

BOOKNEWS from

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sales@poisonedpen.com tel (888)560-9919
http://poisonedpen.com

4014 N. Goldwater Blvd.
Scottsdale, AZ 85251
480-947-2974



FIREWORKS ALL OF JULY...

Happy Holiday – The Pen will be closed July 4

AUTHORS ARE SIGNING...

Some Events will be webcast at <http://new.livestream.com/poisonedpen>.

THURSDAY JULY 6 7:00 PM

Daniel Price signs [The Song of the Orphans](#) (Blue Rider \$28)
The futuristic Silvers Series #2

SATURDAY JULY 8 10:30 AM

Coffee and Crime discusses Daphne Du Maurier's classic,
[Rebecca](#) (\$16)

SUNDAY JULY 9 2:00 PM Amish Tea

Linda Castillo signs [Down a Dark Road](#) (St Martins \$26.99)
Kate Burkholder #9

MONDAY JULY 10 7:00 PM AV Presentation included

Kathy Reichs signs [Two Nights](#) (Ballantine \$28)
Surprise Me! Club Pick introducing Sunday Night

TUESDAY JULY 11 7:00 PM

Keith McCafferty signs [Cold Hearted River](#) (Viking \$26)
Sean Stranahan #6 with Ernest Hemingway history

THURSDAY JULY 13 7:00 PM

Beatriz Williams signs [Cocoa Beach](#) (Harper \$27.99)
July History/Mystery Pick

SATURDAY JULY 15 7:00 PM

Daniel Silva signs [House of Spies](#) (Harper \$28.99) Gabriel Allon
#17

Location: Doubletree Hilton 5401 N Scottsdale Road 85250

Time: Doors Open 6:00 PM, Program 7:00 PM

Free. Cash Bar. Valet Parking

Admission to the signing line only with the purchase of *House of Spies* from The Poisoned Pen

MONDAY JULY 17 7:00 PM

Richard Kadrey signs [The Kill Society](#) (Harper \$25.99)
Sandman Slim #9

TUESDAY JULY 18 7:00 PM

Marcus Sakey signs [Afterlife](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$24.95)
July Modern Firsts Editions Club Pick

THURSDAY JULY 20 7:00 PM

Daryl Gregory signs [Spoonbenders](#) (Knopf \$27.95) Debut
Rob Hart signs [The Woman from Prague](#) (Polis \$25)
Ash McKenna

FRIDAY JULY 21 7:00 PM

SciFi/Fantasy Club discusses Ben Aaronovitch, [Midnight Riot](#)
(\$7.99)

SATURDAY JULY 22 10:30 AM

Croak & Dagger discusses Ruth Ware's [In a Dark, Dark Wood](#)
(\$16)

SATURDAY JULY 22 2:00 PM Tea

Fiona Barton signs [The Child](#) (Penguin \$26)

SUNDAY JULY 23 2:00 PM

Hosted by J Todd Scott

Ace Atkins signs [The Fallen](#) (Putnam \$27) Quinn Colson #7

David Bell signs [Bring Her Home](#) (Penguin \$16)

TUESDAY JULY 25 7:00 PM

Jeff Abbott signs [Blame](#) (Grand Central \$26)

Glen Erik Hamilton signs [Every Day Above Ground](#) (Morrow
\$26.99) Van Shaw #3

WEDNESDAY JULY 26 7:00 PM

Marcia Clark interviews Linda Fairstein

Fairstein signs [Deadfall](#) (Dutton \$28) Alexandra Cooper #19

Doubletree Hilton 5401 N Scottsdale Road 85250

Doors Open 6:00 PM Cash Bar Free Valet Parking

Admission to signing line only with the purchase of *Deadfall* (by
Fairstein) or [Blood Defense](#) or [Moral Defense](#) by Clark

FRIDAY JULY 28 7:00 PM

James Sallis and *The Three Legged Dog* play

SATURDAY JULY 29 2:00 PM Cozy Tea

JC Eaton signs [Booked 4 Murder](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Sophie
Kimball #1

MONDAY JULY 31 7:00 PM

CJ Box signs [Paradise Valley](#) (St Martins \$27.99)

Cassie Dewell vs. The Lizard King

TUESDAY AUGUST 1 7:00 PM

Jonathan and Jesse Kellerman sign [Crime Scene](#) (Ballantine
\$28.99)

Starts a Coroner's Investigator series

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 2 7:00 PM

Gin Phillips signs [Fierce Kingdom](#) (Viking \$25)

Modern Firsts Club Pick

SATURDAY AUGUST 5 2:00 PM Tea

Rhys Bowen signs [On Her Majesty's Frightfully Secret Service](#)
(Berkley \$26)

Her Royal Spyness #11

EVENT BOOKS

Abbott, Jeff. [Blame](#) (Grand Central \$26). Two years ago, Jane Norton crashed her car on a lonely road, killing her friend David and leaving her with amnesia. At first, everyone was sympathetic. Then they found Jane's note: *I wish we were dead together*. So was Jane trying suicide and killed David instead? If only she could remember but amnesia won't go away and she can't defend herself. Even now Jane is filled with questions: Why were they on that road? Why was she with David? Did she really want to die? Most of all, she must find out who has just written her an anonymous message: *I know what really happened. I know what you don't remember...* but does she? This is a complex multi-narrator story of betrayals, truly a Trust No One, American style.

Atkins, Ace. [The Fallen](#) (Putnam \$27). A classic southern tale of backroom deals, tainted honor, dysfunctional family, high-stakes greed—and everyday heroism. In his 7th Quinn Colson, Atkins may be channeling Stephen Hunter, although crooks of today, not the 1934 rash of bank robbers (plus it's not about the guns). The beleaguered Mississippi sheriff had to admit he admired the bank robbers. A new bank was hit almost every week, and the robbers rushed in and out with such skill and precision it reminded him of raids he'd led back in Afghanistan and Iraq when he was an army ranger. In fact, it reminds him so much of the techniques in the *Ranger Handbook* that he couldn't help wondering if the outlaws were former Rangers themselves. If he stands any chance of catching them, he's going to need the help of old allies, new enemies, and a lot of luck. A fine, biting series! So why not [order all of them?](#)

Barton, Fiona. [The Child](#) (Penguin \$26). The British author of huge bestseller [The Widow](#) (\$26, 3 Signed 1sts; \$16 paperback), visits us with her second stunner. Book editor Emma Simmonds has been battling for decades with depression, as has the single mother, Jude Massingham, who threw her out of the house when she was just 16. Former nurse Angela Irving has never gotten over the kidnapping of her newborn daughter from a maternity hospital 28 years earlier, a heartbreak worsened by police suspicion of her and her husband. Emma, Jude, and Angela are each riveted, for reasons that will only gradually emerge, by an item in a newspaper reporting the excavation of an infant's skeleton at an East London building site. Kate, who could really use another major scoop to help keep her job, is also drawn to the story.

“Readers patient with the relatively slow initial pace until the intertwining stories gain momentum will be rewarded with startling twists—and a stunning, emotionally satisfying conclusion.” This is a standout amidst the glut of British Trust No One suspense stories and I recommend it. The only reason Barton isn't the British Crime Club Pick for July is that *The Widow* was one last year.

Bell, David. [Bring Her Home](#) (Penguin \$16). Just a year and a half after the tragic death of his wife, Bill Price's fifteen-year-old daughter, Summer, and her best friend, Haley, disappear. Days later, the girls are found in a city park. Haley is dead at the scene, while Summer is left beaten beyond recognition and clinging to life. As Bill holds vigil over Summer's bandaged body, the only sound the unconscious girl can make is one cryptic and chilling word: No. Secrets emerge about Summer's life as she remains in

a coma. And the more time Bill spends with Summer, the more he wonders what happened to her. Or if the injured girl in the hospital bed is really his daughter at all. Bell is a rising star who will surely go hardcover... don't miss him. Order [Bell's earlier books](#) too.

Bowen, Rhys. [On Her Majesty's Frightfully Secret Service](#) (Berkley \$26). As Lady Georgie tells us, When Darcy runs off on another secret assignment, I am left to figure out how to travel to Italy sans maid and chaperone to help my dear friend Belinda, as she awaits the birth of her baby alone. An opportunity presents itself in a most unexpected way—my cousin the queen is in need of a spy to attend a house party in the Italian lake country. The Prince of Wales and the dreadful Mrs. Simpson have been invited, and Her Majesty is anxious to thwart a possible secret wedding. What luck! 11th in a delightful, clever series. [Order all eleven.](#)

Box, CJ. [Paradise Valley](#) (St Martins \$27.99). For three years, Investigator Cassie Dewell has been on a hunt for a serial killer known as the Lizard King whose hunting grounds are the highways and truck stops where runaways and prostitutes are most likely to vanish. Cassie almost caught him... once. The loss cost her her job and the sheriff she worked for his. Now a lone wolf without a PI license, Cassie has tracked the Lizard King from North Dakota to Yellowstone National Park and set what she believes is the perfect trap. The disappearance of troubled youth Kyle who'd been under her wing seemed incidental. And inevitably, her plan goes horribly wrong.... Of course it does! Order all four of Box's [Highway Quartet](#).

Castillo, Linda. [Down a Dark Road](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Eight years ago Joseph King was convicted of murdering his wife with a shotgun blast and sentenced to life in prison. According to local law, Joseph was a known drug user with a violent temper. Though his children were in the house that night, it appears there were no actual witnesses. And he's steadfastly proclaimed his innocence. Police Chief Kate Burkholder (a childhood friend, also a “fallen” Amish) gets a call one night: King has escaped and he's headed for Painters Mill. The authorities want him recaptured with, preferably, no violence, but it doesn't play that way and the question becomes for Kate, does she believe Joseph and look for another killer, or does she work to entrap him? Order the [whole Kate Burkholder series](#), best read in order.

To read with Castillo, David William, [When the English Fall](#) (Algonquin \$24.95). “Part insight into Amish culture, part dystopian novel, the story follows the days leading up to a solar storm and its aftermath. The Indie Next Picks finds that, “The story unfolds through the diary of an Amish farmer, whose young daughter has visions of the future—but what she sees does not bode well. She talks of the English falling from the sky. When a solar storm causes destruction to the power grid, the world is left in the dark. While the Amish are not immediately affected, once things start to fall apart, they are not safe from desperation.” And Jacob and his family, already accustomed to a life without modern conveniences, must decide what course of action they will take, and what assistance they will provide to their English neighbors.

Eaton, JC. [Booked 4 Murder](#) (Kensington \$7.99). Sophie “Phee” Kimball is not a cop. She’s a divorced, middle-aged mom who works as an account clerk for the police department in a small city in Minnesota. But her retired mother, Harriet Plunkett, is convinced Phee is the only one who can solve the mystery of a cursed book. According to Harriet, four members of her book club have already succumbed to the deadly curse. Harriet insists Phee catch the next plane to her retirement community in Sun City West, Arizona, to investigate. Is her mother just bored and lonely? She does have a new pet—a long-haired chiweenie (half Chihuahua, half Dachshund)—for company and a host of pals (although that number is admittedly dwindling). Phee is certain that their book club selection isn’t cursed, but is somebody really knocking off the ladies? Soon Phee starts to uncover dark secrets hidden in plain sight under the blazing Arizona....

Fairstein, Linda. [Deadfall](#) (Dutton \$28). Amid concrete and skyscrapers, the Wildlife Conservation Society works to preserve and protect the animal kingdom both within and beyond the borders of the five boroughs. But dangerous creatures don’t always have claws and fangs, as Assistant DA Alexandra Cooper and NYPD detectives Mike Chapman and Mercer Wallace know all too well. Predators lurk close to home, and in the aftermath of the shocking drive-by murder of an important city employee—someone Alex has worked with for years—the trio must discover who the bigger snake is: the killer or the victim. You can [order the whole of the Alex Cooper series](#) plus Fairstein’s first Devlin Cooper books for younger readers (think Nancy Drew modern).

Gregory, Daryl. [Spoonbenders](#) (Knopf \$27.95). A generations-spanning family of psychics—both blessed and burdened by their abilities—must use their powers to save themselves from the CIA, the local mafia, and a skeptic hell-bent on discrediting them. “A joyfully weird book about psychics and con artists, and the marvels that result from the intermarriage of the two.” —Charlie Jane Anders. “In a nimble and substantial novel, Gregory elves into the lives of the members of the eccentric and psychically gifted Telemachus family. On a summer day in 1963, Teddy Telemachus, a flamboyant and charming con man, card shark, and devotee of sleight of hand, cheats his way into a government study about psychic abilities. He meets Maureen McKinnon, a genuine psychic of enormous and mysterious power, and immediately falls in love with her. They get married, have three children with particular psychic gifts, and become famous as the Amazing Telemachus Family until a combination of televised embarrassment and personal loss begins to unravel their lives. Thirty years later, the Telemachus family’s lives are in tatters and sliding ever further into the dreariness of debt, unhappiness, and possible mental instability when the 14-year-old Matty Telemachus plunges them back into a world of cleverly plotted and swiftly paced adventure. Gregory’s novel deploys a cast of odd, damaged, enormously likable characters in a complex story that gracefully balances the outrageous melodrama of Chicago mobsters and shadowy government agencies with the ordinary mysteries of family dynamics”—*Kirkus* Starred Review for our **July SciFi/Fantasy Club Pick**. The Indie Next Pick finds it “a blast to read.”

Hamilton, Glen Erik. [Every Day Above Ground](#) (Morrow \$26.99). Edgar-nominee Hamilton’s “outstanding third Van Shaw novel fulfills the promise of the earlier entries. Shaw, a former Army ranger, is trying to stay on the right side of the law as he

struggles to make ends meet with whatever part-time work he can get. He hopes that he can manage to rebuild the Seattle home he recently inherited from his thief grandfather, Donovan Shaw, so when Mickey O’Hasson, an old criminal colleague of Dono’s, offers him a part of a score, Shaw is naturally tempted. Mickey has just been released from prison, where he met an inmate who claimed to have worked for Karl Ekby, the most powerful heroin dealer in L.A., and invested his proceeds in gold, which he stored in a safe in the floor of his Seattle office. Shaw agrees to help Mickey break into the safe, but the burglary goes south, leaving Shaw scrambling to find out why they were apparently set up. The suspenseful, fast-moving plot is a good match for the empathetic, nuanced lead.—*PW Starred Review* for our **July Hardboiled Crime Club Pick**. [Order the whole series](#).

Hart, Rob. [The Woman from Prague](#) (Polis \$25). Ash McKenna, soured by events that befell him in earlier books, has sought solace living somewhat off the grid in Prague. But he can’t stay there. It sounds simple: a bank employee named Samantha Sobolik is set to receive a package containing covert information in a handoff on the Charles Bridge. Amateur PI Ash McKenna, lying low in Prague, must intercept the package, and deliver the contents to Roman. Ash refuses—until Roman, who claims to work for the US, threatens to kill his mother. Out of options and too far away to protect her, Ash agrees. But when Ash gets to the bridge, he discovers that the handoff is actually a hit. And there he is, back in the game...A Kafkaesque story brimming with the atmosphere of this historic city. Order all five [Ash McKennas](#).

Kadrey, Richard. [The Kill Society](#) (Harper \$25.99). Sandman Slim #9. He’s been to Heaven and Hell and many places in between, but now he finds himself in an unknown land: the far, far edge of the Tenebrae, the desolate home of the lost dead. Making his way inland with nothing but his unerring instinct for trouble to guide him, he collides with a caravan of the damned on a mysterious crusade, led by the ruthless Magistrate.

Kellerman, Jonathan/Jesse. [Crime Scene](#) (Ballantine \$28.99). Starts a new series with a Bay Area star athlete who’s turned coroner’s investigator. How much do you know about the work of such an official? I confess to ignorance and thus one reason I read right through the book was to learn about it. Eccentric, reclusive Walter Rennert lies cold at the bottom of his stairs. At first glance the scene looks straightforward: a once-respected psychology professor, felled by a combination of booze and a bad heart. But his daughter Tatiana insists on a closer look. So Clay Edison has to decide whether a seemingly open-and-shut case of accidental death is murder. It’s not part of his job, but his are the trained eyes at the scene. At Left Coast Crime in Honolulu last March Jesse told me about the depth of his research for creatong Clay and how fascinating it was.

McCafferty, Keith. [Cold Hearted River](#) (Viking \$26). Sean Stranahan #6 in one of my favorite series, a must for fans of Box, Johnson, and RW White. McCafferty reports he was inspired to write it by a meeting with Ernest Hemingway’s fisherman son Jack when they were both contributing editors to *Field & Stream*. Most Hemingway readers know about the suitcase filled with his manuscripts that his first wife lost in a Paris train station. Fewer know that a steamer trunk filled with EH’s valuable fishing gear was stolen from Railway Express in 1940 en route to Ketchum, Idaho, where EH was staying at Sun Valley Lodge. For McCaf-

ferty the novelist, this was a gift and he crafts one of his unusual stories around the lost treasure...bamboo rods and reels, House of Hardy gems (London's best; one actually does survive today)... perhaps now found. Or some of it. What if more than sports gear was in the trunk? The story actually begins when a woman and her husband are trapped by a surprise spring snow storm. He survives by shooting his horse and crawling inside; she makes it to a grizzly's den but dies from exposure, not by bear. Sheriff Martha Ettinger, joined in looking for her by her sometime lover Sean, finds a fly wallet in the pannier of the dead woman's horse, the leather sporting an engraved EH. And only days before the president of the Madison River Liars and Fly Tiers Club, Sean's old friend, was approached by a man wanting to sell fishing gear he claimed once belonged to the author. It goes from there. I admire the inventive, spare-nothing deaths McCafferty, so kind but a true outdoorsman devises for characters in his novels. They really are not about fishing, they are about Montana and mystery and have won him a Spur Award among other honors, and my heart. [Order them all.](#)

Phillips, Gin. [Fierce Kingdom](#) (Viking \$25). The zoo is nearly empty as Joan and her four-year-old son soak up the last few moments of playtime. They are happy, and the day has been close to perfect. But what Joan sees as she hustles her son toward the exit gate minutes before closing time sends her sprinting back into the zoo, her child in her arms. And for the next three hours—the entire scope of the novel—she keeps on running. Our **August Modern Firsts Club Pick** asks, where is the boundary between our animal instinct to survive and our human duty to protect one another? Boldly exploring the ferocity of a mother's love, this beautifully paced and all too real narrative will have you asking, what would I do? While this is a mother, it could be a father, a sibling, anyone thrust into a shooter's path. The narrative from the perspective of the shooters is illuminating too.

Price, Daniel. [The Song of the Orphans](#) (Blue Rider \$28). The end of the world was just the beginning for Hannah and Amanda Given. Saved from apocalypse by three mysterious beings, the sisters were marked with a silver bracelet and transported to an entirely different Earth—a place where restaurants move through the air like flying saucers and the fabric of time is manipulated by common household appliances. Now, six months after their tumultuous arrival in New York City, the Silvers find themselves in more trouble than ever in the second volume of this futuristic thriller series after [The Flight of the Silvers](#) (\$16). Price is a local author.

Reichs, Kathy. [Two Nights](#) (Ballantine \$28). What a great new voice for veteran author Reichs. Meet Sunday Night, a woman with physical and psychological scars, and a killer instinct, the narrator of our **July Surprise Me! Club Pick**. Sunnie has spent years running from her past, burying secrets and building a life on deserted Goat Island just off Charleston in which she needs no one and feels nothing. She does admit Beau, a former cop who took her on, with few rewards, as a foster kid wrestling with the fallout from Jonestown. And now he challenges her to take a mission from local, aged matriarch Opaline Drucker. Opaline's divorced daughter and grandson were killed in a bombing apparently targeting a Jewish school a year ago. The granddaughter Stella was not identified among the dead, but has never been seen since. Opaline offers Sunnie \$140,000 plus expenses to find Stella, if Stella survived. Eventually Sunnie, unable to shake a feeling the girl lives, agrees. Next stop: Chicago....

Sakey, Marcus. [Afterlife](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$24.95). Our **July Modern Firsts Club Pick** asks, what if death is just the beginning? This modern myth, a thriller, is per one Starred Review, "...a noodle-bender of the first order. A love story enmeshed in a twisty thriller that peels back the universe to see what lies beneath." It has some horrifying moments that will shock some of you. "It's amazing what someone with a sense of theater and a rifle can do to a civilization," notes FBI agent Will Brody while tracking a spree killer in a terrified Chicago only to become one of the victims. Suddenly Brody is tracking something worse in the afterlife, a dystopian Chicago that's an "echo" of itself. It's "like someone took the batteries out of the world" and populated it with the walking, talking, living and loving dead. Chicago in the afterlife is an "echo" of itself, and Brody navigates its horrors while struggling to keep his humanity. Sakey has crafted a compulsive thriller drawing on motifs of multiple genres – mystery, mythology, sci-fi and romance. His world-building is epic and the community of characters Brody connects with is fully realized and compelling. It's amazing what a skillful writer with a "sense of theater" and a brilliant imagination can do. If you like King's *The Stand*, this is for you." *PW* adds in its Starred Review: "Edgar-finalist Sakey follows his Brilliance trilogy with a remarkably conceived and passionately realized supernatural thriller featuring two dedicated FBI agents. Sakey comes up with a fascinating answer to the eternal question of why humans exist." I am reminded here of *The Life of Pi*. We will have copies of the [Brilliance trilogy](#) on hand.

Silva, Daniel. [House of Spies](#) (Harper \$27.99). Gabriel Allon #17 truly mirrors current events, namely terrorist acts in London. Terrorists leave a trail of carnage across the West End. Is this the work of the shadowy ISIS mastermind known as Saladin? It had his hallmarks of planning and secrecy—but there's one loose thread. Christopher Keller, in a new ID, arrives at the south coast spy training fortress. And Allon, back in the field from his desk at King Saul Boulevard, Jerusalem, and his team follow it to the South of France. There they meet a British former fashion model and a Frenchman of enormous wealth (drugs?). Is Jean-Luc Martel turning a blind eye to doing business with Saladin whose objective is the destruction of the West? Can Gabriel turn the couple into assets, an unlikely pair of heroes? I'm reminded of *The Night Manager* although the story is very different.

Williams, Beatriz. [Cocoa Beach](#) (Harper \$27.99). Burdened by a dark family secret, Virginia Fortescue flees her oppressive home in New York City for the battlefields of World War I France. While an ambulance driver for the Red Cross, she meets a charismatic British army surgeon whose persistent charm opens her heart to the possibility of love. As the war rages, Virginia falls into a passionate affair with the dashing Captain Simon Fitzwilliam, Five years later grieving widow Virginia arriving at her husband's Florida estate and the plot spins off in surprising directions. John Charles writes, and I agree: "Williams has gained a solid reputation with readers for her elegantly written historical fiction, and *Cocoa Beach* is an excellent example of her ability to flawlessly marry a finely-honed plot rich in unexpected twists and turns with a full cadre of deftly nuanced characters, who will keep readers engaged from the book's first page to its stunning conclusion. Readers who enjoy novels with a strong sense of place and time will especially savor William's latest masterwork as she whisks them from World War I France to misty Cornwall

and then onto sun-drenched Florida. As an added bonus, fans of classic gothic romances by authors such as Daphne Du Maurier and Mary Stewart will especially appreciate the clever manner in which Williams remixes and re-masters many of the quintessential ingredients – including the ancestral estate, the heroine torn between the love of two men, and a romantic plot.” Our **July History/Mystery Pick**. We recommend Williams’ other [suspense novels](#) as well as her [historical romances written as Juliana Gray](#).

SIGNED BOOKS

Black, Benjamin. [Prague Nights](#) (Mulholland UK\$34). Black, aka Ireland’s John Banville, “displays his mastery of yet another mystery subgenre in this brooding, atmospheric whodunit set in 16th-century Prague. Christian Stern, the bastard son of the Prince-Bishop of Regensburg, has arrived in that city in the hopes of winning the favor of Rudolf II, the ruler of the Holy Roman Empire, and obtaining a place among the court’s learned men, such as Johannes Kepler and Tycho Brahe.” The first night he spends in Prague, Stern finds Magdalena Kroll, the teenage daughter of Dr. Ulrich Kroll, Rudolf’s physician and ‘one of his chief wizards’ and, we learn, Rudolph’s mistress, one of them anyway, lying in a snowy street below the castle with her throat slit. Initially a suspect, Stern soon becomes the emperor’s designated investigator. Too young, and too naïve although ambitious, the studious Kroll finds it tough sledding through the intricacies and secrets of Rudolph’s court.” I find that all books about Prague under Emperor Rudolph are full of alchemy, intrigue, and unsettling but atmospheric. This is no exception. If you haven’t visited the magical Czech city, here’s one way to do it. [Read an interesting review](#) (in agreement) in the June 25 *NY Times Book Review*. The US title for *Prague Night* is [Wolf on a String](#) (Holt \$28) as you will see in the *NYT* review, and is in stock now.

✦ Booth, Stephen. [Dead in the Dark](#) (LittleBrown UK \$44). I look forward every year to revisiting the Peaks District, such an unusual British landscape, with Booth as the guide. How do you prove a murder without a body? Ten years ago, Reece Bower was accused of killing his wife, a crime he always denied. Extensive police searches near his home in Bakewell found no trace of Annette Bower’s remains, and the case against him collapsed. But now memories of the original investigation have been resurrected for Detective Inspector Ben Cooper—Reece Bower himself has disappeared, and his new wife wants answers. Cooper can’t call on the Major Crime Unit and DS Diane Fry for help unless he can prove a murder took place which is impossible without a body (*habeas corpus*, no?). As his search moves into the caves and abandoned mines in the isolated depths of Lathkilldale, the question is: who would want revenge for the death of Annette Bower?

Connelly, Michael. [The Late Show](#) (LittleBrown \$28). On sale July 18. Connelly launches a new series with a lot of energy combined with meticulous police work. Renée Ballard works the night shift in Hollywood, beginning many investigations but finishing none as each morning she turns her cases over to day shift detectives. A once up-and-coming detective, she’s been given this beat, referred to as The Late Show in the LAPD, as punishment after filing a sexual harassment complaint against a supervisor that her then partner failed to back. But one night she catches two cases she doesn’t want to part with which require her to proceed with craft, cunning, and resolution. And to go on little to no sleep

as she works them by day while maintaining her shift with new partner Jenkins, a guy who wants to sign off at dawn so he can be home with his cancer-stricken wife, at night. Renee grew up on Maui so her days had been spent surfing and sleeping in a tent on the beach with her dog Lola as a guard, and keeping her wardrobe in her locker at the station. It’s a perfect set up for running two-track, off track cases, cases where two women have met violent deaths. If you have never read Connelly, here is the place to start. And you fans will love this as did I. The (true) Signed UK edition: [The Late Show](#) (Orion \$46)

Connolly, John. [A Game of Ghosts](#) (Atria \$26.99). If you missed the UK edition (we have 3 left) here is the Signed US edition. As Connolly himself says, it’s another odd book and fuelled by “a lifetime of reading ghost stories.” Maybe it’s a function of being a Celt. Anyway it has multiple narrators pursuing multiple agendas, a missing private eye, an FBI agent not telling Parker, whom he’s hooked into a kind of work alliance with the Bureau all that he should know about what Jaycob was also doing for the agency, some moving scenes with daughter Sam’s mother Rachel and Sam’s grandparents who are worried that Sam seems unconcerned about being abducted in [A Time of Torment](#) (\$36) and that they should formalize custody to keep Charlie Parker at arm’s length.... Plus there are The Hollow Men and the Brethren, all frightening. I find the Parkers compelling and entertaining; the trick is just to go with the world Connolly creates.

Hearne, Kevin. [Besieged](#) (Dell \$28). On sale July 11 but our books come to us from Hearne so there may be a delay. The ancient gods are alive and well in the modern world in this hilarious, action-packed collection of original short stories featuring Atticus O’Sullivan, the two-thousand-year-old Irishman from Kevin Hearne’s *New York Times* bestselling Iron Druid Chronicles.

Johnson, Jane. [Court of Lions](#) (Zeus \$40). Kate Fordham, desperate to escape her past, has fled to the beautiful sunlit city of Granada, where she is scraping by with an unfulfilling job in a busy bar. One day in the glorious gardens of the Alhambra, once home to the last Sultan of Granada, Kate finds a scrap of paper hidden in one of the ancient walls. Upon it, in strange symbols, has been inscribed a message from another age. It has lain undiscovered since before the Fall of Granada in 1492, when the city was surrendered to Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand. Born of love, in a time of danger and desperation, the fragment will be the catalyst that changes Kate’s life forever.

Lange, Richard. [Smack](#) (LittleBrown \$26). Patrick reviews this July 18 release: I’ve been keeping a close eye on Lange ever since his first book, [Dead Boys](#) (\$13.99), and he’s become one of those writers I drop everything to read. His new novel starts out in Reno, Nevada, where career con-artist Rowan Petty’s luck has finally run out. Living in a hotel and trying to stretch out his last five grand, he works the odd phone scam for chump change. An older grifter approaches Petty with a wild story he heard in prison about two million dollars in stolen army money smuggled into Los Angeles from overseas, and Petty is just desperate enough to take the bait. Accompanied by a down-on-her luck prostitute who calls herself “Tinafey”, our hero heads out to LA, where he soon gets mixed up with an eccentric cast of misfits, including a wounded veteran, a has-been actor, and a pair of French tourists. Lange really captures the contradictions and surreal weirdness of modern day LA in this terrific slice of modern noir.

✎ Lyle, HB. [Irregular: A Different Class of Spy](#) (Hodder \$43). As a boy, he spied for Sherlock Holmes. As a man, he must save the Empire. London 1909: The British Empire seems invulnerable. But Captain Vernon Kell, head of counter-intelligence at the War Office, knows better. In Russia, revolution; in Germany, an arms race; in London, the streets are alive with foreign terrorists. Kell wants to set up a Secret Service, but to convince his political masters he needs proof of a threat. To find that, he needs an agent he can trust. The playing fields of Eton may produce good officers, but not men who can work undercover in a munitions factory that appears to be leaking secrets to the Germans. Kell needs Wiggins. Trained as a child by Kell's old friend Sherlock Holmes who employed urchins in his Baker Street Irregulars. Wiggins is an ex-soldier with an expert line in deduction and the cunning of a born street fighter. Wiggins, disdaining an official post, turns down the job, but when his best friend is killed by Russian anarchists, Wiggins sees that the role of secret agent could take him towards his sworn revenge. Working for Kell, he begins to unravel a conspiracy that reaches far beyond the munitions factory.

✎ Marston, Edward. [The Circus Train Conspiracy](#) (Allison \$46). Following a string of successful performances along the west coast, the Moscardi Circus is travelling by train to Hexham on the Newcastle to Carlisle Railway for their next show. Yet a collision on the track with a couple of sleepers causes pandemonium: passengers thrown about and animals escaping into the night. When the headless body of a woman is discovered in nearby woodland, Inspector Colbeck is desperate to lend assistance, believing the two incidents to be connected, however a reluctant Superintendent Tallis forbids him from doing so. Torn between his desire to detect and his duty as a father, Colbeck agrees, until contact from an old friend is made and Tallis relents. With the performers pointing fingers at both the competition and each other, the interference of locals concerned about the show's morality, and a planned takeover bid of the NCR, Colbeck has his work cut out trying to untangle the thread of events.

Meyer, Deon. [Fever](#) (Hodder \$34). Expect a huge push from the American publisher of this pulse-pounding thriller from South Africa Meyer! Sadly Meyer won't be visiting the US. Nico Storm and his father Willem drive a truck filled with essential supplies through a desolate land. They are among the few in South Africa—and the world, as far as they know—to have survived a devastating virus. Their world turned upside down, Nico realizes that his superb marksmanship and cool head mean he is destined to be his father's protector, even though he is still only a boy. But Willem Storm, though not a fighter, is both a thinker and a leader, a wise and compassionate man with a vision for a new community that survivors will rebuild from the ruins. And so Amanzi is founded, drawing Storm's 'homeless and tempest-tost' to the community. It begins with rescuing Melinda Swanevelder from brutal thugs. As the community grows—and with each step forward, as resources increase, so do the challenges they must face—attacks come from biker brigands. And also from within.... The scene with wild dogs will stay with you....

Mukherjee, Abir. [A Necessary Evil](#) (Random UK \$32). Mukherjee's debut in [A Rising Man](#) (Pegasus \$25.95 Unsigned) was one of our biggest 2016 History Club Picks—see Some New Book below. I'm thrilled he's back with another mystery of India under the Raj. It's 1920. Captain Wyndham and Sergeant Banerjee

of the Calcutta Police Force investigate the dramatic assassination of a Maharajah's son. The fabulously wealthy kingdom of Sambalpore is home to tigers, elephants, diamond mines and the beautiful Palace of the Sun. But when the heir to the throne is assassinated in the presence of Captain Sam Wyndham and Sergeant 'Surrender-Not' Banerjee, they discover a kingdom riven with suppressed conflict. Prince Adhir was a modernizer whose attitudes – and romantic relationship – may have upset the more religious elements of his country, while his brother – now in line to the throne – appears to be a feckless playboy. As Wyndham and Banerjee desperately try to unravel the mystery behind the assassination, they become entangled in a dangerous world where those in power live by their own rules and those who cross their paths pay with their lives. And reminder: if you were riveted to *The Jewel in the Crown* and the earliest Barbara Cleverly mysteries, you will love Arjun Gai'd's [A Very Pukka Murder](#), the first Maharaja Mystery. I'll be getting the second, *Death at the Durbar*, to edit at the end of June to publish in November.

I liked *A Rising Man* so much here's a review for its May US publication which you might like to read first: British author Mukherjee's outstanding debut and series launch combines a cleverly constructed whodunit with an unusual locale—Calcutta in 1919—portrayed with convincing detail. Capt. Sam Wyndham, a former Scotland Yard detective, has arrived in the Indian city wounded in spirit from the loss of his wife to the influenza epidemic and addicted to morphine after surviving the trenches of the Western Front. His experience lands him a position with the British Imperial Police Force in Bengal, and he soon receives a sensitive murder inquiry. Alexander MacAuley, a top aide to the lieutenant governor, has been found in an alley with his throat slit, some fingers cut off, and a bloodstained scrap of paper placed in his mouth on which is written: "English blood will run in the streets." That warning indicates that Indian terrorists opposed to continuation of the Raj were responsible, but Wyndham finds the truth more complicated. The nuanced relationship between Wyndham and his Indian assistant, a sergeant known as Surrender-not Banerjee because the English can't pronounce his first name correctly, adds even more depth.

✎ Richardson, Matthew. [My Name is Nobody](#) (Joseph \$32). Solomon Vine was the best of his generation, a spy on a fast track to the top. But when a prisoner is shot in unexplained circumstances on his watch, only suspension and exile beckon. Three months later, MI6's Head of Station in Istanbul is abducted from his home. There are signs of a violent struggle. With the Service in lockdown, uncertain of who can be trusted, thoughts turn to the missing man's oldest friend: Solomon Vine. Officially suspended, Vine can operate outside the chain of command to uncover the truth. But his investigation soon reveals that the disappearance heralds something much darker. And that there's much more at stake than the life of a single spy...

✎ Ripley, Mike. [Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang](#) (Collins \$43). Here's a reference book to dip into all summer. Ripley examines the rise of the thriller from the austere 1950s through the boom time of the Swinging Sixties and early 1970s, examining some 150 British authors (plus a few notable South Africans). Drawing upon conversations with many of the authors mentioned in the book, he shows how British writers, working very much in the shadow of World War II, came to dominate the field of adventure thrillers and the two types of spy story: spy fantasy (as epitomized by Ian

Fleming's James Bond) and the more realistic spy fiction created by Deighton, Le Carré and Ted Allbeury, plus the many variations (and imitators) in between. Signed also by Lee Child who writes the Introduction. With the first George Smiley in years from Le Carré out in September among the wealth of new books to choose from, this reminder of literary roots is timely.

✦ Robinson, Peter. [Sleeping in the Ground](#) (Hodder \$43). This excellent British procedural, almost a reboot and thus this 24th case is a fine choice for someone who hasn't read an Alan Banks, opens with a sniper gunning down the bride and some of the wedding party outside a small Yorkshire Dales church. It's horrific, and makes no sense. The responders' time is slow and heavily criticized. Using the scant evidence at the scene Banks and his team launch a major manhunt. A clue comes here and there, a snippet from a witness, something about guns. Struggling with the recent death of his first serious girlfriend and the return of profiler Jenny Fuller who is called in to assist, Banks (by now a Detective Superintendent) digs into the lives of the wedding party's families and the locals. Just as Connelly presents the work of the LAPD this month, Robinson does it British style. Order [earlier Alan Banks](#) and binge.

Rosenfelt, David. [Collared](#) (St Martins \$28). Every witty and affectionate Andy Carpenter mystery begins with a pickle for a dog. This time the pet is tied to the door of the shelter Andy and his friend Willie run (on Andy's dime) along with a note. When they scan the dog for an embedded chip, they discover this is the "DNA dog." A dog that generated evidence in a criminal case. Some 30 months before the dog and the baby adopted by single mom Jill Hickman were kidnapped in broad daylight in Eastside Park. Neither dog nor baby Dylan has been seen since. When a tip came in that a former boyfriend of Hickman's who also worked in her company was the kidnapper, hair from the DNA dog proved the clincher in Keith Wachtel's arrest. He's doing life. But here's the dog and here's Andy, debating whether to renew his New Jersey law license and now under pressure from Laurie to help her friend Jill find the baby, convinced that the real kidnapper may not be Keith. So he gains a new client and begins to investigate.... As ever Rosenfelt displays an ingenious mind for crime such that I am glad he's an author and not a practicing crook. For a great summer escape, order all [Rosenfelt's amusing, tricky books](#), some of them not Andy Carpenters.

Sager, Riley. [Final Girls](#) (Dutton \$26) borrows riffs from *Friday the 13th*, *Halloween* and *Single White Female*, but remains its own sophisticated creature. "An original take on a familiar pop-culture motif. The "final girl" is a trope familiar to film scholars and horror-movie fans. "She's the young woman who makes it out of the slasher flick alive, the one who lives to tell the tale. After she survives a mass murder, the media tries to make Quincy into a final girl, but she refuses to play that part. Instead, she finishes college, finds a great boyfriend, and builds a comfortable life for herself on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. She's managed to bury her trauma under a mountain of Pinterest-ready sweets—she runs a successful baking blog—and psychological repression. Then another final girl, a woman who's tried to be a mentor to Quincy, dies of an apparent suicide, and the cracks in her carefully constructed world begin to show...."—*Kirkus* Starred Review, one of several. "Sager" is a pseudonym for a published author. *LJ*'s ends: "The suspense ratchets up with a mysterious murder, violent late-night escapades in Central

Park, and the appearance of multiple suspects in past and present crimes. The tale builds to a fantastic conclusion that will have readers thinking of Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl* and Paula Hawkins's *The Girl on the Train*."

Sykes, SD. [City of Masks](#) (Hodder \$40). "We are plunged into Sykes' rich soup of Venetian intrigue; period detail; and increasingly intricate plotting, all with the deeply realized character of Lord Somershill fighting his own demons while investigating. A brilliant addition to the Somershill Manor Novels." So says the *Booklist* Starred Review. It's 1358, and young Oswald de Lacy, Lord Somershill, and his mother are delayed in Venice as he awaits a pilgrim ship to the Holy Land. While the city is besieged by the King of Hungary, Oswald stays at the house of an English merchant, and soon comes under the spell of this decadent and dazzling island state that sits on the edge of Europe and of the household in the *palazzo*. But Oswald has secrets from his complicated past and reluctant accession to his title that still haunt him, no matter how much he consoles himself with the delights of Venice, perhaps the wife of his host. When he finds a dead man at the carnival, he is dragged into a murder investigation that thrusts him before the feared Signori di Notte, the secret police, and reveals that the masks are not just worn to celebrate Carnivale. This is a detail rich, slowly moving story to read on lazy days. It's best if you [order the first two in the series](#) before you begin this 3rd entry. Unsigned US edition is \$26.95.

Tremayne, Peter. [Night of the Lightbringer](#) (Headline \$44). Ireland, AD 671. On the eve of the pagan feast of Samhain, Brother Eulf and the warrior, Aidan, discover a man murdered in an unlit pyre in the heart of Cashel. He has been dressed in the robes of a religieus and killed by the ritualistic 'three deaths'. When a strange woman known as Branche³ appears in a raven-feather cloak foretelling of ancient gods returning to exact revenge upon the mortal world, she is quickly branded a suspect. But in their search for the killer, Sister Fidelma and Eulf will soon discover a darker shadow looming over the fortress. Order earlier Sister Fidelmas and [check this link to the 2017 Sister Fidelma Féile September 8-10](#).

To read with Tremayne, Scott Oden, [A Gathering of Ravens](#) (St Martins \$27.99). The Starred Review: "In this lovingly crafted tale of high adventure, Oden creates an alternate early medieval Europe in which mortal men have defeated entire races of vicious magical creatures. Some nightmares have faded from memory as magic and ancient beliefs are supplanted by a new religion, Christianity. Grimnir, last of the giants called kaunar, is on a mission for vengeance several centuries in the making. The world is in disarray, but he happens on a pair of Christians who seem to hold the key to all his plans. He captures Étain to exploit her knowledge but unintentionally leads her on a path of spiritual enlightenment while also taking on armies that stand between himself and his prey. This fast-paced thrill ride might have been bleak or unsettling, but it's rendered so lovingly that it reveals new layers of familiar territory. The fresh viewpoint is steeped in an appreciation for the terrifying and powerful characters of high fantasy, and Oden does them justice. He provides a satisfying saga that's as complex as an old tree's roots, and a pleasure to read."

Trigiani, Adriana. [Kiss Carlo](#) (Harper \$27.99). It's 1949 and South Philadelphia bursts with opportunity during the post-war

boom. The Palazzini Cab Company & Western Union Telegraph Office, owned and operated by Dominic Palazzini and his three sons, is flourishing: business is good, they're surrounded by sympathetic wives and daughters-in-law, with grandchildren on the way. But a decades-long feud that split Dominic and his brother Mike and their once-close families sets the stage for a re-match. From the dreamy mountaintop village of Roseto Valfortore in Italy, to the vibrant streets of South Philly, to the close-knit enclave of Roseto, Pennsylvania, to New York City during the birth of the golden age of television as long buried secrets are revealed, mistaken identities are unmasked, scores are settled, broken hearts are mended and true love reigns.

BRITISH LIBRARY CRIME CLASSICS

There are too many to list; please [check available titles here](#)

Austen-Leigh, Lois. [The Incredible Crime](#) (Poisoned Pen \$12.95). "The bland title doesn't capture the liveliness or wit of this well-plotted cozy, first published in 1931, by Austen-Leigh (1883–1968), Jane Austen's great-great-niece. Prudence Pinsent, the independent single daughter of the master of Cambridge University's fictional Prince's College, lives amid academics, including her distant cousin, toxicologist and poisons expert Francis Temple. Just before making a visit to the country, Prudence learns that a destructive new drug is being smuggled into the area and that both Cambridge University and Wellende Old Hall, her destination, are suspected distribution points. Initially skeptical, she becomes sure that something is amiss at the remote coastal home of the unpretentious Lord Wellende. Its fabled ghost has grown suddenly noisy, two senior men from Scotland Yard make ostensibly social visits, and Lord Wellende falls ill immediately after Francis unexpectedly ends their long-standing estrangement. This British Library Crime Classics reissue features richly evocative settings, an appealing romantic subplot, and sly nods to other fiction, including that of the author's illustrious ancestor.

Edwards, Martin. [Continental Crimes](#) (Poisoned Pen \$12.95). Coming in late July this collection earns a Starred Review: "Detection Club president Edwards (puts his expertise to good use in this superb reprint anthology of 14 short stories by British writers set in continental Europe. As with the best of such compilations, readers of classic mysteries will relish discovering unfamiliar authors, along with old favorites such as Arthur Conan Doyle ("The New Catacomb") and G.K. Chesterton ("The Secret Garden"). Many will finish F. Tennyson Jesse's "The Lover of St. Lys" wanting to see more of her unique sleuth, Solange Fontaine, who investigates crimes "with the end always in view of throwing light on causes rather than on actual deeds." Agatha Christie's "Have You Got Everything You Want?" foreshadows a plot Christie used two decades later in a novel. Christie fans will also be interested in Marie Belloc Lowndes's "Popeau Intervenes," featuring a French sleuth, Hercules Popeau, who predates Hercule Poirot. J. Jefferson Farjeon, one of the lesser-known names, is represented by the nicely spooky "The Room in the Tower." Those unfamiliar with the bygone age of crime fiction celebrated in this volume will find this the perfect introduction.

OUR JULY LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

Alexander, Tasha. [A Terrible Beauty](#) (\$15.99). For the armchair travel as well as Lady Emily series fan, Alexander sets a tale on Santorini asking if Emily's first husband, lost during an African

expedition, could have survived? Emily mourned him sincerely as she realized how much he had cared for her and how little she had understood it. But she's remarried to (crown agent) Colin, is a mother—her life will be upended and her children made illegitimate. Events play out against the backdrop of the art-filled retreat Emily had been left on the lovely Aegean island.

✦ Chase, Eve. [Black Rabbit Hall](#) (\$16). What better summer read than a real Gothic? "A house, not a person, is the star of Chase's debut novel—an ivy-covered country estate in Cornwall." — *New York Post*. *LJ* says in its Starred Review: "Pencraw Hall (known quaintly as Black Rabbit Hall to Cornish locals) was once the well-loved home of a prominent family, but by the time Lorna scouts the house as a potential wedding venue, the estate has gone to ruins. Lorna is fascinated and takes childish delight with the hydrangeas popping up through the ballroom floorboards and the pails in each room to catch the rain from the leaky ceilings. Improbably, the manor is still inhabited by the elderly former matron, Mrs. Alton, who is desperate for money to maintain the residence... allows Lorna to tease out information about the house and the family's tragic past. So, *Manderley*... in a story of mystery, romance, history. Analogous authors include Daphne Du Maurier, Kate Morton, and Diane Setterfield's *The Thirteenth Tale*. For Chase's new novel see Some New Books for July.

Cutter, Nick. [Little Heaven](#) (\$16). A trio of mismatched mercenaries is hired by a young woman for a deceptively simple task: check in on her nephew, who may have been taken against his will to a remote New Mexico backwoods settlement called Little Heaven. Shortly after they arrive, things begin to turn ominous. Stirrings in the woods and over the treetops—the brooding shape of a monolith known as the Black Rock casts its terrible pall. Paranoia and distrust grips the settlement. The escape routes are gradually cut off as events spiral towards madness. Think Cormac McCarthy and Stephen King.

✦ Ellwood, Nuala. [My Sister's Bones](#) (Harper \$15.99). This is a cut above the cloned entries in the Trust No One (family or otherwise) genre spilling out of Britain. For her debut, Ellwood combines the both horrors on foreign soil, in wars, and those in the familiar territory of one's own village. War reporter Kate Rafter is more comfortable with mortar shells dropping in Aleppo and Fallujah than she is back in London, freshly returned from an assignment in Syria that has left her with nightmares and hallucinations. Kate got word of her mother's death too late to make the funeral in a typically shitty short note from her alcoholic younger sister. But she can't avoid a trip to seaside Herne Bay in Kent to settle up. Insisting on staying in the old family home where memories of her raging alcoholic father who abused his wife and made life hell after Kate and Sally's little brother drowned one day, compete with Kate's broken affair left behind in London. It all gets worse as Sally deteriorates and Kate begins to see a little boy in her garden, exacerbating her memories of her brother's death. Is Kate losing it, or is something sinister going on? I find the emotions resonant and real and the plot works with them.

✦ Hannah, Sophie. [Closed Casket](#) (\$14.99). Karen reviews: Lady Athelinda Playford is a well-known, successful author of children's books featuring Shrimp Seddon, leader of a gang of child detectives. Warning her lawyer ahead of time, she announces she intends to have a dinner party for family and friends to announce a changing of her will. In addition to the intimate group, she has

also invited outsiders, Edward Catchpool, the narrator of the story, and Hercule Poirot. Neither man knows why they have been included. The big announcement comes before dinner is served, when Lady Playford reveals the change to her will, noting the exclusion, of her children, turning her assets over to her frail secretary who is not expected to survive more than a few weeks. When the shock wears off, the questions begin. Her son, with no visible means of support, and daughter who clings to a well-to-do fiancé, fail to understand their omission and why bequeath to someone who may well pre-decease their mother. There is an abundance of motives among the group to hasten the demise of the victim before the will is changed. When a murder becomes a reality, Poirot and Catchpool assume their roles of investigators....

Hart, Elsa. [The White Mirror](#) (\$16.99). Hart seamlessly melds the complex politics of 18th-century Asia with a superior fair-play plot in her second whodunit featuring Chinese librarian Li Du of First Mystery Pick [Jade Dragon Mountain](#) (\$15.95). Li Du, whose successful solution of a high-stakes murder in the previous book ended his political disgrace, has chosen a nomadic existence that lands him with a commercial caravan traveling in the Tibetan mountains, where his group encounters the eerie spectacle of a dead monk on a bridge. The monk, later identified as Dhamo, a painter who lived in a nearby temple, has the image of a white mirror painted on his face. Li Du astutely deduces that Dhamo was murdered, based on something missing from his studio. The sleuth assiduously probes the potential motives of his fellow guests at the manor where the travelers take shelter, among them a visiting dignitary and a Capuchin monk. The isolated and eerie manor setting is reminiscent of a classic golden age puzzle mystery but it's the characters in this exotic landscape that stick with you. Readers of Eliot Pattison's Skull Mantra series and fans of Judge Dee will love Hart's mysteries.

Khan, Vaseem. [The Strange Disappearance of a Bollywood Star](#) (Orbit \$15.99). Rising star and incorrigible playboy Vikram Verma has disappeared, leaving his latest film in jeopardy. Hired by Verma's formidable mother to find him, Delhi's Inspector Chopra and his sidekick, baby elephant Ganesha, embark on a journey deep into the world's most flamboyant movie industry. As they uncover feuding stars, failed investments and death threats, it seems that many people have a motive for wanting Verma out of the picture. And yet, as Chopra has long suspected, in Bollywood the truth is often stranger than fiction.... 3rd in a delightful series. This is the US edition vs. the UK hardcover. [Order all three](#) for summer fun.

Koryta, Michael. [Rise the Dark](#) (\$15.99). For his 13th work, best-selling Koryta, a former PI and newspaper reporter with a host of literary award nominations under his belt, crafts a gripping—indeed, one could say, an electrifying—thriller linking, in time, the murder of Markus Novak's wife Lauren in a Florida village to what appears to be a senseless act of vandalism in Red Lodge, Montana. In Koryta's expert hands we know immediately that the link is valid and the vandalism shutting off the lights in Red Lodge is purposeful. And that the deaths of Sandra Baldwin's brother and the behavior of her husband Jay, both high-voltage linesmen, must be related. But even the savvy reader will not guess why.... There will be no new Koryta in 2017 but he joins us October 5 to chat with Nelson DeMille.

Lanh, Andrew. [Child of My Winter](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95). "As complex and tricky as Lanh's other Vietnam-centric mysteries, with a psychological component that makes this installment especially intense."—*Kirkus Reviews*. The murder investigation is contemporary—Hartford, Connecticut, investigator Rick van Lam, teaching part time at Farmington College, witnesses the shooting of a professor in a blizzard campus parking lot. The most obvious suspect is oddball kid Dustin Trang, a scholarship student with no social skills. It's not Asperger's, it's his appalling Vietnamese family who scorn and bully him. This clan left its privileged life in Saigon in the last days of the war. Although Dustin rebuffs Rick's aid, Rick can't leave the murder alone. His slowly building investigation takes you to a place you will not see coming! I lived through this war in my twenties and yet am surprised by what I learned from this story. Among the questions it raises is, what plan did the US have for the post war, for governing, if we had won? A question to ask about Afghanistan today. Order all of [Rick's excellent investigations](#).

Lennon, J. Robert. [Broken River](#) (Graywolf \$16). When 12-year-old Irina moves with her artist father and writer mother from Brooklyn to Broken River, a small and dying town in upstate New York, she's partially aware that the relocation has something to do with her father's infidelity. As her parents work through their drama, the precocious young girl passes the time by researching her new town and large home, discovering it to be the site of a gruesome double-murder 10 years earlier, one in which the murdered couple's daughter was never found. When a young woman arrives in town, Irena is convinced she's the daughter of the murdered couple and convinces her parents to let the woman babysit. Meanwhile, her father continues an affair and her mother fears she's dying of cancer. Each of their worries, some real and some imagined, twist together toward a riveting climax that changes their lives forever. *Broken River*, Lennon's eighth novel, is a darkly hilarious examination of human behavior. Shifting from varying viewpoints—a young girl, a philandering middle-aged artist, a wildly talented writer, a down-and-out small-town criminal and a disembodied narrator (referred to self-referentially throughout as the Observer)—this literary psychological thriller gets at the root of motivation, whether it's to kill or love or even forgive. Jonathan Lethem makes this his Summer Reading Pick.

Neville, Stuart. [So Say the Fallen](#) (\$15.95). "In Edgar-finalist Neville's excellent sequel to 2015's [Those We Left Behind](#) (\$15.95), DCI Serena Flanagan of the Belfast police investigates the apparent suicide of Henry Garrick, who was bedridden while slowly and painfully recovering from a serious car accident. It seems that his wife, Roberta, and a family friend, Rev. Peter McKay, gave him his evening medication of a packet of morphine granules mixed into a tub of yogurt, but after they left, he added an additional 10 packets and died during the night. But Roberta and McKay share a dreadful secret that eats at the reverend until he can barely contain it. Flanagan, who's trying to focus on work despite serious family problems, suspects something is not as it seems, but he has no evidence and is constrained to accept the death as a suicide. The case is officially closed, but Flanagan can't help following the remaining loose ends until something approaching justice is done in this complex and compassionate study of the human condition."—*PW Starred Review*. Don't overlook the Irish star's thriller as Haylen Beck set mostly in Arizona: [Here and Gone](#) (\$26).

Notaro, Laurie. [Crossing the Horizon](#) (\$16). If you thrilled to Paula McClain's [Circling the Sun](#) and her fictionalization of the life of aviatrix Beryl Markham, this terrific triple-story, based on fact and illustrated from real life, is for you. Three women resolve to become the first to fly across the Atlantic from East to West. They are Elsie Mackay, daughter of an Earl, the first Englishwoman to get her pilot's license. Mabel Boll, a glamorous society darling and former cigar girl, ardent to make the historic flight. And beauty pageant contestant Ruth Elder who uses her winnings for flying lessons and becomes the preeminent American girl of the sky. Elsie, a rebel from Society life, is the most accomplished and the most likely to succeed; and the least interested in the celebrity that comes with the role (this is after all the age of Lindbergh). Notaro's research is awesome but it's her storytelling chops that make what could be journalism or biography into something much more as she braids these lives and the times into a suspenseful work that gains extra power from following the three women on through their lives

✂ Reed, Eric. [Ruined Stones](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95). Our **British Crime Club Pick** for July has earned many enthusiastic reviews, in particular praising the social history of 1940s Britain portrayed as in relations and neighbors viewing a corpse kept at home in the bedroom while family and Grace sleep in the kitchen. After her close encounter with a psychopath in her little British village, Grace Baxter has moved to the "big city" of Newcastle-on-Tyne. The city has a fascinating history dating back to Roman times and Grace enjoys exploring the town when she's not working for the city's police force. Not everything is sunshine and roses, the Germans are still dropping bombs and a young woman's body has been found in the ruins of a Roman temple. With so many men off fighting, women have had to step in to fill jobs formerly held only by men, and that seems to have irked some of the locals, who believe women belong in the home. There are plenty of suspects for the young woman's murder, and with the ongoing war, Grace often seems to be fighting a losing battle in her search for the killer, but determined to prove she's her police officer father's daughter, Grace won't give up until the truth comes out. "This is such a good historical mystery series. Reed hits all the high notes with a spunky, savvy heroine, small town idiosyncrasies and a tumultuous time in world history." Grace first appears in the atmospheric [The Guardian Stones](#) (\$15.95) set in a small Shropshire village earlier in WWII.

Winters, Ben. [Underground Airlines](#) (\$15.99). The #1 2016 Indie Next Pick earned many rave reviews. "An immersive thriller as well as a provocative alternative history, *Underground Airlines* showcases a fully realized central character who believes his own disturbing past can be kept safely buried. But history has a way of bubbling to the surface of the present. Winters succeeds in rendering the slave catcher monstrous but capable of redemption as Victor's sympathies shift to the underground side."—*NY Times Book Review*. "Ralph Ellison's *The Invisible Man* meets *Blade Runner* in this outstanding alternate history thriller from Edgar-winner Winters." Patrick recommends.

SUMMER READING FOR KIDS (and adults)

Burgis, Stephanie. [The Dragon with a Chocolate Heart](#) (Bloomsbury \$16.99). This Ages 8-12 Indie Next Pick caught my eye as good summer escape reading. Who doesn't like dragons? And chocolate? "Have your hot chocolate ready before you start read-

ing this book, because I guarantee you won't want to stop reading to make a cup once you've begun this delightful (and delicious) tale of friendship and growing up. Aventurine is a young dragon whose scales aren't hard enough to protect her yet, but, tired of being stuck at home, she runs away. When she tries to eat a human, the delicious smell of cooking chocolate reaches her nostrils first and she drinks his hot chocolate instead. It is the most wonderful thing she has tasted, but it turns out it was enchanted and now Aventurine is a human girl. Feeling like she has failed her family, Aventurine travels to the closest city in search of more chocolate. With the help of a new friend and a chocolatier boss, she finds so much more than that."

Catero, Edgar. [Meddling Kids](#) (Doubleday \$26.95). More fun lies in a book that "subverts teen detective archetypes like the Hardy Boys, the Famous Five, and Scooby-Doo, and delivers an exuberant and wickedly entertaining celebration of horror, love, friendship, and many-tentacled, interdimensional demon spawn." In 1977, the tween members of the Blyton Summer Detective Club solved their last case and went their separate ways. Now it's 1990 and the man they sent to jail has been paroled. These former detectives have unfinished business, so one of them resolves to get the gang back together to find out the dark truth behind that final case. "Highly recommended for fans of Christopher Moore and Ernest Cline, or anyone seeking a little laughter, nostalgia, or escapism."

Henry, Christina. [Lost Boy: The True Story of Captain Hook](#) (Berkley \$15). From the national bestselling author of *Alice* comes a familiar story with a dark hook—a tale about Peter Pan and the friend who became his nemesis, a nemesis who may not be the blackhearted villain Peter says he is... There is one version of my story that everyone knows. And then there is the truth. This is how it happened. How I went from being Peter Pan's first—and favorite—lost boy to his greatest enemy. Peter brought me to his island because there were no rules and no grownups to make us mind. He brought boys from the Other Place to join in the fun, but Peter's idea of fun is sharper than a pirate's sword. Because it's never been all fun and games on the island... One can't help but feel a parallel in this tale to Milton's *Paradise Lost*, no?

McManus, Karen. [One of Us Is Lying](#) (Dial \$17.99). "This fast-paced blend of *Gossip Girl*, *Pretty Little Liars*, and classic John Hughes will leave readers racing to the finish as they try to unravel the mystery on their own."—*Kirkus*. "McManus's intense mystery unfolds through the eyes of each of the four suspects... each character becomes more complex and nuanced, adding richness and depth to the suspense. McManus captures the power of social media among high school students and the tangled web of ever-changing relationships that is the fabric of adolescent life. Give to readers looking for mysteries set securely in the teen world."—*School Library Journal*

SOME NEW BOOKS FOR JULY

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Adenle, Leye. [Easy Motion Tourist](#) (Cassava Republic Press \$24.95). Nigerian author Adenle introduces fans of crime fiction to the staggeringly corrupt city of Lagos in his debut novel. In a spare style reminiscent of Raymond Chandler, Guy Collins, an inexperienced British journalist new to Lagos, navigates the city. His misadventures begin abruptly when he stumbles upon a horrible crime: the all-too-real phenomenon of ritual killing, a

gruesome practice involving the removal of human body parts in order to perform black magic. When he's arrested and interrogated by local police, he's acquainted with the brand of rough justice that leads many Nigerians to be "as scared of their police as they were of killers." Collins is also introduced to Amaka, a cross between a vigilante and a guardian angel, who tries her best to look after the working girls of Lagos and get revenge on the men who abuse them. She springs Collins from jail and the two of them embark on a dangerous mission to find out who's responsible for the ritual murders.

Akunin, Boris. [The State Counsellor](#) (Grove \$25). How nice to see Russian author Akunin's sly historical series continue—2008 was the last US publication. It's 1891. The new governor-general of Siberia has been secreted away on a train from St. Petersburg to Moscow. A blizzard rages outside as a mustachioed official climbs aboard near the city; with his trademark stutter, he introduces himself as State Counsellor Erast Fandorin. He then thrusts a dagger inscribed with the initials CG into the governor-general's heart and, tearing off his mustache, escapes out the carriage window. The head of the Department of Security soon shows up at the real Fandorin's door and arrests him for murder. Fandorin is quickly exonerated and keen to unveil the real killer. "A relentless page-turner. The 19th century that Mr. Akunin depicts is pulsing with irresistible energy. From dastardly terrorists to sultry femme fatales, Akunin's Moscow is a noir paradise cut through with a decidedly Russian sense of futility . . . [A] fun and entertaining detective novel."—*New York Journal of Books* on a story that brings to life the internecine squabbles among Moscow's multiple police forces as well as the nihilist revolutionaries whom they seek to foil.

Barker, JD. [The Fourth Monkey](#) (Houghton \$26) is an offbeat thriller about a serial killer plaguing Chicago and in particular the two lead cops on the case. When one day a man falls in front of a city bus while on his way to post the killer's signature package to his next target who will receive a severed body part, then more, from a kidnapped loved one, do Porter and Nash relax? No, their immediate goal is to find the missing person before she or he is killed. At the Talbot mansion they find the man's wife and step-daughter safe. So, they conclude, Talbot must have a mistress or unacknowledged child. Meanwhile the dead man had a diary on him that tells a history of the killer's pathology from childhood on. Will all these plot strands come together? The 4th monkey inspiring the killer's nickname and the title is Do No Evil which means I can't tell you more without committing one in the form of a spoiler. An interesting entry in this summer's serial killer chases.

Berenson, Laurien. [Murder at the Puppy Fest](#) (Kensington \$25). The Stamford, Connecticut, dog lover and breeder of standard poodles is looking forward to helping out at Puppy Fest, a dog rescue benefit sponsored by philanthropist Leo Brody. But when Melanie goes to visit Leo at his Greenwich office, she finds him lying dead on the floor with his latest paramour leaning over him. Leo, who suffered from a severe peanut allergy, died of anaphylactic shock after eating cookies containing ground-up peanuts delivered to his office. The authorities declare Leo's death an accident, but one of his daughters, Libby Rothko, suspects murder and asks Melanie to find out who may have wanted Leo dead. Melanie soon discovers that Leo's nine entitled children by three wives all had reasons of their own to hasten his

demise. 20th in a long-running cozy series.

Bollen, Christopher. [The Destroyers](#) (Harper \$27.99). Alas, no ARC came my way so we're late bringing this to your attention. Welcome to Patmos, playground of the rich, wannabe-rich, and their parasitic pals. "Beautiful people visiting glamorous places, being wicked enough to bring Patricia Highsmith to mind. It just isn't summer without this kind of globe-trotting glamour to read about, especially when most of it is set in the Aegean. Bollen is stylish enough to know what sells.... Escapism, as calculating as it gets." —Janet Maslin, *New York Times*. Recommended as Summer Reading also by *Entertainment Weekly*, *TIME*, *Vogue*, *New York Post*, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *Seattle Times*, Yahoo!, Refinery29, BBC, PopSugar, *Boston Herald*, *New York Social Diary*, *Library Journal*, *Kirkus*

Brookmyre, Christopher. [The Last Hack](#) (Atlantic \$25). Jack Parlane #8 goes in a different direction. Patrick and I are fans of the Scottish reporter and the oddball situations he gets into. This one is fun and not too technical for readers like me. "Sam's hacking ploys are cool in the extreme. An enjoyable departure from its predecessors, Brookmyre's eighth Jack Parlabane novel works exceptionally well as cybercrime fiction, but it's the human element that makes it tick."—*Kirkus*. "*The Last Hack* is a revelation. I loved the two central characters and the plot reminded me why the computer is the scariest tool since the invention of the buzz saw."—Thomas Perry. "As soon as I finished *The Last Hack*, I immediately changed all my passwords, and I'll never look at a USB drive the same way again. It's at once terrifying and tremendous fun, with superb characterization, gripping moral complexity, and no shortage of clever villainy."—Chris Pavone

Brown, Janelle. [Watch Me Disappear](#) (Spiegel & Grau \$27). The Indie Next Picks seem to me more and more aimed at women's book clubs. As: "Billie is a beloved and loving wife and mother to Jonathan and Olive—or so they believe. Her disappearance while hiking dredges up secrets about Billie's radical past, doubts about how well either of them knew the woman around whom their lives revolved, and questions about whether Billie is even dead... or simply vanished. For fans of *The Woman in Cabin 10* or *The Couple Next Door*"—neither of which I liked. Unless you read this as some kind of celebration of the independent woman empowered to cast off all responsibilities like her kids, skip it.

✘ Buckley, Fiona. [A Deadly Betrothal](#) (Severn \$28.99). Ursula Blanchard, the secret half-sister of Elizabeth I, struggles to deal with darkening conspiracies both at home and at Hampton Court, in Buckley's dramatic 15th Tudor mystery. In the 1570s the Queen is in her forties and pressured to marry a much younger man for the sake of the country. She is consumed by terror at the prospect of sex and pregnancy. When a teenage son of a friend disappears and is found murdered, Ursula's probing begins, with the death of a nobleman raising the stakes. 15th in series. Ordered Upon Request.

Burgis, Stephanie. [The Dragon with a Chocolate Heart](#) (Bloomsbury \$16.99). This Ages 8-12 Indie Next Pick caught my eye as good summer escape reading. Who doesn't like dragons? And chocolate? "Ages 8-12 but hey..."

Catero, Edgar. [Meddling Kids](#) (Doubleday \$26.95). More fun

lies in a book that “subverts teen detective archetypes like the Hardy Boys, the Famous Five, and Scooby-Doo, and delivers an exuberant and wickedly entertaining celebration of horror, love, friendship, and many-tentacled, interdimensional demon spawn.” In 1977, the tween members of the Blyton Summer Detective Club solved their last case and went their separate ways. Now it’s 1990 and the man they sent to jail has been paroled. These former detectives have unfinished business, so one of them resolves to get the gang back together to find out the dark truth behind that final case. “Highly recommended for fans of Christopher Moore and Ernest Cline, or anyone seeking a little laughter, nostalgia, or escapism.” Although this is adult fiction it should be fun for teens (especially those whose parents may be fans of the older teen fiction).

✦ Chase, Eva. [The Wildling Sisters](#) (Putnam, \$27). “In 1959, the Wilde sisters spend the summer at Applecote, a country manor, with their aunt and uncle who are still reeling after the disappearance of their daughter Audrey. The spirit of Audrey is everywhere and the sisters’ close bonds are tested with secrets and jealousies revealed. Fifty years later, Jesse and her family move back to Applecote, hoping for a fresh start. Their transition is not smooth and they are swept up into the old mystery. A page turning, suspenseful novel with richly created characters, a twisting plot, and a gothic setting. A delicious, shivery tale,” says the Indie Next Pick for Chase’s second book after this month’s Large Paperback Pick *Black Rabbit Hall* (reviewed above). Very much in the Kate Morton school which puts it in the Victoria Holt/Mary Stewart romantic suspense vein.

✦ Casey, Jane. [Let the Dead Speak](#) (St Martins \$27.99). London detective Maeve Kerrigan is a gripping character, voice and actions and powerful emotions. Irritatingly of the 6 previous Kerrigans, only 4 in are print in paperback, and disappearing. In this 7th she’s very much alone, still hoping her colleague/lover Rob will return, still partnering with the ever-abrasive Derwent and now saddled with an ambitious young recruit whose default is to sabotage her. And now they face the case brought by 18-year-old Chloe Emery who returns to her West London home to a blood bath and a missing mother. Yet there’s no body to be found. Chloe is a bit “slow” and neighbors reluctantly agree to shelter her while a search is mounted. Where this goes is a surprise for sure, but Maeve is a bit too cold here and the others that bit bizarre. Still, any Casey British mystery is one I grab.

✦ Clare, Alys. [The Devil’s Cup](#) (Severn \$28.99). The 17th Hawkenlye Mystery takes you to 1216. “King John, the Donald Trump of his day, is battling the French and other splinter factions for control of England. Former knight Josse d’Acquin’s family is divided into those who back King John and those who consider him a lecherous traitor and tyrant. Josse, a supporter, is summoned by the king and gallops off to join him. Meanwhile, Josse’s herbalist and healer daughter, Meggie, has been called to Hawkenlye Abbey to treat a seemingly hysterical woman who has been brought there by her son, Faruq. Soon, Faruq and Meggie are on a quest to find the Devil’s Cup, an ancient treasure that leaves death and sorrow in its wake. The story pauses every now and then to slide in little shards of backstory, which the reader requires to understand the lives of Josse and his large and complicated clan.”—*PW*. Ordered Upon Request. Why quote *PW*? No review copies are available.

Corby, Gary. [Death on Delos](#) (Soho \$26.95). In seven books Corby has staked out ancient Athens as his own, providing not just endearing characters and interesting plots but solid historical ground. We first met Nicolaos, elder brother of the difficult child Socrates, when he became an investigator for a young Pericles. Now we’re in 545 BC when Athens has become a short-lived super power, Pericles its most potent strategist and orator, and Nicolaos and his wife the priestess Diotima are about to become parents. Although heavily pregnant, her assignment is to escort offerings to Artemis’s temple on Delos, the island where Leto gave birth to the gods Apollo and his sister, and where no one is allowed to give birth or die. Nicolaos is there with Pericles in command of 50 Athenian triremes come to take the treasury of the Delian League (the NATO of its day) off to Athens for safeguarding. The island has no defense to raiders Phoenician or Persian. The High Priest resists Pericles’ demand and in the fallout, the second-high priest is found murdered. His death taints the holy sanctuary and casts suspicion all around but mostly on the Athenians and especially on Nicolaos whose dodgy behavior the night of the murder is hard to explain (unless you know Pericles). Delos is today a tourist hot stop just off Mykonos (where those who were about to give birth or die were sent back in Nicolaos’ day. In summer, given all the marble ruins, temperatures can be like Phoenix, i.e. 120+. [Order all of Nicolaos’ cases](#), good summer reading.

Deutermann, P T. [Red Swan](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Deutermann, with his decades of military/tactical experience, and with many novels under his belt, is less well known than many thriller writers, which is a shame. Here he writes a propulsive contemporary spy thriller with a Chinese spy ring and the US’s secret war against China interplaying. And, there’s a murder, a behind-the-scenes CIA operator whose skills at infiltration were critical to the agency’s work.

Farnsworth, Christopher. [Flashmob](#) (Harper \$26.99). “With cinematic pacing and colorful action scenes, Farnsworth blends a unique premise into fun summer reading. Michael Crichton’s gone, but Farnsworth entertainingly explores the border where science fantasy meets reality.” the combination of a telepathic lead and a terrifyingly plausible effort to use the Internet for social manipulation produces intelligent and knuckle-biting suspense. After 9/11, Smith has served his country by reading the thoughts of terrorists and planting painful sensations in their minds. He’s confronted with an even greater challenge when he becomes a private security consultant. After witnessing the attempted shooting of a reality TV personality in the middle of her wedding at a Santa Monica, Calif., hotel, Smith learns the disturbing truth behind the violence. The investigating FBI agent, Greg Vincent, shares his suspicions that the crime was caused by a website called Downvote. The site, which encourages the worst in humanity, features the “most hated people on the Internet at any given moment” and produces a de facto hit list that some of its visitors have already acted on. Farnsworth credibly ups the ante for his hero and makes accepting his paranormal abilities easy. Good news for members of our **Fresh Fiction Club** as this is the July Pick.

✦ Francis, Felix. [Triple Crown](#) (\$16). Jeff Hinkley, investigator for the British Horseracing Authority, has been seconded to the US Federal Anti-Corruption in Sports Agency (FACSA) where he has been asked to find a mole in their organization—an

informant who is passing on confidential information to those under suspicion in American racing. At the Kentucky Derby, Jeff joins the FACSAs team in a raid on a horse trainer's barn at Churchill Downs, but the bust is a disaster, and someone ends up dead. Then, on the morning of the Derby itself, three of the most favored horses in the field fall sick. This new Francis by Dick (and Mary's) son Felix is most of interest in contrasting British racing with American.

✦ French, Nicci. [Dark Saturday](#) (Morrow \$15.99). I have never warmed to psychotherapist Frieda Klein as a narrator or character. Perhaps she's too clinical. Who knows why as readers like some voices and not others? This series takes its titles from days of week (obvious, I know, and this is book six) and here we have the story of psychiatric hospital patient Hannah Docherty who was 18 a decade ago when convicted of the brutal murder of her family. It was labeled an open-and-shut case. When Frieda is asked to assess a tragic, aged Hannah, she begins to wonder if Hannah was a victim along with her family rather than a killer....

Garwood, Julie. [Wired](#) (Berkley \$27). "When Agent Liam Scott recruits a beautiful hacker, Allison Trent, to find a leak within the FBI, he uses her cousin's criminal record as leverage. As they try to deny their growing attraction, the computer program Allison developed is stolen. Liam helps track down the thief while protecting her from continual harassment and attempts on her life. I genuinely enjoyed reading this novel. The whole book was tightly plotted and well written. This is a story I would highly recommend to romance readers, especially those new to the genre." This is a book for our John Charles to review, but as it involves crime as well as romance I note it here.

George, Nina. [The Little French Bistro](#) (Crown \$26.). I keep citing summer escape/travel sorts of book this month. "Terribly depressed by the emptiness of her long marriage, Marianne decides to end it all by jumping off a Paris bridge. Her unwanted rescue and ensuing marital abandonment jolt Marianne into ditching her tour group and setting out for Finistère, the westernmost coast of Brittany. Keeping body and soul together by working at a seaside bistro, Marianne finds herself healing through the company of a diverse group of quirky locals. *The Little French Bistro* is *merveilleux*. It refreshes like the sea breeze sweeping the Breton coast." I mention this Library Reads Recommends to those of you, like me, who admire the wonderful [mysteries of Jean-Luc Bannalec](#) set in Brittany.

Greenwood, Kerry. [Unnatural Habits](#) (\$15.95). The 19th in the Miss Fisher Mysteries (with actress Essie Davis on the cover). 1929: Girls are going missing in Melbourne. Little, pretty, golden haired girls. And not just pretty. Three of them are pregnant, poor girls from the harsh confines of the Magdalene Laundry. People are getting nervous. Polly Kettle, a pushy, self important Girl Reporter with ambition and no sense of self preservation, decides to investigate and promptly goes missing herself. It's time for Phryne and Dot to put a stop to this and find Polly Kettle before something quite irreparable happens to all of them. It's all piracy and dark cellars, convents and plots, murder and mystery and Phryne finally finds out if it's true that blondes have more fun. Anyone reading the Miss Fishers will have fun, too. [Order them all](#).

Hammer, Lotte. [The Lake](#) (Bloomsbury \$28). Chilling Nordic noir. Identifying the skeletal remains of a young woman killed

six months ago, her body dumped in a lake in Hanehoved Forest, is obviously going to be quite a challenge for Detective Superintendent Konrad "Simon" Simonsen and his colleagues in the Copenhagen Homicide Department. Human trafficking, rape, worse.... 4th in series.

Hellman, Peter. [In Vino Duplicitas](#) (The Experiment \$25.95). Here's another escape landscape—pour a glass and read about Rudy Kurniawan, perhaps the most notorious—and unlikely—wine forger in history. Rudy Kurniawan, an unknown twentysomething from Indonesia, was blessed with two gifts that opened doors: a virtuoso palate for wine tasting, and access to a seemingly limitless (if mysterious) supply of the world's most coveted wines. After bursting onto the scene in 2002, Kurniawan quickly became the leading purveyor of rare wines to the American elite. But in April 2008, his lots of Domaine Ponsot Clos Saint-Denis red burgundy—dating as far back as 1945—were abruptly pulled from auction. The problem? The winemaker was certain that this particular burgundy was first produced only in 1982. Journalist Peter Hellman was there, and he would closely investigate as a singular cast of characters—including a Kansas-born billionaire and self-proclaimed "hoarder," a dignified Burgundian winemaker, a wine-loving young prosecutor, and a crusty FBI agent who prepared for the case by reading *French Wine for Dummies*—worked to unravel the biggest con in wine history. Whether driven by the love of wine or of justice, all were asking the same question: Was the mild-mannered Kurniawan himself a dupe? Or had one young man—with little experience and few connections—ensnared the world's top winemakers, sellers, and drinkers in a web of deceit?

Hillsbery, Kief. [Empire Made](#) (Houghton \$25). Kief Hillsbery grew up with the legend of his great-grandfather's great-uncle Nigel, who had "gone out to India" and never returned to his family's home in Coventry, England. According to the many stories, he'd left the British East India Company abruptly and gone to live in Kathmandu; he'd been killed by a tiger; he'd been involved with shady dealings regarding a famous diamond. From childhood, Hillsbery always had "a clear sense that [the family] disapproved of Nigel and the vague notion that there was more to his story." Hillsbery describes his decades-long, on-and-off exploration into Nigel's life and death. It is an absorbing story, told with an eye for suspense and the odd, engrossing detail. Over the years and miles, Hillsbery uncovers a theory that Nigel was a deep-cover British secret agent; that he was connected to an important family, the Sadozais, by his close friendship with the Afghan prince Sa'adat ul-Mulk; that he was involved in some under-the-table dealings with the famous Koh-i-noor diamond. But beyond these dramatic stories, Hillsbery finds quieter details that link his own life story more closely to Nigel's than he could have ever expected. *Empire Made* nears its end when Hillsbery visits a seeress whose insights lead him to a conclusion he can't substantiate. Readers of say *The Far Pavilions* should snabble this absorbing book.

Hilton, LS. [Domina](#) (Putnam \$27). The second chapter in a trilogy laden with the luxe life in Europe (brand names abound) and erotic, usually deadly encounters for Judith Rashleigh whose life went off the rails after spotting a fake at a London auction house in [Maestra](#) (\$16). Think of this as *50 Shades of Grey* on a *Vogue* level that begins by touring Venice well. Almost inevitably there's a Russian oligarch with KGB creds in the plot.

Honda, Tetsuya. [Soul Cage](#) (St Martins \$25.99). Rob, publisher of Poisoned Pen Press, has become an enthusiastic reader of Japanese crime, especially police procedurals set there. We both look forward to reading this one. Meanwhile here's *LJ's* review to tempt us, and you: "When a severed left hand is found in an abandoned minivan, it is assumed to belong to a missing contractor, Kenichi Takaoka. Lieutenant Reiko Himekawa, of the Homicide Division of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department, and her squad are assigned to the case. Investigations reveal that the missing man is not Takaoka and the task force confronts perplexing dead ends as they work to uncover a forced-suicide-for-insurance scheme involving the yakuza (Japanese organized crime). At the same time, Himekawa must interact professionally with colleagues who range from supportive to hostile and annoyingly lovelorn. This follow-up to *The Silent Dead* features an intricate plot, stylish writing, a particularly nasty villain, splendidly developed characters, and innovative police procedurals. Admirers of Nicolás Obregón's *Blue Light Yokohama* and Keigo Higashino's *Malice* will devour this.

Jacobsen, Steffen. [Trophy](#) (Arcade \$25.99). More Danish Nordic Noir begins a four-part thriller series with this harrowing account of the most dangerous big game hunting of all. When heiress and lawyer Elizabeth Caspersen-Behncke discovers a DVD that suggests that her late father killed a man for sport, she hires Michael Sander, a happily married PI who doesn't usually carry a weapon, to investigate. Meanwhile, 40ish, divorced cop Lene Jensen, a superintendent in Denmark's national police force, is looking into the death of highly decorated war veteran Kim Andersen, found hanging from a tree. That Andersen's hands were handcuffed behind his back suggests he didn't commit suicide. Michael and Lene join forces as their investigations intersect, leading to dark revelations. Here's one to read while you wait for David Lagercrantz to join us September 26 with a 5th chapter in the Stieg Larsson Millennium Series.

Kahn, Michael A. [Played](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95). Just in time for the All Star Game... plus the Diamondbacks are playing winning ball, is a tongue-in-cheek gem from St Louis lawyer Kahn, author of 10 Rachel Gold mysteries *PW* reviews: "Set in St. Louis, this [is a] neat little yarn... Milton Bernstein, an extremely bright but exceedingly nerdy lawyer, is engaged in research that will bring down shyster extraordinaire Leonard Pitt. Milton is startled when Hal, his good-hearted but rather dim younger brother, is arrested for murdering Pitt's devious trophy wife, Cherry. Despite the mountain of evidence against Hal, Milton goes into full PI mode to prove his brother's innocence. Readers have witnessed a series of quick-cut cinematic scenes showing Hal being set up for a frame, so the question is whether Milton can step out from behind his desk and become a true mensch—and whether Hal can wake up and transform himself from a slacker, used-to-be-great college baseball pitcher into something heroic, too. The outcome is never in much doubt in this pleasant tale built on the love between two brothers." *Kirkus* adds, "The spectacle of these ornaments of the Missouri bar attacking, undermining, and double-crossing each other provides brisk, sprightly entertainment, and the hapless defendant's baseball background comes into play just when it's most needed." I make it a policy to quote other reviewers for books I edit.

Karp, Larry. [The Ragtime Traveler](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95). In the fourth and final Ragtime Mystery, ragtime music expert Alan

Chandler suddenly finds himself traveling back in time to 1899, standing beside the King of Ragtime—Scott Joplin. What can he learn in the past, to solve a murder in the present? *Kirkus* finds our July History/Mystery Paperback Pick "filled with warmth and wonder and interesting music trivia, buoyed by the relationship between the two sleuths, which may well echo that between the late Larry Karp and his son Casey..." who completed this charmer as Larry was dying. The whole quartet of Ragtime Mysteries revolves around Joplin. Karp spent many happy days in Joplin researching them. [Order the first three](#) as well.

Physician Karp earlier wrote a really knockout medical mystery, on the dark side, with a wrenching ethical dilemma and harking back to wartime, 1943, I can't recommend enough: [First, Do No Harm](#) (\$14.95).

Koutsakis, Pol. [Athenian Blues](#) (Bitter Lemon \$14.95) takes you away to Athens with hit man Stratos Gazis, who has been hired by both celebrity lawyer husband and trophy actress wife to kill each other. Gazis thinks of himself as a "conscientious fixer," not a killer for hire. His stipulation is his meticulous research must show him that the targets deserve their fate. Nevertheless, in the midst of the Greek economic and political crisis, this film-noir loving assassin takes on the highest-profile case of his career. I can't now recall who said this but I like it: "Carl Hiaasen is surely envious of the subtlety of humor propelling the dilemma facing Gazis and his team of childhood friends: a top homicide cop; a high-class transgender sex worker; and Maria, the love of his life. *Athenian Blues* is not written as a comedy, but the absurdity of circumstances that pile up along with the bodies and course reversals is funny. A great little book that couldn't have been written by anyone else but Greece's most famous playwright." Expect a sequel in 2018.

Kuhn, Shane. [The Asset](#) (\$16). Kennedy, driven by grief over his sister's death on one of the planes hijacked on 9/11, has become an aviation security specialist, the best in the business. Consumed by work, he's jolted out of his doldrums by a chance reunion with his sister's childhood best friend, an indie musician now known as Love, and an offer to join Red Carpet, a CIA Clandestine Service operation investigating a suspected national attack from a mysterious global terrorist, Lentz. Kennedy and his team unwittingly put Lentz's plan in motion and must race to deactivate 25 suitcase nukes installed in airports nationwide, even as they cope with betrayal from within. Expect the offbeat from Kuhn.

LeMaitre, Pierre. [Three Days and a Life](#) (Quercus \$26.99). In 1999, in the small provincial town of Beauval, France, twelve-year-old Antoine Courtin accidentally kills a young neighbor boy in the woods near his home. Panicked, he conceals the body and to his relief—and ongoing shame—he is never suspected of any connection to the child's disappearance. But of course the clock is ticking. A decade and some later he returns to Beauval from his good life in Paris and makes another bad decision: he sleeps with a young woman from his past. When she arrives at his Paris doorstep, pregnant, the DNA test her father insists on will match the DNA on the newly discovered body of the dead child. What is Antoine now prepared to do to keep his secrets buried?

Lepionka, Kristen. [The Last Place You Look](#) (St Martins \$25.99). Meet Roxane Weary, an aptly named, hardboiled PI, in this debut mystery. Roxane is bisexual, with a lot of baggage and complicated relationships. When she's hired by the family of

a man on death row and asked to prove his innocence, Weary reluctantly takes the case, only to find new purpose when it connects to an unsolved case that plagued her father throughout his career. Still reeling from his recent death in the line of duty, her main way of dealing with her grief has been working as little and drinking as much as possible. But Roxane finds herself drawn in to the story of Sarah's vanishing act, especially when she links the disappearance to one of her father's unsolved murder cases involving another young girl of similar appearance to Sarah. The voice is lively, most of the characters rich. I expected the plot to deliver more but the whole package kept me reading to the end.

Levine, Laura. [Death of a Bachelorette](#) (Kensington \$25). Freelance writer Jaine Austen's life has been a royal pain since she started penning dialogue for *Some Day My Prince Will Come*—a cheesy dating show that features bachelorettes competing for the heart of Spencer Dalworth VII, a *very* distant heir to the British throne. But Jaine never expected murder to enter the script. When one of the finalists dies in a freak accident, it's clear someone wanted the woman out of the race for good—and the police won't allow a soul off the island until they seize the culprit. The lack of air conditioning alone is enough to spur Jaine into helping the investigation. 15th in this cozy series.

Lindsey, Davis. [The Third Nero](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Rome, 89 C.E. The wedding day of sardonic narrator Flavia Albia is certainly memorable. During the traditional procession from her father's home to that of her betrothed, a bolt of lightning strikes her beloved Tiberius. Throughout the ensuing months, the bride tends the recovering bridegroom and puts off increasingly aggressive creditors. Her agent, Philippus, finds a dicey commission that Flavia's situation makes it impossible to refuse. A year ago, provincial governor Saturninus led a failed revolt. The Emperor Domitian, away defending the borders, is understandably wary and wants a good report. And what about reports of a "third False Nero" who is rallying support for his bid to oust the emperor? 5th in series.

Loehfelm, Bill. [The Devil's Muse](#) (Farrar \$26). With all the policing controversy roiling cities, this look at the New Orleans PD and in particular new transfer Maureen Coughlin attempting to maintain any kind of order during a Mardi Gras parade is worth reading for its dramatic picture of what cops face from intoxicated, drugged, deranged or merely out of control citizens. Her night working the parades begins calmly enough - until a half-naked man careens through the crowd and throws himself onto the hood of an oncoming SUV. As she tries to deal with the incident amid the pulsing chaos of the parade, Maureen hears gunshots. Moments later, with three wounded and a handful of drunken witnesses, Maureen has a full-fledged investigation on her hands. Who was the shooter? Who was he after? Who's the next target? City bigwigs begin pressuring Maureen and her crew for quick answers. And with an amateur camera crew intent on capturing "the real Mardi Gras" for their YouTube channel, an incompetent supervising detective, and tense race relations in a city more likely to mistrust cops than ever.... New in paperback: [Let the Devil Out](#) (\$16), recommended by Patrick.

Lotz, Sarah. [The White Road](#) (Mulholland \$26). The ominous opening sentence, "I met the man who would save my life

twice—and ultimately destroy it—on a potholed road in the arse-end of the Welsh countryside," sets the stage perfectly for South African author Lotz's outstanding thriller. The haunted speaker is Simon Newman, who fractured his skull in a climbing accident and now works as a barista. Simon seeks to add more adventure to his life by cofounding a new website, *Journey to the Dark Side*, which features spooky and scary images and videos. His search for unique content takes him to the wilds of Wales so he can enter the Cwm Pot cave system, where three previous explorers have met their deaths. His perilous exploit, aided by a possibly unbalanced guide, proves to be just the prologue to an attempt to scale Mount Everest, where other bodies await exploitation for profit. Lotz excels at making you feel like you're there and her flawed lead sympathetic. Fans of Dan Simmons's *The Terror* will be pleased

Meade, Glenn. [Unquiet Ghosts](#) (Howard/SimonSchuster \$25). Many novels and memoirs, some of them thrillers, have emerged from the history of US operations in Iraq. This one stems from 2003 but it opens with a riveting death scene in the Great Smoky Mountains and moves on to Kathy Kelly, daughter and wife of officers, who struggles to rebuild a life after her beloved husband and two children board a charter flight and vanish. The wreckage is never recovered. Now the fiery new wreck leads to the discovery of the old and sets Kathy off on a search. And she soon learns she's not the only one hunting for her husband. And that there's more than one form of wreckage to negotiate. The premise of this novel is powerful and you really care about its characters, the whole being narrated with skill and empathy.

Meyer, Stephenie. [The Chemist](#) (\$15.99). A spy story dedicated to "Jason Bourne" melded with romance and loads of action. "A tale of skulduggery, bodice ripper, and shoot-'em-up action unfolds, complete with help from a luscious mistress of disguise who could have stepped right out of a James Bond novel. Rated B for badass."

Mukherjee, Abir. [A Rising Man](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). As a boy, he spied for Sherlock Holmes. As a man, he must save the Empire. India, 1920. Captain Wyndham and Sergeant Banerjee of the Calcutta Police Force investigate the dramatic assassination of a Maharajah's son. "A good deal of excitement and some enjoyable riffing on both the history of espionage and the Conan Doyle canon, with cameos of everybody from Winston Churchill to Mr. Holmes himself... the book is a treat." —*Sunday Express*, echoed by Charles Cumming. For more, and the sequel, see Signed Books.

✉ Paris, BA. [The Breakdown](#) (St Martins \$25.99). If you accept the weak opening premise that a woman drives late away from a party and, despite promising her husband she won't take the dangerous, isolated track through the woods to get to their secluded cottage in Nook's Corner, does it anyway. And as she drives down the dark road in sheets of rain she sees a car parked on the verge, and a woman inside. More afraid to irk her husband of just a year than be a Good Samaritan, getting only a blurry image of the woman, she pulls away for home. The next morning she learns a woman, undoubtedly the same woman, has been found brutally murdered. Riddled with guilt, Cass is thrown into despair and paranoia which in time begins to feel/be real. I thought this story implausible and contrived although the end game is clever. But we have tricks, not an organic suspense story.

Skip it but if you missed Paris' slow-building but electric [Behind Closed Doors](#) (\$15.99), a British Crime Club Pick last August in hardcover, we recommend it highly.

Pötzsch, Oliver. [The Castle of Kings](#) (\$15.99). As the early-16th-century Peasants' War tears Palatinate Germany apart, Pötzsch follows a young noblewoman's epic quest, sparked by a signet ring once owned by the legendary Barbarossa—Frederick I, Holy Roman Emperor. Agnes, preferring falconry to needlepoint, is the teenage daughter of Philipp von Erfenstein, Trifels Castle's knight castellan. Her best friend is the Trifels blacksmith's son, Mathis. One day Agnes' falcon, Parcival, returns from hunting, Barbarossa's ring tied to his talons. Simultaneously, the countryside is beset by bandits led by Black Hans, a rogue knight. Since Mathis is fascinated with firearms and can work alchemy with gunpowder, von Erfenstein charges him with building a cannon to destroy Black Hans' fortress. "The author makes the fantastical elements work by harnessing them to the grim reality of the Peasants' War, setting his far-fetched romance in an utterly convincing world of economic hardship, social strife and religious and political uncertainty. Oliver Pötzsch recognizes that the way to make the extraordinary credible is to anchor it in a thoroughly imagined depiction of real historical times."—*The Wall Street Journal*

Quinn, Kate. [The Alice Network](#) (Morrow \$16.99). Quinn fashions her novel around women espionage agents in the Great War linking her 1915 story to 1947 when American Clair, unmarried and pregnant, is sent off to Europe by her very proper parents to deal with it. Clair decides to head to London to learn what happened to her cousin Rose who had disappeared into Nazi-occupied France during WWII. Which leads to the Alice network, women spies in World War I, and British Eve Gardiner, aka Marguerite, a young woman trained to spy on the Germans. Now aged Eve and curious Clair mount a quest to find Rose while Eve's story of the Alice network, successes and betrayals, unfolds.

✦ Ribchester, Lucy. [The Amber Shadows](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). The Starred Review: "Honey Deschamps, the heroine of this richly imagined WWII-era thriller from Ribchester, serves the war effort by typing decrypted German messages at England's Bletchley Park. Walking in the blackout one night, she's startled to encounter a stranger, Felix Plaidstow, who hands her a package he says was misdelivered to his intelligence unit at Bletchley. The parcel, postmarked in Nazi-controlled Leningrad and holding pieces of amber marked with mysterious letters, is followed by similar mailings. Honey is baffled until she thinks of her artistic Russian father, Ivan Korichnev, who left the family just before she was born and whom she knows about only from her brother, Dickie. Ivan became the curator of the Catherine Palace, whose Amber Room has been looted by the Nazis. Is he reaching out, or are Bletchley authorities testing her? When Dickie is murdered and Honey's attraction to Felix deepens, Honey must disentangle love from danger, falsity from truth. Ribchester movingly reflects on trust, illusion, and the stories that connect us to our pasts."

✦ Robotham, Michael. [The Secrets She Keeps](#) (Scribner \$26). Robotham is a marvelous stylist as his many awards attest. For his new US publisher he writes a one-off suspense story, alternating the voices of Agatha and Meghan as pregnancy progresses, personalities are stressed, and suppressed secrets emerge. This is an excellent example of the Unreliable Narrator and showcases Robotham's skills at portraying obsession linked

to surprises as shown in his Gold-Dagger-winning Joseph O'Laughlin series.

Sakey, Marcus. [Afterlife](#) (\$15.95). See Event Books for a review of the hardcover edition.

Shaara, Jeff. [The Frozen Hours](#) (Ballantine \$28.99). June, 1950. Shaara tells the dramatic story of the Americans and the Chinese who squared off in one of the deadliest campaigns in the annals of combat: the Battle of Chosin Reservoir, also known as Frozen Chosin.

Sharp, Zoe. [Fox Hunter](#) (Norton \$25.95). This series by multi-award nominated British thriller writer Sharp has had a checkered publishing history. It's nice to see Charlie Fox, former Special Forces soldier turned body guard, with Pegasus, which is publishing a lot of UK fiction. Charlie, a kind of Jack Reacher, fears that her boss Sean Meyer, missing in Iraq, maybe pursuing a vendetta on her behalf. The fallout could shut down the close protection agency in New York and blow away all they've worked for. So Charlie is off to the Middle East with instructions to stop Sean by whatever means possible. And on the scene she realizes she is not the only one hunting him....

Shelby, Ashley. [South Pole Station](#) (Picador \$26). The Indie Next Pick sends you to another excellent location for July reading: "Prepare yourself for a frozen and fun adventure in the Antarctic. Cooper Gosling apparently does not have enough cold weather or oddball people in her Minneapolis life, so she heads to the South Pole Station to try to reclaim her career as a painter. Ashley Shelby has collected a wonderful cast of quirky characters in this southernmost ice box and readers are in for a treat when they meet this bunch of scientists, artists, medics, and misfits. Bundle up and enjoy the ride!"

Simenon, Georges. [Maigret and the Tall Woman](#) (Penguin \$13). A face from Maigret's past reappears to tell him about the misadventures of her husband, a safecracker nicknamed "Sad Freddie" who discovered a dead body while committing a burglary and fled the scene in a panic. 38th in Penguin's republication of the classic French policing series by one of the most prolific authors ever.

Spann, Susan. [Betrayal at Iga](#) (Seventh Street \$15.95). It's the autumn of 1565. Having fled Kyoto, master ninja Hiro Hattori and the man he guards, the Portuguese Jesuit Mateo, have taken refuge with Hiro's ninja clan in the mountains of Iga province. Peace is short-lived; an ambassador sent by the rival Koga clan is murdered during peace negotiations at dinner such that the ninjas attending are the suspects (it's like the Nero Wolfe book where a person inside a closed banquet room is killed). This includes the infamous commanding ninja Hattori Hanzo and Hiro's own mother. And his former lover. As the killer strikes again, Hiro has to choose between honor and family. Wars among rival clans in medieval Japan are also found in Liam Hearn's brilliant Tales of the Otori novels (not crime) and Laura Joh Rowland's much missed Sano Ichiro mysteries.

✦ Sykes, SD. [The Butcher Bird](#) (\$14.95). Chapter Two in the unsentimental Somershill Manor Mysteries after History Club Pick [Plague Land](#) (\$15.95). In 1351, Oswald de Lacy, the lord of Kent's Somershill Manor, learns that his life is a lie. He's actually the son of a peasant, switched at birth with the true heir, Thomas Starvecrow, who died in infancy. He seeks out Starvecrow's

grave, which turns out to contain only an effigy. Meanwhile, Oswald's manorial court must deal with madman John Barrow, who claims to have been confronted by a monstrous bird that escaped into the night. Barrow becomes the target of a lynch mob after the corpse of a newborn girl, only just baptized, is left impaled on a thorn bush, as if by a butcher bird or shrike large enough to carry off a child. Sykes artfully integrates both puzzles with the politics of the time, as the survivors of the recent plague, which killed about half the English population, deal with its economic repercussions. The *NY Times* adds, "Sykes offers an unusual perspective on this historical period, emphasizing the power of a newly valuable work force and the desperation of the landed gentry, who are losing out to estate owners daring to pay higher wages. But she also deals realistically with the troubles of the era's women." For a review of the 3rd in this series, [City of Masks](#) (Pantheon \$25.95), set entirely in Venice, see Signed Books as we also stock it from the UK.

Stephenson, Neal/Nicole Galland. [The Rise and Fall of D.O.D.O](#) (Morrow \$35). The Indie Next Pick: "For someone who approaches such serious scientific and technological subjects, Neal Stephenson can be outrageously funny. Combine that with Nicole Galland's storytelling ability and you have a rollicking roller coaster of a novel. The authors mix together magic, witchcraft, time travel, science, and historical figures, both real and imagined, while delightfully skewering bumbling bureaucrats, pretentious academics, a rigid military, and other bastions of the establishment to produce a work that is both thought-provoking and totally entertaining." We can't promise first prints for this top bestseller.

Van Hensbergen, Gjis. [The Sagrada Familia](#) (Bloomsbury \$27). More escapism, this time for real. Rob and I have visited Gaudi's remarkable project several times and were surprised when last there at the acceleration towards completion, now projected at 2026, provided by the Pope's visit and the designation of "basilica" leading to timed tickets and increased visitor revenue. In the historical context of church construction—in which France's Strasbourg Cathedral took almost 500 years to finish—Antoni Gaudi's Basilica and Expiatory Church of the Holy Family, still being built after 135 years, is just a piker. As van Hensbergen paraphrases Gaudi, "With a client as patient as God, what was a mere 150 years?" The art historian and television commentator, has already written a biography of Gaudi, so this illustrated book is more of a study of the building itself, including the history of its inspiration and construction while Spain suffered through the Spanish-American War, the Spanish Civil War, World War I, World War II and the oppressive Franco dictatorship. With more than four million visitors a year, the Sagrada Familia is one of Europe's most popular attractions. If you never get to Barcelona here's an excellent way to view this visionary work.

Viets, Elaine. [Fire and Ashes](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$15.95). In the exclusive, gated enclave of Olympia Forest Estates, death investigator Angela Richman watches a mansion go up in a fiery blaze. With it, seventy-year-old financier Luther Delor, a drunken, bed-hopping rhinestone cowboy. Embroiled in a bitter divorce, Delor may have scandalized Chouteau Forest, but his murder has united it against the accused: Delor's twenty-year-old girlfriend, Kendra Salvato, an "outsider." With an engagement ring bigger than Chouteau County, she's being railroaded straight to death

row as a gold-digging killer. She needs to douse the flames with forensic work that's putting the Forest on edge. After all, facts could implicate one of their own.

☒ Ware, Ruth. [The Lying Game](#) (Gallery \$26.99). I liked this 3rd novel by Ware while disliking her first two (bestsellers, to my surprise). It is, like them, in the Trust No One genre, and again involves women, this time four of them, linked by a secret in their past to unrolling suspense in the present. When three of four schoolmates who used to play an unusual game are summoned to the old mill that is home to the fourth, they instantly know why. But of course they only think they do and uncovering the real truth of the scandal and death in the past is the point. The old mill and the Salten marshy countryside are what really hooked me; I love British landscapes, the more remote the better."

Wilson, Andrew. [A Talent for Murder](#) (Atria \$26). Agatha Christie, in London to visit her literary agent, is boarding a train, preoccupied with the devastating knowledge that her husband is having an affair. She feels a light touch on her back, causing her to lose her balance, then a sense of someone pulling her to safety from the rush of the incoming train. So begins a terrifying sequence of events—for her rescuer is no guardian angel, rather he is a blackmailer of the most insidious, manipulative kind. "*You, Mrs. Christie, are going to commit a murder. But, before then, you are going to disappear.*"

OUR JULY SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Alexander, Ellie. [Crime of Passion Fruit](#) (St Martins \$7.99) Bake-shop #6. While on an all-expenses paid cruise hosted by her estranged husband, pastry chef Jules Capshaw, instead of whipping up her signature sweets, dives headfirst into a mystery surrounding the dead body of a young woman whom no one can identify and is determined to quickly solve the case before she gets in too deep. *Kirkus* raved about Alexander's latest saying "Just reading the descriptions of delectable desserts (and the appended recipes) can pile on the pounds."

Blackwell, Juliet. [Ghostly Light](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Haunted Home #7. When her business partner's abusive ex-husband is murdered, Mel Turner, in the process of renovating a historic lighthouse in the San Francisco Bay, must get the resident ghosts to shine a light on the real killer so she can clear her friend's name.

Castillo, Linda. [Among the Wicked](#) (\$7.99) Kate Burkholder #8. Going undercover to infiltrate a reclusive Amish community and investigate the death of a young girl, chief of police Kate Burkholder unearths a dangerous world of secrets and shocking crimes that are complicated by her limited ability to contact the outside world. *PW* concluded their review with "The feisty Kate is soon immersed in the Amish world and engaged in a ferocious battle for her life. Readers will be enthralled as Kate uncovers secrets in a quaint Amish community."

Dodd, Christina. [Because I'm Watching](#) (\$8.99) Madeline Hewitson survived a college dorm massacre as well as being falsely accused of her lover's murder, but now she is haunted by ghosts and tormented by a killer only she can see. When Madeline accidentally drives her car through the front wall of her neighbor's, Jacob Denisov's, house, however, she finds an unexpected ally, who may be able to help prove the killer she fears is more than a shadow. *LJ* is just one of the major review sources that loved Dodd's latest saying "Two emotionally damaged characters

find hope, self-forgiveness, and love in this exquisitely crafted, modern version of *Gaslight* that hooks readers and keeps them mesmerized until the end.”

Dunn, Matthew. [A Soldier's Revenge](#) (\$9.99) Will Cochrane #6. Waking up at the Waldorf Astoria with blood on his hands and no memory of what happened, former intelligence agent Will Cochrane is challenged to evade U.S. authorities who would apprehend him for a murder he did not commit.

Flynn, Vince. [Order to Kill](#) (\$9.99) written by Kyle Mills. Mitch Rapp #15. Anti-terrorism operative Mitch Rapp chases false leads throughout the world to prevent nuclear weapons from falling into terrorist hands before posing as an American ISIS recruit in Russia, where he uncovers a catastrophic plot.

Gross, Andrew. [One Man](#) (\$9.99) When a World War II physics professor with information vital to Allied forces is sent to a Nazi concentration camp, intelligence officer Nathan Blum is sent undercover to infiltrate Auschwitz and bring the professor to safety *PW's* review included this “Alternating between scenes of American hope-against-hope optimism and Nazi brutality, Blum’s deadly odyssey into and out of this 20th-century hell drives toward a compelling celebration of the human will to survive, remember, and overcome.”

Hartwell, Sadie. [Yarned and Dangerous](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Tangled Web #1. Josie Blair returns to Dorset Falls, a dying Connecticut town, to care for her uncle and close her aunt’s knitting shop, but when one of the ladies in the knitting association turns up murdered with yarn from the shop, Josie’s begins to investigate the town’s secrets. *LJ* had this to say “This debut cozy’s well-drawn characters and a tightly knitted plot will bring a smile to readers of Maggie Sefton, Sally Goldenbaum, and Anne Canadeo.

Marks, Mary. [Knot What You Think](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Martha Rose #5. When a member of her quilting circle meets an untimely demise and her friend’s fingerprints are found at the crime scene, Martha Rose must piece together the clues, which are linked to stolen millions and a secret office room, to clear her friend’s name. *Kirkus* ended their review with “Filled with translated Yiddish, dippy characters, and superfluous lectures on a wide range of topics: a joyous romp with a special appeal to quilters and devotees of delicatessens.”

Scottoline, Lisa. [Betrayed](#) (\$8.99) Rosato and Associates #13. Judy Carrier struggles with torn feelings about her friend Mary DiNunzio’s happiness, as well as racing to the side of her cancer-stricken aunt, whose close friend, an undocumented worker at a local farm, has died under suspicious circumstances. *PW* said “How can Judy juggle the demands of the case she’s working, the 75 cases she’d rather not work, the unofficial case Aunt Barb has handed her and the domestic drama all these complications are bound to stir up? By kicking major butt in a typically unconvincing third act, that’s how. But exemplary first and second acts are enough to make this the most successful melding to date of Rosato & DiNunzio’s cases and Scottoline’s family-centered standalones.”

Storey, Erik. [Nothing Short of Dying](#) (\$9.99) A survivalist adventurer and soldier of fortune, recently released from an unjust prison term, uses his lethal skills to rescue his abducted sister from a meth

kingpin who would control the drug trade throughout the Western United States. If John McClane from the *Die Hard* movies ever needs a partner, it sounds like this guy could do the job.

NEW IN SMALL PAPERBACKS

Abbott, Allyson. [Toast to Murder](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Mack’s Bar #5. Determined to unmask the mastermind who has been taunting her and killed bouncer Gary Gunderson, bar owner Mackenzie Dalton mixes things up by having an invite-only party to beat the murderer at his own game, but when her suspect is found dead, she must find the real criminal among her guests before last call.

Cochran, Peg. [Sowed to Death](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Farmer’s Daughter #2. While preparing for the County Fair, food and lifestyle blogger Shelby McDonald, who is hoping her jams and jellies win a blue ribbon, must find out who planted the evidence to frame her neighbor, fireman Jake Taylor, for murder.

Cornwell, Patricia. [Chaos](#) (\$9.99) Scarpetta #24. Suspicious of a bizarre death by lightning strike, Cambridge forensics examiner Kay Scarpetta identifies links between the case and a series of poetry emails being sent to her by an anonymous cyber-stalker who has gained access to Kay’s personal information.

Ferris, Monica. [Knit Your Own Murder](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Needlecraft #19. A fundraising auction organized by local knitters is upended by a temperamental businesswoman who is murdered by poison halfway through the event, a crime that is blamed on an embittered rival who swears he is innocent.

Fluke, Joanne. [Stepchild](#) (\$7.99) The daughter of a candidate for the U.S. Senate, college student Kathi Ellison, in order to consider her future, must come to terms with her past and her mother’s death when the migraines and nightmares that plagued her as a child come back, causing her to remember things that someone wants her to forget.

Graham, Heather. [Dark Rites](#) (Mira \$8.99) When an unknown assailant begins viciously beating random strangers—including her history professor friend, who has gone missing—Vickie Preston teams up with special agent Griffin Pryce in the wake of terrifying visions that suggest that a cult is responsible for the attack.

Hieber, Leanna. [Eterna and Omega](#) (Tor \$8.99) A group of assassins, magicians, mediums and others with rogue talents head to New York to attempt to obtain Eterna, thought to be the key to immortality, for Queen Victoria, in the second novel of the series following *The Eterna Files*.

Jameson, Chris. [Shark Island](#) (St Martins \$7.99) Naomi Cardiff joins a team of scientists trying to stop a series of shark attacks. The plan: to lure the sharks to a remote island far from the populated coastline. But the scientists’ plan didn’t include a fierce Nor’easter nor having to abandon ship and swim through a sea of circling fins and gaping jaws to a tiny island that now seems to be their only refuge.

Kellerman, Faye. [Bone Box](#) (\$9.99) Lazarus/Decker #24. When Rina Lazarus discovers human remains in the woods near her home, her husband, Peter Decker, investigates related decades-old unsolved murders before identifying a possible suspect who has been hiding in plain sight.

Meier, Leslie. [The British Manor Murder](#) (Kensington \$7.99) Lucy Stone #23. Joining her friend at an English manor for a fancy exhibition, Lucy turns apprehensive when her hosts begin

talking about a deadly family omen before she is swept up by the murder of a handmaiden's son who was privy to dark secrets.

Sheldon, Sidney. [Master of the Game](#) (\$9.99) Who is Kate Blackwell? She is the ultimate symbol of success, the beautiful woman who parlayed her inheritance into an international conglomerate. Now, celebrating her ninetieth birthday, Kate surveys the family she has manipulated, dominated, and loved: the fair and the grotesque, the mad and the mild, the good and the evil -- her winnings in life. Is she really the Master of the Game?

Swanson, Denise. [Lions and Tigers and Murder, Oh My](#) (Berkley \$7.99) Devereaux Dime #5. When the wife of wealthy philanthropist Elliot Wilson goes missing after she publicly opposes his plan to open a wildlife park on the edge of town, Devereaux and her tenant, a handsome private investigator, team up to prove Elliot's innocence before someone else is preyed upon.

Wortham, Reavis. [Hawke's Prey](#) (Kensington \$9.99) When the Presidio County Courthouse in West Texas is overtaken by terrorists who slaughter dozens, take all survivors hostage and assume complete control, one man—a seasoned Texas Ranger—is determin