

# BOOKNEWS from

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## SATURDAY MAY 1 4:00 PM

**Jenn McKinlay and Paige Shelton in conversation**  
**McKinlay** discusses [For Batter or Worse](#) (Berkley \$7.99)  
Cupcake Bakery Mystery #13  
**Shelton** discusses [Deadly Editions](#) (St Martins \$26.99)  
Scottish Bookshop Mystery #6  
Signed books available for both

## MONDAY MAY 3 6:00 PM National Book Launch

**Mark Sullivan** discusses [The Last Green Valley](#) (Lake Union \$27.95)  
Signed books available

## TUESDAY MAY 4 5:00 PM US Book Launch

**Linwood Barclay in conversation with Peter Swanson**  
**Barclay** discusses [Find You First](#) (Harper \$27.99)  
Signed bookplates available for Barclay  
**Swanson** discusses [Every Vow You Break](#) (Harper \$27.99)  
A very few Signed books left for Swanson

## WEDNESDAY MAY 5 1:00 PM

**UK's Mary Sharratt in conversation with Candace Robb**  
**Sharratt** discusses [Revelations](#) (Houghton \$26)  
Two 15<sup>th</sup> Century English mystics: Margery Kempe, Julian of Norwich

## WEDNESDAY MAY 5 5:00 PM

**Katherine St. John and Mary Dixie Carter**  
**Carter** discusses [The Photographer](#) (St Martins \$29)  
Our May First Mystery Book of the Month  
**St. John** discusses [The Siren](#) (Grand Central \$28) and her debut thriller [The Lion's Den](#) (Grand Central \$28)  
Signed books available for all titles

## THURSDAY MAY 6 4:00 PM National Book Launch

**Mike Lupica in conversation with Carl Hiaasen**  
**Lupica** discusses [Robert B. Parker's Payback](#) (Putnam \$28)  
Boston PI Sunny Randall  
Signed books available

## FRIDAY MAY 7 5:00 PM

**Stephen Hunter in conversation with Jack Carr**  
**Hunter** discusses his WWII thriller [Basil's War](#) (Penzler \$25)  
Signed books available

## SATURDAY MAY 8 2:00 PM Cozy Con 2021

**Olivia Blacke** discusses [Killer Content](#) (Berkley \$7.99)  
A debut set in Brooklyn

**Abby Collette** discusses [A Game of Cones](#) (\$16)

An Ice Cream Parlor Mystery

**Darci Hannah** discusses [Murder at the Beacon Bakeshop](#) (Kensington \$8.99)

Starts a series set in small-town Michigan

**Renee Patrick** discusses [Script for Scandal](#) (Severn \$20)

A Hollywood mystery with Edith Head & Lillian Frost

**Angela M. Sanders** discusses [Bait and Witch](#) (Kensington \$8.99)

Starts the Witch Way Librarian Mystery series

## SATURDAY MAY 8 4:00 PM

**Amanda Quick** discusses [The Lady Has a Past](#) (Berkley \$28)  
Signed books available

## MONDAY MAY 10 5:00 PM National Book Launch

**Jeffery Deaver** discusses [The Final Twist](#) (Putnam \$29)  
Colter Shaw  
Signed books available

## TUESDAY MAY 11 12:00 PM

**UK's John Mullan in conversation with Kate Mosse**  
**Mullan** discusses [The Artful Dickens](#) (Bloomsbury \$28)  
The Tricks and Ploys of Charles Dickens

## TUESDAY MAY 11 5:00 PM

**CNN's Jake Tapper in conversation with David Baldacci**  
**Tapper** discusses [The Devil May Dance](#) (Little Brown \$28)  
Signed books available  
**Baldacci** discusses [A Gambling Man](#) (Grand Central \$30)  
A handful of signed books remain

## WEDNESDAY MAY 12 7:00 PM Phoenix Noir

**Jon Talton** discusses [City of Dark Corners](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99)  
Phoenix 1933

## THURSDAY MAY 13 5:00 PM

**Jean Korelitz in conversation with Joseph Finder**  
**Korelitz** discusses [The Plot](#) (Celadon \$29)  
Signed books available for our May Crime Book of the Month

## FRIDAY MAY 14 6:30 PM SciFi

**Jenn Lyons** discusses [The House of Always](#) (Tor \$28.99)  
Signed books available

## MONDAY MAY 17 5:00 PM Debut

**May Cobb in conversation with Laurie Elizabeth Flynn**  
**Cobb** discusses [The Hunting Wives](#) (Berkley \$27)  
Signed books available

**WEDNESDAY MAY 19 5:00 PM Debut**

**Brian Klingborg** discusses [Thief of Souls](#) (St Martins \$27.99)  
Inspector Lu Fei debuts in our May International Crime Book of the Month

**WEDNESDAY MAY 19 6:15 PM**

**Stephen Mack Jones in conversation with Ellen Crosby Jones** discusses [Dead of Winter](#) (Soho \$27.95)  
Signed books available

**THURSDAY MAY 20 1:00 PM**

**UK's Natasha Pulley** discusses [The Kingdoms](#) (Bloomsbury \$27)  
Signed UK Edition available [The Kingdoms](#) (\$50)

**THURSDAY MAY 20 5:00 PM**

**Jeff Guinn** discusses [War on the Border](#) (SimonSchuster \$28)  
Pancho Villa, Pershing, and the Texas Rangers  
Signed books available

**FRIDAY MAY 21 7:00 PM**

**SciFi Friday** discusses Stephen Graham Jones [The Only Good Indians](#) (\$17.99)

**SATURDAY MAY 22**

**Croak & Dagger** discuss Liz Moore's [Long Bright River](#) (\$17)

**SATURDAY MAY 22 4:00 PM National Book Launch**

**Kristen Ashley** discusses [Dream Spinner](#) (Grand Central \$8.99)  
Signed books available

**MONDAY MAY 24 5:00 PM National Book Launch**

**Mette Ivie Harrison** discusses [The Prodigal Daughter](#) (Soho \$27.95)  
Mormon Bishop's Wife Linda Wallheim  
Signed books available

**MONDAY MAY 24 6:15 PM**

**Ben Winters** discusses [The Quiet Boy](#) (Mulholland \$28)  
Signed books available

**WEDNESDAY MAY 26 5:00 PM**

**Ashley Weaver** discusses [A Peculiar Combination](#) (St Martins \$28)  
Electra McDonnell, WWII series start  
Signed books available

**THURSDAY MAY 27 7:00 PM**

**Hardboiled Crime** discusses Jim Thompson's [Savage Night](#) (\$16.99)

**TUESDAY JUNE 1 12:00 PM**

**Sir Roderick Floud** discusses [England's Magnificent Gardens](#) (Knopf \$40)  
A billion dollar industry from Charles II to today

**TUESDAY JUNE 1 7:00 PM National Book Launch**

**JA Jance** discusses [Unfinished Business](#) (Gallery \$27.99)  
Sedona's Ali Reynolds  
Signed book available

**WEDNESDAY JUNE 2 6:00 PM**

**Michael Punke in conversation with CJ Box Punke** discusses [Ridgeline](#) (Holt \$27.99)  
A novel of the western frontier 1866  
Signed books available

**SATURDAY JUNE 5 4:00 PM National Book Launch**

**Laurie R. King** discusses [Castle Shade](#) (Random \$28)  
Russell & Holmes in Romania  
Signed books available

**SIGNED BOOKS**

Ashley, Kristen. [Dream Spinner](#) (Grand Central \$8.99). Hattie Yates has finally met the man of her dreams. Yet years of abuse from her demanding father have left her petrified of disappointment. She's already failed to reach her goal of becoming a professional ballerina—she can't handle the terrible consequences of another dream becoming a nightmare. But when a stalker sets their sights on Hattie, there's only one man she dares to hope can help . . .

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 signed these for us at home. And joins us May 11 with Jake Tapper!

Bradby, Tom. [Triple Cross](#) (Bantam \$36). Attempting to rebuild her shattered life in the South of France, former MI6 operative Kate Henderson receives an unexpected and most unwelcome visit from an old adversary: the UK Prime Minister. He has an extraordinary story to tell—and he needs her help. A Russian agent has come forward with news that the PM has been the victim of the greatest misinformation play in the history of MI6. It's run out of a special KGB unit that exists for one purpose alone: to process the intelligence from 'Agent Dante', a mole right at the heart of MI6 in London. Against her better judgment, Kate is forced back into the fray in a top-secret, deeply flawed and dangerous investigation. But now she's damaged goods. Her one-time allies no longer trust her. And neither do her enemies. With the stakes this high, can the truth ever come out?

Carter, Mary Dixie. [The Photographer](#) (St Martins \$29). Delta Dawn, the narrator of our **May First Mystery Book of the Month**, is a much-sought-after photographer of children's fetes among Brooklyn's artsy set, who has the ability to create picture-perfect moments of connection that never were through the magic of Photoshop and other manipulations. Trouble is, the egocentric young woman approaches life in similarly subjective fashion. Emotionally starved by her own parents, Delta hungers for family—even if it means insinuating herself into someone else's, like that of her new clients, the Straubs: interior design guru Amelia; Amelia's scruffily hunky architect hubby, Fritz; and needy 11-year-old birthday girl, Natalie. Using her well-honed manipulative skills, plus a timely offer to babysit, Delta swiftly gains the run of the Straubs' brownstone, as well as ample opportunity to discover some of their most intimate secrets—which she aims to leverage to her advantage. Delta—arguably the inevitable product of a social media-driven universe where carefully curated images supplant messy reality—becomes increasingly scary as the depth of her obsession with the Straubs becomes apparent. Brace for hold-your-breath suspense from this dazzlingly devious newcomer.

Chabon, Michael. [Awesome Man Mystery Intruder](#) (Harper \$18.99). For kids. Awesome Man's secret identity has stayed safe, and he's still the coolest superhero around. He loves protecting the people of Awesome City from evildoers, like the giant Plutonian octolizard, with his trusty sidekick, Moskowitz. But there have been reports that a new hero is coming to town soon. What if the people of Awesome City no longer need Awesome Man? With 40 pages of *awesome* text and illustrations, this book is a great gift for the superhero-obsessed and any kid adjusting to life with a new sibling!

Cobb, May. [The Hunting Wives](#) (Berkley \$26). Lifestyle journalist Sophie O'Neill, the narrator of this nail-biting thriller, leaves a successful job in bustling Evanston, Illinois, wishing to "slow down" with her architect husband and preschooler son in small town Mapleton, Texas. Soon, a bored Sophie seeks the company of oil-rich Margot Banks, the force behind an exclusive conspiratorial clique of four wives, a group of dysfunctional friends heavily lubricated with a steady diet of martinis and mojitos. Friday nights light up with their private skeet shooting club, followed by barhopping. The flirting women have only two rules: first names only, and don't go all the way. But rules are meant to be broken. Fueled by alcohol, rage, jealousy, unhappy marriages, and blind lust, the women indulge in adultery and raunchy sex. It's Texas, so keep an eye out for hunky football players, and when a teenage cheerleader ends up dead, Sophie becomes the prime suspect. Wild plot twists keep the pages turning up to the unexpected ending. This romp is a guilty pleasure. It's Cobb's second thriller and a good one to read with Carter's debut above which is our First Mystery Book of the Month for May. There are similarities that make for real discussion points. And for book clubs, a chance to think about living authentic lives vs. on social media.

Cussler, Clive/Jack DuBrul. [Saboteurs](#) (Putnam \$29). Signed by DuBrul. It's 1914, and bestseller Cussler's top-notch 12th Isaac Bell adventure—after 2019's *The Titanic Secret*, also coauthored with DuBrul—finds detective Bell and his wife, Marion, in Panama after foiling an attempt on the life of a U.S. senator in San Diego, Calif., by a Panamanian insurgent group. Meanwhile,

Teddy Roosevelt is on his way to Panama to view the Panama Canal, which is still under construction, and a German industrialist, who was behind an earlier effort to assassinate the former American president, is going to try again. In short order, Bell is buried alive, loses his memory, and is thrown into jail. On top of all that, Marion is kidnapped. After Bell escapes and his memory is restored, he sets out to rescue Marion. Along the way, he untangles a complex plot that aims to destroy the canal. Against a colorful backdrop of Panama Canal lore, the action builds to a classic scene of hand-to-hand combat aboard a dirigible that could explode at any moment.

Deaver, Jeffery. [The Final Twist](#) (Putnam \$28). Part one of MWA Grand Master Deaver's third thriller featuring professional reward-seeker Colter Shaw, titled "The Mission," includes the statement: "Time until the family dies: fifty-two hours." The explanation for this countdown comes out gradually. At a house in San Francisco, Shaw is looking for evidence his murdered father left behind about BlackBridge Corporate Solutions, whose machinations include flooding select neighborhoods with cheap drugs to drive down the price of real estate for predatory developers. His search almost proves fatal, and he narrowly escapes death from BlackBridge operatives when his estranged older brother, Russell, intervenes. A bad guy Russell kills carries a note indicating that a "kill order" has been placed on someone with the initials SP and SP's entire family.... Shaw is a character worth spending time with: order [The Never Game and The Goodbye Man](#) to read first.

Guinn, Jeff. [War on the Border](#) (SimonSchuster \$28). Guinn has focused on a memorable period of border history—the decade (1910-1920) of the Mexican Revolution. The Mexican borderlands in the early 20th century are a history buff's dream: violent, romantic, epic in scale, a little bit crazy, and featuring an astounding cast of larger-than-life historical characters. Out of this striking raw material Guinn, well known to us for his fiction as well as his true crime expertise, has fashioned a riveting and supremely entertaining narrative that includes Pancho Villa's blood-soaked raid on a small U.S. border town and General John J. Pershing's Punitive Expedition, a retaliatory gesture.

Harrison, Mette Ivie. [The Prodigal Daughter](#) (Soho \$27.95). Harrison's heart-wrenching fifth Linda Wallheim mystery finds Linda, the wife of an LDS bishop in Draper, Utah, drawn into the role of amateur investigator by the oldest of her five grown sons, Joseph, who teaches Sunday School in nearby Ogden. Sabrina Jensen, a 15-year-old who regularly babysits for Joseph and his wife, has disappeared, but her parents appear unconcerned about her whereabouts. Linda, a self-described busybody who can't resist helping anyone in need, throws herself into searching for Sabrina, who she eventually learns was the victim of a terrible crime committed by "good Mormon boys." Linda winds up trekking the meaner streets of Salt Lake City in her effort to save Sabrina. Meanwhile, she struggles with the strictures of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and her fraught relationship with her husband, with whom she's in marriage therapy. Harrison adroitly raises various ethical issues as the suspenseful plot builds to a devastating climax. Harrison opens surprising windows into Utah's Mormon community in the [Linda Wallheim series](#) which we recommend you order and read in its entirety. Patrick and I both recommend it warmly.

Hunter, Stephen. [Basil's War](#) (Mysterious \$25). So first, this is Hunter writing more like Ian Fleming than the author of the Earl and Bob Lee Swagger thrillers. British Army Captain Basil St. Florian, the hero of this terrific WWII story, is known for his wit, his bravery as a Special Operations Executive agent, and as a man who enjoys dating film stars. In the spring of 1943, Basil parachutes into Nazi-occupied France, steals some identity papers, and catches a train to Paris, where his mission is to photograph pages from *The Path to Jesus*, a rare 18th-century pamphlet written by a Scottish ecclesiastic held in the library of a Paris museum. Stealing the pamphlet would alert the enemy that the British know the Nazis are using it as the basis of a secret code. Deciphering the code is key to catching a traitor employed at Bletchley Park, the Allied code-breaking center in England. The Nazis figure out a British spy is among them, and a clever German counterintelligence agent is soon hot on Basil's trail. Hunter adopts a style that complements Basil's derring-do exploits. Nelson DeMille calls the swashbuckling spy "the James Bond of his time," as he's sent behind enemy lines in search of a religious text that is believed to hold the key to ending the war. This delight is our **May Historical Fiction Book of the Month**.

Jance, JA. [Unfinished Business](#) (Gallery \$27.99). Mateo Vega, a one-time employee of broadcast journalist-turned-cybersecurity expert Ali Reynolds' husband, B. Simpson, at High Noon Enterprises, has spent the last sixteen years of his life behind bars. According to the courts, he murdered his girlfriend. But Mateo knows that her real killer is still on the loose, and the first thing he's going to do when he gets a taste of freedom is track him down. After being granted parole, a wary Mateo approaches Stu Ramey of High Noon for a reference letter for a job application, but to his surprise, Stu gives him one better: He asks him to come on board and work for B. once again. Just as Mateo starts his new job, though, chaos breaks out at High Noon—a deadbeat tenant who is in arrears has just fled, and tech expert Cami Lee has gone missing. As Ali races to both find a connection between the two disappearances and help Mateo clear his name with the help of PI J.P. Beaumont, tragedy strikes in her personal life....

Jones, Stephen Mack. [Dead of Winter](#) (Soho \$27.95). In Hammett Prize winner Jones's gritty third crime novel featuring Detroit PI August Snow, Snow gets a call to meet with Ronaldo Ochoa, the terminally ill owner of Authentico Foods, in the city's Mexican-town neighborhood. Ochoa, who employed Snow's mother for decades, is under pressure to sell out to a real estate speculator claiming to represent Vic Bronson, who "made his fortune selling mortgages and collecting adjustable-rate mortgage balloon payments in an overleveraged housing market." When Ochoa is found shot dead in his office and Snow's godfather and best friend, Tomás, is severely wounded, the detective saddles up to investigate and wreak vengeance. He brushes up against Bronson, who responds by sending thugs his way with a message to lay off. It's the wrong approach to take with hometown hero Snow.... Jones visited us with his first books and we're delighted that he will zoom with us and Ellen Crosby this month. Don't miss the [August Snow series](#).

King, Laurie R. [Castle Shade](#) (Random \$28). Marie of Roumania is the doubly royal granddaughter of Victoria, Empress of the British Empire, and Alexander II, Tsar of Russia. A famous beauty who was married at seventeen into Roumania's young dynasty, Marie had beguiled the Paris Peace Conference into returning her

adopted country's long-lost provinces, singlehandedly transforming Roumania from a backwater into a force. The castle is Bran, a tall, quirky, ancient structure perched on high rocks overlooking the border between Roumania and its newly regained territory of Transylvania. The castle was a gift to Queen Marie, a thank-you from her people, and she loves it as she loves her own children. And now shadowy figures, vague whispers, the fears of girls, dangers that may be only accidents circulate. But this is a land of long memory and hidden corners, a land that had known Vlad the Impaler, a land from whose churchyards the shades creep. When Queen Marie calls, Mary Russell and Sherlock Holmes are as dubious as they are reluctant. But a young girl is involved, and a beautiful queen. Surely it won't take long to shine light on this unlikely case of what would seem to be *strigoi*? Or, as they are known in the West...vampires. King researched this chapter in the Russell and Holmes series with me as we traveled through Romania and Transylvania and up the lower Danube to Budapest in 2019.

Korelitz, Jean Hanff. [The Plot](#) (Celadon \$28). "Fearless Korelitz presents a wry and unusual joyride of a thriller full of gasp-inducing twists as it explores copyright, ownership, and the questionable morals of writers."—*Booklist*. It begins as New Yorker Jacob Finch Bonner arrives at his three-week teaching gig at a low-residency MFA program in Vermont. It feels like—and is—a step back for "the once promising author of the 'New & Noteworthy' novel *The Invention of Wonder*. Jake's writing career is at a standstill: his follow-up to *The Invention of Wonder* tanked, and he hasn't published since. One consolation of his teaching job is that Jake knows his work is at least a cut above the puerile prose of his students—that is, until, during a teacher-student chat, Evan Parker shares aloud a synopsis of his planned novel. Jake can't disagree with Evan's appraisal: "This story I'm writing, it's like, a sure thing." But the prospect of its publication would seem to evaporate with Evan's death, which Jake learns about while poking around on the Internet a couple of years later. Fast-forward three more years, and Jake, having convinced himself of the uprightness of stealing Evan's plot ("A great story... wanted to be told"), finds his name on the cover of two million copies of his by now *New York Times* bestseller. Jake is certain that only he knows the book's origin—until the day he receives a disturbing e-mail, the first of several of an increasingly worrisome kind.. Deep character development, an impressively thick tapestry of intertwining story lines, and a candid glimpse into the publishing business make this a page-turner of the highest order. Korelitz, who tells me she doesn't think of herself as a mystery writer, deserves acclaim for her own perfect plot.

The Indie Next Pick for this our **May Crime Book of the Month**: "Korelitz's depiction of the book world is a treat for those of us in it, but her twisty, psychologically astute plotting will hold broad appeal."

Lupica, Mike. [Robert B Parker's Payback](#) (Putnam \$28). Set in a post-Covid near future, Edgar finalist Lupica's twisty third entry in Parker's Sunny Randall franchise "faithfully captures the character of the Boston PI" including Parker's built-in ambivalence about Sonny's relationship with her ex, Richie, and her new squeeze, Jesse Stone (which series Lupica is now writing too). I add that the dialogue is every bit as snappy as that Parker wrote!

We open on Sunny's best friend, Spike, who has been cheated out of his restaurant by hedge fund hotshot Alex Drys-

dale, who offered him a financial lifeline during the pandemic. Trusting (and desperate) Spike didn't read the contract's fine print which essentially put the restaurateur in default right after he signed the loan papers. Sunny vows to restore Spike's business, but her aggressive tactics result in a threatening visit from a sinister but smooth operator, followed by receipt of a photo of her father with a red dot superimposed on his forehead. Then her gay cop friend Lee shows up asking for Sonny's help in locating his college student niece, Emily Barnes. Emily was assaulted one night, but has not been fully forthcoming about the attack before she disappears. To her surprise, Sunny finds a link between Alex and Emily, and the ante gets upped when someone involved in her inquiries is shot to death. "Lupica makes smart-mouthed Sunny as fully realized as Parker's better-known gumshoe, Spenser."—*PW*. [This link](#) will take you to the three by Lupica and the earlier Sunnys by Parker.

Lyons, Jenn. [The House of Always](#) (Tor \$28.99). In the aftermath of the Ritual of Night, everything has changed. The Eight Immortals have catastrophically failed to stop Kihrin's enemies, who are moving forward with their plans to free Vol Karoth, the King of Demons. Kihrin has his own ideas about how to fight back, but even if he's willing to sacrifice everything for victory, the cost may prove too high for his allies. Now they face a choice: can they save the world while saving Kihrin too? Or will they be forced to watch as he becomes the very evil they had all sworn to destroy? Pat King, Lyon's host for the zoon, is an avid fan of her work.

McKinlay, Jenn. [For Batter or Worse](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Life is sweet and business is booming at the Fairy Tale Cupcakes bakery—and the fact that Mel and Joe are getting married is the icing on the cake. Their reception will be held at the swanky resort where Oz works as the pastry chef. The wedding planning is all fun-fetti and games until Mel and Joe meet the head chef at the resort who has been making Oz's life miserable. When the eccentric chef insults Mel's bakery, Oz gets into a blowout argument with the culinary prima donna. Things turn extra sour when the chef is murdered, and Oz is the police's main suspect. As the countdown to the wedding day begins, Mel, Joe, and the rest of the Fairy Tale Cupcake crew must sift through clues and hustle to catch the real killer and clear Oz's name...

Nadel, Barbara. [Forfeit](#) (Headline \$50). In the early hours of the morning, Turkish TV star Erol Gencer is found dead at his home on the outskirts of Istanbul. But he is not alone. Beside him lies a Syrian refugee whose stomach has been split open with a cheese knife. Did Gencer kill his guest before committing suicide, or are they victims of a sinister double murder? The dead Syrian is soon identified as Wael Al Hussain, whose wife, Samira, is in prison for attempting to kill Gencer a year ago. At the time, no one believed Samira's story that Gencer's wife had planned the attack, but now Samira's sister begs Çetin Ikmen to re-examine her claim. Meanwhile, Inspector Mehmet Süleyman is on leave with his teenage son, Patrick, who is visiting from Ireland, but when Detective Kerim Gürsel's transsexual ex-lover, Pembe, is also murdered, shortly after confessing that Wael Al Hussain had used her for sexual favors, Süleyman knows he must help Kerim solve this complex case. Entering a world of the Syrian diaspora, where tales of mythical storytellers abound, Ikmen and Süleyman uncover a tragic tale of dark secrets and double lives.

Pulley, Natasha. [The Kingdoms](#) (Bloomsbury \$50). This imagi-

native alternate history by a master of the unexpected drops you into an England defeated by France in the Napoleonic Wars. It's now 91 years later and England is a French colony ruled by Napoleon IV. Its language is French, the British are for the most part French slaves, and a pocket of resistance has formed in Glasgow. A postcard has been held at the sorting office all that time, waiting to be delivered to one Joe Tournier. On the front is a lighthouse—Eilean Mor, in the Outer Hebrides. Joe has never left England, never even left London. He is a British slave, one of thousands throughout the French Empire. He has a job, a wife, a baby daughter. But he also experiences flashes of a life he cannot remember. And now he has a postcard depicting a lighthouse built just six months ago, a postcard that was first written nearly one hundred years ago, by a stranger who seems to know him very well. Joe's journey to unravel the truth will take him from French-occupied London to a remote Scottish island, and back through time itself...a journey for you to savor. I love [Pulley's earlier work](#) which you can order and enjoy too.

Punke, Michael. [Ridgeline](#) (Holt \$27.99). From the author of bestseller [The Revenant](#) (\$16), the astonishing story of real-life trapper and frontiersman Hugh Glass, comes a new novel that begins in 1866 in a country still divided by war. And a new one breaks out in the West, a clash of cultures between a nation pushing west and the Native tribes who have lived on the land for centuries. Colonel Henry Carrington arrives in Wyoming's Powder River Valley to defend a new road for settlers and gold miners. Red Cloud, a Lakota Chief, and Crazy Horse, a young and visionary warrior, push back against the US Army...and off it goes. CJ Box calls this book "terrific" and is our host for Punke's June 2 event. "In his kaleidoscopic telling of a little-known battle on the sacred Lakota hunting grounds of Wyoming, Punke has created a modern classic.... Brave, thrilling, and heartbreaking, *Ridgeline* brings the history of conquest in the American West to unforgettable life."

Quick, Amanda. [The Lady Has a Past](#) (Berkley \$28). John reviews: Apprentice investigator Lyra Brazier is really only in charge of things at Kirk Investigations while her boss Raina Kirk takes care of a personal errand, but Lyra thinks it still says something about her abilities as a detective. However, Lyra soon has to draw upon her nascent deductive skills when she begins to suspect something has happened to Raina. After teaming up Simon Cage, an antiquarian book dealer with some unique skills of his own, Lyra and Simon set off to find her boss. Nick and Nora Charles have nothing on Lyra and Simon as the two find themselves trading quips and kisses while searching for a dangerous murderer at a posh desert resort/health spa, run by a woman, who could be Elizabeth Arden's evil twin sister. *The Lady Has a Past*, the latest in Quick's madly inventive 1930s-set Burning Cove books, is another triumph of snappy wit, spine-tingling suspense, and sophisticated romance.

Shelton, Paige. [Deadly Editions](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Here's fun for the fans of literary cozies. 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.

St John, Katherine. [The Siren](#) (Grand Central \$28) St. John delivers on the promise of her 2020 debut, [The Lion's Den](#) (Grand Central \$28 also Signed), with this superb tale of revenge and unbridled ego. Actor Cole Power, who at 49 is still considered by many to be one of the sexiest men in Hollywood, is financing a film titled *The Siren* that was written by his son, a recent film school graduate, who will also direct. Cole's ex-wife, Stella Rivers, who's counting on the movie to revive her flagging career, will star opposite Cole. Taylor Wasserman, the producer, is also desperate for a hit after being fired from her previous job amid rumors of embezzlement. Also involved are Felicity Fox, Stella's beautiful new assistant who seems too good to be true, and social media influencer Madison Kasabian, whose vanity knows no bounds. The troupe assembles on the Caribbean island of Saint Genesius, and the scene is set for action, intrigue, murder, and heart-stopping adventure. St. John keeps readers deliciously off-balance with each new revelation about the characters and their motives, as revealed through the alternating viewpoints of Stella, Felicity, and Taylor. This is pure, riveting entertainment. I wish I'd caught up with St. John last year but we did track down some first prints of *The Lion's Den* and recommend you buy one of the 20 Signed First print pairs of her books while we have them.

Sullivan, Mark. [The Last Green Valley](#) (Lake Union \$27.95). First, be sure to remove the dust jacket and admire the art on the boards, and the end paper map. Sullivan weaves a big tapestry of WWII where German settlers in the Ukraine have to make a hard choice between fleeing with the Nazi wolves as the Red Army advances, or risk the Russians on the attack. Sullivan again demonstrates his gift for finding little-known embers of history and breathing life into them until they glow and shine in ways that are both moving and memorable. "*The Last Green Valley* is a compelling and inspiring story of heroism and courage in the dark days at the end of World War II. Fans of the huge bestseller [Beneath a Scarlet Sky](#) (\$14.95) will savor this novel based on an extraordinary and little-known tale of the war and its aftermath." —Kristin Hannah on our **May Notable New Fiction Book of the Month**.

Swanson, Peter. [Every Vow You Break](#) (Harper \$27.99). What are the consequences of entering a marriage with a guilty secret? As Abigail Baskin faces her approaching wedding to wealthy Bruce Lamb, she's wracked with guilt over sleeping with someone else during her bachelorette party weekend. Her situation becomes even more fraught when that one-night stand, whom she only knows as Scottie, starts stalking her. After Scottie sends Abigail an email suggesting they share a deep connection and she should cancel the nuptials, she goes ahead with the wedding, but fears Scottie's continuing obsession with her. She hopes for a respite when Bruce spirits her away for their honeymoon on a Maine island, but that's dashed when Scottie appears there as well, setting in motion a deadly series of events that imperils her life. Swanson joins us on May 4 with Linwood Barclay for a double event. We may be sold out of Signed copies by the time you read this.

Swinson, David. [City on the Edge](#) (LittleBrown \$28). Patrick reviews: The author of the wrenching Frank Marr novels returns with a terrific coming-of-age story informed by his own experience traveling the world as the son of a Foreign Service officer. The setting is 1972 Beirut, Lebanon, where 13-year-old Graham moves with his family. He quickly makes friends with two other boys whose fathers work government jobs. The city on the edge of the sea also teeters on the precipice of violence, and Graham begins to suspect that his father is in fact a CIA operative. When the young man and his new playmates witness a murder, things take a decidedly darker turn. Equal parts thriller, espionage novel and powerful coming-of-age, Swinson takes readers on an unforgettable journey through the eyes of a child living in a country about to slip into war. Echoing writers like Graham Greene, JG Ballard and John Le Carré, Swinson has written a breakout novel that should earn him a new readership. Highly recommended.

Tapper, Jake. [The Devil May Dance](#) (LittleBrown \$28). Set against the glittering backdrop of 1960s Hollywood, CNN's Tapper's excellent sequel to 2018's [The Hellfire Club](#) (\$16.99) follows husband-and-wife team Charlie and Margaret Marder on a dangerous 1962 mission centering around Frank Sinatra. Sent to LA by AG Robert Kennedy to investigate a threat to the country's security, they soon find themselves neck-deep in Hollywood scandal. The story opens with a highly effective tease. New York congressman Charlie Marder is in a California cemetery along with his wife, Margaret, and members of the Rat Pack, including Sinatra, Sammy Davis, and Dean Martin, who chose the grim locale to mark the passing of mobster Lucky Luciano. After the gathering ends, the Marders return to their rental car, only to find the body of an unnamed woman both of them knew in the trunk, her eyes shot out. On that cliffhanger, Tapper flashes back a month to New York City, where Marder gets a disturbing call from his political fixer father, Winston, who has been arrested for consorting with gangsters. During their brief jailhouse talk, Winston asks his son to find out whatever Attorney General Robert Kennedy wants "and give it to him." That turns out to be information on the relationships between Mafia leaders and Hollywood stars, not to mention the CIA and perhaps the FBI. The plot eventually circles back to the female corpse. Tapper makes good use of the rich source material and eye-popping portraits of a host of figures like JFK as well as Bobby, politicians, movie stars (Bing Crosby, Judy Garland), gossip columnists—a whole panoply of 1960s figures. He writes in the school of Max Allan Collins's Nathan Heller books, but with greater candor, and spares no one. Tapper has agreed to sign our books at his office!

✦Weaver, Ashley. [A Peculiar Combination](#) (St Martins \$28). A gifted lock-picker is called upon to serve her country during WWII in this superb series launch from Edgar finalist Weaver. After business slows down for locksmith Mick McDonnell, Electra "Ellie" McDonnell helps her uncle crack a safe at a posh home in London, only to find it is a setup. The arrogant Major Gabriel Ramsey has a job for her: steal secret plans from a traitor's safe, and Mick will walk free. When Ellie and Ramsey enter the traitor's house, however, they find him dead and the safe empty. Ramsey thinks likely suspects belong to a group of Chinese porcelain devotees with potential ties to Germany, and takes Ellie to one of their parties to break into the host's safe. Suspicion swirls around a former girlfriend of Ramsey, setting Ellie, Ramsey, and their associates on the trail of spies

in the town of Torquay. A thorny relationship between Ellie and Ramsey, a cast of colorful characters, a brisk pace, and an ironic message about the identity of true patriots enthrall. Weaver builds a satisfyingly tricky plot while sensitively exploring the complex motives driving both Ellie and the major to do their work.

Winters, Ben H. [The Quiet Boy](#) (LittleBrown \$28). A medical tragedy propels this new legal thriller from Edgar winner Winters. In 2008, 14-year-old Wesley Keener falls at his L.A. high school and is rushed to a hospital to treat the resulting subdural hematoma. When the surgery doesn't go as planned, Wesley emerges permanently brain-damaged. Attorney Jay Shenk persuades the boy's parents, Beth and Rich, to sue the hospital and the medical personnel involved. Neuroscientist Theresa Pileggi, an expert on the human brain, testifies at the subsequent trial on the plaintiff's behalf. In 2019, Shenk is drawn back into the case when Rich is charged with the premeditated murder of Pileggi, who was both shot and hit in the head with a lamp. After Rich confesses and potentially faces the death penalty, he fires his public defender, placing Shenk in the difficult position of trying to save the life of a client who wants to be executed.

### UNSIGNED EVENT BOOKS

Barclay, Linwood. [Find You First](#) (Harper \$27.99). **Our copies come with Signed Bookplates from Barclay.** At the start of this suspenseful, expertly paced thriller from bestseller Barclay whose [Elevator Pitch](#) (\$16.99) was a true WOW, two people identifying themselves as police bang on the door of 21-year-old Todd Cox, who runs phone scams targeting the elderly out of his trailer home near Springfield, Massachusetts. Eager to appear innocent, Cox lets them in, only to discover they're frauds. The fake cops inject Cox with a lethal drug before sealing him in a body bag and sanitizing the place and the surrounding area. One of them comments, "Two down. Seven to go." Flash back three weeks. Miles Cookson, a Connecticut software millionaire, has been diagnosed with incurable Huntington's disease. As Huntington's is genetic, Cookson decides to use his affluence to bribe a desperate employee of the sperm bank he donated to decades earlier to trace any possible children, both to warn them that they may carry fatal genes and to name them in his will. The list he gets contains nine names, including Cox's, hinting at a link to the initial homicide. Barclay makes even secondary characters feel real along with the dilemmas everyone faces.

✎Floud, Sir Roderick. [England's Magnificent Gardens](#) (Knopf \$40). Sir Roderick was educated at Oxford University in economic history. He holds honorary fellowships from Cambridge, Oxford, and the Royal Historical Society, as well as honorary degrees from City University of London and the University of Westminster. Floud is a Fellow of the British Academy and of the Academia Europaea and was knighted for services to higher education. He plans to show guides of the garden.

Klingborg, Brian. [Thief of Souls](#) (St Martins \$27.99). This debut set in modern China is our **May International Crime Book of the Month**. In the Raven Valley Township of China northernmost province Heilongjiang, Inspector Lu Fei is drinking himself into his customary oblivion at the Red Lotus bar when he's called to a brutal murder scene. The young victim, Yang Fenfang, has been "hollowed out like a birchbark canoe." Suspicion immediately falls on her boyfriend, Zhang Zhaoxing, who works as a butcher. Once he's arrested, Lu's bosses at the Public Security Bureau are

content to end the investigation and incarcerate Zhang. "Klingborg takes the time to lay out the structure and conventions of law enforcement in China, a welcome aid for Western readers. Lu finds a kindred spirit in sarcastic medical examiner Dr. Ma Xilulan, who takes his rejection of her sexual advances in stride. No forensic evidence implicates Zhang. Though Lu thinks the young man is innocent, he's overruled by his superiors, who order that Zhang be kept in custody until more conclusive evidence against him can be found. A wave of protests has little effect on this decision. But the discovery of two similar murders in nearby Harbin gives the investigation new life. Terse dialogue dominates this series debut, which wraps its depiction of contemporary Chinese society in the tropes of police novel."—*Kirkus Reviews*

✎Mullan, John. [The Artful Dickens](#) (Bloomsbury \$28). "Mullan has taken the most popular Victorian novelist and, by holding different facets of his literary technique up to the light, found new angles from which to admire the work. He 'delves into all the ways in which the Great Boz grabs our attention on page one of his novels and refuses to let go until we are deposited a thousand pages later... Mullan is a professor of English literature, which means that he has a forensic eye for how Dickens produces his spellbinding effects.... This vastly entertaining book gives the sense that Mullan is a man with a mission ... Mullan makes us see that Charles Dickens was one of the most artful, which is to say skilled, writers the world has ever seen' —Kathryn Hughes, *Mail on Sunday*. Kate Mosse is our host for Mullan.

✎Pulley, Natasha. [The Kingdoms](#) (Berkley \$27). What if England lost the Napoleonic Wars to France? And what might happen 91 years later? See Signed Books for more.

✎Sharratt, Mary. [Revelations](#) (Houghton \$26). At the age of forty, Margery Kempe has nearly died giving birth to her fourteenth child. Fearing that another pregnancy might kill her, she makes a vow of celibacy, but she can't trust her husband to keep his end of the bargain. Desperate for counsel, she visits the famous anchoress Dame Julian of Norwich. Pouring out her heart, Margery confesses that she has been haunted by visceral religious visions. Julian then offers up a confession of her own: she has written a secret, radical book about her own visions, *Revelations of Divine Love*. Nearing the end of her life and fearing Church authorities, Julian entrusts her precious book to Margery, who sets off the adventure of a lifetime to secretly spread Julian's words.

Talton, Jon. [City of Dark Corners](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99). Talton's latest earns two Starred Reviews. This is *Booklist*: "Living in Arizona during the Depression, WWI veteran and former police detective turned private investigator Gene Hammons finds himself on the wrong end of a heinous murder case. A young woman is found dismembered next to railroad tracks with Gene's business card in her purse. The police department rules it a suspicious death, but Gene is certain it's much more than that. As he searches for the victim's identity, Gene begins to unravel her secrets, leading to confrontations with some of Phoenix's most movers and shakers, both power brokers and criminals. Talton, author of the long-running David Mapstone series, set in contemporary Phoenix, shows his range with his first venture into historical mystery. (At the outset, Talton provides a considerate explanation of and warning about his decision to use language from the era.) Gene is an amiable and savvy protagonist, and Talton shines in weaving together the mystery elements of the plots

with historical events from the Prohibition period. Fast-paced, gritty, and exciting, this one will have fans of both Depression-era and southwestern-set crime fiction begging for more!”

And one from *LJ* ends, “This gritty stand-alone deals with Phoenix’s rough-and-tumble past and its questionable police force in the 1930s. Talton excels at creating the ambiance of historic Phoenix. Suggest for fans of realistic historical mysteries or Phoenix Noir.” While *PW* adds, “References to movie actors and other celebrities of the day, as well as speakeasies and bootleggers, lend atmosphere to this well-crafted tale involving desperate people who could easily disappear. Hopefully, Hammons, a man of too much integrity for his own good, will be back soon.”

I am just as annoyed as are you that after years of hard-cover publishing Talton’s excellent new book is only available as a paperback.

## OUR MAY BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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

Korelitz, Jean. [The Plot](#)

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

To Be Announced

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

Manansala, Mia P. [Arsenic and Adobo](#)

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

Sullivan, Mark. [The Last Green Valley](#)

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

Carter, Mary Dixie. [The Photographer](#)

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

Hunter, Stephen. [Basil’s War](#)

**International Crime Book of the Month**

Klingborg, Brian. [Thief of Souls](#)

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

Weir, Andy. [Project Hail Mary](#) (our copies come with a special backpack while they last)

## CLASSICS

Conan Doyle, Arthur. [The Parasite and Other Tales of Terror](#) (Poisoned Pen \$14.99). Nine tales that terrify and chill with mournful cries in an ice-bound sea, a potion that allows the user to commune with ghosts, an Egyptian priest who cannot die, and a mesmerist of unrivaled power. Presented by the Horror Writers Association, and introduced by award-winning author Daniel Stashower, this collection illuminates Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s talent for the macabre and the supernatural. The stories in this collection in the Haunted Library Horror Classics Series showcase Conan Doyle at his most inventive, sure to entertain both new readers and his most dedicated fans. Annotated by series editor Leslie S. Klinger.

Reeve, Arthur B. [The Silent Bullet](#) (Poisoned Pen \$14.99). Here is *CSI: 1912*. First published in 1912, this entertaining collection of 12 stories by Reeve (1880–1936), set in the boroughs of New York City, features Craig Kennedy, a New York City university chemistry professor, whose journalist friend and Watsonian narrator, Walter Jameson, recommends his services to the NYPD. In the baffling title tale, a stock broker drops dead in the middle of a business meeting from a gunshot despite no one present seeing a firearm or hearing a shot. “Spontaneous Combustion” is especially clever, offering a logical explanation as to how a man ended up dead in his home, burnt from the waist up, with the only copy of his will missing. Another highlight is “The Terror in the Air,” centered on two fatalities during the test of a new flying machine, whose inventor hopes Kennedy can prove his device was sabotaged. Never mind that the characters and puzzles aren’t on a par with R. Austin Freeman’s Dr. Thorndyke stories from the same era. Those interested in early forensics will want to check this out—Kennedy’s use of cutting-edge technology of the day—such as seismographs, lie detectors, artificial respirators, and hidden microphones—makes his investigations unorthodox and entertaining in equal measure. Series editor Leslie S. Klinger adds his usual Introduction and annotations.

Rinehart, Mary Roberts. [The Wall](#) (Penzler \$15.95). Here is a classical mystery dripping with atmosphere and family secrets, set in a picturesque seaside estate in a town inspired by Bar Harbor, Maine, where the author’s summer home was located. Marcia Lloyd and her brother Arthur have spent every summer of their lives exploring the grand halls and seaside grounds of their family’s idyllic vacation home, a gorgeous old mansion called Sunset House built by their grandfather. But when Arthur’s ex-wife Juliette arrives at Sunset to demand alimony from him, things take a dark turn and Juliette disappears—her body found a week later. What sordid secrets lie within the creaky old manor? Marcia and the local sheriff Russell Shand must work against the clock to find the murderer in this seemingly utopian upper-class hamlet.

Seeley, Mabel. [The Listening House](#) (Penguin \$16). First published in 1938, this smart, stylish debut from Seeley (1903–1991)—the Mystery Writers of America’s inaugural director—finds 26-year-old divorced copywriter Gwynne Dacres unemployed after an embarrassing typo slips past her into the newspaper. To stretch her savings until potential employers forget the gaffe, Gwynne trades her apartment for a room in a converted mansion owned by Harriet Garr—an older woman who seems extraordinarily paranoid about tenants snooping through her things. Gwynne’s quarters are pleasant, but she frequently feels like the place is somehow aware of her every move. When a string of unsettling crimes occur in and around the house, Gwynne resolves to let the Gilling City police investigate. Then Mrs. Garr dies under suspicious—and gruesome—circumstances, prompting Gwynne to team up with roguish ex-reporter Hodge Kistler to probe their fellow lodgers’ histories and alibis. Secrets abound, studding Seeley’s multilayered mystery with red herrings. Like her tenacious heroine, Seeley’s writing showcases intelligence and a razor-sharp wit. This exceptional reissue is certain to win Seeley a whole new generation of fans.



## SOME GIFTS FOR MOM

First, sign her up for our [Enews](#). It's free and fun to read.

Second, buy her a [Poisoned Pen Gift Card](#) she can redeem as she likes.

Here are a few and varied ideas for redeeming one:

Bourdain, Anthony. [World Travel](#) (Ecco \$35). The late author's assistant finished up this wonderful mashup of biography, travelogues, and culinary essays, so perfect for reading as we both tire of restrictions and long for new experiences. Mom can stretch her imagination with this delight.

Bromley, Kate. [Talk Bookish to Me](#) (Graydon House, \$15.99). Kara Sullivan's life is full of love—albeit fictional. As a bestselling romance novelist and influential bookstagrammer, she's fine with getting her happily-ever-after fix between the covers of a book. But right now? Not only is Kara's best friend getting married next week—which means big wedding stress—but the deadline for her next novel is looming, and she hasn't written a single word. The last thing she needs is for her infuriating first love, Ryan Thompson, to suddenly appear in the wedding party. “A must-read romance novel, this enemies-to-lovers contemporary romance has enough tension and sizzle to satisfy any romance reader. Bonus, the lead character is a romance writer and readers get a romance novel within a romance novel. For readers who loved *Much Ado about You* and *The Invitation*.”

DiYanni, Robert. [You Are What You Read](#) (Princeton University Press \$24.95). This “Practical Guide to Reading Well” is part of the university's Skills for Scholar series. Why did he write this? The author says, “Because reading good books enriches living, deepens understanding, enlarges our capacity for compassion, makes us more interesting to ourselves and to others. Because talking about good books, especially those we've read, is one of life's greatest pleasures. Because those books become lifelong companions.”

DK. [Remarkable Books](#) (DK \$30). One of the most beautiful books I own, filled with gorgeous photos and commentary of 75 of the most momentous titles ranging across subjects and all the way back to ancient texts. Its generous size makes it a “coffee table” book but it is far more than mere book candy; you will learn some new things as you browse.

Garcia, Gabriela. [Of Women and Salt](#) (Flatiron \$26.99). Garcia, a prolific poet and fiction writer, delivers her highly anticipated debut novel, centered on three generations of Cuban and Cuban American women. It follows generations of Cuban women, from María Isabel, rolling cigars as she listens to the words of Victor Hugo and men die around her, to Jeanette, struggling with addiction in Miami, and trying to find a place in the world that feels real. “At the heart of *Of Women and Salt* are the sacrifices made by mothers so their daughters can have different lives—perhaps better ones. But daughters may make choices based on their own wishes and needs, and this possibility is ever poised to pierce a mother's heart. In this way, the novel is quietly heartbreaking. As Garcia writes, ‘Even the best mothers in the world can't always save their daughters.’”—BookPage

Nimura, Janice P. [The Doctors Blackwell](#) (Norton \$27.95). The story of two pioneering sisters who broke through barriers to women joining the medical establishment in 1849 for Elizabeth and a bit later for Emily. Not only were they pioneering feminists,

they delivered medical care to women and children in a hospital staffed entirely by women while expanding the possibilities for women to embrace medical careers.

Post, Jeffrey Edward. [Unearthed](#) (Abrams \$29.99). This gem is absolutely gorgeous—the actual gems seem to shimmer off the pages. Plus you will love the way Post, the curator of the Smithsonian's National Gem Collections, adds sparkle to the photographs by relating scandals, mysteries, and human stories behind the world's greatest gems. The clothes worn by owners of these fabled jewels are arresting too. Fans of historical fiction will enjoy many of the essays.

Sony. [Outlander Puzzle](#) (Clarkson Potter \$19.99). If Mom is waiting impatiently for *Outlander #9*, here is a jigsaw puzzle of 1000 pieces to occupy her in the run up to November 23 when [Go Tell the Bees That I Am Gone](#) (Delacorte \$36), signed for us by Diana, releases.

## THE COZY CORNER

Bolton, Ginger. [Beyond a Reasonable Donut](#) (Kensington \$15.95). Emily Westhill, owner of the best donut shop in town—alongside her retired police chief father-in-law and her tabby cat Deputy Donut—are looking forward to manning the Deputy Donut tent at the Faker's Dozen Carnival in Fallingbrook, Wisconsin—a festival held on Friday the 13th to celebrate good and bad luck. But Emily has barely dropped the corn fritters in oil when bad luck boils up. First, their bucket of confectioner's sugar disappears—and then while a mime creates a distraction, a magician robs their cash register. After the carnival, their misfortune continues. Emily discovers that someone has broken into artist Nina's loft and vandalized a large painting in progress with the bucket of stolen sugar, which is now on the head of the mime, who seems to have been suffocated. Emily would bet Nina was the intended victim, but the cops think Nina silenced the mime. Now Emily must catch the killer white-handed.... You can order all five [Deputy Donut Mysteries](#).

Davis, Krista. [The Diva Serves Forbidden Fruit](#) (Kensington \$26). With Old Town's DIY Home Decorating Festival in full swing, domestic diva Sophie Winston's swamped, juggling a bumper crop of artisans, antique dealers, and decorators for the busy street fair. Still, when her best friend Nina suddenly needs a ride from the airport, Sophie is happy to help...until she sees Nina disembarking in a state of disarray. It's obvious the trip to Portugal soured somewhere along the way. But after one of Nina's traveling companions turns up murdered the following day, Sophie knows something is truly rotten. Though the crime scene is staged to look like an accident, Sophie isn't fooled and peels off to conduct her own investigation. Her only clue is a strange image the victim scratched into the soil before dying. Could it point to a cryptic killer in Old Town? A bitter travel adversary? Or a cursed artifact smuggled back from the trip? Order a dozen+ [Domestic Diva Mysteries](#).

Fletcher, Jessica. [Murder She Wrote: Killing in a Koi Pond](#) (Berkley \$26). After traveling to Bethesda for a mystery writers' conference, Jessica Fletcher, aka famed mystery author J.B. Fletcher, decides she's earned a vacation and takes a train to Columbia, South Carolina, to visit her old college friend Dolores, who has recently married her third husband, Willis Nickens, a wealthy and cutthroat businessman. They've moved into an opulent historic home with plenty of space for guests, and Jessica

is ready for a week of shopping, gossiping, and relaxing at the grand estate. But the morning after she arrives, Jessica discovers Willis face down in the koi pond, and despite what the police think, she's sure foul play is involved. She hadn't known Willis long, but it's clear to her that he didn't concern himself with making friends. The question isn't if her friend's husband was murdered—it's by whom. This is the first Murder She Wrote mystery by Terrie Farley Moran.

Gates, Eva. [Deadly Ever After](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). "The eighth [Lighthouse Library Mystery](#) finds the friends and family of librarian Lucy Richardson celebrating her long-awaited engagement to Connor McNeil, the mayor of their small town on North Carolina's Outer Banks, at a local restaurant. The situation becomes awkward when Lucy's former boyfriend, Ricky Lewiston, and his formidable mother crash the party—ostensibly to congratulate the happy couple, but actually to persuade Lucy to dump Connor and marry Ricky. The discovery of the body of Ricky's father, Rich, behind the restaurant really puts the kibosh on the festivities. The police can't figure out who killed Rich, or even why he'd come to town from Boston in the first place. Getting involved in a murder investigation is the last thing on Lucy's to-do list, but she soon realizes that in order to move forward, one sometimes has to take care of a few loose ends from the past. Plenty of unexpected plot twists and characters the reader can really care about help make this cozy a winner. Gates (a pen name of Vicki Delany) consistently entertains."—*PW*.

Gerard, Anna. [Peaches and Schemes](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). Nina Fleet might be new to the innkeeping business, but she's savvy enough to know that Cymbeline, Georgia's tourists aren't enough to keep her fledgling bed and breakfast going. And so, Nina decides to tap into the destination wedding market by taking a booth at the Veils and Vanities Bridal Expo. The twice-yearly event is sponsored by the town's two wedding pros: Virgie Hamilton, the sixtysomething owner of Virgie's Formals, and Roxanna Quarry, a Gen X event planner and Nina's new friend. But everything goes wrong during the expo's fashion show, when Roxanna comes tumbling out of an oversized prop wedding cake, strangled to death by her own scarf. Virgie is arrested for the crime, thanks to Nina's statement to the police about having overheard the woman accusing her partner of embezzlement. Meanwhile, the situation grows tense with her sometimes nemesis and current tenant, the dashing out-of-work actor Harry Westcott. Harry is concentrating on plugging his most recent side hustle ...but he's not too busy to break the news to Nina that her ex-husband is engaged to be married again.... And the plot thickens.... Enjoy all three [Georgia B&B Mysteries](#).

Giordano, Mario. [Auntie Poldi and the Lost Madonna](#) (Houghton \$24). In Giordano's exceptional fourth Auntie Poldi mystery (after 2020's *Auntie Poldi and the Handsome Antonio*), 60-year-old Isolde "Poldi" Oberreiter, a Bavarian who has settled in Torre Archirafi, Sicily, sets aside her plan "to drink herself to death in comfort with a view of the sea" to investigate another crime—the death of a nun who fell from the roof of the Vatican's Apostolic Palace following the exorcism of a woman named Rosaria. When the priest asked Rosaria to renounce her demon, she spoke Bavarian German in Poldi's voice. While the plot, which involves the theft of a statue of a Black Madonna, is satisfyingly packed with danger and surprises, it's the digressions on Sicilian history, the Italian mentality, and Poldi's pronouncements on life and sex that

provide readers with some laugh-out-loud moments as well as food for thought. Those who appreciate the intelligent silliness of S.J. Perelman will want to see more of the sexy, quick-witted Poldi, who won't take guff from any man, including the pope. Simultaneous paperback release: [Auntie Poldi and the Lost Madonna](#) (\$15.99).

Haines, Carolyn. [Independent Bones](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Our blogger Lesa reviews: PI Sarah Booth Delaney and her best friend and business partner, Tinkie Richmond, attend the grand opening for a park in Zinnia, MS, where the speaker, Dr. Alala Diakos, opines that men who abuse women "should be exterminated." The event turns violent when domestic abuser Curtis Miller is attacked by a mob of women. He's later shot to death, and Alala is questioned. She hires Sarah Booth and Tinkie because this is the third time a man Alala knows was shot and killed. They discover a local group of men affiliated with a national campaign to limit women's economic, educational, and medical choices. Sarah Booth knows she can't keep Tinkie from the case, but she wants to limit her exposure to possible violence: Tinkie is eight-and-a-half months pregnant, and Sarah Booth is more worried for her safety than Alala's. Haines follows *A Garland of Bones* with an issue-oriented mystery that delves into the stories of women who fought for their independence, alongside accounts of domestic abuse. Despite the heavy overtones, there's room for humor as dogs and cats assist with the investigation. Fans of the series will enjoy the depth of the story, along with the characters' personal development.

Hall, Traci. [Murder in a Scottish Garden](#) (Kensington \$15.95). In the charming Scottish shire of Nairn, Paislee's custom sweater and yarn business, Cashmere Crush, is the sole support for not only the single mum and her ten-year-old son Brody, but also her eccentric Gramps and Wallace, their black Scottish terrier. So when her landlord, Shawn Marcus, serves her an eviction notice and then pulls a disappearing act, she'll go to any lengths to find the man and reason with him. Shawn is heir to the Leery Estate, which Brody's class will be visiting on a field trip. So Paislee volunteers to chaperone in the hopes of tracking down Shawn and killing two birds with one stone. Unfortunately, the only one killed is a man Paislee sees falling out of the hedges after being shot. It's not her missing landlord, but Lady Leery's nephew, Charles Thomson. Gruff DI Mack Zeffer is on the case, but Paislee also has a stake in flushing out the shooter. With suspects sprouting up like weeds, Paislee may need to hedge her bets.... Start with [Murder in a Scottish Shire](#) (\$15.95). Nairn is known as the Brighton of the North but I know it as a place with a wicked golf course.

Hilliard, ME. [The Unkindness of Ravens](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). Greer Hogan 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. I got to this debut and series launch late so we have only a few copies. Apologies.

Kalb, Kathleen Marple. [A Fatal First Night](#) (Kensington \$26). “On the opening night of a new opera, *The Princes in the Tower*, in Kalb’s sprightly sequel to 2020’s *A Fatal First Night*, likewise set in 1899 Manhattan, opera singer Ella Shand finds basso Albert Reuter, who’s playing Richard III, in his dressing room with a bloody knife in his hand, standing over the body of Florian Lutz. Florian’s wife, Albert’s sister, was murdered two years earlier in Cleveland. Did Albert kill Florian to avenge his sister? Ella is unconvinced of Albert’s guilt, so she asks her friend and suitor, Gilbert Saint Aubyn, Duke of Leith, who has come to New York on a mysterious errand, to review the evidence. The appealing, independent Ella, who’s torn between her attraction to the duke and her love for a career she’s determined not to give up, has plenty of would-be male protectors, but she handles their Victorian attitudes with amusement rather than annoyance. The mystery is a bit of an afterthought, but Kalb has clearly done her research, giving the reader a fascinating glimpse into the life of a *fin de siècle* opera singer. Cozy fans will enjoy this one.”—*PW*

Logan, Kylie. [A Trail of Lies](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Jazz Ramsey is back in a relationship with her boyfriend, police officer Nick Kolesov, whose alcoholic mother, Kim, is a constant thorn in her side. Late one night Kim phones Jazz, claiming that Nick is dead in her yard. Even though no corpse is found, Kim continues to maintain that she killed someone. While calming Kim down, Jazz discovers some old pictures that may prove the key to solving a murder, though not the one Kim thinks she committed. Jazz, though irritated, still feels some responsibility to investigate Kim’s wild story, but Wally, the cadaver dog she’s training when she’s not working her administrative job at a girls school, doesn’t alert in Kim’s yard. When a body is found in a park, Jazz returns to Kim’s backyard with her late father’s retired tracking dog, Gus...and then....

Manansala, Mia P. [Arsenic and Adobo](#) (Berkley \$16). Lila Macapagal, the narrator of Manansala’s outstanding debut and series launch, notices two unwelcome customers at Tita Rosie’s Kitchen, a Filipino restaurant run by her aunt in Shady Palms, Illinois, where Lila has moved after a devastating breakup with her fiancé. Her life seems to be following all the typical rom-com tropes. She’s tasked with saving her Tita Rosie’s failing restaurant, and she has to deal with a group of matchmaking aunties who shower her with love and judgment. But when a notoriously nasty food critic (who happens to be her ex-boyfriend) drops dead moments after a confrontation with Lila, her life quickly swerves from a Nora Ephron romp to an Agatha Christie case. With the cops treating her like she’s the one and only suspect, and the shady landlord looking to finally kick the Macapagal family out and resell the storefront, Lila’s left with no choice but to conduct her own investigation. Armed with the nosy auntie network, her barista best bud, and her shunky, trusted Dachshund, Longanisa (named for a kind of sausage), Lila takes on this tasty, twisted case, our **May Cozy Crimes Book of the Month**.

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#### SOME NEW HARDCOVERS FOR MAY

*I can't come close to capturing all the May releases here, such as a new Richard Flanagan novel, etc. Plus advance reading copies are still scarce (but picking up for June and on) so I'm forced to quote other reviewers. Do search our webstore or call us for information on books you don't see here. Thank you.*

Abrams, Stacey. [While Justice Sleeps](#) (Doubleday \$28.95). Supreme Court Justice Howard Wynn has few family ties to speak of, just an estranged son and a soon-to-be-divorced second wife. He has dedicated his life, instead, to his role on the Supreme Court, and to his definition of justice. Avery Keene serves as Justice Wynn’s law clerk, overworked and underpaid while juggling care for her mother, who suffers from drug addiction and pops in and out of Avery’s life. When Justice Wynn slips into an inexplicable coma, it comes as a great surprise to everyone—Avery included—when Wynn’s papers name Avery his legal guardian. And as people around Justice Wynn start to disappear or turn up dead, Avery quickly realizes she’s in deeper than she thought possible. “There are a lot of layers to the central mystery which can feel labyrinthine at times—both to readers following Avery’s pursuits, and to Avery tracing a scavenger hunt-like trail of Justice Wynn’s clues about the case at hand. But a bit of patience is more than worth it, as Abrams weaves a suspenseful tale of politics and power that feels grounded in the realities of American politics—even while the case and story surrounding it are purely fiction.”

The Indie Next Pick: “From the first pages, this crime novel from author/activist Stacey Abrams drew me into the world of the Supreme Court (and chess!) and the seedy underbelly of the U.S. government. This race through the streets of Washington, DC, also contains a deeply satisfying ending that I won’t give away.”

Ames, Jonathan. [A Man Named Doll](#) (Mulholland \$26). “Ames has a soft spot for the man out of time, as his novels *Wake Up, Sir!* and *The Extra Man* attest. For *A Man Named Doll*, which is set in the present day, Ames has planted his lost man-boy narrator, ex-cop and private investigator Hank Doll, who is a private investigator moonlighting as a massage parlor bouncer, in a situation straight out of classic noir fiction—an inspired pairing given that Doll doesn’t have a hard-boiled bone in his body. The story opens at Doll’s Los Angeles office with a visit from his getting-on-in-years friend Lou Shelton, who has a proposition: ‘I need a new kidney. I’m looking for volunteers.’ Shelton is offering big money, but that’s not what convinces Doll to volunteer, free of charge: back when they were on the force, Shelton saved Doll’s life. Ex-cop Lou Shelton, who once saved Doll’s life, never gets to the operating table, after he gets stabbed at his security job. Shelton, though, gives Doll a diamond—showing up on his door before dying—which leaves Doll suddenly in the sights of the people who killed his friend. “So far, so noir—it’s a one-man investigation in which classic crime motifs mingle amusingly with modern mores. Unlike vintage noir dicks, Doll doesn’t suppress his emotions: he’s been in Freudian analysis for years. And Doll reserves his pillow talk not for the dame who’s crazy about him but for his dog, George, who will strike readers as something

not unlike an emotional-support animal. Ames delivers a time-tripping white-knuckler with horror shadings, a noir soul and a tender heart.”—Nell Beram. *PW* touts the book as having “assured plotting, superb local color, and excellent prose.”

Andrews, Mary Kay. [Newcomer](#) (St Martins \$28.99). Letty is on the run with her four-year-old niece, afraid she will be accused of her sister’s murder. She ends up at a beach front motel in Florida full of interesting and entertaining characters. Murder, fugitives, romance, and a great cast of characters. A perfect beach read. For readers who enjoy books by Elin Hilderbrand and Janet Evanovich.”

Bokur, Debra. [The Bone Field](#) (Kensington \$26). Kali Mahoe, Hawaiian cultural expert and detective with the Maui Police Department, has been called to a bizarre crime scene. In the recesses of a deep trench on Lanai Island, a derelict refrigerator has been unearthed. Entombed inside are the skeletal remains of someone buried decades ago. Identification is a challenge. The body is headless, the skull replaced with a chilling adornment: a large, ornately carved wooden pineapple. The old field soon yields more long-buried secrets, and Kali is led along an increasingly winding path that brings to light an unlikely suspect, an illegal cock-fighting organization, and a strange symbol connected to a long-disbanded religious cult. Her task is to dispel the dark shadows lingering over the Palawai Basin plains, and to solve a puzzle that no one wants exposed by the bright, hot tropical light. To discover the answer, Kali will be drawn deeper in the mysteries of the island’s ancient legends—stories that tell of an enraged rooster god and man-eating monsters. The dormant pineapple fields of Lanai have yet to give up their darkest and most terrifying secrets. I recommend Bokur’s first Dark Paradise Mystery, [The Fire Thief](#) (\$8.99). You will feel as though you’re once again traveling.

Brown, Dale. [Arctic Storm Rising](#) (Harper \$28.99). Good news for you action/adventure/thriller fans, a new series launch from this veteran author. “This strong series launch from bestseller Brown introduces Captain Nick Flynn, a smart-mouthed U.S. Air Force intelligence officer banished to a remote outpost in Alaska, where he heads up a ragtag bunch of similar military outcasts with little real responsibility. Suddenly, his unit is ordered into emergency action. The Pentagon has received word that a Russian super secret stealth bomber, commandeered by Colonel Alexei Petrov, has landed somewhere in the Alaskan wilderness, and Petrov is asking for \$2.6 billion in exchange for revealing its location. As a winter storm builds, Flynn and his men parachute into the frozen frontier, poorly supplied, a traitor in their ranks, and facing Russia’s elite *spetznaz* fighters. The brisk plot showcases the latest military technology and warfare techniques. The rough-and-ready Flynn, a handsome rogue with good social skills and a doer’s mentality, gets lost at times amid the large cast, but the ending suggests he’ll play a more central role in his next outing.”—*PW*. I can recommend this to fans of Marc Cameron’s US Marshal Arliss Cutter series too.

Brundage, Elizabeth. [The Vanishing Point](#) (LittleBrown \$28). Rye Adler evokes the late celebrity photographer Peter Beard in many ways: He seems to move easily in the world, gifted and carefree, and everyone recognizes him as a genius behind the lens. Yet something is not right in the now middle-aged man’s life, for when Brundage’s latest novel opens, a headline blares,

“Rye Adler, Photographer of the Rich and Infamous, Is Presumed Dead at 52.” The focus shifts to Julian Ladd, classmate and roommate and rival, who early on realized that compared to Rye in most aspects, he was second-tier at most: “Editors would stare at his pictures, glumly, and say nothing.” So it was that Julian went into advertising, taking with him the one treasure that Rye could not have—Magda, a strikingly beautiful fellow photography student—and building a life of wealth and conspicuous consumption, all Armani suits and “shiny, expensive loafers.” Does it buy him happiness? Of course not. Rye is in turn married to a brittle, brilliant translator whose “favorite language is silence,” and each day is a negotiation in frustration. Things soon change from miserable to catastrophic when, the story shifting into the near past, Rye and Magda meet by chance—or is it?—and revelations begin to spill out. “In this dark-toned mystery, Brundage develops an engrossing story about a love triangle involving three photographers. . . . The first half of the novel brilliantly dissects the competitive and erotic entanglements that mark the characters, and Brundage is particularly good at using photographic theory to describe how each sees the world.”—*PW*

Buehlman, Christopher. [The Blacktongue Thief](#) (Tor \$25.99). Out May 25 and is our **June SciFi/Fantasy Book of the Month**. Set in a world of goblin wars, stag-sized battle ravens, and assassins who kill with deadly tattoos—it’s epic fantasy like none other. “Buehlman draws on his experience as a professional performer and insulter at Renaissance Fairs to create a whole new fantasy world. The story follows a mischief-worshipping thief with student debt who reluctantly joins a quest to find a mad queen. Common enemies and uncommon dangers force thief and knight on a quest. The Indie Next Pick: “Buehlman hasn’t just written a really good epic fantasy; he has taken readers and dunked them into a world full of joy, wonder, heartbreak, foulness, horror, and hope. Once I started the book, I couldn’t put it down...”

Cantrell, Christian. [Scorpion](#) (Random \$27). This stunning near-future thriller from Cantrell takes some truly breathtaking turns. CIA data analyst Quinn Mitchell is sent in pursuit of the Elite Assassin, an apparently unpredictable and unstoppable killer. Readers, meanwhile, are introduced to the inscrutable murderer Ranveer, whose killings efficiently carry out someone else’s master plan. Quinn’s clever investigation, using neatly extrapolated high-tech gadgets, is fascinating in itself, and, as the CIA receives missives from the future through the time-bending Epoch Index, Quinn’s search collides with some darkly fascinating thought experiments. Among them: would a person be justified in killing a nine-month-old baby if told he would grow up to be a terrorist? Quinn is not the only one to grapple with such issues; so must her colleague, quantum physicist Henrietta Yi, whose parents died in a terrorist attack, but who is increasingly worried about how her bosses could use the Epoch Index to create an authoritarian future. Cantrell’s drolly caustic prose encourages readers to care about the characters, even as the many surprises make it dangerous to get close to any one of them. The result is as entertaining as it is intellectually and ethically challenging.”—*PW* Starred Review

Cameron, W. Bruce. [A Dog’s Courage](#) (St Martins \$26.99). I worry that “pandemic puppies” are going to end up in shelters or worse. So it’s good to read a story about a dog called Bella, once lost, then becoming a family with hardships forgotten, and then lost again when they all go on a weekend camping trip in the

Rockies. The mountains are engulfed by a huge wildfire which separates Bella from her people. Alone, she finds herself protecting two mountain lion cubs, a kind of new family. With danger at every turn, what next?

Dorn, LR. [Anatomy of Desire](#) (Harper \$27.99). Claire Griffith has it all, a thriving career, a gorgeous boyfriend, glamorous friends. She always knew she was destined for more than the life her devout missionary parents preached to her. Arriving in Los Angeles flat broke, she has risen to become a popular fitness coach and social media influencer. Having rebranded herself as Cleo Ray, she stands at the threshold of realizing her biggest dreams. One summer day, bisexual Cleo and a woman named Beck Alden set off in a canoe on a serene mountain lake. An hour later, Beck is found dead in the water and Cleo is missing. A witness has spotted her fleeing the scene. Authorities suspect foul play, and news of Cleo's involvement goes viral. Who was Beck? An infatuated follower? Were she and Cleo friends or lovers? Was Beck's death an accident...or murder? A sensational trial follows. Told in the form of an immersive investigative docuseries, Dorn's brilliant reimagining of Theodore Dreiser's classic crime drama, *An American Tragedy*, the "podcast style, the mystery gives us a range of voices and perspectives, from the boathouse attendants on, held together by the narrator. The advantage of this format is its great immediacy."—*Booklist*. *LJ* adds, "For fans of true crime and podcasts such as *Serial*, this riveting mock podcast docudrama ratchets up the suspense as readers glimpse every angle of the story from a 360-degree view." Dorn is a pseud for TV writers/producers Matt Dorff and Suzanne Dunn.

Gladwell, Malcolm. [The Bomber Mafia](#) (Little Brown \$27). 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. Things might have gone differently had LeMay's predecessor, General Haywood Hansell, remained in charge. Hansell believed in precision bombing, but when he and Curtis LeMay squared off for a leadership handover in the jungles of Guam, LeMay emerged victorious, leading to the darkest night of World War II. Gladwell 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.

Glenconner, Anne. [Murder on Mustique](#) (Mira \$26.99). Mustique is in a state of breathless calm as tropical storm Cristobal edges towards it across the Atlantic. Most villa owners have escaped the island but a few young socialites remain, unwilling to let summer's partying end. American heiress Amanda Fortini is one such thrill-seeker—until she heads out for a morning swim and doesn't return. Detective Sergeant Solomon Nile is just 28 years old and the island's only fully trained police officer. He quickly realizes he needs to contact Lord and Lady Blake, who bought the island decades ago and have invested time, money and love creating a paradise. Jasper is in St Lucia designing a new village

of luxury villas but Lady Veronica (Vee to her friends) catches a plane immediately. Her beloved god-daughter, Lily, is on the island and this disappearance has alarming echoes of what happened to Lily's mother many years ago. Lady Vee would never desert a friend in need, and she can keep a cool head in a crisis. When Amanda's body is found, a murder investigation begins. Nile knows the killer must be an islander because flights and ferry crossings have stopped due to the storm warning, but the local community isn't co-operating. And then the storm hits, and someone else disappears....

Hepworth, Sally. [The Good Sister](#) (St Martins \$27.99). When a woman helps her twin sister have a baby, she unintentionally causes buried family secrets to resurface. The story opens with an entry from the journal of Rose Castle depicting a childhood camping trip during which her twin sister, Fern, did something horrific. After this unsettling introduction, the story jumps to the present, told from the point of view of Fern, now an adult working at her local library. Fern is neurodiverse and content with her regimented life, which includes regular dinners with Rose. Fern's strict daily routines start unraveling when she meets an unusual man at the library and discovers Rose can't get pregnant. When Fern embarks on a plan to help Rose, she inadvertently sets in motion a series of events that unearth dark family secrets. Hepworth proficiently spins a web that slyly keeps pulling in readers until they realize they're caught up in it and can't escape. The main draw is Fern, an endearing character who has no edit button and is very funny in the literal way she perceives social interactions. Australian Hepworth has cracked bestseller lists with her novels.

Herron, R H. [Hush Little Baby](#) (Dutton \$27). Dr. Jillian Marsh, is the gutsy survivor of a troubled childhood and alcoholism, and when the novel opens, she's carrying the biological child of her wife – who has just left her for another woman. Jillian relies on her circle of friends, The Ripleys, for support, but they can't help when strange things start happening around her house. She begins to suspect someone is stalking her, then events turn harrowing and Jillian finds herself in the battle of her life, for her life—and for her baby. "I'm new to R. H. Herron but this page-turner puts her on my must-read list!"—Lisa Scottoline

Jenoff, Pam. [The Woman with the Blue Star](#) (Park Row \$28.99) follows a Jewish family hiding from the Nazis in Kraków, Poland. Famished 18-year-old Sadie Gault's parents insist she hide in a crawl space of their ghetto apartment in 1942, to spare her from grueling forced labor. A year later, facing intensifying raids, the family escapes into the sewer system with help from a worker who explains the tunnels and brings them food. Sadie bonds over books with the 20-something son of another family hiding with them, and their friendship blossoms into romance. Meanwhile, in a parallel narrative, a young Catholic woman named Ella Stepanek dreams of marrying her boyfriend and yearns to flee from her cruel Nazi collaborator stepmother. While running an errand at the market, Ella happens to glance down at a sewer grate in the street and sees Sadie looking up at her. Thus begins a lifesaving friendship in which both young women discover great inner resources neither one knew she possessed. Jenoff drew on a true story for this harrowing narrative, and shapes it with precise details of the subterranean world and of the city's churches, markets, and cafes.

Johnson, Katherine. [My Remarkable Journey: A Memoir](#) (Harper \$25.99). Not out until May 25 or I'd have included it in Gifts for Mom. In fact we can deliver a Gift Card to Mom for this title. Johnson is the remarkable NASA mathematician who helped land the first man on the moon. Her story is told in the Oscar-winning film *Hidden Figures* which I enthusiastically recommend, but this is a memoir of her personal journey from child prodigy in the Allegheny Mountains of West Virginia to NASA human computer, made all the more remarkable because she was a Black woman born in 1918. Johnson died in February, 2020, a witness to remarkable transformations.

Jónasson, Ragnar. [The Girl Who Died](#) (St Martins \$27.99). Reykjavík substitute teacher Una, who's ready for a change of scene, accepts an opportunity to teach in the remote fishing village of Skálar, which has only 10 residents, two of them girls aged seven and nine. Una moves into an attic room in the home of one of the girl's mothers, and soon finds how insular and isolated Skálar is. Meanwhile, to Una's distress, she has visions in the room of a girl singing a lullaby. A neighbor discloses that a girl named Thrá died in the house in 1927 under mysterious circumstances, and is rumored to still haunt it. A shocking death in the present and a local conspiracy connected to a missing person add to Una's fears. Jónasson makes Una's plight feel vivid and immediate, and effectively uses the isolated setting to create a claustrophobic atmosphere for this standalone suspense.

LeGardinier, Gilles. [The Paris Labyrinth](#) (Flammarion \$26.95). Talk about getting lost in a book...this novel that begins at the 1889 World's Fair in Paris where the Eiffel Tower debuts by best-selling French author LeGardinier (he's also a screenwriter which you can tell reading this exciting adventure) provides the opportunity. Vincent has created a unique niche: safety rooms for the rich or famous, hidden compartments for treasures and undetectable escape routes for the endangered. He and his team live and work in such a room which is fortunate after he takes on a secret mission and makes them the target of ruthless assassins. It's a life or death challenge to discover who is behind the deadly threat. A client? Dark forces of politics? Or of the occult they might have provoked? This is a broad canvas painted by someone familiar with Paris and thus a great tour guide giving you an opportunity, for example, to wonder how it felt to be among the first to risk gravity-defying escalators to reach the top of the new Tower.

McDowell, Christina. [The Cave Dwellers](#) (Gallery \$28). Can't get enough of the weirdness that is Washington! "In this bold novel, McDowell uses a wild group of teenagers in Georgetown/Kalorama/Capitol Hill, (Yes, the places where the Obamas, the Kushners, and Jeff Bezos reside), to probe the privileged inner circle of their families, exposing the stupidity and failures of character of these dynastic swamp dwellers, nouveau-riche social climbers, womanizing, lying politicians and nobody comes off well. The mystery surrounding the shocking murder of one family (based on a real event) deepens the darkness."—Lisa Howorth on a book that feels like actual news even if satire is the intent.

McKenzie, Catherine. [Six Weeks to Live](#) (Atria \$27). What if you had to solve your own murder? Jennifer Barnes never expected the shocking news she received at a routine doctor's appointment: she has a terminal brain tumor—and only six weeks left to live. While stunned by the diagnosis, the forty-eight-year-old mother decides to spend what little time she has left with her family—

her adult triplets and twin grandsons—close by her side. But when she realizes she was possibly poisoned a year earlier, she's determined to discover who might have tried to get rid of her before she's gone for good. Separated from her husband and with a contentious divorce in progress, Jennifer focuses her suspicions on her soon-to-be ex. Meanwhile, her daughters are each processing the news differently. Calm medical student Emily is there for whatever Jennifer needs. Moody scientist Aline, who keeps her mother at arm's length, nonetheless agrees to help with the investigation. Even imprudent Miranda, who has recently had to move back home, is being unusually solicitous. But with her daughters doubting her campaign against their father, Jennifer can't help but wonder if the poisoning is all in her head—or if there's someone else who wanted her dead.

McMahon, Jennifer. [The Drowning Kind](#) (Gallery \$27). When social worker Jax receives nine missed calls from her older sister, Lexie, she assumes that it's just another one of her sister's episodes. Manic and increasingly out of touch with reality, Lexie has pushed Jax away for over a year. But the next day, Lexie is dead: drowned in the pool at their grandmother's estate. When Jax arrives at the house to go through her sister's things, she learns that Lexie was researching the history of their family and the property. And as she dives deeper into the research herself, she discovers that the land holds a far darker past than she could have ever imagined. I love the way *Kirkus* summed this up "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. For best results, read it on a dark and stormy night in a well-lit room, far away from the water."

✂Mozley, Fiona. [Hot Stew](#) (Algonquin \$26.95). "Mozley leaves the Yorkshire countryside of her Booker-shortlisted *Elmet* for the gritty streets of London in this lively contemporary Dickensian outing "parsing the relationships between inheritance and wealth, gentrification and squalor, men and women. Agatha Howard is a millionaire with loads of London properties inherited from a father with questionable business ethics. Her current focus is on the redevelopment of a dilapidated Soho building populated by a colorful group of sex workers, sex traffickers, and small-time gangsters. Their microcosm reflects the sharp contrasts between life on the edge of poverty and the wealth of the clients who seek their services. Agatha, on the other hand, seems more interested in her social life, her Borzoi, and the relationship between her husband and her mother. Rumors of eviction ramp up; the residents do not intend to go quietly. As Agatha's plans progress, the tenants stage protests in the streets, her siblings come out of the woodwork wanting pieces of the action, and locals with political aspirations take sides, in a contemporary tale of morals, money, and mischief. With tinges of *Tom Jones*, this is a seriously entertaining romp through one of London's most historic districts, alongside a band of resilient have-nots who are determined to win out over an entitled heiress."—*LJ* Starred Review for a May Indie Next Pick.

Patterson, James/Maxine Pietro. [21st Birthday](#) (LittleBrown \$29). Tara Burke, a young wife and mother, goes missing with her baby. At first, all signs point to her husband Lucas lying to the police to cover up a crime. But then he offers law enforcement one startling piece of evidence that changes the whole case. And

if he's not lying, it means that every woman in California is in grave danger.

Power, Chris. [A Lonely Man](#) (Farrar \$27). Two British men meet by chance in Berlin. Robert is trying and failing to finish his next book while balancing his responsibilities as a husband and father. Patrick, a recent arrival in the city, is secretive about his past, but eventually reveals that he has been ghostwriting the autobiography of a Russian oligarch. The oligarch has turned up dead, and Patrick claims to be a hunted man himself. Although Robert doubts the truth of Patrick's story, it fascinates him, and he thinks it might hold the key to his own foundering novel. Working to gain the other man's trust, Robert draws out the details of Patrick's past while ensnaring himself ever more tightly in what might be either a fantasist's creation or a lethal international plot. Through an elegant existential game of cat and mouse, Chris Power's *A Lonely Man* depicts an attempt to create art at the cost of empathy.

Rutherford, Edward. [China](#) (Doubleday \$35) focuses on the development of China's relationship with the West. He begins in 1839, on the eve of what became known as the Opium War. British traders have been profiting from selling the drug to the Chinese, and Lord Lin, a righteous government minister, vows to stamp out the lucrative trade, by force if necessary, a tack that prompts the British to showcase their naval superiority. Rutherford carries the story forward through the early 20th century, ending it after the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, and the untimely death of a Chinese emperor. Nothing original here, and some clunkers, but many readers enjoy Rutherford's popular history formula, and heaven knows we could all learn a lot more about China.

Saint, Jennifer. [Ariadne](#) (Flatiron \$26.99). Ariadne, eldest daughter of King Minos, and her younger sister Phaedra live under the pall of their family's shame. Thanks to their father's impiety, their mother Pasiphae has mated with a bull and birthed the Minotaur. Although Ariadne and her mother try to love the carnivorous creature, his vicious nature makes him a natural weapon. Each year, Minos demands Athens send Crete 14 young people in payment for the death of his eldest son, killed near their city. The Minotaur hunts and devours the tributes in the Labyrinth under the palace, while Ariadne spins on her dancing floor to stop herself from imagining "the tearing of teeth through flesh." In Ariadne's 18th year, the Athenian ship brings Prince Theseus, and Ariadne, smitten, elects to help him enter the Labyrinth and kill the Minotaur. In return, he promises to take her with him to Athens as his bride. Instead, Theseus betrays Ariadne, marooning her on an apparently uninhabited island. Rescued by the god Dionysus (Bacchus), she finds a measure of happiness, while Phaedra, who believes Ariadne has died, must enter a loveless political marriage. "Saint's background in classical studies is apparent in her portrayal of self-interested gods and hapless mortals. Her focus on Ariadne, usually treated as a supporting character or footnote, allows her to highlight the powerlessness and scapegoating of women in patriarchal systems. Filled with luxuriant descriptions of pastoral ancient Greece, fearsome deities and frightening creatures, and unflinching, intelligently developed emotion, this shrewd commentary on the inner lives of overlooked women should resonate with fans of Madeline Miller's [Circe](#) (\$16.99)." I add that one of my all time favorite novels is Mary Renault's [The King Must Die](#) (\$16.95) which recounts the Theseus/Ariadne story brilliantly.

Shipstead, Maggie. [Great Circle](#) (Knopf \$28.95). Actress Hadley Baxter "has been familiar with the story of Marian Graves, an aviatrix who disappeared while trying to circumnavigate the globe, since she was just a little girl—before she became a pop-culture phenomenon, turned into a movie star with a mega-franchise, accidentally destroyed her career, and was given the chance to reinvent herself...by playing Marian in a biopic. The film, *Peregrine*, is based at least partly on the logbook of Marian's "great circle," which was found wrapped in a life preserver on an ice floe near the South Pole. Shipstead's story begins decades earlier, with the christening of the *Josephina Eterna* in Glasgow in 1909. The unhappy woman who breaks the bottle on her bow, the laconic captain who takes the ship to sea, the woman he beds onboard, the babies that result from this union—Marian Graves and her twin, Jamie—the uncle who has to raise them when their mother drowns and their father disappears: The destinies of every one of these people, and many more unforgettable characters, intersect in ways that reverberate through a hundred years of story. Whether Shipstead is creating scenes in the Prohibition-era American West, in wartime London, or on a Hollywood movie set, her research is as invisible as it should be, allowing a fully immersive experience. Ingeniously structured and so damn entertaining; this novel is as ambitious as its heroine. Shipstead reveals breathtaking range and skill, expertly juggling a multigenerational historical epic and a scandal-soaked Hollywood satire, with scenes playing out on land, at sea, and in the air."—*Kirkus Reviews* on the No. 1 Indie Next Pick for May: "This epic novel is fascinating, adventurous, and well-written, with great characters, historical details, and fantastic settings. Don't miss this journey!"

Solomon, Rivers. [Sorrowland](#) (Farrar \$27). The *Booklist* starred review: "Solomon once again stretches the boundaries of speculative fiction in this distinct and visceral exploration of the trauma of Black and queer bodies in an all-too-believable near future.

Takamura, Kaoru. [Lady Joker Volume 1](#) (Soho \$28.95). Takamura makes her English-language debut with an excellent crime novel centered on a kidnapping. In 1995, Kyosuke Shiroyama, the head of one of Japan's leading companies, Hinode Beer, is snatched from his home by a criminal or criminals, who leave a message simply reading "we have your president." A massive police inquiry ensues, which focuses on ascertaining who might have an axe to grind against the company. The investigators probe a possible connection to events from 1990, when a dentist, after his son died, accused Hinode of improperly denying his child employment. Between that accusation and the abduction, various characters from a wide range of society are introduced, including a truck driver, a lathe operator, a banker, and a disgraced cop, who eventually unite in plotting Shiroyama's kidnapping. This approach raises the emotional stakes leading up to the crime and its aftermath, though the resolution awaits the second volume. Readers open to delaying gratification will be hooked. Takamura shows why she's one of Japan's most prominent mystery novelists.

✽Wade, Francesca. [Square Haunting](#) (Crown \$28.99). 5 women writers live in Mecklenburgh Square, Bloomsbury, London, between the wars: H.D., a poet; Dorothy Sayers, a mystery writer who also translated Dante & other works; Jane Ellen Harrison, a classicist. Wade, a British journalist and the editor of *The White Review*, brings these five together in her vividly written first book

because they all lived in Bloomsbury, on Mecklenburgh Square. Although they resided there at different times — and, except in the case of one or two, it is unclear whether they ever met — each worked to overturn obstacles that had long “kept women subordinate,” forging new paths to the economic independence and intellectual fulfillment Woolf heralded in her landmark essay “A Room of One’s Own.” After H.D. left London for Cornwall in 1920, Dorothy Sayers moved into her former apartment on the square, shortly after her official graduation from Somerville College, Oxford, with a First in modern languages, and five years after she had completed her studies — 1920 being the first year Oxford acknowledged women graduates. Vera Brittain, in her book *The Women at Oxford*, called Sayers the Somerville graduate who “made the most lasting impression on her contemporaries and on the outside world.” Brilliant, musical and interested in theology, Sayers astonished her classmates when she became a professional writer of detective stories. But her books, featuring her sleuth Lord Peter Wimsey, were immediately celebrated!

Weir, Andy. [Project Hail Mary](#) (Ballantine \$28.99). Our **May SciFi/Fantasy Book of the Month** comes with a special nifty backpack per book while supplies last. Ryland Grace is the sole survivor on a desperate, last-chance mission—and if he fails, humanity and the earth itself will perish. Except that right now, he doesn’t know that. He can’t even remember his own name, let alone the nature of his assignment or how to complete it. All he knows is that he’s been asleep for a very, very long time. And he’s just been awakened to find himself millions of miles from home, with nothing but two corpses for company. His crewmates dead, his memories fuzzily returning, Ryland realizes that an impossible task now confronts him. Hurling through space on this tiny ship, it’s up to him to puzzle out an impossible scientific mystery—and conquer an extinction-level threat.... The Indie Next Pick: “Remember how much you loved *The Martian*? Prepare to love this book even more. I found myself engrossed from the very beginning, and every page brings a new delight. Weir writes incredible characters that leave a mark you’ll feel long after you’re done.”

Wells, Martha. [Fugitive Telemetry](#) (Tor \$19.99). When security droid Murderbot discovers a dead body on Preservation Station, it knows it is going to have to assist station security to determine who the body is (was), how they were killed (that should be relatively straightforward, at least), and why (because apparently that matters to a lot of people—who knew?). Yes, the unthinkable is about to happen: Murderbot must voluntarily speak to humans! Again! The Indie Next Pick for *The Murderbot Diaries* #6: “I haven’t felt such joy reading a sci-fi series in a long time. If you’ve been putting off reading *The Murderbot Diaries*, go start right now!”

White, Edward. [The Twelve Lives of Alfred Hitchcock](#) (Norton \$28.95). White sidesteps familiarity with an inventive and clever new way to present his biography and critical assessment of the filmmaker. Rather than tell Hitchcock’s life in chronological order, White has written 12 lengthy chapters, each presenting a different aspect of his subject. “Only when all twelve are seen together will the full picture be complete,” he writes. The chapters (or “lives”) begins with “The Boy Who Couldn’t Grow Up,” which examines Hitchcock’s childhood phobias that seemingly lasted his entire life. “The Murderer” posits Hitchcock had a life-long fascination with cruelty and violence that fueled his creativ-

ity. “The Auteur” shows how Hitchcock’s persona changed after decades of being regarded as merely a Hollywood hit-maker until French critics declared him an “artiste” in the mid-1960s. One of the more fascinating chapters is “The Womanizer,” which looks at Hitchcock’s wildly conflicted treatment of women on and off screen. Hitchcock was, White writes, “caught between feelings of admiration and resentment, identification and estrangement, an instinct to worship and a desire to control.”

✎Williams, Pip. [The Dictionary of Lost Words](#) (Ballantine \$28). A young British woman quietly creates a compendium of words from women and the lower classes in this sweeping feminist *bildungsroman* set against the writing of the first Oxford English Dictionary. In late 19th-century England, Esme Nicoll spends her childhood hiding under tables in the Scriptorium, a garden shed in Oxford where a team of lexicographers, including her widowed father, work diligently at collecting and editing definitions on paper slips for the first Oxford English Dictionary. At age five, she swipes a slip bearing the word “bondmaid.” Years later, the realization that this word applies to Lizzie, a maid and her close companion, as easily as to a Roman slave girl angers Esme. She questions why the OED leaves words out, often the language of working-class people and women. “All words are not equal,” or not considered so, explains family friend and female intellectual Ditte. While remaining devoted to the OED, Esme begins. Using oral history techniques combined with lexicography to collect the words of market vendors, actresses and servants. As British suffragists protest and World War I draws near, writing *The Dictionary of Lost Words* becomes Esme’s guiding purpose. This sweeping coming-of-age story, set against a tumultuous time in British history, is a historical fiction fan’s dream.

Wojtas, Olga. [Miss Blaine’s Prefect and the Vampire Me](#) (Felony \$26). Intrepid time-traveling librarian Shona McMonagle—former Marcia Blaine Academy prefect, accomplished linguist, and martial artist—now finds herself in an isolated French village which receives no sunlight because of its topography and is reeling from a spate of unexplained deaths. Sans-Soleil, which has no sunlight because of its topography. It’s reeling from a spate of unexplained deaths, and Shona has once again travelled back in time to help out. Forging an uneasy alliance with newly widowed Madeleine, Shona is soon drawn into a full-blown vampire hunt, involving several notable villagers, the world-renowned soprano Mary Garden—and even Count Dracula himself. Will Shona solve the mystery, secure justice for the murder victims and make it through a deathly denouement in the hall of mirrors to return to present-day Morningside Library? You can read this first or start with [Miss Blaine’s Prefect and the Golden Samovar](#) (\$14.95) if we can still order it.

✎Wynne, Phoebe. [Madam](#) (St Martins\$27.99). Wynne takes Donna Tartt’s *The Secret History* and DuMaurier’s *Rebecca* to an extreme level (add in *Jane Eyre*) at a very exclusive boarding school for girls in Scotland housed in a kind a baronial manor called Caldonbrae Hall. It’s 1993. Into its illustrious midst steps Rose Christie: a 26-year-old Classics teacher, Caldonbrae’s new head of the department, and the first hire for the school in over a decade. At first, Rose is overwhelmed to be invited into this institution, whose prestige is unrivaled. But what Rose finds in her new post is a claustrophobic, regressive atmosphere filled with secrets and the simmering tension one expects in a gothic novel.—at odds with her commitment to educating “girls for the



future.” It also doesn’t take long for Rose to suspect that there’s more to the secret circumstances surrounding the abrupt departure of her predecessor—a woman whose ghost lingers everywhere—than anyone is willing to let on. In her search for this mysterious former teacher, Rose instead uncovers the darkness that beats at the heart of Caldonbrae, forcing her to confront the true extent of the school’s nefarious purpose... Class, cruelty, repression, and grooming the girls. This twisty take on patriarchy, education and consent, set at an elite boarding school for girls in 1990s Scotland, will appeal to fans of classic gothic novels.

Yoon, David. [Version Zero](#) (Putnam \$27). Imagine a world in which the entire Internet is controlled by a handful of shady CEOs. Oh. Right. Well, imagine someone doing something about it. Imagine a high-speed, edge of your seat adventure with stakes higher than you can measure. “For his first adult novel, YA superstar Yoon draws on his decades in the tech industry to envision a takedown of the digital world so complete that paper comes back into fashion...A fast-paced, contemporary take on *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, blowing up digital infrastructure instead of dams.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

### **BOOKS FOR EARTH DAY READING (even though it was April 22)**

Drori, Jonathan. [Around the World in 80 Plants](#) (Laurence King \$24.99). Drori, a former trustee of the Royal Botanic Gardens, again masterfully blends science, history, and culture in this globe-spanning introduction to botany. In 80 illustrated chapters, Drori provides the evolutionary origins of familiar plants (the banana, for instance, is “an ancient hybrid of two wild species that still grow in South East Asia, with small, unappetizing fruit”), along with surprising revelations (the artichoke does not exist in the wild, but was bred from the thistle family) and introductions to obscure vegetation such as the tree tumbo, which Charles Darwin dubbed “the platypus of the plant world.” Drori also delves into how fruits have been used in rituals in different societies and faiths, and describes wedding garlands made of shrubs that are sacred to Greek goddesses, validating his introductory remarks that most of the entries “reveal as much about people as they do about plants.” Witty prose (“The nettle’s separate male and female plants are an understated couple”) is a further plus. An accessible and colorful volume, this will charm even readers who know little about the plant-world. Drori previously authored [Around the World in 80 Trees](#) (\$19.99).

Dunn, Jon. [The Glitter in the Green: In Search of Hummingbirds](#) (Basic Books \$30). We have two hummingbird feeders in our garden and love to watch a large flock perform acrobatics and duck as they buzz us so tame are they. So I am drawn to this handsome volume where natural history writer Dunn takes readers on a wondrous globe-trotting pilgrimage to seek out hummingbirds as their populations are threatened. He stops in Alaska to check on “the most northerly hummingbirds in the world” whose population is in decline (as are birds at the southernmost tip of South America), and visits Patagonia, Arizona, to see “a species at best scarce in the United States.” Dunn points to climate change, habitat loss, and hunting as reasons “the clock of extinction is ticking loudly for them.” Along the way, Dunn shares odd facts about the birds’ physiognomy and behavior—their tongues are so long “that, when retracted, they coil inside the birds’ heads around their skulls and eyes,” and male Anna’s Hummingbirds court

prospective mates by making music with their tails. As in the best nature writing, Dunn paints striking pictures: he describes a bird “clad in an impossibly rich and overpowering imperial purple that, as traces of golden light from the lodge struck his breast, exploded into myriad sparks of palatinate life, each feather coruscating and glittering.” Dunn’s vivid prose, balanced with just the right amount of detail, will captivate birders and non-birders alike.

Garvin, Eileen. [The Music of Bees](#) (Dutton \$26). A debut novel centers on three lonely strangers in a rural Oregon town, each working through grief and life’s curveballs, are brought together by happenstance on a local honeybee farm. An unexpected friendship blossoms among Alice, Jake, and Harry, when a nefarious pesticide company moves to town, threatening the local honeybee population and illuminating deep-seated corruption in the community. The unlikely trio must unite for the sake of the bees—and in the process, they just might forge a new future. The Indie Next Pick: “Comparing this book to *Eleanor Oliphant* left me a bit skeptical, but the comparison is fair and I’d even say that *The Music of Bees* stands on its own beautifully. Add in some interesting facts on bees and heartwarming stories of lovable, offbeat characters and you have a winner.”

Hamer, Marc. [Seed to Dust: Life, Nature, and a Country Garden](#) (Greystone \$26.95). The Indie Next review: “This book has the kind of calm coziness that will leave your mind abuzz with wonder and reflection about the natural world, gardens, and our place in them. Gardener or not, this book has lessons for us all on the kind of patience, quiet, and listening we could use a bit more of in this world.” Who is Hamer? Hamer has nurtured the same 12-acre garden in the Welsh countryside for over two decades. The garden is vast and intricate. It’s rarely visited, and only Hamer knows of its secrets. But it’s not his garden. It belongs to his wealthy and elegant employer, Miss Cashmere. But the garden does not really belong to her, either. As Hamer writes, “Like a book, a garden belongs to everyone who sees it.” His meditative memoir explores the wisdom of plants, the joys of manual labor, and the natural cycle of growth and decay that runs through both the garden’s life and our own. If like me you have been seduced by the British TV show *Gardener’s World* (BBC), try Hamer in place of Monty Don.

Irving, Nikki. [Growing Flowers](#) (Mango \$26.95). Basically, everything you need to know....plus 156 pages of color photos of flowers and arrangements for you to browse

Weidensall, Scott. [A World on the Wing: The Global Odyssey of Migratory Birds](#) (Norton \$32). I’m a fan of Helen MacDonald’s engrossing *H Is for Hawk* and *Vesper Flights* so naturally this bestselling book drew me in. I can’t cover its range here. I will quote this: “Nearly a third of all birds—three billion creatures—have vanished from North America.” Enjoy the birds that flit through these pages while you can and consider the implications of climate change, travel, habitat invasion, and other hazards avians increasingly face.

### **OUR MAY LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS**

Barclay, Linwood. [Elevator Pitch](#) (\$16.99). It all begins on a Monday, when four people board an elevator in a Manhattan office tower. Each presses a button for their floor, but the elevator proceeds, non-stop, to the top. Once there, it stops for a few seconds, and then plummets. Right to the bottom of the shaft. It

appears to be a horrific, random tragedy. But then, on Tuesday, it happens again, in a different Manhattan skyscraper. And when Wednesday brings yet another high-rise catastrophe, one of the most vertical cities in the world – and the nation’s capital of media, finance, and entertainment – is plunged into chaos. Clearly, this is anything but random. But what is it? Domestic terrorism. For sure it’s terrorizing New York and bringing commerce to a halt.... I remember reading a fascinating piece in the *WSJ* about Otis Elevators and the smart technology it is developing and installing and one big issue is... it means an elevator carrying a specific passenger or passengers can be hacked. Once again crime fiction cuts along the edge of change.

Clark, Julie. [The Last Flight](#) (\$16.99). Our June 2020 First Mystery Book of the Month is now in paperback: “In this outstanding thriller, New York socialite Clair Cook, who has a plan to run away from her emotionally and physically abusive husband, and Eva James, a woman heading home to Berkeley, Calif., who says she’s mourning her late husband, meet by chance at an airport bar at JFK before their flights. Claire tells Eva that she would do anything not to go to Puerto Rico, where her husband is expecting her. Eva agrees to fly to Puerto Rico in Claire’s place, and the two swap e-tickets and phones. On arrival at Oakland’s airport, Claire learns that the Puerto Rico flight has crashed, killing everyone aboard. Though she’s devastated that Eva has died in the crash, Claire takes the opportunity to assume the life Eva left behind only to discover that Eva was not who she said she was and was fleeing her own dangerous past. The moral dilemmas that the multifaceted, realistic characters face in their quest for survival lend weight to this pulse-pounding tale of suspense.” Recommend to you who enjoyed *The Last Mrs. Parrish* by Liv Constantine and *The Passenger* by Lisa Lutz.

Connolly, John. [The Dirty South](#) (\$16). ). Connolly has written a prequel to his splendid, long-running Charlie Parker series and sets it in Arkansas (not an obvious choice for an Irish writer). Here’s a well deserved Starred Review: “...noir fans will relish an origin story set in 1999. The murder of Parker’s wife and daughter ended his career as an NYPD detective, but the ghosts of his loved ones still literally haunt him, and the tragedy may have turned him into a vigilante who beat a child predator to death. Parker’s hunt for his family’s killer takes him to impoverished Burdon County, Arkansas, where someone, possibly the same person he’s seeking, has been murdering teenage girls. One possible victim, Patricia Hartley, was ruled to have died accidentally, despite the placement of branches in her vagina and throat. During a chance encounter in a Cargill bar between Parker and Evander Griffin, the town’s police chief, the conversation turns hostile after they get on the topic of Hartley’s death. Parker later learns that Griffin wants the murders hushed up to avoid losing a lucrative business opportunity for the county. Brilliant descriptions of the setting (a lake ‘seemed to consume light’) enhance this intelligent and subtle suspense novel...”

Davis, Fiona. [The Lions of Fifth Avenue](#) (\$17). A series of book thefts roils the iconic New York Public Library, leaving two generations of strong-willed women to pick up the pieces. It’s 1913, and on the surface, Laura Lyons couldn’t ask for more out of life—her husband is the superintendent of the New York Public Library, allowing their family to live in an apartment within the grand building, and they are blessed with two children. But headstrong, passionate Laura wants more and applies to the Columbia

Journalism School, cracking her world wide open. As her studies take her all over the city, she is drawn to Greenwich Village’s new bohemia, where she discovers the Heterodoxy Club—a radical, all-female group. Soon, Laura finds herself questioning her traditional role as wife and mother. But when valuable books are stolen back at the library, threatening the home and institution she loves, she’s forced to confront her shifting priorities head on . . . In 1993, Sadie Donovan struggles with the legacy of her grandmother, the famous essayist Laura Lyons, especially after she’s wrangled her dream job as a curator at the New York Public Library. But the job quickly becomes a nightmare when rare manuscripts, notes, and books for the exhibit Sadie’s running begin disappearing from the library’s famous Berg Collection. Determined to save both the exhibit and her career, the typically risk-adverse Sadie teams up with a private security expert to uncover the culprit. However...

Hillier, Jennifer. [Little Secrets](#) (\$16.99). *Little Secrets* is “a delightfully twisty psychological thriller perfect for fans of *You* and *Gone Girl*.” Celebrity hairstylist Marin Machado, the heroine of this diabolically plotted psychological thriller of lust, obsession, greed, and betrayal, believes she’s hit bottom during the 16 months since her four-year-old son was snatched while they were Christmas shopping at a Seattle’s famed Pike Place Market—something for which she can’t stop blaming herself, nor can her entrepreneur husband of almost 20 years, Derek. But that’s before the PI Marin hired after the case went cold shares her chance but devastating discovery that Derek’s having an affair with a much younger woman, Kenzie, catapulting Marin into an even darker circle of hell.

Mathews, Francine. [Death on Tuckernuck](#) (\$16.95). Much of the action of Mathews’ gripping sixth Merry Folger mystery occurs on Tuckernuck, “the small island trailing like an afterthought off the western end of Nantucket.” At the end of September, most of Tuckernuck’s inhabitants have departed, leaving the island’s caretakers, Dionis Mather and her father, Jack, to evacuate the remaining privileged residents as a hurricane approaches, though Jack has to abandon the task after suffering a heart attack. Meanwhile, Nantucket police detective Meredith Folger is getting married soon, but the discovery of two gunshot victims aboard a yacht that runs aground on Tuckernuck during the storm ensures she’ll be on the job right up to her wedding day. A Coast Guard team is able to rescue the victims, but one dies on the helicopter flight to Nantucket, and the other remains in a coma in the hospital. At the peak of the hurricane, Dionis is trapped alone on Tuckernuck, until she meets a stranger with a gunshot wound in his hand. Readers will keep turning the pages to see what happens next. Mathews once again displays her storytelling powers.” The [Merry Folger Nantucket Mysteries](#) introduced me to Mathews back in the 1990s. The books have now been updated and I recommend you order them all.

✶Michaelides, Alex. [The Silent Patient](#) (\$16.99). Psychotherapist Theo Faber, the emotionally fragile narrator of Michaelides’ superb first novel, finagles his way to a job at the Grove, a “secure forensic unit” in North London, where artist Alicia Berenson has been housed for six years since she was convicted of murdering her prominent fashion photographer husband, Gabriel. The evidence against Alicia was clear—Gabriel was tied to a chair and shot several times in the face with a gun that had only her fingerprints. Since the day of her arrest, Alicia has never said a word.

Before the murder, Alicia painted a provocative self-portrait entitled *Alcestis*, based on a Greek myth that seemed to echo her life. Her current therapists reluctantly agree to let Theo treat the heavily drugged Alicia to get her to speak. The boundary between doctor and patient blurs as Theo seeks to cure his own emotional problems in the course of treating Alicia. This edgy, intricately plotted psychological thriller establishes Michaelides as a major player in the field—and indeed it has been a hardcover bestseller since February, 2019. Look for [The Maidens](#) (\$27.99) in June and the Signed UK hardcover [The Maidens](#) (\$36).

Moore, Graham. [The Holdout](#) (\$17). This stellar novel from bestseller Moore takes a searing look at the U.S. justice system, media scrutiny, and racism. A decade earlier, during a high-profile L.A. murder trial, idealist Maya Seale persuaded her fellow jurors to acquit African-American high school teacher Bobby Nock of killing Jessica Silver, his wealthy white 15-year-old student. The controversial trial had a powerful impact on all the jurors, most of whom regretted the verdict. Maya was vilified in the press, but the most stinging rebuke came from juror Rick Leonard, who published a book blaming the verdict on Maya's bullying. Now the producers of *Murder Town*, a true crime documentary series, want to do a 10-year anniversary special with Maya, who's since become a defense attorney, as the key participant. During a reunion of the jurors, one of them is murdered in Maya's hotel room. The narrative builds tension as it shifts among the voices of the various jurors, including Maya. Agreeing with me that that Moore has set a new standard for legal thrillers are authors like Lisa Scottoline. Or AJ Finn who calls it: "Exhilarating...a fiendishly slippery game of cat-and-mouse suspense and a provocative, urgent inquiry into American justice (and injustice) in the twenty-first century."

Paretsky, Sara. [Dead Land](#) (\$16.99). "Sara Paretsky's gloriously kick-ass private eye, V.I. 'Vic' Warshawski, is back for the 20th time in a political-rot thriller that's the definition of perfection in the genre... The novel's robustly flavorsome cast of characters includes a semi-deranged land preservationist, a corrupt Nobel Prize winner, a Chilean Ayn Rand disciple and several wonderful dogs."—*The Washington Post*

Perrin, Valerie. [Fresh Water for Flowers](#) (\$16.95). This debut, translated from the French, is one of the most original and captivating I've read in many a year. It's the perfect book to get lost as we transition from April to May. Violette Toussaint, an orphan who survived a chaotic childhood, taught herself to read, and succumbed to the beauty of the older Phillipe Toussaint in 1986, when Violette was 18—and pregnant. Despite the difference in their social class, lust could not be denied. But Phillipe, raised to be a dilettante, is an incorrigible womanizer. They secure a job and cottage as keepers of a railroad crossing, opening and lowering the gates. When the work is automated, Violette, having become friends with a cemetery keeper in Brancion-en-Chalon, moves the family there to take over the position and its lodge. Phillipe, always roaring around on his motorcycle and gone for days, leaving Violette to raise their daughter, one morning rides away...and disappears. Violette develops a pleasant routine tending the graves, chronicling services, dispensing food and wine. When Julien Seul, a detective from Marseilles, shows up to inter the ashes of his mother beside an apparently complete stranger as her will dictated, Violette is unnerved by how much Julien knows about her life.... The narrative keeps you engaged with a gradual

payout of secrets, including long unanswered questions about the death of Violette's daughter while at summer camp, that each character tries to protect. Fiction doesn't get better than this.

Quinn, Spencer. [Of Mutts and Men](#) (\$17.99). So much fun; this is truly a Scottsdale backdrop and nails many aspects of high desert life. With Chet the dog as the narrator and Bernie Little, the PI Chet adores, plunge into an investigation, we track it through a different sort of unreliable narrator but one who sticks doggedly to the meat of the story. Wendell Nero, chairman emeritus of the geology department of Valley College, confides to Bernie of the Little Detective Agency that something may be amiss. When Bernie and Chet arrive at Nero's RV parked at his worksite the next morning, they discover Nero sitting at his desk—dead. Someone has cut his throat. Plus his wallet is missing. Chet's nose leads them on the trail of a gum-chewing suspect who has the wallet. But Bernie doesn't believe that Florian Machado is Nero's killer... Water as a resource plays a big role in this latest entry in [a humorous series](#) very popular with The Pen's staff.

"Ware, Ruth. [One by One](#) (\$16.99). In yet another variation of the country house murder, we visit a group snowed in at a luxurious ski chalet high in the French Alps, accessible only by a funicular. These posh quarters come with a stunning view, a resident chef, a housekeeper, and cozy fires. And for this company jolly for Snoop, a trendy London-based startup in the music field (listen to what others listen to), eight coworkers including the two co-founders with a difficult agenda that includes a by-out offer, assemble. Then comes an avalanche....and a missing Snooper. It spirals downhill from there....

### SOME MAY LARGE PAPERBACKS

Bazon, Lara. [Good Mother](#) (Hanover Square \$16.99). Law professor Bazon debuts with a fast-paced, multilayered legal thriller. In 2006, L.A. attorney Abby Rosenberg, a deputy federal public defender, takes on the high-profile case of 19-year-old Luz Rivera Hollis, who has admitted to stabbing to death her husband, a decorated combat veteran with a history of violence and addiction, at a U.S. Air Force base in Germany. Luz maintains she acted in self-defense to protect herself and her three-day-old daughter. The case will be the first time a trial revolves around a new law that extradites civilians who commit crimes against the military outside the U.S. The trial careens out of control as Abby deals with the manipulative Luz, a co-counsel foisted on her, and a sexist judge. Meanwhile, she risks the relationship with her partner by cutting short her maternity leave. Unlikable but never boring, Abby often skirts the law as her need to win overpowers her ethics and her common sense. This tale of unchecked ambition about one woman's efforts to balance her professional and personal lives will resonate with many.

Cooney, Caroline B. [Before She Was Helen](#) (\$15.99). In this 2021 Edgar nominee, Clemmie has been living under an assumed name for 50-plus years in a South Carolina retirement village. When she goes to check on a nasty neighbor, she finds a beautiful glass sculpture and sends photos to her grand-niece and nephew, who promptly post it online—and unwittingly put her in jeopardy. Suddenly she's the target of a deadly drug dealer, her double identity could be exposed, and her fingerprints are all over a murder scene. Worse, a cold case involving the murder of her long-ago rapist and stalker, a beloved basketball coach at her high school, is being reopened. Must she run away and make a new

life again, or can she continue her dull but safe life in Sun City? The details of the identical “villas” and their decidedly nonidentical residents are spot-on, as are observations about how we live now vs. then.

Cotterill, Colin. [The Delightful Life of a Suicide Pilot](#) (\$16.95). Laos, 1981: When an unofficial mailman drops off a strange bilingual diary, Dr. Siri Panboun, Laos’ coroner, is intrigued. Half is in Lao, but the other half is in Japanese, which no one Siri knows can read; it appears to have been written during the Second World War. Most mysterious of all, it comes with a note stapled to it: Dr. Siri, we need your help most urgently. To the chagrin of his wife and friends, who have to hear him read the diary out loud, Siri embarks on an investigation by examining the text. Though the journal was apparently written by a kamikaze pilot, it is surprisingly dull. Twenty pages in, no one has died, and the pilot never mentions any combat at all. Despite these shortcomings, Siri begins to obsess over the diary’s abrupt ending...and the riddle of why it found its way into his hands. Solving the riddle brings this excellent quirky series to an end. “Cotterill has a gift for tempering bad stuff—specifically, the baffling and chaotic political climate of communism circa 1980—with gently ironic humor and frequent doses of slightly kooky occultism. His books are thus a welcome balm for our own current baffling and chaotic political climate.”—*The Seattle Times*

Del Arbol, Victor. [Above the Rain](#) (Other Press \$18.99). Aha, more travel via a noir to the Morocco of the 1950s to modern Spain and Sweden. Living in a retirement home in Tarifa, Spain, Miguel, who’s showing signs of dementia and has painful memories of the Franco era, has befriended Helena, an Englishwoman with her own fraught past. In an effort to escape the weight of their respective personal histories, the pair set out on a road trip that will take them to Sweden, where Helena’s son lives. Meanwhile, in Malmö, Sweden, Yasmina, the daughter of Moroccan immigrants, is having an affair with a police officer and is at odds with her authoritarian grandfather. As Yasmina is drawn deeper into Malmö’s criminal underworld and Miguel and Helena approach the end of their feverish road trip, tragedy results.

✽Dennison, Hannah. [Death of a Diva](#) (Little Brown UK \$15.99). Spring is in the air ... and so, too, is the sound of music as the residents of Honeychurch Hall are stunned to learn that the Dowager Countess Lady Edith Honeychurch has agreed to the staging of a production of *The Merry Widow* in the dilapidated grand ballroom. Fears that the fiercely private octogenarian must be going senile are soon dismissed when our heroine, Kat Stanford, learns that the favor is a result of a desperate request from Countess Olga Golodkin. As one of Edith’s oldest friends Olga is the director of the amateur Devon Operatic Dramatic Organization. Just a week before, D.O.D.O.’s original venue was destroyed in a mysterious fire but since tickets have been sold, costumes made and lucrative local sponsorships secured, Olga is determined that the show must go on. After decades at the helm of D.O.D.O., *The Merry Widow* will be Olga’s swansong...literally?

Easley, Warren C. [Matters of Doubt](#) (Poisoned Pen \$12.99). Easley’s first for Oregon lawyer Cal Claxton republishes. Claxton has relocated from Los Angeles to a small town near Portland, Oregon, and is adapting to a quieter lifestyle. Or he was, until a young muralist from Portland named Danny Baxter (better known as Picasso) comes to him for help. Turns out Picasso’s

mother, investigative journalist Nicole Baxter, disappeared when her son was quite young, sending him into a rabbit warren of foster homes and, eventually, life on the street. Now, eight years later, Nicole’s body has been recovered from the bottom of a reservoir. As the cold case thaws, Nicole’s former boyfriend, a major Portland mogul, is murdered, and Picasso is the prime suspect. Cal, ever the Good Samaritan, wades into a complicated story filled with high-profile bad guys and vulnerable innocents. This series gets better each chapter as it explores Oregon landscapes and issues both general and specific to the state. Start here. New case for Cal comes in August.

Evanovich, Janet. [Fortune and Glory](#) (\$17). Yes, this is Stephanie Plum #27, shedding the numbers and moving on. When Grandma Mazur’s new husband died on their wedding night, the only thing he left her was a beat-up old easy chair...and the keys to a life-changing fortune. But as Stephanie and Grandma Mazur search for Jimmy Rosolli’s treasure, they discover that they’re not the only ones on the hunt. Two dangerous enemies from the past stand in their way—along with a new adversary who’s even more formidable: Gabriela Rose, a dark-eyed beauty from Little Havana with a taste for designer clothes. She’s also a soldier of fortune, a gourmet cook, an expert in firearms and mixed martial arts—and someone who’s about to give Stephanie a real run for her money. Stephanie may be in over her head, but she’s got two things that Gabriela doesn’t: an unbreakable bond with her family and a stubborn streak that will never let her quit—both needed because “fortune and glory” will turn into a desperate race against time with more on the line than ever before—could Stephanie finally be forced to choose between Joe Morelli and Ranger?

Fan, Kit. [Diamond Hill](#) (World Editions \$16.99). Fan’s evocative debut portrays a Hong Kong in transition. In the 1980s, recovering heroin addict Buddha returns to Hong Kong from Bangkok at the urging of Daishi, an old Thai monk who helped him get clean. Daishi directs him to stay with the nuns of a small monastery in shantytown Diamond Hill. There, Buddha befriends a teenage gang leader employed by the Triad to run heroin distribution in the neighborhood, and Audrey Hepburn, a prostitute lost in the area’s glamorous past, when Bruce Lee movies were filmed there. The novel’s tension hinges on the redevelopment set to take place as the era of British control comes to a close (as one character puts it, “The whole city is in a state of violent change, moving from one regime we are used to loathing, to another one we are loath to get used to”). When Buddha finds out that the head of the monastery plans to allow the neighborhood to be destroyed, he questions what is truly worth saving. Fan brings poetic language and moving tributes to descriptions of the lost neighborhood—and a glamorous global city being absorbed into China.

Foley, Lucy. [The Guest List](#) (\$16.99). The *LJ* Starred Review for this bestseller: “A wedding taking place between an ambitious magazine publisher and a reality television star on an isolated island off the coast of Ireland, with friends and family in attendance. They all have secrets, and it only takes a few days of drinking games, isolation, and resentments to bring every murky feeling to the surface. The island and the ancient folly where the wedding party stays are themselves characters, adding to the feeling of almost supernatural mystery and the unease that something is lurking in the shadows and getting ready to strike. Only a handful of thriller writers can accomplish what Foley does here: weave a complex plot from the perspectives of eight characters

plus an omniscient narrator without causing confusion or reader exhaustion when the plot bounces from one person to the next. Fans of Christie, Louise Penny, and Ruth Rendell will absolutely love this book, which doesn't reveal its secrets until the very last page."

Fraser, Jackie. [The Bookshop of Second Chances](#) (Ballantine \$17). Library Reads recommends: "Nothing like turning a page in an upended life to find a surprising plot twist leading to a satisfying ending. That's what readers will find in this charming novel. The power of books to soothe will attract bibliophiles, but stay for the lively banter of the romantic leads, the quirky local residents, and the brisk Scottish countryside. Perfect for fans of *Evvie Drake Starts Over* and *The Bookish Life of Nina Hill*."

✎Galbraith, Robert. [Troubled Blood](#) (\$18.99). London PI Cormoran Strike and Robin Ellacott land a cold case while dealing with major personal problems: the aunt who raised Strike is dying of cancer, and Robin is going through a painful divorce. In 1974, GP Margot Bamborough walked out of her London practice to meet a friend, and was never seen again. The case was originally assigned to DI Bill Talbot, who believed Bamborough fell victim to a serial killer, Dennis Creed, but Talbot suffered a mental breakdown while pursuing that theory. Creed, who was arrested in 1976 after a failed abduction attempt, refused to say whether he snatched Bamborough. Almost four decades later, the doctor's daughter, who was one at the time of her mother's disappearance, persuades Strike to try to solve the mystery. As Strike and Robin follow up the slimmest leads and seek to trace any living witnesses, Galbraith (the pseudonym of J.K. Rowling) never loses sight of the tragedy at the heart of the assignment. At 944 pages this is a huge bargain. If you have missed Galbraith order the whole [Cormoran Strike](#) series.

Galligan, John. [Dead Man Dancing](#) (\$17). "Galligan's outstanding sequel to 2019's [Bad Axe County](#) (\$17) puts Wisconsin sheriff Heidi Kick, his all-too-human lead, through the wringer. Kick is having marital troubles, which are exacerbated by a friend's report of seeing her husband with an unknown blond woman. In addition, her seven-year-old daughter is grappling with her gender identity and Kick is getting death threats from someone accusing her of treason, election fraud, and hate crimes as white supremacists are assaulting people of color in Axe County. Meanwhile, someone shoots up the mailbox of Augustus Pfaff, a retired history teacher who's about to publish a book about fugitive slaves who settled in the county. Pfaff is later gunned down in his home, which is then set on fire. Not knowing her adversary's identity or the seriousness of the risk she faces, Kick must watch her back as she investigates the murder and the assaults. Galligan juggles the multiple plotlines without ever straining credibility. Ace Atkins fans should be drawn to this gripping account of an honest law enforcement officer battling racists."—*LJ* Starred Review

✎Goldberg, Leonard. [The Art of Deception](#) (\$17.99). It begins when Inspector Lestrade calls on Dr. John Watson, Joanna Blalock, and Joanna's husband, Dr. John Watson Jr., at 221b Baker Street shortly before Christmas 1916. Lestrade needs their help catching the vandal slashing costly paintings in London's West End. Joanna deduces that the culprit is seeking something—perhaps another artwork—hidden behind one of them. All the canvases have been repaired at the elite but financially troubled Hawke and Evans art gallery by Harry Edmunds and James

Blackstone, making them prime suspects. But since Edmunds has apparently died in an explosion, while Blackstone has fled to Australia, neither man can be questioned. When Joanna's son, Johnny, comes home from Eton, he adds his own astute analysis to the case. "Holmes lovers will enjoy the intricate Sherlockian reasoning Joanna and Johnny bring to the puzzle."

Ignatius, David. [Paladin](#) (\$15.95). In 2016, CIA tech specialist Michael Dunne was given the ultrasecret assignment of penetrating Fallen Empire, a leftist WikiLeaks-like operation that might be linked to the Russians. When the FBI arrests him for running a spy operation against American journalists—really Fallen Empire operatives working under that guise—the CIA abandons him, letting him take the fall. He's also abandoned by his beautiful and pregnant wife, who doesn't take kindly to compromising photos of her husband with a young Swiss beauty, even if it was a setup. After his release from prison, Dunne returns to his hometown of Pittsburgh, where he puts together a private cyberconsulting outfit. Against everyone's advice, he jumps back into the fray to track down those who betrayed him. Ultimately, he must race against time to prevent a hacking plot from wreaking havoc on world financial systems.

Jenoff, Pam. [The Woman with the Blue Star](#) (Park Row \$17.99). "Pam Jenoff's meticulously researched account of an unlikely and dangerous friendship during WWII is a timely and compelling account of the lengths we go to for the family we are born with, and the family we make for ourselves. It will leave you gasping at the end." —Jodi Picoult. See *Some May Hardcover Books* for more.

Jónasson, Ragnar. [The Mist](#) (\$17.99). Isolation and despair undo the characters in Jónasson's exceptional third and final novel featuring Reykjavík DI Hulda Hermannsdóttir. In February 1988, Hulda, who has returned to work after time off to deal with an unidentified personal issue, is still struggling to get through the day and perform any meaningful work. She's forced into action by her boss when multiple corpses are found on a farm, with indications that the bodies have been there since around Christmas. Flash back to a snowy day in December 1987. Einar and Erla Einarsson, who live on a remote farm, answer a knock on the door to an unexpected visitor, who introduces himself as Leó. The couple offer Leó shelter for the night, but Erla becomes suspicious of their guest's account of how he arrived at their home. Jónasson ratchets up the nail-biting tension gradually, alternating the developments at the farm along with the events in Hulda's life that led to her traumatic stupor. Know that not everyone emerges alive, and this scenario will trouble Hulda for the rest of her career. Iceland's premier crime writer wraps up the "Hidden Iceland" series with this final chapter.

Lamanna, Gina. [Three Single Wives](#) (\$16.99). Set in Los Angeles, this original unfolds from the perspectives of three women—Eliza Tate, a high-flying PR consultant; Anne Wilkes, the harried mother of four children; and Penny Sands, a young wannabe actor—who seem to have only one thing in common: a book club. When one of their book club meetings leads to the murder of a philandering husband, one of them goes on trial, though both victim and accused remain unidentified until late in the story. The author provides a wonderful carousel of revolving suspects, motives, and means, and many people to love and to love to hate. Every character possesses good qualities balanced by their dark secrets.

✽Mantel, Hilary. [The Mirror and the Light](#) (\$18). Named a best book of 2020 by *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *TIME*, *The Guardian*, and many more as Mantel brings to a triumphant close the trilogy she began with her peerless, Booker Prize-winning novels, [Wolf Hall](#) and [Bring Up the Bodies](#) (\$18 each). She traces the final years of Thomas Cromwell, the boy from nowhere who climbs to the heights of power, offering a defining portrait of predator and prey, of a ferocious contest between present and past, between royal will and a common man's vision: of the making of a modern nation. There was speculation she would bring off a Booker Prize trifecta, but it was not to be.

Mitchell, David. [Utopia Avenue](#) (\$18). Utopia Avenue is the strangest British band you've never heard of. Emerging from London's psychedelic scene in 1967, and fronted by folk singer Elf Holloway, blues bassist Dean Moss and guitar virtuoso Jasper de Zoet, Utopia Avenue embarked on a meteoric journey from the seedy clubs of Soho, a TV debut on *Top of the Pops*, the cusp of chart success, glory in Amsterdam, prison in Rome, and a fateful American sojourn in the Chelsea Hotel, Laurel Canyon, and San Francisco during the autumn of '68. David Mitchell's kaleidoscopic novel tells the unexpurgated story of Utopia Avenue's turbulent life and times; of fame's Faustian pact and stardom's wobbly ladder; of the families we choose and the ones we don't....

Moore, Christopher. [Shakespeare for Squirrels](#) (\$16.99). This is Moore's third riff on Shakespeare after *Fool* and *The Serpent of Venice*. When you get to the Afterword you will see that he is a serious student of Shakespeare and uses Pocket as the lens with which he focuses our view. Prepare for the scholarly and the seriously rowdy, not to mention profane. Here one reaction: "This is a crazy funny new take on Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* that will have you laughing out loud and getting goofy looks from the other people in the coffee shop. Christopher Moore is always entertaining, and this book is no exception — you will enjoy it from the first sentence to the very last. And, yes, there are squirrels in the story!" But I like this appraisal better: "Christopher Moore's latest is a sheer delight! Moore's signature wackiness pairs perfectly with the lighthearted comedy of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in this loving send up. It's not a pure retelling, of course. There's a murder in this story

Patterson, James. [The Palm Beach Murders](#) (\$16.99) (previously published as *Let's Play Make-Believe*): Both survivors of the divorce wars, Christy and Martin don't believe in love at first sight and certainly not on a first date. But from the instant they lock eyes, life becomes a sexy, romantic dream come true. That is, until they start playing a strangely intense game of make-believe—a game that's about to go too far. (with James O. Born). Nooners: Everyone who knows Tim says he's a good guy. But the popular advertising exec has a problem: a lot of the people who know him are getting murdered. And by the time he figures out why, Tim won't feel so good anymore. (with Tim Arnold). Stingrays: When a teenager goes missing on a Caribbean beach, the local police are baffled. It's up to the Stingrays, a world class team that solves the unsolvable, to unearth the truth: a truth that no one will believe (with Duane Swierczynski). Also out: [Coast to Coast Murders](#) (\$16.99).

Porter, Anna. [Deceptions](#) (Ecco \$16.95). I love this. Porter has created a sprawling, fast-moving fine-art thriller and much of it takes place in Strasbourg which is a lovely French city. "Former

Budapest cop Attila Feher has been hired to help protect a Hungarian diplomat named Vaszary, representative to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France. Vaszary and his wife are divorcing, and arguing about whether a large painting is a genuine Artemisia Gentileschi or not. To help end the divorce stalemate, Attila calls in his friend and former lover, Helena Marsh, an art appraisal expert and investigator. Helena is surprised to discover that the painting may be an unknown Gentileschi work that could be worth massive amounts of money, since the pupil of Caravaggio is rising in popularity. Then a range of shady characters show up—mysterious Russian oligarchs, corrupt Hungarian officials and a murderous man who seems to be stalking Helena. Helena and Attila are now in a race for their lives, attempting to stay one step ahead of the gangsters as they change identities and move from Budapest to Paris to Strasbourg and back, in a quest to identify both the painting and who has it out for them. Fast-paced and funny, *Deceptions* captures kleptocratic vibes in modern Hungary, police corruption, money laundering in the art world and much more. Helena is a kick-ass heroine—brilliant and strong, who can hold her own with the bad guys both physically and mentally"—Jessica Howard. Perfect for fans of Alan Furst.

Pulley, Natasha. [The Lost Future of Pepperharrow](#) (\$16). [The Watchmaker of Filigree Street](#) (\$17) captivated readers with its charming blend of historical fiction, fantasy, and steampunk. Now, Pulley sweeps readers off to Japan in the 1880s, where nationalism is on the rise and ghosts roam the streets. It's 1888 and Pulley moves the series from Victorian-era London to a haunted, steampunk version of 19th-century Tokyo. Thaniel Steepleton is offered a translator position at the British legation in Tokyo on the same night his lover, clairvoyant Japanese clock maker Keita Mori, returns to their London home after months abroad. The pair travels together to Japan along with Thaniel's adopted, autistic daughter. There, Thaniel meets Takiko Pepperharrow, Mori's wife, a woman Thaniel hadn't known existed. As Thaniel questions his relationship with Mori, Mori uses his ability to see the future to manipulate the affairs of the people around him. After Mori goes missing, it's up to Thaniel to find him as a massive electrical storm strikes Tokyo and ghosts wander the streets. "Pulley's intricate plot, vibrant setting, entrancing magic, and dynamic ensemble of characters make for an un-put-downable historical fantasy. New readers will be pulled in and series fans will be delighted by this tour de force."—*PW* Starred Review. I truly love this and the author's work. See Signed Books for Pulley's wildly imaginative new novel.

Ramos, Manuel. [Angels in the Wind](#) (Arte Publico \$18.95). Felon turned private eye Gus Corral isn't doing too well after getting whacked in the head with a baseball bat following his last big case. He was unconscious for a couple of days and still can't see right. Plagued by headaches, there are days he can't think straight. Tired, sore and disoriented, he takes his sister's advice to get out of Denver and help their cousins in Eastern Colorado. George Montoya's son, Matias or Mat, has run off again. The seventeen-year-old has run away before, but he always came back. This time, his dad and Aunt Essie know there's something wrong. As Gus begins to talk to the boy's family and friends, a picture emerges of a smart kid with strong opinions who fought a lot with his dad. Did he run away because of his father? Or did he leave because his girlfriend broke up with him? Her father, the town doctor, definitely didn't want his daughter dating a Mexican

American. But when Gus tracks the missing boy to a shelter for runaways in Pueblo, the ailing investigator discovers something much more sinister. The boy was helping victims of human trafficking. Could the criminals have caught on to him? All too soon, men with guns are threatening Gus, warning him to get out of town, or else!

Riordan, Kate. [The Heatwave](#) (\$16.99). Sylvie Durand would prefer to forget the tragic events that broke up her marriage a decade earlier and prompted her to flee La Rêverie, the home where she grew up in the South of France, for a fresh start in London with her then four-year-old daughter, Emma. But the news of an arson fire at the now unoccupied property sends up a warning flare she dares not ignore. Sylvie's return to finally prepare La Rêverie for sale threatens to rekindle traumatic memories, since it's the last place she and Emma lived with Elodie, Sylvie's bad seed firstborn, who died mysteriously at 14. And it swiftly appears there may also be a more immediate menace beyond the peril of annual summer forest fires in the area. Riordan skillfully manipulates the reader through what initially feels like a ghost story to a real shocker of an ending. S.J. Watson fans will want to check this one out. Recommended.

Sligar, Sara. [Take Me Apart](#) (\$17). Here is Tom Nolan reviewing in the *Wall Street Journal*: "Kate Aitken, the ex-journalist at the forefront of Sara Sligar's circuitous first novel, seems, at age 30, a burnt-out case. Forced to leave her newspaper job in New York after filing a complaint about the sexual harassment she suffered from a colleague, she had a breakdown and then abandoned her Manhattan career for the West Coast. She's accepted the job, in a Marin County town, of archiving the papers of Miranda Brand, a legendary photographer who killed herself in 1993 at age 37. Miranda's grown son Theo has returned to the family home to prepare his mother's effects for sale. Before long, Kate is sucked into the maelstrom of Miranda's chaotic biography. Local gossips promote the notion that Miranda's death may not have been a suicide. ('I'm not spreading rumors,' one local insists. 'I'm just repeating what other people have said.') Might Miranda have been murdered? Soon Kate, as she sifts through her subject's letters and diary, finds herself scrutinizing the pasts of Miranda's deceased abusive husband, a local hippie with whom she may have had an affair, and even her son Theo, a troubled 11-year-old at the time of her death. *Take Me Apart* unfolds in two time frames at once, through the insertion of excerpts from Miranda's journal and correspondence. Ms. Sligar's debut is by turns an art-world satire, an erotic romance and a descent into madness.

Sullivan, Mark. [The Last Green Valley](#) (Lake Union \$15.95). See Signed Books for a review of this epic WWII journey as a family flees the Russian advance into the Ukraine west—into Germany. Another facet of WWII for you.

Sutanto, Jesse. Q. [Dial A for Aunties](#) (Berkley \$16). Our April Cozy Crimes Book of the Month gets an enthusiastic review in the *NY Times* as well as this from John: Wildly wacky and weirdly wonderful is the best way I can find to describe this unforgettably fun novel. Meddelin Chan has given up on romance, every since she was forced to choose between the man she loved and her family back in college. Now Meddy's life consists of working with her mom and her four Aunties in the family's wedding planning business. When Meddy's mom fabricates an online dating profile for her and sets her up on a date, Meddy figures what does

she have to lose by going out with the man? As it turns out, quite a bit, when Meddy accidentally kills her date, and then must turn to her mother and her aunts for a bit of help in dealing with the body. Yes, the plot is completely bonkers, but Sutanto sells the story to readers willing suspend more than the usual modicum of disbelief with an infectiously engaging writing style that is deftly infused with just the right dash of dry humor. Suspense, romance, and a joyous celebration of family, it's all expertly entwined in this whimsically inventive, madly original book.

Thomas, Elisabeth. [The Catherine House](#) (\$16.99). A gothic-infused debut of literary suspense, set within a secluded, elite university. Thomas's spellbinding debut opens in 1996 on Ines Murillo's first night at a small, highly selective college in the Pennsylvania woods. Drunk after a party, Ines reflects on her relief that behind Catherine House's locked gates, no one knows about her past. Renowned for controversial research regarding a mysterious elemental substance called plasm, the school holds classes year-round, and students remain confined to Catherine's rural estate. Eager to disassociate from a past trauma, Ines falls behind on her work while seeking solace in a string of sexual encounters before finding a group of friends who feel closer to family than anything she's ever known. Still, Ines can't ignore her growing suspicions about the school's plasm experimentation in "psychosexual healing," in which students are subjected to mass hypnosis. Ines's academic probation leads her to forced isolation in the "Restoration Center," where a professor places plasm pins in her head and tells her she'll never think of her past life again. Surreal imagery, spare characterization, and artful, hypnotic prose lend Thomas's tale a delirious air, but at the book's core lies a profound portrait of depression and adolescent turmoil. Fans of Donna Tartt's *The Secret History* will devour this philosophical fever dream

Thompson, Elizabeth. [Lost in Paris](#) (Gallery \$16.99). John reviews: Hannah Bond has always been a bookworm, which is why she fled Florida—and her unstable, alcoholic mother—for a quiet life leading Jane Austen-themed tours through the British countryside. But on New Year's Eve, everything comes crashing down when she arrives back at her London flat to find her mother, Marla, waiting for her. Marla's brought two things with her: a black eye from her ex-boyfriend and an envelope. Its contents? The deed to an apartment in Paris, an old key, and newspaper clippings about the death of a famous writer named Andres Armand. Hannah, wary of her mother's motives, reluctantly agrees to accompany her to Paris, where against all odds, they discover great-grandma Ivy's apartment frozen in 1940 and covered in dust. Inside the apartment, Hannah and Marla discover mysterious clues about Ivy's life; including a diary detailing evenings of drinking and dancing with Hemingway, the Fitzgeralds, and other iconic expats. Outside, they retrace her steps through the city in an attempt to understand why she went to such great lengths to hide her Paris identity from future generations....

Truhen, Aiden. [Seven Demons](#) (Vintage \$16.95). If you loved the eccentric assassins, tongue-in-cheek narration, and over-the-top (often hilarious) fight scenes in [The Price You Pay](#) (\$16.95), you're going to devour this follow-up. Working as both a sequel and stand-alone, *Seven Demons* is told at lightning-fast pace by the witty former cocaine dealer turned killer, Jack Price. As the leader of the most dangerous team of assassins in the world, Jack has a lot on his hands. This rag-tag group of killers contains a

cannibal, a mad scientist, a trigger-happy explosives expert, a comic book artist, a knife combat virtuoso, and a literal head on a stick. One mysterious phone call sparks the Seven Demons to take on the heist of an impenetrable Swiss Bank. But when Jack is stabbed outside a pastry shop by a lederhosen-garbed kid named Evil Hansel who he's sure is connected, the mission becomes personal. His dark humored thriller is perfect for fans of Carl Hiaasen (who is himself a fan), Quentin Tarantino, and anyone who loves a gritty twist on the heist novel.

"*The Price You Pay* has high-octane everything. It's a witty, gory, whiplash revenge tale narrated by a brilliantly entertaining sociopath. You're mortified by the things you find yourself laughing at – and when you turn the page, there's more. Guess what: you keep laughing." —Carl Hiaasen

Washburn, Kawai Strong. [Sharks in the Time of Saviors](#) (\$17) "is a groundbreaking debut novel that folds the legends of Hawaiian gods into an engrossing family saga. One of the best pieces of contemporary fiction I've had the pleasure to read. The fact that the book takes place in Hawaii makes it even more special. The author provides the reader with a unique 'chicken skin' experience. The book captures contemporary Hawaii's history over the past 20+ years, including the socioeconomics of race and being Hawaiian, income disparity, housing issues, family issues, and the diaspora that affects so many families in Hawaii who are unable or unwilling to deal with the cost of living. Truly a master work of art with its digressive journey." Recommended by Marlon James, and Tommy Orange, and Barack Obama.

✦Watkins, Roz. [Cut to the Bone](#) (Harper \$16.99). When controversial internet celebrity Violet Armstrong vanishes in the middle of a scorching Peak District summer, the case sparks a media frenzy. The clock is ticking for DI Meg Dalton and her team to find Violet before online threats explode into real-life violence. And then the blood and hair of a young woman are found in an empty pig trough at the local abattoir. The more Meg finds out about this unnerving case, the more she becomes convinced that something very, very bad has happened to Violet. With temperatures rising and the press demanding answers, the case is about to take a terrifying turn...

Wolff, James. [How to Betray Your Country](#) (Bitter Lemon \$15.95). Things are looking bad for disgraced spy August Drummond. In emotional free fall after the death of his wife, fired for a series of unprecedented security breaches... and now his neighbor on the flight to Istanbul won't stop talking. The only thing keeping him sane is the hunch that there's something not quite right about the nervous young man several rows ahead – a hunch that is confirmed when August watches him throw away directions to an old European cemetery seconds before being detained by Turkish police. A reckless August decides to go to the cemetery, where he meets a mysterious figure from the dark heart of the Islamic State and quickly finds himself drawn into a shadowy plot to murder an Iranian scientist in Istanbul. But nothing is what it seems, and before long August realizes he has gone too far to turn back. As he struggles to break free from the clutches of Islamic State and play off British intelligence against their Turkish counterparts, he will find his resourcefulness, ingenuity and courage tested to the very limit of what he can endure. The second novel in a trilogy about loyalty and betrayal in the modern world.

## OUR MAY SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Buckley, Julia. [Death on the Night of Lost Lizards](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Hungarian Tea House #3. After a professor of Hungarian Studies at the local college is brutally murdered, Hana gets one of her visions that pulls her into the investigation and places her in the path of a killer. *Kirkus* ended their review of this fun, gypsy inspired cozy series with "Appealing characters combine seamlessly with a twisty mystery in this pleasing tale of love and hate."

Campbell, Michele. [Stranger on the Beach](#) (St Martins \$9.99). Sharing a vengeance-driven fling with an alluring stranger after an embarrassing public breakup, Caroline finds herself the target of the man's increasingly obsessive stalking, before her ex goes missing and she is implicated in his murder. *PW* summed up with "Those looking for breezy intrigue on a hot summer day will be satisfied."

Castillo, Linda. [Outsider](#) (\$9.99). Kate Burkholder #12. In this follow-up to the best-selling *Shamed*, Kate Burkholder helps a friend from the police academy go into hiding among the Amish to avoid vengeful rogue cops who have wrongly accused her of murdering an undercover officer. *PW* raved "Amid all the mayhem, Castillo presents a loving, realistic portrait of Amish life. Readers will hope Kate has a long career."

Constantine, Liv. [The Last Mrs. Parrish](#) (\$9.99). Tired of being a nobody who blends into the background, Amber Patterson worms her way into the lives of a wealthy golden couple from Connecticut as part of her plot to achieve a privileged life, unveiling dark secrets along the way. Here is *PW*'s conclusion of a truly knockout debut "Suffice it to say that readers would have to go back to the likes of Ira Levin's *A Kiss Before Dying* or Patricia Highsmith's *The Talented Mr. Ripley* to find as entertaining a depiction of a sociopathic monster."

Cussler, Clive/Robin Burcell. [Wrath of Poseidon](#) (\$9.99). Sam and Remi #12. Ten years ago, a chance meeting at the Lighthouse Café in Redondo Beach led Sam Fargo and Remi Longstreet on the adventure of a lifetime, hunting the legendary riches stolen from the Persian King Croesus in 546 B.C. But they weren't the only ones. Someone else is after the gold, and he's willing to kill anyone who gets in his way.

✦Dennison, Hannah. [Death at High Tide](#) (\$7.99). This delightful first installment in the Island Sisters series features two sisters who inherit an old hotel in the remote Isles of Scilly off the coast of Cornwall and find it full of intrigue, danger, and romance. *PW* summed this up with "Two murders and a high tide cutting off the police heighten the suspense. Intriguing characters and an intricate plot lift this twist on Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None*. Cozy fans will look forward to further skullduggery on Tregarick."

Gudenkauf, Heather. [This is How I Lied](#) (\$9.99). Pregnant police detective Maggie Kennedy-O'Keefe is still haunted by the cold case murder of her best friend Eve Knox decades earlier, but she is forced to relive the past and finally understand what happened when new evidence comes to light and the case is reopened. *PW* gave this their star of approval saying "Through alternating viewpoints Gudenkauf keeps the tension high throughout. Fans of dogged, resourceful female detectives will cheer Maggie every step of the way."



Jance, J A. [Credible Threat](#) (\$9.99). Ali Reynolds #15. Ali Reynolds and her team at High Noon Enterprises must race against the clock to save an archbishop who faces mysterious death threats. Here is *PW* again “Depth of character compensates for some overwriting. Jance has rendered a masterly study of the effects of grief, rage, and the power of forgiveness.”

Mentink, Dana. [Pint of No Return](#) (Sourcebooks \$8.99). Shake Shop #1. Opening the Shimmy and Shake Shop in Upper Sprocket, Oregon after divorcing a thrice-married embezzler, Trinidad Jones and her dog Noodles come to the rescue of one of Trinidad’s fellow ex-wives who is accused of murdering the Popcorn King. *Kirkus* ended their review with “Murder offers the heroine a surprisingly fresh start in this charming series kickoff from the prolific Mentink.”

Munier, Paula. [Blind Search](#) (\$7.99). Mercy Carr #2. Former MP Mercy Carr and her retired bomb-sniffing dog investigate a murder to which the only witness is a 10-year-old boy on the autism spectrum. *PW* ended their review with “The hunting party’s overly complex interpersonal relationships often bog down the action, but Munier’s affection for the dogs she depicts, as well as Henry’s sweet bond with them, will warm hearts. Readers will look forward to the irresistible Mercy and Elvis’s next adventure.”

Pleiter, Allie. [On Skin of Death](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Riverbank Knitting #1. Opening a yarn shop along the Chester River, Libby Beckett lands famous knitting celebrity Perle Langager to host a knitting tutorial but when Perle is found dead in the back of her shop, Libby must find the truth before her new life unravels. *Kirkus* concluded with “A passionate knitter shows remarkable aptitude as a detective in a new series kickoff by the prolific Pleiter.”

Silva, Daniel. [The Order](#) (\$9.99). Gabriel Allon #20. While on holiday in Venice with his family, Gabriel Allon is summoned to Rome by the Holy Father’s loyal secretary, who believes Pope Paul VII was murdered.

#### SMALL PAPERBACKS FOR MAY

Allan, Barbara. [Antiques Fire Sale](#) (\$8.99). Trash “n” Treasures #14. After flames consume a historic mansion full of priceless treasures, along with its occupant, Brandy and Vivian must find out who committed this murderous act of arson.

Atkins, Ace. [Revelators](#) (\$9.99). Quinn Colson #10. Struggling to recover after an attempt on his life, Sheriff Quinn Colson resolves to track down his would-be killers only to find his efforts stymied by an interim sheriff who has been appointed by a corrupt governor.

Bagshawe, Tilly. [Sidney Sheldon’s The Silent Widow](#) (Crippen \$9.99). A decade after a young au pair goes missing in Mexico City, psychologist Nikki Roberts uncovers a common link between the cold case and a spate of murders in Los Angeles.

Barrett, Lorna. [Handbook for Homicide](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Booktown #14. Tricia Miles must swim against the tide to catch a killer when Haven’t Got A Clue’s assistant manager is accused of murder.

Donlea, Charlie. [Suicide House](#) (\$9.99). Reconstructionist Rory Moore and her psychologist partner, Lane Phillips, investigate a chilling murder in a prestigious prep school.

Dylan, Jess. [Death in Bloom](#) (St Martins \$7.99). Death in Bloom #1. When her boss at the Flower House goes AWOL, leaving the store to her for the cost of one dollar, 28-year-old Sierra Ravenswood must solve the murder of a customer before anyone else in town meets an untimely reason for needing funeral flowers.

Fielding, Joy. [Whispers and Lies](#) (\$9.99). Reissue. A single, middle-aged woman’s peaceful Florida beachfront life is shattered by the arrival of a mysterious younger woman in her neighborhood.

Goldstein, Debra H. [Four Cuts Too Many](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Sarah Blair #4. When her friend Grace decides to take a job with her business rival, Sarah feels like she’s been stabbed in the back until Grace needs her help in clearing her name when one of her knives is used to kill the director of the local cooking school.

Griffo, J D. [Murder at St Winifred’s Academy](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Ferrara Family #5. Alberta and her crime-reporting partner-in-sleuthing granddaughter, Jinx, investigate the murder of 1950s Hollywood starlet Missy Michaels by joining the cast of the local Tranquility Players to find the truth before it’s curtains for someone else.

Harris, Thomas. [Cari Mora](#) (\$9.99). A ruthless man driven by unspeakable appetites to pursue a fortune in cartel gold hidden beneath a Miami mansion finds his efforts challenged by Cari Mora, the mansion’s caretaker and a war survivor with unusual talents.

Jackson, Lisa. [Wicked Lies](#) (Kensington \$9.99). Reissue. Laura Adderley didn’t plan to get pregnant by her soon-to-be ex-husband, though she’ll do anything to protect her baby. But now reporter Harrison DeWitt is asking questions about the mysterious group of women who live at Siren Song lodge. Harrison hasn’t figured out Laura’s connection to the story yet. But psychopath Justice Turnbull knows. And he is coming.

James, Nik. [High Country Justice](#) (Sourcebooks \$8.99). Agreeing to help Sheila Burnett find her missing father, frontiersman Caleb Marlowe must use all of his cunning and fighting skills to save the doctor, but the ex-lawman cannot anticipate all of the dangers in the Old West.

Johansen, Iris. [Chaos](#) (\$9.99). A CIA agent breaks into a billionaire’s mansion to secure financing for an unsanctioned mission in Africa to rescue schoolgirl hostages, including her sister, from a cold-blooded killer.

Logan, Elizabeth. [Murphy’s Slaw](#) (Penguin \$7.99). Alaskan Diner #3. Diner owner Charlie Cook must investigate the disappearance of a local farmer, known for growing giant cabbages. Includes a recipe for killer coleslaw because what else can you do with giant cabbages?

McElwain, Julie. [Twist in Time](#) (\$9.99). Kendra Donovan #2. After her plan to return to the twenty-first century fails, former FBI agent Kendra Donovan, now stuck in London in 1815, is enlisted by the Duke of Aldridge to save his nephew, who has been wrongly accused of murder.

McKinlay, Jenn. [For Batter Or Worse](#) (Berkley \$7.99). See Signed Books. Cupcake Bakery #13. When their friend, Oz, is accused of murdering the head chef at the resort where their wedding is to be held, Fairy Tale Cupcakes bakery owner Mel and her fiancé Joe must race against time to catch the real killer as their wedding day quickly approaches.

O'Dell, Tawni. [Angels Burning](#) (Pocket \$9.99). Reissue. Embarking on the worst case of her long career when a girl is beaten to death, rural Pennsylvania police chief Dove Carnahan is approached by a man who was imprisoned for killing Dove's mother years earlier and who forces her to confront her own shadowy past.

Patterson, James. [Cajun Justice](#) (\$9.99). Cain Lemaire, an ex-Secret Service agent from New Orleans, had the dream job he had always wanted, protecting the President, until a single night resulted in a scandal that lost him his post. Needing a new direction for his life, Cain takes a job in Tokyo as head of security detail for a very successful and important CEO.

Perry, Carol J. [See Something](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Witch City #11. Using her psychic gifts to help a distraught woman recover her memory, Lee Barrett, Salem's WICH-TV program director, wonders if she is harboring a killer when a body is found washed up in a local cove

Woods, Stuart. [Choppy Water](#) (\$9.99). Stone Barrington #54. When his Maine vacation is interrupted by extreme weather that a menacing adversary uses as cover to target a close friend, Stone Barrington uncovers a massive scheme with corrupt ties spanning New York City through Key West.