy business owner; his

unstable friend Victor, who accompanies him to Hollis' house, is an activist who hates the pollution Russell's father's company is responsible for. A massive chemical spill into a local river further ratchets up the tension.

I like this review: "[*Poison Flood*] combines an unconventional lead with a sobering portrayal of an environmental disaster's impact on a small community. Though Hollis Bragg is a gifted songwriter, paid for writing lyrics for a popular singing group without attribution, his self-esteem is diminished by the hunchback he's had most of his life, which has made him an object of derision. Environmental protests in his hometown of Coopersville, W.Va., which has been economically depressed since the closing of the local coal mines a few years earlier, prompt him to launch a new creative project, a concept album featuring songs "performed by a sick minstrel... who travels a wasteland version of America." He puts that endeavor on hold after a leak from a chemical tank pollutes the area's water, driving the residents to extreme measures to survive. Bragg gets involved in a murder related to the crisis, but the crime subplot is secondary to the lead's struggles to come to terms with his past and himself. Farmer is especially good at making the despair of Coopersville palpable." Think of John Billheimer and Julia Keller.

Hillier, Jennifer. [Little Secrets](#) (St Martins \$26.99). **Jennifer lives in Canada so Signed Bookplates it is for our copies.** As I said in April, *Little Secrets* is "a delightfully twisty psychological thriller perfect for fans of *You* and *Gone Girl*. Celebrity hairstylist Marin Machado, the heroine of this diabolically plotted psychological thriller of lust, obsession, greed, and betrayal, believes she's hit bottom during the 16 months since her four-year-old son was snatched while they were Christmas shopping at a Seattle's famed Pike Place Market—something for which she can't stop blaming herself, nor can her entrepreneur husband of almost 20 years, Derek. But that's before the PI Marin hired after the case went cold shares her chance but devastating discovery that Derek's having an affair with a much younger woman, Kenzie, catapulting Marin into an even darker circle of hell. Following the initial shock of the revelation, the furious Marin feels empowered, almost exhilarated. But her rage also threatens to propel this sympathetic protagonist into a rash, potentially catastrophic decision, encouraged by her best friend and onetime boyfriend, an ex-con, who has his own devious agenda. I am not a serious fan of psychological thrillers but this one is really exceptional.

Hiller won the 2019 Thriller Best Novel Award for [Jar of Hearts](#) (\$7.99). I agree with Laura Lippman: "Trust Jennifer Hillier, a rising star in crime fiction whose work is like no one else's. That gut punch of an opener jumps to a twisty tale of trauma and grief and revenge, with extraordinary empathy for everyone involved." Also good for you who enjoyed *Lady in the Lake* and *Lock Every Door*.

Moore, Christopher. [Shakespeare for Squirrels](#) (Harper \$28.99). This is Moore's third riff on Shakespeare after *Fool* and *The Serpent of Venice*. When you get to the Afterword you will see that he is a serious student of Shakespeare and uses Pocket as the lens with which he focuses our view. Prepare for the scholarly and the seriously rowdy, not to mention profane. Here one reaction: "This is a crazy funny new take on Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* that will have you laughing out loud and getting goofy looks from the other people in the coffee shop. Christopher Moore is always entertaining, and this book is no

exception — you will enjoy it from the first sentence to the very last. And, yes, there are squirrels in the story!” But I like this appraisal better: “Christopher Moore’s latest is a sheer delight! Moore’s signature wackiness pairs perfectly with the lighthearted comedy of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in this loving send up. It’s not a pure retelling, of course. There’s a murder in this story. And Pocket the Fool must find the culprit—with a little help from some amorous fairy folk. Whether you’re a devotee of the Bard, or felt that Elizabethan drama was the worst part of high school, you are in for a treat here.”

Mosley, Walter. [Trouble Is What I Do](#) (Mulholland \$26). Morally ambiguous P.I. Leonid McGill is back — and investigating crimes against society’s most downtrodden. Phillip “Catfish” Worry is a 92-year-old Mississippi bluesman who needs Leonid’s help with a simple task: deliver a letter revealing the black lineage of a wealthy heiress and her corrupt father. But when a famed and feared assassin puts a hit on Catfish, Leonid has no choice but to confront the ghost of his own felonious past. Working to protect his client and his own family, Leonid must reach the heiress on the eve of her wedding before her powerful father kills those who hold their family’s secret....

Panowich, Brian. [Hard Cash Valley](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Dane Kirby is a broken man and no stranger to tragedy. As a life-long resident and ex-arson investigator for McFalls County, Dane has lived his life in one of the most chaotic and crime-ridden regions of the south. When he gets called in to consult on a brutal murder in a Jacksonville, Florida, motel room, he and his FBI counterpart, Special Agent Roselita Velasquez, begin an investigation that leads them back to the criminal circles of his own backyard. Arnie Blackwell’s murder in Jacksonville is only the beginning — and Dane and Roselita seem to be one step behind. For someone is hacking a bloody trail throughout the Southeast looking for Arnie’s younger brother, a boy with Asperger’s Syndrome who possesses an unusual skill with numbers that could make a lot of money and that has already gotten a lot of people killed—and has even more of the deadliest people alive willing to do anything it takes to exploit him. As Dane joins in the hunt to find the boy, it swiftly becomes a race against the clock that has Dane entangled in a web of secrets involving everyone from the Filipino Mafia to distrusting federal agents to some of the hardest southern outlaws he’s ever known.

Patrick adds, “While comparisons to southern stylists such as Daniel Woodrell and Larry Brown are inevitable, Panowich is carving out a terrain all his own. *Hard Cash Valley* is that rare kind of novel that combines spare, poetic writing, emotional weight and a rocking, propulsive narrative.” And Tom Nolan goes all in: “Mr. Panowich, as he did in his previous novels, depicts his Southern terrain well. He deftly sketches the tension between Dane, the rural lawman, and Roselita, who seems ‘completely uncomfortable out in the country’ and who doesn’t care much, as she sees it, for ‘running around with the Dukes of Hazzard.’ The pair must transcend their prejudices to make headway in the Blackwell case (while Dane does what he can for Ned). There is more mayhem to come, as well as jaw-dropping twists...”

Prinzini, Bill. [The Stolen Gold Affair](#) (Forge \$26.99). Another fine review by Tom Nolan: “Sabina Carpenter and John Frederick Quincannon together operate in San Francisco in the late 19th century. The widow Sabina and blue-chip detective’ John,

partners for years, have at last set a date to marry—until John receives a lucrative assignment he can’t refuse: working undercover in order to catch a ring of thieves stealing from a thriving gold mine. Sabina, a thorough professional, takes the postponement mostly in stride, handling another case solo in John’s absence: unmasking a con man specializing in swindling would-be home buyers. In the course of duty, the dedicated suffragist brings poetic justice to a boorish bully she encounters. John, meanwhile, is embedded in the settlement near the Monarch gold mine: 12 hours (by ferry, train, and stage) from the refinements of San Francisco. Surrounded by rough types and with danger in the air, he has come prepared with ‘the hideout weapon he favored for undercover work...a Remington double-barrel .41-caliber rimfire derringer.’ There are faint echoes of such 19th-century legends as Mark Twain, Bret Harte—even Arthur Conan Doyle, whose Sherlock Holmes provides a reference point or two in this winning mixture of suspense and charm.”

Pochoda, Ivy. [These Women](#) (Ecco \$27.99). This will be Patrick’s event with Pochoda on May 19 so he has the galley and will say more. Meanwhile here is a Starred Review: “Fish shack owner Dorian Williams, one of several working-class women at the center of this heartbreaking novel, has done little to fill the void in her life in the 15 years since her teenage daughter, Lecia, was murdered in 1999—the 13th and presumed final victim of a serial killer who was never caught. Then one evening, near her fish shack in South Central L.A., a woman’s body is dumped exactly as Lecia was, throat slit and a plastic bag over her face. Without sacrificing narrative drive, Pochoda (*Wonder Valley*) lets her story unfold organically and impressionistically, through the eyes of her distinctive female characters, who include Julianna, now a hard-partying cocktail waitress but once the child Lecia babysat the night she died; undersized Hispanic LAPD detective Essie, who knows all too well what it’s like not to be taken seriously; and former hooker Feelia, left for dead back in 1999 after Lecia’s murder, whose potentially critical information the police repeatedly ignore. This deep dive into the lives of women too often unseen in the shadows makes them vividly unforgettable.”

*LJ* adds another Star: “Pochoda stuns with this disquieting literary thriller rife with descriptive street language and violence. It is complex, intense, and enthralling. Fans of Rachel Kushner’s *The Mars Room* will experience a similar sense of feeling both captivated and bereft.” And Michael Connelly endorses it.

Qiu, Xiaolong. [Hold Your Breath, China](#) (Severn \$30). *PW* Stars the 10<sup>th</sup> in this series featuring a talented poet/cop and graphically portraying the pollution sickening a swathe of China: “Qiu’s outstanding 10th novel featuring Chief Inspector Chen Cao of the Shanghai Police Bureau finds Chen shelved for vigorously investigating corruption involving high-ranking Communist Party officials. But the capable Chen is soon back in action, along with his partner, Detective Yu Guangming, after the Special Case squad fails to make progress on a serial killer case; someone has murdered three people by shattering their skulls, apparently with a hammer. The victims share no obvious connections, and the Party Secretary himself requests Chen and Yu’s involvement. Chen is later pulled away from the case by the retired first secretary of the Party Central Discipline Committee, who wants him to spy on a group of antipollution activists bent on forcing the government to address China’s air quality. That the group’s

leader is a woman Chen knows well complicates his task. Qiu's execution matches his ambition. Fans of mysteries about honest cops working for compromised regimes won't want to miss this one." I have been a fan from the beginning of this award-winning series where "Xiaolong writes with both urgency and grace about modern China."—*Booklist* Starred Review. He includes his own poetry as well as translations.

Quick, Amanda. [Close Up](#) (Berkley \$27). Quick demonstrates her mastery of sexy and sophisticated thrillers with this superb fourth installment to her Burning Cove series, set in the golden age of Hollywood. Uninterested in a society marriage, heiress Vivian Brazier leaves San Francisco to build a career as an art photographer in L.A., paying the bills by taking headshots for beefcake wannabe actors and racing to crime scenes to shoot exclusives for the dailies. When her knowledge of photography comes in handy in helping the police identify the so-called "Dagger Killer," Vivian unwittingly makes herself a target of someone who may be the murderer's accomplice. Private investigator Nick Sundridge is hired by a mysterious third party to protect her, and together they hatch a plot to catch the killer using Nick's special ability to "see things" in visions and psychic dreams. Quick expertly balances the paranormal intrigue of their investigation with the building attraction between Nick and Vivian while making time for delightful historical details. Readers will revel in the gripping mystery and 1930s glamour of our **May Historical Fiction Book of the Month**.

Sligar, Sarah. [Take Me Apart](#) (FSG \$27). Our April First Mystery Book of the Month sold out but we have a new batch incoming to go with an interview I am hosting with her. Here is Tom Nolan reviewing in the *Wall Street Journal* a book you should not miss: "Kate Aitken, the ex-journalist at the forefront of Sara Sligar's circuitous first novel, seems, at age 30, a burnt-out case. Forced to leave her newspaper job in New York after filing a complaint about the sexual harassment she suffered from a colleague, she had a breakdown and then abandoned her Manhattan career for the West Coast. She's accepted the job, in a Marin County town, of archiving the papers of Miranda Brand, a legendary photographer who killed herself in 1993 at age 37. Miranda's grown son Theo has returned to the family home to prepare his mother's effects for sale. Before long, Kate is sucked into the maelstrom of Miranda's chaotic biography. Local gossips promote the notion that Miranda's death may not have been a suicide. ("I'm not spreading rumors," one local insists. "I'm just repeating what other people have said.") Might Miranda have been murdered? Soon Kate, as she sifts through her subject's letters and diary, finds herself scrutinizing the pasts of Miranda's deceased abusive husband, a local hippie with whom she may have had an affair, and even her son Theo, a troubled 11-year-old at the time of her death. *Take Me Apart* unfolds in two time frames at once, through the insertion of excerpts from Miranda's journal and correspondence. Ms. Sligar's debut is by turns an art-world satire, an erotic romance and a descent into madness. Its gratifying conclusion proves well worth the digressive journey."

Turow, Scott. [The Last Trial](#) (Grand Central \$29). The ominous prologue to our **May Crime Collectors Book of the Month**, in which Sandy Stern, an acclaimed defense attorney in his 80s, collapses in a federal courtroom, hovers over the rest of bestseller Turow's impressive legal thriller, his 11th linked to Illinois's fictional Kindle County. In 2019, Stern and his daughter are

representing Kiril Palko, a Nobel Prize winner and old friend, who's accused of covering up deaths resulting from the use of Palko's breakthrough cancer treatment and then cashing in stocks before news of the fatalities becomes public. Stern, who has vowed that this will be the last case he handles, is aware that both his body and mind are not what they once were. The twisty plot leaves the question of Palko's guilt unsettled until the very end. Take a deep dive into the legal system with Turow in this page-turner that makes a trial centered on fraud and insider trading fascinating. Turow remains in a class of his own in conveying the subtleties of criminal defense work while also entertaining his readers. If you are watch *Bosch*, Seasons 5 and 6, you will be gripped by more insights into our legal system. I also remind you that Turow's bestseller *Presumed Innocent* pioneered the current rage for the Trust No One thriller. It is currently out of stock until the Hachette warehouse reopens.

Walker, Martin. [The Shooting at Chateau Rock](#) (Knopf \$25.95). My treat this May will be reading the 13<sup>th</sup> Bruno Courrèges mystery. Meanwhile here's a summary: It's summer in the Dordogne. The heirs of a Périgordian sheep farmer learn that they have been disinherited, and their father's estate sold to an insurance company in return for a policy that will place him in a five-star retirement home for the rest of his life. But the farmer never gets his life of luxury—he dies before moving in. Was it a natural death? Was there foul play? Bruno begins the investigation that leads him to several shadowy insurance companies owned by a Russian oligarch with a Cypriot passport. The companies are based in Cyprus, Malta, and Luxembourg, but Bruno finds a weak spot in France: the Russian's France-based *notaire* and insurance agent. As Bruno is pursuing this lead, the oligarch's daughter turns up in the Périgord, and complications ensue, eventually bringing the action to the château of an aging rock star. As ever, Bruno still makes time for lunch and his friends, two legged and four. The *PW* Starred Review (mine are always starred for this delicious series) concludes: "Francophiles will relish the evocative descriptions of the Périgord region and its cuisine. Distinctive characters complement the intricate mystery. Readers new to this elegant series will feel right at home." But why not start with [Bruno, Chief of Police](#) (\$16) and binge your way through the very best mystery/escape/travel reading?

Walker has been locked down in the Périgord and hopes to visit us in September. Hence the inclusion in the signed book section. And there is a plus...a photo of Martin's basset hound Balzac enjoying the garden.

White, Kate. [Have You Seen Me?](#) (Harper \$26.99/\$15.95). Ally Linden arrives one morning at her Manhattan office, wet and bedraggled, with a throbbing headache. Her boss approaches her and asks, "What are you doing here?... You haven't worked here in years." A stunned Ally realizes she has no idea where she's been or where she lives, or what came before this embarrassing moment. Not sure whom she can trust, Ally hires a private detective who then ends up murdered. One thing's for certain: Someone will go to any lengths to prevent Ally from recovering her memory. "In this standalone, White provides the twists and shocks that any reader of domestic thrillers expects and savors, but she also manages to use some of our expectations to create clever dead ends. Ally's need for self-discovery has an immediacy, of course, but also a larger resonance, as she begins to realize that she hasn't always made choices that are completely authentic

or independent. Perhaps recovering her memory will be the first step in a larger quest to find herself. An engaging novel that turns some clichés of recent thrillers on their heads.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

Wright, Lawrence. [The End of October](#) (Knopf \$27.95). Our **May First Mystery Book of the Month** gets this rave: “Wright, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*, delivers his knockout first novel, about a World Health Organization doctor who sounds the alarm about the possibility of a global pandemic after stumbling across what looks to be an outbreak of a new disease in Indonesia. On a trip to the site of an ‘unusual cluster of adolescent fatalities in a refugee camp’ in Indonesia, World Health Organization doctor Henry Parsons, the hero of this multifaceted thriller, discovers the compound decimated by an unknown disease. Parsons sounds the alarm that the virus responsible may have spread after learning that his driver, who went inside the camp, was allowed to leave the area. The stakes rise when Parsons finds out that the driver was headed for Saudi Arabia to participate in a pilgrimage to Mecca...

“Wright ... applies the magisterial force of his reporting skills into spinning a novel of pestilence, war and social collapse that, given the current pandemic, cuts exceedingly close to the bone. Like Daniel Defoe’s *Plague Year*, much of the book not only reads like nonfiction, it is nonfiction: Wright weaves into the book accounts of historical epidemics, descriptions of Russian cyber- and biowarfare capabilities, the story of the 1803 attempt to save the New World from smallpox, and other curious nonfiction set pieces. In writing the novel, he interviewed scientists, epidemiologists, government officials and military officers. His understanding of world affairs, Middle East gossip, politics and governmental ineptitude is exceptional. Despite the nonfiction scaffolding, this is a novel, and a good one. The main plotline centers on an epidemiologist, his family and his Odysseus-like return home from the biological battleground. Wright does not spare the reader. There are vivid and ghastly descriptions of hemorrhagic shock, social disorder and brutality. There is a scene of a child scraping a hole in the backyard to bury her mother, and another of the attempted rape of a child.” Douglas Preston concludes his review in the *NY Times* with this: “It has been a surreal experience reading a novel about a fictional pandemic in the midst of a real one.

## OUR MAY BOOKS OF THE MONTH

**British Crime Club** One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Forry, Lauren A. [They Did Bad Things](#)

**Cozy Crimes Club** One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Whishaw, Iona. [A Match Made for Murder](#)

**First Mystery Book of the Month Club** One Signed First per month

Wright, Lawrence. [The End of October](#)

**The Crime Collectors Book of the Month Club** One Signed First per month

Turow, Scott. [The Last Trial](#)

**Historical Fiction Club** One Signed First per month

Quick, Amanda. [Close Up](#)

**Fantastic New Fiction** One Signed First per month

Farmer, Jordan. [The Poison Flood](#)

## 2020 EDGAR WINNERS

### Best Novel

Elly Griffiths. [The Stranger Diaries](#) (\$15.99)

From the author of the beloved Ruth Galloway series, a modern gothic mystery for fans of *Magpie Murders* and *The Lake House*.

### Best First Novel

Angie Kim, [Miracle Creek](#) (\$17)

A 2019 Book of the Month here, a fascinating mix of murder, medicals, betrayals, secrets, and a courtroom drama. [Watch Angie discuss it with me](#) for more background. This is truly a fabulous book and given its picture of an experimental medical treatment, a timely one.

### Best Paperback Original

Adam O’Fallon Price. [The Hotel Neversink](#) (Tin House \$15.99) Thirty-one years after workers first broke ground, the magnificent Hotel Neversink in the Catskills finally opens to the public. Then a young boy disappears... A bit of Jewish History and “A gripping, atmospheric, heart-breaking, almost-ghost story. Not since Stephen King’s *Overlook* has a hotel hiding a secret been brought to such vivid life.”

### Best Fact Crime

Axton Betz-Hamilton, [The Less People Know about Us](#) (Grand Central \$27)

Axton Betz-Hamilton grew up in small-town Indiana in the early ‘90s. When she was 11 years old, her parents both had their identities stolen. Their credit ratings were ruined, and they were constantly fighting over money. This was before the age of the Internet, when identity theft became more commonplace, so authorities and banks were clueless and reluctant to help. This true crime memoir, an award-winning identity theft expert tells the shocking story of the duplicity and betrayal that inspired her career and nearly destroyed her family.

### Best Critical/Biographical Work

John Billheimer, *Hitchcock and the Censors* (sold out, hugely expensive to order)

Throughout his career, Alfred Hitchcock had to deal with a wide variety of censors attuned to the slightest suggestion of sexual innuendo, undue violence, toilet humor, religious disrespect, and all forms of indecency, real or imagined. [Watch Patrick discuss this fascinating work with John](#)

### Mary Higgins Clark Award

Carol Goodman, [The Night Visitors](#) (Harper \$15.95)

A story of mistaken identities and missed chances, forgiveness, and vengeance. Alice. Oren. Mattie. Mattie isn’t the only one withholding elements of the truth. Alice is keeping her own secrets. And as the snowstorm worsens around them, each woman’s past will prove itself unburied, stirring up threats both within and without.

### Sue Grafton Memorial Award

Tracy Clark, [Borrowed Time](#) (Kensington \$26)

Cassandra Raines, the former Chicago cop turned private investigator looks into a suspicious death as a favor to a friend—and makes some powerful enemies...

## 2020 PULITZER PRIZE FOR FICTION

Colson, Whitehead. [Nickel Boys](#) (\$24.95)

## NONFICTION TO ENJOY

Buford, Bill. [Dirt](#) (Knopf \$28.99) is a vivid and often laugh-out-loud account of the tribulations, humblings, and triumphs of the author's and his family's adventures, in the world of French *haute cuisine*, a treat to read for anyone who's ever found joy in cooking and eating food with their family—from the author of the widely acclaimed *Heat*. Buford moved to France in the in roughly 2005 to learn about French cooking, and after much effort he, his wife, and their twin toddler boys arrive in Lyon, a city notable for “its gritty darkness, the sewage smells.” It isn't until he does a stint at a cooking school that he finagles a spot in a Michelin-starred restaurant, where the work is relentless and the culture unreformed (an Indonesian cook, for instance, is given the name Jackie Chan). Meanwhile, Buford's twin boys become fully French, and Buford puts on his culinary deerstalker cap to investigate the influence of Italian cooking on French cuisine, and vice versa. Buford's a delightful narrator, and his stories of attending a pig slaughter, befriending the owner of a local bakery, and becoming gradually accepted by the locals are by turns funny, intimate, insightful, and occasionally heartbreaking. It's a remarkable book, and even readers who don't know a sabayon from a Sabatier will find it endlessly rewarding. Rob and I lunched at Trois Gros, a Michelin 3-Star Restaurant near Lyon in the same time period. I can't recommend you watch *Chef* on MHZ highly enough, it will show you how a French kitchen is run like a brigade. Two seasons. I'm still sad it ended.

Bythell, Shaun. [Confessions of a Bookseller](#) (Godine \$25.95). The next best thing to visiting your favorite bookstore (bookshop cat not included). Go behind the scenes at The Bookshop in Wigtown, Scotland with owner (and author) Shaun Bythell. Inside a stone-faced Georgian townhouse on the Wigtown highroad, jammed with more than 100,000 books and one portly shop cat, Shaun manages the daily ups and downs of running Scotland's largest used bookshop with a sharp eye and even sharper wit. His account of one year behind the counter is something no book lover should miss. Enjoy ““A full, appealing world populated with colorful characters. The Scottish landscape—geese flying over the salt marsh, the meandering river where he likes to fish—is gorgeous...an endearing and thoughtful book.”—*Minneapolis Star Tribune*

Cyrgalis, Bret. [Golf's Holy War](#) (Avid Reader \$28). Here's a Starred Review for a book for hungry sports fans: “*New York Post* sportswriter Cyrgalis takes a fascinating look at where technological innovation and hallowed tradition meet in the golf world. Cyrgalis tackles the debates around theories of coaching, from the traditional one-on-one coaches to those who champion ‘the proliferation of high-end technology such as ball-flight monitors and 3-D motion analysis.’ He writes that ‘golf has the most extensive and eclectic literature of any sport,’ and begins by highlighting two seemingly arcane books that are ‘paramount to understanding modern golf’—1969's *The Golfing Machine* and *Golf in the Kingdom*, 1972. From there he discusses many aspects of golf, including the relationship between golf and religion as well as the influence New York Yankee Babe Ruth's swing had on golf. In a chapter on Tiger Woods, he examines how golfers and coaches sought to emulate Woods's powerful swing, and also notes that Woods's recent success has come without a technologically minded coach. This fascinating book is an obvious hole-in-one for golfers and their coaches.”

Gardner, James. [The Louvre](#) (Grove \$30). More for Francophiles. Art critic Gardner traces the turbulent history of Paris's Louvre Museum from fortress to castle to center of France's cultural universe in this engrossing account, revealing a building that Gardner calls “as great a work of art as anything it contains.” The Louvre was a nexus of French art, architecture, and culture, and Gardner argues that through the Louvre one can see the growth of “Paris itself.” The site was originally a campground 7,000 years ago; in 1191, King Philippe Auguste constructed a fortress there; a century and a half later, Charles V had remodeled the Louvre into a castle, which in the early 16th century became the primary residence for King Francois I. After Louis XIV moved the royal court to Versailles in 1682, the Louvre suffered neglect until it was converted into a public art museum in 1793, during the French Revolution. In elegant prose, Gardner describes how over the next 200 years the Louvre endured constant evolution and construction as its reputation as a leading repository for art treasures grew and it became the world's most famous museum (“there is something at once presumptuous and miraculous in its emergence out of nothing”). Fast-paced and evocative, this is a must for Francophones as well as art and architecture lovers.

Harkup, Kathryn. [Death by Shakespeare](#) (Bloomsbury \$28). During the 16th and 17th centuries, the grim reality of death was pervasive. The average life expectancy in England during Shakespeare's time was roughly age 38. Commonplace in the era were widespread illness, contagious disease and plagues; starvation and violent excesses; murder and suicide; venereal diseases and deaths from childbirth; witchcraft; war and public executions. With that in mind, how could Shakespeare not weave the drama of lurking death, complete with blood, gruesomeness and gore, into his stories—tragedies, histories and comedies—that played out on the Renaissance stage? These facts drew chemist and author Harkup, author of *A Is for Arsenic* (), to explore facets of death in the Bard's dramatic works and to examine death through the detailed prism of analytical science. Did Shakespeare capture the essence of death with accuracy? Were the hangings, burnings at the stake and beheadings prevalent in his plays about Henry V and Henry VI rendered authentically? Were the poisoning in *Hamlet*, the snakebite that did in Cleopatra and the catastrophic emotional grief inherent in *Romeo and Juliet* authentic? How and where did William Shakespeare gain his knowledge and insight—and how might he have come to understand the complex vulnerabilities that lead to processes of death? Harkup leaves no stone unturned in her immensely thorough and compelling distillation of the Bard's work.

Miller, Lulu. [Why Fish Don't Exist](#) (Gallery \$26). Here's a book like *H Is for Hawk* or *The Argonauts*, interweaving memoir, biography, and outside research to create a wholly unique book that can pry open the deepest questions we face in our lives. In this case, the question at the heart of Lulu's pursuit is: How do you go on in a time of crisis, when you don't think you can go on? This is universal and timely. “Lulu's gorgeous writing, well-plotted approach, and unique route into the question allow for useful answers, along with a moving, suspenseful, thought-provoking story-like a nonfiction thriller. At the start of each chapter is a beautiful woodcut illustration original to the book. Each depicts a small segment of the story of David Starr Jordan and Lulu Miller's hunt for answers about persistence, faith, and how to live. They help create an immersive atmosphere and a book

that is unique both in form and package. The illustrator is Kate Samworth, an award-winning artist whose book *Aviary Wonders* won the Kirkus Prize. The whole package reminds me of Richard Flanagan's magnificent *Gould's Book of Fish* which years ago was a Book of the Month we sold in the hundreds.

Rasenberger, Jim. [The Revolver: Sam Colt](#) (Scribner \$28). A story of the brazenly ambitious and profoundly innovative industrialist and leader Samuel Colt brings him vividly to life. In the space of his forty-seven years, he seemingly lived five lives: he traveled, womanized, drank prodigiously, smuggled guns to Russia, bribed politicians, and supplied the Union Army with the guns they needed to win the Civil War. Colt lived during an age of promise and progress, but also of slavery, corruption, and unbridled greed, and he not only helped to create this America, he completely embodied it. By the time he died in 1862 in Hartford, Connecticut, he was one of the most famous men in nation, and one of the richest. While *Revolver* is a riveting and revealing biography of Colt, a man who made significant contributions to our country during the nineteenth century, it's also a lively and informative historical portrait of America during a time of extraordinary transformation. A beautiful package, with great interior black and white photos, documents, and maps.

#### BOOKS FOR MOM OR ANY TIME IN MAY

*Because of the time crunch and shipping delays I sent this section out in an April 30 Enews. But the books below can be enjoyed any time in May and on so I repeat it here*

Cobbs, Katherine. [Cookies and Cocktails](#) (Tiller Press \$19.99). Leaning into the hipster trend of making fresh cocktails, while spotlighting regional watering holes and mixologists, here is a cookbook that playfully pairs 50 creamy cocktails with delicious recipes for sweet and savory cookies, biscuits, wafers and bars written by a seasoned food writer. Restaurants and hotels are embracing the cookie + cocktail pairing and similarly multiple restaurants and food blogs are experimenting with cookie-inspired cocktails. *Travel + Leisure* posted a story about pairing Girl Scout cookies with cocktails. The recipes will include trendy ingredients like nut/oat milks, clarified liquor, aquafaba, tahini, matcha, housemade syrups, and a new method of "fat-washing." Cobbs collaborated with James Beard award winners, including Chef Frank Stitt.

Cullen, Lynn. [The Sisters of Summit Avenue](#) (\$16.95). From the author of *Mrs. Poe* and *Twain's End* comes a novel set during the Great Depression about two estranged sisters, both in love with the same man, and their mother, who has spent a lifetime hiding a desperate secret that could upend their entire family. The iconic Betty Crocker—not an actual person, but a fictional character invented by a flour company in 1921—is featured in the novel and offers readers a resonant picture of what lives were like for women during the Great Depression.

Keane, Mary Beth. [Ask Again, Yes](#) (\$17.99). One of the most beloved novels of the year, the 2019 Tonight Show Summer Reads pick and "magnificent" (NPR) *New York Times* bestseller offers "profound insights about blame, forgiveness, and abiding love" (*People*) about two neighboring families in a suburban town, the friendship between their children, the daily intimacies of marriage, and the power of forgiveness. "One of the most unpretentiously profound books I've read in a long time... Keane

writes with deep familiarity and precision about the lives of this particular generation... As a writer, Keane reminds me a lot of Ann Patchett: Both have the magical ability to seem to be telling 'only' a closely-observed domestic tale that transforms into something else deep and, yes, universal. In Keane's case, that 'something else' is a story about forgiveness and acceptance... modestly magnificent." —Maureen Corrigan, *Fresh Air*.

LaPierre, Alexandra. [The Woman of a Thousand Names](#) (Atria \$28). This biography masquerading as a Russian novel explores the complicated loves, losses and unfettered life of a 20th-century marvel. First published in France in 2016, *The Woman of a Thousand Names* makes its American arrival in this translation by Jeffrey Zuckerman. LaPierre traveled to Russia, Estonia, France, England, Italy and the United States over the course of three years, gathering letters, reports and accounts of the life of Maria Ignatievna Zakrevskaya-Benckendorff-Budberg—Moura to her friends. Though fictionalizing the biography of Baroness Budberg, LaPierre nevertheless assures "readers can presume that all the protagonists, all the places, all the dates, all the words, and all Moura's acts of which I am aware have been rendered with as much accuracy as I can provide within this novel." "She embodied the novelistic form so thoroughly that she came to belong wholly to legend, myth, and fantasy," writes LaPierre. "Facts and objective reality barely counted for her. She never owed anything to Truth. Except to her own truth." LaPierre holds nothing back in describing Baroness Budberg's life, with exacting detail painting the fluctuating state of the world (beginning with the Bolshevik Revolution and continuing on through the World Wars); the parade of lovers, friends, family, husbands and children who all knew a different side of her; and the near-constant changes in settings during Moura's tumultuous existence. Did anyone truly know who Moura was? Did she know herself? LaPierre leaves it up to readers to decide, lyrically presenting a life without judgment: "She was the personification of loyalty. She was the personification of deceit.... She was a survivor."

Palmer, DJ. [The New Husband](#) (St Martins \$27.99 SIGNED). This is a terrific suspense thriller, in stock and ready to ship, that begins with a husband apparently washed overboard, disappeared anyway, off his boat while fishing. Nina learns that Glen might have had secrets kept from her. A year and a half later she marries Simon Fitch, a teacher at her children's school, and embraces how perfect he is. Her son adores Simon. Her favorites and her needs, Simon caters to them all. He's the perfect husband. Why then does Nina's daughter so distrust him? As the gap between mom and daughter grows along with Nina's desire to keep her new life on track, what choices will this mom make, what lies is she telling herself? This sums it up: "A grieving widow. A perfect savior. A suspicious child. Clever gaslighting—Palmer gives the familiar a shocking twist that is a stunner."

See, Lisa. [The Island of Sea Women](#) (\$18) is a powerful story of a complex female friendship, rich with family secrets, set against the tragic history of a small Korean island and its matriarchal society of female divers. The mother-daughter dynamic will grip you.

Serle, Rebecca. [In Five Years](#) (Atria \$27). In a kind of reverse *Outlander*, a novel that might resonate with mothers before they took the path to motherhood. Where do you see yourself in five years? When Type-A Manhattan lawyer Dannie Cohan is asked



this question at the most important interview of her career, she has a meticulously crafted answer at the ready. Later, after nailing her interview and accepting her boyfriend's marriage proposal, Dannie goes to sleep knowing she is right on track to achieve her five-year plan. But when she wakes up, she's suddenly in a different apartment, with a different ring on her finger, and beside a very different man. The television news is on in the background, and she can just make out the scrolling date. It's the same night—December 15, but 2025, five years in the future. After a very intense, shocking hour, Dannie wakes again, at the brink of midnight, back in 2020. She can't shake what has happened. It certainly felt much more than merely a dream, but she isn't the kind of person who believes in visions. That nonsense is only charming coming from free-spirited types, like her lifelong best friend, Bella. Determined to ignore the odd experience, she files it away in the back of her mind. That is, until four-and-a-half years later, when by chance Dannie meets the very same man from her long-ago vision.

Shipman, Viola. [The Heirloom Garden](#) (Harlequin \$16.99). Iris Maynard lost her husband in World War II, her daughter to illness and, finally, her reason to live. Walled off from the world for decades behind the towering fence surrounding her home, Iris has built a new family...of flowers. Iris propagates her own daylilies and roses while tending to a garden filled with the heirloom starts that keep the memories of her loved ones alive. When Abby Peterson moves next door with her family—a husband traumatized by his service in the Iraq War and a young daughter searching for stability—Iris is reluctantly yet inevitably drawn into her boisterous neighbor's life, where, united by loss and a love of flowers, she and Abby tentatively unearth their secrets... Illustrated. "The likable women and the engaging information on flowers will appeal to readers of Rhys Bowen's [The Victory Garden](#) (\$14.95) and fans of Mary Alice Monroe and Lorna Landvik." —*Booklist*

Siger, Jeffrey. [Island of Secrets](#) (\$15.99). It's all about woman power: wives, lovers, mothers. And set on the beautiful island of Mykonos in the Aegean where Greek patriarchal culture is rubbing up against the international playground it has become. Athens' Chief Inspector Andreas Kaldis gets a case where the corrupt former police officer who runs a protection racket on the island is gunned down, requiring his Special Crimes Unit's presence, while his rich and lovely wife Lila bonds with American ex-pat Toni, who plays piano in a gender-bending bar, to mentor young Mykonos girls trapped in an exploitative culture. This gem published in hardcover under the title *The Mykonos Mob*.

Webber, Heather. [Midnight at the Blackbird Café](#) (Forge \$16.99). **Alas, this book is out of stock at the publisher so we can't supply it for Mother's Day, but it's worth backordering.** Nestled in the mountain shadows of Alabama lies the little town of Wicklow. It is here that Anna Kate has returned to bury her beloved Granny Zee, owner of the Blackbird Café. It was supposed to be a quick trip to close the café and settle her grandmother's estate, but despite her best intentions, Anna Kate is drawn to the town and into her family's past. This is a charming southern small town story with "A cast of quirky, nosy, small-town Southern characters sure to appeal to fans of Dorothea Benton Frank, Mary Alice Monroe, Karen White, Joshilyn Jackson, Mary Kay Andrews. Lighthearted magical realism perfect for fans of Sarah Addison Allen, Alice Hoffman, and Joanne Harris. Centered around food magic, like *Chocolat* or *Fried Green Tomatoes at the*

*Whistle Stop Cafe*. Yeah, covers a lot of bases. "An enchanting gem of a novel... this is truly magical realism at its best." —Karen White

## CLASSICS

Carr, John Dickson. [Castle Skull](#) (Poisoned Pen Press \$14.95). Alison has been murdered. His blazing body was seen running about the battlements of Castle Skull. And so a dark shadow looms over the Rhineland where Inspector Henri Bencolin and his accomplice Jeff Marle have arrived from Paris. Entreated by the Belgian financier D'Aunay to investigate the gruesome and grimly theatrical death of actor Myron Alison, the two find themselves at the imposing hilltop fortress Schloss Schädel, in which a small group of suspects are still assembled. As thunder rolls in the distance, Bencolin and Marle enter a world steeped in macabre legends of murder and magic to catch the killer still walking the maze-like passages and towers of the keep. This British Library Crime Classic's spirited and deeply atmospheric early novel also features the rare Inspector Bencolin short story "The Fourth Suspect."

Armstrong, Charlotte. [The Chocolate Cobweb](#) (\$15.95). When Amanda Garth was born, a nearly-disastrous mix-up caused the hospital to briefly hand her over to the prestigious Garrison family instead of to her birth parents. The error was quickly fixed, Amanda was never told, and the secret was forgotten for twenty-three years...until her aunt thoughtlessly revealed it in casual conversation. But what if the initial switch never actually occurred, and what if the real accident was Amanda's being "returned" to the wrong parents? After all, her artistic proclivities are far more aligned with painter Tobias, patriarch of the wealthy Garrison clan, than with the uncreative duo that raised her. Determined to discover her true identity within her aunt's bizarre anecdote, Amanda calls on her almost-family, only to discover that the fantasy life she imagines is not at all like their reality. Instead, she encounters a web of lies and suspicions that ensnares her almost immediately.

Christie, Agatha. [The Mysterious Affair at Styles](#) (\$9.95). This her first novel was first printed a century ago as an 18-part serialization in the *Times Weekly Edition* from February to June, 1920. A single-volume edition was published in the United States in October 1920; the U.K. version was not released until a year later. *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* introduced Belgian detective Hercule Poirot—Christie's most famous character alongside Miss Marple. The novel was written during World War I, and was inspired by Christie's work in a hospital, where she gained an expert knowledge of toxins and cared for wounded Belgian soldiers. Christie began writing it at Styles after a bet with her older sister, who claimed Christie could not write a detective novel without the reader being able to deduce the killer ahead of the ending. Christie won that bet and went on to write 66 detective novels and 14 short story collections.

Goldsborough, Robert. [Archie Goes Home](#) (\$16.99). This is a "new" Nero Wolfe but forms part of the beloved Wolfe universe so I list it here. Archie Goodwin's aunt Edna is about to lure him away from his work at Nero Wolfe's New York brownstone. After a phone call, he heads off to Ohio, where the president of Farmer's State Bank and Trust, an elderly widower, has died in an apparent suicide. But Archie's aunt has expressed nagging suspicions—which only grow stronger when someone takes a shot at

a local reporter who wrote about the case. It wouldn't be a small town without some gossip, and Archie soon hears the whispers: romantic intrigues, a possible paternity case, a ruined business. While reconnecting with his aging mother—and fending off his nagging aunt—Archie tries to untangle a web of grudges, scandals, and murder. 15th in Goldsborough's Nero Wolfe novels.

Woolrich, Cornell. [Waltz into Darkness](#) (\$15.95). Woolrich's classic *femme fatale* narrative in which a mail-order marriage goes horribly wrong. First published in 1947, *Waltz* was written under Woolrich's William Irish pseudonym, which he had previously used for his novels *Phantom Lady* and *Deadline at Dawn*. It came near the end of an incredibly prolific period in his creative life—from 1940 to 1950—that saw the publication of eleven classic suspense novels and dozens of short stories. Woolrich's longest novel, *Waltz* trades his usual Manhattan nightscapes for the gaslight and cobblestones of 1880 New Orleans. All that poor Louis Durand, the novel's ostensible hero, wants is to love, and be loved. Fifteen years earlier, his fiancée died of yellow fever on the night before their wedding. Now an affluent businessman at thirty-seven, Louis is nonetheless lonely, lost, and terrified of growing old alone. He contracts for a mail-order bride from St. Louis, in what he calls “the bargain he had made with love, taking what he could get, in sudden desperate haste, for fear of getting nothing at all.” But when Julia Russell, his bride-to-be, arrives, she looks nothing like the pictures she's sent, and her stories don't match what she's recounted in her letters. Blinded by love and need, Louis accepts her explanations without question, and ignores those first ominous clues that she's not what—or who—she claims to be. Petite, blond and lovely, Julia (or Bonny, as her real name may or may not be) is nevertheless the most fatale of femmes. Louis is soon ensnared—helplessly and willingly—in her web.

### THE RETURN OF PERRY MASON

This is a good month to go on a nostalgia reading binge. And HBO has announced an eight-part limited series of Erle Stanley Gardner's defense attorney Perry Mason starring Matthew Rhys, John Lithgow, and Tatiana Maslany, among many others. The series is not based on any particular Perry Mason. But here are some newly released titles, all called *The Case of...* (\$17.99).

[The Gilded Lily](#). Stewart Bedford is willing to cooperate with a blackmailer to protect his beloved wife. But when he wakes up in a daze to find the man shot dead with Bedford's gun and his blond escort missing, he'll need some help from defense lawyer Perry Mason.

[The Lazy Lover](#). Mason is surprised to receive two checks from a stranger named Lola Allred. And when he speaks with Lola's husband, he discovers the woman has run off with her daughter's boyfriend—who happens to be an important witness in a lawsuit. Soon Mason's caught up in a complicated case involving not only a missing witness but forgery and murder as well . . .

[The Lonely Heiress](#). Marilyn Marlow has inherited a good deal of money from her mother. But the money originated with another will—that of her mother's wealthy employer. Now his relatives are contesting the will, and it's Rose Keeling, the key witness to its signing, whose mind they will need to sway. When Rose is murdered, sleuthing lawyer Mason must navigate a twisted case involving a personal ad that casts a cloud of suspicion over his client, Miss Marlow.

[The Dubious Bridegroom](#). Edward Garvin is a very successful businessman with a very unhappy ex-wife—who wants his money. So Garvin calls on Mason to protect his company from her schemes, and ensure the divorce they'd gotten in Mexico is actually finalized. But when Garvin's former spouse is struck down by a killer, Mason's client becomes the chief suspect. Fortunately, the attorney “comes up with dazzling answers” to the mystery.

[The Green-Eyed Sister](#). Beautiful Sylvia Bain Atwood is overseeing her ailing father's estate while her sister serves as his caregiver. But their father's fortune has shadowy roots—and now one of his creditors is blackmailing the family. Then the situation escalates to murder.

[The Terrified Typist](#). Mason needs a temporary typist, but the one he hires turns out to be more temporary than expected. When she disappears, leaving a couple of diamonds behind in her haste, Mason winds up taking on a new client: a gem importer in his office building who's been charged with smuggling and murder. But if Mason's going to untangle this case, finding the typist is key....

### AN ECLECTIC SMATTERING OF NEW BOOKS...

Akers, WM. [Westside Saints](#) (Harper Voyager \$27.99). Gilda Carr returns in this twisted version of Jazz Age New York as the relentless private detective out to solve small mysteries. She must face one of her biggest challenges to date which is the reappearance of her mother who is just as spirited as she is. This is not the New York you know. This is a dangerous New York filled with darkness, drunks, and just enough supernatural occurrences to make it interesting. To a detective this cynical, faith is a weakness, and she is fighting the urge to believe in miracles when her long dead mother, Mary Fall, walks through the parlor door. Stricken with amnesia, Mary remembers nothing of her daughter or her death, but that doesn't stop her from being as infuriatingly pushy as Gilda herself. As her mother threatens to drive her insane, Gilda keeps their relationship a secret so that they can work together to investigate what brought Mary back to life.

Berg, Gretchen. [The Operator](#) (Morrow \$26.99). A debut set in a small 1950s Midwestern town where the residents connect via telephone, with conversations sometimes overheard (hijacked) by the operator(s), feels welcome. Switchboard ace Vivian Dalton knows Wooster, Ohio, better than most, even her fellow operators at Bell down on East Liberty Street. They all have opinions on local behavior from snatches of talk or listening in. Then one night Vivian falls prey to the risk of her behavior: she hears something from a call between that snob Betty Miller and a voice she can't place that will upend her own life. Vivian may be facing humiliation, but she's going to get to the bottom of the rumor, no matter how painful. But of course one secret leads to another....

Block, Lawrence, ed. [The Darkling Halls of Ivy](#) (Subterranean \$50). Set in and around colleges and universities, the 17 new stories and one reprint in this top-notch anthology explore the forbidding side of academia. As Block (the Bernie Rhodenbarr mysteries) notes in his droll introduction, each of the varied, well-told tales is “as individual as fingerprints.” Among the standouts are David Morrell's devious “Requiem for a Homecoming,” in which two alumni cast suspicion on each other while debating a 20-year-old murder; Ian Rankin's riveting “The Reasoners,” concerning the cover-up of a murder at a secret society in an ancient British university; and Reed Farrel Coleman's

chilling “An Even Three,” about a psychopath at a liberal arts college. Elsewhere, themes veer from rivalry, rape, and survival of the fittest, to plagiarism, academic ghostwriting, and unsavory alternative employment beyond the ivy-covered walls. Creepy oddities include Owen King’s tale of heroism, “That Golden Way,” A.J. Hartley’s supernatural “Rounded with a Sleep,” and Jane Hamilton’s superlative “Writing Maeve Dubinsky,” about the appropriation of another person’s work. Order now as we have only ten on order of this exemplary compilation.

Chang, Janie. [The Library of Legends](#) (Morrow \$16.95). China, 1937: When Japanese bombs begin falling on the city of Nan-king, nineteen-year-old Hu Lian and her classmates at Minghua University are ordered to flee. Lian and a convoy of more than a hundred students, faculty, and staff must walk a thousand miles to the safety of China’s western provinces, a journey marred by hunger, cold, and the constant threat of aerial attack. And it is not just the student refugees whose lives are at risk: Lian and her classmates have been entrusted with a priceless treasure: a 500-year-old collection of myths and folklore known as the Library of Legends. Her family’s past has made Lian wary of forming attachments, but the students’ common duty to safeguard the Library of Legends forms unexpected bonds. Lian finds friendship and a cautious romance with the handsome and wealthy Liu Shaoming. But after one classmate is murdered and another arrested, Lian realizes she must escape from the convoy before a family secret puts her in danger. Accompanied by Shao and the enigmatic maidservant Sparrow, Lian makes her way to Shanghai, hoping to reunite with her mother. On the journey, Lian learns of the connection between her two companions and a tale from the Library of Legends, The Willow Star and the Prince. Learning Shao and Sparrow’s true identities compels Lian to confront her feelings for Shao. But there are broader consequences too, for as the ancient books travel across China, they awaken immortals and guardian spirits to embark on an exodus of their own, one that changes the country’s fate forever. Based on true events, and rich in Chinese history and lore.

Collette, Abby. [A Deadly Inside Scoop](#) (Penguin \$16) is a series start introducing Bronwyn “Win” Crewse, who has taken over Crewse Creamery, the ice cream parlor her family has owned for decades in Chagrin Falls, Ohio, after her aunt’s retirement. Win is excited to remodel the business and recreate her late grandmother’s innovative recipes. But when a snowstorm keeps all her potential customers at home on Win’s opening day, she decides to comfort herself by making a batch of ice cream with snow. On her trek to find pristine snow, Win trips over the body of Stephen Bayard, who years earlier plunged Win’s family into a legal nightmare. Bayard was killed with a lethal injection, and Win’s father, a surgeon at the local hospital, becomes a prime suspect. With the enthusiastic help of her best friend, Maisie Solomon, Win sets out to prove her father’s innocence. Readers should be prepared for lots of coincidences and jumping to conclusions, but a pair of plucky female sleuths, a close-knit family, and ice cream shop lore more than compensate. This is a tasty treat for cozy fans. The author may do a virtual event for us in June.

✚Drysdale, Pip. [The Sunday Girl](#) (Sourcebooks \$26.99). A debut by actress Drysdale, who relishes flawed characters, takes advantage of her stage skills, particularly blocking action, in driving a story that you know can’t end well for someone. Londoner Taylor Bishop, a research analyst for a property company, has

been betrayed by charismatic Angus. Taylor’s always been one of those sunny good girls, but when Angus posts a sex tape, she becomes hungry for payback. Better revenge than a wallow in self pity. Guidance is at hand in Master Sun Tzu’s *The Art of War* which she discovers by chance. And so Taylor blocks out a plan. As it develops, Taylor learns she didn’t know Angus as well as she thought, and that once put into motion, a fight can lead to unexpected choices.

✚Forry, Lauren A. [They Did Bad Things](#) (Arcade \$25.99). An ominous note at the start of this superior riff on *And Then There Were None*—**Our May British Crime Club Book of the Month, arriving near the end of May**— indicates that the narrative that follows is a diary recovered as evidence and that some of the pages are missing. Police Constable Hollis Drummond, newly promoted to CID detective, is expecting a relaxing weekend at Wolf-heather House, on Scotland’s Isle of Doon, but he realizes something is going on as soon as he arrives and sees the four other guests. The five shared a house more than twenty years earlier, while undergrads at London’s Cahill University, with Callum McAllister, who died mysteriously. Someone has lured the five to the isolated location, arranged for the sofa McAllister died on to be transported there, and left taunting notes on the stationery their dead classmate used when they lived together. Soon people start dying, leaving the survivors to wonder whether one of them is responsible for the bloodshed. The choice is stark: confess to their crimes, or die. Forry expertly maintains the nail-biting suspense while fully developing her characters. Agatha Christie fans won’t want to miss this one.

Gudenkauf, Heather. [This Is How I Lied](#) (Park Row \$17.99). Maggie Kennedy-O’Keefe of the Grotto, Iowa, PD is assigned to a cold case, the murder of her 16-year-old best friend, Eve Knox, after two kids find a new piece of evidence, Eve’s boot, in the cave where Maggie found Eve’s body 25 years earlier. Maggie’s job is to inform the Knox family, review the case files, gather all the evidence, and send it to the state lab for testing. She speaks to Eve’s mentally unstable sister, the sister’s abusive boyfriend, a pedophile neighbor, and her own father, the former Grotto PD police chief, who suffers from dementia. To complicate matters, Maggie is eight months pregnant and fatigued. When she receives threatening phone calls, and the barn on her property is torched, it becomes clear this small town is filled with secrets people want to keep buried. Maggie has to make one impossible choice after another....

✚Hill, Susan. [The Benefit of Hindsight](#) (Overlook \$27). Detective Chief Superintendent Simon Serrailer, the top cop in Susan Hill’s series of police novels set in the fictional South England cathedral town of Lafferton, has always been a bit of an enigma to colleagues, friends and family. Simon plays things so close to the vest that he may not even know himself what he’s up to. Back from medical leave after suffering the loss of a limb in the course of duty, Simon seems to have healed well physically: ‘He used his prosthesis as naturally as anyone used their flesh-and-bone arm.’ But what of his emotional health? Is his judgment still sound? When a well-planned burglary occurs at the home of a successful local couple, Simon orders a media blackout, thinking to lull the thieves into carelessness. But a second such robbery turns violent, and further injury occurs in its wake. Has Simon’s eagerness to return to work caused him to make a fatal error? Ms. Hill has written a sophisticated crime story with a protagonist

fallible enough to commit big mistakes and wise enough (with prodding) to deal with the consequences.

✚Hunter, Madeline. [Heiress for Hire](#) (Zebra \$7.99). My eye is caught by this Starred Review at a time when romance is super comforting: “At the heart of this smart, satisfying Regency romance—the first in a new trilogy from Hunter—is the mystery of why a duke would bequeath a fortune to a woman he’d never met. Chase Radnor, gentleman investigator and nephew to the late duke, is instantly suspicious upon meeting newly minted heiress Minerva Hepplewhite. His eccentric uncle’s fall from a parapet looks like murder, and Minerva gained a great deal from his death. The self-reliant young widow also has a dark, secretive past that makes her a perfect suspect. To clear her name, Minerva begins her own investigation into the duke’s death, launching Hepplewhite’s Office of Discreet Inquiries, and she and Chase form an uneasy alliance as they first compete for, then begin to share, clues. Hunter gives the well-matched pair plenty of ground to cover with a wide cast of memorable suspects, and their clever detective work is a consistent pleasure. The plot moves apace, but Chase and Minerva’s relationship is treated patiently, with their attraction simmering alongside mutual respect, and their eventual love scenes are sensitively rendered. Romance readers craving substantive mystery and intelligent leads will savor this pitch-perfect love story.”

McCreight, Kimberley. [A Good Marriage](#) (Harper \$27.99). A Library Reads Pick: “In Park Slope, everyone has a ‘good marriage.’ Yet after an annual party that often involves partner swapping, one wife ends up dead. Her husband might not be the best spouse, but he claims he didn’t kill his wife. If being a bad husband doesn’t make you a murderer, then who in this idyllic community is responsible? Liane Moriarty fans will love this one.” Legal thriller, domestic suspense, marriage introspective – *A Good Marriage* is all of these as well as a good story of people dealing with their kids, their spouses, and their pasts. You will be pulled in immediately when Lizzie is contacted by an old college beau who is in Rikers, charged with the murder of his wife. And reading this will confirm that no good deed goes unpunished in a Trust No One world.

Meyer, Deon. [The Last Hunt](#) (Grove \$27). While we only dream of travel, here you can visit South Africa with one of its most compelling authors. A bodyguard and ex-cop named Johnson Johnson has been killed and thrown off “the most luxurious train in the world,” his body found a week later next to the railroad tracks. When Griessel and Cupido try to contact a state-security officer whom the victim called on his cellphone just before his death, they’re told by government agents to back off. A second narrative unfolds parallel to Griessel and Cupido’s investigation: the account of a former South African revolutionary soldier living in Bordeaux, France, under the assumed name of Daniel Darret. A former colleague tracks Daniel down and begs him to accept one last assignment: to assassinate a corrupt South African official about to visit France. Hours after making his appeal, Daniel’s ex-colleague himself dies in an airport—of an alleged heart attack. The two story strands intertwine in time to reveal a corrupt conspiracy—even as Griessel and Cupido risk their lives and careers to defend their personal and departmental integrity. Of this new dark period, Griessel reflects: “Shame burned through him. It was just like it was back in the apartheid days, the lies and deceit.” But the two detectives are not the type to get discour-

aged; in word, deed and spirit, Mr. Meyer’s humane and engaging characters are indeed among “the best of the best.”

Morgenthaler, Sarah. [The Tourist Attraction](#) (Sourcebooks \$14.99). Here is the first of a romantic series set in Moose Springs, Alaska. The Starred Review: A grumpy diner owner and an adventurous waitress on her first vacation in years develop unexpected feelings in Morgenthaler’s thoroughly entertaining debut. Graham Barnett hates running the Tourist Trap, his popular Moose Springs, Alas., establishment famous both for the gimmicky menu items (‘Growly Bear’ drinks and ‘reindeer dogs’) and Graham’s surly behavior, which the wealthy visitors to the nearby resort find inexplicably charming. He would much prefer to spend his time working on his chain saw sculptures. But as soon as he locks eyes with the ‘adorably dorky’ Zoey Caldwell, who’s saved up tip money for years for a two-week Alaskan adventure, Graham puts aside both art and business to spend time with her as her tour guide. Though their relationship hits an early hurdle when Zoey mistakes a chainsaw-wielding Graham for a murderer and kicks him in the groin, the chemistry between the two builds at a satisfying pace. Morgenthaler’s descriptions of the scenery are majestic, and her delineation of the friction between the townspeople and the tourists is well done. The quirky supporting characters, including a truck-humping moose, add charm.”

Parks, Alan. [Bobby March Will Live Forever](#) (Canongate \$26). The *WSJ* again: “Alan Parks’ third tough thriller featuring Glasgow police detective Harry McCoy, takes place (for the most part) in the summer of 1973. The city is sweltering through an oppressive heat wave, and detective McCoy is incensed by workplace conditions. With his boss on leave, McCoy is being persecuted by the man in temporary charge: a vindictive rival who makes sure that McCoy is shut out of the frantic search for a kidnapped 13-year-old girl. Instead, he’s sent to investigate the drug-overdose death of the titular Bobby March, a faded rock star. He’s also put (off the record) on the hunt for his regular boss’s wandering teenage niece. Mr. Parks, who has worked in the music industry, sprinkles his swift narrative with realistic glimpses of the early-’70s pop scene; and his cast of well-drawn characters, from upper-crusters to low-lifers, makes up a lively repertory company. McCoy himself, with his personal vices and criminal contacts, is hardly your run-of-the-mill, cop-shop hero; at one point, even he wonders if he’s lost some vital part of his humanity...” We are still waiting for our Signed UK firsts, [Bobby March Will Live Forever](#) (\$34.99), to arrive from London. Please indicate which edition you want when ordering. Thank you.

Patterson, James/Maxine Paetro. [The 20<sup>th</sup> Victim](#) (LittleBrown \$29). Three victims, three bullets, three cities. The shooters’ aim is as fearsomely precise as their target selection. When Lindsay realizes that the fallen men and women excel in a lucrative, criminal activity, she leads the charge in the manhunt for the killers. As the casualty list expands, fear and fascination with this suspicious shooting gallery galvanizes the country. The victims were no angels, but are the shooters really villains?

Street, Karen. [Edgar Allan Poe and the Empire of the Dead: A Poe and Dupin Mystery](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). The ominous prologue of the terrific concluding volume of Street’s Poe trilogy takes place in Baltimore in October, 1849, just days before the real Poe died. Poe has a vision of his dead wife and an apothecary

dispensing poison, which reveals the truth about how he “had finally been murdered and by whom.” Flash back to June. The writer gets a letter from his friend C. Auguste Dupin, entreating him to come to Paris. Dupin needs his help tracking down Ernest Valdemar, who’s responsible for sending Dupin’s grandparents to the guillotine during the French Revolution. When the two friends meet, Dupin tells Poe he’s sure Valdemar forged the letter and had reason to lure Poe to Paris. Valdemar appears to be working with Poe’s nemesis, George Reynolds, whose father was falsely imprisoned for the assaults of more than fifty women that were committed by Poe’s maternal grandparents decades earlier. Street fulfills the promise of the tantalizing opening with a twisty and nail-biting plot.

Ward, JR. [The Sinner](#) (Gallery \$28). Ward returns to the fascinating, dangerous vampire world with the riveting story of Syn, a mercenary and assassin for hire. This 18th novel in the series can be read as a standalone, although readers will surely want to read earlier books as well. Reporter Jo Early is unaware her biological father was a vampire. Syn is fully aware Jo is about to transition to non-human, however, and despite believing he’s the last thing she should want, he’s compelled to save her. Unfortunately, pulling Jo into Syn’s world has the potential to destroy her, for the ongoing war with the Lessening Society, an undead enemy determined to destroy both vampire and human society, has reached a pivotal moment. Threading the fine line between good and evil, keeping Jo safe, and retaining what little is left of his own scarred soul is complicated for Syn. What his actions mean to the Black Dagger Brotherhood warriors and their families could change their lives forever. With Brotherhood vampire ally Butch O’Neal, Syn may save the world or destroy it and the odds against them winning are high. In the final battle, neither Butch, Syn, or Jo can be certain they will endure despite an unexpected intercession. This novel’s gritty plot, with multiple actors, moves at lightning speed to reach an excellent and surprising ending.

Whishaw, Iona. [A Match Made for Murder](#) (Touchwood \$14.95). I first visited Arizona in 1950 as a child yet remember well the charm of a mostly undiscovered, thinly populated state not yet part of the coming tourist boom. This novel, while 7<sup>th</sup> in a series set in British Columbia (shades of LR Wright’s mysteries on the Sunshine Coast), is a good starting point for newly married sleuths Lane Winslow, formerly of MI6, and Inspector Fred Darling, arrive in Tucson for a honeymoon. It’s November, 1947, so the lack of modern air-conditioning isn’t a killer. However there is a killer, one who fires shots at poolside of the charming inn where our couple has booked. Meanwhile, back home in Nelson, where Darling has taken up a new post, Sergeant Ames investigates what looks like vandalism at a local garage but turns into something more. The story, our **May Cozy Crimes Book of the Month**, moves along two tracks, the one in Tucson, the other in Nelson, in interesting ways in the kind of meticulous policing that characterizes the work of Steven Havill in his Posadas, New Mexico, series.

The bonus here is that you can then go to [A Killer in King’s Cove](#) (\$14.95), when Lane arrives to reboot her life in rustic BC, 1946, and read your way forward to *A Match Made for Murder*. Lane will appeal to Maisie Dobbs fans, and readers of Vicki Delany’s series set in Nelson, and of Louise Penny, will enjoy time spent in Canada.