

BOOKNEWS from

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A MAGICAL MARCH

Opening Hours M-Fri 10 AM-7 PM; Sat 10 AM-6PM; Sun 12-5 PM

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.

THE FIRST 6 EVENTS ARE ON MST

MONDAY MARCH 3 5:00 PM Virtual Event

James L'Étoile with Patrick

L'Étoile discusses [River of Lies](#) (Oceanview \$18.99)

TUESDAY MARCH 4 7:00 PM Live Event

Lisa Unger with Olivia Fierro

Unger discusses [Close Your Eyes and Count to 10](#) (Park Row \$30)

Dangerous Hide & Seek on a remote island with real & digital elements

WEDNESDAY MARCH 5 6:00 PM Virtual Event

Adrian McKinty discusses [Hang on St Christopher](#) (Blackstone \$28.99)

1992 Belfast with DI Sean Duffy

Signed Books Available

THURSDAY MARCH 6 7:00 Live Event

Lauren Willig discusses [The Girl from Greenwich Street](#) (Harper \$30)

Aaron Burr & Alexander Hamilton for the defense in a 1790 murder trial

Our April Historical Fiction Pick

SATURDAY MARCH 8 10:00 AM Live Event

Local Authors Fair

Support independently published authors

SATURDAY MARCH 8 5:00 PM Live Event

Susanna Kearsley discusses [The King's Messenger](#)

(Sourcebooks \$26.99/\$16.99)

With stenciled edges and a map featured on the endpapers! & wooden bookmarks

A Scot has to navigate the treacherous court of James I

OUR EVENTS ARE NOW ON PDT

MONDAY MARCH 10 7:00 PM Live Event

First, a short chat with Steve Burrows, author of the Birders Mysteries

Elle Cosimano with Allison Brennan

Cosimano discusses [Finlay Donovan Digs Her Own Grave](#) (St Martins \$28)

Are there skeletons in her closet if not in her backyard?

TUESDAY MARCH 11 2:00 PM Live Book Launch

Rhys Bowen & Clare Broyles discuss [Silent as the Grave](#) (St Martins \$28)

Molly Murphy embroiled with Edison & DW Griffiths in the new movie industry

Join us for Afternoon Tea

WEDNESDAY MARCH 12 7:00 PM Live Event

Deanna Raybourn discusses [Kills Well with Others](#) (Berkley \$29)

The killer sequel to [Killers of a Certain Age](#) (\$17)

Don't discount silver foxes

THURSDAY MARCH 13 6:00 PM Live Special Event

If you attend you may take home your book. Otherwise we hold them until the April 1 on sale date

JA Jance discusses [Overkill](#) (Gallery \$28.99)

Sedona's Ali Reynolds

SATURDAY MARCH 15 10:30 AM Live & Virtual

Croak & Dagger Club discusses Tana French's [The Searcher](#) (\$18)

MONDAY MARCH 17 12:00 PM Live Event

Zibby Owens with Zach Silverman

Owens discusses [On Being Jewish Now](#) (Zibby Publishing \$12.99)

MONDAY MARCH 17 7:00 M Live Event

Gigi Pandian discusses [The Library Game](#) (St Martins \$28)

A Secret Staircase cozy mystery

TUESDAY MARCH 18 6:00 PM Live Event

Sandra Brown discusses [Blood Moon](#) (Grand Central \$30)

A podcaster and a cop chase a Louisiana abductor

Tess Gerritsen discusses [The Summer Guests](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$28.99/\$16.99)

The Martini Club #2, the sequel to our staff favorite [The Spy Coast](#) (\$16.99)

WEDNESDAY MARCH 19 1:00 PM Virtual Event

Natasha Pulley discusses [The Hymn to Dionysus](#) (Bloomsbury \$29.99)

A reimagining of the Greek God of Ecstasy's story which I expect is different from the version told in Mary Renault's work.

WEDNESDAY MARCH 19 5:00 PM Virtual Event

Katy Hays discusses [Saltwater](#) (Random \$30)
A twister set in Capri, our March Crime Book of the Month

THURSDAY MARCH 20 2:00 PM Virtual Event

Connie Briscoe discusses [Chloe](#) (Amistad \$30)
Visit Martha's Vineyard & a Potomac River mansion in a riff on *Rebecca*

FRIDAY MARCH 21 2:00 PM Live Event

Kathryn Lasky discusses [Slant of Light](#) (Severn House \$29.99)
A new Georgia O'Keeffe 1930s New Mexico Mystery
Wonderful reading for fans of Douglas Preston and Michael McGarrity and lovers of art

FRIDAY MARCH 21 7:00 PM Live and Virtual

SciFi Friday Club discusses Robert Jordan's [The Eye of the World](#) (\$10.99)

SATURDAY MARCH 22 11:00 AM

The Cookbook Club discusses Brook Williamson's [Sun-Kissed Cooking](#) (Harper \$35) reimagining vegetables
Members are encouraged to bring a dish to share

SATURDAY MARCH 22 5:00 PM Live Ticketed Event

Catherine Cowles discusses [Beautiful Exile](#) (Sourcebooks \$18.99 Deluxe Edition)
[Tickets](#): \$21 includes one copy of the book

SUNDAY MARCH 22 2:00 PM Live Event

Allison Brennan, Christina Dodd, Elle Owens
Brennan discusses [See How They Hide](#) (Mira Books \$28.99)
Dodd discusses [Girl Anonymous](#) (Harlequin \$30)
Owens discusses [Tell Me You Trust Me](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$16.99)

MONDAY MARCH 24 7:00 PM Live Book Launch

John Sandford with host Nick Petrie
Sandford discusses [Lethal Prey](#) (Putnam \$32)
Lucas Davenport & Virgil Flowers work a Minnesota case at their rollicking best as they contend with competitive podcasters and crowd-sourcing sleuthing
Lucas Davenport & Virgil Flowers work a Minnesota case
Our copies come with an exclusive Sandford photograph insert

TUESDAY MARCH 25 7:00 PM Live Event

Michael Connelly hosts **Rick Jackson and Michael McGough**
They discuss [Black Tunnel White Magic: The True Story](#) (Little Brown \$35)
Los Angeles True Crime with Introduction by Connelly
Sign up for [TICKETS](#) as more information is to come

THURSDAY MARCH 27 2:00 PM Virtual Event

Kensington Publishing Preview with John
Get updates on upcoming cozies, historicals, and thrillers

THURSDAY MARCH 27 5:00 PM Virtual Event

Andrew Ludington discusses his debut [Splinter Effect](#) (St Martins \$28)
A debut by a Northwestern University writer in the Indiana Jones vein involving traveling back in time to Constantinople and a treasured lost Menorah. Such fun, I loved it
Signed books available

THURSDAY MARCH 27 7:00 PM Live

Hardboiled Discussion Group
The club discusses David Goodis' [Somebody's Done For](#) (\$15.95)

SATURDAY MARCH 29 5:00 PM Live Event

Boyd and Beth Morrison discuss [The White Fortress](#) (Bloomsbury \$29.99)
Croatia, 1351 in the Tales of the Lawless Land series -- think medieval Clive Cussler style adventures based on sound scholarship
Erica Ruth Neubauer discusses [Homicide in the Indian Hills](#) (Kensington \$27)
1920s India up in Ootycamund with Jane Wunderly and Redvers

MONDAY MARCH 31 2:00 PM Virtual Event

Susan Meissner discusses [A Map to Paradise](#) (Penguin \$29)
1956 Malibu and the Hollywood Blacklist

MONDAY MARCH 31 7:00 PM Live Event

A Shadow Mountain Author Trio
Traci Hunter Abramson discusses [Novel Threat](#) (\$27.99)
Sian Ann Bessey discusses [A Time Traveler's Masquerade](#) (\$17.99)
Dani Pettrey discusses [One Wrong Move](#) (\$17.99)

OUR MARCH 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.

To join, gift, or request information please email sales@poisonedpen.com

British Crime Club One Unsigned hardcover or paperback per month
McAllister, Gillian. [Famous Last Words](#)

Cozy Crimes Club One Unsigned hardcover or paperback per month
James, Holly. [The Big Fix](#)

The Crime Collectors Book of the Month Club One Signed First Printing per month
Hays, Katy. [Saltwater](#) (Random \$30)

First Mystery Club One Signed First Printing per month
Hall, Clare Leslie. [Broken Country](#)

Hardboiled/Noir Club One Signed First Printing per month
McKinty, Adrian. [Hang on St Christopher](#)

Historical Fiction Club One First Printing per month
Limoncelli, Rosanne. [The Four Queens of Crime](#)

Historical Fiction Paperback Club One Unsigned paperback per month
Chance, Megan. [Glamorous Notions](#)

Notable New Fiction One Signed First Printing per month
Wink, Callan. [Beartooth](#)

Romance and Relationships One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month
Everett, Elizabeth. [The Lady Sparks a Flame](#)

SOME SIGNED BOOKS FOR MARCH

Abramson, Traci Hunter. [Novel Threat](#) (\$27.99). CIA Case Officer Brandon Hale contemplates walking away from the covert world of espionage to embark on a quieter path in publishing. But his plan takes an abrupt turn when a critical source within the Labyrinth terrorist organization is assassinated, leaving behind a cryptic message about a New York publishing house. Kimber Seidel, a CIA finance officer with secret aspirations of becoming a novelist, enjoys a serendipitous encounter with a handsome book lover like herself on her way home from London. Though she cannot reveal her true employment to her new friend, Brandon Hale, she can't deny the instant spark that ignites between them. When Kimber's manuscript is unexpectedly shopped to Monroe Publishing as a pawn in the CIA's counterterrorism plot, Kimber must navigate the intersection of her literary dreams and her covert life as well as her deepening connection with Brandon. Though each decoded message is leading Brandon and Kimber closer to the truth, it is also leading them into a line of fire....

Bohjalian, Chris. [The Jackal's Mistress](#) (Knopf \$29) is a story inspired by a real-life friendship across enemy lines where the wife, a Virginian, of a missing Confederate soldier, discovers a wounded Yankee officer from Vermont and saves him despite the terrible risks for both. In the story it's 1864. The battle of Gilbert's Ford leaves a Union Captain minus a leg and some fingers. A formerly enslaved woman named Sally discovers him and brings him to the home of 24-year-old Libby Steadman. She is a white woman whose husband, Peter, had freed the people enslaved at the Virginia gristmill he inherited and is now in a Yankee prison, if he's even still alive. As both whites and blacks are at risk of discovery and hanging, the local doctor, a drunk, is roped in. Tension mounts but the real pull is about two people who long for their spouses despite uncertain fates for all.

Bowen, Rhys/Clare Broyles. [Silent As the Grave](#) (St Martins \$28). The 1909 Easter break begins in New York City where Molly Murphy, erstwhile sleuth, is retired to raise her children. Her husband, NYC Detective Daniel, is at work in Washington, DC. Bored, Molly and the children accept an invitation to visit the set of a movie being shot by her friend the writer Ryan O'Hara. An actress is fired and Molly's adopted teenager Bridie, on hand, is asked to replace her. Bridie proves to be a natural and is asked to star in a film with a real plot but with special effects that begin to dangerously malfunction. Is this chance, or sabotage? And what danger does the filming pose for Bridie? The nascent movie business, mostly in New Jersey if I recall, involves Thomas Edison and DW Griffiths.

Brown, Sandra. [Blood Moon](#) (Grand Central \$29.99). An embittered detective and an ambitious TV show producer are in a race against the clock to prevent another young woman from disappearing before the next blood moon. That's the premise of Brown's sexy love story entwined with the search for a killer. Detective John Bowie of the Auclair, Louisiana, police department is known among his colleagues for his strong opinions. His vocal doubts about the arrest of Billy Oliver, a young Black man, in the disappearance of 18-year-old Crissy Mellin—which led to Oliver's suicide—has put Bowie in direct conflict with his superior officer, Lt. Tom Barker. Three and a

half years after Oliver's death, a still-haunted Bowie is ringed in by Beth Collins, producer for the popular true crime show *Crisis Point*, in a bar. Beth is developing an episode based on what she believes could be major evidence tying Crissy's abduction to a series of similar crimes, all of which occurred under blood moons. After Bowie agrees to help Beth relitigate Crissy's case, Barker fires him, giving Bowie the freedom to handle things on his own terms. From their first meeting, Bowie's and Beth's chemistry is palpable, and Brown spices up their sleuthing. Veteran Brown is a deliciously smooth stylist.

Coben, Harlan. [Nobody's Fool](#) (Grand Central \$30). Harlan has written plenty of blockbuster suspense thrillers. His latest is the follow-up to [Fool Me Once](#) (\$19). Sami Kierce returns to investigate a dark incident from his past. Decades ago, Sami was on a backpacking trip through Spain when he woke up with a knife in his hand and his girlfriend Anna's dead body beside him. Twenty-two years later, Sami is shocked to see Anna among his students in a night school course. Anna bolts from the classroom as soon as the pair makes eye contact, setting us up for one heck of a compelling mystery.

Cosimano, Elle. [Finlay Donovan Digs Her Own Grave](#) (St Martins \$28). At the outset, the citizens of South Riding, Virginia, are eagerly gossiping about the discovery of a body in the rose garden of mystery writer and divorced mom Finlay Donovan's nosy 81-year-old neighbor, Mrs. Haggerty after a pipe bursts. Finlay and her sidekick, nanny Vero, are looking forward to a break from crime solving, but since Mrs. Haggerty's house is now a crime scene, she ends up staying at Finlay's and the investigation is on. Yes, five years after he vanished, Ashburn mortgage broker Gilford Dupree has finally turned up. Loudoun County Detective Mike Tran's arrest of Finlay's ex, developer Steven Donovan, for the murder throws Finlay's dream of having even one more peaceful night with her adorably self-assertive children and her latest beau, Fairfax County Detective Nicholas Anthony, into the trash can. As Finlay struggles to figure out how to deal with the lucrative offer Hollywood producer Randall Wolfe has made to turn the story of her earlier adventures (read: earlier crimes she's secretly been complicit in) into a TV series, ghosts from her past seem to confront her at every turn, eventually leading her to the truth. Recommended to fans of Janet Evanovich, Ali Hazelwood, and Charlaune Harris.

Dodd, Christina. [Girl Anonymous](#) (Harlequin \$30). As a child, Maarja Daire saw her mother ignite an explosion that killed vengeful mob boss Benoit Arundel—and herself—to save Maarja's life. Maarja's been on the run ever since... fleeing from intimacy, from love, from consequences. Now an adult, Maarja hides in plain sight as a fine arts mover, transporting priceless belongings. Work for a new client brings her to the mansion where the fateful blast from her childhood occurred. There she meets Dante, the ruthless, scarred and brooding Arundel family boss. He watches her with dark intent...but does he remember her? "Dodd cleverly ratchets up her usual exciting mix of suspense and romance to incendiary levels by successfully marrying a wildly imaginative story line involving an ancient feud, a Mafia clan straight out of La Cosa Nostra, and a rare artifact."

Donoghue, Emma. [The Paris Express](#) (Summit Books \$26.99). I wanted to like this more than I did. Others recommend this tale inspired by a true story. “On October 22, 1895, Mado Pelletier boards the express from Granville to Paris with a homemade bomb in tow. Born into poverty, she’s furious over the plight of the working class, which is made all the more plain to her by the arrangement of the train’s carriages: first-class passengers are placed at the center of the train to cushion the blow in the event of a crash. Three members of Parliament are riding in first class, and Mado hopes that by assassinating them, she will send a message to the ruling class. But as the locomotive speeds toward Paris, Mado meets her fellow passengers and questions whether she can follow through with her plan. Through shifting points of view—including that of the train engine itself—Donoghue establishes an intricate web of human relationships as the narrative speeds toward an unexpected yet plausible finale. Along the way, she offers detailed commentary on the railway’s cynical exploitation of its workers.”

Gerritsen, Tess. [The Summer Guests](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$28.99/\$16.99) Retired CIA agent Maggie Bird and her ex-spy friends attempt to track down a missing teenage girl in Gerritsen’s lively sequel to [The Spy Coast](#) (\$16.99). After 15-year-old Zoe Conover vanishes during a family vacation in the small hamlet of Purity, Maine, Maggie and her martini-sipping cohorts jump on the case, earning the begrudging respect of local police chief Jo Thibodeau. The mystery deepens when authorities dredge up decades-old human remains from a pond next to the property where the Conovers were staying. Unwilling to write off the discovery as a coincidence, Maggie and her team launch a wide-ranging investigation that reveals dark secrets about a mass killing in 1972 and reignites rumors that Purity hosted government drug experiments throughout the ’60s. Meanwhile, sparks start to fly between Maggie and her ruggedly handsome neighbor, Declan Rose. As in the first book, Gerritsen paints Maggie and her crew with a fine brush. These sexagenarian spies are hitting their stride.

* Goldberg, Leonard. [A Scandalous Affair](#) (Pegasus \$27.95). In 1918, during the height of the Great War, Joanna Holmes and the Watsons receive a late-night, clandestine visit from Sir William Radcliffe, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who brings with him an agonizing tale of blackmail; a case so sensitive that it can only be spoken of in the confines of 221B Baker Street. An unknown individual has come into possession of salacious photographs, which not only sullies the family name, but may force the chancellor to vacate his seat on the War Council where his advice is most needed. The blackmailer has in their possession revealing photographs that show Sir William’s granddaughter in romantic encounters with a man other than the aristocrat to whom she is engaged to marry. Sir William’s family has been forced to pay exorbitant sums for several of the photographs, but even more salacious pictures remain in the blackmailer’s possession—and will no doubt carry greater demands and threats. Scotland Yard cannot be involved, for fear of public disclosure. So.... This story is powered by a fear of scandal that is missing today.

Green, John. [Everything Is Tuberculosis](#) (Penguin \$28). We have a limited supply. Green, the #1 bestselling author of *The Anthropocene Reviewed* and a passionate advocate for global healthcare reform, tells the story of one young boy’s fight against a curable condition and the powerful biotech companies standing

in the way of its eradication, told alongside scientific and societal insights into the disease.

* Griffiths, Elly. [Frozen People](#) (Quercus \$44). Ali Dawson and her cold case team investigate crimes so old, they’re frozen—or so their inside joke goes. Most people don’t know that they travel back in time to complete their research. The latest assignment sees Ali venture back farther than they have dared before: to 1850s London in order to clear the name of Cain Templeton, the eccentric great-grandfather of MP Isaac Templeton. Rumor has it that Cain was part of a sinister group called The Collectors; to become a member, you had to kill a woman.... Fearing for her safety in the middle of a freezing Victorian winter, Ali finds herself stuck in time, unable to make her way back to her life, her beloved colleagues, and her son, Finn, who suddenly finds himself in legal trouble in the present day. Could the two cases be connected?

* Hall, Clare Leslie. [Broken Country](#) (Simon Schuster \$28.99). One of the hottest debuts of this year, a story of grief, love, and murder set in the Dorset countryside, comes to us signed by British author Hall for our **March First Mystery Subscription Club** (first in line, free shipping to members). We will have some extra copies. It’s compared to [Where the Crawdads Sing](#) (\$18) if set on a British farm, to Ian McEwan, to.... I truly loved it.

The year is 1968 and Beth Johnson, wife of gentle sheep farmer Frank, remains shattered by the death of her nine-year-old son, Bobby, in an accident two years earlier. Her first love, Gabriel, a bestselling novelist who grew up wealthy on a nearby estate, returns with his young son, Leo, after separating from his American wife. Beth reconnects with Gabriel, fantasizing about rewinding her life to a simpler time, and she forges a bond with Leo, who reminds her of Bobby. An unreliable narrator, Beth, who once attended Oxford aspiring to be a poet, provides a blinkered view of the action which harks back into the 1950s and forward into a local jury trial over a farmer who has been murdered and someone close to her is the accused, but neglecting to reveal the identities of these two characters until more than halfway through the narrative. Readers are kept guessing about the precise consequences of Gabriel’s return and the circumstances behind Bobby’s death, but heartbreak is all over it. Hall writes beautifully of rural life and poignantly about the prevalence of the English class system.

“*Broken Country* combines the intoxicating passion of Sally Rooney’s *Normal People* with the hard-won wisdom of Ian McEwan’s *On Chesil Beach*. It is also as romantic about the British countryside as Elena Ferrante is about Naples. Both a love story and a pulsing suspense, you could wait a lifetime for a novel as good as this.”

Hays, Katy. [Saltwater](#) (Random \$30). Following up her debut in [The Cloisters](#) (\$17.99), one of our 2022 First Mystery Picks, Hays takes readers to the island [island!] of Capri off the coast of Italy, where the wealthy and private Lingate family return each year, despite the tragic death of matriarch Sarah, wife of Richard, back in 1992. Did Sarah fall from the cliff accidentally or did she jump? Or was she pushed? For daughter Helen, those questions are a side note to plans she’s made for this year’s visit to the island. All her life she has been suffocated by her family’s power, money, and obsession with keeping up appearances. Now, having formed a friendship and alliance with her uncle’s assistant, Lorna, she thinks she’s found a way out. But the plan hinges on

reminding everyone of Sarah's death and threatening to expose long-buried secrets. Once the plan is in motion, they lose control of the players with deadly effect. "The tension in this atmospheric novel builds like a drumbeat as Hays explores the secrets that lie within a privileged family and keeps readers guessing from one twist to the next. For fans of Lucy Foley and Lucinda Berry," says the No. 1 Library Reads Pick for March about our **March Crime Subscription Club Pick**.

Read an interview with the author [HERE](#).

Jackson, Rick/Matthew McGough/Michael Connelly. [Black Tunnel White Magic: The True Story](#) (Little Brown \$35) Retired LAPD detective Jackson teams up with true crime author McGough to recount how Jackson and his partner, Frank Garcia, spent six years solving the bizarre murder of Ron Baker. The 21-year-old Baker was found dead in a Los Angeles train tunnel on the summer solstice in 1990, his throat slashed with a Marine Corps knife. Almost immediately, Baker's two roommates, Nathan Blalock and Duncan Martinez, became the sole suspects, but the case stalled after Martinez faked his own kidnapping and disappeared for 18 months. Jackson and McGough's account of the investigation, which is dotted with strange red herrings—Baker was interested in Wicca, and his family received cryptic ransom calls—unfolds like a mind-bending prestige TV crime drama, with the details liable to grip readers as tightly as they did the authors. Readers drawn to complex, slow-burn investigations will be rapt...**as is apparently Michael Connelly who wrote the Introduction and joins the authors for the launch on March 25.**

Jance, JA. [Overkill](#) (Gallery \$28.99). Remember you can pick it up at her March 13 event or wait for the formal release on April 1.

It's too soon for a ready copy so all I can say is: Chuck Brewster, the former business partner of Ali Reynolds's husband B. Simpson, once carried on an affair with Clarice, B.'s first wife. So when he's found murdered with Clarice standing nearby covered in blood, it seems an open and shut case. But Clarice swears she's innocent and begs for Ali's help. At the same time, someone is targeting Camille Lee while she's on the road for High Noon.

Jones, Stephen Graham. [The Buffalo Hunter Hunter](#) (Saga Press \$29.99) is a chilling historical horror novel, an ingenious Western tracing the life of a vampire who haunts the fields of the Blackfeet reservation looking for justice. In a frame narrative set in 2012, academic Etsy Beaucarne learns of the discovery of a 1912 manuscript hidden in the wall of a Montana parsonage, written by her great-great-great-grandfather Arthur. Within lies Arthur's transcription of the personal history told to him during confession by Good Stab, a Blackfeet warrior. Decades earlier, Good Stab was bitten by a being he refers to as "the Cat Man," a caged, feral creature transported by an ill-fated expedition of white settlers. That bite endows Good Stab with supernatural powers of healing and regeneration, but also a voracious thirst for blood, which he slakes by preying on the white hunters ravaging the frontier through their profligate slaughter of buffalo herds. Good Stab's horrifying ordeal offers a dark window into the history of conflict between America's Indigenous inhabitants and its white colonizers, with Jones incorporating details of the real-life Marias Massacre of Blackfeet by the U.S. Army into the plot. Jones heightens the impact of the massacre's recounting through Good Stab's narrative voice, whose easy incorporation of lore and

myth into his vernacular makes the supernatural seem believable. It's a remarkably well-wrought work of historical horror

* Kearsley, Susanna. [The King's Messenger](#) (Sourcebooks \$26.99). Our first 100 copies come with Wooden bookmarks.

Another richly detailed historical from Canadian Kearsley explores romance, court alliances, and the limits of one's duty in stirring story of an honorable man in service to a treacherous king, and the mission that brings him to love and his true calling. It also illuminates the family of James I (and VI of Scotland) and particularly his Queen, a Danish princess often overlooked amidst the affairs of a man with a horrendous childhood (son of Mary, Queen of Scots) who was either gay or bi in an age not tolerant of either. While the story starts in London we travel north. 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 who suddenly died in 1612. 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 the supposed murder of Prince Henry. 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... Paperback: [The King's Messenger](#) (\$17.99) has sprayed edges.

Lasky, Kathryn. [A Slant of Light](#) (Severn House \$29.99). You will be enchanted by the descriptions of the Southwest landscape seen through Georgia O'Keeffe's artistic eye as well as by the real people who populate the series alongside the fictional. This is a wonderful series for fans of Douglas Preston

Georgia makes a fascinating sleuth in 1930s New Mexico, a period when she was still married to Stieglitz and shifting her art towards the work she is best known for today. Lasky envisions Georgia with a lover, the local county Sheriff, solving murders linked to her home at Ghost Ranch as well as the Mabel Dodge Luhan crowd in Taos, and with much wider implications. Now it's 1936. Settling in for a harsh winter alone at her at the Ghost Ranch, Georgia makes the most of the weather before a storm rolls in. But when she finds the ideal spot to capture a particularly nice sunset, Georgia discovers a boy, cold, exhausted and desperate—a boy who is an extraordinary runner. Joseph Reyes is a student at St Ignatius School, and he claims that sinister Sister Angelica and Father Raphael have raped and killed his sister. And she is not the only one who suddenly went missing! Georgia is determined to find out what's happening at this seemingly peculiar school, but as she investigates she uncovers even more disturbing machinations that link the school to the newly founded Opus Dei institution and its cult-like practices as well as Nazis and hidden spies. This novel stands alone but I urge you to read [Light on Bone](#) (\$19.99) and the second, [Mortal Radiance](#) (\$20 Signed hardcover, \$18.99 paperback).

* Limoncelli, Rosanne. [The Four Queens of Crime](#) (Crooked Lane \$29.99). "Limoncelli makes a splash with her riotously entertaining debut, which imagines real-life crime writers Agatha Christie, Dorothy L. Sayers, Ngaio Marsh, and Margery Allingham teaming up to solve a murder in 1938. At the outset, the women, all friends, have agreed to host a fundraising gala for the Women's Voluntary Service as fears rise that Nazi aggression

might lead to war. The party is to be held at Hursley House, the country residence of former Conservative MP Sir Henry Heathcote. The festivities turn sour, however, when Heathcote is found dead in his library with a stunned expression on his face. Lilian Wyles, the real-life first female DCI at Scotland Yard, is assigned to the investigation, and she leans on the macabre expertise of Christie and her cohorts to help crack the case. Limoncelli delivers both a shrewd whodunit and an insightful look at the lives and careers of her heroines, with fizzy conversations about each woman's writing style seamlessly woven into their crime-solving. The result is a note-perfect Golden Age pastiche with a satisfying metafictional twist"—and our **March Historical Fiction Subscription Club Pick**.

Ludington, Andrew. [Splinter Effect](#) (St Martins \$28). Ludington debuts with a rip-roaring thriller about a time-traveling treasure hunter who journeys to Justinian Constantinople in hopes of recovering the menorah of the Temple of Jerusalem. In 2018, the menorah has been lost for centuries-making it a hot commodity for adventurers like Dr. Robert "Rabbit" Ward, who works as a chrono-archaeologist for the Smithsonian, embarking on missions to the past sponsored by wealthy donors. On Rabbit's first attempt to recover the menorah, he made an enemy of the influential Kahan family by abandoning their 20-year-old son, Aaron, in 455 CE Rome as it was being sacked by the Vandals. Since then, Rabbit has traveled alone on a series of successful assignments, but his credibility has been shaken by the interference of an unknown female time traveler in his most recent missions. Skeptical donors give Rabbit a final chance to prove himself by retrieving the menorah from its last known location in 535 CE Constantinople. He faces steep odds, however, with another traveler after the same object, and indications that he's become the target of a shadowy adversary.

"The thrill-a-minute chase scenes in pursuit of priceless artifacts will recall the breakneck pace of *National Treasure* and *The Da Vinci Code*. Fans of Kage Baker's classic "Company" novels may have finally found a worthy successor. The heart of this story is Rabbit's desperation to fix the things and people that he broke even if he has to outrun shadowy criminal time-looters and shady government agencies looking for scapegoats, in the past and in the present."—*Library Journal* starred review for a debut by a fellow Northwestern University alum.

Mahurin, Shelby. [The Shadow Bride](#) (Harper \$21.99). In the thrilling conclusion of the duology set in the world of the Serpent & Dove series, a vampire and the woman who tried to kill him prove that true love can conquer anything, even Death. Young adult fiction, perfect for fans of Sarah J. Maas.

McCann, Colum. [Twist](#) (Random House \$28) delivers a haunting portrait of "a chameleon, a charlatan, a con man," painted by a narrator whose own existence in midlife provides a meaningful counterpoint. Invoking Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, McCann delivers this utterly contemporary that begins when struggling novelist and occasional playwright" Anthony Fennell leaves his Dublin home to research a piece of long-form journalism. He boards a Belgian-owned vessel whose crew is charged with repairing an undersea cable in a canyon four kilometers below the ocean surface off the African coast. But Fennell has no hint of the mystery he'll need to untangle, a puzzle that revolves around John A. Conway, veteran chief of the mission to fix the vital communications link that stretches from London to Cape Town.

McKinty, Adrian. [Hang on St Christopher](#) (Blackstone \$28.99). McKinty's fabulous last investigation for Northern Ireland's DI Sea Duffy, [The Detective Up Late](#) (\$16.99), set up this new book by moving Duffy to Scotland. It's July, 1992. He's now commuting to Belfast six days per month, counting down the hours until he can retire from the Royal Ulster Constabulary. So now, while Duffy's boss is holidaying in Spain, a murder is reported in Belfast: well-liked portrait painter Quentin Townes was killed in what Duffy's colleagues quickly label a violent carjacking. Duffy, on the other hand, has a hunch that the attack was targeted. Soon, he unearths a plot linking foreign forces to the IRA, a discovery that makes him a target for ruthless assassins and sends him to the U.S. to solve the puzzle. "As always, Duffy is a sly, lovable narrator, peppering the narrative with witty asides and copious references to 1980s and '90s British pop culture. Enriched by McKinty's brisk plotting, illuminating glimpses at a difficult period of Irish history, and poignant reflections on aging, and balancing action with intimacy, this is a cracking good time."

Morrison, Boyd/Beth. [The White Fortress](#) (Bloomsbury \$29.99). Brother and sister Morrison join us again with a historical thriller taking us to the Dalmatian Coast, specifically Croatia, 1351, although a prologue recounts sea battle between Venetians led by explorer Marco Polo and rival Genoese merchants. As English knight Gerard Fox and his new bride Willa are sailing towards Dubrovnik they inadvertently wreck a rescue mission. And become caught in a power play between the city's treasurer and a Serbian warlord. A century-old prophecy and the Polo manuscript lost in the earlier struggle could spark a war engulfing the whole Adriatic coast. I love this Lawless Land series, so much like a medieval Cussler adventure. Boyd wrote a number of thrillers in Cussler's Oregon Files series and Beth is a distinguished medievalist at the Getty. Although this is their third it stands fine on its own, but start with [The Lawless Land](#) and move on to [The Last True Templar](#) (\$16.95 each).

Neubauer, Erica Ruth. [Homicide in the Indian Hills](#) (Kensington \$27). Neubauer, Erica Ruth. newlyweds Jane Wunderly and Redvers Dibble traveling to India by train in 1927. Redvers, an English banker, is visiting the mountain town of Ootacamund ("Ooty" for short) on official business. The American Jane, meanwhile, plans to explore Ooty's lush gardens and tea plantations. On the train, the couple bumps into British expat Gretchen Beetner, a former member of the Indian National Congress whose outspoken opposition to British rule in India instantly enchants Jane. After the three strike up a friendship, Gretchen is found dead, the victim of a supposed tiger attack. Jane and Redvers suspect foul play, however, and quickly identify people close to Gretchen with reasons both personal and political for wanting her dead. A second killing raises the stakes and intrigue, leading Jane and Redvers to believe they might be in peril. As they sort through a mélange of blackmail and betrayal, they cling to each other for support. Neubauer's solid puzzle plot is accented by well-drawn characters, evocative scenery, and captivating historical detail.

Owens, Elle. [Tell Me You Trust Me](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$16.99). When her husband goes missing, Marissa Creighton fears the worst. *Tell me you trust me* was the last thing Ethan said to her, and she'd shrugged it off. Now she can't get those words out of her head. Marissa's family has always been her rock. But when

they come to help her with 18-month-old Logan, their overprotectiveness borders on oppression—an occupational hazard of the family’s surveillance business, or is it? Seeking comfort in the playlist she and Ethan share, Marissa is shocked to find a new song there: “Trust Me.” She’s certain it’s a message. Using song titles as code, she and Ethan start communicating back and forth. But she still doesn’t understand why he left. Stick around to find out....

Owens, Zibby. [On Being Jewish Now](#) (Zibby Publishing \$12.99). “Zibby Owens has done the literary world a great service, collecting important views at a critical moment in history. As she says, this is not a time to lower your voice. Kudos to her and all the authors here for sharing valuable insight, emotion, and perspective on the often misunderstood Jewish experience.” —Mitch Albom. Zibby is directing all profits to Artists Against Antisemitism. The list of contributors can be found by clicking on the title.

Pandian, Gigi. [The Library Game](#) (St Martins \$28). When Las Vegas magician Tempest Raj’s performing career ended in ruin, Tempest returned to her small California hometown to join the family business: a secret staircase construction firm. The firm’s latest client, Harold Gray, hired the company to convert his home into a library focused on classic detective fiction just before he died. Now, Harold’s heir and grandnephew, Cameron, has taken control of the project. He asks for his own living quarters above the library and goes ahead with his late uncle’s plan to host an interactive murder mystery play, written by Tempest and her friend Ivy, to christen the new space. After one of the actors is killed while rehearsing a stunt with a toy gun, the bad situation turns truly bizarre. Not only had the victim somehow switched places at the last second with another actor, who’s now missing, but then the body disappears altogether. Drawing on her expertise as an illusionist, Tempest sets out to solve the impossible crime. “Tempest remains an immensely likable heroine, and Pandian’s shrewd puzzle plot arrives at a satisfying and surprising conclusion.”

Raybourn, Deanna. [Kills Well with Others](#) (Berkley \$29). I am a true fan of Raybourn’s [Killers of a Certain Age](#) (\$17) where you can’t help but fall in love with the 4 women operatives who work for The Museum, a secret organization that restores stolen art to their rightful owners. The women, recruited when young and honed to be the best assassins in the world are so likeable, relatable and so so deadly. And now, aging, so disposable. Only they are not.

Lesya reviews: For years, Billie Webster and her three colleagues—Helene, Mary Alice, and Natalie—were professional assassins working for a British organization called the Museum. They’ve retired, but after a massive shake-up when members of the administration tried to kill them, the four women have been called back. Someone has killed an assassin, and the death may be connected to a recent security breach. Worst of all, the women could be targets because of a case in the past when they took out a Bulgarian. Are they targets of the man’s son? They accomplish their goal of killing their target onboard the *Queen Mary 2*, but it only grows more complicated with a web that goes back to World War II and art smuggling. Now, as they hide in plain sight, and travel across Europe and Asia, they attempt to complete a job they started over 30 years earlier. Enjoy the return of the four senior assassins whose escapades from the past and present are

intermixed in a fast-paced, humorous adventure. The books stand out for their wit and unlikely friendships.” And for me, time spent in Sardinia where I travel in May.

Ritter, Krysten. [Retreat](#) (Harper \$28.99). Signed Limited Edition. In *Jessica Jones* star Ritter’s second novel Liz Dawson, a con artist who targets the elite, is beginning to wear out her welcome when she is invited to oversee an art installation for Isabelle Beresford at a vacant resort in Mexico. Liz quickly sees the potential for an even bigger scam when she is mistaken for Isabelle, who owns the resort and is mysteriously missing. Liz’s first few days of impersonating Isabelle spiral into deceit when Liz discovers the dead bodies of a woman and Isabelle’s husband, Oliver, in the forest around the resort. With Oliver’s shady business deals, Liz’s own past, and Oliver’s irresistible brother all catching up to her, Liz must decide whether to escape or stay and risk her life. Best for fans of the actress.

Sandford, John. [Lethal Prey](#) (Putnam \$32). **Our copies come with an exclusive card showing a photo OF John and one BY John—I think the one of John is a self-portrait as he’s a camera enthusiast.**

We’re in Minnesota with Lucas Davenport and Virgil Flowers. 20 years earlier Doris Grandfelt died in a brutal stabbing as we see in the first chapter. We also see who and how. And now Doris’ sister Lara, a woman with drive and assets, learns she has breast cancer. The single thing she can best do is try to find her sister’s killer before she dies, so she uploads all the information she has accumulated onto every true crime website in the world along with promising a \$5 million dollar reward for information leading to the killer. This unleashes a horde of true-crime bloggers looking for any leads, but also for clicks to hook more followers. These guys are extremely competitive and basically without boundaries. So are Lucas and Virgil who are called in to examine any new leads although Virgil is mostly interested in working on his new novel. Even they are surprised by the true crime community’s actions. But then.... Of course we readers know what there is to uncover, so we watch how it rolls.

Scalzi, John. [When the Moon Hits Your Eye](#) (Tor \$29.99). The moon has turned into cheese. Now humanity has to deal with it. For some it’s an opportunity. For others it’s a moment to question their faith: In God, in science, in everything. Still others try to keep the world running in the face of absurdity and uncertainty. And then there are the billions looking to the sky and wondering how a thing that was always just *there* is now... something absolutely *impossible*.

Unger, Lisa. [Close Your Eyes and Count to 10](#) (Park Row \$29.99). Here we go off to a remote island for an extreme game of hide-and-seek in an abandoned hotel. The prize for winning — a million dollars. Pro tip: It’s not about the game, but about what we’ll do to survive when stunts turn to survival and the stakes become all too real. Unger makes good use of the locked-room structure adding in her trademark twists as the perils of the real and the virtual worlds collide. “Hide-and-seek is a classic kids’ game, but in Lisa Unger’s heart-pounding new thriller, it’s far from child’s play... Her carefully crafted psychological thrillers are reliable bestsellers, thanks to her skill at creating engaging, complex characters and her mastery of the killer plot twist. This book does all that and, like many of her recent books, makes effective use of our dependence on our devices. The question is

whether they save our lives or become the death of us.” —*Tampa Bay Times*

Willig, Lauren. [The Girl from Greenwich Street](#) (Harper \$29.99). Lesa reviews: Just before Christmas in 1789, Elma Sands walked out of her cousin’s boardinghouse in New York City and was not seen again. Her cousins thought she was leaving to marry Levi Weeks, a carpenter who boarded there. But then Levi showed up that night, asking about Elma. It wasn’t until January that Elma’s body was found in the Manhattan Well. Handbills circulated, and a mob called for the arrest of Levi Weeks, accusing him of killing Elma. After his arrest, Levi’s influential and wealthy brother Ezra hires Aaron Burr and another prominent New York attorney to defend Levi. Politics and jealousy won’t allow Alexander Hamilton to stay out of the trial. He insists on serving as part of the defense. In the sensational two-day trial, Hamilton and Burr compete for the public’s attention while attempting to save Levi’s life. Historical personalities bring this real story to life in a riveting account of the first U.S. murder trial for which there is a transcript. The author of the ‘Pink Carnation’ series and many thoughtful historicals leans on that transcript for the trial testimony in a gripping novel that will appeal to true-crime buffs, those interested in Hamilton and Burr, and historical mystery fans.” I add that it’s the history more than the story (and the extensive documentation) that makes this our **April Historical Fiction Subscription Club Pick**. The March Pick is the Limoncelli debut listed above.

Wink, Callan. [Beartooth](#) (Spiegel & Grau \$28), our **March Notable New Fiction Subscription Club Pick**, is the story of two brothers roped into a risky criminal job in the Federally protected lands of Yellowstone. It’s a combination of a heist thriller and the work of, say, Peter Heller and others of the epic Western novel ilk. For its lyrical writing of Montana by Wink, who is a fishing guide on the Yellowstone and based in Livingston, think Jim Harrison too. Watch a [super video conversation](#) and learn a lot from Callan and from Patrick. You can skip me and go forward straight to when Patrick comes in.

“Wink is at home in rugged but beautiful settings, and he takes his time to look around at both the grandeur and the rot, the rippling muscles of this landscape and its bones. Rather than painting a static portrait, Wink makes this place the timeless one of the American West. While *Beartooth*’s plot packs a punch, its natural rhythm builds gradually. Agreeing to the Scot’s proposition sets a course into motion that Thad can’t control.” Here’s a must read for CJ Box fans too.

Winstead, Ashley. [This Book Will Bury Me](#) (Sourcebooks \$27.99) “nods to the genre of dark academia and feels like both a satire of and a homage to true crime. On its surface, it’s the story of unsolved murder—the deaths of three college girls in Delphine, ID—and the true crime fans who take justice into their own hands. The compulsively readable story shows how things can be hidden in plain sight, even when the world is watching a crime unfold. Written with footnotes, narrative gaps, and a narrative voice that is unreliable to say the least, the novel spins in unpredictable ways that will keep readers guessing at every police misstep and each personal revelation along the way. Between the cheeky humor of TV’s *Only Murders in the Building* and the grim, psychological recasting of facts through fiction and memory (as exemplified by Gillian Flynn’s *Gone*

Girl), Winstead’s novel breathes life into stories that, the narrator hints, might be better off dead and buried.”—*LJ Starred Review*. **Publishes in late March but not Signed here until April 29.**

CLASSICS

Himes, Chester. [The Third Generation](#) (\$19). Lillian Taylor has three sons, a comfortable house, and a well-liked husband who teaches at a local college. But her contempt for her family’s dark complexion infects this bright world until it begins to come undone. As one troubling incident leads to another, her husband is pushed to an ever more precarious existence and her best-loved son, Charles, sinks into a life of vice in the perilous borderland between black and white society. Ralph Ellison called this “By far the most intense and compassionate probing of the psychological predicament of a middle-class Negro family yet written.”

Hitchens, Dolores. [Cat’s Claw](#) (American Mystery Classics \$15.95). Unable to stop herself from investigating another murder, Rachel Murdock gets plenty of help from Samantha, the cat who follows her wherever she goes; her much less adventurous sister Jennifer; and Lieutenant Mayhew, who is grateful to have another sharp mind on the case. Miss Rachel, her sister, and her cat are watching with undisguised interest a bandy-legged man who is spying on a house across the street until a speeding black sedan runs him down. The sisters are curious to know why the man was murdered—and just as baffled about what happened to the mysterious tenants of the house, who disappear the next day. Their investigations take Miss Rachel and Samantha to the small mountain town of San Cayetano, where.... Introduction by a Queen of Cozies Katherine Hall Page.

Treat, Lawrence. [V as in Victim](#) (Poisoned Pen Press \$15.99). This Library of Congress Crime Classic from 1945 examines day-to-day investigations of murder and other crimes through the lens of the detective Mitch Taylor, a cop who knows it’s a job, not a calling. “He knew that he liked movement. Once he started he kept going, and as soon as he stopped he went sound asleep. Paperwork is Mitch’s biggest bane until he’s summoned, along with the mercurial lab technician Jub Freeman, to the scene of a hit-and-run; together they link that crime with a dead cat and a murdered man. Treat’s laconic style clearly foreshadows Ed McBain’s wonderful 87th Precinct series.

COZIES

Arceneaux, Danielle. [Glory Daze: A Glory Broussard Mystery](#) (Pegasus \$26.95). After her life was turned upside down by solving the murder of her best friend, Sister Amity Gay, all Glory Broussard wanted was a little peace and quiet. That included getting back to her Sunday morning routine as a bookie in a coffee shop, and planning the annual Mardi Gras gala for her church. But there’s no rest for Glory once the woman who broke up her marriage walks in to CC’s Coffee House and asks for help finding her missing husband. It doesn’t take long before Glory finds him . . . with a knife impaled in his chest. As if solving a murder and sparring with the woman who had an affair with her ex-husband isn’t enough, Glory has to get to the bottom of her daughter’s secrets, and there are a few members of her church group who would love to see her fail in her Mardi Gras responsibilities. Walloped with one revelation after another, Glory’s no-nonsense, tell-it-like-it-is attitude and strength is tested like never before. We first met Glory in [Glory Be](#) (\$26.95),

winner of the Lilian Jackson Braun Memorial Award and a 2023 Cozy Club Pick.

Childs, Laura. [High Tea and Misdemeanors](#) (Penguin \$30). Charleston's Theodosia Browning and her tea sommelier, Drayton Conneley, are tapped to cater the elegant wedding of Bettina and Jamie. Theodosia and Drayton are setting up when they hear a crash from the greenhouse. Shockingly, they discover that part of the roof has collapsed trapping a bridesmaid and the groom. He will pull through but the bridesmaid....not, thus canceling the wedding. Bonus: recipes and tea time tips.

Fletcher, Jessica/Barbara Early. [Murder, She Wrote: Snowy with a Chance of Murder](#) (Penguin \$29). Jessica Fletcher has taken a nasty spill on the ice, leaving her in a wheelchair for several weeks. She tries to work on her latest manuscript but finds herself distracted by a new neighbor moving in across the street. There's good reason for her to be distracted, because soon after unpacking his sparse belongings, Mr. Rymer is out in the front yard, building somewhat risqué (read: naked) snow sculptures. While Cabot Cove debates whether the sculptures are a protected form of art or a public display of lewdness, someone starts destroying them at night. Rymer doesn't seem upset. He just makes new ones. No need to get the police involved over a little snow, he says. Especially when there's plenty more of it and a blizzard in the forecast. The morning after the storm, Jessica looks out the window to see a new sculpture across the street—and the body of Mr. Rymer half-buried in the snow... Think of this as a cozy nod to Hitchcock's *Rear Window*.

Gerber, Daryl Wood. [Essence of Foul Play](#) (Kensington \$17.95). Emma Brennan may have her head in a cloud of eucalyptus, but her feet are firmly planted on the ground in breathtaking Carmel, California, as she prepares to open her new spa business, Aroma Wellness. But all the reiki, shiatsu, and massage in the world can't help her relax when she's accused of murder.... Gerber joins John at Cozy Con on May 4.

Golden, SK. [The Socialite's Guide to Sleuthing and Secrets](#) (\$19.99). For pure escapism you can't top this. A third case of murder makes 1958 a banner year for Manhattan's Pinnacle Hotel in all the worst ways. Evelyn Murphy, the 21-year-old daughter of the hotel's owner, rarely leaves the premises because, unlike most socialites, she's agoraphobic. But criminal complications keep coming to her. As she gets up to leave the round of champagne she's shared with Lois Mitchell and three of her underlings at Ladies Love to Sparkle, who hope to recruit her to join them in selling costume jewelry (a clear pyramid scheme), Lois clutches her throat and dies in hospital of anaphylactic shock induced by shrimp stock. Hotel chef Marco proclaims zero shellfish in his kitchen so Lois must have been deliberately poisoned by someone actually on the scene—salespeople Prudence, Ruth, or Veronica, or maybe by Evelyn herself, who naturally starts detecting. As if Lois' death isn't enough for the Pinnacle to live down, *New York Times* journalist Dottie Stewart—who seems to have it in for both Evelyn and the hotel she'll inherit—eagerly reports that Mr. and Mrs. Bradley Taylor, who were married at the Pinnacle 13 years ago and have celebrated their anniversary there every year since, became the latest victims of Manhattan's Gentleman Thief. Everyone thinks room 1313 is haunted; could it be that the entire hotel is cursed?

Handler, David. [Man Who Swore He'd Never Go Home Again](#) (Penzler \$17.95) reveals how Stewart “Hoagy” Hoag and his ex-wife, Marilee, first met. The year is 1982, and Hoagy has just published his first novel, *Our Family Enterprise*, to glowing reviews and stellar sales. An overnight celebrity, he even snags the cover of Time magazine. At a dinner with his agent, he meets Merilee Nash—“the hottest, classiest young actress in New York”—and they're immediately drawn to each other. The next day, Hoagy gets a call from a high school friend informing him of the murder of Mary McKenna, a librarian in his hometown of Oakmont, Connecticut. Though he's vowed never to return to the inspiration for his novel, Mary encouraged a teenage Hoagy to pursue his writing, so he packs up his Jaguar and sets off to Connecticut with Marilee for Mary's funeral. There, old romances and rivalries reignite as he's involved in solving Mary's murder.

Meier, Leslie. [Bridal Shower Murder](#) (Kensington \$27). Lucy Stone is thrilled about her youngest daughter Zoe's engagement to Chad, a rising minor league baseball player with dreamy eyes and plenty of Southern charm. Yet there's no denying the whirlwind romance has turned Lucy's life upside down in more ways than one—especially when she learns about Chad's complicated background and close ties to Tinker's Cove. The secrets and rumors are enough to send her investigative reporting instincts into overdrive. Then she meets her prospective in-laws who throw a Tuscan-themed bridal shower. All goes well until prominent guest Hetty Furness, the head of the Tinker's Cove Historical Society, goes missing—only to be found dead.

Pleiter, Allie. [One Sharp Stitch](#) (Kensington \$27). This is a series start of appeal to anyone delighting in needlepoint as long as you can ignore plotting.

SOME IRISH READING FOR MARCH (some Cozies here)

Banville, John. [Snow](#) (\$16.99). This one-off by Banville (who abandoned his crime alias Benjamin Black) is a terrific Irish country house murder, classic in form. Detective Inspector St. John Strafford has been summoned to County Wexford to investigate a murder. A parish priest has been found dead in Ballyglass House, the family seat of the aristocratic, secretive Osborne family. The year is 1957 and the Catholic Church rules Ireland with an iron fist. Strafford—flinty, visibly Protestant and determined to identify the murderer—faces obstruction at every turn....

Banville's most recent novel is [The Drowned](#) (Hanover Square Press \$30) about a woman's sudden disappearance in a small coastal town in Ireland, where nothing is as it seems.

Berry, Flynn. [Northern Spy](#) (\$18). This emotionally rich espionage story set in present-day Ireland looks at a country divided, the invisibility of motherhood, and the bonds of family that can supersede all else. It is the story of two sisters, one a paramedic and one a BBC news service employee. When one sister is apparently part of an IRA attack, the other refuses to believe it and sets out to prove her sister's innocence. This is a superb look at Belfast as well as difficult ethics and actions. The follow-up is called [Trust Her](#) (\$30).

Blake, Sam. [Three Little Birds](#) (Corvus \$16.99). This UK import takes you into Ireland's An Garda Síochána headquarters and especially its forensics division, and into rural Ireland centered on the tidal Lough Coyne where a skull has been discovered.

Dr. Carla Steele is drawn into a 14-year-old case that becomes immediate when she and the local Garda DS Jack Maguire find the brutally murdered body of a local woman at the water's edge. Carla is an excellent character balanced with her flamboyant but astute partner in work and life Dr. Grace Franciosi, a believer in the luxe life whenever possible in their line of work.

Bowen, Rhys/Clare Broyles. [Silent As the Grave](#) (St Martins \$28). A new Molly Murphy mystery set in the world of early filmmaking and Thomas Edison's power grab. See Signed books below. [Molly's earlier investigations](#) are worth plumbing as well. Start with the first, [Murphy's Law](#) (\$12) which also highlights the immigrant experience.

Brannigan, Ellie. [Murder at an Irish Castle](#) (\$22.99). Rayne McGrath who hits her 30th birthday thinking her bridal wear designer business on Rodeo Drive and her engagement promise a secure future, one she'll love. And then boom, it all goes bust. Bust just in time for her to be pressured into flying to Ireland where her Uncle Nevin's will comes as a new surprise. He's left her the run-down family castle and worse, if she can't turn its finances around the whole village will go under too. And wait—maybe Uncle Nevin was murdered. It's not the set up that's wildly original, it's the solutions to the various vexing problems including his death that make this a standout.

Bruen, Ken. [Galway's Edge](#) (Penzler \$26.95). Former Garda, now PI, Jack Taylor is hired by a special envoy from the Vatican to dissuade Galway clergyman Kevin Whelan from joining a vigilante organization. Edge is a local group whose nominal mission is to administer justice when the law fails. In reality, its members use that aim as a smokescreen for all manner of shady dealings. Jack agrees to warn Whelan, but soon after they meet, the priest is found dead. Then two other Edge members are killed, suggesting that someone—possibly a powerful financier named Benson—is trying to hijack Edge for his own purposes. While Jack pursues Benson, a number of other matters demand his attention. Jack's last case, [Galway Confidential](#) (\$17.95), is now out in paperback. My favorite remains the first: [The Guards](#) (\$16.99).

Deibel, Jennifer. [The Irish Matchmaker](#) (Baker \$16.99). As daughter of a well-known matchmaker, Catriona Daly is no stranger to the business of love—and sees it as her ticket away from the sleepy village that only comes alive during the annual matchmaking festival. Enter Lord Osborne's son, Andrew, and shy cattle farmer Donal Bunratty is in desperate need of a wife after loss left him to handle the farm and raise his daughter on his own. Both of them eye the matchmaker's daughter....

Fanning, Kieran. [Irish Fairy Tales, Myths, and Legends](#) (\$17.99). This UK import presents a collection of much loved Irish fairy tales, myths and legends, bound into a beautiful new edition. Enjoy the rich mythical history of Ireland from the arrival of the Tuatha De Danann on the island and their great battles with the Fomorians right up to the modern day fairytales of Irish storytelling. Including the Ulster Cycle, and the Fenian Cycle, the book features heroes such as Cuchulainn and Fionn Mac Cumhaill, and many traditional favorites such as The Children of Lir.

French, Tana. [In the Woods](#) (\$19) is the first in the Dublin Squad mysteries for international bestseller French, a 2007 First Mystery Subscription Club Pick and Edgar Award winner, whose [The Searchers](#) (\$18) is our this month's Croak & Dagger Discussion Club book.

Howard, Catherine Ryan. [Run Time](#) (\$16.99) is a terrific suspense story with an atmospheric setting in rural Ireland where a fading soap star gets a last-minute offer to play the lead in upcoming horror film Final Draft. Could this be her big break? Adele quickly makes her way to set, deep into the isolated and wintry woods of West Cork, Ireland, miles away from civilization and cell service. And don't miss [56 Days](#) (\$15.99). This is a novel set during Covid that I've enjoyed and in fact the structure of the story, where two people, Ciara and Oliver, barely acquainted decide to ride it out together in Oliver's apartment in Dublin, demands the lock-down. It evokes *Gone Girl* in the plot. We recommend [Ryan's other novels](#) as well.

McDermid, Val. [Still Life](#) (\$17). This gloriously plotted and paced police procedural featuring Glasgow's Karen Pirie begins with a body found near Edinburgh in the Firth of Forth but segues to Ireland for some great action that includes a historic disappearance, art forgery, and secret identities—that seem to orbit around a painting copyist who can mimic anyone from Holbein to Hockney. Meanwhile, a traffic crash leads to the discovery of a skeleton in a suburban garage. The whole is marvelous but the scenes where Pirie runs her basically undercover investigation in Ireland are the highlight.

McKinty, Adrian. [Hang on St Christopher](#) (Blackstone \$28.99 SIGNED) is set in 1992 and tells us the latest for DI Sean Duffy. See Signed Books. But start with [The Cold](#), [Cold Ground](#) (\$15.95) and then segue to [The Detective Up Late](#) (\$16.99), the 2023 Sean Duffy that sets up the new book.

McTiernan, Dervla. [The Ruin](#) (\$16). This first for Detective Cormac Reilly is a bestseller here at The Pen. When Aisling Conroy's boyfriend Jack is found in the freezing black waters of the river Corrib in Ireland, the police tell her it was suicide. She throws herself into work, trying to forget—but Jack's sister Maude reappears in Ireland after years abroad, determined to prove Jack was murdered. Meanwhile, Detective Cormac Reilly, who was recently transferred to Galway from his squad in Dublin, is assigned to dig into a cold case from twenty years ago—the seeming overdose of Jack and Maude's drug and alcohol addled mother. This unsettling small-town noir draws us deep into the dark heart of Ireland, where corruption, desperation, and crime run rife.... Interesting to read alongside Ken Bruen's Galway crime series.

Meier, Leslie. [Irish Coffee Murder](#) (\$8.99). A trio of coffee-themed murders celebrates the wearing of the green. The novellas include step dancing and a ghost story. Try her [Irish Parade Murder](#) (\$8.99) too.

Neville, Stuart. [The Ghosts of Belfast](#) (\$16.95). John Connolly calls this first of Neville's Belfast Novels, winner of the *LA Times* Book Prize, "One of the best Irish novels, in any genre, of recent times." Northern Ireland's Troubles may be over, but peace has not erased the crimes of the past. Gerry Fegan, a former paramilitary contract killer, is haunted by the ghosts of the twelve people he slaughtered. Every night, at the point of losing his mind, he drowns their screams in drink. But it's not enough. In order to appease the ghosts, Fegan is going to have to kill the men who gave him orders. From the greedy politicians to the corrupt security forces, the street thugs to the complacent bystanders who let it happen, all are called to account. But when Fegan's vendetta threatens to derail a hard-won truce and destabilize the

government, old comrades and enemies alike want him dead.

Don't overlook [The House of Ashes](#) (\$16.99) and [The Traveller and Other Stories](#) (\$16.95), a darkly compelling collection of Northern Irish Noir which concludes with his long-awaited novella, "The Traveller," the companion piece to *The Ghosts of Belfast*.

O'Connor, Carlene. [Murder in an Irish Garden](#) (Kensington \$27.99). Everything's coming up roses for Garda Siobhán and the rest of O'Sullivan family in quaint Kilbane, County Cork, Ireland. While Siobhán studies for her Detective Sergeant exams, her brother, Eoin, prepares for the grand opening of his new restaurant, The O'Sullivan Six, and concocts a plan to enter Kilbane's Top Garden Contest to boost business. But trouble brews when Eoin hires a mercurial landscape designer known for her killer designs. His new partner's unflattering reputation and questionable practices nearly eclipse her talents—and plunge the prestigious competition into chaos. A lush and intricate winning garden emerges from the controversy—as does a body.

What better cozy read for March than the Irish Village Mysteries that began with [Murder in an Irish Village](#) (\$8.99)? I am partial to [Murder in an Irish Bookshop](#) (\$8.99) but Order [all of this cheerful cozy series](#) in paperback.

O'Donnell, Roisin. [Nesting](#) (Little Brown \$29). The Irish literary star opens with what looks from a distance like a happy family at the seashore. Close up, the water is too cold, the wind is too strong, and as tiny as they are, the girls have outgrown their wet-suits and their father is screaming at their mother, demanding to know what she'd done with the money he gave her to buy new ones. By the end of the first chapter, we want to get away from Ryan as badly as Ciara does, even if he's handsome, loyal, a good provider, and hasn't actually hit her...yet. That wetsuit money has been tucked away in a diaper bag in preparation for something Ciara hasn't quite admitted to herself she's going to do. And then, at last, it's time. O'Donnell's novel follows Ciara, Ella, and Sophie as they negotiate the harsh realities of sudden homelessness, father's rights, and the Irish housing crisis... The mounting tension and suspense as Ciara struggles to stay free and safe make the pages fly in a read for devotees of Irish fiction.

O'Rawe, Richard. [Northern Heist](#) (\$17.99). "O'Rawe channels both Elmore Leonard and Guy Ritchie in this heist thriller full of sharp twists and gritty dialogue, emerging with a style all his own. His reimagining of the real-life bank heist feels so authentic readers will hope he has a strong alibi. Ken Bruen fans won't want to miss this one." —*PW* Starred Review

Taylor, Patrick. [A Dublin Student Doctor](#) (\$18.99). Doctor Fingal O'Reilly, the quarrelsome general practitioner of the small village of Ballybucklebo, wasn't always the man he is today. Taylor turns back the clock to give us a portrait of the young Fingal—and show us the pivotal events that shaped the man he would become. [Use this link](#) to browse the dozens of novels Taylor writes about Ireland. If you were a Maeve Binchy reader, try Taylor.

Tremayne, Peter. [Death of a Heretic](#) (Headline UK \$25 SIGNED), a Sister Fidelma medieval Ireland mystery, a richly imagined and researched mystery series. Also by Tremayne, and Signed, [Made for Murders](#) (\$32), a collection of 12 Shakespearean stories set in London.

MARCH IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

We have a large number of contemporary memoirs and biographies to choose from

Hollingsworth, Mary. [Catherine de Medici](#) (Pegasus \$35) is a biography of a French Queen worth reading as is the absorbing, amazing portrait of Russian Empress [Catherine the Great](#) (\$20) by Robert K. Massie. Talk about seizing power where you find it....

* Howe, Emily. [The Painter's Daughters](#) (\$18.99). Peggy and Molly Gainsborough—daughters of one of England's most famous portrait artists of the 1700s and the frequent subject of his work—are best friends struggling to live up to the image of the perfect world he creates. They spy on their father as he paints and rankle their mother as she manages the household. But there is another reason they are inseparable: from a young age, Molly periodically experiences bouts of mental confusion, even forgetting who she is, and Peggy instinctively knows she must help cover up her sister's condition. When the family moves to Bath, it's not so easy to hide Molly's slip-ups. There, the sisters are thrown into the whirlwind of polite society, where the codes of behavior are crystal clear. Molly dreams of a normal life but slides deeper and more publicly into her delusions. Peggy knows the shadow of an asylum looms for women like Molly, and she goes to greater lengths to protect her sister's secret. But when Peggy unexpectedly falls in love with her father's friend, the charming composer Johann Fischer, the sisters' precarious situation is thrown catastrophically off course.

Lewis, Damien. [Agent Josephine](#) (\$21.99). American Beauty, French Hero, British Spy.... And a Black woman, highly paid and glamorous, taking on a dangerous role to fight Nazi fascism. Brava.

* Kelly, Julia. [The Dressmakers of London](#) (Gallery Books \$18.99). London. Among the enormous range of women's stories set in WWII, both true and fiction, is this one with a focus on fashion. When their mother leaves estranged sisters her London dress shop as a joint inheritance and Izzie gets called up to the Women's Royal Navy Service, Sylvia, married to a wealthy doctor, steps in to run the business and finds herself relishing the sense of purpose and accomplishment it brings. As Izzie's military service opens her eyes to life beyond London, the sisters begin exchanging letters, tentatively opening up to each other about their hopes, fears, and old wounds from the years they spent apart. Kelly stitches numerous period details into her narrative, including meticulous information about pleats, buttons, and other aspects of fabric rationing. Sylvia's idea for a fashion show featuring London designers and the new "utility clothing" brings the sisters closer, even as they share difficult memories that threaten their fragile new bond. While the dresses will be a treat for fashion lovers, the heart of the novel is its sensitive exploration of the tangled relationship between the sisters and the fresh beginnings that lie ahead for them both.

Kreft, Vanda. [Expect Great Things](#) (Algonquin Press \$29). It's a safe bet that most of the secretaries on the TV series *Mad Men* would have attended the Katharine Gibbs School in New York City. The iconic institution was in its heyday in the 1950 and '60s synonymous with supplying secretaries—always properly attired in heels, ladylike hats, and white gloves—to male executives.

Kreft digs deep into this fun and fascinating social history of the famed Katharine Gibbs School, which from the 1910s to the 1960s, trained women for executive secretary positions but surreptitiously was instilling the self-confidence and strategic know-how necessary for them to claim equality, power, and authority

* Romney, Rebecca. [Jane Austen's Bookshelf](#) (Simon & Schuster \$29.99). A longtime dealer in rare books who has made regular appearances on the TV show "Pawn Stars" and who knows her Richardson from her Fielding, Romney had come to believe that Austen was, if not unique among women writers of her time, certainly superior — that her place in the canon must rest at least partly on the relative inferiority of her peers. Then she read Frances Burney, and realized how many writers had not just influenced Austen — but been great in their own right. "In spite of my supposed professional curiosity, I realized I had missed something," Romney writes. "And it stung." Upon discovering just how little she knew of those female writers who informed Austen's own work — having tacitly fallen into what Katha Pollitt calls "the Smurfette principle," in which a single archetypal female fills a sort of quota — Romney acts. She amasses the titular collection while using her knowledge of book selling to explore exactly how all these women fell from the canon. Read this long review in the [NY Times Book Review](#).

Wilkinson, Alissa. [Joan Didion and the American Dream Machine](#) (Liveright \$29.99). Joan Didion opened *The White Album* (1979) with what would become one of the most iconic lines in American literature: "We tell ourselves stories in order to live." Today, this phrase is deployed inspirationally, printed on T-shirts and posters, used as a battle cry for artists and writers. In truth, Didion was describing something much less rosy: our human tendency to manufacture delusions that might ward away our anxieties when society seems to spin off its axis. Nowhere was this collective hallucination more effectively crafted than in Hollywood. In this riveting cultural biography, *New York Times* film critic Alissa Wilkinson examines Joan Didion's influence through the lens of American mythmaking

NEW IN HARDCOVER

A few trends to point out:

1. **The remote island** as a contained setting for a mystery or thriller. The more remote the better. I marked some new books Island!
2. **The new popularity of Horror:** New tales of blood and monsters unfold against classic backdrops, from a medieval castle to a 1980s arcade.
3. **The Gothic is making its influence felt.** How do we define it: Does it come down to as Hugo Award winner Arkady Martine puts it, "Gothic is a romance between a girl and an evil house"? Expand that to menacing neighborhood and scary green spaces filled with wild things. The Gothic offers a forum for exploring issues like powerless, bodily autonomy, and exposing family dysfunction, tragic pasts, exploitations. Its aesthetic can highlight collective fear, personal trauma, and heighten a prevailing sense of dread — which is in contrast to the current surge of reading cozies and fantasies and historicals all offering comfort and escape.

Read [an excellent essay on the Gothic](#).

Batacan, FH. [Accidents Happen](#) (Soho \$25.95). "All manner of crimes—corruption, assault, murder—along with everyday injustice, haunt Accidents Happen, Filipina journalist Batacan's magnificent, searing collection of 11 partially linked stories. At least three irresistible recurring characters are ready for standalone titles of their own. "Beyond murder, Batacan is particularly adept at inserting unexpected, disturbing relationships among the living. A lonely professor begins to care for—and becomes righteously attached to—a neighbor who uses a wheelchair and whose much-younger wife seems to blithely neglect him in "Door 59." In "Promises to Keep," a couple who parted after an intense three-month relationship reunite after he calls her to his bedside 11 years later. Batacan is a gloriously sly writer, never allowing complacency to simplify her narratives. Amid rising body counts and unpunished infractions, she occasionally assumes the role of both judge and executioner, adroitly inserting necessary, satisfying consequences..."—Terry Hong

Briscoe, Connie. [Chloe](#) (Amistad \$30). A young chef embarks on a whirlwind romance with a billionaire. Angel is taking a break from her restaurant job in Washington, D.C., to work as a private chef on Martha's Vineyard when she meets billionaire Everett Bruce. Enchanted by Everett's down-to-earth demeanor, Angel falls for him quickly. Just before her job ends and she returns to D.C., Everett proposes marriage, and the newlyweds settle at River wild Estate, Everett's enormous home in Potomac, Md., which is run by his prickly sister, Ida. As the new Mrs. Bruce, Angel is forbidden from entering the Riverwild room once inhabited by Everett's first wife, Chloe, who died by suicide over a year ago. With Everett growing more distant, Angel searches for details about Chloe's death, fearing she won't like what she finds. "Readers familiar with the Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* won't be particularly surprised by the twists and turns of the plot, yet, Briscoe folds some perceptive class critiques into the tale."

Callahan, Patti Henry. [The Story She Left Behind](#) (Atria \$29.99). Thirty-year-old Bronwyn Newcastle Fordham disappeared from her home on the South Carolina coast in 1927, leaving behind an unpublished sequel to the novel she wrote as a precocious 12-year-old that made her famous. In 1952, Bronwyn's daughter, Clara, gets a mysterious call from Charles Jameson, a Londoner who's just discovered a satchel in his recently deceased father's library filled with papers belonging to Bronwyn. Among the materials is a letter stipulating the satchel must be hand-delivered to Clara. She and her asthmatic eight-year-old daughter, Wynnie, arrive in London during the Great Smog, and they accept Charlie's invitation to stay at his mother's Lake District home, where the air is clearer. Clara feels very much at home on the pastoral landscape and finds a romantic spark with Charles. Henry imbues her story with lush descriptions of the landscape and intriguing linguistic puzzles as Clara attempts to decipher Bronwyn's dictionary of the invented language that was central to her work. "Inspired by an unsolved literary mystery, and layered with magical storytelling it is both real and imaginative..." — Ariel Lawhon.

Currie, Ron. [The Savage, Noble Death of Babs Dionne](#) (Viking \$29). Babs, proud Franco-American, doting grandmother, and vicious crime matriarch, rules her small town of Waterville,

Maine, with an iron fist. She controls the flow of drugs into Little Canada with the help of her loyal lieutenants, girlfriends since they were teenagers, and her eldest daughter, Lori, a Marine vet struggling with addiction. When a drug kingpin discovers that his numbers are down in the upper northeast, he sends a malevolent force, known only as The Man, to investigate. At the same time, Babe's youngest daughter, Sis, has gone missing, which doesn't seem at all like a coincidence. In twenty-four hours, Sis will be found dead, and the whole town will seek shelter from Babe's wrath. Filled with idiosyncratic characters, Currie's stirring, cinematic tale blends mystery, suspense, and domestic drama to incisively interrogate the limits of filial responsibility.

Dahl, Arne. [Within the Circle](#) (Crooked Lane \$29.99). Swedish noir from the legendary Dahl finds Stockholm's Inspector Eva Nyman facing a string of bombings in Stockholm. Her new team, NOVA, first investigates the death of a steel industry executive in a burning BMW but it escalates as more people die when the bombings target public places. All NOVA has to go on is a cryptic letter and a strange symbol hinting at a secret organization. Could it be linked to climate debate? Or is it criminals going about their work?

* Gilchrist, January. [My Sister's Shadow](#) (Crooked Lane \$20.99). Gothic fiction can offer a forum for exploring critical issues, as in Gilchrist's debut opening in 1904 England where mirror twins Adelaide and Victoria live entwined at Harewood Hall. But their father elects visiting Lord Stanley to take the twins off his impoverished hands. Stanley's unlikely choice is the obedient Adelaide which enrages the domineering more beautiful Victoria who insists on moving into the couple's Fifth Avenue, NY, home—and outshining Adelaide. I rather like the way Adelaide turns the tables. Gilchrist says her book's "themes of powerlessness and bodily autonomy were inspired by the overturning of Roe v. Wade. 'The protagonist has been forced to marry,' she explains, 'and that sense of not having any control over her future haunts her.' Identical twins Adelaide and Victoria are mirror images and complete opposites: Adelaide is content living in their childhood home in the English countryside, and Victoria wants to live a glamorous life. "What do women do when they don't have any power?"

Gomez-Jurado, Juan. [White King](#) (St Martins \$28). The Spanish author of the acclaimed book and streaming series [Red Queen](#) (\$19) returns with the climax for Antonia Scott, the forensics expert and lynchpin of the top secret project Red Queen. It's under attack, its agents across Europe are murdering each other, and long resolved cases are rearing their deadly heads again. At the center is Mr. White, a psychotic killer, who has killed her husband and been weaving his web around Antonia for a long time. It a complex game. Can Antonia win it if she can only see part of the board?

Grecian, Alex. [Rose of Jericho](#) (Nightfire \$28.99). Grecian moved from mysteries set in Victorian London and 1950s Kansas to Horror with [Red Rabbit](#) (\$18.99). And here he's landed in 19th Century New England where ghosts and ghouls are the least of a witch's problems....

Harman, Sarah. [All the Other Mothers Hate Me](#) (Putnam \$29). Deb reviews a book that I think underlines the nature and effect of fandom: "Meet Flo, a former girl band singer who has lost her career, her marriage, her morals, and her ambition. She drinks too

much, hooks up too much, is fanatic about her exotic appearance and works part time delivering party balloons in a gig her successful sister set up. The one thing Flo is sure of is her love for her 10 year old son Dylan. When one of Dylan's classmates disappears on a school trip and Dylan is the prime suspect, things get lively as clueless "chaos monster" Flo is driven to action: she realizes she must find the missing boy to clear her son Dylan's name. Be prepared to laugh and cry along the way, with Flo the new detective in this hilarious debut. Evanovich fans, don't miss this one!" Library Reads adds: "Florence is a washed-up girl group singer and a hot mess. She skates through life, having no qualms about manipulating people to get what she wants. When her son is accused of a horrible crime, she investigates, but with morals so gray, can she actually bring a killer to justice? All the other mothers hate her—with good reason—yet readers will root for her." Hmm. Read at your own risk.

Henderson, Alice. [The Vanishing Kind](#) (Harper \$30). Wildlife biologist Alex Carter's field work in New Mexico disrupted by a murder. Alex was hired by the Land Trust for Wildlife Conservation to gather data about jaguars in the Southwest, in hopes that the federal government will approve the organization's proposal to reintroduce the animals to their former New Mexico habitats. Soon after she gets started, Alex learns that bureaucratic protocol and potential jaguar attacks are the least of her worries: a white supremacist gang has been terrorizing people of color throughout the region, and trigger-happy Wildlife Services agent Roger Trager is more than happy to shoot the animals she's studying—and possibly Alex herself. Then a friendly archaeologist working on a dig near Alex's turf is stabbed to death and Alex, fearful she might be the next victim, takes it on herself to investigate. Henderson's evident passion for and expertise in animal science enlivens the clever mystery plot. Current events make the premise that the Feds will help implausible but here's a good read for fans of Paul Doiron even if NM is a long way from Maine.

James, Holly. [The Big Fix](#) (Kensington \$28). When bookish Penny Collins reluctantly lets her sister drag her to an estate sale at a neighbor's house, she's hoping for a little diversion rummaging through dusty antiques. Instead, she ends up in a public squabble over candlesticks with the deceased owner's nephew, Anthony—right before a dead body tumbles out of a closet. Penny's plan for the summer involved finalizing tenure at the university where she's a computer sciences professor. Instead, she's suddenly on the run with a man she barely knows, scaling walls, evading bullets, and accidentally stabbing henchmen. It seems the wrong people have got it in their heads that she's Anthony's girlfriend. "Fans of the Finlay Donovan series will adore *The Big Fix*, with its endearing heroine and perfect blend of light-hearted suspense, screwball comedy, and 'hot hitman next door' romance (um, yes please!). James will have you cackling all the way through this madcap romp, as her characters journey from secretly subversive suburban streets to high-end playgrounds for the rich and famous." I chose this as our **March Cozy Crimes Subscription Club Book of the Month** for the quality of the writing and the cheerful humor and the likelihood of a successful series start. The definition of a Cozy is expanding without losing its fundamentals of no violence on the page, no blatant sex, and no hard swearing.

* Jones, Sandie. [I Would Die for You](#) (St Martins \$29) tells the dual-timeline story of two sisters and Secret Oktober, one of the biggest bands of the 1980s. Nicole has worked hard to hide her involvement in one of the most scandalous cases of her generation and to build a perfect life with her husband and daughter. 20 years earlier, Nicole and her sister Cassie coped with their mother's cancer diagnosis by diving into the realm of Ben Edwards, an English music star. As they followed Secret Oktober, they soon entered a world of love, obsession, secrets, drugs, and death. Now Nicole's past, come back to life when her daughter is abducted; she's also forced to face the music of her lost love. Jones uses time jumps to slowly reveal Nicole and Cassie's twisted history, you on your toes while they try to uncover the villain.

* McAllister, Gillian. [Famous Last Words](#) (Harper \$29.99) has a particularly stressful story proposition. You're a happily married London wife and mother, ending maternity leave from your job as a literary agent. Imagine you've just dropped off your daughter at the nursery when you discover that your husband is part of a hostage situation in the city. Then imagine your surprise when you discover your husband isn't a hostage. He's the gunman. It gets worse. Seven years later, Adam's betrayal rears its ugly head again. Will Cam turn to amateur sleuthing, or put everything behind her and find closure? McAllister uses her standard smooth and emotional style to make sure all the puzzle pieces click together. This fabulous, astonishingly plotted and compellingly written story is **our March British Crime Book of the Month**.

McConaghy, Charlotte. [Wild Dark Shore](#) (Five Star \$28.99). The talented Australian writer of *Migrations* and *Once There Were Wolves*, presents a novel about a family living alone on a remote island when a mysterious woman washes up on shore. This is the fictional Shearwater Island (inspired by Macquarie Island, a World Heritage Site in the waters between Antarctica and Tasmania). Shearwater is a haunted place, recently home to a research station, a global seed vault, and the Salt family, who serve as caretakers of the island. With rising tides reclaiming the land, Shearwater has been decommissioned, and Dominic and his three children are preparing for departure when 17-year-old Fen pulls from the water a nearly-drowned woman named Rowan, "this creature carried in from a sea too vast to make sense of. A gift for them or something rejected?" Rowan's arrival changes everything, especially coming at a moment already full of uncertainty and loss for the Salt family. As the narrative alternates between each character, it deepens and complicates the reader's understanding of what happened in the days before Rowan washed up on shore. No one is telling the truth, it seems, at least not all of it. Note: Island!

Martin, George RR, ed. [Wild Cards: House Rules: A Novel in Stories](#) (Random House Worlds, \$30,) contains six connected stories set in the Wild Cards sci-fi/fantasy universe.

Meissner, Susan. [A Map to Paradise](#) (Penguin \$29) . Blacklisted by association, actress Melanie Cole occupies her time pestering her housekeeper, Eva, and seeking the advice of her agoraphobic neighbor, Elwood, through their respective backyards. Eva is a displaced person from Europe, grieving her old life and trying to avoid entanglement with Melanie's alleged Communist reputation. When Elwood stops appearing for their chats, Melanie sends Eva over to spy on him. The plan backfires, as Elwood's

caretaker, June, who is also his sister-in-law, has her own secrets to guard. The tension among the three women amplifies until they're forced to trust each other out of necessity. The story moves at a fast clip and evokes the Red Scare's dire impact on the film industry,

Morrissey, Hannah. [The Unlucky Ones](#) (St Martins \$28) returns you to Black Harbor, Wisconsin where we first met Hazel Greenlee working in the PD during a wicked winter in [Hello, Transcriber](#) (\$19). Now with violent crime reaching new heights, Hazel is back, lured by a murder. The victim is Hazel, the ex of Sergeant Nikolai Kole, and the suspect is Hazel's ex-husband, Tommy. Hannah and Kole had an affair before she left town, and now they are back in each other's orbit in an atmosphere growing increasingly dark and volatile. Morrissey writes dark very very well.

Mulhauser, Travis. [The Trouble Up North](#) (Grand Central \$29). I love this knockout novel, and so does this Starred Review of a "stellar family crime saga set in northern Michigan during the early 2000s. The Sawbrooks have owned hundreds of acres along the Crow River for nearly two centuries, but the expansion of a nearby resort has led to a spike in property taxes that's put the family in financial straits. The stress comes at a difficult time for the clan: patriarch Edward is seriously ill, and his wife, Rhoda, is at odds with their addict son, Buckner, who's been banned from their property, and their older daughter, Lucy, a park ranger who put her chunk of Sawbrook land into a conservation trust against her parents' wishes. Meanwhile, the Sawbrooks' other daughter, Jewell, has agreed, for \$10,000, to torch a boat so its owner can collect on a lucrative insurance policy. Jewell carries out the arson, but unexpected complications ensue, threatening her family's legacy. Mulhauser peppers the action with jaw-dropping twists, but his real strength is in constructing three-dimensional characters whose transgressions feel both plausible and shocking." The Midwest is having a moment in mystery.

Nadler, Stuart. [Rooms for Vanishing](#) (Penguin \$28). With Anti-Semitism on the rise again, I recommend this moving novel by Nadler, earning a Starred Review. It " follows a Viennese Jewish family shattered by the Holocaust... In each of the four narrative threads, a different member of the Alterman family is the sole survivor. The first, set in 1979 London, focuses on Sonja, rescued from the war at age five by the Kindertransport train. She's married to Franz, a famous orchestra conductor, with whom she lost a young daughter to a terminal illness. Franz disappears after becoming convinced the girl is still alive. Next is Sonja's mother, Fania, who survived a displaced persons camp and now works as a masseuse in 1966 Montreal. Third, Fania's younger son, Moses, an infant when the family was rounded up by the Nazis, narrowly escapes being killed during an anti-communist protest in 1960s' Prague. While Moses awaits the birth of his grandchild in 2000 New York City, the ghost of a friend begs him to return to Prague. And fourth comes Fania's husband, Arnold, who lives in Vienna in 2016. He receives a message from a woman claiming to be Sonja after she tracks him down via the DNA test he shared on an ancestry site. Throughout, Nadler beautifully conveys the ways in which his characters' sense of reality is distorted by their trauma."

Offutt, Chris. [The Reluctant Sheriff](#) (Grove \$27). We're back with former Army investigator Mick Hardin in his 4th investigation.

Hardin came out of retirement to serve as the sheriff of Eldridge County, Kentucky, after his sister, Linda, was injured in the line of duty. Recently, the situation has left him feeling that “his life had reached its nadir at age forty—a job he didn’t want, a car he didn’t own, living in his dead mother’s house, divorced, adrift, and befuddled.” It gets worse when bar owner Skeeter Martin is fatally shot, and Zack Jones, the new husband of Hardin’s ex-wife, Peggy, is charged with the crime. Peggy insists that Jones is innocent and beseeches Hardin to exonerate him, but Hardin isn’t completely convinced by her pleas. When two more seemingly unrelated murders rock Eldridge County, however, the sheriff starts to suspect that Peggy might be right.... Patrick is a fan of Offut and recommend to readers of Ace Atkins and David Joy.

Patterson, James/JD Barker. [The Writer](#) (Little Brown \$30). NYPD Detective Declan Shaw gets a call: How fast can you get to the Beresford building on Central Park West? In the tower apartment, Shaw finds a woman waiting for him. She’s covered in blood. A body is lying dead on the floor of the luxurious living room. Every book in the apartment’s floor-to-ceiling shelves is by the same author: bestselling true-crime writer Denise Morrow. “This is you?” Shaw asks the woman. “You’re a writer?” Only one person knows the ending to this story. Is it the victim or the killer?

Puchner, Eric. [Dream State](#) (Doubleday \$28). Salish, Montana, 2005. Cece has come to her in-laws’ family home — a place she adores more than anywhere on earth — to plan her wedding to Charlie, a cardiac anesthesiologist with a brilliant future ahead of him. Charlie wants nothing more than for his best friend Garrett to officiate the wedding. Working as a baggage handler at the airport, unmoored by the death of a friend in college, Garrett is maybe not the ideal choice. He seems like a lost cause: a misanthropic counterpoint to Charlie, who saves lives every day at work. So why does Cece, still haunted by the premature death of her mother, begin to feel unmoored herself? And why does Garret accept, even after he begins to fall for his best friend’s fiancée? The events of that July change the trajectory of their three lives forever, reverberating through marriage and parenthood and old age—even, in the end, across generations. “Cinematic from the outset, *Dream State* opens upon a beloved old family homestead... What strikes most powerfully is Puchner’s bold inhabiting of each stage, over two generations, of true, if embattled, affection between men....”—*Boston Globe*

Pulley, Natasha. [Hymn to Dionysus](#) (Bloomsbury \$29.99). Phaidros has been a faithful and obedient soldier of Greece, but he struggles to understand his orders after rescuing a baby from the flames of Thebes’s palace: abandon the boy at a temple and keep quiet about his existence. After the death of most of his battalion, he wrestles with flashbacks and panic attacks, and many of his fellow soldiers are suffering, too. Charged with finding the child—now grown and a runaway crown prince—he joins forces with the witch Dionysus, who seems the single sane thing in a world gone mad. Pulley illuminates “a much-neglected god.” Though there’s reference to offerings of honey left to Dionysus 1,000 years before mentions of other Greek gods, she says, he’s often forgotten or misunderstood. “Dionysus is the god of stuff we don’t really understand anymore,” says Pulley, who learned ancient Greek to read the original Homeric hymn that lends its name to her book’s title. “He’s remembered now as the god of

good times and wine,” she says, but people tend to skip over madness’s inclusion within his purview.

Rendon, Marcie. [Broken Fields](#) (Soho \$28.95). Ojibwe amateur sleuth Cash Blackbear as she tries to solve disappearances, murders, and other mysteries happening around her—all-too-common occurrences in Native American communities.

Dana Stabenow reviews: It’s summer in the 1970s and instead of continuing her college education at summer school Cash is contracting out her services to farmers in the Red River Valley bordering Minnesota and the Dakotas, in between helping local sheriff Wheaton on his cases. One day she stumbles into a murder scene, the victim the farmer for whom she was supposed to have spent the summer working. Upstairs she finds a little girl hiding under the bed who has been shocked into traumatic mutism by what she has witnessed. Cash calls Wheaton, who calls the same county social worker Cash was left with when her mother abandoned her as a child. Shawnee, like Cash, is Indian, and, also like Cash, ends up in foster care in a white household, where nothing good ever happens to Indian foster children. This on top of PTSD from her last case sends Cash straight to the Casbah and the pool table and as much beer as Shorty will serve her. But who killed the farmer, Bud Bogerud? Where are Shawnee’s parents? And what’s going to happen to Shawnee? Try as she might Cash can’t turn her back on the girl, and you will cheer her on every step of the way.”

Read this [interview with Rendon](#), who is a member of the White Earth Nation and the first Native American woman to receive the McKnight Foundation’s Distinguished Artist award

Rose, Bellamy. [Pomona Afton Can So Solve a Murder](#) (Atria \$27.99). Can a spoiled hotel heiress find redemption and a murderer without musing her manicure? From socialite to sleuth, Pomona Afton will stop at nothing (even if her investigation takes her all the way to the outer boroughs of NYC) to find her grandmother’s killer, salvage her trust fund, and discover that she’s more than meets the eye. Lesa adds, “Fans of *Only Murders in the Building* will enjoy this fun mystery rom-com by Rose (a.k.a. Amanda Elliot). “Readers who love a great transformation story, ridiculously charming characters, and the chance to have a little chuckle while they’re rooting for all the right things to happen will find satisfaction on every page.... Rose (aka Amanda Elliot) has written a romp that will appeal to fans of Elle Cosimano, Sophie Kinsella, and Meg Cabot.

Rose, Karen. [Dead Man’s List](#) (Penguin \$30). On a long-anticipated second date with police psychologist Dr. Sam Reeves—right as things are getting steamy—San Diego PD Homicide Detective Kit McKittrick stumbles across the mutilated body of a local politician. The man was loved by many of his constituents but is hated and reviled by many more. That the suspect list is long surprises no one, but exactly who ends up on it stuns Kit and her team. As the SDPD reveal the victim’s sinister dealings, Kit and Sam are forced to navigate the closely guarded world of the city’s richest and most powerful citizens to find answers.

Spillane, Mickey/Max Allan Collins. [Mike Hammer: Baby, It’s Murder](#) (Titan \$27.99). The concluding Hammer novel begins with a 21st-century funeral before flashing back to summer, 1973. Nine years after the events of *Dig Two Graves*, Hammer takes another unlikely vacation—this time on Long Island to help

look after his partner Velda Sterling's seventeen-year-old sibling, Mikki. Mikki must deal with the attention of two boys vying for her affection – Hammer preferring the good kid from a wealthy family over the long-haired dooper with an Easy Rider vibe. When Mikki gets hooked on heroin, Hammer – filled with contempt for dope dealers – goes on a rampage. He will find those behind the drug racket and teach them what shooting up is all about. And then comes a shocker....

Stava, Sophie. [Count My Lies](#) (Gallery \$28.99). Sloane Caraway is a liar. Harmless lies, mostly, to make her self-proclaimed sad, little life a bit more interesting. So when Sloane sees a young girl in tears at a park one afternoon, she can't help herself—she tells the girl's (very attractive) dad she's a nurse and helps him pull a bee stinger from the girl's foot. With this lie, and chance encounter, Sloane becomes the nanny for the wealthy, and privileged Jay and Violet Lockhart. The perfect New York couple, with a brownstone, a daughter in private school, and summers on Block Island. But maybe Sloane isn't the only one lying. Deb adds, "A little white lie leads to a fabulous dream job for our protagonist. A nanny to a fabulous wealthy family, with lots of lies of their own. Read it all in one sitting thriller, very twisty!"

Steck, Ryan. [Ted Bell's Monarch](#) (Penguin \$30). Following a successful but costly mission to destroy an enemy outpost in Antarctica, Lord Alex Hawke is looking forward to some quiet time at Teakettle Cottage, his home in Bermuda, along with his family. The comes a call to action from former Chief Inspector of Scotland Yard Ambrose Congreve, who calls him with stunning news. Just days away from a controversial vote threatening to tear the United Kingdom apart at the seams, King Charles has disappeared while vacationing at Balmoral Castle. The prime minister believes she can keep the news quiet for no more than 72 hours. After that, Britain will be plunged into chaos.

Waite, Olivia. [Murder by Memory](#) (Tordotcom, \$21.99). A Library Reads Pick: "Dorothy Gentleman, ship's detective on the *Fairweather*, is trying to solve a mystery in which the victim has been erased completely. There is a very real possibility that she herself is inhabiting the body of the killer, due to an emergency action by the ship's mind. Waite has come up with something insanely clever and truly original"—a SciFi/Mystery blend.

Wang, Jack. [The Riveter](#) (Harper \$30). For fans of cross-cultural historical fiction like Anthony Doerr's [All the Light We Cannot See](#) (\$18.99), a Chinese Canadian man fights prejudice and falls in love during WWII. Josiah Chang, who's unable to join the army because of his race, finds work as a riveter in a Vancouver shipyard in 1942. There, he meets yard worker Poppy Miller, who is also a nightclub singer. They fall hard for each other, and Poppy accepts his marriage proposal, even though her parents refuse to give their consent. After Josiah hears a rumor of other Chinese men successfully enlisting on the east coast, he takes a train to Toronto and signs up to be a paratrooper. After training, he is sent to England and takes part in the invasion of Normandy. Fighting his way through France, Holland, and Germany, Josiah transforms from a raw recruit to a veteran soldier. Along the way, he sees comrades die horribly and witnesses barbaric acts, but he never loses sight of his ultimate goal: to be worthy of Poppy. The author successfully combines the entertainment of an old-fashioned war story with a crystalline view of the period's racism, offering a genuinely touching romance between Josiah and Poppy

and visceral scenes of training and battle. Fans of WWII fiction will devour this.

Wurth, Erika T. [The Haunting of Room 904](#) (Flatiron Books \$28.99) will strike a chord with readers of Roberta Emerson's [Shutter](#) (\$16.95) and [Exposure](#) (\$29.95) as Wurth takes the idea of a haunted house and makes it something entirely new. Olivia Becente abandoned her academic career after the death of her sister Naiche. That loss awakened her supernatural abilities. Then the hotel where her sister died contacts Olivia about a job. Every five years, a woman dies in room 904, three weeks exactly after their stay. Nothing has been able to prevent the deaths. Unlike the other ghosts Olivia has encountered, whatever is haunting Denver's landmark Brown Palace Hotel does not need to tell its story so that it can leave this world. These spirits do not want understanding or redemption. As the explanation for the haunting is revealed, readers will be quickly drawn into the story, driven forward to find out more. The book explores guilt as a kind of haunting and is a contemporary ghost story blended with a mystery for great crossover appeal.

OUR MARCH LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

Bannalec, Jean-Luc. [Death of a Master Chef](#) (\$18). Why not a fun trip to Saint-Malo? In a region known as the culinary heart of Brittany, the paradoxical city is known for being a uniquely Breton, yet un-Breton, place. Commissaire Georges Dupin would love to explore the internationally renowned cuisine one bite at a time. But to his chagrin, Dupin is there instead to attend a police seminar dedicated to closer collaboration between the Breton forces. To prepare himself, Dupin wanders through the halls of a local market—stopping to sample its wares as he goes—while admiring its aromatic orchestra. Suddenly there's a murder at a nearby stall. The police know the victim: Blanche Trouin, a *grand chef* of the region. They know the perpetrator: Lucille Trouin, Blanche's sister and fellow successful chef in the area. The two had a well-known and public feud. After a bit of searching, Lucille is even in custody. The only thing they're missing is the motive. And Lucille refuses to talk.... This is a favorite and bestselling series here, wonderful for readers of Martin Walker's superb Bruno Chief of Police series set in another magical region of France, the Périgord/Dordogne.

* Callahan, Jo. [Leave No Trace](#) (Random House \$18). I was riveted by Callaghan's debut [In the Blink of an Eye](#) (\$18) and no less so by this sequel where widowed single mother DCI Kat Frank of the Warwickshire Constabulary's partner, AIDE Lock learns that despite his AI brilliance, there are some things only a human can do. I love the way this brings tech arrogance down a peg while not disparaging how marvelous it is for solving crimes in the British Midlands. A top pick for Deb, Dana Stabenow, and me, *Blink* is Winner of the Crime Writers' Association's John Creasy New Blood Dagger Award and the Theakston Old Peculier Crime Novel of the Year.

Chan, Vanessa. [The Storm We Made](#) (\$18.99). In 1945 Malaya, a housewife becomes a spy for the Japanese. A decade prior, Cecily had been desperate to be more than a housewife to a low-level bureaucrat in British-colonized Malaya. A chance meeting with the charismatic General Fujiwara lured her into a life of espionage, pursuing dreams of an "Asia for Asians." Ten years later as the war reaches its apex, her actions have caught up with her. Now her family is on the brink of destruction—and she will

do anything to save them. I don't have much sympathy for Cecily but I do admire this look at a WWII war theater in Asia.

Chance, Megan. [Glamorous Notions](#) (Lake Union \$16.99). This engrossing story, recommended to us by Jayne Ann Krentz, is our **March Historical Fiction Paperback Subscription Club Pick**. Elsie Gruner, the daughter of an Ohio dressmaker, stifled by her small 1950's town where her incredible gift for sketching fashion goes nowhere, runs away with an aspiring but to SoCal where he's intent on becoming a star. She takes work in a diner to support them but keeps honing her gift for design. After they split she wins a coveted scholarship to an art academy in Rome where charismatic Julia draws her into a shadowy world of clubs, code words, mysterious deliveries and worse. So Elsie, bewildered by sinister international plotting, runs again, back to LA where she reinvents herself as Lena and earns success. But her engagement to a screenwriter in the McCarthy era throws her into the spotlight where this final façade may shatter....

Faust, Christa. [Get Off](#) (Titan \$17.99). It's been nearly 15 years since readers last heard from former porn star and occasional sex worker Gina Moretti, aka Angel Dare. Now she's over 40, pregnant, and not sure what to do about it. When a revenge scheme against her sworn enemy, mobster Vukasin, goes horribly wrong, Angel accidentally kills a cop and is forced on the run. She barely makes it out of California alive before landing in Yuma, Arizona, where an old friend arranges for her to find sanctuary with an elderly couple living off the grid in the far reaches of Washington State, near the Canadian border. A professional rodeo bullfighter is tasked with ushering Angel to safety, and the two embark on a raucous road odyssey across the West. Faust fortifies her classic setup with pulpy sidesteps into rodeo culture and the world of wealthy cattle barons, mashing up picaresque, neo-noir, and old-fashioned western into a supremely satisfying saga. Patrick zooms with Christa in April.

King, Laurie R. [The Lantern's Dance](#) (\$18). There are so many things to enjoy about this Mary Russell and Sherlock Holmes investigation although in many ways it's really a series of revelations tied together mostly by Russell. We learn much more about Holmes' family. We learn a lot more about Irene Adler. And we become immersed in Victorian India under the Raj through the medium of a technological marvel, a zoetrope, mostly a toy for children that spins and imitates animated motion via drawings on strips of paper – the lantern's dance. And also through a set of coded diaries that Russell discovers, and cracks, at Irene Adler's home in the rural south of France. As she learns the story these artifacts tell Holmes is off with his son Damian investigating a possible threat to Damian and his family. So, alternating chapters, time in Paris too, and as I said, Big Revelations. You'll love it.

And you can preorder the next in series [Knave of Diamonds](#) (Random House \$30) to launch here at The Pen on June 7 with co-host Leslie S. Klinger.

Lasky, Kathryn. [Mortal Radiance](#) (\$18.99). Lasky draws Georgia O'Keeffe's New Mexico with her own skillful hand. The deftest of efforts, [Light on Bone](#) (\$19.99) gives us a murder mystery as seen through the mind of a mid-century artist free enough from convention to catch what others miss. And now here is Georgia's second investigation. It's 1935 and her friend Mabel Dodge Luhan's home, Los Gallos, a house inhabited by a colorful range of artists, authors and society figures, to attend the memorial

service of the renowned writer D.H. Lawrence. Georgia has been commissioned to design the stained-glass windows for the small memorial chapel in Lawrence's honor. But when she checks to see how the light comes through the glass, another much more horrible sight awaits her: beloved Navajo potter Flora Namingha is dead, her face smashed in with a stone... With Flora's fiancé locked up as the obvious suspect and the local police negligent in its investigation, it seems like no one other than Georgia is capable of solving the murder and making sure justice is done. Then the sheriff comes to town unannounced.... For the sequel see Signed Books.

Lending, Tod. [The Umbrella Maker's Son](#) (Harper \$18.99). *Umbrella Maker*. Born to a secure, middle-class Polish Jewish family, seventeen-year-old Reuven works alongside his father, an artisan businessman whose shop creates the finest handmade umbrellas in Poland. But the family's peaceful life shatters when the Nazis invade their homeland, igniting World War II. The Nazis confiscate their business, evict them from their home, and strip away their rights, threatening the lives of the city's entire Jewish population, including Reuven and Zelda, the girl he loves. After being separated from his family, Reuven embarks on a perilous journey through the Polish countryside, determined to reach the Kraków ghetto where he hopes to reunite with Zelda. With exquisite attention to detail, Lending weaves a tale that transports readers to the heart of Krakow, capturing the essence of a community torn apart by war. The novel stands out not only for its historical accuracy but also for its deeply personal exploration of family dynamics amidst chaos

Lupica, Mike. [Robert B Parker's Broken Trust](#) (\$19). For me, Lupica best captures the voice and spirit of his longtime friend Parker. Here he is writing Spenser now after doing both Jesse Stone and Sunny Randall, a Spenser grounded in a newer Boston despite his never aging. Here, Spenser is waiting out the latest Boston snowstorm when he gets word that Rita Fiore has been shot. Rita's always been a tricky one: flirting with Spenser for years, she's an ever-present figure that transcends friendship in Spenser's circle. But at the end of the day, Rita is family. And family will always be protected. Both a pit bull in the courtroom and provocateur outside it, Rita is no stranger to controversy. But as one of the city's toughest lawyers, Spenser knows that there's no short list of suspects who might want to enact revenge. With Rita's life hanging in the balance, Spenser, backed by Hawk, swings into action....

* Mackintosh, Clare. [A Game of Lies](#) (\$16.99), a 2025 Edgar Award nominee. Isolating a group of game contestants is a recurring plot basis lately—Ruth Ware, Heather Gudenkauf, Lisa Unger this month. It's an Agatha Christie structure. This one is notable for the set-up for a group of seven reality show contestants competing for a prize up in the mountains of Wales. It's glorious countryside. Each of the contestants has a secret putting them at risk: for if one contestant can discover another's secret it will be exposed live on air. Then one of the seven disappears forcing local detective Ffion Morgan to dig deeply into who these people are. Then a killer strikes.... Ffion has a fraught personal life and one strand of it is movingly resolved in this story.

Miranda, Megan. [Daughter of Mine](#) (\$18.99). When Hazel Sharp, daughter of Mirror Lake's longtime local detective, unexpectedly

inherits her childhood home, she's warily drawn back to the town—and people—she left behind almost a decade earlier. But Hazel's not the only relic of the past to return: a drought has descended on the region, and as the water level in the lake drops, long-hidden secrets begin to emerge...including evidence that may help finally explain the mystery of her mother's disappearance. Miranda, a consummate professional when it comes to exposing the small community tensions that naturally arise when people live in close proximity for generations, exposes revelation after twisty revelation..... New book in July.

* Rozan, SJ. [The Murder of Mr. Ma](#) (\$18.95). will delight fans of Sherlock Holmes (and Laurie R. King and Will Thomas). Two unlikely allies race through the cobbled streets of 1924 London in search of a killer targeting Chinese immigrants. When shy academic Lao She meets larger-than-life Judge Dee Ren Jie, his quiet life abruptly turns from books and lectures to daring chases and narrow escapes. Dee has come to London to investigate the murder of a man he'd known during World War I when serving with the Chinese Labour Corps. No sooner has Dee interviewed the grieving widow than another dead body turns up. Then another. All stabbed to death with a butterfly sword. Will Dee and Lao be able to connect the threads of the murders—or are they next in line as victims? Blending traditional gong'an crime fiction with the most iconic aspects of the Sherlock Holmes canon, Dee and Lao's first adventure is as thrilling and visual as an action film. Rozan, author of my much loved Lydia Chen and Bill Smith mysteries, allies with John Shen Yen Nee to start a series. And the sequel [The Railway Conspiracy](#) (Soho Press \$29.95), also written with John Shen Yen Nee, will be signed here on April 23.

Sandford, John. [Toxic Prey](#) (\$19). In a version of a locked-room thriller only expanded to a whole city, that of Taos, NM, Lucas Davenport and his daughter, Letty, team up to track down a dangerous scientist whose latest project could endanger the entire world—at least that is what Dr. Lionel Scott believes. A renowned expert in tropical and infectious diseases, Scott has witnessed the devastating impact of illness and turmoil at critical scale. When Scott then disappears without a trace, Letty is tasked with tracking down any and all leads. Scott's connections to sensitive research into virus and pathogen spread has multiple national and international organizations on high alert, and his shockingly high clearance levels at various institutions, including the Los Alamos National Laboratory, make him the last person they'd like to go missing. As the web around Scott becomes more tangled, Letty calls in her father, Lucas, help her lead a group of specialists to find Scott as soon as possible. But maybe the conspirators form a larger group than imagined....

Turton, Stuart. [The Last Murder at the End of the World](#) (\$17.99) imagines a future world and populates it with an array of marvelous characters—and gives them a murder to solve to save it. “After a deadly fog decimates most of humanity, the small population that's left lives on an island. As one villager begins investigating a murder, what once seemed like utopia begins to reveal dark secrets that no one could have predicted. The always insightful if imaginative Turton raises tantalizing social questions, presents an inventive world structure, and keeps you surprised right to the end. Highly recommended. Note: Island!

SOME LARGE MARCH PAPERBACIS

Abrams. [Death in the Downline](#) (Quirk Books \$18.88). Drew thought she was destined to become a star journalist in New York City. But now she's back in New Jersey, pushing thirty, newly single, and living with her father. After a chance encounter, she reconnects with her former best friend, Steph, who married young and never left their hometown. But Steph looks...so good. Why? She's part of a skincare sales opportunity called Luminous. So glamorous. But... Indie Next reports: “I absolutely loved this twisty thriller! Centered in the world of a women's beauty brand multi-level marketing company, this book had me guessing from the get-go and made me laugh out loud more times than I can count. An incredibly strong debut!”

Beagle, Peter S. [The Innkeeper's Song](#) (Saga Press \$18.99). Three powerful women (each with her own secret past and on a quest to save the world's most powerful wizard), a stable boy, a weaver's son, and an innkeeper converge at an inn, life there is forever changed as powerful forces wage ungodly battle for possession of the wizard's soul. In elegant yet simple prose Beagle illuminates the shifting relationships among the various major and minor players (including an irascible shape-changing fox) who people this affecting tale. Beagle's [The Last Unicorn](#) (\$20 with new Intro by Patrick Rothfuss) remains one of my favorite fantasies.

Blaedel, Sara. [A Mother's Love](#) (\$18). When innkeeper Dorthe Hyllested of an idyllic tourist town is found murdered, the police are surprised and puzzled to discover a concealed nursery in her upstairs apartment. As far as her friends and family knew, the recently widowed Dorthe was childless. Detective Louise Rick has just taken over as head of the freshly created Mobile Task Unit, which is charged with solving Denmark's most difficult cases. With Dorthe's murder as her first investigation and the clock ticking to find the missing child, Louise, forced to cobble together a brand-new, unproven team from a group of officers she's never met, must also collaborate with the Missing Persons Department—which will mean working closely with Louise's former fiancé, Eik, who abruptly broke things off last year, leaving her devastated. Bummer!

* Bull, Jessica. [Miss Austen Investigates](#) (\$18.99). A 20-year-old Jane Austen unexpectedly becomes an amateur sleuth to clear her brother's name in Bull's imaginative debut and series launch. Budding novelist Jane attends a ball at the opulent home of Lord John Harcourt, where she expects dashing Irishman Tom Lefroy to offer her his hand in marriage. Before Lefroy can bend a knee, however, one of Harcourt's housemaids finds the body of a young woman in the laundry closet, and the festivities come to a halt. When the woman's jewelry turns up in the pocket of Jane's nonverbal older brother Georgie, he's swiftly arrested and charged with theft and murder. With Georgie unable to defend himself and Jane convinced of his innocence, she enlists the help of her close-knit family to find the killer before her brother is sent to an asylum, transported, or hanged.

Campisi, Megan. [The Widow Spy](#) (\$17.99) is a novel based on the astonishing true story of the first female Pinkerton detective whose next assignment could end the Civil War.

* Cleeves, Ann. [A Lesson in Dying](#) (\$18). Who hung the headmaster in the playground on the night of the school Halloween Party? Almost everyone in Heppleburn either hated or feared the

viper-tongued Harold Medburn. Inspector Ramsay is convinced it was the headmaster's enigmatic wife but Jack Robson, school governor and caretaker, is determined to prove her innocence. With the help of his restless daughter Patty, Jack digs into the secrets of Heppleburn. This first for Inspector Ramsay is where Cleeves got her crimewriting start and is now available in the US for the first time.

Critchley, Emily. [The Undoing of Violet Claybourne](#) (Sourcebooks \$17.99). Much of this novel takes place in 1939 England, when anxiety was running high ahead of WWII. Gillian Larking visits her boarding school roommate, Violet, at her family's estate, where she meets the other Claybourne sisters and becomes enamored of their lifestyle; then, tragedy strikes. Decades later, Gillian, a successful writer, learns that Violet has spent the past 60 years in a psychiatric hospital, and now wants Gillian to share her story. "When I think of gothic, I think of a kind of claustrophobia," Critchley says. "I wanted to explore that mix of feeling claustrophobic in an isolated place."

Crosby, Ellen. [Dodge and Burn](#) (\$18.99) has a nifty set up. When billionaire philanthropist and art collector Robson Blake hires Sophie Medina to take photographs for him, she doesn't expect to show up and find her client dead. Why was his state-of-the-art security system turned off . . . and why, in a house full of priceless Old Masters, is the only thing missing a beautiful but insignificant Ukrainian religious icon? Before long, Sophie finds herself in the crosshairs of a D.C. homicide detective who suspects she knows more than she is saying about Blake's murder—and he's not wrong. Authorities find blood on one of Sophie's tripods, and determine that Blake was bludgeoned to death with a blunt object, placing Sophie near the top of the suspect list. In the attempt to clear her name, she uncovers secrets about her own lineage that cause her to believe someone in her family may have played her.

Crouch, Sarah. [Middletide](#) (\$17.99). Out of money and motivation, 33-year-old Elijah Leith returns to his empty childhood home in Point Orchards on Puget Sound to lick the wounds of his futile writing career. Hungry for purpose, he throws himself into restoring the ramshackle cabin his father left behind and rekindling his relationship with Nakita, the extraordinary girl from the nearby reservation whom he betrayed but never forgot. Then one peaceful morning Dr. Erin Landry is found hanging from a tree on his property. Sheriff Jim Godbout's initial investigation points to an obvious suicide, but upon closer inspection, there seem to be clues of foul play when he discovers that the circumstances of the beautiful doctor's death were ripped straight from the pages of Elijah's own novel. As the town of Point Orchards turns against him, Elijah must fight for his innocence against an unexpected foe who is close and cunning enough to flawlessly frame him for murder in Crouch's intense debut.

* Dean, Abigail. [Day One](#) (\$18). "During a primary school play in the coastal English enclave of Stonesmere, a gunman opens fire, killing more than a dozen people, many of them children. The resulting media storm opens up the door for Sandy Hook-style conspiracy theories to take root. Examining the aftereffects of the tragedy on Stonesmere's tight-knit community, Dean zeroes in on two characters: Marty Ward and Trent Casey. Marty is the town's star soccer player and the daughter of Ava Ward, a

teacher who was killed in the massacre; Trent is a lonely young man who briefly lived in Stonesmere before leaving to move in with his mother's new husband, and who now falls under the sway of a right-wing media charlatan peddling theories that the tragedy was a politically motivated hoax. What emerges is a complex, gutting portrait of communal grief and crushing isolation, which builds to a moving and unexpected climax."—*PW* on a book that is not my cup of tea but well done by a talented new writer.

* Fields, Helen. [The Profiler](#) (Harper \$18.99). Trained analyst Midnight Jones discovers Profile K's file in the course of her ordinary work in biotech firm Netco specializing in the human brain. K stands for Killer (think Sue Grafton here) making Midnight realize a true psychopath is out there. She knows what K is capable of before he commits his first crime, the horrendous murder of an unwary local woman. So horrendous no one believes Midnight when she says he's capable of much worse. And he is . . . and he's made Midnight his next target. This is a dark book for fans of serial killer thrillers.

Garmus, Bonnie. [Lessons in Chemistry](#) (\$19) . . . out on April 1, no fooling.

Harding, Robyn. [The Haters](#) (\$18.99). High school guidance counselor Camryn Lane is over the moon: she's just published her debut novel, *Burnt Orchid*, to rave reviews and much admiration from her 17-year-old daughter, Liza. During the launch event, Camryn checks her email to find a scathing message that accuses her of exploiting her students' lives for the book's material. A shaken Camryn brushes the message aside, but then the same person posts an even angrier one-star review online, opening the floodgates for an all-out smear campaign. Before long, Camryn is doxxed, hacked, and heckled at publicity events, and she loses the support of her colleagues, boyfriend, and even Liza. After Camryn hires a digital expert to expose her harasser, he turns up dead, kicking the stakes up several notches.

Hillier, Jennifer. [Wonderland](#) (Gallery Books \$19.99). By day, Wonderland is a magical amusement park boasting a certain retro charm. And now it may be a crime scene. Vanessa Castro's first day as deputy police chief of Seaside, Washington, is off to a bang. The unidentifiable homeless man rotting inside the tiny town's main tourist attraction is strange enough, but now a teenage employee is missing. Clues lead Vanessa into a mysterious web of missing persons cases that goes back decades.

* Horowitz, Anthony. [Close to Death](#) (\$19.99) again blends mystery and metafiction to examine a murder in an exclusive London cul-de-sac. After the obnoxious Giles Kenworthy is slain with a crossbow in his home among the ritzy mansions of Riverview Close, police detective Daniel Hawthorne and his sidekick, John Dudley, jump on the case. At first, owing to Kenworthy's lack of popularity among his neighbors, Hawthorne and Dudley float the idea that it was a collaborative killing in the tradition of *Murder on the Orient Express*. Then one of their key suspects dies in an apparent suicide, and the case shifts into locked-room mystery territory, with a single killer likely picking off Riverview Close peers one by one. Horowitz again inserts himself in the narrative, working with Hawthorne to turn the case into a proper novel, but he writes much of this volume in third person, turning to his own voice only occasionally to comment on

genre conventions or tease the mystery's conclusion. The result is a narrative of frames within frames.

* Limoncelli, Rosanne. [The Four Queens of Crime](#) (Crooked Lane \$19.99). See Signed Books for the simultaneous hardcover of our March Cozy Crimes Pick bringing together Golden Age mystery writers Christie, Sayers, Allingham and Marsh.

Michaelides, Alex. [The Fury](#) (\$17.99). "There were seven of us in all, trapped on the island. One of us was a murderer." So begins a tale of friendship and retribution, stardom and fame, and the wounded child that hides in everyone. Playwright Elliot Chase is the unreliable narrator spinning a fantastical tale of a group of people trapped on a private Greek island by the Fury, harsh windstorms that batter the island. Told over five acts, Elliot's narrative moves from Hollywood to London to the Greek island of Aura and provides a history of the major players in the island murder case, including himself. His main focus is his best friend, former movie star Lana Farrar, who invited the guests to her private isle. Note: Island!

Natt Och Dag, Niklas. [The Order of the Furies: 1795](#) (\$18.99). Two unlikely allies work to end the reign of a powerful cabal of depraved hedonists in 18th-century Stockholm. For more than a year, Emil Winge has dedicated himself to capturing the diabolical Tycho Ceton, with the invaluable assistance of one-armed army veteran and watchman Jean Michael Cardell. Their mission is made more difficult by the ever-increasing paranoia gripping Sweden's royal family, who fear that a bloody revolution is brewing. A letter with the names of the revolutionary conspirators is said to be in the possession of Anna Stina Knapp, a good friend to Cardell. Now, Anna is missing and Cardell is determined to find her before the secret police take her into custody. A war is on between the status quo and its destroyers.

O'Connor, Carlene. [Murder in an Irish Village](#) (\$17.95) – See Irish Reading above for a round up of O'Connor's cozy series and other recommended reading.

Parks, Adele. [First Wife's Shadow](#) (Mira \$18.99). When Emma meets Matthew, a kind, handsome widower, he seems to be just what she needs. Yet as their relationship moves fast, Emma's friends worry she might be exploited. She's a rich woman after all. Emma doesn't care Matthew has no money. But as the memory of his perfect first wife hangs over them, Emma does have one tiny doubt. If Matthew's wife hadn't died, he wouldn't be with her....

Patterson, James/ Duane Swierczynski. [Lion & Lamb: Two Investigators](#) (\$19.99) centers on rival Philadelphia PIs Veena Lion and Cooper Lamb, both of whom have been hired to investigate the slaying of Eagles quarterback Archie Hughes. Archie was found shot to death in his Maserati on a freezing January night and missing his watch and Super Bowl ring. Chief among the multiple suspects is Archie's wife, Francine Pearl Hughes, a Grammy-winning singer and film star who's possibly even more famous than her late husband. Veena has been tapped by the Philadelphia district attorney to help build the case against Francine; Cooper is working on her defense. As their investigations develop, questions about Archie's own innocence muddy the waters.

Rotenberg, Robert. [One Minute More](#) (\$18.99). For fans of Lee Child and Brad Thor, an unstoppable thriller set in 1988 when—a mere 100 hours before world leaders gather for the G7 summit—

police get a hot tip that an assassin is on the way. It's a long-shot mission. No one thinks much of the information the Toronto chief of police receives from a mysterious source: a would-be assassin is about to cross the border into Canada to kill the heads of the seven most powerful countries in the world. Undeterred, he sends young police officer Ari Greene to a sleepy Quebec-Vermont border town to investigate. During a festive and colorful July 4th parade, Greene spots his unlikely target and gives chase across borders and boundaries. But as the hours and the minutes until the summit tick down, bodies start to pile up...

Spotswood, Stephen. [Murder Crossed Her Mind](#) (\$18). In the fall of 1947, New York City defense attorney Forest Whitsun calls on Pentecost and Parker to track down his friend, Vera Bodine, a retired secretary in her late 70s. Soon, Will and Lillian learn that Vera's age and occupation belie her colorful—and dangerous—life, which could have gathered her all manner of enemies. Her disappearance might be linked to her obsession with a string of recent murders, for instance, or perhaps to her time assisting the FBI in tracking down Nazis. Meanwhile, Will is targeted by a group of small-time crooks who've stolen her identity, and Lillian's multiple sclerosis worsens while she's blackmailed by an old nemesis. For the sequel see Signed Books.

Van Veen, Johanna. [Blood on Her Tongue](#) (Sourcebooks \$17.99 Deluxe Edition with sprayed edges). Per my note under New in Hardcover about the rise of Horror, this: Van Veen's "stunning sophomore outing," per *PW*'s starred review, "takes place in her native Netherlands in the 1880s, when a bog body surfaces on Sarah's husband's estate with a stone in its mouth. Her obsession with the centuries-old corpse concerns her twin, Lucy, who begins to suspect that Sarah's increasingly bizarre behavior is not the brain fever the doctor has diagnosed, but something far more sinister and inhuman."

* Ware, Ruth. [One Perfect Couple](#) (\$19.99). Biologist Lyla Santiago's postdoc research on mosquito-borne illnesses hits a wall when inconsistencies in her colleague's work threaten their grant funding. Rudderless, Lyla agrees to join her boyfriend, out-of-work actor Nico Reese, to film a reality TV competition called Ever After Island. On the *Survivor*-esque show, five couples complete in challenges on a remote island in the Indian Ocean and then vote to send one contestant home each week. Lyla plans to get eliminated quickly so she can return to London and sort out her future, leaving Nico behind to improve his career prospects. Her plan gets complicated, however, when a powerful storm sweeps across the island, isolating the contestants from the show's production crew. When people start turning up dead, Lyla has to decide whom to trust, taking the traditional stakes of reality TV alliances to nerve-shredding new heights. This is not one of Ware's best. Note—*island!*

OUR MARCH SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Battles, Brett. [Stuart Woods' Smolder](#) (\$10.99). Stone Barrington #65. When he is drawn into a case involving a ring of art thieves, which has links to his own mother's paintings, Stone Barrington must draw out a familiar enemy and face down his most vindictive threat yet.

Childs, Laura. [Murder in the Tea Leaves](#) (\$9.99). Tea Shop #27. When she reads the tea leaves on the set of the movie, *Dark Fortunes*, which results in the film's director murder, Theodosia Browning starts her own shadow investigation.

Dodd, Christina. [Every Single Secret](#) (\$9.99). A woman lives alone in an isolated lighthouse on the coast of California ... until a man appears on her doorstep who knows every single secret she's kept since one fateful night.

McAllister, Gillian. [Wrong Place Wrong Time](#) (\$9.99). After witnessing her teenage son kill a man, a mother falls asleep in despair, wakes up and it is yesterday, and wakes up again and it is the day before yesterday, getting chance after chance to stop the murder and save her son.

Sandford, John. [Toxic Prey](#) (\$10.99). Prey #34. When a renowned expert in infectious diseases disappears without a trace, Letty Davenport, with the world on high alert, calls in her father, Lucas, to locate him in what turns out to be a locked-down Taos, NM. It's a clever structure and powerful.

MORE MARCH SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Armentrout, Jennifer L. [Storm and Fury](#) (\$10.99) Harbinger #1. Reissue. Trinity, who can communicate with spirits, is protected from demons by shape-shifting Wardens, but when she hears reports of something killing both demons and Wardens, Trinity must work with outsider Zayne to save her family and perhaps the world.

Baldacci, David. [The Whole Truth](#) (\$10.99). Shaw and Katie James #1. Reissue. While the head of the world's largest defense contractor and his minions secretly conspire to gain even more riches by instigating a war, a multi-national intelligence agent reluctantly travels to keep the world safe, and an ambitious journalist receives a mysterious offer to interview the sole survivor of a recent massacre.

Jackson, Lisa. [You'll Find Out](#) (\$9.99). Two tales of danger and intrigue: In "The Shadow of Time," Mara is drawn into conflict with Shane when he inexplicably returns from the dead, while in "Gypsy Wind" Becca's relationship with Brig Chambers is haunted by scandal and mistrust, blinding them to a looming enemy

Johnstone, William W. [The Dead We Honor](#) (\$8.99). War veteran Bryan Branch returns to his hometown of Maverick, Iowa, now overrun with crime and violence, and joins forces with fellow veterans, "The Night Warriors," to reclaim their community from gangs, dealers, and a billionaire buying up land.

King, Stephen. [Later](#) (\$8.99). Reissue. The son of a struggling single mother, Jamie Conklin just wants an ordinary childhood. But Jamie is no ordinary child. Born with an unnatural ability his mom urges him to keep secret, Jamie can see what no one else can see and learn what no one else can learn. But the cost of using this ability is higher than Jamie can imagine – as he discovers when an NYPD detective draws him into the pursuit of a killer who has threatened to strike from beyond the grave.

Meier, Leslie. [Patchwork Quilt Murder](#) (\$8.99). Lucy Stone #30. When the director of the new community center and her young employee are found dismembered, part-time reporter Lucy Stone, trying to piece the clues together, discovers the truth rests somewhere between wild rumors, a trusted friend's emotional new sewing project and the authenticity of a mysterious 300-year-old patchwork quilt.

Ray, Cate. [Good Husbands](#) (\$9.99). Three complete strangers have their worlds turned upside when they receive letters from someone accusing their husbands of a terrible sexual assault they committed together 20 years prior and claiming to be the product of the assault.

Ryan, Sofie. [Cat Got Your Killer](#) (Penguin \$9.99). Second Chance Cat #12. From a secondhand store in a tourist town, Sarah Grayson investigates a possible connection between a recent murder and a long-ago drowning with the help of her clever cat Elvis and a team of senior citizen detectives.