

# Midmonth BookNotes

Volume 6 Issue 05 May

4014 N. Goldwater Blvd., Scottsdale, AZ 85251

(888) 560-9919 • (480) 947-2974

poisonedpen.com • sales@poisonedpen.com



## A Marvelous May

**Andrews, Mary K.** [Sunset Beach](#)

(St Martins \$28.99)

Out of a job and down on her luck, Drue Campbell's life doesn't seem to be getting any better when her estranged father, Brice Campbell, a flamboyant personal injury attorney, shows up at her mother's funeral after a twenty-year absence. Worse, he's remarried – to Drue's eighth grade frenemy, Wendy, now his office manager. And they're offering her a job. With no other prospects on the horizon, Drue begrudgingly joins the firm, spending her days screening out the grifters whose phone calls flood the law office. Working with Wendy is no picnic either. But when a suspicious death at an exclusive beach resort nearby exposes possible corruption at her father's firm, she goes from unwilling cubicle rat to unwitting investigator, and is drawn into a case that may – or may not – involve her father. No one does easy, breezy beach reads quite like Andrews!

**Bauermeister, E.** [The Scent Keeper](#)

(St Martins \$26.99)

Emmeline lives an enchanted childhood on a remote island with her father, who teaches her about the natural world through her senses. What he won't explain are the mysterious scents stored in the drawers that line the walls of their cabin, or the origin of the machine that creates them. As Emmeline grows, however, so too does her curiosity, until one day the unforeseen happens, and Emmeline is vaulted out into the real world--a place of love, betrayal, ambition, and revenge. To understand her past, Emmeline must unlock the clues to her identity, a quest that challenges the limits of her heart and imagination.

They say that scent is the most powerful of all trigger of memories, and this lovely and lyrically written story uses that sense to demonstrate how it can reveal hidden truths, lead us to the person we most need in our lives, and even help us find our way back home.

**Benjamin, Melanie.** [Mistress of the Ritz](#)

(Bantam \$28)

In March 1940, the Nazis sweep Paris and immediately take up residence in one of the city's most iconic sites: The Hotel Ritz. There, under a roof legendary for its unprecedented luxury and for its fabled residents--including Coco Chanel, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Cole Porter, Hemingway, Balanchine, Doris Duke, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and now Hermann Goering--the Nazis rule over a paralyzed city. But two residents of the Ritz refuse to be defeated: its director, Claude Auzello, and his beautiful American actress wife, Blanche. They not only oversee the smooth workings of the hotel, but both Blanche and Claude throw themselves fearlessly into the dangerous and clandestine workings of the French Resistance. *New York Times* best-selling Benjamin has developed quite the literary knack for using real historical figures – including Anne Lindbergh, Mary Pickford, and Truman Capote - as the foundation for her novels - and her latest impeccably crafted book is no exception. This will be the equivalent of literary catnip for any reader of historical fiction.

**Blake, Sarah.** [The Guest Book](#)

(Flatiron \$27.99)

Kitty and Ogden Milton appear to have everything--perfect children, good looks, a loving marriage every-

one envies. But after a tragedy befalls them, Ogden tries to bring Kitty back to life by purchasing Crockett's Island off the coast of Maine. That island, and its house, comes to define and burnish the Milton family name, year after year after year. And it is there that Kitty issues a refusal that will haunt her till the day she dies. When Kitty's granddaughter hears that she and her cousins might be forced to sell it, and when her husband brings back disturbing evidence about her grandfather's past, she realizes she is on the verge of finally understanding the silences that seemed to hover just below the surface of her family all her life. Blake's latest compelling family saga has garnered an impressive number of starred reviews including one from *PW* which concluded with "Blake has a particular knack for dialogue; she knows exactly how to reveal the hidden depths of the characters both through what is said and what is unsaid. The result is potent and mesmerizing."

**Bradford, Laura.** [A Daughter's Truth](#)  
(Kensington \$15.95)

Emma Lapp knows she's a reminder of her mother's greatest sorrow, having been born on the same day Mamm lost her beloved sister. The one bright spot has been the odd trinkets anonymously left at her aunt's grave each year on Emma's birthday—gifts Emma secretly hides because they upset her parents. But the day she turns 22, a locket bears a surprise that sends her on an unexpected journey. Searching for answers, Emma travels to the English world and finds a kinship as intriguing as it is forbidden. But is this newfound connection enough to leave behind the future she'd expected? The answers are as mysterious, and as devastating, as the truth that divides Emma from the only family, and the only life she's ever known. Bradford is also the author of the Claire Weatherly Amish mysteries.

**Chiaverini, Jen.** [Resistance Women](#)  
(Harper \$26.99)

After Wisconsin graduate student Mildred Fish marries brilliant German economist Arvid Harnack, she accompanies him to his German homeland, where a promising future awaits. In the thriving intellectual culture of 1930s Berlin, the newlyweds create a rich new life filled with love, friendships, and rewarding

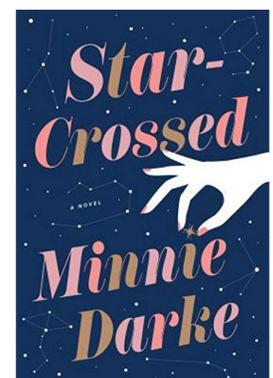
work—but the rise of a malevolent new political faction inexorably changes their fate. As Adolf Hitler and his Nazi Party wield violence and lies to seize power, Mildred, Arvid, and their friends resolve to resist. Chiaverini's latest mesmerizing historical centers on the real historical exploits of four women – Mildred Arvid, Martha Dodd (the daughter of the American ambassador to Germany), Greta Kuckoff (an aspiring author), and Sara Weitz (a Jewish literature student) – who worked together to try and bring down the Third Reich from within Germany.

**Constantine, Liv.** [The Last Time I Saw You](#)  
(HarperCollins \$26.99)

Dr. Kate English's perfect life – successful career, perfect husband, adorable daughter, showcase home – shatters into a million pieces when her mother Lily is found brutally murdered in her own home. The only bright spot in the whole ordeal is the fact that Kate's old friend Blaire Barrington turns up at the funeral to pay her respects. Kate and Blaire were thick as thieves throughout school and college right up until the day of Kate's wedding. Now whatever it was that has kept them apart seems to have vanished as Blaire, a successful mystery writer with her own husband, insists on staying with Kate until the investigation into Lily's death is completed. As it turns out, it is a good thing for Kate that Blaire is a mystery writer since she will need Blaire's professional expertise when evidence suggests that her mother's killer could be anyone within the close circle of people surrounding Kate. Fans of stylish domestic suspense a la Mary Higgins Clark will adore this sleekly plotted, twist-filled book by the two sisters responsible for the internationally best-selling *The Last Mrs. Parrish*.

**Darke, Minnie.** [Star-Crossed](#)  
(Crown \$26)

When childhood sweethearts Justine (Sagittarius and serious skeptic) and Nick (Aquarius and true believer) bump into each other as adults, a life-changing love affair seems inevitable. To Justine, anyway. Especially when she learns Nick is an astrological devotee whose decisions are



guided by the stars, and more specifically, by the horoscopes in his favorite magazine. The same magazine Justine happens to write for. As Nick continues to *not* fall headlong in love with her, Justine decides to take Nick's horoscope, and Fate itself, into her own hands. But, of course, Nick is not the only Aquarius making important life choices according to what is written in the stars. This charming and clever debut deftly explores the question of whether our romantic future lies in the stars or in ourselves.

**Dev, Sonali.** [Pride, Prejudice, and Other Flavors](#) (HarperCollins \$15.99)

Acclaimed neurosurgeon, Dr. Trisha Raje, clashes with the chef and restaurant owner, DJ Caine, over pedigree, pride, and arrogance, but must find a common ground with him in order to save DJ's sister. In addition to serving up a smorgasbord of intriguing characters and a plot that deftly tackles topics such as family and forgiveness, Dev provides enough mouthwatering descriptions of the dishes Cordon Bleu-trained chef DJ cooks up to make that worth the book's price all by itself in this delicious, gender-swapping, multicultural spin on Austen's beloved classic romance *Pride and Prejudice*.

**Donohue, Meg.** [You, Me, and the Sea](#) (HarperCollins \$15.99)

As a child, Merrow Shawe believes she is born of the sea: strong, joyous, and wild. Her beloved home is Horseshoe Cliff, a small farm on the coast of Northern California where she spends her days exploring fog-cloaked bluffs, swimming in the cove, and basking in the light of golden sunsets as her father entertains her with fantastical stories. It is an enchanting childhood, but it is not without hardship—the mystery of Merrow's mother's death haunts her, as does the increasingly senseless cruelty of her older brother, Bear. Then, like sea glass carried from a distant land, Amir arrives in Merrow's life. He's been tossed about from India to New York City and now to Horseshoe Cliff, to stay with her family. What if Cathy from Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* had lived? Would she have taken the safe and expected route in matrimony and chosen Edgar or would she have gambled everything and taken a chance with Heathcliff? Donohue admits to being "equally haunted and fascinated by *Wuther-*

*ing Heights*" ever since she first read the classic tale of forbidden love twenty years ago *You, Me, and the Sea* is her authorial attempt to recreate the intensity of Cathy and Heathcliff's infamous relationship as well as give readers the kind of dramatic setting found in Brontë's classic tale of love and desire.

**Frank, Dorothea Benton.** [Queen Bee](#) (HarperCollins \$27.99)

Beekeeper Holly McNee Kensen quietly lives in a world of her own on Sullivan's Island, tending her hives and working at the local island library, but her quiet life is unexpectedly upended when her more flamboyant sister Leslie returns home and both sisters, polar opposites; fixate on what's happening in their neighbor Archie's home. In her twentieth novel, Dorothea Benton Frank brings us back to her beloved Sullivan's Island with an unforgettable story where the Lowcountry magic of the natural world collides with the beat of the human heart.



**Hoang, Helen.** [The Bride Test](#) (Berkley \$15)

Hoang's debut *The Kiss Quotient* was a big hit with readers, and the expectations for her second contemporary were high. Fortunately, Hoang does it again with this heartwarming and heart-wrenching love story about Esme Tran, who while working as a maid in Vietnam meets a woman looking for a bride for her American son Khai. Thinking it might be the chance to give her five year old daughter a better life, Esme agrees to spend the summer with Khai, an autistic accountant, who believes he is incapable of love. Hoang is a favorite among several Poisoned Pen staff members including Elinor.

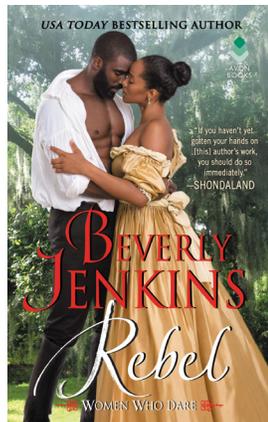
**Jaswal, Balli Kaur.** [The Unlikely Adventures of the Shergill Sisters](#) (Harper \$26.95)

The British-born Punjabi Shergill sisters—Rajni, Jezmeen, and Shirnia—were never close and barely got along growing up, and now as adults, have grown even further apart. Rajni, a school principal is a stickler for order. Jezmeen, a thirty-year-old struggling

actress, fears her big break may never come. Shirina, the peacemaking “good” sister married into wealth and enjoys a picture-perfect life. On her deathbed, their mother voices one last wish: that her daughters will make a pilgrimage together to the Golden Temple in Amritsar to carry out her final rites. Arriving in India, these sisters will make unexpected discoveries about themselves, their mother, and their lives—and learn the real story behind the trip Rajni took with their Mother long ago—a momentous journey that resulted in Mum never being able to return to India again. According to the author, *The Unlikely Adventures of the Shergill Sisters* is a female take on the Indian travel narrative. «I was curious about how different the trip would be if it were undertaken by women, who are vulnerable to different dangers in a male-dominated society,» Balli Kaur Jaswal writes. «I also wanted to explore the tensions between tradition and modernity in immigrant communities, and particularly how those tensions play out among women like these sisters, who are the first generation to be raised outside of India.»

**Jenkins, Beverly.** [Rebel](#)  
(Avon \$7.99)

Valinda Lacey’s mission in the steamy heart of New Orleans is to help the newly emancipated community survive and flourish. But soon she discovers that here, freedom can also mean danger. When thugs destroy the school she has set up and then target her, Valinda runs for her life—and straight into the arms of Captain Drake LeVeq. As an architect from an old New Orleans family, Drake has a deeply personal interest in rebuilding the city. Raised by strong women, he recognizes Valinda’s determination. And he can’t stop admiring—or wanting—her. But when Valinda’s father demands she return home to marry a man she doesn’t love, her daring rebellion draws Drake into an irresistible intrigue. Jenkins continues to impress readers with her compelling characters, strong sense of place, and fascinating glimpses into the important role African-Americans played in shaping our country.



**Johns, Ana.** [The Woman in the White Kimono](#)  
(Park Row \$26.99)

Japan, 1957. Seventeen-year-old Naoko Nakamura’s prearranged marriage to the son of her father’s business associate would secure her family’s status in their traditional Japanese community, but Naoko has fallen for another man—an American sailor, a *gaijin*—and to marry him would bring great shame upon her entire family. When it’s learned Naoko carries the sailor’s child, she’s cast out in disgrace and forced to make unimaginable choices with consequences that will ripple across generations. America, present day. Tori Kovac, caring for her dying father, finds a letter containing a shocking revelation—one that calls into question everything she understood about him, her family and herself. Setting out to learn the truth behind the letter, Tori’s journey leads her halfway around the world to a remote seaside village in Japan, where she must confront the demons of the past to pave a way for redemption.

**Kane, Jessica Francis.** [Rules for Visiting](#)  
(Penguin \$26)

Inspired by reading the tribute site to a beloved author and the unexpected gift of a month’s worth of paid leave, reclusive university gardener May Ataway, who truth be told is more at home with plants than people, embarks on an odyssey to reconnect with four once-close friends - Lindy, Neera, Vanessa, and Rose – and while visiting them discovers the important role friendship plays in all our lives. In this quietly charming and surprisingly timely book, Kane explores the role of friendship in the digital age as her protagonist opts to bypass “connecting” with others online in favor of spending time in person with those near and dear to us.

**Lauren, Christina.** [The Unhoneymooners](#)  
(Gallery \$16)

When her twin sister and new brother-in-law get food poisoning at their wedding, maid of honor Olive Torres, accompanied by her nemesis, the best man Ethan Thomas, winds up going on the new couple’s Hawaiian honeymoon. After all, ten days of bliss in Maui is worth having to assume the role of loving newlyweds, right? But the weird thing is...Olive is suddenly not minding being Thomas’ new wife

quite as much as she thought she might. Lauren, the pen name of long-time friends Christina Hobbs and Lauren Billings, once again score big with this fresh, funny rom-com.

**Layne, Lauren.** [Passion on Park Avenue](#)  
(Gallery \$16)

Naomi Powell, the strong-willed CEO of one of the biggest jewelry empires in the country, fights to find her place in Manhattan's upper class while engaging in a battle of wits with her potential new neighbor—and former childhood tormentor—Oliver Cunningham when she discovers she has been approved for an interview at a coveted Park Avenue co-op, where Oliver now lives.

**Lim, Roselle.** [Natalie Tan's Book of Luck and Fortune](#)  
(Berkley \$16)

Natalie Tan hasn't spoken with her mother for more than seven years ever since Natalie left home over her mother's objections to pursue a career as a chef. Now after receiving word of her mother's death, Natalie returns home only to be shocked when she discovers the vibrant neighborhood of San Francisco's Chinatown that she remembers from her childhood is fading, with businesses failing and families moving out. She's even more surprised to learn she has inherited her grandmother's restaurant. The neighborhood seer reads the restaurant's fortune in the leaves: Natalie must cook three recipes from her grandmother's cookbook to aid her struggling neighbors before the restaurant will succeed. Unfortunately, Natalie has no desire to help them try to turn things around—she resents the local shopkeepers for leaving her alone to take care of her agoraphobic mother when she was growing up. But with the support of a surprising new friend and a budding romance, Natalie starts to realize that maybe her neighbors really have been there for her all along.

**McKenna, Lindsay.** [Out Rider](#)  
(Harlequin \$7.99)

A Ranger with the U.S. Forest Service, former Marine Devorah McGuire arrives in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, for a fresh start and finds herself attracted to her new mentor, canine handler and horseman Sloan Rankin, as danger stalks them at every turn.

**Meyers, Randy Susan.** [Waisted](#)  
(Atria \$26)

Alice and Daphne, both successful and accomplished working mothers, harbor the same secret: obsession with their weight overshadows concerns about their children, husbands, work—and everything else of importance in their lives. The two women meet at *Waisted*. Located in a remote Vermont mansion, the program promises fast, dramatic weight loss, and Alice, Daphne, and five other women are desperate enough to leave behind their families for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. The catch? They must agree to always be on camera; afterward, the world will see *Waisted: The Documentary*. The women soon discover that the filmmakers have trapped them in a cruel experiment. With each pound lost, they edge deeper into obsession and instability...until they decide to take matters into their own hands. *Library Journal* concluded their incisive review with these words "culturally inclusive and societally on point, this is a must-read."

**Miller, Linda Lael.** [The Yankee Widow](#)  
(Mira \$26.99)

Protecting her child and Gettysburg farm at the height of the Civil War, widowed Caroline Hammond faces difficult choices when she offers shelter to a dedicated Union soldier, a passionate Southern rebel and a pregnant fugitive slave. Miller doesn't shy away from depicting the brutal and bloody realities of a war that divided family and friends in her latest moving novel that will definitely draw in historical romance readers with its poignant love story and historical fiction fans with its impeccably realized setting.

**Orringer, Julie.** [The Flight Portfolio](#)  
(Knopf \$27.95)

In 1940, Varian Fry--a Harvard educated American journalist--traveled to Marseille carrying three thousand dollars and a list of imperiled artists and writers he hoped to rescue within a few weeks. Instead, he ended up staying in France for thirteen months, working under the veil of a legitimate relief organization to procure false documents, amass emergency funds, and set up an underground railroad that led over the Pyrenees, into Spain, and finally to Lisbon, where the refugees embarked for safer ports. Among

his many clients were Hannah Arendt, Franz Werfel, André Breton, Max Ernst, Marcel Duchamp, and Marc Chagall. *The Flight Portfolio* opens at the Chagalls' ancient stone house in Gordes, France, as the novel's hero desperately tries to persuade them of the barbarism and tragedy descending on Europe.

**Page, Katherine Hall.** [The Body in The Wake](#)

For the first time in years, Faith Fairchild has time for herself. Her husband Tom is spending days on the other side of the island using a friend's enhanced WiFi for a project; their son, Ben, after his first year in college, is studying abroad for the summer; and their daughter Amy is working at the old Laughing Gulls Lodge, now a revamped conference center. Faith is looking forward to some projects of her own. Her friend Sophie Maxwell is also spending the summer on Sanpere Island, hoping for distractions from her worries that she isn't yet pregnant. And the daughter of Faith's good friend Pix Miller is getting married to a wonderful guy . . . with a less-than-wonderful mother. Between keeping Sophie's spirits up and Pix's blood pressure down, Faith has her hands full. And that's before a body with a mysterious tattoo and connections far away from small Sanpere Island appears in the Lily Pond. Once again, Faith will get to the bottom of this strange case—and whip up a delicious blueberry buckle on the side. Page does a particularly splendid job capturing the joys of summertime in Maine in the 25<sup>th</sup> crackerjack entry in her award-winning series featuring caterer/wife/mother/amateur sleuth Faith Fairchild making it a real treat for both old fans and new readers alike. The Poisoned Pen was able to secure a limited number of signed copies of this cozy masterpiece.

**Pearce, AJ.** [Dear Mrs. Bird](#)

(Scribner \$16)

Emmeline Lake and her best friend Bunty are doing their bit for the war effort and trying to stay cheerful, despite the German planes making their nightly raids. Emmy dreams of becoming a Lady War Correspondent, and when she spots a job advertisement in the newspaper she seizes her chance; but after a rather unfortunate misunderstanding, she finds herself typing letters for the formidable Henrietta Bird, renowned advice columnist of *Woman's Friend*

magazine. Mrs. Bird is very clear: letters containing any Unpleasantness must go straight into the bin. But as Emmy reads the desperate pleas from women who many have Gone Too Far with the wrong man, or can't bear to let their children be evacuated, she begins to secretly write back to the readers who have poured out their troubles. If you missed this remarkable debut in hardcover, now is your chance to read what I think is one of the best books of the year. Sweet yet not sappy, heart-wrenching yet heart-warming, *Dear Mrs. Bird*



not only “perfectly captures the courage of ordinary people in extraordinary times” it is a moving literary tribute to the power and importance of friendship in our lives.

**Ramos, Joanne.** [The Farm: A Novel](#)

(Doubleday \$24.95)

Nestled in New York's Hudson Valley is a luxury retreat boasting every amenity: organic meals, personal fitness trainers, daily massages—and all of it for free. In fact, you're paid big money to stay here—more than you've ever dreamed of. The catch? For nine months, you cannot leave the grounds, your movements are monitored, and you are cut off from your former life while you dedicate yourself to the task of producing the perfect baby. For someone else. Jane Reyes, an immigrant from the Philippines, is in desperate search of a better future when she commits to being a “Host” at Golden Oaks—or the Farm, as residents call it. But now pregnant, fragile, consumed with worry for her family, Jane is determined to reconnect with her life outside. Yet she cannot leave the Farm or she will lose the life-changing fee she'll receive on the delivery of her child. This stunning and heartbreaking debut has received a number of rave reviews including one from *LJ* who called it an “exciting read about the politics of motherhood and female autonomy,” and another from Booklist, which said “an alarming and realistic look at the power of wealth and access buoyed by clear, compelling storytelling.” Book discussion groups will want to give this some serious consideration.

**Richardson, Kim Michele.** [The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek](#) (Sourcebooks \$15.99)

Thanks to Roosevelt's Kentucky Pack Horse Library Project, Troublesome's got its very own traveling librarian, Cussy Mary Carter. Cussy's not only a book woman, however, she's also the last of her kind, her skin a shade of blue unlike most anyone else. Not everyone is keen on Cussy's family or the Library Project, and a Blue is often blamed for any whiff of trouble. If Cussy wants to bring the joy of books to the hill folks, she's going to have to confront prejudice as old as the Appalachians and suspicion as deep as the holler. Richardson was inspired by the true stories of the blue-skinned people of Kentucky as well as the brave and dedicated Kentucky Pack Horse library service of the 1930s. A poignant paean to the power of books in our lives.

**Roper, Richard.** [How Not to Die Alone](#) (Penguin \$26)

For years Andrew has worked a thankless public health job, arranging the funerals of and searching for any next of kin the deceased may have had of those who die alone. Luckily, Andrew goes home to a loving family every night. At least, that's what his coworkers believe. A misunderstanding has left Andrew trapped in his own white lie and his lonely apartment. When new employee Peggy breezes into the office like a breath of fresh air, she makes Andrew feel truly alive for the first time in decades. But telling Peggy the truth could mean losing everything. For twenty years, Andrew has worked to keep his heart safe, forgetting one important thing: how to live. Maybe it's time for him to start. This darkly humorous debut by Roper is a heady mix of hope and heartbreak that still manages to be marvelously life-affirming in the end. Fans of Nick Hornby or Frederick Backman will want to add this to their reading lists.

**Rosen, Renee.** [Park Avenue Summer](#) (Berkley \$16)

In 1965, small-town aspiring photographer Alice Weiss finds herself working as a secretary for Helen Gurley Brown, the new editor-in-chief at *Cosmopolitan*, and now Alice must navigate her way through office politics, city life, and unscrupulous men while trying to hold on to her dreams. Rosen perfectly

captures the giddy excitement of New York City in the 1960s as well as chronicling the seemingly never-ending hurdles Brown faced as she tried to put her own stamp on *Cosmopolitan* despite opposition from the men at the top of the corporate ladder.

**Thomas, Jodi.** [The Little Teashop on Main](#) (Harlequin \$15.99)

Three childhood friends—Zoey, a free spirit who struggles with body image, Emily, who lives her life vicariously through characters in books, and Shannon, a strong athlete who fears abandonment—keep up with their regular tea parties until the unthinkable happens. Fans of Robyn Carr and Debbie Macomber will want to check out this new title from Thomas.

**Wax, Wendy.** [My Ex-Best Friend's Wedding](#) (Berkley \$16)

Prized and stored away for safekeeping, the timeless ivory wedding dress, with its scooped neck and cleverly fitted bodice, sits gently folded in its box, whispering of Happily Ever Afters. To Kendra, Brianna, and Lauren it's a reminder of what could have been, the promise of a fairy tale, and a friendship torn apart. But as Kendra knows firsthand: it wasn't the dress's fault. Once closer than sisters, Lauren and Bree have grown up and grown apart, allowing broken promises and unfulfilled dreams to destroy their friendship. A successful author, Lauren returns home to the Outer Banks, fiancé in tow, to claim the dress she never thought she'd wear. While Bree, a bookstore owner, grapples with the realities of life after you marry the handsome prince. As the former best friends wrestle with their uncertain futures, they are both certain of one thing: some betrayals can never be forgiven. Now on the eve of her daughter Lauren's wedding, Kendra struggles with a secret she's kept for far too long. And vows to make sure the dress will finally bring Lauren and Bree back together—knowing they'll need each other to survive the coming storm.

**Weiner, Jennifer.** [Mrs. Everything](#) (Atria \$27.99)

Growing up in 1950s Detroit, Jo and Bethie Kaufman live in a perfect "Dick and Jane" house, where their roles in the family are clearly defined. Jo is the tomboy, the bookish rebel with a passion to make the

world more fair; Bethie is the pretty, feminine good girl, a would-be star who enjoys the power her beauty confers and dreams of a traditional life. But the truth ends up looking different from what the girls imagined. Jo and Bethie survive traumas and tragedies. As their lives unfold against the background of free love and Vietnam, Woodstock and women's lib, Bethie becomes an adventure-loving wild child who dives headlong into the counterculture and is up for anything (except settling down). Meanwhile, Jo becomes a proper young mother in Connecticut, a witness to the changing world instead of a participant. Neither woman inhabits the world she dreams of, nor has a life that feels authentic or brings her joy. Is it too late for the women to finally stake a claim on happily ever after?

**Weir, Alison.** [Anna of Kleve](#)  
(Ballantine \$28)

Newly widowed and the father of an infant son, Henry VIII realizes he must marry again to ensure the royal succession. Forty-six, overweight, and suffering from gout, Henry is soundly rejected by some of Europe's most eligible princesses. Anna of Kleve, from a small German duchy, is twenty-four, and has a secret she is desperate to keep hidden. Henry commissions her portrait from his court painter, who depicts her from the most flattering perspective. Entranced by the lovely image, Henry is bitterly surprised when Anna arrives in England and he sees her in the flesh. Some think her attractive, but Henry knows he can never love her. What follows is the fascinating story of an awkward royal union that somehow had to be terminated. Weir continues her string of historical novels featuring the six wives of Henry VIII with this compelling tale about one of the few women, who after royally disappointing him, still managed to not only survive his wrath but become friends with Henry.

**White, Kate.** [Such a Perfect Wife](#)  
(HarperCollins \$16.99)

When Shannon Blaine goes out for her normal run one morning in Lake George after dropping her kids off at school but then vanishes, true crime reporter Bailey Weggins is just one of the media journalists scrambling to cover the case. After all, what could have happened to Shannon? Did she just become

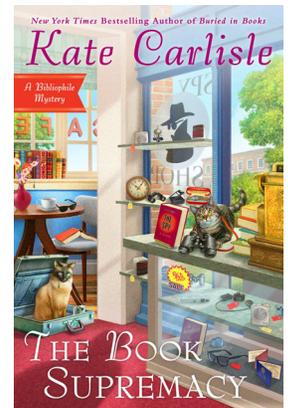
overwhelmed by all the pressures of being a perfect wife and mother and decide to take a "vacation?" Was she snatched up by a stranger? Or was the guilty party someone closer to home like Shannon's husband? White's latest is another stylish tale of fast-paced suspense a la Mary Higgins Clark, or as *Kirkus* aptly defined the series protagonist "A grown-up Nancy Drew for grown-up girl detectives."

## A JUNE 8 AUTHOR TRIO

*New York Times* best-selling authors Jennifer Ashley, Kate Carlisle, and Lauren Willig will be appearing together for a fun afternoon of tea, talk, and treats on Saturday June 8<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM. For more on their latest books see below.

**Ashley, Jennifer.** [Death in Kew Gardens](#)  
(Berkley \$15)

In Ashley's third engaging mystery featuring Victorian cook and sleuth Kat Holloway, Kat once again finds herself involved in a murder investigation when her employer's next-door neighbor Sir Jacob is found murdered and the police arrest Chinese scholar Li Bai Chang. Kat, who had met Mr. Li earlier when they bumped into one another, knows he can't be guilty of the crime, but now it will be up to her and her circle of friends and fellow servants to prove Mr. Li's innocence. Ashley deftly integrates some fascinating details about the hunt for botanical samples around the world by Victorian adventurers as well as some interesting facts about the complex relationship that existed between China and Victorian Great Britain.



**Carlisle, Kate.** [The Book Supremacy](#)  
(Berkley \$25)

Newlyweds Brooklyn and Derek are enjoying the final days of their honeymoon in Paris. As they're browsing the book stalls along the Seine, Brooklyn finds the perfect gift for Derek, a first edition James Bond novel, *The Spy Who Loved Me*. When they bump into Ned, an old friend from Derek's spy days,

Brooklyn shows him her latest treasure. Once they're back home in San Francisco, they visit a spy shop Ned mentioned. The owner begs them to let him display the book Brooklyn found in Paris as part of the shop's first anniversary celebration. Before they agree, Derek makes sure the security is up to snuff--turns out, the unassuming book is worth a great deal more than sentimental value. Soon after, Derek is dismayed when he receives a mysterious letter from Paris announcing Ned's death. Then late one night, someone is killed inside the spy shop. Are the murders connected to Brooklyn's rare, pricey book? Is there something even more sinister afoot? PW concluded their review with "Book lovers and Bond fans won't want to miss this cozy."

**Willig, Lauren.** [The Summer Country](#)  
(Harper \$26.99)

Emily Dawson has always been the poor cousin in a prosperous English merchant clan-- merely a vicar's daughter, and a reform-minded vicar's daughter, at that. Everyone knows that the family's lucrative shipping business will go to her cousin, Adam, one day. But when her grandfather dies, Emily receives an unexpected inheritance: Peverills, a sugar plantation in Barbados--a plantation her grandfather never told anyone he owned. When Emily accompanies her cousin and his new wife to Barbados, she finds Peverills a burnt-out shell, reduced to ruins in 1816, when a rising of enslaved people sent the island up in flames. Rumors swirl around the derelict plantation; people whisper of ghosts. Why would her practical-minded grandfather leave her a property in ruins? Why are the neighboring plantation owners, the Davenants, so eager to acquire Peverills? The answer lies in the past-- a tangled history of lies, greed, clandestine love, heartbreaking betrayal, and a bold bid for freedom.

## A CLASSIC RETURNS

**Dunnett, Dorothy.** [The Game of Kings](#)  
(Vintage \$18)

Long before readers were consumed by the political intrigues found in *The Game of Thrones* and were swept away by the intense romanticism of *Outlander*, there were the six books written by Dorothy Dun-

nett known as *The Lymond Chronicles*. Originally published between 1961 and 1975, the books follow the adventures of Francis Crawford of Lymond -- alternately called traitor and murderer -- who has returned home to Scotland to redeem his reputation and rescue his home. In *The Game of Kings*, it's 1547, and Scotland has been humiliated by an English invasion and further threatened by intrigues from beyond its borders. Yet, the country is still free, but its freedom may rest on a man accused of treason. Francis Crawford of Lymond is a scapegrace nobleman of crooked felicities and murderous talents, possessed of a scholar's erudition and a tongue as wicked as a rapier. Now Francis is back home determined to clear his name and defend his people -- even it costs him his life. Once you read *The Game of Kings* and become hooked, the next titles in this fabulous series are *Queen's Play*, *The Disorderly Knights*, *Pawn in Frankincense*, *The Ringed Castle*, and *Checkmate*.