

# BOOKNEWS from

ISSN 1056-5655, © The Poisoned Pen, Ltd.

Volume 36, Number 11

Gift Catalogue 2024

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## Our First Poisoned Pen Gift Catalogue

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It's eclectic but heartfelt with no paid advertising. And there's more to come in the November and December Booknews issues and Enews highlights.

With so much chaos in the world we recommend getting a start on the holidays now to avoid disappointments – and the high December shipping rates which kick in right after Thanksgiving. Also if you order now we have a much better chance of securing stock to fill your orders.

I'm not kidding. My top recommendation published September 24 and it is already unavailable, I hope reprinting. If it comes back into stock I'll hit it up big in the November Booknews and the Enews. But why tease you with it now?

### WHAT'S SHELF WEALTH?

Patrick and I believe that books produced as works of art as well as telling stories are making a comeback. Collectables are not just about the author's signature but about the quality of the production. This recent article in the *NY Times Business Section* (!) about [Assouline Books](#), a luxury brand, depicts the really high-end where publications costing thousands can, for example, come in a custom clam shell. Buyers accumulate shelf wealth. One hopes they are readers too.

On a more modest scale, Shelf Wealth can be realized with the publication of Special Edition Romantasy, Fantasy, Science Fiction and say Historical Fiction. An example of the latter is Anna Rasche's gorgeous debut [The Stone Witch of Florence](#) (Park Row \$30 SIGNED), our October Historical Fiction Subscription Book of the Month set in 1348 as the Plague strikes and a young woman who can heal using gemstones is pitted against a ruthless thief. The premium special edition hardcover features gold accents to the jacket, stunning four-color endpapers, and beautiful blue sprayed edges. Grab one while you can.

Shelf Wealth books can have as little as sprayed edges but go for the ones with fore-edge paintings, illustrated end papers, foil stamping, maybe a surprise under the dust jacket on the hardcover such as in Dean Koontz's [The Forest of Lost Souls](#) (\$28.99 SIGNED).

I've just spied an [Illustrated Edition of The Hunger Games](#) (Scholastic \$34.99) for teens with art by artist Nico Delort. And one of the first Harry Potter, [Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone](#) (Scholastic \$39.99) with 100 illustrations by Jim Kay. I remember when I was very young getting gifts of the Oz books with the illustrations, and my Mom treasured her classics

illustrated by Howard Pyle. Even Sherlock Holmes was elevated by the iconic illustrations for his stories published in *The Strand* magazine.

Try Tolkien's [The Lord of the Rings Deluxe Illustrated Box Set](#) (Harper \$325). This is a three-volume, deluxe slipcased hardback set of *The Lord of the Rings*, illustrated throughout by acclaimed Tolkien artist, Alan Lee. Features exclusive new paintings and dozens of pencil drawings appearing for the very first time, together with three removable art cards and two foldout maps.

Or Sarah Mass's [Throne of Glass Boxed Set](#) (Bloomsbury \$245). A perfect gift for the fantasy reading enthusiast. Join Celaena Sardothien as she rises to power from the depths of prison to the heights of the King's Guard. This series has it all: tyrant rulers, mythical assassins and deep political intrigue all thrown together with a bit of romance. This series was one of the quintessential fantasy series of 2024 and with good reason. All 5008 pages presented in 8 colorful hardcover volumes and packaged in a gorgeous box. Recommended by Pat King, who also recommends:

Kui, Ryoko et al. [Delicious in Dungeon Boxed Set](#) (Yen Press \$225). For the Manga/Anime and JRPG enthusiast and now a runaway Netflix success, *Delicious in Dungeon* follows Laios and his team of adventurers as they crawl lower and lower through a town's cavernous dungeons. In order to keep their strength up and rescue Laios' sister, they must learn how to eat and cook the monsters they run into—if they can stay alive at least. Funny, exciting and filled with surprising emotion, the complete set of *Delicious in Dungeon* is perfect gift for those who love Manga and Anime. The boxed set comes with 15 volumes and an exclusive poster

## BOOKS ABOUT BOOKS AND READING

For free, here's a list of "[The 100 Best Books of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century](#)" as compiled by the *NY Times Book Review* from surveying "hundreds of literary luminaries." So one gift idea might be to print out the list and include it in one of the recommended books. Or buy a journal to go with the list so your recipient can write down reviews of their own of the books as they are read. More about writing things down below.

Davis, Kenneth C. [The World in Books](#) (Scribner \$30.99). 52 of the best, most important short nonfiction works of all time—from Plato to Michael Pollan and Dante to Joan Didion.

Lee, Stan. [Origins of Marvel Comics](#) (Gallery \$21/95). When I was a kid I bicycled every Saturday to Woolworth's to spend my allowance (\$.25) on a new comic. For those like me who love(d) them, here's a classic originally published in 1974. It features the first appearance of characters who have dominated the pantheon of Marvel's modern storytelling mythology—Spider-Man, the Fantastic Four, the Hulk, Thor, and Doctor Strange—along with a second Silver Age tale featuring these special heroes, all hand-picked and introduced by the one and only Stan Lee, and serving as an essential showcase for writers and artists such as Stan himself, Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko, John Romita, and Marie Severin. Whether viewed as a historical artifact that launched an industry or a collection of the best in Silver Age comics by many of the greatest creators, *Origins of Marvel Comics* highlights the lasting greatness of these iconic characters and their talented creators.

Mustich, James. [1000 Books to Read before You Die](#) (Workman \$40). Every list is subjective, personal to the compiler, but why not crib from one like this to make your own? We all have a finite number of books we can read in a lifetime so consider also the 50 page test: if it's not working, donate it, gift it, someone else will like it. Life is too short to finish books you can't embrace.

Salter, Colin. [100 Novels That Changed the World](#) (Harper \$30). Here's another, not a Best Books List but an Impact List.

Snider, Grant. [I Will Judge You by Your Bookshelf](#) (Abrams \$16.99). This popular volume here at The Pen is about loving books rather than Shelf Wealth. Celebrate the culture and fanaticism of book lovers with beloved illustrator Grant Snider's full-color graphic novel celebrating books, authors, and reading. The striking package includes a die-cut cover and makes a nifty stocking stuffer.

## WRITE IT DOWN

Studies show that reading physical books are stimulating to the brain and helpful to learning and emotional health. But IMHO it's also true that writing things down, not keyboarding or tapping on your phone, reinforces memory and learning.

Allen, Roland. [The Notebooks](#) (Biblioasis \$19.95). Where did they come from? How did they revolutionize our lives? And how can using a notebook help change the way you think? The

physical act of putting pen or pencil to paper not only reinforces memory but is a versatile tool for creative thinking, giving it space. Allen shows how bullet points can combat ADHD, journals can ease PTSD, and patient diaries soften the trauma of reawakening from coma. The everyday act of moving a pen across paper, he finds, can have profound consequences. We recommend a copy of *The Notebook* as a meaningful, attractive gift, especially if you pair it with one of the many notebooks/journals we have stocked at the store.

One big seller is the journal [What I Read](#) (Potter \$9) bound in a brilliant red.

I add that a written calendar is a great tool for managing life. I keep one on my desk and consult it first thing every day but the value comes from the act of writing down engagements in the first place, triggering memory.

### PUZZLE BOOKS FOR GIFTING

Karber, GT. [Murdle Jr.](#) (Little Brown \$12.99). Join four junior detectives—and earn your own Murdle Jr. badge—in this puzzle book packed with illustrations, clues, codes, and a helpful mystery-solving logic grid. Kids can go it alone or it can become a family thing.

Karber, GT. [Murdle: The School of Mystery](#) (St Martins \$18). Here's a new way to test your wits in 50 murder mystery logic puzzles set at the dark and mysterious Deduction College. Can you crack these cases before the final bell?

Meanwhile you can give a set of the original, all 3 award-winning and Poisoned Pen bestselling [Murdle Volumes](#) (\$16 each). We can hardly keep them in stock. These are not only fun but exercise the brain in helpful ways.

Moore, Gareth. [The Murder Mystery Club Puzzle Book](#) (Andrews McNeel \$14.95). Clearly modeled on the success of the hugely bestselling [Murdle series](#) with Detective Logico, here is the first book in the brand-new Murder Mystery Club Puzzle Book series. *Murder in the Village* is all the brain-teasing fun of a classic murder mystery game in a convenient travel-sized paperback with flaps, a handsome production. It's one mystery with over 70 clues. Puzzle solving needs:

Deductive logic; Mastermind-style combination and safe cracking; Location tracking; Visual puzzles including spot the difference and hidden pictures; Date, time, and other event ordering tasks.

Package a puzzle book with a copy of one of my favorite fall thrillers, Danielle Trussoni's [The Puzzle Box](#) (SIGNED at a special gift price of \$25) which not only has great fun with Japanese puzzle boxes (who knew how complex they are, and how dangerous if properly booby trapped?), and Imperial Japanese history but has a truly nifty crossword to work formatted in the shape of a chrysanthemum. I loved doing it.

Burr, Samuel. [The Fellowship of Puzzle Makers](#) (Knopf \$29). Deb also recommends a book to go with these puzzle challenges. Wrap up a bestseller you may not have heard, a “gloriously uplifting novel about the power of friendship and the puzzling ties that bind us.” with a Karber or Moore.

Clayton Stumper might be in his twenties, but he dresses like your grandpa and fusses like your aunt. Abandoned at birth on the steps of the Fellowship of Puzzlemakers, he was raised by a group of eccentric enigmatologists and now finds himself among the last survivors of a fading institution. When the esteemed crossword compiler and main maternal presence in Clayton's life, Pippa Allsbrook, passes away, she bestows her final puzzle on him: a promise to reveal the mystery of his parentage and prepare him for real life.

Finally, working jigsaw puzzles is also credited with both brain stimulation and a healing escape from scrolling. I don't recommend one specifically but again, why not pair a jigsaw with a puzzle book?

And for Outlander fans, Diana Gabaldon's [Outlander Trivia](#) (Random House \$24.99), a Card Game: 200 Questions and Answers to Test Your Knowledge. Diana signs all our copies.

### AND A ROLE PLAYING GAME BOOK

Kolb, Andrew. [Wonderland](#) (Andrews McNeel \$35). Follow the White Rabbit down the hole.... Drawing on the books and poems of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by author Lewis Carroll, Andrew's third RPG book offers a dungeon setting and source book that leans into combat. Like his previous books, it will have secrets to explore and social interactions to navigate, but the change in setting and focus will allow it to stand on its own. And, of course, it will all be beautifully illustrated and designed in Andrew's signature style

## SOME UPLIFTING STOCKING STUFFERS

Aoyama, Michiko. [What You Are Looking For Is in the Library](#) (Hanover Press \$21.99). I love this little book. Set in Japan, it shows in a series of charming vignettes how the perfect book recommendation can change a readers' life. Of course this requires a gifted librarian.

Kashiwai, Hisashi. [The Restaurant of Lost Recipes](#) (Penguin \$26). Every meal is a mystery.... Koishi is in her 30s and works at a restaurant in Kyoto—it's known as the Kamogawa Diner, though it doesn't have a sign—with her father, Nagare Kamogawa, the chef. Both miss Koishi's late mother, Kikuko. Their cat, Drowsy, spends its days trying to get into the restaurant, though he's banned to protect the customers from cat hair. Enjoy a Japanese café-esque setting with beloved staff who delivers plenty of empathic kindness to customers whose visits inspire stand-alone narratives. . . Deliciousness lingers." Honestly, the cover art is so cute this book will just leap off the shelf. What a great gift idea.

## FOOD



I generally list new cookbooks or older gems in the November Booknews. We have a constantly turning number in stock but we can order any book you wish. Sharon, who belongs to our monthly Cookbook Club, recommends

Scott, Elle Simone. [Food Gifts: 100 Irresistible Recipes for Crafting Personalized Presents](#) (America's Test Kitchen \$30). Plus you could write out a treasured recipe or two of your own to include, or present the book with a beautiful piece of kitchenware.

I recommend Martin Walker's [Bruno's Cookbook](#) (Knopf \$40 SIGNED) for the French food flair, often basic. Give it with a copy of [Bruno, Chief of Police](#) (\$17) or of [Black Diamond](#) (\$18) where truffles are mixed into the crime when an expert in truffles is murdered, for someone unfamiliar with this our bestselling paperback series. Martin wrote an essay for Crime Reads about food and much more—"Crime Fiction's Best and Worst Meals"—you can read and enjoy.

And for fans of the Great British Baking Show, I see a November release from the Bake Off Team, [The Great British Baking Show 2024](#) (Mobius \$35.99) for something we all need: 80 wonderful bakes inspired by the show's most popular signature themes—Cake, Biscuits, Bread, Pastry, Patisserie, Dessert, Chocolate—celebrating the very best in comfort bakes.

## TRAVEL

Blomdahl, Cecilia. [Life on Svalbard](#) (DK \$32). I've been to this remote place, the world's northernmost town (so far) where you as a tourist aren't allowed to walk without an armed escort (polar bears). Sadly I imagine this is all changing but here's a woman and dog adjusting to life near the North Pole and sharing it through evocative text and spectacular photography. With the Northern Lights on display this fall this is book to enrich the viewing.

Koval, Wally and Amanda. [Accidentally Wes Anderson Adventures](#) (Voracious \$45). For lovers of travel, design, and exploration, AWA presents a brand-new collection of real-world places that seem plucked from the films of Wes Anderson, and the stories that bring each location to life. Venture to Antarctica through the treacherous Drake Passage, make a stop in lesser-known Jincumbilly, Australia (where platypuses outnumber people), discover the bridge in Wisconsin that went to nowhere, and drop into the most peculiar umbrella shop in London. But adventure means nothing without someone to tell the tale.

Share, Amber. [SubPar Planet](#) (Penguin \$30). I am a big fan of the snarky illustrated entries in Share's [SubPar Parks](#) (\$30)—looking at many of our beloved National Parks, so here's fun looking at The World's Most Celebrated Landmarks and Their Most Disappointed Visitors. I don't know where Parks finds the (mostly) hysterical and harsh reviews from vocal critics which say a lot more about the critics than the landmarks. I'm a fan of The Darwin Awards so this fits right in.

By contrast try DK's [USA National Parks, Lands of Wonder](#) (\$30) as a companion piece to *SubPar Parks*. It could teach irony to younger readers.

Stone, George. [100 Perfect Weekends](#) (Nat Geo \$40). No matter how busy your life odds are you can plot a 2-day adventure to....somewhere. Give this as inspiration to a travel partner.

Wilson, Randal K. [A Place Called Yellowstone](#) (Catapult \$34) will take you through the epic landscape and history of America's First National Park, a bucket list destination IMHO (I've been there 4 times, always awe struck).

### NONFICTION IDEAS FOR GIFTS

Andrews, Robin. [How to Kill an Asteroid](#) (Norton \$29.99) is a sometimes scary, often humorous and always erudite account of planetary defense, the people and projects striving to safeguard Earth from space rocks and help humanity avoid the dinosaurs' dismal fate.

Bronin, Sara C. [Key to the City: How Zoning Shapes Our World](#) (Norton \$28.99). Anyone who has dealt with the intricacies of zoning will attest to how complex and contentious it can be, generally on a very local level.

David Day, [The Illustrated World of Tolkien](#) (Thunder Bay Press \$24.99). The Second Age has long been a "dark age" for readers of J. R. R. Tolkien, as none of his fiction provides an all-encompassing narrative of the events of that 3,500-year period of Middle-earth's history. Only through the efforts of Tolkien's son Christopher has the public been able to appreciate the full grandeur of the Second Age, which is revealed in Tolkien's meticulous notes and unfinished works. This unauthorized work includes more than 120 illustrations depicting the characters and events of this period—along with insightful commentary from renowned Tolkien scholar David Day.

Gladwell, Malcolm. [The Revenge of the Tipping Point](#) (Little Brown \$32). You should read this book if you like: Nonfiction, essays, psychology, sociology, Canadian contrarians with elite storytelling skills, kinda-sorta sequels to very famous social science books. Best to read this article in the [NY Times](#) and for bonus points, this one in the [Times Business Section](#) too on Gladwell and his work.

Graham, Ely. [Book and Dagger](#) (Harper \$30). Such a great title, who can resist? And the book is about How Scholars and Librarians Became the Unlikely Spies of World War II. In other words, an Information War was created by forming the OSS, the precursor to the CIA, 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. Among them are Joseph Curtiss, a literature professor who hunted down German spies and turned them into double agents; Sherman Kent, a smart-mouthed

history professor who rose to become the head of analysis for all of Europe and Africa; and Adele Kibre, an archivist who was sent to Stockholm to secretly acquire documents for the OSS. These unforgettable characters would ultimately help lay the foundations of modern intelligence and transform American higher education when they returned after the war.

Read this [expanded review](#) to see why Elyse Graham's rescuing a cast of scholar-spies from obscurity is included in our suggestions.

Greenberg, Mike. [Got Your Answers](#) (Random \$14.99). ESPN's Greenberg (Got Your Number) again partners with mega-producer Hembo to help you win every sports debate by answering the top 100 questions on every fan's mind.

Helprin, Mark. [The Oceans and the Stars](#) (\$19). A Navy captain near the end of a decorated career, Stephen Rensselaer is disciplined, intelligent, and determined to always do what's right. In defending the development of a new variant of warship, he makes an enemy of the president of the United States, who assigns him to command the doomed line's only prototype—*Athena*, Patrol Coastal 15—with the intent to humiliate a man who should have been an admiral. Rensselaer takes it on, meets a killer lawyer and falls in love, and ultimately ensures that his command and the *Athena* become a legend. Inspiring to read about a man who puts honor and duty above all else. With a second chance at love bonus.

Jacobsen, Rowan. [Wild Chocolate](#) (Bloomsbury \$28.99). One taste of an artisanal chocolate bar launched Jacobsen's journey through Central and South America in pursuit of wild and heirloom cacao beans whose flavors are influenced by the earth in which they grow. The James Beard Award-winning food writer's engaging narrative history doubles as an adventure tale, taking readers from Montezuma's treasure vaults to shrewd profiteers' warehouses. Recent years have seen a reclamation of cacao farming by small, sustainable, organic farmers using traditional methods but also modern brokers to bring their products to a worldwide audience, fueling a cacao renaissance. Why am I recommending this book? When in Germany last December for a Christmas Markets cruise we found amazing chocolate processing and restaurants devoted to drinks, ice creams, candies, and much more. Dark chocolate has beneficial health properties aside from just making you delighted.

Morris, Michael. [Tribal: How the Cultural Instincts That Divide Us Can Help Bring Us Together](#) (Penguin \$30). I hope this is true.

Panek, Richard. [The Pillars of Creation: How the James Webb Telescope Unlocked the Secrets of the Cosmos](#) (Little Brown \$29) brims with the excitement of scientific discovery in this accessible account of how the Webb telescope has revolutionized the field of astronomy.... Panek tells the story with infectious enthusiasm... An essential read for anyone interested in the new frontiers of science, written with clarity and authority.”

Popova, Maria. [The Universe in Verse: 15 Portals to Wonder through Science & Poetry](#) (Storey Publishing \$22). Imagine aliens asking us about the human experience, about what it is like living on earth, and us giving them a guide. I’d like it to be this book of illustrated essays of the search through truth seen through the lenses of science and poetry.

Read, Simon. [Scotland Yard](#) (Simon Schuster \$35). The idea of “Scotland Yard” is steeped in atmospheric stories of foggy London streets, murder by lamplight, and fiendish killers pursued by gentleman detectives. From its establishment in 1829 through the eve of World War II, Scotland Yard—the world’s first modern, professional, and centrally organized police force—set new standards for policing and investigating. Scotland Yard advanced groundbreaking 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.

Renkl, Margaret. [Leaf, Cloud, Crow: A Weekly Backyard Journal](#) (Spiegel & Grau \$24). This gorgeous journal is organized by seasons like Winter with dates not tied to any specific year, and enriched with illustrations. It’s a marvelous work and, whether one is moved by the natural world or just wants to record personal events, for everyone.

It’s tied to Renkl’s much praised memoir [The Comfort of Crows, A Backyard Year](#) (Spiegel & Grau \$32) which could be a much welcomed companion book for you or for your gift list.

Richardson, Heather Cox. [Democracy Awakening: Notes on the State of America](#) (\$18) charts historical and contemporary challenges and threats and should be a prompt to vote.

Roux, Jessica. [Floriography Coloring Book](#) (Anchor \$14.99). Based on artist Jessica Roux’s bestselling guide to the nineteenth-century “language of flowers,” this beautifully designed coloring book collects 45 of her botanical illustrations alongside easy-to-follow line art. Render dozens of flowers and herbs in Roux’s iconic style while learning about the meaning behind each one. From dahlia to foxglove, hellebore to hyacinth, capture a whole garden of Victorian blooms in vivid color!

Roux has also produced [Illustrated Guides to Ornithography](#) (\$21.99) and [Floriography](#) (\$21.99 each) as well as “Field Guides to [Fairies](#) and to [Dragons](#).

Sarian, Alex. [The Audacity of Relevance: Critical Conversations on the Future of Arts and Culture](#) (ECW Press \$27.95)

Shaw, Hannah. [Cats of the World](#) (Penguin \$32). Hannah “Kitten Lady” Shaw and professional cat photographer Andrew Marttila journey to thirty countries to bring you hundreds of photos and stories of cats from every corner of the world.

Sobel, Dava. [The Elements of Marie Curie: How the Glow of Radium Lit a Path for Women in Science](#) (Grove Atlantic \$30). The author of *Longitude* and other landmark books of science returns with yet another accessible, complex, and fascinating study of a woman and the women whose paths she facilitated. Read more about it in [The Washington Post](#) or the [Wall Street Journal](#)

Tucci, Stanley. [What I Ate in One Year](#) (Gallery Books \$32.50). Tucci is always fun to read—also to watch if you catch him on TV. “My taste buds have a very strong memory,” the actor and foodie writes in this globe-trotting diary where the menu includes cannellini beans and canned tuna (Jan. 3), baked beans in an airport lounge (April 20), risotto with butternut squash and sea bream (Nov. 22) and home-brewed ale at Guy Ritchie’s 1,100-acre country estate (Dec. 28). Read it and salivate.

Tyson, Neil DeGrasse. [Merlin’s Tour of the Universe](#) (Blackstone \$29.99 SIGNED) has been revised and updated for today. I think it’s a marvelous gift book to a teen. In Tyson’s delightful journey through the cosmos, his fictional character Merlin responds to

popular questions asked by adults and children alike. Merlin, a timeless visitor from Planet Omnisca in the Andromeda Galaxy, has observed first-hand many of the major scientific events of Earth's history. Merlin's friends include the most important scientific figures and explorers of all time—Da Vinci, Magellan, Newton, Einstein, and Hubble.

Unger, Craig. [Den of Spies](#) (Harper \$29.99). Unger reveals the definitive story of the October Surprise [the Reagan campaign conspiring with Iran to delay the release of the 52 American hostages until after Reagan defeated Carter and took the oath of office], going inside his three-decade reporting odyssey, along with Parry's never-before-seen archives, and sharing startling truths about what really happened in 1980. The result is a real-life political thriller filled with double agents, CIA operatives, slippery politicians, KGB documents, wealthy Republicans, and dogged journalists. A timely and provocative history that presages our Trump-era political scandals, *Den of Spies* demonstrates the stakes of allowing the politics of the moment to and foreign collusion to write our



history. While Unger's investigation was initially shunned it has recently been confirmed by some of the pro-Reagan actors.

#### **MEMOIRS/BIOGRAPHIES MAKE GIFTS TOO**

Bernstein, Richard. [Only in America: Al Jolson and the Jazz Singer](#) (Knopf \$28)

Boot, Max. [Reagan: His Life and Legend](#) (Norton \$45)

Chung, Connie. [Connie: A Memoir](#) (Grand Central \$32.5)

Conant, Jenet. [Fierce Ambition: The Life and Legend of War Correspondent Maggie Higgins](#) (\$21.99)

Cooper, Anderson. [Astor: The Rise and Fall of an American Fortune](#) (\$19.99)

Edim, Glory. [Gather Me: A Memoir in Praise of the Books That Saved Me](#) (Random \$28)

Garten, Ina. [Be Ready When the Luck Happens](#) (Crown \$34) – Read this essay in the [NY Times](#) about her life

Greenberg, David. [John Lewis: A Life](#) (SimonSchuster \$35)

Herzog, Werner. [Every Man for Himself and God Against All](#) (\$20)

Hunter, Robert. [The Silver Snarling Trumpet](#) (Hachette \$32). The birth of The Grateful Dead?... The lost manuscript of co-founder Robert Hunter

Hilburn, Robert. [A Few Words in Defense of Our Country](#) (Grove \$34)

John, Elton. [Farewell Yellow Brick Road](#) (Disney \$55)

Kaplan, Bruce Eric. [They Went Another Way: A Hollywood Memoir](#) (Harper \$28.99)

Labrie, Sarah. [No One Gets to Fall Apart: A Memoir](#) (Harper \$27.99)

Lenz, Bethany Joy. [Dinner for Vampires: Life on a Cult TV Show](#) (SimonSchuster \$29.99)

Levy, Deborah. [The Position of Spoons](#) (Farrar \$26)

Milford, JR, Stanley. [The Paranormal Ranger: A Navajo Investigator's Search for the Unexplained](#) (Harper \$28.99)

Navalny, Alexei. [Patriot](#) (Knopf \$35)

Owens, Zibby. [On Being Jewish Now: Reflections from Auschwitz](#) (Zibby Books \$12.99). Signed while supply lasts on November 1

Pacino, Al. [Sonny Boy: A Memoir](#) (Penguin \$35)

Presley, Lisa Marie. [From Here to the Great Unknown](#) (Random \$32)

Resnick, Ira M. Moxie: [The Daring Women of Classic Hollywood](#) (Abbeville Publishing \$49.95). Foreword by Jane Fonda

Taibo, Paco Ignacio. [Pancho Villa: A Narrative Biography](#) (Seven Stories Press \$49.95)

Van Halen, Alex. [Brothers](#) (Harper \$32)

## HANUKKAH GIFTS

Bader, Bonnie. [Hanukkah: The Festival of Lights](#) (\$5.99). A Little Gold Book edition of the story of Hanukkah for preschoolers.

Carle, Eric. [The Very Hungry Caterpillar's 8 Night of Chanukah](#) (Penguin \$9.99). Ages 3 and under. This festive counting story makes for a fine holiday gift for fans of The Very Hungry Caterpillar. Light the menorah, spin the dreidel, sing songs, and so much more in this board book.

Goldberg, Tod, ed. [Eight Very Bad Nights](#) (Soho \$27.95). Here's a delight, a collection of Hanukkah Noir with stories by: Ivy Pochoda, David L. Ulin, James D.F. Hannah, Lee Goldberg, Nikki Dolson, J.R. Angelella, Liska Jacobs, Gabino Iglesias, Stefanie Leder, and Jim Ruland, plus a foreword and story by Tod Goldberg. They take you through old-school slapstick comedy, hardboiled noir, gritty procedurals, and poignant reminders of the meaning of Hanukkah, offering something for almost every reader willing to take the journey through these twisted tales.

Levin, Fred. [Glitter Hanukkah Stickers Activity Book](#) (Dover \$2.99). These 14 glittery stickers reflect the time-honored traditions of The Festival of Lights, including a decorative *menorah*, spinning tops called *dreidels*, coins known as Hanukkah *gelt*, potato pancakes called *latkes*, gifts for the 8-day observance, and more. Kids can use the stickers to make their own cards and invitations! We have lots of other holiday activity books from Dover. Come in and browse.

Meyer, Marissa. [Let It Glow](#) (Feiwel and Friends \$9.99). "Two adopted girls who meet by chance discover they're twins who were separated at birth, and secretly switch places. One family is Jewish, the other celebrates Christmas and the holidays are in full swing. It's funny, thoughtful, and touching and one of my favorite parts is the relationship each girl has with their grandparent and their delight when a romance develops between them."

Mlynowski, Sarah. [A Dragon for Hanukkah](#) (Scholastic \$18.99). A colorful picture book for the ages 4-8 reader. Hannah's holiday adventure begins as she receives eight magical presents, one for each night. There's a playful dragon, a gleaming treasure chest, a time travel machine, some rowdy unicorns... and much more. But are the gifts what they seem to be? When Hannah gathers with family and friends to light the menorah, play dreidel, and eat delicious latkes, she'll discover the true magic of the Festival of Lights.

Nathan, Joan. [A Sweet Year](#) (Doubleday \$35). Jewish Celebrations and Festive Recipes for Kids and Their Families from "America's Queen of Jewish Cooking."

Price, Roger. [Hanukkah Mad Libs](#) (Penguin \$5.99). 21 "fill-in-the-blank" stories about lighting the menorah, spinning the dreidel, and opening presents, there's plenty of laughs for all eight nights of the Jewish Festival of Lights! Play alone, in a group, or at a Bubbies' house! Mad Libs are a fun family activity recommended for ages 8 and up and help build reading and grammar skills.

## FOR KWANZA

Harris, Jessica B. [A Kwanzaa Keepsake and Cookbook](#) (Scribner \$30). A new exploration of African American culture, food, and family, featuring recipes and stories to help this generation create unique holiday traditions.

## CLASSICS FOR CHRISTMAS

Christie, Agatha. [Hercule Poirot's Christmas](#) (\$18.99). A classic country house murder set on Christmas Eve at Gorstan Hall where the tyrannical Lee family patriarch is foully murdered, repackaged and always worth (re)reading for the structure of the mystery.

Dickens, Charles. [A Christmas Carol](#) (Abbeville \$25). A new illustrated, leather-bound edition and nifty stocking stuffer

Hill, Reginald. [Dalziel and Pascoe Hunt the Christmas Killer and Other Stories](#) (Harper \$17.99). The fabled Yorkshire coppers created by the late Hill on the hunt. Foreword by Val McDermid. I so love Hill's marvelous work and urge you to find more of it. There is also a TV series, aging but fun to watch.

## NEW FOR CHRISTMAS

Benedict, Alexandra. [The Christmas Jigsaw Murders](#) (Poisoned Pen \$16.99). "Readers who think the story is the main event here will be briskly redirected by the author's opening announcement that the book contains



three different word puzzles—involving Dickens novels, Fleetwood Mac numbers, and a Christmas song—before the killer gets down to business by sending a taunting message signed “Rest in Pieces” to octogenarian Edie O’Sullivan, the Pensioner Puzzler renowned among fans for the ingenious crosswords she creates.”—Kirkus Reviews. Personally I’d stick to Benedict’s first Yuletide whodunnit, [The Christmas Murder Game](#) (\$16.99). Twelve clues. Twelve keys. Twelve days of Christmas. But how many will die before Twelfth Night in this manor house murder mystery?

Carlisle, Kate. [The Knife Before Christmas](#) (Berkley \$28 SIGNED we anticipate in December but out now). In this Fixer Upper Mystery, contractor Shannon Hammer hopes for a peaceful Christmas with her fiancé, Mac, until murder throws a wrench in her holiday plans.

Clegg, Sarah. [The Dead of Winter](#) (Algonquin \$22). Beware the Krampus and other Wicked Christmas Creatures. Clegg takes a deep dive into the folklore of the Christmas season in Europe, detailing the way its terrifying and often debaucherous past continues to haunt and entertain us now in the twenty-first century. Perfect for the growing mainstream audience obsessed with horror and monsters, this guide makes the perfect gift, beautifully packaged in a stocking-stuffer-friendly trim size.

Connelly, Lucy. [Death at a Scottish Christmas](#) (Crooked Lane \$29.99). Sea Isle is magical during the holiday season Dr. Emilia McRoy, a transplant finds, until the lead singer of a famous band on the eve of a world tour brings the festivities to a halt.... I enjoyed [Death at a Scottish Wedding](#) (\$22.99) by Candace Havens writing this cozy series as Connelly.

Delany, Vicki. [A Slay Ride Together with You](#) (Crooked Lane \$29.99). In the latest Year Round Christmas Mystery, Rudolph, New York, shop owner Merry Wilkinson’s best friend Vicky Casey is newly engaged to Chef Mark Grosse and is moving into the historic Cole House—a home surrounded by drama, intrigue, and a possible haunting that is in desperate need of renovation. The wedding is just three weeks away, but all is not bliss for the newly engaged couple as estranged relatives of the late owner fight over her will. Then, late one night, Vicky and Merry come across a dead body in the garden of Cole House—and Mark is the one standing over the corpse

Fletcher, Jessica. [Murder, She Wrote: A Killer Christmas](#) (Penguin \$28). It’s Christmastime in Cabot Cove where realtor Eve Simpson has found a buyer for the old Jarvis homestead. But a long missing brother returns to stop his sister from selling. When the sister is murdered, he’s the natural suspect but Jessica Fletcher isn’t buying it....

Haines, Carolyn. [Blue Christmas Bones](#) (St Martins \$28). Sarah Booth Delaney and her friends can’t help falling in love with Christmas this year, which they plan to spend celebrating the King of Rock n’ Roll at the annual Elvis Festival in Tupelo. The main attraction is an Elvis impersonator competition, drawing impersonators from all over the world to honor the king. But before the revelry can get underway, a priceless jewel-encrusted replica of a belt once worn by Elvis is stolen from its display case, and Sarah Booth and Tinkie are roped into one of the biggest heists in the history of Mississippi....

Hallett, Janice. [The Christmas Appeal](#) (\$21.99 – but why not buy a [UK Signed copy](#) for \$28?). This absolute gem of a clever British mystery follows the hilarious Fairway Players theater group as they put on a Christmas play, Jack and the Beanstalk. Keep an eye on the play’s props as well as the dead body on stage. Told in mostly emails holding true to Hallett’s revival of the epistolary narrative form.

Hannah, Sophie. [Hercule Poirot’s Silent Night](#) (\$18.99). It’s December 19, 1931. Hercule Poirot and Inspector Edward Catchpool are looking forward to a much-needed, restful holiday, when they are called upon to investigate the murder of a man in a Norfolk hospital ward. Poirot is given a week to solve the crime or not make it home for Christmas.

Ho, Joanna. [A City Full of Santas](#) (Harper \$19.99). One little girl has always hoped to stay awake long enough to meet Santa, and she knows this is her year. Here’s “a fun and festive holiday story about a little girl’s enthusiastic hunt for the real Santa in a city that’s bustling with joy.”

McGown, Jill. [Scene of Crime](#) (Pan \$18.99). It’s three days before Christmas, and the Malworth Amateur Dramatic Society’s rehearsal of Cinderella, scripted by GP Carl Bignall, is struggling thanks to a flu epidemic that has hit the production. But as rehearsals finally get under way at the Riverside Theatre, the police across town are entering Carl’s house—and discovering the body of his wife, Estelle....

Meyer, Susan Lynn. [Nisha's Just Right Christmas Tree](#) (Augsburg Fortress Publisher \$18.99). Based on a true story from author Jaya Mehta's childhood, the book beautifully demonstrates a blend of cultures between Nisha's father, who is Hindu, and her mother, who is Christian, as they celebrate Christmas together in their Brooklyn Heights apartment and agree their tree is just perfect for their ornaments and sharing holiday treats.

O'Regan, M. [Death Comes at Christmas](#) (Titan 28.99). Stories from Alexandra Benedict, David Bell, Fiona Cummins, JT Ellison, Tom Mead, and more. 18 festive stories of murder and mystery in the grand tradition of Christmas crime fiction, from the masters of the genre. From locked room mysteries on Christmas Eve to devilish whodunits and tales of simmering rivalries unfolding at the dinner table, these seasonal tales will delight and shock

Prose, Nita. [The Mistletoe Mystery](#) (Random House \$22 SIGNED). Molly the Maid dives into a mystery made personal when a Secret Santa gift exchange at the Regency Grand Hotel raises questions about who Molly can and cannot trust....

Quinn, Spencer. [Up on the Woof Top](#) (\$18.99). Chet the dog and Bernie Little, PI, find themselves high in the mountains this holiday season to help Dame Ariadne Carlisle, a renowned author of bestselling Christmas mysteries, find Rudy, her lead reindeer and good luck charm, who has gone missing.

Ripley, Mike. [Mr. Campion's Christmas](#) (Severn \$29.99). It's Christmas 1962 and Albert Campion is snowed in with his family and a ragtag party of gate-crashers. When one of them turns up dead, it's up to Mr. Campion to unravel a fiendish web of espionage as the Cold War comes chillingly close to home. "A refreshingly surprise-packed entry in an always excellent series"

Rosenfelt, David. ['Twas the Bite Before Christmas](#) (\$18). Professionally retired NJ lawyer Andy Carpenter is at the Tara Foundation's annual Christmas party. The dog rescue organization has always been his true calling, and this is one holiday tradition he can get behind because every dog that's come through the rescue—and their families—is invited to celebrate. This year's party is no exception. But before the stockings can be hung by the chimney with care, homicide detectives ruin the evening. This year it's a Dalmatian that hooks Andy into defending a Foundation volunteer who's arrested for a murder....

Russell, Leigh. [Poppy's Christmas Cracker](#) (Oldcastle Books UK \$16.99). A Christmas cozy crime set in the village of Ashton Mead. Hannah, owner of the Sunshine Tea Shoppe, feels threatened by the opening of a French patisserie. So when the owner is killed, Hannah is an obvious suspect. No luck in clearing Hannah's name until her friend Emily's little dog Poppy, an energetic Jack Tzu, makes a discovery.... Poppy has her own series of which this appears to be the 4<sup>th</sup>.

Stevenson, Benjamin. [Everyone This Christmas Has a Secret](#) (Harper \$19.99). **The first 30 of our copies come with a signed bookplate.** Australian Stevenson has subverted the Golden Age form to a contemporary Christie-puzzle mystery with his sleuth Ernest Cunningham. My name's Ernest Cunningham. , who says: I used to be a fan of murder mysteries until I found myself with a haphazard career getting stuck in the middle of real-life ones. I'd hoped, this Christmas, that any self-respecting murderer would take it easy over the holidays. I was wrong. So here I am, backstage at the show of world-famous magician Rylan Blaze, whose benefactor has just been murdered. My suspects are all professional tricksters: masters of the art of misdirection....

*And for young readers:*

Barry, Robert. [Mr. Willowby's Christmas Tree](#) (\$15.95). Christmas is here and Mr. Willowby's tree has arrived. There's just one big problem: The tree is too tall for his parlor! He cuts off the top so it will fit, and soon the top of that tree is passed along again and again to all the animals in the forest. Kids will love watching the tree move from home to home, and families will appreciate the subtle message of conservation and recycling. This heartwarming story of how one Christmas tree brings joy to a whole forest of critters, in print since 1963, is the perfect way to start the yuletide season

Bond, Michael. [Paddington's Christmas Post](#) (Harper \$18.99). Classic bear, great cover, and comes with Christmas mail and an advent calendar.

Dewdney, Anna. [Llama Llama Holiday Drama](#) (Penguin \$9.99). A board book also for ages 3+. Llama Llama can't wait for Christmas to come. How more days again, he keeps asking Mama Llama?

Cummings, Troy. [Otto the Ornament](#) (Random \$12.99). A snazzy ornament tries to find the tree that's just right for him to ornament....

Penguin for Young Readers: [Bluey: 12 Days of Christmas](#) (Penguin \$9.99). *On the first day of Christmas, Veranda Santa gave to me...a fruit bat in a mango tree!* Countdown the twelve days of Christmas with Bluey and Bingo from the Disney animated series.

Rowling, JK. [Christmas at Hogwarts](#) (Scholastic \$19.99). Ages 6+. *Christmas was coming. One morning in mid-December, Hogwarts woke to find itself covered in several feet of snow.* "So begins young Harry Potter's first Christmas at Hogwarts which, as the illustrations show, is decked out in the English holiday tradition.

Scarry, Patricia M. [The Sweet Smells of Christmas](#) (Random \$9.99). Ages 3-7. Celebrate the sights and smells of Christmas with this classic scratch-and sniff book--a fragrant stocking stuffer perfect for any child!

Wallace, Adam. [How to Catch an Elf](#) (\$10.99). A stocking stuffer for ages 4-8. It's Christmas Eve and an elf is on the loose... in YOUR house! Do you have what it takes to catch him? Filled with zany traps, vibrant illustrations, STEAM concepts, and even Santa Claus himself.

I think Wallace has hooked into the Elf on the Shelf universe, full of elftastic adventures at the North Pole, and even recipes and magic in the new [The Elf on the Shelf Family Cookbook](#) (Harper \$24).

Willems, Mo. [Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Sleigh](#) (Union Square Kids \$18.99. SIGNED even if it's hard to find the signature). Ages 3-5. Kids love Willems' graphics with words.

Workman Publishing. [Paint by Sticker](#) (\$10.95). For ages 5-9. Step 1: Find the sticker. Step 2: Peel the sticker. Step 3: Place the sticker...and watch your Christmas painting come to life! Includes everything needed to create ten sticker paintings on study card stock. Plus, all the pages are perforated—making it easy to tear out each finished work to frame and share!

We have lots of Dover booklets of stickers, activities, and even tattoos for the younger set, such as shown above in Hanukkah Gifts. Come in and browse.