

BOOKNEWS from

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OCTOBER IS OUR 33rd BIRTHDAY MONTH

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

Note: Event times are Pacific Daylight time

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

TO CELEBRATE WE OFFER NEW PP TEES

They are also a fundraiser for the store to help offset increasing operating costs.

Go [HERE](#) to see the colors, sizes, and styles in our Bonfire Market Place

This campaign is in effect until October 13. Shirts will start shipping October 21.

We plan to offer future designs and campaigns to liven up our exclusive Merchandise line



*Note: The events marked "Live" offer Signed books
The virtual events do so when noted*

MONDAY OCTOBER 3 7:00 PM Live

There will be cake!

The Pen celebrates its 33rd birthday with **John Sandford** discusses [Righteous Prey](#) (Putnam \$29.95)
Lucas Davenport and Virgil Flowers

TUESDAY OCTOBER 4 1:00 PM

Ian Rankin previews [A Heart Full of Headstones](#) (Little Brown \$28)

John Rebus

Signed UK edition [A Heart Full of Headstones](#) (Orion \$46)

TUESDAY OCTOBER 4 5:00 PM

Candace Robb discusses [Fox in the Fold](#) (Severn \$29.99)

Owen Archer of medieval York

Signed books in stock

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 5 5:00 PM

Megan Shepherd discusses [Malice House](#) (Hyperion \$26.99)

A horror of a story perfect for October

Signed books available

THURSDAY OCTOBER 6 7:00 PM Live

Leslie S. Klinger discusses [The \[Annotated\] Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde](#) (Norton \$34.95) and [The New Annotated Frankenstein](#) (\$35)

SATURDAY OCTOBER 8 2:00 PM Live

South Africa's **Michael Stanley** discusses [A Deadly Covenant](#) (White Sun Books \$16.99)

A young Detective Kubu investigate a cold case among the Bushmen

MONDAY OCTOBER 10 5:00 PM

Marcie Rendon discusses [Sinister Graves](#) (Soho \$27.95)

#OwnVoices Cash Blackbear

Signed books available

MONDAY OCTOBER 10 7:00 PM Live

Jenn McKinlay signs [The Plot and the Pendulum](#) (Berkley \$27)

Library Lovers series—ideal for Halloween

Jenn also signs [Fairy Tale Cupcakes Cookbook](#) (\$12.99) which she created to go with her [Cupcake Bakery Mysteries](#)

TUESDAY OCTOBER 11 7:00 PM Live

David Rosenfelt discusses [Santa's Little Yelpers](#) (St Martins \$25.99)

Andy Carpenter and crew

A Golden Retriever rescue group joins us along with a few friendly Golden Retrievers and will appreciate donations to their work
Also available: [Holy Chow](#) (\$27.99), the July Andy Carpenter

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 12 5:00 PM

David Baldacci discusses [Long Shadows](#) (Grand Central \$29)

Amos Decker, The Memory Man

Signed books available

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 12 7:00 PM Live

John Connolly discusses [The Furies](#) (Atria \$28)

A double Maine PI Charlie Parker thriller

Free Connolly tote bag to the first 40 to buy a copy

And we discuss [Shadow Voices](#) (\$36.99)

300 years of Irish literature

We have giveaway items and stickers to go with them

THURSDAY OCTOBER 13 7:00 PM Live

Nelson DeMille with Taylor Moore

DeMille discusses [The Maze](#) (SimonSchuster \$28.99)

John Corey returns

SATURDAY OCTOBER 15 10:30 AM

Croak & Dagger discusses David Bell's [The Finalists](#) (\$17)

SATURDAY OCTOBER 15 4:00 PM Live

Karen Odden discusses [Under a Veiled Moon](#) (Crooked Lane \$27.99)

Victorian crime with Inspector Corran of Scotland Yard

MONDAY OCTOBER 17 5:00 PM

AC Rosen with PJ Vernon

Rosen discusses [Lavender House](#) (Forge \$26.99)

Fabulous 1952 queer family California country-house murder (locked room?)

Very Agatha Christie...with a soap empire at stake, and murder(s)

Signed books available

TUESDAY OCTOBER 18 1:00 PM

Rachel Grant and Toni Anderson

Anderson discusses [Cold Silence](#) (\$16.99)

Grant discusses [Into the Storm](#) \$14.99) in her Evidence: Under Fire Series

TUESDAY OCTOBER 18 5:00 PM

Simon Gervais with Brian Freeman

Canada's Gervais discusses [Robert Ludlum's The Blackbriar Genesis](#) (Putnam \$28)

Signed bookplates available

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 19 5:00 Horrors!

Andy Davidson with Jason Rekulak

Davidson discusses [The Hollow Kind](#) (Farrar \$28)

Signed copies available

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 19 7:00 PM Live

[Writing Historical Fiction Workshop with Sulari Gentill](#)

Registration Required: Fee: \$25

Writing fiction often begins with a single shining idea. Writing historical fiction is about setting that idea in a time and place that has existed and been recorded. The historical novelist's art is that of weaving a new story into the old. This workshop will explore the techniques, tricks, ideas and pitfalls of bringing history into a narrative in a way that enhances rather than swamps.

Historical novelists weave imaginary plots into actual events and milieus. This workshop explores the techniques involved with bringing history into a narrative in a way that enhances rather than swamps the story.

THURSDAY OCTOBER 20 7:00 PM Live

Australia's Sulari Gentill discusses [The Woman in the Library](#) (Poisoned Pen \$16.99)

A bestseller, and dedicated to me, Barbara

The sold out hardcover first print is our October Crime Book of the Month

OUR OCTOBER BOOKS OF THE MONTH

British Crime Club One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Cambridge, Colleen. [A Trace of Poison](#)

Cozy Crimes Club One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Golden, S K. [The Socialite's Guide to Murder](#)

First Mystery Club One Signed First Printing per month

Godfrey, Bradley. [Imposter](#)

The Crime Collectors Book of the Month Club One Signed First Printing per month

Gentill, Sulari. [The Woman in the Library](#)

History/Mystery Club One Signed First Printing per month
MacNeal, Susan Elia. [Mother, Daughter, Traitor, Spy](#)

Notable New Fiction One Signed First Printing per month
Shepherd, Megan. [Malice House](#)

International Crime One Unsigned Hardcover or paperback per month

Hewson, David. [The Medici Murders](#)

Romance & Relationships One Unsigned Hardcover or 2 paperbacks per month

Anthony, Gretchen. [The Book Haters Book Club](#) & Mimi Matthews, [The Belle of Belgrave Square](#)

FRIDAY OCTOBER 21 2:00 PM

Cozies Panel with John Charles

Crooked Lane Halloween Cozy Panel

Raquel V. Reyes. [Calypso, Corpses, and Cooking](#)

Allison Brook. [Dewey Decimated](#)

Gretchen Rue. [Steeped to Death](#)

Kate Young. [Crime for the Books](#)

FRIDAY OCTOBER 21 7:00 PM

SciFi Friday discusses Tori Eldridge's [Dance among the Flames](#) (\$19.99)

SATURDAY OCTOBER 22 10:30 AM

[Writing Crime Fiction Workshop with Sulari Gentill](#)

Registration Required: Fee: \$25

Crime Fiction has always attracted a large and dedicated readership from all age groups. It has inhabited bookshelves in the form of both pulp fiction and literary-award-winners. As a genre, it continues to evolve in accord with new values and concerns. The crime novel has the particular capacity to embody and reflect the social, historical and cultural contexts in which it is set, and to hold a mirror to the prejudices and injustices of the time. From Enid Blyton's *Famous Five*, to Peter Corris' *Cliff Hardy* and Peter Temple's *Jack Irish*, the tropes of Crime Fiction are consistent and consistently remade. This workshop will introduce the underlying structure of the traditional crime novel and consider the ways that established tropes and reader expectations may be tested and twisted through the use of character and plot.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 23 2:00 PM Live

Tasha Alexander discusses [Secrets of the Nile](#) (St Martins \$27.99)

Lady Emily sleuths in Edwardian Egypt

MONDAY OCTOBER 24 1:00 PM

Robert Lloyd with Andrew Child

Britain's Lloyd discusses [The Poison Machine](#) (Melville House \$29.99)

The sequel to [The Bloodless Boy](#) (\$17.99) with 1679's Robert Hooke

MONDAY OCTOBER 24 6:00 PM Live

Andrew Child [No Plan B](#) (Bantam \$28.99)

A Jack Reacher signed by Andrew and Lee Child

TUESDAY OCTOBER 25 7:00 PM Live

Katherine Corcoran with Elvia Diaz

Corcoran discusses [In the Mouth of the Wolf](#) (Bloomsbury \$28)

A Murder, a Cover-Up, and the True Cost of Silencing the Press

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 26 1:00 PM

Colleen Cambridge discusses [A Trace of Poison](#) (Kensington \$26)

A cozy with Agatha Christie's housekeeper

Our October British Crime Book of the Month

Signed books available

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 26 7:00 PM Live

Carlene O'Connor discusses [No Strangers Here](#) (Kensington \$26) and [The Christmas Scarf Murder](#) (Kensington \$26)

THURSDAY OCTOBER 27 5:00 PM

Andrew Klavan discusses [Strange Habit of Mind](#) (Mysterious \$26.95)

Signed books available

THURSDAY OCTOBER 27 7:00 PM

Hardboiled Crime discusses James Kestrel's [Five Decembers](#) (\$15.95)

HAPPY HALLOWEEN

We close at 5:00 PM October 31 so we can all trick or treat

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 1 7:00 PM Live Book Launch

Rhys Bowen discusses [Peril in Paris](#) (Berkley \$27)

Lady Georgie in Paris

SIGNED BOOKS

Alexander, Tasha. [Secrets of the Nile](#) (St Martins \$27.99). Egypt and particularly the area on the west bank opposite Luxor, the Valley of the Kings and Queens, will be much in the news with the possibility of Queen Nefertiti's mummy discovered. And November is the 100th anniversary of the discovery of King Tut's tomb. So this adventure for Lady Emily and her intelligence agent husband, Colin Hargreaves, who travel to Egypt in 1904 at the invitation of Lord Deeley, an antiquities collector, is just the thing to read.

At the Lord's first dinner party, amid a gathering of old friends and acquaintances, he's poisoned and dies. It's as if Agatha Christie wrote a different version of *Death on the Nile*. "As usual, Alexander offers multiple suspects who have long personal histories with the victim—including Lady Emily's mother-in-law—and plenty of clues and red herrings to discover and interpret. Lady Emily's investigation alternates with chapters focused on a young woman sculptor named Meryt who lived along the Nile thousands of years before. Meryt's struggles to carve figures out of alabaster while attempting to discover who vandalized her studio and threatened her family provide a nice counterpoint to Lady Emily's investigation and efforts to build relationships with her mother-in-law and her stepdaughter, Kat. A murder in the past, meanwhile, turns out to have a link to Lord Deeley's death. The resolution is surprising, with a twist readers won't see coming. *Kirkus* adds, "The unusual background and Agatha Christie twist make for an enjoyable and informative read."

Baldacci, David. [Long Shadows](#) (Grand Central \$29). Baldacci sets up a real puzzle here for FBI Agent Amos Decker. He's in crisis following the suicide of a close friend and his own receipt of a letter suggesting that the brain injury that makes him *The Memory Man* is morphing in a way that could change his life. Not an easy or sociable guy, he is resistant to the prospect of working with a new partner, Frederica White, after his former colleague is reassigned. Then he's hit with a case that will take all of his special skills to solve. Federal Judge Julia Cummins, murdered, seemingly had no enemies, and there was no forced entry to her property. Close friends and neighbors in the community apparently heard nothing, and Cummins' distraught ex-husband, Barry, and teenage son, Tyler, both have strong alibis. Why did the judge have a personal bodyguard, not one assigned by the Secret Service? And what is the meaning behind the strange calling card left by the killer? I will say that the resolution to this gem is one you will not see coming. I really applaud Baldacci for this fabulous plot.

✎Bowen, Rhys. [Peril in Paris](#) (Berkley \$27 November 1 a week before publication day). Lady Georgiana Rannoch and her dashing husband, Darcy, are awaiting a bundle of joy, but an unexpected trip to Paris on a dangerous assignment will thrust them straight into a tangled web of international intrigue. Georgie's best friend from school, Belinda, is in the city assisting fashion designer Coco Chanel. The scheduled arrival in that city of Gerda Goldberg, a Jewish friend of Nazi leader Hermann Göring's wife, could enable Darcy to complete his mission. And—it's Paris!

✎Cambridge, Colleen. [A Trace of Poison](#) (Kensington \$26). Our **British Crime Book of the Month for October** is part of the wave of Agatha Christie interest and titles. I cannot rave enough

about the short story collection by contemporary authors called [Marple](#) (\$28.99) giving Jane Marple new life in 12 original stories. Val McDermid imagines a second *Murder at the Vicarage* for example. There's also a biography by Lucy Worsley and if you have an academic turn, Mary Anna Evans has edited [The Bloomsbury Handbook to Agatha Christie](#) (\$175 ignore the webstore price) to which I contributed my account of the 1990 Christie Centenary Party in Torquay, her birthplace, and Rhys Bowen, Ragnar Jonasson, etc added their takes and Val wrote the Introduction.

Cambridge give us *The Murder Fete*, a gathering of amateur and professional mystery writers in the English village of Lisleigh, provides the backdrop for Cambridge's delightful sequel to 2021's [Murder at Mallowan Hall](#). When a Catholic priest is poisoned during the festival, Phyllida Bright, Agatha Christie's fictional housekeeper, quickly determines that the intended victim may have been the loathsome Alastair Whittlesby, president of the local writers' club. Whittlesby has been considered the front-runner to win a writing contest with a prize of a publishing contract, and he believes that one of the other amateur writers wanted him out of the way. Cambridge weaves in just the right amount of historical detail and references to classic Christie novels while placing Phyllida and her intelligent sleuthing skills front and center. That the judges for the contest include Christie and other members of the real-life Detection Club, including Anthony Berkeley, G.K. Chesterton, and Dorothy L. Sayers, only adds to the fun. Fans of traditional mysteries will appreciate the author's sometimes tongue-in-cheek adherence to the conventions of the genre, particularly the denouement where all is revealed. Dame Agatha, who is having a very big year, would be proud.

Carle-Sanders, Theresa. [Castle Rock Kitchen: Wicked Good Recipes from the World of Stephen King](#) [A Cookbook] (Ten Speed \$35). Signed bookplates from Canadian Carle-Sanders, who put together both *Outlander Kitchen* cookbooks we have sold for years. She also sends recipe cards. Explore 80 classic and modern recipes inspired by Stephen King's Maine, featuring dishes from the books set in Castle Rock, Derry, and other fictional towns—with a foreword from the legendary author himself. Here is an immersive culinary experience from the mouthwatering to the macabre, with gorgeous, moody photographs to transport Stephen King fans to kitchen tables, diners, and picnic blankets. Recipes ranging from drinks to dessert (and every course in-between) are inspired by meals and gatherings from the more than forty novels and stories set in King's Castle Rock multiverse—a darker, more gothic version of the Maine most are familiar with.

Child, Andrew/Lee. [No Plan B: A Jack Reacher Novel](#) (Bantam \$28.99). **Signed by both Childs, Andrew here, Lee in NY.** No Plan B begins with a woman literally being thrown in front of a bus. Reacher sees what really happened from his vantage point, having just arrived in town. Unlike many of the other novels where Reacher stumbles upon a bully or bullies harassing an innocent citizen early in the story, this one starts with the bad guys going straight after Reacher, who is an eyewitness to a murder. The rest is pure Reacher with echoes of Follett's *The Eye of the Needle*. In fact, so pure, Grant went back to Reacher's roots. He's recovered his humor, but Reacher is now more prone to use technology, and since 9/11, he has carried an ATM card, expired passport, and toothbrush with him wherever he goes. The

Minerva, Mississippi team's justifiable fears as they hunt Reacher and Reacher's quest for justice propel the plot, which charts Reacher's long journey from Colorado to Mississippi. With a high body count, Reacher's unique approach to dispensing justice leads to a thrilling denouement. Who could ask for more?

Connelly, Michael. [Desert Star](#) (LittleBrown \$29). **Signed here November 9.** Ballard invites the retired Bosch to volunteer for the LAPD's newly revived Open-Unsolved Unit, which she's running, enticing him with the prospect of finding the man responsible for the 2013 slaying of an entire family. She also wants to reopen the 1994 murder of 16-year-old Sarah Pearlman, sister of the L.A. city councilman who helped resuscitate the cold case team. Ballard and Bosch work at the department's new homicide archive where the unsolved murder books are stored: "hallowed ground to Bosch: the library of lost souls." Both cases require deep dives into the past; both lead to great action scenes; and, as always, Connelly displays his encyclopedic knowledge of the latest forensics, such as "Investigative Genetic Genealogy." Bosch, however, takes a low-tech approach and follows leads in the field with his trademark intensity, driven by his desire to restore order in a violent world ("The dark engine of murder would never run low on fuel. Not in his lifetime"). This entry, the 24th Bosch novel, may not be as expansive as *The Dark Hours*, but it ranks up there with Connelly's best.

Connolly, John. [The Furies](#) (Atria \$28). **The first 40 to purchase get a Connolly Tote Bag.** Charlie Parker is back in a pair of short novels with a ghostly twist. And here's a Starred Review: "In *The Sisters Strange*, the first of two novels in Connolly's exceptional 20th book featuring Portland, Maine, PI Charlie Parker, a lumber company owner fears that his girlfriend is at risk from her ex-lover, ex-con Raum Buker. Parker's probing leads him to believe that Buker may be connected with the theft of some valuable coins and drawn the ire of a murderous collector, who has already left bodies in his wake, including a man choked to death by coins forced down the victim's throat. In the title novel, set at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, Parker's approached for help by mobster Nate Sawyer's widow. After Sawyer was poisoned in jail, her husband's former criminal associates harass and assault her, believing she knows where he hid some stolen money. Vivid word pictures and humor enhance suspenseful plotlines." *Kirkus Reviews* adds, "Connolly skillfully hints at the occult while keeping Parker grounded and sane. The author imbues both stories with melancholy and deft touches of dark humor. As with all the Charlie Parker books, this is fine fodder for crime fans."

NOTE: Also available (again, many Connolly fans bought the UK edition), is [Shadow Voices](#) (\$36.99). John will have some giveaway items and stickers to go with them which he is bringing along in his doubtless overweight luggage from Ireland. Here the story of genre fiction—horror, romantic fiction, science fiction, crime writing, and more—is also the story of Irish fiction. Irish writers have given the world Lemuel Gulliver, Dracula, and the world of Narnia. They have produced pioneering tales of detection, terrifying ghost stories and ground-breaking women's popular fiction. Now, for the first time, John Connolly's one volume presents the history of Irish genre writing and uses it to explore how we think about fiction itself.

Corcoran, Katherine. [In the Mouth of the Wolf](#) (Bloomsbury \$28). "Corcoran, the former Associated Press bureau chief for Mexico and Central America, debuts with a searing look at the

unsolved 2012 murder of Regina Martínez, an investigative reporter for the Mexican magazine *Proceso*. Martínez was discovered beaten to death in her bathroom in the capital city of the state of Veracruz. Martínez's targets had included influential politicians, such as Fidel Herrera, the former Veracruz governor, whom she'd linked to the misuse of state funds and organized crime. She persisted in her digging, despite Veracruz's history as an extremely dangerous place for journalists. The number of powerful enemies she made led her colleagues to suspect that one of them, possibly Herrera, was responsible for the killing. Corcoran's own reporting discredits the official story that the murder was a crime of passion and that a petty criminal, El Silva, arrested a few months after the killing, was responsible; her analysis makes it clear that El Silva, who confessed under torture, was just a patsy. Corcoran's vivid account is based on hundreds of interviews she conducted in Mexico over seven years. Despite the lack of a satisfying resolution, this succeeds both as an homage to the heroic Martínez and as a gripping real-life whodunit."—*PW* Starred Review

Cornwell, Bernard. [Sharpe's Command](#) (Collins \$48). Publishes 30 October but realistically it won't make it here from London until November. Spain, 1812. Richard Sharpe, the most brilliant—but the most wayward—soldier in the British army, finds himself faced with an impossible task. Two French armies march towards each other. If they meet, the British are lost. And only Sharpe—with just his cunning, his courage and a small band of rogues to rely on—stands in their way

Davidson, Andy. [The Hollow Kind](#) (Farrar \$28). Davidson delves once again into the underbelly of the American South in this haunting, atmospheric tale. In 1989, Nellie Gardner inherits the Georgia turpentine farm Redfern Hill from her estranged grandfather, August Redfern, and sees it as the perfect opportunity to escape her abusive marriage and make a new start with her 11-year-old son, Max. Upon arriving, however, Nellie and Max discover that Redfern Hill consists of acres of desolate pine forest and a crumbling farmhouse. Max is the first to notice something isn't quite right with the property: the apparition of a young girl, odd scratching noises behind the walls, and things moving by themselves are just some of the supernatural incidents that occur around the house and cause the Gardners increasing concern. This timeline alternates with flashbacks to August's own odd experiences with the farm, beginning in 1917 and slowly revealing the hidden history of Redfern Hill—and the ancient, restless evil that has lived in its grounds for decades. It's up to Nellie to put an end to the property's legacy of destruction. Davidson impresses with his chilling and immersive worldbuilding, effortlessly blending generational trauma with supernatural danger. The result is a harrowing novel that's sure to please fans of gothic horror. Perfect for October, no?

DeMille, Nelson. [The Maze](#) (SimonSchuster \$28.99). Having appeared in six best-selling DeMille novels, John Corey is hanging out at his uncle's waterfront estate on Long Island when he heeds a call to help find a serial killer who is dispatching prostitutes and burying them along the beach. Corey is a former NYPD homicide detective, and he's currently "NYU—New York Unemployed." He has plenty of enemies, like the Russian SVR intelligence service, which wants him dead—but waiting for that plotline to develop is like waiting for Godot. Ex-lover Detective Beth Penrose conveys an offer that he become a consultant to

Security Solutions Investigative Services, “a very tacky private investigative agency” located on Suffolk County farmland with a giant hedge maze as a neighbor. Though Beth doesn’t say so, the plan seems to be that Corey will be her confidential informant, getting inside Security Solutions to learn if it has any connection to the killings of nine young Long Island women. Security Solutions is a fun-loving outfit, with after-hours parties like Thirsty Thursdays. “There’s a tough, unsolved murder case with interlocking crimes and suspects that ends in a fiery finish...not for the strait-laced,” says *Kirkus*.

Gauld, Tom. [Revenge of the Librarians](#) (Drawn \$24.95).

Almost certainly Tip-ins. Confront the specter of failure, the wraith of social media, and other supernatural enemies of the cartoonist author. Tom Gauld returns with his wittiest and most trenchant collection of literary cartoons to date. Perfectly composed drawings are punctuated with the artist’s signature brand of humor, hitting high and low. After all, Gauld is just as comfortable taking jabs at *Jane Eyre* and *Game of Thrones*. Some particularly favored targets include the pretentious procrastinating novelist, the commercial mercenary of the dispassionate editor, the willful obscurantism of the vainglorious poet. Quake in the presence of the stack of bedside books as it grows taller! Gnash your teeth at the ever-moving deadline that the writer never meets! Quail before the critic’s incisive dissection of the manuscript! And most importantly, seethe with envy at the paragon of creative productivity! *Revenge of the Librarians* contains even more murders, drubbings, and castigations than *The Department of Mind-Blowing Theories*, *Baking for Kafka*, or any other collections of mordant scribbles by the inimitable Gauld.

Gentill, Sulari. [The Woman in the Library](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.99). Later printings. We squirreled away enough first printings for Gentill, our 2022 Writer in Residence visiting us from Australia the end of October, to sign for our **October Crime Book of the Month**. I say, modestly, I loved editing it (before we sold PP Press) and it is dedicated to me. It’s been a bestseller in hardcover and in trade paperback. We can supply signed later printings of both editions and the [paperback edition](#) (\$16.99). Gentill, who won Australia’s “Edgar” for her standalone [After She Wrote Him](#) (\$16.99), a book-within-a-book metafiction highly praised by Dean Koontz, again centers a story upon authors, books, sliding points of view, and a body in the library, a Boston library in a story that embraces that city.

Gentill is also the author of the marvelous [Rowland Sinclair](#) 1930s historical mysteries much admired by me, Anne Perry, and Rhys Bowen. There are ten and I love them all.

Gervais, Simon. [Robert Ludlum’s The Blackbriar Genesis](#) (Putnam \$28). Canadian Gervais, author of the Clayton White thrillers, enters the Ludlum universe with the launch of a series that centers on Blackbriar, a secret agency that’s been mothballed for years, but has been revived to complement the Treadstone agency. And does it well. Treadstone uses assassination to support American interests, whereas Blackbriar focuses on disrupting foreign intelligence operations. Treadstone agent Oliver Manton is assigned to protect Assistant Deputy Secretary of State Edward Russell, who’s in Cairo on a diplomatic mission. Manton thwarts an attack on Russell, and one year later, Russell, now the Director of National Intelligence, offers him a job as director of Blackbriar, which Manton accepts. Blackbriar has

two of its agents—former FBI agent Helen Jouvert and former CIA officer Donovan Wade—in Cairo tasked with neutralizing a leak in U.S. intelligence. Jouvert and Wade later head to Prague to investigate the killing of a Treadstone agent. There, they face five Mexican cartels and Russian intelligence operatives who have joined forces in a disinformation operation against the U.S. Gervais delivers the exciting action, colorful heroes and villains, and seamless plots that readers have come to expect from this dependable franchise. Ludlum would be proud.

Godfrey, Bradley. [Imposter](#) (Blackstone \$25.99). It’s been awhile since what is in part a medical mystery caught my eye. In our **October First Mystery Book of the Month**, Chicago pediatrician Lilian Donaldson and her sister, Rosie, a graphic designer, agree to meet three years after they fell out in the aftermath of their parents’ freak death from carbon monoxide poisoning. Lilian, who remains shaken by a missed diagnosis that contributed to a patient’s death from cancer, is eager to mend fences. Driving together on an icy road in the middle of a snowstorm, Rosie admits that she has something important to tell Lilian—a secret she describes as a matter of life and death. But before she can say more, a car careens into theirs, with devastating consequences. Lilian’s fears increase when she finds out the collision may have been intentional—and she surprises a stranger at her sister’s hospital bedside who looks like the driver she saw before their car was hit. This man says he’s Daniel, Rosie’s fiancé, and he is ready to take care of her—Rosie has a brain injury and an unusual syndrome. Is he some kind of imposter? Gaslighting. Obsession. Manipulation. Dark Secrets!

Grant, Rachel. [Into the Storm](#) (Janus \$14.99). **Signed Book-plates.** As a storm rolls in, a team of elite Navy SEALs arrives at a remote lodge for a wilderness training exercise that becomes terrifyingly real... Xavier Rivera planned the exercise down to the smallest detail, but he didn’t plan the arrival of archaeologist Audrey Kendrick—a woman he shared a passionate night with before betraying her in the worst way. As the storm is unleashed on the historic lodge it becomes clear the training has been compromised. Trapped by weather, isolated by the remote wilderness, and silenced as communication with the world has been severed, unarmed SEALs face an unexpected and deadly foe. Audrey and Xavier must set aside their distrust and desire and work together to save a team under fire and survive in a battle against the wild.(This story was inspired by my archaeologist husband’s work for the Navy to get approval for Navy SEALs to train in Washington State Parks.)

Appearing with Grant is bestseller Toni Anderson, also experimenting with publishing her work in [Cold Silence](#) (Anderson \$16.99). We will see more of this for various reasons including the platform the major book distributor, Ingram, has made available. Here is have Shane Livingstone of the FBI Hostage Rescue Team frustrated when an injury sidelines him during an operation to capture a sadistic killer who films torturing his victims to sell on the dark web. While Shane is sidelined a teammate dies, and so....

✂Hamdy, Adam. [The Other Side of Night](#) (Macmillan \$55). Loved our zoom event with Hamdy, living in Mauritius, and Peng Shepherd [you can watch here](#). Here is the Signed UK edition we can order on demand while supply lasts.

In the preface to this stellar thriller from British author Hamdy, popular novelist David Asha reflects on the close bond

he shared with his son, Elliot, grateful for their time together but lamenting the tragic events that drove them apart. In the main narrative, various pertinent letters and emails, court and police reports, and news clippings tell the story of two people: disgraced police detective Harriet Kealty, dismissed from the force over manslaughter allegations; and the widowed David Asha whose wife, university physicist Elizabeth Asha, may have involved foul play. While researching a cryptic note found in a book, Harri learns about the Asha family; David appears to have stepped off a cliff to his death, leaving his orphaned little boy Elliott entrusted to a family friend, Ben Elmys, a man Harriet once held strong feelings for, but who spurned her love. “Mistrustful of Ben and concerned about the boy’s safety, Harriet goes on a private crusade to uncover evidence of wrongdoing, with shocking consequences. Intelligently plotted and powerfully told, Hamdy’s deviously twisty tale of fate and coincidence, love and courage, and profoundly tough choices will shock, stir, and haunt readers long after the final page.”

Heughan, Sam. [Waypoints](#) (LittleBrown \$29). **Tip-ins by Heughan; Signed by Diana Gabaldon.** In this intimate journey of self-discovery, Sam sets out along Scotland’s rugged ninety-six-mile West Highland Way to map out the moments that shaped his views on dreams and ambition, family, friendship, love, and life. The result is a love letter to the wild landscape that means so much to him, full of charming, funny, wise, and searching insights into the world through his eyes. Limited supply.

Hewson, David. [The Medici Murders](#) (Severn \$45). When a well-known British TV historian, Marmaduke Godolphin, is found murdered in the canals of Venice during carnival, stabbed by a stiletto blade, the Venetian police are eager to have the case solved and cleared up within a day—m murder is bad for tourism! The police recruit the help of retired archivist, Arnold Clover. Godolphin had hired his services on arriving in Venice to help sort through some historical papers of note. These dusty documents may contain previously unknown information about the assassination of the murderer, Lorenzino de’ Medici, 500 years previously. How coincidental that Godolphin meets his death in the same place as the Medici murderer, Lorenzino, on a cold, dark, bloody night. Can Arnold use his powers of perception to establish a link and solve the murder of Godolphin? If you love Donna Leon’s work then this is a deeper dive into Venetian history as well as a loving walkabout around the magical city.

The Unsigned US edition is our October International Crime Book of the Month: [The Medici Murders](#) (\$29.95). Be careful which price you click when ordering in the webstore.

Kemerer, Brigid. [Forging Silver into Stars](#) (Bloomsbury \$18.99). An exciting read for teens taking them into an expanded Cursebreaker world where ancient magic tests a newfound love, a dark fate beckons... Starts a new series.

Klavan, Andrew. [A Strange Habit of Mind](#) (Mysterious \$26.95). Cameron Winter, once an assassin for a covert government entity called the Division, is now a literature professor at a Midwestern university after blackmailing the dean about “things the dean wanted to keep hidden until the end of the world.” Romantic poetry scholar Winter can’t let go of the suicide of a former student, Adam Kemp, who jumped from the roof of his San Francisco apartment building right after texting Winter, “Help

me.” Winter, who defended Kemp against a date rape charge and is curious why Kemp hadn’t waited a few minutes for a response to the text, travels to California to investigate—not the verdict of suicide, which he accepts, but the why of it. And gradually the role of Pup, a billionaire tech titan married to the sister of Kemp’s girlfriend, moves front and center. There’s a fair amount of philosophizing here, and poetry, as Winter moves inexorably forward. Winter’s introduction in [When Christmas Comes](#) (\$21.95) was a high demand 2021 title.

Klinger, Leslie S. [The New Annotated Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde](#) (Penzler \$34.95). **Introduction by Joe Hill.** There’s no question that *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is one of the most influential texts of all time. The now-iconic tale, which has confounded and thrilled readers for more than a century, was described by one scholar as the only detective-crime story in which the solution is more terrifying than the problem. And even as its plot gets continually reinterpreted and reimaged in literature, film, and theater, the main themes persist, as do the titular characters, now so familiar as to have become a part of the English language. This new edition gives the classic tale of depraved murder and unrelenting horror it’s most complete and illuminating presentation yet. Heavily illustrated with over a 150 full color images from the history of this cultural touchstone—including reproductions of rare books, film stills, theatrical posters, and the true-life people associated with the adventure—and extensively annotated by Edgar Award winning editor and noted Victorian literature expert Leslie S. Klinger, this thorough and authoritative approach is both an invaluable resource for scholars and a sumptuous treat for fans of the text. A Starred review adds, “Richly illustrated with scenes from Victorian London, playbills, and film images, this will instantly become the definitive edition of this complex and influential piece of literature.”—*PW*

✚MacBird, Bonnie. [What Child Is This?](#) (Collins \$36). Note: **The Unsigned US edition is our December British Crime Club Book of the Month.**

True to the curmudgeonly character, this schmaltz-free Christmas novel also gives a fascinating look at the attitudes toward love and family in late Victorian England – while deftly weaving a suitably Sherlockian double mystery.”—Matt Witten. During the holly jolly season, Sherlock Holmes takes on two cases. The angelic three-year-old child of a wealthy couple is the target of a vicious kidnapper, and a country aristocrat worries that his handsome, favourite son has mysteriously vanished from his London *pied à terre*. Sadly MacBird won’t be joining us at The Pen this year. We are zooming and these signed copies come from London.

Mackay, Margaret. [Ian of New Scotland](#) (Brandan Press 12.99). **With an Introduction by Diana Gabaldon who signed our copies.** A tiny press based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, brings us a book about 13-year-old Iain Robertson. It’s 1773 and he’s just arrived there with his parents and little sister in Pictou Harbor after a long, disastrous Atlantic voyage. They came for a new life in New Scotland, but Iain is desperately homesick for the Highlands. How will they, so ill equipped and penniless, survive the coming harsh winter—and the locals? Written for a young audience this is still of interest to Outlander fans for the Glossary of Gaelic and of Mi’kmaw, the maps, and Gaelic songs translated into English.

Margaret, Joanna. [The Bequest](#) (Penzler \$26.95). I have mixed feelings about this debut which combines the Dark Academic (in freezing Scotland) with a deep dive into 16th Century French history and a Bad Actor. This review sums up my feelings for a book appealing to history buffs: “PhD candidate Isabel Henley, the narrator of Margaret’s impressive if flawed debut, follows her older college chum, Rose Brewster, to Scotland’s St. Stephens University, where she learns that the rock-star feminist scholar who was to be her thesis adviser has just died in a hiking accident. Flash forward a few months. Only the occasional outing with Rose or fantasizing about a broodingly handsome young lecturer relieves the lonely Isabel’s immersion in the lives of 16th-century monarch Catherine de’ Medici and her female court. Rose’s subsequent disappearance puts Isabel on the trail of a priceless emerald legend claims was brought from Brazil to Italy by the subject of Rose’s dissertation, Catherine’s courtier Federico Falcone. As Isabel embarks on a high-stakes intellectual treasure hunt that will take her from the Falcone family’s Genoese palazzo to archives in Florence and Paris, the author not only maintains suspense but makes the historical figures come vibrantly alive through their correspondence. Indeed, the contemporary characters pale by comparison, and a couple of key figures swing wildly between winningly seductive and sociopathic, particularly as dictated by the hairpin turns of the far-fetched denouement.” The history will appeal to fans of Susanna Kearsley.

✦Marston, Edward. [The Railway Detective’s Christmas Case](#) (Allison \$44). December 1864. As a cold winter wind scours the Worcestershire countryside, an excursion train comes through a tunnel in the Malvern Hills to be confronted by a blockage on the line ahead. The driver manages to slow the train down so that the impact is minimized, but the passengers are alarmed. The first person to alight is Cyril Hubbleday, the man in charge of the excursion to the delightful spa town of Great Malvern. He walks to the front of the locomotive and as he is talking to the driver, fireman and guard, Hubbleday is shot dead by a sniper. Christmas is coming all too soon and Inspector Robert Colbeck and Sergeant Victor Leeming are under pressure to solve the case quickly. However, with a number of disputes and enemies in the shadows behind the seasonal excursion and the investigation hampered by heavy snow, the hunt for a cold-blooded killer is far from straightforward.

McEwan, Ian. [Lessons](#) (Knopf \$30). **Tip-ins.** “McEwan returns with his best work since the Booker- and NBCC-winning *Atonement*, a sprawling narrative that stretches from the commencement of the Cold War to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Protagonist Roland Baines, “another inky boy in a boarding school,” is 11 when his piano teacher, Miriam Cornell, begins to groom him for abuse. A sexual relationship ensues, and Roland never recovers from the experience. He grows into a distant underachiever, eventually finding work as a lounge pianist in London and, occasionally, as a journalist. He marries Alissa and has a son, Lawrence, but Alissa disappears when Lawrence is an infant. With help from the police, he tracks her movement to Paris, prompting bittersweet memories of their courtship. In 1986, three-year-old Lawrence obsesses over such events as the Chernobyl disaster while Roland confronts the lingering impact of Miriam’s abuse and Alissa’s sudden reappearance. Alissa then publishes a bestselling (and specious) memoir, which isn’t so nice on Roland. Throughout, McEwan poignantly shows how the

characters contend with major historical moments while dealing with the ravages of daily life.”—*PW* Starred Review

McKinlay, Jenn. [The Plot and the Pendulum](#) (Berkley \$27). Library director Lindsey Norris is happy to learn the Briar Creek Public Library is the beneficiary of the Dorchester family’s vast book collection. However, when Lindsey and the library staff arrive at the old Victorian estate to gather the books, things take a sinister turn. One of the bookcases reveals a secret passage, leading to a room where a skeleton is found, clutching an old copy of *The Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe*. Lindsey does a quick check of missing persons, using the distinctive 80s era clothing worn by the deceased to determine a time frame, and discovers that Briar Creek has an unsolved missing person’s case from 1989. A runaway bride went missing just weeks after her wedding. No suspects were ever arrested and the cold case remains unsolved. Lindsey and the crafters crew decide that justice is overdue and set about solving the old murder mystery, using some novel ideas to crack the case. This Lucky #13 in the Library Lovers Mystery series is perfect for Halloween, no?

For fans of her delightful Cupcake Bakery Mysteries, McKinlay has put together a [Fairy Tale Cupcakes Cookbook](#) (\$12.99).

Mosse, Kate. [Warrior Queens & Quiet Revolutionaries](#) (Macmillan \$44) is a celebration of unheard and under-heard women’s history. Within these pages you’ll meet nearly 1000 women whose names deserve to be better known: from the Mothers of Invention and the trailblazing women at the Bar; Warrior Queens and Pirate Commanders; the women who dedicated their lives to the natural world or to medicine; those women of courage who resisted and fought for what they believed in to defend their families, their culture and their countries; to the unsung heroes of stage, screen and stadium. It travels the world – from the UK to the United States of America, Romania and Chile to Pakistan, Uganda to Germany, South Africa and India to New Zealand – and spans all periods of time. But it is also an intensely moving detective story of the author’s own family history as Kate Mosse pieces together the forgotten life of her great-grandmother, Lily Watson, a famous and highly-successful novelist in her day who has all but disappeared from the record. Ambitious in its scope and fascinating in its detail, this beautifully illustrated book features a diverse and global cast of names and is both an alternative and eclectic women’s history of the world, a love letter to family history and a personal memoir about the nature of women’s struggles to be heard and their achievements

Ng, Celeste. [Our Missing Hearts](#) (Penguin \$29). **Tip-ins.** The author of [Little Fires Everywhere](#) (\$17) sets this prophetic novel in a dystopian U.S. in which dissent is surveilled and heavily punished. Ever since revolutionary poet Margaret Miu went missing three years ago, her 12-year-old son, Bird Gardner, has struggled to make sense of her disappearance. His friend Sadie claims Margaret is leading a movement to fight the federal law Preserving American Culture and Traditions (PACT), created as an antidote to a period of violent civic unrest. Protest art featuring heart imagery and the phrase “our missing hearts,” borrowed from a Margaret Miu poem, pops up across the nation and is just as quickly expunged. Then Bird receives an envelope containing a drawing from a folktale his mother used to tell him. Could the drawing lead him to her? Ng’s brilliantly envisioned novel asks

what it means to be a good parent or a good citizen when every child is at risk—and demonstrates the power of art to challenge injustice.

The Indie Next Pick adds, “Ng wrestles with how to find hope for ourselves and our children against forces that bend toward authoritarianism and nationalism.” And here is [a long review](#) in the *NY Times* which says Ng “explores a fictional world where Chinese Americans are spurned and books are recycled into toilet paper.”

O’Connor, Carlene. [No Strangers Here](#) (Kensington \$26). *LJ* enthuses: “In a tight-knit Irish town, the body of Johnny O’Reilly, the town’s richest man, is found staged on a local beach. The only clues are black stones spelling out “Last Dance,” a tarot card, a syringe containing veterinary euthanasia medication, and small footprints leading away from the scene. Recently transferred DI Cormac O’Brien, ignorant of the local lore and characters, is dependent upon longtime DS Neely for context. The O’Reilly family is determined to point O’Brien in the direction of local veterinarian Dr. Wilde, due to longstanding family grudges. Alerted to the situation by a friend and former police officer, Wilde’s daughter Dimpna, also a veterinarian, reluctantly returns home after a long absence to find her father not only a suspect in a murder, but also sadly losing his memory and incapable of maintaining his practice. She steps into his practice and the murder investigation. Cormac and Dimpna navigate the clues and uncover answers to long held secrets. Known for her cozies, O’Connor (“Home to Ireland” and “Irish Village” series) moves into darker territory here. For fans of Louise Penny.”

She can also sign [The Christmas Scarf Murder](#) (Kensington \$26) in which she teams up with Maddie Day and Peggy Ehrhart for a holly jolly Christmas collection of seasonal stories, as their beloved series sleuths each solve cases revolving around hand-knit Christmas scarves.

✎Odden, Karen. [Under a Veiled Moon](#) (Crooked Lane \$27.99). After solving the river murders while working for Scotland Yard the year before, Corravan is acting superintendent at Wapping River Police, not too far from the Irish district of Whitechapel, where he grew up. When visiting Ma Doyle in Whitechapel—the woman who took him in as an orphan—Corravan discovers that someone is terrorizing the area, shooting people and looting stores. His adopted 19-year-old brother, Colin, has also fallen in with the wrong people—Corravan is worried that he’s working for an Irish crime boss named James McCabe, who runs the Cobbwaller gang. Corravan was once a member of a thieving gang, so he’s well aware of the danger involved. There’s also a man’s murder to investigate. Then the unthinkable happens. The coal carrier *Bywell Castle* rams into the pleasure steamer *Princess Alice*, sinking it and killing many of its more than 600 passengers. Working with his former Scotland Yard boss, Director Vincent, Corravan learns that all signs indicate the Irish caused the accident. Is it also related to the recent crash of a commuter train? And what does it have to do with the murdered man found nearby? “Odden never strikes a false note, and she combines a sympathetic lead with a twisty plot grounded in the British politics of the day and peopled with fully fleshed-out characters.”—*PW* Starred Review. Fans of Anne Perry’s William Monk series, now completed, will love Corravan’s investigations.

Patterson, James. [Triple Over](#) (LittleBrown \$29). **Signed Bookplates.** A killer slaughtering multigenerational families

wholesale in and around Washington, DC, looks to be seeking out Detective Alex Cross’s family next. Cross is on the case, of course, with his efforts doubled by a flashy true-crime author.

Rankin, Ian. [A Heart Full of Headstones](#) (Orion \$46). “Edgar winner Rankin’s outstanding 24th John Rebus novel opens dramatically with the Edinburgh detective, officially retired but still working, in the dock charged with a crime that’s not revealed until the very end. Flashbacks show familiar characters from Rebus’s world pursuing various agendas. Organized crime kingpin Morris “Big Ger” Cafferty, an old adversary of the detective, asks Rebus to find a man he wronged, but Rebus still has eyes on taking down Cafferty. Det. Insp. Siobhan Clarke, a former colleague of Rebus’s, is investigating a policeman accused of domestic abuse who threatens to expose a culture of police corruption (“Skeletons are about to come tumbling out of closets”). Malcolm Fox, a loathsome, ambitious detective inspector, wants to contain that threat’s collateral damage. Every thread leads to murder. The well-constructed plot is matched by brooding, atmospheric prose (Rebus has ‘spent his whole life in... a city perpetually dark, feeling increasingly weighed down, his heart full of headstones’). This is one of Rankin’s best Rebus novels in years.” That was said last year of [A Song for the Dark Times](#) (\$16.99) so I’m really pumped to plunge into this one.

Rankin is touring Canada but not the US, sob, hence the UK Signed copies. The Unsigned US is [A Heart Full of Headstones](#) (Little Brown \$28).

I add we have a dozen Signed copies left of [Rebus’ Scotland](#) (Orion \$25), now out of print but a kind of photographic biography of Rebus and Rankin.

Rendon, Marcie R. [Sinister Graves](#) (Soho \$27.95). Set sometime in the 1970s, Rendon’s strong third Cash Blackbear mystery finds 19-year-old college student Cash, an Ojibwe who was separated from her family when she was three, continuing to serve as the unofficial assistant of Wheaton, the sheriff of Minnesota’s Norman County, who rescued her from the foster care system. When flood waters on the Red River float the body of an unidentified Native American woman into Ada, Minn., the coroner determines that she was smothered to death. The coroner shows Wheaton and Cash an item he found on the body: a torn page from a hymnal with words in both English and Ojibwe. Cash later learns of the victim’s possible connection to another dead woman, who attended an unusual fundamentalist church run by the charismatic Pastor John Steene. Despite being warned to stay away from Steene, Cash seeks him out, determined to get to the truth. Rendon deepens the complex character of her eccentric Native American lead, who believes she can read minds and has revelatory out-of-body experiences. Lisbeth Salander fans will be eager to see more of Cash.

✎Robb, Candace. [A Fox in the Fold](#) (Severn \$29.99). October, 1376. Owen Archer is summoned by sheriff Sir Ralph Hastings regarding a stripped and bloodied body discovered on the road north to York. Could it be connected to an attack on a carter and his laborers who were transporting stone destined for St Clement’s Priory? The carter fled, but his men stayed to fight and are now missing. Is the victim one of them? At first Owen believes the catalyst for murder and menace in York is the arrival of the political pariah William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester. But he soon suspects that a formidable and skillful adversary from his past has arrived in the city, thrusting him and his family into grave danger.

Rosen, Lev. [Lavender House](#) (Forge \$26.99). This is one of my favorite books this month, a country-house Christie whodunnit with a locked room aspect, as one of its many raves (Indie Next, Library Reads, etc) underlines: “This mystery, just a step past cozy, is set in 1950s San Francisco, where a P.I. is hired by a woman who needs to know the truth about the death of her wife. When he discovers their home is a protective haven for a found family of queer couples, it opens his eyes. This is an absorbing, locked-room mystery that works in commentary.” All that is true but what really captures me is the vivid picture Rosen paints of a dedicated cop booted off the force when he’s discovered trysting with a guy in a bar bathroom. It reminds me of what I’ve read about the persecution visited upon the brilliant Alan Turing that pushed him to suicide. Our former SFPD Inspector Evander Mills who has lost his job, his apartment, everything, is debating suicide himself when a very wealthy woman appears wishing to hire him to discover who murdered her wife, a soap company heiress and genius (there is a lot to learn here about the soap industry, amazing). Pearl brings Andy to the secluded Lamontaine estate, where he plumbs the question, could one of the “family” residing there be responsible for Irene’s death? What makes this a standout is not the plot but the vivid depictions of the characters’ personal struggles and the depiction of a San Francisco that not much later became a center of gay liberation.

Rosenfelt, David. [Santa’s Little Yelpers](#) (St Martins \$25.99). Chris Myers, an employee at the Tara Foundation, a dog rescue center “professionally retired” NJ lawyer Andy Carpenter runs, needs his help. A disbarred lawyer, Chris was convicted of involuntary manslaughter as the result of a bar fight almost three years earlier. He has always insisted he was innocent of the crime, and now a prominent witness in the case against him has come to Chris saying that he was paid to give false testimony. Before the motion to have Chris’s conviction overturned is processed, though, the recanting witness is found dead, and Chris is arrested for murder. Andy and his investigative team, which includes his wife, Laurie, a former cop with the Paterson, N.J., PD, and Marcus Clark, a “remarkably scary and dangerous” person, who saves Andy’s bacon whenever fisticuffs are called for, set out to clear Chris. In the process, they unmask a nefarious scheme. A nice group of supportive human pals, adorable dogs, and a plot that’s just complicated enough make this a winner. Cozy fans not already familiar with this series should check it out.

Sandford, John. [Righteous Prey](#) (Putnam \$29.95). **Signed on October 3, our bookstore 33rd birthday. There will be cake.** Sandford has had a rollicking good time with this joint investigation by US Marshal Lucas Davenport and Minnesota BCA agent Virgil Flowers, not quite a father and son scenario, more like two bros, since Virgil is always his own man as they buck various law enforcement agencies including their own in an unusual case. This novel also showcases some of Sandford’s best prose spiced with lively humor (Ok, and a body count).

It opens with a brutally executed murder of a vicious predator on the streets of San Francisco. We quickly learn that behind it is The Five, a highly organized group of mega-wealthy vigilantes, who meet on the dark web and keep their identities secret from each other. Bored and thrill seeking, but also motivated by disgust for the worst of society—rapists, murderers, and thieves—The Five issue a press release: their

objective is “to murder people who need to be murdered.” The Five then use their unlimited resources to offset the damage done by those who they’ve killed, donating untraceable Bitcoin to charities and victims via the dark net. (Intriguing design, sort of like committing to carbon offsets). The Five soon become the most popular figures on social media, like modern-day Batmen... though their motives may not be entirely pure. But The Five err by murdering a woman in the Twin Cities, thus bringing Flowers and Davenport to the scene. Soon the pair has their hands full—the killings are smart and carefully choreographed, and with no apparent direct connection to the victims, The Five are virtually untraceable. Virtually...but not to our dream team.

About whom *Booklist* reports, “Sandford’s characters seem to have limitless unexplored nooks and crannies to their personalities,” while *PW*, like me, enjoys the rapport between Davenport and Flowers: their pithy dialogue is spiced with the kind of humor that enduring friendships engender.”

Saunders, George. [Liberation Day: Stories](#) (Random \$28). **Tip-ins.** A tour de force collection that showcases all of Saunders’ many skills.

Shepherd, Megan. [Malice House](#) (Hyperion \$26.99). “Haunting and atmospheric, Megan Shepherd expertly blends horror and suspense in her captivating book-within-a-book adult debut. Beautifully written and steeped in Gothic lore, *Malice House* explores themes of family and legacy, magic and curses, and the mysterious power of stories.”—Megan Miranda.

Of all the things aspiring artist Haven Marbury expected to find while clearing out her late father’s remote seaside house, *Bedtime Stories for Monsters* was not on the list. This secret handwritten manuscript is disturbingly different from his Pulitzer-winning works: its interweaving short stories crawl with horrific monsters and enigmatic humans that exist somewhere between this world and the next. The stories unsettle but also entice Haven, practically compelling her to illustrate them while she stays in the house that her father warned her was haunted. Clearly just dementia whispering in his ear...right? Reeling from a failed marriage, Haven hopes an illustrated *Bedtime Stories* can be the lucrative posthumous father-daughter collaboration she desperately needs to jump-start her art career. However, everyone in the nearby vacation town wants a piece of the manuscript: her father’s obsessive literary salon members, the Ink Drinkers; her mysterious yet charming neighbor, who has a tendency toward three a.m. bonfires; a young barista with a literary forgery business; and of course, whoever keeps trying to break into her house. But then a monstrous creature appears under Haven’s bed right as grisly deaths are reported in the nearby woods.

“Gripping, chilling, creepy, and enthralling, *Malice House* channels Shirley Jackson, if Shirley Jackson knew how to make me check under the bed every night before going to sleep. *Malice House* is a must for readers who love gothic horror, creaking old houses, attics overflowing with dark secrets, or for anyone who has ever secretly suspected that there is an entire other universe hovering just out of reach.”

Stanley, Michael. [A Deadly Covenant](#) (White Sun Books \$16.99). Author Kwei Quartey writes, “Stanley’s third book, *Death of the Mantis*, was shortlisted for an Edgar award and won a Barry Award. Their fourth book, *Deadly Harvest*, was shortlisted for an International Thriller Writers award. The latest series installment—Stanley’s eighth—is a prequel set on the Kavango

River in north-west Botswana and starts with the discovery of a long dead Bushman skeleton that turns out to be one of a group of murdered Bushmen. As a big fan of uncovered or unsolved mysteries from the remote past, I found this completely intriguing and engrossing and the Bushman scenes fascinating. Kubu seems ever more incisive than his first outing as a detective in *Facets of Death*. Vividly painted scenery—and you can feel the oppressive heat. Talk about Sunshine Noir! Read more by Quartey in a fascinating essay about this series, [Botswana, Detective Kubu, and Bushmen](#).

CLASSICS

Gardner, Erle Stanley. [The Bigger They Come](#) (American Mystery Classics \$15.95). Bertha Cool is the gruff, tough-talking, corpulent head of her private detective agency, opened after the death of her husband; Donald Lam is her meek, slight, and nervy new hire, who makes up for a lack of boldness with brilliant deductive work. In this, their first outing, Donald Lam is tasked with delivering divorce papers to a man who reportedly made a fortune in rigged slot machines. The only problem is that nobody—not even the police—can find him. Before long, Lam’s seemingly-simple assignment finds him caught up in a web of money, mysterious safety deposit boxes, and a gang of toughs every bit as desperate as he is to find the runaway husband. You could say this is more Paul Drake than Perry Mason....

Latimer, Rupert. [Murder after Christmas](#) (Poisoned Pen \$14.99). This pseudonymous novel from 1944, one of the most obscure entries in the British Library Crime Classics, is also one of the most rewarding with its ‘lively riot of murder, holiday desserts, and misdirection, cleverly twisting the tropes of Golden Age detective fiction. Wartime needs have turned Sir Willoughby Keene-Cotton out of his hotel, and Rhoda Redpath, his stepdaughter by his late wife, thinks it’s too dangerous for him to join his ailing current wife, Lady Josephine, in London. So she talks her husband, Frank, into inviting him to their country home, Four Corners, for the holiday; Frank’s aunt, Paulina Redpath, has already come to live with them, and they invite lots of other people to round out the party; the neighboring Crosbys and Coultards will stop by for an evening featuring not one but two Father Christmases. His exorbitant wealth, complicated family relations, ambiguous will, and habit of confusing his wives with each other make it obvious from the get-go that Uncle Willie, as Rhoda calls him, will be murdered, but that’s about all that will be obvious. Even after Willie’s old friend Major Smythe, now Chief Constable of Blandshire, and Superintendent Culley establish that he’s been fed a lethal dose of laudanum, there are riddles upon riddles and how his body came to end up outdoors next to a ruined snowman.

Latimer, a pen name for Algernon Victor Mills (1905-1953), supplies cheerfully calculating relatives, decorously brutal dialogue, and a fiendishly intricate set of Chinese boxes before the surprising reveal. No, they don’t make them like this anymore—so golden-age fans should welcome this rediscovery with open arms.”—*Kirkus* Starred Review.

BRACE FOR HALLOWEEN

Here’s one publisher’s roundup of [Must Read Horror Books](#). Unsurprisingly Stephen King dominates this list

Chapman, Clay. [Ghost Eaters](#) (Quirk Books \$21.99). “Chapman puts a new spin on ghost stories with a tale of a drug that allows

people to be ‘haunted’ by dead loved ones. Featuring a strong subplot about the roots of colonization, this excellent horror novel examines being addicted to grief and the lengths some go to hang onto those they love. For fans of Paul Tremblay and Grady Hendrix.” The Indie Next Pick adds, “A dark and chilling story about a group of friends who discover an addictive drug that allows them to see dead people. Well, more like forces, and it gets intense. This was impossible to put down, but please read it with the lights on!”

Davidson, Andy. [The Hollow Kind](#) (Farrar \$28). See Signed Books!

Dressler, M. [I See You So Close](#) (Arcade \$24.99). A spellbinding novel, Book Two in the Last Ghost Series, of the hunter and the hunted, defiance and survival, for fans of Jennifer McMahon and Simone St. James. In a climate-ravaged town in the remote Utah desert, a house remodels itself, a cemetery is rearranged, and an ancient valley is suddenly haunted by a glimmering visitor. Called in to “clean” the unwanted dead, ghost hunter Philip Pratt finds himself in territory at once familiar and unfamiliar, stalking the spirit of Emma Rose Finnis, a one-hundred-year-old phantom who has never let his own spirit rest. Yet Emma has come to this blazing desert for her own reasons—to see just how far a ghost can go in a changing world. And if a living man bars her path, she must find a way through him, even if it means risking her heart and soul. Joined by other ghosts of the West, both old and new, she will make her stand for the unexpected chance at love and home, far from the cold ocean grave where she began.

Givhan, Jennifer. [River Woman, River Demon](#) (Blackstone \$28.99). Here’s a well-deserved Starred Review from *Kirkus*: “Eva Santos Moon is a glass blower by trade and a bruja by heritage. Her husband, Jericho, a college professor, also runs a Magick shop, and they have two wonderful children whose names begin with X. But no amount of protection they can summon will help when they discover the body of Eva’s friend Cecelia in the river behind their house and Jericho is immediately arrested for her murder. Evidence emerges that suggests he may have been having an affair with Cecelia, but when Eva tries to talk to him about it, he suggests he may plead guilty to protect her. After all, it’s not the first time someone close to Eva has died; when she was 15, her best friend drowned, and she was believed by some to be responsible. The trauma of this most recent death, and her suspicions about Jericho, instantly sends Eva back to a place of trauma; drinking and blacking out, she also begins to experience visitations from Cecelia’s ghost. Then a former love reenters her life, and Eva has to decide where her path of happiness lies—and how far she will go to find out the truth about Cecelia’s murder. There are all the expected thrills and chills as well as some unexpected ones, but the real gift here is Givhan’s command of language. She employs gorgeous metaphors and crass slang with precision. In a similar way, the mystical and the earthly are seamlessly intertwined, in place as well as in plot. It’s not often that we get a story of hoodoo and conjuring that presents these as religious elements rather than sensational ones. Eva embodies these complexities as well; she’s a memorable and multifaceted heroine. Sharp as glass shards and lush as the desert after the rain, the writing is the true magic here.”

Hieber, Leanna Renee. [A Haunted History of Invisible Women](#) (Kensington \$15.95). True stories of America’s ghosts.

“Delightfully harrowing and full of spine-tingling horrors, this is not your average book of ghost stories. Hieber and Janes go far beyond the obvious thrills and chills, providing fascinating context and lavish detail in this incredibly empathetic book as they gently remind us not only of what we are but what we may become. You’ll be thinking about this one long after you finish. Read it with the lights on!” —Deanna Raybourn

Hogarth, Ainslie. [Mothering](#) (Vintage \$17). The Indie Next Pick: “*Mothering* is dark, witty, and absurd — the perfect combination! Abby and Ralph move in with Ralph’s mother, but Laura is conniving and prickly. This book will leave you gasping, and you might think twice about eating chicken à la king.”

Jennings, Alex. [The Ballad of Perilous Graves](#) (Orbit \$28). Music is magic in this vibrant and imaginative debut novel set in a fantastical version of New Orleans where a battle for the city’s soul brews between two young mages, a vengeful wraith, and one powerful song. Nola is a city full of wonders. A place of sky trolleys and dead cabs, where haints dance the night away and Wise Women help keep the order. To those from Away, Nola might seem strange. To Perilous Graves, it’s simply home. In a world of everyday miracles, Perry might not have a talent for magic, but he does know Nola’s rhythm as intimately as his own heartbeat. So when the city’s Great Magician starts appearing in odd places and essential songs are forgotten, Perry realizes trouble is afoot. Nine songs of power have escaped from the piano that maintains the city’s beat, and without them, Nola will fail. Unwilling to watch his home be destroyed, Perry will sacrifice everything to save it. But a storm is brewing, and the Haint of All Haints is awake....

Lozano, Brenda. [Witches](#) (Catapult \$26). In translation. The beguiling story of a young journalist whose investigation of a murder leads her to the most legendary healer in all of Mexico, from one of the most prominent voices of a new generation of Latin American writers. The Indie Next Pick: “*Witches* features the most distinctive voice I’ve come across in fiction this year. Feliciano’s life as an indigenous healer — or *curandera* — is hypnotic. Her story combines with Zoe’s to highlight women striving to find their own voices.”

Mandanna, Sangu. [The Very Secret Society of Irregular Witches](#) (Penguin \$17). Mika Moon chafes at the Rules, a set of regulations established for witches, chief of which is that witchcraft remain secret. Her tiny act of rebellion is posting social media videos of real magic tricks. She expects viewers to say she’s a fake. However, “in a big house in a quiet, windy corner of the Norfolk countryside, a skinny old man in a magnificent rainbow scarf and enormous fluffy slippers was saying exactly the opposite.” Mika receives a direct message requesting a live-in tutor for three magically gifted girls at remote Nowhere House. She accepts. In addition to the precocious children, she meets elderly Ian and Ken, devoted husbands; the kindly housekeeper, Lucie; and grumpy, gorgeous librarian Jamie. Mika finds that she fits into this makeshift family, but her happiness may unravel when she learns the denizens of Nowhere House have a bigger secret than magic. This cozy, charming fantasy about found family and self-acceptance enfolds readers in a delightful cocoon of magic and humor.

An Indie Next Pick and also Library Reads which says, “Mika is one of the few witches secretly living in Britain

when someone reaches out for help teaching three young witches. She becomes entangled in the lives of her pupils and the household, including the handsome yet grouchy librarian Jaime. A cozy romance for fans of *The House in the Cerulean Sea*.”

Medawar, Tony. [Ghosts from the Library: Lost Tales of Terror and the Supernatural](#) (Harper \$16.99) resurrects forgotten tales of the supernatural by some of the masters of the Golden Age. From Arthur Conan Doyle and John Dickson Carr to Agatha Christie and Daphne du Maurier, this spine-chilling anthology brings together thirteen uncollected tales of terror, plus some additional surprises—thrills, spills, and chills perfect for Halloween.

Mesa, Desideria. [Bindle Punk Bruja](#) (Harper Voyager \$17.99). “Luna is both a daughter of Mexican immigrants trying to establish herself in the 1920s Kansas City underworld and a bruja, an earth witch who can read emotions and bend others to her will. Complex character relationships enhance this entertaining historical fantasy. For fans of *The Chosen and the Beautiful* and *The Gods of Jade and Shadow*.” The Indie Next Pick adds, “Half-Mexican, white-passing witch Rose dreams of owning her own illegal jazz club in 1920s Kansas City while refining her inherited powers in a sexist, racist society. *Bindle Punk Bruja* is fun, sexy, and downright dangerous — so is Rose.”

Schwaeble, Hank. [Moonless Nocturne](#) (A/G Publishing \$17.95). A riveting collection of short stories from Bram Stoker Award-winner Schwaeble. Tori Eldridge says, “From classic noir with a supernatural twist to futuristic sci-fi terror to military action in faraway jungles, *Moonless Nocturne* delves into the darkest corners of the mind for a thrilling and mystifying ride. His horrifying, dystopian ‘Everything Not Forbidden’ shocked me to the core and still won’t let me go.” “Hank Schwaeble manages to craft spine-tingling chills where you least expect them and stories that resonate on every page.”—Mark Greaney. Introduction by F. Paul Wilson.

Shepherd, Megan. [Malice House](#) (Hyperion \$26.99). See Signed Books for more about a complex tale of dark magic, family secrets, and monsters that don’t stay on the page.

Slayton, David R. [Deadbeat Druid](#) (Blackstone \$15.99). Previously, warlock Adam opened a portal that sent his evil great-grandfather John, a druid, to the underworld—and also took his boyfriend, cop-turned-reaper Vic, and his cousin Jodi. Now Adam is determined to get them back. Death herself provides Adam with Vic’s location on the promise that he also retrieves another living person, Melody, who’s similarly unfairly trapped in the afterlife. Adam; his brother, Bobby; and elf Vran embark on the rescue mission—and along the way encounter the ghost of Adam’s father, who upsets Adam by not being the unrepentant villain he remembers. Meanwhile, Vic and Jodi are captured by demons who feed off their pain. They escape but subsequently get swept up by a cult of the dead who consume others to cling to any semblance of life. When the separate parties eventually reunite, they must find a way to stop John for good and repair the disruptions that their living bodies have brought to the underworld. Slayton continues to impress with complex relationships and clever mythologies. Slayton delivers another tightly plotted contemporary fantasy in his fast-paced third Adam Binder novel.

Sterling, Erin. [The Kiss Curse](#) (Avon \$16.99). “Gwyn owns the Graves Glen’s witchcraft shop, and life is good until Wells Pen-

hallow comes back to create havoc at the school and in town. Sterling is very good at the love/hate relationship with a great pinch of wit, and the spell is cast for a fun romcom.” The Indie Next Pick adds, “If you swooned over [The Ex Hex](#) (\$15.99, a big hit here at The Pen), the sequel is here! This time featuring Gwen (and Sir Purrival) with more witchy hijinks, quirky characters, and steamy scenes. This is an absolute Halloween treat; there better be a third book next year!”

Young, Adrienne. [Spells for Forgetting](#) (Delacorte \$28) is a deeply atmospheric story about ancestral magic, an unsolved murder, and a second chance at true love. Library Reads calls it, “Another stunner by Young! When August Salt, the love of Emery Blackwood’s life, returns to clear his name after being accused of killing Lily Morgan fourteen years ago, dark secrets arise in Saiorse Island. The prose flows like the magical elements throughout.”

Scares for Teens

Alemagna, Beatrice et al. [You Can’t Kill Snow White](#) (Enchanted Lion Books \$24.95). The Indie Next Pick: “In this dark, genre-defying picture book, acclaimed artist Beatrice Alemagna retells the story of Snow White from the jealous stepmother queen’s perspective.” This is a new entry in Enchanted Lion’s Unruly imprint dedicated to complex visual storytelling for teens and older readers

Bovalino, Tori, ed. [The Gathering Dark](#) (Page Street Kids \$18.99). An Anthology of Folk Horror. Urban legends and folktales are given new life in this collection of 13 spine-tingling stories from a stellar line-up of critically acclaimed authors, including Tori Bovalino, Allison Saft, Courtney Gould, and more. “Kids who grew Up on Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark but never grew OUT of wanting to be scared out of their wits will devour this collection... if something in it doesn’t devour them first.”

Dennard, Susan. [The Luminaries](#) (Tor \$18.99). Hemlock Falls isn’t like other towns. It’s not on a map, cell phones don’t work there, and you might find a ghost-deer grazing at midnight. It’s also inhabited by the Luminaries, an ancient order charged with guarding the nearby forest. Each night, when nightmares rise, only the Luminaries stand between humanity and these monsters bent on devastation—one clan for each night of the week. Fourteen orders around the globe. Winnie (of the Wednesday clan) desperately wants to reclaim her family’s standing within the Luminaries. In the four years since her dad was caught as a witch, her family has lived as outcasts. Winnie’s solution? Pass the hunter trials. Then her family will be welcomed in again. During the first trial, however, Winnie is severely outmatched by the forest’s nightmares. So when a new, unknown monster slaughters a banshee and everyone assumes Winnie did the slaughtering, she doesn’t correct them. Realizing she will never survive the final two trials, Winnie seeks help from her gorgeous ex-friend, Jay Friday, who is no longer a baby-faced boy but the best hunter in Hemlock Falls. As Winnie’s lies start to pile up around her and bodies start to pile up from the new nightmare, she must protect Hemlock Falls, protect her family’s new status, and protect her heart from a former friend with brutal secrets of his own.

Griffin, Rachel. [Wild Is the Witch](#) (Sourcebooks Fire \$18.99). Another Indie Next Pick: “I love this second novel by Rachel Griffin. An emotional story about guilt, regret, and vulnerability

with incredible storytelling and rich descriptions! Love the magic and the animals and the cozy feeling—like walking out in the woods.”

For Ages 4 to 8

Lyall, Casey. [A Spoonful of Frogs](#) (Greenwillow \$17.99). Illustrated by Vera Brosgol. Grab your witch’s hat and your cauldron for a hilarious new picture book sure to make you giggle with impish delight. Frogs not included!

Tucholke, April Genevieve. [Beatrice Likes the Dark](#) (Algonquin \$18.95). Illustrated by Khoa. The Indie Next Pick: “Beatrice likes the dark. She likes black clothes, graveyard picnics, and a sky full of stars. Her sister, Roo, likes the light. She likes bright clothes, picking strawberries, and hot, sunny days. Beatrice and Roo are nothing alike and don’t understand each other. This slightly spooky story illustrates how they learn to be different and together. “One of my favorite picture books of the year! *Beatrice Likes the Dark* is a beautifully illustrated, sweet story of sisterhood. Each page is full of heart and whimsy. Your inner baby goth or any year-round Halloween lovers will need this one!»

SCIFI/FANTASY FOR FALL

Bradbury, Ray. [Ray Bradbury: The Illustrated Man](#) (Library of America \$40). In one authoritative volume, here are two landmark story collections by one of America’s most beloved authors, plus 27 stellar, speculative, and strange tales from other collections, including 7 restored to print.

Brooks, Terry. [Daughter of Darkness](#) (Del Rey \$28.99) is the second entry in the Viridian Deep world, an all-new fantasy series from the legendary author behind the Shannara saga, about a human girl adapting to her place in a magical world she’s only recently discovered.

Butcher, James, Jr. [Dead Man’s Hand](#) (Ace \$27). Butcher Jr.’s debut novel is a brilliant urban fantasy about a young man who must throw out the magical rule book to solve the murder of his former mentor. On the streets of Boston, the world is divided into the ordinary Usuals, and the paranormal Unorthodox. And in the Department of Unorthodox Affairs, the Auditors are the magical elite, government-sanctioned witches with spells at their command and all the power and prestige that come with it. Grimshaw Griswald Grimsby is...not one of those witches. After flunking out of the Auditor training program and being dismissed as “not Department material,” Grimsby tried to resign himself to life as a mediocre witch. But he can’t help hoping he’ll somehow, someday, get another chance to prove his skill. That opportunity comes with a price when his former mentor, aka the most dangerous witch alive, is murdered down the street from where he works, and Grimsby is the Auditors’ number one suspect. Proving his innocence will require more than a little legwork, and after forming a strange alliance with the retired legend known as the Huntsman and a mysterious being from Elsewhere, Grimsby is abruptly thrown into a life of adventure, whether he wants it or not. Now all he has to do is find the real killer, avoid the Auditors on his trail.

Chakraborty, SA. [River of Silver](#) (Harper \$27.99). Her Daevabad Trilogy gets expanded with this new compilation of stories from before, during, and after the events of *The City of Brass*, *The Kingdom of Copper*, and *The Empire of Gold*, all from the

perspective of characters both beloved and hated, and even those without a voice in the novels.

Howey, Hugh. [Across the Sand](#) (Harper \$27.99). The first original novel from author Hugh Howey in six years, takes us back to the world of Sand, to a far future many generations after a disaster has destroyed civilization as we know it, where four siblings struggle to build their futures amid the harsh wastes of endless desert. The old world is buried. A new one has been forged atop the shifting dunes, a land of howling wind and infernal sand. In this barren home, siblings Conner, Rob, Palmer and Violet daily carve out a future. They live in the shadow of their father and oldest sister, Vic, two of the greatest sand divers ever to comb the desert's depths. But these branches of their family tree are long gone, disappeared into the wastes beyond, leaving the younger siblings scratching in the dust, hopeful for a better life.

Lafferty, Mur. [Station Eternity](#) (Ace \$17). Library Reads recommends "A science fiction murder mystery that was a blast to read, cinematically written with amazing characters. Lafferty introduces new aliens and their culture slowly enough to take in the details. The plot is *Murder She Wrote* meets sentient *Deep Space Nine*. It's all over the place but comes together satisfyingly."

Weber, David/Jacob Holo. [The Janus File](#) (Baen, \$25) continues the Gordian Division sci-fi series.

COZY CRIMES

Andrews, Donna. [Dashing Through the Snowbirds](#) (St Martins \$26.99). A cold and snowy Christmas season is in full swing with every corner of Meg's large Victorian house in Caerphilly, Virginia, festooned with evergreen garlands, red bows, and cheery baubles, courtesy of her indefatigable mother. In addition to the large extended family, Meg is also playing host to 11 Canadian employees of AcerGen, a Toronto "wannabe Ancestry.com" and their boss, arrogant and slovenly Ian Meredith. Meg must cater to the whims of the Canadians for the sake of her brother Rob, whose company, Mutant Wizards, has landed a lucrative contract to revamp the AcerGen website now that they have expanded into home DNA testing. When Ian is murdered, credible suspects pop up around every corner: dissatisfied and possibly dangerous clients, stalkers, and disgruntled employees. Andrews does a masterly job juggling all the elements of the plausible plot and fills it with entertaining red herrings.

Anthony, Gretchen. [The Book Haters Book Club](#) (Park Row \$17.99). John picks this for his **October Romance and Relationships Books of the Month** saying, "I loved this. A bit of sweet romance plus other relationships—friends, family, co-workers—come into play."

✚Benedict, Alexandra. [The Christmas Murder Game](#) (Sourcebooks \$16.99). It's a snowy Christmas Eve in this fun contemporary British country house mystery, and Lily Armitage, a 33-year-old costume corset maker is heading from her London home to the wilds of Yorkshire and the 17th-century manor known as Endgame House, where she lived as a child. She hasn't set foot in the place since she left it at the age of 12 after her mother's death. She's only returning because her recently deceased aunt and adoptive mother, Liliana Armitage-Feathers, has left a letter for her with the family lawyer in which Liliana begs Lily, as a last request, to participate in the family's

traditional Christmas treasure hunt, in which all the Armitage cousins take part. Only this time, the winner will get Endgame House itself, while the other participants will get nothing. Greed-fueled animosity runs high, and it's no surprise when, one by one, the cousins start turning up dead. Puzzle-loving readers will enjoy searching for anagrams of the gifts mentioned in "The Twelve Days of Christmas" and for the titles of 12 of the author's favorite country house mysteries embedded in the text. Nostalgia reading but with updates from an Agatha Christie mystery and without Christie's fabled surprises.

Budewitz, Leslie. [Peppermint Barked: A Spice Shop Mystery](#) (Seven Stories \$17.95). It's Black Friday and Pepper Reece, owner of Seattle Spice, is gearing up for a busy holiday season. The shops of Pike Place Market are adorned with Victorian decorations while costumed merrymakers mingle with tourists. But then Pepper finds Beth, a young woman who works at her friend Vinny's wine shop. She has been brutally attacked and left for dead. What seems a random violent attack becomes more ominous as Pepper is confronted with multiple suspects. The case becomes more complex, with family tragedy, broken marriages, and the fiercely competitive world of real estate in this iconic Seattle landmark. Pepper's romance with Nate the fisherman is going strong and balancing sleuthing with meeting his brother will make this a chaotic and potentially dangerous holiday season. *LJ* adds, "Budewitz is a dab hand at cozies, portraying the Market and its denizens as a 'community within a community' while weaving a murder mystery into this placid backdrop."

Golden, S K. [The Socialite's Guide to Murder](#) (Crooked Lane \$28.99). I love this our **October Cozy Crimes Book of the Month**—it's like Eloise (of Plaza Hotel fame) crossed with Paris Hilton. We're in 1958 Manhattan where our heroine, Evelyn Elizabeth Grace Murphy—fashionable daughter of the owner of New York City's glittering Pinnacle Hotel—has lived for years in a fabulous suite, almost never leaving her cocooned life but filled with deep knowledge about the building which comes into play. She's a true Daddy's Girl (although Daddy is not quite as indulgent as you might think) and accustomed to a cushioned, wealthy life. She has a BFF for an escort, a handsome actor who is gay, so their "romance" keeps the nosy, and suitors, at bay. When a famed artist's valuable painting is stolen and the man murdered, Evelyn enlists the aid of handsome and shady hotel employee Malcolm "Mac" Cooper as she contemplates whether a guest or a staff member may be the perpetrator. Detective Hodgson regards the hotel's security chief as the prime suspect, but Evelyn is not so sure, eyeing individuals such as an obnoxious countess, a mysterious maid, and a prickly hotel manager. Though the detective dismisses Evelyn's sleuthing, even he must concede she may be on to something when her room is ransacked and her life is endangered. With her creation of an intriguing upstairs/downstairs world, Golden channels the spirit of the late Hugh Pentecost's Beaumont Hotel.

Agreeing with my take is Rhys Bowen who says, "It's as if Eloise is all grown up and a sassy, savvy sleuth at the Plaza hotel! Hotel owner's daughter Evie Murphy is smart and daring in this delightful Golden Age mystery"

Haines, Carolyn. [Bones of Holly](#) (St Martins \$26.99). *Kirkus Reviews* takes a real shine to this chapter in a long-running cozy series: "Detective duo Sarah Booth and Tinkie Bellcase Richmond are in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, along with Tinkie's

baby, Maylin, and the ladies' significant others to judge a Christmas tree decorating contest. Their fellow judges, authors Sandra O'Day and Janet Malone, are always at daggers drawn, and the sleuths soon get to see their fraught relationship up close. When Sandra and her assistant, Daryl Marcus, vanish from a party, leaving traces of blood behind at her mansion, which Al Capone built for a daring actress, Janet surprises Sarah Booth and Tinkie by hiring the pair to find them. They're soon entangled in past and current tales of Capone's missing fortune, which could very well be hidden in the house or somewhere on the Gulf Coast, where he brought in loads of illegal booze. Along the way, the women learn that Sandra and Janet are not the bitter enemies they portray in public, making them wonder if it's all a publicity stunt, but rumors of the dangerous Gulf Coast Mafia suggest another possibility. As the tough Southern belles continue the search, they get threats and are stalked by unknown people. But they won't back down in their search for the missing pair and possibly a very large fortune. Fascinating characters dripping in grit and Southern charm highlight a twisty puzzler."

Lush, Tara. [Live and Let Grind](#) (Crooked Lane \$28.99). Devil's Beach is percolating with a hot murder case, and reporter-turned-barista Lana Lewis could be the next to get beaned in Tara Lush's third Coffee Lover's mystery, perfect for fans of Cleo Coyle and Lucy Burdette.

Manansala, Mia P. [Blackmail and Bibingka](#) (Penguin \$17). It's Christmastime in Shady Palms, but things are far from jolly for Lila Macapagal. Sure, her new business, The Brew-ha Cafe, is looking to turn a profit in its first year. And yes, she's taken the first step in a new romance with her good friend, Jae Park. But her cousin Ronnie is back in town after ghosting the family fifteen years ago, claiming that his recent purchase of a local winery shows that he's back on his feet and ready to give back to the Shady Palms community. Tita Rosie is thrilled with the return of her prodigal son, but Lila knows that wherever Ronnie goes, trouble follows. She's soon proven right when Ronnie is accused of murder, and secrets and rumors surrounding her shady cousin and those involved with the winery start piling up. Now Lila has to put away years of resentment and distrust to prove her cousin's innocence. He may be a jerk, but he's still family. And there's no way her flesh and blood could actually be a murderer...right? Start this award-winning culinary cozies series with [Arsenic and Adobo](#), a 2021 Cozy Crimes Book of the Month, and [Homicide and Halo-Halo](#) (\$16 each).

✎McKenna, Clara. [Murder at the Majestic Hotel](#) (Kensington \$26). The new entry in this cozy British historical series opens the day after the 1905 wedding of wealthy American Stella Kendrick and British viscount "Lyndy" Lyndhurst. When the newlyweds try to check in to York's luxurious Majestic Hotel, they find the honeymoon suite they've booked already occupied by Horace Wingrove, the founder of England's leading confectionery company. Lyndy and Stella settle into rooms across the hall and overhear an altercation at Wingrove's door. The next morning, a chambermaid discovers the confectioner's corpse lying peacefully in bed. The cherry-red color of his skin leads the police to attribute his death to accidental carbon monoxide poisoning, but Stella isn't sure. Her suspicion that the death is murder deepens when Wingrove's room is rifled and the closely guarded formula for the company's signature chocolate turns up missing.... [Check out the whole series.](#)

McKinlay, Jenn. [The Plot and the Pendulum](#) (Berkley \$27). See Signed Books for the latest in Jenn's Library Lovers Mysteries and also for the [Fairy Tale Cupcake Cookbook](#) (\$12.99) she's created for her Cupcake Bakery Mysteries set here in Scottsdale.

✎Mimi Matthews, [The Belle of Belgrave Square](#) (Berkley \$17). Victorian historical romance with a nod and spin on classic Gothics, says John, selecting the other Romance and Relationship Book of the Month for October. PW agrees with him in this Starred Review: "A grand cross-class romance, a twisty mystery, and emotional internal struggles combine to excellent effect in Matthews's effervescent second Belles of London romance after [The Siren of Sussex](#) (\$16). Navigating Victorian high society is a necessary nightmare for anxious heiress Julia Wychwood, who prefers the company of a good novel or her horse to men, but longs to escape the clutches of her ailing and overbearing parents. Seeking a spouse is equally unpleasant for war hero Jasper Blunt, who needs a lady's fortune to secure a life for his three children and repair the country estate where they reside. Jasper and Julia discover an unexpected mutual attraction and marry despite Julia's parents' objections to Jasper's suit—and the threat that they will withhold her dowry. Jasper is prepared to sacrifice Julia's money to keep her safe with him, but her family's continued meddling endangers the couple's blissful union—and could dig up secrets that Jasper is desperate to keep buried. Matthews expertly paces out the mystery of what Jasper is hiding; each twist brings Julia and the reader closer to the truth, but the final reveal still manages to be a surprise. Most delightful is the genuine feeling of joy between the newlyweds, who each grow into their own together. Matthews's fans and new readers alike will root for this well-earned love story

Perry, Carol J. [High Spirits](#) (Kensington \$15.95). Greetings from Haven, Florida, a quaint, scenic old town on the Gulf Coast where Massachusetts transplant Maureen Doherty and her excessively friendly Golden retriever are the newest proprietors of the charming local inn...along with its many ghostly tenants! Maureen is determined to make this a holiday season to remember—which means finding a way to promote Haven House on a shoestring. Fortunately, Haven's vintage movie theater, the Paramount, has come up with a great "Twelve Days of Christmas" idea. They'll feature an impressive list of the best classic Christmas movies ever made—shown by one-time movie actor-turned-projectionist Decklin Monroe.... But nobody bothered to tell Maureen that the Paramount is haunted by the ghost of a man who was murdered a few years back. Haven's top cop Frank Hubbard doesn't believe in ghosts but, believing that Decklin Monroe was somehow involved, he wants a reluctant Maureen's help.

Romeril, Christina. [A Christmas Candy Killing](#) (Crooked Lane \$28.99). A debut and series launch introduces Alex Wright and her twin sister, Hanna, the owners of Murder and Mayhem: Killer Chocolates and Bookshop, in Harriston, Montana. Alex's "idea of naming chocolates after poisons used in murder mysteries" has been a great success in their close-knit community. But then.... Our **November Cozy Crimes Book of the Month**.... Will say more then.

Young, Kate. [Crime for the Books](#) (Crooked Lane \$28.99). Lyla Moody and her book club, the Jane Does, are hosting a Halloween party at Magnolia Manor, tailored after Agatha

Christie's *A Murder is Announced*, but when the lights come on after the staged murder, a real victim lies dead with a gunshot wound in her chest. The victim was an estranged relative of Elaine Morgan, operator of the B&B, who'd earlier been seen arguing with her about the fate of the property. Suspicion immediately falls on Elaine, and she's arrested. The Jane Does believe Elaine is innocent, and when they get the chance to team up with police officer Rosa Landry—a member of the club—they jump on it. But then....

NEW IN HARDCOVER

Check out this list of [International Voices](#) you may wish to explore – and consider joining our International Crimes Book of the Month or giving a membership as a gift. Email Karen@poisonedpen.com for details and sign ups.

Adams, Erin E. [Jackal](#) (Random \$27). A debut by a Haitian author set in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, where one of its few Black girls has returned some years later for the wedding of her best friend. During the ceremony Mel's biracial daughter Caroline goes missing in the surrounding woods. Liz discovers a history of Black girls gone missing and, with the cops uninterested, sets herself to uncover the serial killer. The strength of the story for me is Adams' rage at being Black in America, the daily trials as well as the big ones. Library Reads finds it, "a well-written suspense novel with supernatural elements." It does take some suspension of disbelief as far as the plot goes but the anger and pain are all too real.

Albanese, Laurie Lico. [Hester](#) (St Martins \$27.99). The Indie Next Pick: "A magical retelling of a strong woman coming into her power. I would have enjoyed *The Scarlet Letter* in high school if this was the book we were forced to read. I love the incorporation of synesthesia and the art of the needle and thread."

Ballantyne, Lesa. [The Innocent One](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). In Edgar finalist Ballantyne's *The Guilty One*, solicitor Daniel Hunter successfully defended 11-year-old Sebastian Croll against a charge of murdering an eight-year-old friend. Ten years later, in this enjoyable if by-the-numbers sequel, the police want to question Sebastian after his Cambridge classics tutor, Frances Owen, is found murdered in her office. Daniel allays Sebastian's fears, saying his trial as a child should be expunged and the police are doing routine questioning. When Sebastian's past is leaked to the media, dangerous protests follow, forcing him to leave Cambridge. Meanwhile, Daniel, who still grapples with having grown up in foster care, contends with his wife wanting a separation, his seven-year-old son acting out at school, and his legal investigator turning up leads on the mystery of who his father was. As the police turn more attention to Sebastian, Daniel is backed into a legal corner that threatens his whole family.

Banville, John. [The Singularities](#) (Knopf \$30). Banville revisits some of his career's most memorable figures in this new novel. A man with a borrowed name steps from a flashy red sports car—also borrowed—onto the estate of his youth. But all is not as it seems. There is a new family living in the drafty old house: the Godleys, descendants of the late, world-famous scientist Adam Godley, whose theory of existence threw the universe into chaos. And this mystery man, who has just completed a prison sentence, feels as if time has stopped, or was torn, or was opened in new and strange ways. He must now vie with the idiosyncratic Godley family, with their harried housekeeper who becomes his landlady,

with the recently commissioned biographer of Godley Sr., and with a wealthy and beautiful woman from his past who comes bearing an unusual request.

Barry, Ava. [Double Exposure](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). Hollywood PI Rainey Hall, the narrator of this seductive neo-noir, harbors a dangerously soft spot for certain vulnerable-seeming clients—especially ones as alluring as Melia van Aust. Four years after the notorious, never-solved attack at Melia's wealthy family's hillside home that left her parents butchered, Melia, now 22, approaches Rainey with what seems a simple request: find out who's been sending her the increasingly threatening letters she fears might be coming from her fugitive younger brother, Jasper, who disappeared the night of the murders. It emerges there's little straightforward about either the case or Melia herself—and that Rainey may be putting not only her heart but her life in jeopardy. Rainey's clouded personal history, including both her past as a globe-trotting violin prodigy and the aching void left when her artist-mother vanished when she was 15, adds intrigue. And she has a gift for tossing off memorable lines such as the observation she remembers her late conductor-father once making: "Los Angeles is a place of dead poetry." This evocative novel demonstrates that both the city and its magic remain very much alive.

Beaton, MC. [Devil's Delight: An Agatha Raisin Mystery](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Agatha and her assistant, Toni, are driving to their friend Bill Wong's long-awaited wedding, thinking of nothing more than what the beautiful bride will be wearing when a terrified young man comes running down the country lane towards them wearing...nothing at all. The encounter leads them to become embroiled with a naturist group, a disappearing corpse, fantasy games, witchcraft, an ice cream empire, intrigue and murder. In the meantime, Agatha's hectic life swirls along at dizzying pace, her private detective agency as busy as ever and her private affairs in turmoil, with old loves to contend with and a new suitor on the scene. But when she begins to close in on a suspected murderer, she finds herself in deadly peril, as the sinister nature of the ice cream business leads her to a chilling conclusion. This British cozy series is being continued by RW Green.

Chambliss, Jennifer. [Sisterhood of Sleuths](#) (Little Brown \$16.99). **Here's a Middle Grade homage to all Nancy Drew fans meaning even grownups might like to leaf through it.** Maizy always assumed she knew everything about her grandmother, Jacuzzi. So when a box full of vintage Nancy Drew books gets left at her mom's thrift store, Maizy is surprised to find an old photo of her grandmother and two other women tucked beneath the collection. Stranger still, when Maizy shows the photo to Jacuzzi she feigns ignorance, insisting the woman is someone else. Determined to learn the truth — and inspired by the legacy of Nancy Drew — Maizy launches her own investigation with the help of new friends, Nell and Cam. What they discover not only points to the origins of the iconic series, but uncovers a truth from the past that will lead to self-discovery in the present, connecting three generations of women. This intergenerational mystery filled with literary history, friendship, and family secrets delivers a captivating tribute to the world's most famous girl detective.

Coe, Jonathan. [Mr. Wilder and Me](#) (Europa \$27). In the heady summer of 1977, a naïve young woman called Calista sets out from Athens to venture into the wider world. On a Greek island

that has been turned into a film set, she finds herself working for the famed Hollywood director Billy Wilder, about whom she knows almost nothing. But the time she spends in this glamorous, unfamiliar new life will change her for good. Here is a novel “that is at once a tender coming-of-age story and an intimate portrait of one of cinema’s most intriguing figures “*Mr. Wilder and Me* is, in part, a homage to the great film director and producer, Billy Wilder.... Cinephiles will find this account a diverting companion to scholarly volumes about Wilder and the post-war history of films.”—*New York Journal of Books*

Cohen, Leonard. [A Ballet of Lepers: A Novel and Stories](#) (Grove \$27). What more is there to say?

Cornwell, Patricia. [Livid: A Scarpetta Novel](#) (Grand Central \$29). Virginia’s Chief medical examiner Kay Scarpetta is the reluctant star witness in a sensational murder trial rocked by media attention generated by the angry and vocal friends, family, and supporters of the victim, former beauty queen April Tupelo, when she receives shocking news. The judge’s sister has been found dead. At first glance, it appears to be a home invasion, but then why was nothing stolen, and why is the garden strewn with dead plants and insects? Although there is no apparent cause of death, Scarpetta recognizes telltale signs of the unthinkable, and she knows the worst is yet to come. Another brutal death, a failed presidential assassination, a band of homegrown terrorists, and more all take their turn stirring the pot of weirdness.

Grisham, John. [The Boys from Biloxi](#) (Doubleday \$29.95). Biloxi was known for its beaches, resorts, and seafood industry. But it had a darker side. It was also notorious for corruption and vice, everything from gambling, prostitution, bootleg liquor, and drugs to contract killings. The vice was controlled by small cabal of mobsters, many of them rumored to be members of the Dixie Mafia. Keith Rudy and Hugh Malco grew up in Biloxi in the sixties and were childhood friends, as well as Little League all-stars. But as teenagers, their lives took them in different directions. Keith’s father became a legendary prosecutor, determined to “clean up the Coast.” Hugh’s father became the “Boss” of Biloxi’s criminal underground. Keith went to law school and followed in his father’s footsteps. Hugh preferred the nightlife and worked in his father’s clubs. The two families were headed for a showdown, one that would happen in a courtroom.

Hilderbrand, Elin. [Endless Summer: Stories](#) (LittleBrown \$29). “One wonders what the author of 28 novels, sometimes appearing at the rate of two per year, does in her spare time. It turns out she writes what might almost be called Elin Hilderbrand fan fiction, creating short stories piggybacking off already-developed characters and plots....[*Endless Summer* is] a generous gift to fans.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

Jakubowski, Maxim, et al, eds. [Black Is the Night](#) (Titan \$27.99). The 30 stories in this anthology capture the feel of Cornell Woolrich’s iconic noir fiction. In a brief introduction, “Why Cornell Woolrich Matters,” Neil Gaiman aptly observes: “The world Cornell Woolrich painted for us with his words is a world in which we will always be disappointed... in which our hopes and our dreams burn brightly, but in their burning they only make the shadows darker.” Highlights include James Grady’s “Eyes Without a Face,” in which a man spies on an attractive female neighbor via a hacked security feed while also watching

Hitchcock’s *Rear Window*, which was based on a Woolrich story. That classic tale also inspired another standout, Kim Newman’s “Black Window,” about a man’s frantic attempts to get the police to believe he witnessed a matricide. Charles Ardai, the founder of Hard Case Crime, distinguishes himself with “Sleep! Sleep! Beauty Bright,” about a man’s search for the person who put his wife into a coma. The variations on Woolrich’s themes, even when set in the present day, resonate. This is a welcome companion to *In Sunlight or in Shadow: Stories Inspired by the Paintings of Edward Hopper*, edited by Lawrence Block.

Irving, John. [The Last Chairlift](#) (Simon & Schuster \$35)—his first novel in seven years—starts off by introducing us to a pregnant skier, known as Little Ray, who comes to raise her son, Adam, in a small New England town without his biological father in the picture but with a whole cast of eccentric characters guiding him through the nuances of growing up. Years later, when Adam goes to look for answers about his father at a hotel in Aspen, he meets ghosts, and carries the ghosts of those he’s known with him as well. This plot, which blends the magical and the real, is perhaps akin to *The World According to Garp*.

Kennedy, Deborah E. [Billie Starr’s Book of Sorries](#) (Flatiron \$27.99). “Edgar finalist Kennedy follows her debut, *Tornado Weather*, with an enthralling suspense thriller. Unmarried 28-year-old Jenny Newberg, who lives in Benson, Ind., a small town where “you might meet yourself on the street, coming and going,” is always apologizing for everything. Meanwhile, her precocious eight-year-old daughter, Billie Starr, and a school friend record her “sorries” in a book. They plan to publish it, not for the money but “for the good of the world.” Despite all Jenny’s apologies, “nothing ever gets better.” Until it seems it might, when two men in black suits offer Jenny the chance to get out of debt—if she wears a wire while seducing the Candidate, a married man who’s running for high political office. Jenny’s rendezvous with the Candidate at a hotel is supposed to change her and Billie’s lives. It does. But not exactly the way Jenny hoped. The Candidate endears himself to Jenny, fixing her furnace and being attentive to Billie. Yet something seems off kilter. When Billie goes missing after a Christmas field trip to Chicago, Jenny goes into high gear to find her, and, in the process, herself. The tension rises as the real intent behind the seduction scheme unfolds. Exquisite prose matches deep characterization. Kennedy deserves to win an Edgar with this captivating sophomore effort.”

Kidd, Jess. [The Night Ship](#) (Atria \$28), which toggles between two time periods, is based off a true historical event. Back in 1628, an orphaned girl is bound for the Dutch East Indies by boat. Throughout her journey, she spends her time searching for the mythical monsters that are thought to roam the ship. Flash-forward more than three hundred years later, where a lonely boy named Gil is sent to live in the islands off Western Australian with his grandfather. While he is there building a new life, Gil discovers the story of an infamous shipwreck, the *Batavia*. As the lives of these characters parallel and entwine, a thrilling, twisted, and beautiful tale of friendship and sacrifice unfold. “Jess Kidd connects the true history of a brutal 1629 shipwreck with the story of a lonely boy in modern day Western Australia with tenderness and vivid storytelling. Epic in scope and heart-wrenchingly detailed, this is Kidd at her best.

Kingsolver, Barbara. [Demon Copperhead](#) (Harper, \$32.50). Comes with a special letter for independent bookstores. Kingsolver offers a deeply evocative story of a boy born to an impoverished single mother. In this self-styled, modern adaptation of Dickens's *David Copperfield*, *Demon Copperhead*, 11, is the quick-witted son and budding cartoonist of a troubled young mother and a stepfather in southern Appalachia's Lee County, Va.; eventually, his mother's opioid addiction places *Demon* in various foster homes, where he is forced to earn his keep through work (even though his guardians are paid) and is always hungry from lack of food. After a guardian steals his money, *Demon* hitchhikes to Tennessee in search of his paternal grandmother. She is welcoming, but will not raise him, and sends him back to live with the town's celebrated high school football coach as his new guardian, a widower who lives in a castle-like home with his boyish daughter, Angus. Library Reads adds, "From abusive foster homes to the collapse of the coal and tobacco industry and rise of the opioid epidemic, this masterpiece follows one of the most unforgettable characters in recent literary history, who comes-of-age in an Appalachian Virginia community filled with people of extraordinary character. For fans of *Dopesick* and *Raising Lazarus*."

✠Lloyd, Robert. [The Poison Machine](#) (Melville House \$29.99). London, 1679 — A year has passed since the sensational attempt to murder King Charles II, but London is still a viper's nest of rumored Catholic conspiracies, and of plots against them in turn. When Harry Hunt — estranged from his mentor Robert Hooke — is summoned to the remote and windswept marshes of Norfolk, he is at first relieved to get away from the place. But in Norfolk, he finds that some Royal workers shoring up a riverbank have made a grim discovery — the skeleton of a dwarf. Harry is able to confirm that the skeleton is that of Captain Jeffrey Hudson, a prominent member of the court once famously given to the Queen in a pie. Except no one knew Hudson was dead, because another man had been impersonating him. The hunt for the impersonator, clearly working as a spy, will take Harry to Paris, another city bedeviled by conspiracies and intrigues, and back, with encounters along the way with a flying man and a cross-dressing swords-woman — and to the uncovering of a plot to kill the Queen and all the Catholic members of her court. But where? When?"

McCarthy, Cormac. [The Passenger](#) (Knopf \$30) is "a beguiling, surpassingly strange novel by the renowned—and decidedly idiosyncratic—author of [Blood Meridian](#) (1982) and [The Road](#) (2006). He is Bobby Western, as described by college friend and counterfeiter John Sheddan. "He's in love with his sister and she's dead." Western doesn't much like the murky depths, but he's taken a job as a salvage diver in the waters around New Orleans, where all kinds of strange things lie below the surface—including, at the beginning of McCarthy's looping saga, an airplane complete with nine bloated bodies: "The people sitting in their seats, their hair floating. Their mouths open, their eyes devoid of speculation." Ah, but there were supposed to be 10 aboard, and now mysterious agents are after Western, sure that he spirited away the 10th—or, failing that, some undisclosed treasure within the aircraft. Bobby is a mathematical genius, though less so than his sister, whom readers will learn more about in the companion novel, [Stella Maris](#) (\$26), due out in December. Alicia, in the last year of her life, is in a distant asylum, while Western is evading those agents and pondering not just

mathematical conundrums, but also a tortured personal history as the child of an atomic scientist who worked at Oak Ridge to build the bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It's all vintage McCarthy, if less bloody than much of his work

McCracken, Elizabeth. [The Hero of This Book](#) (Harper \$26.99). "Is this a memoir or a novel? Does it matter? A very well-written story about memoir writing, following a writer who, in the wake of her mother's death, travels to London. A great examination of the grieving process and what it does to art."

McDermid, Val. [1989](#) (Grove \$27). "McDermid's stellar sequel to 2021's [1979](#) (\$17) finds Allie Burns, now a seasoned journalist, removed from her investigative post at Glasgow's *Clarion* by its narcissistic owner to a post in Manchester, England. Resentful, she begins to rethink her future in journalism. After one of her best friends needlessly dies of AIDS, Allie determines to reveal what pharmaceutical companies are withholding from dying patients desperate for a drug that will prevent HIV from turning into AIDS. When Allie hears about labs in East Berlin having success with new drugs, she flies to West Germany to interview a scientist she thinks can help her, Colin Corcoran. Colin gets Allie past the East Berlin checkpoints and into the offices where classified information is stored. The catch is that she must swap identities with Colin's girlfriend so the girlfriend can escape East Berlin. In a heart-pounding episode, Allie is caught by the fearsome Stasi police. McDermid creates a vivid sense of doom in these scenes, which will stun readers. Allie's girlfriend, Rona, introduced in 1979, has grown into a marvelous character now integral to this powerful, addictive series. McDermid is writing at the top of her game. Yay. We still have Signed UK firsts of [1989](#) (\$46).

Oren, Michael. [Swann's War](#) (Dzanc \$26.95). A rave blurb from Daniel Silva caught my eye since Silva rarely blurbs anything. And indeed author Oren, former Israeli Ambassador to the US and author of 3 bestsellers, crafts a dark and powerful WWII story—again a woman's story—set on a tiny island called Fourth Cliff off the coast of Massachusetts where a tiny US force mans an encampment meant to sink U-boats while next door is an Italian POW camp. Former Boston cop Mary Beth Swann followed her husband Archie, the island's police captain, to Fourth Cliff only to be left when he sets off to the Pacific Theater as a Major in the Marines. Informally taking up his job, feeling unprepared and lacking support or respect, Mary Beth is hit with the murder of one Italian prisoner, then another... it goes from there. Oren does a cracking good job bringing the life of the POWs to you as well as the conflicted emotions of a wife left behind in the war.

Pamuk, Orhan. [Nights of Plague](#) (Knopf \$32.50). I was mesmerized by Pamuk's [My Name Is Red](#) (\$16), 1 2001 mystery/love story set in 16th Century Istanbul, and so were the Nobel judges who awarded him the Prize. In the Turkish Laureate's latest novel, a plague has swept through Mingheria, a fictional island in the Ottoman Empire. The 1901 calamity was chronicled by Princess Pakize, whose letters historian Mina Mingher is preparing for publication in 2017. But struck by the princess's "descriptive flair" and weary of writing another "dreary" history book, Mina decides to turn the letters into a novel. Indeed, there's flair to Mina's text, which forms the bulk of a narrative that includes the murder of Istanbul's royal chemist, sent to the island to implement quarantine protocol; political upheaval that results

in Mingheria declaring its independence; and romances among a slew of characters. Via Mina, a descendent of Mingherians, Pamuk ascribes importance to players from all social strata: politicians, religious leaders, and ordinary citizens alike. “As it pivots between saga and satire, mystery and pseudo-history... [Pamuk] shows nous, charm and cunning as he keeps his bulky cargo afloat and on the move. If this generous hybrid of epidemic soap opera and novel of ideas has becalmed patches, it stirs the senses and flexes the mind. You will be sad to leave lavishly imagined Mingheria, where ‘a view of the sea and a trace of its scent’ can always ‘make life seem worth living again’.” —Boyd Tonkin, *The Spectator*

Picoult, Jodi/Jennifer Finney Boylan. [Mad Honey](#) (Random \$29.99). Olivia McAfee knows what it feels like to start over. Her picture-perfect life—living in Boston, married to a brilliant cardiothoracic surgeon, raising a beautiful son, Asher—was upended when her husband revealed a darker side. She never imagined she would end up back in her sleepy New Hampshire hometown, living in the house she grew up in, and taking over her father’s beekeeping business. Lily Campanello is familiar with do-overs, too. When she and her mom relocate to Adams, New Hampshire, for her final year of high school, they both hope it will be a fresh start. And for just a short while, these new beginnings are exactly what Olivia and Lily need. Their paths cross when Asher falls for the new girl in school, and Lily can’t help but fall for him, too. With Ash, she feels happy for the first time. Yet at times, she wonders if she can trust him completely. Then one day, Olivia receives a phone call: Lily is dead, and Asher is being questioned by the police. Olivia is adamant that her son is innocent. But.... This is a collaborative novel with appeal to fans of *The Bad Daughter* and *Defending Jacob*.”

☞Quinn, Joanna. [The Whalebone Theatre](#) (Knopf \$29). “Best friends putting on Shakespeare plays in the bones of a whale! Secret agents fighting Nazis! Joanna Quinn has given us fearless and fearsome Cristabel Seagrave, a heroine for the ages. *The Whalebone Theatre* is a magical adventure.” The emotional upheaval of the interwar years in England is dramatized afresh in Quinn’s dazzling and imaginative debut. Cristabel Seagrave’s mother dies in childbirth, and Cristabel’s father, Jasper, who remarries when she is three, dies soon after. This leaves Cristabel to be raised by her disinterested stepmother, Rosalind, who then marries Cristabel’s aviation-obsessed uncle Willoughby, Jasper’s brother. In 1928, when Cristabel is 12, she discovers a dead whale washed up on the beach adjoining the decaying Seagrave estate. She turns the whale’s rib cage into the proscenium for a theatre, where she ambitiously stages *The Iliad* and *The Tempest* with the help of her half sister Flossie, cousin Digby, loyal kitchen maid Maudie Kitkat, and Taras Kovalsky, a Russian artist. Fourteen years later, Cristabel and Digby’s experiences at playacting will come in handy when they are both parachuted into France on separate espionage missions to help the Resistance during WWII. But will they survive to see the renaissance of the Whalebone Theatre? Thorny, idiosyncratic Cristabel is a formidable first among equals in this expansive cast of memorable eccentrics. Peacetime whimsy gracefully segues into scenes of unbearable tension and heart-wrenching suspense as Cristabel boldly infiltrates Paris on the eve of its liberation.”—*PW* Starred Review

☞Redmond, Heather. [A Twist of Murder](#) (Kensington \$26). Harrow-on-the-Hill, March 1836. Aspiring author Charles Dickens is on the case again—in pursuit of missing orphans, legendary treasure, and a cold-blooded killer.

Roth, Veronica. [Poster Girl](#) (Harper \$26.99). WHAT’S RIGHT IS RIGHT. Sonya Kantor knows this slogan—she lived by it for most of her life. For decades, everyone in the Seattle-Portland megalopolis lived under it, as well as constant surveillance in the form of the Insight, an ocular implant that tracked every word and every action, rewarding or punishing by a rigid moral code set forth by the Delegation. Then there was a revolution. The Delegation fell. Its most valuable members were locked in the Aperture, a prison on the outskirts of the city. And everyone else, now free from the Insight’s monitoring, went on with their lives. Sonya, former poster girl for the Delegation, has been imprisoned for ten years when an old enemy comes to her with a deal: find a missing girl who was stolen from her parents by the old regime, and earn her freedom. The path Sonya takes to find the child will lead her through an unfamiliar, crooked post-Delegation world where she finds herself digging deeper into the past—and her family’s dark secrets—than she ever wanted to.

Steadman, Catherine. *The Family Game*. Harry is a novelist on the brink of stardom; Edward, her husband-to-be, is seemingly perfect. In love and freshly engaged, their bliss is interrupted by the reemergence of the Holbecks, Edward’s eminent family and the embodiment of American old money. For years, they’ve dominated headlines and pulled society’s strings, and Edward left them all behind to forge his own path. But even though he’s long severed ties with his family, Edward is set to inherit it all. Harriet is drawn to the glamour and sophistication of the Holbecks, who seem to welcome her with open arms, but everything changes when she meets Robert, the inescapably magnetic head of the family. At their first meeting, Robert slips Harry a cassette tape, revealing a shocking confession which sets the inevitable game in motion. What is it about Harry that made him give her that tape? A thing that has the power to destroy everything? As she ramps up her quest for the truth, she must endure the Holbecks’ savage Christmas traditions all the while knowing that losing this game could be deadly

Woods, Stuart. [Distant Thunder](#) (Putnam \$29). “During a severe storm, the body of a man, shot twice in the head, is found on the ferry to the island of Islesboro, Maine, in bestseller Woods’s twisty 63rd novel starring New York attorney Stone Barrington. Inside the man’s wallet are credentials identifying him as CIA officer John Collins. At the request of the police, Stone, who has a house on the island, agrees to keep the corpse in his garage until the weather clears and it can be airlifted to the morgue. When Stone’s longtime paramour and houseguest, U.S. president Holly Barker, phones CIA director Lance Cabot, Cabot is at first equivocal and then denies Collins’s existence. The next day, Stone returns to New York, where he’s soon visited by Collins’s sexy widow, Vanessa Morgan, who confirms her husband worked for the CIA. Stone soon falls into bed with Vanessa—and narrowly avoids becoming the victim of a seductive female Russian agent at P.J. Clarke’s, his favorite restaurant. For a refreshing change, the imperturbable Stone doesn’t always keep his cool en route to the cinematic climax, a clash with faceless villains on boats off Key West. Chalk up another winner to

Woods.” This review was published before the sad news of Woods’ death. Will Stone Barrington live on? We shall see.

MAJOR NONFICTION/MEMOIRS, ETC

Always good choices for gift giving

Catton, Bruce. [Bruce Catton: The Army of the Potomac](#) (Library of America \$45). Catton’s Civil War trilogy is brought together in one handsome LoA volume.

Livingston, Natalie. [The Women of Rothschild](#) St Martins \$39.99). Extraordinary women, extraordinary lives. As Jews in a Christian society and women in a deeply patriarchal family, they were outsiders. Excluded from the family bank, they forged their own distinct dynasty of daughters and nieces, mothers and aunts. They became influential hostesses and talented diplomats, choreographing electoral campaigns, advising prime ministers, advocating for social reform, and trading on the stock exchange. From the East End of London to the Eastern seaboard of the United States, from Spitalfields to Scottish castles, from Bletchley Park to Buchenwald, and from the Vatican to Palestine, Livingstone follows the lives of the Rothschild women from the dawn of the nineteenth century to the early years of the twenty-first.

Meacham, Jon. [And There Was Light](#) (Random \$40) is a “deeply researched look at Lincoln’s moral evolution on the issue of slavery. Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Meacham follows Lincoln from his rural Kentucky roots to his assassination in 1865, paying close attention to the many influences on his ideas and values. “The author provides in-depth analysis of Lincoln’s career as president and on how his thoughts on the issues of slavery and the status of African Americans changed during the course of the war, right up to the Union victory. Where those thoughts might have led him—and the nation—became immaterial in the wake of his assassination and the subsequent accession to power of those who did not share his experiences or vision—most notably, Andrew Johnson. While there are countless books on Lincoln, one of the most studied and written-about figures in history, Meacham’s latest will undoubtedly become one of the most widely read and consulted.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

Mukherjee, Siddhartha. [The Song of the Cell](#) (Scribner \$32.50). The physician, professor of medicine, and Pulitzer Prize-winning author of [The Emperor of All Maladies](#) (\$20), a “biography of cancer” which I think is superb, has a knack for explaining difficult ideas in terms that are both straightforward and interesting. In his latest, he punctuates his scientific explanations with touching, illustrative stories of people coping with cell-based illnesses, tracking how the knowledge gleaned from those cases contributed to further scientific advancement. In the early chapters, the author traces the discovery of cells as the building blocks of animal and plant life, with the invention of the microscope making analysis possible. With this development, researchers could better understand the roles of cells in human physiology, including the illnesses that rogue cells could cause. In the middle section, Mukherjee investigates how scientists then moved on to study the processes through which cells become specialized by function and how some turn cancerous. The identification of the phases of cell division and the discovery of DNA were crucial breakthroughs, opening the way for a new generation of treatments. Mukherjee occasionally digresses from the historical story to provide vivid portraits of key researchers,

with recollections about his own work. The final section of the book deals with emerging areas of research such as cell manipulation and gene editing as well as new technologies like transplantation. It’s all unquestionably exciting, but the author is careful to acknowledge the knotty ethical considerations.

Newman, Paul. [The Extraordinary Life of an Ordinary Man](#) (Knopf \$32). In 1986, Paul Newman and his closest friend, screenwriter Stewart Stern, began an extraordinary project. Stuart was to compile an oral history, to have Newman’s family and friends and those who worked closely with him, talk about the actor’s life. And then Newman would work with Stewart and give his side of the story. The only stipulation was that anyone who spoke on the record had to be completely honest. That same stipulation applied to Newman himself. The project lasted five years. The result is an extraordinary memoir, culled from thousands of pages of transcripts as he greatest movie star of the past 75 years covers everything: his traumatic childhood, his career, his drinking, his thoughts on Marlon Brando, James Dean, Elizabeth Taylor, John Huston, his greatest roles, acting, his intimate life with Joanne Woodward, his innermost fears and passions and joys. With thoughts/comments throughout from Joanne Woodward, George Roy Hill, Tom Cruise, Elia Kazan and many others. Those interested in the history of Hollywood and the movies, if not Newman, should grab this.

Obama, Michelle. [The Light We Carry](#) (Crown \$32.50) is a “book of practical advice” you might want to order in October for release November 15). As is Steve Martin, [Number One Walking](#) (Celadon \$30), a memoir publishing November 15 also).

Rickman, Alan. [Madly, Deeply: Diaries](#) (Holt \$32). Rickman, the English stage and screen actor who died in 2016, was famous for his roles in “Die Hard,” the Harry Potter movies, “Love Actually” and many other films. He kept a diary for 25 years, about his work, his political activism, his friendships and other subjects, and they promise to be “anecdotal, indiscreet, witty, gossipy and utterly candid. I loved him playing Louis XIV in *A Little Chaos* which beguiled a flight home from London some years ago.

Shatner, William. [Boldly Go: Reflections on a Life of Awe and Wonder](#) (Atria, \$28,) is the memoir of the actor best known for the stellar Captain Kirk of Star Trek and today at 90 for his continuing exploits.

Tyson, Neil DeGrasse. [Starry Messenger](#) (Holt \$28.99). “In this book, named for the English title of Galileo’s *Sidereus Nuncius*, Tyson once again earns his position as one of the foremost science communicators of the modern age. From the preface to the afterword, which he calls the overture and coda, every word and argument is beautifully balanced. The 10 chapters are themed to a cadence, with titles such as “Truth & Beauty,” “War & Peace,” and “Gender & Identity.” Tyson’s ability to simplify complex topics without seeming disparaging or condescending is refreshing, as is his willingness to approach such a broad range of topics in a forthright yet nonconfrontational manner. As Tyson states in his overture, this book truly is “a trove of insights, informed by the universe and brought to you by the methods and tools of science.” It will encourage readers to question the biases that determine how they react to information from a variety of sources, from textbooks to social media pundits. An excellent addition to any science collection that will encourage critical thinking by all who read it.”—*LJ*

Worsley, Lucy. [Agatha Christie: An Elusive Woman](#) (Pegasus \$29.95). Not many authors sell a billion books, but Christie's nearly 70 mysteries helped her do just that. Born in 1890, she introduced the world to two detectives still going strong in film adaptations and elsewhere: Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple. Her life even included its own mystery. Worsley, a historian, offers a full-dress biography.

OUR OCTOBER LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

Clayton, Meg Waite. [The Postmistress of Paris](#) (\$18). 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."

Coben, Harlan. [The Match](#) (\$17.99). Wilde, first met in Coben's [The Boy from the Woods](#) (\$9.99), is a man who knows next to nothing about his true identity or of his family. All he knows is that he was discovered as a small child, living feral in the Ramapo Mountains of New Jersey. Now the adult Wilde, after months away, has returned to the Ramapo Mountains in the wake of a failed bid at domesticity that confirms what he's known all along: He belongs on his own, free from the comforts and constraints of modern life. Suddenly, a DNA match on an online ancestry database brings Wilde closer to his past than he's ever dreamed, and finally gives Wilde the opening he needs to track down his father. But meeting the man brings up more questions than answers. So Wilde reaches out to his last, most desperate lead, a second cousin who disappears as quickly as he resurfaces, having experienced an epic fall from grace that can only be described as a waking nightmare. The aging Hester Crimstein has a role here along with her late life romance Oren. *The Match* addresses reality shows, celebrity culture social media influencers, online trolls and bullies—hence we are introduced to The Boomerangs, and of course, DNA genealogy databases and genetic testing.

Hoffman, Alice. [The Book of Magic](#) (\$17.99). Hoffman concludes her Practical Magic series about the Owens family women, cursed by 17th-century ancestor Maria, with an illuminating story of their inherited witchcraft. In present-day Massachusetts, octogenarian Jet Owens sees the death watch beetle, a sign that she has seven days to live. She pulls *The Book of the Raven* from her library—a "dark spell-book" that had corrupted Maria's daughter, Faith. The book contains the secret for how to end the family curse, which has caused the men they fall in love with to die, and its discovery sets off a series of cataclysmic events.

Hoffman focuses primarily on Jet's niece, Sally, who quashed her magical powers, and Sally's daughters Kylie and Antonia, from whom Sally hid the family's unusual heritage. After Kylie's fiancée, Gideon, has a life-threatening car accident, she learns about the curse and travels to London where the book was made, in search of answers that could save Gideon. Meanwhile, Antonia, a lesbian, is pregnant and plans to raise the baby with a gay couple, one of whom is the father. Hoffman runs through the Owens family history over the centuries, and though the accounts of bloodlines and varied relationships can be confusing, the story brims with bewitching encounters and suspenseful conflicts revolving around good magic versus bad magic.

The Indie Next Pick adds: "A wonderful conclusion to the series with a new generation of Owens to charm us. For fans who like their books with a good dose of magic, and readers who enjoy a family saga with characters that win you over. What a treat!"

✂Horowitz, Anthony. [A Line to Kill](#) (\$18). Here we have former detective inspector Daniel Hawthorne and a fictionalized Horowitz in an effortless blend of humor and fair play. At a literary festival on the English island of Alderney, the pair plans to promote the series of books Horowitz has been writing about Hawthorne's homicide investigations. On Alderney, they become acquainted with the five other festival guests: 'an unhealthy chef, a blind psychic, a war historian, a children's author, a French performance poet.' One night, they all attend a party hosted by wealthy Charles le Mesurier, who gained his fortune from internet gambling and is the prime advocate for a controversial proposal to route a new electric power line linking the U.K. and France through the island. When a partygoer is found stabbed to death the next morning in an outbuilding near le Mesurier's main house, Hawthorne helps the sparse local police force investigate. The often prickly relationship between the Watson-like Horowitz and the Holmes-like Hawthorne complements the intricate detective work worthy of a classic golden age whodunit." Start with [The Word Is Murder and The Sentence Is Death](#) (\$16.99 each). And the 4th, [The Twist of a Knife](#) (Harper \$29.99), publishes in November.

Johnson, Craig. [Daughter of the Morning Star](#) (\$17). Native American women have experienced extreme violence for years, many of them vanishing without a trace. So Absaroka County Sheriff Walt Longmire isn't entirely surprised when a favor he's doing for Chief Lolo Long of the Cheyenne police leads him to a search for a missing teen. Jaya, Long's niece, is a star basketball player for Montana's Lame Deer Morning Stars high school who's gotten more than 20 notes threatening her life; her sister, Jeanie, is among the missing. Along with his friend Henry Standing Bear, Longmire realizes he must travel to Montana to investigate Jeanie's disappearance to have any chance of helping Jaya, who has prodigious athletic talent but no team spirit. Jaya's mother is an alcoholic who's currently in the county jail, and her father, only recently out of jail, is involved with a White supremacy group that provides plenty of suspects. Longmire interviews the people who were with Jeanie when she vanished from a van that was stopped for repairs as well as others who might be connected to the case; the most surprising and useful information comes from Lyndon Iron Bull, a farmer who claims to have seen Jeanie some time later singing in a snowstorm. He introduces Longmire to the concept of the Wandering Without, a spiritual

black hole that devours souls, which of course fascinates Walt.

We still have Signed copies of the sequel, [Hell and Back](#) (\$28). And Craig is a work on the 2023 Longmire. Yay.

✎Johnson, Jane. [The White Hare](#) (Simon & Schuster \$17.99). Johnson transports readers to rural Cornwall in the years just after World War II. There to the far west lies the White Valley, which cuts deeply through bluebell woods down to the sea at White Cove. The valley has a long and bloody history, laced with folklore, and in it sits a house above the beach that has lain neglected since the war. It comes with a reputation and a strange atmosphere, which is why mother and daughter Magdalena and Mila manage to acquire it so cheaply in the fateful summer of 1954. Magda has grand plans to restore the house to its former glory as a venue for glittering parties, where the rich and celebrated gathered for cocktails and for bracing walks along the coast. Her grown daughter, Mila, just wants to escape the scandal in her past and make a safe and happy home for her little girl, Janey, a solitary, precocious child blessed with a vivid imagination, much of which she pours into stories about her magical plush toy, Rabbit. But Janey's rabbit isn't the only magical being around. Legend has it that an enchanted white hare may be seen running through the woods. Is it an ill omen or a blessing? Things go bump in the night, there are hints of ghosts and old crimes, and the vicar in town is inexplicably, aggressively sinister. Mila and her parents emigrated from Poland just before the war, so she must deal with several layers of outsider status in this insular and remote setting. This is a good read for fans of Alice Hoffman and Kate Morton.

Lescroart, John. [The Missing Piece](#) (\$17). Some exonerated criminals are actually guilty. No one mourned when San Francisco DA Wes Farrell put Paul Riley in prison eleven years ago for the rape and murder of his girlfriend. And no one is particularly happy to see him again when he's released after The Exoneration Initiative uncovered evidence that pinned the crime on someone else. In fact, Riley soon turns up murdered, surrounded by the loot from his latest scam. But if Riley was really innocent all along, who would want him dead? To the cops, it's straightforward: the still-grieving father of Riley's dead girlfriend killed the former prisoner. Farrell, now out of politics and practicing law with master attorney Dismas Hardy, agrees to represent the defendant, Doug Rush—and is left in the dust when Rush suddenly vanishes. At a loss, Farrell and Hardy ask PI Abe Glitsky to track down the potentially lethal defendant. The search takes Glitsky through an investigative hall of mirrors populated by wounded parents, crooked cops, cheating spouses, and single-minded vigilantes. As Glitsky embraces and then discards one enticing theory of the crime after another, the truth seems to recede ever farther... So far that he begins to question his own moral compass. 19th in a series Lescroart never fails to shake up and change up...here using a multiple narrators to create a kaleidoscope of the story.

Limon, Martin. [War Women](#) (\$16.95). U.S. Army investigators George Sueño and Ernie Bascom—I call them the Slicky 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. [The Bloodless Boy](#) (\$17.99). A meaty and superbly conceived historical mystery set in the 17th Century reign of Charles II. A *New York Times* Best New Historical Novel of 2021. Compared to Carr's *The Alienist* or Mantel's *Wolf Hall* as a "literary thriller." Or for my money, Iain Pears' huge bestseller *An Instance of the Fingerpost* also set in the 17th Century and its evolving science. But really the strength of Lloyd's debut lies in his characters. When the body of a young boy drained of his blood is discovered on the snowy bank of the Fleet River, Robert Hooke, the Curator of Experiments at the just-formed Royal Society for Improving Natural Knowledge, and his assistant Harry Hunt, are called in to explain such a ghastly finding—and whether it's part of a plot against the king. They soon learn it is not the first bloodless boy to have been discovered. Meanwhile, that same morning Henry Oldenburg, the Secretary of the Royal Society, blows his brains out, and a disgraced Earl is released from the Tower of London, bent on revenge against the King. Wary of the political hornet's nest they are walking into – and using scientific evidence rather than paranoia in their pursuit of truth – Hooke and Hunt must discover why the boy was murdered, and why his blood was taken

Longworth, M L. [Disaster at the Vendome Theater](#) (Penguin \$17). The largely amateur cast of the Théâtre Vendôme's upcoming production of Marcel Pagnol's *Cigalon* all atwitter at the thought of working with real professionals like Liliane Poncet, the once great leading lady of French stage and screen, and Liliane's costar, Gauthier Lesage, TV actor and guest on various game shows. Gauthier's arrogance and condescension toward his fellow thespians, however, creates friction. When he's found strangled in the theater's storeroom, chaos breaks out. Examining magistrate Antoine Verlaque and his heavily pregnant wife, Marine Bonnet, investigate. Will the show go on, with the town butcher stepping into the leading role? What secrets is the ragtag band of actors hiding? This tenth in a delightful French series, verging on the cozy but wonderfully atmospheric, is "Packed with luscious descriptions of food and flashes of cultural history...a fine way to relax in the company of old friends." A set of Longworth would make an enjoyable gift to anyone loving food and France. I suggest [reading all ten in order](#).

Manansala, Mia P. [Blackmail and Bibingka](#) (Penguin \$17). It's Christmastime in Shady Palms, but things are far from jolly for Lila Macapagal. Sure, her new business, The Brew-ha Cafe, is looking to turn a profit in its first year. And yes, she's taken the first step in a new romance with her good friend, Jae Park. But her cousin Ronnie is back in town after ghosting the family

fifteen years ago, claiming that his recent purchase of a local winery shows that he's back on his feet and ready to give back to the Shady Palms community. Tita Rosie is thrilled with the return of her prodigal son, but Lila knows that wherever Ronnie goes, trouble follows. She's soon proven right when Ronnie is accused of murder, and secrets and rumors surrounding her shady cousin and those involved with the winery start piling up. Now Lila has to put away years of resentment and distrust to prove her cousin's innocence. He may be a jerk, but he's still family. And there's no way her flesh and blood could actually be a murderer...right?

Morris, Wanda M. [Anywhere You Run](#) (Harper \$17.99). After the murder of a white man in Jim Crow Mississippi, two Black sisters run away to different parts of the country... but can they escape the secrets they left behind? 22-year-old Violet Richards finds herself in more trouble than she's ever been in her life. Suffering a brutal attack of her own, she kills the man responsible. But with the color of Violet's skin, there is no way she can escape Jim Crow justice in Jackson, Mississippi. Before anyone can find the body or finger her as the killer, she decides to run. With the help of her white beau, Violet escapes. But desperation and fear leads her to hide out in the small rural town of Chillicothe, Georgia, unaware that danger may be closer than she thinks. Back in Jackson, Marigold, Violet's older sister, has dreams of attending law school. Working for the Mississippi Summer Project, she has been trying to use her smarts to further the cause of the Black vote. But Marigold is in a different kind of trouble: she's pregnant and unmarried. After news of the murder brings the police to her door, Marigold sees no choice but to flee Jackson too. She heads North seeking the promise of a better life and no more segregation. But has she made a terrible choice that threatens her life and that of her unborn child? Two sisters on the run—one from the law, the other from social shame. What they don't realize is that there's a man hot on their trail. Library Reads adds, «This fast-paced heart stopper is set in Jim Crow Mississippi, where two sisters are on the run after a murder in their town. And as they run, their secrets follow. With pulse-pounding suspense that's also filled with empathy and hope, give this to fans of historical thrillers such as *Lady in the Lake* and *American Spy*.”

Morrissey, Hannah. [Hello, Transcriber](#) (\$16.99). Our blogger Lesa writes, For two years, Hazel Greenlee has felt trapped—in her marriage and in the small town of Black Harbor, WI. 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. Former police transcriber Morrissey brings her expertise to this suspenseful debut. Ace Atkins calls it “An edgy and haunting crime novel with a complex and world-weary heroine at the center. Hannah Morrissey writes with passion, razor-edged prose, and most importantly, authenticity. A former police transcriber herself, she

knows the cops and criminals and those who bridge the worlds between. No doubt destined to become one of this year's best debuts.” Look for signed copies of the Black Harbor-set sequel, [The Widomaker](#) (St Martins \$27.99), in December.

Rosenfelt, David. [Best in Snow](#) (\$16.99). Here is the best Christmas-time dog cover ever! It wouldn't be Christmas in Paterson, New Jersey, without a dead body covered by snow in Eastside Park. On a snowy November night, “professional retired” defense attorney Andy is walking his dogs in the park when Tara, “the greatest golden retriever the world has ever known,” discovers a hand protruding through the snow. It turns out to be connected to the body of Paterson's mayor, Alex Oliva. The police are quick to arrest journalist Bobby Nash, who had written a negative story about Oliva, which turned out to be false and cost Bobby his job. Vince Sanders, the editor of the local paper and a longtime buddy of Andy's, refuses to believe his former employee capable of murder and begs Andy to defend him. Soon homicides and attempted homicides are “popping up all over.” In the end, Andy must put his life in peril to draw out the bad guys. Rosenfelt matches crisp action scenes with wry dialogue, and he pithily conveys his characters' shared histories. Newcomers as well as established fans will enjoy this holiday treat. 2020's treat: [Silent Bite](#) (\$16.99). This year's is above in Signed Books. And order the entire [Andy Carpenter](#) series for a dog-gone good time.

Tracy, P J. [Desolation Canyon](#) (\$17.99). LAPD Detective Margaret Nolan worked a tough case in 2021's [Deep into the Dark](#) (\$9.99), a 2020 Crime Club Book of the Month. She is still carrying guilt from a line-of-duty shooting. Afghan War vet Sam Easton's PTSD is stirred when he hears rifle shots while jogging in Desolation Canyon near Death Valley. Nolan's mother, grieving the combat death of her soldier son, goes on a spiritual retreat at the wilderness compound of the Children of the Desert. Father Paul, the sect's charismatic leader, is so outraged that his consort, Marielle, has fled with their daughter that he recruits a cold-blooded killer, an ex-con who is familiar with Father Paul's earlier criminal identity as Roger “Snake” Jackson—to help recover his “stolen property.” That's the set up with the main players, all well realized with their vivid personalities and quirks. So, moving along, Nolan's investigation into a corpse dumped in the swan pond at the Hotel Bel-Air leads her to confront an ex-KGB crime boss and to ponder how the kidnapping of the murder victim's son decades ago could have consequences today. All these plot elements come neatly together as the tension builds along with Father Paul's drug-fueled paranoia and the hunt for Marielle. “Tracy should win new fans with this vivid, twisty crime novel.” Fans of the Monkeewrench series will be pleased with this new Nolan one written by PJ after the death of her writing partner mother.

Willingham, Stacy. [A Flicker in the Dark](#) (\$17.99) is her last January debut. Chloe was only 12 when her father was arrested for murdering six teenage girls in Breaux Bridge, Louisiana. She watched in horrified disbelief, and again when he confessed and took a plea to serve six consecutive life sentences in order to avoid the death penalty. In the wake her mother attempted suicide and her outgoing older brother retreated inside himself. Flash forward to a 32-year-old Chloe who has forged a life as a psychologist in Baton Rouge where her history is unknown. She's prone to self-medicating. She engaged to Daniel Briggs, a pharmaceutical salesman, after a whirlwind romance. Daniel does

know her story and gets her apprehension as the 20th anniversary of the murders approaches. Then a 15-year-old girl disappears from her neighborhood, and a few days later, another teen vanishes after visiting Chloe's office. Is there a pattern here? Has a copycat killer arisen? Or....?

NEW IN LARGE PAPERBACK

Benedict, Marie. [Her Hidden Genius](#) (\$16.99). Well I remember the sensation when British scientists James Watson and Francis Crick announced the double helix, their discovery of the structure of DNA, in 1953. Here's a description of Watson's book [The Double Helix](#) (\$16.99). At the time there were rumors that Watson's "personal account" suppressed the contributions of others to the discovery. Benedict, whose specialty is novelizing surprising facets of influential women's work (Hedy Lamarr, Mitza Maric, Clementine Churchill), reveals the pioneering work of Rosalind Franklin. Always an outsider, cold-shouldered as a woman working in a male bastion in England after more camaraderie in a Paris laboratory, she has a natural genius for physics and chemistry that guides her experiments. When she is assigned to work on DNA she thinks her time has come. Never again will she have to listen to her colleagues complain about her, especially Maurice Wilkins who'd rather conspire about genetics with James Watson and Francis Crick than work alongside her. Then it finally happens—the double helix structure of DNA reveals itself to her with perfect clarity. But then.... Like Marie Curie, Rosalind was unwary of radiation, leading to her work ending her life before its time and with credit for her work hidden by the male colleagues who should have celebrated her extraordinary gifts and contributions to molecular biology.

Cornwell, Patricia. [Autopsy](#) (\$17.99). 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, 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 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....

Darnielle, John. [Devil House](#) (\$19). "Mountain Goats singer-songwriter Darnielle flays the conventions of true crime to reveal the macabre and ordinary brutality behind sensationalized stories of violence." True crime writer Gage Chandler has spent the last five years living in the "Devil House" in Milpitas, California, where he's been working on a book about an unsolved murder that took place there in 1986, during the height of the Satanic Panic. Interspersed with Gage's investigation are long excerpts from one of his previous books, *The White Witch of Morro Bay*, which recounts the gruesome end for two teenage boys who broke into their teacher's apartment. "Gage's multilayered narrative of the *Devil House* murders slowly builds from conjecture to the victims' ventriloquized voices, lending itself

well to Darnielle's themes about the artifice of the genre. I find this interesting given the booming popularity of true crime podcasts – which is almost like we're returning to radio.

De Castrique, Mark. [Secret Lives](#) (Poisoned Pen \$16.99). The wonderful De Castrique returns with a new character who plays into the rising interest in senior sleuths (Richard Osman, Deanne Raybourn, etc) and their capabilities. I worked with Mark on this tale before we sold Poisoned Pen Press and am happy to see it publish. *PW* agrees with my take: "75-year-old Ethel Fiona Crestwater, a retired FBI agent who remains a legend among her former colleagues for her 'myriad connections in both the Secret Service and the FBI, and a maestro's skill to play those connections to her advantage.' Her comfortable Arlington, Virginia, home is affectionately referred to as 'Ethel's dormitory' by the government agents who have rented rooms from her over the years. When one roomer, Secret Service agent Jonathan Finch, is shot in front of her house, the feisty landlady steps into the role of action hero to find Finch's killer and discover the reasons for his death. She's assisted by Jesse Cooper, her double first cousin twice removed, who's also staying with her while attending the American University in Washington, D.C., as well as former boarders Cory Bradshaw, head of the Secret Service, and Arlington police detective Frank Mancini. Petite but plucky Ethel is an elderly Nancy Drew: sure of herself and her convictions, and ready to bend a few rules to achieve her goal of seeing justice done. She's off to a fine start."

Franzen, Jonathan. [Crossroads](#) (\$20) examines shifting culture of early 1970s America, the first in a trilogy. The novel's action is centered on the small Illinois town of New Prospect, where the each of the Hildebrandts is experiencing a sea change.

Gaylin, Alison. [The Collective](#) (\$17.99). 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.

Haw, Penny. [The Invincible Miss Cust](#) (Sourcebooks \$16.99). "A skillfully told story of an extraordinary woman's grit, determination, and devotion to her dream of becoming Great Britain's first female veterinary surgeon. Haw brings Aleen Cust to vivid life, from her aristocratic but stifled childhood to her difficult days at school, to her eventual acceptance as a highly skilled vet—all the while fighting a patriarchal system designed to thwart her every step. Detailed and evocative, *The Invincible Miss Cust* is an engrossing read." — Shana Abé. And pairs well with the Marie Benedict novel that opens this section of the Booknews.

Henderson, Alice. [A Blizzard of Polar Bears](#) (\$17.99). 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

✎Herron, Mick. [Dolphin Junction: Stories](#) (16.95). . 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.

McCloskey, David. [Damascus Station](#) (\$17.95). This is a strong thriller debut with a background rarely seen. CIA case officer Sam Joseph is dispatched to Paris to recruit Syrian Palace official Mariam Haddad. The two fall into a forbidden relationship, which supercharges Haddad's recruitment and creates unspeakable danger when they enter Damascus to find the man responsible for the disappearance of an American spy. But the cat and mouse chase for the killer soon leads to a trail of high-profile assassinations and the discovery of a dark secret at the heart of the Syrian regime.... I'm looking forward to the sequel to this excellent addition to international thrillers.

✎McGeorge, Chris. [Murder at Balmoral](#) (Penguin \$17). I might have been amused by this story where the 85-year-old King of England is murdered at Balmoral Castle on a Christmas Day gathering with his dysfunctional Royal family before Queen Elizabeth died, but now it strikes a very sour note for me.

Medawar, Tony. [Ghosts from the Library: Lost Tales of Terror and the Supernatural](#) (Harper \$16.99) resurrects forgotten tales of the supernatural by some of the masters of the Golden Age. From Arthur Conan Doyle and John Dickson Carr to Agatha Christie and Daphne du Maurier, this spine-chilling anthology brings together thirteen uncollected tales of terror, plus some additional surprises—thrills, spills, and chills perfect for Halloween.

✎Ripley, Mike. [Mr. Campion's Wings](#) (\$17.95). A well-deserved honor for his brainy wife drags Albert Campion out of retirement yet again in 1965. Under the sponsorship of Professor Emeritus John Branscombe, St. Ignatius College, Cambridge, has chosen to confer an honorary doctorate on Lady Amanda Fitton for her work as head of the Goshawk Project, which develops state-of-the-art aircraft designs. The only false note in Amanda's big day comes when she's spirited away by police officers who detain

her under the Official Secrets Act. And even that comes with a silver lining: She has a perfect alibi when Branscombe's former student Alan Wormold is killed in a suspicious and very bloody accident in the Goshawk workshop. Since Amanda can't believe that workshop manager Alf Bagley, who discovered Alan's body, is responsible for his death, that leaves only four suspects, all of them Goshawk employees. The late Margery Allingham, much of whose work I read in real time and loved, lives on thanks to Ripley and even better, so do Mr. Campion and friends.

Shteyngart, Gary. [Our Country Friends](#) (\$18.99). 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. The Indie Next Pick: "Extraordinary. I love every word Shteyngart ever written, and this is his best novel by an upstate country mile. I said I never wanted to read a 2020 pandemic novel, but I was wrong. I needed to read one—this one."

Sloan, Robin. [Mr. Penumbra's 24Hour Bookstore](#) (\$18). A 10th Anniversary reissue of the 2012 novel that was a Poisoned Pen Notable New Fiction Pick... and a lot of fun. The Great Recession shuffled Clay Jannon away from life as a San Francisco web-design drone and into the aisles of Mr. Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore. But after a few days on the job, Clay discovers that the store is more curious than either its name or its gnomic owner might suggest. The customers are few, and they never seem to buy anything—instead, they "check out" large, obscure volumes from strange corners of the store. Suspicious, Clay engineers an analysis of the clientele's behavior, seeking help from his variously talented friends. But when they bring their findings to Mr. Penumbra, they discover the bookstore's secrets extend far beyond its walls.

Weir, Andy. [Project Hail Mary](#) (\$20). From the author of [The Martian](#) (\$17), a thriller about a lone astronaut must save the earth from disaster in a "propulsive" cinematic thriller full of suspense, humor, and fascinating science—and in development as a major motion picture starring Ryan Gosling.

OUR OCTOBER SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Bruns, Catherine. [A Doomful of Sugar](#) (Sourcebooks \$8.99). Maple Syrup #1. Returning home to Sugar Ridge, Vermont, to run her late father's maple-syrup store, Leila Khoury, learning that he didn't die in a robbery gone wrong, but was murdered, gets herself in a sticky situation as she launches her own investigation.

This first in series includes 5 delicious maple recipes for mystery readers with a sweet tooth!

Connelly, Michael. [The Dark Hours](#) (\$9.99). Harry Bosch #23. LAPD Detective René Ballard, investigating a New Year's Eve murder along with an unsolved murder, teams up Detective Harry Bosch once again when their two cases—one old and one new—intersect, while an undetected killer watches their every move. "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." (*PW*)

Coyle, Cleo. [The Ghost and the Stolen Tears](#) (Berkley \$8.99). Haunted Bookshop #8. When her part-time employee, Norma—a modern-day nomad who's become an uplifting presence in Quindicott, Rhode Island—is accused of stealing priceless jewels, bookshop owner Penelope Thornton-McClure calls upon her paranormal P.I. to find the real culprit. “Engaging characters, historical backgrounds, and plenty of red herrings add up to a gem of a story.” (*Kirkus*)

Deaver, Jeffery. [The Midnight Lock](#) (\$9.99). Lincoln Rhyme #15. When he is fired as a consultant for the NYPD, Lincoln Rhyme decides to risk jail to solve a case involving “the Locksmith”—a sociopathic intruder who can break through any lock or security system ever devised, terrorizing the entire city. “Some readers will be aghast in admiration at the nonstop revelations, others impatient for every last T to be crossed so that they can turn the last page and get to sleep before dawn. In the end, everyone will agree that there's no other detective under the midnight moon like Lincoln Rhyme.” (*Kirkus*)

Johansen, Roy. [Killer View](#) (\$9.99). Kendra Michaels #9. Hired by an incarceration consultant, who prepares wealthy people for prison, to find his missing partner, army vet and former bodyguard for the rich and famous, Jessie Mercado learns just how far someone will go to keep the fate of one man hidden.

King, Stephen. [The Colorado Kid](#) (\$8.99). Stephen King's bestselling unsolved mystery, *THE COLORADO KID* - **inspiration for the TV series HAVEN — returns to bookstores for the first time in 10 years in an all-new illustrated edition.**

Shelton, Paige. [Dark Night](#) (\$8.99). Alaska Wild #3. Suspicions turn towards the seemingly innocuous “census man,” in Benedict, Alaska, after a battered woman stumbles into the town bar and her husband is found dead, all while Beth Rivers – better known to her fans as thriller author Elizabeth Fairchild – must deal with the arrival of her mother in town. *Kirkus* called Shelton's latest unputdownable book “a character-driven mystery in a near-mystical setting, a land of stark contrasts and self-reliant denizens.”

NEW IN SMALL PAPERBACK

Alexander, Ellie. [Cure for What Ales You](#) (\$8.99). Sloan Krause #5. Preparing to debut her new line at the Maifest celebration, amateur sleuth and craft brewer Sloan Krause must contend with her past and present when a woman involved in a local murder warns Sloane that her and her entire family are in danger.

Andrews, Brian. [W E B Griffin Rogue Asset](#) (\$9.99). Presidential Agent #9. To save the secretary of state from an army of terrorists in Cairo, the president revives the Presidential Agent program and calls Charley Castillo out of retirement to direct a new agent, Killer McCoy, to get the job done.

Cameron, Marc. [Tom Clancy Chain of Command](#) (\$9.99). Jack Ryan #21. To implement his most ambitious plan of all, a ruthless billionaire must get President Jack Ryan out of the way and assembles the most ruthless mercenaries alive to kidnap the First Lady.

Cass, Laurie. [The Crime That Binds](#) (Berkley \$8.99). Bookmobile Cat #10. While delivering comforting reads to the citizens of Chilson, Michigan, librarian Minnie and her rescue cat, Eddie encounter Ryan Anderson, who, on the run from the police for crimes he didn't commit, needs her help in proving his innocence.

Childs, Lisa. [The Missing](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Reissue. Bane Island #3. Arriving at a former insane asylum-turned-luxury resort where the mystery of women disappearing there remains unsolved, reporter Edie Stone becomes convinced someone is trying to kill her as she gets closer to the truth.

Collette, Abby. [Soul of a Killer](#) (Berkley \$8.99). Books and Biscuits #2. When Mama Zola, her foster mom, and one of her employees find themselves suspects in a murder, bookstore and soul-food café owner, Koby, along with her twin sister, Keaton, must serve a side of justice to the real killer.

☞Doherty, Paul. [The Nightingale Gallery](#) (Camden \$9.99). Reissue. Sorrowful Mysteries #1. In 1376 England's crown is in the hands of a young boy, the future Richard II, and a power struggle seems imminent. However, when one of London's powerful merchant princes is murdered and other deaths soon follow, the coroner Sir John Craston and monk Brother Athelstan are ordered to investigate.

Erickson, Alex. [Death by Spiced Chai](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Bookstore Café #10. Framed for murder, bookstore-café owner Krissy Hancock finds her business in hot water as she races against time to uncover the truth before the killer's rage boils over again.

Griffin, Laura. [Vanishing Hour](#) (Berkley \$8.99). While volunteering on a search-and-rescue mission, former corporate lawyer Ava Burch makes a discovery linked to an unsolved case and a recent disappearance that has her working closely with Deputy Sheriff Grant Wycoff to solve this mystery before time runs out.

Gudenkauf, Heather. [These Things Hidden](#) (\$8.99). Reissue. When her sister Allison, convicted of a heinous crime, is released from prison to a halfway house and is desperate to speak with her, Brynn, unable to forget the past that haunts her, must keep the truth from being revealed due to unimaginable consequences.

Harding, Robyn. [The Swap](#) (\$9.99). Two couples embark on a toxic relationship after a night of sexual shenanigans, unaware of the manipulative teenager with an explosive secret at the center of it all.

Henry, Julia. [The Plot Thickets](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Garden Squad #5. While cleaning up the historic Goosebush Cemetery, Lilly Jayne stumbles upon the body of Whitney Dunne-Bradford, the conniving custodian of the graveyard, and must dig up the dirt on the real killer when the homicide inquiry suddenly targets an old friend.

Hooper, Kay. [Curse of Salem](#) (\$9.99). Bishop/Special Crimes #20. Teaming up with less-than-reassuring partner Destiny Kincaid for his first assignment, former Chicago street cop-turned-FBI Special Crimes Unit rookie finds the limits of his paranormal abilities tested by unexpected occult dangers.

Kelly, Diane. [A Trip with Trouble](#) (St Martins \$8.99). Mountain Lodge #2. Joining the Dangerous Curves Motorcycle Club on a ride to admire the colorful fall foliage, Misty Murphy, the owner of Mountaintop Lodge, must help the ladies locate their tail gunner—the last rider in their group—when she fails to show up at their destination.

Laskowski, Tara. [One Night Gone](#) (\$8.99). While house sitting in a wealthy beach town, the recently divorced Allison Simpson

finds herself drawn in by the unsolved, mysterious disappearance of Maureen Haddaway 30 years before and uncovers dark secrets hidden among the gorgeous homes in this triple award winner – Agatha, Macavity, and Anthony – mystery.

Margolin, Phillip. [The Darkest Place](#) (\$9.99). Robin Lockwood #5. After a pro bono case upends her life, defense attorney Robin Lockwood retreats home to Elk Grove where she defends a surrogate accused of kidnapping the baby she carried for another couple—a case that may result in unexpected, deadly consequences.

Patterson, James. [The Paris Detective](#) (\$9.99). Joining the NYPD for a fresh start, French detective Luc Moncrief, as gorgeous women drop dead at upscale department stores and priceless paintings vanish from a Park Avenue murder scene, must become a quick study in the art of the steal before a coldblooded killer strikes again.

Slaughter, Karin. [False Witness](#) (\$9.99). Reissue. Defense attorney Leigh Collier is taken aback when she discovers her new, high profile case will be defending her childhood abuser.