

BOOKNEWS from

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A STELLAR SEPTEMBER...

Note: All the times are Scottsdale time, 3 hours later than EDT

Please look for pop up book chats with authors and editors and who knows what from time to time on our Home Page and then moved to Facebook.

Watch these virtual events on [Facebook Live](#) or our [YouTube](#) and any time thereafter at a time that suits you. You don't have to belong to FB to click in. Listen to them on [Google Music](#) and [iTunes](#) our [Podcasts](#)

MONDAY AUGUST 31 6:00 PM

NY Times reporter Alan Feuer in conversation with Nicholas Griffith

Feuer discusses his true crime narrative [El Jefe: The stalking of Chapo Guzman](#) (Flatiron \$28)

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 1 5:00 PM Virtual Book Launch

Tori Eldridge discusses [Ninja's Blade](#) (Polis \$16.95)
Signed bookplates available

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 1 6:00 PM

Carl Hiaasen in conversation with John Sandford
Hiaasen discusses [Squeeze Me](#) (Knopf \$28.99)
Signed books in stock

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 2 1:00 PM

Hannah Dennison discusses [Death at High Tide](#) (St Martins \$25.99)

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 2 2:00 PM

Canadian Andrew Pyper discusses [The Residence](#) (Gallery \$26)
A horror story based on true 1853 events at the White House
Signed bookplates in stock

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 2 4:00 PM

James R. Benn in conversation with Francine Mathews
Benn discusses his new Billy Boyle WWII thriller [The Red Horse](#) (Soho \$27.95)
Signed books available

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 3 6:00 PM

Jonathan and Jesse Kellerman discuss their new novel [Half Moon Bay](#) (Random \$28.99)
Oakland Deputy Coroner Clay Edison
A special letter for you Signed by both authors is included in our copies

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 5 2:00 PM

Jenn McKinlay in conversation with Kate Carlisle and Paige Shelton
McKinlay discusses her new Library Lover's Mystery [One for the Books](#) (Berkley \$26)
Signed books available

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 10 6:00 PM

Mike Lupica in conversation with Joe Ide
Lupica discusses his new Sunny Randall PI novel [Robert B Parker's Fool's Paradise](#) (Putnam \$27)
Signed books available

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 12 12:00 PM

The UK's Ruth Ware in conversation with A J Finn, author of The Woman in the Window

Ware discusses [One by One](#) (Gallery \$27.99)
Includes a signed book plate. First 50 orders will also receive a cozy knit beanie hat with custom ONE BY ONE embroidery!

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 14 6:00 PM Virtual Book Launch

Kyle Mills with Special Guest Brad Thor
Mills discusses his new Mitch Rapp thriller [Total Power](#) (Atria \$28.99)
Signed books available

Our copies come with a unique Mitch Rapp holiday card for Poisoned Pen customers (since *Total Power* takes place on Christmas day)

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 15 3:00 PM

Bradford Morrow in conversation with his editor Otto Penzler
Morrow discusses [The Forger's Daughter](#) (Grove \$27)
Signed books available

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 15 4:00 PM

Wendy Walker in conversation with Megan Miranda
Walker discusses [Don't Look for Me](#) (St Martins \$28)
Signed books available for both authors

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 17 5:00 PM

Charlie Lovett in conversation with Fiona Davis
Lovett discusses [Escaping Dreamland](#) (Blackstone \$26.99)
Our September Fantastic New Fiction Pick
Signed copies available for Lovett

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 18 1:00 PM

LC Shaw (Lynn Constantine) discusses [The Silent Conspiracy](#) (Harper \$16.99)

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 18 7:00 PM

SciFi Friday discusses Sarah Gailey's [Upright Women Wanted](#) (\$20.99)

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 19 10:30 AM

Croak & Dagger discusses Alex Morwood's [Wicked Girls](#) (\$16)

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 21 6:00 PM

Robert Dugoni in conversation with Angie Kim

Dugoni discusses his spy thriller [The Last Agent](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$24.95)

Signed books available for Dugoni

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 22 6:00 PM

This is a [Ticketed Event](#) requiring the purchase of a copy of **Craig's new book from The Poisoned Pen to receive the zoom invitation**

Craig Johnson discusses his new Walt Longmire [Next to Last Stand](#) (Viking \$27.99)

Special Guests will appear with Craig

Signed books available. Our copies of *Next to Last Stand* come with a special holiday season card featuring Craig and Judy at the ranch

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 23 5:00 PM

Mark Pryor discusses his new Hugo Marston Paris thriller [The French Widow](#) (Seventh Street \$15.95)

Signed bookplates in stock

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 23 6:00 PM

Lee Child hosts authors contributing to [The Nicotine Chronicles](#) (Akashic \$15.95)

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 24 2:00 PM

Brian Freeman in conversation with Karen

Freeman discusses his 10th Jonathan Stride [Funeral for a Friend](#) (Blackstone \$27.99)

Signed books available

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 24 6:00 PM

Rachel Howzell Hall discusses [And Now She's Gone](#) (Forge \$27.99)

Signed books available

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 24 7:15 PM

Hardboiled Crime Club discusses Jean-Patrick Manchette's [No Room at the Morgue](#) (\$15.95)

SIGNED BOOKS

Abbott, Jeff. [Never Ask Me](#) (Grand Central \$27). Lakehaven, a leafy, affluent suburb of Austin, is thrown into a panic when Danielle Roberts's son finds her dead on a park bench. A lawyer who facilitated overseas adoptions, including some for her neighbors, Danielle was currently arranging one from Russia — if that had anything to do with her murder. Pertinent or not, the Russia connection allows two prospective parents, the likable if high-strung Iris and her husband, Kyle, to travel to St. Petersburg, providing the book with its most dramatic scenes. Abbott writes in an authoritative way about the protocols, many of them maddening, of adopting a child. He also has a real understanding of the emotional roller-coaster couples going through the process

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 25 10:00AM

Martin Edwards and Ann Cleeves in conversation

Cleeves discusses [The Darkest Evening](#) (St Martins \$27.99)

Signed UK copies available for Cleeves

Edwards discussed [Mortmain Hall](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99)

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 26 12:00 PM

UK author Richard Osman in conversation with Mark Billingham

Osman discusses his debut [The Thursday Murder Club](#) (Viking \$26)

Our October First Mystery Book of the Month

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 26 2:00 PM

Scott Graham discusses his new National Parks mystery [Mesa Verde Victim](#) (Torrey \$15.95)

Margaret Mizushima discusses [Hanging Falls](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99)

Signed books available for Mizushima

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 28 2:00 PM Virtual Book Launch

James Rollins presents [Unrestricted Access](#) (Morrow \$27.99)

A full length novella with Tucker Wayne and his war dog Kane plus short stories

Signed copies with a dog doodle, can be personalized up to 5 words

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 29

Joanne Fluke presents [Christmas Cupcake Murder](#) (Kensington \$22.95)

Signed books available

THURSDAY OCTOBER 1 5:00 PM

Archer Mayor discusses his new Joe Gunther Vermont thriller [Orphan's Guilt](#) (St Martins \$27.99)

Signed books available

THURSDAY OCTOBER 1 6:00 PM

Smith Henderson and Jon Marc Smith discuss [Make Them Cry](#) (Ecco \$27.99) with Patrick

Books signed by Henderson with a letter signed by Smith available

must endure. His layered plot moves along at a nice clip.... However the books did not, having been sent to Abbott in July and then... We apologize, sometimes the supply side goes wonky and needs a fix.

Benn, James R. [The Red Horse](#) (Soho \$27.95). Set in 1944, U.S. Army investigator Billy Boyle is plunged into a country house murder at Saint Albans—a former lunatic asylum converted to a hospital devoted to soldiers and agents in recovery, some from psychological wounds or flawed memories. Boyle, grievously wounded in his 14th, investigation at the liberation of Paris, is an impatient patient. Plus his lover, Lady Diana Seaton, an undercover British operative, fell into the hands of the Gestapo which, believing her to be a genuine French woman, has sent her off to

Ravensbrück. One day, walking the grounds, Boyle witnesses a fellow patient, Thomas Holland, fall to his death from a clock tower. Glimpsing a second figure by Holland, the former Boston homicide cop rejects the official view that the fatality was either suicide or an accident. His status as a patient being treated for depression and disorientation after taking too much methamphetamine makes investigating a challenge. And his suspicions increase after someone else on the grounds is stabbed to death. Meanwhile his closest friend Kaz, a Polish aristocrat and worried about his sister, also at Ravensbrück. “Benn maintains a high level of tension throughout, and his admirable but flawed lead will engage even first-time readers. This fair-play whodunit stands comparison with the best classic mysteries.” Francine Mathews joins me September 2 in our event with Benn, whose work is a staff favorite.

Butcher, Jim. [Battle Ground](#) (Ace \$27.99). Harry Dresden #17 finds things getting deadly serious for Chicago’s only professional wizard. Harry has faced terrible odds before. He has a long history of fighting enemies above his weight class. The Red Court of vampires. The fallen angels of the Order of the Blackened Denarius. The Outsiders. But this time it’s different. A being more powerful and dangerous on an order of magnitude beyond what the world has seen in a millennium is coming. And she’s bringing an army. The Last Titan has declared war on the city of Chicago, and has come to subjugate humanity. Harry’s mission is impossible: kill a Titan. “*Battle Ground* has more at stake than any previous book in the Dresden Files series, and more changes for Harry. Filled to the brim with non-stop action, this entry has Harry and almost every supernatural being he knows coming to defend Chicago from a mad Titan bent on reshaping reality.”

Clarke, Susanna. [Piranesi](#) (Bloomsbury \$27). Piranesi’s house is no ordinary building: its rooms are infinite, its corridors endless, its walls are lined with thousands upon thousands of statues, each one different from all the others. Within the labyrinth of halls an ocean is imprisoned; waves thunder up staircases, rooms are flooded in an instant. But Piranesi is not afraid; he understands the tides as he understands the pattern of the labyrinth itself. He lives to explore the house. There is one other person in the house—a man called The Other, who visits Piranesi twice a week and asks for help with research into A Great and Secret Knowledge. But as Piranesi explores, evidence emerges of another person, and a terrible truth begins to unravel, revealing a world beyond the one Piranesi has always known. For readers of Neil Gaiman’s *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* and fans of Madeline Miller’s *Circe*, and of course, of Clarke’s imaginative *Jonathan Strange and Mr. Norrell*. There’s a mystery—why is there no Season Two of its television adaptation?

Our Signed copies of *Piranesi* went to subscribers of the **Historical Fiction Book of the Month** (September).

Cleeves, Ann. [The Darkest Evening](#) (Macmillan \$40). Yay, another country house murder, this one set in a very snowy, freezing Northumberland village where the big house, Brockburn, and its family still dominate. DI Vera Stanhope, familiar to those of you who watch the TV series starring Brenda Blethyn, has foolishly set off for home in deteriorating blizzard conditions when she comes upon an abandoned car. The door is open, the driver absent—and a baby is secured in its carrier in the backseat. Vera loses no time in hustling the baby to the nearest shelter which is Brockburn—as it happens, the ancestral seat of the Stanhopes.

Vera is the child of the family black sheep, disdained by her relatives and herself preferring to ignore them. But here they are as a Christmas party is in full swing. And soon it’s not just the abandoned baby but the body of a dead woman on the grounds in the snow that interrupt the festivities. So here we are in a classic scene, a large home in the countryside where family and guests are snowed in, even if not for long. And frictions grow. I love a strong British police procedural and here is a gem.

The unsigned US edition [The Darkest Evening](#) (St Martins \$27.99) is our **September British Mystery Book of the Month**. We have a limited number of the UK edition so please order quickly and don’t confuse the two.

Dugoni, Robert. [The Last Agent](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$24.95). This is a terrific spy story, the follow up to Dugoni’s [The Eighth Sister](#) wherein CIA case officer Charles Jenkins, in his early sixties, desperate for money (a new baby is on the way), accepts a risky assignment to take down a Russian agent believed to be receiving information that lets him kill members of a clandestine US spy cell known as the Seven Sisters. Is the mastermind the Eighth Sister? Why after a daring escape across the Black Sea to Turkey was Jenkins abandoned by the agency? Here is where the story continues.... It covers another daring voyage across the Black Sea, this time from Turkey to the Crimea, Jenkins’ infiltration of Moscow and its dread Lefortovo prison where he learns a woman has been isolated. Is she Paulina Ponomayova, the agent who sacrificed her life to save his? I’m not saying why, but I really enjoyed the scenes in Oslo where I have visited the Akershus Fortress twice and think it to be awesome. Angie Kim joins me in the virtual book launch for Dugoni on September 21.

Fluke, Joanne. [Christmas Cupcake Murder](#) (Kensington \$22.95). Hannah Swensen, owner of the Cookie Jar bakery in Lake Eden, Minn., is baking German chocolate cupcakes when she hears a knock at the door. Outside is a stranger asking for work. Hannah invites the man in, and over coffee the two discover a mutual love of German chocolate cake. The stranger reminisces about how his mother always used to give him an orange when she made him one for his birthday. Recipes follow for German chocolate cake and frosting. The man leaves after doing a few odd chores for Hannah, who later that day finds him lying unconscious in her mother’s storage shed. The doctor who treats the man diagnoses that he has amnesia brought about by a blow to the head. After many more recipes and discussions of food, the stranger’s fondness for oranges provides Hannah with a clue to his fate. As befits a holiday book, there are loads of good recipes.

Freeman, Brian. [Funeral for a Friend](#) (Blackstone \$27.99). Another strong police procedural, this one set in Duluth, Minnesota and a 10th investigation for Lt. Jonathan Stride. Life hasn’t been easy for Stride or his family. His best friend is now dying. On his deathbed he reveals to Stride that years back he buried a body in order to protect Stride. Stride immediately informs his superiors, knowing if it turns out to be the body of reporter Ned Bauer he’ll be implicated in Bauer’s death, since the police know he was the last person to see Bauer before everyone thought the man had drowned. The police then dig up Bauer’s remains in Stride’s yard. Bauer, who came to Duluth seven years earlier to investigate 30-year-old anonymous rape accusations against a prominent politician, has a bullet hole in his skull. Meanwhile, Cat Mateo, a teenage runaway Stride and his wife have taken under their wing, has been receiving a lot of unwanted attention resulting from the

publicity surrounding her surviving an assault attempt by a Hollywood celebrity, who came to town to shoot a movie in the previous book. Grateful #MeToo survivors have sent Cat messages, but she's unnerved when someone local sends her a threatening picture of herself. Surprising connections between her case and Stride's soon emerge and test all the players in this dark story.

Hall, Rachel Howzell. [And Now She's Gone](#) (Forge \$27.99). A Starred Review for this cat-and-mouse adventure written in a sharp #BLM voice that ensnares you: "Newbie L.A. PI Gray Sykes, the 39-year-old heroine of this smart, razor-sharp novel from Anthony and Thriller Awards finalist Hall, reluctantly accepts her first independent assignment from her boss, Nick Rader, a friend of hers since she was 15 and on whom she now has a crush: to locate physician Ian O'Donnell's missing girlfriend, Isabel Lincoln, who may not want to be found. As Gray searches for Isabel, she discovers that self-professed nice guy Ian abused Isabel, and that Isabel even attempted suicide, revelations that resonate with Gray, who was abused as a child growing up in the foster care system. Then Isabel herself starts to text Gray, who eight years earlier went under another name, to tell her to stop investigating, and it becomes clear that Isabel's own strange history mirrors Gray's in the way Isabel has shifted identities. A final plot twist puts Gray's life in peril just as she's getting closer to Nick. Full of wry, dark humor, this nuanced tale of two extraordinary women is un-put-downable." Hall earned heaps of praise for her last, [They All Fall Down](#) (\$8.99), her modern take on *And Then There Were None*. Christie remains a real inspiration, especially this season. Hall is clearly a versatile writer, branching out after writing her Lou Norton series. Yay.

Harris, Joanne M. [Orfeia](#) (Orion \$39).

*When you can find me an acre of land,
Every sage grows merry in time,
Between the ocean and the sand
Then will you be united again.*

(Inspired by *The Child Ballads 2 & 19*)

So begins a beautiful and tragic quest as a heartbroken mother sets out to save her lost daughter, through the realms of the real, of dream, and even into the underworld itself. But determination alone is not enough. For to save something precious, she must give up something precious, be it a song, a memory, or her freedom itself... Beautifully illustrated by Bonnie Helen Hawkins, this is a stunning and original modern fairytale by the remarkable Joanne Harris.

Harris, Robert. [V2](#) (Random UK \$44). On the brink of defeat, Hitler commissioned 10,000 V2s – ballistic rockets that carried a one-ton warhead at three times the speed of sound, which he believed would win the war. Dr Rudi Graf who, along with his friend Werner von Braun, had once dreamt of sending a rocket to the moon, now finds himself in November 1944 in a bleak seaside town in Occupied Holland, launching V2s against London. No one understands the volatile, deadly machine better than Graf, but his disillusionment with the war leads to him being investigated for sabotage. Kay Caton-Walsh, an officer in the WAAF, has experienced first-hand the horror of a V2 strike. When 160 Londoners, mostly women and children, are killed by a single missile, the government decides to send a team of WAAs to newly-liberated Belgium in the hope of discovering the location of the launch sites. But not all the Germans have left and Kay

finds herself in mortal danger. As the war reaches its desperate end, their twin stories play out, interlocked and separate

Henderson, Smith. [Make Them Cry](#) (Ecco \$27.99). Signed by Smith Henderson with a signed letter by coauthor Jon Marc Smith. Patrick thinks this is a terrific novel and reviews: The author of the award-winning novel *Fourth of July Creek* teams up debut author Jon Marc Smith to create this superb, intelligent thriller that will appeal to fans of Don Winslow and J Todd Scott. Diane Harbaugh is a tough, no nonsense DEA agent who heads down to Mexico for a private meet-up with Gustavo Acuña Cárdenas, a major player in the Cartel del Golfo. The gangster fears for his life after it becomes known that he is the last living person who knows the secret location of a border tunnel made by the cartel. Everyone else associated with the project has been assassinated. Cardenas hopes to make a deal with the DEA - protection and a new identity in the States in exchange for insider knowledge about cartel players and activities. On the ground in Tampico, however, Harbaugh discovers that she isn't the only one interested in Cardenas. Soon they find themselves on the run from just about everyone – the cartel, the global intelligence community, and perhaps even their own government. Highly recommended." Seems to us that fans of Don Winslow and T. Jefferson Parker will be especially eager to read this gem.

Hiaasen, Carl. [Squeeze Me](#) (Knopf \$28.99). A frothy blend of murder mystery and political satire set on the wealthy island of Palm Beach, Florida, and deep inside the (unnamed) U.S. president's private estate. It's the height of the Palm Beach charity ball season: for every disease or cause, there's a reason for the local luminaries to eat (minimally), drink (maximally), and be seen. But when a prominent high-society dowager suddenly vanishes during a swank gala, and is later found dead in a concrete grave, panic and chaos erupt. Kiki Pew was notable not just for her wealth and her jewels—she was an ardent fan of the Winter White House resident just down the road, and a founding member of the POTUSSIES, a group of women dedicated to supporting their President. Never one to miss an opportunity to play to his base, the President immediately declares that Kiki was the victim of rampaging immigrant hordes. This, it turns out, is far from the truth. The truth might just lie in the middle of the highway, where a bizarre discovery brings the First Lady's motorcade to a grinding halt (followed by some grinding between the First Lady and a love-struck Secret Service agent). Enter Angie Armstrong, wildlife wrangler extraordinaire, who arrives at her own conclusions after she is summoned to the posh island to deal with a mysterious and impolite influx of huge, hungry pythons... Carl Hiaasen can brighten even the darkest of days and *Squeeze Me* is pure, unadulterated Hiaasen. Irreverent, ingenious, and highly entertaining...."

"One mystery leads to another, and delightful subplots multiply as the sprightly narrative follows the intersecting adventures of Angie, the novel's irresistible heroine; the first lady; bumbling villains; sardonic lawmen; loathsome politicians; and, inevitably, an Everglades-dwelling, LSD-imbibing eco-avenger—who is incubating an iguana egg in his one empty eye socket.... This exuberant elegy for Florida's paved-over paradise performs the near miracle of making us laugh even as we despair."—*Kirkus Reviews*

Johnson, Craig. [Next to Last Stand](#) (Viking \$27.99). Real signed books, not Tip ins, and our copies come with a winter scene

featuring Craig and Judy on the ranch. One of the most viewed paintings in American history, *Custer's Last Fight*, copied and distributed by Anheuser-Busch at a rate of over two million copies a year, was destroyed in a fire at the 7th Cavalry Headquarters in Fort Bliss, Texas, in 1946. Or was it? When Charley Lee Stillwater dies of an apparent heart attack at the Wyoming Home for Soldiers & Sailors, Walt Longmire is called in to try and make sense of a piece of a painting and a Florsheim shoebox containing a million dollars, sending the good sheriff on the trail of a dangerous art heist.

Kline, Christina Baker. [Exiles](#) (Morrow \$27.99). Here is a fascinating 19th-century take on *Orange Is the New Black*. In the 1840s, the ominously named Medea leaves Great Britain with a boatload of convicts destined for the penal colony of Tasmania. Among them is Evangeline, a naïve governess jailed at Newgate after being left pregnant by her employer's son, who survives the journey with the help of gifted midwife and herbalist Hazel. Once they arrive, Mathinna, orphaned daughter of a Lowreenne chief and among the cruelly relocated Aboriginal people, adds her voice to this chorus celebrating female friendship in adversity.

Lovett, Charlie. [Escaping Dreamland](#) (Blackstone \$26.99). Our **September Fantastic New Fiction Book of the Month** sent me into a trance remembering all those childhood series I gobbled up. For me the Oz Books ruled, along with Narnia, Black Beauty, and some of the Syndicates like Nancy Drew. My mom still had some of The Bobbsey Twins which were fun and my uncle had preserved his Little Big Books including the amazing adventures of Flash Gordon on the Planet Ming. Lovett, who has written earlier books for book lovers, delves into the reading history of a blocked writer—The Hardy Boys, Tom Swift, some superheroes—who holds in some secret demons, one in particular that paralyzes him. He may lose his wife, his career. Can the way forward be to crack the mystery surrounding his favorite childhood series, The Tremendous Trio (fictional)? To do so he is guided by the fragment of a story back to 1906 Manhattan and a terrible steamboat tragedy. His efforts mesh with the stories of three youngsters sorting out their place at the dawn of the 20th Century. Magda, Gene, and Tom author The Tremendous Trio books as they explore the city from the Polo Grounds to Coney Island's Dreamland. It's a time jump structure, not time travel, marvelously atmospheric and nostalgic while at the same time not shirking hard truths and hard times.

Librarians play a role and so Fiona Davis, author of [The Lions of Fifth Avenue](#) (Dutton \$27), joins me on September 17 at 5:00 PM to discuss Charlie's book virtually.

Lupica, Mike. [Robert B. Parker's Fool's Paradise](#) (Putnam \$27). Lupica, who took over the Sunny Randall series, now writes Jesse Stone. Although Jesse recognizes him from an AA meeting, nobody knows the identity of the John Doe fished out of a lake with a bullet in his head. Even after he's identified as Florida horse groom Paul Hutton, nobody can explain what he was doing in Paradise, Massachusetts, or why he took a taxi to the estate of real estate tycoon Whit Cain, incapacitated after a series of strokes. Whit's wife, iron-willed socialite Lily, and their son, privileged heir-apparent Bryce, insist they know nothing about him, and Whit's nurse and gatekeeper, Karina Torres, says she never heard him buzz the gate for admittance. While Jesse labors to figure out whom Hutton came to Paradise to see, his deputy chief Molly Crane's friend Annie Fallon is assaulted after she

leaves a local bar, and the incident sends Jesse, galvanized by a series of attacks on himself and his colleagues, back to a past crime.... I like Lupica's "Parker" for Sunny and look forward to his Jesse.

Mayor, Archer. [Orphan's Guilt](#) (St Martins \$27.99). I love police procedurals whether British or American or... and here is Mayor with another: "[A] fine police procedural, one with a heartrending backstory within its crystal-clear narrative." I've been a fan of Mayor for years and collect him, so I also know that he has actually worked nearly all the jobs in his Joe Gunther series: not medical examiner per se, but EMT, also fire, police, etc. His research into technology and procedure is impressive and impeccable.

This new investigation brings back a bit of the Tag Man and certainly the man's impressive daughter Sally Kravitz who is a private investigator, as well as Vermont ME Beverly Hillstrom's daughter Rachel Reiling who is an ace reporter. They both end up in this case along with the usual Gunther squad. It begins with an innocuous DUI stop. Web designer John Rust is clearly over the limit. And not for the first time. Trooper Tyler Brennan experiences no resistance: indeed a compliant Rust explains he's drinking to get over the death of his brother Peter, a hydrocephalic deteriorating into vegetative state towards the end of his 28 years. Rust had provided uninterrupted meticulous care for Peter. Rust's lawyer, hoping to find some wiggle room for his client, hires Sally to dig in for possible extenuating circumstances. And then skeletons begin to surface, questions arise about Peter's condition, Rust disappears, and.... Mayor provides so much fodder for everyone that fresh complications are still piling up as the tale hurtles toward its final scene.

Macdonald, Helen. [Vesper Flights](#) (Grove \$27) "showcases her affinity for the essay in her quest for readers to see "the glittering world of non-human life around us," and see it through other eyes, to realize the world does "not belong to us alone. It never has done." Topics include a captive wild boar provoking introspection about Macdonald's place in the world; the territorial anxiety over wild animals "intruding" in human spaces; an autistic boy's mutual delight with Macdonald's parrot; a young refugee smuggled into the U.K.; and the complexity of avian navigation. The poet in Macdonald moves these subjects toward mystery and she crafts brilliant descriptions, drawing wisdom from her observations: "It's true that time walking in a forest can be beneficial to our mental health. But valuing a forest for that purpose traduces what forests are: they are not there for us alone." She takes hard-won emotional solace from "knowing that animals are not like me, that their lives are not about us at all."

McKinlay, Jenn. [One for the Books](#) (Berkley \$26). Love is in the air in Briar Creek as library director Lindsey Norris and boat captain Mike (Sully) Sullivan are finally tying the knot. The entire town is excited for the happy day, and Lindsey and Sully's plan for a small wedding evaporates as more and more people insist upon attending the event of the year. When Lindsey and her crafternoon pals head out to Bell Island to see if it can accommodate the ever-expanding guest list, they are horrified to discover a body washed up on the rocky shore. Even worse, Lindsey recognizes the man as the justice of the peace who was supposed to officiate at her wedding ceremony. When it becomes clear he was murdered, Lindsey can't help but wonder if it had to do with the wedding. Jenn tells us she loves pop-up books and is pleased the cover art highlights pop-up art/construction.

Mills, Kyle. [Total Power](#) (Atria \$28.99). In bestseller Mills' suspenseful, strikingly original sixth Mitch Rapp novel the Russians activate sleeper agent Sonya Vance (real last name Voronova) and send her to the backwoods of West Virginia, where she meets John Alton, a power grid consultant for the U.S. government, who tells her he has the ability to shut down the entire U.S. power grid and keep it down for a year, maybe forever. After checking out Alton's computer, Sonya reports back to Moscow that it's a workable plan and Alton wants nothing in payment. The Russians pass on the offer, but ISIS picks up the option. When the CIA gets wind of the plot, Mitch and his team set a trap for Alton, but the wily evil genius evades them and goes to ground, literally, in a carefully prepared underground shelter. Meanwhile, Alton unleashes his attack. "Mitch's hunt for Alton amid a devastated America in the throes of an epic disaster is as riveting as anything penned by Mitch's creator, Vince Flynn (1966–2013). Mills has really hit his stride."

Out in paperback, a strangely prescient book you might have missed: [Lethal Agent](#) (\$9.99). An unprecedented and terrifying bioterrorism plot threatens to kill millions in the midst of a divisive presidential election in this "gut punch of a tale that exploits our greatest fears."

Miranda, Megan. [The Girl from Widow Hills](#) (Simon Schuster \$28.99). The Indie Next Pick: "How do you cope when the whole world knows your name and acts like they own a bit of your trauma story? Maybe you change your name, like Olivia does, and try to make a break from your past. Until one night when you find yourself sleepwalking. Like you did 20 years ago. And suddenly not only has your past caught up with you, it is legit stalking you. Now your secret is out, but there are even more deadly secrets hiding in the shadows. The final twists in this story are so sharp you'll check yourself for stab wounds! Another fantastic, twisty, thrilling read from Megan Miranda!"

Mitchell, David. [Utopia Avenue](#) (Random \$30) is the strangest British band you've never heard of. Emerging from London's psychedelic scene in 1967, and fronted by folk singer Elf Holloway, blues bassist Dean Moss and guitar virtuoso Jasper de Zoet, Utopia Avenue embarked on a meteoric journey from the seedy clubs of Soho, a TV debut on Top of the Pops, the cusp of chart success, glory in Amsterdam, prison in Rome, and a fateful American sojourn in the Chelsea Hotel, Laurel Canyon, and San Francisco during the autumn of '68. David Mitchell's kaleidoscopic novel tells the unexpurgated story of Utopia Avenue's turbulent life and times; of fame's Faustian pact and stardom's wobbly ladder; of the families we choose and the ones we don't.

Mizushima, Margaret. [Hanging Falls](#) (Crooked Lane \$26.99). An imperfect heroine and her beloved canine sidekick: What's not to like? Certainly the PP staffers are fans. Mattie Cobb is finally stepping aside from her role as deputy and the human part of Timber Creek's only K-9 team to connect with relatives she thought she'd lost many years before. Her sister, Julia, and her *abuela* have plans to welcome Mattie with open arms, if only she can get away for a few days. But those plans are put on ice when Mattie and her friend Glenna come upon a body while jogging at Hanging Falls. Robo, Mattie's German shepherd partner, is needed to search the Colorado forests, so Mattie puts off her visit to find out who could have killed what appears to be an out-of-towner, then dumped him in the water. While Mattie keeps their shift from friendship to full-on romance private, she's happy to have the help of Cole Walker on the case.

Morrow, Bradford. [The Forger's Daughter](#) (Grove \$27). In Morrow's sterling sequel to 2014's [The Forgers](#) (\$14), the enviable life that erstwhile literary forger Will has painstakingly crafted since he survived a savage attack by criminal rival Henry Slader two decades earlier threatens to come crashing down. One evening outside Will's farmhouse in New York's Hudson Valley, a spectral figure springs from the bushes with a package. Inside is what appears to be the rarest book in American literature—Edgar Allan Poe's *Tamerlane and Other Poems*—along with a letter from Slader asking for a meeting. When Will, now a beyond-reproach manuscript expert at a Manhattan auction house, meets Slader at a local tavern, his nemesis demands that he forge the Poe book or his most shameful secret will be exposed. Will feels he has no choice but to agree. What he doesn't realize is just how dangerous the gamble could prove for his family, especially for his coolly enigmatic 20-year-old daughter, Nicole, whose sublime artistic skills he will need in order to create the forgery on a letterpress. Evocatively rendered and emotionally resonant, this literary crime novel is the real deal. Morrow's gothic tale bears comparison with Poe's own work. I think there is some slippery morality in this drama which is of course a delight for bibliophiles and Poe fans. **Morrow's editor Otto Penzler, a premier bibliophile/publisher, will join us on September 15 at 3:00 PM (6:00 ET), for a truly memorable program.**

Mosley, Walter. [The Awkward Black Man](#) (Grove \$26) features men who are, as Rufus Coombs, the naive and sweet-natured narrator of "Pet Fly," would put it, "one shade or other of brown." In "Pet Fly," Rufus, who is stuck working in a mail room at an insurance company despite having a political science degree, is accused of sexual harassment after he leaves gifts for a female colleague. In "Leading from the Affair," a copy editor's two-timing of his therapists parallels the two-timing going on in his romantic life. In "Between Storms," a man's paranoia following Hurricane Laura compels him to skip work and hole up in his Manhattan apartment; his self-isolation becomes a news story, which leads to his misbegotten valorization as "a people's hero who was refusing to take one more step before the other side made changes."

"Fifty-plus books into his career, Mosley hasn't run out of inspired plots, and his interest in social issues remains acute, although he editorializes with the lightest of touches; *The Awkward Black Man* teems with sharp, quippy dialogue and not a sentence suffers the indignity of a frill. The stories—some speculative, all playing out in the reliable noir settings New York City and Los Angeles—tend to be centered on Black men of accomplishment who are either underestimated or who self-sabotage their way to a personal or professional crisis. The namesake character in 'Otis' could be speaking for a lot of Mosley's men when he says, 'I always keep thinkin' that maybe I could find a place where you nevah have to get mad, and then I'd be cool.' Leave it to a master of the crime novel like Mosley to give several stories a shocking final twist: a happy ending."

Osman, Richard. [Thursday Murder Club](#) (Mulholland \$34). British TV celebrity Osman mixes mirth and murder in his exceptional debut, a series launch featuring the four members of the Thursday Murder Club, residents of the Coopers Chase Retirement Village in Kent. Despite their different backgrounds, Elizabeth, Ibrahim, Joyce, and Ron share an interest in solving mysteries. When 26-year-old Donna De Freitas, a police con-

stable who dreams of pursuing serial killers, visits the home to talk to the pensioners about “Practical Tips for Home Security,” the club members arrange for Donna to be assigned to a homicide case they have a connection to by manipulating her boss, so that they can get access to the investigation through a grateful Donna. That way they can take a crack at solving the bludgeoning murder of drug dealer Tony Curran, who operated a building business as a front, and whose killer left a photo of three men, one of whom is Ron’s son, near Curran’s corpse. They use their individual talents, including Joyce’s gift for gathering information unobtrusively, and Ibrahim’s medical knowledge, which enables him to narrow the timing of a second, related killing. As the bodies begin to pile up, can our unorthodox but brilliant gang catch the killer, before it’s too late? If *A Man Called Ove* were a crime novel, it would be *The Thursday Murder Club*, with the golden-age murder mystery feel of *The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie*, and an eccentric, older ensemble cast reminiscent of Alexander McCall Smith’s No. 1 Ladies’ Detective Agency series, and Anthony Horowitz’s *The Magpie Murders* and his Detective Daniel Hawthorne mysteries. **This is our October First Mystery Book of the Month though it may arrive in September.**

Paolini, Christopher. [To Sleep in a Sea of Stars](#) (Tor \$29.99). We have 10 handsome metal bookmarks to go with 10 copies which I believe to be Tip ins. During a routine survey mission on an uncolonized planet, Kira Navárez, who’s always dreamed of life on new worlds, finds an alien relic. At first she’s delighted, but elation turns to terror when the ancient dust around her begins to move. As war erupts among the stars, Kira is launched into a galaxy-spanning odyssey of discovery and transformation. First contact isn’t at all what she imagined, and events push her to the very limits of what it means to be human. While Kira faces her own horrors, Earth and its colonies stand upon the brink of annihilation. Kira may be humanity’s last and best hope....

Parish, Stan. [Love and Theft](#) (Doubleday \$26.95). Our **September Crime Book of the Month**, Parish’s second novel but first foray into crime, is a delight of a heist novel. OK, I am a sucker for a good caper and this one delivers one with a devilish pace. “*Love and Theft* pays tribute to classic capers — and rivals the best of them for verve and ingenuity.”

Adam Sternbergh writes in *The NY Times Book Review*: “The story opens on a kaleidoscopic set piece worthy of a James Bond movie as directed by Robert Altman: Four sleek and helmeted motorcyclists attempt a brazen jewel heist (really, is there any other kind of fictional jewel heist?) at a high-end boutique off the Vegas strip. We track the action through the eyes of nearly a dozen disparate characters... Misgivings are expressed, in degrees of vehemence. Everyone heads off to Tulum, Mexico. The F.B.I. circles and, soon, the specter of One Last Job looms. In lesser thrillers, this necessary erection of plot scaffolding can be tedious, the impatient reader skimming ahead while waiting for the bullets to start flying. But character back story, and the entanglements it reveals, seem to be where Parish’s true interests lie: the lives of battered people, looking for absolution or, failing that, some form of shelter, maybe in one another. His other interest is language — and *Love and Theft* is expertly and (a rarer accomplishment) artfully written... a precision-cut sentence can quicken the reader’s pulse as reliably as a surprise twist or a character’s excruciating dilemma. When a novel delivers all of the above — as *Love and Theft* ultimately does, its racecar

engine revving to a smooth and satisfying purr — it can feel to the reader like a kind of miracle. In a word: thrilling.”

Rollins, James. [Unrestricted Access](#) (Morrow \$27.99). You can request a personalization of no more than 5 words. These will be the only Signed copies of *Unrestricted Access* AND they each come with a doodle drawn by Rollins of Tucker’s canine companion Kane.

Rollins writes that this volume “includes EVERY short story that I’ve written across the breadth of my career. The anthology also includes new introductions, where I got to look back across those two decades and share anecdotes from a writer’s life, to tell why I told certain stories. Some of the questions answered in this collection are: How did Kowalski end up getting recruited by Sigma? What happens when Commander Gray Pierce runs into Steve Berry’s Cotton Malone in a jungle? What story did George R.R. Martin challenge me to write? Or the master of kid’s horror, R.L. Stine? You’ll get all those answers PLUS a brand-new BIG novella featuring Tucker and his war dog, Kane. This story is set in Sedona, Arizona, and marks a pivotal turn for these two. It made my editor cry...so be ready.

Here’s a bit more about “Sun Dogs,” the new Tucker/Kane novella: While trekking through the Sonora desert, a gunshot thrusts Tucker and Kane into an adventure that challenges their considerable skills. The discovery of secrets known only to the native tribes of Arizona threatens to unleash an ancient force that could irreparably alter the future.”

Walker, Wendy. [Don’t Look for Me](#) (St Martins \$28). This is a story driven by guilt, by self-blame, and by wrecked communications. It’s a story of the aftermath of the death of a child. And it’s also a story of hope, hope created by an event so traumatic it either breaks or heals the riven family. One night, Molly Clarke walked away from her life. She doesn’t want to be found. Or at least, that’s the story. The car abandoned miles from home. The note found at a nearby hotel. The shattered family that couldn’t be put back together. They called it a “walk away.” But is that what really happened to Molly Clarke when she went missing in the hurricane striking the heart of Connecticut? “Wendy Walker has done it again, created a nail-biter that’ll keep you up all night. This is so much more than a twisty thriller. It’s a heartbreaking portrait of a family coping with grief and an insightful study of guilt and blame, gaslighting and agency. If you love fast-paced page-turners with relatable, flawed characters, look no further!” — Angie Kim

Ware, Ruth. [One by One](#) (Gallery \$27.99). Signed bookplates. Our copies come with very cool swag: a cozy knit beanie hat with custom *One by One* embroidery! In yet another variation of the country house murder, we visit a group snowed in at a luxurious ski chalet high in the French Alps, accessible only by a funicular. These posh quarters come with a stunning view, a resident chef, a housekeeper, and cozy fires. And for this company jolly for Snoop, a trendy London-based startup in the music field (listen to what others listen to), eight coworkers including the two co-founders with a difficult agenda that includes a by-out offer. Then comes an avalanche....and a missing Snooper. It spirals downhill from there.... Do not miss Ware’s September 12 event with AJ Finn, author of the smash hit *The Woman in the Window*.

Watson, SJ. [Final Cut](#) (Doubleday UK \$36). A documentary filmmaker winds up in a small English town called Blackwood Bay

in this noir from bestseller Watson. After her producer receives an unsigned postcard urging someone to look into the seaside village, which was home to a smuggling operation centuries ago, Alex Young winds up focusing on a string of local kidnappings involving three teenage girls. We noted that this “outstanding psychological thriller” perfectly captures “small town ennui while illustrating how corruption can hide in plain sight.”

UNSIGNED EVENT BOOKS

✂Dennison, Hannah. [Death at High Tide](#) (St Martins \$25.99). British author Dennison’s start of a series set in the Scilly isles was our August Cozy Crime Club Pick. She has this to say about inspiration: “Christie’s stories encapsulate the entirety of human nature in a small setting. I live in a village myself—very close to Burgh Island [which inspired the setting for *And Then There Were None*—and it’s always fascinating to think about what’s going on under the surface. Her settings have influenced me, and I always have the drawing room discussion.” Dennison and I will chat on September 2 and I have pulled together photos I took of the Scillies in May, 2019.

Child, Lee, ed. [The Nicotine Chronicles](#) (Akashic \$28.95/\$15.95). In recent years, nicotine has become as verboten as many hard drugs. The literary styles in this volume are as varied as the moral quandaries herein, and the authors have successfully unleashed their incandescent imaginations on the subject matter, fashioning an immensely addictive collection. Featuring brand-new stories by: Lee Child, Joyce Carol Oates, Jonathan Ames, Eric Bogosian, Achy Obejas, Michael Imperioli, Hannah Tinti, Ariel Gore, Bernice L. McFadden, Cara Black, Christopher Sorrentino, David L. Ulin, Jerry Stahl, Lauren Sanders, Peter Kimani, and Robert Arellano.

Eldridge, Tori. [The Ninja’s Blade](#) (Polis \$16.95). Signed bookplates. In Eldridge’s riveting sequel to 2019’s [The Ninja Daughter](#), Aleisha and Stan Reiner, who run Aleisha’s Refuge, a shelter for abused women, retain kick-ass L.A. ninja Lily Wong to find shelter resident Emma Hughes, who was forced into being a sex worker and was later abducted at gunpoint while visiting her parents. In looking for Emma, Lily uncovers a juvenile-sex-trafficking ring, and vows to find the man responsible and free the girls. Meanwhile, Lily becomes the target of Varrio Norwalk 66, a street gang, because they blame her for the death of one of its members. Further impeding her is her own judgmental mother who expects her to entertain her grandparents visiting from Hong Kong and PTSD-generated flashbacks of a killing she once witnessed. Also competing for Lily’s time is a new love interest. In her unconventional style, the indomitable Lily keeps all these balls in the air, resulting in an exciting mystery that takes a sobering look at the sexual exploitation of youth in Los Angeles. Join our virtual book launch September 1 for Tori.

Feuer, Alan. [El Jefe: The Stalking of Chapo Guzman](#) (Flatiron \$28). Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman is the most legendary of Mexican narcos. As leader of the Sinaloa drug cartel, he was one of the most dangerous men in the world. His fearless climb to power, his brutality, his charm, his taste for luxury, his penchant for disguise, his multiple dramatic prison escapes, his unlikely encounter with Sean Penn—all of these burnished the image of the world’s most famous outlaw. He was finally captured by U.S. and Mexican law enforcement in a daring operation years in the making. Here is that entire epic story—from El Chapo’s humble

origins to his conviction in a Brooklyn courthouse. Longtime New York Times criminal justice reporter Alan Feuer’s coverage of his trial was some of the most riveting journalism of recent years. Feuer’s mastery of the complex facts of the case, his unparalleled access to confidential sources in law enforcement, and his powerful understanding of disturbing larger themes—what this one man’s life says about drugs, walls, class, money, Mexico, and the United States, makes this a must-read for fans of Don Winslow and of Nicholas Griffin who hosts our August 31 virtual event.

Graham, Scott. [Mesa Verde Victim](#) (Torrey \$15.95). The latest of Graham’s National Park Mystery Series find archaeologist Chuck Bender sucked into murder uncovered Mesa Verde—literally, from a hidden cave for starters—that threatens his family, particularly his daughter, too. Graham bring the Mesa Verde National Park with its ancient stone villages, secret burial sites, and artifacts taken away a century ago to Sweden by an early Scandinavian archaeologist, vividly to life and raises some tough questions about the stewardship of ancient remains and plunder vs. science.

Kellerman, Jonathan and Jesse. [Half Moon Bay](#) (Ballantine \$28.99). Our copies come with a letter for you signed by both authors. Kellerman father and son collaborate on a series with protagonist Clay Edison filling a position we don’t often encounter: Deputy Coroner. For Alameda County, California. “As for the keen sense of drama, it must be a genetic trait. . . . Unlike most crime writers (not to mention most of their readers), who revel in the bloody aftermath of a violent encounter, the Kellermans show compassion for the survivors, including conscientious officials like Edison.”—*The New York Times Book Review*. This investigation gets started by the discovery of a decades-old child’s skeleton in a torn-up park and a local businessman’s claim that it could be his sister. . . .

✂Osman, Richard. [The Thursday Murder Club](#) (Viking \$26). The Signed UK edition is our **October First Mystery Book of the Month**. See Signed Books above.

Pryor, Mark. [The French Widow](#) (Seventh Street \$15.95). Signed bookplates. A young American woman is attacked at a historic Paris chateau and four paintings are stolen the same night, drawing Hugo Marston into a case where everyone seems like a suspect. To solve this mystery Hugo must crack the secrets of the icy and arrogant Lambour family, who seem more interested in protecting their good name than future victims. Just as Hugo thinks he’s close, some of the paintings mysteriously reappear, at the very same time that one of his suspects goes missing. While under pressure to catch a killer, Hugo also has to face the consequences of an act some see as heroic, but others believe might have been staged for self-serving reasons. This puts Hugo under a media and police spotlight he doesn’t want, and helps the killer who is hunting him. . . . This is an excellent series I’ve always wished were in hardcover. Don’t let the format do you out of the pleasure of spending time in France.

Pyper, Andrew. [The Residence](#) (Gallery \$26). Signed bookplates from this Canadian author. Pyper pens a supernatural thriller steeped in the melancholic and macabre, the kind of ghost story that will keep you up at night. This horror story is based on true events of 185. President-elect Franklin Pierce is traveling with his family to Washington, DC, when tragedy strikes. In an instant, their train runs off the rails, violently flinging passengers about

the cabin. When the great iron machine finally comes to rest, the only casualty is the Pierces' son, Bennie. The loss sends First Lady Jane Pierce into mourning, and casts Franklin's presidency under a pall of sorrow and grief. As the Pierces move into the White House, Bennie haunts it, breaking the spirit of what remains of the First Family and the divided America beyond the residence's walls. "A skilful blend of horror, science fiction and family drama... Pyper is a masterful plotter... a clean, clear and subtly affecting writer who is underappreciated as a stylist, who lulls readers and then grabs them by their throats. *The Homecoming* is an excellent novel and might be Pyper's best book."—*Winnipeg Free Press*. And it is our **September SciFi/Fantasy/Horror Book of the Month**.

Shaw, LC. [The Silent Conspiracy](#) (Harper \$16.99). It's been almost two years since investigative reporter, Jack Logan, and television producer, Taylor Parks brought down the Institute—the secret facility responsible for indoctrinating a generation of America's political and media power players—in [The Network](#) (\$16.99). Now, their lives are just getting back to normal, and Jack and Taylor have settled into married life with their young son, Evan. The man who'd threatened their lives—Damon Crosse, is dead, and his evil plan for society thwarted. But soon a series of bizarre murder/suicides capture Jack's attention. When he begins to piece together the seemingly unrelated incidents, a disturbing pattern emerges. Could someone be intentionally causing people to become homicidal? Meanwhile, Taylor is producing a story about a class action suit against a national insurance company that has reached the Supreme Court. As Jack and Taylor uncover layer after layer, they start to suspect that their stories are connected and that there is something darker and more insidious at play.

OUR SEPTEMBER BOOKS OF THE MONTH

The Crime Book of the Month One Signed hardcover First per month

Parish, Stan. [Love and Theft](#)

British Crime Book of the Month One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Cleeves, Ann. [The Darkest Evening](#)

Cozy Crimes Book of the Month One unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Yu, Ovidia. [The Mimosa Tree Mystery](#)

Fantastic New Fiction Book of the Month One Signed hardcover First per month

Lovett, Charlie [Escaping Dreamland](#)

First Mystery Book of the Month Club One Signed hardcover First per month

Pavesi, Alex. [Eight Detectives](#)

Historical Fiction Book of the Month One Signed hardcover First per month

Clarke, Susanna. [Piranesi](#)

International Crime Book of the Month One Unsigned hardcover or paperback per month

Noor, Rozlan. [21 Immortals: Inspector Mislan and the Yee Sang Murders](#)

SciFi/Fantasy Book of the Month One hardcover or paperback per month signed when possible.

Pyper, Andrew. [The Residence](#)

CLASSICS

Christie, Agatha. [Death on the Nile Classic Edition](#) (Harper \$21.99). In this hardcover reprint featuring the original cover art and typesetting, one of Agatha Christie's most beloved mysteries is painstakingly restored to its original beauty. The tranquility of a luxury cruise along the Nile was shattered by the discovery that Linnet Ridgeway had been shot through the head. She was young, stylish, and beautiful. A girl who had everything...until she lost her life.

Edwards, Martin, ed. [Settling Scores](#) (Poisoned Pen \$14.95).

"The detective story is a game between two players, the author... and the reader."—Ronald Knox. From the squash court to the golf links, the football pitch to the swimming pool and the race course to the cricket square, no court, grounds, stadium or stand is safe from skulduggery. Entering the arena where sport clashes with crime, this spirited medley of short stories showcases the greatest deadly plays and criminal gambits of the mystery genre. With introductions by Editor Martin Edwards and stories by some of the finest writers in the field—including Celia Fremlin, Michael Gilbert, Gladys Mitchell, and Leo Bruce—this new anthology offers a ringside view of the darker side of sports and proves that crime, naturally, is a game for all seasons

Starrett, Vincent. [The Great Hotel Murder](#) (Penzler \$15.95). First published in 1934 as *Recipe for Murder*, this twisty whodunit from Starrett (1886–1974), best known for his writings about Sherlock Holmes, stars an eccentric amateur sleuth, Riley Blackwood, who divides "his undoubted talents between dramatic criticism and the alluring problems of fantastic crime." Miss Blaine Oliver arranges to have breakfast in Chicago's Hotel Granada with a guest there, H.C. Trample, an old friend she hasn't seen in years. When Trample doesn't show, or answer his phone or door, Blaine and the hotel manager, Mr. Moffat, enter Trample's locked room, only to find the body of another guest, Jordan Chambers, an apparent poisoning victim. Since Chambers was registered to a different room on the same floor, Blaine and Moffat check out that room. Sure enough, Trample is sleeping soundly there, and when he's roused, he explains that Chambers requested the room switch for sentimental reasons. The Granada's owner brings in Blackwood to investigate, but the puzzle deepens when he learns that Chambers wasn't the dead man's real name. The American Mystery Classics series has rescued another memorable work from obscurity..

PANDEMIC READS

Veseth, Mike. [Around the World in Eighty Wines](#) (Rowan \$16.95). What a great idea for a pandemic read! Travel with the celebrated editor-in-chief of *The Wine Economist*. The journey inspired by Jules Verne's classic starts in London, Phileas Fogg's home base, and follows Fogg's itinerary to France and Italy before veering off in search of compelling wine stories in Syria, Georgia, and Lebanon. Every glass of wine tells a story, and so each of the eighty wines must tell an important tale. We head back across Northern Africa to Algeria, once the world's leading wine exporter, before hopping across the sea to Spain and Portugal. We follow Portuguese trade routes to Madeira and then South Africa with a short detour to taste Kenya's most famous Pinot Noir. Kenya? Pinot Noir? Really! The route loops around, visiting Bali, Thailand, and India before heading north to China to visit Shangri-La. Shangri-La? Does that even exist?

It does, and there is wine there. Then it is off to Australia, with a detour in Tasmania, a wine train in California and rendezvous with Planet Riesling in Seattle before getting into fast cars for a race across North America, collecting more wine as we go. Pause for lunch in Virginia to honor Thomas Jefferson and then it's time to jet back to London to tally our wines and see what we have learned. Why these particular places? What are the eighty wines and what do they reveal? And what is the surprise plot twist that guarantees a happy ending for every wine lover?

Nerserian, Arthur. [The Five Books of \(Robert\) Moses](#) (Akashic \$44.95). Ordered Upon Request. Nerserian has spent more than 25 years writing this and his publisher Johnny Temple has spent over a decade editing it. "When people are able to write and really pull off a complicated 1,000- or 1,500-page book and keep the plot both understandable and coherent, but also complex, it's a whole different ball-game than writing a 200-400-page book," he said. He also believes that the book, despite its focus on New York City history, is applicable to our current cultural moment. The book is rooted in themes of political tyranny and the death of culture and, perhaps most potently, is filled with viruses and social distancing and quarantining." Nerserian also, of course, could not have predicted the rise of Donald Trump, whose brand of politics could be seen as dovetailing remarkably with that of Robert Moses, the unelected public official who had perhaps more power in shaping the history of the New York metropolitan area than that of any of its mayors.

Temple says, "It's a book about political tyranny, and it uses New York and New York mythology as a canvas, but I think that the lawlessness in this book is a very interesting mirror of the lawlessness—a libertarian-inspired erosion of legal protections," Temple said. "It's also a book that shows culture dying of thirst. In this book, so many residents of New York City get shipped out to the desert in Nevada and get stuck out in a sort of refugee city, and because this happens—and it starts in about 1970 in the book—a lot of the people that get shipped out to the desert include people like Timothy Leary, and Allen Ginsberg, and Andy Warhol.... It does seem to me to be a great metaphor for the starvation of culture and the erosion of culture."

BOOKS FOR LOVERS OF BOOKS ABOUT BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Alexander, Zeno. [The Library of Ever](#) (Square Fish \$7.99). This middle-grade fantasy is about a magical library with every book ever written on its endless shelves—and Lenora, its newest, youngest, most adventurous librarian Ages 8-12.

Davis, Fiona. [The Lions of Fifth Avenue](#) (Dutton \$28). A series of book thefts roils the iconic New York Public Library, leaving two generations of strong-willed women to pick up the pieces. *PW* adds in its Starred Review: "Davis illuminates the world of special books through keen descriptions of the library and rare book dealers, while leading readers through the twin mysteries of the missing books. The characters and story are stellar, but the real star of the show is the library, which Davis evokes beautifully." Davis joins Charlie Lovett and me on September 17 to talk about books and libraries.

Crosby, Polly. [The Book of Hidden Wonders](#) (Park Row \$27.99). "A father-daughter story that is part adventure, part ghost story. Full of books, treasure and emotion; this is a family tale so well done that it brings to light harsh realities of grief, life and

coming-of-age unlike any other. One of the best debut novels I've ever read. Fans of Philip Pullman will enjoy!!"

DeRoux, Margaux. [The Lost Diary of Venice](#) (Ballantine \$27). A book restorer is presented with a 16th Century Venetian manuscript and discovers it's a palimpsest.

Edwards, Martin, ed. [Howdunnit](#) (Harper \$27.99). Ninety crime writers from the world's oldest and most famous crime writing network give tips and insights into successful crime and thriller fiction. Editor Edwards, President of the Detection Club, offers a fresh perspective on the craft of crime writing from leading exponents of the genre, past and present. The book offers invaluable advice to people interested in writing crime fiction, but it also provides a fascinating picture of the way that the best crime writers have honed their skills over the years. Its unique construction and content mean that it will appeal not only to would-be writers but also to a very wide readership of crime fans. The principal contributors are current members of the legendary Detection Club, including Ian Rankin, Val McDermid, Peter James, Peter Robinson, Ann Cleeves, Andrew Taylor, Elly Griffiths, Sophie Hannah, Stella Duffy, Alexander McCall Smith, John Le Carré and many more. Interwoven with their contributions are shorter pieces by past Detection Club members ranging from G.K. Chesterton, Dorothy L. Sayers, Agatha Christie and John Dickson Carr to Desmond Bagley and H.R.F. Keating. The book is dedicated to Len Deighton, who is celebrating 50 years as a Detection Club member and has also penned an essay for the book.

Haig, Matt. [The Midnight Library](#) (Viking, \$26). Somewhere out beyond the edge of the universe there is a library that contains an infinite number of books, each one the story of another reality. One tells the story of your life as it is, along with another book for the other life you could have lived if you had made a different choice at any point in your life. While we all wonder how our lives might have been, what if you had the chance to go to the library and see for yourself? Nora Seed finds herself faced with this decision. Faced with the possibility of changing her life for a new one, following a different career, undoing old breakups, realizing her dreams of becoming a glaciologist; she must search within herself as she travels through the Midnight Library to decide what is truly fulfilling in life, and what makes it worth living in the first place. Library Reads adds, "At a seminal moment in her life, Nora visits a unique library. Every book she chooses is one that she becomes part of and is a possible life she might have led. There are adventures, close calls, and joy. Give this totally engrossing page turner to fans of *Here and Now and Then* (Chen) and *Life after Life* (Atkinson).

Johnson, W. Bolingbroke. [The Widening Stain](#) (Penzler \$15.95). First published in 1941, this sparkling academic mystery from Johnson (the pseudonym of Cornell professor Morris Bishop) takes place at "the University" (a stand-in for Cornell), home to self-absorbed professors, anxious instructors, and quick-witted Gilda Gorham, the chief cataloguer at the University Library. When French instructor Lucie Coindreau, "the oomph-girl of the Romance Language Department," leaves a party at the university president's house suspiciously early, curious Gilda follows her to the library. Inside, Gilda hears a scream and a crash. Lucie is lying dead on the marble floor below a high gallery, having apparently taken an accidental fall over the gallery railing. When a professor is later strangled in a locked room filled with ancient

erotica, Lucie's colleagues have to wonder whether Lucie, too, was murdered. A master of lively word play, Johnson exposes the foibles of his characters with sly wit. Readers will regret that this funny, erudite novel was poet and scholar Bishop's only foray into fiction. It is filled with books and biblio sorts of fun and has an Introduction by notable bibliophile Nicholas Basbanes with whom we did a virtual event in July we recommend watching.

Lovett, Charlie [Escaping Dreamland](#) (Blackstone \$26.99). See Signed Books above. What fun to revisit books we loved as kids, especially series with heroes. I love this and can't wait to talk with Lovett and Fiona Davis about books that shaped our lives from magical first encounters. Please join us and we can blend in your comments via questions to our FB Live monitor.

McKinlay, Jenn. [One for the Books](#) (Berkley \$26). A new Library Lover's mystery. See Signed Books above.

Morrow, Bradford. [The Forger's Daughter](#) (Grove \$26). I have asked Morrow's editor, Otto Penzler, bibliophile/publisher/bookseller, to join me in talking to Morrow about forgery, Edgar Allan Poe, letterpress printing, books... and the mystery which is the sequel to Morrow's 2014 hit *The Forgers*. See Signed Books above. Otto let me know the dust jacket art replicates a Poe, probably *Tamerlane* which is in play here.

Pearl, Nancy/Jeff Schwager. [The Writer's Library: The Authors You Love on the Books That Changed Their Lives](#) (HarperOne \$27.99). Library Reads enthuses: "As someone who loves reading, books, and talking about books, this was perfect for me. I found it fascinating to get a glimpse of what books influenced such an eclectic group of writers. It made me look at my own reading history and at books and reading in a different way." There is a list of seminal books at the end of each author's essay – it skews literary, not towards the thrilling, and ranges widely.

Poston, Ashley. [Bookish and the Beast](#) (Quirk \$18.99). Rosie Thorne is feeling stuck—on her college application essays, in her small town, and on that mysterious General Sord cosplayer she met at ExcelsiCon. Most of all, she's stuck in her grief over her mother's death. Her only solace was her late mother's library of rare Starfield novels, but even that disappeared when they sold it to pay off hospital bills. On the other hand, Vance Reigns has been Hollywood royalty for as long as he can remember—with all the privilege and scrutiny that entails. When a tabloid scandal catches up to him, he's forced to hide out somewhere the paparazzi would never expect to find him: Small Town USA. At least there's a library in the house. Too bad he doesn't read. When Rosie and Vance's paths collide and a rare book is accidentally destroyed, Rosie has to pay off a debt to Vance, a jerk.... This is the third in the Book a Con series, geeky retellings of romances like *Beauty and the Beast* for Young Adult readers but really, why not for nostalgic adults?

Wingate, Marty. [Murder Is a Must](#) (Berkley \$26). A charming bibliocozy set in Bath, England. Not out until October but order it now.

SURPRISING AND SUSPENSEFUL JOURNEYS

DeRoux, Margaux. [The Lost Diary of Venice](#) (Ballantine \$27). Artistic legacies and impossible love stories combine in a debut that bridges present day Connecticut with Renaissance Venice. Rose Newlin is mourning the death of her beloved father and trying to work out her life's path by running a (New Haven) book-

store with a sideline as a skilled book restorer. One rainy day struggling painter William Lomazzo, unable to maintain his NYC success, brings in a 16th Century treatise on art which eventually ties to an ancestor working in Venice where the Ottoman fleet is preparing for conquest (the Battle of Lepanto is the culmination although not part of the book). Gio is losing his sight so begins to document everything. His last commission may be to paint the portrait of the enchanting courtesan kept by the city's most powerful military commander who is on a path to become Doge. Rose and William, who is a married father, ignite a spark, as do Gio and his lovely model. Dive in and see where it goes.... This is not operatic nor tragic but... entrancing. Plus who can resist a palimpsest?

Morelli, Laura. [The Night Portrait](#) (Morrow \$16.99). Dive into this dual-timeline historical novel about the creation of one of Leonardo da Vinci's most famous paintings, *Portrait of a Lady with an Ermine*, and the woman who fought to save it from Nazi destruction during World War II. Milan, 1492: When a 16-year old beauty becomes the mistress of the Duke of Milan, she must fight for her place in the palace—and against those who want her out. Soon, she finds herself sitting before Leonardo da Vinci, who wants to ensure his own place in the ducal palace by painting his most ambitious portrait to date. Munich, World War II: After a modest conservator unwittingly places a priceless Italian Renaissance portrait into the hands of a high-ranking Nazi leader, she risks her life to recover it, working with an American soldier, part of the famed Monuments Men team, to get it back. Two women, separated by 500 years, are swept up in the tide of history as one painting stands at the center of their quests

OUR SEPTEMBER LARGE PAPERBACK PICKS

Box, CJ. [The Bitterroots](#) (\$16.99). Cassie Dewell has left law enforcement to work as a private eye, based in Helena, Montana. Her main clients are insurance companies and car dealerships. When an old friend calls in a debt, Cassie leaves the comfort of her new business to look into the circumstances surrounding the arrest of a member of an influential family in a small, rural community. As she heads into the Bitterroot mountains, where a fire is raging, that fresh air disappears both literally and metaphorically. "This will appeal to readers who enjoy works by Craig Johnson, Paul Doiron, Brian Panowich, and Nevada Barr," says Phoenix librarian Sharon Mensing. The other good news is that Cassie and company come to ABC-TV in October in a new series, *Big Sky*.

Edwards, Martin. [Mortmain Hall](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99). I may have been Martin's American editor, but I can't say better about this gem than this *PW* Starred Review: "Set in 1930s England, Edgar winner Edwards's sequel to 2019's [Gallows Court](#) (\$15.95) is a triumph, from its tantalizing opening, in which an unnamed dying man begins to explain an unspecified perfect crime, through its scrupulously fair final reveal. Rachel Savername, an enigmatic figure fascinated with mysteries, is tipped off by Reggie Vickers, who works in Whitehall, that someone is about to be murdered. Gilbert Payne, a publisher believed dead, is set to travel, incognito, from London to his mother's funeral in the country. Rachel warns Gilbert that his life is in peril, but he ignores her, and ends up dead under the wheels of a train. Meanwhile, Rachel's reporter friend, Jacob Flint, is approached by Leonora Dobell, one of the country's top criminologists, who

seeks an introduction to Rachel, who later attends a house party at Leonora's home, Mortmain Hall, on the Yorkshire coast, for "acquitted murder suspects," whose ranks include other individuals Reggie mentioned to Rachel. The labyrinthine plot builds to a logical explanation. Edwards, the current president of the Detection Club, a group of British mystery writers founded in 1930, impressively channels Agatha Christie, one of his predecessors in that position." Notice that Christie's fingerprints are all over this Booknews as they have been all of 2020.

Grecian, Alex. [The Saint of Wolves and Butchers](#) (\$17). Travis Roan and his dog, Bear, are hunters: They travel the world pursuing evildoers. And so they come to Kansas on the trail of Rudolph Bormann, a Nazi doctor and concentration camp administrator who snuck into the U.S. under the name Rudy Goodman in the 1950s and has at last been identified. Travis quickly learns that Goodman has powerful friends who will go to any length to protect the Nazi; what he doesn't know is that Goodman has furtively continued his diabolical work, amassing a congregation of followers who believe he possesses Godlike powers. Caught between these men is Kansas State Trooper Skottie Foster, an African American woman and a good cop who must find a way to keep peace in her district... This 2018 thriller, a change up from Grecian's Victorian series, is even more relevant today than two+ years ago.

Greenwood, Kerry. [The Spotted Dog](#) (\$15.99). A missing dog, a series of break-ins, and several dangerous gangs provide a jam-packed agenda for Melbourne baker/sleuth Corinna Chapman and Daniel Cohen, her tall, dark, handsome, and dangerous Israeli lover. No, this isn't Phryne Fisher, this is a quite different woman, but they share the same sense of adventure and willingness to shatter social norms. I love the roof forest atop the iconic apartment building in Melbourne (which also has a fabulous train station and an impressive public library) where the characters commune amidst the parsley. This is the 7th in a delightful Australian series. Enjoy the cats.

✎Harvey, John. [Body and Soul](#) (\$15.95). When his estranged daughter Katherine suddenly appears on his doorstep, Frank Elder knows that something is badly wrong. The breakdown of her relationship with a controversial artist has sent her into a self-destructive tailspin which culminates in murder. "A few terrifying twists up the stakes and a shocking finale will have readers reeling. Procedural fans with a soft spot for P.I. tales will love this, but a father's love and a young woman trying desperately to crawl out of the darkness and into the light are at the heart of this crackling tale."—Criminal Element. Closing out his wonderful Frank Elder mysteries, "Harvey writes with great power about the disappointments and tragedies of living, and he always digs deep into the emotional recesses of his characters—all of which makes the devastating ending of this remarkable novel all the more powerful."—*Booklist* Starred Review

Hill, Joe. [Full Throttle: Stories](#) (\$18.99). A grief-stricken librarian climbs behind the wheel of an antique Bookmobile to deliver fresh reads to the dead in "Late Returns." In "By the Silver Water of Lake Champlain," soon to be an episode on Shudder TV's *Creepshow*, two young friends stumble on the corpse of a plesiosaur at the water's edge, a discovery that forces them to confront the inescapable truth of their own mortality . . . and other horrors that lurk in the water's shivery depths. And tension

shimmers in the sweltering heat of the Nevada desert as a faceless trucker finds himself caught in a sinister dance with a tribe of motorcycle outlaws in "Throttle," co-written with Stephen King. Replete with shocking chillers, including two previously unpublished stories written expressly for this volume ("Mums" and "Late Returns") and another appearing in print for the first time ("Dark Carousel"),

Johnson, Sara E. [The Bones Remember](#) (Poisoned Pen \$15.99). In the sequel to Johnson's debut in [Molten Mud Murder](#) (\$15.95), Alexa Glock, formerly of the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation has found a way to stay in New Zealand, where she has found a job with the Forensic Service Center in Auckland. Her specialty in forensic odontology makes her the perfect person to identify the remains of a man discovered on Stewart Island off the tip of the south island, whose main tourist draws are its native birds—midnight kiwi hunts—and shark cage diving operations. Alexa confirms that the body is that of Robert King, who disappeared while deer hunting in Rakiura National Park 10 months earlier. There's a bullet hole his skull. Then a dead man washes up on the beach, a third of his body torn away by sharks. He, too, was shot. The flora and fauna of rural New Zealand turn out to be relevant to the murder investigation. At the exciting climax, Alexa uses her wits, not a gun or martial arts skills, to take down the bad actor. I've visited Stewart Island though avoiding the shark cages and can say that Johnson does a wonderful job with its landscape and special culture—although she missed the amazing restaurant up the highest hill! We will schedule a virtual program with Johnson and Mary Anna Evans in October.

McKinty, Adrian. [The Chain](#) (\$17.99). I'm fascinated by international authors who craft quintessentially American thrillers such as Lee Child (British). Northern Ireland-born Adrian McKinty, who's done a stint in Australia, really nails it with *The Chain*. The engine of the kidnapping plot is brilliantly conceived—which of us hasn't at some time received a chain letter tagged with dire consequences for breaking the chain?—but it's the vivid characters and their wrenching dilemmas that lift this chiller above the ordinary. Not to mention the true sociopath(s) running the chain. Grab a copy, then turn off your phone. No wonder McKinty has won several awards for *The Chain*, US and UK.

✎Perry, Anne. [Death in Focus](#) (\$17). An intrepid young photographer carries her dead lover's final, world-shattering message into the heart of Berlin as Hitler ascends to power. On vacation from London on the beautiful Italian coast, 28-year-old Elena Standish and her older sister, Margot, have finally been able to move on from the lasting trauma of the Great War, in which the newly married Margot lost her husband and the sisters their beloved brother. Touring with her camera in hand, Elena has found new inspiration in the striking Italian landscape, and she's met an equally striking man named Ian. When Ian has to leave unexpectedly, Elena—usually the more practical of the sisters—finds she's not ready to part from him, and the two share a spontaneous train trip home to England. But a shocking sequence of events disrupts their itinerary, forcing Elena to personally deliver a message to Berlin on Ian's behalf, one that could change the fate of Europe. Back home, Elena's diplomat father and her secretive grandfather—once head of MI6, unbeknownst to his family—are involved in their own international machinations. Ian reveals that he works for MI6 and he's trying to prevent the murder of a German admiral in Berlin, a crime the plotters hope to pin on the British.

Preston, Douglas/Lincoln Child. [Crooked River](#) (\$16.99). This book is a must read for any fan of Randy Wayne White and Doc Ford. We begin where two children are shelling on a Sanibel Island beach and espy tennis shoes floating onto the sand—shoes each filled with a severed human foot. Then the Sanibel police chief has to take drastic action to preserve evidence (most of you will hate this!). Then a team of investigators gathers under the leadership of a Coast Guard commander who develops a theory that, no surprise, is challenged by Agent AXL Pendergast, still in the area after the events in *Verses for the Dead*, who sets up his own line of inquiry. Roger Smithback of the Miami Herald meanwhile is trying his every ploy for a scoop, Pendergast's ward Constance takes an active role dressed in organdy, and the aforementioned police chief, Perelman, who switched gears from studying to be a rabbi to law enforcement officer, bemusedly cooperates with the unorthodox FBI Agent. All this in the first 50 pages. Bonus: the writing about Sanibel, Captiva, and the Florida coast is lyrical. Did I mentioned a Coast Guard op off the shores of a dreaded Cuban prison that is first terrifying and then hilarious?

Rosenfelt, David. [Dachshund Through the Snow](#) (\$16.99). N.J. defense attorney Andy Carpenter focuses on a cold case: the murder of 18-year-old Kristen McNeil, whose body was found near an abandoned stadium 14 years earlier. For Christmas, little Danny Traynor has three wishes: a coat for his mother, a sweater for his dachshund, and for Santa to find his daddy and bring him home. Laurie, Andy's former police lieutenant wife who knows Danny's mom, talks Andy into tracking down the boy's father, Noah. Noah is in fact hiding from the police, who are about to arrest him for Kristen's murder, based on new DNA evidence that links Noah to the crime. It looks like a slam dunk for the prosecutor, but when Andy and his team start to dig, they uncover a larger conspiracy that puts Andy's life at risk. Meanwhile, Andy establishes a genial relationship with Simon, a retired police dog, and Simon's handler.

Sallis, James. [Sarah Jane](#) (\$16.95). As one bookseller describes it, "A spare, sparkling tour de force about one woman's journey to becoming a cop, by master of noir James Sallis, author of *Drive*. Everything he writes is most worthy and so beautifully written to boot. You will marvel. He's a sorcerer with words. Because most of his novels feature a crime, and subsequent matching atmosphere, they are called mysteries. But trust me these are novels first of the highest literary quality that work within the world of bad deeds gone even more wrong. *Sarah Jane* is no different. What's not to admire in a sentence that reads: 'There's a small revolution going on in that sentence.' Trust me—find this guy—start here—read this book!"

Stuart, A M. [Revenge in Rubies](#) (Berkley \$16). Singapore, 1910—Harriet Gordon has found fulfillment at last. Her young ward, Will, has settled into his new home with Harriet and her brother, Julian. And Harriet's employment as a typist at the Straits Settlements Police Force has given her an intriguing way to occupy her time and some much-needed financial independence. But when her friend and employer, Inspector Robert Curran, is called to the scene of a brutal murder and Harriet is asked to comfort the victim's family, her newfound sense of contentment is abruptly shattered. Sylvie Nolan, the new and much-younger wife of Lieutenant Colonel John Nolan, has been bludgeoned to death in

her bedroom. The tightly knit military community in Singapore quickly closes ranks to hinder Curran's investigation, and Harriet realizes that her friendship with the colonel's sister might prove useful. But to get close enough to the family's secrets, Harriet must once again face her painful past, and Curran is forced to dredge up some long-buried secrets of his own. And then more shocking deaths occur.... This is the sequel to an excellent series start John and I both recommend: [Singapore Sapphire](#) (\$16). Grab them both.

✠Todd, Charles. [A Cruel Deception](#) (\$16.99). WWI nurse Bess Crawford is trying to figure out what direction her postwar career should take while serving in a Wiltshire surgical clinic when she's summoned to the Queen Alexandra's headquarters in London to meet with the Matron, Mrs. Minton, whose son, Lawrence, is in Paris as part of the British delegation attending the peace conference. A friend has informed Mrs. Minton that, despite Lawrence's assurances, he hasn't been attending meetings. In fact, he may have disappeared. Bess agrees to travel to Paris and look into Lawrence's circumstances. When she finally tracks him down in a small village at the home of a friend, she discovers he's addicted to laudanum and plagued by somnambulism. And refusing to seek help or even discuss his deterioration. The general muddle all find themselves in reflects, I think, Bess's own muddle over what path to follow, and with whom, as the muddle of discharging troops back into civilian life and of the peace talks grows.

Webb, Betty. [Desert Redemption](#) (\$15.99). Once again I prefer someone else's review of a book I edited. "In Jones's electrifying 10th and final Lena Jones mystery, Scottsdale, Arizona., PI Lena is approached by Harold Slow Horse, one of Arizona's leading artists, who insists that she investigate the Kanati Spiritual Center, a compound promoting a mishmash of Native American symbolism and philosophy, where his flighty ex-wife, Chelsea, has taken up residence. Lena reluctantly agrees, and discovers that Chelsea is thriving on the fresh air, sunshine, and gourmet cuisine on offer at the center. When the body of a woman with a possible link to the center turns up in the desert, Lena begins to think that there is 'something more horrific than religious plagiarism going on at Kanati.' Lena gets on a trail that leads her at long last to answers about her troubled past: 'I was an orphan... I'd been found comatose on a Phoenix street at the age of four with a bullet in my head. No one came forward to claim me.' The resolution will satisfy series fans, though they'll be sad to see the last of Lena."—PW. [Order all 10 Lena Jones' investigations starting with *Desert Noir*.](#)

Yu, Ovidia. [The Mimosa Tree Mystery](#) (Constable \$15.99). Mirza, a secretive neighbor of the Chens in Japanese Occupied Singapore, is a known collaborator and blackmailer. So when he is murdered in his garden, clutching a branch of mimosa, the suspects include local acquaintances, Japanese officials -- and his own daughters. Su Lin's Uncle Chen is among those rounded up by the Japanese as reprisal. Hideki Tagawa, a former spy expelled by police officer Le Froy and a power in the new regime, offers Su Lin her uncle's life in exchange for using her fluency in languages and knowledge of locals to find the real killer. Su Lin soon discovers Hideki has an ulterior motive. Friends, enemies and even the victim are not what they seem. There is more at stake here than one man's life. Su Lin must find out who killed

Mirza and why, before Le Froy and other former colleagues detained or working with the resistance suffer the consequences of Mirza's last secret. "Charming and fascinating with great authentic feel. Ovidia Yu's teenage Chinese sleuth gives us an insight into a very different culture and time. This book is exactly why I love historical novels."—Rhys Bowen on a new Crown Colony Mystery.

Yu, author of this our **September Cozy Crimes Book of the Month**, adds, "Miss Marple is a great-granny of Auntie Lee, not because she's unassuming, but because the point of Miss Marple is that you can see the whole range of behavior in one little village because people are the same everywhere. Auntie Yu likes gossip, and likes food, and understands people—Miss Marple doesn't judge, and neither does she. Christie influenced the whole genre; you can't help but be influenced by her. People say her views were old-fashioned, but she was equal-opportunity: Poirot was 'foreign' and a lot of her terrible people are white upper class. She made everybody bad. Anybody—the least likely—could be the murderer."

SOME NEW BOOKS

✚Abbott, Rachel. [The Invitation](#) (Grand Central \$12.99). *The Big Chill* meets the board game Clue in this British whodunit. "Lies, secrets, and the wonderfully twisted murder game will have readers furiously turning the pages. Jemma Hudson isn't looking forward to the anniversary party her husband's friend Lucas Jarrett is giving at Polskirrin, Lucas's seaside estate in Cornwall. A year earlier, Lucas's elaborate wedding to Nina Bélanger was marred by the suicide of his reclusive sister, Alex Lawrence. The wedding also marked the point at which Jemma's once happy marriage began to fall apart. At Polskirrin, the controlling Lucas tells his guests, comprised of his friends who attended his and Nina's wedding, that he believes Alex was murdered and one of them is the killer. When Lucas forces each guest to dress in exact replicas of last year's outfits and eat the same meals, Jemma pushes back, but the others fear Lucas, the scion of one of Britain's wealthiest and most influential families, will ruin them professionally or never invite them back if they don't go along...."

Atwood Margaret. [Testaments](#) (\$16.95). Whatever happened to Offred after the close of Atwood's iconic [The Handmaid's Tale](#) (\$15.95)? In this talk-of-the-town sequel, we find out. Taking place 15 years later, the narrative is shaped by the testaments of three female narrators from Gilead.

Backman, Fredrik. [Anxious People](#) (Atria \$28) is "a poignant comedy about a crime that never took place, a would-be bank robber who disappears into thin air, and eight extremely anxious strangers who find they have more in common than they ever imagined. Viewing an apartment normally doesn't turn into a life-or-death situation, but this particular open house becomes just that when a failed bank robber bursts in and takes everyone in the apartment hostage. As the pressure mounts, the eight strangers slowly begin opening up to one another and reveal long-hidden truths. As police surround the premises and television channels broadcast the hostage situation live, the tension mounts and even deeper secrets are slowly revealed. Before long, the robber must decide which is the more terrifying prospect: going out to face the police, or staying in the apartment with this group of impossible people."

Barnes, Jennifer Lynn. [The Inheritance Games](#) (Little Brown Teen \$17.99). Avery Grambs has a plan for a better future: survive high school, win a scholarship, and get out. But her fortunes change in an instant when billionaire Tobias Hawthorne dies and leaves Avery virtually his entire fortune. The catch? Avery has no idea why — or even who Tobias Hawthorne is. To receive her inheritance, Avery must move into sprawling, secret passage-filled Hawthorne House, where every room bears the old man's touch — and his love of puzzles, riddles, and codes. Unfortunately for Avery, Hawthorne House is also occupied by the family that Tobias Hawthorne just dispossessed. This includes the four Hawthorne grandsons: dangerous, magnetic, brilliant boys who grew up with every expectation that one day, they would inherit billions. Their apparent Grayson Hawthorne is convinced that Avery must be a con-woman, and he's determined to take her down. His brother, Jameson, views her as their grandfather's last hurrah: a twisted riddle, a puzzle to be solved. So, Avery must play the game....

Brodesser-Akner, Taffy. [Fleishman Is in Trouble](#) (\$17). *NY Times* Bestseller. National Book Award Longlist. Named one of 10 Best of the Year by multiple media—"A feminist jeremiad nested inside a brilliant comic novel—a book that makes you laugh so hard you don't notice till later that your eyebrows have been singed off."—Ron Charles, *The Washington Post*. Toby Fleishman thought he knew what to expect when he and his wife of almost fifteen years separated: weekends and every other holiday with the kids, some residual bitterness, the occasional moment of tension in their co-parenting negotiations. He could not have predicted that one day, in the middle of his summer of sexual emancipation, Rachel would just drop their two children off at his place and simply not return. He had been working so hard to find equilibrium in his single life. The winds of his optimism, long dormant, had finally begun to pick up. Now this. As Toby tries to figure out where Rachel went, all while juggling his patients at the hospital, his never-ending parental duties, and his new app-assisted sexual popularity, his tidy narrative of the spurned husband with the too-ambitious wife is his sole consolation. But if Toby ever wants to truly understand what happened to Rachel and what happened to his marriage, he is going to have to consider that he might not have seen things all that clearly in the first place.

Cole, Alyssa. [When No One is Watching](#) (Harper \$16.99). A compelling novel brings racism, gentrification, and imperiled neighborhoods to the fore. (I can't help but think of the protests about Amazon moving into NY). "The gentrification of her beloved Brooklyn neighborhood has longtime resident Sydney Green mourning what's lost. Striking up an uneasy alliance with new neighbor Theo, she starts research for a walking tour to highlight the area's rich history and diversity but quickly comes to realize that something far more sinister is going on. A sense of mounting dread and some startling twists and turns will keep readers turning the pages. Where have all those old neighbors gone? For fans of *An Unwanted Guest*, *The Woman in Cabin Ten*, and *Watching You*."

A bookseller writes she is a "fan of Cole's romances so I was super excited for her to step outside her genre and write a thriller. She didn't skip a beat with this one. I almost felt that this was real life and not fictional; it was very haunting and so good.

Sydney is born and raised in Brooklyn and begins to see alarming changes in her neighborhood when white people begin moving in. She finds a friendship with her new white neighbor Theo, and they begin uncovering why and how black people are disappearing in different ways. This was a crazy and wild ride.”

Donati, Sara. [Where the Light Enters](#) (\$17). Obstetrician Dr. Sophie Savard returns home to the achingly familiar rhythms of Manhattan in the early spring of 1884 to rebuild her life after the death of her husband. With the help of Dr. Anna Savard, her dearest friend, cousin, and fellow physician, she plans to continue her work aiding the disadvantaged women society would rather forget. As Sophie sets out to construct a new life for herself, Anna’s husband, Detective Sergeant Jack Mezzanotte, calls on them both to consult on two new cases: the wife of a prominent banker has disappeared into thin air, and the corpse of a young woman is found with baffling wounds that suggest a killer is on the loose. In New York, it seems that the advancement of women has brought out the worst in some men.... The talented Donati introduces a crime element into her historical fiction.

ÆEllicott, Jessica. [Murder Cuts the Mustard](#) (\$15.95). When a man is found murdered in the local churchyard in the quaint English village of Walmsley Parva, Constable Gibbs comes looking for his prime suspect. Edwina Davenport’s elderly gardener Simpkins has been secretly sleeping there after a row with his disreputable brother-in-law and housemate, Hector Lomax, the dead man. Based on the sad state of her garden, Edwina has grave doubts that the shiftless Simpkins could muster the effort to murder anyone. The two sleuths throw themselves into weeding out suspects and rooting out the real killer. But this is no garden variety murder. The discovery of a valuable ring, a surprise connection to Colonel Kimberly’s Condiment Company, and a second homicide all force Edwina and her private enquiry agent partner, the brash American Beryl Helliwell, to play catch-up to contain the culprit....

ÆElliott, Lexie. [The Missing Years](#) (\$16). Who can resist a country house mystery set in the foothills of the Scottish Highlands with a Gothic touch and vibrant village dynamics? Not me. Ailsa Calder has inherited half of an old manor. The other half belongs to a man who disappeared without a trace twenty-seven years ago—her father. Leaving London behind to settle the inheritance, Ailsa returns to the manor, nestled amongst the craggy peaks of the Scottish Highlands, joined by the half-sister who’s practically a stranger to her, and with sketchy memories of the past. And she can’t ditch the claustrophobia blooming from a feeling that the house is watching her. Then the first night-time intruder shows up. Should she sell up or stay? Never fear, this is not a ghost story, and it immerses you in the rugged landscape (and equally rugged villagers), both foreign to urbanites. This is a good novel of suspense with great atmosphere. I liked it so well it was a May 2019, British Crime Club Book of the Month.

Ferrante, Elena. [The Lying Life of Adults](#) (Europa \$26) brings readers back to a world—who knows if it is autobiographical or entirely fictional—that book-after-book we have come to think of as hers. Naples is there from the start, and, most importantly, so too are the indissoluble, complex, painful bond between children and their parents. “Ferrante shows again how she is unbeatable at pulling you inside the mind of a teenage girl, making you see how everything that looks irrational from the outside—the moods,

the silences, the jealousy, fears, tears and resentments—are utterly logical and reasonable.”—*The Times*. Ferrante highlights the bitter and sometimes brutal insecurity of being a teenager. “It’s the sort of coming-of-age story that captures the uncertainty we feel when we begin to see our parents and other grown-ups as real people—and flawed ones, at that.”—*AFAR Magazine*

ÆFforde, Jasper. [The Constant Rabbit](#) (Viking \$28). England, 2022. There are 1.2 million human-size rabbits living in the UK. They can walk, talk, drive cars, and they like to read Voltaire, the result of an Inexplicable Anthropomorphizing Event fifty-five years before. A family of rabbits is about to move into Much Hemlock, a cozy little village in Middle England where life revolves around summer fetes, jam making, gossipy corner stores, and the oh-so-important Best Kept Village awards. No sooner have the rabbits arrived than the villagers decide they must depart, citing their propensity to burrow and breed, and their shameless levels of veganism. But Mrs. Constance Rabbit is made of sterner stuff, and she and her family decide they are to stay. Unusually, their neighbors—longtime resident Peter Knox and his daughter, Pippa—decide to stand with them and soon discover that you can be a friend to rabbits or humans, but not both. With a blossoming romance, acute cultural differences, enforced rehoming to a MegaWarren in Wales, and the full power of the ruling United Kingdom Anti-Rabbit Party against them, Peter and Pippa are about to question everything they had ever thought.... Fforde is a master fantasist/satirist.

ÆFollett, Ken. [Evening and the Morning](#) (Viking \$38). It is 997 CE, the end of the Dark Ages. England is facing attacks from the Welsh in the west and the Vikings in the east. Those in power bend justice according to their will, regardless of ordinary people and often in conflict with the king. Without a clear rule of law, chaos reigns. In these turbulent times, three characters find their lives intertwined: A young boatbuilder’s life is turned upside down when the only home he’s ever known is raided by Vikings, forcing him and his family to move and start their lives anew in a small hamlet where he does not fit in... A Norman noblewoman marries for love, following her husband across the sea to a new land. But the customs of her husband’s homeland are shockingly different, and as she begins to realize that everyone around her is engaged in a constant, brutal battle for power, it becomes clear that a single misstep could be catastrophic. . . . A monk dreams of transforming his humble abbey into a center of learning that will be admired throughout Europe. And each in turn comes into dangerous conflict with a clever and ruthless bishop who will do anything to increase his wealth and power. This is a touch of Candace Robb’s Owen Archer series set in a later Yorkshire but it also carries me back 30 years ago to the brilliant [Pillars of the Earth](#), my personal favorite Follett—this is essentially a prequel, ending the narrative where Pillars begins.

ÆGalbraith, Robert. [Troubled Blood](#) (Mulholland \$29). Private Detective Cormoran Strike is visiting his family in Cornwall when he is approached by a woman asking for help finding her mother, Margot Bamborough – who went missing in mysterious circumstances in 1974. Strike has never tackled a cold case before, let alone one forty years old. But despite the slim chance of success, he is intrigued and takes it on; adding to the long list of cases that he and his partner in the agency, Robin Ellacott, are currently working on. And Robin herself is also juggling a messy

divorce and unwanted male attention, as well as battling her own feelings about Strike. As Strike and Robin investigate Margot's disappearance, they come up against a fiendishly complex case with leads that include tarot cards, a psychopathic serial killer and witnesses who cannot all be trusted... This is JK Rowling writing adult crime fiction as Galbraith.

Gee, Poppy. [Vanishing Falls](#) (Morrow \$21) is a lush mystery with just the right amount of Gothic undertones. When the beautiful socialite Celia vanishes without a trace from the remote home she shares with her husband nestled in the Tasmanian rain forest, only Joelle Smithton, the person everyone underestimates, can uncover the truth.

Goldenbaum, Sally. [A Murderous Tangle](#) (\$15.95). While the Seaside Knitters get ready to showcase their new Danish-inspired event, locals can't stop talking about Tess Bean, a bright-eyed environmental activist with a way of charming both animals and humans alike—especially Birdie's granddaughter, and Izzy's old Irish setter. Except not everyone is a fan of Tess and her strong opinions, especially after she starts questioning the "clean" practices of small-business owners. When a popular bar owner whom Tess publicly calls out is found dead from a fall off his club's deck, Tess soon tops the list of suspects. But in addition to a murderer walking their streets, the knitters must grapple with an unusual wave of local thefts.

Gyasi, Yaa. [Transcendent Kingdom](#) (Doubleday \$27.95) is a deeply moving portrait of a family of Ghanaian immigrants ravaged by depression and addiction and grief. Gifty is a sixth-year PhD candidate in neuroscience at the Stanford University School of Medicine studying reward-seeking behavior in mice and the neural circuits of depression and addiction. Her brother, Nana, was a gifted high school athlete who died of a heroin overdose after an ankle injury left him hooked on Oxycontin. Her suicidal mother is living in her bed. Gifty is determined to discover the scientific basis for the suffering she sees all around her. But even as she turns to the hard sciences to unlock the mystery of her family's loss, she finds herself hungering for her childhood faith and grappling with the evangelical church in which she was raised, whose promise of salvation remains as tantalizing as it is elusive.

Harris, Robert. [V2: A Novel of World War II](#) (Knopf \$28.95). It's November 1944—Willi Graf, a German rocket engineer, is launching Nazi Germany's V2 rockets at London from Occupied Holland. Kay Connolly, once an actress, now a young English Intelligence officer, ships out for Belgium to locate the launch sites and neutralize the threat. But when rumors of a defector circulate through the German ranks, Graf becomes a suspect. Unknown to each other, Graf and Connolly find themselves on opposite sides in the hunt for the saboteur. Their twin stories play out against the background of the German missile campaign, one of the most epic and modern but least explored episodes of the Second World War. Harris has touched on this era in earlier thrillers.

Harris, Thomas. [Cari Mora](#) (\$16.99). Twenty-five million dollars in cartel gold lies hidden beneath a mansion on the Miami Beach waterfront. Ruthless men have tracked it for years. Leading the pack is Hans-Peter Schneider. Driven by unspeakable appetites, he makes a living fleshing out the violent fantasies of other, richer men. Cari Mora, caretaker of the house, has escaped from

the violence in her native country. She stays in Miami on a wobbly Temporary Protected Status, subject to the iron whim of ICE. She works at many jobs to survive. Beautiful, marked by war, Cari catches the eye of Hans-Peter as he closes in on the treasure. But Cari Mora has surprising skills, and her will to survive has been tested before.... Not the best Harris....

Hoffman, Alice. [The World That We Knew](#) (\$17). Set in Nazi-occupied France between 1941 and 1944, Hoffman's latest is a bittersweet parable about the costs of survival and the behaviors that define humanity. The narrative follows several groups of characters: teenage Julien Lévi and his older brother, Victor, whose family is murdered by the Nazis; Ettie, a rabbi's daughter, who with Victor and Marianne, the Lévis' former (Protestant) housekeeper, become members of the Resistance; and Lea Kohn, a schoolgirl fleeing Berlin with her "cousin" Ava. Unbeknownst to most of the characters, Ava is actually a golem—a soulless supernatural protector out of Jewish folklore—and her interactions with them and the ways in which she touches their lives serve as touchstones for Hoffman's reflections on the power of love to redeem and the challenges of achieving humanity, or retaining it, under such challenging circumstances. Though coincidence governs much of the meeting and team-ups of her characters, Hoffman mitigates any implausibility through the fairy tale quality of Ava's involvement and her supernatural powers of salvation. The attention to the harsh historical facts makes the reader care all the more strongly about the fates of all of the characters. Hoffman offers a sober appraisal of the Holocaust and the tragedies and triumphs of those who endured its atrocities

✂Huber, Anna Lee. [A Pretty Deceit](#) (Kensington \$15.95). Peacetime has brought little respite for Verity Kent. Intrigue still abounds, even within her own family. As a favor to her father, Verity agrees to visit his sister in Wiltshire. Her once prosperous aunt has fallen on difficult times and is considering selling their estate. But there are strange goings-on at the manor, including missing servants, possible heirloom forgeries, and suspicious rumors—all leading to the discovery of a dead body on the grounds. While Verity and her husband, Sidney, investigate this new mystery, they are also on the trail of an old adversary—the shadowy and lethal Lord Ardmore. At every turn, the suspected traitor seems to be one step ahead of them. And even when their dear friend Max, the Earl of Ryde, stumbles upon a code hidden among his late father's effects that may reveal the truth about Ardmore, Verity wonders if they are really the hunters—or the hunted.

Joel, Alexandra. [The Paris Model](#) (Harper \$16.99). A lush debut novel in the vein of Kathleen Tessaro's international best-seller, *Elegance*, about a beautiful woman working as a model for Christian Dior in postwar Paris, who discovers astonishing secrets about herself and the fabulous people around her such as Pablo Picasso, Julia Childs, and the future Jackie Kennedy. Grace mixes with counts and princesses, authors and artists, diplomats and politicians. Raised on an Australian sheep farm, the beautiful Grace Woods is compelled to travel to postwar Paris in order to start a new life as a model. But when Grace falls in love with the handsome Phillippe Boyer, she doesn't know that he is leading a double life, nor that his past might hold secrets and lies that will turn her life upside down.

Kang, Lydia. [Opium and Absinthe](#) (\$14.95). New York City, 1899. Tillie Pembroke's sister lies dead, her body drained of blood and with two puncture wounds on her neck. Bram Stoker's new novel, *Dracula*, has just been published, and Tillie's imagination leaps to the impossible: the murderer is a vampire. But it can't be—can it? A ravenous reader and researcher, Tillie has something of an addiction to truth, and she won't rest until she unravels the mystery of her sister's death. Unfortunately, Tillie's addicted to more than just truth; to ease the pain from a recent injury, she's taking more and more laudanum...and some in her immediate circle are happy to keep her well supplied. Tillie can't bring herself to believe vampires exist. But with the hysteria surrounding her sister's death, the continued vampiric slayings, and the opium swirling through her body, it's becoming increasingly difficult for a girl who relies on facts and figures to know what's real....

Kelly, Sofie. [A Case of Cat and Mouse](#) (Berkley \$26). Spring has come to charming Mayville Heights, and with it, some Hollywood glamour. The little town is abuzz because the reboot of a popular baking TV show is filming there. Librarian Kathleen Paulson is working as an advisor on historical facts for the show, local restaurants are providing catering for the camera crews, and Kathleen's faithful felines, Hercules and Owen, are hoping there is a cat treat challenge. But then Kathleen finds one of the judges dead....

Lemmie, Asha. [Fifty Words for Rain](#) (Dutton \$26). Our sales rep for Dutton is wild for this and tells me, "It's a beautiful, sweeping, heartrending coming-of-age novel about a young woman's quest for acceptance in post-World War II Japan. To me, Asha Lemmie's writing is early Lisa See with a perfect cross of *Gentleman of Moscow* and *Where the Crawdads Sing*. I can definitely see an older YA cross over with this novel too." OK, this is such a wild linkage I have to dive in but first I have to get this Booknews out to you. So more to come... it doesn't publish until September 22.

Meanwhile here's a summary: Kyoto, Japan, 1948. "Do not question. Do not fight. Do not resist." Such is eight-year-old Noriko "Nori" Kamiza's first lesson. She will not question why her mother abandoned her with only these final words. She will not fight her confinement to the attic of her grandparents' imperial estate. And she will not resist the scalding chemical baths she receives daily to lighten her skin. The child of a married Japanese aristocrat and her African American GI lover, Nori is an outsider from birth. Her grandparents take her in, only to conceal her, fearful of a stain on the royal pedigree that they are desperate to uphold in a changing Japan. Obedient to a fault, Nori accepts her solitary life, despite her natural intellect and curiosity. But when chance brings her older half-brother, Akira, to the estate that is his inheritance and destiny, Nori finds in him an unlikely ally with whom she forms a powerful bond—a bond their formidable grandparents cannot allow and that will irrevocably change the lives they were always meant to lead.

✦Lester, Natasha. [The Paris Secret](#) (Grand Central \$16.99). England, 1939: The Penrose sisters couldn't be more different. Skye is a daring and brash pilot, and Liberty the one to defy her at every turn. Even if women aren't allowed in the Royal Air Force, Skye is determined to help the war effort. She's thrilled when

it reunites her with her childhood soul mate, Nicholas. She's less thrilled to learn Nicholas is now engaged to an enigmatic Frenchwoman named Margaux Jourdan. Paris, 1947: Designer Christian Dior unveils his glamorous first collection to a world weary of war and grief. He names his debut fragrance Miss Dior in tribute to his beloved sister Catherine, who forged a friendship with Skye and Margaux through her work with the French Resistance. Present Day: Fashion conservator Kat Jourdan discovers a priceless collection of Dior gowns in her grandmother's vacant cottage. As she delves into the mystery of their origin, Kat begins to doubt everything she thought she knew about her beloved grandmother

King, Stephen. [The Institute](#) (\$18.99). "Stephen King's protagonists have been hunted by all sorts of malevolent beings, from the demonic clown of *It* to the fiendish cowboy Randall Flagg in *The Stand*. But as scary as those supernatural bad guys can be, King's most unsettling antagonists are human-size: the blocked writer sliding into delusions of grandeur and domestic violence, the fan possessed to the point of madness by someone else's fiction, the bullied teenager made homicidal by the cruelty of her peers. We can see something of ourselves in these characters, and recognize in them our own capacity for evil. King's latest novel... belongs to this second category, and is as consummately honed and enthralling as the very best of his work. It has no ghosts, no vampires, no metamorphosing diabolical entities or invaders from other dimensions intent on tormenting innocent children. Innocent children are tormented in *The Institute*, but the people who do it are much like you and me."—*NY Times Book Review*.

✦Koch, Bea. [Mad and Bad: Real Heroines of the Regency](#) (Grand Central \$17.99). Many of us are invested in the heroines of Jane Austen and Georgette Heyer. Some the romance of Lord Byron. And the popular image of the Regency continues to be mythologized by the hundreds of romance novels set in the period, which focus almost exclusively on wealthy, white, Christian members of the upper classes. But there are hundreds of fascinating women who don't fit history books limited perception of what was historically accurate for early 19th century England. Women like Dido Elizabeth Belle, whose mother was a slave but was raised by her white father's family in England, Caroline Herschel, who acted as her brother's assistant as he hunted the heavens for comets, and ended up discovering eight on her own, Anne Lister, who lived on her own terms with her common-law wife at Shibden Hall, and Judith Montefiore, a Jewish woman who wrote the first English language Kosher cookbook. A welcome slate of fascinating women can be found in these pages.

Manning, Kirsty. [The Lost Jewels](#) (Morrow \$16.99). Jewelry expert Kate Kirby has just learned that her great-grandmother, a suffragette named Essie, may have been connected to the Cheapside Hoard: a bundle of English Civil War-era finery, discovered in 1912. When she receives a business call related to the Cheapside jewels, she hops a plane for London, first thing. But Kate's on a collision course with her family's past, part of it in Boston, and a secret that leads to a legendary bucket of precious jewels and gemstones. Together with photographer Marcus Holt, Kate chases the history of the Cheapside gems and jewels, especially the story of a small diamond *champlevé* enamel ring. Soon, everything Kate believes about her family, gemology, and herself will be threatened.

Mayne, Andrew. [The Girl Beneath the Sea](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$15.95). For a Florida police diver, danger rises to the surface in an adventurous thriller by the *Wall Street Journal* bestselling author of *The Naturalist*—presumably the start of a series as it is billed as Underwater Investigation Unit #1. Coming from scandalous Florida treasure hunters and drug smugglers, Sloan McPherson is forging her own path, for herself and for her daughter, out from under her family's shadow. An auxiliary officer for Lauderdale Shores PD, she's the go-to diver for evidence recovery. Then Sloan finds a fresh kill floating in a canal—a woman whose murky history collides with Sloan's. Their troubling ties are making Sloan less a potential witness than a suspect. And her colleagues aren't the only ones following every move she makes. So is the killer. Stalked by an assassin, pitted against a ruthless cartel searching for a lost fortune, and under watch within her ranks, Sloan has only one ally: the legendary DEA agent who put Sloan's uncle behind bars. He knows just how deep corruption runs—and the kind of danger Sloan is in. To stay alive, Sloan must stay one step ahead of her enemies—both known and unknown—and a growing conspiracy designed to pull her under. I liked this a lot.

McHugh, Clare. [A Most English Princess](#) (Morrow \$16.99). It isn't a romance to be a princess as the life of Victoria's eldest daughter, the Princess Royal, illustrates. The favorite of her father, Prince Albert, imbued with his values, she was wed in January 1858, at St James Chapel to Fritz, Prince Frederick, heir to the powerful kingdom of Prussia. Although theirs is no mere political match, Vicky is determined that she and Fritz will lead by example, just as her parents had done, and also bring about a liberal and united Germany. Brought up to believe in the rightness of her cause, Vicky nonetheless struggles to thrive in the constrained Prussian court, where each day she seems to take a wrong step. And her status as the eldest daughter of Queen Victoria does little to smooth over the conflicts she faces. But handsome, gallant Fritz is always by her side, as they navigate court intrigue, and challenge the cunning Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, while fighting for the throne. At home they endure tragedy, their difficult heir, Wilhelm, and court values rejecting all they stand for.

Nesbø, Jo. [The Kingdom](#) (Knopf \$28.99). In a rural village deep in the mountains, mechanic Roy leads a quiet, simple life, but when his little brother Carl, an entrepreneur, returns with a proposal for a grand hotel to revive the struggling town, dark secrets from their childhood threaten to resurface. As children, Roy defended his little brother against schoolyard bullies and vicious rumors, but his loyalty to family is tested when greed and betrayal saturate Carl's plans—not to mention when Roy's sister-in-law Shannon catches his eye. The farther he goes to protect Carl, the more Roy finds himself dredging up the town's shocking past. And when the town sheriff starts looking into Roy and Carl's parents' tragic deaths, Roy will have to reckon with how far he will go to protect his brother.

Nijkamp, Marieke. [Even If We Break](#) (Sourcebooks \$17.99). For teens. Finn doesn't trust anyone since he was attacked a few months ago. Popular girl Liva saw it happen and did nothing to stop it. Maddy was in an accident that destroyed her sports career. Carter is drowning under the weight of his family's expectations. Ever wants to keep the game going for as long as they can, at all costs. When the lines between game and reality start to blend

with deadly consequences, it's a race against time before it's game over—forever.

Noble, Shelley. [Tell Me No Lies](#) (\$18.99). The second “Lady Dunbridge” mystery following [Ask Me No Questions](#) (\$17.99) “is a witty, entertaining romp through elite society in early 20th-century New York. Philomena Amesbury reflects on her fortunate new life as a happily widowed aristocrat enjoying her freedom and luxurious lifestyle at the Plaza Hotel, courtesy of a shadowy agency requiring her crime-solving skills. The mysterious Mr. X tells Phil to expect a visitor, and Luther Pratt duly arrives in need of her services, as he fears social and financial scandal ensuing from the suspicious death of Perry Fauks, heir to an industrial empire, at his daughter's debut. Phil gathers her team: Lily, her enigmatic lock-picking maid, and Preswick, her proper English butler with a penchant for detective novels. Meanwhile, Phil, her cohorts, and handsome Det. Sergeant Atkins collaborate to solve multiple crimes and avert the collapse of a fragile financial market. Wonderful period detail and clever humor combine with the delicious romantic tension between Phil and both Mr. X and Atkins to create a tasty recipe for fun reading for historical mystery buffs and fans of amateur sleuths.”—LJ

Noor, Rozlan. [21 Immortals: Inspector Mislán and the Yee Sang Murders](#) (Arcade \$25.99). “Noor, a former Malaysian police officer, does a stellar job of translating his experience into fiction in his nuanced debut, a series launch. Kuala Lumpur Inspector Mislán Latif is confronted with a high-profile and baffling triple homicide. The corpses of a family of three—a father, mother, and 10-year-old son—have been found in their home in an affluent part of the city. There are no obvious signs of violence, and the bodies were posed at the dinner table, set with a traditional Chinese New Year meal. When the adult male is identified as Robert Tham, a wealthy and renowned clothing designer, the pressure to solve the case intensifies. An autopsy determines that the Tham family were poisoned by hydrogen cyanide gas and then embalmed. Mislán learns that the ostensibly respectable Robert was once the leader of a secret society known as the 21 Immortals, who may have cooperated with the authorities against his fellow immortals years before. The inspector pursues the truth relentlessly in the face of crooked superiors and trigger-happy colleagues. Fans of honest cops working in a rigged system are in for a treat.”—PW Starred Review on our **September International Mystery Book of the Month**.

O'Brien, Perry. [Fire in the Blood](#) (Random \$27). In 2003 Afghanistan when he finds out his wife has died, Specialist Cooper is shocked by the news that his social worker wife has been killed in a hit-and-run in the Bronx. Returning to New York City for the funeral, Cooper finds that the police are investigating the hit-and-run, and that his wife's files have disappeared from the rehab facility where she worked. PW called this one an “impressive debut,” noting that it's perfect for “fans of “Nick Petrie's Peter Ash novels.”

Patterson, James. [The Midwife Murders](#) (\$29/\$17.99). A single mom teams up with an N.Y.P.D. detective to solve a case involving misdeeds at a university hospital. Also new in paperback: [Killer Instinct](#) (\$16.99) and [Murder Thy Neighbor](#) (\$16.99).

Penny, Louise. [All the Devils Are Here](#) (St Martins \$28.99). On their first night in Paris, the Gamaches gather as a family for a bistro dinner with Armand's godfather, the billionaire Stephen

Horowitz. Walking home together after the meal, they watch in horror as Stephen is knocked down and critically injured in what Gamache knows is no accident, but a deliberate attempt on the elderly man's life. When a strange key is found in Stephen's possession it sends Armand, his wife Reine-Marie, and his former second-in-command at the Sûreté, Jean-Guy Beauvoir, from the top of the Tour d'Eiffel, to the bowels of the Paris Archives, from luxury hotels to odd, coded, works of art. It sends them deep into the secrets Armand's godfather has kept for decades. A gruesome discovery in Stephen's Paris apartment makes it clear the secrets are more rancid, the danger far greater and more imminent....

✦Perry, Anne. [A Question of Betrayal](#) (Ballantine \$27.99). Britain's secret intelligence service, MI6, has lost contact with its informant in northern Italy, just as important information about the future plans of Austria and Nazi Germany is coming to light. And young Elena Standish, to her surprise, is the only person who can recognize MI6's man—because he is her former lover. Aiden Strother betrayed her six years before, throwing shame on her entire family. Now, with so much to prove, Elena heads to Trieste to track down Aiden and find out what happened to his handler, who has mysteriously cut off contact with Britain. As Elena gets word of a secret group working to put Austria in the hands of Germany, her older sister, Margot, is in Berlin to watch a childhood friend get married—to a member of the Gestapo. Margot and Elena's grandfather, the former head of MI6, is none too happy about the sisters' travels at this tumultuous time, especially when a violent event at home reminds him that even Britain is growing dangerous. Start the Standish series with [Death in Focus](#) (\$17), one of our September Large Paperback Picks above.

Petty, Kate Reed. [True Story](#) (Viking \$26). This wildly inventive and haunting debut novel plays with structure as it uncovers the mystery behind conflicting memories. *True Story* is a startling, eloquent and wildly original novel that works on several levels. It tackles serious issues but also reads like a top-notch psychological thriller—complete with a final-chapter twist that rivals the best of Agatha Christie. Petty keeps readers on edge through her inventive switching among narrative forms, from various first-person accounts to screenplays, college admission essays, e-mails and interview transcripts. *True Story* begins in 1999 with a drunken party and possible sexual assault of a high school girl at the hands of two members of the school's lacrosse team. At first the two boast to their friends about taking advantage of the girl passed out in their car, but when rumors spread and legal threats are made, the teammates deny anything happened. *True Story* follows how the assault and its rumors affect the lives of those involved over the next two decades. This psychological thriller is fast-paced, gripping, and unforgettable. It follows the fallout of a fifteen year old rumor that derailed so many lives. If it's not already being adapted, expect news soon.

✦Penrose, Andrea. [Murder at Kensington Palace](#) (\$15.95). Though Charlotte Sloane's secret identity as the controversial cartoonist A.J. Quill is safe with the Earl of Wrexford, she's ill prepared for the rippling effects sharing the truth about her background has cast over their relationship. She thought a bit of space might improve the situation. But when her cousin is murdered and his twin brother is accused of the gruesome crime, Charlotte immediately turns to Wrexford for help in proving the young man's innocence. Though she finds the brooding scientist just as enigmatic and intense as ever, their partnership is now marked

by an unfamiliar tension that seems to complicate every encounter. Despite this newfound complexity, Wrexford and Charlotte are determined to track down the real killer. Their investigation leads them on a dangerous chase through Mayfair's glittering ballrooms and opulent drawing rooms, where gossip and rumors swirl to confuse the facts. The more Charlotte and Wrexford try to unknot the truth, the more tangled it becomes. The Regency is one of my favorite time periods: so much going on, an elegant Society surface, deep poverty and unrest in a society absorbing Napoleonic war veterans and the nascent industrial revolution. Order the [first two Wexford & Sloane Mysteries](#).

Picoult, Jodi. [The Book of Two Ways](#) (Ballantine \$28.99). Dawn Edelstein is on a plane when the flight attendant makes an announcement: prepare for a crash landing. She braces herself as thoughts flash through her mind. The shocking thing is, the thoughts are not of her husband, but a man she last saw fifteen years ago: Wyatt Armstrong. Dawn, miraculously, survives the crash, but so do all the doubts that have suddenly been raised. She has led a good life. Back in Boston, there is her husband, Brian, her beloved daughter, and her work as a death doula, where she helps ease the transition between life and death for patients in hospice. But somewhere in Egypt is Wyatt Armstrong, who works as an archaeologist unearthing ancient burial sites, a job she once studied for, but was forced to abandon when life suddenly intervened. And now, when it seems that fate is offering her second chances, she is not as sure of the choice she once made. After the crash landing, the airline ensures the survivors are seen by a doctor, then offers transportation wherever they want to go. The obvious option for Dawn is to continue down the path she is on and go home to her family. The other is to return to the archaeological site she left years before, reconnect with Wyatt and their unresolved history, and maybe even complete her research on *The Book of Two Ways*—the first known map of the afterlife. First Mystery Book of the Month members will recognize some parallels in concept between *The Last Flight* and this new Picoult.

Prior, Hazel. [How the Penguins Saved Veronica](#) (Berkley \$26). Wealthy, misanthropic octogenarian Veronica has trouble connecting with her newly discovered grandson, but a visit to Antarctica changes her life. One voyage south and a purposely missed return trip later, Veronica's adventures on the ice, including bonding with a young woman scientist and raising a penguin chick, begin to thaw her heart. Meanwhile, Patrick gets a package containing Veronica's teen journals from 1940 and learns the devastating truth behind her frosty persona. Reminiscent of *A Man Called Ove* mixed with *Where'd You Go, Bernadette?*, this life-affirming dramedy scores big on the cuteness index. However, Prior also delves into trauma and healing in a serious and sensitive manner.

Rijneveld, Marieke Lucas. [The Discomfort of Evening](#) (Graywolf \$16). The winner of the 2020 Book Prize is a new voice in Dutch literature. Ten-year-old Jas lives with her strictly religious parents and her siblings on a dairy farm where waste and frivolity are akin to sin. Despite the dreary routine of their days, Jas has a unique way of experiencing her world: her face soft like cheese under her mother's hands; the texture of green warts, like capers, on migrating toads in the village; the sound of "blush words" that aren't in the Bible. One icy morning, the disciplined rhythm of her family's life is ruptured by a tragic accident, and Jas is convinced she is to blame. As her parents' suffering makes

them increasingly distant, Jas and her siblings develop a curiosity about death that leads them into disturbing rituals and fantasies. Cocooned in her red winter coat, Jas dreams of “the other side” and of salvation, not knowing where this dreaming will finally lead her. A best seller in the Netherlands, “Rijneveld’s radical debut novel offers readers a rare vision of rural and religious life in the Netherlands. In it, they ask: In the absence of comfort and care, what can the mind of a child invent to protect itself? And what happens when that is not enough? With stunning psychological acuity and images of haunting, violent beauty, Rijneveld has created a captivating world of language unlike any other.

The Booker judges add: From this exceptional field, and against an extraordinary backdrop, we were looking for a book that goes beyond echoing our dystopian present and possesses a timeless charge. Combining a disarming new sensibility with a translation of singular sensitivity, *The Discomfort of Evening* is a tender and visceral evocation of a childhood caught between shame and salvation.

Roslund, Anders/Borge Hellstrom. [Three Hours](#) (\$14.99). Stockholm, Sweden: 73 refugees have been found dead, suffocated in a container at Varta harbor. Niamey, Niger: Ewert Grens arrives in a city he’s never heard of, in search of a man he never thought he would see again. Piet Hoffmann has again got himself in too deep, infiltrating a West African trafficking ring. He thinks he has two weeks to extricate himself, but will learn that his life, and that of countless defenseless people, now hangs on his actions during three desperate hours. The two earlier Grens/Hoffmans appear to have gone out of print.

Simenon, Georges. [Maigret and Monsieur Charles](#) (Penguin \$15). Maigret is a few years short of his retirement and has just refused promotion to the post of Head of the Police Judiciare, preferring the human contact he enjoys as Head of the Criminal Division. His wish is granted when Madam Nathalie Sabin-Levesque, an elegant but highly nervous woman, insists that he personally investigates the disappearance of her husband Gerard, a highly successful and wealthy Parisian lawyer. This is the 75th and final Maigret where the famous detective finds himself contemplating his past and future through a final dive into the Paris underworld. You can order [all 75 Maigrets](#) which are nicely packaged to fit the city and the era.

✎Steadman, Catherine. [Mr. Nobody](#) (\$17). When a man is found on a British beach, drifting in and out of consciousness, with no identification and unable to speak, interest in him is sparked immediately. From the hospital staff who find themselves inexplicably drawn to him, to international medical experts who are baffled by him, to the national press who call him Mr. Nobody, everyone wants answers. Who is this man? And what happened to him? Neuropsychiatrist Dr. Emma Lewis is asked to assess the patient in a small town deep in the English countryside. This is her field of expertise, this is the chance she’s been waiting for, and this case could make her name known across the world. But therein lies the danger. Emma left this same town fourteen years ago and has taken great pains to cover all traces of her past since then. But the more time she spends with her patient, the more alarmed she becomes that he knows the one thing about her that nobody must know.... Very good, and with a nifty twist.

Stewart, Amy. [Dear Miss Kopp](#) (\$15.99). The U.S. has finally entered World War I and Constance is chasing down suspected

German saboteurs and spies for the Bureau of Investigation while Fleurette is traveling across the country entertaining troops with song and dance. Meanwhile, at an undisclosed location in France, Norma is overseeing her thwarted pigeon project for the Army Signal Corps. When Aggie, a nurse at the American field hospital, is accused of stealing essential medical supplies, the intrepid Norma is on the case to find the true culprit. The far-flung sisters—separated for the first time in their lives—correspond with news of their days. The world has irrevocably changed—will the sisters be content to return to the New Jersey farm when the war is over? Told through letters, *Dear Miss Kopp* weaves the stories of real life women into Stewart’s fiction. You can order all the [Kopp Sisters](#) adventures.

Sveistrup, Soren. [The Chestnut Man](#) (\$16.99). In this debut novel by the creator of the television show *The Killing*, a serial killer in Copenhagen targets young mothers as part of a complex scheme that seems to have ties to the apparent murder of government minister Rosa Hartung’s 12-year-old daughter, Kristine, a year ago. The homicidal Chestnut Man, named after the chestnut and matchstick dolls he leaves behind, is a grisly operator who amputates the hands of the women he abducts while they’re still alive. A pair of mismatched investigators is reluctantly on the case: Naia Thulin, a local cop who, tired of what she thinks of as “tedious” assignments with Major Crimes, eyes a promotion to the cyber-crime unit, and Mark Hess, a disheveled Europol agent on temporary leave from The Hague to serve “penance for some blunder or other.” The big complicating factor is the absence of proof that Kristine, who disappeared, is dead; when her fingerprints turn up on the chestnut dolls, hopes stir that she is, in fact, alive.

✎Wilson, AN. [The Mystery of Charles Dickens](#) (Harper \$32.50). The biographer and historian A.N. Wilson turns detective as he investigates several curious aspects of Charles Dickens’s life and psychology. Charles Dickens died before he finished writing *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, but A.N. Wilson points out that the great English novelist left behind other mysteries as well: Why, when Dickens died, did he have not the full £22 from a cashed check in his pockets but only six-odd pounds? Why was Dickens, whose name is entwined with kindness, such a jerk to his wife? *The Mystery of Charles Dickens* presents six puzzles, and Wilson endeavors to solve them with a fruitful multipronged approach: textual analysis, biographical inquiry and armchair psychoanalysis. Wilson is keen on both extolling Dickens’s virtues and exploding the misperceptions about him. While those who have never read Dickens will find no barrier to entry into *The Mystery of Charles Dickens*, the book will be manna for advanced beginners.

I add if you want to have more fun with Dickens then the debut fantasy by HG Parry, [The Unlikely Escape of Uriah Heap](#) (\$16.99), is the ultimate for booklovers as well as Dickensians and is one of my favorite debuts. It’s somewhat in the spirit of Jasper Fforde’s Thursday Next romps.

OUR SEPTEMBER SMALL PAPERBACK PICKS

Baldacci, David. [One Good Deed](#) (\$9.99). In 1949, World War II veteran and recent convict Aloysius Archer is released on parole with instructions to stay out of trouble, but when he becomes the suspect in a murder, he must track down the killer to avoid being sent back to prison. *Kirkus* had this to say “Readers will like Archer. He’s a talented man who enjoys detective stories, won’t

keep ill-gotten gains, and respects women. All signs suggest a sequel where he hangs out a shamus shingle. Archer will be a great series character for fans of crime fiction. Let's hope the cigarettes don't kill him."

Coleman, Reed Farrel. [Robert B Parker's The Bitterest Pill](#) (\$9.99). Jesse Stone #18. When a popular cheerleader dies of a suspected overdose, Police Chief Stone battles school administrators, teachers, distrustful students, and overprotective parents as he tries to unravel the drug supply chain and expose the criminals behind it. *PW* concluded their rave review with "Coleman stays faithful to the spirit of Parker's characters without sticking to the status quo."

Corrigan, Maya. [Gingerdead Man](#) (Kensington \$7.99). Five-Ingredient #7. When a man playing Santa is poisoned by one of her cookies at the Dickens of a Holiday festival, Val Deniston's reputation is on the line and she and her Granddad must race against time to catch a cookie-cutter killer. *Kirkus* gave this thumbs up saying "Plenty of red herrings, mixed motives, and recipes for foodies make for a spirited holiday cozy."

Delany, Vicki. [Dying in a Winter Wonderland](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Year Round Mystery #5. When Luanne Ireland's fiancé is found murdered at their proposed wedding venue, Merry Wilkinson resolves to restore peace and calm to the community of Rudolph even if it means putting herself in the crosshairs of a killer. Here's *Kirkus* "Plenty of suspects, likable characters, and lots of possible motives add up to a cheery holiday cozy."

Hollis, Lee. [Murder at the PTA](#) (Kensington \$7.99). Maya and Sandra #1. When the person behind a gossipy website called Dirty Laundry is found dead, PI Maya Kendrick teams up with PTA president Sandra Wallage, the target of the most recent rumors, to catch a killer who is determined to teach them a lesson.

Horowitz, Anthony. [Magpie Murders](#) (\$10). Magpie #1. When she realizes that the final chapter of mystery writer Alan Conway's latest manuscript is missing and Alan later turns up dead, editor Susan Ryeland follows clues buried in the text to investigate the author's suspicious death. *LJ* was just one of the enthusiastic reviews for this saying "Both stories might stand alone, but combined, they result in a delightful puzzle. Fans of Agatha Christie and the BBC's *Midsomer Murders* and *Foyle's War* (both written by Horowitz) will relish this double mystery."

Murphy, Catie. [Death on the Green](#) (Kensington \$7.99). Dublin Driver #2. A driver for Dublin's Leprechaun Limousine Service, American Army veteran Megan Malone must clear the name of a world-class champion golfer, and her newest client, when he is accused of murdering his rival. *Kirkus* said this "Cleverly blends rivalries on and off the golf course with colorful characters as a plucky limo driver takes the wheel again."

Ness, Lucy. [Haunted Homicide](#) (Berkley \$7.99). Haunted Mansion #1. When she stumbles upon the dead body of Muriel Sadler, the president of the Portage Path Women's Club, in the basement of the mansion she is restoring, Avery Morgan, with a little otherworldly assistance, sets out to solve this case before everything comes crashing down. *Kirkus* concluded their favorable review with "A series debut with fun and flair."

Rawlings, H. Ripley. [Assault by Fire](#) (Kensington \$8.99). Tyce Asher #1. When US troops stationed in the Middle East are attacked by a military mastermind hell-bent on destruction, U.S.

Marine Tyce Asher is called into action and must enlist every patriot he can find to unleash their 2nd Amendment rights on America's #1 enemy. Sounds like this new series has testosterone to spare.

Slaughter, Karin. [The Last Widow](#) (\$9.99). Will Trent #9. After the kidnapping of a CDC scientist and a bombing in one of Atlanta's neighborhoods, Georgia detective Will Trent and medical examiner Sara Linton find themselves pitted against a mysterious group intent on unleashing a deadly epidemic. *PW* concluded with "Vivid characters and rapidly escalating stakes complement the riveting, adrenaline-fueled plot. Along the way, Slaughter examines such topics as misogyny, white nationalism, and the politicization of law enforcement. Thriller fans will devour this visceral, gratifying entry."

SEPTEMBER SMALL PAPERBACKS

Barry, Jessica. [Freefall](#) (\$9.99). After surviving the crash of a private jet that killed her husband, Allison struggles across the Colorado Rockies to make it home while, in Maine, her estranged mother tries to find her.

Berenson, Laurien. [Here Comes Santa Paws](#) (\$7.99). Melanie Travis #24. Crime-solving friends Melanie and Claire dive into the investigation of the death of a mysterious local woman in an affluent Connecticut town just before Christmas.

Blackmoore, Stephanie. [Veiled in Death](#) (Kensington \$7.99). Wedding Planner #6. While trying to plan for her own wedding, and getting ready to host the town's Revolutionary War reenactment, Mallory Shepard is drawn into a centuries-old murder mystery when a local woman is killed by a musket.

Blake, Heather. [A Witch to Remember](#) (\$7.99). Wishcraft #9. The Enchanted Village always has a touch of magic about it, but the buzz of excitement over the wedding between wish-granting witch Darcy and Police Chief Nick Sawyer is positively electric. But Darcy's dream wedding is threatened when the Divinitea Cottage, the tea room hosting her bridal luncheon, goes up in flames, revealing the strangled body of the owner, Leyna Noble.

Brandman, Michael. [Missing Persons](#) (\$7.99). Buddy Steel #1. His health failing, Sheriff Burton asks his son Buddy, a LAPD homicide cop, to come home to cover his back and to groom him to be his successor. Buddy reluctantly agrees, but no sooner does he hit town than Buddy learns the wife of the high-flying star of a Freedom based world-renowned television ministry has gone missing.

Clark, Mary Higgins. [Kiss the Girls and Make Them Cry](#) (\$8.99). Navigating traumatic memories of an assault in college, a journalist researching the #MeToo movement discovers that her attacker is on the cusp of a merger that will render him a billionaire.

Day, Maddie. [Candy Slain Murder](#) (Kensington \$7.99). Country Store #8. The owner of a popular country store and café, Robbie Jordan, with strange happenings going on and a decades-old mystery taking shape after skeletal remains are found, is determined to solve this case and save Christmas.

Evanovich, Janet. [Twisted Twenty-six](#) (9.99). Stephanie Plum #26 (what, you were expecting something else?) Bounty hunter Stephanie Plum is challenged to protect one of her own when her suddenly widowed grandmother is targeted by ruthless gangsters.

Farrow, Sharon. [Hollyberry Homicide](#) (Kensington \$7.99). Berry Basket #5. When the set of Oriole Point's production of *A Christmas Carol* is plagued by strange accidents and then murder, Marlee Jacob, who is playing Jacob Marley, must find the culprit before it's curtains for someone else.

Hearne, Kevin. [A Blight of Blackwings](#) (\$7.99). In this sequel to *A Plague of Giants*, Daryck pursues vengeance against the giants, while Hanima leads a movement to keep magic in the hands of the people and captain Koesha navigates dangerous waters to find her lost sister.

Hilderbrand, Elin. [Winter in Paradise](#) (\$8.99). When Irene Steele discovers that her husband is dead, she is shocked to find out he died on the white, sandy beaches of St. John where he kept a secret, second family.

Kashian, Tina. [Mistletoe, Moussaka, and Murder](#) (Kensington \$7.99). Kebab Kitchen #6. When a much-despised caterer is murdered during Ocean Crest, New Jersey's most popular winter event, Lucy Berberian, to save the Kebab Kitchen's Christmas celebration, must get to the bottom of this cold-hearted case.

McBride, Michael. [Mutation](#) (Kensington \$9.99). As a newly evolving life form known as Subject Z spawns a new race, the men and women of Unit 51 must uncover a global link between the mutations that is as ancient as the oldest tombs on earth – and as alien and unknowable as the universe itself.

Meier, Leslie. [Holiday Murder](#) (Kensington \$7.99). This duet of cozy mysteries includes the first Lucy Stone adventure *Mistletoe Murder*, which introduces the plucky Tinker's Cove amateur sleuth to readers when she discovers a body at the famous mail-order company Country Cousins, and *Christmas Cookie Murder*, in which the Tinker's Cove's annual cookie exchange turns murderous.

O'Connor, Carlene. [Christmas Cocoa Murder](#) (Kensington \$7.99). A trio of holiday season themed mysteries includes "Christmas Cocoa Murder" by Carlene O'Connor, "Christmas Cocoa and a Corpse" by Maddie Day and "Death by Hot Cocoa" by Alex Erickson.

Sennefelder, Debra. [The Corpse Who Knew Too Much](#) (Kensington \$7.99). Food Blogger #4. When her friend Devon, a true-crime podcaster, who has returned to town to solve the mystery of what happened to her mother 20 years ago, is murdered, food blogger Hope Early must find the guilty party before she herself becomes the next subject of a true-crime podcast.

Simon, Misty. [Varnished Without a Trace](#) (Kensington \$7.99). Tallie Graver #5. When her beloved Uncle Hoagie is accused of murdering his wife, the mean-spirited Ronda, Tallie Graver must find the real killer and clear his name, while keeping her mother and grandmother from duking it out during the town's annual Christmas Eve bingo game.

Wilton, Traci. [Mrs. Morris and the Ghost of Christmas Past](#) (Kensington \$7.99). Salem B&B #3. When David Baldwin, who just won a fortune in the lottery, is murdered after handing out checks during a charity event, Salem, Massachusetts B&B owner Charlene Morris and her ghostly housemate step in to find a money-hungry killer.

Woods, Stuart. [Treason](#) (\$9.99). Stone Barrington #52. Helping his close friend discretely identify and remove a destructive traitor

hiding within a classified agency, Stone Barrington is embroiled in an audacious plot that threatens to reveal confidential intelligence.