

# Midmonth BookNotes

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4014 N. Goldwater Blvd., Scottsdale, AZ 85251

(888) 560-9919 • (480) 947-2974

poisonedpen.com • sales@poisonedpen.com

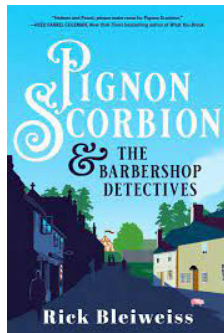


## Fall in Love with a Good Book

### Cozy Corner

**Bleiweiss, Rick.** [Pignon Scorbion & the Barbershop Detectives](#) (Blackstone \$28.99)

In the small and sleepy little English municipality of Haxford, Pignon Scorbion, the town's dapper and unflappable new chief police inspector, must investigate a trio of crimes, whose origins span three continents and half a century. Fortunately, Pignon has some help with his detecting from Haxford's barber, his clients, and an aspiring young ace reporter for the local *Morning News*.



**Cole, Stephanie.** [Evil Under the Tuscan Sun](#) (Berkley \$8.99)

When a wealthy New York philanthropist pays top dollar for a private, four-day ziti workshop, Nell Valenti wants everyone at the Orlandini cooking school focused on the task at hand. But complications abound when Nell's boyfriend Pete Orlandini rushes to Rome for an unexpected business trip, Chef Orlandini is more preoccupied with a potential spot on an American cooking show than preparing for the workshop, and an uninvited woman sneaks into the villa to inspect Pete's olive grove. The last disturbance proves deadly, and when the woman's body is found

in the grove, Nell must investigate before her hopes for the workshop, like the olives, are crushed.

**Klump, Michelle Hillen.** [A Dash of Death](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99)

Suddenly single and unemployed, Samantha Warren reinvents herself as a mixologist and serves her homemade bitters at a meeting of the local historical society, only to become the prime suspect when one of the council members is poisoned. Klump debuts her new Cocktails and Catering series with this fizzy and fun cozy.

**Rothschild, Peggy.** [A Deadly Bone to Pick](#) (Berkley \$26)

After the death of her husband, ex-police officer and former private investigator Molly Madison and her golden retriever, Harlow, move cross-country to California. But as charming and peaceful as the beachside town seems, she soon learns its tranquil tides hold dark secrets. On her first day in the new house, a large, slobbering Saint Berdoodle wanders in. Molly winds up taking on the responsibility of training Noodle since his owner is too busy to do the job. But later during one of their daily beachside walks, Noodle digs up something Molly has never seen before: a severed hand. Fortunately, when Molly becomes the police's number one suspect in the case, she can draw upon her old investigative skills to find the real killer.

**Wesley, Valerie Wilson.** [A Fatal Glow](#)  
(Kensington \$15.95)

Recently widowed Odessa Jones is sure the exclusive job she's scored from wealthy businessman Casey Osborne will propel her catering career into the big leagues. So, when Dessa's pesky second sight warns her that Osborne is bad news, she ignores it. She wishes she hadn't when he drops dead at his brunch after sampling her homemade preserves. Now Osborne's death is declared a homicide, and Dessa and the friends who helped her cook are considered suspects. Wesley introduced readers to Odessa in [A Glimmer of Death](#) (Kensington \$15.95).

### Historical Fiction, Mysteries, Romance, and More

**Albertson, Alana Quintana.** [Ramon and Julieta](#)  
(Berkley \$16)

Celebrity chef Julieta Campos has sacrificed everything to save her sea-to-table taqueria from closing. To her horror, she discovers that her new landlord is none other than Ramón Montez, the magnetic mariachi she hooked up with on *Día de los Muertos*. Even worse, it was *his* father who stole her mother's taco recipe decades ago. Now Julieta has no choice but to work with Ramón, the man who destroyed her life's work--and the one man who romantically tempts her and culinarily inspires her.

**Alexander, Kianna.** [Carolina Built](#)  
(Gallery \$27.99)

Josephine N. Leary is determined to build a life of her own, and a future for her family. When she moves to Edenton, North Carolina, from the plantation where she was born, she is free, newly married, and ready to follow her dreams. As the demands of life pull Josephine's attention--deepening her marriage, mothering her daughters, supporting her grandmother--she struggles to balance her real estate aspirations with the realities of keeping life going every day. She teaches herself to be a businesswoman, to manage her finances, and to make smart investments in the local real estate market. But with each passing year, it grows more difficult to focus on building her legacy from the ground up.

**Ali-Afzal, Aliya.** [Would I Lie to You?](#)  
(Grand Central \$17.99)

It's taken a few years for Faiza to crack the snobbish white mommy clique that rules over the local school. Now you'd never guess, seeing her at the trendy kids' parties and the leisurely coffee mornings, that her childhood was spent being bullied and being embarrassed of her poor Pakistani immigrant parents. But when Faiza's husband Tom loses his job and says he will have to dip into their savings, Faiza starts to unravel. Creating the perfect life and raising the perfect family comes at a cost - and the money Tom put aside has gone. Faiza will have to tell him she spent it all. Unless Faiza can find a way to put her hands on \$100,000 in the next few weeks.

**Allen, Jayne.** [Black Girls Must Be Magic](#)  
(HarperCollins \$16.99)

For Tabitha Walker, her grandmother's old adage, "Black girls must die exhausted" is becoming all too true. Discovering she's pregnant--after she was told she may not be able to have biological children--Tabitha throws herself headfirst into the world of "single mothers by choice." Between her job, doctor's appointments, and preparing for the baby, she's worn out. And that's before her boss at the local news station starts getting complaints from viewers about Tabitha's natural hair. When an unexpected turn of events draws Marc--her on and off-again ex-boyfriend--back into her world with surprising demands, and the situation at work begins to threaten her livelihood and her identity, Tabitha must make some tough decisions about her and her baby's future.



**Asher, April.** [Not the Witch You Wed](#)  
(St. Martins \$16.99)

Magic-less witch Violet Maxwell wants nothing to do with alpha wolf shifter Lincoln Thorne--the man who broke her fragile, teenage heart. But when the two of them are forced by arcane Supernatural Laws to find mates, Violet and Lincoln agree to fake-date their way to a fake-mating in order to conjure them-

selves some time. The joke's on them. When old feelings make a reappearance--along with Violet's magic--they both realize there's nothing fake about their feelings.

**Ashford, Jane.** [Earl on the Run](#)  
(Sourcebooks \$8.99)

At the end of the London season, Harriet Finch reluctantly returns to her wealthy grandfather's country house. His rigid opinions for how she should live and whom she should marry sparks Harriet's rebelliousness. Yearning to reclaim her freedom, Harriet goes for a long walk and a handsome rogue from the nearby Travelers camp catches her eye. Little does she know, the rugged Traveler she's flirting with is the missing Earl of Ferrington in disguise. Will this intriguing man, who goes by Jack tell Harriet the truth about who he is for the sake their blossoming relationship? Or will he keep his distance altogether? Time is running out, and the earl can't hide forever.

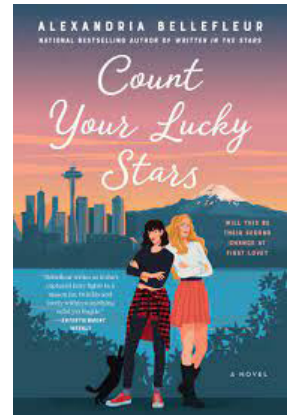
**Ballard, Falon.** [Lease on Love](#)  
(Putnam \$16)

After getting passed over for an overdue--and much-needed--promotion, Sadie Green is in desperate need of three things: a stiff drink, a new place to live, and a one-night stand. But when an accidental mix-up lands her on the doorstep of Jack Thomas's gorgeous Brooklyn brownstone, it's too bad Sadie is more attracted to the impressive real estate than she is to the man himself. While Jack doesn't know just what to make of the vivaciously verbose Sadie, he's willing to offer her his spare bedroom while she gets back on her feet. And with the rent unbeatably low, Sadie can finally pursue her floristry side hustle full-time. The two are polar opposites, but as Sadie's presence begins to turn the brownstone into a home, they both start to realize they may have just made the deal of a lifetime.

**Bellefleur, Alexandria.** [Count Your Lucky Stars](#)  
(HarperCollins \$15.99)

While touring a wedding venue with her engaged friends, Margot Cooper comes face-to-face with Olivia Grant--her childhood friend, her first love, her first... well, everything. Never in a million years did Olivia Grant expect her important new client's Best Woman would be Margot Cooper, the one that got

away. When a series of unfortunate events leaves Olivia without a place to stay, Margot offers up her spare room. Olivia is everything she's ever wanted, but Margot let her romantically in once and it ended in disaster. Will history repeat itself or should Margot count her lucky stars that she gets a second chance with her first love.



**Blake, Ashley Herring.** [Delilah Green Doesn't Care](#)  
(Berkley \$16)

Delilah Green swore she would never go back to Bright Falls. But when Delilah's estranged stepsister, Astrid, pressures her into photographing her wedding with a guilt trip and a five-figure check, Delilah finds herself back in the godforsaken town that she used to call home. Having raised her eleven-year-old daughter mostly on her own while dealing with her unreliable ex and running a bookstore, Claire Sutherland depends upon a life without surprises. And Delilah Green is an unwelcome surprise...at first. Forced together during a gauntlet of wedding preparations--including a plot to save Astrid from her horrible fiancé--Claire isn't sure she has the strength to resist Delilah's charms. Even worse, she's starting to think she doesn't want to.

**Buccola, Allison.** [Catch Her When She Falls](#)  
(Random \$27)

Ten years ago, my boyfriend killed my best friend. At least that's what Micah has believed ever since her high school sweetheart, Alex, was convicted of murdering her best friend, Emily. A decade later, Micah has finally moved on from the unforgivable betrayal and loss. Now the owner of a bustling coffee shop in her small hometown in Pennsylvania, she's happily coupled up with another old high school friend, the two having bonded over their shared sorrow. But when reminders of her past begin appearing at her work and home, Micah begins to doubt what she knows about Emily's death.

**Chase-Riboud, Barbara.** [The Great Mrs. Elias](#)  
(HarperCollins \$26.99)

Born in Philadelphia in the late 1800s, Hannah Elias has done things she's not proud of to survive. Shedding her past, Hannah slips on a new identity before relocating to New York City to become as rich as a robber baron. Hannah quietly invests in the stock market, growing her fortune with the help of businessmen. As the money pours in, Hannah hides her millions across 29 banks. Finally attaining the life she's always dreamed, she buys a mansion on the Upper West Side and decorates it in gold and first-rate décor, inspired by her idol Cleopatra. Then an unsolved murder turns Hannah's world upside-down and threatens to destroy everything she's built.

**Cramer, Sofie.** [Text for You](#)  
(Putnam \$17)

It has been two years since Clara's fiancé died in a tragic accident, but she's still paralyzed with grief, and her friends are worried about her. So, to try to say what was left unsaid, she starts texting his old phone. What she doesn't realize is that the number has been reassigned. Across town, Sven's phone begins receiving mysterious but heartfelt text messages. He doesn't respond, but he is captivated by the sender. His own relationship has been on the rocks, and when it ends, he sets out to find the person who has been texting him. Neither Sven nor Clara knew what they were setting out to find, but it would change both of their lives forever

**Everett, Elizabeth** [A Perfect Equation](#)  
(Berkley \$16)

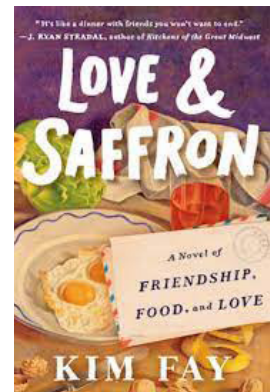
Readying herself to compete for the prestigious Rosewood Prize for Mathematics, Miss Letitia Fenley is suddenly asked to take on another responsibility--managing Athena's Retreat, a secret haven for England's women scientists. Lord William Hughes, the Viscount Greycliff's lifelong dream of becoming the director of a powerful clandestine government agency is within his grasp when he is tasked with helping Letty safeguard Athena's Retreat, Grey is positive that he can control the antics of the various scientists as well as manage the tiny mathematician--despite their historic animosity and simmering tension. But as Grey and Letty are forced to work together, their mutual dislike turns to admiration and eventually to something...magnetic.

**Fawcett, Jennifer.** [Beneath the Stairs](#)  
(Atria \$27)

Few in sleepy Sumner's Mills have stumbled across the Octagon House hidden deep in the woods. Even fewer are brave enough to trespass. A man had killed his wife and two young daughters there, a shocking, gruesome crime that the sleepy upstate New York town tried to bury. One summer night, an emboldened fourteen-year-old Clare and her best friend, Abby, ventured into the Octagon House. Clare came out, but a piece of Abby never did. Twenty years later, an adult Clare receives word that Abby has attempted suicide at the Octagon House and now lies in a coma. With little to lose and still grieving after a personal tragedy, Clare returns to her roots to uncover the darkness responsible for Abby's accident

**Fay, Kim.** [Love & Saffron](#)  
(Putnam \$24, Signed)

When twenty-seven-year-old Joan Bergstrom sends a fan letter--as well as a gift of saffron--to fifty-nine-year-old Imogen Fortier, a life-changing friendship begins. What Helen Hanff did for books and letters in *84, Charing Cross Road*, Fay does for food and letters in this superbly written, gem of a book. *Love & Saffron* is a love letter to what some would say the lost art of letter writing. Here is how the author describes the true magic of writing and receiving an actual letter:



“There is an unequalled satisfaction in composing words on a blank page, sealing them in an envelope, writing an address in my own messy hand, adding a stamp, walking it to the mailbox, and raising the flag. It's like preparing a gift, and I feel like I receive one when a letter arrives – yours most of all.”

But the book is more than just a lovely meditation on the joys of written correspondence with a kindred spirit. It is about how one small gift can change people in ways they never expected. It is about the importance of friends in our lives and how food can

bring us closer together. To her credit the author doesn't shy away from addressing some serious topics of the 1960s including racism and sexism but it is deftly done in a manner that is completely organic to the story. The author's editor wrote this about *Love & Saffron*: "this story healed my heart and gifted me back the joy of reading at a time when that seemed impossible." Hyperbole? All I can say is that I completely agree with her. Thoughtful and thought-provoking, the quietly powerful *Love & Saffron* has won a permanent place on my bookshelves.

**Fox, Hester.** [A Lullaby for Witches](#)  
(Graydon House \$16.99)

Accepting a dream job at the Harlowe House estate museum in New England, Augusta Podos discovers a Harlowe daughter who was almost completely removed from the family historical record and digs deeper, awakening a sinister power. "Fox balances Augusta and Margaret's stories with an expert hand, giving both characters depth. With unexpected twists aplenty, this is sure to keep fans of paranormal fantasies turning the pages. It's a multilayered, haunting tale." (*PW*) Sounds like the perfect read for fans of Barbara Michael's classic gothic romances.

**Frost, Caroline.** [Shadows of Pecan Hollow](#)  
(HarperCollins \$27.99)

Fourteen years after being abducted and forced into a life of crime, Kit must reckon with her past when her kidnapper shows up on her doorstep, drawing her back into his orbit—and back into a life she thought she'd left behind forever. The book's publisher calls this Texas backroads thriller *Paper Moon* meets *Badlands*.

**Gladstone, Max.** [Last Exit](#)  
(Tom Doherty \$18.99)

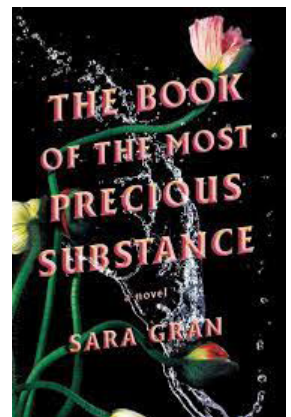
When Zelda and her friends first met, in college, they believed they had all the answers. They had figured out a big secret about how the world worked and they thought that meant they could change things. They failed. One of their own fell, to darkness and rot. Ten years later, they've drifted apart, building lives for themselves, families, fortunes. All but Zelda. She's still wandering the backroads of the nation. She's still fighting monsters. She knows: the past isn't over. It's not even past.

**Gramont, Nina De.** [The Christie Affair](#)  
(St. Martins \$27.99)

De Gramont brilliantly reimagines the unexpected 11-day disappearance of Agatha Christie that captivated the world as told from the point of Miss Nan O'Dea, who infiltrated the Christies' wealthy, rarified world and went on to destroy their marriage. While I will always be Team Christie when it comes to whom is the injured party, this was a fascinating book and I love how *Kirkus* summed it up. "The story unfolds in a series of carefully placed vignettes you may find yourself reading and rereading, partly to get the details straight, partly to fully savor the well-turned phrases and the dry humor, partly so the book won't have to end, damn it. Devilishly clever, elegantly composed and structured—simply splendid."

**Gran, Sara.** [The Book of the Most Precious Substance](#)  
(Dreamland Books \$18.95)

After a tragedy too painful to bear, former novelist Lily Albrecht has resigned herself to a dull, sexless life as a rare book dealer. Until she gets a lead on a book that just might turn everything around. *The Book of the Most Precious Substance* is a 17th century manual on sex magic, rumored to be the most powerful occult book ever written—if it really exists at all. And some of the wealthiest people in the world are willing to pay Lily a fortune to find it—if she can.

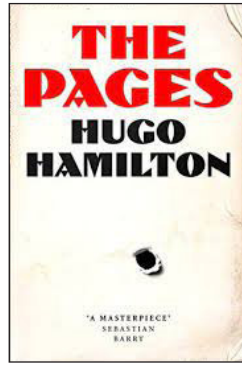


Her search for the book takes her from New York to New Orleans to Munich to Paris, searching the dark corners of power where the world's wealthiest people use black magic to fulfill their desires. Will Lily fulfill her own desires, and join them? Or will she lose it all searching for a ghost? Hot in so many ways, this inventive novel by the author of the Claire DeWitt series, which her publisher calls a provocative and erotic literary thriller, is very much in the tradition of Arturo Perez-Reverte's *The Club Dumas* and Carlos Ruiz Zafon's *The Shadow of the Wind*.

**Hamilton, Hugo.** [The Pages](#)

(Knopf \$28)

Dramatically illuminating the connections between past and present by looking at censorship, oppression, and violence, this gripping novel follows Lena Knecht as she, accompanied by an old copy of the book *Rebellion*, searches for clues to the hand-drawn map on its last page.



**Handler, David.** [The Lady in the Silver Cloud](#)

(Norton \$25.95)

When a universally loved resident of a luxury apartment building on Central Park West is murdered, ghostwriting sleuth Stewart Hoag, along with his beloved dog Lulu, is called in by Lieutenant Romaine Very of the NYPD to investigate and discovers the unexpected source of her wealth, which changes everything. This is the 13<sup>th</sup> fabulously fun installment in Edgar award winner Handler's dryly witty and oh-so-arch (but in the best possible way) series.

**Hawks, Arlem,** [Beyond the Lavender Fields](#)

(Shadow Mountain \$26.99)

Committed to equality, liberty and dethroning the monarchy, Gilles Etienne, a clerk working in a soap factory worker in Marseille, France meets the factory owner's beautiful, bourgeoisie, royalist daughter Marie-Caroline Daubin and catches her in a dangerous secret that could cost both of them not just their liberty but their lives.

**Hoen, Tory Henwood.** [The Arc](#)

(St. Martins \$27.99)

Signing up for The Arc, a highly secretive matchmaking service guaranteed to find your ideal mate, Ursula Byrne is paired with a lawyer with whom she immediately connects, but as their relationship unfolds in unanticipated ways, she realizes true love is never a sure thing. "The long wait for the romance to start makes this unusual genre fare, but Hoen raises some fascinating questions about love and relationships and ends on an optimistic note that will please romance fans. The result is as thoughtful as it is thought-provoking." (PW)

**Jackson, Kosoko.** [I'm So \(Not\) Over You](#)

(Berkley \$16)

Pretending to still be his ex's current boyfriend in front of his parents, Kian Andrews reluctantly winds up being Hudson River's plus-one at a splashy Georgia wedding only to find themselves in need of hashing out their true feelings. "Jackson makes his adult debut (after the YA novel *Yesterday Is History*) with a multilayered queer rom-com that combines fun fake dating and second chance romance tropes while exploring timely social themes. (PW)

**Janowitz, Brenda.** [The Liz Taylor Ring](#)

(Graydon House \$16.99)

When their late mother's long-lost 11-carat ring, which looks just like the diamond Richard Burton gifted Liz Taylor, unexpectedly resurfaces decades later, three siblings discover a secret that challenges everything they thought they knew about their parents' epic love story. *Kirkus* called this "A fun, flirty, well-paced sibling-inheritance story."

**Jio, Sarah.** [With Love from London](#)

(Ballantine \$17)

Inheriting a flat and bookshop in London from the mother who abandoned her, Valentina slowly begins to piece together her mother's life while trying to save the bookshop from going under, with the help of its eccentric staff and some startling revelations. "A cozy bit of escapism that will leave many readers dreaming of true love and the bookstores they might one day open" (*Kirkus*)

**Katz, Erica.** [Fake](#)

(HarperCollins \$26.99)

Emma Caan, a professional forger, who makes copies of nineteenth-century paintings for museums and wealthy collectors, receives an invitation to work with Russian oligarch Leonard Sobetsky and quickly discovers the seedy underbelly of his opulent life.

**Kennedy, Elle.** [Good Girl Complex](#)

(St. Martins \$16.99)

Intent on earning a degree at Garnet College in the beachside town of Avalon Bay, internet entrepreneur Mackenzie Cabot has her "good girl" abilities

tested when she meets the rough and rowdy bad boy Cooper Hartley.

**Kistler, Bonnie.** [The Cage](#)  
(HarperCollins \$26.99)

Two women—a company lawyer and a human resources director at an international fashion conglomerate—enter an elevator to take them down from the thirtieth floor, but only one woman is alive when the doors open in the lobby. The publisher had me hooked with their tagline for this book, which they call *The Firm* meets *The Silent Patient*.

**Macneal, Elizabeth.** [Circus of Wonders](#)  
(Atria \$27.99)

When Jasper Jupiter's Circus of Wonders pitches its tent in a poor coastal town, the life of one young girl changes forever. Sold to the ringmaster as a "leopard girl" because of the birthmarks that cover her body, Nell is utterly devastated. But as she grows close to the other performers, she finds herself enchanted by the glittering freedom of the circus, and by her own role as the Queen of the Moon and Stars. Before long, Nell's fame spreads across the world—and with it, a chance for Jasper Jupiter to grow his own name and fortune. But what happens when her fame begins to eclipse his own, when even Jasper's loyal brother Toby becomes captivated by Nell? No longer the quiet flower-picker, Nell knows her own place in the world, and she will fight for it with everything she has.

**Marsh, Violet.** [Velocity of a Secret](#)  
(BRL \$12.95)

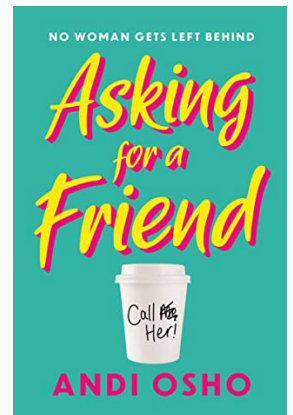
When World War I started, Rose Van Etten went from racing cars to driving ambulances and learned of an insidious spy ring from a dying soldier. Now that the war is over, Rose ventures to Scotland in search of the truth. The isles' stark beauty quickly captivates her, but so does one of the locals. Unlike most men, the rugged, Viking-esque Thorfinn Sinclair respects Rose's independent spirit. It seems she's met her equal. But Thorfinn has secrets of his own. Fiercely loyal to home and family, he will do whatever it takes to protect the land he loves. As the spies close in, Rose must decide for herself: Is Thorfinn friend or foe?

**Morrow, Bethany.** [Cherish Farrah](#)  
(Dutton \$26)

Being faced with her home's foreclosure, seventeen-year-old Farrah Turne, one of only two black girls in a wealthy gated community manipulates her way into her friends' household where she starts noticing strange things happening and her suspicion of the seemingly-perfect family grows.

**Osho, Andi.** [Asking for a Friend](#)  
(HQ \$15.99)

Three best friends are going to solve their relationship woes once and for all. Forty-something Jemima's life is on track – well, sort of, she just needs to bat her niggly ex away for good. Twenty-something Meagan is in the midst of her five-phase plan and is nearly ready for phase three: a relationship. While thirty-something Simi has had more it's not you than any I dos. These best friends decide it's time to ditch the dating apps and play the love game by their own rules. They're going to ask people out in real life...but only for each other. What could possibly go wrong?



**Pataki, Allison.** [The Magnificent Lives of Marjorie Post](#) (Ballantine \$28)

The epic reimagining of the extraordinary life of Marjorie Merriweather Post, the American heiress who lived and loved on a grand scale, reveals the heart-break she endured as a wife four times over in vastly different, dramatic marriages.

**Pek, Jane.** [The Verifiers](#)  
(Knopf \$17)

Introducing Claudia Lin: a sharp-witted amateur sleuth for the 21st century. This debut novel follows Claudia as she verifies people's online lives, and lies, for Veracity a referrals-only online dating detective agency in New York City. Until a client with an unusual request goes missing. Claudia breaks protocol to investigate—and uncovers a maelstrom of personal and corporate deceit. Part literary mystery,

part family story, *The Verifiers* is a clever and incisive examination of how technology shapes our choices, and the nature of romantic love in the digital age, Kirkus calls it “cool, cerebral, and very funny,”

**Pineiro, Caridad.** [The Family She Never Met](#)  
(Sourcebooks \$14.99)

Given the opportunity to go to Miami and meet her estranged family, Jessica Russo, through her blossoming relationship with her grandmother, learns what caused the estrangement and, determined to heal her fractured family, discovers what it means to embrace the many facets of her identity

**Pitoniak, Anna.** [Our American Friend](#)  
(Simon and Schuster \$27.99)

When mysterious First Lady Lara Caine asks her to write her official biography, former White House correspondent Sofie Morse is wary when Lara starts sharing sensitive information, which draws her into a game of cat-and-mouse with explosive consequences.

**Silver, Josie.** [On Night on the Island](#)  
(Ballantine \$17)

Spending her thirtieth birthday alone is not what dating columnist Cleo Wilder wanted, but she plans a solo retreat at a remote Irish island —at the insistence of her boss—in the name of re-energizing herself and adding a new perspective to her column. Mack Sullivan is also looking forward to some time to himself. With his life in Boston deteriorating in ways he can't bring himself to acknowledge, his soul-searching has brought him to the same Irish island to explore his roots and find some clarity. Unfortunately, a mix-up with the bookings means both have reserved the same one-room hideaway on exactly the same dates. Instantly at odds, Cleo and Mack don't know how they're going to manage until the next weekly ferry arrives. But as the days go by, they no longer seem to mind each other's company quite as much as they thought they would

**Stachniak, Eva.** [The School of Mirrors](#)  
(HarperCollins \$16.99)

When she discovers her true identity as the daughter of Louis XV, midwife Marie-Louise, whose mother,

who was once the King's favorite and attended the palace's “school of mirrors,” must tread very carefully as the new King ascends the throne.

**Swanson, Peter.** [Nine Lives](#)  
(HarperCollins \$27.99)

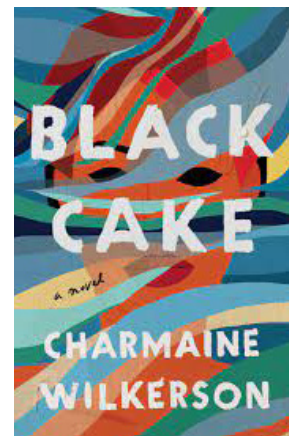
When nine people, including FBI agent Jessica Winslow, receive a cryptic list with their names on it, they dismiss it as a joke, until bad things start happening, prompting Jessica to find the link that binds them all together to expose a murderous madman. Swanson won me over as a reader with his modern classic *Eight Perfect Murders*, a twisty homage to eight classic crime novels. Now he is back in rare form with another tautly paced riff on Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None*.

**Turnbull, Bryn.** [The Last Grand Duchess](#)  
(MIRA \$16.99)

As war approaches, Grand Duchess Olga Romanov trades her gown and crown for a nursing habit, but when troubling rumors about her parents trickle in from the Front and the controversy over Rasputin grows into a fiery protest, a call for revolution threatens to end 300 years of Romanov rule. “Turnbull again successfully humanizes a family of powerful historical figures in this look at the end of the Romanov dynasty from the vantage point of Olga Nikolaevna, oldest daughter of last czar Nicholas.” (*PW*)

**Wilkerson, Charmaine.** [Black Cake](#)  
(Random \$28)

Estranged siblings Byron and Benny Bennett try to reclaim the closeness they once shared while trying to piece together their late mother Eleanor's life story and fulfill her last request that they share a traditional Caribbean black cake “when the time is right.” Here is how Wilkerson describes her debut novel “Every family has things they haven't shared.” But *Black Cake* is about “how the stories we don't tell shape us as much as the stories we do.” *Black Cake* has been racking up starred reviews including *Kirkus* who





said “There is plenty to savor in this ambitious and accomplished debut,” and *PW* who concluded their review with “Readers will adore this highly accomplished effort from a talented new writer.”

## YA Fiction

**McWilliams, Kelly.** [Mirror Girls](#)  
(Little Brown \$17.99)

Reunited with her twin sister, who passes for white in the racially divided town of Eureka, Georgia, Charlie needs her help in order to put the hauntings of the past to rest and break their family’s dangerous curse.

**Nazemian, Abdi.** [The Chandler Legacies](#)  
(HarperCollins \$17.99)

At Chandler, an elite boarding school, five teens are brought together in the Circle, a coveted writing group where life-changing friendships are born--and secrets are revealed. Their professor tells them to write their truths. But is the truth enough to change the long-standing culture of abuse at Chandler? And can their friendship survive the fallout?

**Scholte, Astrid.** [League of Liars](#)  
(Putnam \$18.99)

An apprentice under a premier public defender in a world where illegal users of magic are brought to justice, Cayder discovers the law is no longer black and white when he meets the three criminals he is supposed to defend.

**Stamper, Phil.** [Golden Boys](#)  
(St. Martin’s \$17.99)

Gabriel, Reese, Sal, and Heath are best friends, bonded in their small rural town by their queerness, their good grades, and their big dreams. They are about to embark on the summer before senior year of high school, where each is going on a new, big adventure, from attending a design school in Paris to interning on Capitol Hill for a U.S. Senator. What will this summer of new experiences and world-expanding travel mean for each of them--and for their friendship?

**Stevens, Court.** [We Were Kings](#)  
(Thomas Nelson \$19.99)

Twenty years ago, eighteen-year-old Francis Quick was convicted of murdering her best friend, Cora King, and sentenced to death. Now the highly debated Accelerated Death Penalty Act has passed giving Frankie thirty final days to live. The at-first reluctant but soon-fiery Nyla and her unexpected ally—handsome country island boy Sam Stack—bring Frankie’s case to the international stage through her YouTube channel, *Death Daze*. They step into fame and a hometown battle that someone’s still willing to kill over.

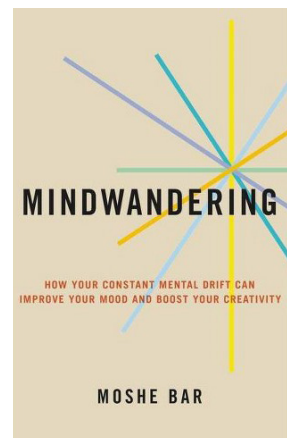
**Sutanto, Jesse Q.** [The New Girl](#)  
(Sourcebooks \$10.99)

A transfer student and scholarship recipient, sophomore Lia Setiawan is angered when she discovers a cheating ring, but by the time she finds a dead body and shuts down the campus drug dealer, she fears she might be the biggest snake in the Draycott Academy nest of vipers

## Nonfiction

**Bar, Moshe.** [Mindwandering](#)  
(Hachette \$29)

Mindwandering is our brain’s way of developing our sense of self, trying to sort out what others are thinking, and searching for associations to help us interpret what’s happening in our lives. *Mindwandering* is the first book to expose readers to the multi-faceted phenomenon of their wandering minds, the new and exciting research of the brain and the mind behind this default mode of ours, when it is beneficial and when it is harming us to wander, and how we can gain some control over our mental lives.



**Barbero, Alessandro.** [Dante: A Life](#)  
(Pegasus \$28.95)

Dante Alighieri’s *Divine Comedy* has defined how people imagine and depict heaven and hell for over

seven centuries. However, outside of Italy, his other works are not well known, and less still is generally known about the context he wrote them in. In *Dante*, Barbero brings the legendary author's Italy to life, describing the political intrigue, battles, city and society that shaped his life and work.

**Curtis, James.** [Buster Keaton](#)  
(Knopf \$40)

From acclaimed cultural and film historian James Curtis—a major biography, the first in more than two decades, of the legendary comedian and filmmaker who elevated physical comedy to the highest of arts and whose ingenious films remain as startling, innovative, modern—and irresistible—today as they were when they beguiled audiences almost a century ago.

**Freeman, Philip.** [Hannibal: Rome's Greatest Enemy](#)  
(Pegasus \$27.95)

Over two thousand years ago one of the greatest military leaders in history almost destroyed Rome. Hannibal, a daring African general from the city of Carthage, led an army of warriors and battle elephants over the snowy Alps to invade Italy. But what kind of person would dare to face the most relentless imperial power of the ancient world? How could Hannibal, consistently outnumbered and always deep in enemy territory, win battle after battle until he held the very fate of Rome within his grasp? Freeman brings his own answers and more to these and other questions surrounding one of the most enigmatic figures in ancient history.

**Pangonis, Katherine.** [Queens of Jerusalem](#)  
(Pegasus \$28.95)

Queen Sibylla was the last of a line of formidable female rulers in the Crusader States of Outremer. Yet for all the many books written about the Crusades, one aspect is conspicuously absent: the stories of women who ruled. Queens and princesses tend to be presented as passive transmitters of land and royal blood. In reality, women ruled, conducted diplomatic negotiations, made military decisions, forged alliances, rebelled, and undertook architectural projects. Pangonis explores the lives of Sibylla and her Armenian mother, her three sisters, and their daughters and granddaughters were no less intriguing in this fascinating multi-generational account.

**Puhak, Shelley.** [The Dark Queens](#)  
(Bloomsbury \$30)

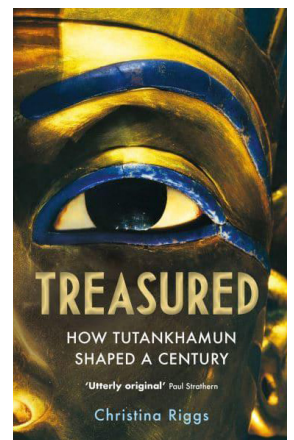
Brunhild was a foreign princess, raised to be married off for the sake of alliance-building. Her sister-in-law Fredegund started out as a lowly palace slave. And yet—in sixth-century Merovingian France, where women were excluded from noble succession and royal politics was a blood sport—these two iron-willed strategists reigned over vast realms, changing the face of Europe. Yet after the queens' deaths—one gentle, the other horrific—their stories were rewritten, their names consigned to slander and legend. Now Puhak sets the historical record straight as to just how amazing these women were.

**Rawlence, Ben.** [The Treeline](#)  
(St. Martins \$29.99)

For the last fifty years, the trees of the boreal forest have been moving north. Ben Rawlence's *The Treeline* takes us along this critical frontier of our warming planet from Norway to Siberia, Alaska to Greenland, to meet the scientists, residents and trees confronting huge geological changes.

**Riggs, Christina.** [Treasured](#)  
(Public Affairs \$30)

When it was discovered in 1922, in an Egypt newly independent of the British Empire, the 3,300-year-old tomb of Tutankhamun sent shockwaves around the world. The boy-king became a household name overnight and kickstarted an international obsession that continues to this day. From pop culture and politics to tourism and the heritage industry, it's impossible to imagine the past century without the discovery of Tutankhamun — yet so much of the story remains untold. In *Treasured*, Christina Riggs weaves compelling historical analysis with tales of lives touched, or changed forever, by an encounter with the boy-king from Jacqueline Kennedy, who first welcomed the young pharaoh to America to the British Museum's landmark Tutankhamun exhibition in 1972 remains its most successful ever.



**Ward, Jacob.** [The Loop](#)

(Hachette \$29)

An eye-opening narrative journey into the rapidly changing world of artificial intelligence by a high-profile NBC technology reporter, revealing the dangerous ways that AI is poised to exploit the unconscious habits of our minds”