

Midmonth BookNotes

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All Treats and No Tricks!

Cozy Corner

Adams, Ellery. [The Little Lost Library](#) (Kensington \$27)
Big clues come in small packages as Miracle Books owner Nora Pennington and the Secret, Book, and Scone Society discover when they attempt to solve a series of murders connected to a bibliophile's missing books.

Andrews, Donna. [Rockin' Around the Chickadee](#) (Minotaur \$27)
After a body is found in Meg and Michael Langslow's yard, can Meg still keep her pregnant sister-in-law, Delaney, calm in the middle of a murder investigation, all while trying to catch the killer and prepare for the holidays?

Gerber, Daryl Wood. [Murder on the Page](#) (Kensington \$27)
Allie Catt, caterer and personal chef in the beautiful mountain community of Asheville, North Carolina, has devised a winning formula by using her clients' favorite books as inspiration, but when her friend's aunt ends up murdered, Allie conjures up those books again for clues to a killer. Gerber launches a new series that makes the most of her talent for crafting charming cozies.

Kelly, Vanessa. [Murder in Highbury](#) (Kensington \$27)
First in a captivating new series. Less than one year into her marriage to respected magistrate George Knightley, Emma has grown unusually content in her newfound partnership and refreshed sense of independence. But cheery circumstances change in an instant after Emma and Harriet Martin, now the wife of one of Mr. Knightley's tenant farmers, discover the body of Mrs. Augusta Elton, the vicar's wife on the altar steps. When suspicions suddenly fall on a harmless local, Emma—armed with wit, unwavering determination, and extensive social connections—realizes she must discreetly navigate an investigation of her own to protect the innocent and expose the ruthless culprit hiding in plain sight.

McKinlay, Jenn. [A Merry Little Murder Plot](#) (Berkley \$28)
Briar Creek library director Lindsey Norris tries to encourage a grumpy and reclusive writer in residence to join in the town's Christmas festivities and discovers she has a stalker.

Quigley, Mindy. [Sleep in Heavenly Pizza](#) (Minotaur \$9.99)
Pizza chef Delilah O'Leary and her cat Butterball navigate holiday festivities and an unexpected visit from Delilah's sister, only to face a murder mystery that threatens the town's snow sculpting championship and their festive spirit.

Historical Fiction, Mysteries, Romance and More

Cana, Natalie. [Sleeping with the Frenemy](#) (MIRA \$18.99)

When circumstances beyond their control push Sofi Santana and her ex, firefighter Leo Vega, into a tense roommate situation, Sofi finds that it is almost impossible to move on with someone new when Leo is there, reminding her what they had, every day.

Dunlap, A. Rae. [The Resurrectionist](#) (Kensington \$28)
In the literary tradition of *The Alienist* and *Anatomy: A Love Story*, this is a decadently macabre, dark and twisty gothic debut set in 19th century Scotland – where real-life serial killers Burke and Hare terrorized the streets of Edinburgh and a young medical student is lured into the illicit underworld of body snatching.

El-Fassi, Nadia. [Best Hex Ever](#) (Dell \$18)
Dina Whitlock, a talented kitchen witch running a London café with magic-infused treats, grapples with a love curse while preparing for her best friend's upcoming wedding where she unexpectedly hits it off with the best man Scott Mason. "El-Fassi's debut romance is a delightfully magical story with a welcome helping of spice. An emphasis on female friendship and Dina's connections with her family—Moroccan on her mother's side and Welsh on her father's—adds a heartwarming through line, but the real star of the story is the steam between Dina and Scott. A soft, spicy romance with perfect fall vibes." (*Kirkus*)

Fixsen, Jaima. [The Specimen](#) (Poisoned Pen \$17.99)
Isobel Tait finds herself, by chance, staring at a tiny human heart floating in a jar. It should be of little consequence; Dr. Burnett is renowned for his collection of oddities and medical specimens, and this, a juvenile heart with a damaged mitral valve, is not the strangest thing on display. Except that the condition is rare, and that Isobel's young son, who has been missing for months, suffered from the ailment. A phantom pulse beats in Isobel's ears. She knows something here isn't right. Missing persons cases are all too common in Edinburgh, where people simply vanish like mist. But Burnett is obsessed with his specimens – how far would he go to acquire a new one? Determined to investigate, Isobel joins his staff as the keeper of his collection. What she'll unearth, though, is far worse

than any of her nightmares.

Juniper, Josie. [Double Apex](#) (Forever \$17.99)
Top Formula 1 race engineer Phaedra Morgan's clash with the team's charismatic new driver, Cosmin Ardelean, leads to a secret, forbidden arrangement, but as their attraction deepens, their bond faces challenges that could derail everything.

Kelly, Julia. [Betrayal at Blackthorn Park](#) (Minotaur \$28)
Evelyne Redfern's first spy assignment at Blackthorn Park turns perilous when she and her handler, David Poole, must solve the murder of the chief engineer to protect a critical wartime facility. Fans of Susan Elia MacNeal and Ashley Weaver's WWII mysteries will love Kelly's equally diverting books.

Kelly, Lee and Jennifer Thorne. [The Starlets](#) (Harper \$18.99)
Vivienne Rhodes thinks she's finally landed her break playing Helen of Troy in Apex Pictures' big-budget epic, *A Thousand Ships*, an anticipated blockbuster meant to resurrect the failing studio. Naturally, she's devastated when she arrives on the remote Italian island of Tavalli and finds herself cast as the secondary character, Cassandra—while her nemesis, the fiancé-stealing Lottie Lawrence, America's supposed "sweetheart," is playing the lead role instead. The tension on set, though, turns deadly when the ladies discover that members of the crew are using the production as a front for something decidedly illegal—and that they are willing to kill to keep their dealings under wraps. When the two women find themselves on the run and holding key evidence, Vivienne and Lottie frantically agree to work together to deliver the proof to Interpol, hoping to protect both their lives and their careers. "Pass the popcorn and settle in for a terrific time with this seamlessly crafted blend of historical fiction and old-school suspense." (*LJ*)

Korelitz, Jean Hanff. [The Sequel](#) (Celadon \$29)
When Anna Williams-Bonner publishes her book and indulges in her own literary acclaim, she begins to receive excerpts of a novel she never expected to see again, a novel that should no longer exist. "Korelitz makes hay with her satirical depiction of the publishing industry's ego parade—untended slush piles play a pivotal role—and she brilliantly ushers the action toward a shocking conclusion. She also offers satisfying glimpses into what makes Anna tick, placing her alongside Tom Ripley in the pantheon of amoral an-

tiheroes. It's another taut and compulsively readable spellbinder from Korelitz." (PW)

Martin, Celestine. [Deja Brew](#) (Forever \$17.99)

After making a wish for a second chance to fix her life, an ex-celebrity chef and witch Sirena Caraway discovers she can redo the entire month of October. Think *Groundhog Day* with more kissing and pumpkin spice vibes.

Mesa, Desideria. [Bindle Punk Jefe](#) (Harper \$17.99)
Prohibition is in full swing, and the glamorous life of upper-class Kansas City is everything Rose (Luna) Lane ever hoped it would be. Being married to her best friend isn't so bad either, considering their agreement to keep their real love lives out of the public eye. However, try as she might to continue her life of anonymity, her popularity as a land developer's wife—and as a successful club owner—draws even more attention to her personal endeavors. Soon, the balancing act between the life of Luna and Rose becomes a full-time job itself, making visiting home harder than ever before. However, her haven, which once offered a place of acceptance, is growing more hostile. Her community of *brujas* criticizes her methods of using magic for economic and social gain while consorting with nefarious witches of the North. Meanwhile, the Pendergast Machine is running at full force, pushing his will and money all over the city. Keeping her true identity and powers a secret while posing for the society papers gets all the more dangerous as new enemies start to question her origins...and old ones creep up from dark realms.

Moning, Karen Marie. [The House on Watch Hill](#) (William Morrow \$30)

Zo Grey is reeling from the sudden death of her mother when she receives a surprising call from an attorney in Divinity, Louisiana, with the news she has been left an inheritance by a distant relative, the terms of which he will only discuss in person. Destitute and alone, with nothing left to lose, Zo heads to Divinity and discovers she is the sole beneficiary of a huge fortune and a monstrosity of a house that sits ominously at the peak of Watch Hill—but she must live in it, alone, for three years before the house, or the money, is hers. What Zo doesn't yet know is that her own roots lie in this very house and that in order to discover her true identity and awaken her dormant powers, she will have to face off against sinister forces she doesn't quite comprehend—or risk being con-

sumed by them.

Noble, Shelley. [The Colony Club](#) (William Morrow \$19.99)

When young Gilded Age society matron Daisy Harri-man is refused a room at the Waldorf because they don't cater to unaccompanied females, she takes matters into her own hands. She establishes the Colony Club, the first women's club in Manhattan, where visiting women can stay overnight and dine with their friends; where they can discuss new ideas, take on social issues, and make their voices heard.

Phillips, Hesse. [Lightborne](#) (Pegasus \$27.95)

In the plague-stricken streets of Elizabethan England, Kit Marlowe's plays are a roaring success; he seems destined for greatness. But in the spring of 1593, the queen's eyes are everywhere and the air is laced with paranoia. Marlowe receives an unwelcome visit from his one-time mentor, Richard Baines, a man who knows all of Marlowe's secrets and is hell-bent on his destruction. When Marlowe is arrested on charges of treason, heresy, and sodomy—all of which are punishable by death—he is released on bail with the help of Sir Thomas Walsingham. Kit presumes Walsingham to be his friend; in fact, the spymaster has hired an assassin to take care of Kit, fearing that his own sins may come to light. Now, with the queen's spies and the vengeful Baines closing in on the playwright, Marlowe's last friend in the world is Ingram Frizer, a total stranger who is obsessed with Kit's plays, and who will, within ten days' time, first become Marlowe's lover—and then his killer.

Pullen, Nicholas. [The Black Hunger](#) (Redhook \$19.99)

John Sackville will soon be dead. Shadows writhe in the corners of his cell as he mourns the death of his secret lover and as the gnawing hunger inside him grows impossible to ignore. He must write his last testament before it is too late. The story he tells will take us to the darkest part of the human soul. It is a tale of otherworldly creatures, ancient cults, and a terrifying journey from the stone circles of Scotland to the icy peaks of Tibet. It is a tale that will take us to the end of the world.

Robbins, Lawrence. [The President's Lawyer](#) (Atria \$28.99)

After a long career as one of DC's most powerful litigators, Rob Jacobson is faced with the case of a lifetime: the former President of the United States—

his childhood best friend—has been accused of murdering his mistress. Rob knows he's the only one who can prove his friend's innocence, but he is soon overwhelmed as he attempts to devise a strategy to defend an authoritative man with a taste for infidelity, serious anger issues, and unconventional sexual appetites. As the high-profile case unfurls, the troubled, intertwining pasts of the two men complicate Rob's efforts and soon, doubts begin to grow in his head. Could his oldest friend truly be capable of murder or is something even darker at play?

Roberts, Amber. [Haunt Your Heart Out](#) (Alcove \$29.99)

Homebody Lex McCall loves her sleepy Vermont town and quiet bookstore job. After her family, friends, and exes all moved away to seek futures elsewhere, Lex set one rule: no dating tourists, newcomers, or anyone else who is bound to leave her behind. When the bookshop owner, eager to off-load the supposedly haunted building, offers to sell the store to Lex at an unbeatable price, Lex jumps at the chance to further put down roots. Then handsome stranger James stops by the bookstore. Lex assumes he's just another tourist passing through, but it turns out he's part of a ghost-hunting documentary crew that's looking into the many "verified" ghost stories in town.

Ryan, Tom. [The Treasure Hunters Club](#) (Atlantic Monthly \$27)

Centuries ago after engaging in a fierce sea battle, Captain Barnabus Dagger sent some of his crew ashore to bury their ill-gotten gains. Ever since then the legendary Obelisk Treasure has drawn treasure hunters from around the globe to Maple Bay, Nova Scotia. Now Cass Jones, a one-hit wonder author hoping to jumpstart her writing career, Peter Barnett, whose stuck-in-a-rut life is shaken up by the surprise news that he is the heir to Maple Bay's leading family, and Dandy Feltzen, whose late beloved grandfather left her a clue to the Obelisk Treasure, find themselves caught up in final, frantic race to discover the whereabouts of Captain Barnabus's legendary booty

Sandeen, Del. [This Cursed House](#) (Berkley \$29)

In this Southern gothic horror debut, Jemma Barker abandons her life in 1960s Chicago for a position with a mysterious family in New Orleans, only to discover the dark truth: They're under a curse, and they think she can break it.

Somin, Yeon. [The Healing Season of Pottery](#) (Algonquin \$18.99)

Burned out by her TV news writing job, Jungmin abruptly leaves her job to take time alone and attempt to put her life back together, but when she stumbles upon a little pottery studio in her neighborhood, its windows almost entirely covered by plants, she is invited in by the mysterious workshop teacher. Award-winning Somin makes her English-language debut.

Stein, Charlotte. [How to Help a Hungry Werewolf](#) (St. Martin's \$18)

When Cassandra Camberwell returns to her hometown of Hollow Brook to clear out her late grandmother's ramshackle old house, the last thing she expects is Seth Brubaker on her doorstep. Her former best friend was responsible for the worst moment of her high school life, and she can't imagine he wants to do anything but torment her all over again. Until she unearths the real reason this annoyingly gorgeous beast of a man keeps hanging around: he's an actual werewolf, who's certain she's the witch that will ease his suffering

Sterling, Erin. [The Wedding Witch](#) (Avon \$18.99)
The New York Times best-selling author of *The Ex Hex* and *The Kiss Curse* brightens up the Winter Solstice with another spooky novel following Bowen Penhalow and the girl he feels strangely drawn to—especially when she becomes his only hope of salvation after a strong spell sends them to a Yuletide celebration more than 50 years in the past.

War, Pyae Moe Thet. [I Did Something Bad](#) (St. Martin's \$18)

In this smart and swoony adventure rom-com, freelance journalist Khin Haymar and movie star Tyler Tun find themselves teaming up to cover up a murder...and falling for each other in the process. "The movie-star romance gets new life from its Myanmar setting, and the realistic and moving portrayals of life-long friendships add depth to the story of two professionals struggling to maintain boundaries in the face of growing affection. This is a winning fiction debut from War." (LJ)

Teen

Anderson, Lily. [Killer House Party](#) (Henry Holt \$19.99)
From Printz Honor winning author Lily Anderson comes a young adult horror that follows Arden and her friends as their graduation party at an abandoned mansion turns into a bloody fight for survival.

Gardner, Faith. [If You Can Hear This](#) (HarperCollins \$19.99)
Posey Spade moves to the small town of Wild Pines and joins the AV Club, and when the club's beloved sponsor disappears, Posey and the club members dig into the mystery.

Hautman, Pete. [Answers to Dog](#) (Candlewick \$18.99)
When a stray border collie joins him on his runs, loner Evan, through the dog's friendship, thwarts an abusive dog breeder and a school bully, finding the courage to stand up for himself-and his new friend-and open up to those who matter most. National Book Award and Edgar winner Pete Hautman explores a friendship like no other—and the universal truth that dogs make life better, especially for underdogs.

Lippincott, Rachel. [Make My Wish Come True](#) (Simon & Schuster \$19.99)
Told in alternating voices, teen actress Arden James heads home for the holidays to improve her reckless reputation, surprising her ex-best friend and aspiring journalist Caroline with a fake dating proposition.

Luken, Erin. [This Dark Paradise](#) (Bloomsbury \$20.99)
When Lucia tries to steal the magical power source from an enchanted island to save her brother, she discovers a dark secret that threatens her survival. "Blending a healthy dose of introspection surrounding the metaphorical masks people wear with evocative storytelling, Luken presents an Italian-inspired, Fantasy Island–esque tale with an insidiously evil twist." (PW)

McKinnon, Kate. [The Millicent Quibb School of Etiquette for Young Ladies of Mad Science](#) (Little Brown \$17.99)
A madcap new adventure about sisters Gertrude, Eugenia and Dee-Dee Porch, who don't belong in their snooty town, school, or adoptive family, and after getting kicked out of the last etiquette school that would take them, the girls receive a mysterious invitation to

a new school under the tutelage of the infamous Millicent Quibb - a mad scientist with worms in her hair and oysters in her bathtub.

Tirreno, Lisa. [Prince of Fortune](#) (Atheneum \$19.99)
Shy Prince Edmund, gifted with rare magic and burdened by his nation's expectations, finds unexpected love with the Seer Lord Aubrey Ainsley, and together they must overcome war and dark sorcery to save their homeland.

Underwood, Sarah. [Gentlest of Wild Things](#) (HarperCollins \$19.99)
To save her beloved twin sister Phoebe from marrying Leandros, Eirene must complete four elaborate tasks he sets before her, which leads her to Lamia, the strange, neglected daughter he keeps locked away who longs for the outside world.

Nonfiction

Benoiel, Bernard. [Alfred Hitchcock All the Films](#) (Black Dog & Leventhal \$60)
Organized chronologically and covering every short film, television episode, and classic film that the "Master of Suspense" directed over the course of his illustrious, 60-year career, *Alfred Hitchcock All the Films* draws upon years of research to tell the behind the scenes stories of how each project was conceived, cast, and produced, down to the creation of the costumes, the search for perfect locations, and of course, the direction of some of cinema's most memorable scenes.

Davis, Kenneth C. [The World in Books](#) (Scribner \$30.99)
From ancient times to the present day, *The World in Books* offers a wide-ranging historical education through pleasure reading—and a fantastic introduction to some of the most thought-provoking, profound, and interesting nonfiction works of all time. From Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* to bell hooks's *All About Love*, as well as such recent classics as Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed* and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *We Should All Be Feminists*, Davis's guide suggests a world of nonfiction books and explains just why they're so historically meaningful and culturally relevant today.

King, Charles. [Every Valley the Desperate Lives and Troubled Times that Made Handel's Messiah](#) (Double-day \$32)

The New York Times best-selling historian reveals the untold moving story of the diverse and troubled individuals behind Handel's Messiah, set against the backdrop of 18th-century Britain's bust of creativity, war and political turmoil.

Weatherford, Jack. [Emperor of the Seas](#) (Bloomsbury \$35)

Genghis Khan built a formidable land empire, but he never crossed the sea. Yet by the time his grandson Kublai Khan had defeated the last vestiges of the Song empire and established the Yuan dynasty in 1279, the Mongols controlled the most powerful navy in the world. How did a nomad come to conquer China and master the sea? Based on ten years of research and a lifetime of immersion in Mongol culture and tradition, *Emperor of the Seas* brings this little-known story vibrantly to life.

Weber, Nicholas Fox. [Mondrian](#) (Knopf \$40)

The extraordinary and surprising life of Piet Mondrian, whose unprecedented geometric art revolutionized modern painting, architecture, graphic art, fashion design, and more—from acclaimed cultural historian Nicholas Fox Weber

Wullschlager, Jackie. [Monet](#) (Knopf \$45)

Drawing on thousands of never-before-translated letters and unpublished sources, this landmark biography reveals dramatic new information about the life and work of one of the most influential, modern painters of the late 19th century and founder of the Impressionist movement.