

BOOKNEWS from

ISSN 1056-5655, © The Poisoned Pen, Ltd.
Volume 36, Number 3
March Booknews 2024
sales@poisonedpen.com tel (888)560-9919
http://poisonedpen.com

4014 N. Goldwater Blvd.
Scottsdale, AZ 85251
480-947-2974



APRIL... Is Poetry Month

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.

Note that we have opened a [YouTube channel just for John Charles'](#) many author interviews, most of which do not appear in our regular calendar but are supplemental and varied. Watch at your leisure.

THURSDAY APRIL 4 7:00 PM Live

Gary Phillips discusses [Ash Dark as Night](#) (Soho \$27.95)

SATURDAY APRIL 6 2:00 PM Live Tea

Kristen Ashley discusses [Avenging Angel](#) (Rock Chick LLC \$23.99)

Karen Rose discusses [Cheater](#) (Penguin \$28)

MONDAY APRIL 8 7:00 PM Live

Don Winslow discusses [City in Ruins](#) (Harper \$29.99)
Our copies come with a super cool exclusive: three chips glued to a 5x7 card inserted into a clear plastic sleeve, one chip for each of the three books in the City trilogy, stamped with the title of each and in a different color each

TUESDAY APRIL 9 all day (see April 17)

John Sandford's [Toxic Prey](#) (Penguin \$32 SIGNED by John) goes on sale

John will be back for a live event on April 17

TUESDAY APRIL 9 5:00 PM

David Baldacci discusses [A Calamity of Souls](#) (Grand Central \$30)

Copies signed for us by David on sale April 16

TUESDAY APRIL 9 7:00 PM Live

Libby Fischer Hellman discusses [Max's War: The Story of a Ritchie Boy](#) (EF Hellman \$23)

A WWII story

THURSDAY APRIL 11 6:30 PM

This ticketed event with Holly Jackson is sold out

You can request a Signed copy however of [The Reappearance of Rachel Price](#) (Random \$20.99)

SUNDAY APRIL 14 2:00 PM Live

Betty Webb discusses [The Clock Struck Murder](#) (Poisoned Pen \$16.99)

1924 Paris, host of the Summer Olympics

MONDAY APRIL 15 5:00 PM

KT Nguyen discusses [You Know What You Did](#) (Dutton \$28)
Our First Mystery Book of the Month
Signed books available

MONDAY APRIL 15 7:00 PM Live

SJ Rozan discusses [The Murder of Mr. Ma](#) (Soho \$25.95)
Our April Historical Mystery Book of the Month

TUESDAY APRIL 16 1:00 PM

Karen E. Olson discusses [An Inconvenient Wife: A Modern Tudor Mystery](#) (Pegasus \$27)
Signed books available

TUESDAY APRIL 16 3:00 PM

CS Harris discusses [What Cannot Be Said](#) (Berkley \$28)
Sebastian St. Cyr Regency Mystery
Signed books available

WEDNESDAY APRIL 17 7:00 PM Live

John Sandford discusses [Toxic Prey](#) (Penguin \$32)
Lucas and Letty Davenport

THURSDAY APRIL 18 7:00 PM Live

UK's Clare Mackintosh discusses [Game of Lies](#) (Sourcebooks \$27.99)
A reality TV show goes off the rails in rural Wales

FRIDAY APRIL 19 7:00 PM

SciFi Friday discusses Rebecca Yarros' [Fourth Wing](#) (\$29.99)

SATURDAY APRIL 20 10:30 AM

Croak & Dagger discusses William Martin's [December '41](#) (\$19.99)

SATURDAY APRIL 20 1:00 PM Live

Megan Miranda discusses [Daughter of Mine](#) (Simon & Schuster \$28)

For fans of Lisa Unger and Mary Kubica

SUNDAY APRIL 21 2:00 PM Live Book Launch
Anne Hillerman discusses [Lost Birds](#) (Harper \$29.99)

MONDAY APRIL 22 6:30 PM Live Book Launch
James Rollins hosts **Douglas Preston**
Preston discusses [Extinction](#) (Tor \$29.99)
Our copies come with a cool and exclusive set of trading cards

WEDNESDAY APRIL 24 7:00 PM Live
Robert Dugoni discusses [A Killing on the Hill](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$28.99/\$16.99)
Seattle 1933 hardboiled crime with reporter William Schumacher

THURSDAY APRIL 25 7:00 PM
Hardboiled Crime discusses Gil Brewer's [Satan Is a Woman/13 French Street](#) (\$19.99)

SATURDAY APRIL 27 all day
Independent Bookstore Day
A special sale all day in store

SATURDAY APRIL 27 11:00 AM
The Cookbook Club discusses Christopher Kimball's [Milk Street: Cook What You Have](#) (\$35)
Bring a dish from it to share

THURSDAY MAY 2 7:00 PM Live
Will Thomas discusses [Death and Glory](#) (St Martins \$28)
Victorian sleuths Barker & Llewellyn

SUNDAY MAY 5 2:00 PM Live
Cozy Con with John and Six Authors
Colleen Cambridge. [Murder Most French](#) (Kensington \$27)
Amanda Flower. [To Slip the Bonds of Earth](#) (Kensington \$27)
Nicholas George. [Deadly Walk in Devon](#) (Kensington \$27)
Erica Ruth Neubauer. [Secrets of a Scottish Isle](#) (Kensington \$27)
Sheila Roberts. [The Best Life Book Club](#) (Mira \$18.99)
Paige Shelton. [Poison Pen](#) (St Martins \$27)

OUR APRIL BOOKS OF THE MONTH

We select a book and charge it to you. Free shipping to US Customers. It's a treat each month, for you or as a gift.
Email Karen@poisonedpen.com to join

British Crime Club One Unsigned hardcover or paperback per month
Horowitz, Anthony. [Close to Death](#)

Cozy Crimes Club One Unsigned hardcover or paperback per month
Mack, Catherine. [Every Time I Go on Vacation, Someone Dies](#)

The Crime Collectors Book of the Month Club One Signed First Printing per month
Baldacci, David. [A Calamity of Souls](#)

First Mystery Club One Signed First Printing per month
Nguyen, K T. [You Know What You Did](#)

Hardboiled/Noir Club One Signed First Printing per month
Phillips, Gary. [Ash Dark as Night](#)

History/Mystery Club One First Printing per month
Rozan, SJ. [The Murder of Mr. Ma](#)

Historical Fiction Paperback Club One Unsigned paperback per month
Hellmann, Libby Fischer. [Max's War: The Story of a Ritchie Boy](#)

Notable New Fiction One Signed First Printing per month
Carson, Scott. [Lost Man's Lane](#)

Romance and Relationships One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month
Henry, Emily. [Funny Story](#)

SIGNED BOOKS FOR APRIL

Baldacci, David. [A Calamity of Souls](#) (Grand Central \$30). We haven't selected a courtroom drama for ages for the **Crime Collectors** Club and here is one, arguably lawyer Baldacci's most important work and ten years in the making, that aligns with *To Kill a Mockingbird* and John Grisham, especially *A Time to Kill*, in the way it underscores the racial divide of 1968 (I won't comment on whether race remains a hot issue today). **So here is our April selection.** It is set in a tumultuous year in southern Virginia, where a murder case sets a duo of white and Black lawyers against a deeply unfair system as they work to defend their wrongfully-accused Black defendants. Young Jack Lee is a Freeman County lawyer. He's White and he is asked to defend Black war veteran Jerome Washington who is accused of murdering an elderly White couple. This novel is not the trademark Baldacci high action thriller; rather it focuses on well developed characters and issues relatable to today that were experienced in his own childhood, and mine.

Cambridge, Colleen. [A Murder Most French](#) (Kensington \$27). **Signed May 5.** Julia Child returns in Cambridge's sprightly second cozy featuring the legendary chef who once again asks her American expat neighbor, Tabitha Knight, to help solve a mystery—this time, a series of wine-based slayings in 1950s Paris. During a cooking demonstration at L'École du Cordon Bleu, where Julia studies French cuisine, a famous chef dies after taking a sip of Volnay Clos de la Rouge from the rare 1893 vintage. Toxicology reports indicate that cyanide is the culprit—but who would add poison to such a precious wine? When a string of other figures in the Parisian culinary scene also die from poisoned vino, Julia taps Tabitha to flex her formidable powers of deduction, decipher clues, and risk her life and limb to ferret out the culprit.

Carson, Scott. [Lost Man's Lane](#) (Atria \$28.99). Michael Koryta, writing as Carson, evokes the best of Stephen King in this exceptional coming-of-age tale about a young man confronting the supernatural menace that's taken root in his hometown, 1999 Bloomington, Indiana. This is so brilliant it is our **April Notable New Fiction Book of the Month.** While the menace is truly creepy, the story of the boy, of all the teens in fact, is the kind that powers a Great American Novel. Koryta, who began writing when he was like 21 and is only 41 now, captures the inner thoughts and outward actions of 16-year-old Marshall Miller so vividly it can send you down memory lane yourself. Here's an example: a confident Marshall goes for his driver's license test on February 11. And he thinks... let's all admit that our heart rates picked up at the phrase 'parallel parking' when we were sixteen. Even today I still remember a driver's license was a ticket to freedom and adult mobility we teens strove for. He also threads in his own early years as an aspiring author and his job as a young private investigator. So there's something autobiographical here for the multi-award winning Koryta, one of our most frequent guest hosts and an early Poisoned Pen writer in residence. Don't miss this conversation... or the book which is also suitable for young adults who may find themselves mirrored in the characters... minus facing the deadly menace...

Dugoni, Robert. [A Killing on the Hill](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$28.99/\$16.99). The Great Depression. High-level corruption. And a murder that's about to become Seattle's hottest mystery. It's the kind of story that can make a reporter's career. If

he lives to write about it. 1933. The city is in the grips of the Great Depression, Prohibition, and vice. Cutting his teeth on a small-time beat, hungry and ambitious young reporter William "Shoe" Shumacher gets a tip that could change his career. There's been a murder at a social club on Profanity Hill—an underworld magnet for vice crimes only a privileged few can afford. The story is going to be front-page news, and Shoe is the first reporter on the scene. The victim, Frankie Ray, is a former prizefighter. His accused killer? Club owner and mobster George Miller, who claims he pulled the trigger in self-defense. Soon the whole town's talking, and Shoe's first homicide is fast becoming the Trial of the Century. The more Shoe digs, the more he's convinced nothing is as it seems. Not with a tangle of conflicting stories, an unlikely motive, and witnesses like Ray's girlfriend, a glamour girl whose pretty lips are sealed. For now. In a city steeped in Old West debauchery, Shoe is following every lead to a very dangerous place.

Enger, Leif. [I Cheerfully Refuse](#) (Grove \$27). **Tip ins.** The story unfolds in a near-future America where the billionaire class has complete control and reading has been abandoned. Even so, narrator Rainy and his wife, Lark, have found happiness in a small town on the shores of Lake Superior. Their idyll ends with the arrival of a fugitive from a billionaire's work camp. After Lark is murdered by Kellan's pursuers, Rainy leaves his home in a small sailboat, both to escape the killers and in the hope that he'll find Lark's spirit among the islands where they fell in love. He weathers violent storms while sailing to various lakeside towns, where outsiders are easy targets for extortion and robbery. In a desperate world where kindness is a luxury, a few people are willing to help him.... The Indie Next Pick: "Haunting yet hopeful, this futuristic tale will hit close to home with its honesty and pertinent observation of what it is to be human."

Flower, Amanda. [To Slip the Bonds of Earth](#) (Kensington \$27). **Signed May 5.** December 1903: While Wilbur and Orville Wright's flying machine is quite literally taking off in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina with its historic 57 second flight, their sister Katharine is back home in Dayton, Ohio, running the bicycle shop, teaching Latin, and looking after the family. Returned home, Wilbur and Orville accept an invitation to a friend's party. Nervous about leaving their as-yet-unpatented flyer plans unattended, Wilbur decides to bring them to the festivities . . . where they are stolen right out from under his nose. As always, it's Katharine's job to problem solve—and in this case, crime-solve.

✦ George, Nicholas. [Deadly Walk in Devon](#) (Kensington \$27). **Signed May 5.** After a long career as a detective in San Diego, Rick "Chase" Chasen has traded in his badge for a change of scenery in the coastal comforts of Devon, England, until his historic sightseeing is interrupted by the deadly fall off a cliff by wealthy and obnoxious Ronald Getz. Chase, whose investigative instincts remain sharp, knows Getz's death was no accident. While helping the police investigate, he discovers that members of the tour group all had motives to murder Getz.

✦ Griffiths, Elly. [The Last Word](#) (Quercus UK \$44). Nataalka and Edwin, whom we met in the Edgar-winning [The Postscript Murders](#) (\$16.99), are running a detective agency in Shoreham, Sussex. Despite a steady stream of minor cases, Nataalka is frustrated, longing for a big juicy case such as murder to come

the agency's way. Nataalka is now living with dreamer, Benedict. But her Ukrainian mother Valentyna has joined them from her war-torn country and three's a crowd. It's annoying to have Valentyna in the tiny flat, cooking borscht and cleaning things that are already clean. To add to Nataalka's irritation, Benedict and her mother get on brilliantly. Then a murder case turns up. Local writer, Melody Chambers, is found dead and her family is convinced it is murder. Edwin, a big fan of the obit pages, thinks there's a link to the writer of Melody's obituary who predeceased his subject. The trail leads Benedict and Edwin to a slightly sinister writers' retreat. When another writer is found dead, Edwin thinks that the clue lies in the words. Seeking professional help, the amateur investigators turn to their friend, detective Harbinder Kaur, rapidly becoming one of my very favorite sleuths; this fabulous Kaur series is in the spirit of Agatha Christie, Anthony Horowitz, and Richard Osman.

The US edition will be out later in April: [The Last Word](#) (Harper \$27.99)

✦ Harris, CS. [What Cannot Be Said](#) (Berkley \$28). Yay, a new chapter in an always brilliant Regency series, a personal delight. July 1815: The Prince Regent's grandiose plans to celebrate Napoléon's recent defeat at Waterloo are thrown into turmoil when Lady McInnis and her daughter Emma are found brutally murdered in Richmond Park, their bodies posed in a chilling imitation of the stone effigies once found atop medieval tombs. Bow Street magistrate Sir Henry Lovejoy immediately turns to his friend Sebastian St. Cyr, Viscount Devlin, for help with the investigation. For as Devlin discovers, Lovejoy's own wife and daughter were also murdered in Richmond Park, their bodies posed in the same bizarre postures. A traumatized ex-soldier was hanged for their killings. So is London now confronting a malicious copyist? Or did Lovejoy help send an innocent man to the gallows? I cannot recommend strongly enough you immerse yourselves in this brilliant and gorgeously written [Regency era series](#) – it is not a cozy.

Hellmann, Libby Fischer. [Max's War: The Story of a Ritchie Boy](#) (EF Hellman \$21.99). As the Nazis sweep across Europe, Jewish teen Max and his parents flee German persecution to Holland, where Max finds friends and romance. But when Hitler invades in 1940, Max escapes to Chicago, leaving his parents and friends behind. When he learns of his parents' deportation, Max immediately enlists in the US Army. After basic training he is sent to Camp Ritchie, Maryland, where he is trained in interrogation and counterintelligence. Deployed to the OSS, Max carries out dangerous missions in Occupied countries. Post-war he works for the Americans in the German deNazification program, bringing him back to his Bavarian childhood home of Regensburg. Though the city avoided large-scale destruction, the Jewish community was decimated. I like the focus both on the 1930s and the immediate aftermath of the war. This unusual historical fiction is our **April Historical Paperback Book of the Month**.

Hillerman, Anne. [Lost Birds](#) (Harper \$29.99). Joe Leaphorn may be long retired from the Navajo Tribal Police, but his detective skills are still sharp, honed by his work as a private detective. His experience will be essential to solve a compelling new case: finding the birth parents of a woman who was raised by a bilagáana family but believes she is Diné based on one solid clue, an old photograph with a classic Navajo child's blanket. Leaphorn discovers that his client's adoption was questionable,

and her adoptive family not what they seem. His quest for answers takes him to an old trading post and leads him to a deadly cache of long-buried family secrets. When a call ends in an explosion Bernie Manuelito is called in....

Jackson, Holly. [The Reappearance of Rachel Price](#) (Random \$20.99). Eighteen-year-old Bel has lived her whole life in the shadow of her mom's mysterious disappearance. Sixteen years ago, Rachel Price vanished and young Bel was the only witness, but she has no memory of it. Rachel is gone, long presumed dead, and Bel wishes everyone would just move on. But the case is dredged up from the past when the Price family agrees to a true crime documentary. Bel can't wait for filming to end, for life to go back to normal. And then the impossible happens. Rachel Price reappears, and life will never be normal again.

Kubica, Mary. [She's Not Sorry](#) (Park Row \$29.99). Recently divorced ICU nurse Meghan Michaels is trying to find balance between being a single mom to a teenage daughter and working a full shift. While on duty at the hospital one day, a patient named Caitlin arrives in a coma with a traumatic brain injury. She's apparently jumped from a bridge to fall twenty feet to the train tracks below. Meghan is assigned this patient whose care is closely monitored. Caitlin's grieving parents stand by. Gradually their conversations and that of a witness to the fall coming forward begin to shift the picture as ethical and moral issues spiral. "Complete with a clinically creepy hospital setting and an entire cast of characters you cannot trust, every page is steeped in a sense of deep, debilitating dread. This book gave me whiplash with the sheer number of twists." —Stacy Willingham.

Larson, Erik. [Demon of Unrest](#) (Crown \$35). **Tip ins.** Larson brings to life the pivotal five months between the election of Abraham Lincoln and the start of the Civil War—a slow-burning crisis that finally tore a deeply divided nation in two.

✦ Mackintosh, Clare. [Game of Lies](#) (Sourcebooks \$27.99). Stranded in the Welsh mountains, seven reality show contestants have no idea what they've signed up for. Each of these strangers has a secret. If another player can guess the truth, they won't just be eliminated—they'll be exposed live on air. The stakes are higher than they'd ever imagined, and they're trapped. The disappearance of a contestant wasn't supposed to be part of the drama. Detective Ffion Morgan has to put aside what she's watched on screen, and find out who these people really are—knowing she can't trust any of them. And when a murderer strikes, Ffion knows every one of her suspects has an alibi.... It's a treat to read British Crime set in Wales which is small but amazing in its geology, geography, history, and culture.... The language is having something of a rebirth. I have spent many happy days travelling in Wales. Those who miss Rhys Bowen's Constable Evans series can immerse themselves in Mackintosh although Ffion's investigations are not in the cozy genre.

✦ Marston, Edward. [Murder in Transit](#) (Allison & Busby \$45). 1866. On a train bound for Portsmouth, an elegant woman shares a first-class compartment with a gentleman in a celebratory mood. Giles Blanchard reveals his lecherous side as the journey gets underway, but he will never reach his home on the Isle of Wight alive. This chance encounter is to prove fortuitous for the woman and her partner-in-crime. They find themselves not only the richer for picking the dead man's pocket, they also now possess the material for an extremely lucrative blackmail. Detective

Inspector Colbeck and Sergeant Leeming are swiftly dispatched to sift through the evidence. They are all too aware that with Her Majesty Queen Victoria spending the summer on the island, a speedy resolution to the case is a priority

Miranda, Megan. [Daughter of Mine](#) (Simon & Schuster \$28). When Hazel Sharp, daughter of Mirror Lake's longtime local detective, unexpectedly inherits her childhood home, she's warily drawn back to the town—and people—she left behind almost a decade earlier. But Hazel's not the only relic of the past to return: a drought has descended on the region, and as the water level in the lake drops, long-hidden secrets begin to emerge...including evidence that may help finally explain the mystery of her mother's disappearance. "Miranda, a consummate professional when it comes to exposing the small community tensions that naturally arise when people live in close proximity for generations, exposes revelation after twisty revelation... Small-town claustrophobia and intimacies alike propel this twist-filled psychological thriller." —*Kirkus* Starred Review

Neubauer, Erica Ruth. [Secrets of a Scottish Isle](#) (Kensington \$27). **Signed May 5.** Isle of Iona, 1927: Cast away on a remote locale, Jane Wunderly's latest is a wild adventure on a Scottish island that includes a mysterious cult and a murder. Her assignment to vet Robert Nightingale, a cult leader who's proposed himself to the British government as a possible agent, depends on concealing her identity and blending in at an occult gathering. Posing as a new initiate to the Order of the Golden Dawn, Jane soon decides that Nightingale would make a terrible spy. Instead, she takes more time to investigate the cult and its followers, which include several women and the Irish poet William Butler Yeats. Not even her fiancé, Redvers, can be too close as Golden Dawn begins to split into two rival factions, and information comes in from the nearby Isle of Mull.... This entertaining series focuses on intriguing landscapes and of what traveling the world in the 1920s may have been like. Start at the beginning in Egypt and carry on through the English countryside, an Atlantic crossing, and then Istanbul by [clicking here to order](#).

Nguyen, K T. [You Know What You Did](#) (Dutton \$28). Annie "Anh Le" Shaw grew up poor, but seems to have it all now: a dream career, a stunning home, and a devoted husband and daughter. When Annie's mother, a Vietnam War refugee, dies suddenly one night, Annie's carefully curated life begins to unravel. Her obsessive-compulsive disorder, which she thought she'd vanquished years ago, comes roaring back—but this time, the disturbing fixations swirling around in Annie's brain might actually be coming true. A prominent art patron disappears, and the investigation zeroes in on Annie. Spiraling with self-doubt, she distances herself from her family and friends, only to wake up in a hotel room—naked, next to a lifeless body.... all adding up to our **April First Mystery Book of the Month**.

Olson, Karen E. [An Inconvenient Wife: A Modern Tudor Mystery](#) (Pegasus \$27). By moving the story of Henry VIII to the present, Olson performs magic, delivering a compulsively readable broken-marriage thriller with tons of twists and the beating heart of a historical. Intricately plotted, completely gripping and utterly original—and for me, and for you historical fiction fans, it's a fabulous test of what you know about the Tudors and the tumultuous reign of Henry VIII. I found it a truly captivating and often startling 'what if' adventure, both eerily familiar and

entirely unknown that "brilliantly captures the psychological terror of the Tudor period, translating it into a vivid twenty-first century world. It is clever, captivating and oh-so-difficult to put down; the mystery deepens with every turn of the page. The book combines all the feminist fire of *SIX* with the dark familiar murder-mystery of *Knives Out*." It begins when Kate Parker (think Henry's 6th wife Katherine Parr—even the modern names are splendid riffs), who has just married billionaire Hank Tudor when a headless body is discovered near their summer home.... If we can get enough signed copies this may well be the unconventional May Historical Fiction Book of the Month to remind us that the past is never gone away.

Patterson, James. [The Secret Lives of Booksellers and Librarians](#) (Little Brown \$28). **Signed Bookplates.** Patterson continues his support of independent bookstores and all librarians with a new cash award program and also this book which contains essays from various booksellers and librarians. So timely when many are working under siege. In a digital age book bans are even more pointless as their history over the centuries shows. There is a [worthwhile article](#) about this project I recommend you read.

Phillips, Gary. [Ash Dark as Night](#) (Soho \$27.95). Patrick reviews the **April Hardboiled/Noir Club Pick**: "Los Angeles, August 1965: Vietnam is heating up, the civil rights movement is gaining momentum, but tensions between the police and the Black community have reached a boiling point. Phillips takes us down into the streets as the Watts Riots erupt. Photographer Harry (aka "One-Shot Harry") Ingram is on the scene and manages to capture the police shooting of unarmed activist Faraday Zinum. The police tackle Ingram and attempt to destroy his camera, but the plate with the damning photo is rescued by his girlfriend. The image goes viral (in today's parlance) and brings the photographer newfound fame (as well as increased scrutiny by the LAPD). Meanwhile, Ingram has been hired to look into the disappearance of a local businessman who vanished during the riots, hinting at a new direction in the series going forward. I've been a huge fan of Phillips' work for nearly 30 years and I really feel that all of his strengths converge in this series: an encyclopedic knowledge of LA social history, compassion for the marginalized, an affinity for the absurd, a great ear for dialogue, and a singular ability to blend it all into a kick ass story."

Preston, Douglas. [Extinction](#) (Tor \$29.99). **Our copies come with an exclusive set of trading cards created for this pulse-pounding thriller.** The April Library Reads Pick: "When newlyweds are attacked at Erebus Resort, investigator Frankie Cash and Sheriff Colcord team up to find the killers. There is more going on than meets the eye as the killers carry out more blatant attacks at this unique location featuring resurrected dinosaur species, including a family of woolly mammoths. An interesting concept with loads of science." In fact, the science of possibly recreating a mammoth is very much in play today.

Our guest host for the book launch, James Rollins, adds, "Preston's latest thriller, *Extinction*, is *Jurassic Park* for the Pleistocene Era—and that's no exaggeration. It's got everything I love: fantastic creatures, wild adventures, and dynamic heroes. But most frightening of all, it shines a disturbing light on where the science of genetic engineering might be venturing next. Read at your own risk!"—James Rollins who joins Doug on April 22 for our book launch. FYI we are already at nearly 2000 preorders so get yours in for a thriller *PW* says "is the equal of or outdoes

the finest Michael Crichton.” Truly Doug is one of the most versatile of authors and his deep background in writing science and nonfiction is the perfect basis for this much anticipated book.

Rollins has two epic fantasy thrillers out so far in his Moonfall series: [The Starless Crown](#) (\$19.99) and [The Cradle of Ice](#) (\$19.99). His 18th Sigma Force Thriller [Arkangel](#) (Harper \$29.99) debuts here on August 5. It’s not too early to preorder yours. We will have second 2nd prints of [Tides of Fire](#) (\$29.99), the 2023 Sigma Force, on hand too.

Reich, Christopher. [Matterhorn](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$28.99). I am a forever fans of the international thrillers, often involving banking and/or spying, by Reich. He writes to me from Switzerland where he is researching his next novel that he will sign this one for you when he returns home.

Here is non-stop, high Alpine action. Writing a review for *LJ*, Jeff Ayers says “This would make a great movie and fans of the Bond tales and special-ops action novels should add this to their reading lists. The death of a spy in the Alps leads Mac Dekker, a former CIA agent, to resurrect himself and hunt down the culprits. Dekker was presumed dead and had been living undercover in a small Alpine town, but he won’t hide any longer when he learns that his son, also a spy, has died. The person responsible, Ilya Ivashka, was once someone Mac considered a brother, before Ilya defected to the enemy. After Mac makes his presence known, Ilya and other enemies will stop at nothing to put him in the ground for good. Even the people who loved Mac before he had to fake his death are not happy to learn that he has been alive all this time. The pace is relentless, and the spycraft is in full gear as Mac tries to get justice for his son and himself.”

Reichl, Ruth. [The Paris Novel](#) (Random \$29). **Tip ins.** A dazzling, heartfelt adventure through the food, art, and fashion scenes of 1980s Paris. When her estranged mother dies, Stella is left with an unusual inheritance: a one-way plane ticket and a note reading “Go to Paris.” Stella is hardly cut out for adventure; a traumatic childhood has kept her confined to the strict routines of her comfort zone. But when her boss encourages her to take time off, Stella resigns herself to honoring her mother’s last wishes. As it turns out, adventures are hers. She ends up living as a “tumbleweed” at famed bookstore Shakespeare & Company, uncovers a hundred-year-old mystery in a Manet painting, and discovers a passion for food that may be connected to her past. I’ve always thought Reichl, food writer and editor of the late much lamented *Gourmet*, was also a delicious novelist.

Rose, Geneva. [Home Is Where the Bodies Are](#) (Blackstone \$27.99). Answers are hard to come by in this twisting tale designed to trick and delight. Ashley Winstead sums it up as “a master thriller writer’s deliciously f*cked-up answer to *The Inheritance Games*, pitting three flawed siblings against one another when they return to rural Allen’s Grove, Wisconsin, in the wake of their mother’s death and shocking will. Only, in true Geneva Rose fashion, there’s a devious, life-changing twist: Mom and Dad may have committed murder, and the family inheritance is actually a legacy of violence that threatens to ensnare the siblings for good. Sharp writing, a breakneck pace, and a surprisingly tender heart make this story of familial loyalty, grief, and murder impossible to put down.”

Library Reads picks it: “When three estranged siblings reunite after the death of their mother, things are bound to be tense. As they decide to revisit their childhood with a few home

videos, the last thing they’d expect to see is their father carrying a dead body. But there’s no denying the evidence. Readers looking for complex family dynamics and hidden secrets will devour this one.”

Rose, Karen. [Cheater](#) (Penguin \$28). Death is not an unfamiliar visitor to Shady Oaks Retirement Village, which provides San Diego with premier elderly support from independent retiree housing to full-time hospice care. But when a resident’s body is found brutally stabbed and his apartment ransacked, it’s clear there’s someone deadly in their community. Detective Kit McKittrick quickly discovers that Shady Oaks is full of skeleton-riddled closets, and most tenants prefer to keep their doors firmly closed to the SDPD.

✦ Rozan, SJ. [The Murder of Mr. Ma](#) (Soho \$25.95). Our **April Historical Mystery Book of the Month** will delight fans of Sherlock Holmes (and Laurie R. King and Will Thomas). Two unlikely allies race through the cobbled streets of 1924 London in search of a killer targeting Chinese immigrants. When shy academic Lao She meets larger-than-life Judge Dee Ren Jie, his quiet life abruptly turns from books and lectures to daring chases and narrow escapes. Dee has come to London to investigate the murder of a man he’d known during World War I when serving with the Chinese Labour Corps. No sooner has Dee interviewed the grieving widow than another dead body turns up. Then another. All stabbed to death with a butterfly sword. Will Dee and Lao be able to connect the threads of the murders—or are they next in line as victims? Blending traditional gong’an crime fiction with the most iconic aspects of the Sherlock Holmes canon, Dee and Lao’s first adventure is as thrilling and visual as an action film. Rozan, author of my much loved Lydia Chen and Bill Smith mysteries, allies with John Shen Yen Nee to start a series. Yay!

Sandford, John. [Toxic Prey](#) (Penguin \$32). John signs his book here early for publication day April 9 sale, but he returns to joins us live on April 17. Funny story....

Lucas Davenport and his daughter, Letty, team up to track down a dangerous scientist whose latest project could endanger the entire world—at least that is what Dr. Lionel Scott believes. A renowned expert in tropical and infectious diseases, Scott has witnessed the devastating impact of illness and turmoil at critical scale. When Scott then disappears without a trace, Letty Davenport is tasked with tracking down any and all leads. Scott’s connections to sensitive research into virus and pathogen spread has multiple national and international organizations on high alert, and his shockingly high clearance levels at various institutions, including the Los Alamos National Laboratory, make him the last person they’d like to go missing. As the web around Scott becomes more tangled, Letty calls in her father, Lucas, help her lead a group of specialists to find Scott as soon as possible. But as Letty and Lucas begin to uncover startling and disturbing connections between Scott and conspiracists, their worst fears are confirmed....

Shelton, Paige. [Poison Pen](#) (St Martins \$27). Love the title for this new Scottish Bookshop cozy. Wonder how Paige came up with it? She will sign copies for April on sale and then will join our Cozy Con on May 5.

Several weeks after the death of Queen Elizabeth II, Delaney Nichols is still feeling sad, but an unexpectedly diverting adventure begins when her boss, Edwin MacAlister—owner of

the Cracked Spine bookstore in Edinburgh—asks her to research a rare and valuable object that an old friend recently discovered on her property. When Delaney’s friend Elias drives her to the estate of Jolie Lannister, a large gothic mansion reminiscent of horror films, she’s shocked by the clutter inside. Jolie’s lawyer, Bowie Berry, is there with an auctioneer she hired on her own initiative to inventory the house and possibly sell some of the contents. The object in question, which Jolie has kept hidden in a garden shed, seems to be a medieval Crusader sword covered in grime and rust. Near it they find the body of auction house assistant Alban Dunning, killed with a garden rake. Delaney texts Inspector Winters, the friend she’s worked with on several murder cases, and soon her expertise and desire to help Jolie have her deeply involved.

✂ Thomas, Will. [Death and Glory](#) (St Martins \$28). **Signed May 2.** In 1894, Cyrus Barker, London’s premier enquiry agent, receives an American delegation. Its Civil War may have ended nearly 30 years ago, but that doesn’t deter four officers from the Confederate army—General James Woodson, Brigadier David St. Ives, Colonel Zebedee Beaufort, and Captain Manuel Cortes—from leaving the far-flung places in Latin America where they’ve been soldiering on to ask Cyrus Barker and Thomas Llewelyn to wangle them an audience with Prime Minister Lord Rosebery. Granted 15 minutes, they waste no time in demanding that England fulfill an 1865 treaty that promised to deliver the Confederacy an ironclad warship. “Things can’t possibly go well for the Crown whether it grants or denies the request, since the nation will either be breaking faith with its most hallowed diplomatic practices or ratifying the Confederacy as a going concern in 1894. Barker and Llewelyn can’t ignore the genie they’ve helped escape from the bottle, and follow up hints that link the treaty to both the recent murder of former U.S. Senator turned Confederate diplomat Jubal Slidell, the last survivor of the real-life seizure of two Confederate officers from *HMS Trent* during the war, and two wildly unlikely historical figures who are supposed to have died long ago.”

The ever snarky *Kirkus Reviews* adds, “Nothing that follows lives up to Thomas’ extravagant premise, but then nothing could.” Personally I love extravagant premises—what could possibly be more extravagant than events unfolding now here in the US, and everywhere else, every day?

Tintera, Amy. [Listen for the Lie](#) (Celdadon \$26.99). As I predicted in March, this has indeed become a big seller. By working with a friendly publicist I was able to score a carton of copies Signed for us by Tintera in NY. You debut novel fans should move quickly to grab one.

The premise: Five years ago, in Plumpton, Texas, Lucy Chase murdered her best friend, Savvy. Lucy, suffering from a head injury, was found covered in Savvy’s blood. Although Lucy can’t remember what happened, that hasn’t stopped just about everyone she knows from deciding she’s a murderer. When a hit true crime podcast launches a new investigation into Savvy’s case, Lucy is pulled back into the bloody limelight. Now she must return home to find out what went down that night, even if that means revealing herself as the killer. Tintera’s dynamic narrative jumps between Lucy’s whip-smart first-person narration and transcripts from the true crime podcast, creating a thrilling investigation that unfolds in real time. Stephen King calls this a “world-class whodunit.”

Webb, Betty. [The Clock Struck Murder](#) (Poisoned Pen \$16.99). In 1924 Paris, Zoe is hard up for money, and still hoping Pinkerton operatives back in the States will locate her missing daughter. After her favorite porcelain clock breaks, her search for a replacement leads to a flea market in Montparnasse, where she buys a new clock from vendor Laurette Belcoeur, only to find, when she gets home, that it’s been wrapped in a painting by Marc Chagall. Baffled by the artwork’s shabby treatment and convinced that Laurette must not have known what it was, Zoe returns to Montparnasse to track down the vendor. After much poking around, she discovers Laurette bludgeoned to death in this sequel to [Lost in Paris](#) (\$16.99).

Winslow, Don. [City in Ruins](#) (Harper \$29.9932). **Our copies come with a super cool exclusive: three chips glued to a 5x7 card inserted into a clear plastic sleeve, one chip for each of the three books in the City trilogy, stamped with the title of each and in a different color each.**

“Winslow concludes his Danny Ryan trilogy—and his career as a novelist—with an addictive finale that charts the Rhode Island mobster turned Las Vegas casino mogul’s turbulent business dealings and deadly feuds. In 1997, Ryan has relocated from California to Sin City, using millions of dollars of stolen cartel money to buy his way into the thriving Tara Group corporation. As director of hotel operations, Ryan owns two leading properties on the Strip, with ambitions to build a third: his elegant dream hotel, Il Sogno. When Ryan’s chief rival, Vernon Winegard, bids on a crumbling 1950s relic in a prime location for Il Sogno, Ryan slyly undermines the sale, blocking Vernon’s plans to dominate the Strip. Retaliatory moves from Vernon, together with FBI subdirector Regina Moneta’s relentless efforts to get revenge on Ryan for his role in the death of her lover 10 years earlier, soon demolish his hotelier dreams and turn his days into a gory fight for survival. Bolstered by careful plotting and meticulous attention to character, Winslow’s ambitious narrative culminates with an exhilarating climax that beautifully wraps up the series’ many plot threads. It’s a fitting swan song from a giant of crime fiction.”—*PW* Starred Review

APRIL IS POETRY MONTH

We have a very small selection on our shelves. In May Scribner is launching 3 volumes in a new poetry program I will list. Meanwhile I draw one amazing book to your attention:

Matecki, Jenna. [The Hours Before Dusk](#) (Parea Books \$25 softcover). Since 2005, Jenna Matecki has chronicled the moments of her life in the form of poems, short stories, and letters. Her work as a sustainability strategist and journalist has taken her to over 25 cities across four continents, where she puts words to the familiar feelings of nostalgia, curiosity, turning strangers into friends, and falling in love: for a moment, with a feeling, with a place, with the right person at the perfect time. Enjoy this hybrid narrative that is a joy to experience, the more so as it is studded with colorful drawings. Recommended as a Mother’s Day surprise gift.

CLASSICS

Fleming, Ian. [You Only Live Twice: A James Bond Novel](#) (Harper \$18.99). In case your Bond reading needs refreshing, or you’ve only seen the films, here’s a reissue. Vivian Lestrage—celebrated author of the popular mystery novel *The Charterhouse Case* and total recluse—has apparently dropped off the James

Bond is shattered by the murder of his wife at the hands of Ernst Stavro Blofeld, and only the prospect of a particularly challenging mission can draw him out of his deep depression. Determined to restore 007 to his former effectiveness, M sends Bond to Japan, where a criminal mastermind is using a poisonous garden inside a rocky island fortress to lure people to their deaths. Bond will have to infiltrate and destroy this mysterious “Castle of Death” in exchange for top secret Japanese intelligence.

✉ Lorac, ECR. [Death of an Author](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99). Another British Library Crime Classic from Lorac, back in print for the first time since 1935 and introduced by Martin Edwards, is full of wry humor, Red Herrings, and jabs at contemporary reviewers who suspected the Lorac pseudonym must belong to a male author. Vivian Lestrangle—celebrated author of the popular mystery novel *The Charterhouse Case* and total recluse—has apparently dropped off the face of the Earth. After he was reported missing by his secretary Eleanor, whom Inspector Bond suspects to be the author herself, crime and murder are afoot when Lestrangle’s housekeeper is also found to have disappeared. Bond and Warner of Scotland Yard set to work to investigate a murder with no body and a potentially fictional victim.

COZIES

This is a rich month for cozies. We offer six Signed on May 5 but all but Roberts publish in April:

Colleen Cambridge. [Murder Most French](#) (Kensington \$27)
Amanda Flower. [To Slip the Bonds of Earth](#) (Kensington \$27)
Nicholas George. [Deadly Walk in Devon](#) (Kensington \$27)
Erica Ruth Neubauer. [Secrets of a Scottish Isle](#) (Kensington \$27)
Sheila Roberts. [The Best Life Book Club](#) (Mira \$18.99)
Paige Shelton. [Poison Pen](#) (St Martins \$27)

And new to April:

Brown, Rita Mae. [Feline Fatale: A Mrs. Murphy Mystery](#) (Random \$28). Take note that this long-lived cozy series featuring a delightful human and animal population in rural Crozet, Virginia, has, in the words of one early reader, “Some really serious stuff here that reflects the life happenings of 2023 in politics and the infiltration of the drug trade into too much of daily life. The historical learning (for those of us who geek history) relates to the use of Ham Radios and Morse Code from WW2 to the present as it pertains to the regular characters. There are several mysteries to solve and the furry ones continue to be essential.” Spring flowers may be about to bloom, but Harry Haristeen is thinking about snow. Her dear friend Ned Tucker is in the House of Delegates, advocating for a bill to improve road clearing during bad weather, and Harry and Ned’s wife, Susan, have gone down to the statehouse to support him. Tensions are high between political parties, and no one can agree on anything for long enough to get something done. The bill’s chief detractor is the glamorous Amanda Fields who is not murdered—it’s one of the young pages. Why?

Davis, Krista. [The Diva Delivers on a Promise](#) (\$16.95). Sophie Winston is a young Martha Stewart in the making. She’s busy handling the first ever convention of the Association of Ghost Kitchens—restaurants that do delivery only—but she’s taking a little time out for a lunch meeting organized by A Healthy Meal. The group 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. If it weren’t for the dead man lying on the floor, everything would be perfect.... This 16th in the Domestic Diva Series includes recipes and decorating tips.

Deveraux, Jude. [An Unfinished Murder](#) (Mira \$30). Sara Medlar may be retired as a bestselling author, but her career as an amateur detective is facing one final mystery. The romance novelist has been comfortably sharing her large home with her niece Kate and her “honorary grandson” Jack. It’s a convenient arrangement given the Medlar Three, as they’ve become known, are often working closely together to solve mysteries in their small town of Lachlan, Florida. But when real estate agent Kate announces she’s been given the listing for the town’s storied Lachlan House, it sets off alarm bells for Sara and Jack. The infamous house has a dark history, one that’s certain to haunt them all. Then comes a grim discovery....

Fletcher, Jessica. [Murder, She Wrote: Murder Backstage](#) (\$18). On arrival in Edmonton, Alberta, Jessica is quickly outed as mystery writer J. B. Fletcher, and despite numerous protests, a hotel staffer arranges a book signing for her. This and touristy adventures arranged for the group make for a much busier trip than Jessica was expecting when she agreed to travel to Canada where her British cousin, Emma MacGill, is to perform with internationally famous star of stage, screen, and television Derek Braverman in an old-fashioned musical review. And then, a hotel bartender, who also happens to be a stagehand for Emma’s play, turns up dead backstage at the theater....

Gerber, Daryl Wood. [A Twinkle of Trouble](#) (Kensington \$16.95). Carmel-by-the-Sea garden shop owner Courtney Kelly sees things others can’t. She is delighted when her tiny friend Fiona returns from the fairy realm, appearing at the base of a Cypress tree. When her Ragdoll cat, Pixie, emerges from her own portal—aka the cat door—the three set off for a busy day. Busier than usual, since Courtney has rented a small plot of land at the Flower Farm, where she hopes to grow her own supplies for her fairy-garden business. Plus, the annual Summer Blooms Festival is coming up, and Courtney has booked a booth. Then the murder of Courtney’s friend, Genevieve, casts a pall over the festival....

Graves, Sarah. [Death by Chocolate Raspberry Scone](#) (Kensington \$27). As tourists flock to the town of Eastport, Maine, to enjoy the summer’s warm weather, locals Jacobia “Jake” Tiptree and Ellie White feel more pressure than pleasure from the influx. Although tourists keep their bakery, the Chocolate Moose, in business, the crowds and hot weather can be a little too much in a town with limited air conditioning. And while some folks might find peace in Passamaquoddy Bay’s coastal waters, the ocean isn’t always safe. Take Paul Coates, for example, a seasoned fisherman whose boat, the Sally Ann, was found by the Coast Guard with no one aboard. Now Sally, his presumed widow and Ellie’s old friend, has to wait for a body to wash up for a burial... and Lizzie Snow, the new police chief, doesn’t strike Jake as up to the job. 7th in series which follows a darker series featuring Jake.

Mack, Catherine. [Every Time I Go on Vacation, Someone Dies](#) (St Martins \$28). *Library Journal*’s Mystery Pick of the Month is “Perfect for fans of *The Magpie Murders* and *Only Murders in the Building*.” Lesa reviews our **April Cozy Crimes Book of the Month**: The pseudonymous Mack’s first entry in “The Vacation

Mysteries” series features author Eleanor Dash, who wants to finish her book tour in Italy so that she can get back to writing and fulfill her publishing contract by killing off her series’ main character, Connor Smith. She also confesses to a priest her urge to kill the con man (and ex-lover) who inspired the character of Connor. Even so, Eleanor is shocked when the real Connor, also on the book tour, tells her that someone has tried to kill him—twice. She thinks he just wants attention—until someone tries to harm her. When one of their tour group is killed, the remaining group members realize they’re all suspects. All of them, including literary rivals, Connor’s ex-wife, and Eleanor herself, have secrets, and reasons to want Connor dead. Mack’s unusual format includes footnotes that directly address the reader, offering a chance to uncover secrets and the killer.

Booklist calls it “funny and suspenseful, featuring Eleanor as a witty and relatable narrator who constantly breaks the fourth wall in an entertaining and original use of footnotes. Mack’s tale is full of lively references (Taylor Swift galore), beautiful Italian settings, romance, fun chapter titles, and an interesting mix of suspects who are almost all mystery writers themselves. It is an amusing, light read that invites the reader to gather the clues and solve the crime before Eleanor reveals the answer.”

Meier, Leslie. [Patchwork Quilt Murder](#) (Kensington \$27). During a heat wave in Tinker’s Cove, Maine, part-time reporter Lucy Stone becomes unseasonably entangled in handmade quilts—and a twisted case of murder....

✦ Myers, Amy. [Murder at Tanton Towers](#) (Severn \$29.99). A British cozy set in a Stately Home where a divorcee who bakes a meanest cake in Kent opens a café that thrives. Then one beautiful summer evening Daphne Hanson, queen of the costume-clad dancing troupe and fearsome gossip, is lying dead in the Orangery....

Ryan, Lindy. [Bless Your Heart](#) (St Martins \$28). A new cozy-horror series debut described by the publisher as “*Steel Magnolias* meets *Buffy* by way of Charlaine Harris” in this dark and delightful mystery-horror novel about four generations of women tasked with battling the original vampire to protect their small Southern town. See New in Hardcover for more as I’m not sure “Cozy” is the right label for this.

✦ Sampson, Freya. [Nosy Neighbors](#) (Penguin \$18). Nothing brings neighbors together like someone else’s secrets... 77-year-old Dorothy Darling has lived in Shelley House longer than any of the other residents, and if you take their word for it, she’s as cantankerous as they come. But Dorothy has her reasons for spying. And none of them require justifying herself to Kat Bennett. Twenty-five-year-old Kat has never known a place where she felt truly at home, and crumbling Shelley House is no different. Her neighbors find her prickly and unapproachable, but beneath her tough exterior, Kat’s plagued by a guilty secret from her past. When their apartments face demolition, sworn enemies Kat and Dorothy agree on just one thing: they must save their historic building. But when someone plays dirty—and one of the residents is viciously taken down—Dorothy and Kat seek justice.

Smith, Karen Rose. [Murder Marks the Page](#) (Kensington \$27). New York State’s Belltower Landing is a lakeside resort town where tourists spend their summer days boating, floating, and paddle-boarding on the water. It’s also the perfect place to cuddle

up with a good book and enjoy a cup of tea, courtesy of Tomes & Tea. Owned and operated by Jazzi and her best friend Dawn Fernsby, the book bar is beloved by vacationers and locals alike, but browsers grabbing brews in the off season aren’t enough to help them make ends meet. Between brainstorming social media publicity ideas for the shop and fending off flirtatious men she has no interest in or time for, Jazzi befriends a woman named Brie who has recently made contact with her biological father. As an adopted child herself, Jazzi is more than happy to give Brie emotional support, especially as her wealthy father’s wife and children see her as a threat. But Brie is also looking to start a family of her own. Unfortunately, all the potential princes she’s met through a dating app turn out to be frogs. Then, when Brie is found murdered, Jazzi finds herself playing detective.

SOME NEW HARDCOVERS FOR APRIL

Addison, Esme. [An Intrigue of Witches](#) (Severn \$29.99). Introducing the Secret Society mystery series wherein a Black historian goes on a treasure hunt. While doing it, Sidney Taylor uncovers a sacred sisterhood. It begins when she is unceremoniously downsized from her job at the Smithsonian and decides that her grandmother is due a visit. Sidney’s family has been entrenched in D.C. society and politics for as long as she can remember, but something about her Grams’ home in Robbinsville, North Carolina, has always felt right to Sidney, who spent happy college years in the small town. Greeted by the smiling face of her Grams, Sidney knows everything will be all right. Meeting handsome Gabe Willoughby, a fellow appreciator of history, doesn’t hurt either, though Sidney’s soon too distracted by her first love to notice him all that much. And Abner Robbins, owner of the Robbins Early American Living History Museum & Village, wants Sidney’s help locating a lost artifact set up by President James Madison who “worked with talented cryptographer Josiah Willoughby, to set up what amounts to a historical treasure hunt.”.... Ordered Upon Request.

Allen, Samantha Jayne. [Next of Kin](#) (St Martins \$28). It’s a sweltering August in the small town of Garnett, Texas, and Annie has her plate full as maid of honor for her cousin Nikki’s wedding. During one of the pre-nuptial parties, she’s approached by local musician Clint Marshall, the groom’s brother and best man. Adopted as a baby, he wants Annie to help him find his birth parents. The case seems straightforward enough: Annie uses Ancestry.com to locate Clint’s biological brother, Cody, and his father, who’s serving time in prison for a years-old bank robbery. Things take a turn, however, when Cody is found dead and Clint disappears... 3rd in a series featuring regional intrigue by a Tony Hillerman Prize winner.

Alvarez, Julia. [The Cemetery of Untold Stories](#) (Algonquin \$28). When Alma inherits a piece of land in the Dominican Republic, she decides to use it as a place to bury her unfinished manuscripts. But the characters she puts to rest have lives of their own, and whisper their stories to Filomena, the groundskeeper. “Alvarez’s beautiful new novel synthesizes her familiar themes: storytelling, sisters, family differences, the violent legacy of the Dominican Republic, the allure of ‘home’, and of ‘up North’, and the craft of writing itself.”

Aveyard, Victoria. [The Fate Breaker](#) (Harper \$24.99). How can we resist a book whose author describes it as “When the typical heroes fail, the ragtag B team steps up to save the world. It’s *Lord*

of the Rings meets Guardians of the Galaxy.” Start with [Realm Breaker](#) (\$14.99) and [Blade Breaker](#) (\$16.99) for the epic fantasy series from an author whose hero is JRRR Tolkien.

Bannalec, Jean-Luc. [Death of a Master Chef](#) (St Martins \$28). Joy, April in Paris is one thing, but move outside Paris to Brittany, France’s westernmost Department with a Celtic heritage, fabulous coastlines and food, St Malo and Mont Saint Michel, and a prickly cop who’s grown happy with his exile from Paris, working cases. The TV series, hilariously, is all German, as was Donna Leon’s Commissario Brunettis. We all enjoy Commissaire Georges Dupin’s fascinating investigations and his inner circle including fellow cops and his doctor partner who has left Paris to join him. She’s extremely patient.

It’s the 9th investigation for Commissaire Georges Dupin and his team stationed in the furthest west and most magical region of France. It’s June, time for a fun trip to Saint-Malo. In a region known as the culinary heart of Brittany, the paradoxical city is known for being a uniquely Breton, yet un-Breton, place. Dupin would love to explore the internationally renowned cuisine one bite at a time. But to his chagrin, Dupin is there instead to attend a police seminar dedicated to closer collaboration between the Breton forces. To prepare himself, Dupin wanders through the halls of a local market—stopping to sample its wares as he goes—while admiring its aromatic orchestra. Suddenly there’s a murder at a nearby stall. The police know the victim: Blanche Trouin, a *grand chef* of the region. They know the perpetrator: Lucille Trouin, Blanche’s sister and fellow successful chef in the area. The two had a well-known and public feud. After a bit of searching, Lucille is even in custody. The only thing they’re missing is the motive. And Lucille refuses to talk.....

Barnes, SA. [Ghost Station](#) (Tor \$27.99). “This unsettling space horror novel follows Dr. Ophelia Bray as she is assigned to a crew exploring a deserted planet with ruins from an ancient civilization. Soon it’s apparent that something suspicious happened to the previous crew and, even earlier, to the ancient society. Mystery, murder, and secrets keep the reader intrigued and guessing the outcome,” says Library Reads making this an April Pick.

Bardugo, Leigh. [The Familiar](#) (Flatiron Books \$29.99). After her employer catches her reciting Hebrew-Spanish incantations, an orphaned maid named Luzia Cotado enters a magical contest for miracle workers in 16th-century Madrid. “Luzia and Santángel, a duo for the ages! A scullion and an immortal familiar team up to win the king’s competition in the Spanish Golden Age as the Inquisition looms. Bardugo will lead you down new paths you won’t ever forget” in her new historical fantasy. The books on our initial order will come with stained edges.

✦ Burr, Samuel. [The Fellowship of Puzzlemakers](#) (Knopf \$29). Another Library Reads April Pick for a book I can’t wait to read: “Baby Clayton is left on the steps of a puzzlemakers’ society in Bedfordshire and raised by a group of eccentric enigmatologists. Pippa, the society’s founder and the most prolific crossword compiler in Britain, finds and raises him. When she passes away, Clayton, untethered, longs to solve the mystery of his abandonment. Pippa has created a special puzzle for Clayton to find out the secrets of life and discover his origins. Readers will absolutely love this fun, quirky tale.” I add there’s a budding romance with Neil, a home health care aid in London.

Carr, Caleb. [My Beloved Monster](#) (Little Brown \$30). The author of mystery classic *The Alienist* tells the extraordinary story of Masha, a half-wild rescue cat that fought off a bear, tackled Caleb like a linebacker-and bonded with him as tightly as any cat and human possibly can.

Carrasco, Katrina. [Rough Trade](#) (Farrar \$28). Detailed historical research bolsters dynamic crime fiction in this spectacular queer adventure about opium smugglers in 19th-century Washington Territory.

Clark, Mary Higgins/Alafair Burke. [It Had to Be You](#) (Simon & Schuster \$26.99). The two identical brothers seemed perfect in every way-handsome, intelligent, popular-until a shocking summer night when one brother killed his parents in cold blood while the other brother had an iron-clad alibi. But which twin was where during the murders? And is it possible the two of them planned the perfect crime together?

Constantine, K C. [Another Day’s Pain](#) (Penzler \$26.95). I think this deserves the full Starred Review so I quote it: “Decades of unresolved trauma power the deeply moving, posthumously published final Rocksburg procedural from Constantine (1934–2023). It’s 2011, and Ruggiero ‘Rugs’ Carlucci, who became Rocksburg’s acting police chief after his mentor’s retirement, is now two years past retirement age himself. Rugs has spent his entire life in the small Pennsylvania town; unmarried and childless, he is one of only two detectives on the ramshackle police force. Meanwhile, his girlfriend, Franny Perfetti, is struggling with the burden of her aging mother’s medical bills, which threaten to bankrupt her. Her plight reminds Rugs of his own mother, whom he committed to a mental facility after she nearly killed one of his colleagues with a frying pan. When Rugs responds to a call about an active shooter much larger and younger than him, the detective draws on the survival instincts he developed 40 years earlier in Vietnam, and the experience spurs him to face long-buried emotional demons. Constantine ends the long-running series on a high note, striking an elegiac tone that never tilts into triteness.” So, if you have not read Constantine before this would be a way to appreciate his work.

✦ Cornwell, Bernard. [Sharpe’s Command](#) (Harper \$28.99). In Richard Sharpe’s 23rd adventure it’s the spring of 1812, General Hill sends Major Sharpe on a reconnaissance mission to check out key bridges across Spain’s wide River Tagus. One French army needs to cross it to regroup with Napoleon’s army to the north, so stopping that connection is crucial to the British. Sharpe is ordered “not to poke the wasps’ nest,” and his subordinate Lieutenant Love notes that the mission “calls for subtlety and forbearance.” But Sharpe sees the need for immediate action, so, like the daring commander he is, he disobeys orders. Blood flows aplenty as his riflemen and members of the Spanish resistance wreak havoc on the Crapauds (*pardonnez-moi*, that means Toads) with muskets, rifles, and cannons, while the French retaliate fiercely. On a broad scale, the story is about real events, but the layer of fictional characters brings it to life.

Croft, Jennifer. [The Extinction of Irina Re](#) (Bloomsbury \$28.99). I am giving another shout out to an amazing book that taps into literary tropes, specifically the role of translators, for Croft is an acclaimed translator, and won the 2018 Man Booker International Prize for her English translation of Olga Tokarczuk’s “Flights.” It seems fitting that her first novel is a detective story following

a troupe of translators tracking down their missing author. Eight of them are summoned to a remote Polish forest to translate the work of world-renowned writer Irena Rey. Upon their arrival, however, the translators discover that Rey is missing. Using their expertise as detectives of information and astute uncoverers of layered meaning, the translators must work through their bitter rivalries, growing isolation, and increasing paranoia to locate their author in the great, dark forest.

Dolan, Harry. [Don't Turn Around](#) (Grove \$27) is a prequel to [Bad Things Happen](#) (\$16.99). On a rainy night in April, a chance encounter draws David Loogan into a romance with Jana Fletcher, a beautiful young law student. Jana is an enigma: living in a run-down apartment with only the barest of possessions, sporting a bruise on her cheek that she refuses to explain. David would like to know her secrets, but he lets them lie—until it's too late. When Jana is brutally murdered, the police consider David a prime suspect. But as he sets out to uncover the truth, he soon learns that Jana's death may be related to an earlier murder, one that she was obsessed with during the last weeks of her life. And as he retraces her steps, he begins to realize that he's treading a very dangerous path

Garmus, Bonnie. [Lessons in Chemistry Special Edition](#) (Knopf \$40). Meet Elizabeth Zott: “a gifted research chemist, absurdly self-assured and immune to social convention” (The Washington Post) in 1960s California whose career takes a detour when she becomes the unlikely star of a beloved TV cooking show. If you have missed this bestseller or want to give a copy as a gift, here's a special edition (which of course allows Knopf to make even more money with the book).

Garrett, Kellye. [Missing White Woman](#) (LittleBrown \$29). It was supposed to be a romantic getaway weekend in New York City. Breanna's new boyfriend, Ty, took care of everything—the train tickets, the dinner reservations, the rented four-story luxury row house in Jersey City with a beautiful view of the Manhattan skyline. But when Bree comes downstairs their final morning, she's shocked. There's a stranger lying dead in the foyer, and Ty is nowhere to be found.....

✎ Gramazio, Holly. [The Husbands](#) (Doubleday \$29). This premise is hard to resist: The attic, it seems, is producing an endless supply of life paths in the form of husbands—how will Lauren decide which is the right one? It rates April Picks by both Indie Next and Library Reads: “Lauren is faced with a troubling situation: not only is she married to a complete stranger, she can also trade her husband in for a new one. The story leans into the wacky possibilities and bittersweet potentials that could tempt many of us.” And “Lauren, who's single, comes home to find that not only is she married, but she doesn't recognize her husband. She discovers that by sending a husband to the attic, she can replace him with a new model and there seems to be a never-ending supply. The quirky nature of the book, humorous writing, charming characters and the unbelievable situation will have readers completely engrossed.”

Hepworth, Sally. [Darling Girls](#) (St Martins \$29). This rollercoaster of a novel follows three women who call themselves “sisters” since living together at Wild Meadows Farm under the watch of their strict and mercurial foster mother, Holly Fairchild. Now, 25 years later, Wild Meadows has been sold, leading to the discovery of human remains buried under the farmhouse,

and authorities bring Jessica, Norah, and Alicia from Melbourne to the crime scene in Port Agatha for questioning by the police. Hepworth is a good choice for readers of Jane Harper or Liane Moriarty.

✎ Horowitz, Anthony. [Close to Death](#) (Harper \$30) is the 5th ingenious fifth literary whodunnit in the Hawthorne and Horowitz series and our **British Crime Book of the Month**. Riverside Close is a picture-perfect community. The six exclusive and attractive houses are tucked far away from the noise and grime of city life, allowing the residents to enjoy beautiful gardens, pleasant birdsong, and tranquility from behind the security of a locked gate. It is the perfect idyll, until the Kentworthy family arrives, with their four giant, gas-guzzling cars, gaggle of shrieking children, and plans for a garish swimming pool in the backyard. Obvious outsiders, the Kentworthys do not belong in Riverside Close, and quickly offend every last one of the neighbors. When Giles Kentworthy is found dead on his own doorstep, a crossbow bolt sticking out of his chest, Detective Hawthorne is the only investigator they can call to solve the case where every single person who could have done it is a suspect?

Houston, Victoria. [At the Edge of the Woods](#) (Crooked Lane \$31.99). When a local pickleball player is shot in the head while practicing at an abandoned tennis court with his partner-slash-lover, Sheriff Lew Ferris suspects that the bullet was a stray shot from hunters in the area. It's not until a second player—the first victim's mistress and pickleball partner—is killed that Sheriff Ferris realizes this is no hunting accident....

Huang, Justinian. [The Emperor and the Endless Palace](#) (Mira Books \$28.99). This queer Romantasy debut gets an Indie Next Pick: “*The Emperor and the Endless Palace* is a hard novel to sum up, but let me try: an erotic love story, three eras, loyalty, betrayal, intrigue, mythology. The story is gloriously addictive and will keep you turning page after page!”

Humphreys, Helen. [Followed by the Lark](#) (FSG \$27). The malady that afflicted the Thoreau family was consumption, striking down three generations. The insidious influence of the disease, which strings together a series of vignettes to form a poetic fictional biography of Henry David Thoreau. There are glimpses of his Transcendentalist circle, but Humphreys prefers to concentrate on friendships with the less well-known figures who join him on treks through woods and fields. “...nature's glories can't be eclipsed, and this is where Humphreys' narrative is most evocative — particularly in the spring, when Thoreau finds it impossible to document so much new life in his journal.”—*NY Times*

Jacobs, Nova. [The Stars Turned Inside Out](#) (Simon & Schuster \$27.99). Deep beneath the ground outside of Geneva, where CERN's Large Hadron Collider smashes subatomic particles at breathtaking speeds, a startling discovery is made when the tunnel is down for maintenance: the body of Howard Anderby, a brilliant and recently arrived young physicist, who appears to have been irradiated by the collider. But security shows no evidence of him entering the tunnel, and for all of the lab's funding, its video surveillance is sorely lacking. The discovery of this suspicious death sparks a mystery that merges science, philosophy, and the high-stakes race to unlock the fundamental nature of our universe in this thrilling new novel from the Edgar

Award-nominated author of the “hugely entertaining *The Last Equation of Isaac Severy*.”—*WSJ*

Kurkov, Andrey. [The Silver Bone](#) (Harper Via \$28). “Andrey Kurkov is often called Ukraine’s greatest living writer, and it is a gift for crime fiction fans that he writes in this genre. (Read *Death and the Penguin* and its sequels — they are a delight.) His newly translated book is the first in a fine new series set in Kyiv in 1919. The book cover is black, with a leg bone in the center. Samson Kolechko barely escapes with his life — though he does lose his right ear — when a Cossack murders his father with a saber. Orphaned, jobless and forced to relinquish his apartment to Red Army soldiers, Samson’s options seem limited. But then the local police force recruits him, and almost immediately he finds himself sucked into a murder case, parsing clues that involve a custom-tailored suit and a giant bone made of silver. Kurkov, as filtered through the supple translation of Boris Dralyuk, infuses *The Silver Bone* with wry humor as Samson investigates his case while succumbing to the charms of a statistician named Nadezhda. A sequel to this Kyiv Mystery #1 is set to arrive next year.”—*NY Times*

Lares, Mariely. [Sun of Blood and Ruin](#) (Harper Voyager \$30). “A fast-paced fantasy filled with shapeshifting, sorcery, and epic battles. Lares weaves together a rich world from Mesoamerican history and mythology, alongside a thoughtful exploration of *mestiza* identity and finding a place in the world.”

Leavitt, Caroline. [Days of Wonder](#) (Algonquin \$29). This one really has it all: there’s a teenager whose life is upended when she’s accused of trying to murder her boyfriend’s father. There’s her attempt to reconnect with her daughter when she’s released from prison six years later. And through it all, there’s one central mystery that endures: what really happened on the night of the attempted murder? Fans of Miranda Cowley Heller’s *The Paper Palace* will be delighted.

Lennon, Ferdia. [Glorious Exploits](#) (Henry Holt \$26.99). Looking for something unusual for spring? Here’s your book. Set in 400BC; written in contemporary working-class Irish dialect. Set in Syracuse, Sicily, during the Peloponnesian War, follows Lampo and Gelon, unemployed laborers and best friends since childhood. Living on island of Syracuse; thrilled to have survived the Athenians’ recent invasion and as shocked by the Syracusan victory as everyone else, these unemployed potters are in a mood to celebrate. Of course, they hate the Athenians. Still, that doesn’t mean you can’t love Greek poetry as well as the theatre of their great playwright Euripides, does it? A Starred Review adds: “Lennon brings ancient Sicily to life with humor and pathos in his stunning debut. Thousands of Athenian soldiers are being held prisoner in Syracuse after a failed assault during the Peloponnesian War. Two unemployed potters, Lampo and Gelon, decide to recruit some of the prisoners, who have been left to die in quarries near the city, to perform a selection of Euripides’ plays in exchange for food. Gelon, fearing the defeat of Athens could mean the end of its rich history of tragic drama, wants to stage *Medea* and *The Trojan Women*, the latter of which depicts the grim aftermath of Troy’s defeat in the Trojan War. Lampo becomes increasingly invested in the project and discomfited by the brutal treatment of Sicily’s vanquished rivals. By giving his leads a sense of purpose during dark and bloody times, Lennon makes the success of their offbeat venture feel important to the

reader, and he thoroughly explores the novel’s melancholy central theme—the world is “a wounded thing that can only be healed by story”—all the way up to the gut-punch denouement.”

McHugh, Laura. [Safe and Sound](#) (Random \$29). No one ever leaves the backwater town of Beaumont, Missouri. Amelia and Kylee Crow’s older cousin, Grace, comes closest to getting out—she was both at the top of her class and the first in their family to get into college—but all that changed the night she vanished while babysitting them. Years have passed and while most of Beaumont’s residents have moved on with their lives, Amelia can’t shake the feeling that the truth of what happened is still out there waiting to be found—and so is Grace, dead or alive. When the body of a young woman is discovered, old questions are dredged up, fingers are pointed, and Amelia and Kylee soon learn that their family might not be the only one with skeletons in the closet. The story is told in alternating sections, starting with chapters narrated by Amelia as she and Kylee search for answers, and then switching to chapters written from Grace’s point of view leading up to the night of her disappearance.

Muller, Marcia. [Circle in the Water](#) (Grand Central \$28). San Francisco is home to more than 200 privately owned streets. Most are alleyways, but a select few are lined with mansions and elaborate gardens; security guards patrol the grounds to keep the curious at bay. Few know of these exclusive enclaves, but those who do prowl for availability, ready to make a grab for the precious real estate if opportunity strikes. When several such streets are targeted in a series of so-called pranks, Sharon is hired by a coalition of concerned owners to investigate. But as things escalate—an attempt on Sharon’s life, an explosion at a meth lab, and a shocking murder. Worse, one of McCone and Ripinsky’s employees is implicated....

Natt Och Dag, Niklas. [The Order of the Furies: 1795](#) (Atria \$28). Scandi Noir, but historical, wraps up the 18th-century Bellman noir trilogy (after *1794: The City Between the Bridges*). Three years after the assassination of King Gustav III, Sweden is governed by the despotic Gustav Adolf Reuterholm, whose regency is under threat from Gustaf Mauritz Armfelt, the late monarch’s favorite member of the royal court. Armfelt has become a fugitive after leading a squashed plot to overthrow Reuterholm; meanwhile, his imprisoned lover, noblewoman Magdalena Rudenschöld, has passed a list of the rebellion’s conspirators to escaping inmate Anna Stina Knapp. Reuterholm’s thugs set out to find and kill Knapp, while her friend, Jean Michael “Mickel” Cardell, partners with brilliant university student Emile Winge to locate her first. Verdi wrote his opera *The Masked Ball* about the King’s assassination.

Paretsky, Sara. [Pay Dirt](#) (Harper \$30). Lesa reviews: Chicago PI V.I. Warshawski hasn’t been herself since one of her cases ended in tragedy. Friends persuade her to head to Kansas for a college basketball game featuring her protégée Angela. When Angela’s housemate Sabrina goes missing, V.I. reluctantly agrees to help search for the young woman. With no support network in Lawrence, and the police suspicious of her motives, V.I. finally finds Sabrina almost dead in a drug den on Yancy Hill. It gets worse: the FBI shows up to question V.I. about kidnapping the girl, and the police don’t believe her. When V.I. returns to the drug house, she finds the body of a woman who had been stirring up trouble in town. Now V.I. is suspected of kidnapping and

murder, and she only has two junk men and an ambitious young reporter to turn to for help. As V.I. investigates the death, she finds evidence that connects the land around Yancy Hill with Lawrence's industrial future and Kansas's bloody past before the Civil War.

Rapp, Adam. [The Wolf at the Table](#) (Little Brown \$30.00). *The Corrections* meets *We Need to Talk About Kevin* in this harrowing multigenerational saga about a family harboring a serial killer in their midst. It begins as late summer 1951 descends on Elmira, New York, Myra Larkin, thirteen, the oldest child of a large Catholic family, meets a young man she believes to be Mickey Mantle. He chats her up at a local diner and gives her a ride home. The matter consumes her until later that night, when a triple homicide occurs just down the street, opening a specter of violence that will haunt the Larkins for half a century. "Through one family's pursuit of the American dream, *Wolf at the Table* explores our consistent proximity to violence and its effects over time. Pulitzer Prize finalist Adam Rapp writes with gorgeous acuity, cutting to the heart of each character as he reveals the devastating reality beneath the veneer."

Riordan, Matt. [The North Line](#) (Disney \$27.99) "is a ruggedly erudite story that combines the best of the individualism of Jack London with the introspective ruminations of Raymond Carver . . . not to be missed."—S.A. Cosby. It's a debut where a college student in need of quick money finds work on an Alaskan fishing boat in the unforgiving Bering Sea. "A frightening story of tough men pushed to the brink. The novel is captivating, occasionally funny, and startling. I couldn't put it down." —David Sedaris

✦ Robotham, M.J. [The Scandalous Life of Ruby Devereaux](#) (Bloomsbury \$28.99). From a teenager in wartime England to a veteran of modern-day London – via 1950's New York, the Swinging Sixties, Cold War Berlin, Venice and Vietnam – Ruby Devereaux has lived one hell of a life: parties, scandals and conflict zones, meeting men and adventure along the way. In a writing career spanning seven decades and more than twenty books, she's distilled everything into her work. Or has she? Now beyond her 90th year, Ruby's energy is ebbing and her beloved typewriter put away. Until a call from her publisher presents Ruby with an ultimatum, and the impetus to embark on one last book – "warts and all" as she says. Even in her dotage, Ruby M. Devereaux has the power to surprise.

Ryan, Lindy. [Bless Your Heart](#) (St Martins \$28). A new cozy-horror series debut described by the publisher as "*Steel Magnolias* meets *Buffy* by way of Charlaine Harris" is a "dark and delightful story about four generations of women tasked with battling the original vampire to protect their small Southern town. It's 1999 in Southeast Texas and the Evans women, owners of the only funeral parlor in town, are keeping steady with...normal business. The dead die, you bury them. End of story. That's how Ducey Evans has done it for the last eighty years, and her progeny—Lenore the experimenter and Grace, Lenore's soft-hearted daughter, have run Evans Funeral Parlor for the last fifteen years without drama. Ever since That Godawful Mess that left two bodies in the ground and Grace raising her infant daughter Luna, alone. But when town gossip Mina Jean Murphy's body is brought in for a regular burial and she rises from the dead instead, it's clear that the Strigoi—the original vampire—are back." And the Evans women are the ones who need to fight back to protect their town.

Schaffert, Timothy. [The Titanic Survivors Book Club](#) (Knopf \$29). A group of assorted characters who for one reason or another never made it into their assigned berths on the *Titanic* form surprising bonds in Schaffert's lush latest. An American expat in Paris discovers that he's dead—according to an article he reads at the pub after work. After seeing his name on an official list of passengers who lost their lives on the *Titanic*, Yorick receives a strange message: a ship-in-a-bottle invitation to a Titanic survivors support group. He finds himself in the company of ticket holders who didn't embark on the ill-fated voyage. One is Zinnia, a vivacious candy heiress whose first-class reservation was denied along with her family's because of her Japanese mother's race. Another is the elusive, handsome Haze. Yorick, Haze, and Zinnia become entangled in a complicated love affair. Meanwhile, Yorick balances the pressures of his bookstore, his sexual identity, and a book club that he organizes for the support group. Punctuating the story are the club's musings on Leo Tolstoy, Sigmund Freud, Oscar Wilde, and many other fin-de-siècle authors and thinkers. Themes of death and survivorship grow stronger when World War I ravages Europe. It's fiction so Schaffert may have tweaked the actual incidents a bit. "The marvelous sensuous details—from the smells and feel of old books to the descriptions of Zinna's candies and the veritable river of cognac, absinthe, wine, and Dutch gin—make this star-crossed lovers' tale an absolute delight, and the underlying themes of book banning and suppressed sexuality resonate."

Shechtman, Anna. [The Riddles of the Sphinx](#) (Harper \$29.99). **I mentioned this is March as a good read for Women's History Month. And now I suggest this (with the link below to a puzzle) makes a fine gift for Mother's Day.**

The journalist and crossword-puzzle compiler, uses the nuances and politics of the crossword-puzzle industry to craft a memoir as alluring as a ready-to-be-solved crossword puzzle. Shechtman, the second youngest woman to publish a crossword in the *New York Times* and a bimonthly compiler for the *New Yorker*, details her journey from sketching boxes for witty wordplay to world-class success. Deemed the "queen of crosswords" by the *Guardian*, she celebrates female talent, success, and strength in *The Riddles of the Sphinx*. In showcasing her predecessors, Shechtman's meticulously researched timeline unveils a widely unknown history of crossword puzzles, detailing how they emerged as a craze; became a pastime for intellectuals and an outlet for activism; and evolved into a daily section of every major newspaper. She writes: "It is also a group portrait of women, myself included, who have attached themselves to language rules—and language games.

How much fun is this? She has created a crossword puzzle for you to solve. [Click on the link...](#) Enjoy!

On another note of Women's History, Therese Oneill's [Unbecoming a Lady: The Forgotten Sluts and Shrews Who Shaped America](#) (Simon Element \$24.99) is "A quippy and irreverent collection of illustrated profiles of the great American women who weren't attractive, well-spoken, demure, or sinless enough to receive their rightful place in history... until now."

✦ Sherwood, Kim. [A Spy Like Me](#) (Harper \$30). In the second entry in a Double O series, James Bond is alive. Or at least, he was when he left a clue at the black site where the insidious private military company Rattenfänger held him captive. MI6 cannot spare any more lives attempting to track down one

missing agent—no exceptions, even for Bond. But Johanna Harwood, 003, has her own agenda. Sidelined by her superiors while she grieves the loss of a loved one, Harwood goes on an unsanctioned mission: to find 007. Meanwhile, MI6 has another problem... A bomb has detonated in London. If you are a Bond fan there's a lot of fun in this.

Smiley, Jane. [Lucky](#) (Knopf \$29) follows the life of a budding folk rock singer. While Jodie Rattler is studying at Penn State in the 1960s, one of her songs becomes a surprise hit, leading to gigs in Los Angeles and New York City. She relishes her success and takes to the bed-hopping bohemian lifestyle while resisting pressure from her record label to drop out of college. Memories of her idyllic childhood in 1950s St. Louis are ever-present, as are those of her steadfast determination to succeed as a teenager, setting her apart from a bookish high school classmate, whom she refers to only as the "gawky girl." "The gawky girl, a clear stand-in for Smiley, makes periodic appearances. At its close, the novel takes an apocalyptic leap into the near future that matches Smiley's darkest pages in *A Thousand Acres* (1991) and *The Greenlanders* (1988)."

Thompson, Victoria. [Murder in Rose Hill](#) (Berkley \$28). Socialite Sarah Brandt Malloy and her husband, Frank—who inherited enough money to quit the corrupt police department and open a detective agency—have solved many mysteries. Sarah, who likes to keep a hand in at a clinic she's funded where even the poorest women can get care, has just delivered a baby when Louisa Rodgers, a magazine reporter for the *New Century*, arrives asking for her help in exposing the dangers of patent medicines. Many of them are addictive. Louisa's father shows up a few days later with the news that his daughter has been murdered, he tells Sarah that his daughter was a secretary at the magazine, not a reporter. Since the police think she was a randomly chosen victim, Sarah explains to Louisa's distraught father that hiring Frank may be the only way to find the killer in this latest in the Gaslight Mystery Series.

Tietjen, Katie. [Death in the Details](#) (Crooked Lane \$29.99). "Inspired by the real-life mother of forensic science, Frances Glessner Lee, this fascinating, solid debut will appeal to historical mystery readers who enjoy novels based on actual people." Lesa reviews a debut: In 1946, Maple Bishop is a war widow stuck in a small Vermont town, lonely and plagued by a quick temper and inclination to blurt out the truth. Desperate to make her next mortgage payment, she asks the local hardware store owner if she can set up a corner in his store to display the dollhouses she builds. She makes her first dollhouse sale to a grumpy farmer and his wife but finds no one at home when she delivers the completed structure. Instead, she finds open barn doors and the body of Elijah Wallace hanging in his barn. The sheriff, showing no interest, immediately concludes that Wallace's death was suicide, but Maple wants to convince him the man was murdered. He's not interested in her re-creation of the death scene as a nutshell miniature, but she pushes on when a young deputy seeks to work with her to uncover the truth.

Towles, Amor. [Table for Two: Fictions](#) (Penguin \$32). An Indie Next Pick: "This collection of stories and a novella is the perfect thing to tide over Amor Towles' legion of fans till the next novel. There's even an Evelyn Ross appearance, from *The Rules of Civility*, which is worth the price of admission alone." Also a

Library Reads pick: "Towles's literary fiction never disappoints. In this collection of short stories and a novella, readers will be entranced by his use of sophisticated and smart language to convey aspects of the human condition. Highly recommended for book clubs and lovers of short stories."

Vasilyuk, Sasha. [Your Presence Is Mandatory](#) (Bloomsbury \$28.99). A debut novel is based on true events about a Jewish Ukrainian veteran of World War II. When Yefin Shulman dies in 2007, his family discovers a letter to the KGB tucked in his briefcase. The letter contains a confession that changes everything they thought they knew about the man. Spanning the 1940s and Yefin's harrowing actions as an artilleryman on the border between the Soviet Union and Germany to the present-day Russia-Ukraine conflict, the story powerfully illustrates the terrible price people are forced to pay when caught under the brutality of totalitarianism and war.

Westerbeke, Douglas. [A Short Walk Through a Wide World](#) (Avid Reader \$28.99) is an epic novel charting the adventurous journey of one woman trying to outrun a mysterious curse that will destroy her if she stops moving. "Librarian Westerbeke combines elements of Vernian adventure and Borgesian fantasy in his enthralling debut about a woman who must travel constantly in order to survive. In 1885 Paris, nine-year-old Aubry Tourvel, suddenly racked with pain, begins bleeding from her eyes, nose, and lips. After visits to myriad doctors yield no diagnosis, trial and error proves she becomes deathly ill if she stays anywhere for more than a few days or visits the same location twice. Her mother joins her on the road for three years, until Aubry, seeing her exhaustion, steals away alone one night. Aubry, who eventually circles the globe five times.... Though she speaks openly about her strange affliction, she keeps to herself the moments when, facing dangers or impassable obstacles such as the Himalayan mountains, she finds doors to vast subterranean libraries in which time and space seem to loosen. Capturing each moment of Aubry's sweeping odyssey with extraordinary vividness, Westerbeke's poignant epic speaks to the challenges of knowing oneself and others in a world of endless change."—*PW* Starred Review

Wilson, Jeffrey/Brian Andrews. [Four Minutes](#) (Blackstone \$27.99). **From the authors taking on Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan, Sr, series from Marc Cameron comes a new military thriller of their own that can be signed May 23 when they come to sign [Tom Clancy Act of Defiance](#) (Putnam \$32).**

Special Operations Chief Tyler Brooks might not know quantum mechanics, or have an eidetic memory, but he is the very best in the world at one thing: leading covert ops. When an unpredictable enemy causes the catastrophic loss of his entire SEAL team, Brooks is recruited by Pat Moody to lead a new elite squad, Task Force Omega. Moody's promise—access to mind-bending tech that grants a glimpse of the future. Together with Navy Intelligence Specialist Zee Williams, Brooks leads a new kind of counterterrorism task force, one that collects intel from the future to stop attacks in the present. But there's a catch. Each mission can only last FOUR MINUTES. Stakes quickly escalate when Omega discovers an unprecedented future attack against America

Yuzuki, Asako. [Butter: A Novel of Food and Murder](#) (Harper \$28) is "the cult Japanese bestseller about a female gourmet

cook and serial killer, and the journalist intent on cracking her case, inspired by a true story. Gourmet cook Manako Kajii sits in the Tokyo Detention House convicted of the serial murders of lonely businessmen, whom she is said to have seduced with her delicious home cooking. The case has captured the nation's imagination, but Kajii refuses to speak with the press, entertaining no visitors. That is until journalist Rika Machida writes a letter asking for her recipe for beef stew, and Kajii can't resist writing back. Rika, the only woman in her news office, works late each night, rarely cooking more than ramen. As the visits unfold between her and the steely Kajii, they are closer to a master class in food than journalistic research. Rika hopes this gastronomic exchange will help her soften Kajii, but it seems that Rika might be the one changing in "A delectable meditation on appetite, fatphobia and misogyny in modern Japan – *Butter* is a salty morsel with one hell of a bite." — Alice Slater

OUR APRIL LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

Bannalec, Jean Luc. [The Body by the Sea](#) (\$18). The Starred Review says in part: "The suspicious death of Pierre Chaboseau, a cardiologist and general practitioner who takes a fatal fall from a restaurant balcony, drives Bannalec's intoxicating eighth Brittany mystery. The death occurs in the harbor town of Concarneau over Pentecost weekend when Commissaire Georges Dupin and his wife expect to entertain his in-laws and most of his investigators are away. Despite the skeleton crew, Dupin soon establishes the death was a homicide and begins to look into the victim's business dealings, particularly those with a pharmacist and a wine merchant.... Two very busy days include an explosion in the harbor, another murder, and Dupin frequently indulging his penchant for sampling food and drink. Bannalec smoothly blends the beauty and charm of the region into the whodunit plot. Readers will be ready to pack their bags and head to Brittany by the end of this one." See Some April Hardcovers for Dupin's next and if you have missed out, start with [Death in Brittany](#) (\$19.99) and [binge them all](#). Readers of Martin Walker could well become hooked on this part of France.

Barclay, Linwood. [The Lie Maker](#) (\$18.99) nails it in 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 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."—*PW* Starred Review. I concur and you can watch our discussion of last summer on our FB or YT channels.

Beanland, Rachel. [The House Is on Fire](#) (\$18.99) imagines how the (real) Richmond Theater fire, which killed 72 people on December 26, 1811, impacted several survivors, some more fictionalized than others. I tore through this devastating story in

a single sitting, gripped by depictions of the privileged theatergoers, the unfortunate cast and crew, the less fortunate audience members, and the shifting of blame—plus the search for a scapegoat. Fiona Davis nails it: "A riveting story that places the reader at the very heart of a devastating, true-life tragedy. Beanland has clearly done her research, and the effect is both heart wrenching and eye-opening, as unlikely heroes and unforgivable cowards add to the rich mosaic of a community torn apart in a single night. Enthralling."

Berry, IS. [The Peacock and the Sparrow](#) (\$17.99). This 2023 First Mystery Book of the Month (you can watch my interview of Berry with guest host Joe Kanon, or listen to it in our Podcasts) is up for several Awards including an Edgar, a Thriller, and a Barry.

It's the kind of spy novel that gets into the meticulous details of espionage which, in a digital age, is reverting to Old School to avoid hacks. "Berry's stint as a CIA officer lends a palpable veracity to this outstanding debut thriller. In 2012, 52-year-old CIA veteran Shane Collins is assigned to Bahrain's capital city of Manama during the Arab Spring uprisings there. His career is circling the drain, but his young station chief, Whitney Mitchell, is a star on the rise. In order to collect information that proves Iran is fueling the local revolution, Collins has riskily embedded a local agent in a volatile rebel group. Then Collins attends a gala where he's struck by a massive mosaic and again by the beautiful artist who created it, Almaisa. Shane begins a lengthy pursuit of Almaisa, and before long, he's juggling new love, a budding conscience about his work, and bloody complications with his revolutionary informant. The plot's many twists will captivate readers, and Berry's gorgeous prose is its own reward, with echoes of Le Carré and Graham Greene: "Wind whistled through the fortress like the laughing dead."

If you do not belong to our First Mystery Club, you should consider it.

✦ Fields, Helen. [The Institution](#) (\$18.99). We imported the UK hardcover last August as our British Crime Book of the Month. Here is the US edition, a paperback. John Mars calls it "An intense, fast paced, locked room thriller." Lisa Gardner adds, "Quite simply, wow! One of the best high concept thrillers I've read in forever. I raced through this riveting thriller in a single, breathless session of oh-my-God-what-is-going-to-happen-next." What happens is that Dr Connie Woolwine has five days to catch a killer. On a locked ward in the world's highest-security prison hospital, a scream shatters the night. The next morning, a nurse's body is found and her daughter has been taken. A ransom must be paid, and the clock is ticking. Forensic profiler Dr Connie Woolwine is renowned for her ability to get inside the mind of a murderer. Now, she must go deep undercover among the most deranged and dangerous men on earth and use her unique skills to find the baby – before it's too late. As the walls close in around her, can Connie get the killer before The Institution gets her?

Goldis, Jaclyn. [The Chateau](#) (\$17.99). Sex, lies, and secrets turn deadly in this modern-day tale built on classic plot devices. It asks us, "How well do we really know our friends? A stay at the sumptuous Chateau du Platane in Provence sounds like the perfect girls' trip—until it descends into deception and violence.... This book is a sensuous, suspenseful mystery threaded by topics that kept me musing well past the book's close: the dark secrets we keep in relationships, the insidious influence of wealth, the

lasting effects of generational trauma, and the healing nature of art. This story is an intense, intricate puzzlebox I couldn't put down."—Julia Bartz. Goldis lives in Israel and I'll be zooming with her about her new book [The Main Character](#) (Atria \$28.99), on May 23 at 12 PM PDT.

Koller Croft, Rachel. [Stone Cold Fox](#) (\$18). Bea, the scheming narrator of screenwriter Croft's engrossing debut, has learned from the best, a mother who groomed her from childhood how to deceive men. Now Bea, a senior business development director at a major New York City ad agency, wants it all for herself—and she wants it from über-wealthy one percenter Collin Case, an agency client. But two other women shadow Bea's every move as she sinks her nails into Collin's old-money family. One jaw-dropping bombshell after another emerges during luxurious family gatherings in Greenwich, Conn.; an over-the-top lobster-stuffed and liquor-drenched weekend marriage proposal party at Newport, R.I.; a French-themed bridal shower with "this little perverse sect of society"; and the extravagant Rainbow Room wedding itself, culminating in totally unexpected revelations from the past. The intricate plot, illuminating backstories, and assorted reprehensible secondary characters expose a devastatingly "pernicious interpretation of love." This clever tale of jealousy, revenge, deception, and betrayal marks Croft as a writer to watch and a must read for fans of Lisa Unger or Mary Kubica. Rachel returns to us with a new book in the fall.

Lehane, Dennis. [Small Mercies](#) (\$19.99). Impossible not to pick a Lehane. "Excellent and unflinching . . . [*Small Mercies*] has all the hallmarks of Lehane at his best: a propulsive plot, a perfectly drawn cast of working-class Boston Irish characters, razor-sharp wit and a pervasive darkness through which occasional glimmers of hope peek out like snowdrops in early spring . . . Lehane masterfully conveys how the past shapes the present, lingering even after the players are gone." — *New York Times Book Review*. Do watch Michael Koryta and me discuss it, his career, and why he's writing screen plays, not novels, with Lehane from last April.

Preston, Douglas. [Dead Mountain](#) (\$18.99). My absolute favorite of the Nora Kelly series for so many reasons including the fabulous and surprising locations in New Mexico, the instigating incident (horrific), the corrupt law enforcement, the chase, the totally unexpected solution to the deaths (nothing supernatural which is not always true in a Preston and Child thriller). And the interplay between archaeologist Nora and FBI Agent Corrie Swanson. This is truly a terrific old fashioned action story that grips from first to last.

We still have some Double Signed first prints: [Dead Mountain](#) (\$25) complete with trading card set. Why not spend that bit more for a lot more?

✉ Robinson, Peter. [Standing in the Shadows](#) (\$18.99). **I am sad that this paperback edition is the last we will have from the late Robinson who took Inspector Banks into the grave with him. Still, they go out in style, sent off with a Starred Review from someone besides me:**

"Bestseller Robinson's excellent 28th novel featuring DS Alan Banks interweaves the 1980 murder of college student Alice Poole with the discovery in 2019 of a man's body buried in an old farm about to be razed for a shopping center in Eastvale, Yorkshire. The earlier crime is related through the eyes of Poole's ex-boyfriend, Nicholas Hartley, who's haunted by the fact that no

one was charged with Poole's murder—and the obvious suspect, her then boyfriend, Mark Woodcroft, who disappeared without a trace. The narrative alternates between Hartley's lifelong interest in the case while he becomes a successful journalist and Banks leading his team, including Det. Sgt. Winsome Jackman and other regulars, in the dogged, needle-in-a-haystack search for the identity of the man buried on the farm and, ultimately, his killer. The story enables Robinson to delve deeply into Banks' backstory, including a stint undercover in London early in his career, along with policing and corruption from Thatcherite England to the present. As always in the Banks novels, readers will enjoy the details of pop culture and social history."

SOME APRIL LARGE PAPERBACKS

Anderson, Michelle Collins. [The Flower Sisters](#) (Kensington \$16.95). Daisy Flowers is fifteen in 1978 when her free-spirited mother dumps her in Possum Flats, Missouri. It's a town that sounds like road kill and, in Daisy's eyes, is every bit as dead. Sentenced to spend the summer living with her grandmother, the wry and irreverent town mortician, Daisy draws the line at working for the family business, Flowers Funeral Home. Instead, she maneuvers her way into an internship at the local newspaper where, sorting through the basement archives, she learns of a mysterious tragedy from fifty years earlier. . . . On a sweltering, terrible night in 1928, an explosion at the local dance hall left dozens of young people dead, shocking and scarring a town that still doesn't know how or why it happened. Listed among the victims is a name that's surprisingly familiar to Daisy, revealing an irresistible family connection to this long-ago accident. Obsessed with investigating the horrors and heroes of that night, Daisy soon discovers Possum Flats holds a multitude of secrets for a small town. And hardly anyone who remembers the tragedy is happy to have some teenaged hippie asking questions about it!

Brooks Dalton, Lily. [The Light Pirate](#) (\$18.99)" is equal parts prophecy, elegy, and revelation. *The Light Pirate* describes a world much like ours, one of rising seas and changing coastlines, and peers around the corner into the future to show us what awaits. How will human beings endure such loss? How will we mourn, and how will we persist? Lily Brooks-Dalton has captured the fragile beauty of our world, and our lives, with a tenderness that is both moving and galvanizing." —Anna Pitoniak

Brownlow, John. [Assassin Eighteen](#) (Hanover Square \$18.99). The winner of an Ian Fleming Steel Dagger Award carries on from [Agent Seventeen](#) (\$9.99), when the most infamous hit man in the world quit, with a search for Assassin Eighteen. But whoever wants to become Assassin Eighteen must first track Seventeen down and kill him. So when a bullet hits the glass inches from his face, he knows who fired it—doesn't he? It turns out that the sniper isn't the hardened killer he was expecting. It's Mireille—a mysterious silent child abandoned in the woods with instructions to pull the trigger. Reuniting with his spiky lover, Kat, Seventeen has to protect Mireille and discover who sent her to kill him and why. The answer will blow apart everything Seventeen thought he knew.

Chakraborty, Shannon. [The Adventures of Amina al-Sirafi](#) (\$19.99). Chakraborty gives us a pirate adventure with a charming and sarcastic female lead, the most lovable crew, and ancient magic. "Sheer perfection from start to finish — this is a guaranteed five star read!"—Indie Next.

Cleveland, Caroline. [When Cicadas Cry](#) (Union Square \$17.99). In this powerful debut by a South Carolina attorney, Zach Stander, a lawyer with a past, and Addie Stone, his indomitable detective and lover, find themselves entangled in secrets, lies, and murder in a small Southern town. A white woman has been bludgeoned to death with an altar cross in a rural church on Cicada Road in Walterboro, South Carolina. Sam Jenkins, a Black man, is found covered in blood, kneeling over the body. In a state already roiling with racial tension, this is not only a murder case, but a powder keg. A haunting cold case—Two young women are murdered on quiet Edisto Beach, an hour southeast of Walterboro, and the killer disappears without a trace. Thirty-four years later the mystery remains unsolved. Could there be a connection to Stander's case? A killer who's watching—Stander takes on Jenkins's defense, but he's up against a formidable solicitor with powerful allies. Worse, his client is hiding a bombshell secret.

Cole, Alyssa. [One of Us Knows](#) (\$18.99). Years after a breakdown and a diagnosis of dissociative identity disorder derailed her historical preservationist career, Kenetria Nash and her alters have been given a second chance they can't refuse: a position as resident caretaker of a historic home. I didn't like this novel but if you are interested in the disorder it's worth a read.

Dallas, Sandra. [Where Coyotes Howl](#) (\$19). It's 1916. The two-street town of Wallace is not exactly what Ellen Webster had in mind when she moved from Iowa to accept a teaching position in Wyoming, but within a year's time she's fallen in love—both with the High Plains and with a handsome cowboy named Charlie Bacon. Dallas writes their incredible love story, hitting the various high points and numerous hardships the couple experiences throughout the years. Overall, their love for each other endures.

Bryce, Denny S. [The Trial of Mrs. Rhinelander](#) (Kensington \$16.95). Inspired by a real-life scandal that was shocking even for the tumultuous Roaring Twenties New York. Born to English immigrants who've built a comfortable life, idealistic Alice Jones longs for the kind of true love her mother and father have. She believes she's found it with Leonard "Kip" Rhinelander, the shy heir to his prominent white family's real estate fortune. Alice, too, is white, though she is vaguely aware of rumors that question her ancestry—gossip her parents dismiss. But when the lovers secretly wed, Kip's father threatens his inheritance unless he annuls the marriage. Devastated but determined, Alice faces overwhelming odds legally and in the merciless court of public opinion. But there are two people who can either help her—or shatter her hopes for good. The fluidity of racial identity is still powerful today.

Donlea, Charlie. [Those Empty Eyes](#) (\$16.95). In 2013, when Alexandra Quinlan, was 17, she hid as her parents and 13-year-old brother were murdered by an intruder in their McIntosh, Va., home. Alexandra earned the nickname Empty Eyes as she was led out of her family's house in shock; the name stuck after she was arrested for the murders. Her case never went to trial, and she later won millions in a defamation lawsuit. Hounded by true-crime fanatics and unscrupulous tabloids, she changed her name to Alex Armstrong. In 2023, Alex works in Washington, D.C., as a legal investigator for Garrett Lancaster, the lawyer who won her defamation lawsuit and always believed her to be innocent. Alex's latest case involves Matthew Claymore, a business major

at McCormack University who is suspected in his girlfriend Laura McAllister's disappearance. Laura was working on a story of campus rape and murder... What will Alex learn as Laura's death is investigated?

✦ Fellowes, Jessica. [The Mitford Secret](#) (\$19). Private detective Louisa Sullivan, the Mitford's former nursemaid, reunites in 1941 with the family at Chatsworth, their new home in the English countryside, which serves as a refuge for Louisa and her five-year-old daughter from the bombing of London. Then an old woman appears at Chatsworth, Mrs. Hoole, who claims to have a message for the youngest Mitford sister, Deborah, from the other side, directing Deborah to search the house's vestibule. Those in attendance go along with the request, and Louisa finds a bloodstained maid's cap hidden behind a wall panel. Mrs. Hoole eventually reveals the cap's connected to the disappearance and likely murder of Joan Dorries, who was in service with her and vanished more than 25 years earlier. A fresh murder, which seems clearly linked to Joan's fate, injects even more life into the cold case. Fellowes neatly balances period detail and fair cluing.

Heng, Rachel. [The Great Reclamation](#) (\$18). Indie Next finds this to be "An epic historical fiction in an area most Americans know little about. Ah Boon and Siok Mei's paths diverge between fighting oppression and moving Singapore into the 'modern' world. So many relevant issues in this thought-provoking read."

Henry, Patti Callahan. [The Secret Book of Flora Lea](#) (\$17.99). The Indie Next Pick calls this "pure magic about the power of story, the bond between sisters, hope, perseverance, mystery, and an unexpected twist. Not to be missed, it may be Patti Callahan Henry's best yet!"

Jackson, Joshilyn. [With My Little Eye](#) (\$18.99). When a former sitcom star begins to receive explicit and violent letters from a deranged fan, she decides to leave Los Angeles and return to Georgia her almost-13-year-old daughter, Honor, who has autism. After all there are fewer roles open to a woman in her 40s. So she's juggling men and an escalating stalker and Honor's foibles, including the fact that she's adopted a "stray cat" (actually a homeless girl). "Beneath this thrilling, breakneck story of an actress being pursued by a mysterious stalker (his lurid "fan" notes alone will compel you to lock your doors), there's smart, savage humor and incisive questions—about courage and fear, forgiveness and revenge, and the murky, complicated business of telling and keeping secrets."—Abbott Kahler

Jennett, Meagan. [You Know Her](#) (\$19). Here's a crackling cat-and-mouse thriller set against the verdant backdrop of small-town Virginia. Two hours before he vanished, Mark Dixon stole a glass of wine. That's what bartender Sophie Braam tells the cops when they question her about the customer whose mutilated body has just been found. What she doesn't tell them is that she's the one who killed him. Officer Nora Martin is new to the Bellair Police Department and is trying very hard to learn the ropes from Detective Murphy while ignoring all her male colleagues griping about a diversity hire. When she meets Sophie, they build an uneasy camaraderie over shared frustrations. As winter slides into spring and bodies start piling up, Nora begins to suspect that something's not quite right with the unnerving, enigmatic bartender. But will she be able to convince Murph, or will he keep laughing off the idea that the serial killer haunting their little town is a woman?

Massey, Sujata. [The Mistress of Bhatia House](#) (\$16.95). Set in 1922 India, Perveen Mistry, Bombay's only female solicitor, volunteers to defend a young ayah who has been arrested for inducing her own abortion. The woman denies she was ever pregnant, and as Perveen investigates, she slowly uncovers corruption, fraud, and possibly murder, all tied to the misappropriation of funds raised for a women's hospital. Things get more complicated when Perveen's sister-in-law, suffering from severe postpartum depression, leaves her newborn with Perveen's parents and goes home to her mother. The complex mystery sometimes takes a backseat to Massey's deep dive into social issues during the Raj, especially the lack of rights for women of all classes. [This historical mystery series](#) is well worth reading from the beginning.

McFadden, Freida. [One By One](#) (Sourcebooks \$17.99). Claire Matchett needs this trip. It will be a break from work and raising children. A chance to repair her damaged marriage. A week of hiking and hot tubbing with friends at a luxurious hotel in the woods, disconnected from the pressures of real life. Then, on a lonely dirt road, Claire's minivan breaks down. With no cell reception, the group has no choice but to walk the rest of the way to their remote accommodation. But the forest is dark and difficult to navigate and, hours later, they are lost. Hopelessly lost. As they venture deeper into the woods, the members of their party are struck down mysteriously, one by one. Are they being hunted? And by what—or who? As Claire's dream vacation descends into a nightmare, something becomes clear: only one of them will return home alive.

Morrison, Robbie. [Cast a Cold Eye](#) (Random \$18). Glasgow, 1933. Murder is nothing new in the Depression-era city, especially to war veterans Inspector Jimmy Dreghorn and his partner, "Bonnie" Archie McDaid. But the dead man found in a narrowboat on the Forth and Clyde Canal, executed with a single shot to the back of the head, is no ordinary killing. "This is Peaky Blinders territory. . . . Packed with dramatic action and unforgettable characters, it casts a hypnotic spell and stirs the blood."—*Daily Mail*

Morton, Kate. [Homecoming](#) (\$19.99). It's Christmas Eve 1959, and patriarch Thomas Turner is abroad on business, leaving behind his wife, Isabel, and their four children. One day, neighbor Percy Summers happens upon the family while riding his horse. At first, it appears they're resting on blankets after a swim, but upon closer inspection, he realizes they're dead and that baby Thea is missing from her basket. A painstaking investigation begins, and Percy is grilled by a detective who was brought in from out of town. Morton then cuts to 2018 as journalist Jess Turner leaves her London home to travel back to Adelaide after her grandmother, Nora, injures herself in a bad fall. At Nora's house, she finds an old book about the unresolved Turner deaths and discovers the family's connection to her own. Jess's gripping inquiry into what happened brings up staggering revelations. Along the way, there are beautiful descriptions of the region's landscape and canny insights into the neighborhood's tight-knit community.

Nakamura, Fuminori. [The Rope Artist](#) (\$16.95). 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. "Nakamura specializes in combining elements from disparate genres. . . . The book mixes the tropes and trappings of a noir novel with the tortured perceptions of a Poe protagonist and the cruel pleasures of the Marquis de Sade."—Tom Nolan, *The Wall Street Journal*

Nesbø, Jo. [Killing Moon](#) (\$18). Even at the 13th in this detective series, Jo Nesbø's writing pulls no punches. At rock bottom in Los Angeles, Harry is drowning in alcohol, having lost everything dear to him. However, a lucrative offer beckons him back to Oslo, where as a private detective he can save the life of a woman he recently met. The case involves a sadistic serial killer. So Harry promptly assembles the Aune Group, a cadre of four helpers even more disreputable than him, and sets them to work to find a disturbed killer who calls himself Prim.

Patterson, James/Brendan DuBois. [Countdown](#) (\$19.99). Undercover CIA Agent Amy Cornwall excels at working from the shadows—until a botched field operation reveals dark dealings between her bosses and an informant. And a hidden plot by a terrorist genius that could kill thousands of Americans. Among them: her husband and daughter. She has to go dark. The Division wants to erase her. And they know every detail about her identity, her history, and her family.

✦ Penner, Sarah. [The London Séance Society](#) (\$18.99). In 1873, 20-year-old Evie Wickes, a student of the medium Madame Vaudeline D'Allaire, who specializes in contacting those who are victims of murder to help families solve the mystery, is murdered on All Hallows Eve. Her older sister, Lenna, who is 23, becomes an intern with Vaudeline in order to solve the mystery of her sister's murder. This Gothic Victorian tale begins by drawing the reader into an interrupted séance, and then alternates perspectives between Lenna and Mr. Morley, vice president of the London Séance Society's Department of Spiritualism. If you're looking for a feminist Gothic, go no further.

✦ Slater, Alice. [Death of a Bookseller](#) (\$16.95) is not a cozy but the story of two frenemies who share an antagonistic obsession with true crime. Brogan Roach and Laura Bunting meet when the new manager of the failing London bookstore branch at which caustic Roach has long worked hires chipper Laura to boost sales. The women are like oil and water: Roach wears only black and is obsessed with true crime, while Laura sports colorful berets and thinks true crime is "tacky, exploitative crap." But when Roach learns that Laura writes poetry about murder victims because her mother fell prey to a notorious serial killer, Roach starts stalking Laura, desperate to convince her they share a "dark connection." The harder Roach tries, the more her misguided actions repulse and terrify Laura, locking the two in a dangerous downward spiral that threatens mutual destruction.

✦ Thomas, Will. [Heart of the Nile](#) (\$19). Cyrus Barker, along with his former assistant and now partner Thomas Llewelyn, is the premier enquiry agent in all of Victorian London, and beyond. In 1893, a volunteer at the British Museum makes a startling discovery. When examining a mummy in the museum's

collection, he discovers there is a giant ruby in the shape of a heart buried in the mummy's chest of a mummy. Even more startling, the mummy might well be Cleopatra. The following morning, the volunteer is found floating in the Thames and the ruby has gone missing. Hired by the victim's wife to learn the truth behind his death, Barker and Llewelyn find themselves in the crosshairs, avoiding a violent street gang, a ruthless collector, and the British Museum itself in order to find the killer and safeguard the gem. May I say I truly hoped the first victim would not be murdered and I still felt that way at the end. For the sequel see *Signed Books* and come and see Will on May 2 here at The Pen.

Valentine, Danielle. [A Delicate Condition](#) (\$16.99). Anna Victoria Alcott is desperate to have a family. But as she tries to balance her increasingly public life as an indie actress with a grueling IVF journey, she starts to suspect that someone is going to great lengths to make sure that never happens. Crucial medicines are lost. Appointments get swapped without her knowledge. Cryptic warnings have her jumping at shadows. And despite everything she's gone through to make this pregnancy a reality, not even her husband is willing to believe that someone is playing twisted games with her. Then her doctor tells her she's had a miscarriage—except Anna's convinced she's still pregnant. “A frightening, propulsive read brimming with brutal truths about motherhood, autonomy, and the everyday horror of not being believed. This twisty horror thriller will have you guessing until the staggering end.” —Rachel Harrison

✂ Wallace, Joanna. [You'd Look Better As a Ghost](#) (Penguin \$18). The night after her father's funeral, Claire meets Lucas in a bar. Lucas doesn't know it, but it's not a chance meeting. One thoughtless mistyped email has put him in the crosshairs of an extremely put-out serial killer. But before they make eye contact, before Claire lets him buy her a drink—even before she takes him home and carves him up into little pieces—something about that night is very wrong. Because someone is watching Claire. Someone who is about to discover her murderous little hobby. The thing is, it's not sensible to tangle with a part-time serial killer, even one who is distracted by attending a weekly bereavement support group and trying to get her art career off the ground. Will Claire finish off her blackmailer before her pursuer reveals all? Let the games begin in this darkly comic debut. This is the US edition of the UK signed hardcover we sold out of last year.

Walls, Jeannette. [Hang the Moon](#) (\$18). Indie Next calls it “A rollicking adventure set in the Virginia mountains during Prohibition, starring the unforgettable Sallie Kincaid. To say she is bold and fearless would be unjust to her wit and vulnerability. This is a fun and thrilling read.”

OUR APRIL SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Bentley, Don. [The Forgotten War](#) (\$10.99). Matt Drake #4. As a team, Matt Drake and his partner, Frodo, have watched each other's backs through some very dark days. But one thing they've never doubted was their commitment to each other...until now. Frodo has been accused of a war crime ten years after leaving Afghanistan. Matt is determined to prove his friend innocent, but what will he do when he finds that his closest friend has secrets he won't share?

Collins, Megan. [The Family Plot](#) (\$10.99). When her twin brother's body is found in the family plot, 26-year-old Delilah returns home to her true crime-obsessed family where she, grappling with her own grief and horror, realizes that her eccentric family and their mansion itself may hold the key to the truth.

Connelly, Michael. [Desert Star](#) (\$10.99). Harry Bosch #24. LAPD detective Renée Ballard and Harry Bosch team up to hunt the brutal killer who is Bosch's “white whale”—a man responsible for the murder of an entire family.

Thor, Brad. [Dead Fall](#) (\$10.99). Scott Harvath #22. America's top spy is sent to war-torn Ukraine after a Russian military unit comprised of violent, insane criminals conscripted from their worst prisons and mental asylums goes rogue.

Turow, Scott. [The Suspect](#) (\$10.99). Kindle County #12. Investigating the high-profile case of police chief Lucia Gomez, who is accused of soliciting sex for promotions to higher ranks, P.I. Clarice “Pinky” Granum must unravel the dark secrets of the people closest to Gomez, drawing her into the deepest recesses of the city's criminal networks.

APRIL SMALL PAPERBACKS

Andrews, Mary Kay. [The Homewreckers](#) (\$9.99). While starring on a beach house renovation reality show called “The Homewreckers,” Hattie Kavanaugh is drawn into a mystery—and an unexpected romantic triangle—when, during the demolition, evidence is unearthed about a long-ago crime.

James, Miranda. [Hiss Me Deadly](#) (\$9.99). Cat in the Stacks #15. When a former classmate returns to Athena to work with local college music students, Charlie and his cat, Diesel, investigate after a band member is murdered.

Kelly, Diane. [FourAlarm Homicide](#) (St Martins \$9.99). House-Flipper #6. Managing to acquire a rundown townhouse at the behest of Joanna Hartzell, who lives next door to the eyesore, carpenter Whitney and her cousin Buck, when Joanna turns up dead, suspect foul play and must put the clues together to nail down a killer.

King, Stephen. [The Dead Zone](#) (\$11.99). Reissue. A reluctant clairvoyant man who must weigh his options when he suddenly sees the terrible future awaiting mankind.

Levine, Laura. [Death by Smoothie](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Jaine Austen #19. Freelance writer Jaine Austen and her cat Prozac investigate the attempted murder of a demanding actress set to star in a play based on a short-lived zombie sitcom.

Meier, Leslie. [Mother of the Bride Murder](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Lucy Stone #29.

When her daughter Elizabeth's impending fairytale wedding in France to Jean-Luc Schoen-Rene is marred by murder, reporter and jet-lagged mother-of-the-bride Lucy Stone, to protect her family, vows to expose a killer among a list of worldly jilted lovers and potential criminal masterminds.

Scottoline, Lisa. [Look Again](#) (\$9.99). Reissue. Reporter Ellen Gleeson is on a quest to determine whether her adopted son and the boy in a “Have You Seen This Child?” flyer are one and the same.

Sowden, Stephanie. [After Everything You Did](#) (Canelo \$9.99). The story ends with a car crash. Two women, both maimed, their long blonde hair matted with blood. It begins with one woman waking up, in an unfamiliar hospital bed. Bright lights, nurses... and handcuffs.

Topping, Zac. [Wake of War](#) (\$9.99). When the Revolutionary Front takes control of Salt Lake City, Army soldier James Trent finds himself on the front lines, fighting for something he doesn't even know if he believes in, and goes up against a female sharpshooter fueled by revenge against the government.

Tremblay, Paul. [The Pallbearers Club](#) (\$9.99). A volunteer pallbearer for poorly attended funerals, Art Barbara, a 17-year-old loner in the 1980s, meets a cool girl who has an obsessive knowledge of strange, terrifying things that he tries to make sense of years later while writing a book that she begins making cuts to.