

BOOKNEWS from

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July Booknews 2021
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FIREWORKS ALL MONTH LONG

Happy Fourth: We are closed July 4 and 5

Opening Hours M-Sat 10 AM-6 PM; Sun 12-5 PM

Note: All the event times are Pacific Daylight time

Watch these virtual events on [Facebook Live](#) or on our [YouTube](#) channel and any time thereafter at a time that suits you. You don't have to belong to Facebook to click in.

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

TUESDAY JULY 6 4:00 PM

Susan Elizabeth Phillips discusses [When Stars Collide](#) (Harper \$28.99) with John
A Chicago Stars contemporary romance
Signed books available

TUESDAY JULY 6 7:00 PM Live Event

TJ Newman signs her debut [Falling](#) (Avid/Simon Schuster \$28)
Masks required plus the purchase of a Signed copy from The Pen
Our July First Mystery Book of the Month

WEDNESDAY JULY 7 5:00 PM

Charles Todd discusses [An Irish Hostage](#) (Harper \$27.99)
Bess Crawford
Signed books available

WEDNESDAY JULY 7 6:15 PM

Dan Fesperman in conversation with Francine Mathews Fesperman discusses [The Cover Wife](#) (Knopf \$26.95)
Spycraft and story
Signed books available

THURSDAY JULY 8 4:30 PM

David Rosenfelt discusses [Dog Eat Dog](#) (St Martins \$27.99)
Professionally retired attorney Andy Carpenter in Maine
Signed books available

THURSDAY JULY 8 6:00 PM

Linda Castillo discusses [Fallen](#) (St Martins \$27.99)
Police Chief Kate Burkholder
Signed books available

FRIDAY JULY 9 4:00 PM

Jeff Abbott discusses [Ambush of Widows](#) (Grand Central \$28)
Terrific standalone, Austin and New Orleans
Susan Elia MacNeal discusses [The Hollywood Spy](#) (Bantam \$27)
Maggie Hope in Hollywood
Signed books for both available

SATURDAY JULY 10 4:00 PM

Weston Ochse in conversation with Pat Ochsee discusses [Bone Chase](#) (\$16.99)
Signed SEAL Team bookplates available

MONDAY JULY 12 5:00 PM National Book Launch

Daniel Silva discusses [The Cellist](#) (Harper \$28.99)
Gabriel Allon
Signed book purchase required to attend the JCC event
You will receive a link to join the zoom program

TUESDAY JULY 13 5:00 PM

Connor Sullivan in conversation with Mark Sullivan
The father and son discuss [Sleeping Bear](#) (Atria \$27)
A debut set in Alaska and Russia
Signed books available

WEDNESDAY JULY 14 5:00 PM

Ace Atkins discusses [The Heathens](#) (Penguin \$28)
Quinn Colson
Chris Offutt discusses [The Killing Hills](#) (Grove \$26)
Kentucky noir with an Army CID lead
Signed books for both available

THURSDAY JULY 15 4:00 PM/ 7:00 PM EDT

Kathy Reichs discusses her 20th Temperance Brennan, [The Bone Code](#) (Scribner \$27)
Special appearances by David Baldacci, Harlan Coben, Tess Gerritsen, Karin Slaughter, Louise Penny
Signed copies available and ours come with a special Bone Code Pen

FRIDAY JULY 16 4:00 PM

Liv Constantine discusses [The Stranger in the Mirror](#) (Harper \$26.99)
Signed book available
Kate White discusses [The Fiancée](#) (Harper \$16.99)

FRIDAY JULY 16 7:00 PM

SciFi Friday discusses Andrzej Sapkowski's [The Last Wish](#) (\$16.99)
The Witcher #0.5

SATURDAY JULY 17 10:30 AM

Croak & Dagger discusses Fiona Barton's [The Suspect](#) (\$16)

MONDAY JULY 19 6:00 PM National Book Launch

Brad Thor discusses [Black Ice](#) (Atria \$28.99)
Scot Harvath
Signed books available

TUESDAY JULY 20 4:00 PM National Book Launch

Karin Slaughter discusses [False Witness](#) (Harper \$28.99)
You must register [HERE](#) to attend this free event with Karin, Alafair Burke, and surprise guests
Our copies are signed for us by Karin and come with a special book bag for The Pen's customers

WEDNESDAY JULY 21 1:00 PM

UK's Owen Matthews in conversation with Alma Katsu
Matthews discusses [Red Traitor](#) (Doubleday \$27.95)

WEDNESDAY JULY 21 5:00 PM

Spencer Quinn discusses [Tender is the Bite](#) (Forge \$26.99)
Chet (the dog) and Bernie (the Arizona PI)
Signed books available

THURSDAY JULY 22 1:00 PM

Dr. Gwen Adshead and Eileen Horne with Karen
They discuss [The Devil You Know](#) (Scribner \$28)
Stories of Human Cruelty and Compassion

THURSDAY JULY 22 6:00 PM

SA Crosby discusses [Razorblade Tears](#) (Flatiron \$26.99)
Signed books available

FRIDAY JULY 23 12:00 PM

Camilla Lackberg in conversation with Christina Alger
Lackberg discusses [Silver Tears](#) (Knopf \$26.95)

MONDAY JULY 26 5:00 PM

Samantha Downing discusses [For Your Own Good](#) (Berkley \$27)
Megan Miranda discusses [Such a Quiet Place](#) (SimonSchuster \$26.99)
Signed books available for both

TUESDAY JULY 27 1:00 PM

Maria Hummel discusses [Lesson in Red](#) (Catapult \$27)
Elisabeth de Mariaffi discusses [The Retreat](#) (LittleBrown \$28)

TUESDAY JULY 27 5:30 PM

Brian Freeman discusses [Robert Ludlum's Bourne Treachery](#) (Putnam \$28)
Signed books available

TUESDAY July 27 7:00 PM

Richard Lange discusses [Rovers](#) (LittleBrown \$28)
Signed books available

WEDNESDAY JULY 28 12:00 PM

UK's BA Paris in conversation with Gilly Macmillan
Paris discusses [The Therapist](#) (St Martins \$27.99)
Our British Crime Book of the Month

WEDNESDAY JULY 28 5:30 PM

Nikolas Butler in conversation with Ace Atkins
Butler discusses [Godspeed](#) (Putnam \$27)
Signed books available for our Notable New Fiction Book of the Month

THURSDAY JULY 29 5:00 PM

Laura Sebastian discusses [Half Sick of Shadows](#) (Ace \$27)
The Arthurian legend's Lady of Shalott reclaims her story

THURSDAY JULY 29 7:00 PM

Hardboiled Crime Discusses Stark House Classic Noir, [Tall, Dark and Dead](#) (\$19.95)

SIGNED BOOKS

There are some interviews of interest in [The Big Thrill](#) about June and July authors

Abbott, Jeff. [An Ambush of Widows](#) (Grand Central \$28). Kirsten North, a New Orleans freelance researcher, believes her husband, Henry, a software consultant specializing in computer security, is in New York City on a business trip. Then she gets a call from Henry's phone that's not from him. The indistinct voice, whose gender is unclear, informs Kirsten that Henry has been fatally shot in Austin, Texas, then hangs up. An online search yields a press report that two men were found shot to death in an Austin warehouse two days earlier. Only one victim has been identified: entrepreneur Adam Zhang. Fearing that Henry's killer may have been the anonymous caller, the distraught Kirsten hops the first flight to Austin, unaware that her seatmate is shadowing her. After identifying her husband's corpse in the county morgue, Kirsten begins digging on her own into the baffling tragedy. She later joins forces with Adam's widow, Flora, even though she suspects Flora of being behind the murders. Abbott adroitly shifts perspectives to raise the suspense. I was torn between this thriller and Kathy Reichs' *The Bone Code* as to which would be our July Crime Book of the Month. I went with Reichs for the terrific science but I urge anyone to grab this, especially if you are a fan of Lisa Unger. It's an excellent book and not, in fact, unlike the Laura Dave huge hit for June, [The Last Thing He Told Me](#).

Atkins, Ace. [The Heathens](#) (Penguin \$28). Patrick writes, "Atkins begins a new chapter in his terrific Tibbehah County series after concluding several long-running story arcs in last year's *The Revelators*. Sixteen year-old T.J. Byrd is a survivor who has been forced to grow up quickly. She and her wayward, hard-living mom have always had a volatile relationship, so when Gina Byrd ends up brutally murdered and dismembered, T.J. immediately becomes a prime suspect. Sheriff Quinn Colson doesn't believe that T.J. Byrd killed her mom but everyone else in town seems to think so. Sensing that she's about to take the fall, T.J. goes on the run with her boyfriend, her best friend and her nine-year old brother. As the teens cross the state line, US Marshall Lillie Marshall tracks their trail of burglaries, stolen cars, and even the kidnapping of a wealthy teenager. As Marshall focuses on bringing the kids to justice, Colson works hard to prove their innocence. Atkins is in great form here, as always."

Bell, David. [Kill All Your Darlings](#) (Berkley \$27). Bell comes up with a great concept for this standalone, one that if you like Korelitz's *The Plot* will appeal. The two books are very different but at their hearts is the question of who owns a story—plus what is plagiarism, what is appropriation, what are the consequences of claiming someone else's story as your own? Bell, a professor, sets his story on a campus (rather than in the commercial publishing world) where the stakes are different. He creates a dark, twisty

journey through the labyrinth of academia featuring a missing girl, a murder, a book-within-a-book, and more than one wobbly moral compass. And he manages to weaponize the elements of college, students, teachers, tenure—even the writing of novels. I'm looking forward to our book chat with JT Ellison and Bell which will post on our home page in July.

Butler, Nickolas. [Godspeed](#) (Putnam \$27). This wild and wonderful book set in the luxe world of Jackson, Wyoming (not Joe Pickett or Walt Longmire country) as well as a remote mountain site for a fabulous mansion, was brought to my attention by Ace Atkins who is hosting our conversation with Butler. Our **July Notable New Fiction Book of the Month** is not a conventional thriller; it builds slowly but—wow! The big themes Butler explores under his wide umbrella include the divide between the uber rich and regular folk; wilderness invasion; conservation; aging; addiction; ambition. *PW* notes that *Godspeed* “highlights the conflict between wealthy transplants and blue-collar locals in the increasingly gentrified rural West. Cole, Bart, and Teddy, the founders of True Triangle Construction, take on the job of finishing an isolated mansion outside Jackson Hole, for California lawyer Gretchen Connors, but the project is fraught. The original contractor has quit, and Gretchen demands completion in four months, offering \$450,000 in bonuses rather than an explanation for the nearly impossible deadline. The driven Cole, eager to succeed, pushes his two partners. For Teddy, the money means a house for his family, and for Bart, the least steady of the three, it's a path to escape. After Bart is injured, he slips into addiction as he tries to work while hurt.” Tension mounts, violence ensues, and at the end, the legacy of troubled pasts catches up with everyone. This is a novel for all stripes of readers. And it reflects a global trend of humans pushing into wilderness at great cost to the environment and nature, the heightened risks of remote living, and the rising resentment against the 1% who can afford to do it.

Castillo, Linda. [Fallen](#) (St Martins \$27.99). Castillo's Kate Burkholder series never disappoints. Partly it's the confident, compelling voice. Partly it's the lively limning of characters both Amish and not as well as the sympathy yet keen-eyed portrait of Amish faith and life which is stratified like Judaism and some other faiths. And it's always the instigating incident, usually horrific, that draws Ohio's Painter Mills' Police Chief Kate into an investigation that tests her character along with her skills. It kicks off with the murder of Rachael Schwartz, a young woman Kate once babysat, who was beaten to death in a local motel. Kate, who recalls Rachael's rebellious attitude as a child, isn't surprised for Rachael, like Kate, left the Amish faith. Rachael lived in Cleveland, where she co-owned a restaurant, but Kate can't determine what brought her back to Painters Mill. As Kate speaks with Rachael's business partner, Andrea Matson, and Amish best friend Loretta Bontrager, she deduces Rachael made most of her money from blackmailing people. Flashbacks to 2008, when Rachael and Loretta were in their late teens, showcase Rachael's free-spirited behavior and potential culprits for her murder. The tension rises as Kate narrows down the suspects. “In addition to providing readers with plenty of Amish cultural context, Castillo adds surprising twists to the gripping plot and touches upon police brutality and Amish discrimination. This sterling entry can be easily read as a standalone.” If you are new to Castillo this will hook you into going back to read the whole series as I have.

Connolly, John. [The Nameless Ones](#) (Hodder \$45). In Amsterdam, four people are butchered in a canal house, their remains arranged around the crucified form of their patriarch, De Jaager: fixer, go-between, and confidante of the assassin named Louis. The men responsible for the murders are Serbian war criminals. They believe they can escape retribution by retreating to their homeland. They are wrong. For Louis has come to Europe to hunt them down: five killers to be found and punished before they can vanish into the east. There is only one problem—the sixth.

Constantine, Liv. [The Stranger in the Mirror](#) (Harper \$26.99). A disheveled, bleeding woman who doesn't know even her own name is picked up hitchhiking on a highway in New Jersey by a kindly trucker. He and his wife become her surrogate parents, helping her manufacture a new identity as Addison Hope. Addison soon meets Gabriel, a wonderful young man from the Philadelphia Main Line who is so smitten he ends a years-long relationship with another woman and proposes. Gabriel's mother, Blythe, isn't ready to pop the champagne, though—she wants to know who this girl really is. In truth, Addison does too. Meanwhile, up in Boston, a handsome psychiatrist named Julian is caring for his 7-year-old daughter on his own after his wife disappeared two years earlier. Could it be...? Well coincidence seldom plays a role in books like this. The sterling character here is Addison, a truly genuine person trying to do her best for everyone. Constantine has “cooked up another plot involving people with hidden identities—and it works well to embed that issue in the head of the protagonist, who doesn't know herself or anyone else from her past.”

Cosby, SA. [Razorblade Tears](#) (Flatiron \$26.99). Ike Randolph has been out of prison for 15 years and is making good money running Randolph Lawn Care and Landscaping when his only child, Isiah, is fatally shot, as is Isiah's husband, Derek, while they're in front of a wine store in Richmond, Virginia. Ike, who is at the center of S.A. Cosby's brutal and beautiful *Razorblade Tears*, has no illusions about his mission to avenge the death of his son: “Folks like to talk about revenge like it's a righteous thing but it's just hate in a nicer suit.” That hate finds company when Ike, who is Black, and Buddy Lee Jenkins, an alcoholic self-described redneck, form an unlikely avenging alliance. Their nice suits will stay at home. They have more in common than a suddenly parentless three-year-old granddaughter: neither man could say that his behavior toward his gay son was supportive, which ratchets up the grief. The murder case stalls out, in no small part, a detective says, because people who knew Isiah, a reporter, and Derek, a chef, won't talk to the cops, so in a private moment Buddy Lee proposes to Ike that they take charge: Buckets of blood are spilled, but in a volume that's proportional to the amount of soul-searching going on and the number of jokes being cracked. That Ike is no sufferer of fools and Buddy Lee is an unfiltered wild card sets up an odd-couple dynamic that Cosby works like a master comic, and his specialization in insults is on display throughout the novel. The humor abets the surprise-strewn story, much of it unfolding in the Red Hill County, Virginia, scene of Cosby's award-nominated [Blacktop Wasteland](#) (\$16.99). It also shares its predecessor's occasionally discombobulating point-of-view shifts. If *Blacktop Wasteland* confronted fans of noir with a setting that's miles outside the white urban stronghold typically home to the genre, *Razorblade Tears* ups the ante by introducing

characters forced to grapple with their thoughts on homosexuality and interracial love while Confederate flags fly around them.” – Nell Beram

Indeed Cosby takes a critical yet sensitive look at homophobia, racism, classicism and toxic masculinity. Ike and Buddy Lee’s quest puts their lives at risk but also challenges their senses of self and understanding of the world. Their self-interrogation and personal transformation prompt readers to do the same.

Davidson, Hilary. [Her Last Breath](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$24.95/\$15.95). When her beloved sister Caroline dies suddenly, Deirdre is heartbroken. However, her sorrow turns to bone-chilling confusion when she receives a message Caroline sent days earlier warning that her death would be no accident. Long used to being a pariah to her family, Deirdre covers her tattoos and heads to Manhattan for her sister’s funeral. The message claimed Caroline’s husband, Theo, killed his first wife and got away with it. Reeling from the news, Deirdre confronts Theo on the way to the cemetery, and he reveals both his temper and his suspicion that Deirdre’s “perfect” sister was having an affair. Paranoid and armed with just enough information to make her dangerous, Deirdre digs into the disturbing secrets buried with Caroline. But as she gets closer to the truth, she realizes that her own life may be at risk...and that there may be more than one killer in the family... “A black sheep family drama becomes a deliciously paranoid psychological thriller from the always-thrilling Hilary Davidson. Brilliant!” —Adrian McKinty

Downing, Samantha. [For Your Own Good](#) (Berkley \$27). Like Bell, Edgar-finalist Downing takes a school setting for her new novel of suspense. Within weeks, Belmont Academy’s image plummets from gilded Ivy League gateway to ghoulish #HomicideHigh in this slyly plotted page-turner. It’s going to take more than a few inconvenient bodies on campus, however, to derail such driven Belmont community members as English lit instructor Teddy Crutcher, whose recent teacher of the year award seems to have done little to diminish the massive chip on his shoulder, or talented but entitled junior Zach Ward, the most recent individual to arouse his ire. That is, until the less than stellar police investigation targets a student close to both Teddy and Zach, gifted school newspaper editor Courtney Ross. Their independent efforts to help her only make matters much, much worse—as well as put them on a dangerous collision course with one another. Downing” offers darkly comic amusement and ample surprises from its cast of unabashedly amoral schemers.”

Fesperman, Dan. [The Cover Wife](#) (Knopf \$26.95) fictionalizes the story of the terrorist cell in Hamburg, Germany, responsible for the 9/11 attacks. CIA agent Claire Saylor goes undercover, posing as the wife of an academic with an explosive new interpretation of the Koran launching a book at an event in Hamburg. But Saylor’s real job is to understand what the terrorist cell is up to—and she soon discovers other American agents are focused on the same group of Islamists. A parallel plot focused on Mahmoud Yassin, an Arab youth who becomes radicalized and joins the cell, raises the tension. Identities and motives are tantalizingly muddled, and Fesperman, a fine stylist, does a good job portraying the elusive, frustrating nature of espionage. Although we know the outcome, Fesperman does an ace job getting us there. He’s a wonderful writer.

Freeman, Brian. [Robert Ludlum’s Bourne Treachery](#) (Putnam \$28) finds Bourne, “the man with no memory and no past,” and love interest Nova, his partner in the Treadstone spy organization, in Tallinn, Estonia, on a doomed mission to rescue a U.S. double agent, Grigori Kotov. As they escort Kotov through the streets of Tallinn, Bourne hears a Beatles song from a distant radio. During a subsequent clash with FSB agents, Bourne hears one of the Russians say the name *Lenin*—which turns out to be another name. Three years later, Nova has died in a mass shooting in Las Vegas, and Bourne is in London where he’s trying to prevent a mysterious world-class assassin known as Lennon, who has a lethal girlfriend code-named Yoko, from killing a Russian ecoterrorist out to strike a blow against Russian oligarchs. “Freeman supplies plenty of exciting fight scenes and plot twists, but his convincing use of Bourne’s fraught backstory is what distinguishes this entry. Series fans will look forward to more contributions to the Bourne franchise from this talented author.” And how; the action scenes are great and Freeman has the skills to make the characters come alive too. Excellent.

Gerritsen, Tess/Gary Braver. [Choose Me](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$24.95). Signed by Tess, not sure if also by Braver, the co-author of this interesting, sexy murder mystery about a reckless affair and dangerous secrets. Taryn Moore is young, beautiful, and brilliant...so why would she kill herself? When Detective Frankie Loomis arrives on the scene to investigate the girl’s fatal plunge from her apartment balcony, she knows in her gut there’s more to the story. Her instincts are confirmed when surprise information is revealed that could have been reason enough for Taryn’s suicide—or a motive for her murder. To English Professor Jack Dorian, Taryn was the ultimate fantasy: intelligent, adoring, and completely off limits. But there was also a dark side to Taryn, a dangerous streak that threatened those she turned her affections to—including Jack. And now that she’s dead, his problems are just beginning. After Frankie uncovers a trove of sordid secrets, it becomes clear that Jack is the key to the mystery.... Braver, an academic, is a fine fit with Gerritsen to write this.

Hamilton, Glen Erik. [Island of Thieves](#) (Morrow \$27.99). Shaw, a reformed criminal who’s trying to set up a foundation for troubled kids, must surmount harder and harder obstacles. Eager for honest money, Shaw agrees to test Droma International’s security at its Port of Seattle facility by attempting to remove a valuable carved figure from a warehouse without being caught. The job proves a breeze for him and leads to a more lucrative offer from Droma. Company founder Sebastien Rohner is about to host an important business meeting on a private island off the coast, which is also home to an art gallery. Rohner, who suspects one of his guests may try to steal some of the art, hires Shaw to pose as the island’s facilities manager while keeping an eye on the gallery. Shaw suspects that he’s not been told the full story after Rohner’s security team confronts him, and he’s soon in peril after stumbling across the corpse of a murdered guest. Hamilton’s fast-paced plot never loses its way despite numerous jaw-dropping twists. Fans of Jeffery Deaver and Jeff Lindsay will love this. Glen Erik will do a zoom event with us later this summer after he settles in his new residence.

Khan, Vaseem. [The Dying Day](#) (Hodder \$40). For over a century, one of the world’s great treasures, a six-hundred-year-old copy of Dante’s *The Divine Comedy*, has been safely housed at Bombay’s Asiatic Society. But when it vanishes, together with the man

charged with its care, British scholar and war hero, John Healy, the case lands on Inspector Persis Wadia's desk. Uncovering a series of complex riddles written in verse, Persis—together with English forensic scientist Archie Blackfinch—is soon on the trail. But then they discover the first body. As the death toll mounts it becomes evident that someone else is also pursuing this priceless artifact and will stop at nothing to possess it. Harking back to an era of darkness, this second thriller in the Malabar House series pits Persis, once again, against her peers, a changing India, and an evil of limitless intent. Persis was introduced in *Midnight at Malabar House*, so far only available here as an E-book; [paperback](#) due out August 31. Ann Cleeves recommends the “deftly drawn Persis Wadia, the country's first female detective. She's a wonderful creation and this is a hugely enjoyable book.” It's 1949 Bombay, not the 1920s city, but Sujata Massey fans will appreciate this.

Lange, Richard. [Rovers](#) (LittleBrown \$28). Patrick reviews: “Just when you thought the vampire novel had been played out comes this fresh interpretation by award-winning novelist and short-story writer Lange, author of *The Smack*. Set during the summer of 1976, the story follows a rover (Lange mostly avoids the V word) named Jesse and his mentally handicapped brother as they make their way across the southwest, doing their best to keep their nocturnal feeding on the QT. But when Jesse falls in love with a human bartender named Johona, things get complicated quickly. Meanwhile, an undead biker gang called The Fiends blazes a trail of carnage across the American southwest. Preying upon the marginalized at the edges of society, these rovers leave a trail of bodies in their wake. The father of one of the victims devotes himself to investigating his son's murder and takes off in search of other murders with the same m.o. – blood drained, body left in a shallow grave. As these different groups come into conflict with each other, their paths converge near Las Vegas, where a 2000-year-old rover named Beaumont lives in a bunker-like fortress. Lange ingeniously mashes up elements of “Near Dark” and “The Lost Boys” in this undead noir novel that you didn't know you needed.”

✚ Lovesey, Peter. [Diamond and the Eye](#) (Sphere \$46). Of all the weird characters Detective Superintendent Peter Diamond has met in Bath, this one is the most extreme: a twenty-first-century private eye called Johnny Getz, whose office is over Shear Amazing, a hairdressing salon. Johnny has been hired by Ruby Hubbard, whose father, an antiques shop owner, has gone missing, and Johnny insists on involving ‘Pete’ in his investigation. When Diamond, Johnny and Ruby enter the shop, they find a body and a murder investigation is launched. Diamond is forced to house his team in the dilapidated Corn Market building across the street. His problems grow when his boss appoints Lady Bede, from the Police Ethics Committee, as an observer. Worse still, Johnny conducts his own inquiry by latching onto Ruby's stylish friend, a journalist called Olympia. Shootings from a drive-by gunman at key players create mayhem and the pressure is really on. Can the team stop more killings in this normally peaceful city?

MacNeal, Susan Elia. [The Hollywood Spy](#) (Bantam \$27). I chose this as our **July Historical Mystery Book of the Month** less for the story—which is nonetheless an interesting mystery involving “lavender” marriages, a murder, and treason—than for MacNeal's meticulously researched look at a Los Angeles fractured even in wartime by the widespread discrimination casually perpetrated

against people of color, Jews, migrants, and LGBTQ communities. MacNeal underlines that in America, the past continues to erupt into the present and is a key to understanding today. Read [this interview with MacNeal](#) for more.

It is 1943, and Maggie Hope, an American stationed in England who works for MI5 now but whom we first met as [Mr. Churchill's Secretary](#) (\$17), arrives in Hollywood. Gloria Hutton, the fiancée of RAF pilot John Sterling, has been found dead in a hotel swimming pool. The police are quick to label the deceased a “hophead” and rule her death an accident, but Sterling refuses to believe their assessment and asks Maggie to investigate. Maggie's inquiry, which takes her to film sets, nightclubs, and other Hollywood locales, eventually leads her to a charismatic L.A. cop who heads the local Ku Klux Klan and is plotting to blow up a theater. Maggie's personal life, on edge since her 9th adventure, takes another turn here in her 10th. MacNeal underlines the deep divisions in our democracy today with a look at its earlier fractures. This reads well as a standalone so no worries if you don't know the series.

Miranda, Megan. [Such a Quiet Place](#) (SimonSchuster \$26.99). Agatha Christie left a forever stamp on plots and on a classic mystery form, here updated by Miranda who constructs her own American village on a lakeshore for the mystery. There's even a village map shown. Longtime Hollow's Edge resident Ruby Fletcher, who was convicted of the double murder of Brandon and Fiona Truett a year and a half earlier, returns after her conviction is overturned to the tight-knit lakeside community. Ruby allegedly sneaked into the couple's house one night, turned on the car in the garage, and opened an interior door, ensuring their death from carbon monoxide poisoning. Ruby assumes her old roommate, Harper Nash, will welcome her return, even after she tells Harper, “Someone's going to pay.” Harper doesn't know whether Ruby is directing this threat at her, but after allowing Ruby to move back in, she begins to wonder: If Ruby isn't guilty, who is? What other secrets are the residents of Hollow's Edge hiding—and would they go so far as murder to protect them? The twists keep coming until the very last page. Christie fans will appreciate this 21st-century update on the classic golden age village mystery. Library Reads add, “The tight-knit neighborhood of Hollow's Edge is supposed to be a safe, private place where the neighbors all know each other. But secrets lie behind every door. Miranda creates a vivid setting where the characters develop quickly, and the twisty plot will keep readers guessing until the end.”

Newman, TJ. [Falling](#) (Avid/Simon Schuster \$28). Here is the #1 Indie Next Pick for July. Flight attendant Newman, the author of our **July First Mystery Book of the Month**, who only quit flying as of 2019, opens with quintessential family man Bill Hoffman, a Coastal Airways pilot who's missing his son's Little League game to steer a transcontinental flight as a favor for his boss. As he prepares to leave town, his wife, Carrie, isn't happy with him, but, alas, he's too focused on the task at hand to give her more than a guilty excuse. In a karmic response, as Bill launches his plane into the sky, he quickly learns his family has been taken hostage by the Internet repairman he passed at his front door without a thought earlier that morning. The repairman-turned-terrorist sends Bill a picture of his family, bound and strapped with explosive devices. Through a live video stream, he presents the pilot with a choice: crash your plane when and where

I instruct or watch your family die before your eyes. Bill refuses to make such a choice and hatches a plot to rescue both his loved ones and the souls on board his vessel. For that, he'll need to rely on his flight attendants.... This tense and convincing debut thriller requires Newman's professional expertise to make the plot work, and that lifts it above the rather unsurprising motive behind it. You can see action movie—already in development—unfold from the first chapter although I hope it finesses the odd prologue.

Offutt, Chris. [The Killing Hills](#) (Grove \$26). Offutt's brooding and bloody country noir takes readers to the hollers of rural Kentucky, where meth and Oxycontin ravage the population, and havoc is wrought by long-festering family feuds. The focus is on an Iraq and Afghanistan war veteran named Mick Hardin who now works as an Army Intelligence agent. Hardin winds up joining his sister, who's a sheriff, to solve a local murder—the death of a woman named Nonnie Johnson, whose body was discovered deep in the woods. Set in a community ravaged by drug abuse—where meth and Oxycontin addiction have run rampant—the novel sees Mick and his sister having to navigate innumerable nuisances, from a meddling FBI agent to a local coal tycoon, as they try to close the case. “The lean prose elicits more than a hard-boiled style, and while the brisk yet gnarled atmosphere is reminiscent of Woodrell's *Winter's Bone*, the dime-store crime novels of Jim Thompson, or even William Faulkner's *Sanctuary*, Offutt brilliantly evokes the body and soul of his wounded hero. It adds up to a mesmerizing and nightmarish view of what lurks just over the hills. Having a trained CID officer as the lead adds an extra and broadening dimension to a Southern noir. An excellent book, not your every day story. David Joy, Sharyn McCrumb fans should note this one too.

Phillips, Susan Elizabeth. [When Stars Collide](#) (Harper \$28.99). John reviews: Opera diva Olivia Shore is definitely not looking forward to spending weeks stuck traveling with Chicago Stars quarterback Thaddeus Walker Bowman Owens. But Olivia signed a contract with a luxury watch company to act as brand ambassador for their new glitzy female timepiece while Thad performs a similar duty for the company's latest luxury male watch. This means Olivia is going to have to figure out a way to live with Thad even if it kills one of them in the process. However, in between all the soul-searching, trash talking, backstage drama, and romantic passes—some completed and some that are not—that are part and parcel of the tour, the duo also face threatening letters, haunting photographs, and a series of dangerous encounters that complicate their lives in more ways than one. The latest in award-winning Phillip's Chicago Stars books—each of which stands by itself—delivers all of the captivating characters, witty banter, and simmering sexual chemistry her fans expect as well as a nifty, twisty mystery.

Quinn, Spencer. [Tender Is the Bite](#) (Forge \$26.99). At the start of Quinn's cleverly plotted 11th Chet and Bernie mystery, PI Bernie Little of the Little Detective Agency is on the road with his canine partner, Chet, in the unidentified southwestern U.S. city where they live [it's Scottsdale!!] when Bernie realizes that their battered Porsche is being followed. Through some creative maneuvering, they block the car on their tail and thus meet an attractive and very frightened potential client, Mavis, who was driving the car. When Mavis spots a bumper sticker for Griffin

Wray, a candidate for U.S. senator, in Bernie's car, she panics and runs off. In their effort to discover why Mavis was scared of Wray, Bernie and Chet must contend with dead bodies that disappear and reappear in unlikely places, spying neighbors, and job offers that are too good to be true, not to mention a pesky ferret. Along the way, narrator Chet is a source of wisdom and innate doggie joie de vivre, making this a real pleasure for anyone who has ever looked into a dog's eyes and asked: who's a good boy? This outing should win this offbeat series new readers who can join the raging fan club among The Pen's staff. I was always nut for Peter Abraham's clever thrillers and so transitioned to Chet & Bernie with ease.

Reichs, Kathy. [The Bone Code](#) (Scribner \$27). Note: our copies come with a special **Bone Pen** while supplies last for this our **July Crime Book of the Month**. I chose it for the well explained and highly pertinent science—this thrilling read has a very contemporary feel, combining current scientific and forensic terminology with a sinister plot; for the landscapes of the story; and because it's Reichs' 20th Temperance Brennan and yet this can be read as a standalone. “Kathy Reichs is expert at making science both scary and thrilling, and she's in top form in *The Bone Code*. The story moves at such a relentless pace I couldn't stop turning the pages!” —Tess Gerritsen

We are in 2021, with some references to Covid. A waste container turns up with two bodies, similar to an old unsolved case of Brennan's. The coroner of South Carolina's Charleston County needs a forensic anthropologist. The coroner knows Brennan, who specializes in analyzing “remains unfit for a pathologist's scalpel: the decomposed, dismembered, burned, mummified, mutilated, and skeletal,” and happens to be headed from Charlotte, NC, her home base, to Charleston. A recent hurricane has tossed ashore a container with two decayed bodies inside wrapped in plastic secured by electrical wire, and at least one of the bodies shows evidence of a bullet to the head. These details rattle Brennan, as they match those of a 15-year-old unsolved case involving two victims that Brennan worked on with Andrew Ryan, a former Quebec homicide detective turned PI, who's her long term lover. The new victims spur Brennan to labor to identify the killer or killers of all four people. You can order the entire “Bones Series” and binge.

Rosenfelt, David. [Dog Eat Dog](#) (St Martins \$27.99). In what may well be my most enjoyed novel for July—fast and witty style, Maine setting, nifty plot resolution for a legal thriller—semi-retired Paterson, N.J., defense attorney Andy Carpenter is enjoying a stroll with his wife, Laurie, and their dogs when they see a man kicking a pug on a leash. They rush to the rescue, but another bystander, Matt Jantzen, gets to the man first and saves the pug after a brief fight. The police arrive and take the pug's owner and Matt into custody, and Matt is soon arrested for the double murder of Peter Charkin and his girlfriend in Maine two years earlier. Though DNA found underneath Charkin's fingernails matches Matt's, Matt asserts his innocence, and Andy decides to represent him in court. Andy travels to Maine, to a community that doesn't in the least welcome him and his “elite” ways, where he discovers Charkin had dangerous ties to drug dealers and a quasi terrorist militia group. Laurie and her partners from her investigation group, the K Team, come to join Andy when it becomes clear he's settling in for the long term preparing to take the case to trial

with the aid of a local lawyer. Unpredictable yet credible plot twists, along with Andy's dry sense of humor and wit, keep the pages turning in a most unusual legal thriller—a genre we don't see much of these days.

Silva, Daniel. [The Cellist](#) (Harper \$28.99). **These are Tip ins.** Viktor Orlov had a longstanding appointment with death. Once Russia's richest man, he now resides in splendid exile in London, where he has waged a tireless crusade against the authoritarian kleptocrats who have seized control of the Kremlin. His mansion in Chelsea's exclusive Cheyne Walk is one of the most heavily protected private dwellings in London. Yet somehow, on a rainy summer evening, in the midst of a global pandemic, Russia's vengeful president finally manages to cross Orlov's name off his kill list. *Before him was the receiver from his landline telephone, a half-drunk glass of red wine, and a stack of documents....* The documents are contaminated with a deadly nerve agent. The Metropolitan Police determine that they were delivered to Orlov's home by one of his employees, a prominent investigative reporter from the anti-Kremlin *Moskovskaya Gazeta*. But Gabriel Allon, who owes his very life to Viktor Orlov, believes his friends in British intelligence are dangerously mistaken. His desperate search for the truth will take him from London to Amsterdam and eventually to Geneva.

Slaughter, Karin. [False Witness](#) (Harper \$28.99). Our copies come with a special book bag designed for Poisoned Pen readers. The link for joining the publisher-hosted kickoff is in our Events listing. And here is a Starred Review: "In 1998, teen sisters Callie and Leigh, the heroines of this superb thriller, murder Buddy Waleski, who sexually abused them for years while they babysat his son, Trevor, in Chicago. They leave the Waleski kitchen spotless after cleaning up any evidence of the murder and hide Buddy's body. In 2021, Callie, who became addicted to heroin after a gymnastics accident left her in constant pain, and Leigh, a defense attorney, unexpectedly confront the past after Leigh's boss assigns the case of an alleged serial killer to her. During their first meeting, Andrew Tenant tells Leigh he's actually the little boy she once babysat—Trevor Waleski—and implies that he knows the sisters killed his father. Callie and Leigh work urgently to determine how and what he knows. Breaking into the abandoned former Waleski house, Callie finds a crawl space with cameras aimed both at the kitchen where Buddy's murder occurred and the living room couch where Callie was repeatedly raped as a 12-year-old by Buddy. If Leigh doesn't secure a not guilty verdict, the pathological Andrew threatens to retaliate by releasing his father's videos to the media and murdering her 16-year-old daughter. A shocking tragedy at the end will keep readers transfixed."—*PW*. I add that Karin's interests here were twofold: writing linked to social issues, and seeing how people choose to live their lives through the pandemic.

Sullivan, Connor. [Sleeping Bear](#) (Atria \$27). For fans of Brad Thor and Jack Carr, Marc Cameron, Kyle Mills, etc, this white-knuckled debut thriller follows a former Army veteran seeking solitude in the Alaskan wilderness after her husband's death—only to find herself a pawn in a deadly game with Russia. I was truly torn between this debut and that of TJ Newman for our July First Mystery Book of the Month; they are both excellent. Why not buy both? Sullivan is the son of Mark Sullivan, a longtime favorite of mine, and heavily mentored by Gregg Hurwitz, another fine writer.

So what we have here is a woman driving up through the Yukon to a campsite in Alaska. She stops for a night and a meal. She drives off. And then... When Army veteran Cassie Gale goes missing on a solo camping trip along Alaska's Yukon River in Sullivan's impressive debut, her father, former intelligence officer Jim Gale, immediately organizes a search party of friends and family to augment the state's thin law enforcement resources. Jim eventually determines that Cassie was the latest victim of a Russian kidnapping scheme. Meanwhile, on Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula, Cassie and several other Americans abducted from Alaska are being held in a former missile silo. Read it to find out why. "An electrifying finale featuring a tense rescue mission by a Navy SEAL team caps off the drama. Sullivan nails it out of the gate with a story that moves with confidence and, despite a few over-the-top plot twists, never rings false. This action thriller marks the arrival of a new talent." So as I said, don't skip this one. Mark Sullivan joins Connor and me for July 13 conversation.

Thor, Brad. [Black Ice](#) (Atria \$28.99). I asked Brad, who has once again agreed to sign copies for us, for a few lines and he replies: "The Arctic is hot, hot, hot. Russia and China are both competing for dominance there—vying for vast oil, natural gas, and mineral deposits, as well as strategic shipping lanes as the sea ice is turning to slush. The United States is WAY behind the curve and struggling to catch up. There is a new Cold War playing out above the Arctic Circle and I wanted to capture all of the power struggles and brinkmanship taking place, focusing especially on what the Chinese have been up to. Norway, in addition to being a NATO partner, is super sexy and I wanted to unfold a great spy tale across that gorgeous scenery. It's an edge-of-your-seat thriller, wrapped in real life events." I add that once again, in true Thor fashion, he writes a fun, exciting read that will leave you smarter. It's my belief many if not most of us read crime fiction to learn things along with being entertained. Thus we appreciate meticulous research underpinning thrilling action, which Thor consistently delivers.

Todd, Charles. [An Irish Hostage](#) (Harper \$27.99). It's now 1919. On leave from Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, Bess Crawford is free to travel to Ireland to serve as a bridesmaid for Eileen Flynn, another nurse whose leg she helped save from amputation. It's clear that venturing across the Irish Sea will be anything but routine. Instead of taking trains and motorcars subject to hijacking by nationalist fanatics, Bess asks American pilot Captain Arthur Jackson to fly her to tiny Killeighbeg, where all is in readiness except for the groom, Michael Sullivan, who's presumably been abducted by members of the Rising in retaliation for his wartime service to the Crown. But Bess doesn't need to venture outside Eileen's home to find furious conflicts raging. "Days after local painter Fergus Kennedy turns up coshed to death, Eileen decides to forge ahead with her preparations for the ceremony in case the groom happens to show up.... "The mystery is peripheral to this worm's-eye view of the struggles that tore the Emerald Isle in two."

Tremayne, Peter. [The House of Death](#) (Headline \$50). Ireland. AD 672. The Feast of Beltaine is approaching and the seven senior princes of the kingdom of Muman are gathering at Cashel to discuss King Colgú's policies. Just days before the council meets, Brother Conchobhar, the keeper of the sacred sword, is found murdered. Sister Fidelma and her brother Colgú fear that the killer had been trying to steal the sword that symbolizes the

King's authority to rule. And as rumors begin to spread of an attempt to overthrow Colgú, news reaches Cashel that a plague ship has landed at a nearby port, bringing the deadly pestilence to its shores. Amid fear and panic, Fidelma, Eadulf and Enda must work together to catch a killer as the death toll starts to mount... 32nd in this much loved medieval series.

UNSIGNED EVENT BOOKS

De Mariaffi, Elisabeth. [The Retreat](#) (Mulholland \$28). Maeve Martin was a modern dancer before entering an abusive marriage and having two children. Now widowed, though hardly believing her luck, she leaves the children with her mother and books two weeks at the High Water Center for the Arts, an isolated lodge in the Rocky Mountains, where she'll have uninterrupted time to focus on the dance company she hopes to start. Instead of finding peace, though, Maeve is thrown into a maelstrom after an avalanche cuts off the center's power and communications. Later, filmmaker Anna Barthelmy is found dead in the snow, and Maeve doesn't believe the death was accidental. Maeve gambles that staying behind with the center's director rather than joining the others on the 10-mile trek to the nearest town is her best bet, but danger looms either way. The center's lack of emergency preparation, and several staff's and guests' decisions in the emergency, strain credulity, but the final chapters offer genuine suspense. And anyone interested in the disciplines (and downfalls) of dancers will be rewarded.

Hummel, Maria. [Lesson in Red](#) (Catapult \$27). Here is the sequel to her fabulous novel [Still Lives](#) (\$16.95), an art thriller embedded in the private Roque Museum, part of the Los Angeles art scene, wherein an exhibition of twelve shocking paintings is tied to eleven famous murders. It was a Reese's Book Club x Hello Sunshine selection. *Lesson in Red* ushers you into what comes next. Budding journalist Maggie Richter returns to L.A., where her former employer, Janis Rocque, the museum's founder and chief donor, has an assignment for her. A few months earlier, 22-year-old Brenae Brasil, a student at Los Angeles Art College and a rising star in the video-art world with "a talent for controversy," fatally shot herself in her studio. Janis tells Maggie that "something systemic is wrong" with the school, and it led to Brenae's suicide. Janis arranges for Maggie to go undercover at a gallery where an installation by the LAAC director, a conceptual artist, is being set up by four of his students. She's to report her findings to a private eye. I find the novel lacks the grip of Hummel's first but in her "Astute insights into the shadow side of the art world, Hummel exposes the toxic competition at a top art school..... The cutthroat arts milieu, precisely and knowingly rendered, is magnetizing, while the intricately knotted plot and the characters' nuanced psychology are stoked by Hummel's evisceration of privilege, greed, exploitation, and criminality. Scathing, sexy, suspenseful, and righteous." —*Booklist*

Lackberg, Camilla. [Silver Tears](#) (Knopf \$26.95). In 2020's [The Golden Cage](#) (\$16.95), Stockholm housewife Faye Adelheim, who sacrificed her own career for her entrepreneur husband, Jack, who belittled and humiliated her for years, succeeded in destroying his business and framing him for the apparent murder of their daughter, Julienne. Two years after, in Swedish crime queen's Läckberg's rip-roaring sequel, Faye, whose cosmetics company, Revenge, has made her wealthy, is living incognito in a tiny Italian village with her mother, Julienne, and Kerstin, her best friend

and business associate. But soon rumors disrupt paradise. Jack and another convict escape from prison, women owning shares in Revenge are selling them and threatening a takeover, and a dogged policewoman is reexamining the case of Julienne's supposed murder. Läckberg intersperses Faye's struggle to preserve Revenge and her secrets with scalding scenes from Faye's youth in the town of Fjällbacka, where she saved her mother and herself from her father's brutal sexual abuse. In the present, Faye enjoys eye-popping sexual adventures and an appealing new lover, David Schiller, while she enlists the loyal support of former female rivals to strike back at her enemies. "This pair of novels pays tribute to lusty sisterhood in a must for Scandi noir fans."

Matthews, Owen. [Red Traitor](#) (Doubleday \$27.95). Told primarily from the Russian perspective, this gripping thriller from Matthews focuses on the often overlooked role of Soviet submarines, all equipped with nuclear missiles, that were heading to Cuba in the days leading up to the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. Like the other submarine commanders, Captain Vasily Arkhipov received the go-ahead by the military to launch a nuke at the U.S. without Moscow's approval if attacked. The order makes Arkhipov uneasy because he knows some other captains may have an itchy trigger finger. Meanwhile, back in Moscow, KGB Lt. Col. Alexander Vasin is so troubled by the leeway given to submarine captains that he's trying to find a way to pass along word to American officials about the danger. Vasin attempts to persuade a colleague who's a known American agent to tell his American contact about the Russian threat. Back in the Caribbean, the Russian submarines run low on power and are forced to surface and face a formidable American naval armada. An afterword reveals that Matthews, a journalist who has written widely on Russian affairs, drew closely on the historical record. Cold War buffs will particularly enjoy the ride, though any reader who appreciates the finer points of espionage and foreign intrigue will be intrigued.

Ochse, Wes. [Bone Chase](#) (\$16.99) "weaves folklore and history into a wild ride. Part X-Files, part National Treasure, and ALL Weston Ochse, by the time you're halfway through this fascinating thriller, you will believe that literal giants once walked the earth...and maybe still do!" —Christopher Golden. Ochse does a bit of Dan Brown in a thriller that dips into ancient myths, folklore, and the Old Testament to tell about a race to find giants. Ethan McCloud is a laid-off math teacher from Nebraska whose dad asks if he's seen a six-fingered man. Dad is then killed either by an aneurism or by the Six-Fingered Man, and either way, "Burying a father sucks." Father leaves behind a video urging his son to search for giants because "you think critically and base your answers on provable facts." **Ochse provides us with Signed Bookplates.** There is a hardcover [Bone Chase](#) (Gallery \$26).

✦ Paris, BA. [The Therapist](#) (St Martins \$27.99). Our **July British Crime Book of the Month** follows a Harlan Coben playbook. The setting: The Circle, a London gated community with heavy security for its exclusive residences. The situation: An engaged couple Leo and Alice, renovate their newly purchased and surprisingly affordable home in The Circle. Alice is reluctant to leave the cozy security of her country cottage but she loves Leo enough to make the move. What Happens: Alice, feeling isolated, brushes aside Leo's objections to socializing with their neighbors and invites all of them including the oddly hostile women, to a drinks/housewarming party. A stranger joins them, and gets a tour of the house. And then there is a murder. The Resolution: not telling.

Kirkus adds: “Alice is determined to get to the bottom of the murder and discover just what her neighbors in *The Circle* are hiding. Author Paris has done a masterful job of upping the creep factor in this volume, hinting at the secrets that everyone is hiding and peeling back, layer by layer, the story of what happened to Nina and Oliver as Alice goes through her day-to-day life and struggles to make new friends and deal with her suspicions. As in her other books, Paris has created complex, flawed characters who grapple with death, obsessions, and fear as they try to live their lives.”

Sebastian, Laura. [Half Sick of Shadows](#) (Ace \$27). Sebastian makes her adult fiction debut with a reimagining of the Arthurian legend told in the voice of the Lady Elaine Astolat, known to us as the Lady of the Lake. It’s a more modern voice, intent on giving Elaine agency and taking a fresh look at Guinevere and Morgana, also Lancelot. It’s not the [Once and Future King](#), a gem of a book I recommend to any reader (I first found it in college), but a feminist retelling and emphasizing the border between fey and human communities. I think of this as Madeline Miller light.

White, Kate. [The Fiancée](#) (Harper \$16.99). They had everything they needed for a perfect family vacation: close-knit relatives, a bucolic setting... and a murderer in their midst? Summer’s looking forward to a break from hustling for acting work in Manhattan when she, her husband Gabe, and Gabe’s nine-year-old son arrive at the annual family get-together at her in-laws’ sprawling estate in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. On the agenda are leisurely gourmet meals, tennis matches, and plenty of relaxation by the pool. But this year, Gabe’s brother Nick has invited his new flame Hannah, whom Summer immediately recognizes from a few years before. Oddly, her brother-in-law’s girlfriend claims not to know her. Yet she charms the other family members, and after Nick announces that he’s proposed to Hannah, Summer doesn’t have much choice but to grin and bear it. Then the reunion is rocked by tragedy when a family member is found dead. Though the doctors attribute the loss to natural causes, a grieving Summer fears that the too-good-to-be-true Hannah is involved, even as Gabe dismisses her suspicions. How far will Summer go to expose the truth? As she investigates just what Nick’s fiancée might have done to keep her perfect image intact, she begins to fear that the first death might only be the beginning. “Expert pacing, characters readers can love to hate, and an intelligent heroine make this a winner. White consistently entertains.”

OUR JULY BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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

Reichs, Kathy. [The Bone Code](#)

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

Paris, BA. [The Therapist](#)

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

Perkins, SC. [Fatal Family Ties](#)

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

Newman, TJ. [Falling](#)

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

MacNeal, Susan Elia. [The Hollywood Spy](#)

International Crime Book of the Month

Schneider. [The Basel Killings](#)

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

Butler, Nickolas. [Godspeed](#)

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

Percy, Benjamin. [The Ninth Metal](#)

CLASSICS

Jaediker, Kermit. [Tall Dark and Dead/Savage Chase/Run the Wild River](#) (Stark House \$19.95). Tina Van Lube is being blackmailed by a disreputable ex-lover, so she hires detective Lou Lait to get her incriminating love letters back. All in a day’s work for Lait. Except for one small detail—the disreputable ex-lover, columnist Erskine Spalding, is found dead with a knife in his back. Suspects abound: Tina’s husband Jan, disfigured war hero; Tina’s hot-headed brother, Stanislaus; Coates, the recently-fired butler; plain-but-dedicated secretary, Prescott; the gun-running Colonel; the social-climbing Durkins...even Lolita, the dancer. They all had their reasons for quieting the nasty gossip columnist. Lait’s making it his job to find out who did the deed. Two more classics noirs are included in this volume: Frederick Lornez, *The Savage Chase* & DL Champion, *Run the Wild River*. Patrick, [Patrick@poisonedpen.com](#), is your man for Stark House noir classics.

Penzler, Otto, ed. [Golden Age Detective Stories](#) (Penzler \$15.95). Fourteen authors previously represented by their novels in the American Mystery Classics series demonstrate their skills in shorter form in this superior anthology. Cornell Woolrich, best known for his tales of passion and despair, changes gears with the puzzler “The Mystery in Room 913.” Multiple occupants of a hotel room jump out of its ninth-floor window, leaving suicide notes behind, but the house detective is convinced something else is going on. Clayton Rawson perfects hiding a clue fairly in “From Another World,” in which his magician-sleuth, the Great Merlini, must solve a fatal stabbing in a room whose door and window were sealed with paper. In addition to well-known contributors, such as Ellery Queen and Erle Stanley Gardner, Penzler presents memorable tales from the lesser-known, such as H.F. Heard, whose reimagined Sherlock Holmes appears in “The Enchanted Garden,” and Bayard Kendrick, creator of the blind detective Capt. Duncan Maclain, who demonstrates his considerable abilities in “5 – 4 = Murderer.” This sampler is an easy gateway to other volumes by these authors.

THE COZY CORNER

Note: We will host two summer Cozy Cons: Saturday August 7 9:00 AM with Kensington Publishing; and Wednesday August 11 at 9:00 AM with 5 Minotaur cozy authors. Plus a cozy Historicon August 7 at 4:00 PM with a trio of writers.

Addison, Esme. [A Hex for Danger](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). Mermaids, dragons, mystical espionage, and a delightful family and small-town community. The small town of Bellamy Bay has its share of skeletons in its closet, but it isn’t used to bodies turning up in the local history museum. After all, this coastal North

Carolina town is much like any other...except, of course, for the mermaids. Helping to run the family business, an herbal apothecary, while keeping her supernatural secret hidden is no easy feat for water witch Aleksandra Daniels. But somehow she's still found time to help her friend Celeste, who has her own Caribbean mermaid heritage, plan the annual Mermaid Festival. As fun-seekers throng the beaches, Alex gets to know and is intrigued by renowned artist Neve Ryland, who's in town to decorate the local park with a mermaid-themed mural. Celeste, however, is less enamored with the artist, as Neve has been spending entirely too much one-on-one time with her boyfriend Jasper, director of Bellamy Bay's history museum. Then, a reception for Neve ends abruptly when the artist is found dead in his office. When the police investigation nets Celeste, Alex decides to find the true culprit. Fun for folks who enjoyed the new Pixar movie *Luca* or, switching to China from Italy, *The Wish Dragon*.

Allan, Gabby. [Much Ado about Nauticaling](#) (Kensington \$15.95). Whitney "Whit" Dagner, the narrator of this pleasing series launch from the pseudonymous Allan (the Tallie Graver series as Misty Simon), has left corporate Los Angeles for more relaxed Santa Catalina Island, opening a shop for tourists and assisting her brother, Nick, in running the family business: taking vacationers on a glass-bottomed boat to see life under the ocean. When the body of local businessman Jules Tisdale floats by the boat, the police quickly finger Nick as the perpetrator, as the two men had fought. Nick goes on the run, leaving Whit to figure out who's setting up her brother as the fall guy. Another murder causes further complications, but dogged Whit, with her screwball tendencies, is up to the challenge. Colorful characters determined to weigh into Whit's private life promise much fun ahead.

Barrett, Lorna. [A Deadly Deletion](#) (Berkley \$26). A murder leads to a string of shocking revelations for Haven't Got a Clue Bookstore owner Tricia Miles. While weighing two marriage proposals, she hears the sound of an engine roaring down Main Street. It's a big white pickup truck that aims for and hits Marshall, one suitor, as he's walking back to his apartment. Tragically, he's killed, leaving Tricia feeling bereft and guilty. She retreats to her sister, Angelica's, apartment to wait for Police Chief Grant Baker, the other suitor, to update her on what happened. While there, Tricia takes a dog out for a comfort call behind the building, and the same white pickup roars up the alley and just misses hitting Tricia. Still shaken by that news, Tricia returns to Haven't Got a Clue and is met by federal marshal Kirby, who tells her that Marshall had been in the Federal Witness Protection Program. Everything Marshall told Tricia was a lie—in particular, that he was a widower. So, lots of potential motives....

Delany, Vicki. [Murder in a Teacup](#) (Kensington \$26). Sandra McHenry, a dear friend of Lilly's grandmother, Rose Campbell, who runs a B&B in North Augusta, is visiting with her recently widowed and wealthy granddaughter, Heather, and several other fractious family members. When Heather's brother-in-law, Ed French, dies of poisoning shortly after he drinks some tea, law officials shut down Lily's tearoom and take all the baked goods into custody, though they later determine that someone spiked Ed's tea. To save the tearoom, Lily and Rose must do some sleuthing to figure out who wanted to kill Ed and why. Laura Child's fans will have fun with this second in the Tea by the Sea Mysteries after [Tea & Treachery](#) (\$15.95).

Dunnett, Kaitlyn. [Murder, She Edited](#) (Kensington \$26). Freelance editor Mikki Lincoln inherits a farm outside of sleepy Lenape Hollow, New York, from a woman she hasn't seen in two decades, the unexpected arrangement comes with a big catch: forgotten diaries hidden in the neglected house must be recovered, edited, and published across the internet within one month. The lonely locale is like an untouched time capsule from the 1950s, and it was left behind for good reason. While searching for the mysterious memoirs and clues about the former owners, Mikki discovers that the once peaceful place was punctuated by an unsolved homicide and other rumored crimes. Worse, suspicious activity in the creepy, dilapidated barn suggests it really hasn't been abandoned at all... In a remote farmhouse with only her observant calico cat, Calpurnia, keeping her company, Mikki must swiftly crack an eerie cold case from the past and stop a clever culprit. 4th in the Dead Edits series and fun for grammarians.

Fluke, Joanne. [Carrot Cake Murder](#) (\$12.95). A large paperback reissue of the 10th Hannah Swensen Mystery set in Hannah's bakery in Lake Eden, Minnesota.

Freeman, Dianne. [A Fiancée's Guide to First Wives and Murder](#) (Kensington \$26). This book will be signed by Freeman at the end of August when she returns to Scottsdale. Look for a review in August.

Hart, Carolyn. [Ghost Blows a Kiss](#) (Severn \$28.99). The late Bailey Ruth Raeburn is delighted when she's assigned a new mission by Heaven's Department of Good Intentions, even if she is no good at following the rules for Earthly Visitations. This time she's determined to be the perfect unseen emissary, no matter what it takes. Arriving late in the evening in her old hometown of Adelaide, Oklahoma to find a woman drowning in a pond, Bailey Ruth carries out a daring rescue with textbook invisible effort. But Bailey Ruth soon realizes there's more to Fran's accident than a late-night walk gone wrong. The young widow was running away – but what from? Soon Bailey Ruth finds herself caught up in a complex web of family secrets, loyalties and lies – and if she doesn't act fast, an innocent will be locked up for a very long time.... Ordered Upon Request.

McKevett, GA. [A Few Drops of Bitters](#) (Kensington \$26). The long-running [Savannah Reid Mystery](#) series is full of charm and food, a kind of low-calorie indulgence. Being foster parents to 6-year-old Brody Greyson has its ups and downs. DS Dirk Coulter isn't amused when the little scamp mixes kitty kibble with Dirk's breakfast cereal. But Savannah marvels at Brody's resilience, his curiosity, and his love for all living creatures. To indulge the latter, she lets him spend long hours with the family's beloved vet, Dr. Carolyn Erling. And when Brody manages to wangle an invitation to the birthday bash Dr. Carolyn's throwing for her husband, Stephen, Savannah even manages to persuade Dirk to give up his favorite televised sports so they can go as a family. Which is kind of a shame, since Stephen Erling's 50th birthday turns out to be his last. Fortunately, Brody, out in the llama pen, avoids the trauma of watching the eminent neurosurgeon take one final drink and keel over. Soon Dirk and Savannah, operator of the Moonlight Magnolia Detective Agency, are on the case, Dirk officially and Savannah, who's between cases, tagging along. Just as soon, they discover that very few of Stephen's birthday guests actually wanted their host to live to 51....

Perkins, SC. [Fatal Family Ties](#) (St Martins \$26.99). A determined Camilla Braithwaite hires Austin, Texas, genealogist Lucy Lancaster to research the military record of her Confederate soldier ancestor, Charles Braithwaite, and, she hopes, clear his name. A recent article in a history magazine claims Charles deserted his Texas regiment after the Second Battle of Bull Run and spent the rest of the Civil War hiding in a small Louisiana town. Soon after Lucy starts her research, an elderly relative of Camilla's is murdered, and someone tries to steal a hideously ugly but prized-by-the-family heirloom painting. Could the timing of the article have any connection to the murder and attempted theft? Lucy's careful investigation into Charles and his descendants uncovers forgotten family secrets and unlikely connections among branches of the family, the painting, and the murder. Perkins offers the perfect mix of mystery, family drama, art history, and romance to keep cozy readers eagerly turning pages. Anyone who has ever looked into their own family history will be fascinated by the intriguing details of Lucy's genealogical research. 3rd in the [Ancestry Detective](#) series and our **July Cozy Crimes Book of the Month**. You need not have read the first two to enjoy it. Perkins joins us August 11 in the Minotaur Cozy Crimes event.

Scott, Laura. [Dogged By Death: A Furry Friends Mystery](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). Veterinarian Ally Winter, betrayed by her romantic and professional partner, returns to her hometown of Willow Bluff, Wisconsin, where she purchases a retiring vet's practice, only to find the good doctor apparently lied about the financial side of the business. Broke and idle, Ally takes on dog walking. Problems multiply when Ally finds the body of her newest client, probably crooked attorney Marty Shawlin, on the first day walking Shawlin's boxer. The first detective to respond to the murder scene is none other than Noah Jorgensen, a former high school quarterback who remembers Ally all too well from several epic moments of high school klutziness. As Jorgensen uncovers a multitude of disgruntled clients with reasons to want Shawlin dead, another body turns up. When true crime aficionado Oscar Winter, Ally's irascible Gramps, decides to investigate, Ally reluctantly joins in just to keep Gramps safe. There are some nice canine and feline moments but nothing original here.

SPIES FOR SUMMER

Two British historicals, by Buckley and Clare, noted below in new hardcover books, are spy stories. More can be found by exploring books by Steve Berry, Charles Cumming, David Downing, Alan Furst, Mick Herron, David Ignatius, Joseph Kanon, John LeCarre, Matthew Quinn, Olen Steinhauer, Lauren Wilkinson, and so many more. Plus thrilling non-fiction by, say, [Ben Macintyre](#).

Bentley, Don. [Tom Clancy Target Acquired](#) (Putnam \$29 SIGNED). Jack Ryan, Jr. would do anything for Ding Chavez. That's why Jack is currently sitting in an open-air market in Israel, helping a CIA team with a simple job. The man running the mission, Peter Beltz, is an old friend from Ding's Army days. Ding hadn't seen his friend since Peter's transfer to the CIA eighteen months prior, and intended to use the assignment to reconnect. Unfortunately, Ding had to cancel at the last minute and asked Jack to take his place. It's a cushy assignment—a trip to Israel in exchange for a couple hours of easy work, but Jack could use the downtime after his last operation. Jack is here merely as an observer, but when he hastens to help a woman and her young

son, he finds himself the target of trained killers. We have a few Signed copies left of Bentley's first foray into the Clancyverse—he crushes it!

Berry, Steve. [The Warsaw Protocol](#) (\$17.99). See Our July Large Paperback Picks for this Cotton Malone-led espionage thriller set in Poland. It has an extra treat for those in the know about James Rollins.

Bradby, Tom. [Triple Cross](#) (\$36 Bantam UK). The ongoing search for a suspected Russian mole within the highest ranks of the British government drives Bradby's entertaining third spy thriller featuring former MI6 officer Kate Henderson after [Secret Service and Double Agent](#) (\$17 each). Kate, a single mother with two teenage daughters and a difficult mother, reluctantly agrees to resume the search for the mole, known only as Agent Dante, after the British prime minister, an old adversary, asks for her help. Kate quickly narrows the suspects to her former boss, Sir Alan Brabazon, and MI6's current chief, Ian Granger. The case takes Kate across Europe to Turkey and then on to Moscow, where, undercover, she attempts a daring meet-up with a British operative working inside the GRU who can identify Agent Dante. The rendezvous is botched, and Kate has to frantically scramble to escape from Russia. Series fans will enjoy Bradby's update on Kate's colorful personal life, which takes some surprising turns, and the fast-paced plot, familiar though it is, keeps the pages turning. Note: The US edition of [Triple Cross](#) (\$27) will publish in September, unsigned as will the paperback of [Double Agent](#) mentioned above.

Dugoni, Robert. [The Eighth Sister; The Last Agent](#) (\$15.95 each). A thrilling pair of spy stories, the first involving a horribly risky escape from Russia via Turkey executed by former CIA case officer Charles Jenkins, the second reversing it as Jenkins goes on a crazy rescue mission.

Estep, Jennifer. [Capture the Crown](#) (Harper \$16.99). Estep returns to her Crown of Shards world with an all-new trilogy and a bold new heroine who protects her kingdom from magic, murder, and mayhem by moonlighting as a spy. "Hold onto your hearts, fantasy romance lovers! Because you're going to lose them to the deliciously smexy new bad boy prince in *Capture the Crown*. Estep has outdone herself in penning my new favorite book of hers. Prince Leonidas is everything I could ask for—and Princess Gemma as a spy in a deadly waltz with him had me devouring the pages."

Fesperman, Dan. [The Cover Wife](#) (Knopf \$26.95 SIGNED) fictionalizes the story of the terrorist cell in Hamburg, Germany, responsible for the 9/11 attacks. CIA agent Claire Saylor goes undercover, posing as the wife of an academic with an explosive new interpretation of the Koran launching a book at an event in Hamburg. But Saylor's real job is to understand what the terrorist cell is up to... See Signed Books for more. Former CIA analyst Francine Mathews will be discussing *The Cover Wife* with Dan who has won multiple awards for his spy fiction.

Freeman, Brian. [Robert Ludlum's Bourne Treachery](#) (Putnam \$28 SIGNED) finds Bourne, "the man with no memory and no past," and love interest Nova, his partner in the Treadstone spy organization, in Tallinn, Estonia, on a doomed mission to rescue a U.S. double agent, Grigori Kotov. As they escort Kotov through the streets of Tallinn, Bourne hears a Beatles song from a distant radio. During a subsequent clash with FSB agents, Bourne hears

one of the Russians say the name *Lenin*... Just one of the clever twists Freeman introduces into this high action spy thriller that does Jason Bourne proud. Powerful action, unexpected twists. See Signed Books for more.

Hagedorn, Ann. [Sleeper Agent: The Atomic Spy Who Got Away](#) (Simon Schuster \$28). George Koval was born in Iowa. In 1932, his parents, Russian Jews who had emigrated because of anti-Semitism, decided to return home to live out their socialist ideals. George, who was as committed to socialism as they were, went with them. It was there that he was recruited by the Soviet Army as a spy and returned to the US in 1940. A gifted science student, he enrolled at Columbia University, where he knew scientists soon to join the Manhattan Project, America's atom bomb program. After being drafted into the US Army, George used his scientific background and connections to secure an assignment at a site where plutonium and uranium were produced to fuel the atom bomb. There, and later in a second top-secret location, he had full access to all facilities and he passed highly sensitive information to Moscow. There were hundreds of spies in the US during World War II but Koval was the only Soviet military spy with security clearances in the atomic-bomb project. The ultimate sleeper agent, he was an all-American boy who had played baseball, loved Walt Whitman's poetry, and mingled freely with fellow Americans. After the war he got away without a scratch. His information landed in the right hands in Moscow—in 1949 Soviet scientists produced a bomb identical to America's years earlier than US experts expected.

Harris, Oliver. [Ascension](#) (Houghton \$25). Despite uncovering a deep plot to incite a new world war, English spy Elliot Kane has been on probation with the service since his misadventures in Kazakhstan. Having taken up a job teaching college literature and linguistics, he surprisingly enjoys living a conventional life and wonders if he would even go back to spycraft. Then a colleague from an ages-ago mission reaches out with a request. One of her tech specialists was on a long-term mission, in deep cover, but has suddenly killed himself. The agency is afraid to finish this vital mission without knowing what prompted this seemingly healthy man to take his own life. The carrot in this offer is helping his old friend; the stick is a worse punishment from the Agency if he doesn't comply. So Elliott poses as an academic researcher and heads to one of the most remote places on the planet, Ascension Island. Arriving on a rocky, barely livable island located in the Atlantic Ocean, halfway between Brazil and Angola, Kane is unsure whom to trust and why this lonely outpost is so important to the British military...until he uncovers dangerous secrets that lead straight back to London's highest offices.

Household, Geoffrey. [Rogue Male](#) (\$14.95). I can't leave this 1930 chiller thriller in its republication by the *NY Review of Books* Classics series, out. It's one of my favorites along with gems of the past by such authors as John Buchan, Frederick Forsyth, Ken Follett, E. Phillips Oppenheim, and so many more. Summer is a great time to visit or revisit past masters for fun and also for a fuller appreciation of those currently writing. It's more a chase than a spy novel, but it's terrific.

Katsu, Alma. [Red Widow](#) (Putnam \$27 SIGNED). A spy thriller written by an intelligence veteran about two women CIA agents whose paths become intertwined around a threat to the Russia

Division—one that's coming from inside the agency. Well paced and authentic, and an interesting exploration of female friendship in a world dominated by men. See Beatriz Williams below for similar in an earlier era.

Matthews, Owen. [Red Traitor](#) (Doubleday \$27.95). Told primarily from the Russian perspective, this gripping thriller from Matthews focuses on the often overlooked role of Soviet submarines, all equipped with nuclear missiles, that were heading to Cuba in the days leading up to the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. Matthews' taut tale illuminates aspects of history for us.

✎ Philby, Charlotte. [A Double Life](#) (Harper \$15.99). Gabriela is a senior negotiator in the Foreign Office. When she returns to her young family after a seven-month stint in Moscow, something doesn't seem right. Isobel is a journalist on the local paper in Camden. After witnessing a violent attack, she starts to investigate. But someone saw her watching, and is making himself known in increasingly frightening ways. As Gabriela's life begins to unravel, Isobel gets closer to the truth, and the two women's lives converge. This is a contemporary look at women in espionage that pairs well with Beatriz Williams' post-WWII novel of same below. "*A Double Life* confirms Charlotte Philby as the master of a sub-genre she basically invented, dealing in the dangerous area where working motherhood and international espionage collide. Heart-breaking, gripping and always beautifully written, I can't wait to see what she does next." – Erin Kelly. I add that the surname Philby resonates in the world of spy stories.

✎ Porter, Henry. [The Old Enemy](#) (Grove \$26). Paul Samson is living in London and picking up some extra work for a private security company when he is almost killed by a thuggish assassin while tailing a mysterious and gifted young employee of a powerful environmental NGO. The murder of legendary spy Robert Harland, the poisoning of billionaire philanthropist Denis Hisami with a neurotoxin in the United States House of Representatives, and a second attempt on Samson's own life send him on the run to Estonia to figure out who is trying to kill him, and why. Follow him on the chase that ensues....

✎ Rahman, Khurram. [Home Grown Hero](#) (Harper \$16.99). "Rahman's superior second thriller featuring former London dope dealer Jay Qasim finds Jay, who reluctantly infiltrated a Muslim terrorist group on behalf of MI5 in 2020's [East of Hounslow](#) (\$16.99), working as a Hounslow Council help desk operator, content to have some "normality and structure" in his life. Unfortunately, a fatwa has been issued against him by Sheikh Ali Ghulam, the new leader of the terrorist organization Ghurfat-Al-Mudarris. Jay's quirky, often funny narrative alternates with poignant scenes featuring Imran Siddiqui, a sleeper agent, who—after many years in London—longs for a normal life of his own with his white, non-Muslim girlfriend and her five-year-old son. The author's focus on white nationalists and jihadist cells, whose seductive offering of a group identity can lead rootless young people to participate in horrendous assaults on those identified as "the enemy," leaves readers with a visceral understanding of racism and the lures of extremist belief. Darker and more complex than its predecessor, this entry handles topical issues with clarity and wisdom, plus a dash of wry wit."—*PW* Starred Review

Ricciardi, David. [Shadow Target](#) (Berkley \$27 SIGNED) opens with the crash of a small commercial plane in the French Alps, and only Jake Keller, a member of the CIA's Special Activities

Center, walks away. Before a rescue helicopter can whisk him to safety, Jake observes two armed men looking for something or someone—maybe him. Jake’s survival is bad news for Russian oligarch Nikolai Kozlov, who wants him dead because he might cause problems for a planned assassination of a national leader in London.

Silva, Daniel. [The Cellist](#) (Harper \$28.99 SIGNED). Viktor Orlov had a longstanding appointment with death. Once Russia’s richest man, he now resides in splendid exile in London, where he has waged a tireless crusade against the authoritarian kleptocrats who have seized control of the Kremlin. His mansion in Chelsea’s exclusive Cheyne Walk is one of the most heavily protected private dwellings in London. Yet somehow, on a rainy summer evening, in the midst of a global pandemic, Russia’s vengeful president finally manages to cross Orlov’s name off his kill list. That’s the set-up for the entry of Israeli ace spy Gabriel Allon who disagrees with MI6’s analysis of who and what next.

Starford, Rebecca. [An Unlikely Spy](#) (Harper \$27.99). Recruited into an elite MI5 counterintelligence unit in 1939, Evelyn Varley poses as a Nazi sympathizer in order to infiltrate the Lion Society: a homegrown British group of Nazi sympathizers seeking an alliance with Germany. However, when Evelyn discovers one of her old school friend’s lover may be part of the group, she is forced to make some difficult choices. Here is how *PW* summed up this compelling debut “The author does an excellent job of recreating London before, during, and after the war, and in Evelyn has created a complex heroine whose sense of duty gets her in way over her head. With suspense worthy of Hitchcock and a moral reckoning straight out of Le Carré or Graham Greene, this is a winner.” [Read an essay](#) on *An Unlikely Spy* by noted editor Neil Nyrén.

Tanabe, Karin. [A Woman of Intelligence](#) (St Martins \$27.99). Tanabe takes readers deep into the inner life of a society housewife turned FBI. The daughter of Swiss immigrants, Katharina Edgeworth speaks four languages, has a graduate degree from Columbia and is bored stiff spending her days caring for her two young boys in 1950s Manhattan. As the postwar fear of Communism sweeps across the U.S., Rina is recruited by FBI agents to collect information about a former lover suspected of Communist activities. Desperate to find a purpose beyond wiping noses and breaking up her boys’ arguments (or schmoozing at gala events with her doctor husband), Rina agrees, barely pausing to debate the ethics of spying on someone she once trusted. Before long, she realizes what her handlers already know: she might be in way over her head. Tanabe’s narrative is full of rich period details, from the gilded world of Rina’s Upper East Side apartment and wealthy in-laws to her memories of her former work at the fledgling United Nations. Rina herself is a complicated character, smart and introspective, and bored by constraints.

Thor, Brad. [Black Ice](#) (Atria \$28.99). **Signed for us by Brad at his home.** Scot Harvath is having his best summer ever. With a cottage on the fjord, a boat, and his beautiful girlfriend Sølvi, he’s got everything he could possibly want. But out of vacation days and long overdue back home, America’s top spy has a decision to make—return, or submit his resignation. When his deadly past comes calling, though, he’ll be left with no choice at all. Leaving his favorite Oslo café, Harvath watches as a ghost climbs out of a taxi—a man he killed years ago, halfway around the world.

How is he still alive? And what is he doing in Norway? In a race against time that will take him high above the Arctic Circle. Brad tells me, “I wanted to capture all of the power struggles and brinkmanship taking place, focusing especially on what the Chinese have been up to. Norway, in addition to being a NATO partner, is super sexy and I wanted to unfold a great spy tale across that gorgeous scenery. It’s an edge-of-your-seat thriller, wrapped in real life events.”

Williams, Beatriz. [Our Woman in Moscow](#) (Harper \$27.99 SIGNED). Beatriz writes a Cold War spy story replete with real players like Guy Burgess. It was a time when being a Communist for some was like a religion. And it played hell with lives. Those of Iris and her sister Ruth Macallister are ensnared from the time they join their diplomat brother Harry in Rome in 1940 and Iris is captivated by Sasha Digby, a colleague of Harry’s at the embassy. The narrative switches back and forth from 1940 to 1952 and time inbetween and comes to a head four years after the Digbys defected to Russia in 1948. The KGB now suspects Sasha of working as a double agent. In New York, the FBI’s Sumner Fox devises a plan to have Ruth travel to Moscow. Fox will accompany Ruth as her spouse and extract the Digbys. Ruth and Sumner’s efforts to rescue the Digbys from the Soviet Union, however, are complicated by the KGB, operative Lyudmila in particular, whose story we have also been following. An excellent look at the roles of women in a time when few had agency.

NEW IN HARDCOVER FOR JULY

Austin, Emily. [Everyone in This Room Will Someday Be Dead](#) (Atria \$26). Library Reads says about a book not read by me: “In need of a short novel with a unique and lovable character, genuine LOL moments, and an ending that is richly deserved, hopeful, and joyful? Then this is for you. It’s brilliantly written and also a brutally honest depiction of what it’s like to have severe anxiety. For fans of *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine* and *Mostly Dead Things*.” And I like this bookseller comment: “Finally, someone said it, someone admitted that it’s deeply weird that we’re all just skeletons walking around! *Everyone in This Room Will Someday Be Dead* embraced me in a way that I didn’t know I needed while making me cackle with laughter.”

Barbarisi, Daniel. [Chasing the Thrill](#) (Knopf \$28). The subject of this thrilling nonfiction work is a group of treasure hunters who searched the Rocky Mountains for 10 years trying to find a chest of jewels hidden by an eccentric art dealer. The dealer in question, Forest Fenn, left behind a poem which contained nine clues hinting at the supposed whereabouts of his buried treasure. Barbarisi, a journalist, started hunting for the treasure himself in 2017, and interweaves his own search with that of the other hunters—one is a Colorado pastor—he profiles. As I said before, this book is “shot through with dramatic plot twists, colorful personalities, and insights into the nature of obsession.”

Barry, Max. [The 22 Murders of Madison May](#) (Putnam \$27). “This book isn’t completely out of Barry’s wheelhouse, featuring as it does some unsurprising rips in the space-time continuum, but it’s a little more grounded than usual, closer to a clever riff on unwanted resurrection. The titular Maddie is a real estate agent in Queens when we meet her, trying to follow her profession’s primal rules (‘Teeth, Tits, Hair’) when she meets potential buyer Clayton Hors, who not only identifies as some kind of other-

worldly outsider, but also declares, ‘You know, I love you, Madison. In every world. Even when you don’t love me back.’ Oh, and then promptly murders her. The only person who thinks this case is wonky is political reporter Felicity Staples of the *Daily News*, whose situation gets even stranger when a guy named Hugo Garrelly—who looks exactly like Clayton Hors—gives her a strange metal egg right before pushing her into the path of a moving subway train. In subsequent lives, Maddie is an up-and-coming actress or a TV weather girl or a waitress or a student—all ending in her murder by someone who can effortlessly move between the parallel worlds where she exists. It’s all very noodle-bending, time-travel-y science fiction, but Barry is playing with a very specific set of tropes, as Maddie notices just prior to one of her many demises: ‘Oh, she thought. It’s a horror movie.’” —*Kirkus Reviews*

Benedict, Marie/ Victoria Christopher Murray. [The Personal Librarian](#) (Berkley \$27). I’ve hung out at the fabulous Morgan Library at Madison and 36th Street in Manhattan for decades. Gilded Age zillionaire J.P. Morgan was a serious collector and his legacy was assured and burnished by his personal librarian, Belle da Costa Greene. Belle, hired while only in her twenties to curate his collection and grow it, was remarkable in her post because she was 1. A woman. 2. So young. 3. Black—a secret well hidden. And so she becomes a fixture in New York City society and one of the most powerful people in the art and book world, known for her impeccable taste and shrewd negotiating for critical works as she helps create a world-class collection. But Belle was born not Belle da Costa Greene but Belle Marion Greener, the daughter of Richard Greener, the first Black graduate of Harvard and a well-known advocate for equality. Belle’s complexion isn’t dark because of her alleged Portuguese heritage that lets her pass as white—her complexion is dark because she is African American. Today she’d be celebrated for her heritage. I have seen a film at the Morgan Library about Belle but can’t remember what it addresses outside her biblio expertise.

✦ Brett, Simon. [An Untidy Death](#) (Severn \$28.99) opens with Alexandra Richards asking Ellen Curtis, the kind, empathetic owner of a decluttering company called SpaceWoman in Chichester, England, to visit her mother, Ingrid Richards, a former journalist, as Alexandra believes the woman’s apartment has become a fire hazard. Ellen does so and realizes that the stacks of newspapers and books are merely a “personal filing system,” as Ingrid is in the throes of writing a new book. Ellen goes on to her next client, who casually informs her that he has murdered his wife. Later, while still pondering the veracity of that remark, she learns that Ingrid has indeed died in a fire in her apartment. Convinced that Ingrid has been murdered, Ellen sets out to investigate.... “Brett has a gift for creating vivid, complex characters, and he gently massages in teaching moments about clinical depression (Ellen’s manic-depressive husband died by suicide, for instance) and psychological triggers for hoarders.” Ordered Upon Request.

✦ Buchanan, Greg. [Sixteen Horses](#) (Flatiron \$27.99). Unread by me so this is *PW*: “In a farmer’s field, Alec Nichols, a policeman in the English seaside town of Ilmarsh, views 16 submerged horse heads, “all apart, all with only the barest strand of skin on display, all with a single eye left exposed to the sun.” Nichols and a forensic veterinarian, Cooper Allen, begin investigating the ritualistic tableau and end up probing the past and present of Ilmarsh, whose residents appear to be dying from environmental

and economic disasters. In spare, poetic prose, the story unfolds mostly linearly—people disappearing, more ritualistic animal torture—with occasional flashbacks to illuminate the inner lives of characters and the history of the place itself. Decades of economic activity (fishing, oil, manufacturing, a once-thriving tourism industry) have been killing the town and poisoning the psyches of the locals... The story line can be serpentine, but its rewards are worth the effort. This complex, often gothic tale is definitely an eye-opener.”

✦ Buckley, Fiona. [Forest of Secrets](#) (Severn \$28.99). Ursula Blanchard, a prosperous widow and half-sister to Elizabeth I, receives a strange visitor at her Surrey home. Etheldreda Hope has come from the village of Chenston, where her mule giving birth to a foal is arousing her neighbors’ fears that she’s a witch. Even more worrying, Etheldreda reports that secret rites are being committed in the forest outside Chenston, and the group’s unknown leader says they must “bring about the death of an evil queen, to save an honest queen.” Since Ursula works for Elizabeth’s spymaster Sir Francis Walsingham, off to Chenston she must go. There she finds the villagers in thrall to odd beliefs and pagan practices, but do these have anything to do with a conspiracy to put Mary, Queen of Scots, the queen’s rival, on the throne? Despite the dangers, Ursula must continue to seek out any possible danger to the queen while Walsingham plots Mary Stuart’s downfall. Pagan rituals combine with a thorny mystery in this 19th chapter in the Ursula Blanchard series. Ordered Upon Request.

Chamber, Becky. [A Psalm for the Wild-Built](#) (Tor \$20.99). “The quiet life of a tea monk is interrupted when a robot of Panga, one of the mass who wandered off into the wilderness after gaining self awareness, arrives after centuries to honor a promise to check in. The robot cannot return to the wilderness until the question of ‘what do people need?’ is answered in Hugo-Award winner Chambers’ latest Monk & Robot series entry! For readers who enjoyed [The House in the Cerulean Sea](#).”

✦ Clare, Alys. [Lammas Wild](#) (Severn \$28.99). 1100 England. The talented healer Lassair, who can also read minds, is back home in the Fenland of East Anglia after a seven-year absence in Spain. The tension rises with the murder of one of the first people she speaks to, wealthy widow Eleanor de Lacey. Even more ominous, an enemy from Spain is trailing Lassair, with violence clearly the intent. The investigation into Eleanor’s murder and others that follow by the man Lassair loves, Cambridge lawman Jack Chevestrier, leads to the exposure of a network of spies. Meanwhile, Lassair dares not reveal herself to Jack for fear that she’ll bring death to his door. The political strife tearing apart England during this time, with royal rivals lashing out at one another, makes an effective background, and the fantasy element never dilutes the power of the mystery. At the novel’s center is the affecting romance between Lassair and Jack, which Clare smoothly integrates into the suspenseful narrative

Clark, Tracy. [Runner](#) (Kensington \$26). A potent mix of empathy and rage fuels Sue Grafton Award-winner Clark’s exceptional fourth Chicago mystery. After 15-year-old Ramona Titus runs away from her foster home one cold day before her recovering-addict mother, Leesa Evans, can reclaim her, PI Cassandra “Cassie” Raines, a former Black homicide cop with CPD, takes the job of tracking down the girl. Almost everyone seems anxious

to help save Ramona, including Deloris Poole, the loving foster mother she skipped out on, and retired police detective Frank Martini. Only child placement worker Ronald Shaw appears reluctant. After Cassie discovers that Ramona fled after furtively taking a picture of Poole, Martini, and Shaw conferring—or conniving—together, she sets out to find what the three are really doing with the teenage girls they’re supposed to be protecting. Meanwhile, Cassie has a host of her own family crises to work through. The action builds to an exciting showdown between gutsy Cassie and the villains in a frozen forest outside the city. One can’t help think of Paresky’s VI Warshawski’s and her social conscience. 4th in the [A Chicago Mystery](#) series and getting a lot of attention. [Read an insightful essay by Clark](#) about creating Cassie.

Davis, Lindsey. [A Comedy of Terrors](#) (St Martins \$27.99). Flavia Albia’s husband, Tiberius Manlius, a magistrate in charge of the ancient Roman equivalent of consumer protection, is drawn into his own inquiry. Nuts being sold in honor of the Saturnalia festival have made several Romans sick. Tiberius’s assistant believes that organized criminals, seeking to eliminate competition by sabotaging rivals in the nut trade, are responsible. Soon after Tiberius begins to investigate, the severed head of their pet sheep is left on their doorstep. With characteristic humorous disdain, Flavia takes the threat in stride. After she teams up with Tiberius, they uncover a wide pattern of racketeering that includes murder, public corruption, extortion, and tax fraud. Davis convincingly depicts first-century mobsters, an aspect of ancient Roman criminality that’s been underutilized by authors writing about this period.

Deutermann, P T. [Trial by Fire](#) (St Martins \$28.99). This harrowing WWII naval action thriller fictionalizes the final battle of the aircraft carrier *USS Franklin*. Early chapters introduce the key players, including Commander George Lowry Merritt, the ship’s executive officer, and Lt. John Ryan McCauley, the fire marshal and assistant damage control officer, going about their duties in the months leading up to the morning in March 1945 when a Japanese bomber dropped two bombs that pierced the Franklin’s flight deck, setting off a chain-reaction explosion of armed and fueled fighter aircraft that nearly sinks the ship. Heroism abounds as Deutermann skillfully brings moments like the rescue of 300 men trapped below decks to life, while also vividly conveying the sensations of pervading death.

Feehan, Christine. [Murder at Sunrise Lake](#) (Berkley \$28). “Best-seller Feehan expertly reels in readers for a rip-roaring thrill ride in this spectacular standalone. Badass heroine Stella Harrison, the daughter of a serial killer, possesses an intuitive gift for sensing other serial killers through her dreams—and it appears that one’s about to strike in Sunrise Lake, the tiny hamlet in California’s Sierra Nevada Mountains where Stella owns a resort. For two years, strong, silent type Sam Rossi has been Stella’s handyman and the closest thing she has to a confidant, but she’s reluctant to tell him of her premonitions—until he becomes a target. Now Stella and Sam race to outsmart the killer—and as the body count rises, their relationship heats up. The pair slowly shares the secret details of their lives with each other, including that Sam is a former fixer for the U.S. government with a notorious father of his own. Feehan ramps up the tension early and keeps it climbing until the very end, masterfully throwing out red herrings that

will keep readers guessing. The riveting plot strikes a fine balance between romance and danger.” Though billed as paranormal romance, the reviewer I quote emphasizes the crime elements.

Harmel, Kristin. [The Forest of Vanishing Stars](#) (Gallery \$28). Also from Library Reads: “Stolen from her parents at two years old, Yona learns to survive in the forest. Years later, Yona teaches Jews fleeing the Holocaust likewise to survive in the forest. Harmel pens a tale of personal responsibility, betrayals, loss, and love that stays with you long after you’ve read it. For readers who enjoyed *The Nightingale*, *Salt to the Sea*, and *The Baker’s Secret*.”

Hayes, Emery. [Back from the Brink](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). This tense thriller which sets people chasing one another around Blue Mesa, Montana, border country, is probably better if you read the first case for Sheriff Nicole Cobain, [Cold to the Bone](#) (\$26.99). However you can plunge into this one and enjoy the landscape. It begins with the sheriff called to the lake to assist Border Patrol while just before we followed a very pregnant young woman on the run after her home has been attacked and her husband probably killed. When the team finds a boat adrift, a body in the ice, and drags the lake looking for BP bodies, she gives birth and the placenta is a clue. A clue to corruption within the BP where an undercover op has been trying to root out the bad guys. There is crossover appeal in the later chapters to a Joe Pickett by Box.

Hawke, Ethan. [Meadowlark: A Coming of Age Crime Story](#) (Grand Central \$26). Academy Award-nominated actor and best-selling author Hawke returns with illustrator Greg Ruth in a second graphic novel after 2016’s *Indeh*. We have a coming-of-age neonoir about a troubled boy and his troubled dad set in Texas. Teenage troublemaker Coop has been expelled from school, hates his mom’s dorky boyfriend, and wishes he could just live with his dad, Jack, a brave and charming (if frequently late) corrections officer with a past as a boxer. But when Jack’s fraught relationship with Coop’s mom forces an impromptu bring-your-son-to-work day at the local prison, a series of events unfold that upend Coop’s understanding of his father and force him to grow up quickly.

Heywood, Claire. [Daughters of Sparta](#) (Dutton \$27). As a young princess, Klytemnestra expected to be her father’s heir, that the man she would marry would rule her home kingdom of Sparta after him, and that her beautiful younger sister, Helen, would be sent away to cement an alliance with a foreign king. However, their father’s strategy plays out differently, and Klytemnestra is given to King Agamemnon to be the queen of Mycenae, while Helen’s husband, Agamemnon’s younger brother Menelaus, will have Sparta. Both sisters, even as queens, are meant to be confined to the private lives of their families, but both will reach for more: Helen in her famous abandonment of her home for Troy, and Klytemnestra in her husband’s absence during the ensuing war. Heywood presents a version of these sisters’ lives that could have been authentic for Bronze Age Greece. If there are gods, mortals do not knowingly see or interact with them. The focus is tightly on the experiences of these two women. Other familiar faces from the Iliad and classical Greek drama appear, but only as they are relevant to the sisters. The result will feel fresh even to those most familiar with the traditional stories A debut novel by an author with degrees in Classical Civilization and Ancient Visual and Material Culture.

Jeffers, Honoree Fanonne. [The Love Songs of Web Du Bois](#) (Harper \$28.99). Many of you expressed appreciation for the Juneteenth Reading List link in the Enews. Here's a book of interest, unread by me. *Kirkus* writes, "Ailey Pearl Garfield, the protagonist of this epochal saga, is a compelling mélange of intellectual curiosity, scathing observation, and volatile emotion. Though her grandmother may have preferred that she join the parade of medical doctors in their family, Ailey is destined to become a historian. Her journey toward that goal, fraught with heartache, upheaval, and conflict from her childhood through adolescence and collegiate years, is interwoven with the results of her inquiry into her family history. That history is deeply rooted in the Georgia town of Chicassetta, where Ailey's Black ancestors were enslaved and exploited by a "White Man with Strange Eyes" named Samuel Pinchard, who not only brutalized and demeaned his slaves, but also haphazardly procreated with them over the decades before the Civil War. The "songs" interspersed throughout the book, chronicling in vivid, sometimes-graphic detail the antebellum lives of Ailey's forbears, are bridges linking Ailey's own coming-of-age travails in what is referred to only as the City. Precocious, outspoken, and sensitive, Ailey often tests the patience of the grown-ups in her life, especially her parents, Geoff and Belle, whose own arduous passage to love and marriage through the 1950s and '60s is among the many subplots crowding this capacious, time-traversing narrative. The story always swerves back to Chicassetta, where Ailey spends her summers, and her encounters with friends and relations, the most notable of whom is her beloved Uncle Root, a retired professor at a historically Black college where he'd first made the acquaintance of the novel's eponymous scholar/activist. In her first novel, Jeffers, a celebrated poet, manages the difficult task of blending the sweeping with the intimate, and, as in most big books, she risks stress-testing some of her own narrative threads. Still, the sturdiest of those threads can throb with haunting poignancy, as in the account of Ailey's promising-but-troubled sister, Lydia, which can stand alone as a masterful deconstruction of addiction's origins and outcomes. If this isn't the Great American Novel, it's a mighty attempt at achieving one."

Jobb, Dean. [The Case of the Murderous Dr. Cream](#) (Algonquin \$17.95). The Hunt for a Victorian Serial Killer makes gripping true crime. Not only for its portrait of Thomas Neill Cream, a medical doctor who poisoned as many as ten people in North America and Britain before his 1892 murder trial, but for the societal attitudes that allowed him to kill: the blind faith placed in doctors, the power imbalances between Cream and the people who sought his care, and the indifference of agencies who might have helped them. Plus 19th Century police work in an era when poisoners roamed the earth and forensics were no help, not to mention little to no inter-agency communication and cooperation. Although Cream was Scottish/Canadian and imprisoned for a term in Joliet, Illinois, he ended his notorious serial killer spree in London where despite his attempts to frame others for his crimes, he was tried and hanged in 1892. Leaving much speculation that his last words indicated he was Jack... an unlikely claim.

Johnson, Diane. [Lorna Mott Comes Home](#) (Knopf \$28). Our own staffer Susan's theory is that anything French sells. So I include this drama by Johnson, the author of *Le Divorce* and *Le Mariage*, with its focus on contemporary French and American manners, morals, (ex) marriages, and motherhood and bridging a rural

French village and San Francisco. The titular heroine leaves her marriage to her French husband, a flagrant *tombreur* (seducer), after more than two decades of marriage, as well as her French home, and returns to her roots in San Francisco. Her aim is to reestablish herself as an academic and begin a new chapter, both personally and professionally. Along the way she reconnects with her pregnant, and diabetic, 15-year-old granddaughter, and is pulled back to the French village she fled after a freak accident there uncovers the remains of a well-known American painter.

Joshi, Alka. [The Secret Keeper of Jaipur](#) (Mira \$27.99). Readers of Alka Joshi's debut novel, [The Henna Artist](#) (\$17.99), fell in love with Malik, the savvy, street-child protégé of Lakshmi, the titular artist who made her living serving the upper-crust women of Jaipur. Joshi now picks up Malik's and Lakshmi's stories 12 years later, as Malik uncovers some shady dealings at a prestigious construction firm. Meanwhile, in Shimla, Lakshmi is happy tending to an extensive healing garden and helping her husband run his medical clinic. But she has ambitions for Malik, who owes a great deal to his "Auntie-Boss." He travels to Jaipur to apprentice at Singh-Sharma Construction (whose owners have a complicated history with Lakshmi), just as the firm unveils a state-of-the-art cinema. When the theater suffers a collapse on opening night, Malik begins to investigate. Meanwhile, Lakshmi and a new acquaintance of hers in Shimla have stumbled onto a smuggling operation that may have links to the cinema incident.

Lackey, Kris. [Butcher Pen Road](#) (Blackstone \$25.99). I am not crazy about the voice for this series, but then as a speed reader I stumble at dialect. And such is the voice of Chickasaw Lighthouse Police Sergeant Bill Maytubby, who often finds himself investigating with Johnson County, Oklahoma, Deputy Hannah Bond. What they have here is a scene where nothing seems to fit the victim, neither his oversize waders nor the fish in his creel. Their search broadens to Texas and to an interstate fraud ring. Maytubby hunts by flying an ancient rented Cessna while Bond combs river trails for clues and trails leading to a killer. And they both try to protect the deaf boy and his mother who dragged them into the case by finding the body.

Lapena, Shari. [Not a Happy Family](#) (Penguin \$27). Brecken Hill in upstate New York is an expensive place to live. You have to be rich to have a house there, and Fred and Sheila Merton certainly are rich. But even all their money can't protect them when a killer comes to call. The Mertons are brutally murdered after a fraught Easter dinner with their three adult kids. Who, of course, are devastated. Or are they? They each stand to inherit millions. They were never a happy family, thanks to their vindictive father and neglectful mother, but perhaps one of the siblings is more disturbed than anyone knew. Did someone snap after that dreadful evening? Or did another person appear later that night with the worst of intentions? That must be what happened. After all, if one of the family were capable of something as gruesome as this, you'd know, yes?

Levien, Marissa. [The World Gives Way](#) (Redhook \$28). In a near-future world on the brink of collapse, a young woman born into servitude must seize her own freedom in this glittering debut with a brilliant twist. In fifty years, Myrra will be free. Until then, she's a contract worker. Ever since she was five, her life and labor have belonged to the highest bidder on her contract—butchers, laundries, and now the powerful, secretive Carlyles. But when

one night the Carlyles are found dead, Myrra is suddenly free a lot sooner than she anticipated—and at a cost she never could have imagined. Burdened with the Carlyles' orphaned daughter and the terrible secret they died to escape, she runs. Here we have a crime novel, a dystopian science fiction epic, and an adventure that explores love and striving.

✦ Marcott, Lindsay. [Mrs. Rochester's Ghost](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$24.95). "When Jane, the narrator of this clever, lively update of *Jane Eyre*, loses her job writing for a small cable network show and otherwise finds her life falling apart in Brooklyn, she seizes the opportunity to tutor the teenage daughter of widowed tech entrepreneur Evan Rochester at Thorn Bluffs, his estate in Big Sur, California. Despite rumors that Evan murdered his wife, Beatrice, who he claims drowned, Jane is drawn to her smart, enigmatic employer. As Jane seeks the truth about what happened between Evan and Beatrice, she must also deal with a ghostly figure stalking Thorn Bluffs. Frequent references to art history—a Modigliani painting plays a crucial role in the action—elevate this above garden-variety romantic thrillers."—*PW*

McPherson, Catriona. [A Gingerbread House](#) (Severn \$28.99). Set in the outskirts of Glasgow, Scotland, focuses on three strangers in their mid-50s—Laura, Martine, and Ivy—all lonely women who work from home with no families or close friends. Enter a fairy-tale cottage, deep in the heart country's heart. When shy, lonely Ivy meets a woman who claims to be her long-lost sister, she knows it's too good to be true. She decides to trust Kate anyway. She wants a family. Ivy enters Kate's cottage...and doesn't come out. Meanwhile, neighbor Tash Dodd, a bookkeeper in her father's trucking business, discovers an ugly family secret. When Tash's father threatens her, she seeks refuge at Kate's house, where she winds up imprisoned with the three other women—and devises an escape plan. Here's a thriller set in contemporary Scotland.

Miller, Derek B. [How to Find Your Way in the Dark](#) (Harper \$26). This terrific coming-of-age story, a prequel to Miller's *Norwegian by Night*, follows Sheldon Horowitz from his parents' deaths before his 13th birthday in 1937 to his departure a decade later from the isolated New England village where he and Lenny Bernstein, his best friend and the only other Jewish kid he knows, lead lives largely sheltered from both anti-Semitism and Jewish culture. Sheldon, a tough kid with outdoor skills cultivated during a childhood spent hunting and trapping with his father, a shell-shocked WWI vet, decides, correctly, that the accident that killed his dad as they drove home from his mother's funeral was murder, and devotes his teen years to seeking vengeance while living with an uncle. This quest spirals into grimly entertaining capers, including a jewel heist in the burgeoning borscht belt resorts of the Catskills. Diverting subplots track America's entry into WWII and the birth of modern stand-up comedy, as shown by Lenny's hilarious forays into showbiz. Readers will root for Sheldon, a memorable survivor, every step of the way. I did.

Oates, Joyce Carol. [Night, Neon: Tales of Mystery and Suspense](#) (Mysterious \$25.95). Here's a new story collection, haunting, humorous, mysterious, and suspenseful. Here are regular people searching for their place, a formidable task in today's fractured society. Oates is the author of an amazing 70+ books spanning a range of novels, stories, poetry, plays, essays, and literary criticism.

Parker-Chan, Shelley. [She Who Became the Sun](#) (Tor \$27.99). "*Mulan* meets *The Song of Achilles* in a bold, queer, and lyrical reimagining of the rise of the founding emperor of the Ming Dynasty from an amazing new voice in literary fantasy." In her intense, wonderfully written, and completely absorbing debut, Parker-Chan gives 14th century China a stunner of a rewrite. When her father and brother die as a consequence of a brutal attack, Zhu leaves her impoverished village and takes on her brother's identity and his fate. For readers who enjoyed *Priory of the Orange Tree*, *Gideon the Ninth*, and *The Poppy War*."

Parks, Brad. [Unthinkable](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$24.95). "Would you kill your spouse if that were the only way to prevent a billion other deaths? For lawyer-turned-househusband Nate Lovejoy, this suddenly is no idle question. According to Lorton Rogers, the man who's kidnapped him, Vanslow DeGange, founder of the shadowy Praesidium, can see the future, and he can see that the lawsuit Jenny Welker's filing on behalf of 280 clients of Virginia's Commonwealth Power and Light alleging that its coal-fired Shockoe Generation Plant produced record amounts of lung cancer and COPD will have unintended consequences: Other energy companies that get sued will bring their plants into compliance by using technology that will unintentionally but catastrophically accelerate global warming. Nate won't be able to talk Jenny out of pressing the suit; she'll have to die to save all those other lives. Although Nate's nowhere near ready to pull the trigger once he's released from captivity, Parks stands ready to unleash a furious barrage of complications that will force his hand....A textbook one-sitting read whose fiendishly inventive details only intensify its remorseless momentum."—*Kirkus* Starred Review

Prose, Francine. [Vixen](#) (Harper \$26.99). Prose's latest offering a "dazzling take on America's tendency to persecute, then lionize, its most subversive figures" is set in 1953, at the height of America's Red Scare. Recent Harvard grad, Simon Putnam, has taken a job as a junior editor at a publishing house. Despite his WASP-y sounding name, Simon comes from a liberal Jewish family—his mother went to high school with Ethel Rosenberg—and is aghast at his first assignment. He's supposed to edit a thinly veiled bodice ripper about the Rosenberg trial. The publisher's owner, Warren Landry, is desperate for cash and feels, despite the book's anti-Semitic underpinnings, that it will be a hit. Why newcomer Simon is given such a big editorial job is a mystery that underpins the novel. I put this here rather than into Spies for Summer because of the anti-Semitism it addresses more largely than the espionage of the Rosenbergs.

Raven, Catherine. [Fox and I: An Uncommon Friendship](#) (Spiegel & Grau \$28). On the surface, this is a story about a woman befriending a fox, which is in and of itself remarkable enough, but it is also a powerful meditation on nature, living in the world with and without people, as well as the power of literature."

Riley, Vanessa. [Island Queen](#) (Morrow \$27.99). Library Reads writes, "Both sweeping and intimate, beautiful and painful, this novel based on the life of Dorothy Kirwan Thomas, a free woman of color who rose from slavery to become one of the wealthiest and most powerful landowners in the colonial West Indies, is exquisite. Riley's research is palpable in the detail of each chapter, and readers will find themselves compulsively turning the pages until the end."

Share, Amber. [Subpar Parks](#) (Plume \$22). Park Snark! What's that? At first, I wasn't quite sure what to make of this colorful, book filled with hand-painted iconic scenes of national parks. The minimalist yet vivid illustrations and hand-lettering, slightly cartoony, are great. Then I realized that Share was inspired by the mostly Social Media comments made by visitors to parks who were either disgruntled by services or found nature to be disappointing. Aha. Enter Snark with Share, ie presenting the 1 star reviews against the actual glories of the parks as she sees them. Share says she "thought it was especially funny to illustrate a negative review of a park: Example: Joshua Tree wilderness park, larger than Rhode Island, was rated by one disappointed visitor as "just walking around in the desert." The Grand Canyon was rated by another as "a very, very large hole." Yosemite: "Trees block the view." Bryce Canyon was deemed "too orange." In reaction a community of park lovers sent photos and great stories. So, here you go, tour National Parks while enjoying the Snark with Share. This is a great gift book for anyone.

✎ Schellman, Katharine. [Silence in the Library](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). At the start of the sequel to [The Body in the Garden](#) (\$26.99), George Pierce, father of widow Lily Adler, comes to London, where Lily lives, to see a doctor. Mr. Pierce, who can be highly critical of his daughter, doesn't have time to call on Sir Charles Wyatt, an old family friend who has recently remarried and could be leaving any day for the country, so Lily agrees to visit Sir Charles instead and convey her father's respects. Sir Charles is not at home, but Lady Wyatt, his much younger wife, is, along with his son Frank, who's Lily's age and treats Lady Wyatt with disdain. The next day, Sir Charles is found dead in his library, and perceptive Lily, who has inserted herself into a Bow Street investigation before, immediately suspects foul play. In the end, Lily enlists her disapproving father's aid to catch the culprit. Lively characters and an intricate plot keep the pages turning. Look for a Book Chat between Schellman and me in early August on our Home Page.

✎ Shepherd, Scott. [The Last Commandment](#) (Mysterious \$25.95). Here's a play on Holmes and Mycroft in the person of Metropolitan Police Commander Austin Grant and a case of serial murders. Our blogger Lesa reviews: Just before he's set to retire from Scotland Yard, Austin Grant has three murders to investigate in one week. Austin keeps one clue quiet: mysterious numbers have been carved on the victims' foreheads. His brother, an Oxford professor, suggests that the numbers could be from the Ten Commandments, so Austin sends a warning to priests and London's churches shut down. Then Scotland Yard gets a call from NYPD detective John Frankel about a new victim, in St. Patrick's Cathedral. Austin flies to New York, hoping to reunite with his journalist daughter Rachel, from whom he's been estranged since his wife's death a year earlier. Austin, John, and Rachel team up to investigate, but they can't prevent a fifth murder. When they suspect an infamous old case of Austin's might lead to the next death, they all return to London in time for Christmas, but not in time to prevent the case from taking a terrible personal turn. The intensifying, suspenseful investigation ends in a shocking, made-for-TV reveal. Shepherd's first novel reflects his years as a TV writer (*The Equalizer*; *Miami Vice*.)

Smith, Alexander McCall. [The Man with the Silver Saab](#) (Knopf \$27). "In Smith's delightful third mystery featuring Malmö, Sweden, police detective Ulf Varg, art historian Anders Kindgren has

been plagued for months by a series of 'nasty little events,' starting with someone stuffing rotten fish into his car hood air vents. Now the stakes have risen. A painting he recently authenticated has been discovered to be a forgery. Certain that a forgery was substituted for the original after his evaluation, Kindgren wants Ulf, the thoughtful, tolerant head of the Department of Sensitive Crimes, to catch the person trying to besmirch his reputation. The gossamer-thin plot is almost irrelevant. The novel's pleasures lie in Ulf's philosophical asides and comments on how to live a good, just life."

Wendig, Chuck. [The Book of Accidents](#) (Del Rey \$28.99). Here's the Indie Next Pick: "Despite the classically creepy content of a true horror tale, I found myself devouring these pages before going to sleep at night and seeking them out again first thing in the morning, nightmares be damned."

Williams, Jen. [A Dark and Secret Place](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). Michael Reeve is the famous serial killer known as the Red Wolf. For much of Heather Evans's life, he's been behind bars. But when Heather returns to her family home after her mother's death, she discovers stacks of letters between her mother and the infamous murderer. And then a new body is found, killed in the same way as the Red Wolf killings. Is Michael Reeve innocent? Did he know Heather's mother and did it have something to do with her death? Finding out the answers might cost Heather her own life.

OUR JULY LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

✎ Ashley, Jennifer. [Death at the Crystal Palace](#) (Berkley \$16 SIGNED). Set in 1882, bestseller Ashley's delightful fifth Below Stairs mystery opens at London's Crystal Palace, where Lady Covington, a wealthy widow with four grown children, seeks out Kat Holloway, a cook employed in the home of a lord, after a mutual friend introduced them at the palace earlier. Lady Covington, who feels unwell and can trust no one in her immediate family, fears she's being poisoned and wants Kat, who has a reputation as a crime solver, to identify the culprit. Kat enlists the aid of her charming suitor, criminal investigator Daniel McAdam, who confirms that Lady Covington is indeed in danger. When Lady Covington's daughter-in-law dies after ingesting delicacies meant for her ladyship, Inspector McGregor of Scotland Yard investigates, assisted by Kat, who uses her culinary expertise to put the pieces together before the murderer can strike again. Well-drawn supporting characters and logistical details of running a prosperous household complement the intricate plot. "Downton Abbey" fans will be delighted. The smart move is to order the whole [Below the Stairs](#) series and read it from the beginning.

Axelrod, Steven. [Nantucket Penny](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99). A poetry-writing Nantucket police chief is nearly overwhelmed by multiple crimes in this action-packed procedural rooted in sharply observed social problems. And showcasing Axelrod's love for Old Nantucket, an island rapidly gentrifying with the attendant bonuses and ills. Henry Kennis is eagerly awaiting his nuptials to cozy-mystery writer Jane Stiles. Despite the island's reputation as home to the rich and famous, the native population's interest in past and present insults, along with a healthy dose of xenophobia, has been troubling Henry. In addition, there are drug gangs and an email from Australia that suggests someone is murdering women who look a lot like Jane. One of Henry's own officers is a racist rogue cop whose generations-long ties to Nantucket

have so far kept him from being fired. Several locals have gone missing, with only a telltale penny left behind when each of them disappears, but they could be off-island for purposes of their own. So they're low on Henry's to-do list compared to the problem of the California jailbreak of Roy Elkins, whom Henry had helped capture when he worked for the LAPD. Elkins is evidently bent on killing the loved ones of everyone connected to his arrest. And there's more.... yet Axelrod wraps it all together with skill.

Berry, Steve. [The Warsaw Protocol](#) (\$17.99). A secret dossier from a World War II-era Soviet spy comes to light containing information that, if proven true, would not only rewrite history — it could impact Germany's upcoming national elections and forever alter the political landscape of Europe. Two candidates are vying to become Chancellor. One is a patriot having served for the past sixteen years, the other a usurper, stoking the flames of nationalistic hate. Both harbor secrets, but only one knows the truth about the other. They are on a collision course, all turning on the events of one fateful day — April 30, 1945 — and what happened deep beneath Berlin in the Führerbunker. Did Adolph Hitler and Eva Braun die there? Did Martin Bormann, Hitler's close confidant, manage to escape? And, even more important, where did billions in Nazi wealth disappear to in the waning days of World War II? The answers to these questions will determine who becomes the next Chancellor of Germany. This premise allows Berry to tour you around the globe with Cotton Malone, from Bavaria to the Chilean Lake District which is still a Bavarian enclave, on to South Africa and then into secret vaults in Switzerland.... With the rise of the right in Germany and elsewhere, and the possibility of Merkel's retirement, this is both historical and timely.

Chiarella, Jessica. [The Lost Girls](#) (Putnam \$17). John reviews: More than twenty years ago, Marti Reese's older sister Maggie disappeared, and Marti was the only witness. Now just when Marti is about to give up hope, Ava Vreeland contacts Marti. Ava's brother Colin McCarty has been convicted of murdering his girlfriend, but Ava is certain he is innocent. After learning a bit more, Marti is intrigued, especially once she discovers Colin's case may have some connection to Maggie's disappearance. Chiarella's flair for insightful characterization begins with the book's realistically flawed protagonist and continues on to a cast of strongly delineated supporting characters. The book's plot is a cleverly calibrated mix of twists and turns that expertly lulls readers into thinking that they are so smart for figuring things out only to discover the author has been playing them all along. Chiarella calls her new book a "dark thriller about podcasters, Goth bartenders, and questionable life choices." *PW* called it "an outstanding psychological thriller" by a "writer to watch." I say *The Lost Girls* is simply one of the best suspense novels I've read this year.

✦ Cleaves, Ann. [The Darkest Evening](#) (\$16.99). Yay, another country house murder, this one set in a very snowy, freezing Northumberland village where the big house, Brockburn, and its family still dominate. DI Vera Stanhope, familiar to those of you who watch the TV series starring Brenda Blethyn, has foolishly set off for home in deteriorating blizzard conditions when she comes upon an abandoned car. The door is open, the driver absent—and a baby is secured in its carrier in the backseat. Vera loses no time in hustling the baby to the nearest shelter which is Brockburn—as it happens, the ancestral seat of the Stanhopes. Vera is the child of the family black sheep, disdained by her relatives and herself

preferring to ignore them. But here they are as a Christmas party is in full swing. And soon it's not just the abandoned baby but the body of a dead woman on the grounds in the snow that interrupt the festivities. So here we are in a classic scene, a large home in the countryside where family and guests are snowed in, even if not for long. And frictions grow. I love a strong British police procedural and here is a gem.

Gardner, Lisa. [Before She Disappeared](#) (\$17). Gardner delivers a knockout standalone having interested herself in long-time missing persons and what it takes to work such a case. The heroine if you can call her that is Frankie Elkin, a middle-aged alcoholic whose every day is a challenge to stay dry. Being drunk cost her the one relationship she valued which echoes throughout the story. So she has cut herself loose from all bonds, travels with a backpack, picks up work in a bar where she faces down the demon drink...she's kind of a Jack Reacher but with a specific mission and this one has brought her to a scruffy neighborhood in Boston. The MissPers is Angelique Badeau, a Haitian teenager who vanished from her high school months ago. Frankie has no credentials other than what she's self-taught but she is persistent and thinks outside the box. Inevitably she clashes with the Boston PD when she shoulders into the cold investigation. It goes from there. Frankie is hard to like yet you hope she's on a good path, but can she be? Gardner has always done formidable research for her books

Goodman, Carol. [The Stranger Behind You](#) (Harper \$16.99). One reason to read this gripping suspense from Goodman is the author's powerful account at the end of why she wrote it. Don't peek! While she takes inspiration from the Epstein take-down and fall out, it's a story very much her own, set in Manhattan and then at a high-security residential building called the Refuge up on the northern tip of the island. The Refuge once housed unwed mothers treated basically as prisoners by the Magdalen nuns, but now it's quite posh. And just the place for magazine journalist Joan Lurie to feel safe from both the reactions to her article, based on three years of research encouraged by her boss, exposing newspaper tycoon Caspar Osgood as a sexual predator of years standing, and a further attack such as she sustained at her low-rent city apartment. The attack has left Joan with head trauma she won't acknowledge, which plays a role. Seizing the hefty advance she gets from a \$2M book deal based on her Osgood story, Joan moves into the Refuge where a lively cast including the wife of the ruined Osgood, circle her. In fact, Melissa Osgood quietly moves into the Refuge, planning to discredit Joan's story. The plot takes many terrifying twists and turns en route to the surprising climax of a contemporary Gothic of the kind Goodman excels at writing. I've been a fan of Goodman's work since her fabulous first, [The Lake of Dead Languages](#) (\$16), a 2002 First Mystery Club pick set in a Gothic academia similar to the one in Donna Tartt's big hit.

✦ Griffiths, Elly. [The Lantern Men](#) (\$16.99). Forensic archaeologist Ruth Galloway has relocated to Cambridge and with an American partner. She's no longer North Norfolk police's resident forensic archaeologist. But now, when convicted murderer Ivor March offers to make Norfolk DCI Nelson a deal, Ruth reluctantly pitches in. Nelson was always sure that March killed more women than he was charged with. Now March confirms this and offers to show Nelson where the other bodies are buried—but only if Ruth will do the digging. Curious, but wary, Ruth agrees.

March tells Ruth that he killed four more women and that their bodies are buried near a village bordering the fens, said to be haunted by the Lantern Men, mysterious figures holding lights that lure travelers to their deaths. Is Ivor March himself a lantern man, luring Ruth back to Norfolk? What is his plan, and why is she so crucial to it? She's trying to locate a serial killer's victims, supposedly buried near the fens, where ghostly figures with lanterns are said to lure people to their deaths. This is one of my favorite British series. If you have somehow missed it, wait no longer, and read the [Ruth Galloway Mysteries](#) in order.

✦ Lovesey, Peter. [The Finisher](#) (\$16.95). On the 50th anniversary of the publication of his first novel, Peter Lovesey, Mystery Writers of America Grand Master and titan of the British detective novel, returns to the subject of his very first mystery, *Wobble to Death*: running. Through a particularly tragic series of events, couch potato Maeve Kelly has been forced to sign up for the Other Half, Bath's springtime half-marathon. What Maeve doesn't know is just how brutal some of the other runners are. As race day draws closer, an Albanian refugee named Spiro makes a run for freedom on the other side of town, escaping the chain gang that has held him hostage and its murderous foreman, who is known to his charges as The Finisher. The Finisher has killed for disobedience before, and Spiro knows there's a target on his back as he tries to lose himself in the genteel medieval city of Bath. A city riddled with caves, tunnels, old mines.... Meanwhile Detective Peter Diamond is tasked with crowd control on the raucous day of the race—and catches sight of a violent criminal he put away a decade ago, and who very much seems to be up to his old tricks now that he is paroled. Diamond's hackles are already up when he learns that one of the runners never crossed the finish line and has disappeared without a trace.

Rosenfelt, David. [Muzzled](#) (\$16.99). Paterson, NJ, attorney Andy Carpenter is almost preternaturally astute about the wickedness people get up to, but it takes a predicament for a dog to nudge him into action. He prefers to be retired. “The beauty of retirement is that it is a permanent situation,” he says to his wife and chief investigator, former cop Laurie. She replies: “Our differences are semantic. You consider yourself retired; I see it as semi-retired. I think you should come around to my point of view; that way you avoid disappointment....” If you take this case, “it fits right in. You won't feel like you failed at retirement. You'll be a success at semi-retirement.” Who could withstand the force of this? So Andy agrees to defend a man charged with murder on the basis that his client risked everything, even his freedom and his life, to reunite with his dog.” And behind the crimes is a topic that plays straight into the moment: a new drug trial.

Schneider. [The Basel Killings](#) (Bitter Lemon \$15.95). At the start of Swiss author Schneider's excellent first mystery and series launch, Peter Hunkeler, an inspector with the Basel City criminal investigation department, stops to relieve himself on a tree after leaving a bar. He spots an acquaintance, an “old vagabond” known as Hardy “who always had a diamond in his left earlobe,” sitting on a nearby bench. When Hunkeler approaches Hardy, who doesn't respond to the inspector's efforts at conversation, Hunkeler discovers Hardy has been strangled and the diamond cut out of his ear. The murder resembles one of Hunkeler's open cases—the strangling, several months earlier, of a prostitute whose ear was slashed to remove a pearl stud. Hunkeler, who takes the deaths personally, finds himself at odds with his bosses

and at risk of losing his job when he dissents from the theory that the killings were related to the city's drug-trafficking by Turks and Albanians. Schneider makes his flawed protagonist relatable and the truth behind the murders satisfyingly surprising. This gripping, plausible debut begins a series and is our **July International Crime Book of the Month**—I work at selecting different countries as well as good stories for this club.

Turton, Stuart. [The Devil and the Dark Water](#) (\$16.99). “Set in 1634, this outstanding whodunit from Turton (*The 7½ Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle*) opens in Batavia, where celebrated investigator Samuel Pippis, who was working in the Dutch East Indies until his arrest for an unknown reason, is about to be transported to Amsterdam aboard the *Saardam*, along with his longtime sidekick, Arent Hayes. From the dock, a bloody man issues a dire warning to the *Saardam*'s crew and passengers. As the grim figure, who appears to have leprosy, prophesies that the ship won't reach its destination, his clothing bursts into flame. Hayes and another passenger, the governor-general's wife, rush to help the dying man, only to find that his tongue had been cut out, making any speech impossible. The puzzles only continue once the vessel sets sail, including a locked-room murder, the reappearance of the dead leper, and a ghost ship dogging the *Saardam*. As Turton ratchets up the tension en route to the brilliant resolution of the plot, he keeps readers in doubt as to whether a rational explanation is possible. Fans of impossible crime fiction won't want to miss this one.”—*PW* Starred Review

Weiden, David Heska Wanbli. [Winter Counts](#) (\$16.99). Virgil Wounded Horse, the half Lakota, half white narrator of Weiden's gorgeous, ground-breaking debut, serves as a fists-for-hire enforcer on South Dakota's Rosebud Indian Reservation. Virgil makes his living as a private enforcer. Tribal police have very limited powers, and the feds don't bother with much on the reservation short of murder, so the Lakota often resort to hiring someone like Virgil to deliver vigilante justice. Now he gets to beat up his former bullies, and earn a few bucks doing so. It's not necessarily work to take pride in, though, especially in the eyes of his ex-girlfriend's politically powerful family. So Virgil is surprised when her father, a tribal council member, asks for his help. And he's even more surprised when the case brings Marie back into his life. The scope of the case quickly grows beyond this private enforcer's comfort zone, and he has a renewed romance to manage, while trying to keep Nathan safe at the same time. Out-of-town gangs, heavy hitters and hard drugs challenge Virgil's skills. To keep all these threads together, he may need to reconnect with his Native roots, after all. The setting of *Winter Counts* offers an important and overlooked glimpse at the particular challenges faced by Native Americans, especially concerning crime and justice.

NEW IN LARGE PAPERBACKS FOR JULY

Ahmed, Samira. [Mad, Bad, & Dangerous to Know](#) (Soho Teen \$10.99). Who won't enjoy a romantic, sweeping adventure through the streets of Paris? Smash the patriarchy. Eat all the pastries—words to live by. It's August in Paris and 17-year-old Khayyam Maquet—American, French, Indian, Muslim—is at a crossroads. This holiday with her parents should be a dream trip for the budding art historian. But her maybe-ex-boyfriend is ghosting her, she might have just blown her chance at getting into her dream college, and now all she really wants is to be back

home in Chicago figuring out her messy life instead of brooding in the City of Light. Two hundred years before Khayyam's summer of discontent, Leila is struggling to survive and keep her true love hidden from the Pasha who has "gifted" her with favored status in his harem. In the present day—and with the company of Alex, a *très charmant* teen descendant of Alexandre Dumas—Khayyam searches for a rumored lost painting, uncovering a connection between Leila and Alexandre Dumas, Eugène Delacroix, and Lord Byron that may have been erased from history. Echoing across centuries, Leila and Khayyam's lives intertwine, and as one woman's long-forgotten life is uncovered, another's is transformed.

Bailey, Samantha M. [Woman on the Edge](#) (\$14.99). I repeat the Starred Review for this debut, now out in paperback: "At the start of Bailey's nail-biting debut, new mother Nicole Markham approaches social worker Morgan Kinkaid on a Chicago subway platform and urges Morgan to take her baby. Morgan, whose husband, Ryan, recently committed suicide after being convicted of embezzlement, doesn't recognize the woman, yet Nicole calls her by name. Just after Nicole tosses the baby into Morgan's arms, she jumps to her death in front of a moving train. Morgan, in her effort to understand what motivated Nicole to kill herself, discovers that a baby died under Nicole's care when she was working as a nanny. The baby's mother, blaming Nicole, sent her threatening letters, even though the coroner ruled it was a case of sudden infant death syndrome. Meanwhile, Det. Karina Martinez, who earlier investigated Ryan's suicide and always believed Morgan conspired in Ryan's embezzlement, investigates Nicole's death; Karina suspects Morgan of pushing Nicole onto the tracks because Morgan was desperate for a child of her own. The tension becomes unrelenting as Morgan unravels Nicole's story."

Bowden, Mark. [The Case of the Vanishing Blonde and Other Stories](#) (\$16). I was truly gripped by these true stories, especially the one highlighted in the title which is an astonishing exemplar of perseverance and detailed investigation, plus some inspired guesswork. New readers will want to seek out Bowden's book-length nonfiction after devouring this. Many of you will know his bestseller *Black Hawk Down*.

Butler, Lyn Liao. [The Tiger Mom's Tale](#) (Berkley \$17). "Butler's riveting debut follows a half-white personal trainer who reconnects with her Taiwanese family after her biological father's death...Butler weaves in convincing descriptions of Lexa's navigating of the dating scene and the fetishizing of Asian women, and depicts a fascinatingly complex antagonist in Pin-Yen, who by the end must contend with the effect of her past actions. Butler breathes zesty new life into women's fiction."—*PW* Starred Review. And enjoy the delicious descriptions of food.

Campbell, Michele. [The Wife Who Knew Too Much](#) (\$16.99). Tabitha Girard gets a second chance at love when fate brings gorgeous Connor Ford back to their New Hampshire hometown after a summer fling 13 years earlier when they were teens. Their lives have since taken opposite trajectories: Tabitha's barely making ends meet waitressing after divorcing her abusive husband, while Connor has married a much older widow, heiress Nina Levitt. And yet, he manages to persuade her they're destined to be together, if only he can somehow wriggle out of his marriage without triggering the draconian prenup. Things quickly turn dicey as Nina smells a murder plot, Connor blows alternately hot

and cold, and even a trusting soul like Tabitha starts to suspect that Mr. Wonderful just might be setting her up. The glamorous locations make this far-fetched romantic thriller a sparkling poolside read.

✦ Candlish, Louise. [The Other Passenger](#) (Atria \$17). New mates Jamie Buckby, once a high-salaried marketing executive but now a low-paid barista, and Kit Roper, who works in insurance, are primarily traveling companions on the 7:20 a.m. ferry Thames River bus from St. Mary's into central London. One morning, during Christmas week and after an evening of holiday binge drinking, Kit doesn't show up. Suspicion falls on Jamie when it seems as though he may have a motive for murder. Enter the women in the thickening scheme of things. Jamie lives unmarried in high style with moneyed real estate agent Clare; Kit lives with his assistant, Melia, and they struggle to make ends meet and envy Jamie and Clare their townhouse. Everyone seems to have something to hide, piling one lie on top of another. Dalliances form, alliances abound, and deception is rampant in Candlish's clever commuter horror. There's a new genre for you although I think it fits squarely into Trust No One.

Collins, Max Allan. [Eliot Ness and the Mad Butcher](#) (Harper \$17.99). Max Allan Collins and A. Brad Schwartz uncover the epic story of Eliot Ness's forgotten final case. In 1934, the nation's most legendary crime-fighter—fresh from taking on the greatest gangster in American history—arrived in Cleveland, a corrupt and dangerous town about to host a world's fair. It was to be his coronation, as well as the city's. Instead, terror descended, as headless bodies started turning up. The young detective, already battling the mob and crooked cops, found his drive to transform American policing subverted by a menace largely unknown to law enforcement: a serial murderer. Ness had risen to fame in 1931 for leading the "Untouchables," which helped put Chicago's Al Capone behind bars. As Cleveland's public safety director, in charge of the police and fire departments, Ness offered a radical new vision for better law enforcement. Crime-ridden and devastated by the Depression, Cleveland was preparing for a star-turn itself: in 1936, it would host the "Great Lakes Exposition," which would be visited by seven million people. Late in the summer of 1934, however, pieces of a woman's body began washing up on the Lake Erie shore—first her ribs, then part of her backbone, then the lower half of her torso. The body count soon grew to five, then ten, then more, all dismembered in gruesome ways. As Ness zeroed in on a suspect—a doctor tied to a prominent political family—powerful forces thwarted his quest for justice. In this battle between a flawed hero and a twisted monster—by turns horror story, political drama, and detective thriller.

Cooney, Caroline B. [The Grandmother Plot](#) (Sourcebooks \$16.99). Freddy Bell has come to Middletown, Connecticut, to visit his beloved, Alzheimer's-afflicted grandmother, Cordelia Chase, who resides at Middletown Memory Care, "assisted living for the completely confused."Unfortunately, Freddy has unfinished money-laundering business with a drug kingpin, who has sent an enforcer in search of Freddy. So we're off into a snarky yet sentimental story where a stoner glass blower, Freddy, and a gossip-mongering collector meet up in Memory Care. Freddy leads a life of little responsibility; he's an affable bro who's fumbled into some shady side hustles to bolster his artistic ambitions. He's caring for grandma since everyone else in the family

has a real job. Laura's doing right by Aunt Polly to make up for mom dying alone. You know, floating through life one day at a time. That is, until a fragile old woman, already close to death, is murdered in the room next door. Freddy freaks out and Laura starts snooping. The author is both wry and gently respectful in depicting mentally diminished people. Cooney was a 2021 Edgar nominee for [Before She Was Helen](#) (\$15.99).

Demarco-Barrett, Barbara, ed. [Palm Springs Noir](#) (Akashic \$16.95). This new entry in Akashic's Urban Noir series presents stories by T Jefferson Parker, Janet Fitch, Tod Goldberg, JD Horn, Alex Espinoza, and several other writers who live in Palm Springs or Southern California...and focus not on the glamour but the life mostly just out of reach of the characters.

Don't forget Patrick edited an epic series entry, [Phoenix Noir](#) (\$15.95) filled with stories by Diana Gabaldon, Lee Child, James Sallis, Luis Alberto Urrea, Jon Talton, Megan Abbott, Charles Kelly, Robert Anglen, Patrick Millikin, Laura Tohe, Kurt Reichenbaugh, Gary Phillips, David Corbett, Don Winslow, Dogo Barry Graham, and Stella Pope Duarte. Urea won the Short Story Edgar for his story here.

DePalma, Brian. [Are Snakes Necessary?](#) (Hard Case Crime \$12.95). Postponed from April, from the director of *Scarface* and *Dressed to Kill*, a female revenge story. When the beautiful young videographer offered to join his campaign, Senator Lee Rogers should've known better. But saying no would have taken a stronger man than Rogers, with his ailing wife and his robust libido. Enter Barton Brock, the senator's fixer. He's already gotten rid of one troublesome young woman—how hard could this new one turn out to be? Pursued from Washington D.C. to the streets of Paris, 18-year-old Fanny Cours knows her reputation and budding career are on the line. But what she doesn't realize is that her life might be as well...

Donohue, Rachel. [The Temple House Vanishing](#) (Algonquin \$16.95). Irish writer Donahue's atmospheric debut explores unrequited love, obsession, and disappearance in an Irish boarding school. In 1990, 16-year-old Louisa's test scores earn her a place at the prestigious Temple House, situated in a Victorian manse on a gloomy seaside hill. The dour nuns and the head prefect ensure the reputation of the school for mainly rich and privileged girls is protected from inside defilement, as does snobbish classmate Helen, who bullies Louisa. She remains an outsider until she meets the beautiful, enigmatic student Victoria, and Mr. Lavelle, the school's heartthrob art teacher. As Louisa, Victoria, and Mr. Lavelle form a clandestine clique, they become enmeshed in a messy triangle that has implications for the entire school and ends with the disappearance of Mr. Lavelle and Louisa. Years later, on the 25th anniversary of their disappearance, an unnamed journalist working on a story about the episode aims to make readers feel like the events "could have them." It isn't until the journalist interviews Victoria, now a divorced, successful businesswoman, that the reasons behind the disappearances become unearthed. The creeping pace, melancholic tone, and full-bodied characters create a perfect snapshot of desperate youth amid oppressive tradition. This stands among the best of the current modern gothic trend where a campus/school often provides the background.

✂ Finlay, Mick. [Arrowood and the Meeting House Murders](#) (Harper \$16.99). If you crave Victorian age murder mystery, love darkly gothic atmospheres and want your detective rather tattered

and torn at the edges, Arrowood is your man. His London is seedy and dangerous. It's 1896. As winter grips the city, a group of African travelers seek sanctuary inside the walls of the Quaker Meeting House. They are being hunted by a ruthless showman, who is forcing them to perform in his ethnic exhibition in the London Aquarium. Private investigator William Arrowood and his assistant Barnett agree to help the travelers avoid capture. But when they arrive at the Meeting House, they find a scene of devastation. Two people have been murdered and the others have fled into the night. The hunt for the real killer leads Arrowood into a shadowy world of freak shows, violence and betrayal. 4th in the [Arrowood Mystery](#) series.

Goldin, Megan. [The Night Swim](#) (\$16.99). Again a true crime podcast is key. The host of one host covering a controversial trial finds herself drawn deep into a small town's dark past and a brutal crime that took place there years before.

Hurley, Graham. [Last Flight to Stalingrad](#) (Zeus \$15.95). Set in 1942, Hurley's compulsively readable fifth Spoils of War thriller finds journalist at the Ministry of Propaganda Werner Nehmann enjoying the good life in Berlin, where he resides in a friend's lavish apartment with his beautiful nightclub pianist girlfriend and writes puff pieces to bolster the Nazi government and boost the German war effort for his boss Joseph Goebbels. Nehmann thinks the Nazis are pompous, generally distasteful and some, like the SS, are monsters, but he keeps these opinions mostly to himself as he realizes he lives, prospers, and maybe dies at Goebbels's whim. When Goebbels asks Nehmann a favor—to carry a love letter to the propaganda minister's former mistress—Nehmann knows it's a command, not a favor. When he fails in his mission, Goebbels punishes him by sending him to Stalingrad to write uplifting articles about the doomed German fight for the city. "Nehmann's an appealing character in an impossible situation, and it's riveting to watch him try to stay alive. Fans of the late Philip Kerr's Bernie Gunther series will be enthralled."

Jónasson, Ragnar. [Whiteout](#) (\$15.95). When the body of a young woman is found dead beneath the cliffs of the deserted Icelandic village of Kálfshamarvík, police officer Ari Thór Arason, asking if she jumped or was pushed, uncovers a startling and terrifying connection to an earlier series of deaths, as the killer remains on the loose... July is a great time to read a book set in Iceland, no?

Lepionka, Kristen. [Once You Go This Far](#) (\$17.99). In Shamus Award-winner Lepionka's expertly plotted fourth mystery featuring Columbus, Ohio, PI Roxane Weary, Roxane is hiking one morning in a park when she comes across the body of Rebecca Newsome, a private school nurse, who appears to have accidentally fallen off a trail into a ravine. A month later, Roxane hears from Rebecca's grown daughter, Maggie Holmer, who suspects that Rebecca's nasty ex-husband, Keir Metcalf, a well-connected former Toledo cop, is involved in her mother's death. Roxane drives to Toledo, Rebecca's home, where she meets Keir, who proves uncooperative. Further delving into Rebecca's final days takes her to a casino in Windsor, Ontario, and into the web of a dangerous conspiracy.

Maberry, Jonathan. [Relentless](#) (\$18.99). Joe Ledger's world has been torn apart. The people closest to him have been savagely murdered and Ledger is on the hunt for the killers. His already fragile psyche has cracked apart, allowing a dangerous darkness to overwhelm him. His hunt takes him deep into the world of the

deadly black market weapons sales, and standing in his way are a new generation of private military contractors. These mercenaries have been enhanced with cutting-edge cybernetics and chemical enhancements, transforming them into real-world super soldiers. Stronger, faster, harder to hurt, and fitted with built-in weapons. They are beyond anything Joe has ever faced. But he is not the Joe Ledger they expected to fight. The attempt to destroy him—to break him—has backfired. Instead his enemies have turned him into a far more fearsome weapon.

Nugent, Liz. [Little Cruelties](#) (\$16.99). Three Irish brothers born successively a year apart compete frantically for their conniving actress mother's attention. And the little cruelties to which children are prone get nastier and nastier and finally end in blood. I do not recommend this book but if you missed [Nugent's *Unraveling Oliver*](#) or *Lying in Wait*, grab them.

Redondo, Dolores. [The North Face of the Heart](#) (\$14.95). Amaia Salazar, the Spanish-born police detective, has already made a name for herself by hunting down an elusive predator in northern Spain. In 2005, the 25-year-old Spanish assistant inspector Amaia Salazar, the protagonist of this gripping prequel to Redondo's *Batzán Trilogy*, is taking a course at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Va. During a lecture, Amaia learns of a serial killer, nicknamed the Composer, who's been targeting families affected by natural disasters. The Composer has fatally shot survivors of tornados in Texas and Oklahoma, where a witness saw him "waving his arms like someone directing an orchestra." Now, as Hurricane Katrina heads toward New Orleans, the FBI wants Amaia, an expert on serial killer psychology, to assist with their investigation. In New Orleans, the suspense builds as Amaia, FBI agents, and local detectives work tirelessly to try to find the Composer before the killer can strike again. Amaia's distinctive backstory lends weight to her character and career.

✦ Robb, Candace. [A Choir of Crows](#) (\$17.95). Robb continues her excellent 14th Century York mysteries where Plantagenet and ecclesiastical politics are at play and Captain Owen Archer and his apothecary wife Lucie prove champion investigators. For Owen the loss of the city's archbishop to death and the enthronement of a new one spell bad news. His role is both captain of the city's bailiffs and a spy for Prince Edward, which pits him against the powerful Neville family. And here, in 1374, a young woman disguised as a male pilgrim, proves to have a dangerous history. But first, did she fatally stab a vicar in his churchyard and then push another man to his death from the chapter house roof?

✦ Robotham, Michael. [When She Was Good](#) (\$17). Join brilliant forensic psychologist Cyrus Haven as he becomes embroiled in an explosive murder case with disturbing origins. Haven and Evie Cormac ask who is Evie, the girl with no past, running from? She was discovered hiding in a secret room in the aftermath of a terrible crime. Her ability to tell when someone is lying helped Cyrus crack an impenetrable case in [Good Girl, Bad Girl](#), Cyrus' first appearance. Now, the closer Cyrus gets to uncovering answers about Evie's dark history, the more he exposes Evie to danger, giving her no choice but to run. Ultimately, both will have to decide if some secrets are better left buried. Multi-award winner Robotham is one of my favorite novelists. You can find me talking to him on our FB Live page.

Rodarte, Christopher. [La Llorona: Ghost Stories of the Southwest](#) (Llorona \$14.95). The author tells me, "This is a collection of

tales about the infamous Wailing Woman of Latino folklore. The stories are based on first-person encounters individuals have had with the spirit. The book is geared for young readers who have outgrown Goosebumps and may not be ready for Stephen King; however, many adult readers have told me the stories gave them bad dreams—always a good sign with ghost stories.

Sabar, Ariel. [Veritas](#) (\$17). National Book Critics Circle Award-winning journalist and author Sabar fascinated me with the gripping true story of a sensational religious forgery and the scandal that shook Harvard. In 2012, Dr. Karen King, a star religion professor at Harvard, announced a breathtaking discovery just steps from the Vatican: she'd found an ancient scrap of papyrus in which Jesus calls Mary Magdalene "my wife." The mysterious manuscript, which King provocatively titled "The Gospel of Jesus' Wife," had the power to topple the Roman Catholic Church. It threatened not just the all-male priesthood, but centuries of sacred teachings on marriage, sex, and women's leadership, much of it premised on the hallowed tradition of a celibate Jesus. Sabar covered King's announcement in Rome but left with a question that no one seemed able to answer: Where in the world did this history-making papyrus come from? Sabar's dogged sleuthing led from the halls of Harvard Divinity School to the former headquarters of the East German Stasi before landing on the trail of a Florida man with an unbelievable past. I loved the event with did with Sabar which you can watch on our FB Live page or listen to in a podcast. This is detection at a granular level, a truly gripping story.

Saenz, Eva Garcia. [The Lords of Time](#) (Vintage \$16.95). Basque Noir concludes with the final volume in the [White City Trilogy](#). And it gets a Starred Review: "In 2019, Unai Lopez de Ayala, a police profiler in the Basque city of Vitoria, investigates the disappearance of two young sisters as well as a series of gruesome murders that may be related. Meanwhile, Unai becomes obsessed by *The Lords of Time*, 'the novel everyone in Vitoria was talking about,' by an elusive author who won't reveal his identity. Set in 1192, it 'wasn't so much a book as a trap made of paper, an ambush of words... and there was no escape.' Passages from the novel gradually reveal hidden connections among old Basque families, with a staggering wealth of literary, cultural, and sociological material that relates to Unai's investigation. Besides providing memorable glimpses into a little-known European cultural milieu, Sáenz offers profound insights into the psychology of serial killers, shown as skilled and charismatic professionals, who, devoid of empathy, prey parasitically on the gullible."

Trinchieri, Camilla. [Murder in Chianti](#) (\$16.95). Missing travel? With Trinchieri you can journey into the heart of Tuscan wine country. Mourning the loss of his wife, Rita, former NYPD homicide detective Nico Doyle moves to Rita's hometown of Gravigna in the wine-soaked region of Chianti. Half Italian and half Irish, Nico finds himself able to get by in the region with the help of Rita's relatives, but he still feels alone and out of place. He isn't sure if it's peace he's seeking, but it isn't what he finds. Early one morning, he hears a gunshot and a dog's cries near his new home and walks out to discover a dead body in the woods, flashily dressed in gold tennis shoes. When the police arrive, Nico hastily adopts the fluffy white dog as his own and wants nothing more to do with the murder. But Salvatore Perillo, the local *maresciallo*, discovers Nico's professional background and enlists him to help with the case.

Wasserman, Robin. [Mother, Daughter, Widow, Wife](#) (\$16). The memory clinic has named her Wendy Doe, this total amnesiac with no known past. The clinic's "guest," she is being studied by eminent psychologist Benjamin Strauss and protégée Lizzie (soon, not surprisingly, to be his mistress). Some months later, Wendy's memory returns; she is Karen Clark, with a home and a husband. Some years later, Lizzie (now Elizabeth and Strauss's widow and a best-selling author) finds Alice at her front door. Alice's mother, Karen Clark, has disappeared, and Alice is seeking insight because Lizzie was close to Karen when she was still Wendy. Wendy, Lizzie, and Elizabeth narrate in turns. "If it sounds a little soap opera-ish, it is, something the book lightly acknowledges, but the framework is sound. However, the narrative is studded with side trips into scientific/psychological disquisition, Lizzie's ruminations on 'mistress-hood,' narrative theory, even soap-opera structure, and more. In the end, one unforeseen mystery is solved—Alice's paternity—but a larger one is not: What has become of Wendy/Karen this time?"

✦ Watson, S.J. [Final Cut](#) (\$16.99). A documentary filmmaker winds up in a small English town called Blackwood Bay in this noir from bestseller Watson. After her producer receives an unsigned postcard urging someone to look into the seaside village, which was home to a smuggling operation centuries ago, Alex Young winds up focusing on a string of local kidnappings involving three teenage girls. This outstanding psychological thriller perfectly captures small town ennui while illustrating how corruption can hide in plain sight

Weiss, Leah. [All the Little Hopes](#) (Sourcebooks \$16.99). Weiss's ear for dialogue and her expert balancing of multiple narrators captured readers of her first novel, [If the Creek Don't Rise](#) (\$15.99). Her second novel uses two 13-year-old narrators to tell a lyrical, often gripping story of wartime struggle, small-town mysteries and what it means to be a family. There's plenty of Southern charm: sweet tea, honeybees, the word "y'all," cozy family evenings around the fire. But everyone in town has been touched by the war, including Lucy's household, with its two blue stars in the front window. When their quiet town becomes home to a German POW camp, and several more local men go missing, Lucy and Bert try to solve the mystery while wrestling with their own questions about what makes a person good or evil. Based on Weiss's own hometown and her mother's early experiences, her book tells a gripping wartime story of family, honeybees and missing men set in North Carolina. Reminiscent of *Summer of My German Soldier* and *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek*.

Wells, Christine. [Sisters of the Resistance](#) (Morrow \$16.99). Twenty-five-year-old Gabby Foucher loathes the Nazis, though as the concierge of 10 Rue Royale, she does her best to avoid conflict; unlike her bolder sister Yvette, who finds trouble at every turn. Then they are both recruited into the Resistance by Catherine Dior and swept into a treacherous world of spies, fugitives, and intrigue. While Gabby risks everything for the man she is hiding from the Nazis, Yvette must decide whether to trust an enigmatic diplomat who seems to have guessed her secret. Two years after World War II ends, Yvette returns from New York to reunite with Gabby and begin life anew as a mannequin for Dior, who is revolutionizing fashion with the New Look. But first she must discover the truth behind Catherine's terrible fate, while Gabby finds that there are many kinds of courage, and that love is always worth fighting for.

OUR JULY SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Alger, Cristina. [Girls Like Us](#) (\$9.99). Investigating a pair of grisly murders on Long Island, FBI agent Nell Flynn is horrified to discover the primary suspect is her own recently deceased father, a former homicide detective."Readers can expect a few genuine surprises, and the light Alger shines on society's most vulnerable members is an important one. Melancholy and addictive." (*Kirkus*)

Connelly, Michael. [Fair Warning](#) (\$9.99). Jack McEvoy #3. When a woman with whom he shared a one-night stand is found brutally murdered, veteran reporter Jack McEvoy tracks down a serial killer who has been operating under the radar. *Kirkus* gave this a rave saying "Jack works the case with a dogged professionalism, a mastery of detail, and a scarred but oversized heart that puts most of his police procedural cousins to shame. Darkly essential reading for every genre fan who's ever considered sending a swab to a mail-order DNA testing service.]"

Coulter, Catherine. [Deadlock](#) (\$9.99). FBI #24. Targeted by a vengeful psychopath out to destroy his family, Savich receives three mysterious boxes containing clues leading to an unfamiliar community and a young wife who must confront a decades-old secret. Here is *PW*'s take "Coulter expertly weaves all the plot threads together. Fans of extravagant thrillers with a paranormal tinge will be satisfied."

Goldin, Megan. [The Escape Room](#) (\$9.99). Ordered to participate in a corporate team-building exercise that requires them to escape from a locked elevator, four ruthless Wall Street high-flyers struggle to put aside rivalries shaped by workplace intimidation, deception and sexual harassment."Cancel all your plans and call in sick; once you start reading, you'll be caught in your own escape room—the only key to freedom is turning the last page!" (*Kirkus*)

Lindsey, Julie Anne. [The Cider Shop Rules](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Cider Shop #3. With the Fall Festival in full swing, Winona Mae Montgomery must solve the murder of pumpkin farmer Jacob Potter, one of the town's most popular citizens, while under the watchful eye of a killer. *Kirkus* said this "A down-home cozy with plenty of likable characters, budding romance, and a clever mystery."

Mason, Jamie. [The Hidden Things](#) (\$9.99). A home-security video of fourteen-year-old Carly Liddell fending off a vicious attack inside her own front door goes viral and changes the lives of four desperate people when the video reveals the presence of a priceless stolen painting hanging in the foyer.

Petrie, Nick. [The Breaker](#) (\$9.99). Peter Ash #6. Interrupting a shooting in a crowded marketplace, Peter Ash is approached by an old associate who offers him a clean record in exchange for help tracking down the gunman and the intended victim. *LJ* summed this up saying "Fans of Petrie's previous "Ash" novels and Lee Child's "Jack Reacher" series will fly through this exciting story and wait eagerly for the next installment."

Reich, Christopher. [The Palace](#) (\$9.99). Simon Riske #3. When a man to whom he owes his life reaches out from prison, international spy Simon Riske recruits a daring investigative reporter and a rogue Mossad agent to thwart an international conspiracy targeting major European cities. Here is *PW*'s take "Clever, sophisticated Riske stands out in the crowded action hero field."

Scott, J. Todd. [Lost River](#) (\$9.99). In a small Kentucky town devastated by the opioid epidemic, a young medic, a DEA agent and a former police chief are brought together after the murder of an entire local crime family and each have their loyalties tested. *PW*'s rave review ended with "Scott, a 25-year veteran of the DEA, writes with authority about the drug crisis. Don Winslow fans won't want to miss this wrenching thriller."

NEW IN SMALL PAPERBACKS

Abbott, Rachel. [The Invitation](#) (Grand Central \$8.99). The first time Jemma and Matt were invited to Polskirrin, it was for an intimate wedding that ended in tragedy. Jemma will never forget the sight of the girl's pale, doll-like body bobbing listlessly toward the rocky shore. Now, exactly one year later, Jemma and her husband have reluctantly returned at Lucas's request to honor an anniversary they would do anything to forget.

Allen, Meri. [The Rocky Road to Ruin](#) (St Martins \$7.99). Ice Cream Shop #1. When her best friend's brother is found dead after fighting about their late mother's ice cream shop, Riley Rhodes, a librarian at the CIA, searches for a killer while sharing ice cream scoops and settling into a life she never knew she was missing.

Blackwell, Juliet. [Synchronized Sorcery](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Witchcraft Mystery #11. Plagued by strange events, Lily Ivory sets out to solve two recent murders linked to a mysterious vintage mermaid costume and the long-ago World's Fair before another body is found floating in the San Francisco Bay.

Cahoon, Lynn. [Two Wicked Desserts](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Kitchen Witch #2. When the daughter of a warlock, an actress looking for her big Hollywood break, plays with magic, she becomes the #1 suspect in a murder investigation, and caterer and cooking instructor Mia Malone must conjure up the real killer.

Conte, Cate. [Claws for Alarm](#) (St Martins \$7.99). Cat Café #5. With her cat café, the House of Purrs, gaining national attention, Maddie James finds the fur flying after her celebrity endorser is murdered, leaving Maddie and her rescue pals with a lot of questions to answer.

Coyle, Cleo. [Brewed Awakening](#) (\$7.99). Coffeehouse #18. Awakening on a park bench with no memory of the past decade, coffeehouse manager Clare Cosi becomes a suspect in a kidnapping and must solve the mystery of her own disappearance to prove her innocence.

Graham, Heather. [The Forbidden](#) (\$9.99). Krewe of Hunters #34. When a real murder occurs on set, actress Avalon Morgan is led to the darkest corners of the internet where killers confess their crimes — a discovery that puts her in the path of a killer and in the arms of an FBI agent working the case

Harris, Sherry. [A Time to Swill](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Saloon #2. Saloon owner Chloe Jackson must help prove her friend Ralph's innocence in his wife's murder when her skeletal remains are found 12 years after she disappeared — a case that reveals some bone-chilling secrets.

Hawkins, Jennifer. [Murder Always Barks Twice](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Chatty Corgi #2. For ex-accountant Emma Reed and her beloved corgi, Oliver, opening Reed's Classic Tea & Cakes in the idyllic village of Trevena in Cornwall has been the fulfillment of a life-long dream. However, when Emma is asked to help cater the local Daphne DuMaurier literary festival and the festival organizer

is found dead, Emma, Oliver and their friends are plunged deep into a poisonous mix of village jealousy, family tension, money troubles, and secret love affairs.

Jackson, Lisa. [You Betrayed Me](#) (Kensington \$9.99). San Francisco #3. Waking up in a small hospital with no memory of what happened, playboy James Cahill gradually recalls that his girlfriend had just discovered his affair before going missing. (Don't you just hate it when that happens?)

Kelly, Diane. [Moonshine Shack Murder](#) (Penguin \$7.99). Southern Homebrew #1. The prime suspect in a murder investigation after the body of a rival bar owner is found on her doorstep, Hattie Hayes, to clear her name, must distill the evidence herself and serve the killer a swift shot of justice.

Laurie, Victoria. [To Coach a Killer](#) (\$8.99). Cat Cooper #2. Cat Cooper's efforts to secure her position as East Hampton's premier life coach are complicated by a string of murders that implicate a handsome local bad boy who has made her an unusual offer.

Logan, TM. [The Vacation](#) (\$9.99). Spending a week with loved ones in an opulent villa in southern France, Kate finds her life upended by an incriminating text that reveals her husband is having an affair with one of her three best friends.

Loudon, Margaret. [Fatal Footnote](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Open Book #2. When the Duke's former girlfriend is found murdered at his wedding reception, American novelist Penelope Parish discovers that some happily-ever-afters aren't meant to be as she and her newfound family at the Open Book bookshop set out to catch a killer.

Marks, Mary. [Knot Ready for Murder](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Quilting #9.

Before quilter Martha Rose can have her own happily-ever-after, she must track down her fiancé's first wife when she discovers that their marriage was never annulled, bringing her face-to-face with a kidnapping, murder and an unsolved death.

Mooney, Chris. [Blood World](#) (Berkley \$9.99). In a world where people with a rare gene are kidnapped for their blood's wonder-cure abilities, an LAPD officer fighting the activities of illegal blood farms is pitted against a madman who has modified healing blood to unstoppable levels.

O'Brien, Kevin. [The Night She Disappeared](#) (Kensington \$9.99). When her married lover's wife, Courtney, who has a dark side, mysteriously vanishes, Seattle TV reporter Anna Malone wonders if Courtney is truly missing when she, after a series of disturbances, is forced to play a twisted game unfolding around her.

O'Connor, Carlene. [Murder in Connemara](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Home to Ireland #2. In her newly adopted home of Galway, former New Yorker and interior designer Tara Meehan must pin down a killer when her client, heiress Veronica O'Farrell, who is trying right her wrongs, is found stabbed to death with an antique brooch.

Parnell, Sean. [One True Patriot](#) (\$9.99). Eric Steel #3. Special operative Eric Steel travels from Paris to a top-secret Russian prison to track down a mysterious woman behind the death of a fellow Alpha.

⌘ Perks, Heidi. [Her One Mistake](#) (\$9.99). What should have been a fun-filled, carefree day in the English village of Chiddenford

takes a tragic turn for the worse for one mother when her best friend's child goes missing on her watch.

Robb, J D. [Faithless in Death](#) (\$8.99). In Death #52. Investigating a woman whose report about an artist's murder is not adding up, Eve Dallas uncovers a fanatical conspiracy that leads to Dallas' partnership with the FBI.

Swanson, Denise. [Body Over Troubled Waters](#) (Sourcebooks \$8.99). Welcome back to Scumble River #4. When school psychologist Skye Denison-Boyd's husband Wally investigates an attempted break-in and finds the body of the school superintendent, Skye finds she must juggle her day job with that of her part-time consulting job working for the police.

Woods, Stuart. [Shakeup](#) (\$9.99). Stone Barrington #55. Looking forward to relaxing with his girlfriend after returning from a dangerous coastal adventure, Stone Barrington finds his plans thwarted by the arrival of a grisly crime on his doorstep, along with some suspicious new clients eager for his help.