

BOOKNEWS from

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A Knockout November... Think of it as the New December

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

Note: Event times are Pacific Daylight time until November 8, then Mountain Standard Time

Watch these virtual events on [Facebook Live](#) or on our [YouTube](#) channel and any time thereafter at a time that suits you. You don't have to belong to Facebook to click in.
You also can listen to our [Podcasts](#) on [Google Music](#), [iTunes](#), [Spotify](#), and other popular podcast sites.

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 2 5:00 PM

Dennis Palumbo discusses [Panic Attack](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95).
Pittsburgh psychologist Daniel Rinaldi

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 2 6:00 PM National Book Launch

Janet Evanovich discusses [Game On](#) (Atria \$28.99).
Stephanie Plum Tempting 28
Signed books available

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 3 6:00 PM National Book Launch

Jenn McKinlay discusses [Killer Research](#) (Berkley \$26)
A Library Lovers Mystery
Signed books available

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 4 2:00 PM

Sherry Thomas discusses [Miss Moriarty, I Presume?](#) (Berkley \$16)
The Lady Sherlock Series

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 4 6:00 PM

Ann Williams with Douglas Preston
The authors discuss [Lost Cities, Ancient Tombs](#) (National Geographic \$35)
100 Discoveries That Changed the World
Preston wrote the Introduction and signs all our copies

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 6 4:00 PM

Jayne Castle (aka Jayne Ann Krentz) with John Charles Jayne discusses [Guild Boss](#) (Berkley \$27)
Our November SciFi/Fantasy Book of the Month
Signed copies available

TIME CHANGE BEGINS FROM PDT TO MST

MONDAY NOVEMBER 8 10:00 AM (ie, 12:00 PM ET)

Michael Connelly discusses [The Dark Hours](#) (LittleBrown \$29)
In a conversation recorded earlier at The Pen
There is no Live Event

Signed books available. If ordered by November 2 you may request a short (5 word) inscription

MONDAY DECEMBER 8 6:00 PM

William Boyle discusses [Shoot the Moonlight Out](#) (Pegasus \$25.95)
Signed books available

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 9 5:00 PM

Beatriz Williams discusses [The Wicked Widow](#) (Harper \$27.99)
Signed books in stock

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 10

A recorded conversation with the UK Murder Squad chaired by **Martin Edwards** and including its members **Ann Cleeves, Kate Ellis, Margaret Murphy, Chris Sims, Cath Staincliff** will post.
Their new anthology is [Many Deadly Returns](#) (Severn \$28.99)

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 11 1:00 PM

UK's Lynn Truss discusses [Psycho by the Sea](#) (Bloomsbury \$27)
Brighton's Constable Twitten
Signed bookplates available

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 11 6:00 PM

Nicholas Meyer with Will Thomas Meyer discusses [The Return of the Pharaoh](#) (St Martins \$25.99)
Sherlock Holmes in Egypt
Signed books available

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 12 5:00 PM

Kathleen Kent discusses [The Pledge](#) (LittleBrown \$28)
Signed books available

MONDAY NOVEMBER 15 7:00 PM National Book Launch

Dirk Cussler discusses [The Devil's Sea](#) (Putnam \$29)
A Dirk Pitt adventure
Signed books and short inscriptions requests (5 words) available
NOTE: Dirk is available for a Live Signing Line from 5:00-6:30 PM
The 7:00 PM conversation is Virtual

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 16 1:00 PM National Book Launch

David Baldacci discusses [Mercy](#) (Grand Central \$29)
Atlee Pine
Signed books available

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 16 5:45 PM National Book Launch
Marc Cameron discusses [Tom Clancy Chain of Command](#) (Putnam \$29.95)

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 16 7:00 PM National Book Launch
Thomas Perry discusses [The Left Handed Twin](#) (Mysterious \$25.95)
Jane Whitefield returns after six years!
Signed books available

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 17 5:30 PM
Richard Paul Evans discusses [The Christmas Promise](#) (Gallery \$21.99)
Signed books available

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 17 7:00 PM
Hardboiled Crime discusses William McIlvanney's [Laidlaw](#) (\$16)

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 18 7:00 PM
Karen Odden discusses [Down a Dark River](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99)
Stars a Victorian mystery series for fans of Perry's William Monk series
Books signed at The Pen, short (5 word) inscription requests available

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 19 7:00 PM
SciFi Friday discusses John Alvide Lindqvist's [Let the Right One In](#) (\$19.99)

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 20 10:30 AM
Croak & Dagger discusses Brian Freeman's fabulous [The Deep, Deep Snow](#) (\$16.99)

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 27 10:00AM-6:00 PM
It's Small Business Saturday all day
Drop by for treats and some on-the-spot special deals

MONDAY NOVEMBER 29 6:00 PM
Patricia Cornwell with James Patterson
Cornwell discusses [Autopsy](#) (Harper \$28.99)
Kay Scarpetta
The purchase of a Signed copy of *Autopsy* from The Pen is required to attend this ticketed event.
A link to the recorded Crowdcast program will be provided.
Would you like to have the chance to have Patricia answer your question during the conversation? Your link to the event will provide access to a form you can submit ahead of the start time
Ticket holders will also get priority ordering Patterson's new Alex Cross thriller [Fear No Evil](#) (LittleBrown \$29) with a Signed Bookplate. Our supply is limited.

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 30 7:00 PM Live National Book Launch
Jeff Deaver discusses [Midnight Lock](#) (Putnam \$28)
Lincoln Rhyme
Books signed at The Pen, short (5 word) inscription requests available

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 1 1:00 PM
Robert Lloyd with Lee Child
Lloyd discusses [The Bloodless Boy](#) (McSweeney \$29.99)
An astonishing historical mystery debut by an author living in Wales
Signed bookplates available

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 1 6:00 PM
Meg Waite Clayton discusses [The Postmistress of Paris](#) (Harper \$27.99)
Signed books available

OUR NOVEMBER BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Remember that instead of December selections we offer a zoom discussion to members of: British Crime, Crime, Cozy, First Mystery, Historical Fiction, Notable New Fiction groups. Pat might be able to lead the SciFi/Fantasy group. We will figure out dates, times, and links for the December meetings

Please consider giving a membership as a gift to someone, or to yourself, and sign up for the January-June 2022 cycle. With all the supply problems plaguing publishing belonging to a club is a good way to insure you will not miss out on a book.

The Crime Book of the Month One Signed hardcover First per month
Hall, Rachel Howzell. [These Toxic Things](#)

British Crime Book of the Month One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month
Glennconner, Lady Anne. [A Haunting at Holkham](#) (due early December)

Cozy Crimes Book of the Month One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month
Murray, Amita. [Arya Winters and the Tiramisu of Death](#)

First Mystery Book of the Month Club_One Signed hardcover First per month
Rosenfield, Kat. [No One Will Miss Her](#)

Historical Fiction Book of the Month One Signed hardcover First per month
Cambridge, Colleen. [Murder at Mallowan Hall](#)

International Crime Book of the Month
Angoe, Yasmin. [Her Name Is Knight](#)

Notable New Fiction Book of the Month One Signed hardcover First per month
Flanagan, Ted. [Every Hidden Thing](#)

SciFi/Fantasy Book of the Month One hardcover or paperback per month signed when possible
Castle, Jayne. [Guild Boss](#)

SIGNED BOOKS FOR NOVEMBER

Books with signed bookplates rather than title page are noted

Albom, Mitch. [The Stranger in the Lifeboat](#) (Harper \$23.99).

Tip-ins. Adrift in a raft after a deadly ship explosion, nine people struggle for survival at sea. Three days pass. Short on water, food and hope, they spot a man floating in the waves. They pull him in. “Thank the Lord we found you,” a passenger says. “I am the Lord,” the man whispers. And he says he can only save them if they all believe in him. So begins Mitch Albom’s new novel....

Angoe, Yasmin. [Her Name is Knight](#) (Alyson \$24.95/\$15.95).

Signed Bookplates. Aninyeh, the captivating heroine of Angoe’s impressive debut, had an idyllic childhood as a chieftain’s daughter in a Ghanaian village. Then, when she was 14, an enemy of her father, along with a group of barbaric men, ransacked her village, slaughtered her family, and sold her into captivity. Aninyeh eventually escaped and was found by Delphine Knight, who took her to London. There, Aninyeh was adopted by Delphine and her husband, Noble, the leader of the African Tribal Council (aka the Tribe), a business group devoted to uniting the various African countries into a strong economic force. Aninyeh now lives in Miami, Fla., and is part of an assassination team that protects the Tribe’s interests, killing its enemies when necessary. Things go awry on a mission for the Tribe when, instead of assassinating the intended target, a federal attorney with whom she has become close, Aninyeh kills another person. Meanwhile, after learning the same man who led the attack on her village has joined the Tribe, she plots her revenge. Angoe expertly builds tension by shifting between her lead’s past and present lives. Thriller fans will cheer Aninyeh every step of the way in our **November International Crime Book of the Month**.

Baldacci, David. [Mercy](#) (Grand Central \$29). Well I knew next to nothing about cage fighting until I dove into this new Atlee Pine thriller. You fans will know that FBI Agent Pine, her primary station in Arizona, has been searching for her long-lost sister Mercy and is now assisted by Bureau staffer Carol Blum, a woman in her sixties who’s become a kind of surrogate mother to Pine and has six children of her own. When Mercy disappeared as a child it shattered Atlee’s family and left her abandoned by her parents. Now having closed her third investigation, [Daylight](#) (\$16.99), Atlee has learned some of the real story and believes that Mercy both survived abduction and has somehow survived. Mercy also has left at least one body behind her. You can take it from there.... And order all four Atlee Pines.

☞ Bennett, SJ. [A Three Dog Problem](#) (Zaffre \$35). In the wake of a referendum which has divided the nation, the last thing the Queen needs is any more problems to worry about. But when an oil painting of the Royal Yacht Britannia—first given to the Queen in the 1960s—shows up unexpectedly in a Royal Navy exhibition, she begins to realize that something is up. When a body is found in the Palace swimming pool, she finds herself once again in the middle of an investigation which has more twists and turns than she could ever have suspected. With her trusted secretary Rozie by her side, the Queen is determined to solve the case. But will she be able to do it before the murderer strikes again?

Boyle, William. [Shoot the Moonlight Out](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). Patrick reviews: An impetuous act by a pair of Brooklyn teenagers has tragic repercussions in Boyle’s fantastic new novel. Bobby Santovasco and his buddy Zeke are out for kicks, throwing rocks

at cars, but they end up accidentally killing a 19-year old driver. Meanwhile, a recent widower named Jack Cornacchia seeks relief from his emotional pain by doing freelance vigilante jobs for people in the neighborhood who need help but can’t go to the police. Fast forward five years to the summer of 2001... Cornacchia meets Lily Murphy, an aspiring writer leading a creative writing class at a local church. Murphy confides in him that she is being stalked by a former boyfriend and Jack takes it upon himself to quietly handle the situation. Santovasco, meanwhile, is now nineteen and has an ill-fated scheme to rob his employer, a crooked local businessman running a banking scam. Bobby hopes to impress his new girlfriend and hit the road for California. Boyle makes you care about his characters, even rooting for them when they make tragic mistakes. If you like Lehane, Richard Price and Pelecanos, check out Boyle. He’s really doing something special and deserves a wide readership.

☞ Cambridge, Colleen. [Murder at Mallowan Hall](#) (Kensington \$26). This is classic *Upstairs/Downstairs* stuff, emphasis on Downstairs. You will enjoy a visit with Agatha Christie but the real interest lies in the incredibly meticulous way the servants under the stern direction of the housekeeper (and Agatha’s friend) Mrs. (courtesy title) Phyllida Bright. I chose this series start for our **November Historical Fiction Book of the Month** for this, not for the plot.

We’re in Devon (where Christie’s actual country house Greenway is located, now deeded to the National Trust), 1930. WWI has reduced the number of people employed domestically, but this household staff is kept up to the Gilded Age high standards although they slip during the investigation. Phyllida is an unabashed fan of Hercule Poirot, and one reason she’s currently unwed is “that she had yet to find a man who met the standards set by the proper Belgian detective.” Early one morning, Phyllida goes to draw the curtains in the library and finds one of the Mallowans’ house-party guests lying dead on the rug, a fountain pen protruding from the side of his neck. Another murder follows. The general ineptitude of the local police offends Phyllida, who decides to use her little gray cells to solve the case. Of course it’s not nearly as easy as Poirot makes it look.

Castle, Jayne. [Guild Boss](#) (Berkley \$27). John reviews our **November SciFi/Fantasy Book of the Month**: It is difficult for Lucy Bell to truly be grateful to Gabriel Jones for rescuing her from the tunnels beneath Illusion Town since he inadvertently destroyed her professional reputation at the same time. However, when Gabriel turns up with a job offer, it doesn’t take Lucy more than a moment to ditch her current tour guide gig in favor of working for Illusion Town’s new Guild Boss. However, while being part of Gabriel’s new team will do wonders to help restore Lucy’s professional status as a weather channeler, what Lucy doesn’t know is that the person who tried to kill her by dumping her in the tunnels is just waiting to finish the job. After a five-year hiatus, fans of Castle’s (a.k.a. Jayne Ann Krentz’s) paranormal-infused, futuristic series set on the world of Harmony are in a for a terrific treat. Not only does the author serve up a danger-infused, tautly paced plot deftly spiced with a generous measure of dry wit and simmering sexual chemistry, the book’s endlessly entertaining cast of characters includes a pizza-eating dust bunny that threatens to steal the whole show.

Library Reads echoes John: “In this wonderful return to the Harmony paranormal romance series, Gabriel finds a kid-

napped Lucy sitting on a crystal throne with a dust bunny feeding her pizza. Adventure and sexual tension ensue.”

Clayton, Meg Waite. [The Postmistress of Paris](#) (Harper \$27.99). In 1938, Naneé Gold lives in the company of Parisian writers and artists. When the Germans invade France, Naneé flees Paris with T, the wife of her “French brother,” Danny Bénédite, whom she had lived with while studying at the Sorbonne, and the Bénédites’ young son, Peterkin. Determined to help thwart the Nazi occupation, Naneé begins working with Varian Fry, who provides aid to refugees while secretly helping artists escape, and she later embarks on a mission to free photographer and artist Edouard Moss from an internment camp. As the war rages on, Naneé takes up residence at a villa in Marseilles with Danny, T, and Peterkin following Danny’s French military service, and helps Edouard search for his daughter Luki, whom he sent to Paris before his internment. As Naneé and Edouard become lovers, the intensity of their romance is heightened by the ever-present dangers from the Germans. “Clayton’s lyrical, thought-provoking prose breathes life into her characters. This sterling portrait of a complex woman stands head and shoulders above most contemporary WWII fiction.”

Connelly, Michael. [The Dark Hours](#) (LittleBrown \$29). Connelly has crafted two timely and clever plots for Ballard and Bosch to pick apart as things are shifting to Ballard taking the lead role. A Starred Review adds: “In bestseller Connelly’s stellar fourth novel featuring LAPD Detective Renée Ballard, Ballard leads the way on two separate cases: the shooting death of Javier Raffa, a former gang member, and the search for a pair of serial rapists dubbed the Midnight Men. A recovered bullet connects the Raffa shooting to an old case of Connelly’s main series lead, Harry Bosch. Though Bosch is retired, he willingly helps out and ends up playing a key role in investigating both cases. Meticulous about actual police procedure, Connelly makes the fundamentals of detective work engrossing while providing plenty of suspense and action, including one genuinely shocking scene of violence involving Ballard. He also excels at imbuing his narratives with social commentary, a talent showcased in this entry, which opens with Ballard and her reluctant police partner, Lisa Moore, parked near a homeless encampment on New Year’s Eve 2020 (“It had been a bad year with the pandemic and social unrest and violence”). Along the way to a surprising, even hopeful ending, Connelly avoids polemics while exploring such issues as internal disaffection among the police (including Ballard’s ambivalence about her career), misogyny and domestic violence, and the political divide that resulted in the January 6 insurrection at the Capitol. This is a masterpiece.”

Cornwell, Patricia. [Autopsy](#) (Harper \$28.99). Kay Scarpetta is on the job as the recently appointed the chief medical examiner of Virginia at her headquarters in Alexandria. She’s preparing for the next meeting of the National Emergency Contingency Coalition (aka the Doomsday Commission), but her mind is on a woman whose body she examined over the weekend, a murder victim with severed hands dumped by railroad tracks on an island in the Potomac. Since the office has a history of corruption, and many employees remain loyal to Scarpetta’s predecessor, she hires longtime confidant and former Richmond police officer Pete Marino to help identify the victim. Marino, though retired and married to Kay’s sister, hates being out of the game. They soon focus on a missing 33-year-old biotechnical engineer. Meanwhile,

as a member of the Doomsday Commission, Scarpetta remotely investigates her first crime scene in space—a top secret laboratory where two scientists have died. Then a serial killer the media has dubbed the Railway Slayer strikes again. Cornwell is skilled at describing the various settings for the story, she laces it with food (prep and eating), and the plot includes such topics as industrial espionage and biomedical engineering.

Cussler, Dirk. [The Devil’s Sea](#) (Putnam \$29). **Cussler is signing our books at The Pen. You may request a personalization of no more than five words by November 12.**

A search for a lost artifact drives the exciting 26th Dirk Pitt novel with scenes in the Himalayas and into fascinating water currents in the Philippine Sea. In the prologue, set in 1959, Tibetan monks succeed in getting the Nechung Idol, a large statue carved from a meteorite, onto a plane while under attack from invading Chinese Communist forces. The statue is of paramount importance to the Dalai Lama, who has just fled Tibet. In 2022, no one knows the idol’s whereabouts, until Dirk Pitt Sr. and his children, twins Dirk Pitt Jr. and Summer, all of whom work for the National Underwater and Marine Agency, discover clues in a plane crash from decades earlier into the Philippine Sea. Meanwhile, the Chinese, including the mentally unstable Lt. Zheng Yijong, a member of the Chinese Army Rocket Forces Special Operations Command, are seeking the Nechung Idol because they can use its metal in their new line of supersonic missiles. All three Pitts escape death scores of times as the action races to a showdown between them and the villainous Zheng. “Dirk Cussler has done his father proud.” And how we miss Clive (1931-2020), but are delighted with this the first solo contribution by Dirk to his late father’s bestselling signature series, and how glad we are that Dirk is keeping the Pitts alive. Look for new adventures in the Cussler-verse by Robin Burcell and Graham Brown in the spring.

Deaver, Jeffery. [The Midnight Lock](#) (Putnam \$28). **Deaver is signing our books at The Pen, thus a live event limited to 60. You may request a personalization of no more than five words.**

Lincoln Rhyme, a former cop who does consulting as a forensic expert, must deal with the fallout from a devastating courtroom embarrassment. His conclusions about traces of sand are discredited on cross-examination, leading to the acquittal of a known criminal who was charged with the murder of “a psychotic wannabe gangbanger.” As this occurs in the middle of a taut gubernatorial race, one of the candidates, the New York City mayor, responds by banning the use of civilian consultants such as Rhyme. That places the criminalist, and his wife, Amelia Sachs, who’s an NYPD detective, in a tough spot as a creep known as the Locksmith begins breaking into women’s apartments, leaving behind evidence he invaded their space. One of his targets finds a note with the word *reckoning* that’s signed “the Locksmith” on top of some of her underwear. As ever with Deaver, take nothing at face value. And enjoy the fact that Rhyme has recovered much of the use of one arm.

Erdrich, Louise. [The Sentence](#) (Harper \$28.99). **Tip-ins.** Pulitzer winner Erdrich returns with a scintillating story about a motley group of Native American booksellers haunted by the spirit of a customer. In 2019 Minneapolis, Tookie, a formerly incarcerated woman, is visited at a bookstore by the ghost of Flora, a white woman with a problematic past. Despite being a dedicated ally of

myriad Native causes, Flora fabricated a family lineage linking her to various Indigenous groups including Dakota and Ojibwe... As the Covid-19 pandemic takes hold and the store pivots to mail orders, several of the characters join the protests against police brutality. Library Reads remarks: "A weird novel that is occasionally very funny, this is set in Birchbark Books, Erdrich's own Minneapolis bookstore, which is haunted by the ghost of its most annoying customer. The story moves through the pandemic and the explosion of protests after George Floyd's murder, but Erdrich's warmth is always there. For readers of Isabel Allende and Tommy Orange." I add that I enjoyed Erdrich pointing out that customers can be annoying—although surely none of them can be you.

Evonovich, Janet. [Game On](#) (Atria \$28.99). Well yay! Diesel is back, back as though two years was just yesterday. And he's in Stephanie Plum's apartment. Not an arrangement her longtime main squeeze, cop Joe Morelli, will relish. In fact Steph is sorry her gun is in the cookie jar in her kitchen. But it turns out fellow apprehension agent Diesel is on the trail of the same fugitive as Steph: one Oswald Wednesday, a brilliant hacker. Is Diesel her competition or her partner here? And has Trenton, NJ's, group of small time hackers known as the Baked Potatoes taken Wednesday on? If not why are they dying? Both Morelli and Ranger start to worry about Steph's safety. And amazingly, Grandma Mazur proves to be a rising digital age adept.

Evans, Richard Paul. [The Christmas Promise](#) (Gallery \$21.99). On the night of her high school graduation, Richelle Bach's father gives her and her identical twin sister, Michelle, matching opal necklaces. "These opals look identical," he tells them, "but the fire inside each is completely unique—just like the two of you." Indeed, the two sisters couldn't be more different, and their paths diverge as they embark on adulthood. Years pass, until—at their father's behest—they both come home for Christmas. What happens then forever damages their relationship, and Richelle vows never to see or speak to her sister again. In their father's last days, he asks Richelle to forgive Michelle, a deathbed promise she never fulfills as her twin is killed in an accident. Now, painfully alone and broken, caring for the sickest of children in a hospital PICU, Richelle has one last dream: to be an author. The plot of her book, *The Prodigal Daughter*, is a story based on her sister's life. It's not until she meets Justin Ek, a man who harbors his own loss, that a secret promise is revealed, and Richelle learns that the story she's writing is not about her sister, but about herself.

✦ Fellowes, Jessica. [The Mitford Vanishing](#) (Zaffre \$39). 1937. War with Germany is dawning, and a civil war already raging in Spain. Split across political lines, the six Mitford sisters are more divided than ever. Meanwhile their former maid Louisa Cannon is now a private detective, working with her ex-policeman husband Guy Sullivan. Louisa and Guy are surprised when a call comes in from novelist Nancy Mitford requesting that they look into the disappearance of her Communist sister Jessica, nicknamed Decca. It quickly becomes clear that Decca may have made for the war in Spain—and not traveled alone. As a second, separate missing person case is opened, Louisa and Guy discover that every marriage has its secrets—but some are more deadly than others. The six Mitford sisters are real and this series is loosely inspired by their tumultuous lives.

Flanagan, Ted. [Every Hidden Thing](#) (Crooked Lane \$27.99) is an unorthodox pick for our **November Notable New Fiction Book of the Month**. I say "unorthodox" because it's a debut mystery. But I chose it because "all politics is local" and here local is Worcester, Massachusetts. Its mayor, John O'Toole, is a man bent on suppressing truth in quest for political capital and higher office. He has some aides willing to buy into his "truth" and support his bribes, buried secrets, and personal attacks on anyone in his way. Ok, not that original a character in fiction, and sadly one all too prevalent in real life. But the truly remarkable portrait Flanagan limns is that of militia member Gerald Knak, a man unsuccessful at every level, who copes by playing blame games. And he blames paramedic Thomas Archer, a man O'Toole is determined to silence, for the recent death of his, Knak's, wife. In Knak I recognize the sort of grievance filled or conspiracy minded person who stormed our Capitol on January 6, a man unable to cope with his own life and lot and instead formulates a blame game. This book has drawn praise from James Ellroy, Laird Barron, and Flanagan mentor the writer Wiley Cash. Cash writes that Flanagan "combines the best of James Ellroy's noir cityscapes with the narrative impulses of Dennis Lehane." You who relish first mysteries should grab a copy of *Every Hidden Thing*.

Interestingly, when I told Flanagan how fascinated I was with Knak, he replied that Knak is the only character in this book based on a real person, one he came across in his own career as a paramedic and reporter.

✦ Herron, Mick. [Dolphin Junction](#) (Murray \$40). When a man's wife leaves him under suspicious circumstances, he sets off in search for her, unprepared for the guilty secrets he's about to drag back into the light. A man is tempted by a luxury apartment with a top-of-the-range kitchen. But there is a heavy price to pay for this glamorous new life. And a couple with their marriage on the rocks goes on a hike through the Derbyshire countryside as another way to avoid their real problems. Hailed as the master of the modern spy thriller, Herron displays his mastery of the short story form as well in this collection of eleven tales. For another review see New in Hardcover for November below.

Kent, Kathleen. [The Pledge](#) (LittleBrown \$28). "In Edgar finalist Kent's thrilling third and final novel featuring Sergeant Betty Rhyzyk of the North Central Dallas PD, two of her past enemies return to Dallas, each seeking revenge. Evangeline Roy, the ruthless head of a cult-like drug cartel, sends Betty a message through one of Evangeline's disciples: 'Evangeline is going to take your life apart, piece by piece. And then she's going to take you apart, piece by piece.' El Cuchillo, Evangeline's rival, has his own message for Betty: 'Once I give you the location of Evangeline Roy, you'll have two weeks to capture or kill her.' Meanwhile, teenage mother Mary Grace and her baby, Elizabeth, whom Betty and Betty's wife, Jackie, rescued from the streets, vanish. Mary Grace's stepfather, a wealthy property developer, is intent on finding Elizabeth and blames Betty for the disappearance. Fortunately, Betty, who has one of the strongest marriages in detective fiction and has earned the respect of most of her fellow police officers, is up to every challenge."—*PW* in a review Patrick could have written, he being a serious fan of Kent's work.

Limon, Martin. [War Women](#) (Soho \$27.95). U.S. Army investigators George Sueño and Ernie Bascom—I call them the Slick Boys after one of their early investigations for the 8th

Army in 1970s South Korea—men who prioritize justice over protocol, have two major problems to resolve. When Sergeant First Class Cecil Harvey, the gatekeeper of classified information for Headquarters near Seoul, goes AWOL, the detectives are concerned. They've had their differences with the missing man, but he has provided them with gossip and leads over the years. Their anxiety increases after learning Harvey was supposedly secretly listening to North Korean radio propaganda in the company of a defector from that country. The search for his whereabouts overlaps with a directive to help censor the reporting of Katie Byrd Worthington, a civilian tabloid journalist. Worthington has gotten some embarrassing photos of the 8th Army's chief of staff, but Sueño and Bascom discover she's really been focused on exposing the sexual abuse of members of a female army unit. The absence of a murder mystery doesn't lessen the tension, and Limón evokes the setting with his usual skill. This brilliant series, so well conceived and executed, always nail-biting, is one of my favorites. You can start here or go back to their first case, [Jade Lady Burning](#) (\$9.99), and read forward [through the series](#).

✉ Lloyd, Robert J. [The Bloodless Boy](#) (McSweeney \$29.99). **Our copies come with signed bookplates. This is the first in a trilogy, and it arrives in a stunning package with cover effects, endpapers, deckled edges, and a lavish page layout.** It is also one of the Best Mysteries of 2021 as rated by *Publishers Weekly*—*PW* and gets a rave from Lee Child who plans to join me in a conversation with Lloyd, who lives in Wales, on December 1.

Part *Wolf Hall*, part *Name of the Rose*, this rip-snorting thriller is set in Restoration London, 1678, with a cast of real historic figures, set against the actual historic events and intrigues of the returned king and his court. And introducing two detectives for this the start of a series: Robert Hooke, the Curator of Experiments at the just-formed Royal Society for Improving Natural Knowledge, and his assistant Harry Hunt, who've just been called in to investigate when the body of a three-year-old boy drained of his blood is discovered on the snowy bank of the Fleet River. The corpse had four puncture wounds, each with neat writing next to it. Hunt learns that another boy was found in similar circumstances a week earlier and must determine the deaths' possible connection to the suicide of Henry Oldenburg, Secretary of the Royal Society; a rumored Catholic plot to assassinate the king; and messages employing the Red Cipher, last used during the English Civil Wars. Evocative prose, subtle characterizations, and an ingenious solution to a legendary real-life unsolved murder elevate this above most other historical mysteries. Fans of Iain Pears' *An Instance of the Fingerpost* will be enthralled.

Lloyd writes, "When doing my MA degree in the History of Ideas, I stumbled on Hooke's diary. He was the most extraordinary man, who was the first to observe microorganisms and coined the term cell. He discovered oxygen, although he didn't name it. He believed fossils were evidence of ancient animals, against the accepted interpretation of the Scriptures. How does somebody of average intelligence portray a genius? That took me some working out. 17th justice constantly shocks. One crime that's worth mentioning, as it touches on the plot, was "spiriting." Children were stolen and taken to the Colonies by "spirits." This was a lucrative business, benefiting those who invested in and ran the Colonies. Although the crime of spiriting was made punishable by death in 1670, actually this was rarely applied, small fines being imposed instead. Spiriting was part

of the plantation enterprise. It was people trafficking on a grand scale. What were murder investigations like at the time? Medical jurisprudence emerged in the 1600s, courts asking physicians and surgeons for their opinions in legal proceedings." I add that medicine was in a truly experimental stage as well facing doubts similar to those circulating today about vaccines.

McKinlay, Jenn. [Killer Research](#) (Berkley \$26). **Phoenix author McKinlay is signing our books at The Pen for her virtual event. You may request a personalization of no more than five words.**

In the latest Library Lovers Mystery, Library director Lindsey Norris and her colleagues are supporting the campaign of library circulation head Eugenia Cole for mayor of Briar Creek, Connecticut, while coping with the incumbent, Mayor Hensen, who has done little for the library and resents Ms. Cole's candidacy. When a body is found in Ms. Cole's car trunk, the mayor attempts to torpedo her campaign by insinuating that she's the killer and attempting to have her arrested. Lindsey learns that the victim, Henry Lewis, was a former fiancé of Ms. Cole and involved in a controversial potential sale of his successful Nana's Cookies company. In addition, Henry was opposed to the sale of family property to a developer, which may have placed him on the wrong side of his nephew, Lenny Lewis. McKinlay's solid understanding of small-town personalities and the rallying of loyal library patrons and employees to Ms. Cole's aid will please you.

Meyer, Nicholas. [The Return of the Pharaoh](#) (St Martins \$25.99). In 1910, tuberculosis threatens the life of Dr. Watson's wife, Juliet. Following the best medical advice of the day, the Watsons travel to warmer, drier Cairo so that Juliet can be treated at the well regarded Khedivial sanatorium located on the Jardin des Plantes. As ex-Army invalided out, Watson is quartered in the Nile River island's posh quarters too. Out one evening at a bar, he encounters Sherlock Holmes, who's in the city investigating the disappearance of the Duke of Uxbridge. The nobleman, an Egyptologist, hasn't been in contact with his wife for months, and there's no sign of him in his lavish apartments at the famous Shephard's Hotel where he normally stays during his annual visits to Cairo (a hotel well known to readers of Elizabeth Peters' marvelous Amelia Peabody mysteries). Was the Duke on the trail of the Egyptologist's Holy Grail—an undiscovered, unlooted tomb of a pharaoh? Holmes' investigation is joined by Watson and by Howard Carter—and soon becomes a murder inquiry. Think Indiana Jones here and enjoy the ride. Meyer, who created a sensation and bestseller with his first Sherlockian tale, [The Seven-Per-Cent Solution](#) (\$20), clearly enjoyed himself immensely writing this Sherlockian adventure.

Mukherjee, Abir. [Shadows of Men](#) (Random UK \$35). Increasing tensions in 1923 colonial India provide the backdrop for Edgar finalist Mukherjee's superb fifth mystery featuring Captain Sam Wyndham and DS Surendranath Bannerjee of the Calcutta CID. Lord Taggart, the Calcutta commissioner of police, gives Bannerjee an assignment he's required to keep secret, even from his friend Wyndham: keeping track of the movements and activities of Muslim politician Farid Gulmohamed. Taggart fears Gulmohamed may stoke unrest in Calcutta before the upcoming municipal elections, called by the British following Mahatma Gandhi's incarceration. The surveillance mission goes awry, leaving Bannerjee suspected of murdering Prashant Mukherjee,

a Hindu religious leader, after he was found near the corpse and took steps to conceal the homicide. Under these adverse conditions, the investigators must solve the crime while averting a cataclysm of ethnic violence should a Muslim be accused of committing it. “The pacing and twists are among the author’s best work. This is a sterling example of a riveting whodunit plot coupled with a vivid portrayal of a seminal historical moment.” No wonder Mukherjee has won raves and awards. The Unsigned US edition is listed in New Hardcover for November.

✦ Odden, Karen. [Down a Dark River](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99).

Phoenix author Odden is signing our books at The Pen. You may request a personalization of no more than five words.

This terrific Victorian mystery, absolute catnip for those missing the William Monk mysteries of Anne Perry, introduces Michael Corraivan, one of the only Senior Inspectors remaining after a corruption scandal the previous autumn left Scotland Yard in near ruin. It’s 1878, April, and the day produces the body of a young woman floating in a skiff down the murky waters of the Thames (it was a pretty filthy river as it moved through London). She is identified as Rose Albert, daughter of a prominent judge, the first victim (maybe) of a string of vicious murders that rocks the city’s upper crust. Corraivan, a product of the East End and a former dockworker and bare-knuckles fighter, is good at his job—and the Yard needs a win to offset its loss of public trust. He reluctantly hands over the investigation of shipping magnate Beckford’s missing wife to his young colleague Stiles, and digs into what few clues there are in Rose’s murder. Then a second woman is found dead in a river boat, and then a third. Apparently the women are not connected. Then again, their link may be deeply hidden.... Odden is masterful with the details of the period and a fine prose stylist. Enjoy this series start.

Patchett, Ann. [These Precious Days: Essays](#) (Harper \$26.99). Tip-ins, Limited Supply. From the enchantments of Kate DiCamillo’s children’s books to youthful memories of Paris; the cherished life gifts given by her three fathers to the unexpected influence of Charles Schultz’s Snoopy; the expansive vision of Eudora Welty to the importance of knitting, Patchett connects life and art.

Patterson, James. [Fear No Evil](#) (LittleBrown \$29). **Signed Bookplates.** I haven’t read an Alex Cross for years. And I was at once was hooked by the two plots strands. One involves Cross’ wife Bree, a former cop now working for the private Blue Stone Group, who is sent on a dangerous undercover mission to Paris! Well, no wonder I was hooked. She’s going after a kind of Epstein financier guy. The other plunges Cross and John Sampson into the bizarre series of killings of various government agents (CIA, FBI....) whose bodies are left to be found with confessions of their malfeasance attached. And is the mysterious M back and does that put Cross and his colleagues/even family in jeopardy? It all leads Cross and Sampson into an exciting chase into the Montana wilderness where they are under fire by two rival teams of assassins, one apparently a vicious cartel. This is all exciting stuff, a trademark Patterson fast read, with violence but off the page except for the shoot’em up stuff! This is a thriller Jack Reacher fans will like.

✦ Perry, Anne. [The Christmas Legacy](#) (Ballantine \$21). Gracie Tellman, a former servant to the author’s best-known leads, Thomas and Charlotte Pitt, gets an unexpected visitor, Millie Foster. Millie, the teenage daughter of a woman Gracie and her

London police inspector husband once cleared of a false charge of theft, has recently joined the household of the Harcourt family as a maid, but she’s disturbed by a recent development. Some of the family’s best food has begun to disappear, but none of the other staff acknowledges the apparent pilfering. Millie fears the thefts will come to the attention of her mistress, imperiling all the servants’ jobs. Gracie agrees to help by telling Mr. and Mrs. Harcourt that Millie’s taken ill and offering to fill in for her until her recovery. They accept her offer, giving Millie an opportunity to probe the puzzle of the missing food from the inside.

Perry, Thomas. [The Left Handed Twin](#) (Mysterious \$25.95). After six years, Jane Whitefield is back in her eighth rousing battle of wits with really bad people. Mother Nature, even with herself despite her ability to tamp down emotions. Jane, a Native American guide who specializes in helping people in trouble disappear, finds a stranger, Sara Doughton, waiting for her one night in the Amherst, N.Y., house Jane shares with her new husband, surgeon Carey McKinnon. When Sara explains she’s fled L.A. to escape a murderous former boyfriend bent on revenge, Jane agrees to help. Meanwhile, the ex-boyfriend enlists the aid of some Russian criminals, who soon take an interest in Jane. After relocating Sara in Boston with a new identity, Jane attempts to lose her pursuers in Maine on the Appalachian Trail. “Utilizing wisdom from her Seneca ancestors and some bad-ass survival skills, Jane matches wits with a gang of elite killers... Perry delivers nonstop action, relentless tension, and such three-dimensional secondary characters as the female thief Magda. Jane’s developing relationship with Carey is a plus.”

Picoult, Jodi. [Wish You Were Here](#) (Random \$28.99). **Tip-ins.** With no reading copy at hand, I quote a fan review: “Not yet thirty, Diana O’Toole has had her life planned out, she’s already moving up in her profession, working at Sotheby’s, and her personal life has been fairly smooth sailing, as well. Her boyfriend is a surgical resident, and they are preparing to leave soon for Galapagos. She will celebrate her 30th birthday while on this lovely vacation away from the city, spent with the man she loves, and is pretty sure he will propose. Everything seems to be falling into place just as she’d planned. And then—COVID. Her boyfriend Finn is needed as a health care worker, but insists that she go anyway, their trip is non-refundable. At least she can get away from all of this for a while. When her plane lands she finds out that her luggage is lost, and when the boat taking her to the island arrives, she realizes it may be the last boat there. And back. Now she has to navigate a place where she doesn’t speak the language, and accept the restrictions. But she allows herself to open up to the limited possibilities available and celebrates the beauty found in this lovely place and in the people. The struggle with feeling isolated, even as we have all struggled during this isolation, that isolation, that struggle is also what connects us.” This being Picoult, a shocking twist is delivered in the end.

Rosenfield, Kat. [No One Will Miss Her](#) (Harper \$27.99). Readers of the *Booknews* will know I am not a big fan of psychological suspense (overdosed since *Gone Girl*). But this debut by Rosenfield, who clearly learned a lot partnered with the late San Lee to author *A Trick of the Light*, reveals she was well-mentored. The twist here is terrific, and unexpected. As this Starred Review underlines for our **November First Mystery Book of the Month**: “Rosenfield thrills with a gruesome murder in the atmospheric New England town of Copper Falls. Lizzie Ouelette

is known in her hometown as “the junkyard girl.” Raised on her father’s junkyard and derided by the town as a misfit, there’s nothing wholesome about Lizzie’s upbringing. A dark, ferocious cloud seems to follow her, even when she shocks the town by marrying high school baseball star Dwayne Cleaves. But now Lizzie is dead, found shot at her lake cabin with her nose cut off and her body stuffed into the garbage disposal. Dwayne is missing and there’s no sign of Adrienne and Ethan Richards, the wealthy Boston couple who rented the cabin from Lizzie. When homicide detective Ian Bird is assigned to the case, he realizes Ethan is the infamous financier whose fraudulent actions destroyed the life savings of many innocent people, including Bird’s parents. Rosenfield dares readers with tantalizing hints and glimpses of what initially appears as a straightforward crime. Then “the superb character-driven plot delivers an astonishing, believable jolt. Rosenfield shines a searing light on issues of classism, jealousy, and squandered potential.”

Stephenson, Neal. [Termination Shock](#) (Harper \$25). **Tip-ins.** Saskia, better known as the Queen of the Netherlands (later the Netherword), crashes her plane on an airstrip in Waco, Texas, when wild pigs overtake the runway as she’s landing. Saskia’s visit to America isn’t exactly official, so she and her team enlist Rufus, who happens to be on the runway hunting the vicious boar that killed his young daughter, to help them get to Houston to meet T.R. Schmidt. While America as a nation is “a clown show,” Schmidt has the money to do as he pleases, and what he pleases to do is construct a massive gun that can shoot sulfur into the atmosphere and help ameliorate the effects of global warming. He’s invited people like Saskia, some Venetian aristocrats, and representatives of Singapore and other places that have the most to lose from a rising sea level to see what he’s been working on. When Schmidt starts up his gun and it actually works, a huge global debate emerges.... You can explore the questions across 706 pages. There is some neat stuff about royal life in the Netherlands. And the author promises in my Advance Reading Copy to compile a bibliography to post on [nealstephenson.com](#) if you wish to check.

Thane, James L. [Tyndall](#) (Moonshine Cove \$15). Retired Phoenix homicide detective Jack Oliva is curious about his roots. For nearly seventy years, his mother never mentioned his grandfather’s name, leaving Jack to wonder why she never celebrated her father’s birthday or commemorated the anniversary of his death. Following his mother’s death, Jack discovers an old photograph of the grandfather he never knew and, intrigued by the mystery, he decides to dig into his family’s history. The search takes him to the tiny town of Tyndall, South Dakota where his grandfather died in 1925. But as Jack begins to investigate the circumstances surrounding his grandfather’s death, he gets a surprise!

✦ Truss, Lynne. [Psycho by the Sea](#) (Bloomsbury \$27). **Signed Bookplates.** It isn’t easy to render perfectly pitched satire in a gentle way over a series of books. But here is language/punctuation maven Truss having more fun in 1957 Brighton with Constable Twitten and the cop shop by the sea where the cleaning/tea lady is the town’s criminal mastermind, well placed to keep an eye on the running of her network, and the Inspector is...an idiot. The action here takes place over one week in September when Brighton and the beaches are drenched in rain and brand-new villains. Inspector Steine is away in London

enjoying his celebrity as the man who shot down a gangland boss in a local milk bar, leaving Sergeant Brunswick and “clever cogs” Twitten to investigate the death of an American researcher in Gosling’s department store’s music section, a violent criminal targeting policeman has escaped the local prison, and gang lookout Cecil, whose cover is selling toy clockwork bunnies off a tray at a strategic intersection, is missing. This can be read as a standalone but as it’s only [the 4th in series](#), why not order them all and read them in order?

Williams, Ann/Douglas Preston. [Lost Cities, Ancient Tombs](#) (National Geographic \$35). **Preston wrote the Introduction and signs all our copies. We’re almost sold out at 600 so we have prepared a wait list for copies Doug will sign on February 15 when he is at The Pen for [Diablo Mesa](#) (Grand Central \$29) which is also signed by Lincoln Child and comes with a trading card set depicting Nora Kelly and Corrie Swanson.**

100 astonishing discoveries from the Dead Sea Scrolls to the fabulous “Lost City of the Monkey God” reveal incredible stories of how explorers and archaeologists have uncovered the clues that illuminate our past and unlock our deepest history. Ruined cities, golden treasures, cryptic inscriptions, and ornate tombs have been found across the world, and yet these artifacts of ages past often raised more questions than answers. But with the emergence of archaeology as a scientific discipline in the 19th century, everything changed. Illustrated with dazzling photographs, this enlightening narrative tells the story of human civilization through 100 key expeditions, spanning six continents and more than three million years of history. Each account relies on firsthand reports from explorers, antiquarians, and scientists as they crack secret codes, evade looters and political suppression, fall in love, commit a litany of blunders, and uncover ancient curses. This is irresistible to readers of Cussler and Preston, and Steve Berry.

Williams, Beatriz. [The Wicked Widow](#) (Harper \$27.99). Williams continues her fast-paced Wicked City series with a mystery spanning several decades. In 1998, Ella Dommerich moves into her boyfriend Hector’s Greenwich Village walk-up, following her separation from Patrick, the father of her unborn child. Ella’s aunt Julie asks her to use her investigative skills as a financial analyst to dig up dirt on Senator Frank Hardcastle, a presidential candidate who was once married to another relative of Ella and Julie’s, and to whom Julie bears a grudge. In a parallel narrative set in 1924, Geneva Kelley marries Oliver Anson Marshall and they move into the townhouse later occupied by Hector and Ella. After Louis Hardcastle, the head of an East Coast bootlegging organization, is murdered, Louis’s son blames Anson, a former Prohibition enforcement special agent, and Anson decides to fake his death and go into hiding to protect Geneva. As Ella continues to delve into the background of the Hardcastle family while enduring prenatal nausea, she discovers connections to Patrick’s employer and some financial anomalies, and ropes Patrick in to an increasingly dangerous situation. Order all three [Wicked City mysteries](#).

Yanagihara, Hanya. [To Paradise](#) (Knopf \$32.50). **Tip-ins.** *LJ* reviews: “Following *A Little Life*, short-listed for the Man Booker Prize and a National Book Award finalist, Yanagihara’s new novel tracks themes of love, loss, illness, power, and the unfillable desire for heaven on Earth over three centuries in stories tied together by a townhouse on New York City’s Washington Square

Park. In an alternate 1893 America, with New York belonging to the more or less freewheeling Free States, the scion of a prominent family prefers a poor music teacher to a more polished suitor. In AIDS-ravaged 1993 Manhattan, a young Hawaiian man living with a controlling older partner quietly suppresses his tattered childhood. And in plague-shattered totalitarian 2093, a troubled woman seeking her missing husband misses the guidance of her powerful scientist grandfather.”

UNSIGNED EVENT BOOKS

Cameron, Marc. [Tom Clancy: Chain of Command](#) (Putnam \$29.95). A truly evil pharmaceutical billionaire spends big bucks supporting various radical groups whose violence is meant to distract officials as he floods the U.S. market with counterfeit drugs. Now that people are dying of bad medicine, he sets in motion the ultimate power grab, which means getting rid of President Jack Ryan himself. But on the way, “the bad guys kidnap first lady Cathy Ryan, and what’s a Clancy thriller without fighting and skulduggery in far-flung reaches of the world, with do-good American doctors who stand to be executed as no-good spies in a part of Afghanistan so remote that even the Taliban doesn’t go there? As fans will remember, Cathy, a world-class ophthalmic surgeon, is the love of the president’s life. Knowing his own deep emotional involvement, he sees the need to temporarily cede constitutional power to the newly minted Vice President Dehart. (VP Hargrave has suddenly died.) Yes, the first lady might not survive—wherever she is—but the president must put country above all else. The plot even includes a possibly rogue Chinese cross-border incursion onto the Roof of the World, a testy top-level chat with China’s president, and an encounter with the Argentine border patrol. And with Aussies and Brits who’ve fought in Africa and who may kill Cathy...this is vintage Clancy with plenty of fast-paced excitement in locales galore.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

✦ Edwards, Martin, et al. [Many Deadly Returns](#) (Severn \$28.99). The fourth anthology from Britain’s Murder Squad showcases the group’s talents for short fiction with a bite. Each current squad member has contributed three new stories, and three former members add one apiece. Highlights include Kate Ellis’ “The Confessions of Edward Prime,” which presents a unique solution to the problem of a man determined to confess to a crime he didn’t commit, and Ann Cleeves’ “Wild Swimming,” set just as the COVID pandemic appears to be ebbing, in which DCI Vera Stanhope probes a drowning during an outing of four friends. Edwards’s “Lucky Liam” features an intricate revenge plot concocted by a cuckolded spouse. Impossible crime fans will get a kick out of Kate Ellis’ locked-room puzzle, “My Oleander,” and historical mystery devotees will find Cath Staincliffe’s “Two Birds,” set in 1871 Blackpool, memorable.

Edwards and the other members of the Murder Squad—Ann Cleeves, Kate Ellis, Margaret Murphy, Chris Sims, Cath Staincliff—will join me for a book chat on November 10 which will post soon afterwards.

Palumbo, Dennis. [Panic Attack](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95). Pittsburgh psychologist Daniel Rinaldi, a survivor of various traumas including the murder of his wife right in front of him, has a long-term gig with the Pittsburgh Police helping victims of violent crimes deal with traumas—which often leads him into murder investigations. He also has a complicated series of romantic

relationships which can derail him. However here the instigating incident is the shooting of a tiger—the kid wearing the school’s mascot costume during a college football game Rinaldi is attending. So was the target the usual guy in the tiger suit, the kid who was substituting, or was it a random killing? The usual Teasdale Tiger suffers a panic attack and calls on Rinaldi for help, but then as the shooter continues his killing spree Danny is consistently wrong-footed, fraying his connection with the PPD and also with the sheriff in whose jurisdiction the original shooting took place. Palumbo goes for the big motivation behind crimes and here he taps into...well it would be a spoiler if I say what it is.

✦ Thomas, Sherry. [Miss Moriarty, I Presume?](#) (Berkley \$16). Private investigator Charlotte Holmes, who acts as an “oracle” on behalf of her fictional brother, Sherlock, has an appointment with a potential client, James Baxter, at her office at 18 Upper Baker Street. When Mr. Baxter appears, Charlotte recognizes him as her nemesis, Moriarty, whom she last saw at a disrupted ball at Moriarty’s chateau outside Paris two months earlier. Moriarty doesn’t explain his alias when he requests her assistance in extracting his grown daughter, Marguerite, from a cult based in Cornwall known as the Hermetists, and Charlotte wonders what he really wants. After consulting with the ever-attentive Lord Ash Ingram, Charlotte takes the case, and she and her friend Mrs. Watson head to Cornwall in search of answers. The more she learns about Marguerite, the more she wonders why Moriarty hired her. Meanwhile, the romance between Charlotte and Ash heats up. Thomas has won a wide audience, here at The Pen with John in particular, for her blend of the Sherlockian with the historical British cozy. Order all [The Lady Sherlock mysteries](#) for a real reading retreat.

POISONED PEN GIFTS

Poisoned Pen Books of the Month Clubs

Please consider giving a membership as a gift to someone, or to yourself, and sign up for the January-June 2022 cycle. With all the supply problems plaguing publishing belonging to a club is a good way to insure you will not miss out on a book. Nor will the lucky person(s) you gift a membership to. Please email Karen@poisonedpen.com for information and enrollment.

Poisoned Pen Mystery of the Month Club

This is a personalized club run by our Pat King who will be using a Google Form to secure information about gift recipients (can also be you!), preferences, payment, shipping information. Pat has been operating MOMs for about 20 years and really enjoys working with gift givers and members. Please email Pat@poisonedpen.com for information and enrollment.

[Poisoned Pen Gift Cards](#). Can be mailed as a physical card or emailed as a digital card, in any amount you choose. It can also be for a specific book.

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[Journal](#) (\$19.95) black cover with our logo

HOLIDAY THEMED BOOKS

John has included a large group of varied holiday-themed books, mystery, romance, etc, in the October BookNotes. Do consult it.

Andrews, Mary Kay. [The Santa Suit](#) (St. Martin's \$19.99). After purchasing an old farmhouse, newly divorced Ivy Perkins discovers an old Santa suit with a note in the pocket, which sets her off on a mission that brings her into a welcoming community, where she finds more friendship than she ever thought possible.

✦ Bowen, Rhys. [The Twelve Clues of Christmas](#) (\$7.99) and [God Rest Ye, Royal Gentlemen](#) (Berkley \$26 Signed). Bowen twice puts Lady Georgie, Her Royal Spyness, into investigations at country house Christmas parties—both hosted by her then fiancé, now husband, Darcy's aunts. Surely next year she and Darcy will celebrate the holiday at home!

Childs, Laura. [Twisted Tea Christmas](#) (Berkley \$26). Charleston's Theodosia Browning and company are catering a festive Victorian Christmas party at an elegant mansion when one of the city's *grandes dames* is murdered after announcing her plan to bequeath most of her wealth to charities.

✦ Duncan, Francis. [Murder for Christmas](#) (\$14.99). Mulled wine, mince pies... and murder. When Mordecai Tremaine arrives at the country retreat of one Benedict Grame on Christmas Eve, he discovers that the revelries are in full swing in the sleepy village of Sherbroome—but so too are tensions amongst the assortment of guests. When midnight strikes, the partygoers discover that presents aren't the only things nestled under the tree...there's a dead body too. A dead body that bears a striking resemblance to Father Christmas. With the snow falling and suspicions flying, it's up to Mordecai to crack the case in this classic Golden Age treat.

✦ Edwards, Martin, ed. [A Surprise for Christmas and Other Seasons](#) (Poisoned Pen/British Library Crime Classics \$14.95). Edwards has compiled a golden age gem with stories from the period's masters and as well as familiar names. A Postman murdered while delivering cards on Christmas morning. A Christmas pine growing over a forgotten homicide. A Yuletide heist gone horribly wrong. When there's as much murder as magic in the air and the facts seem to point to the impossible, it's up to the detective's trained eye to unwrap the clues and neatly tie together an explanation (preferably with a bow on top). "Ingenious stories that showcase head-scratching impossibilities while playing totally fair with the reader."—*PW* Starred Review

Edwards also edits the BLCC anthology [The Christmas Card Crime and Other Stories](#) (\$14.99).

Fluke, Joanne. [The Christmas Cupcake Murder](#) (\$9.99). As December turns Lake Eden, Minnesota, into the North Pole, the heat is on in Hannah Swensen's kitchen to honor two Christmas promises: baking irresistible holiday cupcakes and preventing an attempted murderer from succeeding on a second try. Loads of recipes. And dip into a collection of Fluke short stories in [Christmas Sweets](#) (\$8.99).

✦ Glenconner, Lady Anne. [A Haunting at Holkham](#) (Mobius \$26.99). It's Christmas 1943 and Lady Anne Coke has returned to Holkham Hall from Scotland. But her home is now an army base, with large sections out of bounds. And 11-year-old Anne is in the care of a new governess, whom she hates and believes to be hiding something. At least her beloved grandfather is there with her, to share stories and keep her entertained. But even though she's been told to stay away from certain parts of the house, Anne knows secrets about the hall that others do not; the passageways and the cellars that allow her to move around unnoticed, watching. And when mysterious events lead to a murder and disappearance, Anne is determined to uncover the truth. For our final **Brit-**

ish Crime Book of the Month for 2021 a country house murder at Christmas seems just right... Think *Downton Abbey* crossed with Agatha Christie's *Hercule Poirot's Christmas*....

Mallery, Susan. [The Christmas Wedding Guest](#) (Harlequin \$16.99). The Somerville sisters, Reggie and Dana, believe in love, but they've lost faith it will happen for them. Then their parents decide to renew their vows for a Christmas wedding. And magic happens....

Meltzer, Jean. [The Matzah Ball](#) (Mira \$15.99). "Rachel is a Jewish romance writer whose career has been made secretly writing Christmas novels...until her publisher tells her that they want to diversify and ask her to write a Hanukkah romance. Rachel finds inspiration—and a lot more—in the upcoming Matzah Ball, organized by none other than her childhood camp nemesis, Jacob, at the Matzah Ball, a Jewish music celebration on the last night of Hanukkah. This holiday enemies-to-lovers romance includes a healthy dose of party planning, novel crafting, matchmaking families, and Hanukkah celebrations."

✦ Moncrieff, Ada. [Murder Most Festive](#) (\$14.99). An entire family trapped in the house? What could go wrong? Christmas Eve, 1938: Family and friends have gathered for another legendary Christmas. Champaign, sparkling decoration, and brewing family tension fill the Westbury mansion. Come Christmas morning, guest David Campbell-Scott is found lying dead in the snow, with only a hunting rifle lying beside him and one set of footprints leading to the body. Yes, it's cozy Yuletide Murder, English style.

Penzler, Otto, ed. [The Big Book of Christmas Mysteries](#) (Vintage \$26.99). Dana Stabenow reviews: When they called it the "Big" book they weren't kidding. There are 67 stories by writers like Colin Dexter, Donald Westlake, and John D. MacDonald along with a host of other familiar names contained herein. There is a perfectly delightful Christmas Eve story by Ed McBain set in the 87th Precinct, a Jane Marple story by Agatha Christie with Jane at her self-condemnatory best, and not one but two, count 'em, two stories by Ellis Peters. One features Brother Cadfael and the other begins with one of the best character studies I've ever read, featuring...a cat. There is also a Raffles short story by E.W. Hornung, who I learn from Penzler's intro was Arthur Conan Doyle's brother-in-law, and that Hornung's rascally Raffles may have been written in part to poke fun at Sherlock Holmes. Fun.

✦ Perry, Anne. [The Christmas Legacy](#) (Ballantine \$21). Gracie Tellman, a former servant to the author's best-known leads, Thomas and Charlotte Pitt, gets an unexpected visitor.... See Signed Books for more.

✦ Redmond, Heather. [A Christmas Carol Murder](#) (\$15.95). London, December 1835: Charles Dickens and Kate Hogarth are out with friends and family for a chilly night of caroling and good cheer. But their singing is interrupted by a body plummeting from an upper window of a house. They soon learn the dead man, his neck strangely wrapped in chains, is Jacob Harley, the business partner of the resident of the house, an unpleasant codger who owns a counting house, one Emmanuel Screws. Ever the journalist, Charles dedicates himself to discovering who's behind the diabolical defenestration. But before he can investigate further, Harley's corpse is stolen. Following that, Charles is visited in his quarters by what appears to be Harley's ghost—or is it merely Charles's overwrought imagination?

COZY CRIMES

Burns, V M. [Killer Words](#) (Kensington \$15.95). Samantha Washington, owner of a mystery bookshop in North Harbor, Michigan, is eagerly awaiting copies of her newly published debut novel, *Murder at Wickfield Lodge*, a historical cozy set in England. Meanwhile, Detective Bradley Pitt of the North Harbor PD becomes suspect number one in the murder of mayoral candidate John Cloverton, who had accused him of police brutality. Even though Stinky Pitt has been a constant thorn in Samantha's side for years, she, her grandma, and "the girls" from Shady Acres Retirement Village nonetheless step up to find the real killer. The geriatric detectives sort through local gossip while Samantha, who has a "knack for solving murder," does the hands-on investigation. Whenever the case gets tricky, she takes refuge in her writing, treating readers to a parallel mystery for Lady Clara, her amateur sleuth, to solve. This is a new entry in the [Mystery Bookshop](#) mysteries. I can say with authority that they are Fiction!

✦ Brightwell, Emily. [Mrs. Jeffries and the Midwinter Murders](#) (Berkley \$26). Wealthy Harriet Andover is strangled to death in her study. The key to the locked door is still in Harriet's pocket, and the only other key has hung undisturbed in the pantry since Harriet was last seen alive. Inspector Gerald Witherspoon of London's Metropolitan Police quickly decides that Harriet was killed by someone in the household, which still leaves plenty of suspects: Harriet's discontented husband, her resentful stepchildren, her nephew visiting from America, her destitute best friend. Witherspoon is unaware that part of his success is due to the aid of his own devoted household, led by his ever-efficient housekeeper, Mrs. Hepzibah Jeffries. Mrs. Jeffries deploys her team of spies to investigate Harriet's death and subtly feeds the information to Witherspoon. Brightwell skillfully steers the unfolding locked-room mystery down an unexpected path.

Brook, Allison. [Death on the Shelf](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). Carrie Singleton is helping her bestie, Angela Vecchio, negotiate the treacherous shoals of wedding plans. Despite last-minute problems, they manage to make it to the big day with some help from Angela's cousins Donna and Roxy, even though they aren't her favorite relatives. The wedding is lovely, but disaster strikes at the reception, where Donna's physician husband, Aiden, drops dead in the chocolate fountain. Angela's mother begs Carrie to help find the person who poisoned Aiden, since all the obvious suspects are family members. An unrelated subplot, in which Carrie agrees to help Evelyn Havers, the library's resident ghost, reunite Evelyn's estranged brother and troubled niece, provides a counterpoint to the crime solving....

Byrne, M V. [Isabel Puddles Investigates](#) (Kensington \$15.95). Isabel is living life on her terms as summer stirs the peaceful shores of Lake Michigan. Only slowing down to meet her oldest friend for daily coffee, the newly licensed PI has found herself chipping away at the college degree she never completed—and, to her surprise, eagerly awaiting letters from her pen pal, an admired British mystery writer. But when her latest client turns out to be an extravagant recluse who's rich both in secrets and money, Isabel becomes embroiled in the strange world of Rust Belt royalty and the Memorial Day Weekend disappearance of a handsome young heir. Start with [Meet Isabel Puddles](#) (\$15.95).

Chow, Jennifer J. [Mimi Lee Cracks the Code](#) (Berkley \$16). Mimi Lee just found an extra perk to being a pet groomer at Hollywoof (other than cuddling animals all day long, that is). Pixie St. James, one of Mimi's clients and the investor behind Hollywoof, has offered her and her boyfriend, Josh, a getaway at her vacation home, nestled on beautiful Catalina Island. With the island just outside of Los Angeles but still far enough from the hustle and bustle, Mimi, Josh, and their cat Marshmallow (who, of course, wouldn't be caught dead in a dingy pet hotel) are excited for their relaxing stay. That is, until Pixie's last renter, Davis D. Argo, turns up dead. Mimi and Josh's romantic getaway immediately turns into an enormous buzzkill....

Fletcher, Jessica. [Debonair in Death](#) (Berkley \$26). When Nelson Penzell, co-owner of a local art and treasure store in Cabot Cove, is murdered, the nail tech from Jessica Fletcher's favorite beauty parlor is the main suspect. After all, she's the one who ran out of the store screaming, covered in blood, and holding the murder weapon. Jessica is positive that despite the circumstances, Coreen can't possibly be guilty, and is determined to prove it. When Michael Haggerty, handsome MI-6 agent and Jessica's old friend, is caught snooping around the victim's home, it's quickly apparent to her that she was right. Nelson has always had a bit of a reputation for being a rake, but Haggerty is sure his sins went far beyond what anyone imagined. Jessica will have to partner with Haggerty to clear Coreen's name in this latest chapter in *Murder, She Wrote*.

Macy, Meg. [Bear a Wee Grudge](#) (Kensington \$15.95). It's springtime in Silver Hollow, Michigan, and Sasha is looking forward to the village's inaugural Highland Fling weekend. Plans are underway for a Kilted 5K, athletic competitions, dancing, live music, and even a Hurl-the-Haggis contest. Meanwhile, Sasha's staff is busy crafting custom teddy bears in kilts for the Silver Bear Shop's vendor booth. But trouble's brewing behind the scenes, as the obnoxious Teddy Hartman, former owner of a rival teddy bear company, sows seeds of discord about town, targeting Sasha's family and their business. Things go from plaid to worse when—just a week before the festival kicks-off—the disgruntled gossip is found murdered with an ax buried in his back. Sasha's dad is arrested, since he's a champion ax-thrower. But she doesn't give a dram what it looks like—Sasha knows that despite the old business rivalry with Hartman, her father is innocent. Although he is quickly released for lack of evidence, Sasha is certain that the lazy detective won't put in the work to find the real murderer. So she takes on the job with help from her family and friends....

CLASSICS

Brown, Fredric. [The Fabulous Clipjoint](#) (American Mystery Classics \$15.95). In the rough edges of 1940s Chicago, the discovery of a corpse in an alleyway isn't always enough to cause a big stir—especially when the victim is killed in the midst of a night-long bender, caught between barrooms in what appears to be a mugging gone awry. Which is why the police don't take a huge interest in finding the murderer of Wallace Hunter, a linotype operator who turns up dead after a solitary drinking adventure that led through many of the Loop's less reputable establishments. But for his teenage son, Ed, and his carny brother, Am, something about Wallace's death feels fishy, a fact that grows increasingly bothersome when it becomes clear that some of the

witnesses aren't telling the whole story. In order to get to the heart of the matter, they'll need all the skills Am picked up in the circus life—skills that young Ed will have to pick up on fast.

Dickson Carr, John. [The Corpse in the Waxworks](#) (Poisoned Pen Press \$14.99). In this superior British Library Crime Classics reissue from Carr (1906–1977), first published in 1932, Paris examining magistrate Henri Bencolin investigates the murder of Odette Duchêne, a former cabinet minister's daughter, whose bruised and stabbed body was found floating in the Seine. Odette was last seen entering the Musée Augustin, which displays waxworks. Her murder may be part of a pattern linked to the sparsely attended museum, as another young woman seen there disappeared six months earlier. That theory's strengthened after Bencolin and his sidekick, Jeff Marle, visit the Musée Augustin, where what Marle took to be an effigy in the arms of a wax satyr is actually the stabbed corpse of Claudine Martel, Odette's best friend, also a retired cabinet minister's daughter. Carr matches the creepy Grand Guignol atmosphere with an utterly fair solution that reinforces the importance of reading every word. Though the Bencolin tales lack the humor of Carr's Gideon Fell and Henry Merrivale impossible crime novels, golden age fans who haven't encountered them are in for a treat.

Japrisot, Sebastien. [The Sleeping Car Murders](#) (Gallic \$14.95). The discovery of a strangled body in the sleeping car of the night train from Marseille to Paris propels this ingenious whodunit from Japrisot (1931–2003), first published in 1963. The victim is identified as Georgette Thomas, a cosmetics firm saleswoman, who was in Marseille on business. Inspector Antoine Grazziano, the police detective who investigates, assumes from the murder method that the killer wasn't a professional. He divides the reasons for the killing into three possibilities—that Thomas was strangled because of something that preceded her trip, something that happened to her in Marseille, or something that occurred on her return train journey. But as he explores each possibility and their implications logically, Thomas's fellow passengers in the sleeping car are knocked off, one by one. Japrisot heightens the suspense by toggling between Grazziano's inquiries and the other passengers' perspectives. The surprising murder motive is worthy of Agatha Christie herself, and the twisty plot contrasts nicely with the prosaic, appealing sleuth. Georges Simenon fans will be engrossed.

Zamyatin, Yevgeny. [We](#) (Harper \$16.99). The chilling dystopian novel that influenced George Orwell while he was writing *1984*, with a new introduction by Margaret Atwood and an essay by Ursula Le Guin. In a glass-enclosed city of perfectly straight lines, ruled over by an all-powerful "Benefactor," the citizens of the totalitarian society of OneState are regulated by spies and secret police; wear identical clothing; and are distinguished only by a number assigned to them at birth. That is, until D-503, a mathematician who dreams in numbers, makes a discovery: he has an individual soul. He can feel things. He can fall in love. And, in doing so, he begins to dangerously veer from the norms of his society, becoming embroiled in a plot to destroy OneState and liberate the city.

NEW IN HARDCOVER FOR NOVEMBER

Here is a list via PBS of [Best Mystery Books of 2021](#) for you to peruse

✦ Adamson, EV. [Five Strangers](#) (Scarlet \$25.95). This imprint was established to publish books by and about women... but "Adamson" is the excellent British author Andrew Wilson, winner of Edgar and Lambda Awards and author of a few mysteries with Agatha Christie as the sleuth. Here however he pens a contemporary tale against the enticing background of London's Hampstead Heath with its beautiful views, its lawns and jogging paths. And on Valentine's Day, when they are crowded, with a pair of lovers quaffing champagne and their audience of five distracted strangers, who are surprised, then horrified, when a quarrel erupts between the pair that ends in a murder/suicide. As the story progresses, told in the alternating voices of two women, Jen and Bex, we come to realize that not everyone was at the scene by chance. This is a clever plot, horrifying actually, if somewhat unbelievable in design. And as ever with Wilson, elegantly written. If you thirst for something different, this is your book!

Block, Lawrence. [The Night and the Music](#) (Subterranean \$30) is an expanded edition of MWA Grand Master Block's 2013 collection of the same name contains the complete short fiction featuring his best-known character, Matthew Scudder. The stories, which run the gamut from Scudder's early years as an informal investigator struggling with alcoholism to his eventual sobriety and marriage, include the powerful "A Candle for the Bag Lady," in which he investigates the seemingly random street killing of a bag lady who for no apparent reason had left him \$1,200. Other highlights are "By the Dawn's Early Light," perhaps the best of the series, as well as the gentle and humane "The Merciful Angel of Death," in which patients at an AIDS hospice are suspected of dying sooner than expected. Familiar supporting characters such as Elaine Mardell and Mick Ballou appear throughout, as do the fully realized New York locales of Scudder's world. In an afterword, Block notes he wrote the elegiac final tale, "One Last Night at Grogan's," especially for this volume. This is essential reading for Scudder fans.

Díaz, Eloisa. [Repentance](#) (Agora \$26.99). An excellent review: "In 2001 Argentina, the police pension's empty coffers compel world-weary Buenos Aires police inspector Joaquín Alzada, the hero of Díaz's outstanding debut, to stay on the job. Until the day he and his wife can retire to the countryside, Alzada is doing his utmost to avoid becoming entangled in his nation's ongoing political unrest and to keep his idealistic young partner, Deputy Ortestes Estrático, out of trouble in a dangerously charged landscape. Alzada, now the oldest inspector on the force, has managed to survive while maintaining his principles. In a country where people disappear—like his brother Jorge 20 years earlier—keeping a low profile can be the difference between life and death. When the body of Norma Echegaray, a wealthy young socialite killed execution-style, is found by a dumpster, Alzada's role in the years known as the Dirty War can no longer remain buried. Flashbacks to the violent upheaval of 1981 provide context for 2001's relentless economic crises, riots, and life under revolving governments as Alzada struggles to deliver mercy when justice is not possible. Aficionados of mysteries with a hard edge will welcome Inspector Alzada."

☒ Doherty, Paul. [Dark Queen Watching](#) (Severn \$28.99). In 1471, the House of York is ascendant, and Margaret Beaufort, countess of Richmond and a leading Lancastrian, is not only out of power but in serious danger. The bloodshed begins with the murder in a tavern of a French royal clerk, who was trying to chase down an ominous rumor. Other homicides follow, as well as a massacre in an English forest. It becomes clear that there's a political point to the trail of death. Why is someone trying to drive the countess out of England? Who would benefit? Meanwhile, Beaufort's trusted henchman, Christopher Urswicke, who's fighting various family demons, investigates the murders and mischief surrounding Beaufort. What makes this stand out from other mysteries set during the Wars of the Roses is how it draws in formidable players from outside England. Particularly frightening is a highly trained group of assassins from Spain, based on historical fact. This entry's devious and deadly plots and conspiracies make *Game of Thrones* look like a game of patty-cake."—PW

Eriksson, Kjell. [The Deathwatch Beetle](#) (St Martins \$27.99). Eriksson's excellent ninth series mystery to be published in the U.S. takes Ann Lindell, who retired from the police force in 2020's *Night of the Fire*, to the Swedish island of Gräsö, along with her "great love," Edvard Risberg, for a vacation. Lindell's investigative instincts click in when Gräsö native Cecilia Karlsson resurfaces after disappearing four years earlier—just after Cecilia's boss, Casper Stefansson, went missing and is presumed dead. Cecilia, attractive, intelligent, and successful, provoked strong reactions from Casper and others, including her controlling father. She "saw herself as a victim... of the men who explained the world to her." An indelible picture emerges of Cecilia's world, her understandable anger, and her desire for change. Eriksson effectively portrays Sweden in the throes of change, being eroded from the inside out like the destructive insect of the title, while exploring social class, family, and, above all else, how men treat women.

Follett, Ken. [Never](#) (Viking \$36). President Pauline Green, a moderate Republican who's up for reelection, must contend for the nomination with far-right Senator James Moore, whose macho talk appeals to many Republican voters. On the foreign policy front, Green wants to punish the Chinese for selling arms to terrorists, so she proposes a resolution against them in the United Nations. This is the first move in a political chess game between China and the U.S. that could lead to all-out war. At home, Green and her husband are having difficulties with their bright 14-year-old daughter, who's being disruptive in school. Meanwhile, in N'Djamena, the capital of Chad, CIA officer Tamara Levit is running Abdul John Haddad, a 25-year-old cigarette vendor, as a spy on the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara. These are just a few of the plotlines Follett lays out in detail and then slowly weaves together as the stakes and the suspense steadily rise. By the final pages all is made clear, and the shocked reader realizes that the story hasn't ended, it's just beginning.

Never is a departure and a return for the megaselling author (Viking says Follett's books have sold more than 178 million copies worldwide), marking a return to his roots in espionage thrillers. Though he became a household name for his 1989 doorstopper [The Pillars of the Earth](#), about the building of a cathedral in 12th-century England, and further burnished his reputation as a master of historical fiction with the sweeping Century trilogy, which follows five families from WWI into the 1980s, Follett's

tales of spycraft first put him on the literary map. He began writing fiction in his free time and published five spy thrillers in the mid 1970s before finding success with 1978's [The Eye of the Needle](#). By then, Follett says, he'd figured out the secret sauce. "It was an early decision of mine to look for real-life situations where the work of a spy could change the course of history," he recalls. "I'd ask, 'What if there had been a spy who had better intelligence on the other side of this conflict? What if we knew there was that spy and we were trying to catch him?'" He says it's a winning formula that, "like the 12-bar blues, no matter how many times you do it, it always works."

Foody, Amanda/ Christine Lynn Herman. [All of Us Villains](#) (Tor \$18.99). YA Fantasy gets an Indie Next Pick: "Brilliant, fun, addictive, and delightfully wicked. I couldn't get enough of the magick, drama and secrets of these seven rival families, whose teen champions compete in a dark, twisted tournament to the death."

Gaylin, Alison. [The Collective](#) (Harper \$27.99). In an all-too-plausible tale of Highsmith-ian vengeance, Camille Gardener is a grieving—and angry—mother who knows who raped her only child, Emily, at a Brayburn College frat party in upstate New York and left her to die in the woods one winter night. Years after her daughter's murder, Camille's life is still in pieces and her anger has only grown because the killer escaped justice. When she disrupts an event honoring her daughter's murderer, Camille is thrown in jail overnight. Soon after, she receives an invitation to join an online support group for mothers like her. She accepts, and gets quickly sucked in by the group's sinister pull. When accused—but unpunished—killers begin turning up dead, Camille is trapped in a web spun by The Collective...a web she helped weave.

Hadfield, Chris. [The Apollo Murders](#) (LittleBrown \$28). Zing, a Cold War thriller from the dark heart of the Space Race. As Russian and American crews sprint for a secret bounty hidden away on the Moon's surface, old rivalries blossom and the political stakes are stretched to breaking point back on Earth. Houston flight controller Kazimieras 'Kaz' Zemeckis must do all he can to keep the NASA crew together, while staying one step ahead of his Soviet rivals. But not everyone on board Apollo 18 is quite who they appear to be. And they are all a quarter of a million miles from Earth. "Experience the fierce G-forces of launch, the frozen loneliness of Space and the fear of holding on to the outside of a spacecraft orbiting the Earth at 17,000 miles per hour, as told by a former Commander of the International Space Station who has done all of those things in real life."

Henderson, Alice. [A Blizzard of Polar Bears](#) (Harper \$27.99). Fresh off her wolverine study in Montana, wildlife biologist Alex Carter lands a job studying a threatened population of polar bears inhabiting Churchill, Canada. Embedded with a small team of Arctic researchers, she tracks the majestic bears by air, following them over vast, snowy terrain, spending days leaning precariously out of a helicopter with a tranquilizer gun, until she can get down on the ice to examine them up close. But as her study progresses, and she gathers data on the health of individual bears, things start to go awry. Her helicopter pilot quits unexpectedly, equipment goes missing, and a late-night intruder breaks into her lab and steals the samples she's collected. She realizes that someone doesn't want her to complete her study, but Alex is not easily

deterred. Managing to find a replacement pilot, she returns to the icy expanses of Hudson Bay. But then....

Of Henderson's debut in [A Solitude of Wolverines](#) (\$16.99), James Rollins writes: "Both a mystery and a survival story, here is a novel written with a naturalist's eye for detail and an unrelenting pace. It reminded me of the best of Nevada Barr, where the wilderness itself is as much a character as the feisty wildlife biologist who must solve a crime in a remote town where no one is talking, and everyone is a suspect. It's so fraught with excitement and wondrous details that it demands to be read in one sitting and savored afterward. Don't miss it." And Nevada Barr adds, "Her depiction of the natural world in all its beauty and terror is spot-on. Into this she weaves a cast of characters both original and fascinating, as well as a heroine who does the unbelievable, yet one can believe it. A great read!" This is the latest in excellent thrillers set in the Canadian Arctic to come our way this year.

✂ Herron, Mick. [Dolphin Junction: Stories](#) (Soho \$24.95). **For Signed UK copies please see Signed Books for November.**

The 11 entries in British author Herron's first story collection offer wit, original metaphors, surprising plots, and seemingly placid scenes full of sinister undercurrents. Highlights include the seamlessly constructed title story, in which a man can't convince the police that his missing wife has been abducted, and the wonderfully deceptive "Lost Luggage," in which a young couple stop at a motorway service station and engage in a bit of people watching. "All the Livelong Day" elegantly teases back layers of expectation that lead readers from a simple hike through dramatic countryside to claustrophobic horror. Four stories feature Herron's Oxford private investigators, Zoë Boehm and Joe Silvermann. In one of them, "Proof of Love," each of the detectives confronts—in their own very different ways—a blackmailer. The distant past of MI5 spymaster Jackson Lamb, another of Herron's series characters, is poignantly explored in "The Last Dead Letter." Herron, who has received CWA Gold and Steel Dagger awards, is sure to win even more fans.

✂ Horowitz, Anthony. [A Line to Kill](#) (Harper \$27.99). In case you missed this in October here is another review that should tantalize you: Here we have Horowitz "featuring himself as the Watson-like sidekick to Holmesian detective Daniel Hawthorne. As *A Line to Kill* begins, the writer is tired of being second banana to Hawthorne on murder cases, so Horowitz agrees to attend a literary festival on Alderney, one of the Channel Islands. In the publishing world, Horowitz believes he'd have the upper hand over Hawthorne. This turns out to be untrue. During Horowitz and Hawthorne's joint interview at the festival, the audience and moderator mostly ignore the author, as they're more fascinated by the detective and his methodology and motivations. When a murder occurs and the local police are hopelessly out of their depths—since murders never happen on Alderney—Horowitz once again finds himself playing second fiddle to Hawthorne as the detective takes charge of the investigation. One of the joys in this series comes from Horowitz subjecting his fictional self to repeated indignities. He's told by festival organizers that he was only invited after A-list authors like Val McDermid and Philip Pullman had declined invitations to appear. When he's finally asked a question during his interview with Hawthorne, Horowitz is rudely cut off. But in real life, the author, whose oeuvre includes Sherlock Holmes and James Bond novels and

scripts for TV shows such as *Midsomer Murders* and *Foyle's War*, is a master at holding his audience with his entertaining mysteries combining comedy and crime."

Iggulden, Conn. [Protector: A Novel of Ancient Greece](#) (Pantheon \$26.95). Persian King Xerxes stands over the smoking ruins of Athens, an army of slaves at his back. Come to destroy, once and for all, everything that the city stands for, he stares pitilessly at the hopelessly outnumbered Greeks. Veteran soldier Themistocles cannot push the Persians back by force on land, and so he so does so by stealth, at sea. Over three long days, the greatest naval battle of the ancient world will unfold at Salamis, a bloody war between the democracy of Athens and the tyranny of Persia. Less than a year later, the Persians return to reconquer the Greeks. Tens of thousands of soldiers on both sides ready themselves for war. For the Spartans, the Battle of Plataea is chance to avenge their defeat at Thermopylae. For the people of Athens, threatened on all sides, nothing less than the survival of democracy is at stake. And once again Themistocles, the hero of Salamis, will risk everything....

Kawaguchi, Toshikazu. [Tales from the Café](#) (Hanover Square \$19.99). In a back alley in Tokyo, there is a café that has been serving carefully brewed coffee for more than one hundred years. Local legend says that this shop offers something else besides coffee—the chance to travel back in time. The Indie Next Pick: "These four interconnected sweet, simple, yet thought-provoking tales are as wonderful and life-affirming as those in [Before the Coffee Gets Cold](#) (\$19.99) and make it the perfect companion piece."

Kells, Claire. [Vanishing Edge](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). **Possibly signed for December.** This offbeat series launch from Kells introduces a crimefighting team in the start of a series set in National Parks that will appeal to Nevada Barr and Scott Graham readers. Curmudgeonly chief ranger Rick Corrigan has what he calls a situation at an abandoned luxury campsite perched above a lake in California's Sequoia National Park. To look into the case, Corrigan teams Felicity Harland, a fledgling agent with the Investigations Services Bureau (in essence the FBI for the National Parks), with Ferdinand "Hux" Huxley, the ranger who discovered the abandoned Glampist campsite. When the body of TV star Tatum Delancey turns up in the lake, Felicity and Hux begin searching for Tatum's male camping companion—not her husband—and try to determine whether she fell or was pushed to her death. As they hike through difficult terrain, they encounter a daunting number of false clues and may have a clue about a menace to campers called the Woodsman. Along the way, Felicity learns to rely on Hux's talent for finding people, while he respects how she's pushing herself to recover from a broken back and a long rehabilitation not fully completed. Sharply drawn characters and striking descriptions of park scenery are a plus, although you may cavil at the solution to Tatum's murder.

Kelly, Erin. [Watch Her Fall](#) (Mira \$26.99). Ava Kirilova is a 30-year-old prima ballerina with the London Russian Ballet Company poised to dance the coveted dual role of Odette and Odile in *Swan Lake*. With opening night approaching, Ava must deal with her autocratic father, Nikolai Kirilov, the company's master, who elicits the best from his dancers by bullying them, as well as a talented younger rival. However, the opening night for which everyone is feverishly preparing happens almost

entirely off stage, and the story turns instead to Juliet, who has suffered a career-ending injury all dancers dread, and then to Roman Pavluk, an undocumented immigrant, who plunges into the criminal underworld in a desperate attempt to stay in the U.K. Kelly produces “an inventive ending that’s both thematically and narratively satisfying. This fresh approach to the story of a dancer facing the inevitable decline of her body will resonate with many.”—*PW*

Kelly, Greta. [The Seven Queen: Warrior Witch Duology #2](#) (Harper Voyager \$27.99). Askia has just one month before Radovan’s Aellium stone drains her of her magic and traps her soul, and the enchanted chain keeping the stone around her neck suppresses her powers such that while she can still see the dead, she’s unable to summon them or compel them to do her bidding. But with the ghosts of Radovan’s six murdered witch-queens on her side, Askia has a fighting chance to end Radovan’s reign of terror. Complex worldbuilding and fascinating characters propel the intricate plot to a deeply satisfying climax. Sword-and-sorcery fans won’t be able to put down this gripping tale of female solidarity and triumph.

Keneally, Thomas. [The Dickens Boy](#) (Atria \$28). The author of modern classics such as *Schindler’s List* turns to the adventures of Charles Dickens’s son in the Australian Outback during the 1860s. Edward Dickens, the tenth child of England’s most famous author Charles Dickens, has consistently let down his parents. Unable to apply himself at school and adrift in life, the teenaged boy is sent to Australia in the hopes that he can make something of himself—or at least fail out of the public eye. He soon finds himself in the remote Outback, surrounded by Aborigines, colonials, ex-convicts, ex-soldiers, and very few women. Even on the other side of the world, Edward encounters the same rabid veneration of his father that exists in England. But Edward has a secret: he has never read a single word of his father’s beloved writing. Determined to prove to his parents and more importantly, himself, that he can succeed in this vast and unfamiliar wilderness, Edward works hard at his new life amidst various livestock, bushrangers, shifty stock agents, and frontier battles. Does he succeed? Read it and decide.

Lansdale, Joe R. [Radiant Apples](#) (Subterranean \$40). This highly entertaining quickie is less outrageous than usual for Lansdale: set in the early 1900s, it’s a straightforward narrative centered on Nat Love, an important figure in African American history who was a Buffalo Soldier, a U.S. Marshal, a performer in *Buffalo Bill’s Wild West* show—and, as this tale begins, a Pullman car porter on the Cotton Belt Line. His sedate routine is broken when the Radiant Apple Gang attempts a train robbery—and Nat recognizes one of their number as his prodigal son, Rufus. Hired by the railroad to look into the crime, Nat enlists his tracker friend Choctaw and sets off after the outlaws for the sake of justice, money, a chance to reconnect with his son, and the pleasure of being away from civilization and the constant climate of racial prejudice. Nat enjoys the chase but realizes his “time as a manhunter was coming to an end” as “criminals had all turned to banking, politics and preaching.” Indeed, the Radiant Apple gang is a scruffy bunch, dangerous only for their brutality and possession of automatic weapons—which make the final showdown in Hootie Hoot, Oklahoma, breathtakingly gory.

MacLeod, Debra. [To Be Wolves](#) (Blackstone \$25.99). Caesar Augustus’ authority holds only as long as the people believe the gods of Rome support him, particularly the beloved goddess of the home and hearth, Vesta. As chief Vestal Virgin, Pomponia continues to devote her life to protecting her order and the eternal flame of Vesta. She has risen to a position of esteem in Rome and is a valued member of Caesar’s inner circle. But now a contagion ravages the city and tension rises among Rome’s inhabitants. While she struggles to manage the Vestal order and maintain the favor of the goddess, Pomponia must now face a malevolent nobleman, Soren, whose machinations against her threaten not just her friendship with Caesar, but everything she loves. Start this series so likely to win fans of Lindsey Davis and Steven Saylor, also Robert Harris’ Roman trilogy, with [Brides of Rome](#) (\$25.99).

Malerman, Josh. [Pearl](#) (Del Rey \$27). “In a superbly written thriller by the author of *Bird Box*, a telepathic farm pig named Pearl uses mind control to take over a small town. Malerman mastered the technique of taking a normal scenario (boy visiting his grandfather’s farm), adding an incredibly disturbing reality (mind-controlling farm animal) and letting the story spiral in a believable way.”—Paul Dinh-McCrillis. Note: it begins when a 7th grader beholds a pig... was it a psychotic animal?

✦ Marske, Freya. [A Marvellous Light](#) (Forge \$27.99). Financial necessity leads newly titled, 25-year-old baronet Robin Blyth to take a post in the Office of Special Domestic Affairs and Complaints, where Edwin Courcey, liaison to the Chief Minister of the Magical Assembly, “unbushells” him by disclosing the reality of magic. Thugs accost Robin that same evening, placing a curse on him and demanding to know the location of a powerful object his predecessor hid. When Edwin learns of the curse, which gives Robin unbidden glimpses of the future, he whisks Robin to his family’s country estate. There, Edwin, who lacks raw magical power but has a keen mind and a knack for research, attempts to find a solution while his family, including a sister whose pranks teeter on mean-spirited and a brother who torments him, cook up magical diversions.

The Indie Next Pick; “What could be better than a secret magical society in Edwardian England combined with mystery, intrigue, and romance? Turns out, nothing at all...” Library Reads seconds this rave: “An Edwardian baronet mistakenly becomes the bureaucratic liaison to a hidden magical society in this trilogy starter. Features great character development and a strong story line weaving fantasy, mystery, and a study in manners, all with a twist of humor. For fans of Zen Cho and V.E. Schwab.”

Martin, Kat. [The Last Goodnight](#) (Kensington \$26) pairs a widowed rancher and a PI in this outstanding romantic thriller that launches Blood Ties, the Logans series. Eight years before the start of the novel, rancher Kade Logan’s unfaithful wife, Heather, was murdered, and the killer was never found. Now her car is rediscovered, and Kade contacts Nighthawk Security to see if their consultants can shed any light on the situation. Enter Nighthawk investigator Ellie Bowman. Posing as a substitute ranch cook at Kade’s Diamond Bar Ranch, Ellie grills the other employees and townspeople. Then comes a series of attacks on both animals and employees—and another woman dies in circumstances identical to Heather’s. As Ellie and Kade frantically search for the perpetrator,

they give in to their explosive chemistry. Martin, a master of the genre, ratchets up the tension throughout, casting numerous red herrings across the trail until the murderer is identified and some righteous justice is served. Her plucky heroine and gruff hero, meanwhile, provide a solid dose of romance. Readers won't be able to turn the pages fast enough.

McLean, Robin. [Pity the Beast](#) (And Other Stories \$25.95). Following in the footsteps of such chroniclers of American absurdity as Cormac McCarthy, Joy Williams, and Charles Portis, McLean's *Pity the Beast* is a mind-melting feminist Western that pins a tale of sexual violence and vengeance to a canvas stretching back to prehistory, sideways into legend, and off into a lonesome future. The Indie Next Pick adds: "An epic Western adventure that subverts any and all preconceived notions of the genre. McLean twists the sharpest edges of gender, philosophy, and the landscape itself into a compassionate meditation on what it means to survive." As with McCarthy novels, this is not for the faint of heart reader.

McPherson, Catriona. [The Mirror Dance](#) (Möbius \$26.99). PP customers know we recommend this sharp, engaging historical crime series. And here is the latest entry. Dandy Gilver lives on a country estate in Scotland. A 50-something year old woman with a husband and adult children, in fact a grandmother. She and a (younger) male neighbor called Alec have had some success in solving mysteries with, I gather, some assistance from her husband Hugh and her lady's maid Grant. One sleepy Sunday afternoon Dandy receives a call from a magazine owner in Dundee asking her to intervene with a Punch and Judy show which is using copyrighted images of their cartoon characters in its act. A rainy Bank Holiday Monday excursion with her female employees to Dundee to see the Punch and Judy show ends in tragedy when Dandy discovers his body, foully murdered (as they say). An impossible murder, with an invisible murderer in front of an observant audience, a plethora of red herrings and impossibilities, a link to a similar murder 50 years earlier and a behind-the-scenes look at the art of the theatre. Let me add that the supply chain issues from the UK to the US may hold up delivery to us of this book into December. But it's better to order it now and forestall disappointment.

Miller, Nathaniel. [The Memoirs of Stockholm Sven](#) (Little Brown \$28). The #1 Indie Next Pick for November: "Wow, what a book. The world and the characters grow together. In a bleak, unforgiving landscape, Sven is able to discover found family and grow as a person, while offering hard-won insights about human nature that'll leave you breathless."

In 1916, Sven Ormson leaves a restless life in Stockholm to seek adventure in Svalbard, an Arctic archipelago where darkness reigns four months of the year and he might witness the splendor of the Northern Lights one night and be attacked by a polar bear the next. But his time as a miner ends when an avalanche nearly kills him, leaving him disfigured, and Sven flees even further, to an uninhabited fjord. There, with the company of a loyal dog, he builds a hut and lives alone, testing himself against the elements. The teachings of a Finnish fur trapper, along with encouraging letters from his family and a Scottish geologist who befriended him in the mining camp, get him through his first winter. Years into his routine isolation, the arrival of an unlikely visitor salves his loneliness, sparking a chain of surprising events that will bring Sven into a family of fellow castoffs and determine the course of the rest of his life.

Morris, Wanda. [All Her Little Secrets](#) (Morrow \$27.99). See also a review under New in Large Paperback for the simultaneous paperback release. This is a debut getting a lot of press for the social and career issues the author addresses, and for the career of the author herself in the media. Here is the Library Reads comment: "All is not as it first seems in this thriller set in present-day Atlanta. In-house attorney Ellice is suddenly elevated to corporate general counsel after her boss' sudden death, but things don't add up and she is caught up in a dangerous conspiracy."

I didn't find the plot was well constructed and the whole was more about agenda than mystery. For our First Mystery Book of the Month I went with Gregory Galloway's debut mystery [Just Thieves](#) (Melville House \$26.99) for October and Kat Rosenfield's [No One Will Miss Her](#) (Morrow \$27.99) for November (see Signed Books) for what I think is their superior prose and engaging narratives.

Morrissey, Hannah. [Hello, Transcriber](#) (St Martins \$27.99). Inspired by Hannah Morrissey's real-life past job as the night transcriber in the police department of a small Wisconsin city comes a debut featuring a flawed heroine, a shaky marriage to a domineering husband, and an attraction to a cop on the case that aspiring novelist and department transcriber Hazel Greenlee can't push aside. Our own Lesa Holstine reviews: For two years, Hazel Greenlee has felt trapped—in her marriage and in the small town of Black Harbor. She's drawn to Forge Bridge, where locals often jump to their deaths; she understands the attraction. When she gets a job transcribing police reports at the local precinct, she learns the secrets that appear in those reports. She's pulled into an investigation when her neighbor Sam shows up at the police station with a severed finger, saying he helped hide a body in a dumpster. According to the police report filed by detective Nikolai Kole, suspicion falls on a local drug dealer called Candy Man, whose apartment Hazel volunteers to search. More murders (and Hazel's growing attraction to Nik) ensnare her in the secrets and lies at the heart of Black Harbor. Soon, she doesn't know whom to trust; she even fears the neighbors in her apartment complex....

Mukherjee, Abir. [Shadows of Men](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). Increasing tensions in 1923 colonial India provide the backdrop for Edgar finalist Mukherjee's superb fifth mystery featuring Captain Sam Wyndham and DS Surendranath Bannerjee of the Calcutta CID. Lord Taggart, the Calcutta commissioner of police, gives Bannerjee an assignment he's required to keep secret, even from his friend Wyndham: keeping track of the movements and activities of Muslim politician Farid Gulmohamed. Taggart fears Gulmohamed may stoke unrest in Calcutta before the upcoming municipal elections, called by the British following Mahatma Gandhi's incarceration. See Signed Books for more.

Obama, Barack/Bruce Springsteen. [Renegades: Born in the USA](#) (Crown \$50). Two longtime friends share an intimate and urgent conversation about life, music, and their enduring love of America, with all its challenges and contradictions, in this stunningly produced expansion of their groundbreaking "Higher Ground" podcast, featuring more than 350 photographs, exclusive bonus content, and never-before-seen archival material.

Pickett, Rex. [The Archivist](#) (Blackstone \$29.99). The premise is terrific. Archivist Emily Snow is hired by Regents University's Memorial Library in San Diego, California, to finish cataloging

the work of Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Raymond West after the death of her predecessor, Nadia Fontaine, in a surfing accident nine months earlier. When a computer search turns up a “dark archive” (“a digital cosmology containing anything and everything that for reasons of privacy should be undiscoverable by the public road map of the finding aid”) containing a detailed account of an affair between Raymond and Nadia, Emily begins to wonder about the unusual circumstances surrounding Nadia’s death and takes it upon herself to investigate. Meanwhile, the plan of Raymond’s heiress wife to donate \$25 million to the library and the possibility Raymond will win the Nobel Prize for Literature complicate 27-year-old Emily’s efforts to discover the truth. The execution takes 748 pages to complete and you may well think some serious pruning was in order.

Poyer, David. [Arctic Sea](#) (St Martins \$28.99). The four-year war with China has ended (badly) and Dan Lenson has been reduced back to captain after his wartime rank of admiral. Several major American cities have been destroyed, major stretches of the Midwest are contaminated with radiation, and the country is stricken with riots, looting, disease, famine, and revolts against the government. Dan is fighting radiation exposure and working at the Pentagon on a less-than-compelling study of postwar force structure. With Russia undamaged by the recent war and expanding militarily into the Arctic Circle, Dan is assigned to explore the North Slope of Alaska for possible locations for a U.S. naval base. His wife, Blair Titus, continues her political work in Washington, D.C., and his daughter, Nan, is back working as a virologist in the rebel-held areas. There are still plenty of deadly adventures to navigate in this chapter of a long-running series.

✦ Redmond, Heather. [The Pickwick Murders](#) (Kensington \$26). It’s 1836. Charles Dickens has much to celebrate on the eve of his first book’s publication—an invitation to join the exalted Lightning Club and his impending marriage. But when Charles is discovered with bloody hands next to the body of Samuel Pickwick, the Lightning Club’s president, Charles’s intrepid fiancée, Kate Hogarth, and his stalwart brother, Fred, are certain Sir Augustus Smirke, a member of Parliament, has framed Charles to deter him from investigating Smirke’s connection to Amy Poor, a missing girl. With Charles imprisoned in Newgate Prison for murder, his friends and family must solve a series of anonymously mailed riddles to unmask the real killer before Charles hangs. Besides painting a finely detailed portrait of life in London and its social hierarchy, Redmond creates captivating sleuths in the young Charles and the valiant Kate with their sharp-eyed observations of British society and its individuals.

Shteyngart, Gary. [Our Country Friends](#) (Random \$28). Shteyngart offers readers what may be the first major pandemic novel. In March 2020, a group of friends gather in the country to weather the pandemic together. The ensemble includes the Levin-Senderovskys, a Russian American family; a fabulously wealthy Korean American app developer; and a movie star, whose presence threatens to upend it all.

Tarantino, Quentin. [Once Upon a Time in Hollywood Deluxe Edition](#) (Harper \$30). This Deluxe Hardcover from the Academy Award winner includes two color inserts featuring never-before-seen photos from the set and posters and other memorabilia from Rick Dalton’s career. Also included is an original, exclusive script

for a *Bounty Law* episode by Quentin Tarantino titled “Incident at Inez” and a Mad Magazine parody of *Bounty Law* titled “Lousy Law: Loser’s Last Ride.” Altogether this hardcover edition makes a nifty gift.

Tolkien, J.R.R. [The Lord of the Rings Illustrated Edition](#) (Houghton \$75). This new edition of J.R.R. Tolkien’s magnificent quest cycle is illustrated with J.R.R. Tolkien’s own artwork, created as he wrote the original text. It will be packaged with the following features: shrink-wrapped for damage protection, a sewn hardback binding with a ribbon placemark, ink-sprayed edges displaying Tolkien’s runes, two maps loosely tucked, and will be printed on FSC “forest-friendly” paper.

Winman, Sarah. [Still Life](#) (Penguin \$27) begins with a chance meeting in Tuscany in 1944 between a British art historian and an army private. Evelyn Skinner, 64, befriends 24-year-old Ulysses Temper while holed up in a wine cellar as bombs fall. Their paths soon diverge, but Evelyn’s suggestion that Ulysses revisit Florence on his own makes a lasting impact. In 1946 London, where Ulysses is now a civilian in a fractured relationship with Peg—the hometown girl he married before the war—the reader meets Alys, the daughter Peg had with an American soldier she met during her husband’s absence, and the endearing London pub friends who become Ulysses’ family, some of whom eventually join him in Italy in the early 1950s. After the war, Evelyn shuttles between Kent and Bloomsbury, teaching art history and spending time with devoted female lovers. Ulysses and Evelyn finally reconnect in Florence 22 years after their first meeting. “Winman covers much ground, including the devastating 1966 flood of the Arno, a cameo appearance by E.M. Forster, and many rich sections about art, relationships and the transcendent beauty of Tuscany, and while it occasionally feels like two novels stitched into one, for the most part it hangs together.”

Zafon, Carlos Ruiz. [The City of Mist](#) (\$26.99). Return to the mythical Barcelona library known as the Cemetery of Forgotten Books in this posthumous collection of stories from the fabulous author of *The Shadow of the Wind*, one of my all time favorite First Mystery Book of the Month Picks, and *The Labyrinth of the Spirits*. The eleven stories, most of them never before published in English, offer the reader compelling characters, unique situations, and a gothic atmosphere reminiscent of his beloved Cemetery of Forgotten Books quartet. Examples: A boy decides to become a writer when he discovers that his creative gifts capture the attentions of an aloof young beauty who has stolen his heart. A labyrinth maker flees Constantinople to a plague-ridden Barcelona, with plans for building a library impervious to the destruction of time. A strange gentleman tempts Cervantes to write a book like no other, each page of which could prolong the life of the woman he loves. And a brilliant Catalan architect named Antoni Gaudí reluctantly agrees to cross the ocean to New York, a voyage that will determine the fate of an unfinished masterpiece. NOTE: There is a simultaneous paperback edition as noted in our Large Paperback Picks for November.

BOOKS FOR BOOK AND LANGUAGE LOVERS

Damrosch, David. [Around the World in 80 Books](#) (Penguin \$30). Inspired by Jules Verne’s hero Phileas Fogg, Damrosch, chair of Harvard University’s department of comparative literature and founder of Harvard’s Institute for World Literature, set out to

counter a pandemic's restrictions on travel by exploring eighty exceptional books from around the globe. Following a literary itinerary from London to Venice, Tehran and points beyond, and via authors from Woolf and Dante to Nobel Prize-winners Orhan Pamuk, Wole Soyinka, Mo Yan, and Olga Tokarczuk, he explores how these works have shaped our idea of the world, and the ways in which the world bleeds into literature. An excellent gift for any reader.

Dauber, Jeremy. [American Comics: A History](#) (Norton \$35). Columbia professor Dauber covers the entire landscape of American comics in this outstanding encyclopedic survey intelligently analyzing how "comics have shaped wars and inspired movements" and even "conquered pop culture." The roots of today's blockbuster movies date back centuries, but the author focuses on the American experience, which began with the late 19th-century cartoonist Thomas Nast, whose lampooning of the corrupt Tammany Hall was so scathing that he was offered what would today be a multimillion-dollar payoff to stop. Dauber uses Nast to underscore how the medium is replete with erasures that for decades have left creators either ignored or robbed of credit (Nast's wife, Sarah, for instance, wrote most of the most-memorable captions for her spouse's art). Other themes recur throughout the 150 years he chronicles in thrilling detail... In doing so, he skillfully charts "the story of a changing American audience."

Duncan, Dennis. [Index, A History of the](#) (Allen Lane \$46 Signed). A lecturer in English at University College London mixes humor and scholarship to brilliant effect in this accessible deep dive into the history of indexes. A Bookish Adventure recommended by punctuation maven Lynne Truss (*Eats, Shoots & Leaves*) intrigued me enough to order a few Signed copies from London. Duncan highlights key innovations in the centuries-long development of this search tool, including the trend towards putting words in alphabetical order; the shift from scrolls to codices, whose page numbers were crucial to the creation of a usable index; and the rise of medieval universities, where scholars needed "new ways of efficiently finding parcels of text." Characterizing the index as the precursor to Google search, Duncan dismisses fears that an overreliance on search engines will diminish humans' cognitive abilities.

What a treat this is for us bibliophiles, and who would guess that the Index has such an intricate and rollicking history? Duncan creates a grand tour from ancient times to the (almost) present, pointing out the design, uses, and cunning abuses, of what remains the "most sophisticated search tool ever devised." Take that, Google! Honestly, you will learn things you didn't know or hardly realized you didn't know. The Index may seem old school today but really, it's just modernized. Despite longstanding worries that indexes will reduce engagement with books and alter reading habits and attention spans for the worse ("the book index: killing off experimental curiosity since the seventeenth century"), Duncan makes a persuasive argument that it is natural for reading methods and text technology to evolve in order to make information easier to find.

Garner, Dwight. [Garner's Quotations: A Modern Miscellany](#) (\$17). *New York Times* book critic Garner assembles a rather unorthodox ensemble of some of his favorite quotes. Comprising "sentences from novels, stories, poems, and songs, from plays and movies, from overheard conversations," that, Garner writes,

have "jolted me awake," this is much more than a random assortment. Many of the quotes share a common (if broad) theme, touching upon topics such as food, religion, love for literature, and candid remarks on human nature. I am not always in sympathy with Garner but it never hurts to have apposite quotes in your conversation or literary pocket.

Koenig, John. [The Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows](#) (Simon & Schuster \$19.99). Have you ever wondered about the lives of each person you pass on the street, realizing that everyone is the main character in their own story, each living a life as vivid and complex as your own? That feeling has a name: "sonder." Or maybe you've watched a thunderstorm roll in and felt a primal hunger for disaster, hoping it would shake up your life. That's called "lachesism." Or you were looking through old photos and felt a pang of nostalgia for a time you've never actually experienced. That's "anemoia." If you've never heard of these terms before, that's because they didn't exist until John Koenig began his epic quest to fill the gaps in the language of emotion. Born as a website in 2009, *The Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows* has garnered widespread critical acclaim, inspired TED talks, album titles, cocktails, and even tattoos. This handsome small hardcover is an excellent gift idea.

Massini, Stefano. [The Book of Nonexistent Words](#) (Harper Via \$23.99 paperback). This is so much fun, a "flowing, beautifully illustrated collection of linguistic origin stories—words made up by the author in the spirit of say Italo Calvino, words that should exist but, given Massini's delightful stories, ring true even if he created this catalog of new words inspired by real people. Examples: achorism; biroism; caransebic, Faradian, Zacharian.... Massini laces his wordsmithing with marvelous trawls through literary and other important figures, revealing vast erudition. Massini is also a renowned playwright: example *The Lehman Trilogy*.

Wellesley, Mary. [The Gilded Page: The Secret Life of Medieval Manuscripts](#) (Basic Books \$28.99). An historian examines the origins and care of famous manuscripts, thus revealing the pivotal work of binders, scribes, and dedicated women in keeping the works of many celebrated writers and thinkers from ruin. I am a sucker for manuscripts—their artistry and beauty, their content, their preservation—and a lifelong haunter of the Morgan Library, the Huntington, the Met, the British Library and our own Library of Congress, as well as exhibitions all over the world (not just the Western World). As a family we, the Rosenwalds, are delighted with the Rosenwald Collection at the Library of Congress featuring treasures down the centuries.

BOOKS FOR FOODIES

Note: I have listed a number of new Cookbooks at the end of this Booknews, after New in Small Paperbacks

Remnick, David. [Fragile Earth: Writing from the New Yorker on Climate Change](#) (\$18.99). *The New Yorker* has devoted enormous attention to climate change, describing the causes of the crisis, the political and ecological conditions we now find ourselves in, and the scenarios and solutions we face. *The Fragile Earth* tells the story of climate change—its past, present, and future—taking readers from Greenland to the Great Plains, and into both laboratories and rain forests. It features some of the best writing on global warming from the last three decades, including Bill McKibben's seminal essay "The End of Nature," the first piece

to popularize both the science and politics of climate change for a general audience, and the Pulitzer Prize-winning work of Elizabeth Kolbert, as well as Kathryn Schulz, Dexter Filkins, Jonathan Franzen, Ian Frazier, Eric Klinenberg, and others. The range of the authors underlines the emergency we all face, climate deniers too.

And two delicious books combining food and travel. You can also browse for more by clicking here on [Food](#) to get a large number of titles

Jacobsen, Rowan. [Truffle Hound: On the Trail of the World's Most Seductive Scent, with Dreamers, Schemers, and Some Extraordinary Dogs](#) (Bloomsbury, \$28). James Beard Award-winning author Jacobsen captivates with this dual narrative, both an eloquent and sensuous treatise on truffles and the enthralling story of his obsessive quest to learn everything there is to know about them. His love affair begins in the Piedmont region of Italy, at the peak of truffle season, where he smelled a white truffle for the first time. One whiff of the intoxicating aroma set him off on a passionate pursuit to learn more about the unassuming fungi... The real delicacy here, though, is the arresting prose used to convey his reverence and awe: "Slice open a truffle and you'll see a beautifully marbled interior with a fine honeycomb of white veins... [that] produce[s] a dumbfounding cocktail of aromatic compounds.... No words can do justice to the scent of a white truffle." While that may be true, Jacobsen definitely comes close. For more gustatory treats try Jacobsen's [A Geography of Oysters](#) (\$17), aimed at oysters lovers eating them in North America.

Stone, Daniel. [The Food Explorer](#) (\$17). The True Adventures of the Globe-Trotting Botanist Who Transformed What America Eats. Rob, our true foodie, recommends this fascinating, face-paced adventure featuring young botanist David Fairchild who as the 20th Century approached set out in search of foods that would raise American meals from subsistence to a rich diversity while enriching American farmers. Think mangoes from India, peaches from China, avocados from Chile, pomegranates from Malta... and, joy, seedless grapes. He also sent back a variety of cotton from Egypt and cherry blossom trees from Japan (think of the men who sent say rubber tree pods to Kew Gardens). Along the way he caught diseases, was arrested, learned to bargain with tribes. Truly this is a magnificent Stocking Stuffer!

TWO BIOGRAPHIES OF NOTE

De Vise, Daniel. [King of the Blues: The Rise and Reign of B.B. King](#) (Atlantic) (\$30). Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist De Vise amply demonstrates his masterful storytelling and research skills in this definitive look at legendary blues musician B.B. King (1925–2015). Informed by his conversations with "dozens of surviving friends and relatives, band-mates and producers," De Vise provides an intimate portrait of a cultural luminary "whose achievements transcended his genre." Born into poverty on a Mississippi plantation in 1925, King fell in love with music at a young age, when the reverend of his church taught him the three guitar chords at the center of every blues song he would ever perform. In 1946, he left his life as a sharecropper and tractor driver to perform in Memphis, where he became a regional star before signing with a talent agent and touring internationally for more than 50 years. But even after finding fame, De Vise recounts, King endured his fair share of trials, including a fatal accident involving his tour bus that killed a truck driver, and money disputes

with his business manager. These hardships, however, only serve to underscore the tenacity that led King to become "the greatest living guitarist" alive and a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Even readers who aren't fans of the blues will be engrossed by this nuanced look at an American icon.

✂ Trethewey, Rachel. [The Churchill Sisters](#) (St Martins) \$29.99). For those interested in how children cope with famous parents, and vice versa, and for Churchill fans seeking a fuller picture of Winston and his family, this thoroughly researched biography of Winston and Clementine's three daughters is a must read. And for historians too since the family dwelled at the center of Britain in the 20th Century. It's well worth reading the Acknowledgements section and there are extensive notes and a bibliography.

OUR NOVEMBER LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

Barbery, Muriel. [The Writer's Cats](#) (Europa) \$16.95). In 2008, French author Muriel Barbery burst onto the literary scene with [The Elegance of the Hedgehog](#) (\$17), a lyrical, richly imagined novel about a Parisian apartment building concierge and a precocious 12-year-old tenant. Both lead lives of quiet desperation. In the years since, Barbery has continued to deliver stories featuring her distinctive blend of gentle satire and magical realism, and continues to win global readership.

In *The Writer's Cats*, Barbery launches her most playful story yet, focusing on herself and unraveling the "mysterious, confounding" life of a writer. This short, frisky novel is told from the imagined perspective of one of her beloved cats, Kirin—named for the Japanese beer. The four-year-old "fatal beauty" is one of a quartet of Barbery's felines, who all believe they are her esteemed protectors and literary advisers. The tribe includes three other Chartreux cats, with gray fur and orange eyes, which pair perfectly with the décor of the author's Parisian home. This color scheme is further emphasized in whimsical illustrations and visual wit by Maria Guitart. The distinct charms of the four cats—along with their tail-waving antics—work together to drive Barbery's writing life and ultimately dictate the direction of her literary pursuits. Creative types of all stripes—especially cat lovers—will be enchanted.

Baart, Nicole. [Everything We Didn't Say](#) (Atria) \$17) is an eerie and intriguing page-turner that explores family dynamics, crime, and how hard it is to keep secrets in a small rural town. Juniper Baker had just graduated from high school and was deep in the throes of a summer romance when Cal and Beth Murphy, a childless couple who lived on a neighboring farm, were brutally murdered. When her younger brother became the prime suspect, June's world collapsed and everything she loved that summer fell away. She left, promising never to return to tiny Jericho, Iowa. Until now. Officially, she's back in town to help an ill friend manage the local library. But really, she's returned to repair her relationship with her teenage daughter, who's been raised by Juniper's mother and stepfather since birth—and to solve the infamous Murphy murders once and for all. She knows the key to both lies in the darkest secret of that long-ago summer night, one that's haunted her for nearly fifteen years. As history begins to repeat itself and a dogged local true crime podcaster starts delving into the murders, the race to the truth puts past and present on a dangerous collision course. Recommended for readers of Megan Miranda and Lisa Jewell.

French, Tana. [The Searcher](#) (\$18) is “a classic setup—the lone outsider revealing the dark side of a small town—and imbuing it with simmering menace. There’s also an unexpectedly moving friendship and storytelling so atmospheric you can practically smell the peat bogs.” —*People*. “The west of Ireland looked good to Cal Hooper on the internet. But now that he’s living there, the rugged beauty of the region overwhelms him, as it will anyone reading Tana French’s *The Searcher*. In the lineup of French’s books [it is] an outlier: not her most accessible but not to be missed. It’s unusually contemplative and visual, as if she literally needed this breath of fresh air. It steps back to examine the policing powers she has traditionally taken for granted.” —*The New York Times*

Goldberg, Lee. [Gated Prey](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$15.95). Continuing his truly wonderful series for Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department detective Eve Ronin (you do not need to read the first two to appreciate this gem, although you would relish the full trio), Goldberg amazes me with two astonishing plots that only achieve convergence because of their location: an upscale gated community in Calabasas, California, territory that lies within the LASD’s jurisdiction. I am beyond impressed—and horrified—with both crimes. Eve’s relentless focus on solving them ups her troubled relationship with her colleagues. Goldberg also brings his own savvy media and screenwriting experience into crafting this series. Bravo! We had some Signed hardcovers but may be sold out: [Gated Prey](#) (\$24.95). Order all [three for Eve Ronin: Lost Hills; Bone Canyon; Gated Prey](#).

Grant, Rachel. [Dangerous Ground](#) (Montlake \$12.95). The more I think on it the more I love this splendid book...partly it’s archaeology, partly the isolated Alaska island, a lot the characters and the plot. **And we offer this with Signed Bookplates and will have the sequel in January, [Crash Site](#) (\$12.95), also with Signed Bookplates, or maybe Signed.**

So I repeat the *PW* Starred Review: “Grant shines in the heart-pounding romantic thriller that opens her Fiona Carver series. Archaeologist Fiona Carver and her crew are headed back to the site of an interrupted dig on remote Chiksook Island, Alaska. Newly joining them is supposed ornithologist Bill Lowell, whom Fiona mentally dubs Hot Bird Man. She has no way of knowing that “Bill” is actually famed wildlife photographer Dean Slater, who’s searching for his fraternal twin, Dylan, the crew’s missing volcanologist. Dean’s suspicions of foul play are quickly borne out when he and Fiona are abandoned by the others, left stranded on the island with a destroyed camp and no food or supplies. With someone working to sabotage them, Fiona and Dean must fight for their lives through extreme conditions—including a harrowing escape from a volcano. Grant makes time for nuanced characterization within the breakneck adventure, taking her protagonists through a series of heart-stopping twists. The story ends on a tantalizing tease of a cliff-hanger, but still doles out just desserts to good guys and bad guys alike.”

Hawkins, Rachel. [The Wife Upstairs](#) (\$17.99). This debut is a deliciously gothic contemporary retelling of Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*. Down-on-her-luck Jane is living with an odious young man, saving up for a place of her own and an escape from the horrors of her past, when she catches a break and is hired as a dog-walker by several people in a well-to-do neighborhood in Birmingham, Alabama. Jane meets Eddie Rochester in a near-miss as he backs out of his driveway; the charismatic, handsome

widower immediately sets to winning her over, even going so far as to adopt a puppy so he can hire her to walk it. When Jane learns that not only is Eddie single but also a widower, readers discover the darker side of her desires and ambitions. Readers familiar with *Jane Eyre* will be waiting to learn what happened to Eddie’s first wife...

✦ Horowitz, Anthony. [The Moonflower Murders](#) (\$17) “is a superlative, page-turning, cunning, book-within-a-book mystery chock full of clues, featuring the former editor Susan Ryeland from [Magpie Murders](#) (\$17).” Susan, who misses her previous work as a London book editor and publisher, is discontent in her new life running a struggling hotel in Crete. Then she’s visited by Lawrence and Pauline Treherne, the owners of Branlow Hall, an upscale Suffolk hotel, who think she can help in finding their missing daughter, Cecily. At the time of Cecily’s wedding at Branlow Hall a decade earlier, Frank Parris, a hotel guest, was bludgeoned to death in his room. One of the staff, Stefan Codrescu, was convicted of the murder based on powerful circumstantial evidence. Cecily told her parents on the phone she was convinced of Stefan’s innocence after reading a mystery inspired by the Parris murder by the now deceased Alan Conway, one of Susan’s authors. Susan accepts the Trehernes’ generous fee and travels to Branlow Hall to investigate, which involves looking into Parris’s death and rereading the Conway novel for clues.

✦ McGarrity, Michael. [Head Wounds](#) (\$16.95). Given a chance to salvage his law enforcement career, Dona Ana County Sheriff’s Detective Clayton Istee catches a bizarre late-night double homicide at a Las Cruces hotel. Both victims, a man and a woman, have been scalped with their throats cut. The murders show all the signs of a signature hit, but national and state crime databases reveal no similar profiles. Digging into the victims’ backgrounds, Clayton discovers that six months prior the couple had walked out of a nearby casino with \$200,000 of a high-stakes gambler’s money. He also learns the crime had been hushed up by an undercover federal DEA agent, who resurfaces and recruits Clayton for a dangerous mission to seize the Mexican drug lord responsible for the killings. Thrust into a nightmare world, Clayton duels with a cunning assassin poised to kill him and his family in a ferocious climax to the Kevin Kerney series, all set in NM and one of the most popular series sold at The Poisoned Pen over the years.

Mukherjee, Abir. [Death in the East](#) (\$16.95). The *PW* Starred Review: “Edgar finalist Mukherjee’s excellent fourth mystery featuring Captain Sam Wyndham and Sergeant Surendranath “Surrender-not” Bannerjee of the Calcutta CID deepens the relationship between his two leads and adds detail to Wyndham’s complicated past, all while toggling between two mysteries. In 1922, Wyndham goes to an ashram in Jatinga, Assam, where he hopes to be cured of his opium addiction, a struggle complicated by his belief that he’s seen a dead man, someone who tried to kill him almost 20 years earlier. Flashbacks to 1905 Whitechapel gradually fill in that tantalizing backstory, as Wyndham, then a young police constable, investigates the murder of 20-year-old Bessie Drummond, whom he once courted, after she’s found in a locked room with her skull bashed in. The case of Bessie’s murder and the mystery Wyndham encounters in Assam are both cleverly plotted, and they’re matched by Mukherjee’s depiction of Bannerjee’s growing assertiveness as the movement for his

country's independence grows and of the almost palpable torment experienced by an addict desperate to get clean. The sky seems to be the limit for this extraordinarily talented author." As you can see in Signed Books for November.

✦ Murray, Amita. [Arya Winters and the Tiramisu of Death](#) (Polis \$16.99). Arya Winters, the narrator of this edgy cozy, has a thriving business creating "macabre cakes" in an English village where she lives in a cottage she inherited from her Auntie Meera, an herbalist who was murdered a few months earlier. Arya has an attitude and a mouth without filter that repels social interactions. Then Tobias Yards, Arya's neighbor, dies from eating a slice of poisoned tiramisu, which was decidedly not poisoned when she left it on his doorstep. Craig Yards, Tobias's nephew and Arya's former boyfriend, dumped because he was so dull, so average, becomes a prime suspect. Arya, who was hiding in the bushes spying on Craig in his house at the time of his uncle's murder, can give him an alibi but not without looking like a stalker. So, she decides to investigate, even if it means overcoming her anxiety of interacting with other people. Arya begins to believe that the death of Auntie Meera and that of Tobias are connected, while coming to realize she could well be the killer's next target. "Full of original metaphors and pithily funny descriptions, this lively fair play mystery leaves readers with some serious food for thought. Murray turns the cozy genre on its head in this wryly witty and at times poignant outing" (sex is all off the page), which is our **November Cozy Crimes Book of the Month**.

✦ O'Connor, Joseph. [Shadowplay](#) (\$16.95) is a historical and gothic romp through the golden age of West End theater in a gas-lamp-lit London shaken by the crimes of Jack the Ripper. And illuminates the experiences that inspired Bram Stoker to write *Dracula*. It won the Eason Irish Novel of the Year Award and was shortlisted for five other prizes across France, Ireland and the U.K.

Henry Irving is Victorian London's most celebrated actor and theater impresario. As Irving's Lyceum theater grows in reputation, he first lures to his company a young Dublin clerk harboring literary ambitions by the name of Bram Stoker, and then entices the century's most beloved actress, the dazzlingly talented leading lady Ellen Terry, who nightly casts a spell not only on her audiences but on Stoker and Irving both.

Rollins, James. [Unrestricted Access](#) (\$17.99). Rollins writes that this volume "includes EVERY short story that I've written across the breadth of my career. The anthology also includes new introductions, where I got to look back across those two decades and share anecdotes from a writer's life, to tell why I told certain stories. Some of the questions answered in this collection are: How did Kowalski end up getting recruited by Sigma? What happens when Commander Gray Pierce runs into Steve Berry's Cotton Malone in a jungle? What story did George R.R. Martin challenge me to write? Or the master of kid's horror, R.L. Stine? You'll get all those answers PLUS a brand-new BIG novella featuring Tucker and his war dog, Kane. This story is set in Sedona, Arizona, and marks a pivotal turn for these two. It made my editor cry...so be ready."

Here's a bit more about "Sun Dogs," the new Tucker/Kane novella included: While trekking through the Sonora desert, a gunshot thrusts Tucker and Kane into an adventure that challenges their considerable skills. The discovery of secrets known only to the native tribes of Arizona threatens to unleash an ancient force that could irreparably alter the future."

Zafon, Carlos Ruiz. [The City of Mist](#) (Harper \$15.99). Return to the mythical Barcelona library known as the Cemetery of Forgotten Books in this posthumous collection of stories from the fabulous author of *The Shadow of the Wind*, one of my all time favorite First Mystery Book of the Month Picks, and *The Labyrinth of the Spirits*. The eleven stories, most of them never before published in English, offer the reader compelling characters, unique situations, and a gothic atmosphere reminiscent of his beloved Cemetery of Forgotten Books quartet. Examples: A boy decides to become a writer when he discovers that his creative gifts capture the attentions of an aloof young beauty who has stolen his heart. A labyrinth maker flees Constantinople to a plague-ridden Barcelona, with plans for building a library impervious to the destruction of time. A strange gentleman tempts Cervantes to write a book like no other, each page of which could prolong the life of the woman he loves. And a brilliant Catalan architect named Antoni Gaudí reluctantly agrees to cross the ocean to New York, a voyage that will determine the fate of an unfinished masterpiece. NOTE: There is a simultaneous hardcover edition: [The City of Mist](#) (\$26.99).

NEW IN LARGE PAPERBACKS

Armstrong, Kelley. [A Stranger in Town](#) (\$17.99). A propulsive sixth novel set in the off-grid Canadian Yukon sanctuary of Rockton begins with Detective Casey Duncan and her lover, Sheriff Eric Dalton, encountering a female hiker at the forest's edge. The hiker's bare feet are bloody and frostbitten, she has an infected abdominal wound, and she is babbling in Danish. With translation assistance from a Nordic studies professor who lives in Rockton, the woman reveals that she and three companions were attacked by a "wild man." A search for survivors turns up a campsite strewn with partially dismembered corpses. The ambush appears to be the work of "hostiles"—former residents of Rockton who have reverted to a primal state—but something about the scene sits wrong with Eric and Casey. Their misgivings multiply as their investigation progresses. Armstrong's unique setting and clever premise play pivotal roles in this multifaceted mystery, which satisfies as a self-contained puzzle and significantly advances the series' arc which will captivate thriller fans seeking something different.... I have read this [Casey Duncan series](#) with pleasure.

Baer, Kate. [Hope This Finds You Well: Poems](#) (Harper Perennial \$12). The Indie Next Pick: "From weight loss solicitation emails to comments of appreciation to emails deriding her politics and her body, Baer uses these sources to create poems that pack a punch. A solid collection worth revisiting regularly."

Benn, James R. [Shard](#) (\$15.99). Poisoned Pen favorite Benn writes of this standalone novel: "Private Ethan Shard is part of the US Army of Occupation in Japan, 1950, knee-deep in the black market, getting rich stealing from the Army and selling to Japanese gangs. When the North Koreans invade South Korea. Ethan Shard is sent to war, along with his partner-in-crime, Elliot 'Skitter' Skinner, in a desperate attempt to halt the enemy advance. The two men quickly become prisoners of war. The brutality of his captors, the harsh climate, and the inhumane conditions in the camps challenge Shard's capacity to survive in this tale of captivity, betrayal, and endurance. This is a book about the most forgotten men from a forgotten war. What they went through at the hands of their captors and the truth of how

they were treated by their own government after their release should not ever be forgotten. I wrote this book to keep that story alive.”

Brazier, Eliza Jane. [If I Disappear](#) (\$17). Sera loves true crime podcasts. They give her a sense of control in a world where women just like her disappear daily. She’s sure they are preparing her for something. So when Rachel, her favorite podcast host, goes missing, Sera knows it’s time to act. Rachel has always taught her to trust her instincts. Thus, her favorite true crime podcast host having gone missing, an adrift young woman sets out to investigate and plunges headfirst into the wild backcountry of Northern California and her own dangerous obsession.

Carter, Charlotte. [Rhode Island Red](#) (Vintage \$15). Meet jazz-loving, street busker Nanette, whose love life leads her into some very hot water. Nan’s day is not off to a good start. Her on-again, off-again relationship with Walter is off...again, and when she offers a fellow busker a place to stay for the night he ends up murdered on her kitchen floor. To make matters worse, the busker turns out to have been an undercover cop. And his former partner has taken an immediate and extreme dislike to Nan. When she finds that the dead man stashed a wad of cash in her apartment, cash that could go to help his blind girlfriend, Nan’s desire to do the right thing lands her in trouble. Soon she’s on the hunt for a legendary saxophone worth its weight in gold. But there are plenty of people who would kill for the priceless instrument, and Nan’s new beau just might be one of them. This starts a series.

Eggers, Dave. [The Every](#) (\$17.95). This is the almost simultaneous paperback release of a novel where Eggers gave the hardcover of [The Every](#) (\$28, comes with a Signed bookplate) to McSweeney to publish strictly for independent bookstores.

Delaney Wells is an unlikely new hire at The Every. A former forest ranger and unwavering tech skeptic, she charms her way into an entry-level job with one goal in mind: to take down the company from within. With her compatriot, the not-at-all-ambitious Wes Makazian, they look for The Every’s weaknesses, hoping to free humanity from all-encompassing surveillance and the emoji-driven infantilization of the species. But does anyone want what Delaney is fighting to save? Does humanity truly want to be free?

Elias, Gerald. [Death and the Maiden](#) (\$16.95). Dogged by internal dissension and by a potentially devastating lawsuit from its fired second violinist, the famed New Magini String Quartet is on the brink of professional and personal collapse. The quartet pins its hopes on a multi-media Carnegie Hall performance of Franz Schubert’s masterpiece, “Death and the Maiden,” to resurrect its faltering fortunes. But as the fateful downbeat approaches, a la Agatha Christie, one by one the quartet’s musicians mysteriously vanish, including second violinist, Yumi Shinagawa, former student of renowned blind pedagogue and amateur sleuth, Daniel Jacobus. It is left up to the begrudging Jacobus, with his old friend, Nathaniel Williams, and a new member of the detective team, Trotsky the bulldog, to unravel the deadly puzzle. As usual, it ends up more than Jacobus bargained for. “This fast-paced and punchily written mystery will entertain most fans, even as it delivers a fluid understanding of classical music.”—*Library Journal*. Author Elias is himself a noted concert violinist who has turned to crime(writing).

☒ Fellowes, Jessica. [The Mitford Trial](#) (\$17.99). I’m not a fan of this series but I have always enjoyed the actual histories of the sharply different Mitford sisters and their eccentric family (their only brother, the Redesdale heir, died in WWII, so the title went to his father’s younger brother). Nancy became a journalist and author; Jessica, a leftist and one-time Communist, also an author; Deborah, my favorite, married the Duke of Devonshire and brought Chatsworth into the 21st Century; Diana, the beauty, divorced badly to marry British Black Shirt leader Oswald Moseley; Unity became enamored of Hitler and ended a suicide; and finally there is Pamela who shunned the limelight and preferred country living. Fellowes writes of lady’s maid Louisa Cannon who here is asked to spy upon Diana and Unity this summer of 1933 that begins with a glitzy yacht cruise in the Mediterranean and then reverts to London.

☒ Fforde, Jasper. [The Constant Rabbit](#) (\$17) is a darkly funny satire of modern politics—I think of Fforde as a gentler version of Jonathan Swift. It is 2022 and, due to the Spontaneous Anthropomorphizing Event of 1965, there are now more than a million human-sized, talking rabbits living in the United Kingdom. The rabbits are polite, and mostly take the lower-class jobs that humans don’t want. But right-wing politicians, concerned at how quickly rabbits could procreate if they wanted to, warn about the danger to English culture if the rabbits are allowed to leave their government mandated warrens: “Let one family in and pretty soon they’ll all be here.” Middle-aged Peter Knox is a tiny cog in the large machine of a government agency that surveils rabbits—until a rabbit family moves into his village, and he’s informed that he has to start spying on Doc and Constance Rabbit. But the thing is, Peter knows Connie—they went to college together—and Peter doesn’t want anything bad to happen to the Rabbits. But he also doesn’t want to lose his job.

☒ Frear Caz. [Shed No Tears](#) (\$16.99). The discovery in a remote area of Cambridgeshire of a missing woman’s remains reignites a cold case. In 2012, in what was dubbed the Roommate Case, the confessed killer, Christopher Masters, lured four women to his house by advertising a room for rent and killed three of them. The fourth, Holly Kemp, escaped and went missing. Six years later, DC Cat Kinsella and her partner, DS Luigi Parnell, investigate Kemp’s murder now that her body’s been found. Because Kemp was killed in a different manner than the other victims, and her body was found miles away from Masters’ house, the London-based partners suspect that someone else murdered her.... Meet Cat first in [Sweet Little Lies](#) (\$16.99).

Grippando, James. [Twenty](#) (\$16.99). Eighteen-year-old Xavier Khoury confesses to killing 14 people in a shooting spree at his school and the district attorney is confident of a death penalty verdict based on the anti-Muslim sentiment in the community. Xavier’s mother asks Miami attorney Jack Swytek, whose daughter is a kindergartener at the school, to represent Xavier in proceedings to reduce the sentence to 14 consecutive life sentences in prison, which is a speedier process and also less onerous for the victims’ families. When Al-Qaeda claims responsibility for the mass shooting, the crime intersects with federal terrorism departments and jurisdictional arguments ensue. Jack tries to withdraw as counsel for family reasons but the request is denied by the district judge. His investigation is hampered by governmental interference as well as his uncommunicative client. Either Xavier was groomed for the shooting by extremist factions or he is being set up and is actually innocent.

Kepler, Lars. [Lazarus](#) (\$16.95). If you thirst for a serial killer thriller, here you go. Joona Linna, a superintendent with Sweden's National Crimes Unit, who has "solved more complex murder cases than anyone else in Scandinavia," returns to active duty after completing a community service sentence following time in prison for assault. Meanwhile, a suspected grave robber is murdered in Oslo, and in his refrigerator is the skull of Linna's late wife, which the robber apparently dug up in Sweden and brought home to Norway. The dead man has whip marks on his back, injuries similar to those Linna saw on the brother of his dead Hannibal Lecter-like adversary, Jurek Walter, in a previous outing. In Germany, those same injuries show up on the body of another murdered criminal, who made a call to Linna's cell phone shortly before his death. Linna becomes convinced that Walter is still alive and recruiting men across Europe to serve as accomplices in his crimes. "Strongly recommended for fans of Stieg Larsson and Jussi Adler-Olsen."—*Booklist* Starred Review. This husband and wife team will have a new book out in January.

Kestrel, James. [Five Decembers](#) (Hard Case Crime \$22.95). December 1941. America teeters on the brink of war, and in Honolulu, Hawaii, police detective Joe McGrady is assigned to investigate a homicide that will change his life forever. Because the trail of murder he uncovers will lead him across the Pacific, far from home and the woman he loves; and though the U.S. doesn't know it yet, a Japanese fleet is already steaming toward Pearl Harbor. The publisher writes, "War, imprisonment, torture, romance, foreign language and culture are all explored with genuine feeling." The *NY Times* writes. "The novel has an almost operatic symmetry, and Kestrel turns a beautiful phrase, too." This is on top of acclaim from writers such as Dennis Lehane ("A crime epic for the ages") and Megan Abbott ("Utterly enthralling, not to be missed").

Le Tellier, Hervé. [The Anomaly](#) (Orion \$16.99). This "ambitious, unclassifiable novel is centered around a philosophical puzzle while dabbling in the page-turning realm of thrillers, science fiction and more. It won France's prestigious Prix Goncourt, and is perfectly suited for an English-language release, thanks to its globe-spanning cast of characters and wide-ranging satire, which takes aim at a thinly disguised former president, among others. The events of the novel are set in motion when a Paris-New York flight arrives for seemingly the second time, resulting in two identical sets of passengers. Naturally, this provokes a top-secret emergency as governments and scientists scramble to reckon with what this duplicated flight could mean, while the passengers face the frightening implications of their own doubles. Le Tellier explores the concept of doppelgangers in the grand tradition of Edgar Allan Poe and Dostoevsky, as a way for his characters to encounter themselves, to reconsider their lives and their sense of identity."

Manning, Kirsty. [The French Gift](#) (Harper \$16.99). There are so many stories looking back at WWII, especially in Occupied France, and updating to today. This one is distinctive for the nature of the wartime incarceration of the two women who are its central focus. It begins when Margot Bisset, a maid in the Riviera villa of a wealthy couple, is set up for the murder of an American heiress. Move on to Fresne Prison, 1940: Margot finds herself in a prison cell with writer and French Resistance fighter Joséphine Murant. Together, they are transferred to a work camp in Germany for four years, which, thanks to Manning's careful

research, we see is both unusual and horrific. Slide the door up to today when Evie Black, surprised at being widowed so young by Joséphine's nephew, finds herself having to settle the estate of her husband's famous-author centenarian aunt. She and her son travel to La Maison Rustique from Paris, Joséphine's decades' long home in the very same house where Margot was framed. Evie, who runs a Paris boutique for botanical prints and is thus connected to manuscript experts, and has some expertise herself, makes a surprising discovery—no, make that two. One you savvy reader will see coming, but the other is well worth exploring.

Mayer, Erin. [Fan Club](#) (Mira \$16.99). The narrator is a junior member of the editorial staff at a lifestyle website, dissatisfied with her job and growing more distant from her roommate. One evening she goes out with some coworkers and is struck unexpectedly by the latest single by Adriana Argento, a pop icon whom she previously mostly ignored. She dives into the online fandom and is invited by Meghan, a new staff member, to join her in-person Adriana Argento fan club. The women hold listening parties that end with candlelit, cultish rituals, but they are upset with the direction of Argento's new music. The narrator comes to realize that the lengths to which they will go are greater than she imagined. This debut is "a dark, compelling thriller about the need to belong and the dark aspects of fandom."

Morris, Wanda M. [All Her Little Secrets](#) (Harper \$16.99). Attorney Morris puts her experiences as a Black woman navigating the corridors of corporate power to good use in her strong debut, a legal thriller. Ellice Littlejohn, a 40-something Black woman, is relatively content as a senior member of the legal department at Atlanta's Houghton Transportation Company. But that all changes when she arrives for an early morning meeting with her white boss, Houghton's general counsel and her lover, Michael Sayles, and finds him dead from a gunshot to the head, apparently self-inflicted. Freaked out, Ellice doesn't report her grim discovery and acts surprised when the news reaches her. She's further stunned to be immediately promoted to fill Michael's role before she has a chance to decide whether she wants the position. She becomes increasingly anxious when she's interviewed by the police, who are treating the death as a homicide. Morris gives her flawed lead plenty to struggle with, including a secret, ex-con brother; workplace sexism and racism; and an awkward encounter with her lover's widow.

The Indie Next Pick: "This fast-paced legal thriller hooked me from page one. I so enjoyed having a kick-ass protagonist in a legal thriller that also touches on the challenges of Black women in the male dominated corporate law firm environment." For the simultaneous hardcover release see *New in Hardcover*.

Moss, Tara. [The War Widow](#) (\$17). Moss, author of the Makedde Vanderwall series, follows a former war correspondent in this 1946-set novel. Billie Walker decides to reopen her father's investigative firm after losing her job at the Sydney newspaper where she worked. In her first case, a German immigrant hires Billie to find her 17-year-old son. As Billie looks into the boy's disappearance, she becomes embroiled in more nefarious goings-on, including a murder. The launch of a planned series, this fun title, we noted, is full of "rich period detail" and features a fierce heroine that makes it a "stylish twist on the classic 1940s detective novel."

Patterson, James. [Three Women Disappear](#) (\$17.99). When mob accountant Anthony Costello, nephew of the don of central Florida, is fatally stabbed in his own kitchen, the numbers are off. Way off. There were three women in the house with him that morning — his wife, Anna; his maid, Serena; and his personal chef, Sarah. All three have reason to want him dead. And all three are missing. What's more, chef Sarah happens to be married to homicide detective Sean Walsh. Walsh may be a bad husband, but he's a good cop. And one with a ready audience: his vengeful ex-partner, who's in charge of the investigation; and Anthony's uncle, who has his own powerful hold over Walsh. Both are watching his every move. But even if Walsh can find the women and bring them in, it'll be their word against that of a dead man...

Quinn, Cate. [Black Widows](#) (\$16.99) examines the murder of a Mormon husband through the prisms of each of his three sister wives. Living on a kind of homestead in Utah near enough to Salt Lake City to reach it but away from the gaze of authority (the narrative makes it clear that polygamy is not only a crime in Utah but much frowned upon by conventional Mormons), the isolated family of four is, unsurprisingly, rife with tension. Yet as the story progresses towards an unexpected resolution, so do the wives. Quinn cites some of the many troubled issues our own Betty Webb examined in *Desert Wives* including interbreeding and its effects. See Weisgardner below for additional Mormon stories.

Raybon, Patricia. [All That Is Secret](#) (Tyndale \$15.99). Sujata Massey recommends “the first in a new historical mystery series set in 1920s Colorado. The book's heroine, Annalee Spain, is a young Black professor of theology with a penchant for Sherlock Holmes stories. Annalee is summoned from Chicago to her hometown of Denver to help uncover the truth about the death of her father and others connected to the Mount Moriah AME Church. It's a fast-moving story that's rich with romance and spiritual searching, and sumptuous descriptions of 1920s fashion, buildings and culture.”

Ryan, Rachel. [The Woman Outside My Door](#) (\$16). A debut by an Irish author paints a tense picture of a Dublin housewife, mourning the death of her mother and experiencing a rough patch in her marriage, who begins to worry that her little boy Cody's “new friend” at the park whom he calls New Granny may not be dismissed as the imaginary friend her husband Bren suggests. And then vandalism and weird phone calls start.... “Ryan draws the reader into not only Georgina's terrifying journey to save her son, but also her marriage and her sanity. Georgina is a fierce, loyal narrator, and the reader won't be able to resist rooting for her success. Seasoned mystery lovers will recognize similarities to B. A. Paris' *The Breakdown* (2017), Mary Kubica's *The Other Mrs.* (2020), and A. J. Finn's *The Woman in the Window* (2018).

Savage, Thomas. [The Power of the Dog](#) (\$16.99). Now an award-winning Netflix film by Jane Campion, starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Kirsten Dunst: Thomas Savage's acclaimed Western is “a pitch-perfect evocation of time and place” (*Boston Globe*) for fans of *East of Eden* and *Brokeback Mountain*. And recommended by Annie Proulx among others. It's the story of two brothers — one magnetic but cruel, the other gentle and quiet — and of the woman and young boy, mother and son, whose arrival on the brothers' ranch shatters an already tenuous peace. **Do not confuse this with Don Winslow's book by the same title.**

Strohmeier, Sarah. [Do I Know You?](#) (\$16.99). There's a lot going on here. Boston Homeland Security agent Jane Ellison is a “super recognizer” able to identify strangers by the slightest facial details—the curve of a head, the arch of an eyebrow. When she spies human rights activist and heiress Bella Valencia in a crowded Boston airport, Jane's convinced she's found the person responsible for her sister Kit's disappearance and presumed death eleven years earlier. But her attempt to detain the suspect ends with Jane herself fired and humiliated. As Bella prepares to marry Will Pease, scion of the uber-wealthy, influential, and ruthless Pease family, famous for their wholesome wellness and lifestyle brand, on their private Cape Cod island, she grows increasingly anxious that her dire secret will be revealed and used against her by—of all people—the man she loves. She has reason to fear: Jane is ready to risk everything for the chance to publicly expose Bella's crimes at her upcoming celebrity wedding. But the more she digs into what happened that night, the more she questions her own assumptions. I liked meeting Jane and her special talent more than I did the story.

The New York Times. [The Decameron Project 29 New Stories](#) (Scribner \$16). In a modern version of Boccaccio's *The Decameron*, the *Times Magazine* commissioned original stories as COVID stormed the world. 29 authors including Margaret Atwood, Tommy Orange, Edwidge Danticat, Charles Yu, Rachel Kushner, Colm Toibin, and David Mitchell vary widely in texture and tone. “Their work will be remembered as a historical tribute to a time and place unlike any other in our lifetimes, and will offer perspective and solace to the reader now and in a future where COVID-19 is, hopefully, just a memory.”

Weisgarber, Ann. [The Glovemaker](#) (\$17.99) is compelling historical fiction, with a judicious weaving of late-19th-century history, fascinating explanations of Mormon practices and memorable characters who hold the reader's interest from beginning to end. Highly readable and accessible, the voice of each character rings true, and we care what happens to them. . . . Part love story, part religious explication, part mystery, this novel judiciously weaves all of these fictional trajectories into a seamless whole. . . . Not only does this book bring to life an important part of American history, but a deeper understanding of religion and geography, and the challenges and struggles of living in the West in the 1880s.” —*Houston Chronicle*

Read it with Kate Quinn's mystery of a modern Mormon family/community noted above. And Betty Webb's [Desert Wives](#) (\$18.99) in her Lena Jones mystery series.

Vandiver, Abby L, ed. [Midnight Hour](#) (Crooked Lane \$16.99). In this all-original anthology, Vandiver showcases 20 mystery and suspense stories written by people of color, each with a pivotal moment set at midnight. One highlight is Callie Browning's twisty “Dead Men Tell No Tales,” which centers on the murder of the prime minister of Barbados, “a notorious Lothario with a penchant for dim-witted women with loose morals.” Another stand-out is Christopher Chambers' clever “In the Matter of Mabel and Bobby Jefferson,” in which Shane, an English major now working the night shift at an insurance company call center, wearily concludes, “It's going to get funny tonight,” but he doesn't know the half of it. In Tina Kashian's unsettling “Cape May Murders,” Sona and Priya, both mothers of young daughters, go away for a relaxing weekend at the Jersey Shore and wind up sharing their B&B with a murderer. Sanjay, the Hindi Houdini, finds his séance

spinning out of control in Gigi Pandian's droll "The Diamond Vanishes." Each of the varied contributors offers a surprising and original take on the mystery genre.

Walter, Jess. [The Cold Millions](#) (\$17). The Indie Next Pick: "Jess Walter takes events from history to illuminate our present while keeping them rooted in their own time, from the labor movement to class, race, and gender equality and civil rights issues, to protests and freedom of speech."

✚ Williams, Eley. [The Liar's Dictionary](#) (\$16) is an enormously charming novel about putting the world into words as it explores the misadventures of a lovelorn Victorian lexicographer and a young woman put on his trail a century later to root out his misdeeds. "Would you expect a comic novel about a dictionary to be a thriller? Also a mystery, a love story, and a melodrama" (*NYTBR*)? The Indie Next Pick adds, "Its two logophilic heroes, separated by a century, are unforgettable characters. You'll be utterly transported by this playful and seriously funny book."

Winawer, Melodie. [Anticipation](#) (Gallery \$16.99). A fellow bookseller writes, "Winawer has some of my favorites: historical, fantasy, romance, thriller. I need to read this to get five books in one! Grieving the death of her husband, scientist Helen takes a break and visits Greece with her nine-year-old son. While exploring the ruins of the ancient fortress Mystras, they meet a tour guide, Elias, who just so happens to be a time traveler—hopping between the present to 1237 when Mystras was a bustling metropolis. Elias is prophesied as the only one who can cure a wicked noble family bloodline, but in his attempt to escape his fate, he ends up pulling Helen and her son into danger with him. Promising an atmospheric setting, emotional backstories, and fast-paced plot." I add that the violent history of Crusaders and the tragic fall of Constantinople color this novel.

Yokomizo, Seishi. [The Village of Eight Graves](#) (Pushkin \$14.95). Set in 1950s Japan, this taut mystery from Yokomizo (1902–1981) provides an original variation on the plot of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Tatsuya Terada, a cosmetics company employee in his 20s who believes he has no surviving relatives, hears a radio announcement asking anyone who knows of his whereabouts to contact an attorney. He subsequently learns that an unknown, unnamed wealthy relative wants to adopt and provide for him. Tatsuya then gets an anonymous warning to "never set foot in the village of Eight Graves again," lest it "become a sea of blood." A curse was placed on the village in 1566 by the leader of a group of eight samurai killed by its residents. His vow of vengeance apparently manifested itself in the 1920s, when a man related to Tatsuya went berserk and slaughtered more than 30 villagers. Tatsuya agrees to return to Eight Graves, triggering a series of baffling murders. Kosuke Kindaichi, Yokomizo's Columbo-like sleuth, arrives to sort through the tangled puzzle and provide a satisfying solution. Fans of gothic-tinged fair play will be enthralled.

OUR NOVEMBER SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Ashley, Kristen. [Dream Keeper Signed](#) (Grand Central \$8.99). Dream Team #4. When Pepper Hannigan's little girl Juno decides to play matchmaker, her efforts finally bring her mother and commando Augustus "Auggie" Hero together, but when danger is exposed, Auggie will have to live up to his last name and prove happy endings do exist."A solid example of bestseller Ashley's ability to combine tense action with steamy but heartfelt relationship building." —*PW*

Barclay, Linwood. [Find You First](#) (\$9.99). Searching for the children he has never known, tech billionaire Miles Cookson, diagnosed with a terminal illness, discovers that, one by one, his potential heirs are vanishing – every trace of them wiped, like they never existed at all."Barclay deftly twists and turns all these characters into a taut and engrossing thriller that will keep readers guessing until the end." —*LJ*

Berry, Steve. [The Kaiser's Web](#) (\$9.99). Cotton Malone #20. Former Justice Department agent Cotton Malone investigates a World War II-era Soviet dossier that exposes crucial intelligence involving a German national election, billions in stolen Nazi wealth and the true fate of Adolf Hitler. "Cannily mixing historical research with florid inventions that fill in gaps and sometimes fly in the face of the available evidence, Berry presents an ominously up-to-date world whose frenzied nationalism is a direct descendant of the Thousand-Year Reich. Hitler may not live, but Heil Hitler is alive and all too well." —*Kirkus*

Carr, Jack. [The Devil's Hand](#) (\$9.99). James Reece #4. Former Navy SEAL James Reece embarks on a top-secret CIA mission of retribution, while in a dangerous world region, the supreme leader of a cadre of assassins orchestrates a plot to defeat the United States."Carr delivers engrossing back-story, incorporates current events seamlessly, and never flinches from breathless depictions of violence. Military action fans will find plenty to like." —*PW*

Collette, Abby. [Body and Soul Food](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Books and Biscuits #1. Opening a bookstore and cozy soul-food café in the Pacific Northwest town of Timber Lake, twins Koby and Keaton, just before their grand opening, must use their revitalized connection to find the killer of Koby's foster brother.

Del Toro, Guillermo. [The Hollow Ones](#) (\$9.99). Forced to shoot her suddenly violent partner, rookie FBI agent Odessa Hardwicke witnesses the escape of a shadowy form from the deceased agent's body, and embarks on a sanity-risking investigation into a centuries-old being. "Readers of occult fiction from Poe to Richard Kadrey will instantly recognize the creepy vibes and likely enjoy the ride. An inventive and macabre new spin on malevolent body snatchers." —*Kirkus*

Finlay, Alex. [Every Last Fear](#) (\$9.99). Still reeling from the deaths of neatly his entire family, Matt must also deal with his older brother, Danny, who, in prison for the murder of his teenage girlfriend, is the subject of a virtual true crime documentary proving his innocence – although Matt knows better. "Though elements of the plot strain credulity and the denouement feels formulaic, Finlay imparts nuance via a prismatic narrative that jumps back and forth in time, examining both tragedies from multiple angles. Those who favor character-driven crime novels will find much to admire." —*PW*

Greaney, Mark. [Relentless](#) (\$9.99). Gray Man #10. Attempting to secure an operative who is among several who have gone missing throughout the world, the Gray Man secures vital intelligence from a team of assassins, before an undercover agent in Berlin makes a life-threatening discovery."Not for the squeamish but a jolt for thriller junkies." —*Kirkus*

Hillerman Anne. [Stargazer](#) (\$9.99). Manuelito #6. Officer Bernie Manuelito risks her relationship with Jim Chee to investigate the disappearance of a former roommate, whose confession for the murder of her estranged husband, a prominent astronomer, does not add up.

Pershing, Amy. [An Eggnog to Die For](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Cape Cod Foodie #2. When she stumbles over the lifeless body of the town's Santa Claus, professional foodie Samantha Barnes finds her plans for Christmas Eve getting complicated as she contends with her guests while trying to nab a killer."A delightful sleuth, a complex mystery, and lovingly described cuisine: a winner for both foodies and mystery mavens." —*Kirkus*

SMALL PAPERBACKS FOR NOVEMBER

Archer, Winnie. [A Murder Yule Regret](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Bread Shop #7. When a tabloid journalist meets his demise during a Victorian holiday costume party, fledgling photographer Ivy Culpepper gets roped into helping prove the innocence of It Girl film star Eliza Fox since her festive photos are now official evidence.

Banner, A.J. [The Twilight Wife](#) (\$9.99). After a diving accident, Kyra Withrop suffers amnesia about the last two years, but as her memory returns she experiences intense fear as she remembers the truth about her marriage and about the island residents whom she had believed to be her friends.

Blake, Deborah. [Doggone Deadly](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Catskills Pet Rescue #2. When her best friend, dog groomer Suzi, is framed for murder at the local dog show, Kari Stuart and her clever kitten Queenie must paw through the clues to catch the real killer.

Brabazon, James. [All Fall Down](#) (Berkley \$9.99). Max McLean #2. British intelligence operative and hardened assassin Max McLean must discover who is killing the members of his team.

Brown, Sandra. [Thick as Thieves](#) (\$9.99). While a woman investigates her absent father's involvement in a 20-year-old heist that ended in murder, two vengeful accomplices wait for a corrupt district attorney to make a fatal mistake.

Collins, Kate. [Big Trouble in Little Greektown](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Goddess of Greene St. #3. When she attends a fundraiser and art festival with her date, Case Donnelly, who is awaiting his PI license, Athena Spencer puts him to good use when the body of a disgraced photographer turns up during a nature walk.

Day, Maddie. [Murder at the Lobstah Shack](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Cozy Capers Book Group #3. To prove the innocence of the friend Tulia in the murder of her nemesis, Mac and the Cozy Capers Book Group are faced with several suspects who are getting crabby about them intruding in their affairs.

Dylan, Jess. [Petals and Poison](#) (St Martins \$7.99). Death in Bloom #2. When a horticulture field trip to her flower shop leads to murder, Sierra must save her new business's reputation by digging up clues to catch a killer while proving her new employee's innocence.

Fisher, Tarryn. [The Wives](#) (\$9.99). A woman in a voluntarily bigamous marriage befriends one of her husband's other wives by chance, only to discover that the gentle husband she knows may be abusing his other families.

Gilstrap, John. [Crimson Phoenix](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Victoria Emerson, a West Virginia congresswoman and single mother, becomes the last hope of a nation brought to the brink of destruction in the wake of nuclear war.

Grafton, Sue. [A Is for Alibi & B is for Burglar](#) (\$9.99). Reprints, the first two Kinsey Millhone cases in one volume. In *A is for Alibi*, tough-talking private investigator Kinsey Millhone has set

up a modest detective agency in a quiet corner of Santa Teresa, California, and now her first case involves Nikki Fife, who is out on parole after serving time for allegedly killing her husband. In *B is for Burglar*, Kinsey is reluctant to take on the case of locating Beverly Danziger's sister Elaine. It's a small matter that Beverly should be able to handle herself. So why is she enlisting Kinsey's services?

Gudenkauf, Heather. [Not a Sound](#) (\$9.99). When she discovers the body of a sin an accident two years earlier, is plunged into a mystery that could shatter her carefully reconstructed life.

Harding, Robyn. [The Arrangement](#) (\$9.99). Natalie, a young art student in New York City, sees her life take a dark turn when she becomes obsessed after being jilted by her sugar daddy.

Hollis, Lee. [Murder at the Bake Sale](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Maya and Sandra #2. With both of their marriages on the rocks, PI Maya Kendrick and PTA president Sandra Wallage investigate the dating scene until they are hired by the students to find out who killed their beloved teacher—a flirtatious high school Spanish teacher who had eyes for Maya.

Jackson, Lisa. [Left to Die](#) (\$9.99). Reissue. In the lonely woods of Grizzly Falls, Montana, four bodies are found. Detectives Selena Alvarez and Regan Pescoli are working with the FBI on this nightmare of a case, where all the only clues they have are cryptic notes left behind by the killer.

Jensen, Louise. [The Family](#) (Grand Central \$8.99). After the sudden death of her husband, Laura and her 17-year-old daughter are taken in by a local community who offer them a home, but when sinister things start to happen, Laura must find a way to save her daughter from the group's charismatic leader.

Lillard, Amy. [A Murder Like No Author](#) (Poisoned Pen \$8.99). Main Street Book Club #3. It's movie time in Sugar Springs and the whole town is pitching together to get the historical Coliseum Theater ready for the event of the year—the premiere of *Missing Girl*, local author Wally Harrison's bestselling novel turned film. But when a stranger arrives, boasting he has definitive proof that Wally didn't write *Missing Girl*, Arlo and her Friday night book club find themselves involved in another deadly mystery.

Lindsay, Jeff. [Fool Me Twice](#) (\$9.99). In this sequel to *Just Watch Me*, thief and disguise artist Riley Wolfe continuing his Robin Hood-inspired crusade against the wealthy elite by orchestrating the theft of a highly prized Faberge egg.

O'Brien, Kevin. [Left for Dead](#) (Kensington \$9.99). Reissue. Clair Shaw wakes up in a Seattle hospital, the victim of amnesia, and returns to a life and a family she is unfamiliar with on an isolated island where she is surrounded by a dark evil that feeds on her fear.

Preisler, Jerome. [Net Force: Threat Point](#) (\$9.99). When they are tasked to put an end to recent cyber security threats, Net Force exposes a plan that could trigger a war and must root out the source of the attack before the U.S. is thrown into chaos.

Reichs, Kathy. [Conspiracy of Bones](#) (\$9.99). Temperance Brennan #19. Forensic anthropologist Temperance Brennan struggles to identify a faceless murder victim in possession of her cell number, a mystery that is entangled with a decade-old missing-child case.

Ross, Rosemarie. [Christmas Candy Corpse](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Courtney Archer #3. When the assistant for the American Baking Battle's holiday special is murdered, and one of her co-workers is accused of the crime, chef Courtney Archer whips up a list of suspects to blow the lid of the truth.

Thompson, Victoria. [City of Schemes](#) (\$7.99). Counterfeit Lady #4. After the Great War, Elizabeth Miles and Gideon Bates plan their wedding and welcome home old friends now discharged from the army, and must come to the aid of their friend Archie who may be the victim of a con-woman while fending off their worst enemy.

Youers, Rio. [Lola on Fire](#) (\$9.99). Blackmailed by a witness after robbing a convenience store, a desperate man is forced to commit a burglary before realizing that a young woman and he have been rendered pawns in an organized crime dispute

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Wong, Cecily. [Gastro Obscura: A Food Adventurer's Guide](#) (Morrow \$40)

Wright, Caroline. [Soup Club: 80 Cozy Recipes for Creative Cooks](#) (Andrews McMeel \$24.99)

