

# BOOKNEWS from

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## MAY IS FOR MOM AND MYSTERY

Opening Hours M-Fri 10 AM-7 PM; Sat 10 AM-6PM; Sun 12-5 PM

Note: Event times are in Pacific Daylight Time

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

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

### TUESDAY MAY 2 5:00 PM

#### Amanda Quick with JT Ellison

Quick discusses [The Bride Wore White](#) (Berkley \$28).

Signed books available

Read this [excellent article by Quick](#) that includes Ellison and me

### TUESDAY MAY 2 6:30 PM

#### Brian Klingborg discusses [The Magistrate](#) (St Martins \$28))

An Inspector Lu Fei Mystery

Signed books available

### WEDNESDAY MAY 3 5:00 PM

#### Austin Noir Event with Patrick

Authors of [Austin Noir](#) (Akashic \$16.95) may include Hopeton Hay, Scott Montgomery, and Molly Odintz, Gabino Iglesias, Ace Atkins, Amanda Moore, Jeff Abbott and more

### WEDNESDAY MAY 3 7:00 PM Live

#### JD O'Brien discusses [Zig Zag](#) (Schnaffer Press \$26.99)

Western crime

#### Jim Ruland discusses [Make It Stop](#) (Rare Bird Books \$20)

Speculative LA Punk

### THURSDAY MAY 4 5:00 PM

#### Sarah Herchenroether discusses [The Night Flowers](#) (Norton \$26.95)

New Mexico thriller

### SATURDAY MAY 6 2:00 PM Live

#### Cozy Con with John

#### Colleen Cambridge discusses [Mastering the Art of French Murder](#) (Kensington \$26)

Introducing Julia Child into mystery

#### Kate Carlisle discusses [Dressed to Drill](#) (Berkley \$8.99)

A Fixer-Upper Mystery

#### Dianne Freeman discusses [A Fiancée's Guide to First Wives and Murder](#) (\$15.99)

Victorian mystery

#### Paige Shelton discusses [Fateful Words](#) (St Martins \$26.99)

A Scottish Bookshop Mystery

### MONDAY MAY 8 7:00 PM Live

#### Dave Barry discusses [Swamp Story](#) (Simon & Schuster \$27.99)

Classic Barry Florida mayhem

Our May Crime Book of the Month

### TUESDAY MAY 9 4:00 PM

#### Ashley Weaver discusses [Playing It Safe](#) (St Martins \$28)

Electra McDonnell WWII London mystery

Signed books available

### TUESDAY MAY 9 7:00 PM Live

#### Brendan Slocumb discusses [Symphony of Secrets](#) (Knopf \$28)

A marvelous story of music and fraud and more...

### THURSDAY MAY 11 7:00 PM Live

#### Joe Ide discusses [Fixit](#) (Mulholland \$28)

An IQ novel

### SUNDAY MAY 14 3:15 PM Live

#### Jack Carr Book Launch for [Only the Dead](#) (Atria \$29.99)

[Purchase Ticket](#) @\$35 each

Each ticket comes with one copy of *Only the Dead*

Our copies come with a certificate attesting to the signing date/place

### MONDAY MAY 15 5:00 PM

#### Marc Cameron discusses [Breakneck](#) (Kensington \$27)

Alaska's US Marshal Arliss Cutter

### WEDNESDAY MAY 17 4:00 PM

#### Linwood Barclay discusses [The Lie Maker](#) (Harper \$29.99)

A thriller set in the Witness Protection Program

### WEDNESDAY MAY 17 7:00 PM Live

#### JC Cervantes with Alexandra Bracken

Cervantes discusses [The Enchanted Hacienda](#) (Park Row \$29.99)

Romance and magic within Mexico's Estrada Family

### THURSDAY MAY 18 5:00 PM

#### Michelle Gagnon with Naomi Hirahara

Gagnon discusses [Killing Me](#) (Putnam \$28)

A woman keeps dodging a serial killer

### FRIDAY MAY 19 7:00 PM

#### SciFi Friday discusses RF Kuang's [Babel](#) (Harper \$27.99)

### SATURDAY MAY 10 10:30 AM

#### Croak and Dagger discusses Michael Bussi's [Black Water Lilies](#) (\$15)

### SATURDAY MAY 20 2:00 PM Live

#### Ellen Crosby, Jenn McKinlay, Kate White with John

Crosby discusses [Blow Up](#) (Severn \$31.99)

McKinlay discusses [Summer Reading](#) (Berkley \$17)

White discusses [Between Two Strangers](#) (Harper \$29.99/\$18.99)

**MONDAY MAY 22 5:00 PM**

**Don Bentley with Brian Andrews and Jeff Wilson**  
Bentley discusses [Tom Clancy Flash Point](#) (Putnam \$29.95)  
And they all discuss the Clancyverse  
Signed books available

**TUESDAY MAY 23 5:00 PM**

**Ivy Pochoda with Patrick**  
Pochoda discusses [Sing Her Down](#) (Farrar \$28)  
Signed books available

**TUESDAY MAY 23 7:00 PM Live**

**Claudia Gray** discusses [The Late Mrs. Willoughby](#) (Knopf \$17)  
Book two in the world of Jane Austen's characters

**WEDNESDAY MAY 24 12:00 PM**

**Jaelyn Goldis with Megan Collins**  
Goldis discusses [The Chateau](#) (Atria \$27.99)  
A thriller set in Provence  
Goldis lives in Israel so no signed copies

**WEDNESDAY MAY 24 5:00 PM**

**JT Ellison** discusses [The Wolves Come at Night](#) (Two Tales Press \$27.99)  
Taylor Jackson is back! For readers ages 13 and up  
For fans of Karin Slaughter, Lisa Gardner, John Sandford

**THURSDAY MAY 25 1:00 PM**

**Katherine Hall Page** discusses [The Body in the Web](#) (Harper \$27.99)  
Faith Fairchild is back!  
Signed books available

**THURSDAY MAY 25 5:00 PM**

**Chris Hauty** discusses [The Devil You Know](#) (Atria \$27.99)  
Signed books available

**THURSDAY MAY 25 7:00 PM**

**Hardboiled Crime** discusses Willy Vlautin's [The Night Always Comes](#) (\$16.99)

**TUESDAY MAY 30 7:00 PM Live**

**TJ Newman** discusses [Drowning](#) (Avid Reader Press \$28)  
Our Signed copies come with a boarding pass-style bookmarks  
plus a few attendees will win a boarding kit

**WEDNESDAY MAY 31 1:00 PM**

**Alison Goodman with CS Harris**  
Goodman discusses [The Benevolent Society of Ill-Mannered Ladies](#) (Penguin \$17)  
A Regency Romp

**WEDNESDAY MAY 31 6:30 PM**

**Emma Törzs with Pat**  
Törzs discusses [Ink, Blood, Sister, Scribe](#) (Harper \$29.99)

**OUR MAY BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

**British Crime Club** One Unsigned hardcover or paperback per month  
TBA

**Cozy Crimes Club** One Unsigned hardcover or paperback per month  
Cambridge, Colleen. [Mastering the Art of French Murder](#)

**First Mystery Club** One Signed First Printing per month  
Douaihy, Margot. [Scorched Grace](#) is postponed to the May Pick

**The Crime Collectors Book of the Month Club** One Signed First Printing per month  
Barry, Dave. [Swamp Story](#)

**History/Mystery Club** One First Printing per month  
Mason, Tim. [The Nightingale Affair](#)

**Notable New Fiction** One Signed First Printing per month  
Franklin, Emily. [The Lioness of Boston](#)

**International Crime** One Unsigned Hardcover or paperback per month  
Smith, Martin Cruz. [Independence Square](#)

**Romance & Relationships** One Unsigned Hardcover or 2 paperbacks per month  
McKinlay, Jenn. [Summer Reading](#) & Rosen, Renee, Fifth Avenue Glamour Girl

## SIGNED BOOKS FOR MAY

Banville, John. [The Lock-Up](#) (Faber UK \$39). Abandoning his crime pen name of Benjamin Black, Irish Booker Prize winner Banville brings us a new Quirke mystery set in 1950s Dublin. It begins when Rosa Jacobs, a young history scholar, is found dead in her car. Pathologist Quirke, post autopsy, informs DI St. John Strafford that it was foul play. The victim's sister, a newspaper reporter from London, returns to Dublin and discovers a lead. As they explore Rosa's links to a wealthy German family that settled post-war on a huge estate in County Wicklow, and to investigative work she may have been doing in Israel, they are confronted with an ever-deepening mystery. Despite ever more strained relations between the two men where guilt and a kind of class war rage (honestly, how can anyone drink and smoke like Quirke, who is still reeling from the fatal shooting of his wife, and still function?), they persevere. Enjoy the unexpected locales and WWII history in this ambitious mystery.

Barry, Dave. [Swamp Story](#) (Simon Schuster \$27.99). Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist/author and actual Florida Man Dave Barry returns with a caper full of oddballs and more twists and turns than a snake slithering away from a gator. It's refreshing to read Barry's take on the Sunshine State as compared to the Florida figuring in the news. The cast includes two very bad brothers, the owners of a bait shop, a drug lord, a craven lawyer, a politician, a swamp denizen, a heroine and hero—not to mention gold ingots, a wild boar, a python and of course an alligator. It begins when Ken Bortle of Bortle Brothers Bait and Beer hatches a scheme to lure tourists to his failing store by making viral videos of the "Everglades Melon Monster." What could go wrong? I think we can all use some humor and so this is our **May Crime Collectors Book of the Month**.

Barry reports, "Florida is a festival of weirdness—now more than ever.... My good friend Carl Hiaasen says you don't need an imagination to write stories about Florida; you just need a newspaper subscription. I don't think there's anything in *Swamp Story* that couldn't actually happen in this insane state."

Bentley, Don. [Tom Clancy Flash Point](#) (Penguin \$29.95). Jack Ryan Jr. is in a world of trouble. When a benign surveillance operation takes a deadly turn, Jack finds himself locked in a struggle with an unseen enemy bent on destroying the Campus. The chase leads Jack to the South China Sea where a midair collision between aircraft from rival nations threatens to serve as a flash point for the entire region. As Jack frantically tries to put the pieces of the conspiracy together, the Campus is hit with a crippling attack. When the dust settles, Jack is one of the few operators still standing and the Campus's de facto leader. But the fight is just beginning....

Billingham, Mark. [The Last Dance](#) (LittleBrown UK \$42). Bingham launches a cracking new mystery series featuring the charming, sarcastic DS Declan Miller. Miller's wife, Alex—also a detective—was recently murdered on the job. Afternoons spent in the company of his pet rats and punctuated by visits from Alex's ghost are not enough to keep Declan away from work for long, though. The first case assigned to Miller and his new partner, Sara Xiu, is a double murder. It initially appears that the two victims—an organized crime heir and an IT consultant—have nothing in common, but after Declan taps into a network of sources spanning his and Alex's ballroom dancing friends,

an old informant, and Alex's ghost, he starts to fear a complex conspiracy is at hand. Meanwhile, Declan's friend, prison snitch Gary "Chesshead" Cole, tries to find Alex's murderer, with tragic results. "Billingham imbues Miller with a brilliant sense of humor and populates the margins of this well-paced mystery with lovable, fully fleshed characters whom readers will adore. This is the author at his best." The US edition comes out in July.

Cambridge, Colleen. [Mastering the Art of French Murder](#) (Kensington \$26) whips up a delectable narrative of French food, unlikely friendships, and life in postwar Europe. Thanks to Tabitha Knight's grand-père and uncle, she has a free place to stay in the best city in the world, Paris. Even better, her best friend, Julia Child, lives across the street and is teaching her how to cook the most basic of dishes, much to the relief of Tabitha's household. After a beautiful morning spent gossiping and shopping at the market, Julia and Tabitha walk into Julia's apartment building and hear a scream. *Meurtre!* Tabitha rapidly resolves discover who has killed Therese Lognon before Inspector Etienne Merveille pins the murder on Julia.. Library Reads says of our **May Cozy Crimes Book of the Month**: "The romance, sights, sounds, and food of the city are delightful enough; add a murder committed with one of Julia's knives, and a wonderful series is born. For fans of culinary mysteries." Agatha Christie meets cozy.

Carlisle, Kate. [Dressed to Drill](#) (Berkley \$8.99). While Shannon Hammer is thrilled to attend the premiere of the movie based on her boyfriend Mac's latest book, she can't wait to trade her killer heels for work boots and start her next renovation project in Lighthouse Cove: a quaint Victorian church that has seen better days. And will see them again—as a museum—if Shannon, her talented crew, and her sister Chloe have anything to say about it. But on the first day of demolition, work comes to a screeching halt when they stumble on the body of a beautiful young woman in one of the chapels. Who killed the assistant art director? Suspects crawl out of the woodwork as fast as Shannon can restore it.

Carr, Jack. [Only the Dead](#) (Atria \$29.99). In 1980, a freshman congressman was gunned down in Rhode Island, sending shockwaves through Washington that are still reverberating over four decades later. Now, with the world on the brink of war and a weakened United States facing rampant inflation, political division, and shocking assassinations, a secret cabal of global elites is ready to assume control. And with the world's most dangerous man locked in solitary confinement, the conspirators believe the final obstacle to complete domination has been eliminated. They're wrong. Especially wrong since James Reece is now on the warpath, carrying his tomahawk and rifle....

Once again we can offer a set of the [First 5 Terminal List thrillers](#) (\$150) in autographed hardcover editions with free US shipping included. International shipping is at the usual rates. These will not necessarily be first printings.

Cervantes, JC. [The Enchanted Hacienda](#) (Park Row \$29.99). Enchantment reigns in this beautiful story of the magic of love. Not only is Harlow Estrada the only one of all the women in her family who was not named for a flower, but she is also without magic. Losing her job and boyfriend all in one day sends her from New York City back to her family home in Mexico, Hacienda Estrada where she hopes to heal and begin writing the novel

she has always yearned to write. For Harlow, maybe it's not magic she's missing, but belief in herself. "Cervantes' adult debut is a sensual tale of a young woman discovering herself, finding her passion, and falling in love. Lush descriptions abound, and the sweeping love story draws readers in. Fans of Zoraida Córdova and Alice Hoffman will feel at home in the Estrada family's hacienda." —*Booklist*

Comey, James. [Central Park West](#) (Penzler \$29.99). Prosecutor Nora Carleton, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York (Comey's old haunts) is poised to put away the mobster known as The Nose for good—and, in another ongoing case, nail the ex-wife of the creepy former NY governor for his murder. With the possibility that the murder was committed by a member of the Gambino crime family—a hit woman impersonating the ex-wife, Kyra Burke—a legal free-for-all breaks out. There is some sharp writing here and deployment of insider knowledge.

The signature will interest some of you. The publisher swears Comey wrote this first mystery in a planned series himself and indeed his nonfiction shows he can craft sharp sentences. I agree with this assessment by *Kirkus*: "Comey is comfortable with the technicalities and unspoken truths of a high-level case, including the battles among the Department of Justice and the Manhattan DA and the FBI and the NYPD...."

Cronin, Justin. [The Ferryman](#) (Random \$30). In Cronin's first novel since his Passage trilogy, Proctor Bennett, an elite resident of the socially regimented archipelago world of Prospera, works as a "ferryman," assisting aging fellow Prosperans to transition peacefully to their next "iteration," the reconstitution of their personalities in younger bodies. Proctor discharges his duties with great professionalism—until the ferrying of his own father goes dramatically awry, exposing cracks in Prospera's edenic veneer. Now a dangerous fugitive on the run from his own forced iteration, Proctor enters an unlikely alliance with rebellious subversives in the home to Prospera's disgruntled working class. Having established the foundations for what appears to be a classic dystopian tale, Cronin then pulls the rug out from under his story, audaciously expanding its scope and pushing it into the realm of provocative conceptual science fiction. "The velvety prose, the creepy heart-clenching suspense, and the meaning and emotion layered into every word all give rise to an incredibly thought-provoking sci-fi thriller." —*LJ Starred Review*

Crosby, Ellen. [Blow Up](#) (Severn \$31.99). I'm a fan of Crosby's Wine Country Mysteries and of her two earlier thrillers for photojournalist Sophie Medina. Now she brings us a crackerjack third—one that has an excellent complex plot and is timely since it revolves around a Supreme Court Justice of dubious behavior. Sophie is out for a run with her friend Jack O'Hara, a Catholic priest, when they stumble upon the body of Justice Everett Townsend in an alley behind his DC home. Barely hanging onto life, Townsend is rushed to the hospital where he's pronounced dead. His wife arrives to ID him and arranges a quick cremation. Before Sophie can grasp what has happened, a homeless young man close to her is murdered right after disclosing something shocking. Sophie, already keeping on secret about the Justice, rattled by another damaging to her family, and trying to unlock one about her murdered CIA agent husband, searches for answers, putting her own life at risk. Crosby paints a detailed picture of life in Washington, DC, from the food and architecture

to the heartbreaking reality of homelessness and the dynamics of politics and power. The ring of authenticity stems from Crosby's sharp journalist's eye and own career in a story about Washington that is, refreshingly, not quite a thriller. Highly recommended.

Edwards, Martin. [Sepulchre Street](#) (Zeus \$40). Here's a new glamorous Gothic mystery from Diamond Dagger winner Edwards. London, 1930s: Rachel Savernake is attending renowned artist Damaris Gethin's latest exhibition, featuring live models who pose as famous killers. But that's just the warm-up act... Unsure why she was invited, Rachel is soon cornered by the artist who asks her a haunting favor: she wants Rachel to solve her murder. Damaris then takes to the stage set with a guillotine, the lights go out—and Damaris executes herself. Why would Damaris take her own life? And, if she died by her own hand, what did she mean by 'solve my murder'? Edwards has once again included the Golden Age readers' challenge. "Reads as if Ruth Rendell were channeling Edgar Wallace." —Mick Herron

Ellison, JT. [The Wolves Come at Night](#) (Two Tales Press \$27.99). While the high-profile murder of a young country singer turns Nashville inside out, danger lurks in the woods beyond the city's border. There was a witness to the terrible crime, a college student who stumbled onto the scene. When the girl goes missing, the police don't know if she's run for cover or been taken...or if something more sinister is happening. The truth will shatter Homicide Lieutenant Taylor Jackson's career and bring her face to face with a deadly assassin who wants nothing more than to finish what they started. Taylor Jackson is back. And you've never seen her quite like this. Grab this while waiting for Karin Slaughter to visit us August 24, or for the next Lisa Gardner. I add that we support bestseller JT's decision to create a small press for her work and that of other authors.

Franklin, Emily. [The Lioness of Boston](#) (Godine \$28.95). In our **May Notable New Fiction Book of the Month**, Franklin offers a vivid narrative of Isabella Stewart Gardner's evolution into a pioneering art collector and museum founder. "The novel brims with pitch-perfect period details, such as Isabella's ability to shock New England society merely by wearing blue shoes, and Franklin cannily captures Gardner's ambition, independence, and quirks. Fans of strong female protagonists and Gilded Age historicals will enjoy this."

Gagnon, Michelle. [Killing Me](#) (Penguin \$28). Street-smart Amber Jamison is mortified when she finds herself "bound up like a sushi roll" in a van, potentially the next victim of a serial killer terrorizing Johnson City, Tennessee. Before the Pokémon-obsessed psycho can finish her off, she's rescued by a ski mask-wearing woman armed with a cattle prod who disappears before Amber can learn why this mysterious stranger is hunting serial murderers. Escaping the Pikachu Killer is just the start of our protagonist's misadventures. "If Dexter teamed up with Stephanie Plum, the result would be *Killing Me*. At the story's center is Amber Jamison, whose luck somehow manages to only get worse when surviving one serial killer just puts her in the crosshairs of another. The result is an unforgettable, laugh out loud wild ride with an irresistible cast of characters. Murder has no business being this funny." —Kellye Garrett

Library Reads, always reliable, adds, "Amber has very strong opinions about people who fall prey to serial killers and is sure that being savvy and street smart will keep her safe. Until

she is taken by a serial killer, and her life becomes a hot mess. This quirky, snarky book reads like Janet Evanovich teamed up with Stephen King.”

✂Gray, Claudia. [The Late Mrs. Willoughby](#) (Knopf \$17) follows up on [The Murder of Mr. Wickham](#) (\$17) and earns a Starred Review which calls it “Another superior blend of humor and detection. Jonathan Darcy, the son of *Pride and Prejudice*’s Fitzwilliam Darcy and Elizabeth Bennett, and Juliet Tilney, the daughter of *Northanger Abbey*’s Catherine and Henry Tilney, met in the previous installment, when they teamed up to solve a homicide and found themselves fighting mutual attraction. The amateur sleuths get another murder to crack when they’re both guests at the Devonshire home of *Sense and Sensibility*’s John Willoughby, a former schoolmate of Darcy’s.... T the get-together becomes fraught after the arrival of *Sense and Sensibility*’s Marianne Brandon, who has a past with Willoughby. Things get worse when Willoughby’s wife, Sophia, whom he’d married for her dowry, dies after drinking some poisoned port. Gray makes her endearing leads’ sleuthing both plausible and entertaining while evoking the wit and feel of Austen’s classic novels.”

✂Harris, Joanne. [Broken Light](#) (Orion \$36). Bernie Moon’s ambitions and dreams have been forgotten by everyone, even Bernie herself. At nineteen she was full of promise, but now, facing fifty and going through the menopause, she’s a fading light. Until the murder of a woman in a local park unlocks a series of childhood memories, and with them, a talent that she has hidden all her adult life. What happens when the frustrations and power of an older woman are finally given their chance to be revealed? One great thing about keeping working, I find, is that at 82 I don’t deal with the issues facing Bernie. The Unsigned US edition: [Broken Light](#) (Pegasus \$26.95).

Hauty, Chris. [The Devil You Know](#) (Atria \$27.99). This story has suddenly become, what, potentially topical? When a Justice of the Supreme Court is killed by the police officer assigned to protect him, the country is shocked. Hayley Chill’s superiors suspect the assassination is part of a major conspiracy. In Maui, where one member of the Supreme Court owns a vacation home, a busload of children is taken hostage with the justice’s death as ransom. Together with a deputy US marshal, Hayley embarks on the monumental task of rescuing the children while also protecting the Justice.

It’s fascinating the way crime writers anticipate societal concerns. This is the second May book (see Crosby above) where a Justice is a key character.

Herchenroether, Sara. [The Night Flowers](#) (Tin House \$26.95). We will ship this to the author only if there is demand so please order up.

Research librarian Laura MacDonald is perusing a crime website while awaiting a double mastectomy in a Connecticut hospital when a post catches her eye: in 1983, hikers lost in Sierra County, N.M., found barrels containing the skeletons of a woman and two girls. Thirty years later, the victims remain unidentified, so Laura decides to use her professional skills to investigate. Meanwhile, despite pressure from her husband to retire and help the couple’s daughter raise her child, Detective Jean Martinez has reopened the Sierra County Sheriff’s Department’s case file on the same hikers, hoping recent media coverage triggered by

the discovery’s anniversary will turn up a lead. As the women’s investigations converge, Jane Doe’s ghost worries that if her killer is caught, she’ll only be remembered for how she died. Nuanced characters and artful prose complement the intricately crafted mystery, but what distinguishes Herchenroether’s debut is her visceral, resonant recounting of Laura’s cancer experience where she ‘had no voice. No identity outside her diagnosis.’” Recommended to readers of Michael McGarrity and Ramona Emerson.

Ide, Joe. [Fixit](#) (Mulholland \$28). Genius Isaiah “IQ” Quintabe an “underground PI” who helps those in need “find justice when the police wouldn’t or couldn’t,” now struggles with PTSD from his years in the field. His desire to retire from catching bad guys is thwarted when hit man Skip Hanson, whom IQ sent to prison, abducts IQ’s girlfriend, Grace, and sends the PI taunting messages about her whereabouts and condition. Meanwhile another villain eager for revenge on IQ surfaces. “Ide ably manages mixing comic turns (Dodson carrying most of the water) with ramped-up tension (the RPMs are at shrieking level pretty much from the get-go). And, yet, there is something new here, fighting to be heard: a deep note of all-prevailing sadness” says *Booklist* in its Starred Review. Start with Edgar nominee [IQ](#) and read on [through the series](#).

Keane, Mary Beth. [Half Moon](#) (Scribner \$28). The first 20 of our copies come with Signed bookplates and custom *The Half Moon* coasters and matchboxes. One each per copy. The story takes place over the course of one week when gregarious bartender Malcolm learns shocking news about his wife Jess, a patron of the bar goes missing, and a blizzard hits the town of Gillam, trapping everyone in place.

Klingborg, Brian. [The Magistrate](#) (St Martins \$28). I had to look up Harbin and the northern province of China where it is located when Brian published his first book about a village cop trying to navigate the local and urban bureaucracy, the Party, and other obstacles to doing decent police work in contemporary China as Klingborg sees it. Now in book three this Starred Review shows others have come to appreciate Inspector Lu Fei and his world:

“In Klingborg’s sharply detailed third Lu Fei mystery, the detective—now banished from his post in Harbin to a rural county—is called in to investigate the incineration of a Korean gangster. Fei quickly uncovers that the slaying is part of an increasingly gruesome pattern targeting a corrupt group of senior Chinese civil servants. Meanwhile, an avenging angel named Hak is operating in Harbin, seeking to liberate sex trafficking victims who’ve been kidnapped and smuggled into the country from North Korea. Lu and Hak eventually join forces and the action goes from traditional sleuthing to hyperviolent revenge fantasy as they take down common enemies together. Klingborg does an exceptional job of illuminating Xi Jinping’s China to outside observers without being pedantic or heavy-handed.” Read the [WSJ review](#) of *The Magistrate* and of the new Indridason and Nakamura mysteries in Some New Hardcover for May.

Klune, TJ. [In the Lives of Puppets](#) (Tor \$28.99). Tip-ins for a sweetly angsty, wholly charming post-robot-apocalypse retelling of *Pinocchio*. . “An enchanting tale of Pinocchio in the end times. Klune invites you deep into the heart of a peculiar forest and on the extraordinary journey of a family assembled from spare parts.

Kuang, R F. [Yellowface](#) (Harper \$28.99). Tip-ins—a limited supply. Great cover too! Authors June Hayward and Athena Liu were supposed to be twin rising stars: same year at Yale, same debut year in publishing. But Athena’s a cross-genre literary darling, and June didn’t even get a paperback release. Nobody wants stories about basic white girls, June thinks. So when June witnesses Athena’s death in a freak accident, she acts on impulse: she steals Athena’s just-finished masterpiece, an experimental novel about the unsung contributions of Chinese laborers to the British and French war efforts during World War I. So what if she lets her new publisher rebrand her as Juniper Song—complete with an ambiguously ethnic author photo? Doesn’t this piece of history deserve to be told, whoever the teller? But emerging evidence threatens to bring June’s (stolen) success down around her. As June races to protect her secret, she discovers exactly how far she will go to keep what she thinks she deserves in “a spicy, satirical page-turner that skewers the racism and tokenization in the publishing and entertainment industries, the vanity of social media, and the lengths at which people will go to remain in the glaring spotlight.” — Tracey Lien

✉Mason, Tim. [The Nightingale Affair](#) (Algonquin \$28). Mason’s title for his second Victorian detection after [The Darwin Affair](#) (\$16.95) arises not from the bird but from the pioneer in health care Florence whose volunteer service in the 1853-56 Crimean War laid much of the foundation for battlefield care and for nursing.

London, 1867. Field is working as a private investigator when his latest case reawakens a past one. Tory MP William Hythe-Cooper has hired Field to prove his wife, Susan, is having an affair with political rival Jeremy Sims. After Field spots Sims fleeing the flat he reserved for his and Susan’s trysts, he finds Susan’s strangled corpse in the flat with a piece of red fabric stuffed in her mouth. This was also the trademark of a serial killer known as the Beast of the Crimea who targeted nurses working under Florence. Field was dispatched to Crimea to catch him—and he did. But this new murder leads Field to wonder whether he’s dealing with a copycat or with the original killer. “The action alternates between past and present, each switch masterfully heightening the tension....Mason’s superb plotting and well-drawn lead bode well for future installments. Political intrigue, a backdrop of social upheaval, and a cast of Victorian luminaries make this stylish, cleverly plotted thriller a must-read for fans of historical fiction,” says *PW*, and so it is our **May Historical Fiction Book of the Month**.

McKinlay, Jenn. [Summer Reading](#) (Penguin \$17). John reviews: “You never get a second chance to make a good first impression.” Sam Gale certainly hopes that this saying isn’t true, because her first encounter with Ben Reynolds – a.k.a. “hot reading guy” – is a disaster culminating with Sam knocking the book Ben is reading into the ocean. A few days later when she is dropping her brother Tyler off at the library, Sam bumps into Ben again, who just happens to be the library’s new interim director. But given the fact that Sam hates reading and Ben is a ‘books are my jam’ kind of guy, is there really any hope for any kind of romantic relationship between them? McKinlay’s latest irresistibly readable mix of contemporary romance and women’s fiction is brilliantly imbued with her deliciously snarky sense of wit, snappy characterization, and a bright and breezy summer setting as well as a deft and thoughtful exploration of the impact dyslexia can have on someone’s life.

Newman, T.J. [Drowning](#) (Avid Reader \$28 May 30). Comes with a special bookmark and we will stage a drawing for a few specially designed boarding kits.

*Kirkus* finds Newman’s second thriller to be “A spectacular aviation thriller that readers will be relieved to know is fiction. Just off the coast of Hawaii, Flight 1421’s engine explodes minutes after takeoff with 99 souls aboard. With no controls, the pilot makes an emergency landing into the Pacific with inevitable but disastrous results. The survivors are left with a Hobson’s choice: escape the airplane and hope the burning jet fuel on the ocean’s surface doesn’t kill them, or stay in the fuselage and probably drown when it sinks. Twelve passengers and crew remain alive in the Airbus, including Will Kent and his 11-year-old daughter, Shannon. On a nearby island, Will’s soon-to-be-ex-wife Chris learns about the crash and decides to help in the rescue efforts”—fortunately she has what it takes at hand. Newman made a blockbuster debut in [Falling](#) (\$17.99). Expect major motion pictures.

O’Brien, JD. [Zig Zag](#) (Schaffner Press \$26.99). It’s up to modern-day cowboy turned bail bondsman Harry Robatore to bring home the wayward son of a good friend who’s skipped out on a court date. Harry is “tumbleweeding” toward age 70. Still spry and up for most things his girlfriend might also be up for, his interest in life as a bail bondsman is waning. But when one of his closest friends, Fuzzy, turns to him for help keeping Ted, his ne’er-do-well son, out of jail for robbing a medical marijuana dispensary, Harry pulls on his boots and steps up to the challenge. A deal is made with Fuzzy to guarantee Fuzzy’s bar for Ted’s bail. The problem is Ted has no intention of showing up for his court date. Instead, Ted and his girlfriend, Capri, skip town with the cash and a huge quantity of Acapulco Gold marijuana taken from the dispensary safe. Meanwhile, the dispensary owner sends a wannabe mercenary to retrieve their product—and bringing back Ted and Capri alive is optional. This is his debut novel—but the author comes off as a seasoned pro in *Zig Zag*.”—Paul Dinh-McCrillis

Page, Katherine Hall. [The Body in the Web](#) (Harper \$29.99). While I am awaiting a reading copy, here’s what the publisher says: Faith Fairchild joins the rest of the world in lockdown mode when reality flips in March 2020. As the pandemic spreads, Faith and her family readjust to life together in Aleford, Massachusetts. Her husband, Tom, continues his sermons from Zoom; their children are doing remote learning at home. Faith is happy to have her family under the same roof and grateful for her resilient community. Town halls remain lively and well-attended, despite residents joining from their living rooms. It is at one of these town hall zooms that scandal breaks out as damaging images suddenly flash upon everyone’s screens. Claudia, local art teacher and Faith’s dear friend, is immediately recognized as the woman who has been targeted. When Claudia is later discovered dead, Faith, with the help of her friends, journeys deep into the dark web to unravel the threads of Claudia’s mysterious history....

Pochoda, Ivy. [Sing Her Down](#) (Farrar \$28) is “a pulse-pounding western with a devastating message about the oft-forgotten explosions made by women the world tries hard not to see.” Patrick reviews: “Pochoda’s latest is a dark, uncompromising tale about violence and obsession, a deft synthesis of classic noir and western conventions, and much more... Florence ‘Florida’ Baum and Diosmary ‘Dios’ Sandoval are two inmates doing time

in an Arizona prison when they are suddenly released early due to COVID. Dios thinks she knows the truth that Florida hides behind, the facade of innocence that conceals something much darker. Determined to unleash her former cellmate's true nature, Dios obsessively tracks Florida to Los Angeles, where the two embark on a collision course with fate. Told from multiple, all-female POVs, including a homicide detective named Lobos and multiple inmates, Pochoda's novel is a real tour de force, and one that demands your full attention."

Quick, Amanda. [The Bride Wore White](#) (Berkley \$28). Prudence Ryland has been making a reluctant living as psychic dream consultant Madame Ariadne, a job she inherited from her grandmother, but after a client tries to kill her, she hightails it out of San Francisco to Los Angeles. Content to start anew as a librarian in the newly formed paranormal department of the local college, Prudence is forced on the run again after escaping a kidnapping attempt. Since she's already acquainted with Luther Pell, who runs the local nightclub in the paranormal hub of Burning Cove, she turns to him for help. Luther connects her to the remarkably intuitive Jack Wingate, who's intrigued by her close calls and wants to use her experiences to inform the book he's writing on psychically interpreting crime scenes. Together, they hatch a plan to lure Prudence's enemy into the open—and, of course, they fall in love. John adds, "Mystery meets romance meets the paranormal in this glossy, golden age of Hollywood thriller. This is a quintessential Quick"—aka Jayne Ann Krentz. Read this [excellent article by Quick](#) that includes Ellison and me.

Ruland, Jim. [Make It Stop](#) (Rare Birds Press \$20) "is an intoxicating cocktail of crime and conspiracy, set to a SoCal punk soundtrack. A neo noir thriller I found impossible to put down, or forget."—Elizabeth Hand. Scores of detox and rehab centers across Southern California have adopted a controversial new conditional release policy that forces patients to stay until they pay their bills. And if they can't pay? They don't leave. Enter Make It Stop, a group of highly skilled recovering addicts dedicated to rescuing those trapped in these prison hospitals by posing as patients and getting them out by any means necessary. But when Scary Gary, one of their top ops, gets killed on assignment, Melanie Marsh and her crew set out to avenge his death and unravel an unthinkable medical conspiracy. Melanie may be LA's best hope but if, and only if, she can stay sober.

Shelton, Paige. [Fateful Words](#) (St Martins \$26.99). When Edwin, Delaney's boss at Edinburgh's Cracked Spine bookstore, leaves town on secret business, Delaney is called upon to guide his yearly literary tour around Edinburgh. But on the first night of the tour, at the inn where the tour group is staying, the inn manager falls—or is pushed—off the roof of the inn, and killed. Then, one of the tour members disappears, leaving a trail of puzzles in her wake. "Delaney gamely carries on as she leads the group to places with literary ties, including the Writers Museum and Deacon Brodie's Tavern, and the danger mounts. With the help of her husband, Tom, Delaney discovers a trail of false identities, fraud, and a killer intent on destroying Edwin. This is armchair tourism at its best, with a dash of murder for spice. Bibliophiles and cozy fans alike will be enchanted." Try the whole [Scottish Bookshop Mystery](#) series

Slocumb, Brendan. [Symphony of Secrets](#) (Knopf \$28). In 1936, composer Frederick Delaney's reputation is in tatters after the

premiere of RED, last in a cycle of operas inspired by the five colored circles in the Olympics flag. Why were his earlier pieces so eloquent and this one so bad? A lifetime later, musicologist Bern Hendricks receives an email from the Delaney Foundation (which has supported hundreds of poor children with musical talent, including him), asking Bern to work on a newly discovered manuscript of RED, richer and fuller than the hack version presented in 1936. He is to prepare it for performance. But Delaney's notation system—Delaney Doodles—is indecipherable. On top of some pages are letters as well: JaR. What do they stand for? Aided by computer whiz Eboni, Bern cracks the code, and they're off on a wild ride. By the end, it's a case of murder"...and creative work appropriation." In its way, a kind of *The DaVinci Code*, but the plot also heralds the burgeoning debate about AI for creatives. Slocumb is clearly interested in heists and frauds as evidenced in his gorgeous debut [The Violin Conspiracy](#) (\$17), a 2022 First Mystery Book of the Month.

Smith, Martin Cruz. [Independence Square](#) (Simon Schuster \$26.99). Few readers of crime fiction will have missed [Gorky Park](#), Smith's brilliant 1981 #1 bestseller set when Moscow homicide detective Arkady Renko worked in the context of the Soviet Union and the Cold war. This espionage classic was also written before Smith, one of my and our favorite authors, developed Parkinson's disease. I say that because much of this 10<sup>th</sup> investigation led by the older Arkady follows Arkady's diagnosis of Parkinson's, his symptoms, and its progress, all movingly reflecting Smith's own journey. I am beyond touched that Smith will undertake a large scale signing project for us but we have worked together for many years.

The reception for *Independence Square*, which moves Arkady into the Ukraine in June, 2021, before the Russian invasion, is reflected in this Starred Review: "Bestseller Smith's stellar 10th mystery featuring Arkady Renko after 2019's [The Siberian Dilemma](#) finds the maverick Russian investigator working for Moscow's Office of Prosecution in June 2021. Relegated by his boss to desk duty, he serves as the office's departmental liaison officer and attends pointless meetings where he's 'neither wanted nor needed.' He gets a chance to exercise his investigative skills when Fyodor Abakov, a bodybuilder who runs protection rackets in the city, asks him to trace his missing daughter, Karina, a violinist in a string quartet. That Karina is a member of an anti-Putin organization, Forum for Democracy, has led Abakov to fear that the government is behind her disappearance. Renko agrees to help, and his inquiry eventually takes him to Ukraine and Crimea in search of leads. His efforts are complicated by several brazen political murders, a new romantic opportunity, and a diagnosis that he has Parkinson's, which has already affected his balance and energy level. Smith's reveal about what happened to Karina is surprising, logical, and disturbing. Renko remains the archetype of an honest cop working for a corrupt regime."

Törzs, Emma. [Ink, Blood, Sister, Scribe](#) (Harper \$29.99). Törzs' spellbinding fantasy debut asks, What would you sacrifice to save your family? To save your family's legacy? While Esther gallivants around the world, her sister Joanna shelters in place to keep the family's collection of magical books out of the wrong hands. However, the wrong hands are far sneakier than Joanna could ever imagine, and a series of betrayals push the sisters back together. With a band of misfit toys, Esther and Joanna discover

answers they never knew they needed. “Follow where this novel leads and you will be lost in a bewitching spell, a book of magic about books of magic, and the people who reel from reading them. Go beyond the magic and you’re left with a heartbreaking tale of family where truth blurs with lies, and blood isn’t thick enough.” — Marlon James. “*Ink Blood Sister Scribe* is so many things at once: an adventure, a puzzle, a twisty thriller, and a tender romance. It’s a magical book about the magic of books; I adored it.” — Alix E. Harrow

Vergheze, Abraham. [The Covenant of Water](#) (Grove \$32). Tip-ins, and we are limited to 20 for the long awaited new novel by the author *Cutting for Stone*. It has racked up Starred Reviews from every medium. Here are a few:

“A masterpiece. Put it on your bookcase next to *A Passage to India* by E.M. Forster or anything by the brave and brilliant Salman Rushdie. Indeed, put it next to any great novel of your choice. Sprawling, passionate, tragic and comedic at turns. Vergheze, probably the best doctor-writer since Anton Chekhov, upends all of our expectations...” Or, “A literary landmark, a monumental treatment of family and country, as sprawling in scope as Edna Ferber’s *Giant* ... Writing with compassion and insight, Vergheze creates distinct characters in Dickensian profusion, and his language is striking; even graphic descriptions of medical procedures are beautifully wrought. Throughout, there are joy, courage, and devotion, as well as tragedy; always there is water, the covenant that links all.”

✚Weaver, Ashley. [Playing It Safe](#) (St Martins \$28). A British intelligence officer and a safecracker combine their talents in yet another dangerous enterprise during World War II. When Electra McDonnell, a former thief, takes on a murky new assignment from British intelligence: she knows only that she’s expected to assume a new identity and leave behind her family in blitz-era London for the city of Sunderland. Shortly after arriving at her rooming house, McDonnell sees a man fall dead in the street. She quickly learns he’s part of the reason she’s been summoned: McDonnell’s assigning officer, Major Ramsey, informs her the man was part of an ID counterfeiting scheme that makes it possible for German spies to operate in England. Despite their different working approaches, Ellie and Ramsey go undercover as a couple and develop a plan to take down the mastermind behind the scheme. Weaver populates this bright, fast-paced thriller with engagingly flawed characters and breathless action. Start with [A Peculiar Combination](#) and [The Key to Deceit](#) (\$17.99 each).

White, Kate. [Between Two Strangers](#) (Harper \$29.99). Struggling collage artist Skyler Moore is blindsided by the unexpected announcement that a stranger has left her a multimillion-dollar inheritance, a turn of events that could refurbish her shabby apartment, create the perfect art studio, and help her fulfill her dream of having a child. Skyler is poised to burst upon the New York City art scene with her upcoming gallery show, but it has been a difficult path to get to this point. Twelve years ago her life was upended when her sister Chloe died at a party they attended at a wealthy family’s home. The tragedy was unresolved, but her mother cannot help but blame Skyler. A bewildered Skyler begins to explore possible reasons why the money was bequeathed to her. Tiny clues steadily emerge that entwine her past with the donor’s family. Increasingly feeling stalked, Skyler becomes determined to learn the truth. [Paperback edition](#): (\$18.99).

## UNSIGNED EVENT BOOKS

Barclay, Linwood. [The Lie Maker](#) (Harper \$29.99). Barclay nails this riveting standalone thriller about a washed-up writer’s search for his long-lost parent. In a wrenching prologue, nine-year-old Jack Givins is separated from his father, who enters witness protection with blunt parting words: “Your dad’s not a good person. Your dad killed people, son.” In the present, Givins is a broke novelist hungry for whatever writing work he can get. After an offer to edit advertorial magazines falls through, he gets an even more lucrative opportunity when he’s approached by the U.S. Marshals Service to create fictional backstories for individuals in the federal Witness Security Program. The position gives Givins the idea to seek out his father’s whereabouts after decades of silence between the two. His efforts coincide with some high-profile disappearances, and he soon discovers the authorities have lost track of his father, sending Givins blindly on his trail. Barclay expertly knits the strands together and constructs a fully realized everyman in Givins. Crafty plotting and rich characters make this a winner.

Cameron, Marc. [Breakneck](#) (Kensington \$27). A train ride through the austere beauty of Alaska’s icy wilderness becomes a harrowing fight for survival at the Gateway to the Arctic. In Washington, DC, Supreme Court Justice Charlotte Morehouse prepares for a trip to Alaska, unaware that a killer is waiting to take his revenge—by livestreaming her death to the world. In Anchorage, Deputy US Marshals Arliss Cutter and Lola Teariki are assigned to security detail at a judicial conference in Fairbanks. Lola is tasked with guarding Justice Morehouse’s teenaged daughter while Cutter provides counter-surveillance. It’s a simple, routine assignment—until the mother and daughter decide to explore the Alaskan wilderness on the famous Glacier Discovery train. Hiding onboard are the Chechen terrorists....

Goldis, Jaclyn. [The Chateau](#) (Atria \$27.99). Goldis lives in Israel but her book takes you to Provence. Four best friends, all with secrets to hide, embark on a vacation to remember at a beautiful old chateau in the scenic countryside of Provence. It’s been 20 years since Darcy and her friends have stayed with Darcy’s grandmother Séraphine at her chateau. One day, Darcy, Arabelle, Jade, and Vix all unexpectedly receive invitations from Séraphine, and they each have a personal reason to accept the invitation. The vacation seems perfect with all the wineries, lavender fields, markets, and dinners—until Séraphine is found viciously murdered. While the friends try to figure out who murdered Séraphine, a mysterious Instagram account surfaces, exposing private moments from the vacation and threatening to reveal more. The old chateau holds many secrets, including the murderer and stalker. But which is which?

✚Goodman, Alison. [The Benevolent Society of Ill-Mannered Ladies](#) (Penguin \$17). Lesa reviews one of two Regency mysteries publishing in May: In 1812, Lady Augusta “Gus” Colebrook and her twin sister Julia are 42. They are considered spinsters, lucky to have their own income and their own household. Despite their status in society, Gus is bored. After a successful retrieval of letters for a friend threatened with blackmail, she has an idea: Why shouldn’t she and Julia have adventures while helping other women? For more on this terrific series start see [Our May Large Paperback Picks](#).



## GIFTS FOR MOM

For our non-resident customers we recommend a [Poisoned Pen Gift Card](#) since Mother's Day is coming right up on May 8 and shipping is so tight and, annoyingly, unreliable. A gift card can be for a \$ amount or for a specific book to be sent but avoids the timely delivery issue.

We have created a special [Mother's Day E-card](#) to send. Please click on the regular Gift Card link and request the Mom card in the comments field.



You can also sign her up for our [Enews](#). It's free and fun to read.

And even better, sign her up for our Romance **and Relationship Book of the Month Club** curated by John Charles. Two paperbacks or one hardcover sent to Mom and charged to you each month. Email [Johnc@poisonedpen.com](mailto:Johnc@poisonedpen.com) to enroll Mom.

### *A fascinating new book*

Miller, Max. [Tasting History](#) (Simon Element \$30). YouTuber Miller offers modern recipes inspired by historical fare in his innovative debut. A brief history lesson prefaces each recipe, as with the original instructions for the Egyptian-inspired dessert tiger nut cake, which were drawn on the walls of the tomb of Rekhmire, or the recipe for mead, which notes that in Norse mythology, the beverage “bestows power” on the consumer. A bread pudding recipe nods to the American Civil War doctor who wrote a nutrition guide for soldiers recovering in the hospital, and a raspberry rhubarb recipe is credited to a formerly enslaved Pullman porter. Throughout, Miller skillfully balances history with tantalizing recipes, and manages to make even ancient fare accessible with suggested ingredient substitutions. Enticing for history buffs and home cooks alike.

### *And a trio of novels new in May:*

Edwards, Martin, ed. [The Edinburgh Mystery](#) (Poisoned Pen Press \$14.99). Readers who know Scotland will glow with recognition; those who don't will want to pack their bags and maybe a gun.

Lowell, Joan. [Cradle of the Deep](#) (Feral House \$22.95). First published in 1929, *Cradle of the Deep* was the bestselling book that became a scandal! In 1923, Joan Lowell was an aspiring writer and rising silent film star in Hollywood. Young, beautiful, and talented, she was adored by all. But oops, in 1928, she

decided to write an “autobiography” to help build her brand...but her plan goes off the rails when the New Yorker latches on to the news that Lowell's supposed memoir is a hoax. Critics assumed that because Lowell was married to playwright Thompson Buchanan, HE wrote the story. It was believed that a woman in her mid-twenties could not write the book. Yet readers loved *Cradle*. It was one of the early Book-of-the-Month selections. It sold over 100k copies. Lowell was still invited to speak to groups—women's groups—who saw the book for what it was: a great story based on Lowell's life and her father's sea captain stories with a bit of hyperbolic exaggeration. Today we would call it auto-fiction.

✦Murray, Amita. [Unladylike Lessons in Love](#) (Harper \$17.99). Here's a superbly crafted historical novel, and a romance that doubles up as a mystery, with a delicious Indian twist—what's not to love? See New in Hardcover for more.

### *And what about recreation?*

McHugh, Erin. [Pickleball Is Life](#) (Harper \$17.99)

### *Or spur her creative life?*

Rubin, Rick. [The Creative Act](#) (Penguin \$32)

### *A journal with a message:*

[Life Is To Be Enjoyed](#) (\$7.95)

### *Encourage a playful break*

[Jane Austen Playing Cards](#) (\$14.99). Discover 5 Regency era card games, perfect to package with our two Regency historicals in Events (publishing too late for May 16 but you can do a Gift Certificate)

[Agatha Christie Playing Cards](#) (\$14.99)

[Scottsdale Monopoly](#) (\$44.99)

## CLASSICS

✦Christie, Agatha. [Midsummer Mysteries: Tales from the Queen of Crime](#) (Harper \$18.99). Here's a lovely gift, 12 stories culled from the archives of Dame Agatha Christie, for Mom or for you to dip into. The least familiar item is the brief introduction: an excerpt from Christie's autobiography describing her shock and sorrow when a well-meaning guide in the Pyrenees pinned a live butterfly to her hat. The stories that follow, all reprinted in earlier collections, feature her leading sleuths and then some.

Edwards, Martin, ed. [The Edinburgh Mystery](#) (Poisoned Pen Press \$14.99). Readers who know Scotland will glow with recognition; those who don't will want to pack their bags and maybe a gun. Endlessly resourceful editor Edwards reprints 17 tales by authors who were Scottish, or part Scottish, or set at least some parts of some of their stories in Scotland. Eleven of the stories were first published before 1940, and none after 1974. Edwards has dug deep into the archives to unearth brief, mostly forgotten stories by Josephine Tey, H.H. Bashford, Margot Bennett, Cyril Hare, and, yes, Arthur Conan Doyle (a characteristic Sherlock-ian mind-reading). The three best-known items here: Baroness Orczy's “The Edinburgh Mystery,” a classic of armchair detection by the acknowledged pioneer of the form; G.K. Chesterton's “The Honour of Israel Gow,” an atmospheric Father Brown tale notable for its remarkably inventive puzzle and clues; and Robert Louis Stevenson's imperishable “Markheim,” an extended dialogue between a murderer and the devil who offers to help him escape.

King, C. Daly. [Obelists at Sea](#) (American Mystery Classics \$15.95). When the lights flicker aboard the luxury *Meganaut*, making its way from New York to Paris, a gunshot rings out, and when the light is restored, a man is found dead. The situation becomes all the more curious when it's discovered that the deceased had apparently ingested cyanide just seconds before being struck by the bullet. Luckily, for the other passengers, there are two detectives aboard, ready to leap into action. There are also four psychiatrists, and those psychiatrists convince the captain to let them take a stab at solving the crime, using their professional understanding of the human psyche to determine who could have been capable of it — and why. And before the killer strikes again? This Golden Age mystery is the first of seven penned by psychologist King.

Fleming, Ian. [Live and Let Die](#) (Harper \$18.99). In this reissue of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bond, Mr. Big is a ruthless Harlem gangster who uses superstition and fear to control his vast criminal empire. He's also one of SMERSH's top American operatives. Mr. Big has been smuggling British pirate treasure to New York from a remote Jamaican island and funneling the proceeds to Moscow. With help from Solitaire, Mr. Big's beautiful and enigmatic Creole fortune teller, and his old friend Felix Leiter of the CIA, 007 must locate the crime lord's hideout, sabotage his operation, and reclaim the pirate hoard for England.

## COZIES

Bessette, Alicia. [Murder on Mustang Beach](#) (Berkley \$27). Bessette's delightful sequel to 2022's [Smile Beach Murder](#) (see New in Large Paperback but it also fits here) finds journalist-turned-bookseller Callie Paget looking forward to her first official date with Toby, owner of a martial arts studio on North Carolina's Cattail Island. When she and Toby find a dead newlywed lying on a mat in his dojo, police name Toby the lead suspect, and Callie embarks on a parallel investigation that, in addition to turning up new leads in the murder, drives her to believe that a cherished local mare may be in serious trouble. Then another body is found dead on the beach.... Bessette's fast-paced cozy harbors quirky characters and an intriguing plot that will keep you guessing

Cambridge, Colleen. [Mastering the Art of French Murder](#) (Kensington \$26). Thanks to Tabitha Knight's grand-père and uncle, she has a free place to stay in the best city in the world, Paris. Even better, her best friend, Julia Child, lives across the street and is teaching her to cook basic dishes. Then a murder occurs and one of Julia's knives is the weapon.... Our **May Cozy Crimes Book of the Month** starts a series that whips up a delectable narrative of French food, unlikely friendships, and life in postwar Europe. Agatha Christie meets cozy.

Davis, Krista. [The Diva Delivers on a Promise](#) (Kensington \$27). Entertaining guru Sophie Winston is coordinating a convention for ghost kitchens in Old Town, Alexandria. A Healthy Meal is dedicated to providing meals for children in need, and as a bonus, it'll give Sophie the perfect opportunity to ogle the lavish Old Town home of socialite Geraldine Stansfield. Gerrie's dining room is impeccably furnished, the table laden with gleaming crystal and prized china. If it weren't for the dead man lying on the floor, everything would be perfect....

Duncan, Emmeline. [Flat White Fatality](#) (Kensington \$16.95). To top off her coffee business, barista Sage Caplan is now helping out with her boyfriend Bax's gaming company. It's located next

door to her Ground Rules Roastery. That makes it easy for her to pitch in with Bax's employee team-building event. The plan is to boost morale with a scavenger hunt. And it seems to be going well—until Robbie, a programmer known for being a prankster, turns up dead in Sage's roastery. Who are the two obvious suspects?

Fluke, Joanne. [Cinnamon Roll Murder](#) (\$12.95) is a reissue of a 2012 Hannah Swensen that finds the baker and her sister, Michelle, en route to deliver cinnamon rolls to the Lake Eden Inn. When they come to a multicar pileup on a slick roadway, the sisters hurry to check on the passengers of an overturned bus in a ditch. What they find is a dead driver and minor injuries among members of the Cinnamon Roll Six, a jazz band booked to perform at the inn. At the local hospital, the keyboard player's relatively minor injury lands him in an ER exam room, where a short time later he's found stabbed to death. Hannah flips open her murder book and launches into action.... Recipes as usual are included. Joanne launches a new book here on July 24: [Pink Lemonade Cake Murder](#) (\$27).

Freeman, Dianne. [A Bride's Guide to Marriage and Murder](#) (\$16.95). Lesa reviews: Frances, Countess of Harleigh, has suffered through four months of wedding preparations with her mother; she and fiancé George Hazelton don't need one more interruption to their wedding plans, certainly not by feuding American businessmen Peter Bainbridge and James Connor, who've both been invited to the festivities—the latter by Frances's brother Alonzo, who wants to court James's daughter Madeline Connor. George and Frances make it through the wedding ceremony, but the reception is interrupted by news that James Connor is dead and Alonzo has been arrested for the murder. This means Frances and George have to postpone their honeymoon so George can act as Alonzo's attorney. While readers may beat the sleuths to the punch, the fifth in Freeman's "Countess of Harleigh Mystery" series is a delightful cozy that educates readers about the role of women in Victorian England and entertains at the same time. You can order the first four as well as the June 27 release of the 6<sup>th</sup> [HERE](#).

Haines, Carolyn. [Tell-Tale Bones](#) (St Martins \$28). Private Investigator Sarah Booth Delaney and her partner Tinkie are consulting Sheriff Coleman Peters consulting him about Sunflower Country cold cases when Elisa Redd storms in with a case of her own. She wants Coleman to reopen the investigation of her missing daughter, Lydia Redd Maxell, the heiress to a large fortune who disappeared along with her friend Bethany nearly seven years ago. Lydia and Bethany were rumored to be working as human rights organizers abroad. Now Lydia's husband, Tope, is set to inherit the fortune, and Elisa believes he's behind the disappearance. Sarah Booth and Tinkie soon connect the case to a series of mysterious disappearances over the years, as well as to a perplexing recurring dream....

Hollis, Lee. [Poppy Harmon and the Shooting Star](#) (Kensington \$27) takes us into a Palm Springs retirement community, home to retired actress-turned-PI Poppy Harmon and her Desert Flowers Detective Agency! Poppy never planned on speaking to her old acting rival Serena Saunders again, let alone accepting her as a client. But familiar drama barges back into her life when Serena requests an urgent background check on Ned Boyce, her fiancé, before tying the knot. Wealthy, connected, and the owner

of a breathtaking mountaintop home, Ned seems like the most unlikely private investigation subject in Palm Springs. Poppy no sooner thinks she's nailed down her latest assignment than Serena is caught holding a smoking gun over a stranger's dead body.

Lotempio, Toni. [Eat, Drink and Drop Dead](#) (Severn \$31.99). A former chef gets mixed up in murder when she moves back to her Southern home town in the first Tiffany Austin food blogger mystery – a culinary cozy that will make your brain work and your stomach rumble!

Page, Katherine Hall. [The Body in the Web](#) (Harper \$29.99 SIGNED). Faith Fairchild joins the rest of the world in lockdown mode when reality flips in March 2020. As the pandemic spreads, Faith and her family readjust to life together in Aleford, Massachusetts. Town halls remain lively and well-attended, despite residents joining from their living rooms until scandal breaks out as damaging images suddenly flash upon everyone's screens. Claudia, local art teacher and Faith's dear friend, is immediately recognized as the woman who has been targeted—and is then found dead. See Signed Books for more as well as our calendar—it's been too long since we've been host to Page.

Polito, Frank Anthony. [Rehearsed to Death](#) (Kensington \$16.95). The loquacious PJ Penwell, YA author and cohost of the popular home renovation series Domestic Partners with his sweetheart, JP Broadway, live in an idyllic, fictional Detroit suburb that boasts "the seventh-highest rate of same-sex couples nationwide," where PJ (who also happens to be an unproduced playwright) is thrilled by a request from the local community theater to produce his magnum opus, Blue Tuesday. Then he encounters the arrogant Xander Sherwood Deva, who has been brought in to direct the show. When Deva turns up dead, it becomes clear that a long list of locals might have cause for the crime. June is Gay Pride Month so here's an advance salute. [Renovated to Death](#) (\$15.95) comes first.

Viets, Elaine. [The Dead of Night](#) (Severn \$31.99). Ordered Upon Request. Everyone in Chouteau Forest knows the legend of the Cursed Crypt. It's claimed that the restless spirit of a professor nicknamed Mean Gene Cortini, buried in Chouteau Forest University's crypt, has been causing death and destruction in the Forest for almost two centuries. Local residents are used to disease and natural disasters striking every seven years. But not murder. When Trey Lawson outbids the wealthy Du Pres family at the university's annual Howl-o-ween Benefit Auction, he wins the chance to spend the night in the crypt with his fiancée, Lydia. Angela Richman, Death Investigator, finds their mutilated bodies there the following morning. Has the legend taken a deadly turn, or are Trey and Lydia victims of a vicious power struggle?

### SOME NEW MAY HARDCOVERS

*There is such a tsunami of new books each month that I selected varied kinds of stories for this section and for the Some New May Large Paperbacks. I've thought of appending a full list but even that would have gaps. Please visit our webstore for a broad search. Or you can focus on what we have curated: our Books of the Month Clubs selection, the Large and Small Paperback Picks, and the Event Books.*

Armstrong, Kelley. [The Poisoner's Ring](#) (St Martins \$28). Our Lesa writes: In this sequel to [A Rip Through Time](#) (\$17.99), time-traveling modern-day homicide detective Mallory Atkinson

is still stuck in Victorian Edinburgh in another woman's body, but now her real identity is known to her employers, Dr. Duncan Gray (an undertaker/medical examiner to whom Mallory serves as assistant) and his chemist sister Isla. She's soon drawn into another murder investigation with Duncan and police detective Hugh McCreadie: Men have been dying of poisoning in Edinburgh, and their widows are accused of killing them. The latest such death is personal—the Grays' sister Annis has been accused of poisoning her husband, Lord Gordon Leslie. The newspapers and the scandalous broadsheets have a field day when they learn that Lady Leslie's sister is a chemist who could have provided the toxin that killed the lord. But then Mallory recognizes the signs of a poison not readily accessible in Edinburgh in 1869. She, Duncan, and Hugh will have a difficult time finding the single manipulative villain who they believe must be at the heart of four seemingly unrelated murders.

Atwood, Margaret, ed. [Fourteen Days: An Unauthorized Gathering](#) (Harper \$27.99). Set in a Lower East Side tenement in the early days of the COVID-19 lockdowns, tenants of a Lower East Side apartment building in Manhattan have begun to gather on the rooftop and tell stories. With each passing night, more and more neighbors gather and gradually the tenants—some of whom have barely spoken to each other—become real neighbors. In this *Decameron*-like serial novel, Atwood and Authors Guild president Douglas Preston gather up stories from Celeste Ng, Emma Donoghue, Dave Eggers, John Grisham, Diana Gabaldon, Ishmael Reed, Meg Wolitzer, Luis Alberto Urrea, James Shapiro, Sylvia Day, Mary Pope Osborne, Monique Truong, Hampton Sides, R. L. Stine, Scott Turow, Tommy Orange, and more!

Banville, John. [The Lock-Up](#) (Hanover House \$28.99). A return to 1950s Dublin with Pathologist Dr. Quirke and DI St. John Strafford in a series Banville began writing as Benjamin Black. Rosa Jacobs, a young history scholar, is found dead in her car. Renowned pathologist Dr. Quirke and DI St. John Strafford begin to investigate the death as a murder, but it's the victim's older sister Molly, an established journalist, who discovers a lead that could crack open the case. One of Rosa's friends, it turns out, is from a powerful German family that arrived in Ireland under mysterious circumstances shortly after World War II. But as Quirke and Strafford close in, their personal lives may put the case—and everyone involved—in peril. A dark story with a twist and nearly sodden with whiskey and cigarette smoke.

Bauermeister, Erica. [No Two Persons](#) (St Martins \$28). What is a book's impact on its readers? As I so often say, every person reads a book differently, thus a book is never the same book to every reader. Here Bauermeister conceives a story that revolves around a novel by a reclusive author that develops iterations (audio book, etc). "Erica Bauermeister shares the unexpected, exquisite ways in which one special book transforms its readers' lives. As the novel-within-the-novel passes through the hands of a vast array of people—ranging from an actor to a swimmer to a homeless student, among others—it acts as a guide for the lost, serving in different manners for different readers. A wondrous ode to the power of fiction, *No Two Persons* will linger with its readers in much the same way its fictional novel remained with its characters."—Marie Benedict

Beanland, Rachel. [The House Is on Fire](#) (Simon Schuster \$27.99). I am in thrall to this terrific novel inspired by the Richmond

Theater fire of 1811. In December of that year, 600 people are crowded together for a performance when teenage stagehand Jack Gibson forgets to snuff the candles on the stage chandelier but obeys an order to raise it into the rafters, where it ignites a backdrop and then the building. The loss of life is tremendous, scores are grotesquely injured, a makeshift hospital tries to cope, and the troupe's leaders try to escape criminal charges by falsely blaming a slave rebellion for the conflagration. It's grim for most of those involved but one Virginia slave, Cecily, whose life is made hideous by the sexual sadist son of her master, seizes her purported loss of life to leave Richmond to start a new, free life. This is a masterful creation of a time, place, and mind set but it is eerily familiar to our current world...other than the ease with which a person can ditch her identity for a new one.

Berest, Annie. [The Postcard](#) (Europa \$28). Winner of France's Choix Goncourt Prize, the book tells the story of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Parisian culture and a Jewish family devastated by the Holocaust and partly restored through the power of storytelling. Order your copy from The Pen and you can receive a free audiobook copy when you submit your receipt to Libro.fm. Do so [HERE](#).

Callahan Henry, Patti. [The Secret Book of Flora Lea](#) (Atria \$27.99). Library Reads calls this "A poetic tribute to the power of story. Exploring the lifelong effects of the horrors of war, the richly developed characters endure loss that haunts them into adulthood. When a mysterious book appears, it sets in motion a search for answers, making sense of the past, and healing of broken hearts."

Carcattera, Lorenzo. [Nonna Maria and the Case of the Stolen Necklace](#) (Random \$27). Carcattera's diverting sequel to 2022's [Nonna Maria and the Case of the Missing Bride](#) (\$17) finds 70-year-old widow Nonna Maria, the Italian island of Ischia's favorite amateur sleuth, dealing with two mysteries. The first is the murder of an unidentified woman, found by the side of a road leading down to the port. The second concerns an accusation of theft made against Nonna Maria's goddaughter, Loretta, a maid at the Grand Hotel Excelsior. Eager to appease their haughty guest, the management promptly fires Loretta while the police look into the incident. Using "her wide network of contacts throughout the island and as far away as Rome (though she had never set foot in that city)," Nonna Maria conducts her own investigations, while collaborating with the captain of the carabinieri, Paolo Murino. Once again Carcattera, previously an author of mob fiction, provides armchair travelers with a soothing vacation from daily life.

Chang-Eppig, Rita. [Deep as the Sky, Red as the Sea](#) (Bloomsbury \$28.99). If you're weary of the same old European POV pirate stories, consider this clever and gritty tale of the dread pirate Shek Yeung. When Portuguese sailors kill her husband, the legendary Chinese adventurer does what she must to protect her fleet, her family, and her own pirate queen booty. One of the season's more interesting debut novels is recommended for readers of *Outlawed*, *Piranesi*, and *The Night Tiger*.

☞Clare, Alys. [The Cargo from Neira](#) (Severn \$31.99). Ordered Upon Request. February, 1605. A series of killings shake the quiet life of Devon's Tavy valley. Country doctor Gabriel Taverner, summoned by the coroner to examine the bodies, believes that the murders are somehow connected to a mysterious woman recently discovered taken for dead, but alive. Clues link

this pregnant patient to the brutal killings and to the strange and recurring theme of nutmegs. A precious spice from far-flung islands in a distant sea and already in demand, its high cost is increasing daily since the rumour has spread that it is a cure for the plague.... Soon Gabriel finds himself caught in a deadly rivalry involving a greater prize and more ruthless players than he could have imagined in this is 5th investigation.

Cline, Emma. [The Guest](#) (Random \$28). Alex is coasting through life on the grace and credit card of her older boyfriend for the summer. She can't return to the city now that her roommates want nothing to do with her, and her friends have all disappeared. There is nothing she won't do, and no one she won't manipulate, to get what she needs: a bit more time. Perfect for fans of *The Talented Mr. Ripley*.

Constantine, Liv. [The Senator's Wife](#) (Random \$28). Twisty mysteries! White House dinners! This creepy Beltway thriller follows the increasing misfortunes of D.C. philanthropist Sloane Chase, whose new home health aide Athena Karras may not be precisely the right fit. Sloane is getting sicker, Athena is getting creepier, and something here is very, very Not Right. My vote for Best Beltway Thriller is the Ellen Crosby in Signed Books; it not only has a terrific end game for the Supreme Court Justice but provides a loving, intimate view of DC landmarks.

Cuti, Vanessa. [The Tip Line](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99 "I just wanted to get married," declares 30-year-old Virginia Carey at the start of Cuti's debut, a psychological thriller built in part from elements of a still-unsolved Long Island crime. After Virginia lands a job at the Suffolk County, N.Y., police department fielding calls to its anonymous tip line, Detective Charlie Ford asks her out. Virginia immediately decides she loves Charlie and imagines their romance, sex, and marriage in detail. Their first date is postponed after a woman who identifies herself as Verona calls to say that several dead prostitutes lie in the dunes at a nearby beach. The discovery of four corpses propels Charlie and police chief Declan Brady, another unmarried man who attracts Virginia's interest, into a serial killer investigation. "Cuti uses sharply honed prose to evoke a mind driven by desire and denial" in a sort of Patricia Highsmith's Ripley way. Or think Hannah Morrison.

Doctorow, Cory. [Red Team Blues](#) (Tor \$27.99). Martin Hench, a 67-year-old forensic accountant turned hacker for hire, is kept from retiring by one last job for a good friend, Danny Lazer. A cryptocurrency entrepreneur, Lazer needs to retrieve the stolen decoding keys that secure his crypto cash vaults or he'll face ruin and trillions of dollars of financial disruption. Martin, working both physical and digital detective beats to crack the case, turns up some answers—but also some dead bodies.

☞Dolby, Hannah. [No Life for a Lady](#) (Harcourt \$27.99). Violet Hamilton is a woman who knows her own mind. Which, in 1896, at age 28 makes her life difficult. Violet's father is beginning to worry she will never find a husband. But with every suitor he presents, Violet finds a new and inventive means of rebuffing. Violet does not want to marry. She wants to work, and make her own way in the world. But more than anything, she wants to find her mother Lily, who disappeared from Hastings Pier ten years earlier. Finding the missing is no job for a lady, but when Violet hires a seaside detective to help, she sets off a chain of events that will put more than just her reputation at risk.

Dunn, Mark. [Ella Minnow Pea: An Anniversary Illustrated Edition](#) (Dzanic \$29.95). First published by MacAdam/Cage in 2001, over the years it has become a mainstay of book clubs and middle-school and high-school English classes and has inspired a stage musical LMNOP, and is the recipient of multiple accolades. Lovers of language and word games will delight in the idea that a fictional island off the coast of South Carolina, the homeland of the late Nevin Nollop, the inventor of the pangram “The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog,” a man lionized with a monument featuring this famous phrase, falls apart. It begins when the tile containing the letter “z” topples from the statue and island authorities interpret the fall as a message from Nollop from beyond the grave. They waste no time in banning this letter from all use. As other tiles fall, additional letters are banned until.... It is up to a young woman named Ella to restore order and sanity to the nation of Nollop. You will love how language erodes with the alphabet. I love this book which sold in the hundreds here.

Earling, Debra Magpie. [The Lost Journals of Sacajewea, A Novel](#) (Milkweed \$26). A powerful reimagining of the iconic Sacajewea’s story told from her perspective and in a truly startling voice she both simultaneously expresses the brutality of her time along with the sheer beauty and wonder of life in her pre-European-contact village

Fox, Candice. [Fire with Fire](#) (Tor \$28.99). Following their daughter’s mysterious disappearance, Ryan and Elsie Delaney have taken the LAPD forensic lab hostage, and have given law enforcement an ultimatum: Find their daughter, Tilly, or they will destroy all the evidence they can find to other cold cases. Detective Charlie Hoskins has been undercover in a deadly motorcycle gang for five years. With his cover blown, he has no choice but to find Tilly himself, or lose everything he’s worked for as the lab burns. Lynette Lamb was a police officer — until yesterday, when she was fired before her first beat. Figuring out what happened to Tilly is her one and only chance at rejoining the career she’s prepared her whole life for. Hoskins and Lamb will have to team up to solve what sounds like a *Die Hard* case.

Harkaway, Nick. [Titanium Noir](#) (Knopf \$28). A virtuosic mashup of Philip K. Dick and Raymond Chandler by way of Marvel—this futuristic whodunit is the story of a detective investigating the murder of a Titan, one of society’s most powerful, medically-enhanced elites. “An SF-tinged romp that blends elements of the noir thriller and the picaresque novel.... [Echoes] the Thomas Pynchon of *Inherent Vice*. . . . A tale of genetic manipulation—familiar to fans of movies such as *RoboCop* and *Elysium*.” — *Kirkus Reviews*

Indridason, Arnaldur. [The Girl by the Bridge](#) (St Martins \$29). An elderly couple contacts retired Reykjavik police detective Konrád, introduced in [The Darkness Knows](#) (\$18.99), for advice in dealing with Danni, their wayward granddaughter, whom they haven’t seen for a few days and who they suspect is working as a drug mule. But even before the reader is introduced to the kindly couple, two other dark scenes are presented, casting a spectral shadow over all that follows. First, a young writer on an evening stroll sees a doll floating in the water near the city center and, upon closer examination, discovers a girl’s corpse nearby. And second, in a flashback, Konrád’s friend Eygló encounters a ghost while attending a young classmate’s birthday party, a memory that will haunt her for decades. Konrád is haunted by his own

ghosts, especially the unsolved murder of his father more than 50 years ago.... “Veteran Indridason weaves all these eerie elements together masterfully.”—*Kirkus* Starred Review

Isaacs, Susan. [Bad, Bad Seymour Brown](#) (Grove \$27). A new novel from veteran Isaacs is always a treat even if the pace is a little slow and the asides a little long. The voice is so warm and entertaining and the picture of everyday life in Queens and on a posher Long Island so charming that the investigation run by former FBI Agent Corie Geller and her father, retired NYPD detective Daniel Schottland, into a case brought to them by April Brown makes for breezy fun. April, daughter of Seymour, a purported Mob accountant dead with his wife in a fire years ago, thinks someone has tried to run her down. Desperate for an escape from their “unremittingly suburban” routines and hoping to forestall another attempt on April’s life, Daniel and Corie set up an ad hoc PI office in the Gellers’ Long Island McMansion and start digging into Seymour’s sordid past....

Laoutaris, Chris. [Shakespeare’s Book](#) (Pegasus \$35). After William Shakespeare’s death, his colleagues collected his plays in a single, history-making volume. On Dec. 5, 1623, a fashionable young man-about-town called Sir Edward Dering visited St. Paul’s Cross Churchyard, London’s main bookselling hub. There he bought two copies of a book that had only recently hit the shelves—a large, expensively-bound tome entitled “Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies.” Dering has the distinguished claim of being the earliest recorded purchaser of the first collected edition of Shakespeare’s plays. Published more than seven years after the bard’s death, the First Folio, as it is known today, constitutes a landmark in printing, a cornerstone of the Western canon and a monument to the writer’s singular genius. Read the full page review in the [WSJ Bookshelf](#).

Lisle, John. [The Dirty Tricks Department](#) (St Martins \$29.99) offers a study of the R&D Branch within the Office of Strategic Services during WWII. In 1942, OSS chief William “Wild Bill” Donovan tapped Stanley Lovell, a renowned industrial chemist, to be his “Professor Moriarty” and direct the department’s efforts to “develop and deploy all of the dirty tricks that were needed to win the greatest war in history.” Lisle catalogs dozens of projects undertaken by department researchers, including truth drug experiments, matchbox cameras, and a study of whether bats could be captured, strapped with incendiary devices, and unleashed on Japan. Lovell increased the scope of R&D’s portfolio by creating subunits like the Camouflage Division, which could “transform any agent into a passable French miner, German soldier, Danish fisherman, or Dutch longshoreman at a moment’s notice.” Initially reluctant to create deadly weapons, Lovell “developed into a pragmatist... when faced with the devastating realities of war,” according to Lisle, and “came to view biological warfare as the ethical alternative to conventional warfare.” Though Lovell’s character remains somewhat obscure, Lisle stuffs the account with bizarre inventions, humorous anecdotes, and vivid sketches of researchers and agents. Espionage buffs will be enthralled.

Speaking of espionage fiction, I recommend Kim Sherwood’s [Double or Nothing](#) (Morrow \$29.99), the start of a trilogy following MI6’s Double O agents with a license to kill. 007 is missing, presumed dead. Other 00s are casualties...of what? This is 009’s story along with that of 003, Johanna Harwood. And if you prefer to watch a series, try Netflix’s *Citadel* which is a riff on a James Bond movie for sure.

Nakamura, Fuminori. [The Rope Artist](#) (Soho \$27.95). *Kirkus* calls this a “dive into Japan’s bondage subculture. Before he was beaten to death with an elegant sculpture, Kazunari Yoshikawa was noted as a master of *kinbaku*—rope artistry, as distinct from rope torture. He made the women he bound at a club and privately feel achingly desired and desirous. Even Maiko Kirita, the escort-turned-hostess who spent two weeks as Yoshikawa’s captive, tells police detective Mikiya Togashi how powerful her lover’s hold over her was because he always believed “the ropes were in charge.” But nothing else about the case seems straightforward. The absence of official records on Yoshikawa indicates that he lived and died under a false name.... Detailed step-by-step descriptions of sexual bondage are only the most literal sign of the tangled relationships that bind the characters (and the investigation) together.”

Patterson, James/Maxine Paetro. [The 23rd Midnight](#) (LittleBrown \$30). Request a signed bookplate. An attention-seeking copycat is recreating murders by a famous killer from the Women’s Murder Club’s past—with devastating new twists.

Prendergast, Alan. [Gangbuster](#) (Citadel \$28). A superb nonfiction legal thriller finds crusading Denver District Attorney Phillip Van Cise taking on all manner of really bad guys in the 1920s including organized crime and government corruption. Divisiveness had been heightened by the KKK and the book focuses mostly on his dogged efforts to bring down the Klan that in those days had become a massive criminal enterprise that spared no one in their quest to remake America in their image. It’s a David vs. Goliath tale. *Gangbuster* busts out of the gate and never lets up in riveting and relentless fashion. And it’s absolutely relevant to events going on today.

✦Rose, Rosemary. [The Rewards of Treachery](#) (Severn \$31.99). **Ordered Upon Request.** In this new chapter in a very long-running 2nd century Britain series, a stolen valuable is just the beginning of a trail of strange events Junio has to uncover. It’s late summer, CE 198. With Glevum an uneasy place since the current Emperor seized power, and with rebel Celts still actively opposing Roman rule, tension remains as Caesar turns his attention to stamping out all remaining threats to his authority. Junio, series hero Libertus’ adopted son, tries to be inconspicuous and focus on his workshop and growing family. This becomes difficult when Libertus’ patron, Marcus Septimus, seeks Junio’s advice about a valuable cloak-clasp which has disappeared – together with the jeweler who was repairing it. Unwillingly dragged into investigating this, Junio finds himself faced with a string of murders, betrayal and revenge, and his own small son in dreadful jeopardy.

Shaara, Jeff. [The Old Lion](#) (St Martins \$30). Historical novelist Shaara explores the enormously consequential life of Theodore Roosevelt through the man’s own point of view. Solid biographies of Roosevelt already exist, of course, but fiction is the only vehicle for suggesting what his thoughts might have been. This novel races through his career.

Shaffer, Meg. [The Wishing Game](#) (Ballantine \$28). Years ago, a reclusive mega-bestselling children’s author quit writing under mysterious circumstances. Suddenly he resurfaces with a brand-new book and a one-of-a-kind Wonka-esque competition, offering a prize that will change the winner’s life. “In this magical tale, a beloved children’s author announces a tantalizing game: four

fans can compete to win the only copy of his new book. All the contestants are intriguing, but readers will root for Lucy, a teacher’s aide desperate to find the money needed to adopt an orphaned boy.” Also waiting on the island is Jack’s gorgeous and grumpy cover illustrator and caretaker, Hugo Reese, who says of Jack, “[H]e’s Albus Dumbledore, Willy Wonka, and Jesus Christ all rolled into one. If Dumbledore, Wonka, and Christ had depression and drank too much.” Out May 30—I’ve ordered one to read.

Smith, Alexander McCall. [The Private Life of Spies and the Exquisite Art of Getting Even](#) (Knopf \$29). The continually prolific Smith puts together a collection of stories, half spy, half tales of revenge. In one story, a spy dropped deep into enemy territory manages to disguise himself—quite convincingly—as a nun. In another, an invitation to join the Vatican Secret Service sends a prospective operative down a rabbit hole of controversy and confusion. A third story finds an author, on the brink of public ruin, seeing the error of his ways after an act of kindness saves the day.

Urrea, Luis Alberto. [Good Night, Irene](#) (LittleBrown \$29) “is a beautiful, heartfelt novel that celebrates the intense power and durability of female friendship while shining a light on one of the fascinating lost women’s stories of World War II. Inspired by his own family history—and his mother’s heroism as a Red Cross volunteer during the war—Luis Urrea has created an indelible portrait of women’s courage under extreme adversity. Powerful, uplifting, and deeply personal, *Good Night, Irene* is a story of survival, camaraderie, and courage on the front line.”—Kristin Hannah. This is an alert. I have as yet no idea if this will be signed or.... Meanwhile please order and we will alert you.

Walters, Vanessa. [The Nigerwife](#) (Atria \$27.99). A debut novel about a young woman who goes missing in Lagos, Nigeria, and her estranged auntie who will stop at nothing to find the truth, is perfect for fans of *My Sister, the Serial Killer* and *The Last Thing He Told Me*. Nicole Oruwari has the perfect life: a handsome husband, a palatial house in the heart of glittering Lagos, Nigeria, and a glamorous group of friends. She left gloomy London and a dark family past behind for sunny, moneyed Lagos, becoming part of the Nigerwives—a community of foreign women married to wealthy Nigerian men. For them it was an adventure. But when Nicole disappears without a trace after a boat trip, the cracks in her so-called perfect life start to show. As the investigation turns up nothing but dead ends, her Auntie Claudine decides to take matters into her own hands as this adventure will end badly.

✦Weir, Alison. [The King’s Pleasure: A Novel of Henry VIII](#) (Random \$30). Not my favorite king but one who continues to fascinate many. Weir has devoted decades to the Tudors and here delves into the complexities and the positives of his turbulent life telling it in his own “voice.”

Wells, Martha. [Witch King](#) (Tordotcom \$28.99) is a slow-boil thriller that unfolds on two alternating timelines. In the present, aggrieved demon Kai has been summoned from his afterlife imprisonment by a bumbling mage. In the prequel storyline, we learn how Kai got imprisoned in the first place—a sort of after-the-fact supernatural murder mystery. Murderbot fans will recognize the vibe; Wells is great with this kind of stuff. Enjoy the spectacular worldbuilding and pacing.

White, Karen. [The House on Prytania](#) (Penguin \$27). White, one of the Three W's with Willig and Williams, pens a psychic mystery soaked in New Orleans atmosphere. Nola Trenholm may not be psychic herself, but she's spent enough time around people who are to know when ghosts are present, and there are definitely a few lingering spirits in her recently purchased Creole cottage in New Orleans. Something, or someone, is keeping them tethered to this world. And not all of them are benign.

#### OUR MAY LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

Bohjalian, Chris. [The Lioness](#) (\$17). In 1964, Hollywood super star Katie Barstow honeymoones in the Serengeti with new husband David Hill and a bunch of their glittery Hollywood friends, including distinguished Black actor Terrance Dutton, with whom Katie starred in a controversy-sparking film. They're looking forward to a luxurious safari watching the giraffes and the wildebeest play and guzzling gin with ice from kerosene-powered ice makers. Instead, they get kidnapped, with Soviet mercenaries shuffling them into Land Rovers, leveling guns at their heads as their Tanzanian guides lie bleeding in the dirt. Worse follows, including fatal snake bites. "Bohjalian does a superb job of judiciously rolling out information of how past transgressions may have led to the heart-stopping episodes of chaos and carnage as the shocking, twist-filled plot builds up to the revelation of the truth behind the safari nightmare."

Box, C. J. [Treasure State](#) (\$18). The Treasure State—and a treasure hunt! I think Box took inspiration for part of this exciting thriller from the real life Forrest Fenn treasure (look it up). And he does a deep dive into the history of Anaconda and Butte as well as Montana's historic role in the copper mining industry and US labor organizing. I ripped right through this and you will too. Former police officer Cassie Dewell, now a PI in Bozeman, is on the trail of a con man who bilked wealthy Boca Grande, Florida, widow Candyce Fly out of millions and vanished. Fly earlier employed another PI—the marvelously noxious J.D. Spengler—to track the man down, but both Spengler and his quarry disappeared into the old mining town of Anaconda. Cassie travels there to investigate, and soon realizes that she has stumbled on a lethal conspiracy that goes far beyond the victimization of her client. A second case involving a buried treasure adds to the intrigue. Box has rarely been better. I'm a fan of the previous Cassie, [The Bitterroots](#), which shows her moving to the Treasure State and becoming a private eye.

Burke, James Lee. [Every Cloak Rolled in Blood](#) (\$16.99). A teenage boy spray paints a swastika on the barn of octogenarian author Aaron Holland Broussard in rural Montana. Broussard's interactions with the teen lead him into conflict with a host of villains, including evangelical bikers and a meth dealer who has been known to bury people alive. Ruby Spotted Horse, the state trooper who responds to his call about the graffiti is also entrusted with keeping the malevolent Old People from escaping their confinement beneath her house. Broussard's other ally is his dead daughter, Fannie Mae, who appears from time to time to bring him warnings. Setting aside the ghosts, this is one of those extraordinary crime novels that feels more like real life, with incidents and people that aren't obviously connected piling up in the protagonist's life. Once again, Burke uses genre fiction to plumb weighty issues, both social and emotional.

Castillo, Linda. [The Hidden One](#) (\$18). Painters Mill, Ohio, police chief Kate Burkholder dives deep into her complicated past after she learns her services are needed out of state. The remains of Kish Valley, Pennsylvania, Bishop Ananias Stoltzfus have turned up in a field 18 years after his disappearance. Unsatisfied with the local police, the current elders of Kish Valley ask Kate for assistance, informing her that the police wrongfully arrested charming Amish cabinetmaker Jonas Bowman after his rifle, the murder weapon, was found at the crime scene. Unbeknownst to the elders, Kate had a secret relationship with Jonas as a teenager and doesn't believe he's capable of murder. Despite her whirlwind of emotions, Kate decides to help and unearths disturbing secrets about Ananias's past. As she oversteps, she often falls into danger during the investigation, and old feelings resurface when she questions the now married Jonas. You longtime fans will find extra pleasure in learning more about what drove Kate to quit the Amish but eventually return to Amish country. We host Castillo on June 9 for the next chapter: [An Evil Heart](#) (St Martins \$28)—our copies will come with an exclusive bonus.

☞Caudwell, Sarah. [Thus Was Adonis Murdered](#) (Random \$18). Joy, the reissue of book one in one of the cleverest, most eccentric, fiendishly British series ever. I treasure my original copies and still mourn Sarah's untimely death. It begins when, set to have a vacation away from her home life and the tax man, young British barrister Julia Larwood goes on holiday to Venice with her art-loving boyfriend. But when her personal copy of the current Finance Act is found a few meters away from a dead body, Julia finds herself caught up in a complex fight against the Inland Revenue. Fortunately, she's able to call on her fellow colleagues who enlist the help of Oxford professor Hilary Tamar. However, all is not what it seems. Hilary is a keen sleuth with nearly super legal powers. Also reissued, Book Two: [The Shortest Way to Hades](#) (\$18). Book Three, which won the Anthony Award for Best Novel, and Book Four will republish in 2024.

Flynn, Vince. [Enemy at the Gates](#) (\$17.99) finds CIA agent Mitch considering retirement. After 20 years in the game, he's seriously banged up, he's got a wife and child to protect, he has no relationship with the new U.S. president, and he sees his beloved America collapsing into extremism. Mitch heads to South Africa, where he has a house and plans to become a long-distance bicycle racer. But shortly after his arrival, Nicholas Ward, the world's first trillionaire, shows up to ask for his help finding missing virologist David Chism. Chism, who was working on a vaccine for any type of coronavirus that exists now and any that might arise in the future, disappeared after his laboratory in Uganda, financed by Ward, was attacked by a local terrorist. Mitch accepts and joins old pal Scott Coleman's security team to locate Chism. Mills delivers the goods, including a CIA mole, perfidy at the highest levels of the U.S. government, and close-combat with a messianic psychopathic terrorist villain who commands a drug-fueled army. Wow!

☞Goodman, Alison. [The Benevolent Society of Ill-Mannered Ladies](#) (Penguin \$17). Lesa reviews the start of a well-conceived Regency Mystery series. In 1812, Lady Augusta "Gus" Colebrook and her twin sister Julia are 42. They are spinsters, lucky to have their own income and their own household. Despite their status in society, Gus is bored. After a successful retrieval

of letters for a friend threatened with blackmail, she has an idea: Why shouldn't she and Julia have adventures while helping other women? For their first case, they plan to rescue the childless Lady Caroline Thorne, who fears her husband intends to kill her to remarry for an heir. If the sisters can get her out of her house, her relatives will shelter her. On the way to the Thorne estate, the sisters' carriage is attacked by highwaymen. Gus shoots and injures one of them, but Julia recognizes him as Lord Evan Belford, convicted of murder in a duel 20 years earlier and exiled to Australia. Now the sisters have an escaped felon as a secret partner. Fans of Georgette Heyer's Regency novels will savor this mystery from "Dark Days Club" series author Goodman. Well-developed characters, a touch of romance, and cases involving social issues of the period enhance the experience.

Jenn McKinlay adds: "If you love Georgette Heyer, you'll love this. Smart and sassy and featuring heroines of a certain age, this is the Regency I've been waiting for. Adventure! Mystery! A touch of romance!"

✂Gray, Claudia. [The Late Mrs. Willoughby](#) (Knopf \$17) follows up on [The Murder of Mr. Wickham](#) (\$17) and earns a Starred Review which calls it "Another superior blend of humor and detection." Jonathan Darcy, the son of *Pride and Prejudice's* Fitzwilliam Darcy and Elizabeth Bennett, and Juliet Tilney, the daughter of *Northanger Abbey's* Catherine and Henry Tilney, met in the previous installment, when they teamed up to solve a homicide and found themselves fighting mutual attraction. The amateur sleuths get another murder to crack when they're both guests at the Devonshire home of *Sense and Sensibility's* John Willoughby. Darcy is not fond of his host, who bullied him at school. The unexpected reunion with Tilney, who recognizes the shy Darcy's hidden depths, improves matters. Then *Sense and Sensibility's* Marianne Brandon, who has a past with Willoughby, arrives. Soon Willoughby's wife, Sophia, whom he'd married for her dowry, dies after drinking poisoned port. "Gray makes her endearing leads' sleuthing both plausible and entertaining while evoking the wit and feel of Austen's classic novels."

Haig, Matt. [The Midnight Library](#) (\$18). Somewhere out beyond the edge of the universe there is a library that contains an infinite number of books, each one the story of another reality. One tells the story of your life as it is, along with another book for the other life you could have lived if you had made a different choice at any point in your life. While we all wonder how our lives might have been, what if you had the chance to go to the library and see for yourself? Would any of these other lives truly be better? This gem is a huge success critically and commercially.

Hillier, Jennifer. [Things We Do in the Dark](#) (\$18). Seattle comedian Jimmy Peralta is dead, and his 5th wife is found next to his body holding the straight razor that killed him. Paris Peralta, rightly fearing the spotlight, had fled Toronto many years ago under an assumed name in the wake of a basement fire that claimed the life of stripper Joelle Reyes, whose mother, Ruby Reyes, was already doing time for killing her married lover. As Ruby, who's about to be paroled after 25 years, sends Paris a series of escalating blackmail demands, journalist Drew Malcolm, who has his own uncomfortable ties to Joey Reyes, seizes on Paris' arrest as fodder for his true-crime podcast, "Things We Do in the Dark." Paris swears she didn't kill Jimmy, but can she prove it? Hillier laces her thriller with mentions

of streaming comedy shows and true crime podcasts told by unreliable narrators. Readers of Megan Goldin and Lisa Jewell will enjoy this take on a character reinventing herself but unable to run away from the past.

✂Horowitz, Anthony. [With a Mind to Kill](#) (\$18.99) picks up after the final Ian Fleming novel, *The Man with the Golden Gun*, in which the Russians captured Bond, brainwashed him, and programmed him to kill M, the head of the British secret service. The British stage M's funeral and imprison Bond to fool the Russians into believing Bond succeeded in the assassination as part of a plot to get 007 into Russia to discover what its intelligence organizations are planning. The Russians oblige by snatching Bond from police custody and sending him to Leningrad, where he falls under the "care" of Colonel Boris, a mind control expert, and Katya Leonova, an icy, Communist technocrat. The Russians have a high-profile mission for Bond, which leads to a genuinely thrilling climax. Horowitz displays a thorough knowledge of Bondian tropes, captures the dreariness of Khrushchev-era Russia, and deepens 007 by allowing him a certain ambiguity about his profession. Horowitz writes a heartfelt homage, interesting given the fate of Bond in the most recent Daniel Craig movie.

Krueger, William Kent. [Fox Creek](#) (\$17.99). The ancient Ojibwe healer Henry Meloux has had a vision of his death. As he walks the North woods in solitude, he tries to prepare himself peacefully for the end of his long life. But peace is destined to elude him as hunters fill the woods seeking a woman named Dolores Morriseau, a stranger who had come to the healer for shelter and the gift of his wisdom. Meloux guides this stranger and his great niece, Cork O'Connor's wife, to safety deep into the Boundary Waters, his home for more than a century. On the last journey he may ever take into this beloved land, Meloux must do his best to outwit the deadly mercenaries who follow. Meanwhile, in Aurora, Cork works feverishly to identify the hunters and the reason for their relentless pursuit, but he has little to go on. Desperate, Cork begins tracking the killers but his own skills as a hunter are severely tested by nightfall and a late season snowstorm. He knows only too well that with each passing hour time is running out. But his fiercest enemy in this deadly game of cat and mouse may well be his own deep self-doubt about his ability to save those he loves.

Martin, William. [December '41: A World War II Thriller](#) (\$19.99). This is a truly marvelous story that incorporates Old Hollywood, a German asset deep undercover with an assassination to execute following Pearl Harbor. Martin traces his route from California to DC, includes speeches by FDR and by Winston Churchill, the targets, incorporating small events showing how every day Americans were affected and reacted. The characters are superb, the voices wonderful, the plot truly suspenseful. I love this. So does Mark Greaney: "I loved the rich characters, the noir-like dialogue and settings, and the backdrop of those terrifying days in the American Homeland during the start of World War Two." And Hank Phillippi Ryan enthuses: "His brilliant *December '41* is a contemporary take on the classic spy thriller—It's Herman Wouk meets *The Day of the Jackal*, with the ticking time bomb expertise of Hitchcock—and it is irresistible. Instantly cinematic and endlessly entertaining, *December '41* is an absolute page turner."



Morrison, Boyd/Beth. [The Lawless Land](#) (\$16.95). I love this, a medieval adventure in the Cussler style but with serious scholarship provided by noted medievalist Beth Morrison, Boyd's sister. It's a grand adventure and ranges from England to Mont St. Michel and into France. It's 1351, the Black Death has ravaged England young knight Gerard Fox has been robbed of his family's estate. To restore his lands and his reputation he embarks upon a quest to petition the one man who can be of help. A chance encounter will entangle him with an enigmatic woman, a relic of incalculable value, a dark family secret, and land him in a convent. It will lead him far from home and set him on a collision course with one of the most ambitious and dangerous men in Europe.... Highly recommended for gifts – it's beautifully packaged – and for a grand summer read.

Pavone, Chris. [Two Nights in Lisbon](#) (\$19). Edgar winner Pavone has written another international thriller filled with bait-and-switch twists and a fun side plot involving an independent bookstore. When American businessman John Wright vanishes one morning from his hotel, his wife, Ariel Pryce, insists he was kidnapped, but issues soon emerge that make both the Lisbon police and the CIA skeptical. Why, for instance, are there no witnesses or video evidence of a crime taking place? Why did Pryce, whose account of the incident is fuzzy, change her legal name a decade earlier? And what's to be made of Wright's short stretch in the CIA a while back? When Pryce comes up with €2 million for a ransom payoff, the web leads investigators to .... Pavone skillfully layers plot details, often shifting points of view, all the way to the end of this superior, elegantly crafted yarn. The enigmatic central character has a whose moral compass set a bit differently than most.

### SOME NEW MY LARGE PAPERBACKS

Archer, Jeffrey. [Over My Dead Body](#) (\$16.99). In London, the Metropolitan Police set up a new Unsolved Murders Unit – a cold case squad – to catch the criminals nobody else can. In Geneva, millionaire art collector Miles Faulkner – convicted of forgery and theft – was pronounced dead two months ago. So why is his unscrupulous lawyer still representing a dead client? On a luxury liner en route to New York, the battle for power within a wealthy dynasty is about to turn to murder. As head of the Unit, DCI William Warwick has his work cut out with these two cases.

Ayatsuji, Yukito. [The Mill House Murders](#) (Pushkin Vertigo \$15.95). The Locked Room mystery, i.e. the Impossible Crime puzzle for readers, is making a little comeback. As they do every year, a small group of acquaintances pay a visit to the remote, castle-like Water Mill House, home to the reclusive Fujinuma Kiichi, son of a famous artist, who has lived his life behind a rubber mask ever since a disfiguring car accident. This year the visit is disrupted by an impossible disappearance, the theft of a painting, and a series of baffling murders. The brilliant Kiyoshi Shimada arrives to investigate. "Another ingenious puzzle... John Dickson Carr would be proud to come up with as clever a locked room mystery as this... exceptional fun and superbly plotted." This classic Japanese mystery with an ingenious conclusion from the author of [The Decagon House Murders](#) (\$14.95) is translated into English for the first time.

Bessette, Alicia. [Smile, Beach, Murder](#) (\$17). Mass layoffs at the *Charlotte Times* hit Callie Padgett hard. Her childhood home on Cattail Island seems as good a place as any to escape. Not that

there's much of her family there. Her father left before she was born, and her mother died when she was 12. Her Uncle Hudson is a cantankerous old coot, but he's kept her old bedroom in his loft waiting for her. Hudson prods Callie into working part time for Antoinette Redfield at MotherVine bookshop, where she encounters Eva Meeks who's all atwitter with hopes of finding the pirate treasure long rumored to be buried near Cattail and consults every treasure-hunting volume that MotherVine stocks. But her dreams of rubies and pearls crash when she falls from the top of Cattail Lighthouse. Though the police rule her death a suicide, Callie has doubts. When Eva's daughter, Summer, brings Callie a poem that's the first in a series of treasure-hunt clues, she decides to investigate. MotherVine's book delivery service gives her the perfect excuse to question many of the island's residents. And here is a real plus: Callie is a Mary Higgins Clark fanatic but she mentions all kinds of other mysteries as the story moves along.

Cogman, Genevieve. [Scarlet](#) (Penguin \$17). 1793 and the French Revolution is in full swing. Vampires—usually rich and aristocratic—have slaked the guillotine's thirst in large numbers. The mysterious Scarlet Pimpernel, a disguised British noble, and his League are heroically rescuing dozens of aristocrats from execution, both human and vampire. And soon they will have an ace up their sleeve: Eleanor Dalton. Eleanor is working as a housemaid on the estate of a vampire Baroness. Her highest aspiration is to one day become a modiste. But when the Baroness hosts a mysterious noble and his wife, they tell Eleanor she is the spitting image of a French aristocrat, and they convince her to journey to France to aid them in a daring scheme. Soon, Eleanor finds herself in Paris, swept up in magic and intrigue—and chaos—beyond her wildest dreams. But there's more to fear....

Cornwell, Patricia. [Livid](#) (\$18.99). Forensic pathologist Kay Scarpetta, Virginia's Chief Medical Examiner, testifies in a case, fumbled by the initial pathologist who had rapid onset dementia, concerning a drowned beauty queen whose fiancé is charged with her death. Then the seemingly distracted Judge Chilton's sister is murdered....

Donlea, Charlie. [The Suicide House](#) (\$16.95). Forensic reconstructionist Rory Moore and her psychologist partner Lane Phillips investigate the Westmount Prep Slaughters—and the bizarre string of survivor suicides that follows....

Donoghue, Emma. [Haven](#) (\$17.99). "In this novel of religious discovery, set in the seventh century, three Irish monks make a fraught journey from their monastery to Great Skellig, a craggy rock formation in the Atlantic that resembles 'the most gigantic of cathedrals.' Switching perspectives among the monks, the narrative tracks their escalating discord as they endeavor to construct a new monastic settlement there. Donoghue evokes their devotional seriousness with a descriptive texture that is equally alert to a flock of cormorants taking flight 'by some collusion,' or to the whittling of a makeshift pipe. As the men maintain routines of worship in the face of futility, the novel asks whether they should be answerable to God or to one another."—*The New Yorker*

Goldin, Megan. [The Escape Room](#) (\$12). Reissued. In the lucrative world of finance, Vincent, Jules, Sylvie, and Sam are at the top of their game. They've mastered the art of the deal and

celebrate their success in style. Invited to participate in an escape room challenge as a team-building exercise, the ferociously competitive co-workers crowd into the elevator of a high-rise building, eager to prove themselves. But when the lights go off and the doors stay shut, it quickly becomes clear that this is no ordinary competition: they're caught in a dangerous game of survival. Trapped in the dark, the colleagues must put aside their bitter rivalries and work together to solve cryptic clues to break free. But as the game begins to reveal the team's darkest secrets, they realize there's a price to be paid for the terrible deeds they committed in their ruthless climb up the corporate ladder. "There is clearly no happy ending likely for the four colleagues trapped inside [the escape room]; but fans of JP Delany and Ruth Ware will want to be right in there with them... a nail-biting tale of a corporate team-building exercise gone horribly wrong." — *Booklist*

Gailey, Sarah. [Just Like Home](#) (\$19.99). Vera Crowder returns to her childhood home, Crowder House, after 12 years to reunite with her dying mother, a fraught visit that reawakens dark memories. "It gradually emerges that Vera's father, who frequently reassured her as a child that there were neither monsters nor murderers under her bed, and told her their basement was off-limits, was himself a murderer. (Bodies were found buried in the basement.) Years after her father's arrest, Vera still believes the house has secrets to reveal, a belief supported by the chance discoveries of fragments from his journal. Suggestive prose enhances the twisty plot as Vera tries to better understand the killings her father was accused of. The counterintuitive choice to have flashbacks recounted in present tense, while using past tense for present-day events, along with ominous foreshadowing ('Three years from now, when there are policemen at the door, she will feel afraid') helps to create an unsettling atmosphere. Minette Walters fans will be captivated."—PW Starred Review

Greco, Stephen. [Such Good Friends](#) (Kensington \$16.95). Greco has made a novel out of the friendship between Truman Capote and Lee Radziwill, Jackie Kennedy Onassis' sister.

Hallinan, Timothy. [Rock of Ages](#) (\$16.95). L.A. mobster Irwin Dressler needs Junior Bender to do him a favor. Dressler has invested money in a concert tour featuring obscure bands organized by "four of the killers, extortionists, leg-breakers, kidnapers, armed robbers, and threat specialists who made up his former social circle." Dressler believes that one of them has been siphoning off the profits and that two near-fatal accidents to two of the touring musicians may have been attempted murders. Complications ensue since Bender's investigation coincides with time allotted to spend with his teenage daughter, Rina, who's unaware of his actual profession. When a drummer is seriously injured during a performance after a stage set wall falls on him, Bender finds evidence that the rope suspending the wall was tampered with, thus validating Dressler's suspicions. Hallinan's sharp-edged prose (a character has "lips sharp enough to turn a kiss into a paper cut") and facility for making even assassins likable enhance a complex puzzle. What a treat for die-hard fans who wish rock could go on forever.

Hilderbrand, Elin. [Endless Summer: Stories](#) (\$17.99). Collected in a single volume for the first time, the nine stories range from fan favorites to original, never-before-seen tales from the bestseller who draws upon life in Nantucket.

Hogan, Chuck. [Gangland](#) (\$17.99). The real-life burglary of Chicago mob boss Tony Accardo's suburban home in 1978 provides a marvelously hooky backdrop for Hogan's lowdown tale, which fictionalizes the event and the subsequent assassinations of parties directly and tangentially involved with the incident. "Nicky Pins" Passero, a bowling alley proprietor and midlevel member of Accardo's outfit, is our point-of-view character and an ideal guide through the horrific events set in motion by the resentful thief and the increasingly paranoid Accardo. "The satisfying thriller structure, vivid dialogue and characterizations, and tragicomic tone are reminiscent of the Coen brothers' best film work, and the historical underpinning provides the pleasures of a first-rate true-crime tale," says *Kirkus*

Jonasson, Ragnar. [Outside](#) (\$18). Four friends seek shelter in a small, abandoned hunting lodge as a deadly snowstorm hits. However, it's not the snowstorm they have to worry about. Instead, it's the group dynamics of the four friends as well as their past — and...something...out there ... watching them."An intense standalone...There is so much to like here: the complexity of the quartet's relationships, Jónasson's powerful, streamlined writing, and the parallels between an unforgiving setting and the characters' seething grudges. Readers will be drawn into Jónasson's forbidding Iceland landscape, where it's anyone's guess who will make it out alive." —*Booklist* Starred Review

McKinnon, Hannah Mary. [The Revenge List](#) (Mira \$18.99). The people in Frankie Morgan's life say she's angry. Emotionally stunted. Combative. But really, who can blame her? It's hard being nice when your clients are insufferable, your next-door neighbor is a miserable woman and the cowardly driver who killed your mother is still out living it up somewhere. Somehow, though, she finds herself at her very first anger-management group session—drinking terrible coffee and learning all about how "forgiveness is a process." One that starts with a list. Frankie is skeptical. A list of everyone who's wronged her in some way over the years? More paper, please. Still, she makes the pointless list—with her own name in a prominent spot—and promptly forgets about it...until it goes missing. And one by one, the people she's named start getting hurt in freak accidents, each deadlier than the last. Coincidence or...?

McTiernan, Dervla. [The Murder Rule](#) (\$18.99). In 2019, University of Maine law student Hannah Rokeby, the protagonist of this psychological thriller from Thriller Award winner McTiernan, shares a home with Laura, her alcoholic mother, until she transfers to the University of Virginia, where she wangles a highly desirable job with the law school's Innocence Project, which tracks down new evidence in cases of individuals convicted of a crime, but who profess their innocence. She's assigned to work on freeing Michael Dandridge, who's on death row, having served 11 years for the rape and murder of Sarah Fitzhugh. Meanwhile, vivid excerpts from her mother's diary recount dramatic events surrounding the death of wealthy Tom Spencer in 1994, when Laura was working as a maid at an exclusive hotel in Seal Harbor, Maine. McTiernan keeps the suspense high as she gradually reveals how Spencer's death relates to Hannah's work on the Dandridge case.

☞Murray, Amita. [Unladylike Lessons in Love](#) (Harper \$17.99). Here's a superbly crafted historical novel, and a romance that doubles up as a mystery, with a delicious Indian twist—what's

not to love? Murray (the Arya Winters mysteries) brings a multifaceted Regency London vividly to life in this oh-so-steamy romance featuring a captivating heroine, a sexy hero, and a high-stakes mystery. And meet Lady Lila Marleigh, whose mixed-race ancestry makes her something of an outsider in polite society. It's fine by Lila. She's not in this game for the marriage prospects, she's in it to solve a whodunit-ideally with the help of smoking hot gentleman Ivor Tristram. Think *Bridgerton*.

Nieh, Daniel. [Take No Names](#) (\$18.99). Patrick writes, "Victor Li seems like any other small-time criminal trying to stay afloat. His latest gig involves breaking into government storage units that contain the personal effects of the recently deported, helping themselves to anything worth selling. Only his sister knows that he's a wanted man on the run. As he is going through backpacks and suitcases, Li finds an incredibly rare gem along with a book of cryptic notes that lead Li and his new employer down to Mexico. Naturally, they find themselves involved in a much larger scheme than they bargained for, involving various global interests. A terrific thriller by a writer on the move. Don't miss it." Or the painite, "the world's rarest gem," worth \$65,000 per karat. Nieh's second book "combines biting humor, breathless action scenes, a clever presentation of mixed languages, and dark geopolitical commentary, including an indictment of America's own duplicity. It's a lot of fun." I am a fan of Nieh's first, [Beijing Payback](#) (\$16.99).

Paretsky, Sara. [Overboard](#) (\$18.99). Chicago PI VI Warshawski's 21<sup>st</sup> investigation is a thorny one filled with corruption, greed, prejudice, and a hard look at police brutality as visited in part on VI herself. Paretsky has always had a handle on how the levers of power are operated in the Windy City but here one feels that COVID has fueled its worst sides and that survival, not justice, is the goal. It begins when her two dogs break loose along the lakefront and discover a near-dead young girl hiding in the shoreline rocks. She utters one word—*nagyi*—before the EMTs whisk her away. When the local news interviews VI about this dramatic rescue, it brings cops on the hunt (for what?), ugly scenes, bitter neighbors from her childhood, and memories of her beloved cousin Boom Boom, crashing into her life.

Rovin, Jeff. [Tom Clancy's OpCenter: Fallout](#) (\$19). Things kick off after a Chinese space station destroys a manned American spacecraft, killing everyone on board, and the Op-Center, now codenamed Black Wasp, has been whittled down to five members by a multitude of enemies. The space massacre is revenge for a Black Wasp mission a year earlier in which Lt. Grace Lee abducted Yang Dayou, the chief engineer of a Chinese hypersonic missile program, and his family, and assassinated the project director. Soon, Chinese forces reduce Black Wasp's numbers even further, and Grace endures a terrible personal blow.

Saint, Jennifer. [Elektra](#) (\$17.99). "Elektra makes the world of Mycenaean Greece feel alive again. In Jennifer Saint's prose, you can hear the songs of the poets, feel the floors beneath your feet, smell the wood burning in the fire and experience the story of these three very different women as if you are there. A compelling retelling of ancient legacies, betrayal and the whims of the gods." —Claire North, author of *Ithaca*

Scrivenor, Hayley. [Dirt Creek](#) (\$17.99). During Christmas week 2001, amid a summer so hot that the "edges of the road crumbled," Det. Sgt. Sarah Michaels and her partner, Det. Constable Wayne Smith, investigate the disappearance of

12-year-old Esther Bianchi in the gritty town of Durton. Esther's BFF, Veronica Thompson, may have been the last one to see her after she left school but didn't return home. Or maybe it was their 11-year-old friend, Lewis Kennard, who was bullied at school and telling lies to protect secrets. Progress is stymied with media attention and police support drawn to a high-profile case of missing twins "elsewhere in the state." The cases may be linked and connected to a drug ring. Betrayals, domestic violence, festering family secrets, and fractured friendships delineate clashes among spouses, parents, children, and extended relatives. Scrivenor does a superb job laying out Sarah and Wayne's backgrounds and their working relationship as the well-crafted plot builds to a powerful conclusion.

Vercher, John. [After the Lights Go Out](#) (\$16). "John Vercher writes like a fighter, a dancer, an athlete. The prose is nimble and nothing on the page is wasted. His writing knows when to throw a punch, and, in a novel that explores the intersection of race, class, celebrity, and healthcare, John Vercher leaves it all in the ring. Here is a novelist at the height of his power."—Wiley Cash

Weaver, Ashley. [The Key to Deceit](#) (\$18). Set during the early days of the Battle of Britain, Edgar finalist Weaver's excellent sequel to 2021's [A Peculiar Combination](#) (\$17.99) continues the adventures of Electra "Ellie" McDonnell and her uncle Mick, who have eschewed safe cracking in favor of more legitimate work. When a young woman's body washes up on the banks of the Thames with a bracelet locked to her wrist, Ellie is recruited by Major Ramsey, an impassive and exceedingly handsome British intelligence officer, to remove the bracelet from the corpse's wrist. Together, Ellie and the major soon realize the dead woman was working as a spy for the Germans. Meanwhile, Ellie works with Felix Lacey, a longtime friend and possible romantic partner, to undercover the secrets behind Ellie's mother's decades-old conviction for murder. Weaver does a sensational job of evoking 1940 London and populates the story with endearing characters, none more so than Ellie, who's gutsy, smart, and completely unwilling to be outmaneuvered or left behind when danger presents itself."—*PW* Starred Review. For the new Electra case, see Signed Books.

White, Kate. [Between Two Strangers](#) (Harper \$18.99). See Signed Books for the hardcover edition and review.

## OUR MAY SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Brennan, Allison. [Silenced](#) (\$8.99). Reissue. Lucy Kincaid #4. A number of known prostitutes—with scores of high profile clients—are turning up dead all over D.C., and now Lucy Kincaid's investigation will take her into an underground network of prostitutes, the chambers of the country's most powerful players, and her own dark past.

Castillo, Linda. [The Hidden One](#) (\$9.99). Kate Burkholder #14. When her first love is accused of murdering a beloved Amish bishop 10 years ago, chief of police Kate Burkholder, forced to confront a painful episode from her past, discovers a dark side to the victim, in this complex case that puts her own life in danger.

McMahon, Jennifer. [The Children on the Hill](#) (\$9.99). When Lizzy Shelley, the host of the popular podcast *Monsters Among Us*, arrives in Vermont, where a kidnapping and monster sighting has sent the town into a frenzy, she is determined to hunt it down because it could be her very own sister.

Moriarty, Liane. [Apples Never Fall](#) (\$10.99). The four Delaney children—Amy, Logan, Troy, and Brooke—were tennis stars in their own right, yet as their father will tell you, none of them had what it took to go all the way. But now they are debating whether or not to report their mother is missing because doing so could implicate their father.

Sanders, Angela M. [Witch Upon a Star](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Witch Way Librarian #4. When murder attends the grand reopening of Darla's Café, and her sister receives the killer's chilling calling card, librarian and witch-in-training Josie Way must conjure up the clues with the help of the library's spellbound books to stop a homicidal maniac in his tracks.

Silva, Daniel. [Portrait of an Unknown Woman](#) (\$10.99). Gabriel Allon #22. In this thrilling story of deception in the world of international fine art, restorer and spy Gabriel Allon scours Europe for the secret behind the forgery of a 17th-century masterpiece that has fooled experts and exchanged hands for millions.

Ware, Ruth. [One by One](#) (\$10.99). When an offsite company retreat is upended by an avalanche that strands them in a remote mountain chalet, eight coworkers are forced to set aside their corporate rankings and mutual distrust in order to survive.

#### MAY SMALL PAPERBACKS

Andrews, Donna. [Round Up the Usual Peacocks](#) (\$8.99). Meg Langslow #31. While dealing with wedding plans and demanding out-of-town guests, Meg Langslow must help her nephew when a member of his true-crime podcast has a brush with death by tracking down three relatively local cold cases so she can figure who wants them silenced—forever.

Berry, Tamara. [Murder off the Books](#) (Sourcebooks \$8.99). By the Book #3. When her mother becomes the prime suspect in the murder of her boyfriend Levi Parker, a man recently connected to the deaths of three elderly widows, author Tess Harrow must write a new ending to this story—one where her mother's innocent.

Bokur, Debra. [The Lava Witch](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Dark Paradise #3. As Maui detective Kali Māhoe investigates a bizarre ritual murder near Hawaii's Haleakala Volcano, the hard facts collide with local legends of spirit possession and sorcery.

Coco, Nancy. [Give Fudge a Chance](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Candy-Coated #11. While walking through the Mackinac County fair's haunted house attraction, Allie McMurphy comes across a real body and hunts for clues, but when danger strikes too close to home; Allie finds her case turning into a real rollercoaster and must hold on tight.

Coyle, Cleo. [The Ghost Goes to the Dogs](#) (Penguin \$8.99). Haunted Bookshop #9.

When someone attacks a beloved member of Quindicott's community during Pet Mystery Week, bookshop owner Penelope McClure calls upon resident ghost PI Jack Shepard for help in digging up clues.

Flower, Amanda. [Blueberry Blunder](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Amish Candy Shop #8.

Just in time for the town's big blueberry festival, Bailey King, star of TV's Bailey's Amish Sweets, stumbles upon the dead body of a surly contractor with many enemies and must sift through a

crowd of angry villagers to solve the murder, save her business and protect her Amish friends.

Freeman, Brian. [Robert Ludlum's The Bourne Sacrifice](#) (\$9.99). Bourne #17. Fast on the trail of Lennon, a dangerous and cruelly inventive assassin, Jason Bourne, believing Lennon's employer is the Pyramid, a corrupt conglomerate, draws his ex-lover, reporter Abbey Laurent, into his investigation and must keep her safe when Lennon sets his sights on her.

Jackson, Lisa. [Devious](#) (Kensington \$9.99). Reissue. Bentz and Montoya #7. When her sister, a novice nun named Sister Camille, is found brutally murdered at St. Marguerite's Cathedral in New Orleans, Valerie Houston, becomes convinced that the police aren't doing enough, and investigates the crime herself.

James, Miranda. [What the Cat Dragged in](#) (\$8.99). Cat in the Stacks #14. Librarian Charlie Harris and his faithful feline companion, Diesel, have inherited Charlie's grandfather's house, along with a deadly legacy that includes a decades-old crime scene.

King, Stephen. [Bag of Bones](#) (\$11.99). Reissue. Plagued by vivid nightmares of the summer house he had shared with his late wife, grieving widower Mike Noonan returns to his former Maine getaway, only to find a town in the grip of a ruthless millionaire and tormented by a series of ghostly visitations.

MacNeal, Susan Elia. [Mr. Churchill's Secretary](#) (\$9.99). Reissue. Maggie Hope #1. After German Luftwaffe bomb London, Maggie Hope—trained in math and code breaking, but only able to find a job as Winston Churchill's secretary—uses the unfettered access her position demands to try to unravel a plot to assassinate Churchill himself. Also reissued: [Princess Elizabeth's Spy](#) (\$9.99). Maggie Hope #2. Maggie returns to protect Britain's beloved royals against an international plot—one that could change the course of history.

Martin, Kat. [Against the Law](#) (Mira \$9.99). Reissue. When sexy Lark Delaney comes to “mostly retired” private investigator Dev Raines for help tracking down the baby girl her sister gave away for adoption, the former U.S. Army Ranger gets back in the game

Martin, Kat. [Peril](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Three interconnected romantic thrillers by Martin, Alexander Ivy, and Rebecca Zanetti follow a group of brave men fighting to stop a violent crime spree while protecting the women they love.

Matthews, Olivia. [Hard Dough Homicide](#) (St Martin's \$8.99). Spice Island #2.

When local high school principal Emily Smith dies during her retirement dinner, which was catered by Spice Isle Bakery, owner Lyndsay Murray, to save her business, finds herself investigating yet another crime.

Smith, Karen Rose. [Murder with Earl Grey Tea](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Daisy's Tea Garden #9. Stumbling upon the victim of an apparent hit and run while on a hike, tea shop owner Daisy Swanson becomes steeped in a murder investigation where she must follow a twisted trail of clues to uncover what drove someone to murder.

Woods, Stuart. [Black Dog](#) (\$9.99). Stone Barrington #62. Introduced to a glamorous Manhattan socialite, Stone Barrington discovers his new companion has ties to a nefarious enemy who will stop at nothing to get what he wants.