

Midmonth BookNotes

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New Year, New Books

AUTHOR EVENT

Allison Brennan, Christina Dodd, and Paige Shelton

Saturday, February 8, 2020, at 2 PM

Join three best-selling authors for an afternoon of hot tea and cold suspense!

Brennan, Allison. [The Third to Die](#)
(MIRA \$26.99)

Detective Kara Quinn, on leave from the LAPD, is on an early morning jog in her hometown of Liberty Lake when she comes upon the body of a young nurse. The manner of death shows a pattern of highly controlled rage. Meanwhile in DC, FBI special agent Mathias Costa is staffing his newly minted Mobile Response Team. Word reaches Matt that the Liberty Lake murder fits the profile of the compulsive Triple Killer. It will be the first case for the MRT. This time they have a chance to stop this zealous if elusive killer before he strikes again. Brennan, author of several different series including the Lucy Kincaid books, launches a new series that *PW* says “Fans of Jeff Abbott and Karin Slaughter will find hard to put down.”

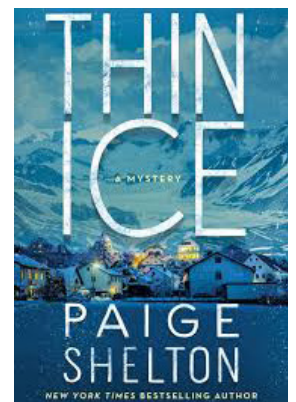
Dodd, Christina. [Strangers She Knows](#)
(HQN \$27.99 or \$16.99)

Dodd returns to the Poisoned Pen for the wrap-up to her Cape Charade trilogy with a nail-biter of a tale that has her series protagonist Kellen Adams, along with her husband Max Di Luca and their young daughter, taking a family “vacation” on Isla Paraiso, the Di Luca family’s private island off the coast of Northern California in an effort to escape Mara Philippi, an obsessed serial killer who has a score to

settle with Kellen. Throw a spooky, old, gothic family mansion on the island and a plot thread that goes back to World War II, and you have all the ingredients for an addictive, compulsively readable tale. *Strangers She Knows* comes in both a hardcover (limited number of copies) and trade paperback edition and Dodd will be happy to sign either as well as *Dead Girl Running* and *What Doesn’t Kill Her*, the first two installments in Kellen Adams series.

Shelton, Paige. [Thin Ice](#)
(St. Martin’s \$26.99)

Shelton is the author of several popular cozy mystery series including The Scottish Bookshop mysteries and a favorite of Poisoned Pen staff and customers. Now Shelton turns her hand to suspense with the first in a new series set in Alaska featuring Beth Rivers. Known to the world as thriller author Elizabeth Fairchild, Beth had become the subject of a fanatic’s obsession. After being held in a van for three days by her kidnapper, Levi Brooks, Beth managed to escape, and until he is captured, she’s got to get away. Cold and remote, Alaska seems tailor-made



for her to hideout. Beth's new home in Alaska is sparsely populated with people who all seem to be running or hiding from something. *Kirkus* had this to say about Shelton's new venture "A page-turner with an unusual location and a coda that provides more questions than answers."

NEW HISTORICAL FICTION, MYSTERIES, ROMANCE, AND MORE

Bailey, Tessa. [Love Her or Lose Her](#) (HarperCollins \$15.99)

Rosie and Dominic Vega are the perfect couple: high school sweethearts, best friends, madly in love. Well, they used to be anyway. Now Rosie's lucky to get a caveman grunt from the ex-soldier every time she walks in the door. Dom is faithful and a great provider, but the man she fell in love with ten years ago is nowhere to be found. When her girlfriends encourage Rosie to demand more out of life and pursue her dream of opening a restaurant, she decides to demand more out of love, too. Three words: marriage boot camp. Bailey's latest sexy and funny contemporary romance has already garnered serious attention including being named one of *Oprah Magazine's* 22 Romance Novels That Are Set to Be the Best of 2020 and *Marie Claire's* Best New Books of 2020.

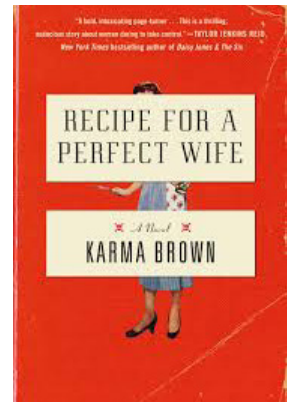
Blackwell, Juliet. [The Vineyards of Champagne](#) (Berkley \$16)

Deep within the labyrinth of caves that lies below the lush, rolling vineyards of the Champagne region, an underground city of women and children hums with life. Forced to take shelter from the unrelenting onslaught of German shellfire above, the bravest and most defiant women venture out to pluck sweet grapes for the harvest. But wine is not the only secret preserved in the cool, dark cellars. In present day, Rosalyn Acosta travels to Champagne to select vintages for her Napa-based employer. Rosalyn doesn't much care for champagne--or France, for that matter. Since the untimely death of her young husband, Rosalyn finds it a challenge to enjoy anything at all. But as she reads through a precious cache of WWI letters and retraces the lives lived in the limestone tunnels, Rosalyn will unravel a mystery hidden for decades... and find a way to savor her own life again. Blackwell is the author of several cozy mystery series as well as

a number of France-set novels (*The Paris Key*, etc.) that have proven to be wildly popular with Poisoned Pen readers. *Kirkus* concluded their rave review of her latest with "The allure of the decades-old mystery of missing letters juxtaposed against the history of the caves of Champagne makes for a satisfying page-turner."

Brown, Karma. [Recipe for a Perfect Wife](#) (Dutton \$26)

When Alice Hale leaves a career in publicity to become a writer and follows her husband to the New York suburbs, she is unaccustomed to filling her days alone in a big, empty house. But when she finds a vintage cookbook buried in a box in the old home's basement, she becomes captivated by the cookbook's previous owner--1950s housewife Nellie Murdoch. As Alice cooks her way through the past, she realizes that within the cookbook's pages Nellie left clues about her life--including a mysterious series of unsent letters penned to her mother. Soon Alice learns that while baked Alaska and meatloaf five ways may seem harmless, Nellie's secrets may have been anything but. When Alice uncovers a more sinister--even dangerous--side to Nellie's marriage, and has become increasingly dissatisfied with the mounting pressures in her own relationship, she begins to take control of her life and protect herself with a few secrets of her own. While skillfully alternating viewpoints between Alice and Nellie with each chapter, Brown provides plenty of insight into domestic life in the 1950s and exactly how much (and how little) has changed when it comes to how much control women have over their own lives.



Carr, Robyn. [The Country Guesthouse](#) (MIRA \$26.99)

When her best friend dies suddenly, Hannah Russell's carefully crafted plans for her own life take an unexpected detour after she becomes guardian to a five-year-old named Noah. With no absolutely no experience whatsoever at motherhood, Hannah fears she is not up to the challenge of taking care of

a young child. So, Hannah decides to rent a country house in rural Colorado to allow her and Noah the time needed to get to know one another. When they arrive at the house, they are greeted by the owner, a handsome man who promises to stay out of their way. But his clumsy Great Dane, Romeo, has other ideas and Noah immediately bonds with the lovable dog. As Hannah gradually learns how to become a mother, Owen Abrams, who is recovering from his grief over losing his own young son, can't help but be drawn out of his solitude by his guests. Carr continues her best-selling "Sullivan's Crossing" series with another emotionally engaging tale of love, loss, family, and friendship.

Chamberlain, Diane. [Big Lies in a Small Town](#) (St. Martin's \$27.99)

Taking the fall for a crime she did not commit; art student Morgan Christopher finds herself serving a three-year stint in the North Carolina Women's Correctional Center. Her dream of a career in art is put on hold—until a mysterious visitor makes her an offer that will see her released immediately. Her assignment: restore an old post office mural in the small town of Edenton, North Carolina. Morgan knows nothing about art restoration, but desperate to leave prison, she accepts. What she finds under the layers of grime is a painting that tells the story of madness, violence, and a conspiracy of small town secrets that stretches back to WWII when Anna Dale, an artist from New Jersey wins a contest to paint the mural for the post office in Edenton only to disappear under mysterious circumstances. *LJ* had this to say about Chamberlain's latest "Vaguely reminiscent of Donna Tartt's *The Goldfinch*, this is a good fit for mystery lovers, and the crossover among art, history, and mental health is multifaceted and intriguing."

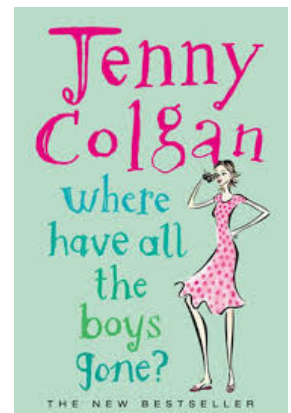
Colfer, Eoin. [Highfire](#) (HarperCollins \$19.99)

The *New York Times* bestselling author of the Artemis Fowl series takes on adult fantasy with a wildly imaginative tale about a vodka-drinking (any other type of alcoholic beverage plays havoc with his internal combustion digestive system), *Flashdance*-loving dragon named Vern (well, his official title is Wyvern, Lord Highfire of the Highfire Eyrie), who has hidden himself away from most of humanity in a fishing shack in the isolated bayous of Louisiana. However,

when Vern rescues a fifteen-year-old Cajun swamp rat nicknamed Squib, who has taken on a part-time job running alcohol and cigarettes for a shady smuggler, from a crooked sheriff with romantic designs on Squibb's mama, all hell breaks loose. If you love Christopher Moore's unique literary sensibility, you will definitely want to give this a try.

Colgan, Jenny. [Where Have All the Boys Gone?](#) (HarperCollins \$16.99)

Faced with the harsh reality that there are 25,000 more women than men in London, Katie's dating prospects are at an all-time low. Resigning herself to the fact that there isn't going to be any sex in the city for her in the foreseeable future, Katie decides to head for the hills; or the tiny town of Fairlish to be exact. Despite the fact she's never been one for muddy rain boots and the fact that Fairlish is smack dab in the middle of nowhere, the tiny Scottish Highlands town does have one major draw: men. LOTS of them! But while Katie relishes the chance to do battle with armies of admirers, she's not excited about going head to head with her shady new boss, Harry. At least there's the local eye-candy to distract her, including gorgeous news-hound Iain. But he is at loggerheads with Harry, and she can't afford to get on Harry's bad side any more than she already has. Life in the country might not be one big roll in the hay, but now that Katie has taken the plunge, can she really turn her back on the delights of Fairlish and return to city life?



Dallas, Sandra. [Westering Women](#) (St. Martin's \$26.99)

After seeing numerous advertisements for "adventuresome young women of high moral character and fine health willing to travel to the gold mines of Goosetown, California for a husband" posted all around Chicago, seamstress Maggie and her young daughter join forty-three other women and two pious reverends on the dangerous 2,000 wagon train journey west to California. No one in the wagon train is prepared for the hardships they will face, but each of the women discover strengths that they didn't

know they have. As Maggie gets to know the other women in the wagon train, she quickly discovers that she is not the only one looking to leave behind a past. So, when a dark secret from Maggie's past threatens to catch up with her, it now becomes clear that her band of "sister" travelers will do whatever it takes to protect one of their own. Dallas is the author of the perennially popular *The Persian Pickle Club* as well as fifteen other vividly written books and is the winner of numerous literary accolades including the Western Writers of America's Spur Award and the Women Writing the West Willa Cather Award. Her latest powerful, emotional, and finely wrought historical novel thoughtfully explores the concept of western girl power on the Overland Trail. (Fans of Sandra Dallas will also want to check out Nancy E. Turner's latest listed below)

Ellison, J.T. [Good Girls Lie](#)

(MIRA \$16.99)

The Goode School, a prestigious prep school hidden away in the small town of Marchburg, Virginia, is a place where appearances are everything. Each year only fifty of the best and brightest daughters of the country's richest and most influential citizens are accepted for admission at the institution, whose long-held traditions and honor code help prepare young women for their brilliant futures at Ivy League universities and beyond. But now a new student, Ash Carlisle, has arrived. Ash is a young woman with a past, and her philosophy is that "there are truths, and there are lies, and then there is everything that really happened, which is where you and I will meet." However, when a popular student is found dead, the truth cannot be ignored, and now the only question is how far will Ash and the other students at the school go to protect their secrets. There is a definite spooky, gothic vibe to *New York Times* best-selling Ellison's latest standalone suspense novel, which was inspired by Ellison's own attendance at a women's college, and the halls of her fictional female school provide the in the author's words a "perfect backdrop for ghost stories, cruelty between teenage girls, and secrets and lies."

Finder, Joseph. [House on Fire](#)

(Dutton \$28)

While attending the funeral of an old army friend, who once saved his life and who has now succumbed

to an opiate addiction, Nick Heller meets a member of the Kimball family, whose pharmaceutical company manufactures the drug Oxydone that caused his buddy's death. The woman wants to turn whistleblower but needs Nick's help. Nick is more than happy to avenge his friend's untimely death, but as he infiltrates his way into the Kimball family, Nick discovers at least one family member will stop at nothing to keep Nick from uncovering the truth. If there was such a subgenre as "corporate thrillers," Finder, author of fifteen best-selling novels including *Killer Instinct* which won the International Thriller Writer's Award for Best Novel, would be its king, and he has an uncanny gift for being able to incorporate whatever social issue is currently dominating the headlines into his fiendishly clever plots. Run out of Grisham and Baldacci books to read? You should definitely give Finder a try.



Gabriele, Lisa. [The Winters](#)

(Penguin \$17)

After a whirlwind romance, a young woman returns to the opulent, secluded Long Island mansion of her new fiancé Max Winter—a wealthy politician and recent widower—and a life of luxury she's never known. But all is not as it appears at the Asherley estate. The house is steeped in the memory of Max's beautiful first wife Rebekah, who haunts the young woman's imagination and feeds her uncertainties, while his very alive teenage daughter Dani makes her life a living hell. She soon realizes there is no clear place for her in this twisted little family: Max and Dani circle each other like cats, a dynamic that both repels and fascinates her, and he harbors political ambitions with which he will allow no woman—alive or dead—to interfere. Daphne Du Maurier's classic novel of romantic suspense *Rebecca* has seen more than its share of literary homages in the past 50 years, but I was incredibly impressed and completely caught up in Gabriele's fiendishly clever take, which according to *LJ* "torques and knots the gothic tale into a modern, compelling, readable novel of domestic suspense." If you missed this in hardcover last year, now is your chance once again return to Manderley.

Hayfield, Olivia. [Wife after Wife](#)

(Berkley \$16)

How can you resist a modern take on the life and marriages of Henry VIII that its publisher bills as “If Philippa Gregory and Jackie Collins went out for cocktails and wrote a book, they’d come back with *Wife After Wife*.” Master of the universe Harry Rose is head of the Rose Corporation, number eighteen on the Forbes rich list, and recently married to wife number six. But in 2018, his perfect world is about to come crashing to the ground. His business is in the spotlight--and not in a good way--and his love life is under scrutiny. Because behind a glittering curtain of lavish parties, gorgeous homes, and a media empire is a tale worthy of any tabloid. And Harry has a lot for which to account. Hayfield is the pseudonym of British author Sue Copsey, who works in publishing (including a stint at Dorling Kindersley as an editor) and has written several children’s books. This is her first adult novel.

James, Miranda. [Careless Whiskers](#)

(Berkley \$26)

Charlie Harris has sworn off investigating murder and mayhem after a recent close call. However, when his daughter, Laura, who’s starring in a production of *Careless Whispers* being put on by the theater department at Athena College and directed by Laura’s husband Frank Salisbury, becomes the police’s number one suspect in the murder of her co-star Luke Lombardi, Charlie has to take center stage, and with his feline sleuthing sidekick Diesel’s help, shine a spotlight on the real killer. The latest in James’ Cat in the Stacks series will have fans of feline mysteries happily purring with satisfaction.

Kelly, Julia. [Whispers of War](#)

(Gallery \$27)

On the eve of the start of World War II, three old childhood friends must choose between friendship or country. Erstwhile socialite Nora is determined to find her place in the Home Office’s Air Raid Precautions Department, matchmaker Hazel tries to mask two closely guarded secrets with irrepressible optimism, and German expat Marie worries that she and her family might face imprisonment in an internment camp if war is declared. When Germany invades Poland and tensions on the home front rise, Marie

is labeled an enemy alien, and the three friends now find themselves fighting together to keep her free at any cost.

Krentz, Jayne Ann. [Vanishing](#)

(Berkley \$27)

Decades ago, in the small town of Fogg Lake, The Incident occurred: an explosion in the cave system that released unknown gases. The residents slept for two days. When they woke up, they discovered that things had changed; they had changed. Some started having visions. Others heard ominous voices. And then, scientists from a mysterious government agency arrived. Determined not to become research subjects of strange experiments, the residents of Fogg Lake blamed their “hallucinations” on food poisoning, and the story worked. Childhood best friends and now co-owners of an investigative firm in Seattle, Catalina Lark and Olivia LeClaire use their special “gifts: to help solve cases. However, when Olivia suddenly disappears one night, no one except Cat takes her disappearance seriously except Slater Arganbright, an agent from a shadowy organization known only as the Foundation, who is investigating the murder of two collectors of paranormal artifacts. The latest suspenseful, sexy, and spooky treat from the always reliable author known as JAK has been gathering up a number of rave reviews including this one from PW, which ends “Krentz masterfully balances mystery, romance, and the paranormal. Readers are sure to be hooked on this new series.”



MacDonald, Andrew David. [When We Were Vikings](#)

(Gallery \$27)

For Zelda, a twenty-one-year-old Viking enthusiast who was born on the fetal alcohol spectrum and lives with her older brother, Gert, life is best lived with some basic rules:

1. A smile means thank you for doing something small that I liked.
2. Fist bumps and dabs = respect.
3. Strange people are not appreciated in her home.
4. Tomatoes must go in the middle of the sandwich

and not get the bread wet.

5. Sometimes the most important things don't fit on lists.

But when Zelda finds out that Gert has resorted to some questionable and dangerous methods to make enough money to keep them afloat, Zelda decides to launch her own quest. Her mission: to be legendary. It isn't long before Zelda finds herself in a battle that tests the reach of her heroism, her love for her brother, and the depth of her Viking strength. Think of this debut as a sort of mix of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime* with *A Man Called Ove*.

Noblin, Annie England. [St. Francis Society for Wayward Pets](#) (HarperCollins \$15.99)

In one memorable day, sports journalist Maeve Stephens lost her boyfriend, her job, and all of the cash she was carrying. Maeve started off the morning by dumping her boyfriend, Seattle Mariners left fielder Derek Mitchell when she and most of the rest of America watched Derek on Channel 33 Action News try to suck the face off another woman in a dodgy nightclub. Maeve then found out the newspaper where she worked was closing, and could she please pack up her desk as she was now out of a job. Adding insult to injury, Maeve is mugged on the way home. Now temporary living at home with her parents, Maeve receives a call from a stranger, who informs her that Maeve's birth mother Annabelle has recently passed away in the small town of Timber Creek. After some serious soul-searching, Maeve decides to attend the funeral and discovers Annabelle has left her a house, a vintage VW Beetle, and a cranky cat. While trying to sort through her legacy, Maeve finds a new set of friends at the St. Francis Society for Wayward Pets, and the possibility of a new future for herself if she can just come to terms with her past. When the cold, cruel world has you down, this charming, sweetly romantic story of family, friendship, and love will restore your faith in humanity.

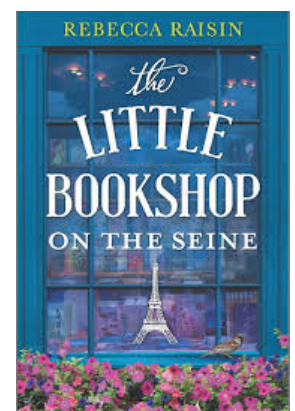
Patrick, Renee. [Script for Scandal](#) (Severn House \$28.99)

Lillian Frost, now working as a social secretary to a LA millionaire, is shocked when her friend, glamorous costume designer Edith Head, hands her the script to a new film that's about to start shooting. *Street-light Story* is based on a true crime: the California Republic bank robbery of 1936. Lillian's beau, LAPD

detective Gene Morrow, was one of the officers on the case; his partner, Teddy, was tragically shot dead. It seems the scriptwriter has put Gene at the centre of a scandal, twisting fact with fiction - or has he? With Gene reluctant to talk about the case, the movie quickly becoming the hottest ticket in town, a suspicious death on the Paramount studio lot and the police reopening the investigation into Teddy's death, Lillian is determined to find answers. Can Lillian and Edith uncover the truth of what happened that fateful day and clear Gene's name? Renee Patrick is the pseudonym for the husband and wife writing team of Vince and Rosemarie Keenan. *Script for Scandal* is the third in the Lillian Frost/Edith Head series, and in the words of the authors is "quite specifically about the birth of film noir although it's difficult for us to think of Renee Patrick books under the noir label. There are too many jokes, for one thing, and a lot of talk about clothes." When pressed to define "noir" the writing duo borrow a definition from their friend Eddie Muller, whose short definition is "suffering in style." In the end, this deliciously fun mystery series really has a little something for any mystery reader, whether they be a fan of cozies, classic whodunits, or historical mysteries or in the words of *PW* "murder, revenge, and sartorial splendor."

Raisin, Rebecca. [The Little Bookshop on the Seine](#) (HQN \$16.99)

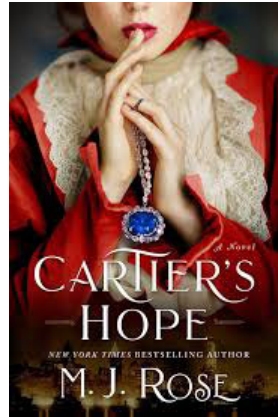
When bookshop owner Sarah Smith is offered the opportunity for a temporary job exchange with her Parisian friend Sophie, who needs a change of scenery after being romantically dumped, saying yes is a no-brainer. Not only will Sarah be helping out a dear friend, it promises to be the experience of a lifetime with days spent surrounded by literature in a gorgeous bookshop, and the chance to watch the snow fall on the Eiffel Tower. Plus, now Sarah can meet up with her journalist boyfriend, Ridge, when his job takes him around the globe. But Sarah's expectations cool faster than her café au lait soon after she lands in the City of Light. The customers are rude, her new coworkers suspicious and her relationship with Ridge has been reduced to



a long-distance game of phone tag, leaving Sarah to wonder if he'll ever put her first over his busy career. As Christmas approaches, Sarah is determined to get the shop; and her life; back in order; and make her dreams of a Parisian happily-ever-after come true. Raisin's heartwarming and sweet love letter to books, reading, friendship, and Paris is *tres, tres charmant* and should be a welcome literary balm to fellow book-lovers and romantics at heart.

Rose, M.J. [Cartier's Hope](#)
(Atria \$27)

Determined to make her mark in Gilded Age New York, heiress turned journalist Vera Garland investigates the curse swirling around jeweler Pierre Cartier's recently acquired Hope Diamond. Vera is particularly interested in the rumor that Cartier is trying to manipulate the value of the diamond by leveraging its notoriety. However, all of Vera's journalistic digging draws the attention of another newspaper publisher, whose blackmailing schemes led to the death of Vera's father. blackmailer behind her father's death. Appealing to young Russian jeweler Jacob Asher for help, Vera is unprepared when she begins falling in love with him; and even more unprepared when she gets caught up in his deceptions and finds herself at risk of losing all she has worked so hard to achieve. Rose (*Tiffany Blues*) has made quite a name for herself with her late 19th and early 20th century historical novels, and *PW* had this to say about her latest "The narrative cleverly explores highlights of early 20th century history and heaps on plenty of intrigue. Rose irresistibly combines elements of mystery, romance, and historical events in this memorable novel." Readers interested in learning more about the Hope Diamond and the Cartier family will also want to consider Francis Cartier Brickell's recently published, fabulously entertaining history on her family [The Cartiers](#) (Ballantine \$35)



Shroff, Mona. [Then, Now, Always](#)
(HQN \$7.99)

Maya Rao is living the dream. She is the owner of a popular café and bakery in New York and the proud mother of a teenage daughter, Samantha. But when Samantha lands in legal trouble over a misdemeanor she didn't commit, Maya is desperate to help her baby, even if it means calling Samantha's dad Sam Hutcherson, a successful lawyer. There is just one teeny, tiny, little problem. Ever since they broke up fifteen years ago, Maya has not been in contact with Sam, and more importantly, Maya neglected to inform Sam he has a daughter. It is always fun to discover a debut author, and Shroff's first contemporary romance is a delight. Need a second opinion? *PW* raved about this saying the couple's "sweet second-chance romance is rendered with nimble prose, quick plotting, and rich cultural details, making it clear that Shroff a writer to watch."

Thynne, Jane. [The Words I Never Wrote](#)
(Ballantine \$27.99)

On a whim, Juno Lambert buys a 1931 Underwood typewriter that once belonged to celebrated journalist Cordelia Capel. Within its case she discovers an unfinished novel that tells the story of Cordelia and her older sister Irene, who married a German industrialist and moved to Berlin in the 1936, and the secret that lies between them. After reading the novel, Juno sets off from New York to Europe, where she resolves to uncover the secret that continued to divide the sisters. In this vivid portrait of Nazi Berlin, from its high society to its devastating fall, Jane Thynne, the widow of author Phillip Kerr, examines the truths we sometimes dare not tell ourselves. Filled with cameo appearances from real-life historical figures such as Martha Dodd and Kim Philby, this is "an engrossing, suspenseful page-turner that defies expectations (*Kirkus*)."

Tsao, Tiffany. [The Majesties](#)
(Atria \$26)

What if Gillian Flynn, author of *Gone Girl*, wrote *Crazy Rich Asians*? The end result might be something like this novel by Tsao. The book centers around two sisters from a Chinese-Indonesian family – Gwendolyn and Estalla. The sisters have always been close and relied on each other for support, until the day

Estella tries to poison their entire family. Now Gwendolyn lies in a coma struggling to remember the moment in the two sisters' past that might have made Gwendolyn so cranky with her family. Traveling from the luxurious world of the rich and powerful in Indonesia to the exclusive shows at Paris Fashion Week and from the sunny coast of California to the melting pot of Melbourne's university scene, *The Majesties* is a haunting and deeply compelling tale about the secrets that can build a family empire - and also bring it crashing down.

Turner, Nancy. [Light Changes Everything](#)
(St. Martins \$27.99)

It's the summer of 1907 and the sun is scorching down on the Pearl family's pecan farm in the Arizona Territory. Mary Pearl and her sister Esther take their minds off the heat by sneaking banned Jane Austen novels from Aunt Sarah Elliot's lively bookshelf. Whispered read alouds preoccupy their nights, and reveries of getting hitched to their own Mr. Darcy à la *Pride and Prejudice* swirl through their day dreams. In walks old-fashioned old-money suitor Aubrey Hanna, here to whisk seventeen-year-old Mary Pearl off her feet with a forbidden kiss and hasty engagement. While Mary Pearl is thrilled to be engaged, she still dreams of a life outside the confines of her family's farm, and thus she accepts an invitation to attend art school at Wheaton College. Days of travel by horse and by train carry Mary Pearl deep into a sophisticated new world of Northern girls' schooling. Seeking friendship but finding foes, Mary Pearl not only learns how to write, read, and draw, but also how to act, dress, and be a woman. But when a range war threatens her family back in Arizona, Mary Pearl doesn't hesitate to return home to help. Award-winning Arizona author Nancy Turner's unforgettable first book, *These Is My Words* introduced readers to Mary Pearl's aunt Sarah Agnes Prine, and became an immediate best-seller. When it comes to capturing the grit and gumption as well as the heroism and heartbreak of those settlers that built Arizona, there is no finer chronicler than Turner.

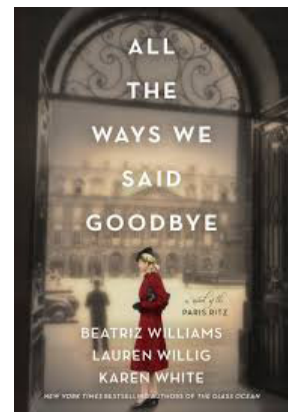
Weinberg, Kate. [The Truants](#)
(Putnam \$26)

When it came time for Jess Walker to decide where she wants to attend college, there really was only one choice: the East Anglian university where prize-win-

ning literature professor Lorna Gray currently teaches. Like so many readers, Jess is obsessed with Gray's best-selling book *The Truants*, whose premise is that all great artists must break the rules of society in order to truly become creative. Once enrolled at the university, Jess signs up for Gray's seminar on Agatha Christie and soon strikes up friendships with fellow students wealthy socialite Georgie, bad boy journalist Alec, and nice but boring geology major Nick. When misunderstandings and jealousies among the quartet lead to a betrayal, will Gray offer Jess the wise counsel she needs or does the professor have an agenda of her own? I found this debut to be loads of fun and would second what *Kirkus* had to say in their starred review "Aside from some slight plausibility issues (if only teenagers' lives were changed by works of literary scholarship!), Weinberg has written one of the best thriller debuts in recent years, with all the cleverness of Ruth Ware (and, yes, even Christie herself) and a dash of Donna Tartt's edgy darkness."

Williams, Beatriz, Lauren Willig, and Karen White.
[All the Ways We Said Goodbye](#)
(Morrow \$28.99)

Three different protagonists – Aurelie (a WWI French heiress), Daisy (a WWII Resistance fighter), and Babs (a 1960s widow)- are connected through Paris' famous Ritz Hotel in the latest marvelously mesmerizing collaboration from the trio of authors known as the Team W Writers (Beatriz Williams, Lauren Willig, and Karen White). The authors handle their latest novel with perfect aplomb deftly entwining the three different storylines into one evocative, elegantly written, and endlessly entertaining mix of history, intrigue, danger, and romance.



Woods, Rita. [Remembrance](#)
(Forge \$27.99)

In this remarkable debut novel by Woods, four women across three centuries are linked by their loss and courage and their power to change the world. While staying at a friend's house, Woods picked up a book on quantum mechanics. What she took away from reading through the book was the idea that "time

and space are not fixed, and that reality is perspective." A few weeks later, while walking through a family graveyard on an abandoned farm in Ohio, I was struck by a "what if" moment." The author goes on to write "History has always been an obsession of mine. It is the one reason I haunt old cemeteries and abandoned buildings, much to the dismay of my family. But it is the history of my ancestors that resonates most strongly for me. In particular, those ancestors that spend their lives enslaved, and the Underground Railroad, which became a path to freedom. Thus, *Remembrance* was born, a sanctuary for runaway slaves created by Mother Abigail using her own innate powers and that of Vodun to manipulate space and time."