

# BOOKNEWS from

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## ANOTHER AWESOME AUGUST

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.

### SATURDAY AUGUST 3 2:00 PM Live

**Sara Johnson** discusses [The Hungry Bones](#) (Poisoned Pen \$16.99)

Forensics expert Alexa Glock in old New Zealand mining village

### SUNDAY AUGUST 4 2:00 PM Live Book Launch

**Deborah J Ledford** discusses [Havoc](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$16.99)  
Lightning Dance Duran #2

### SUNDAY AUGUST 4 6:00 PM Live Book Launch

**Brad Thor** discusses [Shadow of Doubt](#) (Atria \$29.99)  
Scot Harvath

**Tickets:** \$33 with one copy of the book. We can offer a limited number of free companion tickets, one for each ticket purchased. When you order please indicate if you wish one.

### MONDAY AUGUST 5 7:00 PM Live Book Launch

**James Rollins** discusses [Arkangel](#) (Harper \$29.99)  
Sigma Force

Our copies come with a matching and very cool Koozie, an exclusive to The Pen

### TUESDAY AUGUST 6 12:00 PM

**Will Dean** discusses [The Chamber](#) (Atria \$18.99)  
Signed UK edition: [The Chamber](#) (Hodder \$40)

### TUESDAY AUGUST 6 7:00 PM Live Book Launch

**Spencer Quinn** discusses [A Farewell to Arfs](#) (Forge \$27.99)  
Chet & Bernie

### WEDNESDAY AUGUST 7 6:00 PM

**Rhys Bowen** discusses [The Rose Arbor](#) (Lake Union \$28.99)  
Signed books available  
Fun to read this [profile of Rhys](#) before the event

### WEDNESDAY AUGUST 7 7:15 PM

**Jonathan and Jesse Kellerman** discuss [The Lost Coast](#) (Random \$30)  
Berkeley's Clay Edison  
Books signed by Jonathan available

### FRIDAY AUGUST 9 7:00 PM Live at The Pen An Outlander Evening with mocktails

**Tickets:** \$32 includes one copy of [Outlander Cocktails: The Official Drinks Guide](#) (Random \$32). Limited to 120 attendees  
Note: at the door you can change each \$32 ticket to one copy of the Sweany shown below plus a [Clanlands in NZ](#) (\$14) in place of *Outlander Cocktails*

**Diana Gabaldon** also discusses [Outlander Trivia](#) (\$24.95), A Card Game with 200 Questions (and answers)

**BP Sweany** discusses [The Sword and the Sophomore](#) (Th3rd World Studios \$19.99)

### MONDAY AUGUST 12 4:00 PM

**Laurie Elizabeth Flynn** discusses [Till Death Do Us Part](#) (Simon & Schuster \$28.99)

**Jessa Maxwell** discusses [I Need You to Read This](#) (Atria \$27.99)  
Signed copies available for Maxwell

### MONDAY AUGUST 12 7:00 PM Live Book Launch

**TJ Newman** discusses [Worst Case Scenario](#) (LittleBrown \$30)  
Her 3<sup>rd</sup> Disaster Thriller, terrifying and our Crime Book of the Month

### TUESDAY AUGUST 13 6:00 PM

**Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child** discuss [Angel of Vengeance](#) (Grand Central \$30)  
Agent Pendergast  
Our copies are signed by both and come with an exclusive set of Pendergast trading cards

### THURSDAY AUGUST 15 7:00 PM Live

**Gabino Iglesias** discusses [The House of Bone and Rain](#) (LittleBrown \$29)

### SATURDAY AUGUST 17 10:30 AM

**Croak & Dagger** discuss Jim Kelly's [The Coldest Blood](#) (\$12.95)  
Crime in Cambridgeshire

**SATURDAY AUGUST 17 2:00 PM Live**

**John hosts a celebration of Bookstore Romance Day**  
**Jen DeLuca** discusses [Haunted Ever After](#) (Berkley \$19)  
**Jenn McKinlay** discusses [Love at First Book](#) (Berkley \$18)

**MONDAY AUGUST 19 5:00 PM**

**Bones** creator **Hart Hanson** hosts **Kathy Reichs**  
**Reichs** discusses [Fire and Bones](#) (Scribner \$27.99)  
Signed books available  
Also Hanson's book [The Seminarian](#) (Blackstone \$26.99) is in stock, a caper in the vein of Hiaasen and Evanovich

**TUESDAY AUGUST 20 7:00 PM Live Publication Day Party**

**William Kent Krueger** discusses [Spirit Crossing](#) (Atria \$28.99)  
Cork O'Connor

**WEDNESDAY AUGUST 21 1:00 PM**

**Martin Edwards** discusses [The House on Graveyard Lane](#) (Poisoned Pen \$16.99)  
A Rachel Savernake Golden Age Gothic

**WEDNESDAY AUGUST 21 5:00 PM**

**Sarah Stewart Taylor** discusses [Agony Hill](#) (St Martins \$28)  
Our August Historical Fiction Book of the Month set in 1960s Vermont  
**PJ Tracy** discusses [City of Secrets](#) (St Martins \$28)  
A LAPD procedural excellent for fans of Connelly and Kellerman  
Signed books available for both titles

**THURSDAY AUGUST 22 7:00 PM Live**

**A Blackstone Publishing Party Guest Host: Meg Gardiner**  
**There will be giveaways and treats**  
**Reed Farrel Coleman** discusses [Blind to Midnight](#) (Blackstone \$26.99)  
Nick Ryan  
**Steve Hamilton** discusses [An Honorable Assassin](#) (Blackstone \$226.99)  
Nick Mason  
And Meg's July book [Shadowheart](#) (Blackstone \$27.99) is still available too

**FRIDAY AUGUST 23 7:00 PM**

**SciFi Friday** discusses Mur Lafferty's [Station Eternity](#) (\$17)

**SATURDAY AUGUST 24 11:00 AM**

**The Cookbook Club** discusses Yasmin Khan's [Ripe Figs](#) (Norton \$35)  
Bring a dish to share with the group

**SATURDAY AUGUST 24 2:00 PM Live**

**Karin Slaughter** discusses [This is Why We Lied](#) (Harper \$32)  
Will Trent  
This is also a fundraiser for the [New Born Kitten Rescue Organization](#)  
Even if you can't attend you can donate

**SUNDAY AUGUST 25 100 PM Live**

**We begin with a Calabrian food buffet at 1:00 PM**  
**Then Juliet Grames** discusses [The Lost Boy of Santa Chionia](#) (Knopf \$29)  
Our Notable New Fiction Book of the Month  
**Stuart Neville** discusses [Blood Like Mine](#) (Soho \$29.95)  
A knockout venture into Horror for the Irish author  
This event is special: editor/author Grames and her author Neville

**MONDAY AUGUST 26 12:00 PMs**

**Ann Cleeves** discusses [The Dark Wives](#) (St Martins \$29 Signed)  
Also Signed UK edition: [The Dark Wives](#) (Pan UK \$45)  
A Vera Stanhope investigation in Northumberland

**TUESDAY AUGUST 27 4:00 PM**

**Australia's Anna Downes** discusses [Red River Road](#) (St Martins \$28)  
Western Australia van life is dangerous

**WEDNESDAY AUGUST 28 5:00 PM**

**Patrick hosts noir**  
**Eli Cranor** discusses [Broiler](#) (Soho \$27.95)  
**Scott Phillips** discusses [The Devil Raises His Own](#) (Soho \$27.95)  
Signed books for both titles

**THURSDAY AUGUST 29 7:00 PM**

**Hardboiled Crime** discusses Jim Thompson's [The Grifters](#) (\$17.99)

**CLOSED MONDAY SEPTEMBER 2 for Labor Day**

**TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 3 7:00 PM Live Book Launch**

**Jeffery Deaver and Isabella Maldonado**  
**They discuss [Fatal Intrusion](#)** (Thomas & Mercer \$28.99/\$16.99)  
Sanchez & Heron #1

**WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 4 7:00 PM Live**

**Fest in the West or Books and Bourbon**  
**Don Bentley** discusses [Vince Flynn Capture or Kill](#) (Atria \$29.99)  
Joining Don are Brian Andrews, Kyle Mills, Brad Taylor, Jeff Wilson in a celebration of Mitch Rapp and favorite thrillers  
Bring your own list and pitch; prizes for those who do  
A libration will be poured for everyone

## OUR AUGUST BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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

Smith, Sally. [A Case of Mice and Murder](#)

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

Bryant, Elise. [It's Elementary](#)

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

Newman, TJ. [Worst Case Scenario](#)

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

Staple, Elizabeth. [The Snap](#)

**Hardboiled/Noir Club** One Signed First Printing per month

Phillips, Scott. [The Devil Raises His Own](#)

**History/Mystery Club** One First Printing per month

Taylor, Sarah Stewart. [Agony Hill](#)

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

James, Tania. [Loot](#)

**Notable New Fiction** One Signed First Printing per month

Games, Juliet. [The Lost Boy of Santa Chionia](#)

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

Gamez, Gabriella. [The Next Best Fling](#)

## SIGNED BOOKS FOR AUGUST

✦ Atkinson, Kate. [Death at the Sign of the Rook](#) (Doubleday UK \$45). Atkinson's deliciously witty sixth adventure for Jackson Brodie finds the British PI entangled in a weekend-long murder mystery party. Brodie's newest clients are Ian and Hazel Padgett, aging siblings who have discovered, while divvying up their deceased mother's possessions, that one of her oil paintings has gone missing. With the help of his friend, DC Reggie Chase, Brodie digs into the siblings' suspicions that their mother's caretaker, Melanie Hope, swiped the heirloom. Soon, Brodie and Chase's investigation unearths art thefts linked to Burton Makepeace House, a crumbling mansion recently converted into a hotel and managed by the self-aggrandizing Piers Milton. Brodie and Chase head to Burton Makepeace and start poking around while an elaborate "Murder Mystery Weekend" event that Piers has organized is underway; before long, a snowstorm strands the duo with the participants and knocks out everyone's cell reception. "Atkinson keeps things fast, funny, and fair, delivering a twist-filled mystery that will stump armchair sleuths."

Ian Rankin says, "How delicious to have Jackson Brodie back, this time in a story that starts off in Agatha Christie's world but soon becomes a landscape that could only have been crafted from the pen of the incomparable Kate Atkinson." Unsigned US edition [Death at the Sign of the Rook](#) (\$30) in September.

Bentley, Don. [Vince Flynn Capture Or Kill](#) (Atria \$29.99) is, Don says, "a 'throwback' to the era in which Vince Flynn still wrote his iconic Mitch Rapp protagonist meaning that the story takes place between Flynn-authored books *Pursuit of Honor* and *The Last Man*. The novel answers a question that Vince Flynn fans have been asking for more than a decade: What role did Mitch Rapp play in the Navy SEAL led operation to Capture or Kill Osama bin Laden?" Not Signed here until September 4 but wise to preorder so we have enough of this Mitch Rapp thriller.

✦ Bowen, Rhys. [The Rose Arbor](#) (Lake Union \$28.99) is inspired by something true new to me: an entire small Dorset village and large manor house requisitioned by the military for target practice preparing for D-Day. Tydeham's residents were packed up

performer and restitution mostly ignored. In the case of the family whose estate had been handed down for generations, promises to restore it at war's end were broken; it became a shell kept off-limits by the Army. In 1968, Liz Houghton, sidelined into obituaries by her London newspaper, gets a scoop from a gal pal who's a police officer. Three little girls disappeared while being evacuated from London by train. One was found murdered in the woods near a station. The other two were never seen again. Liz sees this as her chance to return to the newsroom with a killer story. But first...why does she recall a body buried in the ruined estate's garden 44 years ago? Lots of fascinating things to unpick here.

Bracken, Alexandra. [The Mirror of Beasts](#) (Random House \$20.99), a YA fantasy, is the electrifying sequel to [Silver in the Bone](#) (Random House \$19.99), in which fresh betrayal ignites ancient magic to wake the dead, and a cursed girl with no magic of her own must put the past to rest. "Simmering with magic, peril, romance, and heartbreak." —Leigh Bardugo

Castillo, Linda. [The Burning](#) (St Martins \$28). Linda had to cancel her July 8 event but she has now signed her latest Kate Burkholder investigation for us. The Amish of Painter's Mill, Ohio, her childhood community, are once again roiled by a murder investigation when a body is found along a country road...

Cavanagh, Steve. [Witness 8](#) (Headline UK \$36). Ruby Johnson is a nanny and maid to wealthy families in Manhattan's West 74th Street. She knows their routines. Their secrets. One night, on her way home, Ruby witnesses a neighbor's murder. She knows the victim. She knows the killer. She makes an anonymous call to the police and names the murderer. But Ruby didn't tell the truth...there's something wrong with Ruby Johnson. Eddie Flynn, conman turned trial lawyer, must defend an innocent man accused of this terrible crime. As Ruby's deadly game begins, one thing is certain. It won't be the last murder for Ruby....

✦ Cleeves, Ann. [The Dark Wives](#) (St Martins \$29). So delighted to have a new DI Vera Stanhope from Ann, so sad to know that

Vera's last season is filming even now for TV. Brenda Blethyn has had an amazing run, bless her.

Ann says the idea for this new book came from reading about the privatizing of care homes for children/youths and how the profit motive replaced government funding—much like privatizing prisons or care homes for the aged and more here in the US. The story begins when a man's body is found in the early morning light by a local dog walker in the park outside Rosebank, a home for troubled teens in the coastal village of Longwater. The victim is Josh, a staff member, who was due to work the previous night but never showed up. Vera is called out to investigate the death, with her only clue being the disappearance of one of the home's residents, fourteen-year-old Chloe Spence. Vera can't bring herself to believe that a teenager is responsible for the murder, but even she can't dismiss the possibility. Vera, Joe, and new team member Rosie Bell, soon face a second body near the Three Dark Wives monument in the wilds of the Northumberland countryside as superstition and folklore begin to collide with fact. Just as the team collides with new recruit Rosie while mourning the death of their mate Holly. Signed UK edition: [The Dark Wives](#) (Pan UK \$45) is also available.

Coleman, Reed Farrel. [Blind to Midnight](#) (Blackstone \$26.99). Detective Nick Ryan doesn't wear a uniform, but he is the most powerful cop in New York. He has cars, safe houses, money, and weapons hidden all over the city. Nearly 3,000 New Yorkers died on 9/11. But in the entire city on that tragic day, only one murder actually took place. Now, over two decades later, Detective Nick Ryan must dig beneath the official report—and into his own past—to find the truth. Working again for the mysterious power broker "Joe," Nick finds a link between an airman, a billionaire, a trove of Nazi gold, and a crew of killers, but gets sidetracked when his dear "uncle" Tony and Tony's wife are murdered in a professional hit. Is he for once outgunned?

Cranor, Eli. [Broiler](#) (Soho \$27.95) is Edgar winner Cranor's "latest Trojan Horse of a novel, a satisfying hunk of noir that tells us far more about the American South than those endless newspaper think pieces set in diners and gas stations. Want to understand what's going on in the United States right now? Read Eli Cranor." —Laura Lippman. Cranor once again impresses with an Arkansas noir with a background of a chicken factory.

Croft, Rachel Koller. [We Love the Nightlife](#) (Penguin \$29). London 1979. Two women with a deep love for disco meet one fateful night on the dance floor. Locked in a toxic female friendship, these two vampires careen toward catastrophe. Publishes August 20 but not signed here until September 10 7:00 PM.

Dean, Will. [The Chamber](#) (Hodder UK \$40) is the ultimate locked room page-turner. Six saturation divers in the North Sea are trapped in a hyperbaric are dying one by one under mysterious circumstances and don't know who to trust. "The isolation and fear are palpable, and the impending dread thrums along with a steady, heart-hammering intensity. Dean's meticulous research into the day-to-day duties of saturation divers lays the groundwork, but it's his ability to thrust readers into the metal chamber and slam the door behind them that makes this a haunting, unforgettable thriller." —Heather Gudenkauf. I add that the locked-room solution is ingenious.

De Luca, Jen. [Haunted Ever After](#) (Berkley \$19). Cassie Rutherford possibly overreacted to all her friends getting married and having kids by leaving Orlando and buying a flipped historic cottage in Boneyard Key. Though there's something *unusual* with her new home (her laptop won't charge in any outlets, and the poetry magnets on her fridge definitely didn't read "WRONG" and "MY HOUSE" when she put them up), she's charmed by the colorful history surrounding her. And she's catching a certain vibe from the grumpy coffee shop owner whenever he slips her a free slice of banana bread. As Nick takes her on a ghost tour, sharing town gossip that tourists don't get to hear, and they spend nights researching the former owners of her haunted cottage, their connection solidifies into something very real and enticing. But Cassie's worried she's in too deep with this whole (haunted) home ownership thing...and Nick's afraid to get too close

Grames, Juliet. [The Lost Boy of Santa Chionia](#) (Knopf \$29). Our **August Notable New Fiction Book of the Month** is in part detection, but for me it's a depiction of a place isolated in a way not possible today. Narrator Francesca Lofffield, a 20-something American woman, arrives in the early 1960s as a charity worker. She has come to Santa Chionia to establish a nursery school that would help reduce the high child mortality rates by improving nutrition and hygiene.

My review: Once again drawing on her Italian heritage, the author of [The Seven or Eight Deaths of Stella Fortuna](#) (\$17.99) hurls us into the wild heart of Calabria, 1960, when isolation, a stagnant economy, severe flooding, and the grip of poverty make the mountain top village of Santa Chionia an unlikely place for an idealistic young American to open a nursery school. Even more challenging is filling a request from an aged village mother for Francesca to determine if the skeleton that surfaced after flood waters receded might be the bones of her long missing son....

Hamilton, Steve. [An Honorable Assassin](#) (Blackstone \$26.99). Nick Mason was released from federal prison to a second life as an unwilling assassin, serving a major Chicago crime lord until the day he finally won his freedom. But that freedom was a lie. Now Mason finds himself on a plane to Jakarta, promoted to lead assassin for a shadowy global organization. This time, there's only one name on his list: Hashim Baya—known as the Crocodile—international fugitive and #1 most wanted on Interpol's "Red Notice" list. Baya is the most dangerous and elusive criminal Mason has ever faced. Then, for the first time in his career, Mason fails his mission—Baya gets away alive. To save himself, his ex-wife, and his daughter, Mason must zero in on hunting down the target on his own. But Mason isn't alone in his search—for Interpol agent Martin Sauvage, apprehending Baya has become a personal vendetta. Sauvage is a man just as haunted as Mason. And just as determined. Hamilton offers a vivid and informative picture of the world's largest city (Tokyo is second).

✦ Harris, Robert. [Precipice](#) (Hutchinson UK \$44). The summer of 1914, 26-year-old Venetia Stanley – aristocratic, clever, bored, reckless – is having a love affair with the Prime Minister, H. H. Asquith, a man more than twice her age. He writes to her obsessively, sharing the most sensitive matters of state. As Asquith reluctantly leads the country into war with Germany,

a young intelligence officer is assigned to investigate a leak of top secret documents – and suddenly what was a sexual intrigue becomes a matter of national security that will alter the course of political history. Again Harris seamlessly weaves together fact and fiction.

Harrison, Jamie. [River View](#) (Catapult \$28). “In 1972, when Jules was a child, his father, the sheriff of Blue Deer, Montana, was gunned down during a traffic stop. Patrick Bell was convicted of the murder—he claimed he’d been on the way home to kill his unfaithful wife and the sheriff “was in the way”—but the precise circumstances of the crime were never made clear. Now, in 2001, Jules’s mother urges him to learn as much as he can about his father’s final moments. While Jules reluctantly revisits that case, he juggles others: his meddling neighbors separately hire him to spy on one another; a priest’s suicide starts to look like it may have been a murder; and Absaroka County hires him to determine where, exactly, the bodies are buried in an abandoned graveyard that officials want to build a road over. Harrison’s unusual take on the West can be enjoyed in Jules’ earlier cases [reissued in nifty covers](#).

Heller, Peter. [Burn](#) (Knopf \$28). Two men—friends since boyhood—emerge from the woods of rural Maine to a dystopian country racked by bewildering violence. Perhaps not what you’d expect from Heller. Indie Next says “In the spirit of *Station Eleven*, there is only one thing humankind understands when it must survive: it cannot be done alone. You read this novel and wonder how such a painful book can be so damn beautiful. Gorgeous writing meets heart-pounding thriller.”

Hood, Joshua. [Burn Out](#) (Blackstone \$26.99). Becoming one of the US Forest Service’s elite smokejumpers has been Jake Slade’s dream. [Sadly, it’s a growth industry this summer. Parachuting into the path of a raging fire and beating it into submission isn’t a job for the faint of heart, but after four years in Folsom, he’s ready to prove himself. And survives the grueling six-week training course. Then fighting a wildfire gets Slade involved in a string of murders deep in the mountains of California’s notorious Emerald Triangle, leaving him caught between a disgraced DEA agent trying to solve his final case and the ruthless cartel hit man determined to kill them both. What began as a straightforward search and rescue mission swiftly turns into a harrowing run for his life....

Iglesias, Gabino. [The House of Bone and Rain](#) (LittleBrown \$29). For childhood friends Gabe, Xavier, Tavo, Paul, and Bimbo, death has always been close. Hurricanes. Car accidents. Gang violence. Suicide. *Estamos rodeados de fantasmas* was Gabe’s grandmother’s refrain. We are surrounded by ghosts. But this time is different. Bimbo’s mom has been shot dead. *We’re gonna kill the guys who killed her* Bimbo swears. And they all agree. Feral with grief, Bimbo has become unrecognizable, taking no prisoners in his search for names. And then....”Pour a large glass of horror master Stephen King with a jigger of spicy Don Winslow and garnish with a splash of magical realism, and you have Iglesias’s latest, a tall, tasty cocktail, a coming-of-age revenge scenario battered by what rolls in on the tide.

Jónasson, Ragnar. [Death at the Sanatorium](#) (Joseph UK \$45). Jónasson follows up [Reykjavik](#) (\$19) with a fair-play whodunit worthy of Agatha Christie, whose work he translates into Icelandic. In 2012 Reykjavik, 30-something Helgi Reykadi is

finishing his criminology dissertation on an unsolved homicide in a tuberculosis sanatorium turned research facility. Flashbacks fill in details about Helgi’s subject: in 1983, someone tortured and murdered Ysra, a nurse at the facility, and a few days later the institution’s director suffered a suspicious fall from the balcony. Police arrested the building’s janitor on a false tip from nurse Tinna—who threw the janitor under the bus to distract from her own suspicious behavior—then let him go. After that, the case went cold. In 2012, Tinna turns up dead, so Helgi tracks down her and Ysra’s old coworkers in hopes of solving both murders. When his interview subjects turn out to be strangely tight-lipped, he launches into a twisty investigation that culminates in a volcanic finale.

Kellerman, Jonathan/Jesse. [The Lost Coast](#) (Random \$30). Our copies are signed by Jonathan. Cut loose from his former life at the coroner’s office, Clay Edison has set up shop as a private investigator. It’s steady, safe work. Until it isn’t. The trouble begins when a young man, tasked with managing his grandmother’s estate, hires Clay to examine some minor financial discrepancies. What starts off as a case of simple fraud rapidly explodes into a web of deception, an elaborate con game stretching back decades and involving countless victims. All the evidence points to a tiny town on California’s rugged, remote Lost Coast. Good luck getting there, though. And Clay’s reward for surviving the journey is a trigger-happy welcoming committee, ready to guard their secrets with lethal force. Navigating this landscape of savage waves and savage lies brings Clay into collision with a host of other players with their own, and probably deadly, agendas.

Krueger, William Kent. [Spirit Crossing](#) (Atria \$28.99). In one of Kent’s most puzzling mysteries to date, the disappearance of a local politician’s teenage daughter is major news in Minnesota. As a huge manhunt is launched to find her, Cork O’Connor’s grandson stumbles across the shallow grave of a young Ojibwe woman — but nobody seems that interested. Nobody, that is, except Cork and the newly formed Iron Lake Ojibwe Tribal Police. As Cork and the tribal officers dig into the circumstances of this mysterious and grim discovery, they uncover a connection to the missing teenager. And soon, it’s clear that Cork’s young grandson “Little Rabbit” (being in part educated by Henry Meloux) is in danger of being the killer’s next victim. At our event there may be Hollywood options news. Finally!

Ledford, Deborah J. [Havoc](#) (Thomas Mercer \$16.99). In a follow up to [Redemption](#) (\$16.9) we find Eva “Lightning Dance” Duran joining the Taos PD and working a bank robbery that left an officer down and a suspect on the run. She has the support of fellow tribal cops but there is tension between the Taos Puebloans and the local Hispanic community.

Leon, Donna. [A Refiner’s Fire](#) (Heinemann U.K. \$44). While this is a slow burn involving overprivileged teens protected from from consequences, it evolves into a crushing crime after one teen, Orlando, warns Commissario Brunetti’s colleague 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. There’s more whispering—but this time, it’s about Griffoni, photographed and identified

at that coffee shop by someone who tipped off peerlessly shady *avvocato* Beniamino Cresti. And then.... It's also about aging in general and out of a profession in particular.

Maxwell, Jessa. [I Need You to Read This](#) (Atria \$27.99). Tired of spending dull days working as a pharmaceutical copywriter and reading the *New York Herald's* Dear Constance advice column, Alex Marks, who came full of hope to the Big Apple for a fresh start, is shaken when she learns Francis Keen, the longtime columnist, has been murdered. One night, flown with wine, Alex decides to apply to be her hero's replacement. She gets the job, allowing her to confirm what she's always suspected: that she's a great writer and advice dispenser. But soon Alex picks up on a sinister undercurrent at the *Herald* of bad blood between the supportive editor and the paper's owner, and gets threatening letters that question her fitness for the job. Worried she might become the next target for Francis' killer, she enlists a former cop and a canny waitress at the diner she frequents to help her investigate.

Maxwell, author of [The Golden Spoon](#) (\$17), a Christie-style country house murder—maybe a combination of *Clue* and the *Great British Bake Off* set in a cooking school and 2023 First Mystery Book of the Month, expertly explores the power structures of Manhattan's elite while portraying the troubled newspaper industry. Excellent.

McKinlay, Jenn. [Fatal First Edition](#) (Berkley \$28). People are dying to get their hands on a rare, valuable book in a Library Lover's Mystery from last February. The paperback is due out August 27: [Fatal First Edition](#) (\$18).

Mejia, Mindy. [A World of Hurt](#) (Grove \$27). For the nerve-shredding sequel to [To Catch a Storm](#) (*\$18 out August 13*), Mejia shifts her focus from psychic PI Jonah Kendrick to his college friend, Iowa City cop Max Summerlin, and Kara Johnson, the lover of Kendrick's late niece, Celina. Max is eager to get back in the field following gunshot wounds he sustained while breaking up an opioid ring run by Sam Olson. Max gets his chance when he's tapped to join a task force looking for a hit man who's been killing people connected to Olson's operation. But he is deflated to learn he's been recruited as a liaison for Johnson, who ran drugs for Olson before becoming an informant. Johnson, born with a condition that makes her unable to feel physical pain, is grieving the loss of Celina, whom Olson killed after she took the fall for Johnson's informing. The oddly matched pair each learns from the other as they run at Olson and the hit man targeting him. "Mejia maintains breathless suspense as she fleshes out the combative dynamic between her captivating leads. For crime fiction fans, it's a must-read."

☞ Meyer, Nicholas. [Sherlock Holmes and the Telegram from Hell](#) (Penzler \$26.95). It's June, 1916. With a world war raging on the continent, exhausted John H. Watson, M.D. is operating on the wounded full-time when his labors are interrupted by a knock on his door, revealing Sherlock Holmes, with a black eye, a missing tooth and a cracked rib. The story he has to tell will set in motion a series of world-changing events. Out in August but not Signed here until his September 23 7:00 PM PDT event.

Neville, Stuart. [Blood Like Mine](#) (Soho \$29.95). Irishman Neville visits us with the Biggest Horror Read of Summer, recommended by Ruth Ware and earning a Starred Review that finds that "Neville gives the serial killer thriller a novel spin in this riveting

splice of crime and weird fiction. FBI agent Marc Donner is a cybercrime specialist skilled at drawing out pedophiles and groomers by posing as vulnerable young people on social media. When some of his predator quarry turn up murdered with their throats slashed and their spinal cords severed, Marc speculates it's the work of a serial killer—and he's right. Meanwhile one Rebecca Carter and her 12-year-old daughter employ the same sorts of online trickery to lure their victims as they cut a bloody swath from Wisconsin to Arizona. "After tantalizing the reader with the prospect that the mother-daughter duo are female Dexters, Neville torques his tale fully into uncanny territory with a spectacular confrontation between Donner and the pair that propels his plot into the realm of the supernatural.... This is a satisfying exercise in high-voltage horror."

Newman, T.J. [Worst Case Scenario](#) (LittleBrown \$30). We are delighted to debut the third "disaster thriller" and our **August Crime Book of the Month** on August 12 for a local author and knockout bestseller with "major motion pictures" coming for her first two books. She was a Flight Attendant (and bookseller) before publishing [Falling](#) (\$17.99) and dreams up absolutely horrifying scenarios that could keep you from flying ever again. This book begins when the captain of a full flight experiences a fatal heart attack while the co-pilot is in the restroom and the supervising FA in the cockpit is too small to move the dead man out of the way. The doomed aircraft crashes into a nuclear power plant in tiny Waketa, Minnesota, making the town ground zero for Nuclear Event Scale Level 8, a step worse than Chernobyl and Fukushima. What next while the whole world panics?

Phillips, Scott. [The Devil Raises His Own](#) (Soho \$27.95). "For this raucous sequel set 38 years after the events of [Hop Alley](#) (\$16.99), Phillips sets his sights on the early days of the pornographic film industry. In 1916 Hollywood, septuagenarian photographer Bill Ogden runs a successful portrait studio with his granddaughter, Flavia, arrived from Wichita, Kansas, after killing her abusive husband. Recently, Bill has photographed some people who work for Clyde Grady, a director of "blue movies" that have begun to enter the marketplace being carved out by L.A.'s nascent film industry. ... In rich, vividly realized vignettes, Phillips follows each cast member as a series of brutal murders sets the City of Angels on edge. Phillips brilliantly marries cheeky comedy and noirish grit, taking the series in a wholly unexpected direction. James Ellroy fans will be thrilled."—*PW* Starred Review for our **August Hardboiled Crime Book of the Month**.

Podolski, Gregg. [The Recruiter](#) (Blackstone \$27.99). A debut introduces Rick Carter, a go-to guy for contract killers, hackers, gun smugglers, and any other assorted villains-for-hire a European crime boss might need. But wait! Suddenly he must save his family after a job goes sideways. Rick's troubles begin when a Belgian mob boss named Trish threatens to kill him if he refuses to oversee hits on six law enforcement officers across the globe. Reluctantly, Rick gets to work, but he's jolted when he realizes that one of the targets—a Philadelphia police detective—is his ex-wife's new husband. Refusing to help kill his children's stepfather, Rick tries to back out, unleashing two assassins to hunt him down. That sends Rick on a mad dash to protect the family he abandoned in New Jersey 10 years earlier, and he draws on his network of nefarious associates to throw his pursuers off the trail. If you like cheeky high action thrillers this

is for you...and if you watch our [video with Gregg](#) you will be touched by how much the book and our event mean to him.

Preston, Douglas. [Angel of Vengeance](#) (Grand Central \$30). Our copies are signed by both authors and include our exclusive: two specially commissioned portraits of Diogenes Pendergast on collectible trading cards. Here is the final novel in the Leng Quartet following series entry #3 [The Cabinet of Curiosities](#), #20 [Bloodless](#), and #21 [The Cabinet of Dr. Leng](#) (\$10.99 each) wherein the FBI Agent and his ward take a final stand against Pendergast's own ancestor...and Constance's greatest enemy.

Unknown to Leng, Pendergast's brother, Diogenes, appears unexpectedly, offering to help—for mysterious reasons of his own. Disguised as a cleric, Diogenes establishes himself in New York's notorious Five Points slum, manipulating events like a chess master, watching Leng's every move...and awaiting his own chance to strike. Meanwhile, as Pendergast focuses on saving the unstable Constance in her fanatical quest for vengeance, she strikes out on her own: to rescue her beloved siblings. But Leng is one step ahead and has a surprise for them all

Pryor, Mark. [A Blood Red Morning](#) (St Martins \$29). Pryor's vivid third WWII-era whodunit finds Paris cop Henri Lefort, after sleeping through a shooting on the doorstep of his apartment building, assigned to investigate. The victim is Guy Remillon, a banker who lost his job when the Nazis took over the city and then began working for the SS, investigating tips sent by French citizens hoping to have their neighbors arrested or fined. The work made Remillon a laundry list of enemies, but Lefort gets a strong lead when one of his neighbors reports seeing the building's busybody toss something out a window soon after the crime. However, when Lefort learns that a Nazi official removed a piece of paper from Remillon's belongings, he worries that investigating the murder with his usual diligence could put him in the crosshairs of the SS. Pryor generates nerve-shredding tension with Lefort's tightrope walk."—*PW*.

Quinn, Spencer. [A Farewell to Arfs](#) (Forge \$27.99). I have to lead with this review by Stephen King: "I have been a Chet and Bernie fan from the start. Chet is a wonderful narrator—top dog, you could say—but he never descends to cuteness, and Bernie is as tough a PI as Spade or Marlowe, a man as quick with his .38 as he is with a Slim Jim for his sidekick." Indeed we here have been with Chet and Bernie since the start since Quinn sets the series in Pottsville, a kind of clone of Scottsdale. Their elderly next door neighbor, Mr. Parsons, thought he was doing the right thing by loaning his ne'er do well son, Billy, some money to help get himself settled. But soon, Mr. Parsons discovers that his entire life savings is gone. A run-of-the-mill scam? Bernie isn't convinced, but it's Chet who senses what they're really up against. Only Billy knows the truth, but he's disappeared. While this is no cozy, Chet delights with some of his funniest dialogue ever.

Reichs, Kathy. [Fire and Bones](#) (Scribner \$27.99). The iconic Temperance Brennan brings her forensic expertise, dogged detection skills, and wry sense of humor to Washington, DC to investigate a harrowing fire scene. Secrets of the past such as Tempe always digs up converge with an arson investigation. "The twists and turns in the case come fast and furious, but Tempe handles each with her trademark aplomb."—Lisa Scottoline.

Note: Hart Hanson, the creator and man behind *Bones*,

the TV series based on the novels, is our host. His second thriller in full Carl Hiaasen mode is in stock, Signed, and is called [The Seminarian](#) (Blackstone \$26.99).

Rollins, James. [Arkangel](#) (Harper \$29.99). Our copies come with an exclusive: a matching *Arkangel* Koozie. The execution of a Vatican archivist within the shadow of the Kremlin exposes a conspiracy going back three centuries—to the bloody era of the Russian Tsars. Before his murder, he manages to dispatch a coded message, a warning of a terrifying threat, one tied to a secret buried within the Golden Library of Tsars, a vast and treasured archive that had vanished into history. As combative forces race for the truth behind this alarming discovery and the death, Sigma Force is summoned to aid in the search—not only for this missing trove of ancient books, but to follow a trail far into the Arctic looking for a lost continent and a revelation that could ignite a global war. But Sigma Force has its own difficulties at home after an explosive attack on the National Mall.... I love it that two lost libraries, the other that of Ivan the terrible in [Red Star Falling](#) (\$30) signed by its authors Steve Berry and Grant Blackwood, fuel high action thrillers.

Slaughter, Karin. [This is Why We Lied](#) (Harper \$32). For GBI investigator Will Trent and medical examiner Sara Linton, McAlpine Lodge seems like the ideal getaway to celebrate their honeymoon. Set on a gorgeous, off-the-grid mountaintop property, it's the perfect place to unplug and reconnect. Until a bone-chilling scream cuts through the night. Hotel manager Mercy McAlpine has been murdered in one of the property's cabins. Will and Sara jump into action with a vicious storm raging and the one access road to the property washed out, the murderer must be someone on the mountain, first turning their suspicion toward Mercy's abusive ex-husband, whom Will knows from the time they spent together in an Atlanta boy's home. But other suspects come into focus, including Mercy's hot-tempered father and ice-cold mother, who hope to force a sale of the lodge, and a guest who has intimate knowledge of Mercy's criminal past. After Will's Bureau of Investigation colleagues show up, the body count rises and....

✦ Smith, Sally. [A Case of Mice and Murder](#) (Raven UK \$36) is a debut set in 1901 London inside the Inner and Middle Temples where the Lord Chief Justice has been murdered. **British Crime Club members should not order this edition; the Unsigned import is our August selection for the club.** The reluctant sleuth is the Temple's brainiest and most reclusive barrister, under pressure from the Treasurer who threatens to turf him out of his decades-long home. Smith, herself a barrister working in London's Temple complex, writes a sly murder scene and investigation populated with eccentric men of law and their circle of women that reminds me of the marvelous [mysteries of Sarah Caudwell](#) now reprinted and well worth your time to read or reread. Why? See Our August Large Paperback Picks below. I love the wit and erudition of both authors as well as the remarkable worlds of the Temple and for Caudwell, Oxford as well.

Staple, Elizabeth. [The Snap](#) (Random House \$29). As the preseason begins while the Olympics run, here is our on-target **August First Mystery Book of the Month**. While the Syracuse Bobcats have the iconic status of the New England Patriots, do not imagine that the author, an attorney who earlier worked

in media relations for that team and many others plus at 3 Super Bowls, has the Patriots or any specific sports franchise nailed here. “In Staple’s nimble first book, a PR director for a professional football team reckons with her role as enabler of much toxic team behavior after the head coach is found dead...” I did wonder how Bobcats Media Director Poppy Benjamin, who has fought tooth-and-nail for a career she finds enthralling and that others envy, maintains her sanity and her health given her horrible eating, drinking, and sleeping habits. And fending off so many unwelcome snipes and inappropriate advances. Her relationships with dates who didn’t get her passion crumble but she has a solid sisterhood of other women working in professional sports. They have her back, mostly, as the investigation into what happened to Coach Red progresses.

“It’s so hard to explain the frenetic, cutthroat and batshit crazy world of sports to the uninitiated, but Elizabeth Staple provides the most bang-on, behind-the-curtains peek about what life is like on the inside. A smart and propulsive trip beyond the sidelines that is both razor-sharp and wickedly funny, *The Snap* illustrates the complexity of navigating one of the most unorthodox workplaces with both nuance and acerbic wit.”—*The Athletic*.

Swan, TL. [The Bonus](#) (Keeperton \$18.99). Our copies come with a bookmark designed for us. Grace Porter has the perfect job, great pay, a beautiful office, everything she ever dreamed of, if not for one small detail. She’s utterly and hopelessly in love with her boss. Most days she wants to stab her eyes out with a pencil, anything to stop her seeing Gabriel Ferrara’s perfection. How any female could work in these conditions and not be completely besotted with him is beyond her. Then he opens his mouth and she remembers why. He’s bossy and sarcastic, with a wit so sharp it could cut glass. But Grace is tired of organizing his glamorous and exciting life, instead of living her own. Determined to find true happiness, she hands in her resignation. Furious and desperate to keep her, he offers her a Bonus. Finally...it’s Grace’s turn to be the boss.

Sweany, B P. [The Sword and the Sophomore](#) (Th3rd \$19.99). If Sir Lancelot and a pregnant Guinevere could time travel to Maryland and raise a very modern daughter while Merlin tries to break an ancient Lust Borne, this is it. King Arthur sends his son Mordred to the future to continue the line of the Lust Born Tide by returning Rosemary to the late 5<sup>th</sup> Century to conceive a child with her. But Rosemary has other plans—plans that involve training under Emrys/Merlin and kicking Mordred’s butt, as long as it doesn’t interfere with prom or getting back with her boyfriend Benz. Combining sword fights and epic quests with the real-life teenage issues of fitting in, sexual agency, and profound personal loss; this fresh take on the classic story of what it means to wield Excalibur and all the power it entails will make you rethink the power of legend. “Dark forces from an ancient world descend on a high school near you. *The Sword and the Sophomore* is funny, scary, astute, and up-to-the minute.”—Spencer Quinn.

Taylor, Sarah Stewart. [Agony Hill](#) (St Martins \$28). Our **August Historical Mystery of the Month** is a slow burn story (deploy patience) that paints arson and (serial?) murder in small Bethany, Vermont. It’s 1965 and an Interstate is coming through that roils the small community. A new State Trooper arrives unsure if his first case at a remote farm on Agony Hill where farmer

Hugh Weber is found dead in his half-burned barn is a copy-cat suicide of a neighbor, or murder. Weber’s widow is left with four boys and a baby on the way, but she won’t say much. Warren’s mysterious neighbor Alice Bellows has ties to the intelligence community and may have information. No one’s really talking. Then a second fire on Agony Hill throws Warren’s investigation into chaos. Here is a setting so vividly described it could be a character.

Julia Spencer-Fleming shares my enthusiasm: “This “stunning new mystery examines life and death in a small town in 1965 with a loving but unsentimental eye. Her rich evocation of the physical world—summer heat, cool green water, the taste of fresh bread—matches the deep inner lives of her characters, all of whom have secrets to conceal and questions they’re desperate to answer. Stewart Taylor builds the several investigations as carefully and intricately as one of Vermont’s timeless stone walls.”

Thor, Brad. [Shadow of Doubt](#) (Atria \$29.99) sends US asset Scot Harvath of the private intelligence Carlton Group back to Norway on what should have been R&R after his mission in the Ukraine detailed in 2023’s [Dead Fall](#) (\$10.99). But it’s not to be. First Harvath subdues a crazed passenger on his flight to Oslo. Then he’s hijacked by the CIA at the airport with intent to blackmail him into spying on his fiancée, Sølvi, a Norwegian Intelligence officer currently charged with debriefing a Russian defector. Why? The CIA is justly alarmed over a Russian nuclear threat situated in Belarus. Next, Sølvi and the defector barely escape assassination from a supposedly safe house, bringing Harvath into her op despite his refusal. Meanwhile a French intelligence agent is killed in Paris, also the result of a security leak. So we have Norway, France, and the US on one hand and Russia and Belarus on another, all playing high stakes and in some cases treacherous games. There are magnificently choreographed action scenes, intense personal relationships, and devious plots to enjoy in this outstanding series entry.

Tracy, P J. [City of Secrets](#) (St Martins \$28). Los Angeles Police Detective Margaret Nolan and her partner have worked a lot of different cases, ones where things aren’t always as they appear. When they’re called to the scene of what looks like a fatal car-jacking, Nolan soon realizes her victim was a founder of a company about to sell for millions, and within a day of his death, his partner’s wife is abducted. As Nolan learns more about the victim and his life, she gets pulled into a disturbing world in an LA familiar to you fans of Michael Connelly and Jonathan Kellerman. Excellent, as always, by Tracy who authored the marvelous Monkeewrench series with her late mother.

Woodward, MP. [Tom Clancy Shadow State](#) (Penguin \$32). The vibrant economy of the new Vietnam is a shiny lure for Western capital as companies race to uncover ideal opportunities. Hendley Associates has sent their best analyst, Jack Ryan, Jr., to mine for investment gold. And he may have found some in a rare earth mining company—GeoTech. But a trip with a Hendley colleague to the Highlands to observe the company’s operations takes a treacherous turn when their helicopter is shot down. The Chinese will ruthlessly keep Jack from finding the truth about what exactly is being processed at the isolated factory.... We have supported Ryan universe from the days when Grant Sutherland and Mark Greaney, stepped in, and now look forward to what Woodward will do following Bentley’s move to the Vince Flynn world.



## SIGNED BOOK SALE

Crosby, Ellen. [Dodge and Burn](#) (Severn \$20)

✦ Griffiths, Elly. [The Last Word](#) (Quercus \$30)

Harris, Joanne. [Broken Light](#) (Orion \$20).

Ignatius, David. [Phantom Orbit](#) (Norton \$22)

Kubica, Mary. [She's Not Sorry](#) (Park Row \$25)

✦ Mackintosh, Clare. [A Game of Lies](#) (\$20)

McDermid, Val. [1989](#) (Sphere UK \$25)

Scottoline, Lisa. [The Truth about the Devlins](#) (Putnam \$25)

Unger, Lisa. [The New Couple in 5B](#) (Park Row \$25)

✦ Thomas, Will. [Death and Glory](#) (St Martins \$20)

## CLASSICS

Edwards, Martin. [Crimes of Cymru: Classic Mystery Tales of Wales](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99). The landscapes and locales of Wales (“Cymru,” in the Welsh language) have fired the imagination of some of the greatest writers in the field of crime and mystery fiction. Presenting fourteen short stories first published in 1909 through the 1980s, this new anthology celebrates a selection of beloved Welsh authors Cardiff’s Roald Dahl and Abergavenny’s Ethel Lina White, as well as lesser-known yet highly skilled writers including Cledwyn Hughes and Jack Griffith. Alongside these home-grown tales, this collection also includes a handful of gems inspired by, or set in, the cities and wilds of Wales by treasured authors with an affinity for the country, such as Christianna Brand, Ianthe Jerrold, and Michael Gilbert.

Houston, Billie. [Twice Round the Clock](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99). Horace Manning is found dead — literally stabbed in the back— in his study at 4am following a dinner celebrating his daughter’s engagement. The only way to figure out whodunit is to go back in time 12 hours. As the reader is led through time toward the present, they will uncover motives and clues that led to Manning’s death. And as the reader makes it twice round the clock, all will be revealed.

## SUMMER COZIES

Andrews, Donna. [Between a Flock and a Hard Place](#) (St Martins \$28). Meg’s neighbors, the Smetkamps’, have won a makeover for their old home from Marvelous Mansions, a flashy, yet dubious company, focused on making historic homes more “modern.” The company already several days into its makeover of the Smetkamps’ house, and tensions are running high...higher when a flock of feral turkeys moves onto the property. Meg comes up with a plan to gather a group of turkey wranglers to snatch them early in the morning. But when they arrive, they find the body of Mrs. Smetkamp in her backyard. Did a fowl do it?

Berenson, Laurien. [Pumpkin Spice Puppy](#) (Kensington \$22.95). It’s autumn in Connecticut and there’s a chill in the air, the fall leaves are a riot of color, and pumpkin spice is the flavor of the season. Melanie Travis is perennially busy, of course—but when the owner of a local pet supply shop is found murdered, she drops all else to investigate.

✦ Bivald, Katarina. [The Murders in Great Diddling](#) (Sourcebooks \$16.99). The small, rundown village of Great Diddling is full of stories—author Berit Gardner can feel it. The way the villagers avoid outsiders, the furtive stares and whispers in the presence of newcomers... Berit can sense the edge of a story waiting to

be unraveled, and she’s just the person to do it. In fact, with a book deadline looming over her and no manuscript (not even the idea for a manuscript, truth be told), Berit doesn’t just want this story. She needs it. Then, while attending a village tea party, Berit becomes part of the action herself. An explosion in the library of the village’s grand manor kills a local man, and the resulting investigation and influx of outsiders sends the quiet, rundown community into chaos.

Bryant, Elise. [It’s Elementary](#) (Penguin \$19). Our **August Cozy Crimes Book of the Month** has received raves. Emily Henry calls it “the coziest of cozy mysteries. With the intrigue and drama of *Big Little Lies* and the warmth and humor of *Abbott Elementary*, Elise Bryant’s first foray into the genre is a delight. A perfect next read for anyone looking for a charming cast, clever writing, and a hint of romance alongside their whodunit.” *The NY Times*: “...a delightful mash-up of PTA wars, adorable children, a hot elementary school psychologist, and the eminently winning Mavis Miller...perpetually fighting exhaustion as the single mom of 7-year-old Pearl and coping with the stress of whether her promotion at a nonprofit will go through...” *The Kirkus Starred Review*: “Mavis’s first-person-present narration evinces a razor-sharp wit, complementing the clever, twist-riddled plot of YA author Bryant’s effervescent adult debut. Myriad mysteries and an enchanting will-they-or-won’t-they romance work in tandem to maintain tension throughout, while boldly drawn characters help spotlight issues such as racism, gentrification, and the devaluation of female labor...A smart, funny novel that’s certain to make a splash.”

Burdette, Lucy. [A Poisonous Palate](#) (Crooked Lane \$29.99). When food critic Hayley Snow receives an intriguing email about a mysterious, decades-old disappearance, her curiosity is piqued. Writer Catherine Davitt has returned to the Keys to research a book about Hemingway’s wives, but she’s also on the hunt for the truth about her missing friend. Hayley quickly agrees to help investigate and they hit the road to see what clues they might find. Catherine and Hayley begin interviewing Big Pine Key residents who were around in the late 1907s at the time of Veronica’s disappearance, but uncover more questions than answers.

Byron, Ellen. [French Quarter Fright Night](#) (Severn House \$29.99). **Ordered Upon Request for Byron to sign it September 28 when she joins our Cookbook Club monthly meeting.**

It’s Halloween in New Orleans, and the staff of Bon Vee Culinary House Museum is setting up a fantastic haunted house tour for their visitors. But when flashy movie star Blaine Taggart and his entourage move into the mansion next door, gift shop proprietor Ricki James-Diaz gets a fright of her own. While Ricki is excited about the potential business the tours will bring to her vintage cookbook shop, she’s less thrilled by former friend Blaine’s arrival in town. As the Big Easy gears up for the Big Scary, it seems everyone has skeletons in their closets.

Childs, Laura. [Peach Tea Smash](#) (Berkley \$29). Murder at an *Alice in Wonderland*-themed event can’t be a surprise to Charleston, SC, tea and tea shop maven Theodosia Browning—this is her 28th investigation. You can dive in anywhere in the series and enjoy recipes and tea time tips with the story. During the Mad Hatter Masquerade, a fundraiser hosted by the Friends of the Opera on the grounds of the old Pendleton Grist Mill, Harlan

Sadler, husband of Cricket Sadler, the chairwoman, is killed. He's been hit in the head with a croquet mallet, and his body hung on the chains and paddles of the grist mill. Nobody can figure out why since Harlan was much beloved by everyone.

Dubb, Sarah T. [Birding with Benefits](#) (Gallery \$18.99) is a charming rom-com where newly-divorced, almost-empty-nester Celeste embarks on a "year of yes" and crosses paths with a shy but sensitive birdwatcher who changes her life. Perfect for fans of Christina Lauren and Ali Hazelwood. Dubb is a writer living the dream with chickens and desert tortoises in her hometown of Tucson, Arizona, and at work on her second RomCom.

Durst, Sarah Beth. [The Spellshop](#) (Tor \$29.99 Signed with colorful packaging). *The NY Times Book Review* calls it "a Cottagecore Romantasy debuting at #6 on our hardcover bestseller list. Durst packs her cozy and colorful tale full of sweet magical creatures, including unicorns, winged cats, and friendly tree sprites that manifest as bears and her diverse supporting cast exudes a near-uniform air of kindness."

Hannah, Darci. [A Fatal Feast at Bramsford Manor](#) (Kensington \$27). This Food & Spirits Mystery series start publishes this month but it's perfect for our **Cozy Crimes Book of the Month for October** so I'll review it then—the Spirits are not alcoholic. Fabulous recipes and cooking etc ideas too, some of them woven into the narrative. **Club members please do not order it, it will arrive with free shipping in October. If you do not belong to this club you can join for September-December. It's a nice gift for a fellow reader too. Why not a Halloween Treat?**

Kelly, Sofie. [Paws to Remember](#) (\$19). It's #15 in the Magical Cats series putting librarian Kathleen Paulson and her enchanted felines into a cold case when a water leak repair results in a body being found behind the walls of the store run by the artists' co-op that Kathleen's friend, Maggie. Whose is it, and who put it there? And will kill to keep both secret?

Mathews, Lisa Q. [The Jig is Up](#) (Crooked Lane \$29.99). A Celtic cozy series debuts in the Irish-themed town of Shamrock, Massachusetts. Single-mom and police chief's daughter Kate Buckley is all about family. After she receives an urgent text from her younger sister Colleen, she puts her life on hold and rushes to back home. With her two daughters in tow, she's ready to fight if it means she can help her charming but hapless sibling. When they arrive, Colleen claims it was all a misunderstanding. But everything changes in an Irish minute when Colleen's best friend, Deirdre, a dance show star, is found dead in the parish hall....

McKinlay, Jenn. [Fatal First Edition](#) (\$18). People are dying to get their hands on a rare, valuable book in the newest Library Lover's Mystery. See Signed Books for the hardcover.

Minix, Sue. [Sentenced to Murder](#) (Harper \$18.99). [The 3rd Bookstore Mystery](#) finds Jen sitting down to start writing her next murder mystery novel, she stumbles across a chilling real-life case: a man who claims he's been wrongly convicted for murder. Time is running out for Jaylon as he needs a kidney transplant to save his life, something he'll never receive while he's in prison for murder. Jen's amateur sleuthing skills are pushed to their very limit as time is ticking to solve Jaylon's case and save his life in a story appealing to fans of Ellery Adams.

Polito, Frank Anthony. [Haunted to Death](#) (Kensington \$17.95). It's *Hart to Hart* via HGTV on All Hallows' Eve, as partners and home

renovation hosts Peter Penwell and JP Broadway try not to flip when their newest fixer-upper is rumored to be a haunted house....

Ward, Amanda Eyre. [Lovers and Liars](#) (Ballantine \$29). Three wildly different sisters reunite for a destination wedding at an English castle. It begins when Once upon a Time, the Peacock sisters were little girls who combed each other's tangled hair. But decades of secrets have led them to separate lives—and to telling lies, to themselves and to one another.

### A SUMMER MYSTERY CHALLENGE

Karber, GT. [Murdle: Volumes 1,2,3](#) (St Martins \$16 each). Wow, here's the first collection of 100 original murder mystery logic puzzles—Elementary to Impossible Mysteries to Solve Using Logic, Skill, and the Power of Deduction—with two sequels, a perfect gift for armchair detectives and puzzlers to hone their minds and solve a series of crimes. Also the perfect volume to stash in your pocket to while away breaks in your action and hone your inner sleuth.

*Who committed the ghastly deed?*

*What weapon was used to dispatch the victim?*

*Where did the calculated demise occur?*

Join Deductive Logico. Examine the clues, interview the witnesses, and use the power of deduction to complete the grid and catch the culprit. Together, you'll uncover a buried secret beneath all of the murders and a message that can only be decrypted when you've solved them all. Packed with illustrations, codes, and maps, and brimming with intrigue.

### SOME AUGUST HARDCOVERS

Bamford, Emma. [Eye of the Beholder](#) (Gallery \$27.99). While awaiting a new Ruth Ware, try this. Paranoia plagues a sequestered ghostwriter in Bamford's atmospheric ode to Hitchcock's *Vertigo*. Maddy Wight initially balks when renowned cosmetic surgeon Angela Reynolds gives her just one month to draft and edit her memoir. The project pays a fortune, however, and Reynolds's endorsement would be invaluable to Maddy's career, so she resolves to make it happen. Reynolds flies Maddy to her remote Scottish compound, ostensibly to make their collaboration easier; upon arriving, however, Maddy learns the surgeon will be traveling for much of the month. The house is lonely, with spotty cell service, so Maddy welcomes the unexpected appearance of a second houseguest—Reynolds's business partner, Scott. Maggie quickly suspects the two of them are hiding something....

✠ Barton, Fiona. [Talking to Strangers](#) (Penguin \$29). Karen Simmons was looking for love on all the dating apps when she turned up dead after a Valentine's Day meet-up. She ran a popular hair salon, and her murder is a shock to her small town of Epping in Essex, England. Journalist Kiki Nunn pounces on the case, hoping that this story will be the scoop she needs to rev up her flagging career. Her aggressive newsgathering style antagonizes Elise King, the detective on the case, and Kiki soon feels stonewalled. She decides to do her own investigating and dives headlong into the online dating scene in hopes of finding Karen's killer and her big story. She doesn't realize that small towns harbor deep secrets, and nosy journalists are not always welcome. With the cops less than eager to help, Kiki is in over her head.... I like Barton's work but have to quote the publisher

copy since very few Advance Reading Copies come my way. It's on me that I cannot read digital review copies which is what is on offer to save money.

Chance, Maia. [The Body Next Door](#) (Mira \$30). Hannah McCullough's life is far from perfect. Yet looking at her you'd see a beautiful young mother devoted to her two children and a docile wife utterly besotted with her self-made millionaire husband, Allan. You'd see the designer clothes she wears, the luxury car she drives, the dewy-eyed au pair she employs. You wouldn't see her dark secret. But when a construction crew unearths the body of a young girl near the McCulloughs' vacation home on Orcas Island, Hannah has no choice but to confront her past. She shouldn't have. I haven't read this and betrayals have begun to bore me, but like the idea of visiting a Pacific coastal island, bound to be cooler than Arizona.

Chavez, Heather. [What We'll Burn Last](#) (Little Brown \$29). Sixteen years ago, when waitress Leyna Clarke was 12, her 16-year-old sister, Grace, disappeared from their home with her boyfriend, Adam Duran. The mothers of the missing pair blamed one another, and soon launched into a feud that took over their lives. Leyna ditched that toxic atmosphere for Reno, while continuing to hold out hope that she'd eventually find Grace alive. One sweltering July afternoon, a woman who looks like Grace walks into the café where Leyna works. When a stunned Leyna starts asking her questions, the woman flees! And then....

Constable, Harriet. [The Instrumentalist](#) (SimonSchuster \$28.99). A story of musical rivalry set in 18th Century Venice where young Anna Maria is the star pupil of Antonio Vivaldi (and could eclipse him). Readers of Benjamin Slocumb, take note.

Donahue, Keith. [The Girl in the Bog](#) (Crooked Lane \$29.99). This supernatural thriller where ancient heroes from Irish mythology and folklore come to life in the modern world is a winner for readers of John Connolly's myths and fairy tales. One morning in a field in Connemara, a farmer unearths the body of a young woman, two thousand years old, preserved under layers of peat. Later that evening, she awakens in unfamiliar modern Ireland, ripping a hole through space and time and setting awirl old animosities and long-held grudges. Shadowy figures follow her from the pagan past, and each emerges with a claim on the girl from the bog. With help from a trio of wannabe teenage witches, she goes on the run. Joining in the chase is an American archaeologist who wants to keep the discovery for herself and two befuddled farmers trapped in the plot. Hosts of fairies out for the night work their magic and mischief. "Part fantasy, part mystery, part thriller, part send-up, this comic and poignant love song to Irish literature and the gift of gab does not merely bend genres; it braids them into Celtic knots.

Downes, Anna. [Red River Road](#) (St Martins \$28) presents an action-packed road trip thriller, set in the van-living scene on Australia's stunning West Coast. The freedom of #vanlife [and pull of influencing] meets the cold metal of keys between fingers—an unsettling, deeply atmospheric novel that highlights the perils of solo travel and asks: where are women safe? With sharp social commentary and her signature lush prose, Anna Downes reigns supreme at excavating the thorny roots beneath intriguing subcultures, where beauty bleeds into danger. "Downes builds suspense by deftly unpacking one layer of deception after another, never forgetting that her two travelers face danger not

only from each other but from every man who catches sight of them. The Australian Tourist Board will never endorse this road-trip nightmare. But readers are likely to recommend it highly."—*Kirkus Reviews*

Dyer, Alli. [Strange Folk](#) (Atria \$27.99). "Lee moves her children from their sterile life in California to the small Appalachian town where she grew up. The children discover the literal magic rooted in their ancestral homestead. With an unreliable narrator and a pace that never lets go, this impressive debut novel is about the love one feels for family and how to reconcile that with the deeply flawed human beings they might be."

Flynn, Laurie Elizabeth. [Till Death Do Us Part](#) (Simon Schuster \$28.99). Where better to spend summer days than in Napa Valley wine country? Unless you are there to celebrate your coming wedding to your Brooklyn wine bar partner/fiancé Kyle with the in-laws of your deceased first husband Josh. Then what if you see Josh on the street one afternoon? June is sure it is him and off the plot goes. There are many things to like but not the self-serving last words of a key actor in this story.

✦ Gauntlett, AE. [The Stranger at the Wedding](#) (Harper \$28.99). This debut by a UK author will be our **September British Crime Club Pick** so club members should not order it. It's getting raves. Annie and Mark met on the 5:38 train to London Bridge. As they would discover, both had traumas in their past. Annie's was the sudden death of her two-year-old sister, Jessica. Mark's was the disappearance of his wife, Hope, who walked out the door one day and was never heard from again. They bonded quickly, dated, courted, and got engaged. And then, on the wedding day, as Annie gazes around the pews, she sees a face she does not recognize, and for some reason, a chill runs through her: a rollercoaster of a book that will leave your head spinning. The stranger is Cameron Wilkes, a retired detective inspector hired by Hope's father to find out the truth about Hope's disappearance. But truth is such a slippery concept. Hope had secrets. So does Mark. So does Annie. So, it turns out, does Cameron Wilkes. In the weeks that follow, all those secrets will emerge, collide, and turn their lives upside down. No one will survive unscathed. Some will not survive at all. Think you know the person you married? Think again. And from reviewer There's a strong element of Greek myth and legend to the book."

Henkl, Calla. [Scrap](#) (The Overlook Press \$28). This book by German Henkl is filled with unexpectedly behaving characters, a surprising plot, and a woman protagonist who's a born survivor despite herself. Esther Ray is an unemployed artist recently dumped by her girlfriend and worried now about paying the mortgage, who is hired by a mysterious wealthy patron Naomi, wife of a billionaire, to put together scrapbooks about Naomi's family's history as a secret birthday present to her husband. And as Esther Ray sorts through all the mementos under the DNA she was required to sign, and myriad papers as well, it's not long before she is drawn into the mystery that all these clipped documents and photographs promise—plus Naomi's murder. If you are looking for something surprising to read, this is your baby. Loved it.

✦ Lloyd, Catherine. [Miss Morton and the Deadly Inheritance](#) (Kensington \$27). Social standing is everything in Regency England—no one knows this better than Miss Caroline Morton, a lady's companion following her father's bankruptcy and

familial disgrace. But while helping Mrs. Frogerton's capricious daughter navigate the high social season, Caroline meets with a cagey lawyer, Mr. Smith, who shares life-altering news—the earl composed a second will, leaving behind an undisclosed fortune. Mrs. Frogerton, a dream employer, is thoroughly unimpressed with the firm's conduct and suspicious of their true motives. Her instinct proves right when the two ladies find the office ransacked, staff in turmoil, and Mr. Smith missing. The full weight of the situation doesn't sink in until Mr. Smith dies following a brutal attack on the street—discovered with an empty envelope bearing Caroline's name in his pocket. But, there's more.... And more for you if you start the [Miss Morton series](#) at the beginning.

Mara, Andrea. [Someone in the Attic](#) (Penguin \$29). John reviews: It isn't real. That is Julia Birch's initial thought when her daughter Isla shows Julia a video posted anonymously online of a masked figure who seems to be creeping out of the attic of the house Julia and her family are renting in Dublin. Almost immediately after Julia watches the video, it disappears. However, soon afterward, another similarly styled video appears, only to vanish as well. Is this someone playing around with AI-generated images and riffing on a popular reality show game called "The Loft?" Or is it someone targeting Julia and her family? More importantly, should Julia now be worried about those odd noises she hears late at night? Bestselling Irish crime fiction writer Mara makes her U.S. debut with a meticulously crafted suspense tale replete with fiendishly clever twists and turns and a claustrophobic sense of menace that will appeal to readers of Riley Sager and Lisa Jewell.

Maxwell, Alyssa. [Murder at Vinland](#) (Kensington \$27). August 1901: A fundraiser for a new Rhode Island Audubon Society brings Emma to Vinland, the Viking-themed seaside home of her relative, Florence Vanderbilt Twombly, where the guest of honor is Edith Roosevelt, wife of Vice President Theodore Roosevelt. Listening to the speakers and observing the ladies in attendance, Emma is struck by the contrast of the Viking warrior-inspired elements in the house and the admirable but admittedly genteel cause of bird protection. Then harmless philanthropy gives way to investigating the introduction of poisoned *petits fours* and letters written in tainted ink.... 12th in The Gilded Newport Series. Also out: #11: [Murder at the Elms](#) (\$17.95)

McAlpine, Gordon. [After Oz](#) (Crooked Lane \$29.99). I cut my reading teeth on the Oz Books from Frank L. Baum (my mother's) forward. So this caught my eye and might yours if you've seen *Wicked* or read the books. Kansas, 1896. After a tornado destroys the Gale family farm, 11-year-old Dorothy goes missing. When the girl turns up unharmed four days later, the townsfolk breathe in a sigh of relief until Dorothy describes a fantastical land and its magical inhabitants, from the scarecrow, the tin man, and the cowardly lion to the wizard and the witch. Is she delusional? What if she's become dangerous? When the body of a local spinster is found, connecting Dorothy's recollections of Mombi, authorities find what they believe to be incriminating evidence, sentencing Dorothy to the Topeka Insane Asylum. When 28-year-old psychologist Dr. Evelyn Grace Wilford arrives at the asylum to interview Dorothy, she begins to wonder if Dorothy truly committed the crime or if something unfathomable has really occurred...

McKeegan, Colleen. [Rip Tide](#) (Harper \$27.99). Here's a beach read for sure. When a body washes ashore in the NJ beach town Rocky Cape of their childhood, sisters Kimmy and Erin, both of

whom recently returned to Rocky Cape, must wrestle with the ghosts they believed they'd left behind at the shore: both the ones they're eager to revisit, and the ones they can't face.

MacPhail, Diane C. [Follow the Stars Home](#) (Kensington \$27) brings to life Lydia Latrobe Roosevelt's defiant 1811 journey, eight months pregnant and towing a toddler, aboard the steamship New Orleans boarding in Pittsburgh to sail to New Orleans and open up the Ohio and Mississippi to reach New Orleans. Enjoy this lush, evocative biographical novel for fans of Paula McLain, Gill Paul, Allison Pataki, and stories about extraordinary yet little-known female adventurers

Pekkanen, Sarah. [House of Glass](#) (St Martins \$29). Attorney Stella Hudson is assigned as counsel for nine-year-old Rose during the family's custody case. Working with the child—mute after witnessing the tragic death of her nanny—Stella begins to uncover something quite sinister and so unnerving that it may put her own life in jeopardy. An excellent story.

Picoult, Jodi. [By Any Other Name](#) (Random \$30). *LJ* reviews: "In parallel timelines, two women playwrights struggle to be heard. Each must suppress her identity to get her work performed. In 1581, Emilia Bassano lives a frustrated life. She has no agency and must conceal her Jewish identity. She writes her pain, love, and rage into works of art forever attributed to William Shakespeare. In the present, Melina Green's newest play, inspired by Emilia's life and work, is submitted to a contest in this field still plagued by misogyny. In a Shakespearean twist of events, it is Melina's fellow struggling playwright and best friend André who submitted Melina's play, under a male pseudonym, in an attempt to give his friend a leg up. Picoult gives Bassano/Shakespeare a run for the money with this heartbreaking delight that deftly and soundly explores theories of Shakespeare's authorship and Bassano's history."

Reid, Ava. [Lady Macbeth](#) (Random \$28.99). "In this reimagining of the tragic play that some call a Gothic Fantasy, Lady Macbeth is a witch who can cast a spell on any man with merely a glance. Reid's lush and captivating writing stays true to the central themes of power and gender politics while creating complex characters. Lady Macbeth is not just manipulative, but a survivor in a brutal patriarchal world."

Ripley, Sam. [The Rule of Three](#) (Atria \$27.99). Ripley is a pseudonym for a British author (Andrew Wilson?). It was just one of those urban myths you hear about all the time. A story my boyfriend told me about a girl cursed by the number three. A girl whose parents had killed themselves after her sibling had died in an accident. Which meant that she was doomed to die too because that's the Rule of Three. Bad things always happen in threes, they say, and they are right. This time the curse is coming for me. And worst of all? It's coming for you.

Rose, Karen. [Buried Too Deep](#) (Berkley \$30). Employed as the nighttime security guard of Broussard Investigations, Phineas Bishop has been working through overwhelming PTSD episodes from his army service while still utilizing his military skills. But when a violent break-in occurs at the office, the accusatory eyes of the NOPD are on Phin, and he resolves to track down the intruder and clear his name. Phin's only lead is Cora Winslow, a spirited librarian who also needs answers. The body of her father, murdered twenty-three years ago, has just been discovered under

a recently demolished building. So who has been sending her handwritten letters—written and signed by her father—every year since she was five?

✦ Schellman, Katharine. [A Scandal in Mayfair](#) (Crooked Lane \$30.99). Lesa reviews: Widowed Lily moves back to London for the season, having gained a reputation as a fixer and “lady of quality” who discreetly investigates delicate cases for other gentlewomen. She receives a visit from Sarah Forrest, a young woman who’s worried that her uncle and guardian is stealing her inheritance and begs Lily to search his house for a missing will. Sarah is accompanied by a strange but familiar enforcer: Mr. Clive, a con man Lily encountered on an earlier case, who threatens to reveal Lily’s connections to previous mysteries unless she helps Sarah. Under threat of blackmail, Lily agrees to attend a ball at the uncle’s house. She doesn’t find a will, but the next morning she is called back to the house because Sarah’s uncle has been killed, and Mr. Clive is found hiding in a closet; now the hunt is afoot. Schellman’s Regency mystery series explores the nuances of societal rules and includes characters whose biracial backgrounds sometimes cause uneasiness in the ton.

✦ Thomas, Russ. [Sleeping Dogs](#) (Simon Schuster UK \$29.99). When an anonymous tip lands on his desk, DS Adam Tyler is intrigued in spite of himself. The disappearance of a young mother twenty-four years ago was big news, but the case was never solved – this tantalizing new lead is something he simply can’t ignore. But the letter has set in motion a dangerous chain of events, and Tyler’s search for the truth soon leaves him fighting for his life. With Tyler out of action, DC Mina Rabbani must step up to lead the Cold Case Review Unit in his absence, retracing Tyler’s steps and uncovering his secrets to figure out what he was working on. Turns out his case is not so cold after all.... I really liked his earlier books, no longer available in the US.

Sutanto, Jesse Q. [You Will Never Be Me](#) (Berkley \$29). “Edgar winner Sutanto triumphs with this twisty suspense tale set in the cutthroat world of influencers. With more than five million followers on Instagram and TikTok, Aspen Palmer has become a full-blown social media celebrity. Her best friend, influencer Meredith Lee, credits herself with boosting Aspen’s visibility by teaching her the tricks of the trade—which makes it all the more painful when Aspen dumps Meredith in the wake of her newfound fame. In the aftermath of their falling-out, Meredith grows obsessed, stalking Aspen’s every move.... Then Meredith vanishes, bringing her conflict with Aspen to a head and the police into the mix. Did Aspen have something to do with Meredith’s disappearance? Or is she an innocent bystander? Either way, how will she handle the fallout online? Sutanto has devilish fun with her premise, lacquering the story’s well-executed twists with a satirical sheen that pokes wicked fun at internet celebrity.”—*PW*

✦ Vassell, Charlotte. [The In Crowd](#) (Knopf \$28). Vassell pens a fabulous whodunit about two cold cases in which things go missing: a fourteen-year-old girl and a multi-million-dollar pension fund. Early one morning, a men’s rowing team discovers a body floating face down in the Thames. Many years before, the chief executive of a clothing manufacturer walked off with a multi-million dollar corporate retirement fund and disappeared without a trace. Now, the discovery of this body has reopened

that cold case. Meanwhile, Detective Inspector Caius Beauchamp has his own evening at the theater upended by the discovery of a dead body just a few seats away. Two decades ago, Eliza Chapel, a 14-year-old student at a girls boarding school in Cornwall, disappeared in the middle of the night under dubious circumstances. A second body and a second cold case reopened. As DI Caius Beauchamp—along with his associates Matt Chung and Amy Noakes—investigates these parallel missing persons cases, he finds himself ensnared in the unexpected political machinations of a duke-in-waiting. Meet Caius first in [The Other Half](#) (\$18).

Ward, Amanda Eyre. [Lovers and Liars](#) (Random House \$29). Sylvie is getting married. Again. A librarian and widow who soothes her grief by escaping into books (and shelving them perfectly), Sylvie has caught the attention of an unlikely match: Simon Rampling, a mysterious, wealthy man from Northern England. Sylvie allows herself to imagine a life beside him—one filled with the written word, kindness, and companionship. She’s ready to love again.... or is she? Her sisters sign on to the destination wedding. When their toxic mother shows up, the sisters assume the roles they fell into to survive their childhood, but they just might find the courage to make new choices. Set over a spectacularly dramatic weekend, in the grand halls of the sprawling Mumberton Castle estate—amid floor-to-ceiling libraries, falconry lessons, and medieval meals—here is a story of a family’s ability to forgive and to find joy in one another once again.

#### WHY NOT VISIT WORLDS FAR FAR AWAY?

*In special initial print run editions: Try one and see if it will, if suitable, get your teen reading*

Maniscalco, Kerri. [Throne of the Fallen Special Edition](#) (LittleBrown \$19.99) is a YA standalone fantasy romance about a dark prince battling an impossible curse—and the artist who might be the only one who can set him free.

White, Frances. [Voyage of the Damned](#) (Mira \$30). I have ordered this one for myself, a youthful fantasy lover exploring it again. Think a mind-blowing murder mystery on a ship full of magical passengers, sort of an Agatha Christie scenario. We have forbidden love, a reluctant hero, magic and murder all rolled up into a story with twelve magical blessings, twelve days at sea, one chance to stop a killer and save the world. Package with interior illustrations, gorgeous color end-papers, shimmering gold on the jacked, and stained edges.

*And while Romantasy dark, epic, or cozy is taking over the world, here are some more suggestions. We have a solid SciFi/Fantasy collection in store and can order you anything you like. For best customer service ask Pat King when you shop or email him at [pat@poisonedpen.com](mailto:pat@poisonedpen.com)*

Akumiah, H B. [Bad Witches](#) (Blackstone \$17.99). A debut where three young women discover the unbelievable: they’re witches, and their new-found magic may be the key to saving the world. This one will get you in the mood for Halloween so maybe store your copy until October?

Clark, P. Djèlí. [The Dead Cat Tail Assassins](#) (Tor \$20.99). Nebula and Alex Award winner Clark introduces a brand-new world and a fantastical city full of gods and assassins. Even the Eviscerator is skilled, discreet, professional, and here for your most pressing

needs in the ancient city of Tal Abisi. Her guild is strong, her blades are sharp. Then the Festival of the Clockwork King turns the city upside down and Even's newest mission brings her face-to-face with a past she isn't supposed to remember, and a vow.... The Indie Next Pick says: This is a delicious, funny, unexpectedly heartwarming story with just the right amount of viciousness."

Dinniman, Matt. [Dungeon Crawler Carl](#) (Penguin \$30). The apocalypse will be televised! You know what's worse than breaking up with your girlfriend? Being stuck with her prize-winning show cat. And you know what's worse than that? Join Coast Guard vet Carl and his ex-girlfriend's cat, Princess Donut, as they try to survive the end of the world—or just get to the next level—in a video game–like, trap-filled fantasy dungeon. A dungeon that's actually the set of a reality television show with countless viewers across the galaxy. Exploding goblins. Magical potions. Deadly, drug-dealing llamas....

Enright, K M. [Mistress of Lies](#) (Orbit \$19.99). More Romantasy but dark in a debut. A bloodthirsty heroine finds herself plunged into the dangerous world of power, politics and murder in the court of the vampire king.

Feist, Raymond E. [A Darkness Returns: Book One of the Dragonwar Saga](#) (Harper \$32) is the first installment in an epic fantasy series that will join up with the Firemane Saga and signature Riftwar Cycle.

Graudin, Ryan. [The Enchanted Lies of Celeste Artois](#) (Orbit \$30) transports readers to the hidden magical pockets of early 1900s Paris, a place of enchanted salons, fortune tellers who can change your stars, and doorways that can take you to the most unexpected places—and introduces readers to the delightful Céleste Artois, a con artist who will make a deal with the devil in exchange for her life...and change the fate of the world.

Harris, Joanne. [Moonlight Market](#) (Pegasus \$28.95) follows a London photographer who becomes entwined with rival kingdoms of supernatural beings separated by tragedy. Tom Argent has always suspected that the world holds realities beyond what he can see—especially after his parents forbade him from reading fairy tales as a child. When Tom meets a mysterious woman named Vanessa, he finds her both dazzling and oddly familiar, though he can't always remember her face. As Tom searches for Vanessa all over London, he steps back in time, visiting the titular market and other obscure places where, he discovers, Vanessa and her compatriots are fighting a centuries-long battle with an enemy kingdom.

Kingfisher, T. [A Sorceress Comes to Call](#) (Tor \$27.99). The Hugo Award-winning author presents a dark reimagining of the Brothers Grimm's "The Goose Girl," rife with secrets, murder, and forbidden magic.

Okorafor, Nnedi. [She Who Knows](#) (Astra House \$23). Part science fiction, part fantasy, and entirely infused with West African culture and spirituality, this novella offers an intimate glimpse into the life of a teenager whose coming of age will herald a new age for her world. Set in the universe Africanfuturist luminary Nnedi Okorafor first introduced in the World Fantasy Award-winning *Who Fears Death*, this is the first in the She Who Knows trilogy

Revis, Beth. [Full Speed to a Crash Landing](#) (Astra House \$23). Enjoy a high octane sexy space heist.

Strahan, Jonathan. [New Adventures in Space Opera](#) (Tachyon \$18.95) is a curated guide to this genre gathering up fifteen dramatic, newly classic interstellar adventures from some of the most highly acclaimed and popular speculative-fiction authors

Walter, Heather. [The Crimson Crown](#) (Random \$29.99). Mirror, mirror, on the wall, who's the wickedest of them all? Snow White's dark queen tells her side of the story in the first book of a queer, witchy duology that reimagines the classic fairy tale—from the author of *Malice*.

## SOME GRIPING NONFICTION

Butcher, Barbara. [What the Dead Know](#) (\$18.99). Barbara Butcher was early in her recovery from alcoholism when she found an unexpected lifeline: a job at the Medical Examiner's Office in New York City. The second woman ever hired for the role of Death Investigator in Manhattan, she was the first to last more than three months. The work was gritty, demanding, morbid, and sometimes dangerous—and she loved it. Butcher (yes, that's her real name, and she has heard all the jokes) spent day in and day out investigating double homicides, gruesome suicides, and most heartbreaking of all, underage rape victims who had also been murdered.

Jobb, Dean. [A Gentleman and a Thief](#) (Algonquin \$32.50). In a stylish biography that well fits the subject of this look at "one of the most brazen and successful jewel thieves in history" who evokes for me an image of Cary Grant in Hitchcock's "To Catch a Thief," Jobb takes us through Arthur Barry's life from his 1896 Irish working class immigrant beginning in Worcester, Massachusetts to his first burglary in 1912 to his living the high life he created in 1920 Manhattan, to his most successful run of heists from 1922-1927, to the 19 years he spent in prison and finally, on parole, his quiet life and death in 1981. Barry's success was crafted on image—"I know he's terrible, but isn't he charming"—bolstered by good manners and confidence and physical skills enabling him to scale balconies. And Jobb reports that Barry who abhorred violence "seemed to regard his thefts as victimless crimes." The amazing David Grann interviews Jobb, a Canadian, in a conversation you will enjoy.

Ferguson, Jane. [No Ordinary Assignment](#) (Harper \$19.99). Ferguson's gripping memoir traces with compassion, insight, and honesty her career as a foreign correspondent. Growing up in rural Ireland during the Troubles, Ferguson was familiar with sectarian violence, but she dove into hostility in a different context after studying Arabic in Yemen and focusing her reporting on the Arabian Peninsula and East Africa. Her narrative explores the challenges of reporting from high-risk conflict (and combat) zones, often as the only woman or the only Western correspondent, alongside her inner journey of learning to believe in herself and her work and human rights.

Jones, Amanda. [That Librarian: The Fight Against Book Banning in America](#) (Bloomsbury \$29.99). "Part memoir, part manifesto, this inspiring story of a Louisiana librarian advocating for inclusivity on the front lines of the culture wars is recommended for any teacher, librarian, or friend of libraries. This detailed account of being targeted by censors sheds light on the tactics of those who seek to force their narrow world view on everyone else."

Kurzweil, Ray. [The Singularity Is Nearer](#) (Penguin \$35). A visionary in AI shares his personal vision of how technology will transform the human race in the decades to come. His regret is at his age he is not likely to see what he believes will happen.

Sheppard, Kathleen. [Women in the Valley of the Kings](#) (St Martins \$29.99). Read a terrific piece on the book—you hear me, Amelia Peabody readers?—in the [NY Times](#). Sheppard creates a blend of history, personalities, travel, science, and ethics in a fascinating book. Implicit are some of the current arguments on colonialism, cultural appropriation, etc but for me the key is the brave pioneering by these women and their determination, and not judging them by the lens of today.

Sinclair, Safiya. [How to Say Babylon](#) (\$18.99). This A Read with Jenna Today Show Book Club and Indie Next Pick is also a historical drama, shedding light on the rise of an Afrocentric, decentralized Rastafari faith in a Jamaica confused about its post-colonial identity. “Readers will marvel at the tenderness that defines the author’s approach to her troubled childhood, and the strength with which she embraces a future certain to be gilded by the extraordinary imagery of her poetry.”

### OUR AUGUST LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

Benn, James R. [Proud Sorrows](#) (\$17.95) combines the best elements of traditional small-town mysteries and WWII thrillers in Benn’s 18th Billy Boyle WWII series by rocking a quiet seaside corner of Norfolk. It’s 1944. Billy brings his life as a Boston cop to bear when a vacation at the country home of his girlfriend, Diana, and her father, Sir Richard Seaton is upended when a storm washes ashore a crashed German bomber with the corpse of a long-missing local Englishman in the pilot’s seat. Ordered to investigate by the commander of a nearby POW facility, Boyle clashes with a British chief inspector who despises “Yanks” and with Norfolk residents who don’t take kindly to questions about their private lives—and worries that Sir Richard might be involved in what is revealed as a murder once the plane was downed.

Benn visits us September 7 with Billy’s next chapter in [The Phantom Patrol](#) (Soho \$27.95), pitting Billy against Nazi-related art thieves in winter, 1944.

Box, CJ. [Three-Inch Teeth](#) (\$19). Clay Hutmacher Jr. is trout-fishing while planning how he’ll propose to Joe Pickett’s daughter when he’s fatally attacked by a grizzly. The discovery of Clay’s remains prompts Pickett to activate Wyoming’s Predator Attack Team to hunt down the bear. Meanwhile, white supremacist Dallas Cates, who headed the WOODS (Whites Only One Day Soon) gang, is released from prison with plans to assassinate six targets—including Pickett—in revenge for killing members of his family and putting him behind bars. When he learns that Pickett is preoccupied with finding the bear that killed Clay, Cates moves his old nemesis to the top of his hit list.

We are already taking preorders for February 25<sup>th</sup>’s [Battle Mountain](#) (Putnam \$32).

Bristow, Su. [The Fair Folk](#) (Europa \$18). The wonders of nature are exquisitely sketched in this cautionary tale about the danger of striking bargains with spirits—here they are mythical beings of Irish folklore (John Connolly fans, alert!). I once spent an enquire quarter at Stanford reading and critiquing Goethe’s *Faust* so I am drawn to this “Faustian, modern-day fairy tale in which

the ‘be careful what you wish for’ trope is updated.” And the Brothers Grimm collections and the color-coded Books of Fairy Tales were childhood favorites. This volume, back in print, is a big seller for Europa.

Speaking of fairy tales Joanne Harris, author of my beloved and whimsical debut [Chocolat](#) (\$17), often writes in this realm. Her latest is [Moonlight Market](#) (Pegasus \$28.95) which follows a London photographer who becomes entwined with rival kingdoms of supernatural beings separated by tragedy.

✦ Callaghan, Jo. [In the Blink of an Eye](#) (Random \$18) is the winner of the 2024 Theakston Old Peculier Crime Novel of the Year (from the Harrogate Festival; Old Peculier is a popular beer made by sponsor Theakston). Here’s why: Two detectives: one human, one AI. And a case that will test them both. “The ideas in this first novel are fascinating and Kat’s slow discovery of what the technology can offer is accompanied by a scientific assessment of so-called gut instinct. The revelation of the full villainy involved in the two men’s disappearance is intriguing, but it is Kat—her personality, her relationship with her young son and her experience of loss—that really lifts this novel.”—*The Literary Review*

Our new bookseller Deb adds: Two detectives, one a female veteran and the other an AI creation are forced to work together to solve a missing person cold case. This debut will have you sitting on the edge of your seat and wondering where the lines between human and AI blur. Hunches versus statistics, heart versus head, what makes a human detective better than an AI one? Previously published in the UK, this twisty debut has won the Crime Writers Association John Creasy New Blood Dagger Award and I can only hope will be the beginning of a long series featuring these two detectives.

✦ Caudwell, Sarah. [The Sybil in Her Grave](#) (\$18). Reissued this month, the 4<sup>th</sup> in a brilliant and beloved series featuring Oxford fellow and legal eagle Professor Hilary Tamar (sex and proclivities never identified). Another mystery icon, the much missed Amanda Cross, was a fan: “This is the last novel we will have from Sarah Caudwell; like all her marvelous books, it combines wit and forbearance, intellect and passion, above all, humor and perfection of language. Sarah set out to write a classic English village crime story, complete with vicar and mad virgin, and here it is, together with Hilary Tamar and the brilliant, sexy, young lawyers at the Chancery Bar. I hardly know whether to cry for joy at their return, or to weep for the finality of this bittersweet adventure.”

Book 3, [The Sirens Sang of Murder](#) (\$18), won the Anthony Award for Best Novel, but you really want to start with [Thus Was Adonis Murdered](#) (\$18), the first, and continue with [The Shortest Way to Hades](#) (\$18).

Chua, Amy. [The Golden Gate](#) (\$18). A 2023 First Mystery Book of the Month is written as a vintage mystery that echoes Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler with a more modern sense of character development and action. It’s 1944, and Homicide Detective Al Sullivan has just left Berkeley’s swanky Claremont Hotel after a drink in the bar when a presidential candidate is assassinated in one of the rooms upstairs. A rich industrialist with enemies among anarchists, Walter Wilkinson could have been targeted by any number of leftist groups. But strangely, Sullivan’s investigation brings up the specter of another tragedy at the Claremont, ten years earlier: the death of seven-year-

old Iris Stafford, a member of the Bainbridge family, one of the wealthiest in all of San Francisco. Some say she haunts the Claremont still. The many threads of the case keep leading Sullivan back to the three remaining Bainbridge heiresses, now adults....

Interesting to compare this wartime era novel with the one above by Benn.

✦ Cleaves, Ann. [The Raging Storm](#) (\$19) is an atmospheric police procedural that builds on the other books while introducing fascinating suspects. Lesa reviews: Greystone, in England's North Devon, is a remote, forbidding, stormy coastal community where lifeboats are essential. When Jeremy Roscoe walks into the Maiden's Prayer, he's welcomed as a local legend, an adventurer who attended Greystone schools and left to sail the world, becoming a TV star and celebrity. Now he's renting a cottage, buying rounds in the bar every night. He slyly hints he's waiting for someone. One night he fails to show. When the lifeboat is called out for a rescue, but it's too late—Roscoe is dead, in a stolen dinghy. Detective Matthew Venn and his small team are called in and it's a bitter return for Venn, who was there as a child with his parents' religious group, the Barum Brethren; some of the locals still belong to the group. When another body is found, Venn realizes he's not the only one with bitter memories of Greystone.

See Signed Books above for both the US and UK editions of Venn's 4<sup>th</sup> case out end of August.

Greaney, Mark. [The Chaos Agent](#) (\$19). In lucky #13 for the Gray Man, his quest for a quiet life has led him to Central America where he and his lover, Zoya Zakharova, have assumed new identities. With a list of enemies that includes billionaires, terrorists, and governments, they need to keep a low profile, but the world's deadliest assassin can't expect to hide out forever. Eventually, they're tracked down and offered a job by an old acquaintance of Zoya's. He needs their help extracting a Russian scientist who is on the kill list. They reject the offer, but just being seen with him is enough to put assassins on their trail.... #14 [Midnight Black](#) (Berkley \$29.99) publishes next February.

✦ Hallett, Janice. [The Mysterious Case of the Alperton Angels](#) (\$18.99). Like Hallett's debut with [The Appeal](#) (\$18.99)—truly fabulous and highly recommended, this layered and imaginative novel rolls out its storyline in a non-traditional format, told mostly through the emails, texts, and WhatsApp messages of Amanda Bailey, an ambitious journalist and true-crime aficionado who garners a book deal to tell the story of the Alperton Angels, a cult whose members allegedly committed mass suicide in London in 2003 after one of its members—a teenager, gave birth to a baby the cult believed was the anti-Christ. The baby was somehow spared and nearly two decades later has yet to be identified. Meanwhile, Oliver Menzies, an equally aggressive journalist, is writing a similar book. As Amanda and Oliver search for the teen, it becomes clear that no one's recollections of the cult, its members, or their deaths are anywhere near the same.

✦ Herron, Mick. [The Secret Hours](#) (\$18.95) is not a Slough House spy tale but a riveting standalone thriller that combines modern political machinations with Cold War-era spy craft. New leadership in the British parliament results in the official cancellation of Monochrome, an infamously ineffective two-year-old inquiry meant to expose historical misconduct by MI5.

Griselda Fleet and Malcolm Kyle, the civil servants who led the inquiry, know failure has torched their chances for future employment. Then a stranger slips Malcolm an official file revealing an off-the-books Cold War-era MI5 operation that ended badly in 1994 Berlin. Griselda and Malcolm begin to investigate and uncover a new conspiracy to infiltrate British intelligence—which the once-disgraced civil servants are now uniquely positioned to thwart. Herron toggles between present-day London and Cold War-era Berlin, crafting memorable, morally complex characters along the way, without sacrificing any of his trademark humor

Note: I missed a Herron paperback from 2018: [This Is What Happened](#) (\$18.95). 26-year-old Maggie Barnes is someone you would never look at twice. Living alone in a month-to-month sublet in the huge city of London, with no family but an estranged sister, no partner, and not much in the way of friends, Maggie is just the kind of person who could vanish from the face of the earth without anyone taking notice. Or just the kind of person MI5 needs to infiltrate the establishment and thwart an international plot that puts all of Britain at risk.

Johnston, Tim. [Distant Sons](#) (\$19.99) is “an intricate, haunting novel sure to resonate with fans of Dennis Lehane, Peter Heller, and James Lee Burke. Johnston's plot is tense and his pacing swift, but he's after bigger game here, with questions of identity, intentions, and legacies merging in a tale that will linger long after it is finished. He's also one of the finest prose stylists in the game, stacking polished sentences with a master's touch.”—Michael Koryta

Mejia, Mindy. [To Catch a Storm](#) (\$18). A 2023 Crime Book of the Month now in paperback. Iowa, and in winter, is fresh turf to me. Eve, a physicist whose focus is on weather, a science based approach, is the wife who, while in the air taking data, is amazed to see her husband Matt's Tesla on fire in an isolated patch of woods below her. Jonah is...well, weird, but also sucks you in. He's a private investigator, but not in the ordinary way. He's a psychic tormented by dreams of a girl, Celine, who is long missing. He's compulsive about finding her. His boyhood friend, Iowa City cop Max, is exhausted by Jonah and ordered not to work with him. But... now that Eve's husband, university professor Matt, too is inexplicably missing, from his burning car, or anywhere, these three people come together. Where they go...well, you have to read the book to find out. “Mejia delivers her best work yet in this propulsive, intelligent page-turner...”—PW Starred Review. See Signed Books for Mejia's new Iowa-based thriller/procedural.

Sullivan, Connor. [Wolf Trap](#) (\$18.99). Brian “Lobo” Rhome, once a paramilitary officer with Ground Branch, the CIA's most elite covert ops force, and the haunted lone survivor of an al-Qaeda ambush in Pakistan, now hides in the Montana backcountry, trying to leave his military past behind. Drawn back into the fold to enact revenge on the terrorist who slaughtered his comrades, Rhome finds himself in the center of the battle to save US President Angela Buchanan who has signed a sweeping international climate-change agreement as she heads to Davos, Switzerland, and to prevent a global war over fossil fuels. It may also be his time to enact revenge on the terrorist who slaughtered his comrades in an Afghanistan ambush. In its Starred Review PW praises “Sullivan's clever rhetorical tricks will keep even savvy readers in the dark while he ratchets the tension ever higher.”



Taylor, Sarah Stewart. [A Stolen Child](#) (\$19). Lesa reviews: Maggie D'arcy resigned from her job as a homicide detective on Long Island after [The Drowning Sea](#) (\$18) and moved to Dublin with her daughter. A year and a half later, she's completed her time at Garda Training College, but despite her long career, she's back to walking a beat with a partner. When they're called for a domestic dispute on a Saturday night, the woman who answers the door reports nothing wrong. Several days later, though, they arrive at the same apartment, where Jade Elliott has been murdered. While they wait for the Garda's criminal investigation team to show up, Maggie realizes there are signs of a child, but no little one on site. The murder of Jade, a former model, will make the news, but the priority is the nationwide hunt for her two-year-old, Laurel. Maggie's friend, Detective Inspector Roly Byrne, pulls her onto his team to assist with the case. She's frustrated to be relegated to minor tasks, but she's present for every twist and turn in the case, complicated by the cover-ups from the victim's family and friends. I add I love this series but Taylor has moved on to a new one set in 1960s small town Vermont. See Signed Books.

### MORE LARGE PAPERBACKS

Alering, Alisa. [Smothermoss](#) (Tin House \$17.95). In 1980s Appalachia, sisters Sheila and Angie couldn't be more different. While their mother works long shifts at the nearby asylum, Sheila cares for their home and keeps to herself, even when enduring relentless bullying. Her fearless younger sister, Angie, is more focused on fighting imaginary zombies and creating tarot-like cards that seem to have minds of their own. When the brutal murder of two female hikers on the nearby Appalachian Trail stuns their small community, the sisters find themselves tangled in a dangerous game of cat and mouse.

Anderson, Leslie J. [The Unmothers](#) (Quirk Books \$18.99). An Indie Next Pick: "Anderson beautifully blends a small-town mystery with the supernatural (and a little feminist rage) to deliver this cathartic punch of a story. If you loved the what-the-hell-is-going-on energy of classic *X-Files*, then read this book.

Baxter, Holly. [Clickbait](#) (Harper \$18.99). Enjoy this debut novel about a disgraced, newly divorced journalist demoted to a "clickbait" job at a Manhattan tabloid. Alas modern journalism seems more and more about clickbait. This is a suggestion to pair with the Jessa Maxwell mystery about an Advice Columnist in Signed Books.

Benchley, Peter. [Jaws](#) (\$18). The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary issue of the shock classic.

Berney, Lou. [Double Barrel Bluff](#) (Harper \$18.99). During his years as a wheelman for the Armenian mob in Los Angeles, Shake Bouchon didn't think of himself as the settling-down type. But now he's happily married to Gina, the love of his life—and former adversary—in Indiana, of all places. The great thing about Bloomington, for two people with checkered pasts, is that everyone is nice and no one knows them. Until the day a brutal Armenian thug who has always hated Shake shows up in his backyard. He demands that Shake help him find his missing mob boss, the *pakhan*—the dangerous and beautiful Alexandra "Lexy" Ilandryan, who also happens to be Shake's ex-girlfriend. Shake's got a lot of history with Lexy, so he reluctantly agrees to travel to Siem Reap, Cambodia, where she was last seen. Once there, he finds himself tangled in an underworld of Cambodian gangsters, mob politics, and opportunistic expats, where the stakes aren't clear and everyone is looking to score.

Cobb, May. [A Likeable Woman](#) (\$19). This is an excellent story and might well become a film just as Cobb's [The Hunting Wives](#) (\$18) is being made into one. After her troublemaker mother's mysterious death, Kira fled her wealthy Texas town and never looked back. Now, decades later, Kira is invited to an old frenemy's vow renewal celebration. Though she is reluctant to go, there are things pulling her home—like chilled wine and days spent by the pool... like sexy Jack, her childhood crush. But more important are the urgent texts from her grandmother, who says she has something for Kira. Something related to her mother's death, something that makes it look an awful lot like murder.... Cobb is good at small town secrets and revising youthful memories and relationships.

Connolly, John. [The Land of Lost Things](#) (\$18.99) is an atmospheric tale set in the same magical universe as the "enchancing, engrossing, and enlightening" [The Book of Lost Things](#) (\$18.99). I have always loved John's immersive dives into worlds so different from his Charlie Parker series.

Cussler, Dirk. [Clive Cussler The Corsican Shadow](#) (\$19). Dirk delivers a thrilling historical adventure grounded in May, 1940, as the German army blitzes Europe and Parisians flee their city, the chief curator of the Musée de l'Armée is ordered to get a mysterious piece of cargo out of the country. When he arrives at the port of Le Havre and learns that his intended ship has been sunk, he places the object on a decrepit steamer that sails out under German fire. In the present day, National Underwater and Marine Agency Director Dirk Pitt is on a diving expedition in the English Channel when he discovers a cache of uncut diamonds on a shipwreck. When the diamonds are stolen, Pitt and the NUMA team find themselves up against a murderous cabal that soon reveals far more destructive plans than mere theft.... I'm a fan of Alistair MacLean and this book reminds me of his work.

✦ Edwards, Martin. [The House on Graveyard Lane](#) (Sourcebooks \$16.99). Surreal artist Damaris Gethin has invited a select group to the opening of her exhibit "Artist in Crime," held in the eerie subterranean Hades Gallery. As costumed models reenact famously violent deaths, the artist herself portrays Marie Antoinette on the day of her execution, complete with a guillotine on the stage. It's not a prop.... As everyone reels from the shock, amateur sleuth Rachel Savernake quickly learns that Damaris herself accomplished the deed with the push of a button—a suicide. So then why did she ask Rachel to solve her "murder?" 4<sup>th</sup> in this Golden Age mysteries series for fans of Agatha Christie.

✦ Gibbs, Aimée. [The Carnivale of Curiosities](#) (\$19.99). "A dazzling gothic tale of Faustian bargains, jealousy, and murder set in a spectacular circus, where star-crossed lovers' destinies are forged at an unexpected price. Grave secrets, recovered horrors, and what it means to be family come to a head in this vividly imagined spectacle of Victorian London—with the lives of all those involved suspended in the balance...." Unique and emotionally engaging, Gibbs' tale may appeal to fans of *Mexican Gothic*...as well as readers enthralled by Shirley Jackson and Edgar Allan Poe." —*Booklist* Starred Review

Goldin, Megan. [Dark Corners](#) (\$19). True crime podcasters are today's private eyes quite often and here Rachel Krall returns to search for a popular influencer who disappears after visiting a suspected serial killer.

Harrison, Rachel. [Black Sheep](#) (\$19). Nobody has a “normal” family, but Vesper Wright’s is truly...something else. Vesper left home at eighteen and never looked back—mostly because she was told that leaving the staunchly religious community she grew up in meant she couldn’t return. But then an envelope arrives on her doorstep and fires up a new irreverent horror novel from the author of *Such Sharp Teeth* and *Cackle*.

Hilderbrand, Elin. [The Perfect Couple](#) (\$19.99). Soon to be a Netflix limited series, this is a “quintessential summer read” (*People*) about the many ways family can fill our lives with love — if they don’t kill us first.

Jonasson, Ragnar. [Reykjavik](#) (\$19). 1956. Fourteen-year-old Lára decides to spend the summer working for a couple on the small island of Videy, just off the coast of Reykjavik. In early August, the girl disappears without a trace. Time passes, and the mystery becomes Iceland’s most infamous unsolved case. What happened to the young girl? Is she still alive? Did she leave the island, or did something happen to her there? Thirty years later, as the city of Reykjavik celebrates its 200th anniversary, journalist Valur Robertsson begins his own investigation into Lára’s case—and surprise, it isn’t a cold case after all.

Knoll, Jessica. [Bright Young Women](#) (\$17.99). We all know the names of serial killers, but seldom the names of the victims. Jessica Knoll tells their stories with compassion and respect. You’ll be shocked by the multiple miscarriages of justice that cut short the lives of so many bright young women.

Mangan, Christine. [The Continental Affair](#) (\$18.99). There’s a Hitchcock vibe here.... Two strangers are traveling alone on the train from Belgrade to Istanbul. Except this isn’t the first time they have met. It’s the 1960s and Louise is running. From her past in England, from the owners of the money she has stolen—and from Henri, the person who has been sent to collect it. Across the Continent—from Granada to Paris, from Belgrade to Istanbul—Henri follows, desperate to leave behind his own troubles. The memories of his past life as a gendarme in Algeria that keep resurfacing. His inability to reconcile the growing responsibilities of his current criminal path with this former self. But Henri soon realizes that Louise is no ordinary mark....

Manning, Kirsty. [The Hidden Book](#) (\$18.99). Based on a true story of a secret World War II-era book, Manning’s dual-timeline historical novel highlights the courageous actions of a group of prisoners at the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria. Spanish political prisoner and photographer Mateo Baca is ordered to document the prisoners and activities at the camp and collate his photographic records into books for top Nazi officials. He secretly makes an extra copy of the photobook that is smuggled out of the camp. When a chance encounter with local woman Lena Lang leads to a tentative friendship, Nico trusts her to hide the book. In 1980s Australia, Nico’s granddaughter Hannah Campbell sees the book for the first time. Haunted by the photographs for years, Hannah goes on to pursue a PhD in history in hopes of uncovering the truth about her grandfather’s time in Mauthausen. As Hannah experiences trials in her own life, she comes to understand the significance of the prisoners’ risking their lives so that their history would not be forgotten.

Morgan, Shannon. [In the Lonely Hours](#) (Kensington \$17.99). On a small island in a remote corner of northwest Scotland lies Maundrell castle, owned by its wealthy namesake family for

centuries—until now. Edwina Nunn is shocked to learn a relative she never heard of has bequeathed the castle and its land to her. What awaits Edie and her teenage daughter, Neve, is even more startling, for the castle is home to a multitude of ghosts. Yet there’s a strange beauty in the austere architecture and the eerie, bloody waters of *Loch na Scáthanna*, the Lake of Shadows. Beguiled by a frightened ghost who gazes longingly out of the castle’s windows, Edie and Neve are drawn to the legends shrouding the island and the mystery of the Maundrell Red—a priceless diamond that disappeared decades before. Is the gem really cursed, and the cause of the family tragedies that have all occurred on Samhain—Scottish Halloween?

Patterson, James/Mike Lupica. [12 Months to Live](#) (\$19.99). Tough-as-nails criminal defense attorney Jane Smith is hip-deep in the murder trial of the century. Actually, her charmless client might’ve committed several murders. She’s also fallen in love with a wonderful guy. And an equally wonderful dog, a mutt. But Jane doesn’t have much time. She’s just received a terminal diagnosis giving her twelve months. Unless she’s murdered first....

Pryor, Mark. [The Dark Edge of Night](#) (\$19). Winter 1940: With soldiers parading down the Avenue des Champs-Élysées, Nazi flags dangling from the Arc de Triomphe, and the Eiffel Tower defaced with German propaganda, Parisians have little to celebrate as Christmas approaches. Neither does Inspector Henri Lefort when the Gestapo orders him to investigate the disappearance of Dr. Viktor Brandt, a neurologist involved in a secret project at one of Paris’s hospitals. Being forced onto a missing persons case for the enemy doesn’t deter Henri from conducting his real job and in time these two strands entwine to reveal something dreadful.... For Henri’s 3<sup>rd</sup> case see Signed Books.

Quinn, Kate. [A Year of Ravens](#) (\$19.99). Quinn joins with other authors to imagine the history of Britannia’s Queen Boudica’s desperate rebellion against the might of Rome.

Rash, Ron. [The Caretaker](#) (\$18). Appalachia is not all *Hillbilly Elegy*. It’s the early 1950s. Blackburn Gant, his face disfigured from polio, is the live-in caretaker for the cemetery of Blowing Rock, N.C. His childhood friend Jacob Hampton is the son of a prominent local couple whose two daughters have died. When Jacob goes off to fight in the Korean War, he leaves in Blackburn’s care his pregnant teenage wife, Naomi, with whom he eloped—an arrangement that prompted Jacob’s parents to disinherit him. But Rash has further complications in mind. When Naomi returns to her father’s Tennessee farm, Jacob’s parents receive word that their son was gravely wounded. This leads to a monstrous lie his parents hope will get Naomi and her family out of their lives. This material could have been tawdry melodrama, but Rash is a savvy writer who delivers much more.

Reichs, Kathy. [The Bone Hacker](#) (\$17.99). Forensic anthropologist Temperance Brennan is wrenched from her lab in Montreal to follow a series of bizarre disappearances on the islands of Turks and Caicos where a new technology may wreak worldwide havoc. Reichs makes use of a truly unusual and up to date murder weapon! Plus in its way this is a beach read! For the new Tempe see Signed Books.

Scottoline, Lisa. [The Truth about the Devlins](#) (\$19). TJ Devlin is the charming disappointment in the prominent Devlin family, all of whom are lawyers at their highly successful firm—except

him. After a stint in prison and rehab for alcoholism, TJ can't get hired anywhere except at the firm, in a make-work job with the title of investigator. Then his older brother, the rising legal star, confesses he has murdered a client, an accountant, and TJ is thrust into a role that surprises everyone. Scottoline is spot-on about parenting here.

✂ Swann, Leonie. [The Sunset Years of Agnes Sharp](#) (\$17.95). A quirky group of seniors living in Sunset Hall, a care home for the old and unruly, attempts to solve one murder while covering up another—with the help of an enterprising tortoise. Swann has fully entered the burgeoning world of Senior Sleuths and their quirky investigations as generated by Richard Osman, Spencer Quinn, and more. Look here for very British sinister bakers, broken stairlifts, inept criminals, the local authorities, and their own dark secrets.

✂ Vassell, Charlotte. [The Other Half](#) (\$18). Rupert's 30th birthday party is a black-tie dinner at the Kentish Town McDonald's—catered with cocaine and expensive champagne. The morning after, his girlfriend Clemmie is found murdered on Hampstead Heath, a single stiletto heel jutting from under a bush. All the party-goers have alibis. Naturally. This investigation is going to be about aristocrats and Classics degrees, Instagram influencers and whose father knows who—a huge challenge for DI Caius Beauchamp. The Indie Next Pick: "First in a series about British Detective Camus Beauchamp, this mystery takes us into London's high society to solve the murder of one of the gentry's 'It' girls. DI Beauchamp is intriguing.

✂ Williams, Pip. [The Bookbinder](#) (\$19). It's 1914 and women are stepping up to keep Britain running as war begins. Sisters Peggy and Maude work in Oxford University Press' bookbinding department. Peggy sees that women at Somerville College (Dorothy L. Sayers studied there) have a whole library of finished books and dreams of joining them while Maude prefers the routine of the bindery and the company of the other girls there. When refugees arrive from the war-torn cities of Belgium, sending ripples through the Oxford community and the sisters' lives, Peggy imagines a new future. "*The Bookbinder* is a story about knowledge—who creates it, who can access it, and what truths get lost in the process."

Woods, Evie. [The Story Collector](#) (Harper \$18.99). From the author of [The Lost Bookshop](#) (\$18.99), a new novel set in a quiet village in Ireland where a mysterious local myth is about to change everything... 100 years ago, Anna, a young farm girl, volunteers to help an intriguing American visitor translate fairy stories from Irish to English. But all is not as it seems and Anna soon finds herself at the heart of a mystery that threatens her very way of life. In New York in the present day, Sarah Harper boards a plane bound for the West Coast of Ireland. But once there, she finds she has unearthed dark secrets – secrets that tread the line between the everyday and the otherworldly, the seen and the unseen.

Wortham, Reavis. [The Broken Truth](#) (Sourcebooks \$16.99). Special Agent Tucker Snow knows rustlers are mounting massive thefts of cattle on remote ranches. When one local rancher dies and his property is quietly sold in a private purchase, Tucker wonders if there is something bigger and more sinister afoot in his jurisdiction than the usual steal-and-sell racket. Working alongside his brother, Harley, Tucker learns that he's right....

## OUR AUGUST SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Berry, Steve. [The 9th Man](#) (\$10.99). Luke Daniels #1. Embroiled in a war between two determined sides after rescuing an old friend, Luke Daniels confronts a series of shocking truths about JFK's assassination on November 22, 1963, which not only rewrite history but will forever change his own life as he comes face to face with the ninth man.

Brennan, Allison. [North of Nowhere](#) (\$9.99). After their plane crashes in the Montana wilderness, siblings Kristen and Ryan McIntyre, on the run from their murderous father, the head of a Los Angeles crime family, soon discover there's something even more dangerous in the woods—something that could determine if they live or die.

Conte, Cate. [Shock and Paw](#) (St Martin's \$9.99). Cat Café #8. While trying to figure who's selling odd-looking designer cats, brazenly advertising outside of her rescue cat café, Maddie must save her best friend Becky, an editor at the island's only daily newspaper, from spending Christmas behind bars when she's accused of killing her boss.

Hillerman, Anne. [The Way of the Bear](#) (\$9.99). Leaphorn, Chee, and Manuelito #8. Navajo Tribal Police officers Jim Chee and Bernadette Manuelito must use all their experience, skill and intuition to solve a series of murders involving fossil harvesting, ancient lore, greed and rejected love linked to Utah's Bears Ears National Park.

Marshall, Kate Alice. [What Lies in the Woods](#) (\$9.99). Twenty-two years after her best friend was attacked in the woods, surviving 17 stab wounds, Naomi Shaw, who has a secret worth killing for, returns home when the man responsible dies in prison to find out what really happened, no matter how dangerous the truth may be.

Unger, Lisa. [Last Girl Ghosted](#) (\$9.99). Believing she had found true love on a dating app, a young woman is shocked when her lover intentionally disappears and she discovers many other girls who also thought they were in love with the same man.

Woodward, M P. [Dead Drop](#) (\$10.99). Handler #2. John and Meredith Dale are caught between Mossad, who is trying to find a missing Iranian officer and rocket scientist, and the hit squad that is hunting him,

## MORE AUGUST SMALL PAPERBACKS

Alexander, Ellie. [Sticks and Scones](#) (\$9.99). Bakeshop #19. When strange occurrences plague her friend Lance's play, a modern, gender-bending twist on "The Taming of the Shrew," as the curtain rises, resulting in the murder of the leading actor, baker Jules, now in the mix, must create the perfect recipe for solving this theatrical whodunit.

Baldacci, David. [Long Shadows](#) (\$10.99). Amos Decker #7. Amos Decker—an FBI consultant with perfect recall—dives into a bewildering double homicide

Cass, Laurie. [No Paw to Stand On](#) (Penguin \$9.99). Bookmobile Cat #12. Heading to the beach, Minnie finds her library business put on hold when her best friend needs her help sniffing out a saboteur in her restaurant, and when an employee at another restaurant is found dead, the claws come out as they corner a suspect.

Ehrhart, Peggy. [A Dark and Stormy Knit](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Knit & Nibble #11. When their neighbor Adrienne's sister is stabbed to death on Halloween night, Pamela and Bettina, and their Knit and Nibble crafting group, doing their own investigating, discover Adrienne may have been the target, not her sister, and must unravel the clues to solve this ghoulish crime.

✦ Elliott, Lauren. [Murder in a Cup](#) (\$8.99). Crystals & Curiosities #2. When her first group reading ends in murder, self-taught "seer" Shay, the descendant of an Irish witch and owner of a New Age tea shop, with her assistant suspected of committing cold-blooded murder, finds her business in hot water as she works to exonerate her employee by following the signs to a manipulative murderer.

Howell, Dorothy. [Hanging by a Thread](#) (\$8.99). Sewing Studio #2. After setting up a small sewing studio in quaint Hideaway Grove, Abbey Chandler is focused on finding crafty, creative ideas to build up her clientele. But murder can be bad for business ... especially when the victim is the same woman who has been trying to take over Abbey's aunt's bakery.

✦ Jewell, Lisa. [Invisible Girl](#): (\$10.99). Suspended from work amid allegations of sexual misconduct, a virgin geography teacher is targeted by a sinister predator upon joining an online support group for the involuntarily celibate, before a therapist neighbor's distraught patient goes missing.

King, Stephen. [The Long Walk](#) (\$11.99). Reissue. **Stephen King, writing as Richard Bachman, tells the tale of the contestants of a grueling walking competition where there can only be one winner—the one that survives.**

Patterson, James. [The House of Wolves](#) (\$10.99). Jenny Wolf's murdered father has left her in charge of a multi-billion-dollar empire—a newspaper, a football team, a holding company ... and a dysfunctional family that knows no bounds.

Perry, Carol J. [Death Scene](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Witch City #14. With a witchcraft-themed movie being filmed in Salem, WICH-TV program manager and chief documentary-maker, Lee, and her police detective husband, Pete, when a gorgeous lead actress is found dead on a staged set, stir up toil and trouble as they try to conjure up the killer.

Rovin, Jeff. [Tom Clancy's OpCenter: Fallout](#) (St Martin's \$9.99). OpCenter #22. The Black Wasp commandos are targeted by Chinese assassins after successfully extricating a top Beijing scientist from captivity and escorting him the United States,