

BOOKNEWS from

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APRIL: Poetry Month, Earth Day, Independent Bookstores Day
Open Hours: M-F 11:00-6:00; Sat. 10:00-6:00; Sun. 12:00-5:00

Note: All the event times are Pacific Daylight time

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You also can listen to our [Podcasts](#) on [Google Music](#), [iTunes](#), [Spotify](#), and other popular podcast sites.

WEDNESDAY MARCH 31 6:15 PM

Dennis Lehane in conversation with Gillian Flynn

Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of [Mystic River](#) (\$16.99)

Signed copies in stock

THURSDAY APRIL 1 6:00 PM Virtual Book Launch

Paula Munier in conversation with Margaret Mizushima

Munier discusses [The Hiding Place](#) (St Martins \$27.99)

Signed books available

FRIDAY APRIL 2 4:00 PM National book launch

David Rosenfelt discusses [Animal Instinct](#) (St Martins \$28.99)

A new K-Team Investigation

Signed books available

MONDAY APRIL 5 4:00 PM National Book Launch

Caroline Kepnes in conversation with Chad Kultgen

Kepnes discusses [You Love Me](#) (Random \$28)

You #3

Signed books available

MONDAY APRIL 5 5:15 PM

Michael Sears in conversation with Hank Phillippi Ryan

Sears discusses [Tower of Babel](#) (Soho \$27.95)

New series start

Signed books available

TUESDAY APRIL 6 6:00 PM National book launch

Flynn Berry in conversation with Adrian McKinty

Flynn discusses [Northern Spy](#) (Viking \$26)

Signed books available

WEDNESDAY APRIL 7 5:00 PM Historical Fiction

CS Harris in conversation with Anna Lee Huber

Harris discusses [What the Devil Knows](#) (Berkley \$26)

The Regency's Sebastian St. Cyr

Huber discusses [A Wicked Conceit](#) (Berkley \$17)

1832 Edinburgh's Lady Darby

Signed books for Harris available

WEDNESDAY APRIL 7 6:15 PM

Wallace Stroby in conversation with Patrick

Stroby discusses [Heaven's a Lie](#) (Mulholland \$27)

THURSDAY APRIL 8 6:00 PM

Nick Martell in conversation with Pat King

Martell discusses [The Two-Faced Queen](#) (Saga Press \$27.99)

Epic fantasy

Signed books available

SATURDAY APRIL 10 4:00 PM National book launch

Rhys Bowen discusses [The Venice Sketchbook](#) (Lake Union

\$24.95)

Signed books available

MONDAY APRIL 12 4:45 PM National book launch

Anne Hillerman discusses [Stargazer](#) (Harper \$27.99)

Bernie Manuelito, Leaphorn & Chee

Signed books available

MONDAY APRIL 12 6:00 PM National book launch

Jack Carr discusses [The Devil's Hand](#) (Atria \$27.99)

James Reece #4

Signed books available

TUESDAY APRIL 13 6:00 PM National book launch

John Sandford discusses. [Ocean Prey](#) (Putnam \$29)

Lucas Davenport

Signed books available

WEDNESDAY APRIL 14 1:00 PM

From the UK, Bonnie MacBird discusses [The Three Locks](#) (Harper \$26.99)

A Sherlock Holmes Adventure

Signed Bookplates available

Signed UK edition: [The Three Locks](#) (Collins \$36)

WEDNESDAY APRIL 14 5:00 PM Debut Author

Bryan Christy discusses [In the Company of Killers](#) (Putnam \$27)

National Geographic reporter/CIA spy Tom Klay

Signed books available

THURSDAY APRIL 15 5:00 PM

Sol Lechuk discusses [One Got Away](#) (Flatiron \$27.99)

Nikki Griffin

Signed books available

FRIDAY APRIL 16 12:00 PM

Anne Perry discusses [Death with a Double Edge](#) (Ballantine \$28)

Daniel Pitt

Signed letter comes with our copies

FRIDAY APRIL 16 1:30 PM

Will Thomas in conversation with Karen Odden

Thomas discusses [Dance with Death](#) (St Martins \$27.99)

Signed books available

FRIDAY APRIL 16 7:00 PM

SciFi Friday discusses James A Corey, [The Leviathan Wakes](#) (\$16.99)

SATURDAY APRIL 17 10:30 AM

Croak and Dagger discusses Emma Rous, [The Perfect Guests](#) (\$16)

MONDAY APRIL 19 1:00 PM Debut Author

Carole Johnstone in conversation with Jayne Anne Krentz/
Amanda Quick

Johnstone, from Scotland, discusses her debut [Mirrorland](#) (Scribner \$27)

MONDAY APRIL 19 6:00 PM

Willy Vlautin in conversation with Patrick
Vlautin discusses [Night Always Comes](#) (Harper \$26.99)
Signed books available

TUESDAY APRIL 20 6:00 PM National Book Launch

Robert Dugoni in conversation with Luanne Rice
Dugoni discusses [In Her Tracks](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$15.95)
Signed books available

TUESDAY APRIL 20 7:15 PM Indonesian author

Jesse Q Sutanto in conversation with John Charles
Sutanto discusses [Dial A for Aunties](#) (Berkley \$16)
Murder, matrimony, and a possible curse on 3 generations of an
immigrant Chinese-Indonesian family

THURSDAY APRIL 22 5:00 PM

Thomas Kies discusses the new edition of his first novel
[Random Road](#) (Poisoned Pen \$12.95)
Reporter Geneva Chase

THURSDAY APRIL 22 6:00 PM

DJ Palmer in conversation with Lee Child
Palmer discusses [The Perfect Daughter](#) (St Martins \$28.99)

SIGNED BOOKS

⌘Aaronovitch, Ben. [What Abigail Did That Summer](#) (Gollancz \$34). Ghost hunter, fox whisperer, troublemaker. It is the summer of 2013 and Abigail Kamara has been left to her own devices. This might, by those who know her, be considered a mistake. While her cousin, police constable and apprentice wizard Peter Grant, is off in the sticks, chasing unicorns, Abigail is chasing her own mystery. Teenagers around Hampstead Heath have been going missing but before the police can get fully engaged, the teens return home—unharmd but vague about where they've been. Aided only by her new friend Simon, her knowledge that magic is real, and a posse of talking foxes that think they're spies, Abigail must venture into the wilds of Hampstead to discover who is luring the teenagers and more importantly—why?

⌘Archer, Jeffrey. [Turn a Blind Eye](#) (Macmillan \$45). William Warwick, two investigations in, is now a Detective Inspector is tasked with a dangerous new line of work, to go undercover and expose crime of another kind: corruption at the heart of the Metropolitan Police Force. His team is focused on following Detective Jerry Summers, a young officer whose lifestyle appears to exceed his income. But as a personal relationship develops with a member of William's team, it threatens to compromise the

THURSDAY APRIL 22 7:00 PM

Hardboiled Crime discusses Rudolph Fisher's [The Conjure Man Dies](#) (\$15.99)

FRIDAY APRIL 23 1:00 PM International Crime

Jeff Siger and David Wagner in conversation
Siger discusses [A Deadly Twist](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.99)
Paperback: [A Deadly Twist](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99)
Signed hardcover edition available
Wagner discusses [To Die in Tuscany](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99)

SATURDAY APRIL 24 All day

Independent Bookstore Day
We will offer specials and swag to mark the day

MONDAY APRIL 26 4:30 PM

Michael Koryta discusses the new MWA Anthology [When a Stranger Comes to Town](#) (Hanover \$27.99)

MONDAY APRIL 26 6:00 PM

Lee Child and Laurie R. King in conversation
They discuss the new MWA Handbook [How to Write a Mystery](#) (Scribner \$27)

WEDNESDAY APRIL 28 1:00 PM

Belfast's Richard O'Rawe in conversation with Patrick
O'Rawe discusses [Northern Heist](#) (Melville House \$26.99)
Signed books available

WEDNESDAY APRIL 28 5:00 PM True Crime

Caitlin Rother in conversation with Camille Kimball
Rother discusses [Death on Ocean Boulevard](#) (Kensington \$16.95)
True Crime: The Coronado Mansion Case/Rebecca Zahau

THURSDAY APRIL 29 5:00 PM

Marc Cameron discusses [Bone Rattle](#) (Kensington \$26)
Alaska's Arliss Cutter

whole investigation. Meanwhile, a notorious drug baron goes on trial, with the prosecution case led by William's father and sister. And William's wife Beth, now a mother to twins, renews an old acquaintance who appears to have turned over a new leaf, or has she? As the undercover officers start to draw the threads together, William realizes that the corruption may go deeper still, and more of his colleagues than he first thought might be willing to turn a blind eye.

Baldacci, David. [A Gambling Man](#) (Grand Central \$30). The 1950s are on the horizon, and Aloysius Archer is in dire need of a fresh start after a nearly fatal detour in Poca City. So Archer hops on a bus and begins the long journey out west to California, where rumor has it there is money to be made if you're hard-working, lucky, criminal—or all three. Archer stops in Reno, where a stroke of fortune delivers him a wad of cash and an eye-popping blood-red 1939 Delahaye convertible—plus a companion for the final leg of the journey, an aspiring actress named Liberty Callahan who is planning to try her luck in Hollywood. But when the two arrive in Bay Town, California, Archer quickly discovers that the hordes of people who flocked there seeking fame and fortune landed in a false paradise that instead caters to

their worst addictions and fears. Archer's first stop is a P.I. office where he is hoping to apprentice with a legendary private eye and former FBI agent named Willie Dash. He lands the job, and immediately finds himself in the thick of a potential scandal.... David signs these for us at home. And joins us May 11 with Jake Tapper!

Berry, Flynn. [Northern Spy](#) (Viking \$26). Belfast BBC political news producer Tessa Daly, the protagonist of this moving contemporary thriller from Edgar winner Berry, is struggling to juggle her job with caring for her six-month-old son, whose custody she shares with her ex-husband, when she sees a TV clip showing a gas station being robbed by a gun-wielding IRA trio. One of them is her younger sister, Marian, whom Tessa believed to be vacationing on the north coast. Detective Inspector Fenton and his team, who subsequently interrogate Tessa, seem convinced that she must also be IRA or, at the very least, privy to her sister's activities. It turns out that the local authorities don't know an awful lot about the now-fugitive Marian, whose efforts to press Tessa to assist her in her current clandestine mission puts both mother and baby at risk. The tension becomes at times almost unbearable.

The Indie Next Pick: "This emotionally rich espionage story set in present-day Ireland looks at a country divided, the invisibility of motherhood, and the bonds of family that can supersede all else. It is the story of two sisters, one a paramedic and one a BBC news service employee. When one sister is apparently part of an IRA attack, the other refuses to believe it and sets out to prove her sister's innocence. I read this in one sitting — compelling is not a strong enough adjective for this thrilling novel!"

Bowen, Rhys. [The Venice Sketchbook](#) (Lake Union \$24.95/\$15.95). Caroline Grant is struggling to accept the end of her marriage when she receives an unexpected bequest. Her beloved great-aunt Lettie leaves her a sketchbook, three keys, and a final whisper... So soon Caroline heads to Venice to scatter Juliet Browning's ashes in the city she loved. Which results in unlocking mysteries over a half century old. In 1938 we witness art teacher Juliet Browning return to the Queen of the Adriatic. For her students, it offers a wealth of history, art, and beauty. For Juliet, it's about poignant memories of a night in 1928 and a chance to reconnect with Leonardo Da Rossi, the man she loves—and met for a single evening when she was barely more than a girl. Leonardo's future was already determined by his noble family. But the war and occupation disrupt plans. Bowen underlines the role that Fate plays in lives, lives that collide with no planning. Rhys loved her "research" trip to La Serenissima as much as writing suspenseful standalones in the mode of beloved Mary Stewart.

Brennan, Allison. [Tell No Lies](#) (Mira \$27.99). Something mysterious is killing desert wildlife in the Santa Rita Mountains, Specifically, birds, the bellwether of pollution due to their fast metabolism. Emma Perez, a college-intern-turned activist, sets out to collect evidence of their poisoning despite the pleas of her boyfriend Billy that it is dangerous. For Emma, it's not dangerous—it's deadly. Her promising young life is lost, dismissed as accidental drowning in a seasonal pond on Mount Wrightson. With local law enforcement slow to get involved, the FBI's Mobile Response Team goes undercover to infiltrate the town of Sonoita and the local copper refinery in search of possible leads. Agents Costa and Quinn find themselves scouring the desolate

landscape, eventually chasing clues to something much darker than pollution. As the body count steadily increases, it's clear that the case at hand is an elaborate high stakes operation. This is a terrific procedural, well grounded in the landscape and in science, with plenty of suspense. I mention it again because it's catnip for JA Jance fans, especially of the Joanna Brady series.

Carr, Jack. [The Devil's Hand](#) (Atria \$27.99). Alec Christensen has been on a 20-year mission to avenge the death of his fiancée in the 2001 World Trade Center attack, in bestseller Carr's rousing fourth Terminal List thriller. First with military service, then a congressional office, and now as the U.S. president, Christensen finally has access to the classified information he's long sought. He tasks former Navy SEAL James Reece, another warrior hell-bent on revenge, with eliminating the 9/11 conspirators still at large. The terrorists, meanwhile, haven't spent the past two decades resting on their victims ashes, and are actively planning a far deadlier mission: the release of a biological weapon that will force the president to destroy infected American cities with powerful fuel-air bombs, killing millions. Reece scrambles to identify the bioweapon, even as he's hunted by both enemy assassins and private American mercenaries working for the president's political rival. Carr delivers engrossing backstory, incorporates current events seamlessly, and never flinches from breathless depictions of violence. Bonus: a **special bookplate**.

Christy, Bryan. [In the Company of Killers](#) (Putnam \$27). Christy, the author of *The Lizard King: The True Crimes and Passions of the World's Greatest Reptile Smugglers*, makes his fiction debut with an exceptional adventure thriller. In Samburu County, Kenya, American journalist Tom Klay, who also works for the CIA, and his friend Captain Bernard Lolosoli, who commands a privately funded counter-poaching force, have information that local crime kingpin Ras Botha is going to kill a world-famous elephant for its massive tusks. In the ensuing ambush, Klay is wounded and Bernard killed. Back in Washington, D.C., Klay broods, drinks in his favorite bar, and begins organizing a hunt to bring down Botha. Once Klay returns to Africa, he runs up against Terry Krieger, the head of the world's biggest private military company, who claims to be a conservator of the earth and likes to relax by killing large animals. A riveting plot, complex characters, deep backstory, and an engrossing setting enhance this finely written novel about justice, personal responsibility, and saving the environment. Readers will come away eager for whatever Christy, the founder of Special Investigations at National Geographic, turns his hand to next. Meanwhile this is our **April First Mystery Book of the Month**.

Interestingly he's not the only author taking on wildlife poaching and attendant crimes. Our **March Crime Book of the Month**, Will Staples' [Animals](#) (Blackstone \$27.99), tackles similar territory. Screenwriter Staples, creator of the Disney+ drama series *The Right Stuff*, makes the tragedy of animal trafficking vivid in his impressive debut. South African Cobus Venter, a ranger who has lost colleagues in shoot-outs with rhino horn poachers in Kruger National Park, embarks on a perilous mission to Southeast Asia to try to stop the powerful criminals behind the slaughter of wildlife and people. Venter's path eventually crosses that of American insurance investigator Randall Knight, who has found evidence that tiger breeding to create an exotic animal could cause a pandemic. Staples skillfully weaves multiple plot strands, including CIA efforts to combat terrorism, how supply

chains and distribution of contraband works, with well-developed characters. His extensive research pays off in this moving, multifaceted tale which, having been to Kruger (to shoot only with camera), intrigues me. Plus he's donating all his profits to wildlife organization. These two thrillers make an absorbing, exciting, and thoughtful pair.

Dugoni, Robert. [In Her Tracks](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$15.95). Returning to active duty after PTSD on the job and childbirth, Seattle Detective Tracy Crosswhite runs right into the slimy and grudge-bearing superior who wants to get rid of her. He shunts her off to the cold cases desk where the one-person unit's officer is just retiring in hopes she'll resign, but it's just in time for a fresh series of disappearances to spark her interest. Tracy's old partner, Detective Kinsington Rowe, wants her to join him in working the disappearance of receptionist Stephanie Cole from a jogging path in North Park, near the places where two prostitutes nobody much cares about were last seen. Tracy agrees even as she's getting invested in her first cold case, the vanishing of Elle Chin from a corn maze her father had taken her to during the weekly outing his estranged wife allowed him with her. Police procedurals necessarily have some routine but Dugoni delivers a real surprise with one of the cold cases, perhaps enough to keep Tracy in the unit. We'll see as the long-running series continues.

Ellison, JT. [Her Dark Lies](#) (Mira \$28.99). A murderer is on the loose at the worst possible time. When troubled artist Claire Hunter becomes engaged to impossibly wealthy Jack Compton, she believes her struggles are over—not only does she stand to inherit a fortune, she also gains attention and acclaim for her budding career thanks to her new powerful connections. But when the couple's family and friends gather for the wedding at the Comptons' villa on a private island in Italy, it quickly becomes apparent that someone does not want Jack and Claire to live happily ever after. A mysterious and sinister individual is terrorizing the couple, and as the weather grows more menacing and the murders add up, Claire and Jack are forced to confront their pasts—particularly the truth surrounding the puzzling deaths of several Compton women on the island, including Jack's first wife. Ellison tells the story from multiple perspectives, revealing just enough information to build suspense and cast doubts about who can be trusted, making this novel delightfully unpredictable and absorbing. Ultimately, it's not clear whether the Compton family needs protecting from the world—or the other way around.

Falling squarely in the rise of the modern Gothic, this suspenseful story reminds me of Daphne du Maurier's classic, [Rebecca](#) (\$16.99)—with one major difference. There is a simultaneous paperback release. This is fun to get lost in, not to mention to experience vicarious travel even to a place Ellison wholly made up.

Estleman, Loren D. [The Eagle and the Viper](#) (Forge \$28). What if *The Day of the Jackal* was set in 1801, and the target of the master assassin was Napoleon Bonaparte rather than Charles de Gaulle? That's the fascinating premise of this standout novel which draws inspiration from a real-life cabal, the Christmas Eve Plot of 1800. That scheme was the brainchild of Georges Cadoudal, a Royalist who sought to replace Napoleon with someone who could restore the Bourbons to the throne. When a plan to blow up Napoleon's carriage goes awry, Cadoudal turns to an enigmatic killer with a penchant for utilizing literary aliases, such as Chaucer and Molière. The hit man's painstaking preparations involve both careful disguises and developing an innovative and diabolical

weapon. The suspense builds as those steps alternate with the increasingly frantic efforts by Joseph Fouché, Napoleon's ruthless minister of police, to foil the plot. Historical figures like Fouché come fully to life. Estleman demonstrates that his versatility extends to mastery of multiple genres.

✎Harris, C S. [What the Devil Knows](#) (Berkley \$26). Harris pits her aristocratic sleuth, Sebastian St. Cyr, against a killer possibly connected to a notorious real-life series of murders. In 1814, St. Cyr is consulted by magistrate Sir Henry Lovejoy after Lovejoy's colleague, Sir Edwin Pym, is found dead in a London alley, his throat slit and his head bashed in. The m.o. matches the recent death of a seaman. The slaughter of a high-ranking official and nobleman is unsettling enough, but the two killings also resemble the horrific Ratcliffe Highway murders of 1811, which claimed seven lives in two households and terrified the city. While sailor John Williams was charged with those homicides, he apparently hanged himself while awaiting trial, and doubts linger as to whether he was guilty. That history leads St. Cyr to reinvestigate the proof against Williams, even as his father-in-law, Lord Jarvis, the real power behind the throne, insists that the inquiry be circumscribed to avoid agitating an already restive population. Harris makes good use of the available evidence concerning the historical crimes, crafting a clever and suspenseful plot. You longtime crime readers will remember PD James teamed up with TA Critchley to write a true crime take on the Ratcliffe Highway Murders in [The Maul and the Pear Tree](#).

Hillerman, Anne. [Stargazer](#) (Harper \$27.99). I can't count how many times I have driven past the Very Large Array on the way from Payson to Socorro, NM. It lies 50 miles west of the city on the Plains of San Agustin, between the towns of Magdalena and Datil. And while the telescopes catch the eye, I haven't stopped to wonder what they actually do. Well the wonderful Hillerman explains the science in a most accessible way—thank you, Anne—without dragging down her suspenseful story a bit. I am so grateful. This also means that Navajo police officer Bernie Manuelito does a lot of driving as she works to find Maya, an old friend struggling for years with addiction. Tracing Maya's whereabouts, Bernie learns that her old friend had confessed to the murder of her estranged husband, a prominent astronomer. But the details don't align. Suspicious, Bernie takes a closer look at the case. Her investigation causes an unexpected rift with her husband and new acting boss, Jim Chee, who's sure Bernie's headed for trouble. While she's caught between present and past, Chee is at a crossroads of his own. Burdened with new responsibilities he didn't ask for and doesn't want, he must decide what the future holds for him and act accordingly. Bernie also wonders if she should consider a new policing role. Can their mentor Joe Leaphorn—a man also looking at the past for answers to the future—come through for all of them? And conquer his own fear of flying to further his bond with his longtime housemate?

This terrific chapter in the Hillermans' series opens up new landscapes and presents new opportunities for all the characters. Clearly Hillerman is recharged and heading them, and us, towards interesting futures. Highly recommended to fans and to newcomers as well as to anyone wishing to learn more about the Southwest's many cultures.

Jackson, Joshilyn. [Mother May I](#) (Harper \$27.99). Growing up poor in rural Georgia, Bree Cabbat was warned that the world was a dark and scary place. Bree rejected that fearful outlook,

and life has proved her right. Having married into a family with wealth, power, and connections, Bree now has all a woman could ever dream of. Until the day she awakens and sees someone peering into her bedroom window—an old gray-haired woman dressed all in black who vanishes as quickly as she appears. Later that day though, she spies the old woman again, in the parking lot of her daughters' private school...just minutes before Bree's infant son, asleep in his car seat only a few feet away, vanishes. It happened so quickly—Bree looked away only for a second. There is a note left in his place, warning her that she is being watched; if she wants her baby back, she must not call the police or deviate in any way from the instructions that will follow. And—they do.

Jónasson, Ragnar. [The Girl Who Died](#) (Joseph \$36). Ooh, a village mystery, Icelandic style. Una wants nothing more than to teach, but she has been unable to secure steady employment in Reykjavík. Her savings are depleted, her love life is nonexistent, and she cannot face another winter staring at the four walls of her shabby apartment. Celebrating Christmas and ringing in 1986 in the remote fishing hamlet of Skálar seems like a small price to pay for a chance to earn some teaching credentials and get her life back on track. But Skálar isn't just one of Iceland's most isolated villages, it is home to ten people. Una's only students are two girls aged seven and nine. Teaching them only occupies so many hours in a day and the few adults she interacts with are civil but distant. She only seems to connect with Thór, a man she shares an attraction with but who is determined to keep her at arm's length. As darkness descends throughout the bleak winter, Una finds herself more often than not in her rented attic space—the site of a local legendary haunting—drinking her loneliness away. She is plagued by nightmares of a little girl in a white dress singing a lullaby. And when a sudden tragedy echoes an event long buried in Skálar's past, the villagers become even more guarded, leaving a suspicious Una seeking to uncover a generations old secret...

Jones, Darynda. [A Good Day for Chardonnay](#) (St Martins \$27.99). Sunshine Vicram, a small-town New Mexico chief of police who loves coffee, donuts, and wine (see the title). Running a small-town police force in the mountains of New Mexico should be a smooth, carefree kind of job. But no. So all Sunshine really wants is one easy-going day. You know, the kind that starts with coffee and a donut (or three) and ends with take-out pizza and a glass of chardonnay (or seven). Turns out, that's about as easy as switching to decaf. (What kind of people do that? And who hurt them?). So, Sunny's got a bar fight gone bad, a teenage daughter hunting a serial killer and, oh yes, the still unresolved mystery of her own abduction years prior. All evidence points to a local distiller, a dangerous bad boy named Levi Ravinder, but Sun knows he's not the villain of her story. Still, perhaps beneath it all, he possesses the keys to her disappearance. At the very least, beneath it all, he possesses a serious set of abs. Between policing a town her hunky chief deputy calls four cents short of a nickel, that pesky crush she has on Levi which seems to grow exponentially every day, and an irascible raccoon that just doesn't know when to quit, well, it calls for more chardonnay. Start Sunny with [A Bad Day for Sunshine](#) (\$17.99).

Kepnes, Caroline. [You Love Me: A You Novel](#) (Random \$28). The third entry in Kepnes' hit You series, now a blockbuster Netflix show—a compulsively readable trip into the deviant mind of the uniquely antisocial, savvy bookseller Joe Goldberg. Joe

is done with the cities. He's done with the muck and the posers, done with Love. Now, he's saying hello to nature, to simple pleasures on a cozy island in the Pacific Northwest. For the first time in a long time, he can just breathe. He's working at the local library and falling for librarian Mary Kay DiMarco. He's trying not to stalk her, not to meddle, not to obsess, instead winning her over as a caring soul, but let's see what happens. For Mary Kay already has a life she loves.... For fans of *Behind Her Eyes* and *The Silent Patient*."

Lamott, Annie. [Dusk, Light, Dawn](#) (Riverhead \$20). Lamott explores the tough questions that many of us grapple with. How can we recapture the confidence we once had as we stumble through the dark times that seem increasingly bleak? As bad news piles up—from climate crises to daily assaults on civility—how can we cope? Where, she asks, “do we start to get our world and joy and hope and our faith in life itself back...with our sore feet, hearing loss, stiff fingers, poor digestion, stunned minds, broken hearts?” We begin, Lamott says, by accepting our flaws and embracing our humanity. Drawing from her own experiences, Lamott shows us the intimate and human ways we can adopt to move through life's dark places. My personal recipe: keep reading, keep working, keep communicating.

Lehane, Dennis. [Mystic River 20th Anniversary Edition](#) (\$16.99). When they were children, Sean Devine, Jimmy Marcus, and Dave Boyle were friends. But then a strange car pulled up to their street. One boy got into the car, two did not, and something terrible happened—something that ended their friendship and changed all three boys forever. Twenty-five years later, Sean is a homicide detective. Jimmy is an ex-con who owns a corner store. And Dave is trying to hold his marriage together and keep his demons at bay—demons that urge him to do terrible things. And then Jimmy's daughter is murdered... This is a good time to revisit the movie, too.

Lelchuk, SA. [One Got Away](#) (Flatiron \$27.99). In Lelchuk's rollicking sequel to 2019's [Save Me from Dangerous Men](#) (\$17.99)—one of my very favorite First Mystery Books of the Moth that year—Nikki Griffin, a Berkeley, California, bookstore owner and badass PI, investigates the alleged blackmail of the matriarch of a prominent San Francisco family that has made a fortune in the pharmaceutical market. The motorcycle-riding Nikki, who looks like “an extra in Sons of Anarchy,” is tasked with tracking down a smooth-talking grifter who milked more than \$1 million out of the family's coffers. But when Nikki finds the seductively manipulative con man and watches as he's forcibly stuffed into an oversize suitcase by a group of vicious thugs, she quickly realizes that she's stumbled across a much larger, and far more brutal, criminal enterprise. “Nikki, with her brass knuckle vigilante attitude, is nicely complemented by a cast of over-the-top characters, including Buster, a giant mechanic with an anger management problem, and Mason, a kid sidekick with a penchant for note-taking. This breakneck-paced thriller—while straining the bounds of believability at times—is unapologetically bloody fun.” And I am reminded of Chandler's *The Big Sleep* in important ways.

It's also impossible not to love a dangerous woman who, as the owner of a bookstore, engages in a dialogue with a ten year old who asks for *A Wrinkle in Time* and gets a bonus, *A Wizard of Earthsea*. Plus who doesn't want to spent time in Monterey and Cypress Point?

✚MacBird, Bonnie. [The Three Locks](#) (Collins \$36). A heat wave melts London as Holmes and Watson are called to action. In the West End, a renowned Italian escape artist dies spectacularly on stage during a performance – immolated in a gleaming copper cauldron of his wife’s design. In Cambridge, the runaway daughter of a famous don is found drowned, her long blonde hair tangled in the Jesus Lock on the River Cam. And in Baker Street, a mysterious locksmith exacts an unusual price to open a small silver box sent to Watson. From the glow of London’s theatre district to the buzzing Cavendish Laboratory in Cambridge where physicists explore the edges of the new science of electricity, Holmes and Watson race between the two cities to solve the murders, encountering prevaricating prestidigitators, philandering physicists and murderous mentalists, all the while unlocking secrets which may be best left undisclosed. And one, in particular, is very close to home. MacBird artfully alternates among the multiple plotlines, maximizing suspense. With its deep probe into the friendship between the detective and the doctor, this is a good choice for fans of Lyndsay Faye’s Sherlock Holmes pastiches.

Martell, Nick. [The Two-Faced Queen](#) (Saga \$27.99). Martell continues the epic narrative of Michael Kingman, who—falsely accused of killing a king—is tasked with saving the very realm where his life has become forfeit. “Powered by an impressively large cast of well-developed characters, immersive worldbuilding, a multitapestry narrative that adeptly weaves together numerous storylines, and an abundance of jaw-dropping plot twists... this series is a master class in grand-scale storytelling.” And it is our **April SciFi/Fantasy Book of the Month**.

McLain, Paula. [When the Stars Go Dark](#) (Random \$28). “At the start of this stunning crime novel, Anna Hart, a San Francisco detective who’s on indefinite leave following a tragic incident that has brought her marriage to the brink and destroyed her faith in herself, is driving to Mendocino, California, where she spent part of her childhood with the foster parents who offered her a first taste of stability. Soon after she arrives in town, she spots a missing person poster: 15-year-old Cameron Curtis, adopted daughter of a recently retired actor, has vanished. Cameron’s fate reminds Anna of the still-unsolved murder of a childhood friend that occurred when she was in high school. “Someone has to save this girl,” she resolves. “And it has to be me.” Then other similar crimes start coming to light, and Anna becomes eerily aware of the disturbing connection between the victims and their predators. McLain matches poetic prose with deep characterizations as she shines a light on the kindness in her characters’ souls. Fans of literary suspense won’t be able to put this one down,” says the *PW* Starred Review. I agree. Do not read the Afterword and if you didn’t catch McLain’s essay in *the NY Times* skip it until you read this. Both are wrenchingly powerful—it’s better to read the book, our **April Crime Book of the Month**, first, and then reflect on what she has to say when you are done. **These are not tip-ins!**

The Indie Next Pick: McLain is a masterful storyteller. Her protagonist in this latest novel is one of the most authentic and powerful characters I have ever experienced. Anna Hart, a missing persons detective, shares not only her knowledge as an expert on missing children but she lays bare her own personal demons as she struggles to find a teen who has disappeared. I was captivated from page one and couldn’t stop until I finished this intense and provocative story. Absolutely mesmerizing!”

Munier, Paula. [The Hiding Place](#) (St Martins \$27.99). March in Vermont may technically be spring, but the weather is still frigid—and treacherous. For former military policewoman Mercy Carr, this spring may be particularly so. Mercy digs into the cold case that haunted her long-dead sheriff grandfather Red and uncovers a nest of secrets. George Rucker, who murdered Mercy’s grandfather, has escaped from prison, and the authorities are afraid he may be coming after Red’s widow. Meanwhile, Red’s former deputy, August Pitts, is dying. August asks to speak with Mercy about the case that was worrying her grandfather just before his murder: a woman’s disappearance in 1999. To complicate matters, a young wildlife biologist and filmmaker from the University of Vermont has been found dead in the snowy woods, naked except for his socks. Are these seemingly disparate cases connected in some way? With her ex-military K-9 Elvis at her side, Mercy pursues her suspects through the dangerously frigid countryside, first forgiving frequent game warden Troy Warner (see earlier book) to enlist his aid and that of his dog, Susie Bear. And fending off another ex-vet who arrives to claim Elvis! Munier combines a complex plot with well-defined characters, both human and canine, as she keeps readers guessing. This action- and emotion-packed novel will hold a special appeal for dog lovers.

O’Rawe, Richard. [Northern Heist](#) (Melville House \$26.99). This thriller based on one of the biggest (and still unsolved) bank-robberies in history, written by a former IRA bank robber, earns a *PW* Starred Review: “Former Irish Republican Army bank robber O’Rawe) makes his fiction debut with a riveting crime thriller loosely based on the unsolved bank robbery that nearly undermined the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. Veteran IRA heavy James “Ructions” O’Hare and his crime-boss uncle, Johnny “Panzer” O’Hare, secretly form a crew of ex-paramilitaries to rob the National Bank in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Ructions’ trusts his crack squad of former paramilitary compadres, and has full confidence in his audacious plan: to literally empty the biggest bank in Belfast by kidnapping the families of two employees—known as a “tiger” kidnapping—in order to force them to help Ructions and his crew get into the bank’s vault. But that’s not the hardest part; their plan to cross the IRA by not paying the mandatory 50 percent tax could put them in the ground if discovered. But nobody robs banks in Belfast without the IRA getting a cut. Bonds of family and faction are put to the ultimate test as IRA enforcers and local police search for suspects, and former Provo Ructions must use all of his cunning if he’s to survive. O’Rawe channels both Elmore Leonard and Guy Ritchie in this heist thriller full of sharp twists and gritty dialogue, emerging with a style all his own. His reimagining of the real-life bank heist feels so authentic readers will hope he has a strong alibi.” Ken Bruen fans won’t want to miss this one as they enter the deadly world of tiger kidnappings, kangaroo courts, money laundering, drug deals and double-crosses.

A native of West Belfast, O’Rawe grew up as best friends with Gerry Conlon, whose remarkable life after prison was the subject of O’Rawe’s critically acclaimed biography *In the Name of the Son: The Gerry Conlon Story* in 2017.

Palmer, DJ. [The Perfect Daughter](#) (St Martins \$27.99). Grace and Arthur felt it was a miracle the day abandoned child Penny came into their lives. She seemed fated to be their daughter. They knew nothing of her past. When she began to grow, Penny became

more than Penny; in fact multiple personalities emerged. Grace and Arthur took Penny to many psychiatrists who had different diagnoses including the idea that Penny was putting on a show to help manage past trauma. But Grace is convinced they are dealing with severe multiple personality disorder. Dr. Mitch McHugh discovers Abigail, someone new inside Penny, and believes Abigail is the key to Penny's past...and a murder. Then he and Grace dig deeper. Palmer has done a deep dive into research of the subject—think *The Three Faces of Eve*—which is impressive and a key reason to read his latest suspense thriller.

✂Perry, Anne. [Death with a Double Edge](#) (Ballantine \$28). **NOT signed on the title page but includes a signed letter from Perry.** Set in 1911, bestseller Perry's middling fourth mystery featuring London attorney Daniel Pitt (after 2019's *One Fatal Flaw*) opens with Daniel identifying a dead man in a police morgue as Jonah Drake, a colleague in his law firm. Drake's slashed corpse was found in the East End early that morning, but why was he in such a dangerous neighborhood at that time? Daniel breaks the sad news to his head of chambers, who fears the killing may have been related to Drake's work for the firm and asks Daniel to do some digging. Daniel uncovers unresolved questions concerning two homicide defendants Drake represented, including one whose father, Erasmus Faber, is the owner of Britain's biggest shipbuilding company. Daniel's policeman father warns him to tread carefully, as Faber's business is vital to a country fearful of a German naval buildup.

Rosenfelt, David. [Animal Instinct](#) (St Martins \$28.99). The second installment in this spinoff series (remember how lazy Andy Carpenter can be?) presents the K Team with a cold case. While on the Paterson PD, Corey Douglas was called to a domestic dispute involving Lisa and her live-in boyfriend, Gerald Kline. It was obvious that Gerald had hit Lisa, but she refused to press charges. Regretting he didn't do more, Corey is sure Gerald had Lisa killed. Though lacking a client, Corey and Laurie Collins, herself a former Patterson cop who is the wife of defense attorney Andy Carpenter, the author's main series lead, decide to investigate anyway, giving Corey a chance to solve "the one that got away" and to get justice for Lisa. Rounding out the team are investigator and muscle Marcus Clark and Corey's K-9 partner, German shepherd Simon Garfunkel, who inspires the name for this private eye group. The believable plot takes surprising twists as the insightful private detectives uncover an intricate conspiracy that reaches beyond a spurned lover. Andy becomes involved when Corey is arrested for a second murder. Rosenfelt smoothly mixes humor with a sharp plot and appealing characters and for a low tech kind of guy, Rosenfelt that is, an interesting scenario. Plus his mysteries are always laced with humor.

Sandford, John. [Ocean Prey](#) (Putnam \$29). Lucas Davenport (last seen in 2020's *Masked Prey*) and Virgil Flowers (last seen in 2019's *Bloody Genius*), team up in this entertaining high-stakes adventure on the high seas. Three Coast Guard officers, alerted to a suspiciously high-powered boat picking up a diver south of Pompano Bay, Fla., head out to investigate. They're shot and killed before they reach the boat. Since they're federal agents, their murder should be a case for the FBI. When the Feds seem to be dragging their feet, frustrated Coast Guard officials asks U.S. Marshal Davenport to pursue the killer or killers. Davenport in turn calls on his friend Flowers, an investigator for the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, for help. Flowers goes

undercover in a vast criminal organization headed by a major bad guy that reaches far beyond the confines of Florida. The suspense rises as Davenport and Flowers take a number of foolhardy chances in their pursuit of justice. You will enjoy seeing the two old buddies and their cohorts wading into dangerous waters.

Sears, Michael. [Tower of Babel](#) (Soho \$27.95). Sears brings Queens, New York, to literary life in this crime series debut featuring a somewhat seedy lawyer with a heart of gold (or at least gold plate). Queens, New York—the most diverse place on earth. Native son Ted Molloy knows these streets like the back of his hand. Ted was once a high-powered Manhattan lawyer, but after a spectacular fall from grace, he has found himself back on his home turf, scraping by as a foreclosure profiteer. It's a grubby business, but a safe one—until Ted's case sourcer, a mostly reformed small-time conman named Richie Rubiano, turns up murdered shortly after tipping Ted off to an improbably lucrative lead. With Richie's widow on his back and shadows of the past popping up at every turn, Ted realizes he's gotten himself embroiled in a murder investigation. His quest for the truth will take him all over Queens, plunging him into the machinations of greedy developers, mobsters, enraged activists, old litigator foes and old-school New York City operators.

Shelton, Paige. [Deadly Editions](#) (St Martins \$26.99). "In Mary Higgins Clark Award nominee Shelton's captivating sixth Scottish Bookshop mystery, eccentric book collector Shelagh O'Connor invites American Delaney Nichols, who works at the Cracked Spine, an Edinburgh bookstore, and three others to take part in a treasure hunt for her first edition of Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. The person who finds this valuable book will also get the entire contents of Shelagh's library. Before Delaney and company accept, one of them asks Shelagh about rumors of her once having been in trouble, and she admits she was suspected of murdering a friend decades earlier. Soon after the hunt gets under way, Shelagh goes missing. Delaney and the others wonder whether she's faking her disappearance and possibly responsible for a recent rash of burglaries as well as a local bartender's murder. Ghostly pubs and blustery winter scenes help create a suitably sinister atmosphere, while distinctive characters and judicious use of Scottish dialect add to the story's appeal. Fans of literary cozies will be delighted."—*PW*. Local author Shelton is a favorite and will appear on May 1 in conversation with Jenn McKinlay, such another. The [Scottish Bookshop Mysteries](#) are fun to order and read in sequence, although it's not necessary.

Siger, Jeffrey. [A Deadly Twist](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.99). The disappearance of journalist Nikoletta Elia while on assignment on the Greek island of Naxos drives Siger's charming 11th mystery featuring Chief Inspector Andreas Kaldis. Kaldis sends his deputy, Yianni Kouros, from Athens to the island to investigate the disappearance—and the discovery of an unidentified body that may or may not be related. Yianni soon learns that Nikoletta was reporting on a battle between preservationists and advocates for expanded tourism, and her snooping may have placed her in danger. After pairing up with the local police, Yianni has a near fatal accident that forces Kaldis and his wife, Lila, along with Yianni's girlfriend, Toni, to travel to the island to pursue the case. "Siger balances the conflict that fuels the plot with vivid descriptions of the culture, food, and glorious settings of this off-the-beaten-track Greek island. Endearing supporting characters

add to the fun. Travel buffs will be enchanted.” This gem earned a Starred Review in *LJ*. There is a very small hardcover edition of which we have snagged copies for Siger to sign for us, so don’t miss out. For the paperback, see Unsigned Event Books below.

Stroby, Wallace. [Heaven’s A Lie](#) (Mulholland \$28). Patrick reviews: Young widow Joette Harper’s uneventful life is suddenly and irrevocably changed when she witnesses a speeding car lose control and crash in front of the Jersey shore hotel where she works. As she rushes up to the vehicle, which is about to burst into flames, she spies a briefcase full of cash and instinctively grabs it. Perhaps this unexpected bounty, nearly 300 grand in fifties and hundreds, could go a long way towards digging Joette out of her financial abyss. Her dying mother is in hospice care and the medical bills that have accumulated are staggering, not to mention the debts that she still carries from her late husband’s care. Of course, we soon learn the briefcase belongs to a local drug dealer named Travis Clay, who definitely notices that his money has gone missing. What results is a propulsive, deftly plotted game of predator and prey, although the distinction between the two becomes blurred as unassuming Joette discovers something in herself that she didn’t know existed. A real kickass read with telling social commentary in the background.”

✠Thomas, Will. [Dance with Death](#) (St Martins \$27.99). This is an absolute joy for any reader of British mystery and historical fiction, watcher of *Victoria* or *The Crown*, or student of the fall of the Romanovs. Thomas, by bringing Tsarevich Nicholas to London in 1893 to participate in the Royal Wedding, the nuptials of future George V to Princess Mary of Teck, and showing how charming yet callow and indecisive the future Tsar is, shines new light. The judgment of Nicky’s escorts as to the kind of leader he will be is illuminating. During the visit, Nicky is being pressured into marriage by his mistress, the prima ballerina Mathilde Kschessinska (real), while his grandmother Queen Victoria is pressuring Princess Alix of Hesse to give up her Lutheran religion for Russia’s Orthodox faith so she can be Nicky’s bride (also real). Thought to be under threat by the assassin La Sylphide or by any of his covetous relatives, Nicky is protected by private security and by the professionals of England and Russia. Then Prince George, whose resemblance to Nicky is remarkable, is attacked by an armed anarchist which brings in Cyrus Barker and Thomas Llewelyn, private enquiry agents, the Holmes and Watson as it were, of this excellent series. Thomas includes lots of real people in this gem including William Morris (a Socialist leader as well as artist) and provides notes at the end as to the fate of several of the real characters. Do not miss this wonderful book. You can start the [Barker & Llewelyn series](#) here or order the earlier investigations for even more pleasure.

Vandermeer, Jeff. [Hummingbird Salamander](#) (Farrar \$27). Security consultant “Jane Smith” receives an envelope with a key to a storage unit that holds a taxidermied hummingbird and clues leading her to a taxidermied salamander. Silvina, the dead woman who left the note, is a reputed ecoterrorist and the daughter of an Argentine industrialist. By taking the hummingbird from the storage unit, Jane sets in motion a series of events that quickly spin beyond her control. Soon, Jane and her family are in danger, with few allies to help her make sense of the true scope of the peril. Is the only way to safety to follow in Silvina’s footsteps? Is it too late to stop?

Vlautin, Willy. [Night Always Comes](#) (Harper \$26.99). Patrick reviews: “Lynette works two jobs, cares for her developmentally disabled brother, and lives in the broken down house she’s been renting with her mother. No matter how hard she works, Lynette can’t seem to get ahead. As we learn, she has a painful past, punctuated by mental illness and sexual abuse, and she just wants a peaceful, drama-free existence. When her landlord offers her a good deal to purchase the house, Lynette sees an opportunity to build a future for herself. All she needs is her mother to cosign on the loan. At the last minute, of course, her mother decides to back out, leaving Lynette scrambling and desperate to buy the house herself. In classic noir fashion, she makes an ill-fated decision, one that leads her down a dark road into her past and against the entitled male predators who prey upon pretty, vulnerable women like Lynette. Willy Vlautin is a national treasure, and one of the most original voices at work today.”

To Patrick’s review of our **April Notable New Fiction Book of the Month**, Library Reads adds, “Vlautin writes with honesty and generosity about people who are just a step ahead of disaster. He makes us care for lives that are singularly defined by the challenge of earning a living wage while navigating the circumstances of society, family, and self. Vlautin is a necessary writer for our times. Vlautin has achieved a brilliant synthesis of Raymond Carver and Jim Thompson.”

✠Winspear, Jacqueline. [The Consequences of Fear](#) (Harper \$27.99). London is being decimated by the Blitz. Twelve-year-old Freddie Hackett is serving as a message runner for the government (a task based on Winspear’s father’s wartime activity), because children can get through bombed-out areas during the blackout, whereas cars or bicycles would be trapped. One dark night on a run, Freddie witnesses a struggle that he thinks ends in a stabbing. Shocked, he continues on to deliver his message, only to come face to face with the possible murderer. But by the time he reports the crime, the body (and the murderer) have both vanished. The police think Freddie is delusional, traumatized by the things he has experienced during the Blitz. But Maisie, ever empathetic, and suspecting Freddie is suffering from shock (today, PTSD) from witnessing the murder, is convinced that Freddie actually saw something. Distressed by her own wartime assignment, she begins a side investigation that puts her at odds with her current job working for a top-secret government agency—an agency that most emphatically does not want Maisie digging around for a murderer in the middle of the war effort, especially a murderer who may have diplomatic ties to the British government.

And two favorites from March, Women’s History Month

Cantor, Jillian. [Half Life](#) (Harper \$26.99). Cantor reimagines the life of Marie Curie as told through two parallel timelines, including one that reflects her real-world achievements and another that explores how the world might be different had she made other choices. I don’t always embrace this sliding-doors structure, but here I was mesmerized by how much I did not know about Curie’s achievements and the tragedies that befell her before dying too young from the x-rays, and by what her life might have been if she’d married her suitor and stayed in Poland. “Cantor’s vivid historic background features the first Tour de France and Marie’s mobile X-ray units on the WWI front, and her fundraising visit to the U.S. adds enriching historical details. Strong secondary characters contribute to the lively story lines.”

Montgomery, Jess. [The Stills](#) (St Martins \$27.99). “The economics and emotional effects of Prohibition on a rural area make for a rousing plot in *The Stills*, Jess Montgomery’s third novel set in the stark Appalachian coal-mining Bronwyn County, Ohio. In cities, Prohibition breeds organized crime, but, in hardscrabble rural areas, the needs are more basic: earn money to feed a family, pay for a child’s expensive medicines, escape soul-crushing poverty. Sheriff Lily Ross is expected to enforce the Volstead Act, which, in 1927, is in its seventh year, yet “so filled with loopholes that it was flimsier than worn-out washrags.” She sometimes ignores the stills in the county’s “hills and hollers” unless “a moonshiner raises too much of a ruckus, or someone—usually a frustrated wife—complains.” But things change when a 12-year-old boy, hired to protect a still, nearly dies from tainted moonshine. Meanwhile, Fiona Vogel returns to her hometown with her powerful husband, George, and his several violent henchmen. George plans to start a bootlegging operation selling toxic wood alcohol to force out competitors.

“*The Stills* richly delves into class differences, religious obsession, greed and Prohibition’s failures. Montgomery forcefully shows Lily’s struggles in an occupation unheard of for a woman during the 1920s while caring for her family on a modest salary. Lily, based on Maude Collins, Ohio’s first female sheriff, inherited the job from her late husband, but has earned the community’s respect. While Fiona seems, at first, to be superficially concerned with money and finery, she shows an inner strength and a savvy business acumen.” **I look forward to a book chat with Jess you can listen to or watch on FB in April.**

UNSIGNED EVENT BOOKS

Cameron, Marc. [Bone Rattle](#) (Kensington \$26). Archaeologist Isaac Mercurief, who’s overseeing the construction of a road near Juneau, Alaska, calls a halt when the work exposes a skeleton and a bone rattle, a highly valuable artifact that may have belonged to a shaman. Mercurief has orders to protect any unearthed human remains or burial sites. Others oppose Mercurief’s decision, and ensure that the archaeologist permanently disappears. Eventually, the circumstances of Mercurief’s disappearance come to Supervisory Deputy U.S. Marshal Arliss Cutter’s attention, but the lawman has a lot of other things on his plate, including the mystery of a woman’s torso that washed ashore near Anchorage, the trial of two vicious drug traffickers, and the assassination of a federal official. Cameron draws on his own service as a deputy federal marshal in Alaska and his expertise in tracking down people, and he does a good job balancing the multiple plotlines as well as characterization and action. And with issues addressed by fellow Alaskan Dana Stabenow too. Fun for fans of Owen Laukkanen as well. Third in the [Arliss Cutter Novels](#); order all three.

Child, Lee/Laurie R. King, eds. [How to Write a Mystery](#) (Scribner \$27). In a marketplace crowded with how-to-write titles, the big selling point of this one is the variety of voices behind more than 30 full-length chapters covering everything from mystery subgenres (Neil Nyren) to publishing law (Daniel Stevens), punctuated with a variety of shorter interpolations. A few of them are more pointed than the longer chapters—e.g., when Rob Hart advises, “Allow yourself the space to forget things,” Tim Maleeny says, “Love your characters, but treat them like dirt,” or C.M. Surrisi notes, “If you’re writing a mystery for kids, remember that your protagonist can’t drive and has a curfew, and no one will believe them or let them be involved.” The contributors vary

in their approaches, from businesslike to personal. Louise Penny, T Jefferson Parker, Rachel Howzell Hall, Allison Brennan, Max Allan Collins, Gayle Lynds, and of course King and Child (Child has a nice argument with Deaver re outlining). Even if you don’t aspire to write this is fun to read about authors you like...or dislike.

Huber, Anna Lee. [A Wicked Conceit](#) (Berkley \$17). As a heavily pregnant Lady Kiera Darby and her husband, Sebastian Gage, await the birth of their child in a cholera-stricken Edinburgh, Kiera’s still crushed by the scandal of her abusive first husband’s association with body snatchers. Now someone has published an anonymous book about Bonnie Brock Kincaid, a hero to the poor, intimating that Kiera’s child is his. Kincaid, whom they know from other cases, is furious, especially since a series of plays based on the untruthful book are being performed. When they try to discover the author’s identity, Kiera and Gage are thwarted by his publisher, who soon ends up murdered. The police think Kincaid is the killer, but Kiera and Gage continue to talk to publishers, printers, and theater managers in an attempt to discover the identity of the author, who obviously hates Kincaid for reasons far more personal than his lawlessness. Cholera may have nothing on Covid-19, but it still adds a sense of dread to a mystery both complex and romantic. 9th in the [Lady Darby Mysteries](#) which I recommend you order and read from the beginning.

Johnstone, Carole. [Mirrorland](#) (Scribner \$27). Cat lives in Los Angeles, far away from 36 Westeryk Road, the imposing gothic house in Edinburgh where she and her estranged twin sister, El, grew up. As girls, they invented Mirrorland, a dark, imaginary place under the pantry stairs full of pirates, witches, and clowns. These days Cat rarely thinks about their childhood home, or the fact that El now lives there with her husband Ross. But when El mysteriously disappears after going out on her sailboat, Cat is forced to return to 36 Westeryk Road, which has scarcely changed in twenty years. The grand old house is still full of shadowy corners, and at every turn Cat finds herself stumbling on long-held secrets and terrifying ghosts from the past. Because someone—El?—has left Cat clues in almost every room: a treasure hunt that leads right back to Mirrorland. To read this debut is to surrender yourself to going back and forth in the lives of the characters as the house of mirrors where they live(d) shifts.

“Author Johnstone has created a dark, twisting thriller that explores the pitch-black corners of people’s minds; how good and bad, love and hate, terror and joy can co-exist; and how childhood memories can be rewritten with time as the lines between imagination and reality are blurred. Fans of Gillian Flynn’s creeping dread and Liane Moriarty’s nuanced morality and complex relationships should love this book,” says *Kirkus Reviews*. And someone who does is Stephen King: “I loved *Mirrorland*. It’s dark and devious, a neo-gothic featuring twin sisters and a deeply frightening old dark house. Beautifully written and plotted with a watchmaker’s precision.”

Koryta, Michael, ed. [When a Stranger Comes to Town](#) (Hanover \$27.99). The latest Mystery Writers of America story collection, featuring surprising, page-turning twists on the genre from some of the top bestsellers and award winners in crime fiction. It’s been said that all great literature boils down to one of two stories—a man takes a journey, or a stranger comes to town. While mystery writers have been successfully using both approaches for generations, there’s something undeniably alluring in the nature of

a stranger: the uninvited guest, the unacquainted neighbor, the fish out of water. The outstanding array of authors each weaves a fresh story on the basic theme. Includes Alafair Burke, Michael Connelly, SA Cosby, Steve Hamilton, Joe Hill, Joe R. Lansdale, Lori Roy, Lisa Unger...many more.

✉MacBird, Bonnie. [The Three Locks](#) (Harper \$26.99). Signed Bookplates. Holmes and Watson work three mysteries as Mac-Bird offers a deep probe in to the friendship between the two sleuths and fleshes out the backstory for Dr. Watson. 4th in a well done series of Sherlock pastiches. See Signed Books for more

Rother, Caitlin. [Death on Ocean Boulevard](#) (Kensington \$16.95). The call came on the morning of July 13, 2011, from the historic Spreckels Mansion, a lavish beachfront property in Coronado, California, owned by pharmaceutical tycoon and multimillionaire Jonah Shacknai. When authorities arrived, they found the naked body of Jonah's girlfriend, Rebecca Zahau, of Scottsdale, gagged, her ankles tied and her wrists bound behind her. Jonah's brother, Adam, claimed to have found Rebecca hanging by a rope from the second-floor balcony. On a bedroom door in black paint were the cryptic words: SHE SAVED HIM CAN YOU SAVE HER. Was this scrawled message a suicide note or a killer's taunt? Rebecca's death came two days after Jonah's six-year-old son, Max, took a devastating fall while in Rebecca's care. Authorities deemed Rebecca's death a suicide resulting from her guilt. But who would stage either a suicide or a murder in such a bizarre, elaborate way? Award-winning investigative journalist Caitlin Rother weaves stunning new details into a personal yet objective examination of the sensational case. She explores its many layers—including the civil suit in which a jury found Adam Shacknai responsible for Rebecca's death, and the San Diego County Sheriff's Department bombshell decision to reconfirm its original findings. "Rother's meticulous journalism shines through in this authoritative account of the Rebecca Zahau death incident. It's difficult to know what to think of this kaleidoscopic case, but Rother provides the multiple perspectives and theories in a balanced manner, along with some significant surprises. If you think you know this case, think again. And read this book." —Katherine Ramsland

Siger, Jeffrey. [A Deadly Twist](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99). A terrific modern thriller rooted in Greek's past and all taking place on Naxos, a stone's throw from Mykonos. I really love this story and characters—it's almost like a visit to the island. See Signed Books for a review.

Sutanto, Jesse Q. [Dial A for Aunties](#) (Berkley \$16). A hilariously quirky novel that is equal parts murder mystery, rom-com, and a celebration of mothers and daughters as well as a deep dive into Chinese-Indonesian culture, by a debut author. "Sutanto brilliantly infuses comedy and culture into the unpredictable rom-com/murder mystery mashup as Meddy navigates familial duty, possible arrest and a groomzilla. I laughed out loud and you will too."—*USA Today* (four-star review). Library Reads adds, echoing John Charles: "Meddy's blind date doesn't end as planned, and she now has a corpse to dispose of. Her mother's solution: call in the three aunties. What follows is a roller coaster ride of a weekend with the Chan family trying to get rid of the body while working at a high profile wedding. A fast-paced and darkly humorous debut with sweet romantic moments throughout. For fans of *My Sister, the Serial Killer* and *Get a Life, Chloe Brown*." And our **April Cozy Book of the Month**.

Wagner, David P. [To Die in Tuscany](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99). The trans-Tuscan investigation is kicked off when Spanish textile magnate Manuel Somonte is found dead in the Orto Botanico in Urbino, right next to the Spanish Dagger plant he'd donated to the garden. Somonte had come to Tuscany to present a Piero della Francesca drawing he'd bought from art dealer Ettore Bruzone to the Museo Civico in nearby Sansepolcro. The drawing had been discovered by Signora Spadini, an elderly widow, in Monterchi. Somonte's choice of the Museo Civico was a bitter disappointment to Annibale Vitellozzi, director of Urbino's Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, who'd wanted it for his own museum. But the rivalry among the three towns is a bonus for translator Rick Montoya and his girlfriend, Betta Innocenti, an expert in art theft. Rick is sent to facilitate communication between the Somontes and the local carabinieri. The Italian police, who honor Betta's academic achievements, are thrilled to have Dottoressa Innocenti's help. Rick and Betta get to sample the culinary delights of all three locales while browsing the charming Tuscan countryside. They also get to peruse the holdings of both museums as well as the renowned private collection of Cosimo Morelli, who lost the drawing in a bidding war with Somonte. And Inspector Alfredo DiMaio gets some welcome help in cracking his case. It's a win-win for all involved, including the reader, who gets to enjoy "the lovingly and meticulously described meals over which the pair meet to discuss the many colorful suspects and motives and share fascinating details of Renaissance art history and pearls of gastronomic wisdom. This entry is an armchair traveler's delight." Start with the reissue of [Cold Tuscan Stone](#) (\$12.99), Rick's first case, and move forward.

OUR MARCH BOOKS OF THE MONTH

The Crime Book of the Month One Signed hardcover First per month

McLain, Paula. [When the Stars Go Dark](#)

British Crime Book of the Month One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Johnstone, Carole. [Mirrorland](#)

Cozy Crimes Book of the Month One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Sutanto, Jesse Q. [Dial A for Aunties](#)

Notable New Fiction Book of the Month One Signed hardcover First per month

Vlautin, Willy. [Night Always Comes](#)

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

Christy, Bryan. [In the Company of Killers](#)

Historical Fiction Book of the Month One Signed hardcover First per month

Scottoline, Lisa. [Eternal](#)

International Crime Book of the Month One Unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

O'Rawe, Richard. [Northern Heist](#) (Signed) to which we encourage you to also order Flynn Berry's [Northern Spy](#) (Signed)

SciFi/Fantasy Book of the Month One hardcover or paperback per month signed when possible

Martell, Nick. [The Two-Faced Queen](#) (Signed)

CLASSICS

Dickson Carr, John. [The Lost Gallows: A London Mystery](#) (Poisoned Pen \$14.99). Carr (1906–1977) is at the top of his game in this taut whodunit first published in 1931. Paris police chief Henri Bencolin, who has come to London for a play's opening, is nearly run down in the street by a limousine driven by a dead man, whose throat, he can clearly see, has been slit from ear to ear. The victim turns out to have been the chauffeur for a wealthy Egyptian, Nezam El Moulk. The baffling murder appears connected to a campaign of terror orchestrated against El Moulk by someone who calls himself Jack Ketch after a notorious English hangman. Ketch manages to infiltrate the Egyptian's locked residence to leave ominous objects, such as a wooden model of a gallows. The tension builds after Ketch calls the police and says, "Nezam El Moulk has been hanged on the gallows in Ruination Street," a nonexistent address. The revelation of Ketch's real name is both shocking and logical, and Carr maintains a creepy atmosphere throughout. The British Library Crime Classics series has unearthed another worthy golden age puzzle.

Hopkins, Pauline. [Of One Blood](#) (Haunted Library \$14.99). In the midst of present day focus let's not forget groundbreaking Black authors like Hopkins and her "uncanny example of classic horror exploring identity, race..." first serialized in *Colored American Magazine* in 1902. *PW* awards this new, annotated edition a Star saying, "The suspense is tangible and the final reveal will leave readers reeling." When medical student Reuel Briggs reluctantly attends a performance by the beautiful singer Dianthe Lusk, he can't help but fall for her. The very next day, their paths cross again when Dianthe's train crashes. To bring her back from the brink of death, Reuel draws on an eerie power he can't quite name. Soon, the two are engaged, and Reuel sets off on an archeological expedition to Africa to offset his debts before the wedding. But, in Ethiopia, unexpected danger and terror force him to confront the truth about his lineage, his power, and his own disturbing history.

Hughes, Dorothy B. [Ride the Pink Horse](#) (American Mystery Classics \$15.99). "It's a particular pleasure to recommend this novel by Dorothy B. Hughes, my favorite crime writer, which returns to circulation this month with a new (and insightful) introductory essay by Sara Paretsky...an unsettling, doom-laden tale set in the midst of Fiesta, the annual early autumn Santa Fe festival commemorating New Mexico's history."—Sarah Weinman, *The New York Times*. Willis Douglass isn't a senator anymore; he left Chicago, his protégé Sailor, and a murder rap behind and set out for the sunny streets of Santa Fe. Now, unwilling to take the fall for another man's crime, Sailor has set out for New Mexico as well, with blackmail and revenge on his mind. But there's another man on his trail as well—a cop who wants the ex-senator for more than a payoff. In the midst of a city gone mad, bursting with wild crowds for a yearly carnival, the three men will violently converge...

Kendrick. [Odor of Violets](#) (American Mystery Classics \$15.99). Kendrick (1894–1977), a now obscure founder of the Mystery Writers of America, gets his due in this terrific reissue, first published in 1941. As Kendrick explains in the foreword, a sightless soldier he encountered in England in 1917, who rattled off a stunning series of deductions about Kendrick that would have done

Sherlock Holmes proud, was the inspiration for detective Duncan Maclain, a former U.S. Army captain who was blinded during WWI and whose abilities derive from his other senses. In the late 1930s, Maclain is working as a PI in Manhattan when he's visited by Paul Gerente, "once a famous stage name," who claims to represent Naval Intelligence. The actor asks for Maclain's help identifying vulnerabilities in the city's infrastructure defenses, in anticipation of an attack by German saboteurs. After the man's departure, Maclain suspects he was an imposter. When he goes to Gerente's apartment, he finds the thespian bludgeoned to death, and the plot careens into a series of twists. Kendrick keeps his concept believable, while tossing in enough action and surprises to keep the pages turning.

Regester, Seeley. [The Dead Letter](#) (Poisoned Pen \$14.99). A title with a strong claim to be America's very first detective novel, first published in 1866, returns to print again in this latest edition to the Library of Congress Crime Classics. "As Leslie S. Klinger's lucid introduction indicates, Regester is one of the many pseudonyms used by Metta Victoria Fuller Victor (1831-1885), a fabulously prolific dime novelist whose sagas combined adventure, crime, sensation, and the supernatural in varying proportions. But the conventions of this tale are very much those of the formal detective story. After a prologue showing how Richard Redfield, a clerk in the dead letter office, is electrified when he opens and reads a cryptic undelivered letter, Regester flashes back two years to the fatal stabbing of Henry Moreland. The victim's fiancée, Eleanor Argyll, can't help suspecting Redfield of the crime although, or because, he's practically one of the family: a law student who works in the chambers of her father, Blankville attorney John Argyll, and happens to be sweet on Eleanor himself. Although the first clues implicate not Redfield but young seamstress Leesy Sullivan, Argyll, upon discovering that he's been robbed of \$2,000, asks Redfield to engage Mr. Burton, a noted detective, to look into the crimes. Burton follows the trail of the killer downstate to Manhattan, out west, and, with remarkable abruptness, to Acapulco before he identifies both the miscreant who stabbed Henry Moreland to death and the even more despicable client who hired the murderer... A document of unquestioned historical importance that only the most devoted genre fans will read for fun."—*Kirkus Reviews*. Yet I think fans of Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* will enjoy it.

Wright, Richard. [The Man Who Lived Underground](#) (Library of America \$22.95). This previously unpublished novel from the author of *Black Boy* and *Native Son* follows a Black man who is tortured by the police until he confesses to a crime he did not commit. "I have never written anything in my life that stemmed more from sheer inspiration," Wright said of the book.

APRIL IS NATIONAL POETRY MONTH

Coleman, Wanda. [Wicked Enchantment](#) (Black Sparrow Press \$15.95). *The New Yorker* writes, "Rarely does a poet seem to want to take an already brutally brief form and speed it up. Wanda Coleman's sonnets are sprints, which is what makes their improvisations, modeled on American blues and jazz, so compelling." The *NY Times* says, "These poems are wildly fun and inventive... and frequently hilarious; they seem to cover every human experience and emotion. *Wicked Enchantment* was named "Best Poetry of 2020" by *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Irish Times*.

Gorman, Amanda. [The Hill We Climb](#) (Viking \$15.99). On January 20, 2021, Amanda Gorman became the sixth and youngest poet to deliver a poetry reading at a presidential inauguration. Taking the stage after the 46th president of the United States, Joe Biden, Gorman captivated a worldwide audience—and set off a raging debate about the authenticity of foreign language translators when it came to publication. This is a gift edition with a forward by Oprah Winfrey

kaur, rupi. [home body](#) (McNeel \$16.99). rupi kaur constantly embraces growth, and in *home body*, she walks readers through a reflective and intimate journey visiting the past, the present, and the potential of the self. *home body* is a collection of raw, honest conversations with oneself—reminding readers to fill up on love, acceptance, community, family, and embrace change. kaur’s accompanying illustrations add to the sensitivity of the material—her line drawings as delicate as the poems.

Lynch, Thomas. [Bone Rosary: New and Selected Poems](#) (David R. Godine \$25.95). “For some 35 years Thomas Lynch has been publishing poems with a voice and understanding completely his own. His poetry emerges from a proud heritage with deep roots in Irish-American Catholicism and the history and culture of the Irish on both sides of the Atlantic. Yet for all his tribal affiliations, Lynch speaks with a stubborn independence, an irreverent humor, a frank joy in the pleasures of the flesh, and a bracing acknowledgment of life’s responsibilities and sorrows. This book represents an enduring poetic legacy.”—Richard Tillinghast, author of *Wayfaring Stranger*

A TRIO OF TREATS

The Eat Offbeat Chefs. [The Kitchen without Borders](#) (Algonquin \$24.95). The inspiration starts with a beloved recipe. When Manal Kahi moved to New York from Lebanon, she found herself missing the taste of the hummus she had grown up with in her Syrian grandmother’s kitchen, so she set to work making it. As she did, word quickly began to spread among her friends, who eagerly awaited the next batch. Manal and Wissam, her brother, realized their friends’ enthusiasm was not just because of how the hummus tasted—it had just as much to do with the memories of family, home, and heritage the hummus carried with it. Out of this realization came the start of the company, [Eat Offbeat](#), a unique catering and meal delivery service that is staffed by immigrant and refugee chefs, many hired through a partnership with the International Rescue Committee ([IRC](#)). Learn to make dishes like *Zeytoon Parvardeh*, a traditional olive, pomegranate, and walnut tapenade from Northern Iran brought to us by Chef Nasrin; Chef El Bahia’s Algerian Couscous, a grain made by hand in the summer months and stored for winter; or Eat Offbeat co-founder Manal’s recipe for smooth hummus flavored with tahini and lemon—the recipe that inspired the whole enterprise

Cohen Jake. [Jew-ish: A Cookbook of Invented Recipes from a Modern Mensch](#) (Houghton \$30). With Passover 2021 extending to April 4, here’s a treasure. Or think ahead to holiday gifting as this gem is for a full menu of cooks. In it, Cohen reinvents the food of his Ashkenazi heritage and draws inspiration from his husband’s Persian-Iraqi traditions to offer recipes that are modern, fresh, and enticing for a whole new generation of readers. Imagine the components of an everything bagel wrapped into flaky galette latkes dyed vibrant yellow with saffron for a Persian spin on the potato pancake, or best-ever hybrid desserts

like Macaroon Brownies and Pumpkin Spice Babka! As the chef reconciles ancient traditions with our modern times, his recipes become a celebration of a rich and vibrant history, a love story of blending cultures, and an invitation to gather around the table and create new memories

French, Erin. [Finding Freedom: A Cook’s Story: Remaking a Life from Scratch](#) (Celadon Books, \$28). “A memoir that grabs you from the beginning and immediately has you rooting hard for a scrappy, young, genius chef-to-be as she overcomes some pretty serious challenges. Long before The Lost Kitchen became a world dining destination with every seating filled the day the reservation book opens each spring, Erin French was a girl roaming barefoot on a 25-acre farm, a teenager falling in love with food while working the line at her dad’s diner and a young woman finding her calling as a professional chef at her tiny restaurant tucked into a 19th century mill. This singular memoir—a classic American story—invites readers to Erin’s corner of her beloved Maine to share the real person behind the “girl from Freedom” fairytale, and the not-so-picture-perfect struggles for success.

GET CLOSER TO NATURE

Earth Day is April 22. Take a hike. Plant a tree. Read a book like these

Raven, Catherine. [Fox and I: An Uncommon Friendship](#) (Spiegel & Grau \$27). For those interested in closeness to the natural world, here is a gentle and soulful memoir about a solitary National Park Ranger living in a tiny cottage on an isolated plot of land in Montana near Yellowstone who forms a wonderful friendship with a local fox. She had never had a regular visitor before. How do you even talk to a fox? She brought out her camping chair, sat as close to him as she dared, and began reading to him from *The Little Prince*. Her scientific training had taught her not to anthropomorphize animals, yet as she grew to know him, his personality revealed itself and they became friends. From the fox, she learned the single most important thing about loneliness: we are never alone when we are connected to the natural world. Friends, however, cannot save each other from the uncontained forces of nature....

Rojas, Natalia. [Celebrating Birds](#) (Harper \$29.99). A gorgeously illustrated and interactive full-color guide to more than 181 birds of North America, based on the bestselling board game, Wingspan. In addition to large-size representations of each bird and the most up-to-date bird descriptions provided by Cornell Lab of Ornithology, *Celebrating Birds* includes a step-by-step guide that can be used to take the game into the real world. Players can collect points based on the birds, nests, and various habitats and feeding clues they find outside. Artists and best friends Natalia Rojas and Ana Maria Martinez collaborated to create the beautiful depictions featured in the original Wingspan board game. *Celebrating Birds* features larger illustrations of the 170 North American birds from the game, plus eleven exciting new birds.

✦ Winn, Raynor. [The Wild Silence](#) (Penguin \$17). Nature holds the answers for Raynor and her husband Moth. After walking 630 homeless miles along The Salt Path, living on the windswept and wild English coastline; the cliffs, the sky and the chalky earth now feel like their home. Moth has a terminal diagnosis, but together on the wild coastal path, with their feet firmly rooted outdoors, they discover that anything is possible. Now, life

beyond The Salt Path awaits and they come back to four walls, but the sense of home is illusive and returning to normality is proving difficult—until an incredible gesture by someone who reads their story changes everything. A chance to breathe life back into a beautiful farmhouse nestled deep in the Cornish hills; rewilding the land and returning nature to its hedgerows becomes their saving grace and their new path to follow. I include this new memoir as a spur for me, and you, to read [The Salt Path](#) (\$17).

And for ages 4-8

Rosen, Sybil. [Carpenter's Helper](#) (Schwartz & Wade \$17.99). “This sweet children’s book features a little carpenter named Renata and two even smaller carpenters in the form of wrens who decide to build a nest in the bathroom Renata and her Papi are renovating. This book will likely generate interest in two hobbies: carpentry and bird-watching! The illustrations are lovely; the little birds come to life on the page.” Illustrated by Camille Garoche.

SOME APRIL HARDCOVER BOOKS

Ackerman, Elliot. [2034](#) (Penguin \$27). In this geopolitical thriller, “It’s 2034, and the Chinese are sick and tired of the U.S. Navy violating their territorial waters with “freedom of navigation patrols.” Near the Spratly Islands and Mischief Reef, a Navy ship stops to aid the incapacitated trawler *Wên Rui*. But there’s something fishy about the boat (hint: electronics), so the Navy holds it. Thousands of miles away, an unknown force takes control of the F-35 piloted by Major Chris “Wedge” Mitchell over the Strait of Hormuz, and he becomes a prisoner in Iran. China will arrange for the F-35’s return in exchange for the trawler, but what they really want is a confrontation and uncontested control of the South China Sea. They put a cyber stranglehold on the U.S., cause a nationwide blackout, and sink several American naval vessels, believing the conflict will be limited and China’s victory will be total. But murder a few thousand people here and a few thousand there, and pretty soon you have a ‘needless war’ in which the dead number in the millions. And this is only with tactical nukes. This novel starts out like a Tom Clancy thriller, but whether Wedge Mitchell is more like Jack Ryan or Dr. Strange-love is for the reader to decide. “Unlike with the never-ending Clancy series, it’s hard to imagine a sequel to this dark warning about human folly and miscalculation. This compelling thriller should be required reading for our national leaders and translated into Mandarin.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

Archer, Jeffrey. [Turn a Blind Eye](#) (St Martins \$28.99) is the third installment in the gripping story of Detective Inspector William Warwick of the London Metropolitan Police. See Signed Books for more.

Babitt, Debbie. [Saving Grace](#) (Scarlet \$25.95). Single mother Mary Grace Dobbs, the new sheriff of Repentance, Arkansas, fears history might be repeating itself 24 years after two of her sixth-grade classmates—her best friend and her worst enemy—vanished separately. First, Black mechanic Darryl Stokes, who many in the conservative, largely white community suspected in the disappearances, suddenly returns after an absence of more than two decades. Then, weeks later, a sixth-grade girl goes missing—alarming Mary Grace in both her professional capacity and as a concerned mother whose daughter is the missing girl’s classmate. As Mary Grace leads the search while struggling to keep in check the white supremacists who are spoiling for a

fight, the narrative shifts between past and present in this debut Southern Gothic. Remember I’ve been saying Gothic is the Next Big Thing—now it’s subdividing into distinct classes.

Bannalec, Jean-Luc. [The Granite Coast Murders](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Commissaire Georges Dupin is taking a forced two-week vacation, along with his longtime girlfriend, cardiologist Claire Lannoy, at a hotel on Brittany’s Côte de Granit Rose. Workaholic Dupin finds relaxing on the beach to be insufferable, and he soon discovers a conspirator in the hotel’s owner, Rosmin Bellet, who feeds him information on a pair of seemingly unrelated petty crimes—a missing statue from a chapel and a break-in at a nearby house. Bellet also connects Dupin to the local gossip network, including a newsstand proprietor and a hairdresser, who become invaluable resources when a hotel guest goes missing. Dupin is determined to investigate the disappearance, despite Claire’s insistence on leaving work at home. Meanwhile, Claire has secrets that Dupin ends up exploiting once a woman’s body turns up in one of the area’s famed quarries. Series fans will enjoy seeing Dupin’s relationship with Claire deepen. Armchair travelers and gourmands alike will appreciate visiting this region of Brittany. Start at the beginning to enjoy [The Brittany Mysteries](#), bestsellers here at The Pen.

Bohjalian, Chris. [Hour of the Witch](#) (Doubleday \$28.95). “In 1660s Boston, blue-eyed, porcelain-delicate Mary Deerfield is determined to escape her marriage after her husband, the cruel and controlling Thomas Deerfield, shoves a fork through her hand in a drunken rage. Yet unfortunate incidents—a screaming maid, a boy’s death after Mary treats him with herbs—leaves her longing not just for freedom but for her life; she could be condemned to the gallows as a witch. Another surprise read from the fabulously protean Bohjalian... Illustrates how rough justice can get when religion and institutional sexism are in the mix.” —*LJ*

Boschwitz, Ulrich Alexander. [The Passenger](#) (Metropolitan Books \$24.99) is “a jewel of a rediscovery: At once a deeply satisfying novel and a vital historical document—likely the first literary account of Kristallnacht and its repercussions.” Written in real time of persecution and flight in 1938 Germany, it offers a premonition of the Holocaust written by someone living through it. The 23-year-old Boschwitz wrote it on the fly in the wake of the Kristallnacht pogroms and a society careening out of control.

This is a riveting publishing story. Here are a few excerpts from its lengthy review in the *WSJ*: “*The Passenger* is a riveting, noirish, intensely filmic portrait of an ambivalent fugitive: a Jew hiding in plain sight during the terrifying days following Kristallnacht; a wealthy Berliner for whom money has become a burden, cornered but not captured, safest when in motion, at greatest risk when forced to rest. The book is urgent, propulsive, often tragicomic, peppered with moments of absurdism and existential speculation, by turns Hitchcockian and Beckettian. It has the immediacy of a novel written in a hurry.

“Otto Silbermann is a merchant, dealing in scrap and salvage. He has already signed his business over to his Aryan employee Becker (now officially his “partner”) and feels insulated by both this decision and his financial capital. But the pogroms have begun... Like Boschwitz himself (a half-Jew brought up a Protestant), Silbermann has been judaized by the Reich. From Berlin, Silbermann travels to Hamburg to track down Becker, with whom he has entrusted a fortune. He plays chess with a Nazi (and can’t help winning), while continuing to dine well. But

“everything’s happening so quickly,” and his rights are evaporating. He is stiffed by Becker, though left with sufficient cash to fill a suitcase: “I am a decent person,” Becker tells him “without conviction.” Silbermann returns to his shattered apartment and packs a large suitcase.

“From here the pace picks up further, as our ambiguous hero boards a series of trains, zigzagging across the country, unsure where to go next, desperate to leave the country but unable to do so, no longer a German resident but a citizen of “the Deutsche Reichsbahn” (German railway). With great verisimilitude, Boschwitz paints the portrait of a man riven with indecision and well-mannered panic as his options fall away.”

The Passenger was first published as *The Man Who Took Trains*” (1939), and in English. A hopeful Boschwitz had made extensive revisions to the text, which he sent on to his mother in England. The revisions were lost; so too was a new manuscript Boschwitz was carrying when he died at sea in 1942, torpedoed by a U-Boat, age 27. Five years ago, the German publisher Peter Graf unearthed the original German manuscript of *The Man Who Took Trains* and found himself transfixed. With the consent of the author’s relatives, and partly based on Boschwitz’s own notes, he revamped the novel to this edition. Preface is by André Aciman, author of *Call Me by Your Name*.

Bourdain, Anthony. [World Travel: An Irreverent Guide](#) (Ecco \$35). Feeling homebound? Dip into this. Bourdain saw more of the world than nearly anyone. His travels took him from the hidden pockets of his hometown of New York to a tribal longhouse in Borneo, from cosmopolitan Buenos Aires, Paris, and Shanghai to Tanzania’s utter beauty and the stunning desert solitude of Oman’s Empty Quarter—and many places beyond. In *World Travel*, a life of experience is collected into an entertaining, practical, fun and frank travel guide that gives readers an introduction to some of his favorite places—in his own words. Featuring essential advice on how to get there, what to eat, where to stay and, in some cases, what to avoid, *World Travel* provides essential context that will help readers further appreciate the reasons why Bourdain found a place enchanting and memorable.

Dean, Will. [The Last Thing to Burn](#) (Atria \$27). Trafficked Vietnamese illegal Thanh Dao, the narrator of this outstanding and heart-wrenching thriller from Dean (the Tuva Moodyson mysteries), endures an endless marathon of household labor, as well as just about every type of abuse imaginable, on a remote pig farm in Britain’s Fenlands. About the only spark of hope sustaining the young woman—whom her captor, Lenn, insists on calling Jane, his late mother’s name—is the belief that her younger sister remains free in Manchester, though Lenn has threatened to ensure the sister is deported if Thanh tries to escape or kills herself. The stakes rise when Thanh discovers she’s pregnant and Lenn imprisons a local woman who comes by to inquire about boarding her horse on the farm. As pressure increases from all quarters on Thanh, the tension becomes at times almost unbearable, relieved only by some shocking twists. With his deceptively soft-spoken but steely protagonist, determined to survive against staggering odds, Dean explores the resilience of the human spirit, even in the face of unfathomable evil. This harrowing journey is one worth taking.

Fredericks, Mariah. [Death of a Showman](#) (St Martins \$26.99). “In the fourth “Jane Prescott” mystery, Fredericks’s early 1900s sleuth/maid Jane encounters murder and heartbreak in New York

City’s theater district. When Jane and her employers, Louise and William Tyler, return to New York after a season in Europe, Jane hears that her former beau, composer Leo Hirschfeld, has made it big with a Broadway show in the works—and he has married chorus girl Violet Tempest. Jane is confused and hurt, even though she broke it off with Leo before leaving for the Continent, when he told her he wasn’t the marrying kind. But Leo reenters Jane’s world when he asks Louise to be a backer of his show. It wouldn’t be proper for Louise to go to the theater alone, so Jane accompanies her to rehearsals. They meet a motley cast of characters: Violet; a famous dancing duo; a comic actress and her caddish paramour; and volatile and vicious producer Sidney Warburton. When Warburton is killed at a famous theater eatery, the suspects are many, including Leo. Jane has her issues with Leo, but she’s certain he’s not a murderer. She and a friend, newspaperman Michael Behan, investigate all the other possibilities. With a spirited, intelligent heroine; pitch-perfect descriptions of pre—World War I New York; and believable characters, Fredericks’s latest historical mystery is a delight.”—*LJ Starred Review*

Gladwell, Malcolm. [Bomber Mafia](#) (Little Brown \$27). We are saturated with personal stories rooted in WWII, most recently focused heavily on women. Malcolm looks to the Pacific Theater with an exploration of how technology and best intentions collide in the heat of war. He weaves together the stories of a Dutch genius and his homemade computer, a band of brothers in central Alabama, a British psychopath, and pyromaniacal chemists at Harvard to examine one of the greatest moral challenges in modern American history. Most military thinkers in the years leading up to World War II saw the airplane as an afterthought. But a small band of idealistic strategists, the “Bomber Mafia,” asked: What if precision bombing could cripple the enemy and make war far less lethal? In contrast, the bombing of Tokyo on the deadliest night of the war was the brainchild of General Curtis LeMay, whose brutal pragmatism and scorched-earth tactics in Japan cost thousands of civilian lives, but may have spared even more by averting a planned US invasion. Tactics and technology, humans and machines....

Graff, Andrew J. [Raft of Stars](#) (Ecco \$26.99). I can’t recall if this is an Indie Next or a Library Reads recommendation: “*Raft of Stars* is an engaging coming-of-age story that will appeal to a wide range of readers. Believing they are murderers, two young boys go on the run in the Northwoods of Wisconsin. As the adults in their lives set out to find them, questions of guilt, hope, and the future rise to the surface. With characters that come alive and a setting that is real enough to feel, touch, and smell, Graff’s novel has action and emotion as well. Filled with themes of family and friendship, this warm-hearted adventure is sure to be a winner!” The publisher recommends it to readers of Jane Smiley.

Greenidge, Kaitlyn. [Libertie](#) (Algonquin Book \$26.95). The #1 April Indie Next Pick also earns raves from all over: “*Libertie* is a beautifully written, immersive historical novel inspired by the story of a Black doctor and her daughter who lived in a free Black community in Brooklyn during the Reconstruction era. It is also a profound meditation on what it means to be truly free — whether born free or formerly enslaved, whether in America, Haiti, or Liberia — while struggling against grief, sexism, racism, colorism, or classism. *Libertie*’s quest to forge her own path is a much-needed inspiration!” historical fiction focuses on a Black girl in Reconstruction-era Brooklyn. *Libertie* Simpson is free-

born, and being pushed by her doctor mother to go into medicine. As the novel follows Libertie, who experiences racism differently from her lighter-skinned mother, she briefly attends a college in Ohio and receives a marriage proposal. *PW* calls the novel a “*pièce de résistance*” which is “so immaculately orchestrated that each character, each setting, and each sentence sings.”

Hepworth, Sally. [The Good Sister](#) (St Martins \$27.99). Fraternal twins Rose and Fern Castle of Victoria, Australia, share all but three things: Rose’s diabetes, Fern’s sensory-processing difficulties, and their memories of how their mother raised them. Rose is a married interior designer, and Fern is a librarian. When Fern discovers that Rose desperately wants to become a mother, but has been unable to conceive, she considers everything Rose has done for her, including protecting Fern from their abusive mother during their childhood, and decides to act as a surrogate. To that end, she seduces a library patron in order to get pregnant. Fearful of Fern’s emotional fragility, Rose moves in with her sister to ensure the pregnancy runs smoothly. And then...The Indie Next Pick: “Having a title like *The Good Sister* might lead a reader to assume there is also a bad sister. Here we meet twin sisters Rose and Fern, whose mother was a sociopath. That upbringing affected Fern the most, so Rose cared for her sister during most of their childhood. Now adult women, Fern begins to come out of her shell and experience life on her own; she likes the freedom and the adventures. But Rose does not. When Fern makes a huge sacrifice to mollify Rose, the story grows tenser as it becomes clear who the good sister is and how bad the bad sister can be. Readers might change allegiances during the book, but no one will see the end coming! Highly recommended!”

Hilliard, M E. [The Unkindness of Ravens](#) (Crippen \$26.99). “Greer Hogan, the smart, self-reliant narrator of Hilliard’s first-rate debut and series launch, used to be an executive at a New York City cosmetics firm, until she realized that she needed a change. ‘So, I went to the place where I always felt safe and happy—the library. More precisely, library school.’ She has recently taken her first job as a librarian in the small town of Raven Hill, where her only friend is Joanna Goodhue, with whom she went to college. The library is housed in Raven Hill Manor, a gothic pile “full of small mysteries and historical oddities.” One night, while insuring that no stray patrons are still on the premises at closing time, Greer discovers Joanna’s lifeless body. Did Joanna fall and hit her head? Everyone, including the police, wants the death ruled an accident. But Greer disagrees and brings her skills as a keen observer to her investigation, tipping off readers when all the clues are in place with more finesse than Ellery Queen. Her carefully doled out backstory actually explains her need to solve the murder. This superior cozy should win Hilliard plenty of fans.”—*PW*

King, Ross. [The Bookseller of Florence](#) (Grove \$30). Art historian King of [Brunelleschi’s Dome](#) (\$17) among other works, delivers a richly detailed portrait of 15th-century Florence and the important role booksellers played in disseminating ancient Greek and Latin texts that were vital to the Renaissance. King focuses on Vespasiano da Bisticci, a renowned bookseller and “manuscript hunter” who produced gorgeously illustrated parchment copies of theological texts and works by Plato, Aristotle, and other ancient philosophers. Like many Florentines, Vespasiano had to balance his relationships with the city-state’s most prominent families carefully; in one case, his stellar reputation resulted in a

brief wartime truce between his patrons Lorenzo de’ Medici and the King of Urbino so that a specially commissioned Bible could reach the king safely. When the success of the Gutenberg printing press reduced interest in parchment booksellers, Vespasiano used his retirement to write a humanizing biographical series on his famous friends and patrons, including Cosimo de’ Medici. “King’s expansive narrative also includes a history of bookmaking and the transition between ‘modern’ Gothic calligraphy and the new ‘ancient’ method designed to mimic the cleaner style found in classical works.”

In a Starred Review, *Booklist* adds, “Magnificent... King’s meticulous research provides an immersive reading experience as he expertly weaves the political intrigue of families vying for power and currying favor with the pope into a riveting intellectual history covering the evolution of books, Renaissance Italy, classical philosophy and literature, and the invention of the printing press. A profoundly engaging study of a time when books were considered essential to a meaningful life, and knowledge and wisdom were cherished as ends in themselves.”

Matheson, Nadine. [The Jigsaw Man](#) (Hanover Square \$27.99). On the day she returns to active duty with the Serial Crimes Unit, DI Angelica Henley is called to a crime scene. Dismembered body parts from two victims have been found by the river. The modus operandi bears a striking resemblance to Peter Olivier, the notorious Jigsaw Killer, who has spent the past two years behind bars. When he learns that someone is co-opting his grisly signature—the arrangement of victims’ limbs in puzzle piece shapes—he decides to take matters into his own hands. As the body count rises, DI Angelica Henley is faced with an unspeakable new threat. Can she apprehend the copycat killer before Olivier finds a way to get to him first? Or will she herself become the next victim? Debut novelist Matheson, one of what she calls “Female Authors of Colour,” draws on her experience as a criminal attorney. But this is a run of the mill serial killer thriller.

McMahon, Jennifer. [The Drowning Kind](#) (Gallery \$27). “McMahon has a gift for creating creepy atmosphere and letting spooky suggestions linger in the mind. She’s also adept at weaving legends and stories into the fabric of what feels like real life, because her characters are so believably vulnerable. As a child, Jackie was often overshadowed by her dazzling older sister. Everything seemed to come easier to Lexie—adventure, friendship, even the love of their family—until, as a teenager, she began to manifest symptoms of ‘schizoaffective disorder of the bipolar type.’ The two girls continued to grow apart; Jackie escaped to the West Coast for college and career. Now their grandmother has died, leaving Lexie her house, Sparrow Crest. Jackie, a social worker, distances herself from her sister for her own mental health, so when Lexie leaves her several manic messages one evening, Jackie ignores the calls only to hear from her aunt the next morning that Lexie is dead, drowned in Sparrow Crest’s pool. Jackie flies back to Vermont and discovers that Lexie was documenting strange occurrences that seemed to center around the pool, which is fed by a mineral spring. Her research into the family history, as well as other deaths by drowning, sparks Jackie’s dread and interest, and she begins to look more deeply into the truth about their family....”—Starred *Kirkus Review*

Murakami, Haruki. [First Person Singular: Stories](#) (Knopf \$26.95). The eight stories in this new book are all told in the first person

by a classic Murakami narrator. From memories of youth, meditations on music, and an ardent love of baseball, to dreamlike scenarios and invented jazz albums, together these stories challenge the boundaries between our minds and the exterior world. Occasionally, a narrator may or may not be Murakami himself. Is it memoir or fiction?

Post, Jeffrey Edward. [Unearthed: The Smithsonian National Gem Collection](#) (Little Brown \$29.99). I LOVE this and write now to say it will make a great Mother's Day gift. It's not just the fabulous gems photographed (in color) so beautifully. It's not just the amazing clothes and the bios of the men and woman who owned the stones, it's the histories of the jewels that fascinate. Dr. Post regales the reader with their stories and actual facts surrounding famous gems like the Carmen Lucia Ruby, the Hooker Emerald, the Bombay Sapphire, the Star of Bombay, the Blue Heart Diamond (and the Hope), plus those of rarely displayed gems from the Smithsonian's vault. This oversize soft cover paperback is printed on thick and pliable paper coated so that everything positively sparkles.

When I was very young I attended a very posh Washington DC New Year's Eve party with my fiancé and by chance found myself sitting by an elderly woman who was almost paled in what I naively thought must be rhinestones. LOL. She was Marjorie Merriweather Post, it turns out, and all those sparkles were diamonds. There are some impressive photos of her and her gems in this book; she was a major donor to the collection and included the Post Tiara.

Sathian, Sanjena. [Gold Diggers](#) (Penguin Press \$27). Another April Indie Next Pick: "Gold as a drug. Gold as a metaphor for the glittering hopes and burdens new immigrants put on their children's shoulders. Gold as the thread weaving history, memory, and imagination, a meditation on how the past blends into the present. Gold as the object of an improbable heist. There is so much in this book, but it is first and foremost an extraordinarily good yarn, the story of two generations of American-Indian immigrants trying to become Americanized while clinging to a fetishized, culturally commodified India. There is love, drugs, alchemy, and stories about the gold rush, both the forty-niners and the new gold diggers of the tech bubble. It's fun and fast-paced, except when you stop short for a sentence so evocative you want to dwell on it. A seriously good book by a seriously talented writer."

Sayers, Constance. [The Ladies of the Secret Circus](#) (Redhook \$28) weaves romance, mystery, and a family curse into a spellbinding historical fantasy that stretches from 1920s Paris to modern-day America. In Jazz Age Paris, the Secret Circus is a place of both beauty and horror, unique because it has no physical building and only becomes visible to ticket holders. Twins Cecile and Esmé Cabot are confined to the mysterious world of the circus, where Cecile has always lived in Esmé's shadow. But when Cecile falls for a charming young artist, the affair worsens Cecile and Esmé's already strained relationship and the consequences of their rift stretch through time. In present-day Virginia, Lara Barnes is floored when her fiancé disappears on their wedding day, and, after coming across her great-grandmother's journals, she sets off for Paris in search of answers. There, Lara uncovers both her family's secret past and a curse that has plagued the women in her family for generations. The rich descriptions and fascinating settings create engagement

in both timelines, and the secret of Lara's bloodline is original and surprising. Fans of Erin Morgenstern's [The Night Circus](#) will love this page-turning story of dark magic, star-crossed love, and familial sacrifice.

Spillane, Mickey/Max Allan Collins. [Shoot Out at Sugar Creek](#) (Kensington \$25) presents tin-star tough guy Caleb York—in a gun-blazing showdown with two women ranchers calling the shots... It starts with an abusive, drunken young scoundrel who resists arrest, holds a barmaid hostage, and gets what he deserves from the blazing .44 of Sheriff Caleb York. The New Mexico lawman doesn't regret taking such deadly action, but the late youth's powerful mother, cattle baroness Victoria Drummond, seems bound to feel differently. To York's surprise, Victoria takes the news with stoic resignation—all she asks of him is a favor: help her convince Willa Cullen—the love of Caleb's life—to sell her the spread that Willa's late father had carved out of the wilderness. Willa, every bit as strong-willed as her rival, refuses to give up her land without a fight. Sheriff York anticipates an ugly showdown brewing with himself in the dangerous middle in Caleb York Western #6

Standiford, Natalie. [Astrid Sees All](#) (Atria Books \$27). The Indie Next Pick: "*Astrid Sees All* is the novel for everyone who has ever moved to a new city to reinvent themselves—and hit some bumps along the way. In a love letter to the East Village of Manhattan, the neighborhood's grit, glamour, and romance feels palpable. The reader never stops rooting for these complex and compelling characters, despite their many missteps. What I wouldn't give to party with Phoebe and her friends for a night at Plutonium!"

Sten, Camilla. [The Lost Village](#) (St Martins \$26.99). One of our recent International Crime Books of the Month earns an Indie Next Pick: "Hearing this book described as a cross between *The Blair Witch Project* and *Midsommar* meant I could not grab it fast enough. This chilling novel, set in a remote village in Sweden, tells the story of a scrappy documentary film crew trying to find out why the entire town disappeared many years ago. The camp they set up in the town square is immediately beset with mysterious happenings that become less and less harmless. Tension mounts as they explore the mystery of where the residents of Silvertjärn went and wonder if they will meet the same fate." Nordic Noir lovers won't want to miss this well-reviewed tale: "Come for the mounting horror and scares, but stay for a devastating examination of the nature of family secrets."—*NY Times*

✂Taylor, Andrew. [The Royal Secret](#) (Harper \$26.99). Two young girls plot a murder by witchcraft. Soon afterwards a government clerk dies painfully in mysterious circumstances. His colleague James Marwood is asked to investigate – but the task brings unexpected dangers. Meanwhile, architect Cat Hakesby is working for a merchant who lives on Slaughter Street, where the air smells of blood and a captive Barbary lion prowls the stables. Then a prestigious new commission arrives. Cat must design a Poultry House for the woman that the King loves most in all the world. Unbeknownst to all, at the heart of this lies an explosive royal secret. Charles II was one of England's most openly libidinous kings yet he stayed married to a sterile wife, thus producing no direct heirs. His trust in his brother James to rule was, time showed, misplaced—another instance of the Stuarts' disastrous history of misjudgments. They were unlucky too.

Thompson, Victoria. [Murder on Wall Street](#) (Berkley \$26). Thompson brings back beloved well-bred midwife Sarah Brandt and her husband Frank Malloy, a former police officer who inherited a great deal of money but works as a private detective to stave off boredom. Sarah has helped arrange a marriage between Jack Robinson and pregnant society lady Jocelyn, whose parents sent her to Sarah's clinic after she was raped in hopes of hiding the birth. Jack, who dabbles in illegal activities, hires Frank to look into the murder of Jocelyn's rapist, Hayden Norcross, the worthless scion of a wealthy family of investment bankers, before the police start looking too closely at Jack himself. Since the assault, Hayden had been forced to marry Violet Andriessen, whom he had also raped and treated abominably, creating suspects in her brother and father, although her parents seem more concerned about society's judgment than the legal system's. While Frank mingles with the upper class with his well-connected father-in-law, Sarah and her mother pick up gossip that suggests... These mostly charmless characters are offset by the elegancies of Gilded Age New York on full display.

Vernon, John. [On Harrow Hill](#) (Catapult \$28). Continuing the trend, here is a police procedural Gothic! I read it right through. I'm not sure I agree with Oline Cogdill's conclusion, but it truly will engage you: "Vernon's clever, cerebral mysteries about retired New York Police Department homicide detective Dave Gurney take another leap forward in this seventh outing, part puzzle, part police procedural and all entertainment. Verdon has a knack for creating outlandish, almost unbelievable, situations that reach logical, realistic conclusions. On Harrow Hill begins when Dave is asked to help his old partner Mike Morgan, now the police chief of Larchfield, an affluent village with a low crime rate about an hour from Dave's Catskills home in upstate New York. The odd crime involves 78-year-old Angus Russell, Larchfield's wealthiest, most powerful and despised resident, murdered while his 28-year-old wife, Lorinda, slept in her bedroom next door. The killer seems obvious—the fingerprints of local ex-con Billy Tate are on the murder weapon. But Billy died the day before the murder, struck by lightning, then falling from the roof of a church he was vandalizing. Mike and the medical examiner witnessed Billy's death. Then a video shows Billy breaking out of his coffin in a funeral home's basement. Pulling together all the plot threads—which grow even more complicated—takes all of Dave's thoughtful perception, but also his ability to re-evaluate his sleuthing skills. Dave, who thrives on bizarre cases, is well aware that a 'trick of the mind' can taint even his insight. Larchfield emerges as a full character, as duplicitous and strange as its residents. Yet no matter how weird the circumstances of *On Harrow Hill* become, Verdon retains tight control of his plot."

Walsh, S. Kirk. [The Elephant of Belfast](#) (Counterpoint, \$27). The apparently never ending spurt of WWII women's stories gets a spin to Northern Ireland. Here's the Indie Next Pick: "*The Elephant of Belfast* is a gem of historical fiction involving a young female zookeeper and an elephant during the Belfast bombings in 1941. The beautiful writing weaves an intricate balance between themes of loss, identity, and resilience during a difficult time. A wonderful book for those who need an element of surprise and who believe the love between animals and humans can make us whole."

OUR APRIL LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

Child, Lee/Andrew. [The Sentinel](#) (\$17). This time, Reacher arrives in a town near Nashville, where he heads toward one of his favorite destinations, a coffee shop, only to notice that someone is about to be abducted. Reacher being Reacher, he saves the stranger and ends up confronting a conspiracy involving cyber ransom, election sabotage, a Cold War secret, and... Much of *The Sentinel* is humorous as Reacher patiently teaches bad guys about the flaws in their tactics. While there's lots of action, the novel also feels like a procedural as Reacher interviews suspects and delves deeper toward the truth.... I add that I spent a few years in and around Oak Ridge, Tennessee, a place that ought to figure into more thrillers.

Connelly, Michael. [The Law of Innocence](#) (\$16.99). Feeling good about a verdict, defense attorney Mickey Haller drives away only to be pulled over by a traffic cop who says the Lincoln is missing a rear license plate. Visual inspection shows body fluids dripping out of the trunk and the next thing you know the trunk is open, there is a body, that of a career con artist, and Haller is arrested for murder. He knows he's been framed. But by whom? And why? And what will he be able to do about it from the confines of the Twin Towers Correction Center in downtown LA? Haller assembles his trusted team and they—including Haller's half-brother Harry Bosch—investigate different leads while Haller, who chooses to represent himself, navigates the legal system as an accused rather than a lawyer. Luckily he knows it well for his eventual day in court. But first, the unusual case leads to the port of Los Angeles and a biofuel company run by a recidivist criminal with mob ties whom Haller put away years earlier. Bosch suspects that the company is running a complex scam and double dipping on government subsidies payouts. Meanwhile, 2020 is off to a strange start with reports of a deadly virus in China that threatens to spread worldwide....

Hallinan, Timothy. [Street Music](#) (\$16.95). Hallinan brings the Thailand-based adventures of Bangkok-based travel writer Poke Rafferty to a close with this ninth installment, which, like so many of the first eight, bears its readers back to a heart-rending past. Poke, his Thai wife, Rose, and their adopted daughter, Miaow, adjusting to a new family member. Rose has just given birth to a son, and Poke's life is in disarray. He's been known for getting into some scrapes and doing a little detective work on the side, but now he faces the responsibilities of being a father and protecting his family. When his good friend vanishes, he tries to locate him and ends up running into his adopted daughter's birth mother. When she is murdered, Poke is a suspect, but then he tries to solve her murder. "This slow-paced, noir-style mystery can be read as a stand-alone, but newcomers will have a richer experience having read the previous books. Raw and atmospheric, this is a solid finale to the series."—LJ. We are devoted fans to Poke here at The Pen not least for the remarkable way he has succeeded in creating a family.

Dugoni, Robert. [In Her Tracks](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$15.95). Seattle cop Tracy Crosswhite returns to her post only to be reassigned to the one-person Cold Case unit. See Signed books for a fuller review.

James, Rebecca. [The Woman in the Mirror](#) (\$16.99) Investigating her birth family upon inheriting a centuries-old English manor, an adopted art gallery curator uncovers the story of a mid-

20th-century governess who was cruelly treated by the curator's unknown ancestors. The tale is atmospheric and DuMaurier-ish yet the women are not supine like the second Mrs. De Winter. If you missed this mesmerizing tale last year in hardcover, now is your chance to indulge in a story that also evokes Barbara Michaels at her bookish best.

Leon, Donna. [Trace Elements](#) (\$17). When Commissario Brunetti and his colleague Claudia Griffoni are summoned to the deathbed of a woman whose husband has recently died, apparently in a car accident, they are told, by the dying woman, that "bad money" killed her husband. Is there a crime to be investigated or is this merely a family tragedy? Naturally, Brunetti digs into the matter and finds that the dead man, whose job involved testing the waters in Venice's canals for contamination, may have uncovered a scandal that could threaten every Venetian. Probing, as so often happens in this series, leads to larger and more ambiguous questions, this time about "that beast, justice." Turning to Aeschylus' *The Eumenides* for clarity, Brunetti finds that our moral muddles have been with us for more than 2,000 years. This isn't the first time Brunetti has been forced to decide "which crime to punish, which to ignore," but the burden of that decision has never been greater." As usual, Leon adroitly portrays the complex questions of what constitutes justice and the sad consequences that can result from its pursuit. And illuminates the pollution aspect of Venice's perennial water crisis.

Longworth, M L. [The Vanishing Museum on the Rue Mistral](#) (Penguin \$16). *Joie!* Here's the latest in a breezy, charming, and perfectly escapist mystery set in the heart of sun- and wine-soaked Aix-en-Provence. Not a cozy series but in their way legal thrillers and loaded with regional history. Something strange has happened at the unassuming Musée de Quentin-Savary. When the director, Monsieur Achille Formentin, walks in one beautiful April morning, he is shocked to find the whole museum emptied of its contents—only a bench, the reception desk, and a lowly fern remain. Distressed, he calls the local police, and Aix's examining magistrate Antoine Verlaque sets out to discover the thief's identity. But it's the most baffling case Verlaque has ever encountered. Why would someone want to steal porcelain dessert plates, some old documents, and a few small paintings? Could this have something to do with the mysterious robbery of Madame de Montbarbon's apartment a few weeks earlier? And how can Verlaque possibly concentrate on the theft when he and his wife, Marine Bonnet, are going to have a baby? Their thorny courtship has been an integral part of [this multibook series](#) which I suggest you order from the beginning unless you're already a real fan like me.

Panowich, Brian. [Hard Cash Valley](#) (\$17.99), Patrick reviews: "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 critic 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..."

⌘Parks, Adele. [Just My Luck](#) (Mira \$17.99). This "exhilarating, shrewdly observed tale about morality and greed" focuses on three English couples. Lexi Greenwood and her husband, Jake, who live with their two children in Little Chester, scrape by on their modest earnings. For 15 years, Lexi and Jake have gotten together every week with Peter and Carla Pearson and Fred and Jennifer Heathcote, who live in posh Great Chester, for dinner and their group-flutter on the National Lottery. Year in and year out, they have played and lost. One fateful evening, the Pearsons and the Heathcotes declare the lottery is for losers and they will no longer take part. Out of habit the following week, Lexi buys a ticket and plays their regular numbers, winning £17.8 million. The other couples feel they deserve a share. The ensuing lawsuits, double-dealing, secret trysts, and fistfights devolve into cruelty, kidnapping, and fraud. Anyone who thinks winning the lottery is a ticket to a life of bliss must think again.

⌘Perry, Anne. [One Fatal Flaw](#) (\$17).). Jessie Beale assures Daniel that despite all the evidence against him, her boyfriend, Rob Adwell, didn't bludgeon Paddy Jackson, his sometime partner in crime, or set fire to the warehouse they'd planned to rob, the place where Paddy's body was found. Desperate for an expert witness to refute the medical testimony, Daniel and Miriam fford Croft, the daughter of his head of chambers, who's partnered with him in two earlier cases, ask Sir Barnabas Saltram, the forensic pathologist who discouraged Miriam from pursuing her medical studies 20 years ago, to examine Jackson's corpse, assuming that his nonpareil reputation will give whatever alternative theory of the crime he advances well-nigh irrefutable status. Their plan works all too well. Bolstered by Saltram's testimony, Adwell is found not guilty, setting the stage for his own death in a remarkably similar arson two months later. Perry adds twist to this Edwardian era tale in her usual style with maybe a touch of feminism. For the sequel see Signed Books.

Rosen, Renee. [The Social Graces](#) (Berkley \$17). "Rosen's novel opens with a sly wink to that *grande dame* of the Gilded Age, Edith Wharton, before she deftly spins a captivating tale of her own, based upon the legendary rivalry between Caroline Astor and Alva Vanderbilt. And what a rich story it is, full of opulent balls and monstrous mansions, yet firmly rooted in the parallel struggles of two very different heroines as they fight for their dignity and rights as wives, as mothers, and as women." —Fiona Davis,

Spencer Fleming, Julia. [Hid from Our Eyes](#) (\$17.99). Karen reviews: Millers Kill is a small town with a lot going on. The recent murder of a young woman is reminiscent of one from 1952 and another in 1972. There is no identification for the victim, no obvious cause of death. The Police Chief, Russ Van Alstyne, was a suspect in the 1972 crime, as he was the one who found her body. The current crime leaves few clues and, because of the time span, it seems impossible that all three crimes could be executed by the same person. Meanwhile, there are other issues. Van Alstyne is facing a citizen's committee which has determined that Millers Kill is too small to finance a police department and wants to turn it over to the State Police. At home, there is a new baby and wife, Clare, who has concerns of her own. She is a new Mom, trying to juggle her counseling duties along with her ministerial responsibilities and her battle to remain sober. Spencer-Fleming does a great job in creating a small town with flawed, but decent, characters.

Walker, Martin. [The Shooting at Chateau Rock](#) (\$16.95). 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. And as ever treats you to evocative descriptions of the Périgord region and its cuisine. The next Bruno, [The Coldest Case](#) (Knopf \$26.95), is out August 3.

Wright, Lawrence. [The End of October](#) (\$17). “Wright, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*, delivers his knockout first novel, our last October First Mystery Book of the Month, 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...

APRIL LARGE PAPERBACKS

Andrews, Mary Kay. [Hello, Summer](#) (\$16.99). After Conley Hawkins's amazing newspaper job in Washington, DC, dries up, she returns to her hometown of Silver Bay, Florida, to crash with her grandmother Lorraine. When Lorraine suggests that Conley write for their family newspaper, The Silver Bay Beacon, Conley doesn't exactly jump at the chance, having never gotten along with the editor, her sister Grayson. But when local congressman, war hero, and family man Charles Robinette dies in a one-car crash, Conley is assigned to cover the incident. Grayson asks Conley to write a puff piece and stick to the popular story floating around the small community. Conley finds discrepancies in Charles's crystal-clear past that leads her closer to a major scandal, putting her at odds with his influential, scummy son and under the scrutiny of small-town residents. Andrews crafts a suspenseful small-town story that keeps the pages turning. It has a bit of everything: mystery, dodgy characters, a little romance, and family drama.

Brooks, Elizabeth. [The Whispering House](#) (Tin House \$16.95). The walls at rundown Byrne Hall seem to whisper, that's what Freya Lyell notices when she travels to the stately yet dilapidated mansion for a wedding, and discovers its mysterious connection to her sister's death. An aspiring poet, 23-year-old Freya is immediately enchanted by handsome painter Cory Byrne, who lives in the house with his ailing mother, Diana. Having spent the last five

years grieving for her sister Stella, Freya is eager to cast aside her old life and plunge headfirst into what she calls her “Bohemian idyll” with Cory—but it won't be that easy. As their love affair becomes all-consuming, Freya's youth and naïveté often work against her. She continues to explain away Cory's increasingly controlling and dangerous behavior—and overlook his shocking connection to Stella. Set near the sea in late autumn, this spooky and captivating thriller about heartache and yearning is filled with bone-chilling breezes, taunting ghosts and maddening isolation.

Davis, Krista. [The Diva Spices It Up](#) (\$15.95). When a celebrity ghostwriter dies on the job, it's up to Sophie Winston, Old Town, Virginia's favorite entertaining expert and sporadic sleuth, to whip up an impromptu investigation...

Downing, Samantha. [He Started it](#) (\$17). Beth Morgan's wryly humorous narration belies the high-stakes skullduggery that awaits her and her two estranged adult siblings on the cross-country road trip they're forced into taking with their grandfather's ashes in order to claim slices of his fortune. According to the terms of the will, Beth, overbearing big brother Eddie, and frosty baby sister Portia must retrace the oddball odyssey westward from Atlanta they took 20 years earlier with gramps, a traumatic trip that was intended to give their parents some alone time to save their marriage but would tear their family apart. As backstabbing, bizarre occurrences (including the disappearance of the ashes) and betrayals pile up, Downing discloses the clan's deeply buried secrets. The journey ends in a shocking, if head-spinning, showdown in the Nevada desert in the second thriller by the author of [My Lovely Wife](#) (\$16).

Harris, Oliver. [A Shadow Intelligence](#) (\$15.99). Elliot Kane reflects the dark side of MI6. He is the instrument of an agency that puts two years and more than £100K into training recruits to steal cars, hack bank accounts, strip weapons, and employ everything from blackmail to improvised explosives in service of Crown and Country. After fifteen years overseas embroiled in events that never make the news, Kane is a ghost in his own life, assuming and shedding personalities with each new cover story. When the woman he loves, another operative named Joanna Lake, vanishes in Kazakhstan, she leaves behind an astonishing video of Kane in a room he's never entered—sending Kane off the rails to find her. While he's well versed in modern psychological warfare, snowbound, landlocked Kazakhstan presents unique challenges. In a country poised between China, Russia, and the West, between dictatorship and democracy, between state intelligence and increasingly powerful private corporations, it's impossible to work out who is manipulating whom. Drawn ever deeper into a realm of deception and conflicting agendas, Kane moves from merely spying to steering the action

Hession, Ronan. [Leonard and Hungry Paul](#) (Melville House \$17.99). Hungry Paul wants a job. No, that's a lie, he's got one, a once-weekly substitute mail carrier gig. It's actually his sister Grace who wants him to get a full-time job, so he'll finally move out from his parents' house. Leonard lived with his mom too, but she just passed away. Leonard has a job, ghost-writing copy for children's reference books. He also has a dream, to write his own children's book. And maybe to go on a date with Shelley, with whom he shares office space. Hungry Paul also has a dream – to win a local contest coming up with a better way to close cor-

respondence. ‘Sincerely yours’ just doesn’t cut it. *Leonard and Hungry Paul* is a delightful book with a gentle sense of humor—and sometimes not-so-gentle—I laughed out loud more than once. *Leonard and Hungry Paul* is perfect for fans of—dare I say it?—*A Man Called Ove*.”—A fan.

Lawson, Mike. [House Privilege](#) (\$16). Fifteen-year-old Cassie Russell, the only daughter of a mega-rich Boston couple, is the sole survivor of a plane crash that killed her parents. She’s also the goddaughter of the newly elected Speaker of the House, John Mahoney, and after the crash Mahoney becomes her legal guardian. Normally, Mahoney would send his kind-hearted wife to deal with his new ward, but she’s unavailable so he dispatches his fixer, Joe DeMarco, to make sure the girl’s okay. DeMarco’s job is only to put things into a holding pattern until Mrs. Mahoney is able to step in and take charge—but DeMarco unintentionally flips over a rock and out from under it crawls a lawyer, the one managing Cassie’s vast estate. DeMarco learns the lawyer has been embezzling from the estate and may have killed Cassie’s parents. What should have been a simple assignment unleashes murder and mayhem.... The sequel publishes in April: [House Standoff](#) (Grove \$26).

Lebedev, Sergei. [Untraceable](#) (New Vessel Press \$22.95). Lebedev’s spy thriller about an obsessive chemist during the collapse of the Soviet is justly called “a thriller dipped in poison.” Just last month, the *New York Times* shared a profile about Lebedev, and Lebedev talked about Alexei Navalny’s imprisonment with the [BBC World Service](#).

✻McKenna, Clara. [Murder at Blackwater Bend](#) (\$15.95). 1905 Hampshire. Viscount Lyndhurst is teaching his wealthy American fiancée, Stella Kendrick, to fly-fish when her line snags the body of corrupt peer Lord Fairbrother, who’s been stabbed. One suspect is George Parley, who was enraged when Fairbrother bested his entry in a pony competition for the seventh year in a row. Another is Stella’s friend Harvey Milkham, the village snake catcher, who accused Fairbrother of burning down his cottage the day before the murder. Stella wants to clear Milkham, but the challenge of hosting her first large English party proves distracting. Meanwhile, Lyndy’s mother conspires to break his engagement to Stella and force him to marry Fairbrother’s widow, the socially impeccable Lady Philippa, now that she’s available again, shaking Stella. But her relationship with Inspector Brown comes to good use. Nothing novel here but a nice blend of mystery and romance. Start with [Murder at Morington Hall](#) (\$15.95).

Parks, Alan. [Bobby March Will Live Forever](#) (Europa \$17). “Parks takes readers deep into the sordid world of Glasgow in the 1970s, delivering a gut-churning, heart-wrenching Tartan Noir”—*Booklist* Starred Review. Recommended to fans of early Denise Mina.

Schlitz, Laura Amy. [Amber and Clay](#) (Candlewick \$22.99). The Indie Next Pick: “Amber and Clay is magnificent! It is a remarkable visit to the ancient world, where we readers (like the gods themselves) observe the difficult lives of mortals. Rhaskos is an enslaved stable boy who longs to release the art and grand thoughts that fill him. Melisto, the spoiled daughter of a wealthy father, burns with resentment over the love her mother withholds. Laura Amy Schlitz relates their painfully intertwined stories through vivid, urgent, poetic voices of both gods and mortals.

The result is a stunning accomplishment, and a truly unforgettable read.” For Ages 9 to 12. Illustrated by Julia Iredale.

Westlake, Donald E. [Castle in the Air](#) (Hardcase Crime \$9.95). Four teams of international thieves race through Paris to steal a king’s ransom from the walls of a disassembled castle. None of the master thieves speak each other’s languages... and no one knows precisely where the loot is stashed... and every one of them wants to steal it all for him or herself. It’s *The Dirty Dozen* with a *French Connection*.

Whishaw, Iona. [A Lethal Lesson](#) (Heritage \$14.95). I love this series and can’t wait to read #8. One snowy day in December 1947, new teacher Wendy Keeling fails to show up at the one-room schoolhouse in King’s Cove, British Columbia. Lane, who served as a British intelligence operative during WWII, goes to the cottage that Wendy shares with her predecessor, Rose Scott. There Lane finds Rose lying on the floor with a bloody head wound and the home ransacked. After rushing Rose to the hospital, Lane reports what happened to her police inspector husband, who takes over the case. Meanwhile, Lane does her own investigating into Wendy’s whereabouts and whether her disappearance is connected with the assault on her roommate. Lane must balance her probing with a new role that’s even more daunting than her spy work—serving as the school’s interim teacher. Whishaw nicely captures the rhythms and dynamics of small-town life with the charm of Louise Penny while matching wits and suspense with Maisie Dobbs and Phryne Fisher. “Think a young Katharine Hepburn—beautiful, smart and beyond capable. Winslow is an example of the kind of woman who emerged after the war, a confident female who had worked in factories building tanks and guns, a woman who hadn’t yet been suffocated by the 1950s’-perfect housewife ideal.” —*Vancouver Sun*

OUR APRIL SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Note: the inclusion of the publisher’s name = paperback original

Adams, Ellery. [Murder in the Cookbook Nook](#) (Kensington \$8.99.) Book Retreat #7. Six chefs are preparing to compete in an outdoor tent at Storyton Hall for prizes that will boost their careers—but is there someone who can’t stand the heat? It looks that way when one of the contestants is found dead in a pantry packed with two centuries’ worth of cookbooks, among other treasures and rarities. *Kirkus* ended their review of the latest Vase Jane Steward mystery with “Love *Chopped* and mysteries? This delightful character-driven cozy is just the treat for you.”

Brandman, Michael. [Risk Factor](#) (Poisoned Pen \$8.99). Buddy Steel #4. Summoned back from vacation to investigate a home invasion at his father’s address, acting sheriff Buddy Steel teams up with tech expert detective Quinn Anthony to trace the convoluted trail of an increasingly violent band of cybercriminals. *Kirkus* gave this a star saying “As usual in this fast-paced franchise, Brandman’s more interested in action than mystery, and the biggest riddle isn’t whodunit but how Buddy will deal with Jill, Catalina, and Quinn. Fans will likely be satisfied with all three of his solutions.”

Carlisle, Kate. [The Grim Reader](#) (\$7.99). Bibliophile #14. When Dharma’s first annual Book Fair is marred by murder — one predicted by both of their moms — book-restoration expert Brooklyn and her new husband Derek must catch a spineless killer. *PW*

concluded their rave of Carlisle's latest with "This long-running cozy series shows no signs of losing steam."

Chamberlain, Diane. [The Stolen Marriage](#) (St Martins \$9.99). Ending her engagement to the love of her life to marry her unborn child's father, Theresa "Tess" DeMello quickly discovers she is trapped in a union with a secretive man and is treated with suspicion by her neighbors when a local girl dies in an accident. *PW* concluded with "Bestseller Chamberlain (*Necessary Lies*) conveys a strong sense of daily life in the American South during WWII, and the concurrent devastation of the polio epidemic, in this well-crafted crime-tinged tale of a marriage of convenience."

Gates, Eva. [A Death Long Overdue](#) (\$9.99). Lighthouse Library #7. Organizing a library artifact exhibit for her college class's 40th reunion, librarian Lucy Richardson and her friends discover the body of an unpopular director and are challenged to identify a killer among a long list of suspects. *PW* says "Lucy and her clever cat, Charles, form an amusing sleuthing team, and the lively and endearing supporting characters add to the fun. Cozy queen Gates (a pen name of Vicki Delany) is at the top of her game."

Lupica, Mike. [Robert B Parker's Grudge Match](#) (\$9.99). Sunny Randall #8. Reluctantly taking the case of a long-time gangster associate who will forgive a betrayal in return, private investigator Sunny Randall tracks down the man's missing girlfriend and business partner before the murder of a witness reveals unanticipated dangers.

Maden, Mike. [Tom Clancy Firing Point](#) (\$9.99). Jack Ryan Jr. #13. Narrowly escaping a Barcelona suicide bombing, Jack Ryan, Jr. investigates a victim's last words for answers before uncovering dark secrets linked to mysterious events that may have been behind the attack. *Kirkus* ended their review with "Fast action and dead bodies abound in this enjoyable bit of hero worship. It's assembly-line Clancy: high-quality entertainment, few surprises."

Preston, Douglas/Lincoln Child. [Crooked River](#) (\$9.99). Pendergast #19. Investigating dozens of grisly blue shoes containing severed human feet floating in the ocean off the coast of Florida, Pendergast and Junior Agent Coldmoon make harrowing discoveries while confronting an adversary of unimaginable power. *Kirkus* loved this saying "There is plenty of suspense, and the action gets bloody. Great storytelling, a quirky hero, and a quirkier plot make this a winner for adventure fans."

Robotham, Michael. [Good Girl Bad Girl](#) (\$9.99). In the 2020 Gold Dagger winner, a dangerous young woman with a unique ability to detect lies sues for her emancipation from a secure children's home, while the psychologist on her case finds himself in a battle of wits for survival. *Kirkus* again "Robotham is a master plotter at the top of his form, and readers will surely hope to see more of his complicated new characters."

Thor, Brad. [Near Dark](#) (\$9.99). Scot Harvath #19. If America's top spy Scot Harvath has any hope of completing his most dangerous mission ever, he's going to need help; a lot of it. Not knowing whom he can trust, Harvath finds an unlikely ally in Norwegian intelligence operative Sølvi Kolstad. Just as smart, just as deadly, and just as determined, she not only has the skills, but also the broken, troubled past to match Harvath's own.

NEW IN SMALL PAPERBACK

Archer, Winnie. [Death Gone a'Rye](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Bread Shop #6. Baker's apprentice Ivy Culpepper must rise to the occa-

sion to catch the real killer when her beau-restaurateur is accused of murdering an ambitious school board president.

Barron, Laird. [Worse Angels](#) (\$9.99). Isaiah Coleridge #3. Ex-mob enforcer-turned-private investigator Isaiah Coleridge pits himself against a rich and powerful foe when he digs into a possible murder and discovers a sketchy real-estate deal worth billions.

Berenson, Laurien. [Game of Dog Bones](#) (\$8.99). Melanie Travis #25. While working as a judge at the prestigious Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show at Madison Square Garden on a bitterly cold February day, Melanie Travis's Aunt Peg is targeted with suspicion when an ousted poodle club member is found murdered.

Bush, Nancy. [The Gossip](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Mackenzie Laughlin, formerly with Oregon's River Glen police department, has reluctantly agreed to investigate a local woman's disappearance. The case reconnects her with Justin James Taft, a P.I. gifted at getting under Mac's skin. But when the body is found tangled in river weeds, Mac and Taft realize that the case has changed, from one missing woman to a hunt for a terrifying and relentless killer.

Calder, Eve. [A Tale of Two Cookies](#) (St Martins \$7.99). Cookie House #3. When her old friend's husband-to-be goes missing right as a TV crew descends on the town of Coral Cay, Florida, to film a hot, new reality show, pastry chef Kate McGuire and her pal Maxi must find the truth during this wedding weekend gone awry.

Coyle, Cleo. [The Ghost and the Haunted Portrait](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Haunted Bookshop #7. Bookstore owner Penelope Thornton-McClure and her ghost-in-residence Jack Shepard must solve the mystery surrounding a haunting portrait of a woman who supposedly went mad and the deadly accidents that befall those around it.

Fletcher, Jessica. [Murder She Wrote Murder in Season](#) (\$7.99). Murder She Wrote #52. Supervising community holiday activities in Cabot Cove, Jessica Fletcher discovers two sets of bones, one recent and one ancient, before a tabloid reporter's theories lead to a third death and revelations about a long-unsolved community mystery.

Flower, Amanda. [Lemon Drop Dead](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Amish Candy Shop #7. When a surprise guest at Emily Esh's lemon-themed baby shower claims to know about her secret shame, and then winds up dead, Emily's sister, Esther, is accused of the crime and Bailey King must put the squeeze on the real killer to keep this family together.

Gilly, Alex. [Death Rattle](#) (\$9.99). Saving the life of a refugee who then dies in custody at a migrant detention center, Officer Nick Finn and human-rights lawyer, Mona Jimenez, investigate the unsettling truth about the prison's lucrative contract with Homeland Security.

Haines, Carolyn. [Devil's Bones](#) (\$7.99). Sarah Booth Delaney #21. Visiting a Jerusalem-inspired garden with the newly pregnant Tinkie, Sarah Booth and Cece stumble on the body of an underhanded local lawyer before taking the case of a wrongly implicated pharmacist.

Johansen, Iris. [Quinn](#) (\$9.99). Navy SEAL-turned-cop Joe Quinn is at the mercy of Eve Duncan's former lover, John Gallo, who

plays a dangerous game of cat-and-mouse with CIA agent Catherine Ling, as Joe and Eve make a shocking discovery about the abduction of Eve's daughter.

✂ Jones, Sandie. [First Mistake](#) (\$9.99). Believing she has finally achieved happiness in her second marriage and forged a best friendship with the most loyal woman she has ever known, Alice turns suspicious when her husband and best friend start disappearing for extended times.

Lynch, Sean. [Hold Back the Night](#) (Kensington \$9.99). Three very different women — a wealthy suburban housewife, her troubled sister and a young SWAT deputy — find themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time after two psychologically disturbed and desperate convicts escape from the local prison.

✂ Macmillan, Gilly. [The Nanny](#) (\$9.99). Growing up blaming her mother after the mysterious disappearance of her beloved nanny, an embittered woman is forced to return home decades later when the discovery of human remains forces her to question everything she thought she knew.

McFate, Sean. [High Treason](#) (\$9.99). After the U.S. vice president's motorcade is hit in a vicious, expertly planned attack, everyone assumes it's terrorists; everyone but young FBI agent Jennifer Lin. Half a world away, former military contractor Tom Locke has his own doubts about what happened. Returning to DC, Locke teams with Lin and discovers that a civil war is secretly brewing in the military-contracting world, and a possible traitor high up in either the White House or the NSA who is leaking information.

Olson, Neil. [Before the Devil Fell](#) (\$9.99). Returning to his Boston village hometown to care for an aging parent, Will Connor is embroiled both in the case of a mysterious death and the New England witchcraft traditions upheld by his mother's spirit circle.

✂ Paris, B. A. [Breakdown](#) (\$9.99). Plagued with guilt for not stopping for a stranded driver who was later reported murdered, Cass struggles with an increasingly compromised memory before she begins receiving silent phone calls she believes are from the killer.

Spillane, Mickey. [Hot Lead, Cold Justice](#) (\$8.99). After a bullet meant for him takes the life of an innocent deputy, Sheriff Caleb York, as winter weather bears down, is forced to play a chilling game of cat-and-mouse with a man determined to eliminate the law.

Walker, Wendy. [All is Not Forgotten](#) (\$9.99). Given a controversial drug to medically erase her memory of a violent assault that occurred after a party, young Jenny struggles with difficult emotional memories that linger months later, an event that reveals vulnerabilities in her family as her father becomes obsessed with revenge and her mother descends into denial.

Young, Kate. [Southern Sass and a Battered Bride](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Marygene Brown #3. Marygene Brown and her best friend Betsy, while preparing to cater Marygene's childhood sweetheart's wedding, must solve a murder mystery when the bride winds up dead, buried in cake batter, and then her body simply vanishes