BOOKNEWS from

ISSN 1056–5655, © The Poisoned Pen, Ltd.
Volume 38, Number 12
September Booknews 2026
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OUR SPECTACULAR SEPTEMBER

Store Hours

M-F 10 AM-7 PM Sat 10 AM-6 PM 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.

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 8 7:00 PM Live Event
With Creepy Book Club Hosts Emily and Ashley
Bonus: Some Advance Reading Copies giveaways plus sample chapters of upcoming books by Berry
Lucinda Berry discusses Saving Noah (Poisoned Pen $19.99 Deluxe Edition)
Emma C. Wells discusses We Already Dug the Grave (Poisoned Pen $18.99)

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 10 7:00 PM Live Event
Nina Simon discusses My Sister Is Going to Kill Me (Harper $30)
Two very different sisters join a rafting trip down the Colorado through the Grand Canyon with murderous results

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 11 4:00 PM Virtual Event
Hank Phillippi Ryan discusses Mother Daughter Sister Stranger (St Martins $29)
Signed books available
Sister survivors of a fatal plane crash killing their parents lose Bea's pre-teen daughter. Is there a family curse, or….?

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 11 7:00 PM Live Event
Kathleen Donnelly discusses Deadly Revenge (Carina Press $10.99)
A National Forest K-9 Suspense Novel
Margaret Mizushima discusses Fighting Edge (Crooked Lane $29.99)
Timber Creek Colorado Deputy Mattie Walker and her canine partner Robo

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 10 4:00 PM Live Event
Jonathan Santlofer discusses Ten Perfect Guests (Sourcebooks $32.99)
Lee Child calls it "A beautiful blend of golden-age charm and modern-day edge—a delightful from first word to last." You can see the Christie model of *And Then There Were None* here
Paperback edition ($18.99)

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 10 6:00 PM
The Horror Club discusses Jenny Kiefer's This Wretched Valley ($18.99)

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 14 7:00 PM Live Event
Debut author Andre Hardy discusses Tear the City Down (Grand Central $30)
Former NFL player Hardy writes "a hard-hitting, heart wrenching crime novel that brilliantly blends elements of jazz, football, and a gritty portrait of a divided San Diego where a crime boss' fixer want out to focus on his daughter's burgeoning tennis career—perfect for fans of S.A. Cosby and Walter Mosley."Our **September Hardboiled Crime Club Pick** and recommended to our First Mystery Club as well Our **September Hardboiled Crime Club Pick** and recommended to our First Mystery Club as well—our September First Mystery Club Pick, Steve Hawk's Nearshore (Viking $32), serves up incredible surfing with evil tech billionaires up around Half Moon Bay/San Fran

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 15 5:00 PM Virtual Event
KB Brodsky discusses Beyond Honor (Atria $29)
A vibrant debut spy thriller sending a CIA analyst into Siberia as he hunts a conspiracy leading to the Oval Office
Signed books available

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 18 7:00 PM Live and Virtual Event
SciFi Friday discusses Edward Ashton's Mickey 7 ($19)

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 19 10:30 AM Live and Virtual
Croak & Dagger Club discusses Ragnar Jónasson's Reykjavik ($19)

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 19 4:00 PM Live Ticketed Event
Baseball's two-time World Series MVP David Eckstein discusses his memoir Just Enough (Evil Eye $31.99)
Ashley Epstein discusses Lucky 22 (Evil Eye $19.99)
Location: The Poisoned Pen
Ticket: $35 with one copy of *Just Enough*
Companion Ticket $55 includes one copy of *Just Enough* and one copy of wife Ashley's *Lucky 22*.
And a third option: Ticket: $23 includes one copy of *Lucky 22*
BONUS: books include a gift (signed bookmark from Ashley Eckstein with her co-author Samantha Chase and a signed sports card from David)
All books are presigned. Photo line only. No sports memorabilia can be signed.

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 22 7:00 PM Live Event
Kyle Mills is our host
Don Bentley discusses Double Tap (Atria $30)
The 25th Vince Flynn Mitch Rapp thriller will take you into Verona, Italy

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 24 7:00 PM Live Event
Michael Koryta discusses Die Famous (Little Brown $30)
A wow—outlaws during the Great Depression
BONUS: Customers who preorder a signed copy will receive a link to a free Kindle version of Scott Carson's fabulous Departure 37 ($19) – one of my favorite books with a truly original concept.

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 26 11:00 AM Live Event
The Cookbook Club discusses **Heartland Masala** ($37.50)
You are encouraged to bring a recipe from the book to share

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 26 6:00 PM Live Ticketed Event
Diana Gabaldon discusses Outlander 35th Anniversary Edition (Random House $30) featuring a gorgeous new cover, Fraser tartan stenciled edges, designed endpapers, and a new letter of introduction from Diana
Location: Scottsdale United Methodist Church
Doors open 5:00 PM loads of free parking
Tickets ($35 includes one copy of the book)

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 27 4:00 PM Live Event
Liam Callanan discusses Stone Age Astronaut The Astonishing Adventures of America's Forgotten Flier (Wisconsin Historical Society Press $24.95) with 10 B&W photos.
Milwaukee born air ace Lester Maitland (1899–1990), arguably more seminal than Lindbergh, ended up an Episcopal priest in Cave Creek, Arizona

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 29 12:00 PM Virtual Event
Britain's Clare Mackintosh discusses It›s Not What You Think (Sourcebooks $29.99)
Truly a knockout, one of the most surprising police investigations of the year for fans of Lisa Jewell, Gillian McAllister and Alice Feeney

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 30 7:00 PM Live Event
Hardboiled Crime discusses John D MacDonald's Cape Fear ($18) with Foreword by Dean Koontz

SUNDAY OCTOBER 4 2:00 PM Live Book Launch
Lauren Willig discusses What Happens at Nightfall (Harper $30)
A Gothic romantic adventure with some demon-hunting centered on the sprawling expanse of Brooklyn's Green-Wood Cemetery where some secrets refuse to stay buried.

SUBSCRIPTION CLUB PICKS FOR SEPTEMBER
Members get free shipping, a 6-month membership bonus, and sometimes other special bonus items plus priority over first printings for signed books
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
Dent, Susie. Death Writ Large UK edition

Cozy Crimes Club One Unsigned hardcover or paperback per month
Hall, Traci. Apple Pies and Poisoned Lies at the Cider Falls Festival

Crime Collectors Club One Signed First Printing per month
Sullivan, Tim. The Bookseller

First Mystery Club One Signed First Printing per month
Hawk, Steve. Nearshore

Hardboiled/Noir Club One Signed or unsigned hardcover or paperback per month
Hardy, Andre. Tear the City Down (debut)

Historical Fiction Club One Signed Hardcover First Printing per month
Lawhon, Ariel. The Pirate Queen

Historical Fiction Paperback Club One Unsigned paperback per month
Akagawa. Jiro. A Game of Cat and Killer (1978)

Notable New Fiction Club One Signed First Printing per month
Givhan, Jennifer. The Sleeping Sisters

Romance and Relationships Club One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month
Wells, Christine. The Lost Perfumes of Paris

In Case You Missed It

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 1 1:00 PM Virtual Book Launch
Britain's Jance Hallett discusses The Silent Appeal (Atria $30)
Signed UK Edition: The Silent Appeal (Viper $46)

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 1 7:00 PM Live Book Launch
James R. Benn discusses The Ninth Circle (Soho $29.95)

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 2 5:00 PM Virtual Event
David Heska Wanbli Weiden is our host for a discussion of Indigenous Horror
Jennifer Givhan discusses The Sleeping Sisters (Little Brown $30)

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 3 5:00 PM Virtual Event
JT Ellison discusses You Know Why (Thomas & Mercer $28.99)

THURSDAY SEPTEMB ER 3 6:30 PM Virtual Event
Emiko Jean discusses Before You Were Anne (Simon Schuster $29)

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 5 4:00 PM Live Book Launch
Laurie R. King discusses Those Who Are Gone (Random House $30)

SIGNED BOOKS

A note here: All of our Signed Hardcover books are first printings

Alexander, Tasha. Murder on the Sacred River (St Martins $29). Not Signed until October 14 with our Jack Reacher book launch with Andrew Child. This is a special book: Lady Emily Mystery #20.

1908: Lady Emily and her husband Colin Hargreaves, along with an eccentric group of English tourists, are vacationing in India at Ahilya Fort, the old home to the Maharaja's family, when a man is found shot along the Narmada River. A parallel plot begins in 1740 when 15-year-old Ahilyabai, married to the heir of Holkar in Malwa territory for seven years, is mature enough to produce an heir. But her husband has barely spoken to her and is addicted to drink and other women. How Ahilya manages her marriage and her crucial role in the ruling dynasty reverberates down the centuries and into Lady Emily's investigation of the 1908 murder. This is one of Alexander's best dual timeline historicals and draws upon her own travels in India.

Benjamin, Chloe. Under Story (Penguin $32). A grieving couple who have lost their son find a way to a mirror universe where time runs backwards. At the edge of the world, biologist Laurel Salter is hiding from her past as a wife, mother and promising scientist.. For ten hours a day, six days per week, she works as a dishwasher at McMurdo Station, an isolated research base in Antarctica. She tells no one her history. And then when a strange light appears across the ice—and draws a group of physicists to McMurdo—her former husband, Eli, won't be far behind. Laurel is captivated by the Arc: its surreal glow; the way it seems almost alive. And though Eli is reluctant to test her wildest theory, Laurel is convinced that the Arc leads down a rabbit hole, and into a world, they can barely imagine. Can she persuade him to risk everything to fix the burden that hangs between them—to turn back the clock and live their story a second time?

Benn, James R. The Ninth Circle (Soho $29.95). We have been fans, and selling Signed copies, of the Billy Boyle World II series since the very first one in 2013. And here we are now up to January, 1945, and a mission for the Army Captain in a new war theater: Cuba. Cuba declared war on Germany almost in sync with the US and has witnessed much activity in the Atlantic. While Billy and his bagman Lt. Piotr Kazimierz, actually a Polish count serving the Allies, hope for a rum-fueled holiday in Havana, they are immediately thrust into the murder of a Navy Intelligence officer. The pace picks up when the Cuban taxi driver providing info is also killed. What did Hector Diaz know? To find out our men in Havana team up with the British Legation which connects them to Lt. Commander Ian Fleming. Joint inquiry leads further to US gangster Meyer Lansky who has been and will be helping the war effort. But what top secret action is at stake here? On they go in a crazy caper involving irregular warfare by Hemingway's anti-fascist "Crook Factory"… and the Duke and Duchess of Windsor on post in the Bahamas. It's brilliant history as well as well plotted mystery—and despite the wartime trials, fun.

Bentley, Don. Double Tap (Atria $30). Signed here September 22 with Kyle Mills as host. This is Mitch Rapp's 25th thriller if only Vince Flynn were here to witness it. But the series is in the expert hands of veteran Don Bentley and the chosen successor to his own Mitch Rapps by Kyle Mills.

Here Don goes back in time to continue the American Assassin storyline established by Vince, taking young CIA assassin Mitch on his first deep-cover mission. It lands him in the ancient Italy city of Verona where his target is a Pakistani looking to sell a horrific weapon to the highest bidder. After a breathless effort to hit his target, Mitch infiltrates a *jihadi* organization bent on unleashing such a weapon of mass destruction. "Fast, ruthless, and loaded with old-school espionage intrigue, *Double Tap* feels both like a Mitch Rapp novel and distinctly like a Don Bentley thriller."—The Real Book Spy. When Don wrote this he could not have anticipated the current new upheaval in the Middle East.

Berry, Lucinda. Saving Noah (Poisoned Pen $19.99). Noah is the boy everyone admires—an honor student, a champion swimmer, a hometown success story. Until he confesses to sexually abusing young girls during swim practice. In a single moment, his future evaporates, and his family shoulders the fallout. After eighteen months in a juvenile sexual rehabilitation center, Noah returns home. But the town recoils, and his father refuses to let him back into their family's life. Noah's mom, Adrianne, is forced into an impossible role: the mother of a child no one believes deserves saving. Loving Noah means losing everything else—her marriage, her community, and her certainty about right and wrong. As devastating truths emerge, Adrianne must confront the darkest question of all: when does standing by your child become a betrayal of everyone around you?

Brodsky, KB. Beyond Honor (Atria $29) is debut thriller. When a CIA analyst uncovers a Russian conspiracy reaching the highest levels of American government, a battle-hardened paramilitary operative is sent on a dangerous mission into Siberia that will change his life forever. Spanning global hotspots, look for a CIA analyst hunting a conspiracy that leads to the Oval Office. A Russian agent hiding in plain sight. Jason Matthews's *Red Sparrow* meets Jack Carr's *The Terminal List*. The husband and wife authors are signing our books for us in NY.

Callanan, Liam. Stone Age Astronaut (University of Wisconsin Press $24.95). Novelist Callanan—*Cloud Atlas*, Paris by the Book ($23); When in Rome ($18), turns to biography to celebrate the fascinating story of the once-famous aviation pioneer Lester Maitland (1899–1990), bringing to life "the daring, drama, and high adventure of early air travel—even as he reflects perceptively on the evanescence of fame and glory."

Interestingly, Callanan reports: "One of Maitland's last living heirs, a granddaughter, helped me with the book; she lives in Scottsdale. Maitland himself spent his last years in and around Cave Creek, where he served as pastor of Good Shepherd of the Hills Episcopal Church."

Five weeks after Charles Lindbergh crossed the Atlantic, Maitland was the first pilot to fly nonstop from California to Hawaii, an astonishing feat of nerve, discipline, and navigation. He went on to become one of the most famous pilots in America. Callanan writes of Maitland's racing his meteoric early career: flight instructor at nineteen; one of the US Army's first test pilots; the first American to fly faster than 200 mph; and the pioneering airman whose Pacific crossing earned him the Distinguished Flying Cross. Then just twenty-two days after becoming Executive Officer of the Far East Air Service Command—and one day after

Pearl Harbor—Maitland witnessed the destruction of much of the Far East Air Force in the Philippines. Later, he commanded the 386th Bomb Group in Europe, making him World War II's oldest bomber pilot, only to be abruptly and mysteriously retired weeks before D-Day. After the war, Maitland experienced a series of professional and personal disappointments, and he quietly faded into obscurity. He eventually became an Episcopal priest, serving small parishes.

Cleeves, Ann. The Dying Light (St Martins $29) is Matthew Venn #4 moving you fans from the Scottish isles down to Devon once again in the effective sequel to The Raging Storm ($19). A scorching heat wave marks the start of the summer in Devon. Detective Matthew Venn and his team are called to Tide House, the Devon vacation home of well-known MP Paul Armstrong, where Armstrong's daughter, Hannah, and her friend, Lottie, had been staying ahead of a family vacation. Armstrong found Lottie dead in the pool, with Hannah nowhere to be seen. His public profile means the U.K.'s ministry of the interior watches and weighs in on every move Venn makes as he searches for answers, which come via observations from local villagers and conversations with the girls' parents and friends. As always, Cleeves is strong on atmosphere, and she crafts well-rounded characters whose overlapping secrets form an engrossing puzzle—developments in the personal lives of Venn's investigators land with the same sense of occasion as bombshells about the victims' lives.

Note: *Shetland* returns to TV this fall but Cleeves left off writing that series awhile back and moved her detective Jimmy Perez to the Orkneys last year in The Killing Stones ($19) which I highly recommend.

Cline, Emma. Switzy (Random House $32). A private plane cuts through the winter night, somewhere over Greenland. David, a retired executive, sits back in his leather seat, playing solitaire on his phone. Click. Click. Drag. Click. The notebook in his jacket pocket is filled with familiar phrases, urgent reminders to himself, but he struggles to recognize his own handwriting. This is a portrait of an aging man's last pilgrimage as he moves towards an assisted ending to his life in Switzerland.

DeWitt, Patrick. Dodge City (Harper $28). It's 1967 in Los Angeles and Lee Clarke has received his draft notice, calling him up to fight in the Vietnam War. A straitlaced, apolitical twenty-three-year-old from Concrete, Washington, Lee is studying at UCLA until a fistfight leads to his expulsion—and his removal from the deferment list. The draft notice forces him to make the first political decision of his life, and though he's happy in California and loves his girlfriend, he will leave the country and head for the border. He signs up at a drive-away car-delivery service, chancing into a showroom-new Jaguar bound for the East Coast. Bringing only a single suitcase and a bag of amphetamines, off he goes….

Dugoni, Robert. One Split Second (Thomas & Mercer $16.99). Detective Tracy Crosswhite is assigned to defend an old friend. Sheriff Jenny Almond has been charged with first-degree murder for shooting an unarmed veteran on a stormy night of confusion, paranoia, and split-second choices. Tracy is certain there's more to the story of Anthony Alvarez's killing-and her investigation draws her back to a cold case that still haunts the community. More than forty years ago, Alvarez was the prime suspect in the unsolved disappearance of a teenage babysitter. The lead investigator, Jenny's late father Buzz Almond, always believed Alvarez had been framed. Decades later, his suspicions of a conspiracy are driving Tracy to find answers.

Eckstein, David. Just Enough (Evil Eye $31.99). Bonus: Pre-orders of the books include a gift (signed bookmark from Ashley Eckstein with her co-author Samantha Chase and a signed sports card from David)

This memoir by David plus Ashley's book are Signed here September 19 4:00 PM.

Ticket: $35 with one copy of the book. Companion Ticket $55 includes one copy of *Just Enough* and one copy of wife Ashley's *Lucky 22*. And a third option: Ticket: $23 includes one copy of *Lucky 22*. All books are presigned. Photo line only. No sports memorabilia can be signed.

Two-time World Series Champion and 2006 World Series MVP David Eckstein shares the valleys and mountaintops that shaped him—years defined not by trophies. David Eckstein was never supposed to make it—too small, too easy to overlook. But with perseverance, faith, and family he went from underdog to champion. If you've ever been underestimated, he shows you can still win.

Ellison, JT. Ellison, J T. You Know Why (Thomas & Mercer $28.99) is a perfect read for fans of Laura Dave's The Last Thing He Told Me ($17.99), but uniquely Ellison. She gives us a dual narrative of suspense with on one side Brooklyn, whose husband surprises their young family with a Christmas trip to Italy, though they have to rush to leave the next day, only to disappear at the airport during their connection in Atlanta. The other side is told by Eden, who on a flight home from a business trip sees the man who murdered her sister Chloe ten years earlier. Both women have secrets, and obviously, Trey does as well.. You Know Why ($16.99).

Gabaldon, Diana. Outlander 35th Anniversary Edition (Random House $30). Tickets ($35 includes one copy of the book) for our live event with Diana on Saturday September 26 6:00 PM are now on sale.

This special edition of *Outlander* features a gorgeous new cover, Fraser tartan stenciled edges, designed endpapers, and a new letter of introduction from Diana.

Godfrey, SC. The Enigma Challenge (Viking $32) follows a cryptologist (Zoe) and a mysterious hacker (Dane) as they race across Europe in a dangerously high-stakes competition. Kirkus Reviews said, "This is what you'd get if a Dan Brown novel was rewritten by Emily Henry." There are puzzles to solve, cinematic locations (from Madrid to the Scottish Highlands), and a "will they/won't they" tension between Zoe and Dane. Despite being billed as a thriller I found it to be a traditional mystery suitable for Cozy readers and a lot of fun for those who like the challenge of working puzzles, decoding, and such (and if you don't the solutions are provided). So I made this our August Cozy Crimes Pick as sometimes a traditional mystery works the best.

Green, John. Hollywood, Ending (Penguin $32). Just 5 left of Green's blend of a behind-the-scenes Hollywood love story with an unflinching examination of the insatiable attention economy For rising talents Kai Laramie and Juniper Castillo, being cast in the buzzy biopic *Andy Warhol Never Gets Old* is the opportunity they've both been waiting for. They're on the verge of breaking

out, and maybe even falling in love. Soon, the movie is blowing up, and so are their lives—in terrifying ways.

✲ Hallett, Janice. The Silent Appeal (Viper $46). This is a follow up to her bestselling debut novel The Appeal ($20). Unsigned US edition on sale now,

In Hallett's sly full-length return to the British village of Lower Lockwood, rookie attorneys Charlotte Holroyd and Femi Hassan gather evidence for an appeal on behalf of someone accused of another murder connected to the Fairway Players drama society. Digging through a mountain of emails, texts, and online chats to better understand the case, the attorneys piece together the Fairway Players' clashing personalities and petty power struggles—namely the conflict between housewife Sarah-Jane and her sister, Nicky-Rose Dearing, a talented director who abruptly abandoned her career before being welcomed to Lower Lockwood a little too warmly by Sarah-Jane's husband, Kevin MacDonald. As the players mount a production of Agatha Christie's *The Hollow*, Hallett presents a parade of possible victims and villains (readers don't know who died or who killed them), including recently acquitted murder suspect Issy Beck, lonely workaholic Fran Elroy-Jones, and shady new actor Lucas Stibson. Eventually, egos clash, affairs ramp up, and Charlotte and Femi struggle to separate genuine clues from red herrings. Though Hallett's epistolary structure has lost some of its freshness, she deploys it in service of a mystery as clever as any Dame Agatha ever devised.

Hardy, Andre. Tear the City Down (Grand Central $30) is a debut by former NFL player Hardy who writes "a hard-hitting, heart wrenching crime novel that brilliantly blends elements of jazz, football, and a gritty portrait of a divided San Diego where a crime boss' fixer want out to focus on his daughter's burgeoning tennis career—perfect for fans of S.A. Cosby and Walter Mosley."

FYI, Andre was the fourth pick of the Philadelphia Eagles in the 1984 National Football League draft. He is a member of the NFL Retired Players Association and the NFL Legends Community, and he earned his MFA through the NFL Players Trust tuition reimbursement program.

Harris, Robert. Agrippa (Heinemann $48) portrays Rome's descent into dictatorship (imperial) led by a political "unicorn" as can happen. Agrippa (Knopf $32) is Unsigned.

He was born feet first, a dangerous way to enter the world. His mother did not survive, and the nickname, Agrippa—*mother killer*—stuck. But the schoolyard taunting only served to harden his resolve and hone his predilection for aggression. In time, the name lost its sting and became instead a mark of his invincibility. It came to shape his destiny. Agrippa was a mere commoner, a plebeian, his father a humble Stoic, but he earned the respect and fear of his peers. He defended a bullied young boy, Octavius, who turned out to be the nephew of Caesar himself, a chance encounter that would change the trajectory of his life.

Hawk, Steve. Nearshore (Penguin $32) is a debut making our **September First Mystery Subscription Club Pick**. Fans of Don Winslow and T. Jefferson Parker will love the intense coastal California setting—here, it's around Half Moon Bay between San Francisco and Santa Cruz—and the high-action surfing. And many of us will relish a quest to bring tech billionaires to account. Stanford University which has been called out as more a tech start-up incubator than an academic haven (unlike in my undergraduate days there) is part of the story's landscape too.

"California surf culture has long run adjacent to big American tech... It has also, always, drawn on the iconography of the American West with its affinity for open space, wild beauty, and loner archetypes. Steve Hawk assembles these contrasting elements, attaches the fuse of a thriller, and builds a story in the traditions of Cormac McCarthy, Robert Stone, and Kem Nunn to deliver a novel that radiates outward with the speed and force of an atomic blast." —Alex Wilson

PW Stars this addng,"With an ease uncommon among first-time novelists, Hawk... stokes suspense by toggling between the [characters'] increasingly desperate perspectives as they unearth a far-reaching conspiracy, all without sacrificing character development or lyrical descriptions of the scenic California setting. Engrossing, graceful, and transporting, this is a terrific—if terrifying—tale of near apocalypse."

Holmes, Rupert. Where the Truth Lies (Avid Reader $30). Marvelous, a new edition of his 2003 First Mystery Pick, so brilliant, so much fun. We sold dozens and dozens then and now get to introduce this vibrant story to new readers.

Kerry O'Connor, a vivacious, free-spirited young journalist known for her penetrating celebrity interviews is hell-bent on unearthing the long-buried secrets that irrevocably shaped the lives of the magnetic showbiz team of singer Vince Collins and comic Lanny Morris. Once inseparable (and seemingly insatiable), the two celebrities were driven apart by a young woman's bizarre and unexplained death, in which either might have been complicit. Hmmm….

James, Marlon. The Disappearers (Penguin $32). From the author of the Booker Prize–winning *A Brief History of Seven Killings*: the electrifying story of the murder of a gay man in 1980s Jamaica and its far-reaching consequences.

Jean, Emiko. Before You Were Anne (Simon Schuster $29). Jean's taut second mystery for now married, pregnant, and thriving in her career Seattle Detective Chelsey Calhoun after The Return of Ellie Black ($18.99)—a 2024 First Mystery Club Pick—hinges on the kidnapping of a nightclub hostess's daughter.

In Tokyo, Rika Takahashi befriends club hostess Mayumi "May" Ito and starts working at Moonlight, May's upscale establishment. On the job, May introduces Rika to gangster Hiroshi Akiyama, and the two quickly fall for each other. After Hiroshi gets Rika pregnant, their relationship sours, and Rika flees to the United States, changes her name to Anne Walker, and ends up raising her daughter, Naomi, in Seattle. Sixteen years later, Rika is murdered and Naomi goes missing. The case comes to Calhoun's attention. Alongside her investigative partner, Montoya, Calhoun pieces together the mysteries of Rika's death and Naomi's disappearance, uncovering an insidious sex trafficking ring and difficult details about her own past in the process. Jean smoothly toggles between the perspectives of Rika, Naomi, and Chelsey, fleshing out each woman's perspective as the complicated plot shifts into high gear. It's an exhilarating thriller with a strong emotional current.

King, Laurie R. Those Who Are Gone (Random House $30). King brings back San Francisco Homicide Inspector Raquel Laing, so insightful and so socially awkward introduced in Back

to the Garden ($18)—currently not available, either reprinting or moving to Print on Demand—and one of my favorite blends of the contemporary and the historical—1970s San Francisco. Raquel, a high functioning neurodivergent, is best off in the Cold Case Squad.

Now the homicide of a drug dealer in a deserted corner of San Francisco finds Raquel pushing protocol again. Meanwhile Dee, daughter of the now deceased Laings who adopted a nine-year-old Raquel and an agoraphobic who works freelance at their shared home, dives into ancestry research and discovers information about Raquel's biological parents. It's all a lot for Raquel to handle in a book constructed much like a spiral that King found both fun and challenging to write. I add that a colleague of Kate Martinelli, the San Francisco cop of King's first series headed by King's Best First Novel Edgar winner *A Grave Talent,* has aged since the 1990s and is now a mentor to Raquel. That's a nice Easter egg for you fans from King.

Koryta, Michael. Die Famous (Little Brown $30). BONUS: Customers who preorder a signed copy will receive a link to a free Kindle version of Scott Carson's fabulous Departure 37 ($19) – one of my favorite books with a truly original concept.

Set during the Great Depression, *Die Famous* follows a determined mother who sets out with her son and retired detective father to track down the outlaw she once loved—and may still love.

"*Die Famous* is the best gangster novel I've ever read. These aren't your Mafia goodfellas; they are the hard case bank thieves who roamed from Indiana to Maine in the 1930s. The writing is first class, and the action is nonstop. You'll think of Larry McMurtry and John Toland (who gets a shout-out here)."—Stephen King

In early 20th-century Indiana, Savannah Cody grows up with and falls in love with the troubled Eddie "Nickel" Terhune, who fixes stolen cars for local gangster Al Brady. By the time the Great Depression hits, Nickel and Savannah have had a son named Alford, and Nickel has become part of Al's crew. When a failed Saratoga, N.Y., bank robbery lands Nickel in prison, Al's gang springs him. After a more successful robbery in Baltimore, Nickel flees to Maine, where Savannah and her father hope to find him before the FBI does—and where a chance encounter provides Nickel and 12-year-old Alford a few magical weeks together. Koryta tells much of the tale via a conversation between Savannah and an FBI agent on the eve of her execution; her voice is tart and quick, but gradual cracks reveal her deep wells of emotion.

"The gangster novel that I didn't know I needed. This story of a reluctant getaway driver, the woman who loves him, and their observant son accomplishes the near-impossible: it is both big-hearted and thrilling as a car chase. I loved this perfectly written tommy gun of a novel." —Ariel Lawhon

Kuang, RF. Taipei Story (Harper $32 Deluxe Limited Edition). Yale freshman Lily Chen, born in China, raised in the States, is off to spend the summer in Taipei at an intensive language program like so many Chinese American students before her, hoping to connect with the culture she inherited but never fully understood. But a promising start quickly unravels. Her classes are grueling, her roommate is driving her insane, and a reckless trip to the hot springs with a guy she barely knows soon has her classmates viciously gossiping when he spills the beans. She feels adrift, a foreigner in a country she thought would feel like home. Then shocking news arrives: her grandfather has died and that she's lost the chance to talk with both grandparents in their native tongue. "Lily's earnestness is heartfelt and poignant, especially as she reels from grief. The result is a touching story of fading heritage."

Lawhon, Ariel. The Pirate Queen (Knopf $32). The author of the mesmerizing bestseller here and everywhere, The Frozen River ($18), writes a sweeping story of 16th Century Ireland folk hero Grace O'Malley, who despite formidable family pressures chooses independence on the sea and to defend her country from Queen Elizabeth I's incursions into Ireland. I have visited Clare Island off the west coast, home to the O'Malleys, and so knew about Grace for years. The September Indie Next Picks notes: "I was enthralled by the structure of this narrative and by this incredible woman that history almost erased."

Told in a three-part looping structure, with alternating chapters titled Maiden, Mother, and Matriarch, the narrative shuffles between Grace's childhood, unhappy marriage, and battlefield triumphs in the Elizabethan era. As a girl, Grace dreams of a life at sea, but her chieftain father, Eóin, bars her from sailing. Eóin foils her love life, too, forcing her at 16, in 1546, to marry the odious Donal O'Flaherty, despite her intense bond with future chieftain Richard Bourke, who writes her a passionate letter after her union with Donal: "I will wait for you." She has three children with Donal, who physically abuses her. After Donal is killed in 1565 while battling the rival Joyce clan, Grace unexpectedly defends Hen's Castle, a key holding of her late husband's clan, against incursions by the Joyces, and she's finally able to be with Richard and earn the respect of Eóin, who hands over command of his fleet.

"The clever storytelling style, inspired, according to an author's note, by the Celtic Trinity Knot, rewards attentive readers, with recurring imagery and motifs forming an increasingly complex portrait of the heroine.."—*PW* Starred Review

Maguire, Gregory. Galinda (Deluxe Limited Edition) (Harper $30). Who was Glinda the Good Witch before she floated down in her bubble to greet Dorothy? Who was Glinda before she became Elphaba Thropp's magnetic and popular roommate at Shiz University? Well, before then, she was Galinda. With a "ga" as we learn in this sister volume to *Wicked*.

Mandel, Emily St John. Exit Party (Knopf $32). A man disappears from a glittering 2031 Los Angeles party, and a woman — a gunrunner, an art collector, an operative of the State — searches for answers. In Mandel's masterful seventh novel, the United States having collapsed into warring city-states and regional republics, and expands into a dizzying story of doubles and parallel universes. In a section titled "A-Side," protagonist Ari Waker, 48, attends a party in Los Angeles to celebrate the lifting of the city's curfew. Party guests seem to double, a stranger calls Ari by her unused legal name, Ibari, and the host disappears. In the weeks that follow, Ari, who was recently released from prison after serving 18 years for attempted murder, tries to make a fresh start. She spends several years working in retail before drifting to Ohio, where she works as a private investigator for a militia and then with an arms-dealing neighbor. The novel's "B-Side" offers an alternative version of Ari/Ibari's life and of the near-future U.S.

Rather than collapsing, the country is consolidated into a totalitarian regime called the United State. Here, Ibari is a detective in the government's all-powerful secret police. Mandel's assured tale offers bracing commentary on the dangers of divisiveness and surveillance, and the propulsive plot is fueled by the unfolding mystery of the initiating party scene.

McCloskey, David. London Station (Norton $29.99). Publishes September 29—virtual event October 16 6:30 PM when David pairs up with Robert McCaw whose fabulous spy story Traitors (Norton $29.99) I have praised heavily to you. But meanwhile David's signed copies will be on sale end of September.

Hmm, an all to plausible scenario here. A new US administration has taken office, installing a brash and unconventional CIA director skeptical of old alliances and determined to disrupt the Agency. When the axe falls on the chief of London Station, the agency veteran decides to spy for the Brits—a betrayal uncovered by his replacement, Artemis Aphrodite Procter. Caught between a turncoat spymaster and a ruthless new boss back at Langley, Procter must now navigate a tense environment as old friends become adversaries and no one knows whom to trust. Adding to the chaos is a new breed of private intelligence agency: a secretive and powerful company run by a reclusive billionaire with a very different agenda than the two old allies who suddenly go at each other's throats.

Miller, Madeline. Mestra: A Short Story (Harper $1)5 looks like a small hardcover with gold stamping and no dust jacket.

Mestra, daughter of the King of Thessaly, is granted a unique gift by Poseidon: The ability to transform herself into any being she can imagine. Her father, on the other hand, is cursed. As punishment for disrespecting the goddess Demeter, he is in possession of an unnatural, insatiable hunger. Devoted Mestra suggests using her new gift to help her father. But if his hunger is bottomless....

Mizushima, Margaret. Fighting Edge (Crooked Lane $29.99). A routine welfare check becomes a nightmare when Deputy Mattie Walker finds a young mother dead and a hysterical toddler, possibly the only witness to a brutal crime. Before the investigative team can start piecing together what happened, Mattie discovers another criminal act in Timber Creek thanks to her K-9 partner Robo.

✲ Osman, Richard. We Chase Shadows (Random House UK $42). See below. UK books run later than their publication dates.

✲ Osman, Richard. We Chase Shadows (Penguin $31). Tip ins. Retired cop Steve Wheeler and his daughter-in-law, Amy, have opened a detective agency with backing from novelist Rosie D'Antonio, "the Jackie Collins of Crime." Steve and Amy are hired by Vern Blackwood, who has made a fortune selling fake vitamin supplements and who contacts them while hiding out in a luxury compound in Italy. A killer has just penetrated Vern's state-of-the-art security system and killed one of his bodyguards, leaving behind a warning note signed by Jacob Erikson, Vern's oldest rival. Vern has no interest in identifying the killer; instead, he wants to know if Erikson really wrote the note. "The adventure that ensues is brimming with Osman's trademark wit and brio, and his characters delight."

Picoult, Jodi. Hollow Bones (Random House $30). On September 11, 2001, when Molly Fitzgerald was only two months old, her mother went to an appointment at the World Trade Center and never came home. Her father and the stepmother who raised her couldn't have loved her more, but she still grew up with a healthy dread of disasters. Now an adult, she runs the Rhode Island Department for Emergency Preparedness, mapping out ways to save lives during storms, epidemics, and airplane crashes. She is married to Jesse—a police polygraph expert with his own history of crisis. But then the unexpected upends their new marriage. Picoult moves between past and present and echoes of *My Sisters Keeper* are present.

Rose, Jeneva. Sometimes I Scare Myself (Blackstone $29.99). **Bonus**: Fans who preorder will receive: A Ouija board planchette-shaped bookmark and two custom tarot card stickers. On sale September 22.

Not all nightmares come from sleep. Some come from these three stories by Rose.

Ryan, Hank Phillippi. Mother Daughter Sister Stranger (St Martins $29). The sole survivors of the fiery plane crash that killed their parents, Eliza Ramsey and her sister Bea share an unbreakable bond. Eliza and Bea were 17 and 20, respectively, when they were orphaned. They had survived the crash in the back seat of the private plane their father owned and piloted. Eliza now works in Boston for a literary agent, while Bea is a high-profile fashion influencer and mother of the bright and curious Piper. The sisters' close bond remains strong, as does their grief over the loss of their parents. Each year, they hold a Remembrance Day to mourn the anniversary. But on the 11th year, Bea fails to show up at Eliza's Boston brownstone to join her sister and collect Piper, who was spending the week with Eliza. Eliza's search for Bea, her attempts to shield Piper from any ideas that the child may have been abandoned and to uncover any secrets about Bea that Eliza didn't know power the story.

Santlofer, Jonathan. Ten Perfect Guests (Sourcebooks $32.99). I recommend you read this entry in his Substack writing where he calls this island-based story "a classic whodunnit with a message" that required serious planning which he normally does not do. "One thing I knew I did not want was a detective. No Hercule Poirot, no aha moment. Yes, I knew who the killer was. And I knew the ending, the resolution. But as I went on and the book continued, that ending became larger, more important, a story in itself. The reader already knows what happened, but the character, the killer tells us why and the how, not exactly the motive but the motivation, and tells us their story too."

There is a full page interview/review in ShelfAwareness to read. And Lee Child calls it "A beautiful blend of golden-age charm and modern-day edge—a delightful from first word to last." You can see the Christie model of *And Then There Were None* here.

When celebrated and enigmatic artist Victor D'Arcangelo dies unexpectedly, leaving an immense fortune, ten of his nearest and dearest receive an irresistible summons: attend his weekend memorial—or forfeit their inheritance. For a variety of reasons—debt, pride, desperation, love, resentment, despair, greed, closure—all ten agree to attend the memorial weekend, held at a remote hotel on a small Caribbean island. Accessible only by boat, and without cell signal. But once they arrive, the paradise begins to feel more like a prison. Someone knows their secrets. Someone wants revenge. As the weekend spirals into chaos, one question hangs in the sultry, tropical air: Who, if anyone, will survive?

Simon, Nina. My Sister Is Going to Kill Me (Harper 30) is based on Simon's actual trip down the Colorado through the Grand Canyon and is just the ticket to read if you have ever wished to do the trip (minus the murders)—or have done it and feel nostalgic. The recent devastating flood reminds us of the dangers such a stunning place can present.

Here are two sisters on a Grand Canyon rafting trip gone wrong. Liv and Mandy Chisholm are polar opposites: Liv is practical and work-minded, while the freewheeling Mandy takes after the duo's father, a convicted fraudster. When Mandy is offered a free rafting trip as part of a beauty product launch, she invites Liv to join her on a seven-day wilderness adventure alongside beauty influencers and the group's rough-and-tumble guides. Trouble starts on day one, when the company's founder misses the start of the trip and her absence is unconvincingly explained away as a marketing stunt. Then someone in the party turns up dead, and the sisters' lighthearted bonding vacation turns into a fight for survival against natural and manmade threats.

Wells, Emma C. We Already Dug the Grave (Poisoned Pen Press $18.99). Signed here September 8 with Berry and the Creepy Book Club hosts.

In this Southern Gothic. Milly can't divine the future anymore, and maybe that's a good thing. Lately, her life has been bleak enough, she doesn't need the now-silent tea leaves to tell her. Meanwhile, her estranged younger sister thrives miles away in a shiny new life with a shiny new marriage. Milly doesn't blame Francis for wanting nothing to do with her. Not after what happened in that Tennessee meadow a decade before. But when Francis shows up on Milly's doorstep with a black eye and a plea for help – Milly can't say no. Especially when the tea leaves are finally crystal clear: if the sisters don't kill Francis's husband, he'll kill her. And if they're going to plot a murder, the sisters have no choice but to return to the one place they'd left behind. A place where another body – and a multitude of secrets – were buried. Because this isn't the first time the sisters have needed to dispose of a bad man. In fact, they might be pretty good at it.

CLASSICS

✲ Buchan, John. The 39 Steps (Michael O'Mara Books $16.99). The early Hitchcock movie starring Robert Donat as intelligence officer Major-General Richard Hannay, newly returned to England from South Africa and then forced on the run by a German spy ring, was based on this classic originally published in 1915. The movie is dated now, but books do not. This edition is a lovely, nicely-priced hardcover

✲ Carr, John Dickson as Carter Dickson. The Judas Window (Poisoned Pen $17.99), is a British Library Crime Classic first published in 1938 and remains a classic of the locked-room genre. James Answell is paying a visit to his future father-in-law, the champion archer Avory Hume, at his Grosvenor Street townhouse. Invited into the study and offered a drink, Answell suddenly swoons—and awakes to find the door and windows locked from the inside. His host is dead, skewered with an arrow, and Answell is prime suspect. The devilish puzzle constructed, Carter Dickson unravels an ingenious courtroom thriller, in which the razor-sharp amateur detective Sir Henry Merrivale, a wizard at deciphering the impossible, argues for the defense.

Clavell, James. Tai-Pan, Part One (Blackstone $24.99). This reissue by the author of Shogun charts the rise of Hong Kong. Dirk Struan rose from humble beginnings to build Struan & Company, also known as the Noble House, into the world's largest Far East trading company. He is now the Tai-Pan—Supreme Leader—of all Tai-Pans in China. Along the way, however, he made a powerful enemy. Tyler Brock, Struan's rival from their early opium-smuggling days, also heads a large trading fleet, second in size only to Struan's. But it is not only silks and spices that drive their mutual companies' wealth—the opium trade is still booming. War between England and China might be over, but the hostilities remain.

O'Higgins, Harvey. Detective Duff Unravels It (Sourcebooks $17.99). This Library of Congress Crime Classic, originally published in 1929, features Detective Duff. Once a lawyer before the war, private detective John Duff might still be a lawyer to anyone looking—albeit an unsuccessful one, in a shabby office in a decrepit building just off Manhattan's Union Square. The deception suits his method, which is keeping a low profile. Duff employs a network of operatives who pose as businessmen, private care nurses. or housekeepers, whom he moves about like chess pieces to gain psychological insights into his clients and suspects. From murder to extortion to kidnapping and more, Detective Duff unravels it all, using his shrewd understanding of human behavior and his expert team of operatives to pick apart even the knottiest of cases. This volume includes two previously uncollected Duff tales, bringing all the Duff stories together for the first time, showcasing how a literary detective used psychology to crack cases and earn a place on the prestigious Queen's Quorum list compiled by the revered Ellery Queen.

Page, Marco. Fast Company (American Mystery Classics $15.95). Skulduggery in the book world. This is a great story to read alongside our September Crime Club Pick, Tim Sullivan's The Bookseller. Find here a hardboiled PI, rare books, forbidden texts, literary clues, a suspicious underworld, and a killer who apparently has a grudge against both booksellers and Dante.

Joel Crisp knows the dark side of the rare book market. A private detective for an insurer of valuable tomes, he makes his living (and his own book allowance) hunting down pilfered volumes and exposing the dealers that traffic them. But when one of the most reviled of these unscrupulous salesmen is found bludgeoned with a bust of Dante and suspicion falls on an innocent kid, Joel finds himself investigating his homicide. Pseudonymously written by screenwriter, playwright, and novelist Harry Kurnitz, Fast Company is a memorable and entertaining detective novel with a unique setting, reissued for the first time this century. In 1938, the novel was adapted for the MGM film of the same name,

Simenon, Georges. Maigret and the Tall Woman; Maigret Takes a Room (Inspector Maigret) (Picador $17 each). Two more in the iconic French cop's investigations.

COZIES

Adams, Ellery. The Tattered Cover ($17.95). It was a dark, rainy night at Nora Pennington's Miracle Books when a mysterious death brings the Secret, Book, and Scone Society into the Halloween season. As the residents of Miracle Springs, North Carolina, select their costumes and get excited for a night of tricks or treats, Nora joins in on the festivities by hosting medium and memoirist Lara Luz at the bookstore. Charismatic and compelling, Lara mesmerizes the audience with her life story. Struck by

a bolt of lightning as a child, she was pronounced dead only to be resurrected with the ability to connect with those on the other side. Lara performs a reading for a select group of bookstore patrons when the encroaching storm knocks out the power. In the sudden darkness, Lara clutches her heart and collapses dead without warning. But Nora doesn't believe she died of natural causes. Buy now and hold this one up until the Spooky Season starts October first.

Alexander, Ellie. The Pumpkin Vice Café, A Bakeshop Mystery ($18). As autumn settles over the charming hamlet of Ashland, Oregon, ushering in cool, crisp breezes and a stunning show of color, everyone at Torte is keeping warm by whipping up a bevy of fall treats and spicy lattes. Jules is nearing her due date, and the whole town is abuzz—placing bets on when the twins will make their grand debut. Helen and the team are working on a secret surprise baby shower, complete with cupcakes, cookies, and a feast fit for royalty, or maybe just a mother-to-be. Meanwhile, Lance and Arlo are busy planning their nuptials in what is sure to be as close to a royal wedding as Ashland has ever seen. But when the high-end wedding planner they hired is found dead in the frigid waters of Ashland Creek, what looks like a tragic accident, a slip on an icy bridge, quickly reveals itself as murder.

Barrett, Lorna. A Critical Conjunction (Berkley $30). In the newest Booktown Mystery, Tricia Miles's sister, Angelica, announces to their chosen family that they're going into business together, it's news to Tricia. But rejuvenating Stoneham Stoneware, a struggling kitchen and home goods store, is something the sisters know they can do. It's a win-win situation. But right after they take possession, they find the store trashed and the previous owner dead. Plenty of people had issues with the dead woman. Tricia will have to crack the case before the murderer destroys not only the fledgling business, but more lives as well.

Cahoon, Lynn. Two Wicked Desserts (Kensington $17.95). Magic Springs, Idaho, may be a small town, but Mia Malone is living an enchanted life running her own catering business and cooking school. And while she's teaching the locals culinary craft, her grandmother is teaching her witchcraft for the day she inherits the family magical spells. Unfortunately, all that knowledge is not helping Mia or her grandmother in removing the spirit of warlock Dorian Alexander from Mia's cat, Mr. Darcy Dorian's spells have already been transferred to his daughter Cindy's grimoire. An actress looking for her big Hollywood break, Cindy is hoping there's something in her father's bag of tricks to make her a star. But playing with magic lands Cindy at the top of the suspect list when a hitman is found dead in the garden of Mia's Morsels. Now it's up to Mia to conjure up a killer....

✻ Cambridge, Colleen. Two Truths and a Murder ($17.95). While her famous employer Agatha is happily back home at Mallowan Hall, wrestling with her Belgian detective's dilemma on board the Orient Express, Phyllida is finding her local renown as a sleuth has put her in high demand. A distraught Vera Rollingbroke suspects her husband of infidelity and has invited Phyllida to a dinner party to observe his behavior, particularly in regard to one Genevra Blastwick. he next morning Phyllida learns Ginevra's shy sister Ethel was purposely run down by a motorcar the previous night while inexplicably walking home alone from the party. She fears Genevra may have been the target, which means someone at the party is a killer—twice over. With Genevra in potential danger—and Inspector Cork proceeding ponderously as usual—Phyllida takes it upon herself to unmask the killer.

Gerber, Daryl Wood. Murder by the Millions ($17.95). Feast for the Eyes bookstore manager and North Carolina caterer Allie Cat's best friend Tega, is hosting a book club soiree and wants it to be a glittering affair based on F. Scott Fitzgerald's iconic Jazz Age-set novel, *The Great Gatsby.* Soon, Art Deco table settings and visions of flappers are dancing the Charleston in their heads. Even Tegan's prickly sister, Vanna, is on board. And surely, Allie's tuxedo cat, Darcy. Charismatic developer Jason Gardner arrives in town to buy some historic buildings on Main Street. He, too, has plans: to create a modern mall. Allie wants to protest. But when Jason invites her to cater a lavish party, she finds him surprisingly likable. Then she's summoned to his estate for a meeting—and finds him dead.

Coyle, Cleo. The Ghost and the Dead Librarian (Kensington $27). In a new series start, a small town Rhode Island bookshop owner investigates the death of an eccentric librarian with the help of a wisecracking, 1940s gumshoe ghost.

Hall, Traci. Apple Pies and Poisoned Lies at the Cider Falls Festival (Kensington $17.95) is our September Cozy Crimes Pick. I may have chosen based on a wish to escape Arizona heat for my Midwestern fall roots.

It starts a new series featuring a family of Washington State apple orchard owners who become entangled in a murder investigation. In the foothills of Washington's Cascade mountains, the Smith family's Cider Falls Orchard is at its busiest. Between hayrides, apple picking, bonfires, and tasty apple treats, their Cider Falls Orchard provides an autumn bounty that draws locals and tourists alike. And now, McIntosh "Macki" Smith—named after an apple variety, just like her siblings—is home too, after a bad breakup. Macki is glad to be on hand when her parents are sidelined by an accident, and she's even been persuaded to enter the Cider Falls Festival's prestigious baking competition with her famous double crust apple pie. Then her parents are laid low by a suspicious accident, rumors flourish that someone wants to demolish the orchard for a housing development—it's murder.

Kauffman, Donna. The Bakeshop at Pumpkin and Spice (Kensington $15.95). Every autumn, Moonbright, Maine, is the picture of charm. Witches, goblins, the occasional ghost—they're all sure to be spotted at the annual Halloween parade, where adults and children alike dress in costume to celebrate Moonbright's favorite holiday. And no place has more seasonal spirit than Bellaluna's Bakeshop, a family business steeped in traditional recipes, welcoming warmth—and, legend has it, truly spellbinding, heart-melting treats … In short, this trio of stories brims with seasonal romance and a bit of spice. OK, this is slightly sexy but it also comes with cookie recipes.

✻ West, Nancy. Agatha Christie: The Mother of the Cozy (Ace $17) is a well researched and thoughtful walk through Agatha's life and well footnoted too. Any fan of the books will be interested in how her life shaped her as a writer and plotter so clever we pay homage to her today when she's bigger than ever.

Note: *There are Christmas mysteries publishing in September but I am not saying more than the titles until the November Booknews. You can order them when you wish:*

Berenson, Laurien. Peg and Rose Deck the Halls (Kensington $27)
Delany, Vicki. 'tis the Season to Be Scary (Crooked Lane $29.99)
Harrington, Kim. A Killer for Christmas (Crooked Lane $29.99)
Klein, Libby. Silent Nights Are Murder (Kensington $17.95)
Meier, Leslie. Countdown to Christmas Murder (Kensington $27)

STELLAR BRITISH DETECTIONS

I am really into procedurals right now as they have become a kind of escape reading as our systems malfunction. Here are some terrific ones.

Cleeves, Ann. The Dying Light (St Martins $29) is Matthew Venn #4 moving you fans from the Scottish isles down to Devon once again in the effective sequel to The Raging Storm ($19). See Signed Books.

Dent, Susie. Death Writ Large (Viper $29). Not a police procedural but a terrific detection. Oxford's Dent who worked on the famed *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) again employs her skills in the sequel to Guilty by Definition ($18.99), a series start praised as "Redolent with Oxford's musty academic atmosphere and deeply respectful of the stewards who keep the English language and all its arcane idiosyncrasies alive, this debut missing-person mystery from renowned lexicographer and British media personality Dent is infused with an intellectual insouciance, delivering tempting challenges for fellow word nerds and creating a trail of tantalizing clues that will intrigue the most devoted fans of Agatha Christie and Dorothy Sayers." — *Booklist* Starred review.

In our **September British Crime Club Pick** imported from London for club members—an excellent reason to join this club is you sometimes get earlier or higher quality UK editions—when mysterious symbols begin cropping up around Oxford, most dismiss them as bizarre graffiti. But lexicographer Martha Thornhill knows better. She recognizes the symbols from a runic alphabet created by a deceased fantasy writer whose papers she once worked on. When the graffiti is found near the body of a university lecturer, Martha knows this is no publicity stunt. And when the suspicious death is assumed by police to be a suicide, she's not the only one to have doubts. Called upon to lend their linguistic expertise to the case, Martha and her colleagues begin to unearth a tragedy that extends beyond the ancient walls of the university. US edition publishes in January.

Foley, Lucy. Murder at the Grand Alpine Hotel (Harper $30). A new Miss Marple mystery is set high in the Swiss Alps, accessible only by a single, winding railway, where stands the luxurious Grand Alpine Hotel. With glorious mountain views and exclusive access to powdery slopes, it draws guests from far and wide. But not everyone is here for a winter holiday. Beneath the champagne and furs, dark histories simmer; old grudges emerge like cracks in the ice. And someone is watching from the shadows. A polite, unassuming woman with an extraordinary mind: Miss Marple. Who of course at some point must bring in the police as she has no powers of arrest herself.

Grainger, Peter. In This Bright Future (Union Square $19.99) is the 5th in the DC Smith series, a September release here in the US, but start this terrific million-copy bestselling UK Series with An Accidental Death ($17.99) and go from there month by month to February, 2027 so far (the series is up to 20 in the UK). Its' all like watching a British crime show

We are in Norfolk in "King's Lake" which is a stand-in for King's Lynn. DC Smith is recovering from knee surgery and is prescribed two weeks of bed rest. There will be no chasing murderers through the streets of Kings Lane—just a simple cuppa and a good book. He's almost looking forward to it. That is, until there is a knock at the door. It's only his next-door neighbor, but it is the beginning of a thrilling case that will take Smith to Northern Ireland, and three decades back in time to the darkest scenes of the detective's past as a British intelligence officer during the Troubles. When old loyalties, buried secrets, and a complicated web of history and betrayal resurface, Smith is forced to confront events he thought were long behind him.

James, Peter. The Hawk Is Dead ($18.99). If you have not so far caught *Grace* on Acorn TV waste no time. It's got five seasons based on this #1 selling UK series. Superintendent Roy Grace's beat is Brighton and he has a terrific team at the cop shop and a fascinating family drama to work on at home. But here his beat moves to Buckingham Palace—and gives a fascinating, behind-the-scenes exploration of life within the royal household—after a shooter sets up a hold up of the Royal Train carrying the Queen through Sussex and nails someone else instead of Camilla. Everyone assumes she was the target, everyone but Grace. Enjoy how he works the case. I loved it. Look for Dead in Three, Two, One (Macmillan $29.99) in late October where a killer makes Grace the target.

Mackintosh, Clare. It's Not What You Think (Sourcebooks $29.99). Mackintosh, a former cop, writes a truly surprising standalone that topped UK bestseller charts last spring and now publishes in the US. This is a must read for fans of Alice Feeney and Gillian McAllister, maybe Ruth Ware. In any case, grab one.

Nadeeka is certain her husband Jamie is having an affair. She knows the tell-tale signs. She's been here before. When Jamie claims to be at work late, she knows he's lying. He's with another woman, and she's determined to catch him in the act. She's laser focused. But when Nadeeka arrives home to confront him, Jamie can't explain himself. Instead she finds crime scene tape, DI Burton at the ready—the house has become a crime scene…Jamie is dead. In fact two men in black are carrying out the body to a waiting hearse. The policeman is kind to her, says she needs to find accommodation for herself and the girls while the scene is processed. So she does. And then her local police station surprises her….and it grows more intense. I was truly hoping one character would stay on the up and up but Mackintosh does not spare us. Don't miss our zoom event September 29 at noon PDT.

Malone, Maria. A Killing in the Countryside (Crooked Lane $32.99). Paperback edition $22.95. I really enjoyed the debut of Sergeant Ali Wren and her police dog Wilson, a Springer spaniel, in Death in the Countryside ($19.99). Their beat is the charming Yorkshire village of Heft where their first case was powered by a vicious rivalry between two Heft bakeries.

Their new case, again not quite a cozy, begins when Ali follows up on reports of a pride of peacocks that escaped from a wealthy resident's estate, stirring up trouble in a once quiet lower

income cul-de-sac. It will be a routine call, a case of fuss and feathers, Ali suspects. But what she discovers inside the house the birds have invaded is far from routine. The couple who live there have been receiving anonymous poisoned pen letters! Hate mail, and threatening. As Ali and Wilson investigate, they dig up long-buried secrets at the heart of the community and edge closer to someone who will kill to keep a past hidden.

Mina, Denise. The Good Liar ($13.99 UK edition). There is no US edition scheduled so this splendid book, our August 2025 British Crime Pick, is luckily available to us in UK paperback.

A year ago, a father and his fiancée were brutally stabbed in their opulent townhouse, sparking the most high-profile murder investigation in recent history. Blood spatter expert Doctor Claudia O'Sheil's evidence put the killer behind bars – or so everyone believes. Since the trial, Claudia's learned a horrific truth: her evidence and her testimony were wrong. And someone she knows made sure of it. Now, as she takes the stage to give a career-defining speech before London's elite, Claudia faces a devastating choice. Protect her children and her livelihood with her continued complicity or blow the whole conspiracy apart and reveal the truth: not only is the real murderer still out there, they're in the audience. As Claudia steps toward the microphone, she revisits that fateful night. What really happened? And what speech will Claudia give?

Osman, Richard. We Chase Shadows (Viking $31). See Signed Books. It's not the Thursday Murder Club sleuths but it is the basis for a new TV show.

Sullivan, Tim. The Bookseller (Grove Atlantic $17 or $27 SIGNED). 7th in the fabulous DS George Cross series set in the cutthroat world of rare books in Bristol and London. Read this entire series,where autistic George delves into one profession or culture after another, in paperback or snag one of our few remaining Signed hardcovers.

Vassell, Charlotte. A Fatal Legacy (Faber $13.99) only available in an import. Of Vassell's debut Harlan Coben wrote: "The Other Half ($18) is a perfectly modern whodunnit. The plot is as entertaining as its skewering of aristocracy is astute, and the characters feel real enough to walk off the page. I can't wait to read Charlotte Vassell's next book!" Next she published The In Crowd ($19) which won the 2025 Edgar for Best Novel. I gave it a rave. Then her US publisher apparently dropped the series so I will look importing #3, *A Deadly Inheritance*. But here is #4.

Who's the policeman lead? Caius Beauchamp (pronounced Keys Beecham)? An Irish-Jamaican detective in the Met, Caius is a foodie with a mortal fear of scurvy. He lives in a family-owned flat in North London with his girlfriend Callie where he loves nothing better than curling up with a good book. Feeling duty-bound, Caius joined the Met after the unsolved disappearance of his sister Lydia and is surprised he's still there. He is the son of pragmatic Jamaican-British builder Marcus Beauchamp and Bridget Beauchamp who is from an Irish family but raised in London. Last year, some complicated inheritance Tetris meant that Caius's late grandfather, the Jamaican son of a second son, inherited a baronetcy from the single worst man Caius had ever come across, Rupert Hampton, formerly Sir Rupert Beauchamp. Caius is working through his feelings over his family's change in fortune. He broke his wrist a couple of months ago and is itching to have the cast removed.

In this his 4th investigation, first off, be apprised there are rules to first dates: don't talk about your ex, do ask lots of questions, always meet in a public place. Digby Coombe-Watson didn't think they applied to him. He had other worries: how to get rid of his great-grandfather's crumbling property, and whether his family would let him. So he ignored the rules, and invited someone in. Now he's lying dead in the family mansion/turned museum, a valuable property full of weird colonial artifacts including some Maori heads a delegation from NZ is determined to reclaim. Who would kill Digby amongst a crowded field of suspects?

NEW IN HARDCOVER FICTION

September is Books in Translation Month so I have designated translated books with ✲✲ and the original language and mentioned some previous suggested reading

And at the end of the Paperbacks sections is a list of Memoirs/ Bios and another of Nonfiction out this September.

✲✲ Adler Olsen, Jussi. No Song for the Dead: A Department Q Novel (Penguin $30) **from the Danish**. Die-hard Carl Mørck fans will applaud this investigation's familiarly intricate layers and the satisfying evolution of Assad's and Rose's characters. It beings when the former head of Department Q's retirement plans go on hold when he comes across a disturbing audio recording, he turns it over to his former colleagues, who are struggling to keep the old department up and running on their own. That is until a new transfer unexpectedly arrives—Helena Henry, a Frenchwoman who throws herself into the investigation with gusto . . . but who may also have secrets of her own. When the team realizes that the audio recording might shed new light on a supposedly open-and-shut murder-suicide case from years earlier, suddenly everything they thought they knew is called into question. Meanwhile, a spurt of seemingly random violence—an explosion off the coast of Jutland, a young woman shot dead in Copenhagen—leads the Department Q team to investigate a possible connection to a different long-ago dark and sinister event.

✲✲ Akagawa, Jiro. A Game of Cat and Killer (Grand Central $17.99) **from the Japanese**. The charming first mystery from Japanese novelist Akagawa to be published in English introduces his most popular creation: a calico cat named Mikeneko Holmes. Detective Yoshitaro Katayama is afraid of many things: heights, dark spaces, blood and … women. When a young female student is found murdered, he's given two choices—review the harrowing crime-scene photographs or head to Hagoromo Women's College to investigate—and reluctantly opts for the latter. But the threat escalates with additional murders, and soon Katayama has a different surprise on his hands: a calico cat orphaned when the dean himself falls victim. Surely that's the last thing Katayama needs. Until Holmes begins to display some uncanny investigative instincts of her own …

Ames, Jonathan. A Past Without Pictures (Mysterious Press $23.95) offers a lean, fast-moving noir. An LAPD detective travels to coastal Alabama to investigate the death of the father she hardly knew. Ames packs the story with sharp dialogue, emotional depth, and relentless suspense. It's a gripping tale of family, justice, and the dangerous cost of digging too deeply into the past.

✻ Atkinson, Kate. Our Noble Selves (Random House $32). As she did with 2018's Transcription ($19.99), Atkinson shows us what happens when everyday people get mixed up in espionage. When crime correspondent turned war reporter Harry Flynn returns to Britain from Singapore in 1945, he takes a quiet job with the Festival of Britain, a government-funded endeavor aimed at celebrating the nation's creativity, grit, and ingenuity. There, he joins a team of misfits and eccentrics as they help to ready the Festival for launch. When a Frenchwoman goes missing, Flynn becomes the central suspect in her disappearance—and possible murder. He was the last person to see her alive, yet he has no memory of the evening they spent together. As evidence against him mounts, Flynn begins to wonder if he might actually be to blame. To make matters worse, he is surrounded by people who have their own secret agenda. "Atkinson deftly blends the tragicomic spirit of Evelyn Waugh's post-WWII novels with the cringe comedy of *The Office* in her latest history-mystery… Excellent characterization and telling historical details in a wonderfully invigorating read."—*Booklist* (starred review)

Aveyard, Victoria. Tempest (Deluxe Limited Edition) (Harper $34). Enjoy a romantic fantasy epic in which a fallen noblewoman faces off against her former love—the last great pirate captain—amid a brutal war for the high seas. "This pirate adventure book is equally adventurous as it is romantic. Cat is cunning, deceptive, strong, and most importantly, alive, and she intends to stay that way, regardless of who she might have to reconnect with or betray to do so." I remind you that August was International Pirate Month.

Bourdain, Anthony. Three Crime Novels By Anthony Bourdain: (Bloomsbury $24). In 2003 Bourdain did an event at The Pen for one of his wisecracking crime novels. You may not realize today that he packed a few books with criminal cooks, bloody kitchens, and razor-sharp knives. Here are *Bone in the Throat*—a 1995 mafia caper; *Gone Bamboo*, and *The Bobby Gold Stories* in one volume revealing another side of this complex man.

✻ Boyne, John. The Weight of Angels (Heinemann $30.99). What if Oscar Wilde had just let the provocative remark go? Boyne delivers a witty alternate history of Oscar Wilde, who, instead of dying in 1900 at 46, enjoys an influential life of letters into the 1950s.

The real Wilde's downfall came in part from his imprisonment following an ill-advised 1895 libel suit against the Marquess of Queensberry, who had accused Wilde of "posing as a sodomite." Boyne's Oscar, however, simply ignores the insult, a decision that enrages Oscar's lover, Lord Alfred Douglas. A year later, Alfred, who goes by Oscar's pet name for him, Bosie, is arrested on charges of gross indecency, convicted, and sentenced to two years' hard labor. Oscar meets with Bosie in Paris after his release, where the latter succumbs to sickness. Having survived scandal and escaped persecution, Boyne's Oscar is a literary force who can't help but make enemies, as when he infuriates Bram Stoker and his wife, Florence, with a scathing review of *Dracula* ("Here is a story that will keep you awake at night, in the way that a sick stomach or a mewling child might"). In the 1930s, he forges a lasting friendship with Winston Churchill and wins the Nobel Prize for Literature on the strength of his acclaimed and prolific output of novels and plays. In the 1950s, he even gets a TV show. Throughout, Boyne honors his subject with a steady string of witty barbs and really makes you wish Oscar had not tweaked the bear.

Brody, Jessica. How to Write a Murder (Random House $32). One dead body. Seven mystery writers who all know how to get away with murder. The bestselling author of the writing advice *Save the Cat! Writes a Novel* and a slew of other writing guides and YA novels takes her own advice in an Agatha Christie construct. Truly Dame Agatha created classic murder templates.

If you want to write a murder, place it in an old, converted monastery with an ominous past, hidden deep in the mountains. Then, you have to invite the right people—like a group of authors attending a prestigious mystery-writing conference. Of course, someone should show up uninvited—like a disgraced literary agent accused of stealing from his top client. Everyone in the story must be hiding something so they can all become suspects when someone ends up dead. That's when they'll turn on one another, digging into the past to uncover dark truths—like a book canceled on the eve of publication, two million dollars in missing royalties, and an obsessive fan with a hidden agenda. But don't forget to trap everyone there—a landslide should do the trick—so they can't escape when more people turn up dead.

This publisher has discontinued sending Advance Reading Copies so I will order a copy to see if this is an accurate summary.

Chouinard, Michelle. A Map to Murder (St Martins $31) is the 3rd entry in A Serial Killer Guide to San Francisco series. Capri Sanzio knows how central the Summer of Love is to San Francisco's identity—even if she's always had conflicted feelings about it. She's used to weaving feel-good hippie culture and music into her Haight-Ashbury true crime tales, centering her tours around dark deeds. She's not used to a guest stepping out from those shadows to drop a murder investigation directly into her lap.

A woman has gone missing in San Francisco after trying to solve her aunt's murder: a cold case from the Summer of Love. Capri sees herself in the missing woman—both were unable to find the answers they desperately wanted as kids—and sees her own daughter in the tour guest begging for her help. Unable to turn the case away, Capri finds herself following a trail of flower-power footprints turned deadly.

✻ Croucher, Lex. The Unmagical Life of Briar Jones (Harper $32). A posh magical boarding school is the background for a delicious and diabolical feast for lovers of dark academia in a contemporary fantasy. A student fails to gain admission to the UK's only school of magic but then gets a job there years later and unearths the ugly secrets hiding behind its ancient walls. "This book pulls off the trick of making magic school wondrously seductive and gut-wrenchingly appalling, thanks to the compelling titular protagonist and, of course, Croucher's incredible gifts. Wildly creative, very funny, and searingly angry, this is a story that has absolutely everything: the institutional rot and villainy of the System; the toxic romance of social mobility and the spires of dark academia; the brilliantly integrated magical system; second-chance yearning at soul-shattering decibels; the sheer bounty of delightful, irreverent dialogue; every perfect turn of phrase." Add this to the works of Lev Grossman for example.

Cullen, Michelle L. A Field Guide to Death and Deceit (Crooked Lane $29.99). Cranky widower and anthropologist Harry Lancaster and his Gen Z caregiver Emma get caught up in a second investigation after their debut in A Field Guide to Murder ($19.99).When an odd request leads Harry to agree to meet his former sweetheart Willow at a farm on the outskirts of town, a

suspicious Emma insists on joining him. Instead of Willow greeting them when they arrive, they discover the farm's owner dead, with a corn rake embedded in his back. After being interrogated by the police, Harry and Emma return to his home to find a bereft Willow, who admits she lost her life savings in a real estate scam involving the farm. Worried Willow will become the main murder suspect, Harry decides to help her, despite Emma's concerns. To bring the swindlers—and murderer—to justice, Harry recruits his potentially shady, financial-whiz brother and a neighborhood teenage hacker. Then Willow's realtor is declared missing, and Harry's brother is caught up in the fray as the teams dodges danger while unearthing clues.

✻ Foley, Lucy. Murder at the Grand Alpine Hotel (Harper $30). Miss Marple in Switzerland! See Stellar British Detections above.

✻ Francis, Felix. The Chase (Crippen Landru $29.99). I am a lifetime Dick Francis reader and his son Felix has really grown into the franchise. This book is less about horses and more about the characters and should click with Daniel Silva fans.

Forty-nine-year-old Fabian Tulley is only trying to run his own art gallery in London's Mayfair in peace. But someone seems determined to ruin his life. Accused of selling a fake Alfred Munnings painting, he is unable to prove his innocence because the police are holding the piece as evidence. While running a retail sale at Cheltenham Racecourse, some of his other paintings are vandalized. Then a couple of men try to run him down in the racecourse parking lot. To make matters even worse, his clients are being threatened to stay away from his gallery, and his landlords are trying to cancel his lease. Everything is against him, but with someone threatening his life's work, Fabian is determined to fight back. And what a fight it turns out to be.

Geni, Abby. Children of the Wolf (Random House $31). As an adult, Liv leads a quiet life, tending to the beekeeping business that supports her and her brother. But when a dead body is discovered in her town, she is forced to grapple with a legacy of violence. As a child, she shared a home in rural Iowa with her brother Finn and their father Ulf. Swedish-born Ulf, a direct descendant of the infamous Erik the Red, raises his children as if they are Vikings. They are homeschooled, speak only Swedish, learn swordplay and archery, celebrate the Norse holidays, and worship the old gods with blood sacrifices. Then when Liv is fourteen, her family's sanctum is broken apart by an FBI raid. Separated from their father, Liv and Finn must learn to adapt to normal life. Now, twenty years later, Liv and Finn have changed their last names and moved to Haven, Michigan, where Live works as a beekeeper. And just as her life is beginning to open up, Liv notices a strange and upsetting pattern in the area around Haven: men are disappearing. As she tallies up the missing, she senses disturbing similarities to her own father's crimes.

"*Children of the Wolf* succeeds as both a clenched-jaw thriller and a moving family saga. The cult like, isolationist influence the father holds over his family will fascinate you, the Viking lore will thrill you, and the slowly unburied secrets will haunt you. There's maybe no greater compliment than saying, damn, do I wish I had written this novel."—Benjamin Percy. And Gillian Flynn calls it "a riveting mystery entwined with the rich story of a woman coming into her own while battling the wildest of demons. Whip-smart, unique, and chilling—I loved it."

Gigl, Robyn. All We Hide (Soho $29.95). Gigl has already shown she can center a trans woman in a legal thriller. Now Gigl creates another riveting, trans protagonist—Police Lieutenant Lauren Kelly, who is smart, tough, and surviving the macho cop shop in small town Donn County although she's been transferred to the Homicide Cold Case Unit at the DA's office so no one can claim discrimination. Grappling with her professional and personal relationships, Lauren manages the ostracism, navigates a lingering attraction for her ex-wife, builds a new bond with the daughter she loves beyond life, and methodically pieces together two puzzling crimes while probing a cover-up that may be tied to why her mother up and left decades earlier. This is a superior procedural.

Grisham, John. The French Illusion (Knopf $35). Grisham steps out of the courtroom to unfold the story of a brutal kidnapping scheme. At the outset, newlyweds Paul Tanner, a Justice Department attorney, and Chelsea Clayburn, an art appraiser, set off for their Paris honeymoon. As Chelsea eagerly documents their trip on social media, a French gang tracks their movements. The gang members stage a car accident, and, in the ensuing chaos, render Paul and Chelsea unconscious. The newlyweds awake to find they've been separated and are being held captive with no way of knowing whether their partner is safe. Meanwhile, Paul's and Chelsea's families receive ransom notes demanding $2 million. The plot thickens when Grisham reveals that FBI personnel have been unsuccessfully investigating two similar cases that appear to have political implications. Though the characters are thinner than in the best Grisham novels, the parallel storylines of Paul and Chelsea trying to escape captivity and the FBI, CIA, and French authorities working together to nail the kidnappers generate crackerjack suspense. It's a blast.

Harrison, Rachel. Kiss Slay Replay ((Berkley $30). It's the picture-perfect wedding for Willa's bestie. The she wakes up on the morning of the wedding. She just had the most intense nightmare of her life. Only as the day unfolds, there are some uncanny coincidences that make her question whether it was really a dream, déjà vu, or something more sinister. After a horrifying turn of events, Willa comes to understand that she's stuck in a loop of carnage and terror. Horror makes the time-loop wedding weekend feel fresh by grounding every bloody turn in friendship, regret, and the lives we keep pretending we still want.

For more new Horror grab Josh Malerman's Pictures of You (Random House $29) or Ben Shepherd's vampire chiller Blood Drunk (Grand Central $30).

Hoffman, Alice. The Witches of Cambridge (Scribner $29). "A delightful return to New England witchy magic with plenty of callbacks to actual history and practices that will resonate with readers. Hoffman is a master of cozy found family sisterhood." To the Indie Next Pick Deb adds, Hoffman has written a dazzling addition to her Practical Magic series with this book about 2 young women, from totally different backgrounds, beginning college in the 1950s. One rich, one poor, one polished and sophisticated, one a farm girl: but both bound together by the secret knowledge that their blood runs black, they possess a mysterious 11th finger, have uncontrolled magical powers and are, unknown to them, the descendants of the original witches of Cambridge. Secret letters, flashbacks to the 1660's, and the oppression of women in both time periods are woven in but the story of the friendship between the 2 girls shines brightly. Highly recommended.

Islington, James. Scion (Saga Press $28). Bestseller Islington crafts a captivating corporate dystopia complete with a bit of evil *schadenfreude*, introducing a world where the ultrawealthy can pay for the immortality-conferring serum Ichor, but normal folks are legally permitted to hire assassins to kill these "lifers," often via crowdfunding. Azure is one such assassin, whose somatic and cognitive "genetic revisions" give him a significant edge in combat. He's surprised when his latest gig is to protect rather than kill, especially given how poorly his last protection job ended, a disaster that still haunts him. Even stranger is that the client, Jasa, is ultrawealthy but appears to be quite elderly, unlike the other lifers he's encountered, who typically choose to stay youthful. Jasa secures first Azure's grudging obedience, then his loyalty by promising him a file of what actually happened in Oceanus, where his previous protection job went wrong. Mayhem and skulduggery ensue. Here's another example of genre blending.

Kluger, Phyllis. The Swiss Account (Rare Bird Books $28) turns on an ethical dilemma. While most countries don't forbid their citizens from holding Swiss accounts, they do require such assets to be reported and taxed. Which is why many account holders, reluctant to comply with their own tax authorities, prefer to keep their holdings secret. Leo Beckwith was one of them—a highly successful American entrepreneur who left behind a tidy Swiss fortune. But without explanation he willed his shady hoard not to his favored children but to Lynn his long overlooked daughter—a hard-working real estate agent in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. The windfall promises lifelong financial security for Lynn, her husband Jerry Hazeltine, a modestly paid art history professor, and their family. There's just one problem: Leo never reported the account to the US Treasury. Now the Hazeltines face a profound moral and legal dilemma. If they come clean, the IRS will likely seize the fortune to settle Leo's long-evaded tax bill. If they don't, they become tax evaders.

✲ Irwin, Sophie. Henrietta (Century UK $28). This British import has a stunning cover of fashionable Regency figures dancing as befits Irwin's foray into writing an "official" Georgette Heyer Romance. It's a creditable job though no one can match Heyer's wit which was sometimes acerbic, sometimes affectionate, always informed whether it was about manners, fashion, manners or lack thereof, mores, and events of the era. Here we have the heir, Arthur, aged 28, home from two years soldiering against Napoleon, and finding his deceased father had badly run the estate while his mother blithely continued her extravagant lifestyle. Living with the family is Hetty, a kind of ward and supremely shy, an heiress, and in love with Arthur all along. Arthur can't bear to take advantage of Hetty, Hetty doesn't know how to overcome this nicety. It's a very soft version of *A Civil Contract* to enjoy. I hope Irwin takes up her pen again.

✲ Lloyd, Catherine. Miss Morton Takes the Waters (Kensington $27). **For those who ask me why the bookstore is called The Poisoned Pen, here is the answer**

It's 1841now in a series featuring a lady's companion, Caroline Morton, a woman not seeking marriage, going with her employer Mrs. Frogerton, who on her doctor's advice has arranged a visit to Bath to take the restorative waters. Daily life in Bath takes on a routine of its own, with visits to the spa interspersed with social occasions and new acquaintances some of whom, Caroline learns, are receiving poisoned pen letters designed to ruin the recipients. Lady Greatmere, the oldest and most unpleasant of the target ladies, is discovered strangled in her own locked drawing room, a half-finished epistle on her dressing table suggesting she might be the author of the poisoned pen letters. As Lady Greatmere's companion falls under the suspicion of the Bath constabulary, Caroline and Mrs. Frogerton resolve to dig deeper.

✲✲ Minyoung, Kang. Plant Lady (Penguin $28) **from the Korean** is, as mentioned in August, a marvelous example of female rage fighting back in the person of a talented young floral artist and plant grower who makes excellent use of her popular florist shop's garden.

Morris, Kevin C. Untamed Coast (Ballantine $31). Insatiable greed for gold propels this story across the decades from the 1930s to the present, in a compelling tale of shady disappearances, murder, and one man's solitary pursuit of the truth."

Marconi Franco is coping with the grief of losing his wife by fulfilling their shared dream of boating through southeast Alaska. When he hears a woman's distress call on his radio one night, followed by a man's voice telling him to change the channel, Marco tries to find the source of the signal. His search takes him to Radioville, a remote island that relayed communications from the mainland to a nearby mine in the 1930s. There, Marconi finds an antique radio filled with hidden gold. While he pokes around the island and tries to figure out whom the radio belongs to, somebody sabotages Marconi's boat, nearly stranding him—and suggesting he might be on to something. Other narrative threads detail a heist off the coast of Alaska in 1938 and a woman's escape from an abusive marriage in the 1980s. Enjoy a heartwarming, swashbuckling regional mystery akin to those of, say, Paul Doiron.

Nix, Garth. Massif (Harper Voyager $30) is YA author Nix's first adult sci-fi novel, a riveting space opera set in the 24th century. In 2097, a mountain range, or massif, in Madagascar was lifted into the sky and began to orbit Earth. The astronauts who reached it encountered an entity that they understood to be the avatar of the massif, who informed them that the massif would leave the solar system for a time to explore the stars. Those who accompanied it returned to report that it was part of a network of such massifs, each safe for human habitation, triggering massive extraterrestrial colonization and sparking continuous warfare for centuries. Nix grounds these epic stakes in human terms, as the aftermath of one such battle leaves Kazlin Kim-Sawahla, a crewmember of the United Earth Government Navy ship *Sassafras*, stranded, and leads her commanding officer, ship leader Parnell Shi-Sawahla, to attempt a rescue that risks his life and his career. His endeavor coincides with efforts to understand more about the sentient massifs, why they facilitate human warfare, and what they're seeking in the stars. The result is a staggering adventure.

✲✲ Niewierra, Anya. The Camino (Simon & Schuster $29) **from the Dutch**. Forty-four-year-old chocolatier Lotte Bonnet has been living happily in South Limburg for years with her husband Emil, a former refugee from Bosnia. But when Emil unexpectedly dies by suicide while walking the Camino de Santiago, or Way of Saint James, Lotte is devastated. Shocked and confused, Lotte resolves to follow Emil's exact path on the Camino one year later, hoping for answers, or at least insights. The answers she finds, and the war crimes, will surprise you as they did me. Most of us

will never walk the camino—I did just a mile of this pilgrim's way or so coming into Santiago Compostela, but everyone should experience just a bit of it even if in a story.

Parks, Alan. Deception (Pegasus Crime $27.95). Parks' gritty sequel to Gunner ($27.95) —a very hardboiled spy story I could not put down—now finds former Glasgow cop Joe Gunner in 1941 New York City working for the British Overseas Council, a covert office stirring up support for the U.S. to enter WWII. Joe's boss, Giles Nickerson, is a posh member of English society who hobnobs with the Astors and Rockefellers to influence the elites, while Joe handles the street-level dirty work, infiltrating pro-Nazi rallies with paid agitators and blackmailing rich playboys with prostitution stings. Gunner discovers that Leopold Korff, a senior adviser to Adolf Hitler, has arrived in New York to spearhead a series of attacks by Nazi saboteurs. Nickerson knows a successful German strike would surely draw America into the war, and as the first week of December 1941 draws to a close, Gunner will have to decide how onboard he is with Nickerson's ruthless tactics. Parks brings wartime N.Y.C. to vivid life as Gunner haunts diners and the streets of Harlem, and real-life historical characters like crime scene photographer Weegee add color.,

Pegau, Cathy. A Deadly Entanglement (St Martins $28) takes you again after A Murderous Business ($18) to early 20th Century NY city. Margot Baxter Harriman has just survived her deadliest scandal as President of B&H Foods, She's busy organizing a fundraiser for the crowded, overworked city charity hospital, where she hopes to do good and give back–until a body falls past a second-floor window. The nurse's death is quickly ruled a suicide, but fellow nurse CeeCee Foxmoor, Margot's friend and the live-in partner of investigator Rett Mancini, isn't so sure: this isn't the hospital's first suspicious death. CeeCee's concerns draw both Margot and Rett into an undercover scheme to untangle the threads behind the deaths everyone else is ready to overlook. "Murder, blackmail, and lesbian love in an era when what you ate could kill you in the name of the almighty dollar."

Pekkanen, Sarah. The Women in White (St Martins $30). I finally got to read this August book and am bowled over. It's based on true events, psych studies performed in universities in the 1960s on people with possible extrasensory perception. Here, specifically in 1964, four young women were recruited for experiment by a visionary scientist. Three of them vanished and the program was expunged. We now meet Riley Bell, newly divorced from a gambling addicted husband who bankrupted them. Desperate she in interviews for an eldercare job with a widow and is hired. Betty's home is a jewel box relic of the Sixtes with no modern tech. Why does she live in such profound isolation, apparently for decades, and why has she hired Riley? Riley begins to question, and investigate…. Anyone a senior today will recognize and enjoy the rituals, the foodstuffs, the treats with which Pekkanen supplies Betty and all readers will embrace the way the friendship between Riley and Betty plays out. Highly recommended.

In a somewhat parallel concept try ELK, The Stargazer Society (Grove $30). What happened on October 17th, 2003? Two decades after the loss of her parents, Blaire Days is only a few months away from earning her master's degree as she begins an internship that all but promises her a spot as Greyvern Historical Library's archival director after graduation. Ira Stone is a wrench in her plan, and a surprise addition to the internship program, but Blaire is determined to make the most of his help, even if it means having to hold his hand through the process. As the anniversary of her parents' deaths approaches, Blaire has determined that she can no longer avoid the truth about what happened. She must finally look at the police report. presents her with a document called the "Codes of the Stargazers." 1945. Founded in Greyvern at the town's peak after the war. Signed by some of the most powerful men of the time. Only one thing seems wildly out of place: the mention of extraterrestrials. As Blaire grapples with learning of the potential existence of aliens—what the hell?—the discovery of a familiar name on both her parents' police report and the Codes of the Stargazers Blaire and Ira follow the trail down a rabbit hole that leads them to the disappearances of many young women in the late forties, all of whom were somehow related to the men of the Stargazer Society.

✲ Penrose, Andrea. Murder on Threadneedle Street (Kensington $27). Not all that glitters in Regency London is quite what it seems, as Charlotte and Lord Wrexford discover when a counterfeiting scheme draws them into a deadly web of murder and manipulation when their young ward Hawk arrives home distraught after learning that his new drawing teacher has been found murdered on Threadneedle Street. Penrose is good at incorporating the economics and science of this energetic period into her plots.

✲✲ Perez-Reverte, Arturo. The Final Problem (Little Brown $29) **from the Spanish**. I gave this Holmesian story, a love letter to Golden Age detective stories, a rave and do so again as a fan of the Spanish author's awesome gifts. And Netflix has just announced *The Final Problem* will be streaming the end of September with only five episodes and highlighting its nod to Doyle and Agatha Christie (and Basil Rathbone). Yay!!

June, 1960. Rough weather at sea leaves a group of strangers stranded on the idyllic Greek island of Utakos, all guests of the only local hotel. Nothing could prepare them for what happens next: Edith Mander, a quiet British tourist, is found dead inside a beach cabana. What appears at first glance to be a clear suicide reveals possible signs of foul play to Ormond Basil, an out-of-work but still a well-known actor who in his glory days portrayed Sherlock Holmes. So he's a natural to solve this murder, no? And then it becomes two… Anthony Horowitz would be proud to have written this mystery.

Rundell, Katherine. Why You Should Read Children's Books, Even Though You Are So Old and Wise (Knopf $17.99). "A fun little book of essays focused on the joys and wonders of children's books. Recommended for those who think they are too old to read kids' books and for readers who adore them."

Patterson, James/David Ellis. The Munich Affair (Little Brown $32). Detective Thomas Bauer obsessively pursues Hitler—putting Bauer's Jewish wife and children in grave danger. A courageous journalist, Fritz Gerlich, writes story after story detailing the murder—making himself a target for Hitler's Gestapo. An American professor, Eleanor Robbins, picks up the trail of evidence from present-day Neo-Nazis guarding the Führer's long-held secrets to the death. "This World War II-era thriller feels startlingly modern and essential. As you watch a detective, a journalist, a resistance leader, and a professor race to solve past crimes, the boundaries of time quickly give way to pure suspense."—Brad Meltzer

Robb, JD. Fury in Death (St Martins $30). When I want to settle into a series that delivers intricate and pacy plotting, an imagined future NY city, and a woman like Lt. Eve Dallas, this 63rd in her investigations is the ticket and while set in the future spotlights big corporations' malfeasance. What was Larry Chu's mistake? The victim's corpse is so mangled and damaged it's hard to believe a lone, unarmed assailant could have managed it. The killer was clearly unnaturally strong—and smart enough to find a way into Chu's highly secure building. The excessive violence leads Dallas to conclude that this was a deeply personal act, born of a rage that she can't excuse but can understand thanks to her own traumatic past. And though the motive seems rooted in heated emotion rather than cold hard cash, she can't ignore the suspicious bank account in the Cayman Islands, or the shadowy, profit-hungry company Chu worked for. The mystery only grows when it turns out Chu isn't the only victim....

Sallis, James. Backwater (Soho $28.95) is, sob, the final novel from the poet and crime writer who died earlier this year. The story delivers a masterful, bittersweet swan song about a retired cop who's called in for one final job. Bishop agrees to take the reins of the tiny police department of Anne's Ferry, his hometown, after its longtime chief walks off the job and is never seen again. He learns how to prepare a budget and report to city council while overseeing a staff of three quirky officers: Hollis, Felicia, and Raymond. To rescue himself from feeling "like tumbleweed, blowing into town, rolling idly about the streets," Bishop digs into the case of a car found abandoned at a truck stop with blood smeared over every surface. He chips away at that inquiry in between dealing with the mundane crimes of small-town America—fender benders, wandering elderly neighbors, squatters in old farmhouses—and learns to find beauty in life's quieter moments. Eventually, the bloody car case gets resolved, as do most of the other daily dramas on Bishop's beat.

One reviewer calls *Backwater* "a tender farewell from a towering talent" and noted that, like much of Sallis' work, the book is "more concerned with the texture of life... than page-turning action." The *NY Times* wrote, "Unlike those pretenders who play in dark alleys and think they're tough, James Sallis writes from an authentic noir sensibility, a state of mind that hovers between amoral indifference and profound existential despair." Sallis' oeuvre—from the moody quasi-noir Drive ($16.99) made into an epic film starring Ryan Gosling, to the existential mystery Sarah Jane ($16.95)—"often folds the tropes of genre fiction into strange, contemplative tales of self-discovery."

Smith, Alexander McCall. The Big Cats Dance Party (Knopf $30). When trouble threatens a beloved elephant sanctuary in northern Botswana, Mma Ramotswe and Mma Makutsi set out to uncover the truth, leaving Charlie to manage the detective agency—and a pair of increasingly complicated cases—back in Gaborone that challenge the No 1 Ladies Detective Agency.

Steck, Ryan. Target Down (Tyndal $32.99). A Western thriller. Though he's been living quietly with his family in Michigan since his 'death' ended his military career and former life twenty years ago, widower Aaron Decker wakes one night to a home invasion that is clearly not random. After narrowly escaping a Russian mafia hit team, he takes no chances with his children's safety and relocates them to a remote Upper Peninsula cabin where he awaits the arrival of his old ally and former Marine Raider, Matthew Redd. When Redd arrives, he and Decker work together under constant threat to transport Decker's kids to Redd's ranch in Montana. Then Redd convinces Aaron to leave the kids in his wife Emily's care, camping at a remote site in Yellowstone National Park under the watchful eye of FBI director Gavin Kline. Meanwhile, the two men take off to investigate the source of the mysterious leak feeding Decker's whereabouts to the Russian mob. While Redd and Decker cross the country, following leads that seem to point to a traitor in Decker's former deep-black ops unit from the early years of the War on Terror, Emily and the kids find they're not as safe in Yellowstone as they hoped…

✲✲ Sveistrup, Søren. Hide and Seek (Harper $30) **from the Danish**. As a screenwriter from 2007 to 2012 he created and wrote *The Killing*, and as a novelist he wrote The *Chestnut Man* – Nordic Noir set in Copenhagen currently streaming on Netflix. Now here he is with a new psychological thriller taking a children's game, a counting rhyme, to a terrifying and diabolical extreme.

A strange voice inside the woods goes "Count to One. Count to Two." Then a body is found in the water. Thirty years later a woman receives a string of anonymous text messages, repeating that same rhyme. Then she disappears. So on Valentine's Day, detectives Naia Thulin and Mark Hess are searching for the missing woman. But then they uncover links to a decades-old cold case suggesting a violent killer is once again on the loose....

Swarup, Vikas. The Girl with Seven Lives (Pegasus $28.95 "Swarup's setup—a character recounts their past in the midst of a high-pressure situation—recalls his 2005 hit *Q&A* (which was adapted into the film *Slumdog Millionaire*), but the gender politics at play here add depth to this survival thriller.

Here he is back in Mumbai. A gun-wielding captor points his weapon at 25-year-old Devi and forces her to tell him about her misdeeds and past scams; in exchange, he will spare her life and auction it off to the highest bidder from the resulting list of people she's wronged. Devi unspools her life story, highlighting how, after she was orphaned, she worked for a Maharaja in Gogra, managed a bookstore in Kottayam, and faked having a nursing degree to put herself on a stable career path. Though Devi's nursing career flourished for years, her lies eventually caught up with her, leading her to start seducing and blackmailing men for money. Now what?

Tallent, Sam. Brut (Random House $28)." Stand-up comic Tallent blends striking prose and rich characterization in this exceptional thriller centered on an ex-Marine turned hit man. Robert Beaujolais has his own brand of morality and a penchant for extreme violence, making him an easy fit a private security job touted by his best friend and lover, Benjamin Stephenson. Beauj begins as a bodyguard for famous performers, CEOs, and other high-net-worth clients and soon progresses into contract killing. During a botched hit on a lawyer, Beauj is forced to kill the man's receptionist, who turns out to be the daughter of Europe's last remaining Mafia godfather, Massimo Di Giovanni. Hit man protocol demands that Beauj be executed for his error, but he's promised a hefty fee and freedom if he kills Di Giovanni, a man most in the criminal underworld consider untouchable instead. The hunt for Di Giovanni is riveting, and the intense final scenes provide an immensely satisfying payoff all rendered in gorgeously ornate sentences.

Turnbull, Cadwell. All the Hidden Places (Blackstone $29.99). Cadwell Turnbull has produced his first story collection using Horror, SF, and Fantasy to examine intimate relationships between parents and children, siblings, and couples—people who have trouble communicating whether they have one soul or many, live on Earth or a faraway space colony. Our starred review says it's "rich and strange, while going straight to the heart. It "takes readers on an imaginative ride with spellbinding tales of dystopian futures, the monsters that live among us, wandering gods, and more. Cadwell Turnbull is one of the most gifted storytellers of our age—and in this latest offering, he does not disappoint!"—P. Djèlí Clark.

Our bookseller Pat King is an enthusiast for Turnbull whose Volume #3 in The Convergence Saga, A Ruin Great and Free ($19.99) is also just out.

Turner, Dawn. Majestic Hills (Scribner $29). I picked this one up because of my Chicago youth to see what a contemporary writer would say about the city today. And it turns out, a lot. At its center are ER doc Langdon Blaque who loves his big city job but yearns for suburban space and quiet, and his lawyer wife Josephine who prefers the city but loves Langdon enough to uproot. The couple is Black and the community they choose is predominately White and upscale. Though the Blaques are initially warmly welcomed a neighbor goes off the rails and soon a storm blows up, pushing the Blaques to the breaking point. Can they continue in Majestic Hills? And if so, why?

"This novel from lyrical talent Dawn Turner, could not be more timely or spot on in its portrait of a utopian suburban neighborhood that becomes a simmering cauldron of faultlines, tensions, divisions, and good intentions gone awry. It asks the questions: what does it mean to be a true community and what does it take for it to fall apart?" In today's America, where flashpoints and divisions abound, former *Chicago Tribune* journalist Turner combines literary fiction with a thriller to cast a light on current American life.

Vansickle, Vikki. The Mystic and the Missing Girl (St Martins $28). Drew Benson can read tarot cards and get impressions from objects—she just never expected to use her gifts to investigate an infamous cold case. She hadn't tapped into visions since she was a teenager when her late aunt, a TV psychic known as Hannah Mystic, became the scapegoat in the unsolved disappearance of a local teenager. Twenty years later, Drew is happy to ignore her gift, focusing instead on keeping the metaphysical shop she inherited from Hannah afloat, wrangling her sole, astrology-obsessed employee, and dodging local rake Foster Banks in her picturesque lakeside hometown. But when Drew's arch-nemesis from high school, now a big city reporter, decides to investigate the cold case from all those years ago, it's Drew's ability that could finally make a break in the decades old mystery. With bills piling up, a disapproving mother laying on the guilt, and a local vandal who wants Drew and her witchy store gone, Drew has a lot to lose

Vansickle's adult debut comes "with great characters and a unique premise. Metaphysical topics such as astrology, psychometry, and tarot are raised naturally. The crime plot, and the drama of moving home again are also strongly drawn elements, creating a book with wide appeal. . . Perfect for fans of Elle Cosimano's Finlay Donovan series or of Cherie Dimaline's VenCo for the mystical aspect."—*Library Journal* Starred Review

Verdon, John. Ghost Barn (Catapult $30). Verdon's ninth and final fair-play puzzle featuring PI Dave Gurney is a fitting send-off for an exemplary series. Gurney is licking his wounds after separating from his wife of twenty years. Despite his emotional state, he's unable to resist an entreaty from Stuart Wilmot, a candidate to be the next town supervisor in Gladstone, an Upstate New York community. Wilmot is a vocal conservationist vehemently opposed to the major changes proposed by his rival, Don Ranzak, who intends to prioritize economic development over the environment. Wilmot's campaign has been the subject of numerous violent threats, and, believing the local cops are in Ranzak's pocket, he asks Gurney to prove his opponent is behind the intimidation. When some of Wilmot's prominent supporters go missing, Gurney takes the matter more seriously, and eventually finds his client's fears more than justified. As he did in past Gurney novels, Verdon constructs an intricate, surprising mystery without sacrificing an ounce of characterization.

Wise, Henry. Promised Land (Grove $27). The mysterious disappearance of Georgia swamp-dweller Lucas "Rainbo" Boon creates a pressure cooker of conflict in 2025 Edgar winner Wise's expert sequel to Holy City ($18). After Rainbo's truck is found crashed and bloodstained in the Snakefoot swamp, Sheriff Mills launches an investigation with the help of his deputies, Will Seems and Tania Jameson. As the search party—including Rainbo's troubled teenage grandson, Buck, and Buck's anxious mother, Diane—plunges into the treacherous swamp, already-strained family bonds among Rainbo's kin fray further. Eventually, Buck and a local woman named Arlene Davis, both skilled trackers, lead Will to a remote camp where chilling discoveries deepen the mystery. When Rainbo is found gravely wounded and the FBI uncovers his hidden identity, the investigation draws the surrounding community into a web of betrayal and violence that puts Buck in harm's way. "Wise's vivid evocation of the Southern landscape and nuanced cast of flawed, fully realized characters imbue his sophomore novel with brooding suspense and emotional depth."

Wilson, Jeffrey/Brian Andrews. Red Specter (Blackstone $29.99) is Tier One Thrillers #5. When shadow warrior and former Tier One Navy SEAL John Dempsey goes undercover to meet with a Vory arms dealer, he thinks he's laying the groundwork to penetrate the Russian criminal underground. Instead, he walks into a trap orchestrated by Zeta, the secret Russian task force behind a recent assassination attempt on the US President. For Dempsey and his team, the only way out is to lay waste to the Russians, putting a target on Ember's back.

Zetterberg, Ally. The Dating Game (Berkley $30). The trend of incorporating puzzles into plots continues with a plot drawing on the 1967 Hasbro board game The Dating Game in which four players of both sexes follow two dice, match answers with a player of the opposite sex, then head to "meet date here." Zetterberg herself left her London life behind for Monaco and the South of France at a turbulent time and says she channeled her anger and trauma into her first adult novel.

For board game designer Tilda Smith games are all necessary steps on the path to finding happiness. And by structuring her life according to a set of rules, just like in the games that she loves to create at her job, Tilda can finally win. The only problem? The other players don't know they're playing by Tilda's rules. But then one night her date pushes her too far

and she gets just a bit carried away. Any player who disappoints must face consequences, right? But as Tilda finds herself transporting a body in a laundry bag, she has to question how to make the punishment fit the crime.

OUR SEPTEMBER PAPERBACK PICKS

Baldacci, David. Nash Falls ($19.99). Walter Nash is the smart CEO at Sybaritic Investments. He has a happy and upscale life with his wife and daughter. However, following his estranged Vietnam-veteran father's funeral, Nash is unexpectedly approached by the FBI in the middle of the night. Their ask: to become their inside man to expose an enterprise that is laundering large sums of money through Sybaritic. At the top of this illegal operation is Victoria Steers, an international criminal mastermind that the FBI has been trying to bring down for years. Nash has little choice but to accept the FBI's demands and try to bring Steers and her partners to justice. But when the devious Steers discovers that Nash is working with the FBI, she turns the tables on him…. The sequel ending the story is Hope Rises ($25 Signed special price).

Berney, Lou. Crooks ($18.99) presents the Mercurios, not a "crime family." They're a family led and raised by scheming small-time crooks." And so character over action drives the story which is wonderful for fans of Elmore Leonard. "In 1961, patriarch Buddy, a low-level member of the Chicago mafia, is 22 and living in Las Vegas. His life changes when he meets beautiful swindler Lillian Ott. The two hit it off from their first conversation, and immediately jump into a relationship and start planning a family. When Buddy is tipped off that his boss has discovered his side hustles and ordered him killed, they flee to Oklahoma. In the following years, Buddy and Lillian have five children—Jeremy, Tallulah, Ray, Alice, and Piggy—each of whom inherits some aspect of their parents' criminal tendencies. The action then shifts to the children's triumphs and failures in the 1980s and 90s.

Box, C J. The Crossroads ($20) finds Joe Pickett literally at one, sitting in his truck, shot, left for dead. Which leaves his wife Marybeth and his daughters Sheridan, April, and Lucy, plus the new Sheriff, to work out which of the three dangerous families whose properties converge at Antler Creek Junction did the deed. They all had reason to do a hit on Joe. Since we launch the new Pickett here on February 22 you know that Joe survived, if barely.

Connelly, Michael. The Proving Ground ($19.99). Looking for a new direction, Mickey Haller turns to public interest litigation, filing a civil lawsuit against an artificial intelligence company whose chatbot told a sixteen-year-old boy that it was okay for him to kill his ex-girlfriend for her disloyalty. Representing the victim's family, Mickey's case explores the mostly unregulated and exploding AI business and the lack of training guardrails. Along the way he joins up with a journalist named Jack McEvoy, who wants to be a fly on the wall during the trial in order to write a book about it. But Mickey puts him to work going through the mountain of printed discovery materials in the case. McEvoy's digging ultimate delivers the key witness, a whistleblower who has been too afraid to speak up. The case is fraught with danger because billions are at stake.

Freeman, Brian. The Photograph ($19.99). Kate Selby shows up at the coastal Florida office of Shannon Wells Investigations and demands to know why her mother, Faith, had hired the private eye a year earlier. Kate reports that Faith has been murdered, so Shannon reveals she'd been hired to find out Faith's real identity. She couldn't. And she believes that was the point: Faith wanted reassurance that her self-reinvention was bullet proof. Clearly it was not. And the reason is that Kate had found a 25-year-old photograph in a coffee table book. One that shows a young girl is standing in front of a motel vending machine holding a red can of Coke, her back to the camera. Kate had posted the photo, not knowing there had been a murder in the motel parking lot that night so long ago. Who was the girl in the photograph, and what happened to her? Did a killer track her down? Was it Faith as a child? And is Faith's death connected to the recent triple murder of a prosecutor and his family? This is a zinger. And Freeman brings us a Jonathan Stride on October 7.

✻ Grainger, Peter. In This Bright Future (Union Square $19.99). See Stellar British Detections above for a new entry in a terrific procedural set in Norfolk.

Jance, JA. The Girl from Devil's Lake ($18.99). Sheriff Joanna Brady is looking forward to the holidays with her busy family, and to celebrating her daughter Jenny's graduation from the police academy. But she is pulled away when a body is discovered beneath a flooded bridge in the Arizona desert. A young boy has been murdered, and the details of the crime scene tell Joanna two things: This was not the killer's first murder. And it's only a matter of time before he kills again. As Joanna digs deeper into the case, she begins to understand this murder is just one piece of a much, much bigger puzzle. She uncovers unlikely connections between cases of mysterious deaths and missing persons and faces saving the Arizona town of Bisbee from a predator.

Jaworowski, Ken. What About the Bodies ($17). Patrick reviews: "A subtle, beautifully done noir about the intersecting trajectories of three disparate characters in a small, fading Pennsylvania town. A struggling single mom must help her son hide a terrible secret, an autistic young man sets out on his own to fulfill a deathbed promise to his mother, and an aspiring singer who sees a chance for the big time if she can just come up with cash she owes an ex-con. These are real characters struggling to make it if they can just catch a break. I loved it." Lisa Scottoline agrees: " These characters resonate with heart as they face the most dangerous times of their lives, eventually colliding in a riveting plot that twists and turns its way through gritty, small-town Pennsylvania."

King, Laurie R. Knave of Diamonds ($20). Somehow we missed the June paperback release of the most recent Russell and Holmes, an investigation set mostly in Ireland where the disappearance of the Irish Crown Jewels may have been the work of Mary's rogue uncle, back in her life, that knave….

Lovett, Charlie. The Paradox Club (Disney $18.99). Lovett is one of my favorite authors, a master of prose, plot, and the unexpected. Like writing a thriller for Disney! I will follow him anywhere and here into "more than a mystery. It's a story of scientific intrigue and buried histories. If you love the likes of Dan Brown … then you're going to adore *The Paradox Club*." *—Parade*

Tess Maxwell grew up fascinated by the stars and her father Harry's stories and his scientific lessons. But ever since Harry's death ten years ago, Tess has felt out of sync with the world and suspects that there's more to her father's work—and death—than anyone has let on. When she discovers a cryptic puzzle he left behind, she's thrust into the hidden world of the Para-

dox Club, a covert organization operating out of an unremarkable Manhattan brownstone where scholars guard knowledge with the power to reshape human history. But the club is fracturing, a rogue member is moving to exploit its most dangerous secrets, and Tess's family is at the center of it all. As she races to uncover the truth about her father's work, Tess becomes a pawn in a battle for control of the society and the worldaltering information it protects.

It's very scary. As his fan Kristin Harmel says, we have "a heart-pounding ode to the power of science here—and a chilling glimpse into what could happen if the mysteries of the universe fall into the wrong hands." So while human agents are a work here, I glimpse frightening aspects of AI.

Maden, Mike. Clive Cussler Quantum Tempest ($20). It's a given that Juan Cabrillo will always survive disaster. But I didn't expect Mike to write such a colorful chapter in the *Oregon Files* about hiking the Darien Gap at the outset where the press of immigrants heading towards the US can so easily be infiltrated by bad actors. A mission there leaves two members of Cabrillo's team unreachable in the Darien Gap searching for an Iranian Quds Force base. But there's much more: a tempest brewing in Central America. A government crackdown on cartels leaves most of the drug lords locked up in an impregnable prison. In response, Amador Fierro, a brilliant, tech-savvy crime boss, forges the seven largest cartels into an allegiance called La Liga. If they are to defeat the U.S. led offensive, they will need a powerful weapon. Thus is born Project Q: an Artificial General Intelligence computer that, when finished, will grant Fierro overwhelming control of America. Chairman Juan Cabrillo and the crew of the *Oregon* are the only ones standing in his way, but they have their own problems—the *Oregon* crew have a mole in their midst!

McCann, Eli. Stitched (Torrey House $18.95). This is September's unicorn, a debut unexpectedly catching fire. Seriously—it's huge. For one thing, it has a sensational cover. For another, it's "A hilarious, heartwarming debut novel about competitive quilting, unlikely friendships, and found family." But I, a sucker for quilts although I've never made one, only collected them, go for this quote: "Reading *Stitched* felt like spending time with the beloved Mormon women of my childhood set in a Christopher Guest film. A Utah Quilting Association that welcomes gay boys? Hello! I'm picking up my needles." I add that we work hard to support independent small presses and Utah's Torrey House is the publisher of Scott Graham's National Park Mysteries always signed by Scott here.

McConaghy, Charlotte. The Wild Dark Shore ($18.99). Sub-Antarctic noir meets a love letter to the rapidly disappearing wild world in McConaghy's 2025 Reece's Book Club Pick, just one of the many accolades bestowed on "A riveting drama set on a remote island near Antarctica, where a man and his three children are caretakers for an underground vault protecting vital samples of the world's plant seeds. Personal mysteries and dangerous climate-change-induced weather propel a riveting tale " filled with both the joys and ravages of nature."

Preston, Douglas and Lincoln Child. Pendergast: The Beginning ($19.99). It only took six months for the life of Special Agent Dwight Chambers to crumble around him. First, he lost his partner, and then, tragically, his wife. Returning to work at the New Orleans Field Office, Chambers is dismayed to find himself saddled with mentoring a brand new FBI agent—a certain A. X. L. Pendergast. As Chambers tries to pull himself together, his enigmatic and exasperating junior partner pulls an outrageous stunt that gets both of them suspended. Pendergast welcomes the banishment, because it gives him the opportunity to investigate a peculiar murder in Mississippi that has captured his fancy. Chambers grudgingly goes along. What starts off as a whimsical quest swiftly turns into a terrifying pursuit, as Chambers and Pendergast uncover a string of grisly, ritualistic killings that defy any known serial killer profile. Thanks in large part to Pendergast's brilliance and unorthodox methods, they solve the case and find the killer... and that is when the true horror begins.

✻ Tyce, Harriet. Witch Trial (Harper $18.99). Here is a stunning legal trial, a gift after last May's staggering Dissection of a Murder ($29 UK import of much better value and readability than the paperback) set in Durham.

It hinges on a juror. When eighteen-year-old Christian Shaw is found dead in a park, the city of Edinburgh is stunned—and the shock only deepens when police charge her best friends, Eliza Lawson and Isobel Smyth, with the murder. As social media explodes in a tizzy of theories and headlines scream for justice, rumors of bullying are overshadowed by something more wicked and frightening: whispers of dark rituals, feverish obsession, and a teenage pact gone wrong. When the trial begins, everyone in Edinburgh clamors for a front-row ticket to the show: to look upon the murderous Eliza and Isobel with their own eyes. Everyone, that is, but Matthew Phillips, a respected heart surgeon picked for the jury. But, as the trial unfolds—and the girls' lawyers offer a surprising and unsettling defense—the reluctant Matthew finds himself questioning everything: the motives, the evidence, even his own judgment. Then comes the bold ending that will blindside you.

White, Randy Wayne. Tomlinson's Wake: A Doc Ford Novel ($18.99). When his friend Tomlinson's boat washes up empty on a reef off Honduras's Mosquito Coast after a hurricane, Doc Ford heads there to find him. And he does, only to have Tomlinson tell him an incredible story: that he died during the storm, but was brought back to life by a one-armed 12-year-old who may be the last descendant of an ancient Mayan king, a boy many people do not want around lest he inspire a revolution. Tomlinson needs to hide the child, and he needs Ford's help. Ford, revealing more than ever his skills in black ops, encounters a slew of shady characters — criminals and traffickers; an archaeologist sex addict, a menace known locally as Iron Baby — as he tries to get a handle on the situation. "Then an earthquake hits, sending everything into disarray, and Ford realizes things are not as they appear: 'One look, and I knew that this trap… had been set up by a boy who actually believed he was the hereditary King of the Maya.'"—*NY Times*

Willingham, Stacy. Forget Me Not ($18). Let's head to Galloway Farm, a muscadine vineyard in coastal South Carolina less than an hour away from where Claire Campbell grew up—and where her older sister Natalie disappeared 22 years ago just after her 18th birthday. Claire, with no father present and a mother living in a daze and thus neglectful) moved away to Manhattan and became an investigative journalist, but a surprise call from her father forces her back home. As it happens the timing is good since Claire has more or less blown up her journalism career at a mid-tier newspaper in NYC. Broke and still unable to connect with

her mother, and learning that Natalie spent a happy last summer at Galloway, Claire takes a seasonal job with housing there. The farm with vineyard appears to be a scenic retreat, and healthful. But then Claire stumbles upon a diary written by Galloway owner Mitchell that tells a different story.

NEW IN PAPERBACK

✻ Benedict, Alexandra. Little Red Death (Deluxe Edition) (Sourcebooks $19.99). DI Lyla Rondell is tasked with investigating a series of disturbing deaths that resemble classic fairytales, only to find out that the killings have much more to do with the facts of her own past than with fiction….

Blacke, Olivia. Death at the Door ($19). Ruby Young is slowly adjusting to her new life in Boston. A big part of that is her unexpected roommate—the ghost of the woman who lived there before. For Cordelia Graves, she may no longer be breathing, but it's still her apartment and Ruby is the somewhat unwanted houseguest. They're both happy they've managed to become friends, which is a miracle considering they struggle to communicate with each other. Cordelia even set Ruby up with her old job. Then when Ruby discovers the body of a delivery guy at work, the new life she's been building hangs in the balance.

Bodard, Aliette de. The House of Shattered Wings (JAB Books $25.99). The first installment of Aliette de Bodard's Dominion of the Fallen trilogy, *The House of Shattered Wings* is an unforgettable gothic fantasy, taking place in a turn-of-the-century Paris devastated by a magical war between houses of fallen angels. A murder mystery that "reads like a hybrid of le Carré and Milton," it won the BSFA Award for Best Novel upon its initial release.

Brennan, Allison. I'll Be Watching You ($18.99) is the 3rd in her Angelhart Investigations series. Private investigator Margo Angelhart has recently rejoined her family's PI business, but she never forgot the reason she walked away. Three and a half years ago, her father, Dr. Cooper Angelhart, pled guilty to killing his colleague. While she never believed he was guilty, her mother, Ava, refused to help investigate and wouldn't explain why. When a nurse who once worked with Cooper reaches out, Margo leaps at what could be a potential lead…only to stumble across the nurse's grisly murder. Then, Cooper is mysteriously transferred to a penitentiary out of state in the middle of the night, and Ava finally discloses why her husband confessed to a murder he didn't commit.

✻ Brett, Simon. Major Bricket and the Circus Corpse (Little Brown UK $18.99) introduces Major Bricket, an infrequent resident of Highfield House in Stunston Peveril, Suffolk. In the past the Major's work assignments, frequently in foreign countries, have prevented him from spending much time there and a result, there is an air of mystery around him while everyone in the village speculates on the nature of his occupation. But now the Major has retired and has come home for good in his open-topped little red sports car... and what a homecoming it is, for lying spreadeagled on his lawn in the summer sunshine is the corpse of a clown. The circus is in Stunston Peveril for the annual village fair, yet none of their quota of clowns is missing they say. Could the body be that of an unfortunate early guest at the village's highlight of the social calendar, the Fincham Abbey Costume Ball? Fortunately Major Bricket's past clandestine career means that he is now very well placed to solve the mystery of the dead clown on his camomile lawn . . .

✻ Brower, Beth. The Unselected Journals of Emma M. Lion (Rhysdan Press $14.99). Volume 1 comprises the start of an on-going Victorian melodrama of a young heiress defrauded by her Trustee and working to hang on to her London town house and create a found family. There are currently 7 more chapters as it were and the short paperbacks make for quick reads with a nicely Victorian feel.

Carr, Jack. Cry Havoc: A Terminal List Thriller ($20) introduces James Reece's father Tom in 1968 in the worlds of special ops and CIA paramilitary units in Vietnam. And now just before the Tet Offensive, before President Johnson announces he will not run for reelection, before the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Bobby Kennedy, as riots and protests rage across the nation, a spy ship is captured by communist forces off the coast of North Korea. The crew thought they had destroyed everything of intelligence value. They were wrong.

✻ Chapman, Amanda. Mrs. Christie at the Mystery Guild Library ($20). Book conservator Tory Van Dyne and a woman claiming to be Agatha Christie on holiday from the Great Beyond join forces to catch a killer when Tory's socialite/actress cousin Nicola gets caught up in the suspicious death of her less-than-lovable talent agent. Nic, as always, looks to Tory for help. Tory, in turn, looks to Mrs. Christie. The woman, whoever or whatever she is, clearly knows her stuff when it comes to crime.

Chilton, L M. I Think We Should Kill Other People ($19). Hazel and Marc were paired together on Love Synced, a revolutionary reality AI dating show that matches hopeful lovers. But when it came time to say "I do," Hazel left her perfect match at the altar. Now all she wants to do is fly home. Instead, she's trapped at a tiny, snowed-in airport with her ex and his obnoxiously rich family. But when they start turning up dead, a jilted lover is the least of Hazel's worries—there's a serial killer to catch first.

Chouinard, Michelle. A Map to Murder ($19). See Hardcovers reviewed above for the 3rd in The Serial Killer Gide to San Francisco Mysteries.

Clark, Julie. The Ghostwriter ($18.99). This is a great book. June, 1975. The Taylor family shatters in a single night when two teenage siblings are found dead in their own home. The only surviving sibling, Vincent, never shakes the whispers and accusations that he was the one who killed them. Decades later, the legend only grows as his career as a horror writer skyrockets. Ghostwriter Olivia Dumont has spent her entire professional life hiding the fact that she is the only child of Vincent Taylor. Now on the brink of financial ruin, she's offered a job to ghostwrite her father's last book. What she doesn't know, though, is that this project is another one of his lies. Because after fifty years of silence, Vincent Taylor is finally ready to talk about what really happened that night in 1975.

Cranor, Eli. Mississippi Blue 42 ($19.95). Patrick is very high on this series debut starring a rookie FBI agent who finds herself caught in the tangled web of a college football empire—and the bloody greed that fuels it by former college quarterback Cranor. It begins when Special Agent Rae Johnson grew up on football fields alongside her father, a national-championship-winning coach. Which is exactly why, fresh out of Quantico, she's sent down to Compson, Mississippi, to investigate the illicit money flowing into a bustling football program in the heart of the Delta.

Cullen, Michelle L. A Field Guide to Death and Deceit ($19.99) is the first in the series reviewed above in Hardcovers.

Diamond, Jason. Kaplan's Plot ($18.99). Perfect for the High Holy Days Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur this month is "A sprawling, funny, Jewish family saga…*Kaplan's Plot* concerns Chicago, cemeteries, secrets and crimes, and the enormous gift of loving somebody for who they truly, imperfectly are." —*Boston Globe*.

Elijah Mendes was hoping for a more triumphant return to Chicago. His mother, Eve, is dying of cancer, his business flamed out, and he has nowhere else to go. So he returns to Chicago feeling listless and shattered, worried about how he's going to help his mother despite their chilly relationship. He finds some inspiration when he discovers that their family owns a Jewish cemetery and that a man he's never heard of, his great-uncle Solomon Kaplan, is buried in a plot there. With a new sense of purpose—and an excuse to talk more deeply with his mother—Elijah begins pursuing a family mystery of extraordinary proportions.

Disher, Garry. Sanctuary (Mysterious Press $17.95). It's great to see the master of Australian rural noir, author of more than 60 crime novels and recipient of many international awards and Australia's Ned Kelly Life Achievement as well, in a US edition. Grace is a thief, taught by experts and specializing in small but high value items. It's not a life she wants. A run-in with old associates forces her to lie low in a small friendly town that boasts an antique shop where there's a room to rent. Grace suddenly glimpses a new life, perhaps a new home, but if she lets her guard slip her past will destroy it all.

✻ Doherty, Paul. The Meadows of Murder ($16.99). Medieval murders once dominated the historical lists: how I miss the much loved Ellis Peters. But Doherty keeps going and here is the 24th for Brother Athelstan set in London, 1383. William the weaver bursts into Brother Athelstan's church, desperately seeking sanctuary. His crime? The bloody murder of a vicious loan shark. Athelstan takes him in, but a short while later William lies dead in the locked church. Who would take revenge for the death of a universally hated man – and how did they commit an almost impossible crime?

Eberle, Kate. If Books Could Kill (Berkley $18.99). "Roxie wishes to live out her favorite romance author's next book, but ends up in a crime thriller instead, complete with a knife-wielding date. What follows is pure comedic gold as she kidnaps an anxious English professor to help her survive. This novel is a unique and engaging take on the romance genre," says the Indie Next Pick of another example of genre blending.

Firestone, Jo. Sex on Murder Island ($20) continues the satire of the reality TV industry as seen from the perspective of Luella van Horn, the crime-solving alter ego of a Staten Island social worker named Marie Jones. Here is Luella back a few months after her first sleuthing triumph… Let's just say I've never read a more wholesome novel involving multiple sex parties. She'll catch the killer, but the book shines brightest in its depiction of a lonely woman searching for real friends."—*The New York Times Book Review*

✻ Follett, Ken. Circle of Days ($24.99) finds Follett writing of the Neolithic British Isles and the origin and construction of the Stonehenge monument through the stories of ordinary people of the time. "His trademark blend of the intensely human and the monumentally epic works to perfection here – a superb novel."—Lee Child

✻ Freeman, Dianne. A Daughter's Guide to Mothers and Murder ($17.95) finds Victorian couple Frances and George enjoying some well-deserved leisure time in Paris when an old acquaintance from London, Alicia Stoke-Whitney, seeks Frances's help to investigate a personal matter. Alicia's daughter is being courted by Carlson Deaver, a wealthy American shadowed by a very suspicious tragedy. Less than a year ago, Carlson's wife, a former actress, was murdered, her body discovered in one of the more dubious quartiers in Paris. Though authorities guess it was a robbery gone wrong, no one was ever brought to justice. Until Daniel Cadieux, Inspector for the Sûreté, follows a startling new lead. None other Sarah Bernhardt, legendary icon of the Paris stage, receives a piece of jewelry stolen from the victim, along with an incriminating note: I know what you did.

Expect a Christmas tale for the Countess of Harleigh next, signed here November 10 with Colleen Cambridge and her new historical.

✻ George, Elizabeth. A Slowly Dying Cause ($20). Michael Lobb has just been found dead on the floor of his family's tin & pewter workshop. It's suspicious enough that his body was found by a representative of Cornwall EcoMining, a company keen on acquiring his family's land, and it's made even worse when he's revealed to have been the majority owner of the business and the sole obstacle preventing a deal from being made. But it doesn't take long for Inspector Beatrice Hannaford to unearth many additional grounds for his murder. This brings Detective Inspector Thomas Lynley and Detective Sergeant Barbara Havers into the case.

Gerritsen, Tess. Mysterious Bookshop Presents the Best Mystery Stories of 2026 (Mysterious Press $17.95). Tess Gerritsen, who has selected an outstanding lineup of the finest crime stories published over the past year. Featuring both legendary names and exciting new voices—including Lee Child, Joyce Carol Oates, Lisa Unger, Andrew Klavan, and even a bonus Agatha Christie story from the rare book room—it's a remarkable snapshot of today's mystery landscape.

✻ Hannah, Sophie. The Last Death of the Year ($18.99) is Hannah's 6th Hercule Poirot. New Year's Eve, 1932. Hercule Poirot and Inspector Edward Catchpool arrive on the tiny Greek island of Lamperos to celebrate the holiday with what turns out to be a rather odd community living in a dilapidated house. A dark sense of foreboding overshadows the beautiful island getaway when the guests play a New Year's Resolutions game after dinner and one written resolution gleefully threatens to perform "the last and first death of the year. Hours later, one of the home's residents is found dead on the terrace. Take note that a new and younger Poirot will soon be streaming as well as Tommy and Tuppence cases. Christie may be more popular now than ever.

✻ Hay, Alex. The Midnight Guests ($18.99) brings the decadence and danger of the 1920s to life. In 1929, Diana Gold, owner of London's opulent Hotel Artemis, throws a buzzy grand opening event. Among the guests is American Cleo van der Meer, happy for a week away from her mother's suffocating gaze. When she meets Polly Fox-Stanton, she thinks she's found her perfect distraction. Meanwhile, as guests enjoy champagne, gambling,

and other indulgences, Diana prepares to face the heads of a criminal organization to whom she owes a huge amount of money. When a dead body turns up in the hotel vaults, Diana sees the evening spiral out of control. Nearly a century later, Joe Carberry checks in as one of the last guests before the Hotel Artemis closes. Following a trail left by his crime-obsessed grandmother, he's determined to discover the truth about what happened in the hotel all those years ago. Fans of Lucy Foley will devour this.

Healy, Anna Fitzgerald. Etiquette for Lovers and Killers (Berkley $19). What are the chances of receiving a love letter and an engagement ring for a perfect stranger, only to see that same woman murdered the very next day? Here's your chance to find out.

Jonasson, Ragnar. The Mysterious Case of the Missing Crime Writer ($19). One winter evening, bestselling crime author Elín S. Jónsdóttir goes missing. There are no clues to her disappearance and it is up to young detective Helgi to crack the case before its leaked to the press. As Helgi interviews the people closest to her—a publisher, an accountant, a retired judge—he realizes that Elín's life wasn't what it seemed. In fact, her past is even stranger than the fiction she wrote.

Justine, H Lee. You Watched in Silence ($19.99) offers a Pacific Northwest gothic, bringing together the isolated setting, tumultuous family, and tantalizing glimpses of the supernatural with the fraught world of family influencers. A gripping story of guilt, grief, and buried secrets

Lyuzna, Olesya. Liars in Paradise (Mysterious Press $17.95). Ginny Dugan, the advice-columnist turned private detective, returns for another foray into the strange underworld of Prohibition-era New York. With her partner's reputation—and life—at stake, the pair investigate a Glen Cove secret society in hopes of exonerating Jack and finding the true culprits of a casino shooting.

Manileve, Vincent. The Grand Canyon Black Widower (Crime Ink $15.99). In December of 1978, three members of a family in Arapahoe County, Colorado, were found dead in their home. Police concluded that the mother had shot her two children and then herself, leaving behind a devastated husband. In April of 1993, a woman fell to her death in the Grand Canyon while hiking with her husband. The man appeared heartbroken on television as he recounted the terrible accident. Then in October of 1994, a third woman died of a presumed overdose shortly after reconnecting with her ex-husband. These three cases had one thing in common: Robert Spangler, the grieving widower. This is the new entry in the 50 States of (True)Crime series.

Mentink, Dana. Murders in the Marquee ($18.99) starts the Murder Most Fowl Historical Mysteries series. An trio of amateur sleuths must uncover a killer who struck in the iconic 1905 San Francisco hotel the Grand Mallard Marquee, known for its iconic style and daily duck parade, before another guest checks out for good. This first book in the Murder Most Fowl Mysteries is reminiscent of *Only Murders in the Building*.

Mosley, Walter. Gray Dawn ($19.99). Easy Rawlins #17 set in 1970s LA. His success has bought him a thriving detective agency, with its first female detective; a remote home, shared with children and pets and lovers, high atop the hills overlooking gritty Los Angeles; and more trouble, more problems, and more threats to those he loves. In other words, he's still beset on all sides. Rising in the city's criminal underground is a woman cannier than any card shark or kingpin, a woman feared by all, threatening the businesses of all, whom Easy must quickly locate and neutralize. Easy will recognize her as the woman who set his entire adult life into motion.

Oates, Joyce Carol. Second Nature (Titan $19). Two complete novels and some never-before-collected stories add up to a 600+ page volume of Oates' remarkable psychological suspense. Fun to read while watching Helen Mirren play Patricia Highsmith in an upcoming TV bio A Talent for Murder out October 23.

Patterson, James. Return of the Spider ($19.99). Police discover that Gary Soneji kept a murder book, *Profiles in Homicidal Genius*, detailing his transformation from substitute teacher to hardened serial killer—including clues that imply missteps that Alex Cross may have made as a rookie homicide detective. Now, Alex must retrace the steps of that long-ago investigation and face Soneji's return.

Rowe, Rosemary. Death Stalks Glevum ($16.99). I have enjoyed Rowe's Roman Britannia mysteries for many years and seen the characters evolve. In Libertus mystery #21 it's 200 AD and the province is still reeling from the brutal Succession Wars. After the defeat and execution of Britannia's governor, Clodius Albinus, Emperor Severus is determined to seek out his enemies in the Roman Empire's northernmost outpost. In such troubled times, the arrival of the plague and the activities of Appius Limpnus, a suspected spy for Emperor Severus, are the last thing Glevum needs. Senior magistrate Marcus Septimus asks Libertus adopted son Junio to keep an eye on Appius by creating a mosaic outside his property. But when Junio discovers two bodies near the road on his way to Apies's townhouse, he is reluctantly diverted to investigating another mystery… Lindsey Davis readers will relate to this series although it falls later in the Roman period.

Ryan, Patrick. Buckeye ($20). Acclaimed as One of the Best Books of 2005 by numerous media and critics chronicles two Ohio families from the 1920s to the 1960s. "The combination of unconventional sex lives, sardonic wit and 20th-century American history recalls the early novels of John Irving … Ultimately, the triumph of his book is the way it captures the nature of mistakes, both the holes dug and the bridges built."—*Financial Times*

Smith, Alexander McCall. In the Time of Five Pumpkins ($18) is the perfect title for the paperback of his 2025 No. 1 Ladies Detective Club investigation. For the new one see Hardcovers.

Thiem, Brian. A Death in the Deluge (Severn River $19.99). A new entry in a thoughtfully crafted low-key policing series set on an island off South Carolina's coast amidst mudflats formed by the rise and fall of the tides. Sean Tanner, a retired Oakland homicide cop who moved to Spartina Island in this Lowcountry is recruited by Sergeant Charlotte Nash when Kimberly Sheehan's body is found with a .22 bullet to the head and her 13-year-old daughter Emily has vanished. Fourteen years ago teenager Ashlee Briggs was abducted and executed with the same gun. When a third body drops with the same .22 signature there is little hope of finding Emily. But as a Category 3 hurricane barrels towards Spartina, and the island empties fast according to the evacuation drill, Sean and Charlotte can't give up and launch an off-the-books, no back-up, Hail Mary last try to find her. I plan to read

the first four entries in this atmospheric and well executed series written by a former Oakland cop who loves the Low Country.

✲ Thomas, Sherry. The Vanished Sister (Penguin $20) is another challenging case for Lady Sherlock. It's been three years since Charlotte Holmes struck a decisive blow against Moriarty's operations in Britain, three years of relative calm and benign developments. In a buoyant mood, everyone gathers at Lord Ingram's seaside cottage in North Devon for what promises to be a perfect summer holiday. Until Mrs. Watson receives an invitation from Mrs. Carstairs, her long-estranged sister, to attend a house party nearby. Mrs. Carstairs has married spectacularly well. She is the mistress of a great manor, a doyen of all domestic arts, and still an unforgettable beauty. Now she clamors for a reconciliation with her sister. Mrs. Watson does not trust Mrs. Carstairs motives. Yet she cannot help but feel tremors of the old admiration for this once-beloved sister. Then Mrs. Carstairs disappears without a trace.

Waldorf, Gigi. Murder on the Upper East Side (Atria $19). 2016: Hannah Miller has begun her senior year at the Prescott Academy alongside the rich and famous of the Upper East Side. Or, at least, their children. Amid the trust funds and penthouse parties, there's one rule for survival: staying out of the way of Queen Bees Madison DuPont and Elle Harrington. Being a scholarship student makes Hannah feel invisible. But no one escapes the watchful eye of notorious gossip account called the Upper Edge. 2026: The academy's alumni have gathered for a glittering charity gala. Only Madison DuPont could host an event this grand. But what starts as a champagne-fueled party soon descends into chaos when Madison is found dead moments after her speech. It doesn't take long for fingers to point at Hannah—she's not one of them. But everyone there wanted Madison dead. So….

Wood, Monica. How to Read a Book ($18.99). Not a murder mystery but a look at what comes after crimes. Violet Powell, a twenty-two-year-old from rural Abbott Falls, Maine, is being released from prison after serving twenty-two months for a drunk-driving crash that killed a local kindergarten teacher. Harriet Larson, a retired English teacher who runs the prison book club, is facing the unsettling prospect of an empty nest. Frank Daigle, a retired machinist, hasn't yet come to grips with the complications of his marriage to the woman Violet killed. When the three encounter each other one morning in a bookstore in Portland, Maine—Violet to buy the novel she was reading in the prison book club before her release, Harriet to choose the next title for the women who remain, and Frank to dispatch his duties as the store handyman—their lives begin to intersect in transformative ways.

✲ ✲ Yokomizo, Seishi. The Honjin Murders (Pushkin $17.95) **from the Japanese.** The author of Murder at the Black Cat Café ($17.95) aces it again. In the winter of 1937, the village of Okamura is abuzz with excitement over the forthcoming wedding of a son of the grand Ichiyanagi family. But amid the gossip over the approaching festivities, there is also a worrying rumor—it seems a sinister masked man has been asking questions around the village. Then, on the night of the wedding, the Ichiyanagi household are woken by a terrible scream, followed by the sound of eerie music. Death has come to Okamura, leaving no trace but a bloody samurai sword, thrust into the pristine snow outside the house. Soon, amateur detective Kosuke Kindaichi is on the scene to investigate what will become a legendary murder case, but can this scruffy sleuth solve a seemingly impossible crime?

BIOGRAPHIES AND MEMOIRS

Bishop, Kelly. The Third Gilmore Girl, A Memoir ($19)
Brodsky, Rachel. Lessons & Lace: Everything I Know About Dreams, Heartbreak and Magic I Learned from Stevie Nicks (Harmony $28)
Hanada, Nanako. The Bookshop Woman: My Year Transforming Lives One Book at a Time (Penguin $29) with some 45 line drawings to enjoy
Kushins, C M. Cooler Than Cool: The Life and Work of Elmore Leonard (Harper $19.99)
Kyle, Scott, Outlander cast member. It's Not Where You Start (Luath Press $22)
Lordi, Emily. The Holding Lightning: The Life, Loves and Art of Whitney Houston (Harper $32)
Mills, Hayley. Forever Young: A Memoir (Grand Central $30)
Owens, Zibby. Between Books: How I Started Over (Zando $15.99)
Quan, Ke Huy. Never Say Die: A Memoir (Grand Central $32.5)
Roy, Arundhati. Mother Mary Comes to Me ($20)
Smith, Patti. Bread of Angels: A Memoir ($20)
Steinem, Gloria. An Unexpected Life: A Memoir (Random House $30)
Wang, Qian Julie. Beautiful Country: A Memoir (Knopf $28.95)
Young, Michelle. The Art Spy: The Extraordinary Untold Tale of WWII Resistance Hero Rose Valland ($19.99)

NEW NONFICTION

Bird, Kai. American Scoundrel: Roy Cohn's Dark Journey from Joe McCarthy to Donald Trump (Scribner $32)
Clapham, Katherine. Receipts from a Bookshop (Harper $28)
Diamond, Jared. Profits, Prophets, Coaches, And Kings (Harper $32)
Doctorow, Cory. Enshittification: Why Everything Suddenly Got Worse and What to Do About It ($20)
Gladwell, Malcolm. The American Way of Killing, (Little Brown $34)
Hitchcock, William I. A Shadow Over the World: Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Rise of Fascism, and the Making of America's World War II (Simon Schuster $35)
Hunt, Chris. The Code of the West: A Frontier Guide to Modern Living (Andrews McNeel $19.99)
Katz, Catherine Grace. Shadow Before the Flame: The Hindenburg (Penguin $38)
Klosterman, Chuck. Rock✲ : A Mainstream Alternative History of Mainstream Alternative Music (Grand Central $32.5)
Lepore, Jill. The Rise and Fall of the Artificial State (Liveright $29). "Lepore does a masterful job laying out how we got to this point with AI and the role a small number of tech billionaires play in our lives. Their inspirations are frightening and something everyone should know. What we do with that knowledge is up to us!"

Macintyre, Ben. Redwood: The Untold Story of the Cold War (Crown $35)
Onishi, Bradley B. American Caesar: How Theocrats and Tech Lords are Turning American into a Monarchy (St Martins $29)
Pakman, David. Pay Attention: How the Algorithms and Media Wars Are Suppressing Truth and Rewiring Your Brain (Harper $30)
Purcell, Kim. Write a Novel in 100 Days (Clarkson Potter $18)

Santenello, Peter. Your Fellow Americans: Dispatches from Across the Country We Call Home (Simon Schuster $30)
Ventura, Michael. Constellation Thinking: Create a Life of Purpose without a North Star (Atria $29)
Wilson, Emily. Crossing the Wine-Dark Sea: Journeys through Classical Literature (Norton $)