

BOOKNEWS from

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FALL INTO MORE GOOD BOOKS

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.

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 16 5:00 PM Virtual Event

Gillian Flynn is our host for Julia Dahl

Dahl discusses [I Dreamed of Falling](#) (St Martins \$29)

Grief and crime rock a small Hudson Valley NY town

Signed books available

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 17 7:00 PM Virtual Event with Patrick

Willy Vlautin discusses [The Horse](#) (Harper \$25.99)

Signed books available

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 20 7:00 PM Live or Virtual

SciFi Friday Group discusses Vajra Chandrasekera's [The Saint of Bright Doors](#) (\$18.99)

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 21 10:30 AM Live or Virtual

Croak & Dagger Mysteries Group discusses Allison Goodman's [The Benevolent Society of Ill-Mannered Ladies](#) (\$17), our favorite Regency mystery

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 23 7:00 PM Live Event

Nicholas Meyer discusses [Sherlock Holmes and the Telegram from Hell](#) (Penzler \$26.95)

A tale loosely based on actual WWI events

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 24 7:00 PM Live Event

Martin Walker discusses [The Grave in the Woods](#) (Knopf \$29)

The Alliance Française is our Guest Host for Bruno, Chief of Police

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 25 7:00 PM Live Event

Stephanie Wrobel discusses [The Hitchcock Hotel](#) (Penguin \$29)

A Hitchcock fanatic with an agenda invites old friends for a weekend stay at his secluded themed hotel

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 26 7:00 PM Live

Hardboiled Crime Group discusses Larry Block's [The Sins of the Fathers](#) (\$8.99)

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 27 10:00 AM Virtual Event

Joel Dicker with Hank Phillippi Ryan

Dicker discusses [The Alaska Sanders Affair](#) (Harper \$32)

Signed Books available from the Swiss author

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 28 11:00 AM

The Cookbook Group

Guest: Ellen Byron who discusses cookbook collecting and signs her latest culinary cozy. [French Quarter Fright Night](#)

(Severn House \$29.99)

Bring a recipe to share

TUESDAY OCTOBER 1 7:00 PM Live Event

Ally Carter discusses [The Most Wonderful Crime of the Year](#) (Harper \$24.99)

Rebecca Thorne discusses [A Pirate's Life for Tea](#) (Tor \$19.99)

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 2 7:00 PM Live Event

Ramona Emerson discusses [Exposure](#) (Soho Press \$27.95)

Navajo forensic photographer Rita Todacheene's 2nd case

THURSDAY OCTOBER 3 1:00 PM – Virtual Event for Our Bookstore Birthday

Ian Rankin discusses [Midnight and Blue](#) (Orion UK \$40)

Edinburgh's John Rebus goes behind bars to break a case

THURSDAY OCTOBER 3 7:00 PM Live Event

Tami Hoag discusses [Bad Liar](#) (Putnam \$29.99)

Dark doing in Louisiana swamp country

SATURDAY OCTOBER 5 6:00 PM Live Event

Kevin Hearne discusses [Candle & Crow](#) (Random House Worlds \$28.99)

Ink & Sigil

OUR SEPTEMBER BOOK SUBSCRIPTION CLUB PICKS

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.

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British Crime Club One Unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Gauntlett, AE. [The Stranger at the Wedding](#)

Cozy Crimes Club One Unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Byron, Ellen. [French Quarter Fright Night](#)

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

Dahl, Julia. [I Dreamed of Falling](#)

First Mystery Club One Signed First Printing per month

Pérez, Kristina. [The Many Lies of Veronica Hawkins](#)

Hardboiled/Noir Club One Signed First Printing per month
Wright, Snowden. [The Queen City Detective Agency](#)

Historical Fiction Club One First Printing per month
Walker, Martin. [The Grave in the Woods](#)

Historical Fiction Paperback Club One Unsigned paperback per month

Ashford, Lindsay Jayne. [Through the Mist](#)

Notable New Fiction One Signed First Printing per month
Moriarty, Liane. [Here One Moment](#)

Romance and Relationships One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Sullivan, Sophie. [Can't Help Falling in Love](#)

SIGNED BOOKS FOR SEPTEMBER

But first, a special edition, unsigned

Rundell, Katherine. [Impossible Creatures](#) (Random House \$19.99 Unsigned). This spectacular book features more than 60 illustrations, stained edges, and a gold-stamped case. The story follows Christopher and Mal as they attempt to save a hidden world and its magical inhabitants from destruction. "Katherine Rundell takes us on an extraordinary journey that taps into the deep magic of fantasy storytelling. Reminiscent of C. S. Lewis, with evocative layers of myth and legend. Once you start this adventure, you won't be able to stop. Rundell says, 'I knew that I wanted a world that would be huge enough for a flying girl to belong with ease: a world where huge, sweeping adventures could happen. So I started trying to conjure her a world — I wanted it to be an untouched, undestroyed version of ours, green and vivid, but with the added magic of the glimourie, and hoards of mythical creatures. And I loved writing Jacques, the tiny belligerent jaculus dragon small enough to perch on the tip of your thumb. I'm currently writing book two of Impossible Creatures, which will be called *Impossible Creatures: The Poisoned King*.'"

And now:

Aaronovitch, Ben. [The Masquerades of Spring](#) (Orion UK \$36). Meet Augustus Berrycloth-Young—fop, flaneur, and Englishman abroad—as he chronicles the Jazz Age from his perch atop the city that never sleeps. That is, until his old friend Thomas Nightingale arrives, pursuing a rather mysterious affair concerning an old saxophone—which will take Gussie from his warm bed, to the cold shores of Long Island, and down to its jazz clubs....

Alam, Rumaan. [Entitlement](#) (Penguin \$30). Tip ins. The Indie Next Pick: "Alam's prose is at its most effortless, his storytelling at its most engrossing, his pacing at its most propulsive. Questions of race, class, generosity, and obsession weave through a thoroughly unpredictable story."

☒ Archer, Jeffrey. [An Eye for an Eye](#) (Collins UK \$42). Lots going on in the 7th for Scotland Yard's William Warwick. Near

the turn of the 21st century, Prime Minister Tony Blair dispatches banker Simon Hartley—the son of an esteemed Lord—to Saudi Arabia to negotiate a deal exchanging British arms for Saudi oil. Soon after Hartley arrives in Riyadh, he attends a reception alongside Prince Ahmed bin Majid and his favorite female companion, Avril Dubois. During the gathering, the prince stabs an Italian guest to death after he puts his hand on Avril's thigh. Though plenty of people saw what actually happened, Hartley is arrested for the crime and confined in a Saudi prison. Meanwhile, Warwick's family is targeted by his nemesis, Miles Faulkner, who seeks, from behind bars, to both sabotage Warwick's wife's career as an art museum director and steal an original version of the *Declaration of Independence*.

☒ Bayard, Louis: [The Wildes](#) (Algonquin \$30). This will be our **October Notable New Fiction Subscription Club Pick** so club members who get free shipping should not order it. It's due in late September.

The magical Bayard whose books I have admired for many years brings Oscar Wilde's wife Constance and two sons out from the shadows of history. Bayard transports us to the British countryside, an Italian villa, the trenches of France, and back to London. Told in the language of the late 19th & early 20th centuries, *The Wildes* involves the entire Wilde family and the scandalous drama that ensues. "It requires a novelist of great audacity to dare to attempt to bring Oscar Wilde back to life, and it requires a novelist of great skill, to say nothing of wit, to manage the feat persuasively. Happily, Louis Bayard is both of those novelists. As if that were not enough, *The Wildes* also presents us with a portrait of Oscar's wife, Constance, that is little short of breathtaking in its vibrant depth, and a recounting of the heartbreaking tragedy of the Wildes that is eloquent and fully compassionate to all its characters, certainly to the Wildes' sons, Cyril and Vyvyan, and even to (almost astonishingly) that feckless instrument of destruction Lord Alfred Douglas.... Bayard presented us with real people pressing, often excruciatingly, toward fateful decisions. This is an intoxicatingly gorgeous novel."

Benn, James R. [The Phantom Patrol](#) (Soho \$27.95). In the 19th entry in this brilliant WWII series, it's the winter of 1944, with brutal weather, months after the liberation of France. Billy Boyle, reeling from the carnage there and from unexpected events during his brief R&R in Britain in 2023's [Proud Sorrows](#) (\$17.95), is in Paris where after a shoot-out in Père Lachaise Cemetery he finds a rare work of art. This leads him to suspect a ring of art thieves embracing the worst of French and German actors is smuggling looted art out of France to collectors (watch *The Monument Men* if you missed it). As he goes after the so-called *Syndicat* he's convinced someone at a high level is facilitating the operation and it leads him into very dangerous territory which we came to call the Battle of the Bulge. This excellent series continues to deliver facets of WWII and locations that horrify, entertain, and frankly, amaze. You can start reading it here and pick up any of the backlist as you become hooked.

Bentley, Don. [Vince Flynn Capture or Kill](#) (Atria \$29.99). In April of 2011 a Quds Force demonstration of a new missile system leads Azad Ashani, Director of Iran's Minister of Intelligence to make a bold move to save his country. From this we get Bentley writing *Capture or Kill*—“Mitch Rapp at his best: behind enemy lines, outgunned, facing hopeless odds, on an impossible time table. The defining Special Forces operation of the twenty-first century is at risk, and only one man can save it. Bentley's writing drops you in the middle of one of Rapp's most improbable missions. We are nearly sold out of Signed copies.

Byron, Ellen. [French Quarter Fright Night](#) (Severn House \$29.99). Members of the **Cozy Crimes Subscription Club** will get this new series start set in New Orleans shipped for free in September. For non-members this is Ordered Upon Request with the usual shipping rates.

“It's hard to imagine a celebration better suited to showcase the essence of New Orleans than Halloween, whose antic revelry digs deep into the city's historic multicultural roots. And it's hard to imagine a better guide to that celebration than *Miracle Fleur de Lis* James-Diaz. Born in New Orleans but raised by an adoptive family in the San Fernando Valley, Ricki returns to “The City That Care Forgot” to work at Bon Vee, in the Garden District, where she discovers a birth-family connection to Genevieve Charbonnet, Bon Vee's original owner. As Ricki prepares for the massive collision of drinking, partying, and spookiness that mark Halloween in her new hometown, she runs into a traumatic reminder of her life in California. Actor Blaine Taggart, who took part in an internet stunt that led to the death of Ricki's husband, moves into Duncan-Sejour, the mansion next door to Bon Vee. Ricki struggles to balance her resentment of Taggart with her appreciation of his boundless energy and willingness to partner with Bon Vee's efforts to take Halloween in New Orleans to a whole new level. Even the murder of his assistant, Miranda Fine, can't dampen Taggart's gung-ho spirit.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

Carr, Jack. [Targeted: Beirut](#) (Atria \$29.99). Coming directly from Jack so I can't give an exact delivery date. The first in a new in-depth nonfiction series examining the devastating terrorist attacks that changed the course of history from Carr and Pulitzer Prize finalist James M. Scott, beginning with the 1983 Marine barracks bombing in Beirut.

Carter, Ally. [The Most Wonderful Crime of the Year](#) (Harper \$24.99). The bridge is out. The phones are down. And the most famous mystery writer in the world just disappeared out of a locked room two days before Christmas. I loved Carter's spy romp [The Blonde Identity](#) (\$17.99). And will check on firsts.

Child, Lee. [Safe Enough](#) (Mysterious Press \$28.99). **NOTE: Lee will do a virtual event with us on October 8 at 5:00 PM PDT to discuss this new book.**

Liberated from Reacher, Lee has enjoyed writing short fiction without him and here is a collection of twenty that show what else he can do. “Throughout, Child gleefully toys with readers' expectations, mirroring his duplicitous characters as he performs a series of satisfying bait-and-switches, most memorably in “Ten Keys,” which initially appears to center on two men in a bar waiting for an assassin. His dialogue, too, has the grit and punch of top-shelf crime fiction.”—*PW*

Dahl, Julia. [I Dreamed of Falling](#) (St Martins \$29). I am not sure how to describe this amazing and appalling story which so struck Gillian Flynn she signed up to host a zoom with Dahl on September 16. She says this is “one of those rare novels in which you feel the pulse of every single character down to the mail carrier. It's an uncompromising look at love and its complications, and a frank, sometimes burning story about the tricky business of learning how to be a grownup. Oh, and it's all wrapped up in a blistering mystery.” As a depiction of small town life in a Hudson Valley town where generations have made lives, often messy, and where growing up is bounded by history and expectations, it's penetrating, arresting, and a gut-wrenching read. Critics are unanimous in high ratings. Dahl introduces a journalist forced to uncover secrets in his own family. As the only reporter in a small Hudson Valley town, Roman Grady covers everything from meetings to park-bench dedications. When his romantic partner Ashley dies at the home of Bella, a known drug user, he is devastated. Roman thought he knew the town's story, and he knew Ashley. He was wrong.... There is much here reminding me of Julia Keller's brilliant West Virginia mysteries featuring Bell Elkins.

Deaver, Jeffery/Isabella Maldonado. [Fatal Intrusion](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$28.99). Deaver's (“Lincoln Rhyme” series) interest in technology and social media and Maldonado's (“Nina Guerrero” series) law enforcement background blend well in this fast-paced crime novel, the first collaboration for each of them and the start of a series. Plus Deaver, author of the Colter Shaw books currently on TV in a show called “Tracker,” is an adept at chasing after bad actors. One such is the predator Spider, adept at uncovering information about his victims on the internet. Spider is one step ahead of his hunters, leaving only a few clues as he kills people who seem to be random victims. Eventually, Spider's actions reveal that he has an accomplice—and no apparent motive. The story plays to both authors' strengths as well as its California background. There is a paperback edition, Unsigned: [Fatal Intrusion](#) (\$16.99).

Dicker, Joel. [The Alaska Sanders Affair](#) (Harper \$32). The Swiss authors' book is out late September but will not arrive here until early October. Eleven years after the 1999 murder of aspiring actress Alaska Sanders in New Hampshire, acclaimed young novelist Marcus Goldman spearheads a new investigation into

what had been an open-and-shut case. After a long-missing teenage girl's body was exhumed from the garden of his close friend and distinguished mentor Harry Quebert, he proved the man's innocence. Writing about that case had cured his writer's block. Now, teaming up with his tormented friend Perry Gahalowood, the cop who oversaw the Sanders investigation, he quickly determines that the two troublesome young men convicted of Alaska's lakeside killing didn't do it and sets out to find the guilty party—all the while collecting material for his next opus.

✎ Edwards, Martin. [Hemlock Bay](#) (Zeus UK \$42). Basil Palmer plans to murder a man called Louis Carson. The problem is he doesn't know anything about his intended victim, not who he is nor where he lives. After learning that Carson runs a hotel in Hemlock Bay, a playground for the wealthy and privileged, Palmer invents a false identity. Posing as Dr Seamus Doyle, he journeys to the coast plotting murder along the way. Meanwhile, after hearing a fortune teller has predicted a murder in a place called Hemlock Bay, amateur sleuth Rachel Savernake rents a cottage there, determined to discover for herself the serpent that has slithered into this idyllic Eden. Murder does occur at the resort, and after meeting a mysterious doctor called Seamus Doyle, Rachel finds herself entering a maze of intricate mysteries – just where she likes to be. This 5th in a Gothic Golden Age Series has a Cluefinder which is fun for testing your wits after you read the book.

For the earlier Savernakes, order [HERE](#).

✎ Goldin, AE. [Murder in Constantinople](#) (Pushkin \$39.00). A wayward if not swashbuckling boy from London's East End can't settle in a traditional mold of a good Jewish son. He runs with friends calling themselves the "Good for Nothing Boys" who long for adventure. On the eve of the Crimean War Ben may have found it in an enigmatic letter and the photograph of a beautiful woman who enchants him. And off he goes to Constantinople. What do the words "The White Death" mean? Conspiracy mixes with poison and politics and kingmaking in a city in upheaval. This is a swashbuckler for sure, written with verve and some uneven prose, and will appeal to you fans of Barbara Nadel's series set in contemporary Istanbul. Unsigned edition \$28

✎ Hallett, Janice. [The Examiner](#) (Viper UK \$39). British bestseller Hallett, with whom I had a delightful tea in London in June, foregoes the unreliable narrator for unreliable characters, adding even more twists to her plot. To tell the story she again utilizes an epistolary style, incorporating texts, message board postings, emails, and student essays to open up the lives of six art students who are beginning a one-year master's program. The program is led by Gela Nathaniel, who is facing its cancellation if she can't show that the students will make connections to real-world (i.e., commercial) entities. When the six, of disparate (and possibly fictional) backgrounds, get started, they find that the biggest challenge they'll face is not the coursework but the personality conflicts among them. As the infighting and competition gets worse, these conflicts lead to a toxic environment that could lead to.... You fill in the blank.

✎ Harris, Robert. [Precipice](#) (Hutchinson UK \$44). I agree with this Starred Review for a book with resonance today: Harris "fictionalizes the real-life love affair between British Prime Minister H.H. Asquith and 26-year-old aristocrat Venetia Stanley

in this fascinating historical thriller. In the summer of 1914, Stanley conceals her flirtations with the married Asquith from her upper-echelon social circle. Meanwhile, DS Paul Deemer responds to a call about a potential drowning, and crosses paths with Stanley. The narrative then stretches into the early days of WWI, with Asquith begrudgingly sending British forces to fight the Germans and detailing his distresses in tender letters to Stanley. As Asquith's letters become increasingly forthcoming, someone in his cabinet starts leaking crucial government telegrams, leading Deemer to investigate. In the process, he begins to unravel Asquith and Stanley's affair through their letters—many of which are authentically reprinted, some for the first time. Themes of national loyalty and the ravages of war permeate the novel, but Harris resists grandiosity, leaning on his background as a journalist to make the stakes feel at once personal and profound. Stanley, in particular, emerges as a fascinating historical figure, caught between a life of easy luxury and an intoxicating love for a desperate man several decades her senior. Readers will be astonished."

Heller, Peter. [Burn](#) (Knopf \$28). Tip ins. 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."

Jance, JA. [A Den of Iniquity](#) (Harper \$29.99). Jance's work gets better and better, like fine wine. And here she addresses how children suffer or thrive under parenting casual, bad, or in the case of grandparents JP Beaumont and his Bellingham, Washington, Police Chief Wife Mel, nurturing with guardrails. And accountability, an element too often lacking in families and in society. Plus Jance's polished and straightforward prose moves the narrative along so smoothly you want to read the entire book in one go. At least I did.

Former Seattle PD detective JP Beaumont, long remarried, long sober, and a devoted dog owner, is shocked when his grandson Kyle arrives out of the blue asking to live with JP and Mel. The shock comes in part because Kyle will be giving up the rest of his last year of high school in Ashland to graduate with his class, instead to finish up by enrolling in Bellingham. Something volcanic must have blown up his family. In truth his mom has moved out with his sister and his dad has moved in the woman with whom he's been having an affair, and who is pregnant. Kyle, now 18, refuses to return to either household. When he reveals why, JP is moved to investigate. Surprises lie ahead. At the same time a Thanksgiving Day death in Bellingham may be more than the overdose it appears to be, so says the young man's grandmother. JP, acting as a PI rather than a cop, agrees to take her case which will require turning over the ME's verdict....

Jónasson, Ragnar. [Death at the Sanatorium](#) (Joseph UK \$45). Jónasson follows up with [The Darkness](#) (\$17.99), soon to be a TV series, with a fair-play whodunit worthy of Agatha Christie, whose work Ragnar translates into Icelandic. There are several time periods in the narrative. 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—two, actually. Jónasson is also the author of the bestseller [Reykjavik](#) (\$19) written with Katrin Jakobsdottir, Iceland's Prime Minister in 2023.

Kearsley, Susanna. [The King's Messenger](#) (Simon & Shuster UK \$44). Canadian Kearsley went to London in August in part to sign her book which has a spring 2025 US publication. This is a truly fabulous historical with adventure and murder and the voice of Queen Anna (from Denmark) heard. I love it! And it ties into [The Winter Sea](#) (\$17.99), the first in Kearsley's Scottish series excellent for Gabaldon fans except that the entire story takes place in 1613. Only 3 copies left

It is the year 1613, and King James is sending his messenger Andrew Logan into Scotland with secret orders to arrest Sir David Moray, close friend and advisor of the late Prince Henry. Secrets are second nature to Andrew, who must hide his Second Sight to stay alive. Joined by a court scrivener and the scrivener's spirited daughter Phoebe, Andrew slowly untangles the true purpose of his mission—to frame Sir David for Prince Henry's murder. But Andrew is unwilling to betray an innocent man. Phoebe Westaway dislikes Andrew, and their history makes it hard for her to trust him. But as their journey draws them deeper into the dark web of court intrigue, Phoebe begins to suspect that she might have need of the King's Messenger and his unusual gifts. I add that Diana Gabaldon, like me, is a rabid Kearsley fan. So here's a book to read while awaiting *Outlander* Book Ten.

Koontz, Dean. [The Forest of Lost Souls](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$28.95). Raised in the wilderness by her late great-uncle, Vida is a young woman with an almost preternatural affinity for nature, especially for the wolves that also call the forested mountains home. Formed by hard experience, by love and loss, and by the prophecies of a fortune teller, Vida just wants peace. If only nearby Kettleton County didn't cast such a dark shadow. It's where Jose Nochelobo, the love of Vida's life and a cherished local hero, died in a tragic accident. That's the official story, but Vida has reasons to doubt it. Vida, the forest, and its formidable wonders will fight back against those hungry for power in Kettleton County.... Love the jacket art with its fearsome wolf....

Maden, Mike. [Clive Cussler Ghost Soldier](#) (Penguin \$32). "Juan Cabrillo and his crew aboard the warship *Oregon* face off against a brilliant and evil arms dealer in the entertaining latest Oregon Files adventure. The action opens during WWII, when an American airman is captured and imprisoned in a Japanese research center for chemical and biological weapons. In the present, a sadistic gunrunner known only as "the Vendor" has been selling \$80 billion in weaponry abandoned after America withdrew from Afghanistan. The U.S. government taps Cabrillo to figure out who's behind the transactions. Eventually, he leads his team—with the addition of beautiful and brainy engineer

Callie Cosima, who designs state-of-the-art submersibles—to the Vendor's remote, booby-trapped island in the Bismarck Sea, where they fight flame-breathing robots and other obstacles. Maden effortlessly weaves subplots about the American POW and the Vendor's scheme to unleash biotoxins into the main action, which is vivid, bloody, and occasionally jaw-dropping. This fires on all cylinders."

✉ Meyer, Nicholas. [Sherlock Holmes and the Telegram from Hell](#) (Penzler \$26.95) Cross the Atlantic with Holmes and Dr. Watson on a secret mission in America at a pivotal point in world history. At the height of World War I, the British Secret Service sends this dynamic detective duo overseas to gather intelligence on a cryptic coded telegram sent by the Germans to a shadowy contact in Mexico. *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 in the most consequential case of the detective's career. Amid rebellion in Ireland and revolution in Russia, Germany has a secret plan to win the war and Sir William Melville of the British Secret Service dispatches the two aging friends to learn what the scheme is before it can be put into effect. Based on the infamous Zimmerman telegram and incorporating the early career of J. Edgar Hoover.

Moriarty, Liane. [Here One Moment](#) (Crown \$30). Travelers aboard a delayed flight from Hobart, Australia, to Sydney are already on edge when a woman stands, points at a fellow passenger, and pronounces, "I expect catastrophic stroke. Age seventy-two." She moves down the aisle, foretelling the causes and ages of death of several more passengers before the cabin crew intervenes. She then sleeps until landing and disembarks as though nothing had happened. Most assume the "soothsayer" has mental health problems—until one of her prognostications comes true three months later. Everyone is rattled, but none more than the other passengers she hit with premonitions. When one of those passengers does die in the exact way the woman predicted, everyone else goes into a tailspin. You members of our **Notable New Fiction Subscription Club** will too when this **September Pick** ships to you free (in the US).

Read this [interview in the NY Times](#) about Moriarty, her career, and the so far 20M books she has sold. This book will up the total. I like this comment about her books made into film or TV: "I think the best adaptations are not completely faithful to the material. It's a different medium and there should be changes. Having said that, of course, when it's my work, I don't especially want changes. It's funny because I say, "Oh, yes, I understand there should be changes." But then I think, "Don't change that!"

Nesbø, Jo. [Blood Ties](#) (Harvill UK \$44). Carl and Roy Opgard are doing quite well for themselves—as well as can be expected in a small town like Os. Carl manages the area's swanky and successful spa and hotel, while Roy runs a nearby gas station and harbors grand plans to build it out into an entire amusement park, complete with a roller coaster. But when news breaks about a new highway to be built nearby, bypassing Os and leaving the town cutoff and isolated, it's clear that something has to be done . . . even if the methods are bound to be dirty. Fortunately, Carl and Roy have experience with just that kind of work. Meanwhile, the town sheriff has gotten his hands on new technology that will

enable him to take a deeper look at a slate of unsolved murders from years past—including that of his own father. And just as the sheriff reopens his investigation, the death toll rises.... So, a Norwegian Western.

Pappas, Ted. [Combing Through the White House](#) (Harper \$24.99). Pappas, the longtime editor of *Encyclopedia Britannica*, says, “The initial impetus for this book was a private dinner I had with Barbara Bush some 40 years ago, during which, in her endearing, self-deprecating way, she joked about her grandmotherly looks and white hair, which likely turned white, according to recent scientific research, due to the stress and grief she experienced from the death of her 3-year-old daughter. Because of her matronly looks, she became one of the most body-shamed persons in White House history. This experience got me thinking of the many other unusual ways that hair has affected aspects of the presidency, from the political messaging tied to George Washington’s refusal to wear a wig, the centuries-old pastime of collecting hair in memory of our leaders and celebrity idols, and the vast imaging-making of the Kennedy administration to the inspiring photo of the little boy patting President Obama’s head just to see if his hair was like his, the many hair-related controversies of the 2020 presidential race, and the rich font of chemical treasures found within hair, such as DNA, that have solved so many presidential controversies in recent years, affecting impeachments and paternity matters while rewriting White House history in the process.” My takeaway: An appreciation for the many novel ways we can learn from the past and narrate history, including learning from something as commonplace as hair.

Pérez, Kristina. [The Many Lies of Veronica Hawkins](#) (Pegasus \$27.95). Pérez’s crime debut, our **September First Mystery Subscription Club Pick**, is “a twisty, glamorous thriller set among the rich and powerful in Hong Kong. The first section is a memoir of a friendship and the experience of grief when one friend dies. Martina Torres came to Hong Kong to support her blue-blooded husband Spencer, but she feels lonely and aimless in the fast-paced city. Her gig as a freelance reporter leads her to interview shipping heiress Veronica Hawkins. From their first meeting, Martina is drawn in. As the two women become close friends, Martina’s view of her life and marriage shifts. Even as she’s making changes, she sees that Veronica is struggling personally as well. When a tragedy takes Veronica’s life, Martina picks up the pieces and writes to assuage her grief. In the second half of the book, told in the third person, Martina has seemingly moved past the worst of her pain, but she finds her life upended again when someone threatens to take all that she has gained.” The setting, characters, and structure of the novel are compelling, and, as the title suggests, there are secrets and lies aplenty. For fans of *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid and *The Heiress* by Rachel Hawkins and [The Hollywood Assistant](#) (\$29 Signed) by May Cobb.

I didn’t pick it for the couturier fashion (can be annoying) or luxe lifestyles of the Hong Kong elite, Ex-Pat and native, but in addition to the quality of the writing, for the fascinating tidbits about Hong Kong’s colonial history and the many gorgeous details of life in this famous city undergoing transition from colony to China.

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*.

Rooney, Sally. [Intermezzo](#) (Farrar \$29) Tip-ins. Two brothers—one a lawyer, one a chess prodigy—work through the death of their father, their complicated romantic lives, and their even more tangled relationship with each other. Ten years separate the Koubek brothers. In his early 30s, Peter has turned his past as a university debating champ into a career as a progressive lawyer in Dublin. Ivan is just out of college, struggling to make ends meet through freelance data analysis and reckoning with his recent free fall in the world chess rankings. When their father dies of cancer, the cracks in the brothers’ relationship widen. “Complete oddball” Ivan falls in love with an older woman, an arts center employee, which freaks Peter out. Peter juggles two women at once: free-spirited college student Naomi and his ex-girlfriend Sylvia, whose life has changed drastically since a car accident left her in chronic pain. Emotional chaos abounds.

✠ Rubin, Gareth. [Holmes and Moriarty](#) (SimonSchuster UK \$39). Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson have been hired by actor George Reynolds to help him solve a puzzle. George wants them to find out why the audience who comes to see him perform every night is the same people, only wearing disguises. Is something sinister going on and, if so, what? Meanwhile, Holmes’ archenemy, Professor James Moriarty is implicated in the murder of a gang leader, Moriarty and his second, Moran, must go on the run from the police in order to find out who is behind the set-up. But their investigation puts them in the way of Holmes and Watson and it’s not long before all four realize that they are being targeted by the same person. With lives on the line, not just their own, they must form an uneasy alliance in order to unmask the true villain. With clues leading them to a hotel in Switzerland and a conspiracy far greater than any of them expected, who can be trusted – and will anyone of them survive?

Thorne, Rebecca. [A Pirate’s Life for Tea](#) (Tor.com \$19.99). *Bookshops & Bonedust* meets *Our Flag Means Death* in this cozy fantasy on the low seas, where sapphic pirates find out if enemies actually can become lovers! This trade paperback release features vivid orange sprayed edges, a beautiful color illustration, and a never-before-seen bonus short story! Start with the series debut [Can’t Spell Treason without Tea](#) (Tor \$18.99 Signed and in stock now).

Vlautin, Willy. [The Horse](#) (Harper \$25.99). Patrick reviews: Al is an aging musician who has retreated from the world to a derelict former assayer’s shack in an abandoned mining town in a remote part of Nevada. He spends his days working on songs by lamplight, going for long walks, and living with the ghosts of his own past. Haunted by the memories of his ex-wife

and the family and friends lost through decades of alcoholism, Al reflects on his transient life touring with various small-time bands, and the tragedy that led him to his self-imposed exile. When an emaciated blind horse appears outside in the snow one afternoon, Al is unclear at first whether or not the animal is real or a hallucination, but he tries to help the poor creature the best he can. This slim masterpiece packs an emotional punch that really resonates.

Walker, Martin. [The Grave in the Woods](#) (Knopf \$29). You historical fiction fans may cry foul when I make a contemporary mystery our **September Historical Fiction Subscription Club Pick**, but I do it for two reasons based on my own feeling that it's fascinating to see events of the past viewed from the lens of today. So first, the discovery of a tomb wherein the unclothed skeletons of two teenaged German girls and the clothed one of a Fascist Italy naval officer have been concealed since 1944 under the bones of a dog, all three killed by a French Resistance patrol, prompts a reaction from NATO partners today to honor rather than revile the dead. Walker delineates the Resistance and its continuing fallout vividly as the village of St. Denis pulls together a diplomatic gathering of Germans and Italians and a surprise American. And to save an ancient estate's rebirth as a luxe hotel. Meanwhile torrential rains have so inundated the Massif Central that water management, dams and bridges and, sob, trees, must be reviewed as massive flooding is predicted. This is a vivid portrait of how climate change forces a reorder of historic engineering.

Walker's narrative embraces past and present with the bonus of amazing meals. This is an excellent companion read to the James Benn winter of 1944 France Billy Boyle thriller reviewed above. And fear not, our October Pick takes you to 14th Century Florence.

Also Signed by Walker at his September 24 visit hosted by the Alliance Française, [Bruno's Cookbook](#) (Knopf \$40). Treat yourself to more time with Bruno and a sumptuous French cookbook that immerses you in the delectable countryside cuisine of Bruno's beloved Périgord region, featuring favorite meals from Roasted Tomato Tapenade and Tarragon Chicken to A Most Indulgent Chocolate Cake. Great photos, too.

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 the 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. Mike will join us December 3 for a Legacy Authors Night with Brett Battles (Stuart Woods' Stone Barrington) and Andrews & Wilson (Clancy's Jack Ryan, Sr.) with host Don Bentley.

Wright, Snowden. [The Queen City Detective Agency](#) (Harper \$30). This debut is a Southern noir selected by Patrick for our **Hardboiled Crime Subscription Club for September**.

Meridian, Mississippi—once known as the Queen City for its status in the state—has lost much of its royal bearing by 1985. Overshadowed by more prosperous cities such as New Orleans and Atlanta, Meridian attracts less-than-legitimate businesses, including those enforced by the near-mythical Dixie Mafia. The city's powerbrokers, wealthy white Southerners clinging to their privilege, resent any attempt at change to the old order. In its review the *NYTBR* avers that “Wright writes sentences that beg to be quoted. He clearly has studied the pacing and syntax of hardboiled fiction.”

Wrobel, Stephanie. [The Hitchcock Hotel](#) (Berkley \$29). So much fun! This exciting story introduces Hitchcock aficionado Alfred Smettle, owner of a bed-and-breakfast (complete with a crow-filled aviary) in New Hampshire's White Mountains. To celebrate the first anniversary of the hotel's grand opening, Alfred invites five friends from his university film club for a four-day stay. Few members of the group have remained close in the 16 years since they graduated, but each has their own private reason for accepting Alfred's invitation. The group's mild interest in reuniting turns to unease as the weekend wears on and buried secrets from their university days rise to the surface, calling into question why, exactly, Alfred has summoned them. Eventually, somebody dies. “This locked-room mystery contains masterful pacing, with suspense built around the identity of the victim and then the discovery of the killer. Wrobel's third novel artfully blends suspense with mystery, tying in quotes from Hitchcock as well as research about his work that will be intriguing to Hitchcock amateurs and aficionados alike.”—*Booklist* Starred Review

SIGNED BOOKS SALE

Andrews & Wilson, [Tom Clancy Act of Defiance](#) (\$24), their first Jack Ryan, Sr.

Bentley, Don. [Tom Clancy Weapons Grade](#) (\$24) his final Jack Ryan, Jr. thriller

Deaver, Jeffery. [The Watchmaker's Hand](#) (Putnam \$25). Lincoln Rhyme #16

Hart, Matthew. [The Lucifer Cut](#) (Pegasus \$24). US Treasury Agent Alex Turner risks all confronting an execution of a diamond merchant, real vs. fake gems, and bad geopolitical actors, mostly Chinese. High action and informative.

Kanon, Joseph. [Shanghai](#) (Scribner \$23). Refugees from Europe mix with native Shanghai citizens and incoming Japanese in 1938 where drumbeats of the coming war are faint but growing.

Mills, Kyle. [Code Red](#) (Atria \$24) his 9th and final Vince Flynn thriller

Taylor, Brad. [Dead Man's Hand](#) (\$24) Pike Logan and team go head to head with Putin in a high action thriller

Thor, Brad. [Shadow of Doubt](#) (Atria \$24 Signed). Scot Harvath takes on the CIA when a (probable) Russian top gun defects to Norway.

CLASSICS

Anaya, Rudolfo. [Bless Me, Ultima](#) (\$18.99). A reissue of a rich and wondrous story about post-World War II New Mexico and the beauty of Chicano culture.

Bolano, Roberto. [Antwerp](#) (\$16). Often called the “big bang” of

Roberto Bolaño's universe, *Antwerp* is his first novel—or the shattered remnants of one. Written when he was just twenty-seven years old, it was so intensely strange and solitary that he tucked it away for more than twenty years, certain that any publisher would slam the door in his face. It proceeds in hallucinatory sketches: a lonely highway, a desolate campground, a freshly abandoned hotel room; a tryst, an interrogation, a murder; and somewhere just out of reach, a young, feverish writer named Roberto Bolaño drifting in and out of view. A radical, sui generis effort by a burgeoning genius, *Antwerp* is an essential part of Bolaño's oeuvre.

✎ Brand, Christianna. [Suddenly at His Residence](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99). While the Blitz bombards London, the boisterous grandchildren of Sir Richard March have descended upon Swanswater Manor in Kent for a family gathering and the finalizing of the patriarch's will. Disgruntled by the behaviour and life choices of his heirs, March seems poised to deny all of them their inheritance and heads out to his lodge to make arrangements — only to be discovered dead the next morning with strychnine in his blood. With evidence at the crime scene suggesting that nobody could possibly have entered the lodge to murder March, Inspector Cockrill—the “Terror of Kent”—has the challenge of finding any plausible solution for this impossible crime, a Golden Age murder resurrected by the British Library Crime Classics series.

Lethem, Jonathan. [Motherless Brooklyn: The Fortress of Solitude](#) (Knopf \$38). This is an Omnibus edition collecting Lethem's fifth (*Motherless Brooklyn*, 1999) and sixth (*The Fortress of Solitude*, 2003) novels, now part of Everyman's Contemporary Classics with a new foreword by Charles Yu

Mavity, Nancy Barr. [The Tule Marsh Murder](#) (American Mystery Classics \$15.95). James Aloysius Piper (Peter) is relentless when pursuing a story for the *Herald*. So when a woman's body is found burned beyond recognition in the marsh near El Cerrito, he is even more eager than the local authorities to uncover her identity. Helping to solve the case is clinical psychologist Dr. Cavanaugh, who uses cutting-edge forensic techniques to glean crucial information from a few strands of the woman's hair that escaped the flames. After Cavanaugh's discoveries tie the corpse to Sheila O'Shay, the missing wife of millionaire Don Ellsworth, it's up to Peter Piper to use all of his craft and charm as a reporter to coax out any secrets the couple may have been hiding. *The Tule Marsh Murder* was inspired by a real case that had captivated the San Francisco Bay Area public a few years earlier, and Dr. Cavanaugh is based on the pioneering forensic criminalist Edward Oscar Heinrich who became known as “America's Sherlock Holmes.” Though Mavity may not be remembered as vividly as her contemporaries, such as Mary Roberts Rinehart and Ellery Queen, her mystery novels were groundbreaking in their use of science in the detection of crime, with psychology and forensics frequently providing key clues to the solution.

McGahern, John. [The Pornographer](#) (NY Review of Books \$17.95) is the story of a writer down on his luck, not a Dubliner but a resident of Dublin penning far from erotic tales to make ends meet. These tales—revolving around the “delicious, unending revel” of Colonel Grimshaw and the typist Mavis Carmichael—form a mordant counterpoint to his own, much more complicated existence. Thirty years old, befogged by alcohol, sensitive yet indifferent to all emotional weather, he

meets the slightly older Josephine, a clever, cautiously optimistic magazine editor who soon confesses her love, and though the feeling isn't mutual (as he makes painfully clear) the affair goes on; Josephine becomes pregnant; and, this being Ireland in the seventies, the piper must be paid.

✎ Milne, AA. [The Red House Mystery](#) (Pushkin \$15.95). A classic Golden Age locked-room cozy mystery by the author of *Winnie-the-Pooh* — hailed as one of the “20 Best Classic Murder Mystery Books of All Time. In a quaint English country house, the exuberant Mark Ablett has been entertaining a house party, but the festivities are rudely interrupted by the arrival of Mark's wayward brother, Robert, home from Australia. Even worse, not long after his arrival the long-lost brother is found dead, shot through the head, and Mark is nowhere to be found. It is up to amateur detective Tony Gillingham and his pal Bill to investigate. Between games of billiards and bowls, the taking of tea and other genteel pursuits, Tony and Bill attempt to crack the perplexing case of their host's disappearance and its connection to the mysterious shooting. Can the pair of sleuths solve the Red House mystery in time for their afternoon game of croquet?

Tolkien, JRR. [The Hobbit Illustrated By the Author](#) (Harper \$75) is “a special enhanced edition of the enchanting prelude to *The Lord of the Rings*, illustrated throughout with over 50 sketches, drawings, paintings and maps by J.R.R. Tolkien himself and with the complete text printed in two colors.”

White, Ethel Lina. [The Lady Vanishes](#) (Steerforth \$16.99) was first published as *The Wheel Spins* in 1936 and adapted for the screen by Alfred Hitchcock in 1938. After a summer holiday in a remote corner of Europe, the glamorous socialite Iris Carr is looking forward to returning to the comforts of home. But having stayed on at the resort after her friends' departure, Iris now faces the journey home alone. On the train to Trieste, she is pleased to meet a kindly governess, Miss Froy, and strikes up a conversation. Iris warms to her companion, and is alarmed when she wakes from a sleep to find that Miss Froy has suddenly disappeared from the train without a trace. Worse still, she is horrified to discover that none of the other passengers on the train will admit to having ever seen such a woman. Doubting her sanity and fearing for her life, Iris is determined to find Miss Froy before the train journey is over. Only one of her fellow passengers seems to believe her story. With his help, Iris begins to search the train for clues to the mystery of the vanished lady.... You can probably find the movie too.

Yokomizo, Seishi. [The Little Sparrow Murders](#) (Steerforth \$16.95). An old friend of scruffy Kosuke Kindaichi invites the detective to visit the remote mountain village of Onikobe, the site of a 20-year-old unsolved murder case. As several bodies are discovered staged in bizarre poses echoing the lyrics of a children's song, the quirky, endearing Kindaichi strings together the clues to solve this fiendish puzzle. “Kosuke Kindaichi is Japan's best-loved and most famous fictional sleuth, and Seishi Yokomizo one of the country's greatest crime writers. His whodunnits have sold an astonishing 55 million copies in his home country.”

COZIES

Alexander, Ellie. [A Murder at the Movies](#) (St Martins \$14.99). Bookseller and events organizer Annie Murray invites the glamorous world of Hollywood along to her small-town film

festival. After the success of her first event, which revived the fortunes of the bookstore she loves so dearly, Annie is excited to launch Redwood Grove's first film festival. But when an infamous film critic plunges to his death during the premiere of a Hitchcock-inspired thriller, Annie's instincts tell her that this was no accident.

Balzo, Sandra. [Brew Unto Others](#) (Severn \$29.99). Ordered Upon Request. The Kingston family has always been at odds, but Maggy Thorsen hopes that the passing of Edna Mayes Kingston, mother of Sarah Kingston, her Uncommon Grounds coffeehouse partner, might unite them. Alas, few tears are shed over the self-righteous Edna, and the wake is barely over when Edna's body is shuffled off unceremoniously for burial and Sarah's sister Ruth is found unconscious in the family home. Did Ruth suffer accidental carbon monoxide poisoning or something more sinister? And could there have been more to Ruth's haste to bury Edna than meets the eye?

✦ Bennett, SJ. [Murder Most Royal](#) (\$18.99). Queen Elizabeth II is looking forward to a traditional Christmas gathering with her family in Sandringham when a shocking discovery interrupts holiday plans. A severed hand has been found—but even more unsettling, she recognizes the signet ring still attached to a finger. It belongs to a scion of the St Cyr family, her old friends from nearby Ladybridge Hall. Despite the personal connection, the Queen wants to leave the investigation to the police—that is, until newspapers drag her name into the matter. As reporters speculate about the proximity of the crime to the Crown and the police fail to investigate a suspicious accident on her doorstep, Elizabeth quietly begins to mull over the mystery herself....

✦ Brett, Simon. [A Messy Murder](#) (Severn House \$29.99). Ordered Upon Request. For his 80th birthday Brett, former Chairman of the Detection Club and a staple of British mystery for decades, presents Ellen Curtis – professional declutterer, amateur sleuth and woman of a certain age – investigating the puzzling death of a TV personality who's past his prime.

Burdette, Lucy. [Poisonous Palate](#) (Crooked Lane \$29.99). When Key West 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. It takes them to Big Pine Key and loops back to the late 1970s....

Byron, Ellen. [French Quarter Fright Night](#) (Severn House \$29.99). Get a jump on Halloween with this cozy Vintage Cookbook mystery, our **September Cozy Mystery Subscription Club Pick**. Byron, author of the award-winning 'Cajun Country' mysteries, combines setting, vintage cookbooks, recipes, and family drama in another delectable treat. 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. Then Bon Vee's prop tomb becomes a real tomb for Blaine's nasty assistant, and suddenly everyone at Bon Vee is a murder suspect. There isn't a ghost of a chance one of them committed the crime, but with NOPD busy tackling the

mischief and mayhem generated by the spooky holiday, it falls on Ricki and her friends to catch the killer.

✦ Cambridge, Colleen. [Murder by Invitation Only](#) (\$17.95). "A murder will occur tonight at Beecham House...." Agatha Christie's ever-capable housekeeper, Phyllida Bright, not only keeps the celebrated author's English country home in tip-top shape, she excels as an amateur sleuth. But when a murder-themed game goes awry, can she outfox the guilty party?

Carlisle, Kate. [The Twelve Books of Christmas](#) (\$19). San Francisco book-restoration expert Brooklyn Wainwright and her hunky security-expert husband, Derek Stone, face a puzzling murder mystery during wedding preparations for friends in Loch Ness, Scotland. And while they're visiting, Claire hopes that Brooklyn will be able to solve a little mystery that's occurred in the castle library—twelve rare, very important books have gone missing.

Falco, Michael. [Murder in an Italian Cafe](#) (Kensington \$27). The Amalfi Coast has, per various newspaper reports, become a kind of parking lot for tourists. Best to go in the off season. Or visit a charming B&B in Positano with Falco in the sequel to [Murder in an Italian Village](#) (\$27). With her new B&B in the gorgeous Italian village proving a success, young widow Bria Bartolucci is enjoying her new life in paradise. But when a celebrity chef filming nearby suddenly dies, Bria has her hands full with a most unsavory murder....

Gilbert, Victoria. [A Killer Clue](#) (Crooked Lane \$30.99). North Carolina book collector Cam Clewe and his librarian friend, Jane Hunter, moonlight as gumshoes. Thus Chapel Hill, NC, bookseller Eloise Anderson comes to Cam with a request. Her mother, Abigail, has recently died in prison while serving time for her husband's murder—but Eloise maintains her mother's innocence and wants to clear her name. Cam and Jane agree to help out, but then Eloise is arrested for the murder of former police detective Bruce Parker, who spearheaded the investigation that put Abigail behind bars. So our sleuths take a closer look at the police on the case and Eloise's peers in Chapel Hill. "Along the way, their knowledge of vintage books—including a rare copy of Alice in Wonderland—helps them crack the case. Gilbert stacks the proceedings with solid suspects, convincing red herrings, and a treasure trove of trivia about mid-20th century mystery authors. Golden Age whodunit fans will have fun."

Howell, Dorothy. [Shear Terror](#) (Kensington \$27). Abbey Chandler's new life in Hideaway Grove, California, is comfortable, and she's grateful for her small sewing studio in the back room of her aunt's bakery, but she's feeling stuck. Her plan to expand her custom tote bag business by selling to a chain of gift shops has hit a snag. Making enough totes to distribute to all the stores requires large-scale production—which requires money Abbey doesn't have. To make ends meet, she takes a part-time job at the town's bustling Visitor Center where Eleanor Franklin, devoted to all things Hideaway Grove, hasn't shown up for work. Soon Abbey discovers her dead inside a clothing bin, dressmaker shears impaled in her chest—shears the sheriff reports are engraved with Abbey's name....

Rue, Gretchen. [The Grim Steeper](#) (Crooked Lane \$30.99). Bookstore owner Phoebe Winchester is putting on her first major author event at the Earl's Study, her book and tea store. The author, Sebastian Marlow, is a famous birder excited to put Raven

Creek on the map for his rediscovery of a presumed-extinct bird. When Sebastian is found dead before his planned bird hike, where he expected to prove the existence of the bird to fellow birding enthusiasts, it's obvious someone wanted him to be extinct, too....

SOME SEPTEMBER HARDCOVERS

✦ Archer, Jeffrey. [An Eye for an Eye](#) (Harper \$30). A new case for Scotland Yard's William Warwick. See the review for the Signed UK edition above

✦ Atkinson, Kate. [Death at the Sign of the Rook](#) (Knopf \$30). Welcome to Rook Hall. The stage is set. The players are ready. By night's end, a murderer will be revealed. In his sleepy Yorkshire town, ex-detective Jackson Brodie is staving off boredom and malaise. His only case is the seemingly tedious matter of a stolen painting. But Jackson soon uncovers a string of unsolved art thefts that lead him down a dizzying spiral of disguise and deceit to Burton Makepeace, a formerly magnificent estate now partially converted into a hotel hosting Murder Mystery weekends. As paying guests, impecunious aristocrats and old friends collide, we are treated to an homage to Christie and Sayers as well as *Knives Out* and *Only Murders in the Building*.

So disappointing that the UK print run was damaged so we could not supply Signed copies. But the US edition reads just as well.

Chouinard, Michelle. [The Serial Killer Guide to San Francisco](#) (St Martins \$28). The chill of a San Francisco summer can be deadly. No one knows this better than Capri Sanzio, who makes her living giving serial killer tours of the city. Capri has been interested in the topic since she was a kid, when she discovered she's the granddaughter of serial killer William 'Overkill Bill' Sanzio. She's always believed in his innocence, though she's never taken the leap to fully dive into the case. But now an Overkill Bill copycat has struck in San Francisco. And Capri's former mother-in-law, Sylvia, just cut off Capri's daughter's tuition payments. Needing cash, Capri wonders if this is the time to exonerate her grandfather. The case is back in the news and the police will be looking to understand the past to catch a present-day killer. Capri could finally uncover the truth about Overkill Bill—documenting the process with a podcast and a book. Then the copycat killer strikes again. His victim? Sylvia!

This is a series start? But not a debut as "Chouinard" is M.M. Chouinard, author of previous mysteries.

Dave, Laura. [The Night We Lost Him](#) (Simon & Schuster \$28.99). Riding on the success of [The Last Thing He Told Me](#) (\$17.99), which is a stunner, here's an instant bestseller where estranged siblings discover their father has been keeping a secret for more than fifty years, one that may have been fatal. The Indie Next Pick calls it "Laura Dave's signature blend of twisty mystery, family drama, and moving love story"

Dellaira, Ava. [Exposure](#) (Zibby Books \$27.99). In 2004, Juliette Marker, a white college freshman, and Noah King, a Black high school senior, are two lonely souls who enter each other's orbit, forge a connection, and go home together after a night out. Twelve years later, Noah has done the impossible and made it in Hollywood. His first film is about to be released, and he and his beloved wife Jesse, a successful writer herself, have just had a baby. Meanwhile, Juliette's best friend Annie is back in LA

for the first time in more than a decade, and makes a startling discovery about Juliette that will threaten to blow up the life Noah has struggled to build. One fateful night.... That's all it takes.

Dennings, Hayley. [This Ravenous Fate](#) (Sourcebooks \$18.99). The Indie Next Pick caught my eye: "You should read this book if you like YA fantasy, historical fiction, murder mysteries, Jazz Age Harlem circa 1926, emotionally complicated queer romance, alternate histories, vampires, vampire hunters, debut novels." Meaning this is the first in a vampire duology from a publisher that plays to the sensational.

Doyle, Roddy. [The Women Behind the Door](#) (Penguin \$29). Some parents are great, but some leave scars that endure. That's what readers get in "Doyle's tornado of suppressed trauma and the difficulty of caring for one's kids. Those who have read Doyle's *The Woman Who Walked into Doors* and its sequel, Paula Spencer, have already met long-widowed Paula, who is still living in Ireland and smarting at age 66 from having been "married to a thief" so abusive that she had to whack him with a frying pan. Now, however—the novel takes place from May 2021 to January 2023—she's happy, with a job at a dry cleaner, a relationship with her "man friend," and the knowledge that her adult kids are well. Except for the Covid-19 pandemic, everything's great. Until her eldest returns home and tells Paula she needs a break from her husband and children. Otherwise, Nicola says, 'I'll kill them.' Readers familiar with Doyle's past novels won't be surprised by the cheerfully profane dialogue and zippy vernacular on every page."

✦ Francis, Felix. [Syndicate](#) (Crooked Lane \$29.99). Chester Newton has built his fortune organizing racehorse syndicates, where top horses are co-owned and managed by several parties. These joint enterprises are high risk and high reward—and for Chester, it's almost always been reward. Until now. The betrayals in this are unexpected. I miss the wonderful Dick Francis thrillers written by Felix's father with mother Mary. This brisk narrative doesn't have quite the emotional punch but it paints contemporary racing very well.

Gong, Chloe. [Vilest Things](#) (Saga \$28.99). Power plays, spilled blood, and lethal romance propel this fantasy sequel to Gong's bestseller [Immortal Longings](#) (\$18.99, inspired by Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*). Truly everything old is new again.

✦ Hallett, Janice. [The Examiner](#) (Atria \$29.99). See the review in Signed Books for the Signed UK Edition.

✦ Harris, Robert. [Precipice](#) (Harper \$30). See the review in Signed Books for the Signed UK Edition.

Harrison, Rachel. [So Thirsty](#) (Penguin \$29) This fresh take on the creatures of the night really hit the spot. Come for the blood-soaked action, stay for the unexpectedly lovely meditation on female friendship.

Hoffman, Alice. [When We Flew Away](#) (Scholastic \$19.99). Writing for Ages 8-12 (and up), Hoffman imagines the life and person of Anne Frank "Before the Diary."

Johansen, Iris. [On the Hunt](#) (Grand Central \$30) introduces a new lead character and her search-and-rescue dog. Kira Drake has come to Paris with her highly trained Golden Retriever, Mack, to investigate the horrific bombing of a museum in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower. Jack Harlan has all the money in the world, but

it can't bring his brother back. His sibling was murdered during the theft of a scientific discovery that could have made the world a better place. Now, after a four-year search, Harlan learns that this bombing was the work of the same twisted man. Kira and her dog are in demand from law enforcement agencies all over the world, but Harlan convinces her to continue the investigation for his own purposes, wherever it may lead....

Jonasson, Ragnar. [Death at the Sanatorium](#) (St Martins \$29). See the review in Signed Books for the Signed UK Edition.

LeGrand, Claire. [A Song of Ash and Moonlight: Book Two in the Middlemist Trilogy](#) (Sourcebooks \$25.99). The curse plaguing the Ashbourne and Bak families has been broken. But a child of each faces tests. The gods are not dead. They're waking up. And someone is hunting them....

Korelitz, Jean Hanff. [The Sequel](#) (Celadon \$29). Publishing October 1, and an Indie Next Pick: "The meta fictional humor of this sequel to [The Plot](#) (\$17.99) works on every level — as a straightforward thriller, as a satire of the literary industrial complex, and as a knowing wink to the secret strivings and longings of artists everywhere."

Kushner, Rachel. [Creation Lake](#) (Scribner \$29.99). "A profound and irresistible page-turner about a spy-for-hire who infiltrates a commune of eco-activists in rural France. The prose is thrilling, the ideas electrifying."—The Booker Prize 2024 judges on nominating this novel for the prize. The *Washington Post* calls it "a spy thriller laced with a killer dose of deadpan wit...Bore through this noir posing and wry satire of radical politics, and you feel something vital and profound prowling around in the darkness beneath."

Lagercrantz, David. [Fatal Gambit](#) (Knopf \$30). Dead women should not show up in photos fourteen years beyond the grave.... But if anyone is likely to recognize Claire Lidman, it's her husband, Samuel. He brings the photo to Hans Rekke and Micaela Vargas. Their initial skepticism gives way to cautious belief—but where will this case lead them? This Swedish detective duo, Rekke and Vargas, were first met in [Dark Music](#) (\$18).

✎ Major, Tim. [Jekyll and Hyde, Consulting Detectives](#) (Titan \$25.99). When Muriel Carew attends a lavish society party, the last person she expects to bump into is her ex-fiancée Henry Jekyll, a man she's not seen for many years. When Jekyll turns out to be investigating a series of missing persons in London, Muriel is intrigued. But Jekyll is not working alone, and if Muriel wants to aid in the investigation, she must work with both Henry and his partner, the monstrous and uncouth Mr Hyde. As their search takes a dark turn and a missing persons case becomes a murder investigation, Muriel finds herself deep in a mystery involving a nefarious group exploring their own hidden alter-egos within the beating heart of London's high society. To solve the case and bring those responsible to justice, Muriel must find a way to place her trust in Mr Hyde, which might mean uncovering secrets about her own life story.

McDermid, Val. [Queen Macbeth](#) (Grove \$25). Val turns this story of ancient Scotland around with the story of a woman forced into marriage and enduring the endless plotting of a string of power-hungry men. She won a country, but now it could cost her her life.... Trust Val to take down the patriarchy, medieval or

contemporary.

✎ Osman, Richard. [We Solve Murders](#) (Viking \$30). The Thursday Murder Club takes a break while Osman introduces another lovable group of unwitting investigators. Amy Wheeler and her father-in-law, Steve, have a special relationship. They talk on the phone every day but in a particularly British way, communicating important things while chatting about the weather. Steve is a former London cop who's retired to the small town of Axley, and since his wife died he's retreated into a routine of playing with his cat, Trouble, and attending Quiz Night at the local pub. Amy works as a bodyguard for Maximum Impact Solutions, a private security company, traveling the world and having adventures. Her husband, Adam—Steve's son—works in finance and also spends most of his time traveling; they view their relationship as a long-term bet and don't mind not seeing much of each other for now. Things begin to go sideways, though, while Amy is on a private island off the coast of South Carolina guarding Rosie D'Antonio, a Jackie Collins-esque novelist who's being threatened by a Russian oligarch who took offense at one of her books. Fear not, Osman will return to the Thursday Murder Club's detections.

Owen, Abigail. [The Games Gods Play](#) (Entangled Deluxe Limited Edition \$32.99) features gorgeous sprayed edges exclusive special design features, only available on a limited first print run! And is already this week's #1 Bestseller! (I had to look the ranking up). Percy Jackson for adults meets *The Hunger Games* with a slow burn romance between a contestant and Hades himself.

Patterson, James/David Ellis. [Lies He Told Me](#) (LittleBrown \$30). Or, She's In Love With a Liar. Illinois Appeal Court Judge and Edgar winner David mentioned this new book when he was here in July with his own new novel [The Best Lies](#) (Putnam \$29 Signed). Here the premise is that an attorney and mother of two discovers her husband's secret life—and it might cost them all their lives.

✎ Penrose, Andrea. [Murder at King's Crossing](#) (Kensington \$27). The Earl of Wrexford and his cartoonist wife, Charlotte Sloane, something of a scandal in Regency London, have offered their country home for the wedding of their friends Christopher Sheffield and Lady Cordelia Mansfield. The festivities take a grim turn when police discover the body of Lady Cordelia's childhood friend, mathematician Jasper Milton, beneath a nearby bridge, with her Cousin Oliver's invitation in his pocket. Cordelia enlists Wrexford and Charlotte to investigate, and the sleuths quickly become entangled in a Gordian knot of international intrigue involving Milton's groundbreaking mathematical theories about bridge construction. As in the 7 earlier series entries, Penrose enjoys writing about society and (emerging) science and engineering, one reason to enjoy Georgette Heyer's Regency novel *Frederica*.

Powers, Richard. [Playground](#) (Norton \$29.99). Powers juggled nine lead characters in [The Overstory](#) (\$18.95), his 2018 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. Here he wrangles just four, but the result is almost as complicated. Two nerdish boys, Rafi Young and Todd Keane, bond in high school over chess and Go. In college, Rafi falls in love with Ina Aroita, a Hawaii-born Navy brat whose mother is Tahitian. The men fall out shortly after brainstorming over Todd's idea for a computer game called Playground. This

strand of the novel is told in retrospect by Todd at age 57, addressing an unidentified “you,” after he receives a diagnosis of dementia with Lewy bodies; he’s an unreliable narrator in more than one way. Interspersed are scenes in later years on the French Polynesian island of Makatea, scarred by phosphate mining and down to a population of 82, including Rafi and Ina and the novel’s fourth lead, an elderly Canadian scuba diver named Evelyne Beaulieu. Through Todd, Powers sketches the computer and social media revolutions, from early coding to gaming to AI. This is a challenging novel, fragmented but compelling, with fine writing on friendship and its loss and on the awe and delight the ocean inspires.

✦ Read. Simon. [Scotland Yard: A History of the London Police Force’s Most Infamous Cases](#) (Pegasus \$35). It’s obviously NonFiction but I include it here as it’s so crime fiction oriented. The idea of “Scotland Yard” is steeped in atmospheric stories of foggy London streets, murder by lamplight, and fiendish killers pursued by gentleman detectives. But advanced ground-breaking use of forensics—from fingerprints to ballistics to evidence collection—made the first attempt at criminal profiling, and captivated the public on both sides of the Atlantic with feats of detective work that rivaled any fictional interpretation. Based on official case files, contemporary newspaper reporting, trial transcripts, and the first-hand accounts of the detectives on the beat, Scotland Yard tells the tales of some of history’s most notorious murders—with cases that proved to be landmarks in the field of criminal inquiry.

✦ Redmond, Heather. [Death and the Visitors](#) (Kensington \$27). The ties between a young Mary Shelley, her stepsister Jane “Claire” Clairmont, poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, and the already-infamous Lord Byron grow increasingly tangled as they’re drawn into a dangerous investigation in this vivid historical mystery exploring the birth of teenaged Mary’s creative genius and the roots of a real-life trio who would later scandalize 19th century England even as they transformed the literary world. Redmond earlier wrote in the time of Charles Dickens so she likes drawing upon real literary figures to fashion her mysteries—here the 2nd in a Mary Shelley series. Of Series Book One *Booklist* wrote, “Fans of the Regency period will appreciate the contrast between high society and the literary class as well as the romantic bantering between the married Shelley and the smitten Mary, along with the jealous Jane.” Peter Lovesey once set a Superintendent Peter Diamond investigation in Shelley’s home in Bath.

To read another novel of Mary Shelley: Eekhout, Anne. [Mary and the Birth of Frankenstein](#) (\$18.99)

Rendon, Marcie R. [Where They Last Saw Her](#) (Random \$28). I’m so glad to see a new book by Rendon getting real buzz. I’m a fan of her work which I liken to that of William Kent Krueger. Quill is running near her home on Minnesota’s Red Pine reservation when she hears a scream—and then silence. Spooked, she brings her husband, Crow, to help examine the area the next day, finding signs of a scuffle and a single beaded earring left behind in the snow. The tribal cops search the forest to no avail. So Quill and her two best friends, Punk and Gaylyn, use their community ties to investigate because they know the truth: “There are between two thousand and five thousand missing and murdered Indian women in this country. Nobody gives a shit.” This novel is Rendon’s way of bringing attention to these often ignored stories. “Quill is a charismatic character, strong and fierce

in both her independence and her love for her husband, children, and community, willing to risk herself to keep others safe. This novel is written in protest of the epidemic of missing Indigenous women and centuries of painful history.”

Robb, J D. [Passions in Death: An Eve Dallas Novel](#) (St Martins \$30). Homicide Detective Eve Dallas hunts a killer who turns a wedding party into a murder scene

Rio, M L. [Graveyard Shift: A Novella](#) (Flatiron \$26.99). Out now, Signed here November 23. I mention it now as we have some first prints in stock to grab. No guarantee there will be any in November.

Sparks, Nicholas. [Counting Miracles](#) (Random \$30). Tanner Hughes was raised by his grandparents, following in his grandfather’s military footsteps to become an Army Ranger. His whole life has been spent abroad, and he is the proverbial rolling stone: happiest when off on his next adventure, zero desire to settle down. But when his grandmother passes away, her last words to him are *find where you belong*. She also drops a bombshell, telling him the name of the father he never knew—and where to find him. So Tanner sets out for Asheboro, North Carolina, to ask around. (There may be a dog involved).

I never know for sure if I should take space in the Booknews for obvious bestsellers you can find on your own. Anyway, here is one.

Steel, Danielle. [Joy](#) (Random \$29). And here’s another....

✦ Stokes Chapman, Susan. [Shadow Key](#) (Harper \$30). A Gothic tale set on an isolated rural estate in 18th Century Wales. The [Paperback Edition](#) (\$17.99) will be our Pick for the **October Historical Fiction Paperback Subscription Club**.

Tokarczuk, Olga. [The Empusium: A Health Resort Horror Story](#) (Riverhead \$30) is a sardonic tale that holds nothing back, taking institutional misogyny to task in a world on the brink of World War I. Tokarczuk brings all her brilliance and creates a poignant narrative that’s eerily reminiscent of modern day.”

✦ Winspear, Jacqueline. [Maisie Dobbs Collector’s Edition](#) (Soho \$29.95). This hardcover features an elegant paper-over-board cover with copper foil, matching printed endpapers, and also an afterword from the author.

Zapruder, Matthew. [I Love Hearing Your Dreams: Poems](#) (Scribner \$26.95). From one of contemporary poetry’s most playful and original minds, an enchanting and harrowing journey through the landscape of dreams and twenty-first century hopes and disillusion. Scribner is leaning heavily into new poetry by such as American Zapruder. Yay.

SOME NEW NONFICTION

Allen, Roland. [The Notebook: A History of Thinking on Paper](#) (Biblioasis \$19.95). We’ve added new journals to our shelves and of course we have our PP Logo pens. Here’s a lovely book by an author with a love affair for writing things down: “Informative and uplifting, *The Notebook* may leave you feeling that you should chuck away your smartphone, pick up a nice, clean journal and start jotting,” writes *WSJ* editor Meghan Cox Gurdon, praising it as “an adventurous and wide-ranging history of ‘thinking on paper.’” The simple invention of the notebook changed the way we think and, often, communicate.

Gladwell, Malcolm. [Revenge of the Tipping Point](#) (Little Brown \$32). Overstories, Superspreaders, and the Rise of Social Engineering. 25 years after [The Tipping Point](#) (\$18.99), Gladwell reframes its lessons. I expect this to be scary.

Graham, Elyse. [Book and Dagger](#) (Harper \$35). Love this title for a look at the untold story of the academics who became OSS spies, invented modern spycraft, and helped turn the tide of the war. At the start of WWII, the U.S. found itself in desperate need of an intelligence agency. The Office of Strategic Services (OSS), a precursor to today's CIA, was quickly formed—and, in an effort to fill its ranks with experts, the OSS turned to academia for recruits. Suddenly, literature professors, librarians, and historians were training to perform undercover operations and investigative work—and these surprising spies would go on to profoundly shape both the course of the war and our cultural institutions with their efforts. Graham draws on personal histories, letters, and declassified OSS files to tell the story of a small but connected group of humanities scholars turned spies.

Kiser, Stephanie. [Wanted: Toddler's Personal Assistant](#) (Sourcebooks \$17.99). Behind-the-curtains-style memoirs are always compelling, and here's one whose subtitle says it all: *How Nannying for the 1% Taught Me About the Myths of Equality, Motherhood, and Upward Mobility in America*. Desperate to pay off her college loans, Kiser spent seven long years nannying for crazy-rich families on New York City's Upper East Side. She's seen some things. She has some thoughts. But she really did love those kids.

Renkl, Margaret. [The Comfort of Crows: A Backyard Year](#) (\$32). A 2023 Reese's Book Club Pick remains fresh and comforting in these fraught times. "New York Times columnist Renkl invites readers along on a year of loving outdoor observations in this gently moving memoir.... This gorgeous reflection on humanity's symbiotic relationship with the outdoors will transform the way readers interact with their own backyards."

OUR SEPTEMBER LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

✦ Ashford, Lindsay Jayne. [Through the Mist](#) (\$16.99). Our **September Historical Fiction Paperback Subscription Pick** is something special. Picture Cornwall and the artists' haven of St. Ives. Imagine it in the winter of 1947 when Britain was in the grip of weather and rationing. But newlyweds Ellen and Tony Wylde, she a successful maker of wooden toys, he a painter of the *plein air* school, arrive, she in jeep, he in motorbike, to live in abandoned, fairly primitive Carreg Cottage up in boulders above the village, are optimistic about their new life. Iris Birch as she calls herself, age nineteen, also arrives just before Christmas, having escaped her father and stepmother and an arranged marriage. Iris' mother died near Carreg Cottage. How these two women unite in their work and in a quest to uncover the village's dark secrets before they are destroyed make a propulsive, atmospheric, story. And, when you get to the end, there's a fascinating summation of all the real characters who appear as themselves like the sculptress Barbara Hepworth, or who form the basis for the fictional like famed abstract painter Wilhelmina Barns-Graham as Iris. This book is compelling on several levels.

Ashford is also the author of [The Woman on the Orient Express](#) (\$14.99) taking Agatha Christie making a break from her divorce from Archie by boarding the famous train in disguise. But she's not the only passenger guarding secrets

Baldacci, David. [The Edge](#) (\$19.99). When CIA operative Jenny Silkwell is murdered in rural Maine, government officials have immediate concerns over national security. Her laptop and phone were full of state secrets that, in the wrong hands, endanger the lives of countless operatives. In need of someone who can solve the murder quickly and retrieve the missing information, the U.S. government knows just the chameleon they can call on. The 6.20 Man's analytical mind is up to the task of uncovering local and global secrets in a small coastal town. This is a terrific book.

Britton, Fiona. [Violet Kelly and the Jade Owl](#) (Allen & Unwin \$17.99). From the Australian publisher who brought you Kerry Greenwood's Miss Fisher Mysteries comes a debut that mixes high-energy action with glimpses at the harsh realities facing the poor in 1930s Sydney. Seventeen-year-old Violet Kelly recently left the cruel orphanage where she'd lived since birth to work as an escort at *Maison des Fleurs*, "the best house of pleasure in Sydney." Instantly liked by *Maison's madame*, Violet becomes one of the bordello's top earners, setting her on a path toward a life of beauty and decadence. One afternoon she learns that a dangerous acquaintance from the *madame's* past (whom she calls only "the ghost-man") has strong-armed her into imprisoning a young Chinese woman named Shen, who is shackled in thick chains with a "jade owl" pendant dangling from the manacle around her neck. *Madame* says it's only a matter of time before the ghost-man returns to sexually assault and kill Shen. Horrified, Violet seeks the help of her colleagues and clients to break Shen free and smuggle her out of Australia before the ghost-man returns. "The cinematic plot moves at a steady clip, bolstered by confident prose and immersive period details." I miss Phryne Fisher.

Cañas, Isabel. [Vampires of El Norte](#) (\$19) is a terrific Gothic and one to read during Hispanic Heritage Month. Vampires, vaqueros, and star-crossed lovers face off on the Texas-Mexico border in this supernatural Western set against the background of the Mexican American War from the author of [The Hacienda](#) (\$17), a stunning 2022 First Mystery Pick. In 1837, young Nena, the daughter of a wealthy Mexican rancher, and her best friend Néstor, the child of her father's workers, escape into the night to look for silver. After a mysterious creature attacks Nena, Néstor carries her lifeless body home and runs away. Nine years later, Néstor returns to the ranch to help defend it from the United States army and is shocked to see that his years of grief were unnecessary, as Nena turns out to be alive and working as a curandera, a healer, at her father's ranch. Nena, however, has spent the last nine years angry that Néstor abandoned her. Nena wants to be valued as a healer by her father, the Patrón, and joins the journey north to protect their land. But while the war is dangerous, there are also nightmarish creatures lurking in the dark chaparral. Recommended by Karin Slaughter

Carr, Jack. [Only the Dead](#) (\$19.99). In 1980, a freshman congressman was gunned down in Rhode Island, sending shockwaves through Washington that are still reverberating over four decades later. Now, with the world on the brink of war and a weakened United States facing rampant inflation, political division, and shocking assassinations, a secret cabal of global elites is ready to assume control. James Reece returns in this sixth series thriller.

You can order this in a Signed hardcover or a full [6 book set of the Terminal List thrillers](#) (\$180 with free shipping in the US).

Chizmar, Richard. [Becoming the Boogeyman](#) (\$19.99). Back in the summer of 1988, a young Richard Chizmar was catapulted into the center of a living nightmare as the serial killer Joshua Gallagher—dubbed by the media as “The Boogeyman”—stalked his tranquil Maryland town. A lot has changed in the intervening years since [Chasing the Boogeyman](#) (\$17.99) was a mega seller. These days, Chizmar enjoys a certain level of celebrity and notoriety himself, being the only person that an incarcerated Josh Gallagher will speak to on or off the record. Chizmar likes to believe that he’s doing the world a public service by visiting Gallagher in prison, as there are plenty of other nameless victims out there who Gallagher might finally admit to killing and bring closure to grieving loved ones, and a dark rhythm and routine begin to take hold. But Chizmar eventually finds there’s a price to be paid for dancing with the devil, when a masked figure with all the hallmarks of Gallagher’s reign of terror from thirty years ago now leaves a horrifying calling card in front of Chizmar’s home, and it’s clear there’s a new player on the board in the ongoing game that the Boogeyman controls...

✎ Feeney, Alice. [Good Bad Girl](#) (\$18.99) starts as a baby is abducted from its stroller leaving its ambivalent mother wracked with guilt. Twenty years later, a woman is found murdered in a care home, setting off an investigation that reveals the connection between the two events. In the present, listeners meet Edith, a spunky octogenarian trying her best to escape the care home. Edith has bonded with the young new worker, Patience, but she doesn’t know that Patience is constantly telling her lies. Meanwhile, Clio, Edith’s estranged daughter, wants nothing to do with her mother. When an ill-intentioned stranger enters the scene, the women must work together to discover the truth of the murders, the abduction, and their own closely held secrets. Good look at London, too. Feeney returns to The Pen on January 18.

✎ Milne, AA. [The Red House Mystery](#) (Pushkin \$15.95). A classic Golden Age locked-room cozy mystery by the author of *Winnie-the-Pooh* — hailed as one of the “20 Best Classic Murder Mystery Books of All Time.” It’s been out of print for a long time and is one of my favorites.

✎ Osman, Richard. [The Last Devil to Die](#) (\$18). It’s rarely a quiet day for the Thursday Murder Club. Shocking news reaches them—an old friend has been killed, and a dangerous package he was protecting has gone missing. The gang’s search leads them into the antiques business, where the tricks of the trade are as old as the objects themselves. As they encounter drug dealers, art forgers, and online fraudsters—as well as heartache close to home—Elizabeth, Joyce, Ron, and Ibrahim have no idea whom to trust. With the body count rising, the clock ticking down, and trouble firmly on their tail, has their luck finally run out? Who will be the last to die? Osman took a break from this 4th in series for the new book in Hardcovers, but he’ll be back with book five.

Rendon, Marcie R. [Where They Last Saw Her](#) (\$18). In Ojibwe community organizer investigates the disappearances of two Indigenous women. While running on a reservation in northern Minnesota one snowy morning, young mother Quill hears a woman’s piercing scream in the woods. After rushing to check out the scene—first alone, then with the help of a tribal cop—

all she turns up is an earring with familiar beadwork. Shaken, Quill casts a suspicious eye toward the oil pipeline workers who have recently been encroaching on Ojibwe territory and enlists her friends, Punk and Gaylyn, to help her inquiries. The trio’s sleuthing turns up a pattern of violence against Ojibwe women, much of it perpetrated by white patrons at the local casino. The stakes are further raised when a second woman goes missing.... This is an excellent series for readers of Kent Krueger, Margaret Coel, and Anne Hillerman.

Ryan, Hank Phillippi. [One Wrong Word](#) (\$17.99). This sterling suspense gem set in Boston is one of my favorites. One wrong word can ruin your life. And no one knows that better than savvy crisis management expert Arden Ward. Problem is, she’s now forced to handle a shocking crisis of her own. Unfairly accused of having an affair with a powerful client, Arden’s life and dreams are about to crash and burn. Then, Arden is given an ultimatum. She has just two weeks to save her career and her reputation. Cordelia Bannister needs Arden’s help for her husband Ned, a Boston real estate mogul. Though he was recently acquitted in a fatal drunk driving accident, his reputation is ruined, and the fallout is devastating not only to the Bannisters’ lives, but the lives of their two adorable children. Arden devotes her skill and determination—and maybe her final days on the job—to helping this shattered family. Only gradually does she learn she’s being played!

Simon, Nina. [Mother-Daughter Murder Night](#) (\$18.99). One of the best debuts of 2023 and a First Mystery Pick we heavily supported combines a landscape equal to that of *Where the Crawdads Sing* (here coastal mid-California) with the drama and dynamics of three generations of women forced into proximity and into a murder investigation. John reviews: “One of the things Beth regrets most in life is that she doesn’t have a closer relationship with her mother, Lana Rubicon. That all changes, however, when Lana [gloriously outrageous] is forced to take a hiatus from her high-powered Los Angeles real-estate career to deal with cancer and subsequently moves in with Beth and Beth’s daughter Jack. When Jack stumbles across a dead body while leading a kayaking tour of the nearby slough and becomes the local police’s main suspect, Lana finds another way of engaging with her daughter and granddaughter by doing a bit of snooping. Can it really be true that the family that sleuths together, stays together? Simon’s dazzling debut delivers everything a mystery fan could crave, including a realistically nuanced cast of characters, a vividly evoked coastal California setting, writing imbued with a sense of wit, and a perfectly plotted murder with enough red herrings deftly dropped in to confound the most experienced mystery reader.”

MORE SEPTEMBER LARGE PAPERBACKS

✎ Alexander, Tasha. [A Cold Highland Wind](#) (\$18). Summer of 1905 finds Lady Emily and spouse Colin Hargreaves with their three sons vacationing at Cairnfarn Castle in the Scottish Highlands, courtesy of their friend the Duke of Bainbridge. At a high spirited celebration things go dark when the gamekeeper comes to a grisly end. Oddly clues to the crime may be found in the story of Lady MacAllister, wife of the Laird of Cairnfarn Castle, who in 1676 suddenly found herself widowed and thrown out of her home along with her Moorish slave girl companion.

Armstrong, Kelley. [Hemlock Island](#) (\$18). In a standalone, Laney Kilpatrick has been renting her vacation home to strangers. The

invasion of privacy gives her panic attacks, but it's the only way she can keep her beloved Hemlock Island, the only thing she owns after a pandemic-fueled divorce. But broken belongings and campfires that nearly burn down the house have escalated to bloody bones, hex circles, and now, terrified renters who've fled after finding blood and nail marks all over the guest room closet, as though someone tried to claw their way out...and failed.

Banville, John. [The Lock Up](#) (\$18.99). Brings two detectives together to solve a mystery that spans from the mountaintops of Italy, to the concentration camps of World War II Bavaria, to the nuclear labs of Israeli and the gritty streets of Dublin.

Berney, Lou. [Dark Ride](#) (Harper \$18.99). A drifter at a carnival sees kids covered with cigarette burns. He tells the police; nothing happens, so he goes after the bad guys. Cat and mouse chase to right a terrible wrong. Reissued.

✦ Clements, Oliver. [All the Queen's Spies](#) (\$19.99). Queen Elizabeth I's advisor John Dee, his new wife Frommond, race to save England with the aid of a mysterious manuscript offering global power that Dee must decode at the court of Rudolf II, Holy Roman Emperor.

Collins, Max Allan. [Too Many Bullets](#) (Titan \$16.99). It began with John F. Kennedy in 1963. Then Malcolm X in 1965. Martin Luther King in April 1968. And then, in June of the same year, President Kennedy's brother Robert fell before an assassin's bullets at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles. But how many shooters were there, really? And who sent them? In this astonishing, meticulously researched novel, bestselling author Max Allan Collins—Mystery Writers of America Grand Master—takes Nathan Heller, "Private Eye to the Stars," from the scene of the crime to Hollywood's seediest haunts, from striptease joints to Washington D.C.'s corridors of power to a deadly desert showdown outside Las Vegas, all in pursuit of the truth about a conspiracy that may have put the wrong man in jail, let the real killers go free, and snuffed out the life of a man poised to become the next president of the United States.

✦ Connally, Celeste. [Act Like a Lady, Think Like a Lord](#) (\$18). After the death of her fiancé, the independent Lady Petra swears she will never marry—and begins to investigate the death of a friend who may be alive and imprisoned in an asylum. This one demands a sequel which, happily, is coming in November.

✦ Douglas, Claire. [The Woman Who Lied](#) (Harper \$18.99). One day, bestselling mystery writer Emilia Ward receives a curious package at the London home she shares with her husband and children; the parcel has no return address or stamp—it's been hand-delivered—and contains a broken-necked ceramic seagull. Emilia registers that Detective Inspector Miranda Moody, star of her popular mystery series, has a fear of seagulls. Some days later, Emilia finds a troll doll dangling from a tree on her property. Troll dolls were featured in her second DI Moody mystery. It's now clear to Emilia that someone is launching a scare campaign against her using motifs plucked from her book series. When something happens that's straight out of the final, forthcoming Moody book, which has been seen by only Emilia's publisher and inner circle, she realizes that someone close to her is behind the intimidation. Then a member of her circle is murdered....

Eskens, Allen. [Saving Emma](#) (\$18.99). When Boady Sanden first receives the case of Elijah Matthews, he's certain there's not much he can do. Elijah, who believes himself to be a prophet, has been locked up in a psychiatric hospital for the past four years, convicted of brutally murdering the pastor of a megachurch. But as a law professor working for the Innocence Project, Boady agrees to look into Elijah's file. When he does, he is alarmed to find threads that lead back to the death of his colleague and friend, Ben Pruitt, a man shot to death four years earlier in Boady's own home. Now what about Ben's daughter, Emma, who has lived with Boady and Boady's wife Dee ever since that awful night?

✦ Follett, Ken. [The Armor of Light](#) (\$22). The 4th entry in his Kingsbridge series that began with the magisterial [The Pillars of the Earth](#) (\$22) brings to life 18th-century England, where class warfare engulfs workers who are seeking security amid owners who value progress over people. The Spinning Jenny was invented in 1770, and with that, a new era of manufacturing and industry changed lives everywhere within a generation. A world filled with unrest wrestles for control over this new world order: A mother's husband is killed in a work accident due to negligence; a young woman fights to fund her school for impoverished children; a well-intentioned young man unexpectedly inherits a failing business; one man ruthlessly protects his wealth no matter the cost, all the while war cries are heard from France, as Napoleon sets forth a violent master plan to become emperor of the world. As institutions are challenged and toppled in unprecedented fashion, ripples of change ricochet through our characters' lives.

Fountain, Ben. [Devil Makes Three](#) (\$19.99). From the award-winning, bestselling author of *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*, a propulsive new novel about greed, power, and American complicity set in Haiti.

Gervais, Simon. [The Elias Network](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$16.99). International assassins play a deadly game of cat and mouse... and cat...and maybe another cat. "As a network operative trained by Onyx, a secret program inside the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Caspian Anderson has logged 33 kills under the code name Elias. Now he's in the resort city of Zermatt, Switzerland, waiting for his latest assignment, banker Leonard Aldrich. Unbeknownst to Caspian, another assassin, Edgar Augustin, has been assigned the same target. The two are a study in contrasts, Caspian the cool lone wolf, Edgar the urbane patriarch of a ragged, dysfunctional family. What should be a routine job spools out. Unexpected villains, plot twists, and betrayals follow, but the big question in this series kickoff is what will happen after the big reveal in a sly, stylish thriller with more scheming than slaughter."—*Kirkus Reviews* on this series start for Canadian Gervais who will, I think, be writing the Jack Ryan, Jr. series too.

✦ Glass, Ava. [The Trap](#) (\$18). In this sequel to [Alias Emma](#) (\$17.99). British spy Emma Makepeace is headed to Edinburgh for the global G7 Summit when her team is tipped off about a high-profile assassination the Russians are planning—but they have no idea who the target is. Surrounded by the world's most powerful political leaders in a gridlocked city, Emma must set a trap and use herself as bait.

Goldberg, Tod. [Gangsters Don't Die](#) (\$17.95). Patrick is a big fan of this series which here reaches its conclusion. Mafia hit-man-turned-rabbi Sal Cupertine is ready to get out of the life. But it's not going to be easy. His once-brilliant plan to pass himself off as Rabbi David Cohen is unraveling. Enemies on both sides of the law are hot on his trail. His wife and son are unreachable in witness protection and are probably in danger. In order to find his family, get out of the desert alive, and salvage his long-sought-after happy ending, Sal is going to have to confront some very bad people from his past.

Golden, Christopher. [All Hallows](#) (\$19). It's Halloween night, 1984, in Coventry, Massachusetts, and two families are unraveling. Up and down the street, horrifying secrets are being revealed, and all the while, mixed in with the trick-or-treaters of all ages, four children who do not belong are walking door to door, merging with the kids of Parmenter Road. Children in vintage costumes with faded, eerie makeup. They seem terrified, and beg the neighborhood kids to hide them away, to keep them safe from The Cunning Man. And they are right.... Save this one up for late October.

Horowitz, Anthony/Otto Penzler, eds. [The Best Mystery Stories of the Year](#) (Mysterious Press \$17.95). Selected from a pool of over 3000 published in 2023. Authors contributing include Ace Atkins, Jeffery Deaver, Andrew Welsh-Huggins, and 16 others you'd like to meet.

✧ Huber, Anna Lee. [The Cold Light of Day](#) (Kensington \$17.95). In June, 1920, Verity Kent must follow the leads of a dangerous investigation that will pull her into a conspiracy spilling dangerously out onto the streets of Interwar Dublin

Jiles, Paulette. [Chenneville](#) (\$18.99). Union soldier John Chenneville suffered a traumatic head wound in battle. His recovery took the better part of a year as he struggled to regain his senses and mobility. By the time he returned home, the Civil War was over, but tragedy awaited. John's beloved sister and her family had been brutally murdered. Their killer goes by many names. He fought for the North in the late unpleasantness, and wore a badge in the name of the law. But the man John knows as A. J. Dodd is little more than a rabid animal, slaughtering without reason or remorse, needing to be put down. So John takes up the mission....

Kingsolver, Barbara. [Demon Copperhead](#) (\$21.99). Set in the mountains of southern Appalachia, an "Equal parts hilarious and heartbreaking, this is the story of an irrepressible boy nobody wants, but readers will love."—*The Washington Post*. You will of course get the nod to Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield*, a Victorian story of a survivor of institutional poverty and its damages to children in his society.

Lethem, Jonathan. [Brooklyn Crime Novel](#) (\$18.99). On the streets of 1970s Brooklyn, a daily ritual goes down: the dance. Money is exchanged, belongings surrendered, power asserted. The promise of violence lies everywhere, a currency itself. For these children, Black, brown, and white, the street is a stage in shadow. And in the wings hide the other players: parents; cops; renovators; landlords; those who write the headlines, the histories, and the laws; those who award this neighborhood its name. Patrick recommends Lethem's work.

Murray, Paul. [The Bee Sting](#) (\$21). Shortlisted for the Booker Prize and the Writers' Prize for Fiction and Winner of the *An Post* Irish Book of the Year, the Nero Gold Prize, and the Nero Book Award for Fiction, plus loads of Best books of 2023 and now in paperback.

Nava, Danica. [The Truth According to Ember](#) (Penguin \$19). A Chickasaw woman who can't catch a break serves up a little white lie that snowballs into much more. The Indie Next Pick says: "You should read this book if you like: Romance, rom-coms, the complicated love lives of Native American accountants, hot IT guys, office flirts, little white lies, forbidden corporate lust, debut novels."

O'Brien, Tim. [America Fantastica](#) (\$19.99). "A brilliant romp across the continent. Boyd Halverson feels the urge to shake things up. So, he gets up from his Kiwanis Club brunch, strolls across the street to a bank with a .38 revolver, robs it, and takes Angie Banks, the teller, hostage. Away we go!"

O'Connor, Carlene. [Some of Us Are Looking](#) (\$17.95). In late summer, the Dingle peninsula is thronged with tourists drawn to County Kerry's dark mountains and deep, lush valleys. For Irish vet Dimpna Wilde, who has returned to run her family's practice after years away, home is a beautiful but complicated place—especially when it becomes the setting for a brutal murder....

This is a terrific series set in Ireland's County Kerry. The sequel, [You have Gone Too Far](#) (Kensington \$27) will be signed here October 28. But start the series with [No Strangers Here](#) (\$16.95).

O'Connor, Joseph. [My Father's House](#) (Europa \$18.95). I just started this wonderfully rendered story set in the Vatican during WWII and will report more. It might become our November Historical Fiction Paperback Subscription Club Pick.

Patterson, James. [Alex Cross Must Die](#) (\$19.99). "Drop whatever you're doing, Detective Cross, and head to Reagan Airport," DC Metro Police dispatch says. "A jet just crashed and exploded on the runway. The chief and the FBI want you and John Sampson there pronto." Cross and Sampson race to the crash site. The plane didn't fail—it was shot down by a stolen Vietnam War-era machine gun. The list of experts who can operate the weapon is short. And time before another lethal strike runs even shorter. Especially for Detective Cross. 29th in this Edgar-winning series.

Plantinga, Adam. [The Ascent](#) (\$19.99). Kurt Argento, an ex-Detroit street cop who can't let injustice go—and who has the fighting skills to back up his idealism. When he does just that in a small corrupt Missouri town, he's brutally beaten and thrown into a maximum-security prison. Julie Wakefield, a grad student who happens to be the governor's daughter, is about to take a tour of the prison. But when a malfunction in the security system releases a horde of prisoners, a fierce struggle for survival ensues. Argento must help a small band of staff and civilians, including Julie and her two state trooper handlers, make their way from the bottom floor to the roof to safety. This is a tense and well executed debut and we hope to see more of Plantinga who signed the hardcover of this for us.

Rio, M L. [If We Were Villains](#) (\$18.99). Rio is coming to The Pen on November 23 as part of a lengthy driving book tour to sign [Graveyard Shift](#) (Flatiron \$26.99/\$16.99). Meanwhile we get this

paperback of her debut about seven young Shakespearean actors at Dellecher Classical Conservatory, a place of keen ambition and fierce competition. In this secluded world of firelight and leather-bound books, Oliver and his friends play the same roles onstage and off: hero, villain, tyrant, temptress, ingénue, extras. But in their fourth and final year, good-natured rivalries turn ugly, and on opening night real violence invades the students' world of make-believe. In the morning, the fourth-years find themselves facing their very own tragedy, and their greatest acting challenge yet: convincing the police, each other, and themselves that they are innocent. And now one of them is ready to tell Detective Colborne the truth.

Smith, Alexander McCall. [From and Far and Lovely Country](#) (\$17). Two confounding cases compete for Mma Ramotswe's attention—and she may need to call in back up. The No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency's 25th case is coming soon. Ward, Jesmyn. [Let Us Descend](#) (\$17.99) is “a haunting masterpiece about an enslaved girl in the years before the Civil War that's destined to become a classic.”

OUR SEPTEMBER SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Cahoon, Lynn. [Six Stunning Sirens](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Kitchen Witch #6. Mia Malone is looking forward to catering the Miss Magic Springs Harvest Pageant, part of the local coven's big autumn celebration—until death puts a damper on the festivities.

Hollis, Lee. [Death of a Gingerbread Man](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Hayley Powell #17. With the holiday season in full swing, food and cocktails columnist and restaurateur Hayley Powell has lots to check off her last-minute to-do list. Not included is the sudden arrival of her father, who hasn't been in the picture since she believed in Santa Claus. Dwight Jordan's presence in Bar Harbor might just be the unwanted gift that keeps on giving—especially after he becomes the top suspect in a case of yuletide murder.

✦ Parks, Adele. [The Image of You](#) (Mira \$9.99). Anna and Zoe are identical in appearance, absolutely opposite in personality. They are so close that nothing—and no one—can come between them until one of them meets her perfect man.

Urszényi, Steve. [Perfect Shot](#) (\$9.99). Alexandra Martel #1. Special Agent Alexandra Martel is pulled back into the dangerous world she left behind when an old friend, an MIS officer, is murdered, drawing her into a terrifying conspiracy involving nuclear weapons and must fall back on her Special Ops skills to stop the unthinkable and keep the world safe.

Willingham, Stacy. [All the Dangerous Things](#) (\$9.99). After her son Mason is kidnapped while sleeping in his crib, Isabelle Drake agrees to be interviewed by a true-crime podcaster who happens to have ulterior motives.

MORE SEPTEMBER SMALL PAPERBACKS

Block, Lawrence. [Sins of the Fathers](#) (\$8.99). Reissue. Matthew Scudder #1. Matthew Scudder, a private detective who had been a cop for fifteen years, investigates the savage murder of a Greenwich Village hooker supposedly killed by her homosexual roommate.

Brewer, Gil. [Wild](#) (Stark House \$12.99). When Lee Baron returns to his hometown in Florida to take over his dad's private detective business, his very first client turns out to be an old flame, Ivor Hendrix. She's got husband troubles and wants Lee

to act as go-between. But when Lee visits the trailer where they lived together, he finds a dead body instead.

Brown, Sandra. [Tailspin](#) (\$10.99). Reissue. Hired to deliver a mysterious box to a fogbound Georgia town, daredevil pilot Rye Mallett is targeted by saboteurs and law enforcement officials before teaming up with an attractive but suspicious doctor to determine the box's significance.

Graham, Heather. [Legacy of Blood](#) (Mira \$9.99). The Hungarian noblewoman, Elizabeth Báthory's unspeakable crimes against her people are being reenacted in Paris and across the French countryside, and unless Special Agent Jeannette LaFarge and recent recruit Detective Daniel Murray act quickly, the upcoming grape harvest promises to yield blood instead of wine.

Klein, Libby. [Silent Nights Are Murder](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Poppy McAllister #9. Gluten-free baker Poppy McAllister and her aunt, Ginny, are looking forward to a quiet, homey Christmas at their B&B in Cape May, but unfortunately, death isn't taking a holiday this year.

Patterson, James. [23 1/2 Lies](#) (\$10.99). A collection of three thrilling novellas including one about an ex-Texas-Ranger and a starving artist who agree to expose a client's cheating wife in the latest addition to the long-running series following 23rd Midnight.