

# BOOKNEWS from

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## AN AWESOME AUGUST

**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.

### MONDAY AUGUST 2 1:00 PM

**Mark Billingham with Karin Slaughter**  
Billingham discusses [Rabbit Hole](#) (Atlantic \$27)  
Signed UK edition available: [Rabbit Hole](#) (LittleBrown \$42)

### MONDAY AUGUST 2 6:00 PM

**Taylor Moore with Don Bentley**  
Moore discusses [Down Range](#) (Harper \$27.99)  
Our August First Mystery Book of the Month  
Signed books available

### TUESDAY AUGUST 3 12:00 PM

**Martin Walker** discusses [The Coldest Case](#) (Knopf \$26.95)  
Bruno, Chief of Police  
Our copies come with a Bruno recipe card/photo of the chateau

### TUESDAY AUGUST 3 6:00 PM

**Glen Erik Hamilton in conversation with Deborah Crombie**  
Hamilton discusses [Island of Thieves](#) (Morrow \$27.99)  
Signed books available

### WEDNESDAY AUGUST 4 5:30 PM

**Megan Abbott with Tasha Alexander**  
Abbott discusses [The Turnout](#) (Putnam \$27)  
Signed books available

### THURSDAY AUGUST 5 12:00 PM

**Sweden's Johanna Mo** discusses [The Night Singer](#) (Penguin \$17)  
August International Crime Book

### THURSDAY AUGUST 5 2:00 PM

**Karen Rose with John Charles**  
Rose discusses [Say Goodbye](#) (Berkley \$27)  
Signed books available

### SATURDAY AUGUST 7 9:00 AM

**Kensington Coffee & Cozies with John Vicki Delany.** [Murder in a Teacup](#) (\$26)  
**Daryl Wood Gerber.** [A Glimmer of a Clue](#) (\$15.95)  
**Emmeline Duncan.** [Fresh Brewed Murder](#) (\$15.95)  
**Karen Rose Smith.** [Murder with Orange Pekoe Tea](#) (\$8.99)

### SATURDAY AUGUST 7 4:00 PM

**Kensington Historicon with Barbara Dianne Freeman.** [A Fiancée's Guide to First Wives and Murder](#) (\$26)  
**Clara McKenna.** [Murder at Keyhaven Castle](#) (\$26)  
**Stephanie Graves.** [Olive Bright, Pigeoneer](#) (\$26)

### MONDAY AUGUST 9 6:00 PM

**Catherine Coulter** discusses [Vortex: An FBI Thriller](#) (Harper \$28.99)  
Signed books available

### TUESDAY AUGUST 10 5:00 PM

**Tess Gerritsen and Gary Braver** discuss their thriller [Choose Me](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$24.95)  
Signed books available

### TUESDAY AUGUST 10 6:00 PM

**Isabella Maldonado** discusses [A Different Dawn](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$15.95)  
FBI Special Agent Nina Guerrero #2  
Signed books available

### WEDNESDAY AUGUST 11 9:00 AM

**Minotaur Cozy Con**  
**Ellie Alexander.** [Mocha, She Wrote](#) (\$8.99)  
**Cate Conte.** [Claws for Alarm: A Cat Café Mystery](#) (\$7.99)  
**Hannah Dennison.** [Danger at the Cove](#) (\$26.99)  
**SC Perkins.** [Fatal Family Ties](#) (\$26.99)

### WEDNESDAY AUGUST 11 6:00 PM

**Jenn McKinlay** discusses [Wait for It](#) (Berkley \$16)  
Signed books available

### THURSDAY AUGUST 12 5:00 PM

**Naomi Hirahara** discusses [Clark and Division](#) (Soho \$27.95)  
August Historical Fiction Book of the Month  
Signed books available

### THURSDAY AUGUST 12 6:30 PM

**Ashley Winstead with Hank Phillippi Ryan**  
Winstead discusses [In My Dreams I Hold a Knife](#) (Sourcebooks \$26.99)  
Signed books available

### FRIDAY AUGUST 13 6:00 PM

**Kevin Hearne with Pat King**  
Hearne discusses [Paper and Blood](#) (Del Rey \$27)  
Signed bookplates from Kevin while they last

### MONDAY AUGUST 16 2:00 PM

**Ireland's Catherine Ryan Howard** discusses [56 Days](#) (Blackstone \$28.99)  
Signed copies available

**MONDAY AUGUST 16 4:00 PM**

**Richard Chizmar with Michael Koryta**

Chizmar discusses [Chasing the Boogeyman](#) (Gallery \$27)  
Chizmar's first thriller!

**MONDAY AUGUST 16 6:00 PM Book Launch**

**Jonathan Santlofer** discusses [The Last Mona Lisa](#) (Sourcebooks \$27.99)

August Crime Book of the Month

Signed books available

**TUESDAY AUGUST 17 6:00 PM Book Launch**

**Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child** discuss [Bloodless](#) (Grand Central \$29)

Agent Pendergast in Savannah

Our remaining copies come with a double-signed bookplate and a set of trading cards for four series characters

**WEDNESDAY AUGUST 18 7:00 PM**

**Ash Davidson** discusses [Damnation Spring](#) (Scribner \$28)

Our Notable New Fiction Book of the Month

Signed books available

**THURSDAY AUGUST 19 12:00 PM**

**Johnny Shaw with Gary Phillips and Patrick**

Shaw discusses [The Southland](#) (Polis/Agora \$16.95)

**THURSDAY AUGUST 19 1:30 PM**

**Warren Easley and Thomas Kies**

Easley discusses [No Witness](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99)

Cal Claxton Mysteries

Kies discusses [Shadow Hill](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99)

Crime reporter Geneva Chase

**THURSDAY AUGUST 19 5:00 PM**

**Crooked Lane Cozy Con**

**Elizabeth Blake**, [Death and Sensibility](#) (\$26.99)

**Lucy Burdette**, [A Scone of Contention](#) (\$26.99)

**Ellen Byron**, [Cajun Kiss of Death](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99)

**Betty Hechtman**, [One for the Hooks](#) (\$26.99)

**Audrey Keown**, [Dust to Dust](#) (\$26.99)

**Schellman, Katharine**. [Silence in the Library](#) (\$27.99)

**SIGNED BOOKS**

Abbott, Megan. [The Turnout](#) (Putnam \$27). Enter the world of amateur ballet with sisters Dara and Marie Durant, the protagonists of this gut-punching noir from Thriller Award winner Abbott. I guarantee you will never feel the same way about *The Nutcracker* again! And interestingly, the human body is in some sense its own character in the novel. Ballet is not all about beauty—there is a high price exacted for it and its hothouse atmosphere.

The sisters have been running the Durant School of Dance since the accidental death of their parents. They're aided by Dara's husband, Charlie, who was the ballet school's prize student until crippled by injuries, and who became a surrogate sibling after his mother moved to England. Marie's move out of the family home to live in the building housing the dance studio changes the dynamic among the three, which is upended even further after a fire damages the school. Derek, an overbear-

**FRIDAY AUGUST 20 5:00 PM**

**Crooked Lane Author Quintet**

**Kris Calvin**. [All that Fall](#) (\$27.99)

**Emery Hayes**. [Back from the Brink](#) (\$26.99)

**Matt Miksa**. [13 Days to Die](#) (\$27.99)

**Emilya Naymark**. [Hide in Place](#) (\$27.99)

**Eric Redman**. [Bones of Hilo](#) (\$27.99)

**FRIDAY AUGUST 20**

**SciFi Friday** discusses NK Jemison's [The City We Became](#) (\$17.99)

**SATURDAY AUGUST 21 10:30 AM**

**Croak & Dagger** discuss Christina Dodd's [The Wrong Alibi](#) (\$17.99)

**SATURDAY AUGUST 21**

**Bookstore Romance Day**

**SUNDAY AUGUST 23 3:30 PM**

**James Lee Burke with Dennis Lehane**

Burke discusses [Another Kind of Eden](#) (SimonSchuster \$27)

Aaron Holland Broussard

Signed books available

**MONDAY AUGUST 23 7:00 PM Live (so far, check back)**

**William Kent Krueger** discusses [Lightning Strike](#) (Atria \$27)

Cork O'Connor prequel

Signed books available

Masks required to attend the live event for your protection and ours

**WEDNESDAY AUGUST 25 6:00 PM**

**Tommy Swerdlow with Patrick**

Swerdlow discusses his LA Noir [Straight Dope](#) (Stark House \$15.95)

**THURSDAY AUGUST 26 7:00 PM**

**Hardboiled Crime** discusses Frederick Lorenz's [The Savage Chase](#) (Stark House \$19.95)

**SATURDAY AUGUST 28 4:00 PM**

**Laurel Woodward** discusses her debut [Kitchen Witchery](#)

(Llewellyn \$24.99 large paperback)

Unlocking the Magick in Everyday Ingredients

**MONDAY AUGUST 30 6:00 PM**

**Zoje Stage** discusses [Getaway](#) (Mulholland \$28)

A terrifying hike into the Grand Canyon thriller

Signed books available

ing contractor who assesses the scope of the necessary repairs, hard-sells the Durants on extensive renovations to be funded by the insurance settlement. Dara has cause to worry when Marie becomes attracted to Derek. A suspicious death follows. Abbott is pitch-perfect at making the sisters' complex dynamic and mix of emotions plausible and painful, while capturing the competitiveness and cruelty of children's ballet, where every young girl wishes to be the center of attention. This look at the darker side of the dance world demonstrates why Abbott has few peers at crafting moving stories of secrets and broken lives.

The Indie Next Pick adds: "*The Turnout* is a deliciously uncomfortable story, from the brutality imposed on dancers"

bodies to the uneasy dynamics of sisterly relationships and the tension when someone new intrudes on their domain.” And I add that there is a dark dynamic in this story no reviewer is touching on (spoilers) but which forms a deep current in the world of creative artists/athletes.

Abrams, Stacey. [While Justice Sleeps](#) (Doubleday \$28). A legal thriller from the Georgia activist is set within the halls of the U.S. Supreme Court—where a young law clerk finds herself embroiled in a shocking mystery plotted by one of the most preeminent judges in America. Avery Keene, a brilliant young law clerk for the legendary Justice Howard Wynn, is doing her best to hold her life together—excelling in an arduous job with the court while also dealing with a troubled family. When the shocking news breaks that Justice Wynn—the cantankerous swing vote on many current high-profile cases—has slipped into a coma, Avery’s life turns upside down. She is immediately notified that Justice Wynn has left instructions for her to serve as his legal guardian and power of attorney. Plunged into an explosive role she never anticipated, Avery finds that Justice Wynn had been secretly researching one of the most controversial cases before the court—a proposed merger between an American biotech company and an Indian genetics firm, which promises to unleash breathtaking results in the medical field. She also discovers that Wynn suspected a dangerously related conspiracy that infiltrates the highest power corridors of Washington. “Abrams follows in Dan Brown’s footprint with this masterfully plotted thriller that unfolds like the ultimate chess match—bold move to bolder move with lives hanging in the balance.”—Lisa Gardner. Legal ace Scott Turow adds, “A first-class legal thriller, favorably compared to many of the best, starting with *The Pelican Brief*, which it brings to mind. It’s fast-paced and full of surprises—a terrific read.”

✦ Billingham, Mark. [Rabbit Hole](#) (LittleBrown UK \$42). Alice Armitage is a police officer. Or she was. Or perhaps she just imagines she was. Whatever the truth is, following a debilitating bout of PTSD, self-medication with drink and drugs, and a psychotic breakdown, Alice is now a long-term patient in an acute psychiatric ward. Though convinced that she doesn’t really belong there, she finds companionship with the other patients in the ward despite their challenging and often intimidating issues. So when one of her fellow patients is murdered, Alice feels personally compelled to launch an investigation from inside. Ignored by the police, she must gather proof of her suspicion on her own, relying on the few contacts she has on the outside that still take her calls. But when her prime suspect becomes the second victim, Alice’s life begins to unravel as she realizes that she cannot trust anyone in the ward, least of all herself. Having lost her conviction and with her investigative confidence shattered, she comes dangerously close to a psychological point of no return.

Brown, Sandra. [Blind Tiger](#) (Grand Central \$28). **Note: Sandra has done a book talk with me, Barbara, that will run on our Home Page and then in our FB Videos, plus a podcast.**

The year is 1920 when Thatcher Hutton, a war-weary soldier, jumps from a moving freight train and lands in Foley, Texas, the state’s Moonshine Capital. As luck would have it—or perhaps “unluck”—a local woman goes missing on the same day. Being the new guy in town, Thatcher is Suspect Number One in her abduction. Meanwhile, widowed Laurel Plummer is hoping for a fresh start when she dives into the regional moonshine in-

dustry—and the good ol’ boys aren’t happy about it. As violence erupts, Laurel and Thatcher—now a deputy—find themselves on opposite sides of a savage moonshine war. Brown gives us a crooked sheriff, a notorious cathouse madam, a sly bootlegger, feuding moonshiners, and of course, in true Sandra Brown fashion, a smoldering romance. She is also attuned to the different ways people face adversity, some triumphing, some despairing. It begins with the contrast between Laurel’s husband and Thatcher, both veterans of WWI’s shattering combat. And Laurel’s father-in-law presents another face to life lived in rough circumstances. In fact we pampered citizens of today will be reminded just how out of reach even basic comforts were a mere century ago in tiny rural Foley...or most anywhere.

Burke, James Lee. [Another Kind of Eden](#) (SimonSchuster \$27). The American West in the early 1960s appears to be a pastoral paradise: golden wheat fields, mist-filled canyons, frolicking animals. But no. It’s 1962 in bestseller MWA Grand Master Burke’s captivating sequel to 2016’s *The Jealous Kind*, and Aaron Holland Broussard, a drifting aspiring novelist, hops off a boxcar near Denver and finds work on a large farm. After the son of a local tyrannical businessman assaults Aaron and some coworkers, Jo Anne McDuffy, a beautiful art student, warns Aaron not to seek revenge. But as much as Aaron, who begins a relationship with Jo Anne, tries to suppress his violent instincts, trouble won’t let him be, with local goons and law enforcement harassing him. Meanwhile, a nefarious professor circles Jo Anne with dubious intentions. Suffering nonchemical blackouts and warding off memories of his time in the Korean War, Aaron slowly unravels as the majestic beauty of the west turns into a hellscape of murdered women, cults, and mysterious forces that might not be of this world. Sharp prose and distinctive characters help propel Aaron’s journey from earnest farmhand to tormented soul in a world of horrors. Notice that here again a novelist is the focus character!

Cavanagh, Steve. [The Devil’s Advocate](#) (Orion \$36). They call him the King of Death Row. Randal Korn has sent more men to their deaths than any district attorney in the history of the United States. When a young woman, Skylar Edwards, is found murdered in Buckstown, Alabama, a corrupt sheriff arrests the last person to see her alive, Andy Dubois. It doesn’t seem to matter to anyone that Andy is innocent. Everyone in Buckstown believes Andy is guilty. He has no hope of a fair trial. And the local defense attorney assigned to represent him has disappeared. Hot shot New York lawyer Eddie Flynn travels south to fight fire with fire. He plans to destroy the prosecutor’s case, find the real killer and save Andy from the electric chair. But the murders are just beginning. Is Eddie Flynn next?

✦ Cleeves, Ann. [The Heron’s Cry](#) (Pan \$43). North Devon is enjoying a rare hot summer with tourists flocking to its coastline. Detective Matthew Venn is called out to a rural crime scene at the home of a group of artists. What he finds is an elaborately staged murder – Dr. Nigel Yeo has been fatally stabbed. His daughter Eve is a glassblower, and the murder weapon is a shard of one of her broken vases. Dr. Yeo seems an unlikely murder victim. He’s a good man, a public servant, beloved by his daughter. Matthew is unnerved, though, to find that she is a close friend of Jonathan, his husband. Then another body is found – killed in a similar way. Matthew finds himself treading carefully through the lies that

fester at the heart of his community and a case that is dangerously close to home.... 2nd in Cleeves' new Two Rivers series after [The Long Call](#) (\$16.99). Meanwhile *Shetland* and *Vera* are filming for more terrific serial TV.

Coes, Ben. [The Island](#) (St Martins \$27.99). In the 9<sup>th</sup> mission for CIA operative Dewey Andreas, an outrageous plot has been conceived by Iranian Zakaria Mansour, the "commander general of Hezbollah." His plan: to assassinate the U.S. president during a speech at the United Nations, slaughter thousands in the New York City streets after crippling access to the island, and electronically destroy the Federal Reserve. But first he'll kill CIA operative Andreas in retaliation for derailing Iran's nuclear bomb procurement in an earlier book. If you are looking for a no-brakes pace with little recourse to logic to enliven your August, this is your book.

Coulter, Catherine. [Vortex: An FBI Thriller](#) (Harper \$28.99). It was [The Cove](#) (\$8.99) that started it all back in 1996. And now here is #25 in Coulter's bestselling series featuring Agents Sherlock and Savich. Seven years ago, Mia Briscoe was at a college frat rave with her best friend Serena when a fire broke out. Everyone was accounted for except Serena, who was never seen nor heard from again. Now an investigative journalist covering the political scene in New York City, Mia discovers old photos taken the night of Serena's disappearance, and begins to uncover a sinister string of events going all the way back to that disastrous party. Working with Sherlock, the secrets begin to unravel. But some very powerful—and very dangerous—people will do anything to keep them from learning the truth. CIA Operative Olivia Hildebrandt is a team leader on a mission in Iran to exfiltrate a betrayed undercover operative. She's nearly killed by an exploding grenade and saved by a team member. But by the time Olivia is released from Walter Reed Hospital, that team member—and a critical flash drive he was carrying—have disappeared. When she is savagely attacked on her first night home...enter Savich.

Everybody has their favorite book out of the 25, and Coulter has three of which she is particularly fond: *The Target*, *Backfire*, and *Nemesis*.

Davidson, Ash. [Damnation Spring](#) (Scribner \$28). The Indie Next Pick: "“With this debut set in a Pacific Northwest logging town, Ash Davidson has immediately established herself as a true writer of the American experience, in all its potential for self-destruction and beauty.” The tale unfolds between 1977 and 1978 and follows the Gundersen family: husband and wife Rich and Colleen; and their kindergartner son, Chub. Rich is a fourth-generation logger who dreams of a less financially burdensome future for his family when, without telling Colleen, he plunks down their savings to buy a ridge near their home in Northern California with a harvestable forest of primordial redwoods. Meanwhile Colleen—who has suffered eight miscarriages before and after Chub's birth and who, as the local midwife, has witnessed a disturbing number of defective births—is listening to an environmentalist friend's warning that the defoliants used by the timber company that employs Rich are leaching lethal toxins into the local water supply.

This debut is our **August Notable New Fiction Book of the Month**. Among its raves are these: "Nowhere else on earth do the trees reach so high as the ancient groves of redwoods that tower over the fog-laced coast of the Pacific Northwest. And in few other settings can a writer erect an overstory so vast, so

intricate, so tightly woven that when its readers lean back and gaze into its branches, they are somehow made to feel both diminished and expanded in the very same breath. Like the canopy of an enchanted forest, *Damnation Spring* is draped in a tapestry of shadows dappled with sunlight, mystery pierced through by beams of revelation, and a harrowing natural beauty capable of drawing forth gorgeous, gracefully wrought prose that is soaring, magnificent, and drenched in birdsong." *Kirkus* awards it a Star: "As thoughtfully as Davidson establishes these dilemmas, she's equally skilled at writing an outdoorsy adventure novel, in which logging threatens the lives of workers in a working class community with snapped cables and everybody else via landslides. Thematically, it's a strong work of climate fiction, but it's rooted in age-old man-versus-nature storytelling. An impressively well-turned story about how environmental damage creeps into our bodies, psyches, and economies." The author from Flagstaff will be signing at the store so you may request a date or personalization.

✎ Fowler, Christopher. [Bryant and May London Bridge Is Falling Down](#) (Bantam UK \$40). It was the kind of story that barely made the news. When 91-year-old Amelia Hoffman died in her top-floor flat on a busy London road, it's considered an example of what has gone wrong with modern society: she slipped through the cracks in a failing system. But detectives Arthur Bryant and John May of the Peculiar Crimes Unit have their doubts. Mrs. Hoffman was once a government security expert, even though no one can quite remember her. When a link emerges between the old lady and a diplomat trying to flee the country, it seems that an impossible murder has been committed. Mrs. Hoffman wasn't the only one at risk. Bryant is convinced that other forgotten women with hidden talents are also in danger. And, curiously, they all own models of London Bridge. With the help of some of their more certifiable informants, the detectives follow the strangest of clues in an investigation that will lead them through forgotten alleyways to the city's oldest bridge in search of a desperate killer. You can't do better for eccentric and witty British mystery than this (other than Ripley's [Mr. Campion's Coven](#) to which I give a rave). And you can start the Peculiar Crime series at any point, like this one.

✎ Freeman, Dianne. [A Fiancée's Guide to First Wives and Murder](#) (Kensington \$26). Agatha Award winner Freeman's lively fourth Countess of Harleigh mystery finds Frances Wynn, Countess of Harleigh, happy in November of 1899 as she contemplates her upcoming marriage to her next-door neighbor and occasional detecting partner, the Honorable George Hazelton. Her thoughts are disrupted by the arrival of a police inspector and Irena Teskey, an attractive young French woman who announces that she is Mrs. George Hazelton. The impetuous fantasist also claims to be the owner of a London theater, the victim of serial abductions, the recipient of menacing letters, and the daughter of a Russian grand duke. Her accusations against George could lead to his and Frances's ostracism from polite society and put a damper on their nuptials, and the situation becomes even worse when Irena is murdered in Frances' back garden. Frances and George investigate with aplomb. Freeman delivers it all: clever plotting, charming characters, plausible suspects, and red herrings galore. This historical is pure unadulterated fun. Freeman will sign it when she returns to Scottsdale in mid-September.

Gerritsen, Tess/Gary Braver. [Choose Me](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$24.95). Signed by Tess, 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.

✎ Gregory, Susanna. [The Chancellor's Secret](#) (Sphere \$48). In 1360, the Great Bridge over the River Cam is close to collapse. To repair it will cost the town and the University dear, especially if its rotten wood is replaced by more durable stone. As arguments rage over raising the money other, equally heated, differences are coming to the boil over the election of a new Chancellor. While the majority supports Brother Michael for the post, at least one of his opponents aims to seize it by fair means or foul. Then the discovery of a body under the bridge and the disappearance of two scholars throw a more sinister shadow over both disputes. Matthew Bartholomew, the University's Corpse Examiner, already has his hands full: due to marry in under a fortnight, he is determined to conclude his teaching duties and deal with an outbreak of the summer flux before relinquishing his official duties. With more deaths, an 'accident' at the bridge and an increasing stench of corruption over the financing of the bridge's repairs, he realizes he owes more to his soon-to-be former colleagues than to his future life as a secular doctor. But will there be enough time for him to unveil the identities of those who seek to undermine both the town and the University?

Hamilton, Glen Erik. [Island of Thieves](#) (Morrow \$27.99). Expert thief Van Shaw is hired to evaluate the safeguards for the art collection of eccentric business magnate Sebastian Rohner. Then Rohner reveals to Van the real reason he's been recruited: to prevent another professional burglar from stealing the art. Rohner wants to set a thief to catch a thief. While questioning the bizarre nature of the job, Van accepts the lucrative offer and surveils the highly secure gallery wing of Rohner's expansive island estate, only to stumble across the murdered body of one of the international summit's honored guests on the rocky shore. Wary of Rohner's true intentions, Van knows the homicide detectives on the case—and perhaps Rohner as well—think he's the prime suspect and will turn his life upside down in their search for proof. Van begins to hunt for the killer himself, but scrutiny only digs his hole deeper, as another of Rohner's executives is killed, and the Seattle police find concrete evidence placing Van at the scene. With no other options, he goes on the run, alone and unaided. You would do well to order the entire [Van Shaw Mysteries](#) series.

Hamilton says, "I've been fascinated by the private enclaves created by the extremely wealthy, especially when those estates serve as both a display of their status and as a place of business. Everything in the book has a basis in real places. Briar

Bay Island, the title location, is fictional but a construct of a few real islands in the San Juans and some estates owned by billionaires in the Northwest."

✎ Harris, Joanne. [A Narrow Door](#) (Orion \$45). It's an incendiary moment for St Oswald's Grammar School in North Yorkshire. For the first time in its history, a headmistress is in power, the gates opening to girls. Rebecca Buckfast has spilled blood to reach this position. Barely forty, she is just starting to reap the harvest of her ambition. As the new regime takes on the old guard, the ground shifts. And with it, the remains of a body are discovered. But Rebecca is here to make her mark. She'll bury the past so deep it will evade even her own memory, just like she has done before. After all...you can't keep a good woman down. I loved Harris' first school mystery, [Different Class](#), also set at St. Oswald's, and can't wait to read this one,

✎ Hawkins, Paula. [Slow Fire Burning](#) (Doubleday UK \$46). I don't know about you but I thought Hawkins' second book after her smash hit [The Girl on the Train](#) (\$16) was disappointing. I make no guarantees on this third. When a young man is found gruesomely murdered in a London houseboat, it triggers questions about three women who knew him. Laura is the troubled one-night-stand last seen in the victim's home. Carla is his grief-stricken aunt, already mourning the recent death of yet another family member. And Miriam is the nosy neighbor clearly keeping secrets from the police. Three women with separate connections to the victim. Three women who are – for different reasons – simmering with resentment. When it comes to revenge, even good people might be capable of terrible deeds...

Hirahara, Naomi. [Clark and Division](#) (Soho \$27.95). Set during WWII, this fascinating standalone from Edgar winner Hirahara (the Mas Arai series) focuses on a Japanese American family, the Itos, who in 1942 are sent with what possessions they can carry from L.A. to the Manzanar internment camp in the California desert. In 1943, elder daughter Rose, a bright and confident young woman, is chosen to be among the first internees to be relocated to Chicago, a move that will pave the way for her family to join her. In 1944, Rose's parents and younger sister, Aki, arrive in the city, only to be informed that Rose has been run over by a subway train at the Clark and Division station, an apparent suicide. Aki refuses to believe this theory and sets out to find her sister's killer and bring that person to justice. Tantalizing clues emerge in Rose's diary, in reports gathered for the War Relocation Authority, and in Aki's tireless interviews with those who shaped Rose's life in Chicago. Elegant prose matches the meticulous research. This well-crafted tale of injustice isn't just for mystery fans. And it's our **August Historical Fiction Book of the Month**.

The Indie Next Pick adds: "*Clark and Division* is a propulsive mystery and a heart-wrenching examination of Japanese internment and relocation in the 1940s. Hirahara beautifully weaves history and injustice into this fascinating and compelling crime novel."

✎ Horowitz, Anthony. [A Line to Kill](#) (Century \$45). There has never been a murder on Alderney. It's a tiny island, just three miles long and a mile and a half wide. The perfect location for a brand new literary festival. Private Investigator Daniel Hawthorne has been invited to talk about his new book. The actual writer of the book, Anthony Horowitz, travels with him. Very

soon they discover that not all is as it should be. Alderney is in turmoil over a planned power line that will cut through it, desecrating a war cemetery and turning neighbor against neighbor. The visiting authors—including a blind medium, a French performance poet and a celebrity chef—seem to be harboring any number of unpleasant secrets. When the festival’s wealthy sponsor is found brutally killed, Alderney goes into lockdown and Hawthorne knows that he doesn’t have to look too far for suspects. There’s no escape. The killer is still on the island. And there’s about to be a second death...

Howard, Catherine Ryan. [56 Days](#) (Blackstone \$24.99). Oliver and Ciara, two young professionals who are new to Dublin, meet in a supermarket just as the pandemic is about to descend on Ireland. The pair hit it off, but fate soon throws them a curveball: to curb the spread of the virus, Ireland’s government is instituting a strict two-week lockdown, and socializing with anyone from a different household is off-limits. When Oliver asks Ciara to move in with him for the duration of lockdown, she agrees—it’s an opportunity to have him all to herself and get to know him without having to introduce him to her family and friends (or meet his). In fact, Ciara doesn’t tell a soul where she’ll be spending lockdown, or who she’ll be spending it with. Things do not go as planned. At the beginning of the novel, a decomposing body is discovered in Oliver’s apartment; how it got there is only one of the mysteries that will unfold over the course of Howard’s book, which saves its most devastating reveal for its final pages. The story is teased out in two timelines: the present day, which follows a pair of Gardaí (Irish state police) as they investigate the gruesome discovery, and flashbacks that detail Oliver and Ciara’s meeting and courtship. While both are intensely sympathetic characters, it quickly becomes clear that at least one of them is harboring a dark secret.

Howard, a huge bestseller in Ireland, says this of what is inevitably going to be called her pandemic novel: “I heard England’s deputy health minister advise new couples to, essentially, break up or shack up in order to adhere to the “no mixing between households rule”—if you didn’t already live with someone, you weren’t supposed to see them at all during lockdown. And a light bulb switched on in the back of the mind: the couple would meet shortly before the pandemic reached Ireland and decide to move in together when lockdown hit. My 2 km confined me to a part of Dublin city center, which I was seeing in a way that both terrified me and felt like a privilege—I could use what I was seeing. Ireland entered lockdown 1 on March 27, 2020, and I have a photo on my phone of a document open on my computer on April 17 with ‘Untitled Lockdown Novel’ as the title—that’s how quickly I switched.”

Jones, Darynda. [A Good Day for Chardonnay](#) (St Martins \$27.99). In this sequel to 2020’s [A Bad Day for Sunshine](#) (\$17), a gem of a series start much loved by our staff, multiple crimes keep intrepid Sunshine Vicram, the sheriff of the sleepy tourist town of Del Sol, N.M., on her toes. Sunshine and Chief Deputy Quincy Cooper are called to the Roadhouse Bar and Grill to investigate the near-fatal stabbing of survivalist Keith Seabright, whose life was saved by the intervention of Levi Ravinder, Sunshine’s “former—and admittedly current—crush.” Soon crimes are popping up at every turn, including kidnapping, murder, fraud, and evidence tampering. Meanwhile, Sunshine’s teenage daughter is certain she has discovered the identity of

a local serial killer, “half the town is confessing to a fifteen-year-old murder,” and the mayor is demanding that Sunshine investigate the possibly mythical Dangerous Daughters, “who secretly run the town behind everyone’s back, including the city council’s.” Snappy dialogue and appealing characters enhance the crazy, stop-and-go plot, and a bit of a cliffhanger points to more fun ahead. Books with a Southwest background are fun for us here, and for you. Jones captures much of NM’s unique and often amusing character with spirit. Think of Sunshine’s investigation as a kind of Michael Garrity thriller light.

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. This is a wonderful read for fans of Sujata Massey and Nev March.

Krueger, William Kent. [Lightning Strike](#) (Atria \$27). Aurora is a small town nestled in the ancient forest alongside the shores of Minnesota’s Iron Lake. In the summer of 1963, it is the whole world to 12-year-old Cork O’Connor, its rhythms as familiar as his own heartbeat. But when Cork stumbles upon the body of a man he revered hanging from a tree in an abandoned logging camp, it is the first in a series of events that will cause him to question everything he took for granted about his hometown, his family and himself. Cork’s father, Liam O’Connor, is Aurora’s sheriff, and it is his job to confirm that the man’s death was the result of suicide, as all the evidence suggests. In the shadow of his father’s official investigation, Cork begins to look for answers on his own.

Kent writes, “This is a very different entry in the series, a prequel. It’s set in the summer when Cork is 12 years old and involves two mysterious deaths that cause a clash between the Ojibwe of the Iron Lake Reservation and the white populace of Tamarack County. Cork’s father is the county sheriff, and the family finds itself caught in the middle of the racial tensions that arise. I love this story because it’s allowed me to explore the relationship between Cork and his father, so important in shaping Cork into the man at the heart of the series.” You would do well to order the entire [Cork O’Connor series](#) beginning with *Iron Lake*.

✦ Mackintosh, Clare. [Hostage](#) (Sphere \$36). In all the excitement about Newman’s debut *Falling* (sold out) this excellent thriller by the UK’s Mackintosh has been overlooked. I think it’s terrific, more complex and character driven, and it has drawn rave reviews from authors like Lee Child who joined me for our US launch for *Hostage* in July.

Here’s one Starred Review that makes my case: “A 20-hour, nonstop plane flight from London to Sydney provides the claustrophobic backdrop for this terrifying thriller from

bestseller Mackintosh. Flight attendant Mina Holbrook trades shifts to join the crew of World Airways Flight 79, preferring to contend with sometimes demanding business class passengers than to face her rapidly deteriorating marriage to police detective Adam Holbrook. Mina is sure Adam has been sleeping with their Ukrainian au pair, who recently quit her job caring for their five-year-old daughter, Sophia. A few hours into the flight, Mina receives a note demanding she help an unknown terrorist group divert the plane. If Mina refuses, Sophia will die. What starts as a domestic drama focused on the Holbrooks' marital problems becomes the airborne equivalent of a classic country house mystery. The suspense builds as Mina, whose co-workers think she's shirking her duties, tries to determine who among the 353 passengers are part of the terrorist plot. Surprising twists propel the story to an unexpected finale. Mackintosh has raised her game with this one."—*PW*. I add that she serves up an extra twist which is most pleasing.

Maldonado, Isabella. [A Different Dawn](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$15.95). When the FBI's Violent Criminal Apprehension Program database detects two murder incidents "staged to look like double murder suicides," FBI special agent Nina Guerrero investigates. The most recent occurred in Phoenix, and the previous one happened four years before in Manhattan, both on February 29. FBI agents soon discover the existence of eight similar crimes at four-year intervals, all involving young couples with an infant or newborn child. Nina and her team travel from the Washington, D.C., area to Arizona, where they look into the first crime in the series, which occurred in Phoenix 28 years earlier. As the agents get closer to finding commonalities among the murders and in particular the significance of leap day, things get personal for Nina as she uncovers clues to the crimes related to her entry into the foster system as a child. Maldonado expertly ratchets up the tension as the pieces of the puzzle neatly fall into place. Meet Nina first in [The Cipher](#) (\$15.95).

✎ McDermid, Val. [1979](#) (LittleBrown UK \$42). McDermid presents the first in a new series. It is the winter of discontent, and reporter Allie Burns is chasing her first big scoop. There are few women in the newsroom and she needs something explosive for the boys' club to take her seriously. Soon Allie and fellow journalist Danny Sullivan are exposing the criminal underbelly of respectable Scotland. They risk making powerful enemies - and Allie won't stop there. When she discovers a home-grown terrorist threat, Allie comes up with a plan to infiltrate the group and make her name. But she's a woman in a man's world... and putting a foot wrong could be fatal.

McKinlay, Jenn. [Wait for It](#) (Berkley \$16). John Charles reviews: When her first ex-husband unexpectedly asks her to marry him again, Annabelle Martin is not about to test the maxim "better luck next time." Instead, Annabelle accepts her best friend Sophie Vasquez's job offer and leaves chilly Boston for sunny Phoenix. One perk of Annabelle's new dream job is getting to live in a charming guest house on the estate of an old friend of the Vasquez family. However, this same perk has a downside in the form of the seemingly endless "tenant rules" her new landlord—obviously a crotchety old codger—keeps leaving on her doorstep. So, of course, it is quite a surprise when Annabelle comes face to face with her landlord—Nick Daire—and discovers he is actually the hot guy she has secretly been ogling. Both fans and readers who are not already smitten with McKinlay's zingy prose and

effervescent wit will soon find themselves happily succumbing to this author's many literary charms, including the effortless way in which she deftly pivots from moments of comic absurdity to heartfelt emotion without missing a beat.

Moore, Taylor. [Down Range](#) (Harper \$27.99). Moore's strong debut and series launch opens in Afghanistan, where undercover DEA agent Garrett Kohl, a former Green Beret, is on assignment investigating opium production. But this is not a military thriller! When Kohl bucks protocol by intervening in a terrorist attack and rescuing a 10-year-old boy from the brutal massacre, the CIA rushes the agent and the boy Asadi out of the country as it tries to deal with the incident's political fallout. Kohl heads home with the traumatized child to the remote Llano Estacado region of Texas, where his ranching family has lived for generations in an increasingly run-down ranch. But things are changing in the Panhandle, and Renegade Oil & Gas Services, one of the companies that hold sway in the region, has gone rogue and made a deal with a Mexican drug cartel to help smuggle heroin into the States. Kohl's semi-estranged attorney brother is targeted when he refuses to represent Renegade, whose truck drivers have been caught with large quantities of narcotics. Things culminate in an exciting, Texas-style showdown between Kohl's family, cartel *sicarios*, and a host of other bad actors. Moore's debut, in its way also a coming of age story, is sure to entice fans of both genres, as he weaves a wild tale of betrayal, vengeance, and death on the Texas High Plains. Fans of J. Todd Scott and C.J. Box, and other Western thriller writers will want to check out this propulsive, character-driven thriller. Check out [Patrick's interview with the author](#) of our **August First Mystery Book of the Month**.

Moore comes by the authenticity honestly. He's a sixth-generation Texan who worked for the CIA in both analysis and operations and then consulted for the Department of Defense in theater security cooperation, force protection, and counter-illicit trafficking.

Muller, Marcia. [Ice and Stone](#) (Grand Central \$28). In MWA Grand Master Muller's 34th Sharon McCone mystery, the Crimes Against Indigenous Sisters organization hires the San Francisco PI to look into the murders of two Native women over the past three months in California's Meruk county, as well as many previous disappearances of Native women. Due to conflicting jurisdictions among the reservation police, the county sheriff's office, and the FBI, any official investigation has faltered. McCone is CAIS's last hope of finding out what has happened in their community. Posing as a journalist, McCone travels in the dead of winter to Meruk, where she soon discovers that the two deaths are just the tip of the iceberg. McCone, who learned only in middle age she had Shoshone roots, becomes a target for bigotry and abuse as motives for the killings shift into ever-darkening realms. Tough, tenacious, self-reliant, and empathetic, McCone is fiercely loyal to her friends and family. As always, it's a pleasure to watch her in action. Muller does a fine job dramatizing a serious social issue.

Preston, Douglas/Lincoln Child. [Bloodless](#) (Grand Central \$29). Note: we are sold out of double signed copies. **What we can still offer is a set of the trading cards and a double signed bookplate with each of 300 additional copies.** At that point, we're done. This book actually sold out back in April! So we'll start with the wait list.

On the evening of November 24, 1971, D. B. Cooper

hijacked Flight 305—Portland to Seattle—with a fake bomb, collected a ransom of \$200,000, and parachuted into the night, never to be seen again... Maybe. Fifty years later, Agent Pendergast and his partner, Armstrong Coldmoon, take on a bizarre and gruesome case: in the ghost-haunted city of Savannah, Georgia, bodies are found completely drained of blood—sowing panic and reviving the infamous legend of the Savannah Vampire. A case like no other in Pendergast’s career: Through twists and turns, Pendergast and his partner, Agent Coldmoon, race to understand how these murders are connected to the most mystifying hijacking in American history. Pressure to close the Savannah case quickly comes from a boorish U.S. senator, who fears bad press about the crimes will imperil his reelection bid. Pendergast’s ward, Constance Greene, assists by befriending a reclusive hotel owner rumored to have prolonged her life by drinking human blood. How the plane hijacking ties in with the current action will surprise you!

Rankin, Ian/ William McIlvanney. [Dark Remains](#) (Camden \$45). Lawyer Bobby Carter did a lot of work for the wrong type of people. Now he’s dead and it was no accident. Besides a distraught family and a heap of powerful friends, Carter’s left behind his share of enemies. So, who dealt the fatal blow? DC Jack Laidlaw’s reputation precedes him. He’s not a team player, but he’s got a sixth sense for what’s happening on the streets. His boss chalks the violence up to the usual rivalries, but is it that simple? As two Glasgow gangs go to war, Laidlaw needs to find out who got Carter before the whole city explodes. William McIlvanney’s Laidlaw books changed the face of crime fiction. When he died in 2015, he left half a handwritten manuscript of Laidlaw’s first case. Now, Ian Rankin is back to finish what McIlvanney started.

Richmond, Michelle. [The Wonder Test](#) (Grove \$26). For various reasons this unusual thriller delighted me in similar ways to Korelitz’s *The Plot* (our May Crime Book of the Month which has turned into a mega bestseller and critical darling and long ago sold out in Signed firsts). **So *The Wonder Test* will be our September Crime Book of the Month. However for non-club subscribers we have signed firsts available now. Club members should NOT order it, it will come to you as usual.** It has had various reviews, *NY Times*, etc. I like this one from Tom Nolan in the *WSJ* the best (besides my own):

“Lina Connerly is having an *annus horribilis*: Her father died, her husband died, and she made a terrible blunder in her job as an FBI agent. Craving a break from stress, she goes on hiatus and moves from New York with her 15-year-old son Rory to her dad’s old house in the Northern California town of Greenfield, where things become even more problematic. Kyle, a brand-new Greenfield police officer who was friends with Lina’s father, asks for her help with his first case: the two-week disappearance, then reappearance, of a classmate of Rory’s, who seems to be suffering PTSD but whose parents won’t discuss the matter. His experience is reminiscent of what happened a year before to a pair of twin siblings at the same school. Despite her vow to take a rest from law enforcement, Lina is soon ‘embroiled,’ in the words of a Bureau colleague, ‘in a triple kidnapping case with a side of the seriously weird.’ The oddity seems related to the town’s obsession with an annual exam assessing high-school students’ multi-disciplinary aptitude and knowledge.... Ms. Richmond maintains a creepy sense of dread throughout, even as she explores Rory’s coming-of-age and Lina’s coming-to-terms.” Even better, I did not see the true wonder of the plot twist coming, a twist that owes

something to last year’s headlines. Richmond’s tale poses the question: “Is it better to do the right thing for the wrong reason or the wrong thing for the right reason? Using diacritical logic, chart your answer.”

Rose, Karen. [Say Goodbye](#) (Berkley \$27). For decades, Eden has remained hidden in the remote wilds of the Pacific Northwest, “Pastor” keeping his cult’s followers in thrall for his personal profit and sexual pleasures. But the Founding Elders are splintering, and Pastor’s surrogate son DJ is scheming to make it all his own. When two of Eden’s newest members send out a cry for help, it reaches FBI Special Agent Tom Hunter, whose friend and fellow FBI Special Agent Gideon Reynolds and his sister, Mercy, are themselves escapees of the Eden cult, targeted by the Founding Elders who want them silenced forever. The three have vowed to find the cult and bring it down, and now, they finally have a solid lead. Neutralizing Eden’s threat will save captive members and ensure Tom’s new friends can live without fear. But when his best friend, ex-Army combat medic Liza Barkley, joins the case, it puts her life—and their blossoming love—in danger.

Santlofer, Jonathan. [The Last Mona Lisa](#) (Sourcebooks \$27.99). The real-life theft of Leonardo da Vinci’s *Mona Lisa* from the Louvre on Aug. 21, 1911, by workman Vincenzo Peruggia provides the backdrop for this outstanding caper from Nero Award winner and artist Santlofer. In 2019, Luke Perrone, a non-tenured university professor of art history and Vincenzo’s descendant, searches the Laurentian library in Florence, Italy, for his great-grandfather’s journal in the hope of determining whether the stolen *Mona Lisa* was replaced by a forgery before its recovery in 1913, and thus ensuring his academic position. John Washington Smith, an ambitious analyst from Interpol’s Art Theft Division, and the mysterious Alexandra Greene join Luke in his effort, and the trio is soon contending with nefarious scholars, forgers, stalkers, a Franciscan monk, and a Russian hit man as the bodies pile up. Details of Florence, Paris, and New York City enhance the twisty plot, as does the insider view of the underground world of art collectors driven by deception, ego, and greed.

**I like to mix up the kinds of books that we pick for Crime Books of the Month—this caper is the August selection.** Among the many raves is this one by Sara Paretsky: “A riveting novel, weaving the real-life 1911 theft of Leonardo’s masterpiece into a nail-biting contemporary drama where billionaire collectors, art historians, book collectors and Interpol engage in so many double and triple crosses you’re left wondering until the last page whom to trust and whom to fear. The Last Mona Lisa is like a master class in how to create a deep understanding of art history while making a seamless thriller.”

Schaffhausen, Joanna. [Gone for Good](#) (St Martins \$27.99). It’s hard for me to resist a Chicago landscape for a book—actually I am surprised there are so few. Luckily Detective Annalisa Vega of the Chicago PD, daughter of a retired cop on the force, the strong, multilayered protagonist of this exceptional series launch, brings us a vivid portrait of the city. She is called to a crime scene at the home of Grace Harper, who has been strangled by an ingenious system of knotted ropes. On Grace’s walls are photos of women in similar poses, killed slowly by ropes, all victims of the Lovelorn Killer, who murdered seven women in the late 1990s, then dropped out of sight. His last victim happens to have been Katie, the mother of Annalisa’s childhood friend Colin, who became her lover when they reached their teens, and whom



she loves still despite his many years' absence. The police soon discover Grace was part of a group of amateur sleuths called the Grave Diggers who attempt to solve cold cases. Had Grace come too close to identifying the serial killer, or was she the victim of a copycat? Interspersed with gripping chapters focused on Annalisa's detective work are extracts from Grace's journal that offer some tantalizing insights into a murderer's mind. Excellent fair-play plotting, genuine surprises, and convincing characters also make this a surefire winner. If you are watching *Unforgotten* on PBS you will draw an analogy to the raking up of past secrets and crimes, a question also raised by Martin Walker in his new book *The Coldest Case*, reviewed below in *Unsigned Event Books*.

Stage, Zoje. [Getaway](#) (Grand Central \$28). 2021 is the year of writers making writers protagonists in a wide variety of stories. Novelist Imogen Blum, one of the principals in Stage's new psychological thriller, is feeling even more introverted and isolated than usual after witnessing a deadly shooting at her Pittsburgh synagogue. Her older sister, Beck, a doctor living in Arizona, proposes a weeklong backpacking trip in the Grand Canyon, like the ones they enjoyed in their youth. Beck invites their childhood friend Tilda Jimenez, whose appearance on *American Idol* and subsequent stardom as an influencer have led to a six-figure book deal, to join them. Imogen and Tilda, who parted ways in college, haven't really spoken in 20 years. Tensions and long-repressed resentments flare as they face the dangers of the rocky trails. But their personal differences fade when they realize they're being stalked and their lives depend on their resourcefulness, courage, and unity. Stage thrillingly describes the perils and the beauty of nature while providing sage advice for hikers—and giving readers palpitations. “Stage's characters speak to the tensions between women that can arise from the pressure to be constantly nice and docile and never stir up conflict—the burden to mask true feelings, jealousy, long-held resentments—and amps them up. It doesn't take long for the characters to question their sanity at every turn; soon they find themselves in an even more perilous situation, at the mercy of a dangerous (supernatural?) force.”—*LJ*. The Canyon has been a stage for many a survival tale which this novel from the author of *Baby Teeth* is in part.

Tremayne Peter. [The House of Death](#) (Headline \$52). 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... This wonderful series makes an excellent read for fans of Ellis Peters and Brother Cadfael.

Walker, Joss. [Tomb of the Queen](#) (Two Tales Press \$28). Our **August SciFi/Fantasy Book of the Month** caught me with its lead character: Jayne Thorne, CIA Librarian. Who would think that Nashville's elegant Vanderbilt University library

would harbor a secret agent? And indeed Jayne enjoys her quiet life of tea and books...until she finds a spell book in the Vanderbilt archives that accidentally gives her access to a magical dimension. Now she's hunted by a magic-wielding terrorist group called the Kingdom, and the only way for her to survive is to team up with a secret branch of the CIA. Her first mission: Go undercover at Trinity College Library in Dublin to discover the identity of a Kingdom member and determine if the Book of Leinster is actually a magical necromantic grimoire. With the help of a handsome Irish kickboxer, Jayne uncovers the truth of her unexpected spellbook: The Irish manuscript is one of five grimoires that can raise five dead, master magicians, and secure their totems of power. With these totems comes the power to control the world. But the spellbook isn't the only thing with secrets in Jayne's new life. Danger lurks in every corner and Jayne must rise to meet her fated role... or perish alongside the rest of the world. This paranormal adventure series debut by JT Ellison as Walker is perfect for fans of *A Discovery of Witches* or of *Indiana Jones* or the *Gilmore Girls*.

Winstead, Ashley. [In My Dreams I Hold a Knife](#) (Sourcebooks \$26.99). Ten years after graduation, Jessica Miller has planned her triumphant return to her southern, elite Duquette University, down to the envious whispers that are sure to follow in her wake. Everyone is going to see the girl she wants them to see—confident, beautiful, indifferent. Not the girl she was when she left campus, back when Heather Shelby's murder fractured everything, including the tight bond linking the six friends she'd been closest to since freshman year. But not everyone is ready to move on. Not everyone left Duquette ten years ago, and not everyone can let Heather's murder go unsolved. Someone is determined to trap the real killer, to make the guilty pay. When the six friends are reunited, they will be forced to confront what happened that night—and the years' worth of secrets each of them would do anything to keep hidden. Told in racing dual timelines, with a dark campus setting and a darker look at friendship, love, obsession, and ambition. Riley Sager is a fan of Winstead's debut.

In an interview Winstead says the novel “is about letting your ambition and desire for success warp your brain until you'll do anything to win, about feeling so desperate to matter that you'll sacrifice people to climb to the top. And at its deepest level, it's about the fear of dying as a small, unimportant person who fades from memory, almost like you never existed. Jessica Miller never allows herself to be an artist, but as you can tell, she's full of an artist's anxieties.” The fictional Duquette University is based on some real-life universities like Vanderbilt, which Winstead attended as an undergrad, but also Duke and Wake Forest. She's familiar with the experience of elite Southern universities. Elite Southern colleges are all about striving, just like Jessica, and they have such a chip on their shoulder about being as good as the Ivies. It kind of permeates the student body, too, which I explore in the book. The scissors on the cover are an allusion to the murder weapon and a wink at ribbon-cutting ceremonies, but the knife of the title is the knife of Jessica's ambition, and it haunts the book from the first chapter to the last.

## UNSIGNED EVENT BOOKS

✦ Billingham, Mark. [Rabbit Hole](#) (Atlantic \$27). See Signed Books above.

Chizmar, Richard. [Chasing the Boogeyman](#) (Gallery \$27). Horror fans know Richard Chizmar as the founder of the influential genre magazine *Cemetery Dance*; a prolific author, editor, and anthologizer of short fiction; and, lately, Stephen King's frequent publisher and co-writer. Thriller fans are about to know him as the author of one of the year's most inventive, compelling, and moving crime novels. Here Chizmar inserts a gruesome—and entirely fictional—serial-killer narrative into a largely autobiographical coming-of-age story. Set in 1988, the book finds a young Chizmar returning to his family home in Edgewood, Maryland, to spend the summer between his college graduation and his upcoming wedding. Chizmar mostly plans to hole up in his childhood bedroom to write horror stories and turn out the first issue of *Cemetery Dance*, but fate has something else in mind for him. When teenage girls begin disappearing from their bedrooms and driveways, only to turn up dead and mutilated hours later, Chizmar is drawn into the investigation that quickly consumes his hometown. The book is presented as true crime, complete with pages of photos ostensibly culled from local newspaper coverage of the murders and the personal collections of some of the people involved. (The photos were staged by Chizmar, his son Billy, and a Baltimore production company.) It's a remarkably convincing piece of metafiction; if not for the words "A Novel" tucked beneath the title on the cover, you might be tempted to wonder if a young Chizmar really did go toe-to-toe with a serial murderer. Stranger things have happened.

Easley, Warren C. [No Witness](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99). In Easley's satisfying eighth mystery featuring Portland, Oregon attorney Cal Claxton, Timoteo Fuentes, a bright and energetic young man Cal has taken a liking to, wants to become a lawyer for the right reason—to change society for the better. So the perpetually under-financed Claxton takes student Timoteo on as a legal clerk by night. When Timoteo's sister, Olivia, is stunningly shot dead from ambush, the Fuentes family begs Cal to help with the investigation because they're uneasy about dealing with the police; Timoteo and Olivia were both relatively safe as Dreamers protected by DACA, but other members of the hardworking family are undocumented and thus in danger of deportation by ICE if they call attention to themselves as witnesses to a crime. Cal must use all his ingenuity to get information from the Latino community, as he learns that a stone-cold cartel hit man is prowling the neighborhood. Meanwhile, the ominous attention of an ICE officer and a predatory financier further, both leveraging the fear of a vulnerable population, complicates the case. And Claxton's elderly neighbor and accountant suffers a stroke. Easley celebrates a loving family's resilience and the power of good people working together. I love this series and recommend ordering all the [Cal Claxtons](#) for a summer binge.

Hearne, Kevin. [Paper and Blood](#) (Del Rey \$27). **Our copies come with a signed bookplate from Kevin in Canada**—we are over 350 sold as I write this. In Book Two of the Ink & Sigil Series, which also acts as a continuation of the Iron Druid Chronicles series, Hearne “continues to explore the intersection of the mundane and the divine with his typical mix of humor and adventure. Scottish sigil agent Al MacBharrais receives word that

his counterparts in Australia and Taipei have vanished during an investigation in Australia's Dandenong Ranges. MacBharrais and his hobgoblin assistant, Buck Foi, head to Melbourne, joining apprentice sigil agent Chen Ya-Ping and the immortal Iron Druid, who currently goes by Connor Molloy, on a hike to the missing agents' last known location. Along the way, they encounter a series of monstrous chimera and magical booby traps that take all their skill to survive—but they still find time to share campfire stories at night. Meanwhile, MacBharrais seeks to dispel the twin curses placed upon him, which all but guarantee that Buck will die within a year. Though the foul-mouthed Buck steals the show, the rest of the cast hold their own—even if Hearne's fans will recognize some eerily familiar patterns in the relationship dynamics.” By throwing well-loved characters into a deadly mystery and moving each one's story along, this entertaining installment is demonstrably (here at The Pen as an indicator) a sure-fire hit. [Ink & Sigil](#) (\$16).

Kies, Thomas. [Shadow Hill](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99). In Kies' memorable fourth mystery featuring PI and occasional freelance journalist Geneva Chase, Eric Cutter hires Geneva to open a fresh investigation into the shooting deaths of his parents, Julia and Morris Cutter, a retired CEO of CP&G, an oil company. The couple was found dead in their upscale Sheffield, Conn., home in what the police ruled a murder-suicide. Morris was about to present a report subsidized by CP&G to Congress with the purpose of stalling legislation on climate change to allow the company time to roll out an international publicity campaign to sway the public to their view and increase their corporate earnings. Morris's death delayed the report, but the pressure mounts for Geneva to quickly wrap up the investigation. The stakes rise as the report's lead researcher disappears, as does Morris's estranged climatologist daughter, and Geneva unearths secrets both spouses kept from each other and rumors of embezzlement. Complex characters and brisk plotting make this a winner. This gripping and atmospheric series with its determined reporter lead is well worth reading in order. Get all of the hard-hitting, propulsive [Geneva Chase](#) Mysteries starting with the fabulous *Random Road* and disregarding the ghastly dust jacket art for *Graveyard Bay*.

Mo, Johanna. [The Night Singer](#) (Penguin \$17). Police detective Hanna Duncker, the heroine of Swedish author Mo's welcome English-language debut and series launch, has just moved from Stockholm to Kalmar on the island of Öland, near where she grew up. Hanna's first case on the local force is the murder of the 15-year-old son of one of her childhood friends. Flashbacks to the victim's last day illuminate the troubled teen's life, and Mo does a good job portraying a host of people with long memories, resentments, and a penchant for gossip. Hanna's fraught personal history adds depth: her father was found guilty of a particularly violent crime when she was a girl, and the story may be deeper than the facts suggest. The plot moves slowly at times, lingering, for example, on minor characters like Duncker's insipid new partner, Erik Lindgren, but readers will readily engage with Hanna, a no-nonsense, dogged, and thoughtful investigator. Mo is off to a strong start with the plus of a fascinating community. I have asked her to supply some photos for our zoom event.

Shaw, Johnny. [The Southland](#) (Polis/Agora \$16.95). Luz works multiple jobs to provide for herself and her teenage son Eliseo.

Nadia, a former journalist with PTSD, fled Mexico and tries to stay hidden from the dangerous men that she exposed in Sinaloa. Ostelinda works as a laborer in a garment factory, having been deceived by coyotes and imprisoned in the same building since her arrival. Their lives intersect through terrifying circumstance that clarify and contrast the horrors of existence. When Eliseo goes missing, Luz is lost. She doesn't trust the authorities to help. One wrong move could get her deported. Luz has no option but to investigate her son's disappearance on her own.

Swerdlow, Tommy. [Straight Dope](#) (Stark House \$15.95) is an LA noir novel in the tradition of the classic pulp tradition. Based on director and screenwriter Swerdlow's own experience as an ex-addict who struggled with a heroin addiction while simultaneously acting in films such as *Howard the Duck* and *Real Genius* and working as a screen writer for *Cool Runnings* and *Shrek*, *Straight Dope* captures both the gritty under belly of LA as well as its shiny surface

Walker, Martin. [The Coldest Case](#) (Knopf \$26.95). **Martin's still in France. But we offer another nifty card insert with a picture of the Chateau on one side and a delicious Bruno recipe straight from the book that Martin has sent us on the other!**

After attending an exhibit on the facial reconstruction of ancient skulls at the famed prehistory museum in Les Eyzies, Bruno Courrèges, Chief of Police in his village, wonders if this technology might provide an invaluable clue to a thirty-year-old cold case his senior colleague JJ has tried to crack since he ran the original investigation. A decision is made to bring a student of facial reconstruction to try her hand and help identify the dead man. The case quickly turns thorny. DNA testing points towards a probable ID and in time a witness to events at a summer festival weekend, the likely time of the crime, is found. From there the case goes in directions that will certainly surprise you so I recommend you don't read any of the blurbs and reviews that will certainly spoil the unfolding of the story. And to make matters even worse, the Dordogne is suffering from an intense summer drought that is sparking fires across the region. As ever Bruno draws us into life in the Périgord with his cooking, his animals including his beloved Basset Hound, now proud father to a litter of nine pups, his many friends professional and personal, and his inability to sever his hopeless relationship with Isabelle, whose high-flying job in Paris is instrumental in solving this very cold case. Walker's long and distinguished career as a journalist injects a broad scope and European politics into his tales, so they are both regional and international in scope.

This is our bestselling series in paperback and if you have somehow missed out on Bruno you can improve upon August by ordering the entire [Bruno Chief of Police series](#). They are also great gifts for any reader, even foodies.

Woodward, Laurel. [Kitchen Witchery](#) (Llewellyn \$24.99 large paperback). Featuring a wide variety of recipes, correspondences, and techniques, this practical guide elevates the way you cook and prepare meals. Laurel Woodward shares the magick of everyday things, revealing how each task can become a ritual of creation. Organized by food type, this book teaches the magickal ins and outs of: Wheats and Flours; Beans and Lentils; Nuts and Seeds Oils and Vinegars; Sweets; Spices and Herbs; Vegetables; Fruits Dairy and Eggs; Drinks; Gluten-Free Meals. *Kitchen Witchery* also provides recipes for the seasons and holidays, oil and seasoning blends, and clever ways to turn your pantry items

into magickal tools. From homemade hummus to herbal teas and so much more, this book nourishes your practice and shows you the bountiful magick right in your kitchen.

There is a special reason we are featuring this book: ask our staff as we are not making it public.

## OUR AUGUST BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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

Santlofer, Jonathan. [The Last Mona Lisa](#)

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

TBA

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

Blake, Elizabeth. [Death and Sensibility](#)

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

Moore, Taylor. [Down Range](#)

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

Hirahara, Naomi. [Clark and Division](#)

**International Crime Book of the Month**

Mo, Johanna. [The Night Singer](#)

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

Davidson, Ash. [Damnation Spring](#)

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

Walker, Joss. [Tomb of the Queen](#) Signed

## CLASSICS

Bell, Josephine. [The Port of London Murders](#) (British Library Crime Classics/Poisoned Pen \$14.99). "A cast of Dickensian characters lifts this British Library Crime Classic from Bell (1897–1987), first published in 1938. Before the arrival in the port of London of a cargo ship that sets in motion a series of events that eventually lead to murder, Bell introduces a diverse group of people, including Leslie Harvey, a boy rescued from drowning by boatman Harry Reed; the affluent Pamela Merston; and Divisional Detective-Sergeant Chandler. Chandler responds to the scene of an apparent suicide—a woman appears to have killed herself by drinking Lysol, but needle marks on her body suggest foul play. After Chandler unexpectedly is unable to continue his probe, the baton's passed to another policeman. Bell ably weaves together the disparate plot strands, but the book's strength lies in her plausible and affecting depictions of people forgotten by much of society, including the destitute, who lived "in the worst possible surroundings, and the Public Assistance saw to it that they did not die too soon." Lyrical prose makes the Thames feel almost like a living character. Traditional mystery fans won't want to miss this gem," says *PW*.

Cohen, Octavus Roy. [Jim Hanvey, Detective](#) (Library of Congress Crime Classics/ Poisoned Pen Press \$14.99). First published in 1923, this fine story collection from Cohen (1891–1957) stars New York investigator Jim Hanvey, whose "huge, fat, shapeless" head and other unattractive features make him

perhaps the least impressive-looking sleuth in crime fiction. The seven short stories are all inverted mysteries, with the fascination derived from the ways in which Hanvey trips up a criminal whose culpability has already been revealed to the reader. In “Fish Eyes,” bank teller Clifford Wallace, after stealing a large sum from his employer, attempts to allay suspicion by reporting the missing cash to his boss, having already passed the money to his fiancée, who uses a safety-deposit box maintained in her dead sister’s name to store the loot. Hanvey’s called in to investigate, and his hovering, annoying Columbo-like presence leads Wallace to make a costly misstep. Hanvey’s acumen is also on display in cases involving stolen gems (“Caveat Emptor”) and an effort to rig a proxy fight (“Common Stock”). The affable but lonely Hanvey is a unique and sympathetic creation. This Library of Congress Crime Classic provides a pleasant change of pace.

Rice, Craig. [Eight Faces at Three](#) (American Mystery Classics \$15.95). Chicago attorney John J. Malone debuts in this sharp blend of humor and fair-play from Rice (1908–1957), first published in 1939. When Holly Inglehart awakes in the middle of the night from a disturbing dream of being hanged, she sees her bedside clock has stopped at 3 o’clock, “although she’s sure it’s actually much later.” When she checks the room of her twin, Glen, it’s empty, but Glen’s clock, too, stopped working at 3 a.m., as has the hallway clock. In the room of her elderly aunt, Alex, Holly finds Alex in a chair by an open window, frozen stiff, with a knife sticking out of her chest. Sure enough, Alex’s clock has also stopped running—at 3 a.m. Holly’s fingerprints on the murder weapon and a possible motive—the dead woman’s threat to disinherit Holly should she wed—make her the prime suspect. Holly has just secretly married, and her husband’s assistant reaches out to the astute, disheveled Malone to clear her name. Amusing prose is a plus to the mystery.

## THE COZY CORNER

*We are hosting several group events for Cozy Crimes in August. Please see Events for a complete listing*

Andrews, Donna. [Murder Most Fowl](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Meg Langslow’s husband, professor Michael Waterston, is directing a production of Macbeth for the Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. The rehearsals are being held on Meg and Michael’s farm outside of Caerphilly, Virginia, and besides hosting the entire cast and crew, Meg is also dealing with a troupe of medieval reenactors who are clumsily attempting to recreate a medieval Scottish military camp in the woods behind her house. On top of it all, the production—and Meg—are plagued by an obnoxious, intrusive documentary filmmaker; a mysterious vandal; and three “witches” brewing evil potions in the woods at night. The day after the filmmaker shows a rough cut of his unflattering documentary, he’s found dead and his equipment destroyed. Was it because his video contained incriminating evidence? Andrews’s long-running family saga—this is the 29th entry—is “packed with eccentric characters, witty digressions, and endearing animals galore.”

✦ Blake, Elizabeth. [Death and Sensibility](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). A fan of all things Austen, Erin Coleridge is delighted to journey to the historic city of York and the York Grand Hotel where the Jane Austen Society’s conference she has helped plan is convening. Her nearest and dearest friend, Farnsworth Appleby, is delighted too, but part of her excitement is seeing that York copper Peter Hemming has sent Erin a welcome bouquet

complete with an Austen pun. Farnsworth loves the idea that the two may have a chance at romance after pairing while solving a murder in [Pride, Prejudice, and Poison](#) (\$26.99). But before any romance can get started, conference speaker Barry Wolf dies, apparently of a heart attack, before his keynote address. Erin, who must find a replacement speaker, suspects that Barry’s death may be murder. The assemblage is rife with scandals and secrets, as well as both shocking and delightful romances. And any Austen fan will enjoy the numerous quotes from her work emitted by the characters in this our **August Cozy Crimes Book of the Month**.

Burdette, Lucy. [A Scone of Contention](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). Key West food writer Hayley Snow and police detective Nathan Bransford have recently married. Their honeymoon is a bit of an odd one, since Hayley’s neighbor, fellow *Outlander* fanatic Miss Gloria, and Nathan’s mother, Helen, are both accompanying them while they stay with Nathan’s sister, Vera, and her husband, William, in St. Andrews, Scotland. Vera, who’s working on a book project, plans to highlight thin places, mystical spots where heaven and Earth are close. William has made plans for Nathan that all involve golf, leaving the women on their own for parts of the trip that must dovetail with Vera’s schedule in order for her to finish up loose ends. A dinner party at the home of Vera’s longtime friend Ainsley, who’s organizing the project, introduces Glenda and her husband, Gavin, who are pushing the book in a totally new direction that includes virtual reality content. Hayley makes friends with Ainsley’s chef, who’s devastated when Glenda becomes ill and the police suspect poisoning. Further tragedy swiftly follows when someone is killed on a visit to the famous Falkirk Wheel. The trip continues, but the palpable tension encourages Hayley to investigate... “A scone by scone tour of Scotland” is for foodies and perhaps for hungry *Outlander* fans awaiting [Go Tell The Bees That I Am Gone](#) (\$36 Signed) to publish on November 23.

Byron, Ellen. [Cajun Kiss of Death](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). The opening of Chanson’s Cajun Kitchen is a mixed blessing for the citizens of Pelican, Louisiana. The Crozat Plantation, managed by Magnolia Marie Crozat-Duran, is bustling, with members of the kitchen’s copious staff packed in for the long haul. Maggie’s mom is not so thrilled, since she’s pretty sure celebrity chef Phillippe Chanson has stolen the recipe for her renowned calas (fried-rice fritters). Abel Garavant, owner of Abel’s Home Cookin’, is spitting fire because Chanson’s catfish po-boys bear a striking gustatory likeness to his own secret recipe for fried catfish. And JJ, proprietor of Junie’s Oyster Bar and Dance Hall, is even madder. Not only is Chanson’s luring away many of Junie’s best customers with ridiculous deals on Gulf oysters, but someone’s left enough unbagged garbage outside his restaurant to cause the health inspector to shut it down. Things get even worse when Phillippe is killed in a boating accident caused by a faulty thermostat and ruled nonaccidental in the ensuing police investigation. Now Maggie’s new husband, detective Bo Durand, has to decide which of the generally likable suspects he’s going to lock up for Phillippe’s murder. Which means that Maggie has to take a break from her art lessons as well as from her own search for the mystery man (or woman) who’s been plying her with unwanted Valentine gifts to track down the real killer.

Carl, Joanna. [The Chocolate Raccoon Rigmarole](#) (Berkley \$26). A gang of crooks with a wicked sweet tooth wreaks havoc on the Michigan resort town of Warner Pier. A frantic late-night phone call from her right-hand woman Dolly Jolly brings Lee Woodyard to the scene of a break-in at the jewelry store next door to TenHuis Chocolate. To her shock, the suspect being held at gunpoint by police is Dolly's boyfriend, Mike Westerly, who was recently hired as a night watchman specifically to prevent break-ins. Dolly hopes Lee can help straighten out the crazy misunderstanding. Even crazier? The thieves took nothing of value from the jewelry store, only swiping some snacks. It's another in a series of break-ins by burglars the media has dubbed the Cookie Monsters. They've been hitting shops selling everything from sunglasses to shoes but stealing only sweets: lollipops, cookies, even chewing gum! It all seems pretty funny—until the discovery of a dead body....

✦ Dennison, Hannah. [Danger at the Cove](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Financially struggling widow Evie Mead and her older sister, Margot Chandler, recently divorced from a Los Angeles film producer, are refurbishing a crumbling 15-room hotel on the tiny island of Tregarrick off the tip of Cornwall. Into the chaos of sorting out the antiquated electrical system marches Louise Vanderhoven, a recently widowed Hollywood friend of Margot's. Louise has already decided to restyle herself as a film producer and expects Margot to be her business partner. Margot hopes Louise can help market the hotel, but the discovery of a body on the nearby shore plunges the sisters into a murder case, which involves a missing diamond-encrusted cross and a historic shipwreck, as well as a touch of bigamy, blackmail, and fraud. Start this charming series with [Death at High Tide](#) (\$7.99).

Duncan, Emmeline. [Fresh Brewed Murder](#) (Kensington \$15.95). Portland is famous for its rain, hipsters, craft beers...and coffee. Sage Caplin has high hopes for her coffee truck, Ground Rules, which she runs with her business partner, Harley—a genius at roasting beans and devising new blends. That's essential in a city where locals have intensely strong opinions about cappuccino versus macchiato—especially in the case of one of Sage's very first customers. Sage finds the man's body in front of her truck, a fatal slash across his neck. There's been plenty of anger in the air, from long-time vendors annoyed at Ground Rules taking a coveted spot in the food truck lot, to protestors demonstrating against a new high-rise. But who was mad enough to commit murder? Sage is already fending off trouble in the form of her estranged, con-artist mother, who's trying to trickle back into her life. But when Sage's very own box cutter is discovered to be the murder weapon, she needs to focus on finding the killer fast. Published last March.

Ellis, Mary. [100 Proof Murder](#) (Severn \$28.99). “Ellis's enticing second Bourbon Tour mystery finds intrepid journalist Jill Curtis and her videographer, Michael Erickson, in Louisville, Kentucky. While discussing with a friendly barman their intended first appointment at Parker Estate distillery, Jill and Michael discover that William Scott, the estate's master distiller, has died that very afternoon. Undaunted, Jill presents herself at the distillery, where she meets Alexis Scott, the dead man's daughter. Having heard of Jill's involvement in a recent murder case, Alexis confides that she believes her father didn't die of natural causes. Heeding Jill's advice, Alexis—against the strenuous opposition of her mother—has her father's cremation halted and a full autopsy performed.

This reveals that William was poisoned. The game is now afoot, with Jill uncovering a story of stalking, disputed inheritances, and long-held grievances, as well as making some dramatic decisions about her personal life. Ellis skillfully uses subplots involving the escapades of Jill's grandmother and aunt, as well as the failing health of the mother of Jill's sweetheart, police detective Nick Harris, to enrich the novel.”—*PW*. Ordered Upon Request.

Gerber, Daryl Wood. [A Glimmer of a Clue](#) (\$15.95). “In Agatha Award winner Gerber's delightful sequel to 2020's [A Sprinkling of Murder](#) (\$15.95), the first in the Fairy Garden Mysteries, Courtney Kelly, the owner of Open Your Imagination, a fairy gardening shop in Carmel-by-the-Sea, Calif., breaks up a brawl between her best friend Meaghan Brownie's mother, Wanda, a prominent art representative, and Lana Lamar, a hypercritical art critic, outside the art gallery Meaghan part owns. According to Wanda, the fight started because Lana denigrated one of Wanda's artists whose work was on display in the gallery. After Lana winds up stabbed to death at the Beauty of Art Spectacular benefit, Wanda is arrested because she's found holding the murder weapon, a letter opener that served as a sword in one of Courtney's fairy garden displays at the benefit. Courtney and her righteous friend, Fiona, a fairy-in-training on probation from fairy school, are determined to find the real culprit and free Wanda. Courtney's cat, Pixie, lends a helping paw.”—*PW*

Gilbert, Victoria. [Booked for Death](#) (\$16.99). First in A Book-lover's B&B Mystery aimed at fans of Kate Carlisle, Ellery Adams, and Vicki Delany. Plus anything that directs attention to the fabulous Josephine Tey is aces with me. Nestled in the historic waterfront town of Beaufort, North Carolina, Chapters Bed-and-Breakfast is a reader's paradise. Built in 1770, the newly renovated inn hosts a roster of special events celebrating books, genres, and authors. It's the perfect literary retreat—until a rare book dealer turns up dead in the carriage house during a celebration of Golden Age mystery author Josephine Tey. The victim's daughter points the finger at forty-two-year-old widow and former schoolteacher Charlotte Reed, who inherited the B&B from her great-aunt Isabella. Charlotte is shocked to discover that the book dealer suspected Isabella of being a thief who founded Chapters on her ill-gotten gains. Charlotte has successfully learned the B&B business in a year, but nothing has prepared her to handle a death on the premises. Armed with intelligence and courage and assisted by her vibrant older neighbor, a visiting author, and members of a local book club, Charlotte is determined to prove her innocence and to clear her great-aunt's name. But the murderer is still at large, and equally determined to silence anyone who might discover the truth behind the book dealer's death.

Hechtman, Betty. [One for the Hooks](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). These are the dog days of August, but you won't catch the Tarzana Hookers crochet club napping. While Molly Pink knits together an idea for a new project, Miami Wilson busily converts a house she inherited into a rental property. But Miami is left shorthanded when Sloan Renner, the woman helping her clean out the house ends up dead under a pile of smelly seafood. A large drone had flown over the property discarding mollusk shells all over the backyard. Was it an accident? An ill-fated prank by neighbors up in arms about a rental house in their cul-de-sac? Witnesses clam up when Molly's ex, homicide detective Barry Greenberg, tries to get information, but he thinks Molly may

be able to get them to open up to her. When Molly learns about Sloan's seafood allergy, she suspects that the woman's death was no accident. Books in this series include a crochet pattern and a recipe.

James, Miranda. [What the Cat Dragged In](#) (Berkley \$26). The 14<sup>th</sup> in the [Cat in the Stacks](#) cozy fair-play series, librarian Charlie Harris is surprised to find himself the owner of his grandfather Robert Harris's farmhouse in Athena, Mississippi. Robert died in a nursing home over forty years earlier, and Charlie believed the property was sold shortly before his death. Charlie's son, Sean, who's also his lawyer, reveals Robert only leased the home to Martin Hale for the duration of Hale's own life. With Hale having just died, ownership reverts to Charlie, a shock as well to Hale's grandson, also named Martin, who expected to inherit it. After Charlie visits the farmhouse, his cat, Diesel, finds a human skull and bones in the attic. Meanwhile, the body of grandson Martin turns up on the property, and the timing of the murder leads Charlie to suspect a connection to the remains in the attic.

Keown, Audrey. [Dust to Dust](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). The opulent furnishings and period theme of Beaux Arts Hotel 1911 invite guests to experience the charm of the early 20th century. But for hotel clerk Ivy Nichols, the mansion also harbors secrets about her past and the family she never knew. When the Pittsburgh chapter of the Association for Gravestone Studies checks in for their national conference, Ivy is intrigued to learn that one of them has connections to her family. The group plans to kick off their event by touring the historic graves thought to be on the hotel grounds. But they didn't plan to find one of their fellow members strangled to death afterwards. The police point the finger at the hotel's loyal manager, Mr. Fig, since no one else could have reached the victim's room. Ivy has other ideas. She believes Mr. Fig is innocent, and desperately wants to prove it.

Laurie, Victoria. [Coached in the Act](#) (Kensington \$26). Getting last-minute seats for the Hamptons' hottest ticket, the one-woman production of *Twelve Angry Men*, is no big deal for Cat Cooper, whose nearest and dearest, Gilley, needs a little pick-me-up. Cat's got connections, after all, and her boyfriend Shep's sister, Sunny, is more than willing to grease the wheels. Sunny is a longtime friend of the play's author and star, Yelena Galanis, and since Sunny's stuck at home with baby Finley while her husband is in LA yet again, it's a favor to her that Cat and Gilley can be at the show and support Yelena's creative work. By the intermission, though, Cat's not sure that she wants to support Yelena. Scorned-women stories may be hot, but hearing Yelena poke fun at 12 of her exes seems mean-spirited. On her way out, Cat runs into a man covered in blood. That's weird enough, but it's even worse when she finds out that the second act has been canceled because Yelena's just been killed. It's obviously not a coincidence, but one could argue that there are 12 suspects who wanted Yelena dead....

✦ Schellman, Katharine. [Silence in the Library](#) (\$27.99). This Regency series is a charming entry into historical cozies and much praised by our own blogger Lesa Holstine. Lily Adler, widow, has finally settled into her new London life when she sustains an unwelcome visit from her estranged father who claims recovery from an illness. His disapproval is hard for Lily to weather so she begins to spend time with Lady Wyatt, new wife of old family friend Sir Charles. They seem a happy couple...until the morning

Lily arrives at their home to find it in an uproar and Sir Charles dead. Did he trip in the night and fatally hit his head? Bow Street constable Simon Page thinks not, and soon Lily stumbles on indications that Sir Charles was murdered. Lily established herself as an insightful partner to Mr. Page in her first murder case, [The Body in the Garden](#) (\$26.99), so they form a new alliance. Soon a second death occurs....

Smith, Karen Rose. [Murder with Orange Pekoe Tea](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Daisy Swanson's orange pekoe is flowing at a Pennsylvania Amish Country fundraiser—and she's also made a new friend, Piper, a young woman whose hopes for motherhood were dashed by a foul-up at a fertility clinic. But before they can settle into a long conversation, the event is disrupted by masked protestors who object to building a shelter in Willow Creek. Among the angry crowd is Eli—who left his Amish community some time ago, with help from a lawyer named Hiram. Hiram is also representing the fertility clinic in a class-action suit—and soon afterward, he turns up dead, felled by an insulin injection. Daisy can't help but get drawn in, especially since Piper's husband had been pretty steamed at the victim and didn't hide it. She'd love to spend some time with the dog she and her boyfriend have just adopted—but first she'll be straining to find a killer.... 7<sup>th</sup> in A Daisy's Tea Garden Mystery series.

#### OUR AUGUST LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

*This is a superb list of previously published novels now in paperback*

Benn, James R. [The Red Horse](#) (\$16.95). Set in 1944, U.S. Army investigator Billy Boyle is plunged into a country house murder at Saint Albans—a former lunatic asylum converted to a hospital devoted to soldiers and agents in recovery, some from psychological wounds or flawed memories. Boyle, grievously wounded in his 14<sup>th</sup>, investigation at the liberation of Paris, is an impatient patient. Plus his lover, Lady Diana Seaton, an undercover British operative, fell into the hands of the Gestapo which, believing her to be a genuine French woman, has sent her off to Ravensbrück. One day, walking the grounds, Boyle witnesses a fellow patient, Thomas Holland, fall to his death from a clock tower. Glimpsing a second figure by Holland, the former Boston homicide cop rejects the official view that the fatality was either suicide or an accident. His status as a patient being treated for depression and disorientation after taking too much methamphetamine makes investigating a challenge. And his suspicions increase after someone else on the grounds is stabbed to death. Meanwhile his closest friend Kaz, a Polish aristocrat and worried about his sister, also at Ravensbrück.

We are excited about Billy's next investigation [Road of Bones](#) (Soho \$27.95), signed copies in September.

✦ Bowen, Rhys. [The Last Mrs. Summers](#) (\$16). It's 1935. Lady Georgiana Rannoch is just back from her African honeymoon with the dashing Darcy O'Mara and is adjusting to her new role, having inherited a fortune, as the lady of a Sussex manor. But she's a bit at loose ends when Darcy departs doing something secret for the British government once again. So she leaps at an invitation from her old friend Belinda Warburton-Stoke to visit Cornwall. Their accommodation most definitely doesn't suit so they end up as guests in the vast, ghost-haunted home of Tony Summers, a former fling of Belinda's. And despite the presence of his wife, Rose, Tony seems hot to rekindle the flame. The

first Mrs. Summers died from a fall off a cliff. The second Mrs. Summers believes that Tony killed the first, and is plotting to kill her too... This twisted Gothic tale of betrayal, deception and, most definitely, murder, is, if not an homage, a nod to Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca*, and draws upon Bowen's own family history in Cornwall.

Box, CJ. [Dark Sky](#) (\$17). A reluctant Joe Pickett is assigned to guide Steve Price, the multibillionaire CEO of Aloft, a social media company, on an elk hunting trip. The executive wants an "actual experience," albeit one he can flog on social media. But Price gets more than he bargained for when a local man, Earl Thomas, and his thuggish sons seek revenge for an act the Thomases blame on the trolling culture of social media and Aloft's platform. A suspenseful conflict between hunter and hunted in the rugged, unforgiving mountains ensues, along with an intense battle between man and nature. Joe's daughter Sheridan and his friend the falconer Nate Romanowski, whose birds are being stolen, fight their own foes. It's difficult not to view Price as Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg now even more than when *Dark Sky* published last March. Why not buy one of our remaining signed first editions of [Dark Sky](#) for \$20 rather than this large paperback—while supply lasts?

✎ Foley, Lucy. [The Guest List](#) (\$16.99). A wedding celebration turns dark and deadly in this deliciously wicked and atmospheric thriller reminiscent of Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None?* On an island off the coast of Ireland, guests gather to celebrate two people joining their lives together as one. The groom: handsome and charming, a rising television star. The bride: smart and ambitious, a magazine publisher. It's a wedding for a magazine, or for a celebrity: the designer dress, the remote location, the luxe party favors, the boutique whiskey. The cell phone service may be spotty and the waves may be rough, but every detail has been expertly planned and will be expertly executed. But perfection is for plans, and people are all too human. As the champagne is popped and the festivities begin, resentments and petty jealousies begin to mingle with the reminiscences and well wishes. The groomsmen begin the drinking game from their school days. The bridesmaid not-so-accidentally ruins her dress. The bride's oldest (male) friend gives an uncomfortably caring toast. And then someone turns up dead.

Greaney, Mark. [Relentless](#) (\$17). CIA operative Zach Hightower is trailing his target, a traitorous former NSA computer scientist, in a Caracas marketplace when he's grabbed by thugs from Venezuela's intelligence service. On learning of the failed mission, the CIA deputy director for operations rousts Zach's partner, CIA contract killer Court Gentry (aka the Gray Man), from his hospital bed, where he's recovering from a chest wound, and sends him to finish the job. Gentry takes on a long list of bad guys, including a group of American mercenaries working for the spy organization of the United Arab Emirates, a rogue international intelligence firm, and a Russian superagent who may be the only assassin in the world who could go one-on-one with Gentry and come out on top. Readers won't be wrong to suspect that Gentry, despite being at half strength, will prevail in this 10th in [The Gray Man series](#) about to burst upon us on Netflix with a stellar cast including Chris Evans, Ryan Gosling, and *Bridgerton*'s Renée-Jean Page and filmed in Prague. I'm pleased to say we at The Pen have been with Mark every step of the way from the first, *The Gray Man*, to the tenth.

McCafferty, Keith. [The Bangtail Ghost](#) (\$16). In Montana's Gravelly Range, paw prints and a single whisker discovered at a scene of horrific violence suggest a woman had been attacked and carried away by a mountain lion. Sheriff Martha Ettinger employs her fiancé, sometimes-detective Sean Stranahan, to put a name to the gnawed bones comprising all that is left of the body. The woman's is the first of several deaths that Sean suspects are not as easily explained as they appear. As a reign of terror grips the Madison Valley, blood in the tracks will lead him from the river below to the snow-covered ridge tops, Sean comes closer to unearthing the secret shared by the dead and missing, the tracks he is following will turn, and the hunter becomes the hunted. I miss the wonderful books by the late Peter Bowen; McCafferty's are darker and more intricate but as closely married to the landscape. We recommend your order the whole [Sean Stranahan series](#), a winner of the Western Writers of America's Golden Spur Award, and read it in order.

Mizushima, Margaret. [Hanging Falls](#) (\$16.99). An imperfect heroine and her beloved canine sidekick: What's not to like? Certainly the PP staffers are fans. Mattie Cobb is finally stepping aside from her role as deputy and the human part of Timber Creek's only K-9 team to connect with relatives she thought she'd lost many years before. Her sister, Julia, and her *abuela* have plans to welcome Mattie with open arms, if only she can get away for a few days. But those plans are put on ice when Mattie and her friend Glenna come upon a body while jogging at Hanging Falls. Robo, Mattie's German shepherd partner, is needed to search the Colorado forests, so Mattie puts off her visit to find out who could have killed what appears to be an out-of-towner, then dumped him in the water. While Mattie keeps their shift from friendship to full-on romance private, she's happy to have the help of Cole Walker on the case.

Mizushima signs her new Timber Creek K-9 Mystery [Stalking Range](#) (Crooked Lane \$27.99) for The Pen in September. Our zoom event is on September 4, 4:00 PM.

✎ Osman, Richard. [The Thursday Murder Club](#) (\$17). British TV celebrity Osman mixes mirth and murder in his exceptional debut, a series launch featuring the four members of the Thursday Murder Club, residents of the Coopers Chase Retirement Village in Kent. Despite their different backgrounds, Elizabeth, Ibrahim, Joyce, and Ron share an interest in solving mysteries. When 26-year-old Donna De Freitas, a police constable who dreams of pursuing serial killers, visits the home to talk to the pensioners about "Practical Tips for Home Security," the club members arrange for Donna to be assigned to a homicide case they have a connection to by manipulating her boss, so that they can get access to the investigation through a grateful Donna. That way they can take a crack at solving the bludgeoning murder of drug dealer Tony Curran, who operated a building business as a front, and whose killer left a photo of three men, one of whom is Ron's son, near Curran's corpse. They use their individual talents, including Joyce's gift for gathering information unobtrusively, and Ibrahim's medical knowledge, which enables him to narrow the timing of a second, related killing. As the bodies begin to pile up, can our unorthodox but brilliant gang catch the killer, before it's too late? If *A Man Called Ove* were a crime novel, it would be *The Thursday Murder Club*, with the golden-age murder mystery feel of *The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie*, and an eccentric, older ensemble cast reminiscent of Alexander McCall Smith's

No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series, and Anthony Horowitz's *The Magpie Murders* and his Detective Daniel Hawthorne mysteries.

✦ Pavesi, Alex. [The Eighth Detective](#) (\$17). Book editor Julia Hart has come to a small Mediterranean island, the home of reclusive author Grant McAllister, to help him prepare his 25-year-old story collection, *The White Murders*, for reissue. Privately printed in the early 1940s, the collection was based on a 1937 paper by Grant, whose intent was "to give a mathematical definition of a murder mystery." As the editor and author go through each of the seven stories, they discuss Grant's mathematical rules for his fiction. Julia spots inconsistencies in each, and remarks on the fact that the collection's title echoes an unsolved crime from the time of the book's origin. Pavesi clearly knows his classic murder mysteries as shown by a story that evokes Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None*, and all his plot tricks will please readers with a similar passion.... "Dizzying, dazzling — a potent potion of a thriller, a brew of bibliophilia (think *The Shadow of the Wind*), wire-taut tension (*The Talented Mr. Ripley*), and plot swerves so sharp and sudden you risk whiplash with each turn of the page, as bold as the best of Michael Connelly and Lisa Gardner. When did you last read a genuinely original thriller?"—AJ Finn

Sager, Riley. [Home Before Dark](#) (\$17). Interior designer Maggie Holt is shocked to learn after the death of her father, Ewan, that he has left Baneberry Hall, near Bartleby, Vermont, to her. She hadn't realized that Ewan still owned the spooky mansion that Maggie, Ewan, and her mother moved into 25 years earlier. Maggie's parents were able to buy the house cheaply, because of a recent tragedy there—the prior owner smothered his six-year-old daughter with a pillow before killing himself. The Holt family had their own traumatic episodes in Baneberry Hall, including Maggie's visions of a ghostly figure, which led to their fleeing into the night just 20 days after they moved in. Ewan, financially struggling, wrote a bestseller about the experience which made pots of money. And then he and Maggie's mother split. Maggie, who still suffers from night terrors, decides to move into Baneberry Hall to get a better understanding of what happened to her. The big question: how much of Ewan's book was true? In this modern Gothic, "Sager, who makes the house a palpable, threatening presence, does a superb job of anticipating and undermining readers' expectations. Haunted house fans will be in heaven." We still have a few Signed firsts of Sager's 2021 zinger [Survive the Night](#) (Dutton \$27), a completely different but equally compelling story.

Spotswood, Stephen. [Fortune Favors the Dead](#) (\$16). "Bullets, blood, bodies, and belly-laugh. Spotswood offers a charming, dazzlingly subversive, refreshingly hopeful modern spin on the classic hardboiled detective novel—and launch of an exciting new series! With all the 1940s finery, quirky murder weapons, and secret tunnels of a game of Clue, this is the perfect transportive mystery. Pentecost & Parker are a female detective duo unlike any you've seen before, determined to keep the hard-boiled streets of Manhattan safe from injustice. It's 1945 and Willowjean "Will" Parker has been the assistant to New York's best — and most unorthodox — private investigator, Lillian Pentecost, for three years. A teenage runaway who spent her adolescence working for a traveling circus, Will now uses her unique set of skills to track down leads, corner criminals, and act as the right-hand woman to Ms. Pentecost, who is battling multiple sclerosis.

Knowing she may soon become lead detective because of Ms. Pentecost's illness and unsure she has what it takes, Will does her best to cover up her doubts with a hard-boiled bravado she's picked up from dime-store detective novels. Enter a murdered millionaire, a blackmailing spiritualist, a tight-lipped butler, a swaggering heir, an enigmatic love interest, and the dark secrets they carry, and the game is afoot! These two empowered, differently abled (Pentecost) and queer (Parker) women do not merely survive despite the realities of their marginalized identities in 1940s New York, but rather thrive because of the unique perspectives they bring to their detective work.

Unger, Lisa. [Confessions on the 7:45](#) (\$16.99). A fellow bookseller writes: "Alfred Hitchcock may have had his *Strangers on a Train*, but *Confessions on the 7:45* leaves it in the dust. Lisa Unger has crafted a sharp and suspenseful take on the theme of spilling secrets. Selena and Martha meet on a train and confess their troubles. Soon after, however, Selena finds her life unraveling and does not know whom to trust. Filled with some of the twisty-turn-iest events readers are likely to encounter on the page, *Confessions on the 7:45* is deliciously intriguing fun." A Starred review adds: "In this exquisitely crafted psychological thriller from Edgar finalist Unger, Selena Murphy trades confessions with a stranger named Martha while seatmates trapped in a stalled New York City commuter train. Serena has discovered that her husband is sleeping with the nanny. Then the woman continues to contact Serena.... Unger explores the complexities of marriage and the devastation wrought by infidelity using keenly rendered characters and a prismatic narrative. Though disappearance drives the plot, smaller puzzles abound, heightening suspense and connecting seemingly disparate story lines in diabolically clever ways.

Look for Lisa to discuss her next novel [Last Girl Ghosted](#) (Park Row \$27.99) with Karin Slaughter on October 9. We will have Signed copies for you. Order early!

Winslow, Don. [Broken](#) (\$17.99). Winslow writes he wanted to take a shot at six novellas in the spirit of Jim Harrison or Stephen King or, as one can see in this collection of six stories, Elmore Leonard. They give him an ability to set one in New Orleans, three around San Diego with homage to Steve McQueen and to Chandler, one in Kauai, and one a neo-Western along the border. "I love the intensity of this form" that demands "taut, economical writing and still has space for richness of character, strong dialogue, even some whimsy." Winslow shows us a world of high-level thieves and low-life crooks, obsessed cops struggling with life on and off the job, private detectives, dope dealers, bounty hunters and fugitives, the lost souls driving without headlights through the dark night on the American criminal highway. Both Patrick and I admire the novellas.

Winslow brings us the start of a new trilogy, [City on Fire](#) (Morrow \$28.99), at the end of September. Order your Signed first early to avoid disappointment!



## OUR AUGUST SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Alexander, Ellie. [Without a Brew](#) (\$8.99). Sloan Krause #4. While crafting regional beers for the winter season's annual Ice Fest, Nitro brewer and amateur sleuth Sloan Krause also rents rooms to unexpected visitors, including a sanctuary-seeking guest who goes missing after a physical altercation. *Kirkus* loved this saying "A delight for foodies, craft beer fans, and lovers of twisty mysteries with a bit of humor."

Baldacci, David. [Walk the Wire](#) (\$9.99). Amos Decker #6. Amos Decker, the FBI consultant with a perfect memory, and Alex Jamison FBI return to solve a gruesome murder of a young woman named Irene Cramer.

Bond, Veronica. [Death in Castle Dark](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Dinner and a Murder Mystery #1. Actress Nora Blake, after the death of one of her Castle Dark cast mates, must figure out which one of her fellow actors has taken the role of a murderous villain too seriously. Here is *Kirkus* again "A promising new series with a charming heroine, plenty of romance, and a generous portion of red herrings."

Howard, Catherine Ryan. [The Nothing Man](#) (\$9.99). Supermarket security guard Jim Doyle has just started reading *The Nothing Man*-the true-crime memoir Eve Black has written about her efforts to track down her family's killer. As he turns each page, his rage grows. Because Jim's not just interested in reading about the Nothing Man. Jim is the Nothing Man, and he knows Eve won't give up until she finds him. "Howard uses serial killer tropes in original and surprising ways in this tour de force." (*PW*).

Lupica, Mike. [Robert B. Parker's Fool's Paradise](#) (\$9.99). Jesse Stone #19. Surprised by the murder of a man he met the night before at an AA meeting, Paradise Police Chief Jesse Stone follows leads to one of the wealthiest families in town to identify the victim and his mysterious agenda.

Parker, T. Jefferson. [Then She Vanished](#) (\$9.99). Roland Ford #4. Helping a rising politician whose wife has gone missing amid an inexplicable series of bombings, private investigator Roland Ford investigates the activities of a mysterious group before uncovering sinister ties to a kidnapping that threatens an entire city. *PW* concluded their review with "The plot is as well crafted as it is thought provoking. Parker writes with confidence, insight, and real humanity."

St James, Dorothy. [The Broken Spine](#) (\$7.99). Beloved Bookroom #1. Rescuing hundreds of precious books from her newly digitized library, spunky librarian Trudell Becket is forced to prove her innocence when the politician behind the library's demolition is murdered. Here is *PW* again "Cozy fans seeking a lighthearted, straightforward mystery will be satisfied."

Tarantino, Quentin. [Once Upon a Time in Hollywood](#) (Harper \$9.99). Expanding on the story told in the Academy Award-winning film, this long-awaited work of fiction tracks the four principal characters--Rick Dalton, Cliff Booth, Sharon Tate and Charles Manson--both before and after the events of the film.

Taylor, Brad. [American Traitor](#) (\$9.99). Pike Logan #15. Assisting a witness' flight from murderous foreign agents, Pike Logan and Jennifer Cahill uncover a plot to trigger a war between China and Taiwan by destabilizing the latter's government and digital defenses. "Series fans will appreciate the continuing evolution of the characters and the customary attention to tactical detail.

Taylor reinforces his place as a major player in the military action genre." (*PW*).

Walker, Wendy. [The Night Before](#) (\$9.99). Parallel accounts of the days before and after a fateful blind date follow Rosie Ferro's revelatory investigation into the disappearance and complicated nature of her sister, Laura. "Walker's clever misdirection paves the way to a truly chilling finale, and she has plenty of insightful things to say about the blame placed on women by society and themselves for the idiotic, careless, and sometimes downright evil things men do. Twisty and propulsive." (*Kirkus*).