

# BOOKNEWS from

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## HOT SUMMER READING

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.

### SUNDAY JUNE 30 2:00 PM Live

#### Historicon with John

**Christina Dodd** discusses [A Daughter of Fair Verona](#)

(Kensington \$28)

**Liana de la Rosa** discusses [Isabel and the Rogue](#) (Penguin \$19)

**Dianne Freeman** discusses [The Art Lovers Guide to Paris and Murder](#) (Kensington \$27)

Our July Historical Fiction Book of the Month

### MONDAY JULY 1 1:00 PM

**Lauren Kate** discusses [What's in a Kiss](#) (Berkley \$19)

A romantic comedy with a magical kiss redo

### MONDAY JULY 1 4:00 PM

**Michael Robotham** discusses [Storm Child](#) (Scribner \$28)

Signed UK edition: [Storm Child](#) (Sphere UK \$46)

Psychologist Cyrus Haven

### MONDAY JULY 1 5:30 PM

**Kathryn Lasky** discusses [Mortal Radiance](#) (Seymour House \$29.99)

The 2nd Georgia O'Keeffe Mystery

Signed books in stock

### TUESDAY JULY 2 5:00 PM

**Richard Lange** discusses [Joe Hustle](#) (Little Brown \$29)

A new and nuanced neo-noir

Signed books in stock

### HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY

We are closed to celebrate the holiday

### MONDAY JULY 8 CANCELLED

A family illness cancels the tour

We have unsigned copies for you

We'll hold the preorders for now but can't accept more

**Linda Castillo** discusses [The Burning](#) (St Martins \$28)

### TUESDAY JULY 9 7:00 PM Live Book Launch

**Peng Shepherd** discusses [All This and More](#) (Harper \$29.99)

Can a woman rewrite every mistake she's ever made?

As part of the Q&A please share the one choice you would make differently... if you dare

### WEDNESDAY JULY 10 12:00 PM

**Matthew Hart** discusses [The Lucifer Cut](#) (Pegasus \$27.95)

A rocket propelled thriller through the modern diamond trade and quantum mechanics

Signed books in stock

### WEDNESDAY JULY 10 7:00 PM Live

**Eric Jay Dolin with Karen Odden**—slide show too

**Dolin** discusses [Left for Dead](#) (Liveright \$29.99)

The true story of five castaways abandoned on the Falkland Islands during the War of 1812—plus his books on pirates

### THURSDAY JULY 11 11:00 AM

**Donna Leon** discusses [A Refiner's Fire](#) (Grove \$28)

Commissario Guido Brunetti #33 but it stands alone too

Signed books available

Signed UK edition [A Refiner's Fire](#) (Heinemann \$44)

### THURSDAY JULY 11 5:00 PM

**Connie Berry** discusses [A Collection of Lies](#) (Crooked Lane \$30.99)

Love this series; the print is very small in this edition

### FRIDAY JULY 12 7:00 PM Live

**Sarah Beth Durst and Rebecca Thorne**

**Come for the fantasy and the beautiful books**

**Durst** discusses [The Spellshop](#) (Tor \$29.99)

A gorgeous hardcover edition featuring lavender sprayed edges!

**Local author Thorne** discusses [Can't Spell Treason Without Tea](#) (Tor \$19.99)

With beautiful jade sprayed edges and brand-new original art!

### SATURDAY JULY 13 6:00 PM Live

**Daniel Silva** discusses [Death in Cornwall](#) (Harper \$29.99)

Gabriel Allon investigates murder and art fraud

Location: Scottsdale United Methodist Church 4014 N Miller Road 85251

Free to attend

**This event will not be streamed so come in person**

### OUR JULY BOOKS OF THE MONTH SO FAR

We select a book and charge it to you. Free shipping to US Customers.

**It's a Book in a Box treat each month. We do ask that you sign up for a minimum of 3 months.**

Email [Karen@poisonedpen.com](mailto:Karen@poisonedpen.com) to join

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

Pooley, Clare. [How to Age Dis-Gracefully](#)

**Cozy Crimes Club** One Unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Byron, Ellen. [A Very Woodsy Murder](#)

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

Silva, Daniel. [A Death in Cornwall](#)

**First Mystery Club** One Signed First Printing per month

Jade, Carinn. [The Astrology House](#)

**Hardboiled/Noir Club** One Signed First Printing per month  
Lange, Richard. [Joe Hustle](#)

**History/Mystery Club** One First Printing per month  
Freeman, Dianne. [The Art Lovers Guide to Paris and Murder](#)

**Historical Fiction Paperback Club** One Unsigned paperback per month

De la Rosa, Lianne. [Anna Maria and the Fo](#)

**xNotable New Fiction** One Signed First Printing per month  
Wroblewski, David. [Familiaris](#)

**Romance and Relationships** One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Dubb, Sarah T. [Birding with Benefits](#)

### A FEW NEW SIGNED BOOKS FOR EARLY JULY

Brennan, Allison. [You'll Never Find Me](#) (Mira \$30) “is classic Allison Brennan with a fresh twist. The Angelhart family of private investigators are whip-smart, courageous characters willing to work outside the system when necessary to help those whom the system has failed. You can't help but root for them, especially the truly compelling Margo, a former Marine, sharp investigator, and at odds with her mother and three siblings who run the Angelhart PI Agency while Margo works free lance. All of them narrative the story as does at least one bad guy, an abusive cop, and one trainee who is not family. Brennan faces you with a complicated set of cases where marital discord merges into corporate espionage, doling out just the right amount of family drama while moving the story effortlessly between the investigations. “Coupled with the unique Arizona setting, chilling villains, and Brennan's signature snappy prose, this is the beginning of a fabulous new series set in Phoenix” for an author who moved to here to the Valley of the Sun a few years ago.

Carr, Jack. [Red Sky Mourning](#) (Atria \$29.99). Think Tom Clancy's *The Hunt for Red October* mixed with the classic 1964 film *Fail Safe*. An odd combination spurred by a rogue Chinese nuclear submarine steaming toward the United States with the most hostile intentions imaginable. Speaking of odd combinations, the country's only hope for survival lies in the tenuous connection between one man and one machine. The man is the stalwart James Reece who has withdrawn from the fight he's been part of too long, and the machine is an AI supercomputer of questionable loyalties. With the clock ticking down to doomsday, Reece finds himself, quite literally, the only man who can save the world.

Castillo, Linda. [The Burning](#) (St Martins \$28). **Family illness causes Linda's tour to cancel but we'll hold onto our copies for awhile in case we can ship them to her.**

Painters Mill, Ohio, Police Chief Kate Burkholder's colleagues find the charred body of 36-year-old Milan Swanz bound to a stake in the middle of the woods. Milan had a

reputation for drunkenness and disorderly conduct, but Kate is still surprised to learn that he'd divorced his wife and been excommunicated from local Amish community a few months earlier. Investigating, Kate learns that hot-tempered Milan had made several enemies in recent years, including Kate's brother, Jacob. When one of Milan's neighbors claims to have seen Milan and Jacob in a physical altercation days before Milan was killed, the county sheriff arrests Jacob for Milan's murder, despite Kate's protests. Though she's taken off the case, she remains determined to prove her brother's innocence, and pulls her husband, an agent with the OBCI, into an off-the-books investigation—which she continues even when a masked stranger threatens her. “Well-shaded characters, near-perfect pacing, and a fascinating glimpse into Ohio's Amish community mark this as another winner for Castillo,” in a series that is a true favorite for me. And wish we could raise a toast to Linda's double win at the 2024 Edgars.

Cobb, May. [The Hollywood Assistant](#) (Berkley \$29). When Cassidy Foster's film producer best friend offers her a job working for director Nate Sterling and his supermodel-turned-actor wife, Marisol Torres, it sounds too good to be true: she'll make a handsome salary and be in proximity to some of L.A.'s brightest stars. But Cassidy soon discovers that in the privacy of their Malibu mansion, Nate and Marisol's relationship is far more tempestuous than it appears in the tabloids. In spite of herself, Cassidy falls for Nate, and agrees when he asks her to tail Marisol and find out if she's cheating on him. Four weeks later, in flash-forward chapters sprinkled throughout the narrative, homicide detectives come knocking at Cassidy's door with news that one of her employers has been killed, and Cassidy waffles over whether to come forward with crucial information related to the case.

Cogman, Genevieve. [Elusive](#) (Tor UK \$44). Revolutionary France is full of blood and bite as the League of the Scarlet Pimpernel faces vampires vying for power in the thrilling sequel to [Scarlet](#) (\$17). Eleanor, once a lowly English maid, is now a member of the League of the Scarlet Pimpernel, known for their

daring deeds and rescuing aristocrat vampires from the guillotine. Eleanor and the League are investigating the disappearance of Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand, the notorious French statesman and diplomat. But they soon uncover two vampire parties feuding for power, and learn that Talleyrand's disappearance is part of a bigger, more dangerous scheme

Copenhagen, John. [Hall of Mirrors](#) (Pegasus \$27.95). Our signed books just arrived so here's another review: In May 1954, Lionel Kane witnesses his apartment engulfed in flames with his lover and writing partner, Roger Raymond, inside. Police declare it a suicide due to gas ignition, but Lionel refuses to believe Roger was suicidal. A month earlier, Judy Nightingale and Philippa Watson attend a lecture by Roger and, being eager fans, befriend him. He has just been fired from his day job at the State Department, another victim of the Lavender Scare, an anti-gay crusade led by figures like Senator Joseph McCarthy and J. Edgar Hoover, claiming homosexuals are security risks. Meanwhile, Judy and Philippa are on a manhunt of their own. They have been tracking their old enemy Adrian Bogdan, a spy and vicious serial killer protected by powerful forces in the government. Frustrated, they send their research to the media and their favorite mystery writer anonymously, hoping to inspire someone to publish on the crimes. This is an excellent book for fans of Lev AC Rosen's [Lavender House](#) (\$17.99) set in 1950s San Francisco, a true staff favorite.

Davis, Lindsey. [Death on the Tiber](#) (Hodder \$44). First century Rome is plagued by all the evils that have beset major cities since time immemorial: crime, corruption, squalor, and worst of all, tourists. When a barge full of those entitled creatures arrives in Rome, they hit all the touristy hot-spots (the Amphitheatre, the Capitol, the dodgy bars with dubious entertainments) before departing for the next destination – leaving behind one of their party, dead and floating in the Tiber. While the authorities first try to pass her death off as a suicide, it's quickly proved that the victim strangled to death and her body dumped. When Flavia Albia, a private informer, learns that the victim was in Rome searching for the man who abandoned her, Florius, Albia's vicious nemesis, Albia is determined to find out the truth behind the murder and finally have her revenge, which leads to a brutal gang war.... Unsigned US [Death on the Tiber](#) (St Martins \$29) due mid July.

Dean, Will. [The Chamber](#) (Hodder UK \$40). *And Then There Were None* meets *The Last Breath* in this tense and suspenseful locked-room thriller. Six experienced saturation divers are locked inside a hyperbaric chamber. Calm and professional, they know that rapid decompression would be fatal and so they work in shifts, breathing helium, and surviving in hot, close quarters. Then one of them is found dead in his bunk. With four days of decompression to go before the locked hatch to the chamber can be safely opened, the group must watch one another's backs at all times. And when another diver is discovered unresponsive, everyone is on edge. What...or who...is taking them out one by one? The US edition [The Chamber](#) (\$18.99) is an Unsigned paperback for August when the author, who lives in the deep woods in Sweden, will zoom with me.

Dodd, Christina. [A Daughter of Fair Verona](#) (Kensington \$28). Once upon a time a young couple met and fell in love. You probably know that story, and how it ended (hint: badly). Only here's the thing: That's not how it ended at all. Romeo

and Juliet are alive and well and the parents of seven kids. I'm the oldest, with the emphasis on 'old'—a certified spinster at twenty, and happy to stay that way. It's not easy to keep your taste for romance with parents like mine. Picture it—constant monologues, passionate declarations, fighting, making up, making out...it's exhausting. Each time they've presented me with a betrothal, I've set out to find the groom-to-be a more suitable bride. After all, someone sensible needs to stay home and manage this household. But their latest match, Duke Stephano, isn't so easy to palm off on anyone else. The debaucher has had three previous wives—all of whom met unfortunate ends. Kristan Hannah calls this "Fun, funny, charming, and absolutely delightful."

Dolin, Eric Jay. [Left for Dead](#) (Liveright \$29.99) unspools a fraught encounter on the Falkland Islands during the War of 1812. "This stunning account of shifting fortunes is riven with tension on every page, as Dolin provides detailed descriptions of bickering and backstabbing, tricky nautical maneuvers, and desperate survival techniques. It's an edge-of-your-seat adventure."—*PW* Starred Review. And "Personal and political dynamics are also at the heart of a Robinson Crusoe-level tale of survival shot through with mind-boggling, Russian-doll levels of treachery and betrayal... Dolin does an excellent job of bringing clarity to a story with permutations as complex as the coastline of the Falkland Islands. The twists and turns keep coming among a memorable cast of castaways. Copious photos and illustrations of local flora, fauna, as well as sites and principal players, are a welcome enhancement to a tale that barely needs it."—*The Globe and Mail* (Canada). So if you're a fan of Patrick O'Brian or JH Gelernter or waiting for the September Clive Cussler—[Ghost Soldier](#) (Putnam \$32)—Dolin's work is for you.

Durst, Sarah Beth. [The Spellshop](#) (Tor \$29.99). The No 1 Library Reads Pick for July gets this rave: "With her city and library under siege, Kiela and her sentient spider plant escape to the island of Caltrey with only the basic supplies and some magical books. Preferring her own company and books to people, she must learn to trust her new community as she rebuilds her family home and her life. This sweet cottagecore novel is pure delight." I think whimsy for summer is wonderful!!

The Indie Next Pick adds, "This cottagecore cozy fantasy absolutely ran away with my heart. It features a librarian more comfortable with books than people, a sentient spiderplant, stolen spellbooks, mythical creatures, found family, and jam." I looked it up: "Cottagecore is an internet aesthetic and design style that celebrates a simple, sustainable, and romantic lifestyle in the countryside."

Freeman, Dianne. [An Art Lovers Guide to Paris and Murder](#) (Kensington \$27). Can't visit Paris for the Olympics this summer? Then go back in time to the 1900 Paris World's Fair in our **July Historical Mystery of the Month**, signed here June 30. It is a whirl of a tour but in depth of the city. "Freeman's superbly plotted seventh Victorian cozy finds Frances Hazelton and her husband, George, tracking down a killer in the City of Light. The action kicks off when George's aunt Julia requests that he and Frances come to Paris from England to investigate the suspicious death of her former lover and fellow artist, Paul Ducasse. After they arrive during the World's Fair, Frances learns that George has kept several secrets for his aunt, including the existence of Julia and Paul's illegitimate daughter, Lisette. When Julia dies in an apparent

accident at the fair, George inherits her estate. Overwhelmed, he and Frances launch an investigation....”—*PW* Starred Review

✦ Griffiths, Elly. [Man in Black Stories](#) (Quercus \$42). In the title story, Ruth Galloway crosses paths with a mysterious man in a bookstore, setting in motion a rescue mission that hinges on the legends and lore of Norfolk. Then come ghost stories, cozy mysteries, tales of psychological suspense, and poignant vignettes of love and loss. Unsigned US edition not until mid-October.

✦ Grossman, Lev. [The Bright Sword](#) (Penguin \$35). A gifted young knight named Collum arrives at Camelot to compete for a spot on the Round Table, only to find that he's too late. The king died two weeks ago at the Battle of Camlann, leaving no heir, and only a handful of the knights of the Round Table survive. They aren't the hero's of legend, like Lancelot or Gawain. They're the oddballs of the Round Table, from the edges of the stories, like Sir Palomides, the Saracen Knight, and Sir Dagonet, Arthur's fool, who was knighted as a joke. They're joined by Nimue, who was Merlin's apprentice until she turned on him and buried him under a hill. Together this ragtag fellowship will set out to rebuild Camelot in a world that has lost its balance. But Arthur's death has revealed Britain's fault lines and before they can restore Camelot they'll have to learn the truth of why the lonely, brilliant King Arthur fell. The Library Reads Pick adds, "The multiple points of view and diverse characters are engrossing."

✦ Harkness, Deborah. [The Black Bird Oracle](#) (Headline \$46) ushers in a thrilling new era for Diana, an Oxford scholar and powerful witch, as she navigates marriage to the vampire Matthew and motherhood, while reckoning with dark secrets from her family's storied past. There's no better time to get swept up in the romance, adventure, and magic of the All Souls world, beginning with [A Discovery of Witches](#) (\$19).”—*Bustle*. Signed US edition: [The Black Bird Oracle](#) (Random \$32)

Hart, Matthew. [The Lucifer Cut](#) (Pantheon \$27.95). In Hart's exhilarating third adventure for U.S. Treasury agent Alex Turner, the former jewel thief goes on a globe-trotting quest to keep a powerful counterfeiting technology out of foreign hands. When prominent Upper East Side diamond merchant Lou Fine and his wife, Coco, are murdered in their home, the ensuing investigation reveals that Lou utilized a mysterious process to manufacture and sell undetectable fake diamonds. In the wake of that discovery, Alex's cohorts at the Treasury call him in to discuss the partnership between his girlfriend, multimillionaire diamond thief Lily, and Xi Mei, a well-connected Chinese woman who operates a diamond mine. Evidence suggests that Mei—and, by extension, the Chinese—are attempting to harness the fake diamond technology to get a leg up in the global economy. Alex embarks on an international quest to locate the technology's source, encountering double agents and hidden motives at every turn. I love Hart's thrillers and agree with *Booklist*: "The story is exciting and suspenseful, and Hart knows his stuff, having spent years writing about the diamond trade. This tale has a ring of truth about it that you just can't fake. Recommend it to everyone who enjoys a good, fast-paced thriller." Plus you will really learn a lot while having fun.

Hart, Rob. [Assassins Anonymous](#) (Putnam \$28). For those missing the hitmen of Lawrence Block and Donald E. Westlake, try this one from Hart. If Carl Hiaasen decided to pen a high-action thriller, this would be it. The blend is perfect and the sparse

prose and snappy dialogue give Hart a refreshing and welcome voice. There's some Donald Westlake bite lurking here, along with a touch of Don Winslow cool. Plus it gives a whole new meaning to the Twelve-step Program. That's because righteous assassin Mark (only first names in the program, remember!) is trying to kick his killing habit. AKA "Pale Horse" Mark's body count rivals John Wick's from at least one of the four Keanu Reeves films, so he understandably is ready to hang up his guns as opposed to the bottle. Unfortunately, his past won't let him and the result is a frantic, nonstop, blood-splattered global romp in which Hart's well-placed humor hits the bulls-eye as neatly as Mark's bullets.

Jade, Carinn. [The Astrology House](#) (Atria \$27.99). Margot needs a minute. She's been working eighty-hour weeks as a newly minted partner at her law firm. She's disconnected from her brother, the only family she has left. And she's still not pregnant after years of trying. Stars Harbor Astrological Retreat promises rest, relaxation, and wisdom for Margot and her friends. With Instagram-worthy views and nightly astrology readings in an impeccably restored waterfront Victorian house, this getaway should be nothing but idyllic fun. For Margot's brother, Adam, it's the perfect opportunity to rekindle the romance that fuels his writing. But his wife, Aimee, hides the darkness of her past with a beautiful social media feed. Their friend, Farah, is a successful doctor who cannot admit that she's losing control. Yet no one holds a greater secret than their astrologer host, Rini. She has a plan for all of her guests, especially one. Those who liked Katy Hays' [The Cloisters](#) (\$17.99) will have fun with our **July First Mystery Book of the Month**.

Lange, Richard. [Joe Hustle](#) (Little Brown \$29) is a "neo-noir" about an ex-con falling for a wounded woman and going on the run. Joe Hustle is a survivor. A Gulf War vet and ex-con always one stumble away from catastrophe, he manages to scrape together enough money from various jobs to eke out a precarious existence on the darker fringes of Los Angeles. When he meets Emily, the black-sheep daughter of a wealthy family, the two spark an instant connection—she seems like the best thing to happen to him in a while. But their whirlwind romance is put to the test when what starts out as a simple favor for a friend leaves Joe homeless, unemployed, and on the wrong side of a vengeful drug dealer. An impulsive offer to go on a road trip with Emily promises to take them out of harm's way—but may only lead to more chaos. Lange's always-admirable knack for character and atmosphere reach their peak here in our **July Hardboiled Crime Book of the Month**.

Lasky, Kathryn. [Mortal Radiance](#) (Severn \$29.99) is the second 1930s investigation for painter Georgia O'Keeffe after her terrific [Light on Bone](#) (\$19.99). I love the way she mixed up real characters like O'Keeffe, while painting the northern New Mexico landscape gorgeously with words. This time we are outside Taos mostly at Los Gallos, the estate of the wealthy Mabel Dodge Luhan, a house continually inhabited by a colorful range of artists, authors and society figures and with a mix of White, Hispanic, and Indian characters. But at the moment the guests are assembled for the memorial service of the renowned writer D.H. Lawrence. Georgia has been commissioned to design the stained-glass windows for the small memorial chapel in Lawrence's honor. But when she checks to see how the light comes through the glass, another much more horrible sight awaits

her: beloved Navajo potter Flora Namingha is dead, her face smashed in with a stone... With Flora's fiancé locked up as the obvious suspect and the local police, usually drunk, taking the easy road, it seems like no one other than Georgia is capable of solving the murder. But wait, there's more: a Nazi ring, secret agents, Wallis Simpson as a tiresome guest with a British maid on the verge of rebellion, and the sheriff who became Georgia's lover in book one. While there's no bloody violence depicted the sex is pretty frank. All in all this is a colorful historical.

Leon, Donna. [A Refiner's Fire](#) (Grove \$28). "As usual in Leon's books, the mystery plays second fiddle to the characters and relationships from whom hints of secret misbehavior gradually coalesce into revelations as sordid and violent as you could wish. Is all this really 'the stuff of television drama,' as Brunetti fears?"—*Kirkus Reviews*. And how this resonates with those of us living here and reading about the Gilbert Goons and the astonishing laxity of law enforcement. It's all too easy to recognize the same situation when teenage gangs roam the city and bully Venetians and parents and officials are too hamstrung, scared, or indulgent to step in.

It begins when all but one of the teenage boys who've been arrested are released to their parents' custody and Commissario Claudia Griffoni offers to walk home the last of them, Orlando Monforte, who's afraid to call his father. The reasons why, Griffoni learns as the two of them stop for a pre-dawn cup of coffee, are obvious. As the Hero of Nasiriyah, whose actions saved two comrades from being killed by a bomb during their service in Iraq, Dario Monforte has high expectations for his son's probity (don't engage in gang fighting) and masculinity (don't get caught). Orlando warns Griffoni he's heard whispers from his schoolmate Gianpaolo Porpora that something big is in the offing—it's a murderous attack on Enzo Bocchese, the Questura's chief lab technician, whose plans to sell most of his valuable collection of sculptures are upended by whoever breaks in and destroys them. In the meantime, there's more whispering—but this time, it's about Griffoni, who was photographed and identified at that coffee shop by someone who tipped off peerlessly shady avvocato Beniamino Cresti. And then.... Signed UK edition: [A Refiner's Fire](#) (Heinemann \$44)

McPhillips, Fiona. [When We Were Silent](#) (Flatiron \$28.99). Before Donna Tartt, in fact think of Josephine Tey's *Miss Pym Disposes* or Dorothy Sayers' *Gaudi Night*, the (elite) campus mystery was a big draw. Irish journalist McPhillips debuts with a dark one set at Dublin's most exclusive Catholic private school, Highfield Manor. In 1986, Louise Manson was once its newest student despite her working class status that made her the obvious outsider inside its granite walls with high-arched alcoves, an oak-lined library...and that Lou has enrolled to avenge her best friend Tina's suicide. She was befriended by some of her wealthy classmates. But after Lou attempts to shed light on the school's secret, her time at Highfield ends with a lifeless body sprawled at her feet. Thirty years later, Lou gets a shocking phone call. A high-profile lawyer is bringing a lawsuit against the school—and he needs Lou to testify if his young client is to prevail. Soon someone tries to extort Lou into staying silent and.... it's shattering.

Moore, Liza. [The God of the Woods](#) (Riverhead \$30). This Indie Next Pick for July will immerse you in the atmosphere of a summer camp, with vivid descriptions of the surrounding

forest and rising humidity. It's a tense thriller involving a deceitful family and camp staff in an emotional rollercoaster that eventually reveals the heartbreaking truth at the heart of events as well as a bit of hope. "Like the placing of puzzle pieces, Liz Moore has written a carefully constructed mystery about a missing female camper. The narrative switches between two time periods: the 1950s and 1970s" before the digital age would have made some of the story unlikely. Excellent.

Moreno Garcia, Silvia. [The Seventh Veil of Salome](#) (Random \$28.99) returns to the world of moviemaking for this layered if schematic story of a Mexico City receptionist whose exotic looks land her the lead role in the eponymous 1950s Hollywood epic. Vera Larios has no professional acting experience, which infuriates costar Nancy Hartley, who was certain the role was hers and that it would have been her big break. While Nancy schemes to knock Vera out of the picture, Moreno-Garcia unfurls a parallel story line in which the biblical Salome navigates power struggles in her Uncle Herod's court through stratagems not unlike those wielded by Vera and Nancy. Moreno-Garcia shines a light on the racial and gender politics of postwar Hollywood and intertwines her tale with real history.

Pearse, Sarah. [The Wilds](#) (Bantam UK \$39). Since the dark events that scarred her childhood, Kier Templer escaped her hometown to live life on the road. She and her twin have never lost contact until, on a trip to a Portuguese national park, Kier vanishes without a trace. Detective Elin Warner, first met in [The Sanatorium](#) (\$17), arrives in the same park ready to immerse herself in its vast wilderness – only to hear about Kier's disappearance, and discover a disturbing map she left behind. The few strangers at an isolated campsite close ranks against Elin's questions, and the park's wild beauty starts to turn sinister. British author Pearse is a real adept at the Destination Thriller such as Ruth Ware's [One Perfect Couple](#) (\$29.99 SIGNED). Also in the Unsigned US Edition: [The Wilds](#) (Viking \$30)

✦ Robotham, Michael. [Storm Child](#) (Sphere \$46). British psychologist Cyrus Haven took in teenager Evie Cormac whom Nottinghamshire police had found hiding in a house with the corpse of a murdered man. After Haven learned that Evie was trafficked into the U.K. from Albania, he informally adopted her, and now occasionally leans on her skills as a human lie detector to help him crack cases. During a visit to the beach one afternoon, Haven and Evie witness the bodies of 17 migrants wash ashore. Most are dead, but the lone survivor suggests that their boat was deliberately rammed. The incident sends Evie into shock, rendering her unable to speak or move, and Haven wonders if the tragedy might somehow be connected to her past. Seeking answers, Haven learns of a master criminal called "the Ferryman," a trafficker one of his National Crime Agency contacts calls "a Keyser Söze or a Lex Luthor or a Moriarty." Soon, Haven discovers that the Ferryman is even more powerful than the rumors suggest. This is a moving story on many levels and brings one story arc to an end. I don't know if multi-award winner Robotham is continuing the Haven series. US edition Unsigned: [Storm Child](#) (Scribner \$28)

Rosenfelt, David. [Dog Day Afternoon](#) (St Martins \$28). A favor for his friend and associate Marcus Clark lands Paterson, New Jersey, attorney Andy Carpenter back in the courtroom for another impossible defense. A man shows up at the offices of

Moore Law and uses six bullets to kill six people, leaving only attorney Sally Montrose and paralegal Laura Schauble alive to identify him from his tattoo and distinctive footgear as handyman Nick Williams. Even a tyro would realize that the murders are the work of a professional hit man, but lead prosecutor Richard Wallace is no tyro, and when the cops find the murder weapon in a trash bin a few blocks from Nick's home with Nick's fingerprint on it, he seems done for. Along the way, though, Marcus, who's served as an informal mentor to Nick and his friend Rafe Duran, asks Andy to defend him. Much as he hates the practice of law, Andy can't say no to Marcus, and he's soon gathering evidence that will link the six killings—more will follow. "Solid legal thrills from a master of the light touch. And the dog you'd forgotten about turns up to brighten the final scene."

Shepherd, Peng. [All This and More](#) (Harper \$29.99) is the inventive new novel from the acclaimed Shepherd about a woman who wins the chance to rewrite every mistake she's ever made... Perfect for fans of Matt Haig's *The Midnight Library* and Kate Atkinson's *Life After Life*. I think it gives us a chance to make her book launch July 9 interactive if a few of you will come ready to talk about a choice you would do over if you had the chance (there will be prizes for bravery). Extra treat: the structure of the story provides a twist: the reader gets to decide what Marsh does next to change her fate. Endless options. Every choice has consequences. You can go back in the narrative and choose another path or paths if you wish.

Meek, play-it-safe Marsh has just turned forty-five, and her life is in shambles. Her career is stagnant, her marriage has imploded, and her teenage daughter grows more distant by the day. Marsh is convinced she's missed her chance at everything—romance, professional fulfillment, and adventure—and is desperate for a do-over. She can't believe her luck when she's selected to be the star of the global sensation "All This and More", a show that uses quantum technology to allow contestants the chance to revise their pasts and change their present lives. It's Marsh's only shot to seize her dreams, and she's determined to get it right this time. But even as she rises to become a famous lawyer, gets back together with her high school sweetheart, and travels the world, she begins to worry that "All This and More"'s promises might be too good to be true. While the technology is amazing, something seems a bit off...

Silva, Daniel. [A Death in Cornwall](#) (Harper \$29.99). If you've never read Silva, you can joyfully plunge into our **July Crime Book of the Month**, a complex tale so smoothly developed and written you become completely immersed in it. If you are a fan you will enjoy the police investigations, the efforts to restore masterpieces looted by Nazis and collaborators to their rightful owners or heirs, the whirlwind travel, and the engagements with many series characters, especially the four legged one living in Corsica, Gabriel Allon's implacable enemy.

It begins when fabled art restorer Gabriel, retired spy, husband, and father of twins, has slipped quietly into London to attend a reception at the Courtauld Gallery celebrating the return of a stolen self-portrait by Vincent van Gogh. Then a grown up Timothy Poole, now of the Devon and Cornwall Police, seeks his help with a brutal murder. The victim is Charlotte Blake, a celebrated professor of art history from Oxford who spends her weekends in the same seaside village where Gabriel once lived under an assumed identity. Her murder appears to be the work

of a diabolical serial killer who has been terrorizing the Cornish countryside using a hammer to kill. But what of her missing mobile phone, and the three-letter cypher she left behind on a notepad in her study? Gabriel soon discovers that Professor Blake was searching for a looted Picasso worth more than a \$100 million that the Louvre wants to restore to its legitimate owner, a man now found murdered in Montmartre. Then there's something off in high-stakes British politics. But there's so much more. Russia has long been a focus of Gabriel as a spy but here Silva casts a jaundiced eye on Britain as well as on the Geneva Freeport sheltering billions. Read the Acknowledgements (only) at the end for more of his inspiration for this story. Oh, and don't forget the serial killer in Cornwall.

Stine, RL, [Shark Night](#) (Blackstone \$16.99) is a new middle grade horror Shark Night! Stine's newest work is a terrifying seafaring adventure. After an accident with the original diver, Liam finds himself alone in a giant water tank holding a camera. A twenty-foot-long hammerhead shark is about to be lowered in with him ... Liam is helping his mom film a documentary for the Danger Channel. A twelve-year-old battling a shark! It'll be a sensation! But don't worry, the hammerhead is the gentlest of sharks, and this one is old and nearly toothless, so he'll be fine. But Liam is paralyzed with fear, and as the shark is lowered into the tank, he realizes something's not right—They sent down the WRONG shark!

Thorne, Rebecca. [Can't Spell Treason Without Tea](#) (Tor \$19.99). When the stress of decades serving the violent and cruel Queen Tilaine becomes too much, Reyna finally follows her dream of fleeing the capital to open a tea shop with her secret girlfriend Kianthe, also known as the Arcandor, Mage of Ages. They settle in Tawney, a small but welcoming town in contested territory, and open their store, but are soon beset by visits from the Queen's agents, mysterious dragon attacks, and tension from their own relationship anxieties. The pair must face their fears and rely on the help and wisdom of new friends to preserve the peace of their new life together. "Readers of Travis Baldree and TJ Klune will feel right at home with this cozy sapphic romantasy."

Whitaker, Chris. [All the Colours of the Dark](#) (Orion \$45). Our third new staff member Deb who will be working remotely raves: "As a mystery reader, I started my love affair with the genre with Nancy Drew and The Hardy Boys. If you like a read where the pace of each plot twist and chapter drops off and leaves you scrambling for the next chapter, cursing your clumsy fingers for not being able to turn the pages fast enough, I have an amazing next read for you, the life story of 13-year-old Patch who saves a local girl from being snatched by a serial killer, only to become his next victim. It begins his lifelong quest to find another missing girl, and tests his friendships, molds his life's arc, and is filled with unforgettable characters who are permanently changed by Patch's determination to find the truth. Chris Whitaker has written a sprawling, 600-page turner with a truly evil serial killer, an obsessive search for a missing girl, and one of the most spine-tingling accounts of captivity spent in the dark you will ever read. If you liked the lyrical writing of *Where the Crawdads Sing* and the suspense of Stephen King's *Stand by Me*, pre-order this gem today."

Wroblewski, David. [Familiaris](#) (Blackstone \$34.99) is our **July Notable New Fiction Book of the Month**, an impressively large

story and the Oprah Book Club Pick. Here's the start of a Starred Review: "A great American novel of people and passions and ideas—and, of course, dogs. For the many fans of 2008's [The Story of Edgar Sawtelle](#) (\$22), this ambitious and captivating prequel focuses on that character's grandfather, John Sawtelle. Its nearly 1,200 pages begin in 1919 when John, who has been working as a road-tester at a car factory, finds a perfect piece of land when his jalopy breaks down in middle-of-nowhere Wisconsin, where he surprises his dog, Gus, by walking 63 yards on his hands. John won't take possession of this inspiring tract for another 300-some pages, necessary to introduce the key characters and elements Wroblewski has invented to populate his cabinet of wonders. And then...."

## CHOOSING YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE

It's time we revive **Booktiks**, recommendations from our staff for reading about places you'll go...or wish you were going. Send [sales@poisonedpen.com](mailto:sales@poisonedpen.com) your destination and we'll reply. Warning: there may not be books available for every destination...at least that we know about.

I add that [Johnc@poisonedpen.com](mailto:Johnc@poisonedpen.com) has a big Paris display up at the store and can recommend titles for you heading to the Summer Olympics or planning to watch.

McClanahan, Paige. [The New Tourist](#) (Scribner \$30). While you consider what adventure next, try this surprising, and page-turning exploration of how tourism has shaped the world, for better and for worse—essential reading for anyone looking for a deeper understanding of the implications of their wanderlust. Through perceptive dispatches from tourist spots around the globe—from Hawaii to Saudi Arabia, Amsterdam to Angkor Wat—*The New Tourist* lifts the veil on an industry that accounts for one in ten jobs worldwide and generates nearly ten percent of global GDP. How did a once-niche activity become the world's most important means of contact across cultures? When does tourism destroy the soul of a city, and when does it offer a place a new lease on life? Is "last chance tourism" prompting a powerful change in perspective, or driving places we love further into the ground and presents revelations about an industry that shapes how we view the world. I do not count cruises on the mega ships as part of this thinking of them rather as floating hotels in the Las Vegas model.

Schultz, Patricia. [1000 Places to See Before You Die](#) (\$23.95) is not macabre but a spur to get you moving. It's the world's bestselling travel book and a #1 *New York Times* bestseller. Some places like Myanmar are on the State Department's Level 4 warning list, so take geopolitical considerations into account.

To stay within the US try [50 States, 5000 Ideas Where to Go](#) (National Geographic \$24.95). And remember we can order you any travel guide or stories.

## SOME SUMMER READING

*Check out John's Midmonth BookNotes for June and upcoming for July were many more will appear*

Harvey, Kristy Woodson. [A Happier Life](#) (Gallery \$28.99). The Indie Next Pick: "Harvey delivers another beautiful and heartfelt novel filled with romance, mystery, and her signature Southern charm. A multigenerational story told through dual timelines,

Palmisano, Erin. [The Secrets of the Little Greek Taverna](#) (Grand Central \$18.99). Yearning for a Mediterranean holiday? The

ultimate beach read, with a touch of magical realism, this debut novel will charm you as you're whisked off to the Greek island of Naxos, where food and wine are the stuff of life, where friendships lift you up, and love has a way of catching you when you're least expecting it. In a village on Naxos lies a gorgeous guest house and taverna that never opened. Cressida's husband died suddenly three years ago – the taverna was their dream – but she's been too lost in grief to keep that dream alive. Marjory "Jory" St. James, a young traveler who always feels more at home on the move, arrives on Naxos in the middle of the night to unexpectedly becomes Cressida's very first guest. Jory quickly discovers that this island vacation is more than just a sightseeing adventure as all of the women in town are more than what they seem. But then a hotel group offers to buy Cressida's taverna....

Parker, T. Jefferson. [Desperation Reef](#) (Forge \$28.99). A quick mention of a Surfing Noir book to be launched here on July 15. If you liked the work of Kem Nunn or the surfing thrillers of Don Winslow, this story where a California big wave surfing champion and her sons wind up competing in the same brutal contest, the Monsters of the Mavericks, that killed her husband years before is for you.

Perrin, Valerie. [Forgotten on Sunday](#) (Europa \$28). For years, 21-year-old Justine Neige has lived in small French village Milly while happily working as a nursing assistant at the Hydrangeas, the local retirement home. There, Justine is most intrigued by Hélène, an enigmatic, 96-year-old nicknamed "The Beach Lady." Drawn to Hélène and her stories, Justine willingly collects and records her remembrances in a notebook at the behest of Hélène's grandson. In doing so, Justine uncovers details of Hélène's long, fascinating life that include romantic passions; a bistro job where she catered to the poet Baudelaire; and the harrowing atrocities of World War II. But then anonymous, mysterious phone calls are made from the Hydrangeas that falsely notify relatives that their loved ones have died. The contacts have either forgotten or refuse to keep in touch with the geriatrics; the calls finally force folks to visit. As a police investigation ensues, Justine probes the history of her own family—and questions are suddenly raised regarding the long-ago tragic car accident that claimed her parents' lives. Perrin, author of the masterpiece I adore, [Fresh Water for Flowers](#) (\$16.99), a detective story, skillfully juggles the storylines of Justine and Hélène, heightening the drama of each with unexpected revelations.

Robinson, Shauna. [The Townsend Family Recipe for Disaster](#) (Sourcebooks \$16.99). Robinson writes: "What if someone showed up unannounced at a relative's funeral, hoping to meet their family, while getting all sorts of side-eye in the process? And thus the character of Mae Townsend was born. Along the way, I wove in more threads that interested me. The intrigue of uncovering family secrets. The experience of being half-Black and wanting to connect with the Black side of your family. The ways you can connect with family through food and recipes—and how a lost recipe can feel like a missing puzzle piece. The desperation you might feel to find the recipe, save the day, and maybe win your family's approval in the process. Mae is curious, determined, and exhaustingly optimistic, and I hope she's as much fun to read as she was to write."

Spence-Ash, Laura. [Beyond That, the Sea](#) (\$18.99). "When a family takes in a young British girl during World War II, she

changes their lives and they change hers. Summers on a Maine island add to the wonder of the story. Told over decades and on both sides of the ocean, this story captured me,” says the Indie Next Pick.

*If you enjoy challenges and puzzles:*

British Museum. [Going for Gold](#) (Nosy Crow \$15.95). Here in one oversize paperback you can learn about the Ancient Olympic Games and master some ancient Greek while solving puzzles. There’s a code breaking guide too. Designed for say ages 12+ but grownups will be challenged too.

Karber, GT. [Murdle Volume 1](#) (\$16), 100 Elementary to Impossible Mysteries to Solve Using Logic, Skill, and the Power of Deduction, is a huge bestseller. We can barely keep it in stock. But don’t overlook [Murdle Volume 2](#) and [Murdle Volume 3](#) (\$16 each). They don’t have to be read/worked in order. Why not give your bored teen the whole set? Volume 1 won the 2024 British Best Book of the Year Award.

### WHY NOT HANG OUT IN BOOKSTORES?

Hwang, Bo-reum. [Welcome to the Hyunam-dong Bookshop](#) (Bloomsbury \$28.99). Travel to Korea for a bookshop to enjoy. Yeongju is burned out. With her high-flying career, demanding marriage, and busy life in Seoul, she knows she should feel successful, but all she feels is drained. Yet an abandoned dream nags at her, and in a leap of faith, she leaves her old life behind. Quitting her job and divorcing her husband, Yeongju moves to a small residential neighborhood outside the city, where she opens the Hyunam-dong Bookshop. For the first few months, all Yeongju does is cry, deterring visitors. But the long hours in the shop give her time to mull over what makes a good bookseller and store, and as she starts to read hungrily, host author events, and develop her own bookselling philosophy, she begins to ease into her new setting. Surrounded by friends, writers, and the books that connect them all, she finds her new story and remembers that it’s never too late to scrap the plot and start again.

Yagisawa, Satoshi. [More Days at the Morisaki Bookshop](#) (Harper \$17.99). Lovely. You can return to [Days at the Morisaki Bookshop](#) with a second chapter set again in the beloved Japanese bookshop and nearby coffee shop in the Jimbochi neighborhood of Toyko. Yagisawa deepens the relationship between Takako, her uncle Satoru, and the people in their lives. A new cast of heartwarming regulars have appeared in the shop, including an old man who collects books solely for the official stamps with the author’s personal seal. This charmer illuminates the everyday relationships between people that are forged and grown through a shared love of books. Characters leave and return, fall in and out of love, and some eventually die. As time passes, Satoru, with Takako’s help, must choose whether to keep the bookshop open or shutter its doors forever.

### A FEW NEW BOOKS FOR EARLY JULY

*This is a mix of genres, of hardcovers and paperbacks and pricing, a few Indie Next Picks but not all. Will mixing it all together lead you to discover books you might miss if you stick to format, price, or category? Let’s find out.... Note there are various places to go like Alaska, Cornwall, New Zealand, Scotland, Singapore, Yorkshire, if you are in summer travel mode. And chances to go back in time too.*

*I add that I am not a fan of the whole Indie Next promotion as I think it homogenizes what bookstores carry, many of the Picks are based on fandom or favors, not critical reading, and publishers put a huge pressure on booksellers to make them. So I pick out some and ignore many of them.*

✂ Abell, Stig. [Death in a Lonely Place](#) (Harper \$18.99). I ran across this author while at Capital Crimes in London and found the characters and the very remote rural landscape of Britain compelling in series start [Death Under a Little Sky](#) (\$18.99). Little Sky is the name of the property that divorcing and burned out London cop Jake Jackson inherits from his solitary uncle. There isn’t even a road to it, the lake is cold and his bathing and laundry facility, he needs to start a garden, but the house contains a magnificent library of crime fiction, classics and more. The locals are insular but friendly until Jake is asked to join an annual treasure hunt where the bones when discovered are human and suggest a crime has been committed. So, an investigation, maybe a love story with the local vet, and is Jake being pulled back into the role of detective he’d abandoned?

In the new case, the village of Caelum Parvum, and Jake, are pulled into the orbit of a group called No Taboo which serves the whims of Britain’s elite. If you’re looking for a British mystery that’s a bit offbeat, try both of these.

Andrews, Brian/Jeffrey Wilson. [Ember](#) (Blackstone \$26.99/\$16.99). In their 8<sup>th</sup> Tier One Thriller, the two military veterans put John Dempsey back at Ember—but things have changed and so has he. To survive the notorious prison IK-2 and assassinate Russian President Vladimir Petrov, John Dempsey had to become rosomakha, the wolverine. Now he’s trying to put the pieces of his life back together. But which man returned from Russia—Dempsey, or the wolverine? From the way his teammates look at him, it’s obvious they’re not sure, and neither is he. Meanwhile, the US Vice President Kelso Jarvis has barely had time to mourn the death of his mentor before a devastating attack reveals a new threat. Because of Dempsey’s mission in Russia, the rules of the game have changed—only now it’s not clear who the players are, and how the game should be played.

Bacigalupi, Paolo. [Navola](#) (Knopf \$29.99). This talented author we much admire is clearly drawing upon the Medici of Renaissance Florence to craft this literary fantasy. Navola is a bustling city-state dominated by a handful of influential families where business is power, and power is everything. For generations, the di Regulai family—merchant bankers with a vast empire—has nurtured tendrils that stretch to the farthest reaches of the known world. And though they claim not to be political, their staggering wealth has bought cities and toppled kingdoms. Soon, Davico di Regulai will be expected to take the reins of power from his father and demonstrate his mastery of the games of Navolese diplomacy: knowing who to trust and who to doubt, and how to read what lies hidden behind a smile. But in Navola, strange and ancient undercurrents lurk behind the gilt and grandeur—like the fossilized dragon eye in the family’s possession, a potent symbol of their raw power.

Banta, Isabel. [Honey](#) (Celadon \$27.99). The Indie Next Pick: “A pitch-perfect reclamation of the ‘90s & early ‘00s pop craze, for anybody who listened to boy bands, girl groups, or their solo spin-offs. This story doesn’t end like Britney’s, or Christina’s—it gives pop stars the endings they deserve.”



Baragwanath, Tom. [Paper Cage](#) (Random \$28). I love New Zealand (and may spend a lot more time there in future) so I belatedly picked up a copy of this Finalist for the Ngaio Marsh Best First Novel Award, also shorted listed for Australia's Ned Kelly Award. It's Chanderlesque in its depiction of a community in crisis. Set in the provincial town of Masterton, Baragwanath's debut is both social novel and thriller, spinning the tensions between the white and Maori populations, the chokehold of street gangs, and the toll of drug addiction on young families into a suspenseful crime drama. As the novel opens, a child named Precious Kingi has been missing for three weeks, and Lorraine Henry, a policeman's widow who works in the file room at the station, is concerned that almost nothing is being done to find her or to protect the town's other children. And then Lorraine's own mixed-race nephew Bradley, age 7, goes missing on a night so rainy there are eels in the gutters. When an out-of-town investigator arrives to ramp up the search, he quickly recognizes Lorraine as the most likely person to offer any help. "Resist the urge to race to the climax and keep Google close at hand to look up Maori words, because fully understanding the relationship between Masterton's white and Indigenous cultures is central—not just to appreciating the book but to solving just the kind of dark, disturbing, gritty, and unusual treat thriller lovers are looking for."—*Kirkus Reviews*

Barry, Kevin. [The Heart in Winter](#) (Knopf \$28). The Indie Next Pick says: "I found this story of two young lovers on the run in 1890s Montana to have the grit of a Cormac McCarthy novel, and the adventure and peril found in *Cold Mountain*. I expect this stunning novel to stay with me for a long time."

✦ Burton, Rachel. [The Mystery of Haverford House](#) (Zeus \$14.95). In Kate Morton style here's a UK import where events of 1933 in rural Yorkshire leading to the disappearance of Haverford House's young maid Annie Bishop resurface in 2003 when Viola Hendricks takes a job at the estate. Viola loves it and admires the widowed Lady Haverford who is working so hard to hold the estate together as it faces closure when her son, the heir, prefers to write it off. Closure will also force Viola out of a job. What she doesn't figure into her plans is the arrival of enigmatic American Chase Matthews with an agenda of his own.

✦ Carr, John Dickson. [The Black Spectacles](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99). Spend summer with a classic while testing your wits. Also known by its US title *The Problem of the Green Capsule*, this classic novel republished in the British Library Crime series is widely regarded as one of John Dickson Carr's masterpieces and remains among the greatest impossible crime mysteries of all time. A sinister case of deadly poisoned chocolates from Sodbury Cross's high street shop haunts the group of friends and relatives assembled at Bellegarde, among the orchards of 'peach-fancier' Marcus Chesney. To prove a point about how the sweets could have been poisoned under the nose of the shopkeeper, Chesney stages an elaborate memory game to test whether any of his guests can see beyond their 'black spectacles'; that is, to see the truth without assumptions as witnesses. During the test – which is also being filmed – Chesney is murdered by his accomplice, dressed head to toe in an 'invisible man' disguise. The keen wits of Dr. Gideon Fell must meet this challenge.

Continue to binge classics with Otto Penzler, editor, [Golden Age Whodunnits](#) (American Mystery Classics \$17.95). It follows up 2023's [Golden Age Bibliomysteries](#) (\$17.95) with

another stellar anthology that places 15 stories from the likes of F. Scott Fitzgerald and Stephen Vincent Bénéet beside works from the biggest names in 1920s and '30s detective fiction. So, it is perfect for dipping in and out as you vacation or staycation.

Chase, Nolan. [A Lonesome Place for Dying](#) (Crooked Lane \$29.99) "delivers a thoughtful, action-packed police procedural that tracks a new police chief learning to be a leader in a town succumbing to a growing drug trade. Former Marine Ethan Brand was a police deputy in Blaine, Wash., for 15 years until he's appointed chief when popular longtime chief Frank Keogh retires. The promotion sets Ethan apart from his deputies, several of whom also wanted the job. Ethan didn't expect the death threats he receives, or the pushback from the town's officials. On his first day as chief, even before his swearing-in ceremony, Ethan and his deputies get called to investigate a woman's murder outside of town. A second murder follows the disappearance of a witness as Ethan transitions from being an employee to the boss, trying to establish his new authority—"In charge, but not taking charge. Not yet." Chase also shows the changes in Blaine, where failing industries have brought in a drug trade from Canada, which borders the town. Chase displays a strong sense of plotting and character development."—Oline Cogdill

Childs, Laura. [Honey Drop Dead](#) (\$9.99). In this Tea Shop Mystery Charleston's Theodosia Browning is hosting an elegant affair set in the new Petigru Park amid newly planted native grasses and a community beekeeping project. But when a phony beekeeper shows up and sprays toxic smoke at the guests, the party erupts in chaos. Worse yet, a shot rings out and Osgood Claxton III, candidate for state legislature, falls to the ground—dead.

Coben, Harlan. [The Match](#) (\$10.99). From 2022, a terrific Coben. After months away, Wilde has returned to the NJ Ramapo Mountains in the wake of a failed bid at domesticity that confirms what he's known all along: He belongs on his own, free from the comforts and constraints of modern life. Suddenly, a DNA match on an online ancestry database brings Wilde closer to his past than he's ever dreamed, and finally gives Wilde the opening he needs to track down his father. But....

Condie, Ally. [The Unwedding](#) (Grand Central \$29) is the June pick of Reese's Book Club, which described the novel this way: "Ellery Wainwright and her husband were supposed to spend their twentieth anniversary together at a luxurious resort. But now she's traveling solo. To add insult to injury, there's a wedding during her stay. But when Ellery discovers the body of the groom floating in the pool, she realizes that she is not the only one whose future is no longer guaranteed." It opens with a wedding at a gorgeous resort in Big Sur... but everything begins to fall apart when the main character Ellery discovers a dead body the morning of the ceremony."

Coulter, Catherine. [Flashpoint](#) (Morrow \$29.99) is the 27th thriller with FBI Agents Savich and Sherlock. A year has passed since Elizabeth Palmer was nearly killed with hundreds more in the attempted bombing of St. Paul's in London, believed to be a terrorist act until the police discovered it was a cover for something even more sinister. For Elizabeth, life is finally back to normal. She's optimistic, her painting is getting accolades, when suddenly her world changes in a flash. With three new attempts on her life, and her connection to the terrorist attack, MI-5 gets involved to find out who is trying to kill her and why.

De la Rosa, Liane. [Ana Maria and the Fox](#) (Penguin \$18). When Mexican heiress Ana María Luna Valdés is sent to Victorian London as her family faces her country's occupation by the troops of Louis Napoleon, she escapes the judgmental eyes of her domineering father. If only she could ignore the piercing looks she receives across ballroom floors from the austere Mr. Fox. Or the squabbling of her sisters. Gideon Fox elevated himself from the London gutters to become a member of Parliament. He's on the cusp of securing the votes he needs to put forth a measure to abolish the Atlantic slave trade—he's the grandson of a formerly enslaved woman. The charmingly vexing Ana María is a distraction until she finds herself in the crosshairs of a nefarious nobleman with his own political agenda. This unusual Luna Sisters series start, our **July Historical Paperback Book of the Month**, is called "Pleasingly subversive" by the *NY Times Book Review* and "A perfect mix of slow-burn romance, geopolitical maneuvering and sisterly antics" by *The Washington Post*. Look for the sequel in Signed Books.

Fadipe, Kehinde. [The Sun Sets in Singapore](#) (\$18.99). A striking debut satisfies a lust for travel as well as good fiction. Three Nigerian expats seek to write their futures in the luxe, moneyed world of Singapore, only to have their lives disrupted by the arrival of a charming British Nigerian lawyer. His impact is both unexpected and rewarding, deepening our understanding of grappling with lives in a foreign community. Fans of recent Singapore-based fiction like Kyla Zhao's *The Fraud Squad* will savor the local settings and depictions of high society.

Goddard, Elizabeth. [Hidden in the Night](#) (Baker Publishing \$17.99). At the behest of her ailing mother, former FBI special agent turned rare-book collector Ivy Elliott, a Florida native, arrives in Alaska to secure an unpublished Jack London manuscript kept secreted away for decades. But when she arrives, she learns the manuscript is gone—taken by the granddaughter of the woman who possessed it. Ivy sets off in pursuit, not just to save the manuscript but to save the vulnerable girl, who was previously trafficked and has no idea what she's getting herself into. Joining forces with sexy Alaska State Trooper Nolan Long, Ivy must battle a blizzard, sabotage, and the worst of an Alaskan winter as the search goes on. But every answer they find only raises more questions....

Grant, Kimi Cunningham. [The Nature of Disappearing](#) (St Martins \$28) serves up the archetypal haunted heroine but with a new twist for a woman for whom the wilderness is as essential as oxygen. Idaho's Emlyn Anthony, haunted by abandonments, works as a high-end hunting and fishing guide, catering somewhat to high-end clients. That's a great setup in its own right, but it gears up when Emlyn gets a visit from Tyler, the love of her life who left her half dead on the side of the road three years ago. She's also estranged from her former best friend Janessa, the woman who introduced Emlyn to Tyler. And now Tyler has shown up to give her the news that Janessa is missing, leading to a tense recoupling of sorts as they join forces to find Janessa by tracking through the wild landscape that Emlyn knows better than practically anyone. "Grant anchors the suspense in the lives of her well-developed characters and delivers a hugely satisfying finale. In the forest of survival thrillers, this stands tall."

Gray, Claudia. [The Perils of Lady Catherine de Bourgh](#) (Knopf \$18). Why not escape to the world of Jane Austen in summer? In her 3<sup>rd</sup> riff on Austen's world Gray captures the insufferable Lady Catherine de Bourgh masterfully. No wonder someone wants to kill her? Why isn't it the wife of Mr. Collins (sorry, spoiler?). Our sleuths as in the first two in this series are Mr. Jonathan Darcy, eldest son of Elizabeth Bennett and Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy and heir to Pemberley, and Miss Juliet Tilney of Northanger Abbey. And the scene of the crime(s) and the slow burning courtship is Lady Catherine's estate Rosings Park.

Grisham, John. [The Exchange](#) (\$18). On sale July 16. What became of Mitch and Abby McDeere after they exposed the crimes of Memphis law firm Bendini, Lambert & Locke and fled the country? It is now fifteen years later than the events recounted in [The Firm](#) (\$10.99), and Mitch and Abby are living in Manhattan, where Mitch is a partner at the largest law firm in the world. When a mentor in Rome asks him for a favor that will take him far from home, Mitch finds himself at the center of a sinister plot that has worldwide implications—and once again endangers his colleagues, friends, and family.

Hakoda, Kerri. [Cold to the Touch](#) (Crooked Lane \$29.99). I finally got to read this April release, a good thing since Alaska is so appealing to read right now during the heat bubble. It's a debut and not perfect but great on our 49<sup>th</sup> State. Lesa agrees with me: Twelve days before Christmas when a body is found, ravaged by scavengers, Anchorage homicide detective DeHavilland Beans catches the case. He's stunned to recognize the victim, Jolene Nilsson, a barista at his favorite coffee shop. Beans and Jolene often talked about their childhoods growing up as multiracial children in small villages in the remote Alaskan Bush. Even before the coroner can gather details from the body, including the unusual murder weapon, another victim is found. She was another barista, but this time found on federal land, so the FBI sends in an agent. While the Anchorage police try to quash media rumors of a serial killer, Beans worries about a friend dependent on pills, another one caught up in the disappearance of a bookie, and his own sister, who just started a new job as a barista. The one thing the Anchorage police department doesn't have is time as they race to stop a murderer who targets young coffee-shop workers. Alaska in the winter and a likable protagonist come to life in this excellent, fast-paced police procedural for fans of Dana Stabenow or Harlan Coben or Lissa Marie Redmond.

Harding, Robyn. [The Drowning Woman](#) (\$18.99) has a nifty premise I truly enjoyed. Lee Gulliver never thought she'd find herself living on the streets—no one ever does—but when her restaurant fails, and she falls deeper into debt, she leaves her old life behind with nothing but her clothes and her Toyota Corolla. In Seattle, she parks in a secluded spot by the beach to lay low and plan her next move—until early one morning, she sees a sobbing woman throw herself into the ocean. Lee hauls the woman back to the surface, but instead of appreciation, she is met with fury. The drowning woman, trapped in a toxic marriage, wanted to die. Gradually the two women living in very different economic circumstances forge an unlikely relationship. Then one day Hazel asks Lee to help her disappear. Hazel promised it will be easy—but is she really the new friend Lee believes her to be?

Harding's new book for July is [The Haters](#) (\$29) wherein Camryn Lane is living her dream. After years of struggle and rejection, her first novel has finally been published. Her edi-

tor is happy; her teenage daughter is proud; and her boyfriend and friends are all excited for her. She's on top of the world—until she receives a disturbing message from an unknown sender. Rattled by the accusations she finds there, Camryn swallows the sick feeling in her stomach and resolves to put the missive out of her mind. But when she checks her ratings on a popular book site, she finds a scathing one-star review. The reviewer is so articulate and convincing that soon, Camryn's book is flooded with bad reviews. Could the reviewer be the same person who sent the ugly email? And why do they want to ruin her?

Harris, Joanne. [The Moonlight Market](#) (Pegasus \$28.95). For summer reading here's "a sweetly upbeat urban fantasy in which—unbeknownst to humans or the supernatural Sightless Folk with whom they coexist—the Butterfly and Moth Kingdoms wage an ancient war. Tom Argent lives a quiet, solitary life in London, with a passion for photography and little else. This changes with two chance meetings, first with an unhoused man who calls himself Spider, then with a woman named Vanessa, whose beauty shines so brightly Tom can't help falling deeply, foolishly, in love with her. Tom's pursuit of Vanessa unexpectedly draws him into the conflict between the butterflies—vibrantly beautiful creatures of daytime—and the moths, somber and unassuming denizens of night.... The combination of epic story and fairy tale prose captivates, however, and Harris builds an enchanting world around Tom and his companions."—*PW*

Heller, Peter. [The Last Ranger](#) (\$18). Can't make it to Yellowstone this summer? I was there in early May...in another blizzard. It is magnificent so I hope you will one day visit this first of our National Parks. Meanwhile... Yellowstone Park Ranger Ren Hopper spends his days policing poachers and saving families from animal attacks. In his spare time, he likes to read Russian fiction and hang out with Hilly, a biologist who is studying the wolf packs that inhabit the park. One day, he finds Hilly caught in a leg trap and rescues her. Suspicion for setting the trap falls on alleged poacher Les Ingraham. Ren investigates Les's background and finds he is peripherally connected to the Pathfinders, a militia of wealthy ranchers whose ultimate goal is to take over government land for their own financial gain, but local police refuse to follow up on his discoveries. As Ren and Hilly become romantically entwined, he finds more traps, which he takes to be veiled threats. "Heller's lyrical prose captures gorgeous natural landscapes, captivating wildlife facts, wolf folklore, and a vibrant community of characters."—*The Christian Science Monitor* on a wilderness novel that will tide you over to the next CJ Box.

Hirahara, Naomi. [Evergreen](#) (\$18.95). Having led us from Los Angeles to a camp to a settlement in the heart of Chicago during WWII for Japanese internees in multi-award winning novel [Clark and Division](#) (\$16.95), Hirahara now leads us back to LA with some of the characters when the war ends and shows us the fight to regain what they had lost and build new lives...along with furnishing a good mystery.

✎ Huber, Anna Lee. [A Deceptive Composition](#) (Berkley \$18). Travel deep into rural 1832 Cornwall as Lady Darby accompanies her husband and father-in-law, bringing along her infant daughter, to the home of the Roscarrocks, family who beg for answers to the murder of Gabe's estranged uncle. The Roscarrocks have a bad history involving wreckers, lost treasure, murders. So it's

a dicey situation that tests Kiera and Gabe. I am fond of this atmospheric series and the struggles of Kiera to forge a place in a patriarchal world.

Jewell, Lisa. [Breaking the Dark](#) (Disney \$28.99). Meet Jessica Jones: Retired super hero, private investigator, loner. She tried her best to be a shiny spandex crimefighter, but that life only led to unspeakable trauma. Now she avoids that world altogether and works on surviving day-to-day in Hell's Kitchen. The morning a distraught mother comes into her NY office, something about Amber Randall's story strikes a chord with her. Amber is adamant that something happened to her teenage twins while they were visiting their father in the UK. Traveling to a small village in the British countryside, Jessica meets the mysterious Belle, who lives a curiously isolated life in an old farmhouse with a strange woman who claims to be her guardian. Can this unworldly teenager really be responsible for the Randall twins' new personas? Why does the strange little village of Barton Wallop seem to harbor dark energies and mysteries in its tight-knit community? "This first book in the brand-new Marvel Crime series, introduces fans to a grittier, street-level side of the Marvel Universe, and will continue with original novels featuring fan-favorite characters." If you are a Jewell fan do read the Acknowledgements.

Kim, Sophie. [The God and the Gumiho](#) (Random House \$19). In this sly and dazzling contemporary fantasy, the most notorious nine-tailed fox in Korea pairs up with a trickster god-turned-detective to track down a wrathful demon ... before it can destroy the mortal world.

Lippman, Laura. [Prom Mom](#) (\$18.99). What about entitled men and the women who enable them? In 1997, the Baltimore press dubbed Amber Glass "Prom Mom" after she gave birth on prom night and allegedly killed the baby. Amber had finagled Joe Simpson, whom she'd been tutoring, into being her date that night, but he ditched her for the girl who'd broken his heart. Amber doesn't remember what happened exactly, but she was convicted and jailed in juvie. She fled Baltimore afterward, but now she's back in her hometown, trying to create a new life as the owner of an outsider-art gallery. She is also trying to stay out of Joe's way—he's happily married and working in real estate—but that proves difficult. This slow-burn thriller is moving towards a film version.

Mayne, Kerryn. [Lenny Marks Gets Away with Murder](#) (St Martins \$28). A debut by an Australian author has charm if a weak story. Lenny teaches at the local elementary school by day and watches reruns of Friends or plays Scrabble against an imaginary opponent by night. She has 36 copies of The Hobbit and a small wardrobe in only four colors. Lenny has coping mechanisms using word play (these are clever and fun) and is good at repressing memories of the day her mom left and her stepfather went to prison. But then a letter from the parole board arrives and Lenny has to face up and step up...if she can.

McEwan, Lynne. [The Gathering Storm](#) (Canelo \$12.99). Missing TV drama *Shetland*? Here's a UK import with Scottish DCI Shona Oliver heading an investigation where past and present collide. Her ex-classmate James McGown, now a famous actor, has returned to make a Robert Burns biopic. Shona's tasked with keeping him safe on an isolated island in the Solway Firth. Stakes rise when a dead man wearing James' coat is found on the

beach while at home Shona's husband faces the possibility of a long spell in prison for a crime he claims he did not commit. Yet protesting could put Shona and their teenage daughter at risk of harm.... I will look into importing the 3 earlier cases for Shona.

McGarrity, Michael. [The Long Ago](#) (\$15.99). As a devoted fan of McGarrity's Kevin Kerney series based in New Mexico I'm pleased with a link to it in this new book and, moreover, delighted that McGarrity is back with a superb voice and authentic feel for the 1950s and 1963, the year of this investigation. And also for the post-WWII brotherhood of Marines and Army supporting Ray in his quest.

"There are crimes aplenty; disappearances voluntary and involuntary; and all manner of violence, individual and state-sanctioned. But this, McGarrity's first stand-alone, is more family saga than crime novel — one I adored without reservation, and inhaled in a single sitting. The Lansdale siblings, Ray and Barbara, survived instability, absent parents and other childhood losses by retreating into a shared utopian fantasy they called 'the Long Ago.' Escaping reality isn't as easy when you become an adult, though. In the early 1960s, Ray, once shiftless and wayward, finds purpose in the Army as the Vietnam War looms large, while Barbara flees their Livingston, Montana, hometown, and no one seems to know where she is. Ray, home on leave, wants to find her. 'People who decide to voluntarily disappear — if that's what really happened with her — usually want to keep it that way,' the sheriff warns him. But Ray takes the words of another cop to heart: 'We all lose people, Ray. Sometimes you can't do a damn thing about it, sometimes you can.'"

✎ Mead, Tom. [Cabaret Macabre](#) (Mysterious Press \$26.95). Mead is captivated by the locked room mystery so beloved in Golden Age crime fiction, and so he writes a third puzzle for magician Joseph Spector to solve: murder(s) inevitably taking place at a 400-year-old family seat called Marchbanks in the snowy countryside. It's 1938. QC Sir Giles Drury has been receiving threatening letters, perhaps from Victor Silvius, confined to a private sanatorium for the past nine years after attacking Sir Giles. His wife Lady Elspeth hires Spector to investigate. Victor's sister however believes her brother isn't safe at The Grange and pushes Inspector Flint of the Yard to investigate. These cases collide at Marchbanks, fatally, requiring Spector and his mastery over misdirection to crack them.

Moore, Ian. [Death in Le Jardin](#) (Duckworth UK \$25). On the surface, Richard Ainsworth has life where he wants it. Middle-aged navel gazing and Olympic levels of procrastination are exactly what rural life in France should be about for the British expat running a posh B&V in the Val de Follet. Then his redoubtable housekeeper, Madame Tablier, is accused of murder. Even more surprisingly, it's the murder of a former fiancé, turned brother-in-law. None of which the stubborn old woman denies. Investigation leads to a strange tourist garden village, where backbiting, recriminations and even former colleagues enact a deadly scenario. Meet Richard and *ses amis* first in [Death and Croissants](#) and [Death and Fromage](#) (\$16.99 each).

Otani, Akira. [Night of the Baba Yaga](#) (Soho \$27.95). It's not every day you come across a yakuza lesbian love story, and it's not every day that it turns out to be good. Otani's lean, mean English-language debut, it turns out, is the whole package. In 1979 Tokyo, 22-year-old Yoriko Shindo is kidnapped by yakuza

boss Genzo Naiki. He offers her a deal: if she agrees to be the bodyguard and chauffeur for his teenage daughter, Shoko, he'll let her live. The sheltered and aloof Shoko initially shows no interest in Shindo, but they slowly develop a connection as the only women in their testosterone-fueled world. When a smitten Shindo learns more about Shoko's troubles—her mother's mysterious disappearance, her upcoming arranged marriage to a sadistic yakuza enforcer—she resolves to help set the teenager free. In a *Thelma & Louise*-style act of desperation, the pair goes on the run, both knowing full well that they won't be able to evade Naiki and his henchmen for long.

Pearson, Joanna. [Bright and Tender Dark](#) (Bloomsbury \$28.99). This intricate debut "nimble ties in true-crime tropes as it traces the ripple effects of a college student's murder in 2000." Karlie Richards, a popular 19-year-old University of North Carolina freshman, was a leader in the campus evangelical group. When she was found strangled to death in her apartment, Toby Braithwaite, an intellectually disabled man who worked at a local diner and had a crush on Karlie, was arrested. He's jailed for the crime, though he's widely believed to be innocent. Two decades later, Karlie's freshman roommate, Joy Brunner, finds an unopened letter from Karlie addressed to her in an old book. The amateur investigation spurred by the letter turns into a writing project that offers Joy fresh purpose, but Joy's obsession endangers her mental health. Pearson contrasts 1999 and 2019 via documents that include newspaper articles and Reddit threads, portraying the dangers of the social media era through a vicious online debate and an incriminating viral video. "Religion takes on major significance here. The title's oxymoron juxtaposes light and dark, good versus evil, but the situation is subtler. Ambivalence reigns."

Perlman, Asher. [Well, This Is Me](#) (New Yorker \$19.99) is the debut cartoon collection from Asher Perlman (*The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*), who NPR's Scott Simon calls "one of today's great *New Yorker* cartoonists." A blend of Asher's classics and never-before-seen material, this collection gives the people what they want: universal health care. Okay, not that, but something almost as important: a delightful book, chock-full of over 150 cartoons about everything from a dog's encounter with a genie to the Tin Man's trip to Jiffy Lube.

Phillips, Julia. [Bear](#) (Random \$28) Yet another Indie Next Pick for July: "Bear is a haunting novel set on a remote island off the Pacific Northwest coast. Two sisters dream of a better life off the island, when a strange bear appears and changes their lives. This story, fairy tale, allegory, will stay with you." To be fair this tale of family, obsession, and a mysterious creature in the woods—"a mesmerizing story about hope, sisterhood, and survival with a truly shocking twist at the end" (*People*, Book of the Week) is one of the Most Anticipated Books of the Summer: *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *People*, *Vulture*, *Elle*, *Bustle*, *LitHub*, *Parade*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Electric Lit*...

✎ Pooley, Clare. [How to Age Dis-Gracefully](#) (Pamela Dorman Books/Viking \$29). Our **July British Crime Book of the Month** is a rollicking tale of six wily members of a London Senior Citizens Social Club whose zest for life improves the outlook of their community center's part-time worker. Lydia takes a job managing their club as respite from her condescending husband, who she suspects is having an affair. She expects docile card games and is surprised to meet such a vigorous group of older

people leading complex, secret, and well-lived lives of 70 and 80-year-olds at a local senior center. “These thrown together misfits break free from societal stereotypes and face various challenges related to health, love, money and family. Despite these obstacles, they come together to support their threatened community center, connect with one another, and provide plenty of laugh out loud moments. If you enjoyed the characters in Richard Osman’s Thursday Murder Club series, you will love the tone, British dialogue and the heartwarming crew.”

Quinn, Spencer. [Mrs. Plansky’s Revenge](#) (\$17.99) is a gem sparkling in the Senior Sleuths realm. If you catch the new movie *Thelma* you might think it is inspired by this novel.

Mrs. P is a widow living in Florida, left well off, with a complicated set of children and grandkids who keep pitching (unwise) investment opportunities at her. Over in the small village of Alba Gemina, Romania, a young man is being groomed for a criminal con. Mrs. Plansky indeed believes the call from her “grandson” is real and forwards money, only to discover that all of her accounts have suddenly been cleared out. Fit from her tennis matches and with surprising skills in her pocket, she sets off to take down Romanian gangsters and recover her money. Mrs. P is truly memorable and I hope for a sequel. Quinn returns to us August 6 with a new Chet & Bernie [A Farewell to Arfs](#) (Forge \$27.99).

Quinn, Kate. [The Briar Club](#) (Harper \$28.99) captures the paranoia of the McCarthy era and evoking the changing roles for women in postwar America. It’s 1950. Everyone keeps to themselves at Briarwood House, a down-at-the-heels all-female boardinghouse in the heart of the nation’s capital where secrets hide behind white picket fences. But when the lovely, mysterious widow Grace March moves into the attic room, she draws her oddball collection of neighbors into unlikely friendship: poised English beauty Fliss, whose facade of perfect wife and mother covers gaping inner wounds; policeman’s daughter Nora, who finds herself entangled with a shadowy gangster; frustrated baseball star Beatrice, whose career has come to an end along with the women’s baseball league of WWII; and poisonous, gung-ho Arlene, who has thrown herself into McCarthy’s Red Scare. Grace’s weekly attic-room dinner parties cover a terrible secret of her own. When a shocking act of violence tears the house apart, the Briar Club women must decide once and for all: who is the true enemy in their midst?

Rosenfelt, David. [Flop Dead Gorgeous](#) (\$18). When Hollywood star Jenny Nichols returns to Paterson during a break on a film she’s shooting in New York City, she gets in touch with Andy, who for years has proudly touted the fact that the two used to date when they were in high school. To prove as much to doubting friends, he organizes a dinner party in Jenny’s honor. During the dinner, Jenny’s costar Ryan barges in and demands that Jenny, who has recently broken off their affair, leave with him. Andy’s wife, a former Paterson cop, twists the handsome actor’s arm to subdue him. The next morning, Andy gets a desperate call from Jenny: she has found Ryan dead in the kitchen of the house where she’s staying, and the police are ready to charge her with his murder. A well-constructed plot and vivid characters—both human and canine, as Rosenfelt dedicates plenty of space to Jenny’s miniature French poodle, Mamie—make this a treat for fans. For the sequel see Signed Books.

Roberts, Lauren. [Reckless](#) (Simon & Schuster, \$21.99,) is the second title in the wildly popular Powerless Trilogy, fantasy and romance for Young Adult and up readers. It follows the forbidden romance between a powerful prince and an ordinary girl as they try to survive their kingdom’s grueling laws pitting them against each other.

Another YA book out end of July is Karen McManus, [Such Charming Liars](#) (Random \$20.99). For all of Kat’s life, it’s just been her and her mother, Jamie—except for the forty-eight hours when Jamie was married and Kat had a stepbrother, Liam. That all ended in an epic divorce, and Kat and Liam haven’t spoken since. Now Jamie is a jewel thief trying to go straight, but she has one last job—at billionaire Ross Sutherland’s birthday party. And Kat has figured out a way to tag along. What Kat doesn’t know, though, is that there are two surprise guests at the dazzling Sutherland compound that weekend. The last two people she wants to run into. Liam and his father—a serial scammer who has his sights set on Ross Sutherland’s youngest daughter.

Sheppard, Kathleen. [Women in the Valley of the Kings](#) (St Martins \$29.99). During the so-called Golden Age of Exploration, there were women working and exploring before Howard Carter discovered the tomb of King Tut. Before men even conceived of claiming the story for themselves, women were working in Egypt to lay the groundwork for all future exploration. Sheppard begins with some of the earliest European women who ventured to Egypt as travelers: Amelia Edwards, Jenny Lane, and Marianne Brocklehurst. Their travelogues, diaries and maps chronicled a new world for the curious. In the vast desert, Maggie Benson, the first woman granted permission to excavate in Egypt, met Nettie Gourlay, the woman who became her lifelong companion. They battled issues of oppression and exclusion and, ultimately, are credited with excavating the Temple of Mut. As each woman scored a success in the desert, she set up the women who came later for their own struggles and successes. And, yay, gave us Elizabeth Peters’ brilliant Amelia Peabody series starting with [Crocodile on the Sandbank](#) (\$10.99). If you missed it, wait no longer.

Smirnoff, Karin. [The Girl in the Eagle’s Talons](#) (\$18). Smirnoff, the 3<sup>rd</sup> author in the Millennium Series after Stieg Larsson and David Lagercrantz, presents the 7<sup>th</sup> for punk hacker Lisbeth Salander. Salander reunites with investigative reporter Mikael Blomkvist in the small town of Gasskas in northern Sweden. Blomkvist is there to attend his daughter’s wedding to Henry Salo, the town’s head commissioner, while Lisbeth has come to assume temporary custody of her 13-year-old niece, whose mother has mysteriously disappeared with a hard drive containing \$400 million in bitcoin. Marcus Branco, the sadistic founder of a secretive energy firm intent on acquiring land in Gasskas, sends his henchmen to disrupt the wedding and kidnap Blomkvist’s grandson as leverage against Salo. The boy ends up in the clutches of a serial killer, forcing Blomkvist and Salander to team up once again, in hopes of saving his life. PW finds that Smirnoff “adds new maturity and depth to the two leads, offers several jaw-dropping plot twists, and draws clever—if occasionally implausible—connections between disparate characters.”

Song, KX. [The Night Ends with Fire](#) (Penguin \$30). Ok, I admit it, I am a sucker for the gorgeous packaging for the surge of books in the Romantasy category (romance, fantasy, some mystery, fairy tales/mythology). Love the sprayed edges, colorful

end papers, foil-stamped hardcover case. As the July Indie Next Pick has it: “Inspired by *Mulan*, this epic fantasy of the Three Kingdom War is told with gusto and a courageous female character. A combination of magic, compelling storytelling, action-adventure, and romance.”

✂ Sutton, Paula. [The Potting Shed Murder](#) (Renegade Books UK \$27.99). Welcome to sleepy Pudding Corner, a village haven complete with golden cornfields, winding cobbled lanes... and murder. Daphne Brewster (like the author) left London and settled into a new farmhouse life in rural Norfolk. This idyll is disrupted when the school’s headmaster is found dead in his potting shed amongst the cabbages. Who would kill M. Papplewick, pillar of the community? His widow points her finger at Daphne’s new friend Minerva, spurring Daph into action and hot water with the local Inspector. But then....

Tapper, Jake. [All the Demons Are Here](#) (\$18.99) is the latest chapter in the continuing adventures of the Marder clan. Evel Knievel? Check. UFOs? Check? A serial killer stalking the nation’s capital? Check. And all set during one of America’s secretly weirdest years: 1977. Powered by dual protagonists Ike and Lucy Marder, the book sends the reader pinballing across America, looking for answers in a strange, post-Watergate world. Tapper’s deep knowledge of American history is on display, as is his obvious love of American pop culture—the good, the bad, and the bizarre.

Talty, Morgan. [Fire Exit](#) (Tin House \$28.85). The top Indie Next Pick, unread so far by me. “Charles Lamosway has grown up on the Penobscot reservation in Maine, but doesn’t have Native American blood. Although he’s very close to his Native stepfather, Frederick, his biological parentage meant he had to move off the reservation when he came of age. Frederick purchased land and helped to build the house where Charles lives now, just across the river. Largely isolated, with few friends, Charles watches from his porch the family on the other side: Mary, Roger, and their daughter, Elizabeth. Charles is Elizabeth’s biological father, a secret he has kept at Mary’s request. But as he ages, and as his mother Louise’s health worsens, he feels increasingly that Elizabeth, now an adult, must know the truth. This urge becomes a fixation, a bodily need. Elizabeth faces medical problems, and he is convinced she needs the truth—including Louise’s medical history—to survive. But it’s possible that what Charles sees as necessary will have an entirely different outcome from what he intends. *Fire Exit* is concerned with bodies, with visceral needs not only for food and shelter but for truth. Talty’s tersely poetic, descriptive prose grounds this story in the physical world.”

Walker, Martin. [A Chateau Under Siege](#) (\$18). “There’s a mildly cantankerous protagonist along the lines of Andrea Camilleri’s Inspector Montalbano or Donna Leon’s Commissario Brunetti. There’s a rustic village, St. Denis, where “the green of the grass and the honey colored stone of the houses against the clear blue sky” recall an Impressionist painting, and where shenanigans major and minor (and murder certainly counts as major) abound. There are mouthwatering descriptions of food — veal stews, plum tarts, fresh croissants with apricot jam. The slow, relaxed pace feels an awful lot like a vacation to the south of France. But there’s also some unexpected steel, in keeping with Walker’s prior career as a journalist. The murder victim was playing the hero in a re-enactment of the Hundred Years’ War, and tracing

his last steps requires Bruno to probe intelligence operations, emerging technologies, and rivalries within families and between countries.” Bruno returns September 24 to The Pen with [A Grave in the Woods](#) (Knopf \$29) in an event hosted by our local Alliance Française.

Winstead, Ashley. [Midnight is the Darkest Hour](#) (\$16.99). Timid Ruth Cornier grew up in the shadow of her overzealous evangelist father in middle-of-nowhere Bottom Springs, LA, where congregants and nonbelievers alike are controlled by preacher Cornier’s decrees, including what books can be held in the library and school. Ruth learns to pilfer from donation boxes at the library before forbidden books can be disposed of. She rescues a copy of *Twilight* and keeps it close. With a teenager’s naive desire for romance, she finds herself in a dangerous situation with a drifter. Beautiful Everett, son of the town drunk, rescues her, and they become inseparable. Six years later, when a skull is found in the swamp, Ruth worries. Then a second skull is found. Now she, with reason, worries more. I like the way Ruth works to save herself.