

# BOOKNEWS from

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## A MAGICAL MAY....

### AUTHORS ARE SIGNING...

*Some Events will be webcast at <http://new.livestream.com/poisonedpen> and on Facebook Live*

Listen to some of our programs on our new [podcast channel](#)

#### TUESDAY MAY 1 7:00 PM

**Lisa Jewell** signs [Then She Was Gone](#) (Atria \$26)  
Bestselling British suspense

#### WEDNESDAY MAY 2 7:00 PM

**Ace Atkins** signs [Robert B Parker's Old Black Magic](#) (Putnam \$27)  
Spenser!

#### THURSDAY MAY 3 7:00 PM

**Jenny Milchman** signs [Wicked River](#) (Sourcebooks \$26.95 or \$15.95)

#### SATURDAY MAY 5 1:00 PM Cozy Con 1:00-4:00 PM

##### 3 Panels of 3 with Tea Breaks

**Tessa Arlen, Kate Carlisle, Jane Cleland, Vicki Delany, Teresa Dovalpage, C.S. Harris, Jenn McKinlay, Ann Parker, Paige Shelton**

Arlen, Tessa. [Death of an Unsung Hero](#) (St Martins \$25.99)  
Carlisle, Kate. [Once Upon a Spine](#) (\$7.99)  
Cleland, Jane K. [Antique Blue](#) (St Martins \$25.99)  
Delany, Vicki. [The Cat of the Baskervilles](#) (Crooked \$26.95)  
Dovalpage, Teresa. [Death Comes in Through the Window](#) (Soho \$26)  
Harris, CS. [Why Kill the Innocent?](#) (Berkley \$26).  
McKinlay, Jenn. [Wedding Cake Crumble](#) (Berkley \$7.99).  
Parker, Ann. [A Dying Note](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95 or \$15.95)  
Shelton, Paige. [Lost Books and Old Bones](#) (St Martins \$25.99)

#### THURSDAY MAY 10 7:00 PM

**Owen Laukkanen** signs [Gale Force](#) (Putnam \$27)  
May Thriller Club Pick, a sea adventure  
**Kelli Stanley** signs [City of Sharks](#) (St Martins \$26.99)  
May History Club Pick, WWII San Francisco

#### FRIDAY MAY 11 7:00 PM

**Jon Talton** signs [Bomb Shelter](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95; \$15.95)  
David Mapstone works a very cold case, the murder of Phoenix reporter Don Bolles, with a surprising contemporary tie-in

#### SATURDAY MAY 12 10:30 AM

**Coffee and Crime** discusses Deanna's Raybourn's [A Curious Beginning](#) (\$15), the start of a Victorian series perfect for Elizabeth Peters fans

#### SATURDAY MAY 12 2:00 PM Mother's Day Tea

**Christina Dodd** signs [Dead Girl Running](#) (Harlequin \$26.99)  
**Amanda Quick** signs [The Other Lady Vanishes](#) (Berkley \$27)

#### TUESDAY MAY 15 7:00 PM

**Nick Petrie** In conversation with Michael Koryta  
**Koryta** signs [How It Happened](#) (LittleBrown \$27)  
Twists and surprises in Maine  
Petrie signs [Light It Up](#) (Putnam \$26)

#### FRIDAY MAY 18 7:00 PM

**SciFi Club** discusses Emily St John Mandel's [Station Eleven](#) (\$16)

#### SATURDAY MAY 19 10:30 AM

**Croak & Dagger** discusses Duane Swierczynski's [Canary](#) (\$14.99)

#### SATURDAY MAY 19 2:00 PM

**Eileen Brady** in conversation with Betty Webb  
**Webb** signs [The Otter of Death](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95; \$15.95)  
Brady signs [Chained](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.95)

#### WEDNESDAY MAY 23 6:00 PM

##### Elevenedden Sci/Fi Fantasy Party

**Emily Devenport, Mike Cole, Cory Doctorow, Sylvain Neuvel, K. Arsenault Rivera, RA Salvatore, John Scalzi, VE Schwab, Scott Sigler, Charles Soule, Chuck Wendig, and host Sam Sykes**

Cole signs [The Armored Saint](#) (Tor \$17.99) Sacred Throne #1  
Devenport signs [Medusa Uploaded](#) (Forge \$16.99) Medusa Cycle #1  
Doctorow signs [Walkaway](#) (Forge \$26.99)  
Neuvel signs [Only Human](#) (Del Rey \$28)  
Rivera signs [The Tiger's Daughter](#) (\$15.99) Their Bright Ascendancy #1  
Salvatore signs [Child of a Mad God](#) (Tor \$25.99)  
Scalzi signs [Head On](#) (Forge \$25.99)  
Schwab signs [A Conjuring of Light](#) (\$16.99)  
Sigler signs [Alone](#) (\$18.99)  
Soule signs [The Oracle Year](#) (Harper \$21.99)  
Wendig signs: [Empire's End: Aftermath](#) (Star Wars) (Del Rey \$7.99)  
And host Sykes signs [God's Last Breath](#) (Orbit \$16.99)

#### THURSDAY MAY 24 7:00 PM

**Hardboiled Crime** discusses Jerome Charyn's [Blue Eyes](#) (\$14.99)

#### FRIDAY MAY 25 7:00 PM

**James Sallis and the Band**

#### THURSDAY MAY 31 7:00 PM

**Laird Barron** signs [Blood Standard](#) (Putnam \$26)  
June Surprise Me! Club Pick

**COZY CON BOOKS ALL SIGNED MAY 5  
PERFECT FOR MOM**

⌘Arlen, Tessa. [Death of an Unsung Hero](#) (St Martins \$25.99). Clementine Talbot, the Countess of Montfort, embarks on a controversial new venture in 1916—a hospital at the nearby dower house, Haversham Hall, dedicated to treating soldiers who have returned from France with mental scars. The operation is overseen by her loyal housekeeper, Mrs. Jackson, and it's all part of the war effort. Arlen writes movingly of the injuries and trauma as well as slipping in a mystery plot. The way Arlen integrates the traumas of WWI into a golden age whodunit plot will please Charles Todd fans. And you *Downtown* fans can replay that stately-home-turned-hospital scenario from Series 2, no? And if you are missing Maggie Smith, there's a charming 2005 movie with her and Judi Dench to watch: *Ladies in Lavender* Rob and I found on Acorn and enjoyed. Note: there are no paperbacks (so far) in this elegant series.

Carlisle, Kate. [Once Upon a Spine](#) (\$7.99). Bibliophile Mystery #11. Its pub date has moved to June 5 so you will have to wait until June 30 when Kate returns to sign [Buried in Books](#) to have her sign this. But she's going to party with us anyway.

Cleland, Jane K. [Antique Blue](#) (St Martins \$25.99). When amateur sleuth and antiques expert Josie Prescott is called in to appraise a Japanese woodblock print and vintage guitar for her friend Mo, she's thrilled—until Mo is murdered. This sucks Josie into a local New Hampshire family's drama while she's juggling planning a wedding—her own, but she hates fuss—and changing up her immensely successful antiques business. I like the conclusion which promises opening up Josie's life and business to wider channels. As ever Cleland's research into the particular facet of the antiques market is impressive. Rob actually owns a very downmarket print by the famed Japanese artist that he bought in Kyoto.

Delany, Vicki. [The Cat of the Baskervilles](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). The 3<sup>rd</sup> Sherlock Holmes Bookshop Mystery. British transplant Gemma Doyle, the proprietor of a bookstore specializing in Sherlockiana in West London, Massachusetts, looks forward to doing extra business during a local theater festival's production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* starring aging actor Sir Nigel Bellingham. When Nigel pays a call at her store, his shaking hands, red nose, and whiskey-scented breath suggest to her that he has an alcohol problem. Gemma later discovers Nigel's body after he takes a fatal fall off a seaside cliff during afternoon tea at the posh estate of the play's producer and director. West London police officer Ryan Ashburton, Gemma's former beau, investigates, with help from her nemesis, Detective Louise Estrada. The suspect list is long, but Gemma knows there's only one killer cat among the pigeons. Cozy fans fond of Sherlock Holmes will have fun," says *PW*. Canadian Delany is the author of the Constable Molly Smith mysteries and three excellent standalone suspense novels. Order all three [Bookshop Mysteries](#), and all eight [Molly Smith Mysteries](#).

Devalpage, Teresa. [Death Comes in Through the Window](#) (Soho \$26). At the start of this dazzling culinary mystery, laid-back, spiritually shambolic 36-year-old San Diego, California, reporter

Matt Sullivan arrives in Cuba just before the 2003 Black Spring crackdown on dissidents, not to investigate human rights violations but to marry (he hopes) 24-year-old food blogger Yarmila Portal, whom he mostly knows through online interactions. But Yarmi doesn't meet him at the airport, and in dizzying succession, Matt discovers her body in a running shower in her Havana apartment, lands in police custody, and learns from Lt. Marlene Martinez that Yarmi had a young lover, Pato Macho. In a typically rich scene, both laugh-aloud funny and bone-chilling, Matt is grilled about his email suggesting Yarmi write a report for the CIA (i.e., the Culinary Institute of America). Matt instantly understands the confusion of acronyms, but will his interlocutor believe that the almighty spy agency allows a mere cooking school to share its initials? Matt's travails are interspersed with Yarmi's recipe-filled blog posts, bringing her to life after death, and the procedural narrative spirals to a smoky finish involving lucid dreaming, Santeria, gender fluidity, and the ultimate magic realism of politics. Those expecting a traditional food cozy will be happily surprised with our **May First Mystery Club Pick**.

⌘Harris, CS. [Why Kill the Innocent?](#) (Berkley \$26). "Harris's fascinating 13th mystery set in Regency-era London centers on the plight of Princess Charlotte, heiress presumptive to the throne, who's being encouraged to marry William, Prince of Orange, a union designed to benefit her father's political agenda. This chapter in a wonderful series draws more on real history for the plot than on the complicated relationships of the characters that make this series so compelling. Harris works to keep it all fresh and I am addicted. Order all the [Sebastian St.-Cyr Mysteries](#) with their gripping blend of domestic noir, romance, history, and amazing mystery plots.

McKinlay, Jenn. [Wedding Cake Crumble](#) (Berkley \$7.99). For the Fairy Tale Cupcake crew, wedding bells turn to death knells. To give everyone a happily ever after, Melanie Cooper and her bakers must stop a killer with a sweet tooth from further sabotaging both Angie and Tate's big wedding and the book signing of a controversial author... For a treat order all ten [Cupcake Bakery Mysteries](#).

Parker, Ann. [A Dying Note](#) (\$26.95 or \$15.95). Inez Stannert, partner in a Leadville saloon and high-end bordello, relocates to bustling San Francisco. Though managing the respectable D&S House of Music, she soon confronts her shady past—and murder. She's a bit too early to be said she's taking on Jack London's San Francisco, but it reads like it. "By far the best of the mysteries featuring Parker's clever heroine. In addition to its historical interest, it provides a more complex problem to solve and leaves open a future in which her crime solver works with a mysterious new partner." — *Kirkus Reviews*, which I don't fully agree with since the first Inez, [Silver Lies](#) (\$9.99) is so outstanding it won the Willa Cather Award and all sorts of nominations as well as the Colorado Gold. The other reason I picked *A Dying Note* for our **April History Club Pick** is that May will give us a chance to see San Francisco some 50 years later in Kelli Stanley's terrific *City of Sharks* (see below) with Miranda Corbie and a nifty plot edging her towards WWII. It's not often we get to look at two faces of a fabled city published back to back. Order all the [Silver Rush Mysteries](#).

Shelton, Paige. [Lost Books and Old Bones](#) (St Martins \$25.99). Kansan Delaney Nichols third investigation at the Cracked Spine, a mysterious Edinburgh bookstore specializing in rare manuscripts and historical objects—filled with “curiosities and surprises” on every shelf—especially ones in the locked rear warehouse. When friends, students at the medical school, come in to sell a collection of rare and illustrated medical books, Delaney’s boss Edwin is smitten. He might even keep them for himself. Then one of Delaney’s new friends is found murdered in the close [Scots for alley] behind the shop, Delaney can’t stay out of the investigation, her third, proving that bookselling isn’t for sissies. Lots of fun and informative, too, like the first two chapters in Delaney’s new life which you can [order here](#). “Shelton’s lovely depictions of Edinburgh, its denizens, and its bookshops will enchant lovers of cozies with a Scottish setting.”

*And John selects some paperbacks perfect for Mother’s Day Gifts*

Clark, Mary Higgins. [All by Myself, Alone](#) (\$8.99). Taking a cruise to escape the humiliation of her fiancé’s arrest, gems expert Celia Kilbride befriends octogenarian passenger Emily Haywood, who is found dead three days out to sea at the hands of someone who has stolen the victim’s priceless emerald necklace. Moms who like stylishly crafted suspense novels that don’t have to rely on graphic violence or language to generate thrills will love the latest by Mary Higgins Clark.

Dodd, Christina. [Because I’m Watching](#) (\$8.99). The survivor of a college dorm massacre, a woman accused of her lover’s murder, Madeline Hewitson is haunted by ghosts and tormented by a killer only she can see. A seasoned military veteran, Jacob Denisov lives alone in his small, darkened home, sleepless, starving, and angry. When a sleep-deprived Madeline drives her car through the front wall of his house, she breaks his house—and his life—wide open. Dodd knows how to ratchet up the suspense making her latest a terrific choice for moms who like their suspense novels served up with plenty of gritty danger and intense action.

McKinlay, Jenn. [Every Dog Has His Day](#) (\$7.99). After being trapped with his neighbor, single mother Jessie Connelly, and her daughters, during a blizzard, Bluff Point brewery owner Zachary Caine has second thoughts about his self-proclaimed bachelorhood as they spend more and more time together. Know a mom who needs a little bit more romance in her life? McKinlay’s latest marvelously humorous Bluff Point contemporary romance would make a great gift.

Quick, Amanda. [The Girl Who Knew Too Much](#) (\$7.99). Discovering the body of a beautiful actress at the bottom of a pool at an exclusive California hotel, rookie reporter Irene Glasson investigates the victim’s secret about an up-and-coming man and becomes drawn to a once-famous master magician whose career was mysteriously cut short. Is your mom constantly glued to TCM? Then Quick’s latest, which launches a new historical series set in the 1930s, delivers plenty of old Hollywood glamour and a generous dollop of intrigue and romance.

Rosett, Sara. [Mother’s Day, Muffins, and Murder](#) (\$7.99). Forced to team up with her rival after a dead body is discovered inside the school’s supply closet during the annual Mother’s Day breakfast, professional organizer Ellie Avery leaves no desk unturned to protect her kids and expose a clever killer before another victim is fatally expelled. Moms who can’t get enough cozy crime mysteries, will enjoy Rosett’s appropriately themed mystery.

Shelton, Paige. [Of Books and Bagpipes](#) (\$7.99). Thriving in her new home in Edinburgh, historical book seller Delaney Nichols pursues a rare manuscript, only to stumble upon the murdered body of her contact, a crime that she links to a complicated plot. Would your mom love a trip to Scotland but you just can’t afford it yet? Try gifting her with Shelton’s latest charming cozy mystery.

## EVENT BOOKS

Atkins, Ace. [Robert B Parker’s Old Black Magic](#) (Putnam \$27). Love this, a story clearly based upon the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum heist. “The heist was legendary, still talked about twenty years after the priceless paintings disappeared from one of Boston’s premier art museums. Most thought the art was lost forever, buried deep, sold off overseas, or, worse, destroyed as incriminating evidence. But when paint chips from the most valuable piece stolen, *Gentlemen in Black* by a Spanish master, arrives at the desk of a Boston journalist, the museum finds hope and enlists Spenser’s help. Soon the cold art case thrusts Spenser into the shady world of black market art dealers, aged Mafia bosses, and old vendettas. A five-million-dollar-reward by the museum’s top benefactor, an aged, unlikable Boston socialite, sets Spenser and pals Vinnie Morris and Hawk onto a trail of hidden secrets, jailhouse confessions, and decades-old murders.”

Barron, Laird. [Blood Standard](#) (Putnam \$26). A classic noir for fans of James Ellroy and John D. Macdonald. Isaiah Coleridge is a mob enforcer in Alaska—he’s tough, seen a lot, and dished out more. But when he forcibly ends the moneymaking scheme of a made man, he gets in the kind of trouble that can lead to a bullet behind the ear. Saved by the grace of his boss and exiled to upstate New York, Isaiah begins a new life, a quiet life without gunshots or explosions. Except a teenage girl disappears, and Isaiah isn’t one to let that slip by. And delving into the underworld to track this missing girl will get him exactly the kind of notice he was warned to avoid and brings in the very guys he left Alaska to avoid. Hardboiled stuff. And Isaiah is the stuff of a series. Barron is an award-winner in other genres and while it’s technically his first mystery, I can’t call our **June Surprise Me! Club Pick** a debut novel.

Dodd, Christina. [Dead Girl Running](#) (Harper \$26.99). Dodd’s new thriller takes place on the dark, rainy North Pacific Coast. Kellen Adams is running away from a past she can’t completely remember. After a stint in the army, she becomes the assistant manager of an isolated resort in Virtue Falls, Washington, where she makes an effort to hire fellow veterans. She’s comfortable leading the hotel team until she discovers a woman’s mutilated body on the property. With Sheriff Kateri Kwinault, familiar to fans from [The Woman Who Couldn’t Scream](#) (\$8), not close enough to provide consistent support, Kellen reluctantly investigates the hotel staff and guests to determine whether they might be behind the gruesome murder. “Christina Dodd reinvents the romantic thriller. Her signature style-edgy, intense, twisty, emotional-leaves you breathless from first page to last. Readers who enjoy Nora Roberts will devour Dodd’s electrifying novels.” —Jayne Ann Krentz, who appears at The Pen with Dodd on Saturday May 12 in a Mother’s Day Tea. Also in paperback: [Dead Girl Running](#) (\$15.99).

Jewell, Lisa. [Then She Was Gone](#) (Atria \$26). “An acutely observed family drama with bone-chilling suspense.” This UK

bestseller is part psychological fiction, part ghost story, both tragic and uplifting. More than a whiff of *The Lovely Bones* wafts through this haunting domestic noir. The disappearance of beautiful, brainy 15-year-old Ellie Mack in May 2005 from her north London neighborhood takes a terrible toll on her parents and siblings, even a decade later. Most profoundly affected is her now-divorced mother, Laurel. After a shocking development in the cold case jolts Laurel from her lonely limbo, Laurel stuns herself by agreeing to dinner with a man she meets in a café, genial author Floyd Dunn, and quickly falls into a relationship with him and the younger of his daughters, precocious nine-year-old Poppy—who reminds Laurel eerily in so many ways of Ellie. But then unsettling coincidences start to emerge....

This is Jewell's 15<sup>th</sup> domestic thriller. Of her last, [The Girls in the Garden](#) (\$16), a Starred Review raved, "Rich characterization and intricate plot development are combined with mid-chapter cliffhangers that cut from one character's point of view to the next, resulting in a riveting pace."

Koryta, Michael. [How It Happened](#) (LittleBrown \$27). Nick Petrie joins us to chat with Koryta for the publication party May 15. This powerful novel takes us into Maine. I can't improve upon this Starred Review: "With this searing look at an investigator's obsessive efforts to close a case that has reawakened childhood demons, bestseller Koryta has produced his most powerful novel in years. FBI agent Rob Barrett feels he has "a firm sense of the truth and no evidence to back it up" after he extracts an unsubstantiated confession from 22-year-old Kimberly Crepeaux, who admits to a role in killing Jackie Pelletier, the daughter of a prominent fisherman in Port Hope, Maine, and Jackie's boyfriend, Ian Kelly. In fact, Kimberly, who has a reputation for being a liar, provided incorrect details about where their bodies could be found. Still, Barrett, an inexperienced agent with a reputation as a superior interrogator, credits Kimberly's account. According to her, her co-conspirator, 29-year-old Mathias Burke, a 'local source of pride' who has a successful landscaping and remodeling business, first ran Jackie down with his truck and then bashed Ian's head in before dumping their corpses in a pond. As Barrett, who knew Burke growing up in Port Hope, tries to ferret out the truth, certain aspects of the case revive painful memories of his mother's inexplicable death when he was eight. **Koryta, when he's at the top of his game, has few peers in combining murder mysteries with psychological puzzles.**" So true.

Laukkanen, Owen. [Gale Force](#) (Putnam \$27). You fans of propulsive sea adventures will love our **May Thriller Club Pick** which begins with a shipwreck off the bar of the Columbia at Astoria and sails full tilt into deep-sea salvage where the tug-boat captain McKenna Rhodes has to find her mojo, a Japanese freighter sailing out of Yokohama founders off the coast of Alaska and Dutch Harbor, aboard it are components of a daring scam, and her ultimate opponent is not the sea but Yakuza and a Japanese mogul of ruthless bent—and much more. A change of pace for Laukkanen who numbers men of the sea in his family and clearly loves writing this. "I absolutely love a thriller that expertly opens a window to a dangerous profession I never knew about – in this case the world of maritime salvage operations. Owen Laukkanen must have seawater in his veins and he's struck gold with *Gale Force*. It's a propulsive and entirely engaging modern-day sea adventure." —C.J. Box, backed up by Cussler, Morrison, Child....

Milchman, Jenny. [Wicked River](#) (Sourcebooks \$26.99). Milchman joins a new publisher and writes a tale for those who enjoy trips to the back country—here, the Adirondacks. It's rare in thrillers for new marriages to hold up... and it's a real test for Natalie and Doug Larson who head out backpacking and fall in with a real sadist with wilderness skills. The Indie Next Pick: "I am a huge Jenny Milchman fan, so I had high expectations for this book. My expectations were met and surpassed. Doug and Natalie both have secrets and issues with trust. Add in debts to old friends and a wedding not celebrated by all, and complications are everywhere. The honeymoon in the wilderness is the stuff of nightmares and will keep your heart pounding. Any fan of a good thriller with psychological twists will love this book." Think Nevada Barr's [Destroyer Angel](#) (\$9.99) and its camping trip into Minnesota's Iron Range.

Quick, Amanda. [The Other Lady Vanishes](#) (Berkley \$27). John Charles writes, "Quick continues her fabulously fun 1930s set series, which began with [The Girl Who Knew Too Much](#) (\$7.99). She now returns to the Hollywood-adjacent Burning Cove, where after successfully escaping from the Rushbrook Sanatorium, Adeline Blake is trying to reinvent herself as tea shop waitress and specialty tea blender Adeline Brockton. Adeline's hopes of keeping a low profile are dashed, however, with the arrival of enigmatic businessman Jake Truett, who has become a regular customer at the tea shop and the unexpected murder of a celebrity psychic. Quick, one of Jayne Ann Krentz's pseudonyms, delivers another engaging mix of history, mystery, and romance set against a glamorous Golden Age Hollywood backdrop. Library Reads' take: "Historical romantic suspense. Who would suspect that the quiet California seaside tea shop waitress is actually an escaped mental patient? The second book in Quick's Burning Cove series has the same 1930s vibe and glamorous, gossipy Hollywood ambiance as *The Girl Who Knew Too Much*."

Scalzi, John. [Head On](#) (Tor \$25.99). Hilketa is a frenetic and violent pastime where players attack each other with swords and hammers. The main goal of the game: obtain your opponent's head and carry it through the goalposts. With flesh and bone bodies, a sport like this would be impossible. But all the players are "threeps," robot-like bodies controlled by people with Haden's Syndrome, so anything goes. No one gets hurt, but the brutality is real and the crowds love it. Until a star athlete drops dead on the playing field. Is it an accident or murder? FBI agents and Haden-related crime investigators, Chris Shane and Leslie Vann, are called in to uncover the truth—and in doing so travel to the darker side of the fast-growing sport of Hilketa, where fortunes are made or lost, and where players and owners do whatever it takes to win, on and off the field. Scalzi pens a follow-up to 2015's [Lock In](#) (\$8.99).

Soule, Charles. [The Oracle Year](#) (Harper \$21.99). Soule, best known for his work on such comics as *Death of Wolverine*, *She-Hulk*, *Darth Vader*, *Lando*, *Curse Words*, *Letter 44*, *Daredevil*, *Swamp Thing*, and *Inhuman*, is making his debut as a novelist with *The Oracle Year*. One hundred and eight: That's how many seemingly random predictions come to Will Dando one night in a dream. When they actually begin to occur, he starts selling his critical economic predictions to international interests and makes mountains of money. In the process, though, he also makes powerful enemies—not least of which is the U.S. government. When Will realizes that the dream wasn't as random as it seemed and

is forced into hiding, what was almost a lark becomes deadly as he tries to survive long enough to counter the global chaos he's caused. With enough humor to lighten the seriousness of Will's predicament, this debut, our **May SciFi Club Pick**, keeps readers guessing right to the surprising end. Order it before we run out.

Stanley, Kelli. [City of Sharks](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Our **May History Club Pick** finds the tough-as-nails PI planning to leave her beloved San Francisco in the fall of 1940. Miranda plans to travel to war-torn Berlin seeking her long-lost mother as soon as she can be booked on an ocean liner. But first, she has one last case—figuring out who's trying to kill Louise Crowley, the assistant to ruthless publisher Niles Alexander. With his reputation of “ruined women and... ruined writers,” Niles—or his athlete son, Jerry, who has a taste for underage prostitutes—would be a more likely target. The complicated, uncompromising Miranda gets a master class in San Francisco publishing with the help of writer Roger Roscoe, and discovers that a missing manuscript about goings-on at Alcatraz, “the city of sharks,” may be worth killing for. “Stanley treats the reader to a history of San Francisco landmarks and seamlessly weaves in real figures such as newspaper columnist Herb Caen and author John Steinbeck, adding to the book's authenticity.” It's fun to read Ann Parker's April History Pick, a precursor of Jack London's San Francisco in background, and then this outstanding and engrossing, fast-paced gem from Stanley.

Talton, Jon. [The Bomb Shelter](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95). The real-life case of Arizona reporter Don Bolles, one of only a few American journalists murdered in the U.S. in modern times, is the inspiration for Talton's lively ninth mystery. Forty years ago, a Phoenix reporter was killed by a car bomb in one of America's most notorious crimes. Three men went to prison—but was there more to the story of Charles Page's assassination? More than three low-level players? Did a kingpin order the hit and get away with it? And what was the real motive? Despite the work of teams of journalists and law and legal professionals, no one yet knows why. It's a case custom-made for David Mapstone, the historian-turned-sheriff's deputy. And suddenly Mapstone's boss, newly re-elected Sheriff Mike Peralta, promises to reopen the investigation into the only murder of an American journalist, in the US, in modern times. Why? Soon Mapstone is on the trail of a series of brutal murders of people who are in some way involved with the decades-old case. “Through Mapstone's wryly witty first-person narrative, Talton expresses his genuine love of Phoenix as it once was, as well as his exasperated but tolerant attachment to the city as it is today. Clear writing, an intricate plot, and credible characters make this entry a winner.” Also [The Bomb Shelter](#) (\$15.95). Why not start with the first Mapstone, [Concrete Desert](#) (\$9.9) and [order the next eight](#) Phoenix-based thrillers.

Webb, Betty. [The Otter of Death](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95). Why is the otter swimming while clutching a cell phone? It's a mystery the Gunn Zoo's Teddy Bentley just has to crack. “Webb's clever, briskly paced fifth Gunn Zoo mystery” finds the trouble-prone zookeeper Teddy taking a morning walk along the California coastline near her home on her day off. While counting otters as part of a study on the effects of offshore drilling on them, she spots one of her favorites and snatches the phone. The camera mode is still on and displays an image of the blood-splattered face of marine biology instructor and fellow otter counter Stuart

Booth. The police, headed by Teddy's fiancé, San Sebastian County Sheriff Joseph Rejas, locate Stuart's body, and the hunt for his murderer begins. Suspects abound.... *PW* notes, “While examining some timely social issues, Webb also delivers lots of edifying information on the animal kingdom in an entry sure to please fans and newcomers alike.” *Booklist* adds, “...the best part here is watching Bentley's investigative juices start to flow (Webb's background as a reporter really comes to the fore here). Bentley (and Webb) just can't help finding out things and telling us about them, like the sugar-daddy phenomenon that has attractive young women offering themselves to rich men to meet soaring tuition costs. There's a website for it. Or the significance of increased sea-otter deaths from *toxoplasma gondii*. This one will satisfy multiple audiences.” Also [The Otter of Death](#) (\$15.95). This well-plotted series is so much fun—[order all five Gunn Zoo Mysteries](#) for Mom or for you.

#### **MAY BOOK CLUB PICKS**

**British Crime Club One Unsigned paperback or hardcover per month**

Flanders, Judith. [A Howl of Wolves](#)

**Cozy Crimes Club One Unsigned hardcover or paperback per month**

Webb, Betty. [The Otter of Death](#)

**Discovery Club One Unsigned paperback or hardcover per month**

Brynard, Karin. [Weeping Waters](#)

**First Mystery Club One Signed First per month**

Dovalpage, Teresa. [Death Comes in Through the Kitchen](#)

**Hardboiled Crime Club One Signed First per month**

Panowich, Brian. [Like Lions](#)

**History/Mystery Club One Signed First per month**

Stanley, Kelli. [City of Sharks](#)

**History Paperback One per month**

Alexander, Rebecca. [A Baby's Bones](#)

**Modern First Editions One Signed First per month**

Wolitzer, Meg. [The Female Persuasion](#)

**SciFi/Fantasy/Horror Club One Signed First per month**

Soule, Charles. [The Oracle Year](#)

**Surprise Me! Club One Signed First per month**

Thomas, August. [Liar's Candle](#)

**Thriller Club One Signed First per month**

Laukkanen, Owen. [Gale Force](#)

#### **SIGNED BOOKS**

✱Bauer, Belinda. [Snap](#) (Bantam \$32). On a stifling summer's day, eleven-year-old Jack and his two sisters sit in their broken-down car, waiting for their mother to come back and rescue them. Jack's in charge, she said. I won't be long. But she doesn't come back. She never comes back. And life as the children know it is changed forever. Three years later, mum-to-be Catherine wakes to find a knife beside her bed, and a note that says: I could have killed you. Meanwhile Jack is still in charge—of his sisters, of supporting them all, of making sure nobody knows they're alone in the house, and—quite suddenly—of finding out the truth about what happened to his mother.

Cussler, Clive. [The Gray Ghost](#) (Putnam \$29). On sale May 29 but Robin Burcell signs ours on May 31 so hang on! Clive's love for vintage cars is on display. In 1906, a groundbreaking Rolls-Royce prototype known as the Gray Ghost vanishes from the streets of Manchester, England, and it is only the lucky intervention of an American detective named Isaac Bell that prevents it from being lost forever. Not even he can save the good name of Marcus Peyton, however, the man wrongly blamed for the theft, and more than a hundred years later, it is his grandson who turns to Sam and Remi Fargo to help prove his grandfather's innocence. We're creating a custom Fargo Series bookmark to go with our copies.

Heaberlin Julia. [Paper Ghosts](#) (Penguin \$32). Love this book, a stunner, and giving up on Signed US copies we have some coming from the UK. I know—it's odd we can get the British edition sometimes more easily than the American.... Anyway, I devoured it. As my hands are cramping I quote *LJ* rather than typing up a review, but I endorse it. "What do you do with a criminal who has escaped justice and now has dementia? Carl Feldman—a documentary photographer now residing in an assisted-living facility—may be just such a person. And though he was acquitted for one murder, he's probably committed many more. That last fact is what brings a young woman to Carl's door; she says she's his daughter and wants to get to know him, but in reality she is determined to delve into the reaches of his memory. She's determined to find the man who killed her older sister, and believes Carl is responsible. And while Carl isn't fully convinced that she's his daughter and claims not to remember killing anyone, he does agree to accompany the woman on a death trip, which will take them to the sites where he is suspected to have enacted the crimes. Heaberlin's latest is a tense, gripping read with a cat-and-mouse game that will keep readers riveted".

✂Horowitz, Anthony. [Forever and a Day](#) (Canongate \$45). A spy is dead. A legend is born. This is how it all began in an explosive prequel to *Casino Royale*. "M laid down his pipe and stared at it tetchily. 'We have no choice. We're just going to bring forward this other chap you've been preparing. But you didn't tell me his name.' 'It's Bond, sir,' the Chief of Staff replied. 'James Bond.' One body. Three bullets. 007 floats in the waters of Marseille, killed by an unknown hand. It's time for a new agent to step up. Time for a new weapon in the war against organized crime. It's time for James Bond to earn his license to kill. This is the story of the birth of a legend, in the brutal underworld of the French Riviera. NOTE: **No restock is possible so to avoid disappointment please order ASAP! This is our June Thriller Club Pick so members are assured of a copy.**

✂James, Peter. [Dead If You Don't](#) (Pan Macmillan \$43). Shortly after Kipp Brown and his teenage son, Mungo, arrive at the Amex stadium for their team's biggest-ever football game, Mungo disappears. A short while later Kipp receives a text with a ransom demand and a warning not to go to the police if he and his wife want to see their son alive again. But as a massive, covert manhunt for the boy and his kidnapers begins, Brighton Detective Superintendent Roy Grace starts to realize that not all is what it seems....

Khan, Vaseem. [Murder at the Grand Raj Palace](#) (Mulholland UK \$39). PI Ashwin Chopra and his elephant sidekick go undercover to investigate a murder at Mumbai's grandest hotel. For a century the iconic Grand Raj Palace Hotel has welcomed the world's

elite. From film stars to foreign dignitaries, anyone who is any one stays at the Grand Raj. In Khan's outstanding fourth mystery, a friend on the force, Rohan Tripathi, asks Chopra to look into the death of American billionaire Hollis Burbank, who was found in his room at the opulent Grand Raj Palace hotel. Burbank was stabbed through the chest by a knife bearing only his fingerprints. Shortly before his demise, the tycoon bid \$10 million to win a painting at auction, making suicide unlikely. Chopra is fired as a police consultant by a rival of Tripathi's invested in the suicide explanation, but he's back in the game after Lisa Taylor, an attractive employee of the auction house who stood to get a hefty commission had the transaction been finalized, hires him to continue. Khan's depiction of Chopra's marriage to Poppy, a restaurateur who has her own mystery to solve involving a vanished bride, adds emotional depth to the often funny plot. For fans of Alexander McCall Smith and Tarquin Hall. **The US paperback original edition makes our June Cozy Crimes Club Pick.**

Koontz, Dean. [The Crooked Staircase](#) (Bantam \$28). Here is the third Jane Hawk. "Gripping... The paranoia and mystery increase as the story unfolds...Koontz has created such a wonderful character in Jane Hawk that readers will clamor for more. Koontz rocks it again."—Associated Press. Battling the strange epidemic of murder-suicides that claimed Jane's husband, and is escalating across the country, has made the rogue FBI agent a wanted fugitive, relentlessly hunted not only by the government but by the secret cabal behind the plot. Deploying every resource their malign nexus of power and technology commands, Jane's enemies are determined to see her dead . . . or make her wish she were. Meanwhile she is sitting in the kitchen of a woman whose life has been trashed by her ex. And not just by him but by his half-brother who is highly placed at Justice and able to create hell deploying the IRS, etc. Jane vows to redress this. In another thread, a brother and sister from India, having survived their predatory aunt and uncle who fleeced the two orphans, suddenly have to go on the run from—seriously!—a local cop and some bad muscle. Boy, can they drive. I may never forgive Koontz for how this plays out.... He has he says just sent me an early look at Jane #4 so I'll try to move on. Start with [The Silent Corner](#) and [The Whispering Room](#).

McLain, Paula. [Love and Ruin](#) (Random \$28). In 1937, 28-year-old Martha Gellhorn travels alone to Madrid to report on the atrocities of the Spanish Civil War and becomes drawn to the stories of ordinary people caught in the devastating conflict. It's the adventure she's been looking for and her chance to prove herself a worthy journalist in a field dominated by men. But she also finds herself unexpectedly—and uncontrollably—falling in love with Ernest Hemingway, a man on his way to becoming a legend. But so is she. And his pattern is to veer towards one woman while married to another until it all goes wrong. However the focus here is Gellhorn, one of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century's great war correspondents who, despite a life of high risk, lived to be 89, dying in 1998 in London. She first met Hemingway in 1936, married him in 1940, and walked out on him in 1945, the only wife to leave him. "Why should I be a footnote to somebody else's life?" she bitterly asked in an interview, pointing out that she had written two novels before meeting Hemingway and continued writing for almost a half-century after leaving him, becoming well known as a writer of novellas. McLain produced a bestseller about Hemingway's first wife Hadley in [The Paris Wife](#) (\$16).

Mosse, Kate. [Burning Chambers](#) (Pan \$42). Carcassonne 1562: Nineteen-year-old Minou Joubert receives an anonymous letter at her father's bookshop. Sealed with a distinctive family crest, it contains just five words: SHE KNOWS THAT YOU LIVE. But before Minou can decipher the mysterious message, a chance encounter with a young Huguenot convert, Piet Reydon, changes her destiny forever. For Piet has a dangerous mission of his own, and he will need Minou's help if he is to get out of La Cité alive. Toulouse: As the religious divide deepens in the Midi, and old friends become enemies, Minou and Piet both find themselves trapped in Toulouse, facing new dangers as sectarian tensions ignite across the city, the battle-lines are drawn in blood and the conspiracy darkens further. Meanwhile, as a long-hidden document threatens to resurface, the mistress of Puivert is obsessed with uncovering its secret and strengthening her power....

Ondaatje, Michael. [Warlight](#) (Knopf \$26.95). A new Ondaatje novel is always cause for excitement. This one begins in 1945 in London as 14-year-old Nathaniel Williams tells readers how his "parents went away and left [him and his sister] in the care of two men who may have been criminals." From this odd starting point, Ondaatje spins a delicate spider web of interconnected stories—the mystery surrounding Nathaniel's parents' whereabouts and the true occupations of their guardians, along with stories of love, coming of age, fractured families, intrigue, espionage, and the messy business of war. Ondaatje's finely observed characters and style light up the whole web like dew glinting in the sun.

Panowich, Brian. [Like Lions](#) (Headline \$46). Clayton Burroughs is sheriff of Bull Mountain and last surviving member of the brutal and blood-steeped Burroughs clan. It's been a year since a rogue government agent systematically crippled the family's criminal empire, leaving two of his brothers dead and Clayton broken and haunted by wounds that may never heal. Now Bull Mountain is vulnerable, ripe for predators wanting to re-establish the flow of dope and money through the town. And the death of a boy belonging to a rival clan brings the wolves straight to Clayton's door. Patrick adds, "Like many readers, I've been jonesing for the sequel to Panowich's outstanding debut and First Mystery Club Pick [Bull Mountain](#) (\$16) for a long time, so when I heard that his UK publisher had published the new book (and that his US publisher hasn't announced a release date) I managed to score some of these true first editions for our **May Hardboiled Cub Pick**. We will sell out fast, so don't delay."

Pronzini, Bill. [Give a Damn Jones](#) (Forge \$27). Bill tells me, "it is a 'Novel of the West,' but it has strong mystery/suspense elements." Give-a-Damn Jones, a free-spirited itinerant typographer, hates his nickname almost as much as the rumors spread about him. He's a kind soul who keeps finding himself in the wrong place at the wrong time. That's what happened in Box Elder, a small Montana town. Tensions are running high, and anything (or anyone) could be the fuse to ignite them: a recently released convict trying to prove his innocence, a prominent cattleman who craves respect at any cost, a wily traveling dentist at odds with a violent local blacksmith, or a firebrand of an editor who is determined to unlock the town's secrets. Here comes Jones, walking in to the middle of it all.... Like Estleman, Pronzini likes to write of a non-mythologized West.

☞Reeve, Alex. [House on Half Moon Street](#) (Raven \$32). Leo Stanhope. Avid chess player; assistant to a Victorian London

coroner; in love with Maria; and hiding a very big secret. For Leo was born Charlotte, the daughter of a respectable reverend. But knowing he was meant to be a man—despite the evidence of his body—and unable to cope with living a lie any longer, he fled his family home at just fifteen and has been living as Leo: his secret known to only a few trusted people. But then Maria is found dead and Leo is accused of her murder. Desperate to find her killer and under suspicion from all those around him, he stands to lose not just the woman he loves, but his freedom and, ultimately, his life.

☞Shaw, William. [Salt Lane](#) (Riverhead \$39). In her series start, DS Alexandra Cupidi has stepped into it again. She should have learnt to keep her big mouth shut, after the scandal that sent her packing—resentful teenager in tow—from the London Met to the lonely Kent coastline. Even murder looks different in this landscape of fens, ditches and stark beaches, shadowed by the towers of Dungeness power station. Murder looks a lot less pretty. The man drowned in the slurry pit had been herded there like an animal. He was North African, like many of the fruit pickers that work the fields. The more Cupidi discovers, the more she wants to ask—but these people are suspicious of questions. It will take an understanding of this strange place, its old ways and new crimes, to uncover the dark conspiracy behind the murder.

Tapper, Jake. [The Hellfire Club](#) (LittleBrown \$27). The idea that there is a secret society in the higher echelons of our government looking out for the greater good but not averse to bad deeds on the way is not new. Tapper, CNN's chief Washington correspondent and anchor of *The Lead* and *State of the Union*, brings his expertise into a plot set in 1950s DC. McCarthyism is on the rise, Roy Cohn is too, as are illegal ways of governing as threats are postulated. It all makes Charlie Marder, a young Congressman thrust into office largely by his power-broker father's connections, and accompanied by his pregnant zoologist wife, question his own ethical compass and the morality of men he admires. What makes this the most interesting is the parade of real figures who walk through the pages including JFK and Bobby, Dick Nixon, etc. You can read this as a thriller or apply it as a modern morality tale. Our supply of Signed 1sts is limited.

Winchester, Simon. [The Perfectionists](#) (Harper \$29.99). How precision engineers created the modern world.

## BRITISH LIBRARY CRIME CLASSICS

*Both with Introductions by Martin Edwards*

Lorac, ECR. [Fire in the Thatch](#) (\$12.95). *PW* writes, "Lorac (1894–1958) lovingly portrays the lush Devon countryside in this satisfying entry in the British Crime Classics series, originally published in 1946 and featuring observant and dogged Chief Inspector Robert Macdonald of Scotland Yard. Into this idyllic world strides Nicholas Vaughan, a strapping young man who has been invalidated out of the Royal Navy toward the end of WWII. He rents a derelict cottage and its surrounding orchards from wealthy landowner Colonel St. Cyres with the intention of earning a living off the land. A few months later, the house is destroyed by fire, with its occupant inside; Macdonald arrives to investigate. Lorac (the pen name of Edith Caroline Rivett) liberally sprinkles the narrative with red herrings and fairly presents all the potential clues. Readers will enjoy watching the conflicts that arise between the wary country folk and the cocktail-drinking Londoners invading their habitat. In sum, this is jolly good fun." April's BLCC was another Lorac: [Bats in the Belfry](#)

(\$12.95), originally published in 1937 and also part of Lorac's Chief Inspector Macdonald series. It's double-fun to read them together.

Postgate, Raymond. [Somebody at the Door](#) (\$12.95). In the winter of 1942, England lies cold and dark in the wartime blackout. One bleak evening, Councillor Grayling steps off the 6.12 from Euston, carrying £120 in cash, and oblivious to the fate that awaits him in the snow-covered suburbs. Inspector Holly draws up a list of Grayling's fellow passengers: his distrusted employee Charles Evetts, the charming Hugh Rolandson, and an unknown refugee from Nazi Germany, among others. Inspector Holly will soon discover that each passenger harbours their own dark secrets, and that the councillor had more than one enemy among them. First published in 1943, Raymond Postgate's wartime murder mystery combines thrilling detection with rich characters and a fascinating depiction of life on the home front.

### SOMETHING SPECIAL

Damon Young. [The Art of Reading](#) (Scribe \$14.95) Philosopher Young investigates the magical act of reading—"cosmically speaking, against the odds"—with essays on six virtues he sees exemplified by it—namely curiosity, patience, courage, pride, temperance, and justice—in this brisk and delightful collection. Its short length belies a book heavy with insight, creativity, and wit. To Young's credit, he treats all types of reading, from scholarly meditation to frivolous binge reading, with seriousness and respect. His literary examples include both highbrow works, such as Jorge Luis Borges's "The Library of Babel" and Blaise Pascal's *Pensées*, and beach reads, such as Star Trek novelizations and *The DaVinci Code*. The essays vary in their tightness and persuasiveness—some hew quite closely to their featured virtue and give analyses that feel acute and surprising, while others have less well-defined theses—but all uniformly entertain. Young sometimes uses scholarly language ("If curiosity like Borges' resists the inertia of being, Heidegger's was a characteristic rejection of stubborn facts altogether") that requires close attention and even rereading, but his thoughts are lucid and accessible, repaying the reader's work. Moreover, the closing bibliographic essay will inspire reading lists for months to come. This literary study is serious but also witty and fun—a tough balance to strike, but Young nails it.

### OUR MAY LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

✎ Alexander, Rebecca. [A Baby's Bones](#) (\$14.95). This is an unusual choice for our **May History Paperback Pick** in that it tracks two times lines: one contemporary where archaeologist Sage Westfield has been called to Banstock Manor to excavate a well behind a 16<sup>th</sup> Century cottage whose new owner is unexpectedly dying; the other tracks the tragic interplay of characters at the manor from 1579-1588. Whose are the bones of a woman and a new baby found in the old well? Is there any truth to the local legend of witchcraft and unrequited love? Is the cottage actually haunted? Who is buried under the gravestone set well away from the church graveyard? And why is today's new vicar plagued by phone calls? Oh, and a modern murderer is at work. The diary of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Manor Steward is terrific stuff in historical detail and reminds us that Domestic Noir is nothing new.

Beck, Haylen. [Here and Gone](#) (\$16). Audra Kinney, the heroine of this suspenseful but deeply disturbing thriller from Beck (the pseudonym of Irish author Stuart Neville), is fleeing from New

York to California with her two kids to prevent her abusive ex from getting custody. One minute Audra is submitting to what seems a routine traffic stop in an Arizona backwater, the next she's in a cell facing charges of marijuana possession with intent to distribute, 10-year-old Sean and six-year-old Louise have disappeared, and Sheriff Ronald Whiteside insists that no children were in the car when he pulled her over. When the story hits the media, the only person who credits Audra's frantic claims that the last she saw of her kids was them being driven away to "some-where safe" is a stranger, San Francisco gang member Danny "Knife Boy" Lee—because he's convinced something similar happened to his wife and daughter five years earlier. Beck is a pseudonym of the brilliant Irish noirist Stuart Neville.

Black, Cara. [Murder in Saint-Germain](#) (\$15.95). Paris, July 1999: Private investigator Aimée Leduc is walking through Saint-Germain when she is accosted by Suzanne Lesage, a Brigade Criminelle agent on an elite counterterrorism squad. Suzanne has just returned from the former Yugoslavia, where she was hunting down dangerous war criminals for The Hague. Now back in Paris, Suzanne is convinced she's being stalked by a ghost—a Serbian warlord she thought she'd killed. She's suffering from PTSD and her boss thinks she's imagining things. She begs Aimée to investigate, a complication in a life already frantic with her *bébé* (adorable) and issues with Chloé's now married father; the dying Morbier (her fault?) and what he has still to tell Aimée about her father's death; her agency partner's issues; and a tangle of bad things among academics. There's a lot about fashion and a wonderful portrait of this district of Paris to boot. This will set you up for the new Black, [Murder on the Left Bank](#) (Soho \$27.95), signed here June 21.

Brynard, Karin. [Weeping Waters](#) (Europa/World Noir \$18). Our **Discovery Club Pick for May** is a muscular gem, brimming with authenticity as it explores South Africa's past while presenting the spate of "farm murders" as rural society undergoes dramatic and difficult change since the 1990s. I could not put this down, and no wonder since the journalist skills of Brynard are top notch. She is one of South Africa's biggest authors, recommended to fans of Deon Meyer and Wilbur Smith and Malla Nunn, Michael Stanley, and to Australians like Peter Carey and Paul Howarth. The conflict between Europeans and indigenous peoples is not limited to Commonwealth countries, nor is conflict between the colonials. Nor, today, between the former power holders and the new native ones. Our hero here is a traumatized cop of Boer descent, Albertus Beeslaar, who has left Joburg for a backwater post on the edge of the Kalahari Desert. Battling panic attacks, he's forced to cope with real attacks by a brutal syndicate, face the murder of a lovely artist and her young adopted daughter on a local farm and the fury of white farmers who blame her Bushman farm manager. Were the killings another of the country's notorious farm murders, or...? Highly recommended!

✎ Burrows, Steve. [A Shimmer of Hummingbirds](#) (\$14.99). The first Birder Mystery [A Siege of Bitterns](#) (\$14.95) so intrigued me it became our April British Crime Club Pick. Since then I've discovered the second, [A Pitying of Doves](#), and the third, [A Cast of Falcons](#) (\$14.95 each), and now here is the fourth. Love these collective nouns (think a murder of crows, for instance) used in the titles, the rural English landscapes (although here a chunk of the book takes place in the Colombian highlands, a magnificent bird refuge), and the prickly nature of cop Domenic Jejeune. This

is his 4<sup>th</sup> investigation since coming as a golden boy to the police in Saltmarsh, Norfolk, in the very heart of Britain's best birding country. But in fact Jejeune is off on a mission in Columbia, having taken vacation days, and the case of the murder of a middle-aged woman accountant in her cottage falls to the man brought in to run it by the Superintendent. A man who is Jejeune's ambitious, jealous rival and wants to swipe his job. This gives Jejeune's partner, Lindy, a chance to shine as she has developed a real love of Saltmarsh.

Connelly, Michael. [Two Kinds of Truth](#) (\$15.99). Harry Bosch, the retired Los Angeles homicide detective is hunting through a cold-case file. This one is infamous. A woman who vanished from her home 15 years ago, leaving her infant in a crib. He gets a warning text. Investigators from the LAPD and the District Attorney are coming for him. They have questions about a murder case Bosch put down years ago. New facts have emerged along with allegations that Bosch planted evidence. All of this and you haven't even finished the first chapter of Michael Connelly's new breakneck thriller, *Two Kinds of Truth*. By chapter two, Bosch is wading through the gore of a double homicide at a San Fernando family pharmacy that will send him into the world of prescription drug abuse, pill mills, and opiate addiction. This book continues the evolution of Bosch since leaving the LAPD. He now splits his time between private investigations and volunteer work at the tiny San Fernando Police Department. It's a terrific double plot, full of surprises.

Crichton, Michael. [Dragon Teeth](#) (\$15.99). Set in 1876, this posthumous novel by Crichton centers itself on the burgeoning world of paleontology and an actual feud between Yale's Othniel Charles Marsh (a Peabody) and rival Edward Drinker Cope of Philadelphia. Both men are set on expeditions west to pillage the land for dinosaur fossils while sabotaging each other's hunting with what became known as the Bone Wars. Crichton creates an entitled and arrogant Yale undergrad, one William Johnson, also rich (note, the three principals of this story are all sons of wealthy fathers, full of entitlement and a desire to make their own fame), who signs on with Marsh after scrambling up some skill as a photographer. But he gets caught up their rivalry. This is not vintage Crichton nor does it have the panache of Indiana Jones, but it's worth reading for the unusual aspects of the Wild West (and academic East) it depicts. Expect to meet other real characters like Wyatt Earp, Collis Huntington, etc. And of course the fossils tie into *Jurassic Park*. I found it fascinating.

✎MacBird, Bonnie. [Unquiet Spirits](#) (\$15.99). MacBird's outstanding sequel to 2015's [Art in the Blood](#) (\$15.99) melds a twisty, multilayered plot with a plausible exploration of Sherlock Holmes's life before Watson. Holmes is unusually rude toward a prospective client, Isla McLaren, who arrives at 221b Baker Street seeking his help concerning a series of strange events at Braedern Castle, her husband's ancestral home in the Scottish Highlands. A decade earlier, her mother-in-law died of exposure after being locked out of the castle. More recently, a servant fell to his death, and, a few days ago, a maid disappeared for two days before reappearing with all her hair shorn, reviving stories that Braedern Castle is haunted. Watson is somewhat taken aback when Holmes refuses to help. But then Mycroft requests Holmes and Watson to travel to France where an epidemic is devastating French vineyards. We now know it's phylloxera, but Mycroft suggests a kind of industrial espionage at work here—that the

pests are the product of British bioengineering. And who might benefit the most from a reduction in the imports and drinking of French wine? The McLaren's, who are in the whiskey business?

✎MacNeal, Susan Elia. [The Paris Spy](#) (\$16). Maggie Hope has played many roles in war-torn Britain, from Churchill's secretary to Special Operations Executive spy. Now she's in Paris waiting for forged identity papers and hoping to find her half sister, Elise Hess, a Resistance fighter who'd escaped from Germany, and to learn the whereabouts of SOE agent Erica Calvert, who's been collecting sand samples to help determine where the invasion forces should land. When the documents arrive, Maggie checks into the Hôtel Ritz posing as neutral Irishwoman Paige Kelly, who's shopping for her trousseau. But tending to the wounds of a German knocked down by a bike as she's on her way to the Ritz brings Maggie to the highly consequential attention of Generaloberst Christian Ruesdorf. At the Ritz, Maggie's befriended by Coco Chanel, who introduces her to high-ranking Germans she'd rather avoid. And off we go.... Order all of this [captivating series](#), excellent for fans of Jacqueline Winspear and Rhys Bowen. We hope to see Susan in August with a new Maggie Hope.

Mathews, Francine. [Death on Nantucket](#) (\$14.95). Spencer Murphy is a national treasure. A famous correspondent during the Vietnam War who escaped captivity in Southeast Asia, he made a fortune off of his books and television appearances. But Spence is growing forgetful with age; he's started to wander and even fails to come home one night. When a body is discovered at Step Above, the sprawling Murphy house near Steps Beach, Nantucket police detective Meredith Folger is called in to investigate. The timing couldn't be worse: It's the Fourth of July, Merry's planning her wedding to cranberry farmer Peter Mason, and her new police chief is gunning for her job. Merry is inclined to call the death at Step Above a tragic accident...until another member of the Murphy clan comes to a brutal end. The dynamics of the Murphy family lead to one surprise after another in a surprisingly savage tale. [Order all the Folgers](#) for more fun.

Penny, Louise. [Glass Houses](#) (\$16.99). A new threat arises in Three Pines as a mysterious masked figure stands watch on the village green. "It" refuses to communicate in any way, which is just the start of another thrilling adventure in this long-running series. Gamache is still trying to restore the Sûreté du Québec back to what it was before it was corrupted under the previous regime. Choices are made that will forever change our hero in ways we can only begin to imagine."

✎Perry, Sarah. [The Essex Serpent](#) (\$16.99). Recent widow Cora Seaborne leaves London with her 11-year-old son, Francis, and loyal companion, Martha, and goes to Colchester, where a legendary, fearsome creature called the Essex Serpent has been sighted. Scholarly Victorian Cora, who is more interested in the study of nature than in womanly matters of dress, tramps about in a man's tweed coat, determined to find proof of this creature's existence. Through friends, she is introduced to William Ransome, the local reverend; his devoted wife, Stella; and their three children. Cora looks for a scientific rationale for the Essex Serpent, while Ransome dismisses it as superstition. This puts them at odds with one another, but, strangely, also acts as a powerful source of attraction between them. When Cora is visited by her late husband's physician, Luke Garrett, who carries a not-so-secret torch for her, a love triangle of sorts is formed. In the end,

a fatal illness, a knife-wielding maniac, and a fated union with the Essex Serpent will dictate the ultimate happiness of these characters. Like John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, whose Lyme Regis setting gets a shout-out here, this is another period literary pastiche with a contemporary overlay. The 2017 Indie Next Pick: Many contemporary authors manage to evoke for readers that experience of reading Jane Austen or Sir Arthur Conan Doyle for the first time. The real miracle of Sarah Perry is that she manages to do so with a completely fresh voice. With beautiful sentences and characters and landscapes so well-crafted you feel you've been there, *The Essex Serpent* captures the imagination and manages to deliver the sense of wisdom only good literature can."

Pulley, Natasha. [The Bedlam Stacks](#) (\$16). This incredible narrative of a disabled adventurer's journey through 19th-century Peru in search of quinine trees perfectly captures the disorientation of altitude sickness and culture shock in a setting where the nature of the fantastical elements remains ambiguous until the very end. This astonishing adventure, mystery, and slightly fantastic novel by the British author of the acclaimed [The Watchmaker of Filigree Street](#) (\$16) also illustrates the ruthless commercial piracy of the British Empire. I found it immersive and compulsive reading—and good on Peru.

Walker, Martin. [The Templar's Last Secret](#) (\$16). In Walker's deftly plotted 10th mystery starring St. Denis, France, police chief Benoît "Bruno" Courrèges, the small-town cop with a knack for stumbling onto big cases rolls into action when an unidentified woman takes a fatal fall from the ramparts of the Château de Commarque, a long-ago Knights Templar stronghold which, along with the labyrinth of prehistoric caves beneath it, continues to draw the interest of scholars. She apparently fell before she could finish painting graffiti there that may relate to the medieval order of the Knights Templar. With the help of Amélie, a young justice official learning local policing, Bruno learns that the dead woman was an archaeologist. Prehistoric cave art, Crusader tales, and modern Islamic terrorism all figure into what becomes a murder case. An old flame of Bruno's is assigned to work it with him, and the two find time, *naturellement*, to enjoy the supreme pleasures of the wine, food, and beauty of the Dordogne. If you have not read the Brunos, [best done in order](#), waste no time! June 18 brings us a new Bruno, [A Taste for Vengeance](#) (Knopf \$25.95).

### **BOND STILL LIVES!**

*In addition to the new Anthony Horowitz James Bond publishing the end of May (see Signed Books), here are a couple of over-the-top thrillers with Bond-like heroes: Alex Hawke and Mike Garin*

Bell, Ted. [Overkill](#) (Morrow \$27.99). John Sandford tells me what makes a great thriller is the villain. Bell adopts this maxim with... Vladimir Putin. A Putin derailed and exiled by oligarchs and going to ground (actually, underground, inside a mountain) in Switzerland. In his 10th for hero Alex Hawke, Bell pits him against. Putin who "is feverishly making plans for his triumphant return to the Kremlin... here, finally, we get to see Bell's fictionalized version of Putin take his final steps into full-blown insanity..." —*Booklist*. But Bell isn't jumping on this sudden uptick in interest in Russia; Putin has been a long-standing character in the series and the publisher notes that throughout Bell's own travels to Russia, he's been able to gain incomparable insight into the

man. Hawke is rather a modern James Bond (counter)spy. You can order [all the earlier Hawkes](#) in paperback.

Kirsanow, Peter. [Second Strike](#) (Dutton \$27). Kirsanow, too, goes to Russia for his villain, invincible assassin Tarras Bor, and the plot that pits former head of the Omega Special Ops unit Mike Garin against Bor. Within mere weeks of thwarting a cataclysmic electromagnetic pulse (EMP) attack against the United States, Garin discovers that Russia has triggered an ingenious and catastrophic backup plan. Garin's efforts to warn the administration of the new attack, however, fall on deaf ears. No one believes the Russians would initiate another strike of such magnitude so soon. Without government support, Garin turns to three people for help: Congo Knox, a former Delta Force sniper; Dan Dwyer, the head of a sprawling military contracting firm; and Olivia Perry, an aide to the national security advisor. Yet Garin and his ad hoc team are checked at every turn by Bor, who is directed by an individual seemingly able to manipulate the highest reaches of the US government. Meet Mike Garin first in [Target Omega](#) (\$9.99).

### **A PAIR OF CANADIANS**

Chapman, Brenda. [Bleeding Darkness](#) (Dundurn \$14.99). David McKenna lies dying in a Kingston hospital, his children gathered from across the country to say a final goodbye. But the family reunion opens old wounds. David's only daughter, Lauren, never recovered from the unsolved murder of her high school best friend fourteen years earlier — or the suspicion that her brother, Tristan, was behind it. Before David breathes his last, Tristan's pregnant wife disappears and the Major Crimes Unit is called in to help find her. With Kala Stonechild struggling to reconnect with her foster niece and Zach Woodhouse making trouble for Staff Sergeant Jacques Rouleau, tensions are running high on the team, but they must put their personal problems aside when a woman's strangled body is found frozen on the Rideau Trail. What is interesting here is the family drama combined with the hidden history of the neighbor next door which ties back to a brutal time in a country far away. In her 5<sup>th</sup> for her cops Stonechild and Rouleau, Chapman pulls no punches working a dramatic investigation.

Greenaway, RM. [Creep: A BC Blues Crime Novel](#) (Dundurn \$17/99). Greenaway, who won the Unhanged Arthur Ellis Award for her first in this series, [Cold Girl](#) (\$17.99), combines a police procedural with the landscape of North Vancouver and its old-growth forest areas plus a touch of the supernatural in the form of a possible shapeshifter. A missing hiker found by his children on a trail in the Headwaters leads to a foul smell which in turn leads to a mauled body. A small boy is attacked by... a wolf? The North Shore RCMP discovers this is only the beginning of what they have to work before winter sets in. We follow Constable David Leith in the thick of it, thicker as Halloween looms, and former Serious Crimes investigator Cal Dion, now a Constable back on general duties, as they struggle.... Very atmospheric.

### **SOME NEW BOOKS FOR MAY**

✻Beaufort, Simon. [The Coiners' Quarrel](#) (\$17.95). This is the first paperback of a 2004 medieval mystery by Susanna Gregory writing as Beaufort. Westminster, 1102. Once again about to depart for the Holy Land, Sir Geoffrey Mappstone is furious to be summoned back by the King, trusting neither his methods of

persuasion nor his motives. When he arrives at Court he finds two argumentative groups of Saxon moneyers, one accusing the other of devaluing the King's currency. There may be more to it than mere greed, however, and, unappealing though the prospect is, Geoffrey has no choice but to accept the King's commission to investigate whether this is part of a treasonous plot—especially as it is his only hope of saving his sister from the consequences of her own involvement. 5<sup>th</sup> in the Mappstone Series and Ordered Upon Request as we do all books published by Severn.

Belsky, R.G. [Yesterday's News](#) (Oceanview \$16). Drawing upon his own impressive media credentials, Belsky starts a series with Clare Carlson, now a TV News exec but still true to her investigative reporter roots. She won a Pulitzer for her reporting on the disappearance of Lucy Devlin from her safe NYC neighborhood 15 years back. Now a combination of the ambition of Manhattan federal attorney Elliott Grayson's run for the Senate and surprising new evidence in the Devlin case—plus Lucy's grieving mom Anne is dying of cancer—pushes Clare back into the field. Literally, since one piece of the story is a field in Mountainboro, New Hampshire, where excavations for a new mall uncover a mass grave containing the bodies of six missing, young children. None of them Lucy. But it's an intersection with other threads in the story. It builds momentum and has surprising twists although I'm not sure I fully buy into how some of it plays out. But maybe there is no finite justice for a mess like this.

Black, Benjamin. [Wolf on a String](#) (\$16). Christian Stern, the bastard son of the Prince-Bishop of Regensburg, has arrived in Prague 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”—lying in a snowy street with her throat slit. Initially a suspect, Stern soon becomes the emperor's designated investigator. In order to discover the truth behind the murder, he must navigate a realm in which no one can be fully trusted. Black is the crime-writing pseudonym of Booker Prize-winning author John Banville.

Blanchard, Alice. [A Breath after Drowning](#) (Titan \$14.95). Boston child psychiatrist Kate Wolfe stands at the center of a thriller with a killer whom Tom Nolan calls in the *Wall Street Journal* “one of the most memorable genre villains since Hannibal Lecter.” Kate had a grim childhood after her mother was committed to an asylum and later committed suicide and Kate's younger sister was kidnapped and horribly murdered. Unsurprisingly her father retreated into solitude. But this trifecta of traumas pushed her to train to help youngsters negotiate crises of their own, and to assuage her sense of guilt over having left her sister alone the night she was stolen away. When one of Kate's young patients hangs herself Kate encounters a retired cop from her old New Hampshire town who shares his doubts that the man awaiting execution for Kate's sister's murder is actually guilty. So Kate elects to use her training to work out who the real killer might be....not realizing the killer will be hunting her.

Buckley, Carla. [The Good Goodbye](#) (\$16). Cousins as close as sisters, a mysterious fire, a tangled web of lies: It all adds up to a fluid, suspenseful story that keeps you turning the pages to find out what happened—and what will happen next.

✂Cleverly, Barbara. [Fall of Angels](#) (Soho \$26.95). The youngest—and handsomest—son of an impoverished upper crust family attended Cambridge but needed a job of work to support himself. And there you have it: Inspector Redfyre. Still endowed with influential relatives. When his Aunt Hetty persuades him to attend a holiday concert in her stead, he's pleasantly surprised to find that one of the performers is a pioneering female trumpeter, Juno Proudfoot. A second surprise is that the other seat Hetty was unable to use is occupied by “Earwig” Stretton, not one of a band of childhood brothers who made Redfyre miserable, but a young woman. The talented Juno is almost killed when she falls down the stage stairs after the music ends. And an investigation develops from there. This post-WWI series start is convoluted if not muddled, and very Britspeak (i.e., full of nuance) in voice. Not Cleverly's best effort.

Connolly, John. [A Game of Ghosts](#) (\$17). It is deep winter. The darkness is unending. The private detective named Jaycob Eklund has vanished, and Charlie Parker is dispatched to track him down. Parker's employer, Edgar Ross, an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, has his own reasons for wanting Eklund found. Eklund is no ordinary investigator. He is obsessively tracking a series of homicides and disappearances, each linked to reports of hauntings. Now Parker will be drawn into Eklund's world, a realm in which the monstrous Mother rules a crumbling criminal empire, in which men strike bargains with angels, and in which the innocent and guilty alike are pawns in a game of ghosts.... We will have Signed copies of the 16<sup>th</sup> Parker [Woman in the Woods](#) (\$26.90) in June—or buy the [Signed UK edition](#) (\$40) now.

Conway, Simon. [A Loyal Spy](#) (Arcade \$25.99). The 2010 winner of UK's Ian Fleming Steel Dagger (Best Thriller) gets a Starred Review in its US debut: “A mission takes British spy Jonah Said, the son of a Palestinian scientist and an English barrister, to Sierra Leone in 2001. Jonah is investigating terrorists who are attempting to buy \$20 million worth of smuggled diamonds; things go awry, and he finds himself held at gunpoint by Nor ed-Din, a spy he thought he killed a number of years before in the Khyber Pass. Jonah parts from Nor, knowing their differences will be settled another day. Years later, when Nor announces in an internet video that he's planning a spectacular attack, Jonah joins the effort to try to stop him and other terrorists from detonating a sunken WWII ship rigged with explosives in the Thames Estuary. The resulting explosion would create a tsunami that would destroy London. With its complex characters and plot, this thriller feels as if the author has channeled his considerable powers through Le Carré by way of Tolstoy, and yet it remains uniquely his own. The final paragraph will give readers hope that they'll be seeing Jonah again in the future.”

Downing, David. [The Dark Clouds Shining](#) (Soho \$26.95). Here's a Starred Review for the final entry in a series that began with the simply fabulous [Jack of Spies](#) (\$15.95), a knockout that was a 2014 History Club Pick: “Set in 1921, Downing's fitting conclusion to his superior quartet of WWI-era spy thrillers (after 2017's Lenin's Roller Coaster) finds series lead Jack McColl behind bars after he punched a London police constable for insulting an injured war veteran. Jack's actions in rushing the comatose policeman to the hospital persuaded the judge to sentence him more leniently, but Jack still faces a seven-year stretch. He's offered a reprieve by his old handler, Secret Service chief

Mansfield Cumming, who makes Jack a deal: he'll get him out of jail if he agrees to travel to Russia to figure out what MI5 is up to. "Five" has had covert contact with an Indian delegation that just settled a trade deal with Russia but has refused to share with Cumming what they're planning. Jack takes the deal and ends up crossing paths with both an old love and an old foe as he races to derail a murder plot that could have catastrophic geopolitical consequences. As always, Downing's intelligently constructed characters complement a plausible and pulse-pounding plotline." Books two and three are [One Man's Flag](#) and [Lenin's Roller Coaster](#) (\$15.95 each).

✚Duncan, Francis. [So Pretty a Problem](#) (Sourcebooks \$14.99). In *Mordecai Tremaine Mystery #3*, the retired tobacconist with a gift for detection is dozing on a Cornish beach when he's roused by Helen Carthallow, who lives in an isolated house nearby. She says she needs his help because she just accidentally killed her artist husband, Adrian. She pointed a gun at Adrian that she thought was unloaded, and it went off. Mordecai returns with her to the cliff-top house, which is accessible only via a narrow bridge, to find Adrian's corpse in his study and no evidence that anyone else has been present. Troubled by Helen's version of events, Mordecai suspects that she was having an affair, and he shares his doubts with the local inspector, who enlists his aid in finding out what really happened. "A final unmasking that suggests Agatha Christie and Rex Stout...this leisurely placed cozy, firmly set in beautiful Cornwall, with its quirky, well-drawn protagonist was originally published in 1947 in the UK." —*Booklist*

✚Flanders, Judith. [A Howl of Wolves](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Lord, can this woman write. Some of her sentences stop me in my (reading) tracks so I can savor them. Her riffs on publishing are hilarious. And in this 4<sup>th</sup> romp for Samantha Clair, called "whip-smart" by Louse Penny, another fan, you get to plunge inside a West End London theater company that is staging a Thomas Kyd (Shakespeare contemporary) play. *The Spanish Tragedy*—13 people dead. As Sam and her partner, the CID's Jake Field, discover, one of them is no dummy but the production's famous director, hanging in full view. At first thought a suicide, Campbell Davison's death is soon ruled murder. And where it all goes from there including the motive, is surprise after surprise. It's hard to beat Sam's mother, the solicitor Helen, for a character, or Mr. Rudiger, the agoraphobic neighbor upstairs, or young Bim whom all want to protect but proves surprisingly savvy. This is our **May British Crime Club Pick**. I highly recommend reading all the Sam Clairs in order: [A Murder of Magpies](#), [A Bed of Scorpions](#), [A Cast of Vultures](#). Flanders is a noted historian of the Victorian era and the author of [The Invention of Murder](#) (\$17) as well as of [The Victorian City](#) (\$18.99).

Fletcher, Jessica. [Murder, She Wrote: A Date with Murder](#) (Berkley \$24). Alas Donald Bain, the author of this long-running series, has died. So this 47<sup>th</sup> entry is completed by Jon Land. Jessica Fletcher takes up the case of her good friend, Barbara "Babs" Wirth, after Babs' husband Hal suffers a fatal heart attack that Jessica has reason to believe was actually murder. At the heart of her suspicions lies a sinister dating site Hal had used while he and Babs were having marital issues, a site that may be complicit in somehow swindling him out of millions. Jessica's investigation reveals that Hal was far from the only victim and when his former business partner is also killed, a deadly pattern emerges.

Freeman, Brian. [Alter Ego](#) (Quercus \$26.99). We have seen some of the elements in this terrific thriller by Freeman before: freezing landscape (outside Duluth); an assassin met in the opening pages; a Hollywood film crew making a big picture with Hollywood royalty as the award-winning and popular actor and his wife; and Jonathan Stride of the Duluth PD working a case. What we haven't seen is a man killed in a freak highway accident who proves to be a "ghost," someone lacking all ID. A missing college student. A screen icon, box-office gold, whom everyone admires, even likes. An actor who is actually playing Stride in a movie being made based on an actual case from Stride's past.... Freeman paces this thrilling procedural briskly and takes full advantage of a northern Minnesota winter doing it.

✚Griffiths, Elly. [The Chalk Pit](#) (\$14.99). Norwich is riddled with old chalk-mining tunnels, but no one's sure exactly how many. When Ruth is called in to investigate a set of human remains found in one of them, she notices the bones are almost translucent, a sign they were boiled soon after death. Once more, she finds herself at the helm of a murder investigation. Meanwhile, DCI Nelson is hunting for a missing homeless woman, Barbara, who he hears has gone "underground." Could she have disappeared into the labyrinth? And if so, is she connected to the body Ruth found? As Ruth, Nelson, and the rest of their team investigate the tunnels, they hear rumors of secret societies, cannibalism, and ritual killings. 9<sup>th</sup> in this atmospheric, character-driven series. It is best to read the [Ruth Galloway Mysteries](#) in order.

Haines, Carolyn. [Charmed Bones](#) (St Martins \$26.99). Zinnia, Mississippi is rife with quirky characters, but the arrival of three sister witches—and their intention to open a Wiccan boarding school—sets the small town on its ear. And bodies begin to accumulate as a result. Faith, Hope, and Charity Harrington are sexy and smart. They're setting up their boarding school in an old dairy—a piece of property with tremendous development potential. And they're standing in the way of "progress," according to some in the town. When young Corey Fontana goes missing, Delaney Detective Agency is hired to find the youth

✚Hall, Araminta. [Our Kind of Cruelty](#) (Farrar \$26). This is a love story. Or is it? It's more a story of obsession—obsession, yes, and written from the point of view of the male lover. Mike Hayes did come from a brutal childhood into a lonely life before he met Verity Metcalf. V electrifies him, as does the sex game they play called the Curve. When things go wrong and later V becomes engaged to Angus... well.... Fantasists, an obsession...can a woman draw the line before behavior leads to murder, or is she too, guilty? Chilling, and disturbing.

Hamill, Pete. [Killing for Christ](#) (Akashic \$27.95) is rereleased to mark the 50th year of its publication. Hamill adds a foreword to this edition, providing context for a remarkably mature debut novel. The story takes place in Rome, from Holy Thursday to Easter Sunday. Malloy is an American, a Vietnam vet and a faithless priest. "Perhaps he had come to understand that sin was a celebration," he thinks. He clerks at the Vatican to remove himself from pastoral duties. At night he drives to an apartment by the sea, where his mistress, Franca, waits for him. Meanwhile, a group of cardinals who oppose the politics of the current pope are conspiring to assassinate him. They employ Harwell, a malevolent young man with a rifle, and Rail, a mysterious co-conspirator, to carry out the assassination in front of the huge Easter Sunday

audience. When Franca becomes involved with the conspirators, and a man is killed, Malloy trades his fatalism for outrage to become the savior he does not believe in.

Harkness, Deborah. [The World of All Souls](#) (Viking \$40). Enjoy the adventures of Diana Bishop, Oxford scholar and reluctant witch, and vampire geneticist Matthew Clairmont all over again in *The Complete Guide to A Discovery of Witches*, *Shadow of Night*, and *The Book of Life*.

Hartov, Steven. [The Soul of a Thief](#) (Hanover \$24.99). “In the spring of 1944, I realized that I was not going to survive the war... ‘Shtefan Brandt, adjutant to a colonel of the Waffen SS, has made it through so far in spite of his commander’s habit of bringing his staff into combat, and a pair of secrets that are far more dangerous than the battlefield. Shtefan is a Mischling and one of the thousands of German citizens of Jewish descent who have avoided the death camps by concealing themselves in the ranks of the German army. And he is in love with Gabrielle Belmont, the colonel’s French mistress. Either of those facts could soon mean his end, were Colonel Erich Himmel to notice. Colonel Himmel has other concerns, however. He can see the war’s end on the horizon and recognizes that he is not on the winning side, no matter what the reports from Hitler’s generals may say. So he has taken matters into his own hands, hatching a plot to escape Europe. To fund his new life, he plans to steal a fortune from the encroaching Allies. A fortune that Shtefan, in turn, plans to steal from him... Atmospheric and intense, *The Soul of a Thief* captures the turbulent emotional rush of those caught behind the lines of occupied France, where one false step could spell death, and every day brings a new struggle to survive.

Holt, Anne. [Odd Numbers](#) (\$17). Karen reviews: Hanne Wilhelmsen is brought out of her self-imposed exile from police work when a bomb goes off in the Islamic Cooperation Council’s offices. The target seems to have been a Muslim group called Prophet True Ummah, but, there is little proof of its existence. It doesn’t take long for law enforcement to realize they are dealing with a culture they know little about. At the same time, her one-time friend and colleague, Billy T., comes to her pleading for help to discover the quiet, and troubling, changes he sees in his son, Linus. Hanne is sent a young man, Henrik Holme, to assist her with the bombing investigation. He is a bit peculiar to a point where Hanne asks if he has Asperger’s. At the same time, Chief of Police, Silje Sorensen, works with another young assistant, Hakon Sand, who is jealous of her money and the fact that she was given the job he thought he should have. There are many pieces to bring together in the solution. Holt is a bestselling crime writer, called “the godmother of Norwegian crime fiction” by fellow writer, Jo Nesbø. Her characters are funny, flawed, decent people.

Kiernan, Olivia. [Too Close to Breathe](#) (Dutton \$26). Irish, not English mystery, but it fits right into the wave of Domestic Noir from Britain. Frankie Sheehan is a Dublin DCS who nearly lost her life four months back pursuing a killer. On her guard, determined not to repeat her mistakes, she would be pleased to declare Eleanor Costello, founded hanged in her pristine home, a suicide. But the autopsy reveals the body has poorly healed bones and old stab wounds, both absent from Eleanor’s medical records. The husband, Peter, is missing. And the only indications of personality in the crime scene are a much-thumbed book on art and a

laptop accessing the Dark Web. As the carefully crafted profile of the victim crumbles and Frankie gets mysterious calls to her own phone, the mystery deepens. And then another woman is murdered. . . . “While the serial killer is often overused, Kiernan finds a unique twist to this trope, where Dublin’s streets and neighborhoods receive a fresh view.”—AP. Thus an obvious comparison is to the work of Tana French.

King, Stephen. [The Outsider](#) (Scribner \$30). When a young boy’s mutilated corpse is found in a public park, the evidence points to Little League coach and high school English teacher Terry Maitland. Despite his vehement claims of innocence, witnesses put him at the scene of the crime, and his fingerprints and DNA are found all over the murder scene. The police have an airtight case, except that other witnesses and video also confirm Terry’s alibi: that he was miles away at a teacher’s convention on the night of the murder. For Detective Ralph Anderson, it is simultaneously the most straightforward and frustrating case of his career. How can a man be in two places at once? “A juicy tale that plays at the forefront of our current phobias... [*The Outsider*] will remind readers of King’s early novel *It*.” — *Kirkus Reviews*

Knoll, Jessica. [The Favorite Sister](#) (SimonSchuster \$26). A best-selling Domestic Noir, [Luckiest Girl Alive](#) (\$9.99) established Knoll who now pens a new one aimed at Millennials. Squarely at them—to be honest I felt like I was traveling in a foreign land. Reality TV. Fiercely competitive young women entrepreneurs on *Gold Diggers* and off the set. Careers—and lives—living and dying by social media. The investigating of the death of one sister, the perennial fan favorite Brett, eerily reflects the formula of backstabbing and betrayals that have given *3* and its stars ratings gold. I just read an article by Knoll in the *Wall Street Journal* where she proclaims she designed her first novel, and this, to make herself rich (by hijacking a trend if not a movement?) which, whether a publicity stunt or honest statement made me realize all the more why I truly disliked both Knoll’s books—there’s no heart, no substance, only a cynical grab at audience metrics.

LaFarge, Paul. [The Night Ocean](#) (\$17). This enjoyable yet challenging read, should grab this riveting novel about secrets and scandals, psychiatry and pulp fiction, inspired by the lives of H.P. Lovecraft and his circle. Marina Willett, M.D., has a problem. Her husband, Charlie, has become obsessed with H.P. Lovecraft, in particular with one episode in the legendary horror writer’s life: In the summer of 1934, the “old gent” lived for two months with a gay teenage fan named Robert Barlow, at Barlow’s family home in central Florida. What were the two of them up to? Were they friends—or something more? Just when Charlie thinks he’s solved the puzzle, a new scandal erupts, and he disappears. The police say it’s suicide. Marina is a psychiatrist, and she doesn’t believe them. And so. . . . Like Lovecraft’s “The Call of Cthulhu,” the novel consists of several sub-narratives, ranging widely in time and place.

Legrand, Claire. [Furyborn](#) (Sourcebooks Fire, \$18.99). “Fierce, independent women full of rage, determination, and fire. The first novel in the epic Empirium fantasy trilogy holds appeal for both young adult and adult readers. For fans of *Game of Thrones*, *Once Upon a Time*, and *The Hunger Games*.”

Lehane, Dennis. [Since We Fell](#) (\$16.99). Once a star journalist, until something snapped during her TV coverage of the devasta-

tion in Haiti following the 2009 earthquake, Rachel Childs now barely leaves her house. Lehane portrays the frantic hamster wheel of waxing and waning anxiety with unnerving clarity. A lifetime of tension, much of it spawning from her now-deceased mother's refusal to disclose the identity of Rachel's father, weighs on Rachel. The quest to put a name to half her DNA is what first sets Rachel on a collision course with Brian Delacroix, a PI (or so he claims) who advises her against the whole thing. Fast forward several years, and Rachel and Brian meet again....

Lukas, Michael David. [The Last Watchman of Old Cairo](#) (Spiegel \$27). Around 1000 CE, "when Cairo was still two cities and the Jews but a tribe among them," a Muslim orphan named Ali becomes watchman of Ibn Ezra synagogue, a recently vandalized Jewish temple. One of his chief duties is protecting the Ezra Scroll, a perfect, magical Torah scroll. Though Ali intends to serve faithfully, disastrous temptation awaits. Almost 900 years later, two wealthy British sisters who study ancient texts visit Ali's descendant Muhammad al-Raqb, desperate to find the Ezra Scroll before con men steal it. In the present day, Berkeley literature student Joseph al-Raqb goes to Cairo on impulse following the death of his father, Ahmed, the last watchman of Ibn Ezra. Raised in America by his Jewish mother, Joseph searches for the truth behind family legend, guided by a framed fragment of an ancient letter suggesting a boy named Ali receive a job as watchman of Ibn Ezra.

Macleod, Torquil. [Menace in Malmö](#) (Global \$14.95). A British journalist is invited to Malmö to interview an old university friend who is now one of Sweden's leading film directors. When he discovers the director's glamorous film star wife dead in her apartment, the Skåne County Police are called in to solve the high-profile case. Among the investigating team is Inspector Anita Sundström, who soon finds the list of suspects growing. As Anita battles to discover the answers amid the antagonism of some of her colleagues, she even begins to think that the person she is becoming attracted to could be the murderer. There are now 6 Anita Sundstrom novels available.

✎Malliet, G.M. [Devil's Breath](#) (\$16.99). Vicar Max Tudor normally sleuths in Nether Monkship, but here is former life in MI5 calls him afield. The body of glamorous film star Margot Browne has washed ashore from a luxury yacht and Max's former colleague Patrice Logan wants his help to find the murderer. It's a perfect "closed circle" murder since victim Margot must have been killed by one of the actors, stylists, screenwriters, or second-tier royalty aboard. Patrice suspects the yacht's owner, a playboy film director she's been keeping tabs on for smuggling, but Max isn't so sure. Max and DCI Cotton interview the suspects as they loll about one of the luxury hotels dotting the waterfront. The investigation into Margot's lurid past uncovers a host of motives... I'm a fan of this "cozy-but-cutting" English mystery series. [Order all 7](#)—this is the 6<sup>th</sup>—and binge during May.

Marzano-Lesnevich, Alexandra. [The Fact of a Body](#) (\$17.99). The Indie Next Pick: Alexandria Marzano-Lesnevich didn't set out to investigate the murder of six-year-old Jeremy Guillory in Louisiana; it was the case she happened upon as a young law school intern in 1992. In a fascinating twist, this becomes not only the true story of a heinous crime, but also of the investigation that unlocks the author's memories of her own childhood in which she and her sisters were repeatedly sexually abused by

their grandfather. As Marzano-Lesnevich moves backward and forward in time between the young man who killed Jeremy and her own life, the reader is swept along on a current of dismay and awe: dismay that human beings can do these things to each other, and awe that the author could face such demons and move on."

Manchette, Jean. [Ivory Pearl](#) (New York Review of Books \$14.95). First published in France in 1996, this unfinished novel from Manchette (1942–1995) was supposed to be the start of his magnum opus, a series following famed war photographer Ivory Pearl from 1945, when she is a refugee child in postwar Berlin, through geopolitical hot spots of the next 40 years. "The opening chapter in particular is as sharp and brutal as anything Manchette wrote, including his masterpiece, *The Prone Gunman*. The obsessive details ("a semi-automatic Sauer Model 38 chambered in .380 ACP and fitted with a silencer") might make even Ian Fleming feel uninformed. Though the spy-versus-spy scenario circles the globe, most of the plot concerns Ivory taking a sabbatical in Cuba's Sierra Maestra range in 1956, as Castro emerges on the revolutionary stage. There she meets the bullet-scarred Victor Maurer and a seven-year-old girl who may be the missing niece of an international arms trafficker. Then a helicopter carrying an elite hit squad arrives. The included author notes suggest how it all might have ended. Noir fans won't want to miss this one."—*PW*

✎McCarthy, Rob. [A Handful of Ashes](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). Susan Bayliss became notorious when she blew the whistle on her boss, a heart surgeon at a renowned children's hospital. She accused him of negligence, operations were stopped and an inquiry launched. In the end she was the one suspended as a troublemaker. Now Dr Harry Kent, a medical examiner with the Met Police, has been called out to certify her suicide. But something about the scene is wrong. Someone held Susan down... The grieving parents of the children who died demand answers. The hospital is stonewalling. Everyone has secrets – it's up to Harry and DCI Frankie Noble to find out which were worth killing for. A road made harder because each is a serious addict; Harry's to amphetamines is the more lethal to himself and his career, not to mention everyone he touches. This brutal and unsparing procedural follows [The Hollow Men](#) \$15.95).

McCrumb, Sharyn. [The Unquiet Grave](#) (\$16). Based on one of the most incredible ghost stories in American folklore, *The Unquiet Grave* is a fascinating historical novel. "Touching on mental illness, race and superstition, *The Unquiet Grave* is not only an informative read, but one that never loses sight of its story—a chilly retelling of an Appalachian legend finely resurrected under McCrumb's pen."—*Mountain Times*

Orenduff, J. Michael. [The Pot Thief Who Studied Edward Abbey](#) (Open Road \$14.99). The *PW* Starred Review for a Pat King favorite series: "Orenduff successfully combines humor and homicide in his superb eighth Pot Thief whodunit after 2016's [The Pot Thief Who Studied Georgia O'Keeffe](#) (\$14.99). Part-time investigator Hubie Schuze, who unapologetically supports himself by illegally digging up ancient Native American pottery and then selling the artifacts at his Albuquerque store, accepts an adjunct teaching position at the University of New Mexico. Hubie was surprised by the offer, given that he had helped put a former head of the university's art department in prison, but he soon gets invested in trying to connect with device-addicted Millenni-

als. Hubie dodges several bullets, including a sexual harassment claim by a student who offered to sleep with him in exchange for a better grade, but he becomes a murder suspect after one of his students, who was covered in a plaster cast for a 3-D model, is found dead inside it. Fans of campus satires will enjoy how Orenduff skewers academic politics and political correctness in the service of a fair-play plot.” [Order them all.](#)

Patterson, James. [The Store](#) (\$15.99). Jacob and Megan Brandeis are writing a book that will expose the Store—a forbidden book, a dangerous book. And if the Store finds out, there’s only one thing Jacob, Megan and their kids can do—run for their bloody lives. Which is probably impossible, because—the Store is always watching (OK, Alexa)...

✚Perry, Anne. [Murder on the Serpentine](#) (\$17). As she nears life’s end, Queen Victoria needs the help of Thomas Pitt, commander of the Special Branch. The task: to probe the untimely death of Sir John Halberd, an old and trusted friend of her majesty, whom she had asked to investigate Alan Kendrick, a new adviser to her son, the Prince of Wales. While Kendrick seems to be merely sharing wisdom about horses with the heir to the throne, a fellow horse enthusiast, the queen is concerned by the man’s rumored involvement in “all sorts of other affairs.” Her worries grew when Halberd died in an unusual boating accident that could have been foul play.... This novel marks a pivot by Perry in her April 2018 book to the Pitts’ son, Daniel, and young and idealistic barrister: [Twenty-One Days](#) (\$28 Signed) which I recommend to Perry fans.

Pollan, Michael. [How to Change Your Mind: What the New Science of Psychedelics Teaches Us About Consciousness, Dying, Addiction, Depression, and Transcendence](#) (Penguin \$28). This is a long quote from Shelf-Awareness: Journalist and author Pollan didn’t consider taking LSD until he was nearly 60 years old. He had a mild experience with psilocybin mushrooms in his late 20s, but never had much interest in illegal drugs, nor introspection, religion or mysticism in any form. “But there are moments when curiosity gets the better of fear. I guess for me such a moment had arrived.” This curiosity resulted, among other more personal and intangible results, in *How to Change Your Mind*, a thorough and enlightening study of the history, science and personal experience of psychedelic drugs in the U.S. The invention of LSD in the 1950s sparked a revolution in brain science. Researchers discovered the role of neurotransmitters in the brain, and the neurochemical roots of many mental illnesses. Psychotherapists had remarkable results using psychedelic drugs in treatments. But as enthusiastic promoters of these substances spread them to the general unmonitored public, and to the youth counterculture in particular, “the exuberance surrounding these new drugs gave way to moral panic.” They were outlawed, and medical research using them faded until the 1990s, when a new generation of scientists set out to revive their legitimate medical and therapeutic study and use.

Pyper, Andrew. [Only Child](#) (\$16). As a forensic psychiatrist at New York’s leading institution of its kind, Dr. Lily Dominick has evaluated the mental states of some of the country’s most dangerous psychotics. But the strangely compelling client she interviewed today—a man with no name, accused of the most twisted crime—struck her as somehow different from the others, despite the two impossible claims he made. First, that he is more

than two hundred years old and personally inspired Mary Shelley, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Bram Stoker in creating the three novels of the nineteenth century that define the monstrous in the modern imagination. Second, that he’s Lily’s father. To discover the truth—behind her client, her mother’s death, herself—Dr. Dominick must embark on a journey that will threaten her career, her sanity, and ultimately her life.

Rhodes. [Ghost Boy](#) (Little Brown \$16.99). Set in an impoverished Chicago neighborhood, this somber story blends history with current events. Jerome Rogers, a black 12-year-old, is playing outside with a toy gun when he is shot and killed by a white policeman who views him as a threat. Now Jerome wanders the earth with other “ghost boys” whose deaths are all connected to bigotry. Ironically, the only human who can see Jerome is Sarah, the young daughter of the officer who took his life. Jerome meets the ghost of Emmett Till and learns the horrific details of his murder. Emmett, like the other ghost boys, cannot rest until the world is swept clean of discriminatory violence; maybe Jerome can help if he can make Sarah understand that her father’s act was a result of deeply ingrained racism. Rhodes writes in short, poetic chapters that offer graphic depictions of avoidable tragedies; her hope for a better world packs a powerful punch, delivering a call to action to speak out against prejudice and erase harmful misconceptions. Ages 10–up.

Robertson, LF. [Madman Walking](#) (Titan \$14.95). If you are interested in the Innocence Project and in complex legal mysteries then this is for you. At its heart is a man who’s a mess, possibly schizophrenic, resistant to all efforts over the course of his life to help him. Then he’s arrested and convicted of shooting a drug dealer and lands on death row. His only chance lies in an appeal and lawyer Janet Moodie, a former state defender and now retired to Sonoma Valley, reluctantly gives in to pressure to take it on. From there Robertson provides both a look at the legal machinery in play and an investigation into the crime of which Howard Henley is accused. It’s not a happily-ever-after story nor is it a bitter one.

Rose, MJ. [The Library of Light and Shadow](#) (\$16). In the wake of the Great War, the glamour of 1925 Manhattan shines like a beacon for high society and people desperate to keep their gaze firmly fixed to the future. But Delphine Duplessi sees more than most. At a time in her career when she could easily remain unknown and penniless, she has gained notoriety for her stunning shadow portraits that frequently expose her subjects’ most scandalous secrets. Then suddenly, this talented young artist flees New York for the South of France after one of her scandalous drawings reveals a dark secret—and triggers a terrible tragedy.

Simenon, George. [Maigret Sets a Trap](#) (Penguin \$13). Detective Chief Inspector Maigret is known for his infallible instinct, for getting at the truth no matter how complex the case. But when someone starts killing women on the streets of Montmartre, leaving nary a clue and the city’s police force at a loss, he finds himself confounded. In the sweltering Paris summer heat, with the terrified city in a state of siege, Maigret hatches a plan to lure the murderer out.

Stewart, Amy. [Miss Kopp’s Midnight Confession](#) (\$14.99). Here’s the Indie Next Pick for Stewart’s 3<sup>rd</sup> in a sparky series drawn from real early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American life and real people as her Author’s Note spells out: “Constance Kopp is back, solv-

ing mysteries and making headlines! Deputy Kopp is a heroine of her day and continues to inspire today. Whether assisting young girls in finding their footing on a law-abiding path, using her voice to stand up for the voiceless, or fighting crime alongside her all-male counterparts, Constance Kopp is breaking with traditional female roles and navigating sometimes-stormy waters with grace, dignity, and a bit of humor. What does a feminist look like? This is what a feminist looks like!” Start with [Girl Waits with Gun](#) and [Lady Cop Makes Trouble](#) (\$14.99 each). Word is just out that this series is being filmed for TV.

Straley, John. [Woman Who Married a Bear](#) (\$9.99). A large paperback back in print at a low price, the Shamus-Award winning first investigation for Cecil Younger, Sitka, Alaska, PI. He is neither good at his job nor at staying sober. When an old Tlingit woman hires him to discover why her son, a big game guide, was murdered, he takes the case without much conviction that he’ll discover anything the police missed. He really just needs the extra cash. But after someone tries to kill him, Younger finds himself traveling across Alaska to ferret out the truth in the midst of conspiracies, politics, and Tlingit mythology. Straley is back in the mystery game this year; more on this in future Booknews.

Street, Karen Lee. [Edgar Allan Poe and the Jewel of Peru](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). The shadow of Poe never fades from the world of mystery, in part because his life provides irresistible material to the novelist. Street writes of his time in Philadelphia here when nativists of the 1840s were fomenting against immigrants, mostly Irish and Catholic. Poe receives an unusual package a small but cunning diorama featuring a murder (at least 6) of taxidermied crows. From here we hook up with C. Auguste Dupin who arrives from France to lend a hand, and visitors from Peru. The “jewel” is not what you might think and in fact this book plays into the wonderful *Birder Mysteries* by Steve Burrows (4, reviewed above) set in modern Norfolk.

Speaking of birds, Rob and I were surprised yesterday by the appearance of a female duck paddling in our pool, and today as I write this, she is joined by a mallard. This could become a killing field for our pups if the ducks have arrived to hatch a family, so we’ll find out what to do....

Thompson, Victoria. [Murder on Union Square](#) (Berkley \$26). A police officer-turned-private eye is accused of murder. Beating the odds against their unlikely union, Irish PI Frank Malloy and midwife Sarah, the eccentric daughter of a society family, have tied the knot and are hoping to adopt Catherine (Murder in the Bowery, 2017, etc.), the illegitimate child of late actress Emma Hardy, whom Sarah has been raising. Frank and Sarah are now extremely well-off, but there’s an obstacle: Because Emma was still married to an actor named Parnell Vaughn when Catherine was born, he is the child’s father under the law, even though her actual father was a wealthy businessman who’s also died. Vaughn is willing to sign away his parental rights, but his greedy girlfriend, Eliza Grime, insists on payment. When Frank goes to the theater where Vaughn is working to make that payment, he finds him beaten to death. Accused by Eliza, Frank is arrested but is soon back on the street, eager to prove his innocence. 21<sup>st</sup> in the Edgar-nominated *Gaslight Mysteries*.

Weeks, Stephen. [Sins of the Father](#) (Poisoned Pen \$26.95). Week’s *The Countess of Prague* series was featured in a *PW* interview. In this second investigation for Trixie, she is com-

manded by Hapsburg Emperor Franz Joseph to investigate the murder/suicide of his heir Rudolph and Rudolph’s 17-year-old mistress at Mayerling? Why? “Two baffling mysteries challenge irrepressible Countess Beatrix “Trixie” von Falkenburg in Weeks’s lively sequel to 2017’s [The Countess of Prague](#). In the winter of 1905, Trixie’s phone number turns up in the pocket of the headless corpse of a man found in a carriage of the Prague funicular railway. The body is later identified as that of a celebrated magician. Police inspector Schneider asks Trixie to help investigate. Meanwhile, she’s summoned to the Hofburg Palace in Vienna for an audience with Franz-Josef I, whose only son, Crown Prince Rudolf, apparently committed suicide at a hunting lodge outside Vienna in 1889. For assistance, Trixie can count on her resourceful butler, Müller, her trusty lady’s maid, Sabine, and the all-encompassing web of aristocratic associates and relatives spun by her mother. Weeks evokes the mores and manners of the period with a blend of richly nuanced details and sly wit.”—*PW*. *Booklist* ended its Starred Review of *The Countess of Prague*: “Highly entertaining, with a compelling mystery and a whirling dervish of a heroine who combines all the best traits of Elizabeth Peters’ Amelia Peabody and Kerry Greenwood’s Phryne Fisher, this wily, witty countess-sleuth’s escapades will have readers clamoring for more.” Also [Sins of the Father](#) (\$15.95).

Wolff, James. [Beside the Syrian Sea](#) (Bitter Lemon \$24). Published in the UK as *The London Times* Book of the Month. Jonas is a British spy, an intelligence analyst. When his father is kidnapped and held for ransom by ISIS in Syria, he takes matters into his own hands. To pay the kidnappers, he begins to steal the only currency he has access to: secret government intelligence. He heads to Beirut with a haul of the most sensitive documents imaginable and recruits an unlikely ally – an alcoholic Swiss priest named Father Tobias. British and American secret service agents in Beirut try everything in their power to stop Jonas, and he finds himself tested to the limit. Racing towards a thrilling confrontation in the Syrian desert, Jonas will have to decide how far he is willing to go to see his father again. This novel is written by an insider, asked to write under a pseudonym by the British government for which “he has been working for the last ten years.” Ann Cleeves writes, “I loved the character of Jonas—the quiet man pushed by his own guilt into becoming a hero.”

#### OUR MAY SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Atkins, Ace. [Robert B Parker’s Little White Lies](#) (\$9.99). Boston private eye Spenser and his sidekick, Hawk, follow a con man’s schemes on cable news shows and within police precincts in the wake of an elaborate double cross that has victimized a smitten woman as well as a cache of investors, cops and paramilitary contractors. *PW* was impressed with this saying “A taut, suspenseful story line drives Edgar-finalist Atkins’s sixth Spenser novel (after 2016’s *Slow Burn*), which deepens the relationship between the Boston PI and his significant other, therapist Susan Silverman.”

Child, Lee. [The Midnight Line](#) (\$9.99). Jack Reacher #22. Spotting a hard-won women’s West Point class ring in a pawn shop, Jack Reacher fights a biker gang and a South Dakota gangster to discover the truth about the ring and why its owner sold it. *LJ* ended their review with “Child does a stellar job this time by not following his customary formula; his usually stoic hero who rarely displays softness and compassion is hit hard emotionally by this case.

Goldman, Matt. [Gone to Dust](#) (\$9.99). Investigating a murder complicated by the killer's strategic approaches to confounding all possible DNA evidence, private detective Nils Shapiro is forced by FBI interference to secretly uncover the potentially shattering identity of a mysterious woman. *PW* loved this saying "With his wry, observant eye and quick wit, plus a pressing need to follow the truth into dark, uncharted places, Shap is a more optimistic version of Ross MacDonald's Lew Archer. Readers will look forward to his next investigative adventure."

Hunter, Stephen. [G-Man](#) (\$9.99). Bob Lee Swagger #10. A conclusion to the best-selling Swagger family saga finds the grandson of talented gunfighter Charles Swagger discovering a cache of his mysterious grandfather's FBI memorabilia and resolving to discover his progenitor's fate before realizing that he is being stalked. *PW* ended their review with "Hunter's skilled ear for dialogue and idiom has never been better, and some of the action scenes—especially a chapter describing the famous robbery of the Merchants National Bank in South Bend, Ind., on June 30, 1934—are as elegant as they are disturbing."

Knoll, Jessica. [Luckiest Girl Alive](#) (\$9.99). Grooming herself for an ideal life involving a successful career and a happy marriage, a rising young journalist confronts a violent episode from her past that threatens to unravel everything she has worked to achieve. This intense debut novel garnered plenty of positive reviews including *LJ* which had this to say "Knoll's debut truly delivers and will keep readers engaged until the end. With multi-layered characters and a plot that twists and turns, it's a bit harsh compared to the usual chick lit and is not recommended for the faint of heart." In my review of her new novel above you will see I disagree with *LJ*, etc. Substitute the second Jane Hawk by Dean Koontz, [The Whispering Room](#) (\$9.99), just moved up from June into May.

Slaughter, Karin. [The Good Daughter](#) (\$9.99). Decades after a shattering confrontation that left her mother dead and her sister traumatized, a New York-based lawyer returns to her Atlanta hometown to help her father save the life of a young woman accused of a school shooting. Even *Kirkus* loved Slaughter's latest saying "It's hard to think of any writer since Flannery O'Connor, referenced at several key moments here, who's succeeded as consistently as Slaughter at using horrific violence to evoke pity and terror. Whether she's extending her franchise or creating stand-alones like this, she really does make your hair stand on end."

#### NEW IN SMALL PAPERBACK

Barton, Beverly. [The Last to Die](#) (Kensington \$7.99). When her former boyfriend, the heir to the Upton fortune, is brutally murdered, Jazzy Talbot becomes the prime suspect in the investigation and finds an unexpected ally in Caleb McCord, a mysterious stranger who helps her expose the dark secrets of the town in order to clear her name.

Cussler, Clive. [Nighthawk](#) (\$9.99). NUMA Files #14. When the most advanced aircraft ever designed vanishes over the South Pacific, Kurt Austin and Joe Zavala are drawn into a deadly race to recover the fallen technology, which carries a secret payload of exotic matter capable of triggering an Armageddon-level catastrophe.

Evanovich, Jane. [Dangerous Minds](#) (\$8.99). In this follow-up to *Curious Minds* pits mismatched partners Riley Moon, a financial analyst; and Emerson Knight, an eccentric billionaire's son, against a big-league criminal whose activities pose a series of puzzle-like clues.

Kirsanow, Peter. [Target Omega](#) (\$9.99). When the other members of his elite, covert unit are assassinated after a successful operation in Pakistan, Michael Garin is targeted by two governments while he races against time to prevent a catastrophic attack.

McBride, Michael. [Forsaken](#) (Kensington \$9.99). When scientists at a research station in Antarctica awaken a strange and ancient organism that they are unable to control, a half-human hybrid that is still evolving is unleashed on the world and has the hunger and power to wipe out the human race.

Murphy, Shirley. [A Cat Shining Bright](#) (\$7.99). Joe Grey #20. Missing his crime-solving work in spite of his delight in training his three kittens, cat detective Joe Grey assists an investigation into the murders of a beautician and one of her customers, only to have his kittens complicate the case.

Sefton, Maggie. [Only Skein Deep](#) (\$7.99). House of Lambspun #15. When the scandal-marked young wife of a banking scion is found dead on the greens at a local golfing club, pregnant Kelly Flynn and the Lambspun Knitters race the clock to identify an unhinged killer in their midst.

Storey, Erik. [Promise to Kill](#) (\$9.99). Clyde Barr assists a sick and elderly Ute Indian whose community on a nearby reservation is being overrun by a menacing biker gang that is harassing and attacking locals.