



The Poisoned Pen
4014 N. Goldwater
Suite 101
Scottsdale, AZ 85251
Toll Free (888) 560-9919
(480) 947-2974 Fax (480) 945-1023
sales@poisonedpen.com
<http://www.poisonedpen.com>
<http://poisonedfiction.blogspot.com>
<http://twitter.com/poisonedpen>

Collector's Corner—March 2014 Volume 23 No. 2

Thank you for joining us in our 25th anniversary odyssey.

THIS AND THAT...

For whatever reason, the publishing gods have packed March and, even more, May, with books. April is a bit thin which is good, time to read and catch up between exciting months. You can see that May brings us nearly an author a day! June will be busy and choice. And, since books never spoil on the shelf, all these great books will make wonderful summer reading.

Trending: Vigilante sorts of books, i.e. hired assassins to remove crooked politicians or business moguls, the odd billionaire. Or just for profit. I expect we may see an uptick in individuals using technology—maybe drones—in pursuit of social order.

Trending for some time: “domestic suspense.” Relationship driven. For a couple of years after *The DaVinci Code* we had an explosion of “DaVinci Clones.” Now it’s *Gone Girls*. This kind of crime novel was always more a British design than American; now it’s both.

Trending: genetic disorders and unusual diseases.

Our hottest book in February, aside from Dana Stabenow’s first volume in *Silk and Song*, [Everything Under the Heavens](#) (\$14.95), was Andy Weir’s [The Martian](#) (Crown \$26), our Modern Firsts Club Pick. We sold it out twice. The publisher is supplying us with two dozen more Signed Firsts, tip-ins. It’s a fabulous read, an excellent gift. I urge you to snag one.

And in a month of amazing novels, two are so refreshing they leave me puzzled as to the best way to describe them: David Downing, *Jack of Spies*, and Nicole Mones, *Night in Shanghai*. Downing’s novel, set in 1914, and Mones, as the Japanese arrive in Shanghai, portray worlds we know are going to collapse. They are richly textured, they reveal unfamiliar (to me) aspects of history, they have plenty of action but are driven by characters uncertain of their choices, and by love stories that surprise. People under stress, caught up in events not of their making—how would you act? I am beyond excited that Downing, whose *Zoo Station* and sequels are among the very best of WWII spy novels, is making his first US tour, stopping here May 20. Think Alan Furst, but WWI. Or better, think Erskine Childers and old school spy stories.

My two favorite March novels are Pavone’s *The Accident* and Olen Steinhauer’s brilliant *The Cairo Affair*, neither a conventional spy story, and both very 21st Century.

2014 FIRST MYSTERY CLUB PICKS TO DATE

Limited to 24 per year, usually more like 18-20

Axelrod, Steven. [Nantucket Sawbuck](#)
Chapman, Drew. [The Ascendant](#)
Dicker, Joel. [The Truth about the Harry Quebert Affair](#)
Elo, Elisabeth. [North of Boston](#)
Lee, Jung Myung. [The Investigation](#)
McHugh, Laura. [The Weight of Blood](#)
Kuhn, Shane. [The Intern's Handbook](#)
Parsons, Kelly. [Doing Harm](#)
Swanson, Peter. [The Girl with a Clock for a Heart](#)
Tucker, Neely. [Ways of the Dead](#)

SIGNED BOOKS FOR MARCH

Archer, Jeffrey. [Be Careful What You Wish For](#) (Macmillan \$45). Harry Clifton and his wife Emma rush to hospital to learn the fate of their son Sebastian, who has been involved in a fatal car accident. But who died, Sebastian or his best friend Bruno? When Ross Buchanan is forced to resign as chairman of the Barrington Shipping Company, Emma Clifton wants to replace him. But Don Pedro Martinez intends to install his puppet, the egregious Major Alex Fisher, in order to destroy the Barrington family firm just as the company plans to build its new luxury liner, the MV Buckingham. Back in London, Harry and Emma’s adopted daughter wins a scholarship to the Slade Academy of Art where she falls in love with a fellow student, Clive Bingham, who asks her to marry him. But then... it’s like *Downton Abbey*, always a new twist. Book #3 in the Clifton Chronicles.

Bauer, Belinda. [Facts of Life and Death](#) (Bantam \$32). Lone women are terrorized and their helpless families forced to watch—in a sick game where only one player knows the rules. And when those rules change, the new game is Murder. Living with her parents in the dank beach community of Limeburn, ten-year-old Ruby Trick has her own fears. Bullies on the school bus, the forest crowding her house into the sea, and the threat of divorce. Helping her Daddy to catch the killer might be the key to keeping him close. As long as the killer doesn’t catch her first... The Gold Dagger winner spins another dark village crime novel.

Berenson, Alex. [Counterfeit Agent](#) (Putnam \$27.95 in stock). A CIA informant alludes to a high profile assassination, but before John Wells can investigate, the target is dead. When the same informant warns of an impending shipment of radioactive material to the US, the entire intelligence community is on high alert. But Wells’ old boss thinks something is fishy, and soon

Wells is off to Guatemala, Thailand, and numerous other cities just to get a lead. “Berenson’s strength is his deep understanding of geopolitics and of the shoddy compromises it demands. He clearly has excellent contacts in the world of shadows. Wells is a complex and satisfying protagonist, tackling bad guys across the world’s conflict zones.”—*The New York Times Book Review*.

Billheimer, John. [A Player to Be Maimed Later](#) (Five Star \$25.95 March 15). Blaze Stender, a retired pitching superstar, asks his old friend Lloyd Keaton to write his biography, hoping that the book will help ensure his election to baseball’s Hall of Fame. Keaton starts work on the biography and continues even after Stender turns up missing following a boating accident. He soon discovers, however, that the facts of his old friend’s life are at odds with his popular image, and that Stender was keeping some dark secrets, including blackmail payments that could be related to a mysterious death. Stender’s widow tries to cancel the biography, fearing it will tarnish her husband’s image. But Keaton can’t stop following a story, even when it leads to another killing and the reporter himself becomes the target of an unknown assailant.

Bingham, Harry. [The Strange Death of Fiona Griffiths](#) (Orion \$45). When DC Fiona Griffiths says “yes” to her policeman boyfriend, it’s an affirmation that she wants finally to put her psychological breakdown behind her. But she still can’t resist the challenge of an undercover policing course. Finding it remarkably easy to assume a new identity, she comes out top of the class. So when an ingenious payroll fraud starts to look like the tip of a huge criminal iceberg, Fiona is selected to infiltrate the fraudsters’ operation. Posing as a meek former payroll clerk now forced to work as a cleaner, Fiona Griffiths becomes Fiona Grey, hoping the criminals will try and recruit her. If discovered, she’s dead meat. And there’s always the risk that her ever-fragile grip on her sense of self will be lost—and she may never find her way back.

Black, Benjamin. [The Black Eyed Blonde](#) (Holt \$27). Booker Prize winner John Banville writes crime fiction as Black. Here he departs from his Irish-based mysteries into “the distinctive narrative voice of Raymond Chandler’s world-weary, mean streets-walking L.A. private eye, Philip Marlowe. Despite Robert B. Parker’s lengthy experience in the PI genre, his sequel to *The Big Sleep*, *Perchance to Dream*, pales in comparison with Black’s pitch-perfect recreation of the character and his time and place. As for the language, Black nails Chandler’s creative and memorable similes and metaphors. ... While the mystery is well plotted, Black elevates it beyond mere thoughtful homage with a plausible injection of emotion in his wounded [Marlowe].”—PW Starred Review. The Indie Next Pick: “In well-written noir, each sentence feels like a story unto itself and strung together those sentences form a book that feels somehow ‘more’ than any other out there. Black manages to mimic the style of one of the best-known authors of the 20th century while still keeping a distinct voice. Raymond Chandler fans will be happy to see Phillip Marlowe back roaming the mean streets of L.A. There’s a sultry femme fatale, a sinister philanthropist, and plenty of punches thrown, pistols whipped, and suits ruined. *The Black-Eyed Blonde* is a tall drink of whiskey, and I enjoyed every drop!” **A Hardboiled Crime Club AND Surprise Me Club Pick.**

Black, Cara. [Murder in Pigalle](#) (Soho \$25.95 March 17). June, 1998: Paris’s sticky summer heat is even more oppressive than usual as rowdy French football fans riot in anticipation of the World Cup. Private Investigator Aimée Leduc has been trying to slow down her hectic lifestyle, take on only computer security assignments, and maybe try to learn how to cook (*quelle catastrophe!*). She’s vowed not to let herself get involved in any more dangerous shenanigans—she’s five months’ pregnant and has the baby’s wellbeing to think about now, too. But all of her best intentions to live the quiet life fall away when disaster strikes close to home. A serial rapist has been terrorizing Paris’s Pigalle neighborhood, following teenage girls home from junior high school and attacking them in their own houses. It is sad and frightening but has nothing to do with Aimée—until Zazie, the 14-year-old daughter of the proprietor of Aimée’s favorite café, disappears. The police aren’t mobilizing quickly enough. Then Zazie’s desperate parents approach Aimée for help.... [Click here](#) to buy Black’s earlier mysteries.

Box, CJ. [Stone Cold](#) (Putnam \$26.95 March 13). Has Nate Romanowski turned paid assassin? You might think so in the opener to the 14th Joe Pickett thriller, but never take anything by Box at face value. Governor Rulon has called in a chip and set Game Warden Joe a troubleshooting task off the grid. The target? A mystery man. Everything about the enigmatic figure is a mystery: the massive ranch in the remote Black Hills of Wyoming that nobody ever visits, the women who live with him, the secret philanthropies, the private airstrip, the sudden disappearances. And especially the persistent rumors that the man’s wealth comes from killing people. Ah, now you see where my question about Nate intersects with Joe’s mission....

To purchase Joe Picketts #1-13, [click here](#).

Castell, Sebastien. [Traitor’s Blade](#) (Quercus \$32). The Greatcoats Book One. Falcio is the first Cantor of the Greatcoats. Trained in the fighting arts and the laws of Tristia, the Greatcoats are travelling Magisters upholding King’s Law. They are heroes. Or at least they were, until they stood aside while the Dukes took the kingdom, and impaled their King’s head on a spike. Now Tristia is on the verge of collapse and the barbarians are sniffing at the borders. The Dukes bring chaos to the land, while the Greatcoats are scattered far and wide, reviled as traitors, their legendary coats in tatters. All they have left are the promises they made to King Paelis, to carry out one final mission. But if they have any hope of fulfilling the King’s dream, the divided Greatcoats must reunite, or they will also have to stand aside as they watch their world burn... I append this info about the author as it reminds me of Ian Rankin’s bio. “Sebastien de Castell had just finished a degree in Archaeology when he started work on his first dig. Four hours later he realized how much he hated archaeology and left to pursue a very focused career as a musician, ombudsman, interaction designer, fight choreographer, teacher, project manager, actor, and product strategist. He lives in Vancouver, Canada.” Plus his photo could come right off the cover of a Romance novel.

Childs, Laura. [Steeped in Evil](#) (Berkley \$28). Charleston’s Theodosia Browning’s thing is tea, tea and the treats she serves at her Indigo Tea Shop. Still, why pass up a fancy wine-tasting invitation at nearby upscale Knighthall Winery? Why anyone

invites Thea is a mystery to me since wherever she goes, a body surfaces. This time it's the son of the winery proprietor Jordan Knight. And dissatisfied with the police investigation, he turns to Theo who has a bouquet of suspects to grill... While this is a cozy, no overt violence, the motives and deeds are dark indeed!

Clements, Katherine. [The Crimson Ribbon](#) (Headline \$35). May Day 1646. The Civil War is raging and what should be a rare moment of blessing for the town of Ely takes a brutal turn. Ruth Flowers is left with little choice but to flee the household of Oliver Cromwell, the only home she has ever known. On the road to London, Ruth sparks an uneasy alliance with a soldier, the battle-scarred and troubled Joseph. But when she reaches the city, it's in the Poole household that she finds refuge. Lizzie Poole, beautiful and charismatic, enralls the vulnerable Ruth, who binds herself inextricably to Lizzie's world. But in these troubled times, Ruth is haunted by fears of her past catching up with her. And as Lizzie's radical ideas escalate, Ruth finds herself carried to the heart of the country's conflict, to the trial of a king. Based on the real figure of the fascinating Elizabeth Poole.

Coben, Harlan. [Missing You](#) (Dutton \$27.95). The NYPD's Kat Donovan signs up for an on-line dating site and voila, a photo of her ex-fiancé Jeff appears with a profile. He shattered her heart 18 years ago, bringing back emotions she's ignored during his silence. Is fate bringing them together for a second chance? When she reaches out to him...well, something's not right. Suspicions fill her, then terror. Echoes of the cruel murder that took her father. And finally, a dreadful dilemma.

Deaver, Jeffery. [Trouble in Mind, Collected Stories](#) (Grand Central \$24.99). Deaver appears on May 17 with a new thriller [The Skin Collector](#) (Grand Central \$28) and can then sign his 3rd volume of collected short stories which includes 5 (of 12 total) brand new tales and a novella called "Forever" which borders on the occult. Lincoln Rhyme and Kathryn Dance get one each. Plus Deaver does a terrific Introduction.

Delaney, Luke. [The Toy Taker](#) (Collins \$32). Your child has been taken... Snatched in the dead of night from the safety of the family home. There's no sign of forced entry, no one heard or saw a thing. DI Sean Corrigan investigates. He needs to find four-year-old George Bridgeman before abduction becomes murder. But his ability to see into dark minds, to think like those he hunts, has deserted him – just when he needs it most. Another child vanishes. What kind of monster is Corrigan hunting? And will he work it out in time to save the children?

DeSilva, Bruce. [Providence Rag](#) (Forge \$25.99 March 27). Journalist DeSilva won the Edgar and Macavity Awards for Best First Novel with [Rogue Island](#) (\$14.99) introducing old-school newspaperman Liam Mulligan who beat is Providence, Rhode Island. His 3rd case "melds moral dilemmas with a suspenseful plot... In 1992, when Mulligan is still handling the sports beat for the *Providence Dispatch*, an editor assigns him to help cover a gory double murder. Mulligan succeeds in getting more information from the police about the slaughter of Becky Medeiros and her 4-year-old daughter, after the paper's lead crime reporter fails. Two years later, a similar crime claims three more lives—a mother and her two daughters, ages 8 and 12. Mulligan ends up cracking the case, but the main action concerns the fate of the convicted killer, who is due to be released after six years thanks to a legal fluke. When a colleague discovers that

efforts to lengthen the incarceration may have been unethical, Mulligan must find a way to balance his passion for the truth with his desire to protect the public."—*PW* Starred Review. I add, Serial killer fans, alert! DeSilva lays out one's evolution in horrifying detail.

Doyle, Roddy. [The Guts](#) (Viking \$27.95). Belatedly come some Signed copies of this January release. Doyle reintroduces Jimmy Rabbitte in this follow-up to his beloved debut novel *The Commitments*. In the 1980s Jimmy Rabbitte formed the Commitments, a ragtag, blue-collar collective of Irish youths determined to bring the soul music stylings of James Brown and Percy Sledge to Dublin. Time proves a great equalizer for Jimmy as he's now approaching fifty with a loving wife, four kids, and a recent cancer diagnosis that leaves him feeling shattered and frightened. Jimmy still loves his music, and he still loves to hustle—his new thing is finding old bands and then finding the people who loved them enough to pay for their resurrected albums. As he battles his illness on his path through Dublin, Jimmy manages to reconnect with his own past, most notably Commitments guitarist Liam "Outspan" Foster and the still beautiful backup vocalist Imelda Quirk. Jimmy also learns the trumpet, reunites with his long-lost brother, and rediscovers the joys of fatherhood

Estleman, Loren D. [Don't Look for Me](#) (Forge \$28). Detroit may be dueling with bankruptcy, but Amos Walker, a sort of dinosaur PI, is neither down nor out. Instead trouble finds him helped along by rich Alec Wynn who wants Walker to find his missing wife, Cecilia. She'd had a fling with a Wynn employee, but the man swears he hasn't seen her. He does she consumed a lot of capsules—herbs for her health. Wynn directs Walker to Patti Lochner who spent time with Cecilia. She knows little. Neither does the clerk in the herb shop although this lovely lady also says she knows nothing about the dead body in the basement. Mafia? Then two Mossad agents accost our private eye, and.... This is more than a Detroit tale, surely....

Evanovich, Janet. [Chase](#) (Random \$28). Written with Lee Goldberg, second in a series featuring master con artist Nicolas Fox and die-hard FBI agent Kate O'Hare. And this time around, things go from hot to nuclear when government secrets are on the line.

Finch, Charles. [The Last Enchantments](#) (St Martins \$26 in stock). *Booklist* writes, "William Baker leaves the political world of New York City behind, along with a well-connected girlfriend, Alison, to spend a year studying English literature at Fleet, a fictional Oxford college. He boards in a small cottage on campus with other graduate students, who introduce him to life as an English uni student. Tom Raleigh, William's pedigreed Tory housemate, indoctrinates him into centuries-old traditions at Oxford. Then he meets Sophie, a smart and proper Englishwoman, and begins to drift away from Alison, and toward the romantic, literary life of Oxford. As in Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*, Oxford sets a regal and stunning backdrop, giving it a timeless and rich ambience that is, well, enchanting." Wilton Barnhardt adds, "Finch achieves that rarest of tributes to Oxford University, fond but still clear-sighted. . . . The heart of *The Last Enchantments* is his Bright Young Things—too young for their own good, let loose upon the medieval city of sherry-sodden intellectuality and rain-soaked romantic debacle, bright about everything except love and life. A witty, touching coming-of-age tale in a town that never ages." —Wilton Barnhardt.

Fowler, Christophe. [Bryant and May and the Bleeding Heart](#) (Doubleday \$45). It's a fresh start for the Met's oddest investigation team, the Peculiar Crimes Unit. Their first case involves two teenagers who see a dead man rising from his grave in a London park. And if that's not alarming enough, one of them is killed in a hit and run accident. Stranger still, in the moments between when he was last seen alive and found dead on the pavement, someone has changed his shirt... Much to his frustration, Arthur Bryant is not allowed to investigate. Instead, he has been tasked with finding out how someone could have stolen the ravens from the Tower of London. All seven birds have vanished from one of the most secure fortresses in the city. And, as the legend has it, when the ravens leave, the nation falls. Soon it seems death is all around and Bryant and May must confront a group of latter-day bodysnatchers, explore an eerie funeral parlor and unearth the gruesome legend of Bleeding Heart Yard. Each novel of this marvelous series is rich in strange characters and steeped in London's true history.

Garrison, Paul. [Robert Ludlum's the Janson Option](#) (Grand Central \$27.99 in stock). Paul Janson—a former Consular Ops legend known as “The Machine” for his deadly speed and accuracy—has a new mission. Sickened by the “sanctioned serial killings” ordered by the state department, Janson has left covert operations and is now a private security consultant. In partnership with deadly sharpshooter Jessica Kincaid, he only takes assignments that he believes will lead to the greater good. When American Synergy Corporation oil executive Kingsman Helms begs Janson to rescue his wife, Allegra, from Somali pirates, Janson and Kincaid view it as the perfect opportunity to infiltrate ASC and disrupt the company's scheme to subvert independent oil-rich African countries into wholly-owned ASC subsidiaries. Once on the ground, Janson and Kincaid discover that the pirates may be the least lethal threat in the violent chaos of anarchic Somalia.

Hall, MR. [The Burning](#) (Pan \$39). In the icy, languid days following Christmas, a dense fog has settled over the Wye Valley. Local Coroner Jenny Cooper, still reeling after being abandoned by her partner for the festivities, is called to the scene of a dreadful tragedy: a house has been burned to the ground, revealing its terrible secrets. Before the fire began, a man - Ed Morgan - shot his two stepdaughters dead, before turning the gun on himself. His infant son is still missing. Ed's partner Kelly Hart was spared by the tragedy but has been left shattered by the loss of her children and the man she loved. The only clue to Ed's dark motives remains a jealous note left on his Facebook page. As Jenny delves further into Ed and Kelly's life, something nags her about that fateful evening—maybe a connection with the mysterious unsolved abduction of a little girl in the village ten years ago?

Harris, CS. [Why King's Confess](#) (NAL \$27). Starred Review—mine are all raves for this series too. “The past casts a long shadow in Harris's best Regency whodunit yet. In January 1813, a case comes to aristocratic sleuth Sebastian St. Cyr, estranged son of the Earl of Hendon, Chancellor of the Exchequer, from his closest friend, Dr. Paul Gibson. On an East London street, Gibson stumbled across a grisly scene—a woman seriously wounded near the butchered corpse of a French physician, Damion Pelletan, whose heart was removed. The murder and assault coincide with a possible turning point in Anglo-Franco

relations. The English are considering making peace with Napoleon, a prospect that does not sit well with the French royalists in exile. The powers that be, including St. Cyr's überpowerful father-in-law, Lord Jarvis, who's a cousin of the king, attribute the Pelletan murder to a footpad, but the investigator finds that theory unpersuasive, especially after learning the mutilation has resonance for survivors of the Terror who remember that the Dauphine's heart was removed in an autopsy. Harris melds mystery and history as seamlessly as she integrates developments in her lead's personal life into the plot.”

Hayder, Mo. [Wolf](#) (Bantam \$32). I believe, from what I can hear, that either my daughter or my wife has just been attacked. I don't know the outcome. The house is silent. Fourteen years ago two teenage lovers were brutally murdered in a patch of remote woodland. The prime suspect confessed to the crimes and was imprisoned. Now, one family is still trying to put the memory of the killings behind them. But at their isolated hilltop house...the nightmare is about to return.

Hoffman, Alice. [The Museum of Extraordinary Things](#) (Scribner \$27.99). The Indie Next Pick: “Hoffman's latest work of fiction is a tour de force of imagination which, at the same time, builds a world so real and present that the reader senses a tangible reality. The setting is New York and Brooklyn in 1911, where sideshow ‘curiosities,’ Russian émigré Jews, the emerging workers unions, and the lost, wild beauty of Manhattan's rivers and woods blend into a dream. Hoffman's research is precise, her vision unique, and her writing extraordinarily evocative. This is a beautiful and sensitive novel.”

Hodgson, Antonia. [The Devil in the Marshalsea](#) (Hodder \$41). “A wonderfully convincing picture of the seamier side of eighteenth-century life. (The novel is a sort of Tom Jones Noir, I suppose.) The narrative whips along. The picture of the Marshalsea is quite chilling. Antonia Hodgson has a real feel for how people thought and spoke at the time. God knows, that's a rare talent. I very much look forward to discovering what Tom Hawkins does next—I imagine it won't be a career in holy orders. —Andrew Taylor. “Hodgson's London of 1727 offers that rare achievement in historical fiction: a time and place suspensefully different from our own, yet real. *The Devil in the Marshalsea* reminds us at every turn that we ourselves may not have evolved far from its world of debtors and creditors, crime and generosity, appetite and pathos. A damn'd good read.”—Elizabeth Kostova. This may be a first novel. I'm awaiting a ready copy so I can say more.

Hughes, Andrew. [The Convictions of John Delahunt](#) (Doubleday UK \$26). Dublin, 1841. A young man tells his story as he awaits the hangman in his cell in Kilmainham Gaol. On a cold December morning, a small boy had been enticed away from his mother and his throat savagely cut. This could have been just one more small, sad death in a city riven by poverty, inequality and political unrest, but this killing causes a public outcry. For it appeared the culprit, a feckless student named John Delahunt, is also an informant and in the pay of the authorities at Dublin Castle. And strangely, this young man seemed neither to regret what he did nor fear his punishment...

Jung-Myung, Lee. [The Investigation](#) (Macmillan \$32). Fukuoka Prison, 1944. Beyond the Japanese prison walls the war rages; inside a man is found brutally murdered. Watanabe, a young guard with a passion for reading, is tasked with finding the killer.

Sugiyama, also a guard, was feared and despised throughout the prison. Investigations have barely begun when a powerful inmate confesses. But Watanabe is unconvinced; and as he interrogates both the suspect and Yun Dong-ju, a talented Korean poet, he begins to realize that the fearsome guard was not all he appeared to be. . . . As Watanabe unravels Sugiyama's final months, he begins to discover what is really going on inside this dark and violent institution. As the war moves towards its devastating close and bombs rain down upon the prison, Watanabe must find a way to protect Yun Dong-ju, no matter what it takes. "At once a captivating mystery and an epic lament for lost freedom and humanity in the darkest of times, *The Investigation*—inspired by a true story—is a sweeping, gripping tale perfect for fans of *The Shadow of the Wind*. A bestseller in Korea is translated into English. I was mesmerized by it. This riveting novel, a **First Mystery Club Pick**, is a murder investigation, a thriller, and a meditation: how can ordinary people behave with astonishing cruelty. . . . or do nothing to protest. This is the Japanese theater, no different than the Nazi war zone of McGee's haunting tale.

Kane, Ben. [Hannibal: Clouds of War](#) (Preface \$32.) 213 BC. Syracuse. Under the merciless Sicilian sun, a city is at war. Outside the walls, a vast Roman army waits. Yet the city's incredible defenses, designed by Archimedes, mean that Syracuse will not be taken easily. A veteran of the bitter war since its beginning, Quintus is ready to give his life in the service of the Republic. But dangers face him from within his own ranks as well as from the enemy - who include his former friend, the Carthaginian, Hanno. Hanno has been sent by his general Hannibal to aid Syracuse in its fight against Rome. Pledged to bring death to all Romans, he is diverted from his mission by the discovery of Quintus' sister Aurelia, a captive within the city. Two friends on opposing sides. A woman caught between them. They are about to meet in one of the most brutal sieges ever. Who will survive?

Katzenbach, John. [Red 1-2-3 Signed](#) (Grove \$26 finally! in stock). Trending: rare genetic disorders shaping lives and novels. And dynamite women. In this case, three of them, all red heads. Three women, very ordinary, with nothing in common other than their hair. And the fact that some wacko called "The Big Bad Wolf" has targeted them, is stalking them, intent upon killing all three. He's just waiting for the perfect chance to complete his master plan after upending their lives and instilling them with daily terror. But he didn't count on one thing: the three Reds discover each other and, with law enforcement indifferent to their inchoate plight, use clues he's left to turn the tables. Can they beat the Wolf at his terrible game? Points to veteran author Katzenbach for reminding us that the Brothers Grimm did not write jolly fairy tales for kids.

Kavanagh, Julie. [Falling Signed](#) (Random UK \$22). A plane falls out of the sky. A woman is murdered. Four people all have something to hide, and each tells his/her story to propel the plot to the end. Jim is a retired police officer and worried father. His beloved daughter has disappeared and he knows something is wrong. Tom has woken up to the news that his wife was on the plane, and he must break the news to their only son. Cecilia had packed up and left her family. Now she has survived a tragedy and sees no way out. Freya is struggling to cope with the loss of her father. But as she delves into his past, she may not like what she finds. A strong example of the British psychological thriller by former police psychologist Kavanagh who lives in Wales.

Kellerman, Jonathan. [Killer](#) (Random \$29). Constance Sykes, a sophisticated, successful physician, hardly seems like someone Alex needs to fear. Then, at the behest of the court, he becomes embroiled in a bizarre child custody dispute initiated by Connie against her sister and begins to realize that there is much about the siblings he has failed to comprehend. And when the court battle between the Sykes sisters erupts into cold, calculating murder and a rapidly growing number of victims, Alex knows he's been snared in a toxic web of pathology. Nothing would please Alex more than to be free of the ugly spectacle known as Sykes v. Sykes. But then the little girl at the center of the vicious dispute disappears and Alex knows he must work with longtime friend Detective Milo Sturgis, braving an obstacle course of Hollywood washouts, gangbangers, and self-serving jurists in order to save an innocent life.

LaPlante, Alice. [A Circle of Wives](#) (Atlantic \$25). LaPlante one-ups Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl* in her second crime novel. The narration by three women, all married to the San Francisco doctor found dead in his solitary hotel room, perhaps murdered, is perfect for the story. Here's the Indie Next Pick: "What would you do if you discovered your husband had another wife, or even two, at the same time that he is married to you? Full of marital and murderous deception, LaPlante's new novel echoes the tension and suspense of her previous work, [Turn of Mind](#) (\$15)—a First Mystery Club Pick—and leads the reader down a path of betrayal, power, passion, and terror. A fabulous read!"

Laukkanen, Owen. [Kill Fee](#) (Putnam \$26.95 March 26). More a caper novelist than a thriller (think Elmore Leonard), Laukkanen has created a compelling literary odd couple in FBI Agent Carla Windermere and Minnesota's BCA policeman Kirk Stevens. Middle-aged and married, he's an unlikely partner for the high-octane, handsome African-American Carla. In their third case they dance romance a bit like Margaret Coel's priest and lawyer. And this while working. In fact, they are meeting for lunch when they witness a bullet felling billionaire Spenser Pyatt. And glimpse someone fleeing the scene, a boyish gunman with dead eyes which stop Windermere in her tracks while giving chase. Rallying, she and Stevens follow a twisty trail after the assassin which leads to tracking the organization running him: Killswitch, an Internet contract killing business run by Department of Defense contractor Michael Parkerson. Told from multiple points of view and with a blistering pace, Laukkanen's third engages you with "a serpentine plot that writhes through high-tech and low-life corruption." [Click here](#) for the two earlier Windermere/Stevens thrillers, the first a First Mystery Club Pick.

Lyndon, Robert. [Imperial Fire](#) (LittleBrown UK \$42 2 remain in stock). In the world after 1066, a new instrument of war appears; gunpowder. The mercenary Vallon, a man made as of grit and earth as much of flesh and blood, is sent by the defeated Byzantine emperor on a secret and near-impossible quest to the far off land of Song Dynasty China. . . .

Mark, David. [Sorrow Bound](#) (Putnam \$43). Philippa Longman will do anything for her family. Roisin McAvoy will do anything for her friends. DS Aector McAvoy will do anything for his wife. Yet each has an unknown enemy—one that will do anything to destroy them. *Sorrow Bound* is a powerful police procedural thriller about how those with the biggest hearts make the easiest targets; and how the corrosive venom of evil can dissolve the

bonds between good people, until all they are bound by is grief... 3rd for McAvoy, a Hardboiled Crime Club Pick with his first.

McGee, Audrey. [The Undertaking](#) (Atlantic UK \$32 in stock). After a marriage of convenience, Peter Faber and Katharina Spinell are surprised by the attraction that develops between them. As Peter lives through the horror of the front and faces the coming battle at Stalingrad, Katharina ruthlessly works her way into the Nazi party hierarchy goaded on by her delusional parents, wedding herself, her young husband and their unborn child to the regime. But when the tide of war turns and Berlin falls, Peter and Katharina, ordinary people stained with their small share of an extraordinary guilt, find their simple dream of family increasingly hard to hold on to.... The question of how ordinary Germans let themselves be hijacked by the Nazis always intrigues me. Here's a novel using the force of fiction to illustrate such an instance.

McHugh, Laura. [The Weight of Blood](#) (Random \$28). This **First Mystery Club Pick** draws you deep into the Ozark Mountains to the town of Henbane for an urgent look at the dark side of a bucolic landscape beyond the arm of the law, where a person can easily disappear without a trace. Folks there still whisper about Lucy Dane's mother, a bewitching stranger who appeared long enough to marry Carl Dane, birth Lucy, and disappear when Lucy was little. Now on the brink of adulthood, Lucy experiences another loss when her friend Cheri disappears and is then found murdered, her body placed on display for all to see... The Indie Next Pick: "This is a literary thriller that will keep you reading well into the night. Two young women, Lila and Cheri, disappear a generation apart. Lucy, Lila's grown daughter and Cheri's friend, soon realizes there is a connection between the two that runs deep in her family. The Ozark Mountain landscape is the perfect setting for this powerful and haunting mystery. Fans of Gillian Flynn will not be disappointed in this gritty coming-of-age story that tests the limits of family loyalty." Narrated by several characters, powered by revelation, rich in its region's landscape, this is very much a Daniel Woodrell and James Sallis sort of book.

Mina, Denise. [The Red Road](#) (LittleBrown \$27.99). "Edgar-finalist Mina's fourth novel featuring Glasgow Det. Insp. Alex Morrow is perhaps her finest yet, a brilliantly crafted tale of corruption, ruined lives, and the far-reaching ripple effects of crime.... Are these decades' old crimes somehow connected? Morrow thinks so, but seeing the investigation through just might cost her the career she's fought so hard to achieve."—*PW* Starred Review. "Like her fellow Scot, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Mina relishes combining elements of the uncanny with crisp insights into the various diseases of the human psyche."—Maureen Corrigan, NPR, who echoes George Pelecanos and Ian Rankin—and Patrick—in recommending Mina

Naughtie, James. [Madness of July](#) (Zelus \$32). Radio 4's Jim Naughtie, a sophisticated thriller about loyalty, survival and family rivalry in the endgame of the Cold War, drawing on his experience as a political insider in both Westminster and Washington. July, late 1970s. It is a sweltering summer in Westminster, and for politician Will Flemyng, the temperature is rising with each passing hour. A man's body has been found inside the walls of Parliament, and his death has sparked a political storm that will draw Flemyng back into an old, familiar

world of danger and deceit. For Will Flemyng is a man with a past. During the Cold War he was a spy, living a life of secrets behind enemy lines. Now he must revisit that past - but first he must question his loyalties: to his friends, his enemies, and to his own two brothers. Only then can he expose the truth. Only then can he walk into the fire...

Nesbit, Tarashea. [The Wives of Los Alamos](#) (Bloomsbury \$25 March 8). The Indie Next Pick: "In 1943, families of mathematicians and scientists, escorted under high security, move to The Hill—Los Alamos, New Mexico. Not knowing where they're going or why, these wives from all over the world cut their ties with friends and relatives to live in isolation, without telephones or uncensored mail. Based on the history of the development of 'The Gadget'—the atomic bomb—this novel reads like a collective diary of hundreds of wives. This unique first-person plural recounting of real events culminates with varied reactions to the use of this powerful weapon on the people of Japan. Nesbit portrays these delicate issues brilliantly!" I once lived in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, in the 1960s when wartime memories were still alive, and agree with this *PW* Starred Review: "The author's writing—by turns touching, confiding, and matter-of-fact—perfectly captures the commonalities of the hive mind while also emphasizing the little things that make each wife dissimilar from the pack. This effect intensifies once the nature of the Los Alamos project is revealed and the men and their families grapple with the burden of their new creation. Engrossing, dense, and believable." **Our March History Club Pick.**

Parris, S J. [Treachery](#) (Collins \$32). 3 unreserved copies remain of this 4th for Walsingham spy Giordano Bruno. It's August, 1583, and he travels to Plymouth with his friend Sir Philip Sidney on the Queen's business where they meet up with Sir Francis Drake...

Parshall, Sandra. [Poisoned Ground](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95). Parshall's first for Rachel Goddard, the Agatha Award-winning *The Heat of the Moon*, ratcheted up powerful suspense in Washington, DC. "Parshall's debut is a captivating tale of suspense and romance with gothic twists."—*Booklist*. The fallout sent veterinarian Rachel to Mason County, Virginia, to forge a new professional (and inevitably, personal) life. She's been romanced by, and is now married to, Sheriff Tom Bridger who is part Melungeon with deep roots in the mountains. Rachel was often a part of the Sheriff's Department investigations even before she and Tom were an item and he became the Sheriff. Beautiful rural areas offering space and privacy can become targeted by developers hoping to buy land cheap and sell high to the rich. One such has chosen Mason County as the site for a sprawling resort and is aggressively offering incentives to sell and lobbying the holdouts. Their vision requires everyone in the designated plan to sell. When Rachel's neighbors, a couple who also refuse to sell, are gunned down outside their house, it appears the proponents have moved beyond debate to violence. And soon a small civil war starts raging. But wait—maybe the murders came from another angle and the county war is but cover for some hidden agenda and dark sins....

Pavone, Chris. [The Accident](#) (Crown \$26). Pavone won the 2013 Edgar Award for Best First Novel with [The Expats](#) (\$15), also a First Mystery Club Pick. He has a great voice for storytelling

and goes for nuance in spy fiction rather than big thrills. His second novel blends the bibliomystery with the spy novel to wonderful effect. *PW* agrees with me in this Starred Review: “The contents of ‘The Accident,’ a manuscript submission by an anonymous author, shock New York literary agent Isabel Reed, the heroine of Pavone’s high-wire thriller. Isabel worries that the revelations of this nonfiction work about Charlie Wolfe, a global media baron (think Rupert Murdoch crossed with Charles Foster Kane), pose a real danger. Her fears prove well founded ... The Indie Next Pick: “Literary agent Isabel Reed is the first to receive the manuscript of *The Accident*, which, unbeknownst to her, is a dangerous thing to have in one’s possession. It reveals secrets that a powerful media mogul and his cronies, including a CIA agent, have spent a lifetime concealing. They will stop at nothing to see that *The Accident* is never published and that their reputations remain intact. Readers get an insider’s glimpse into the gears of the publishing machine as the manuscript changes hands and endangers everyone who knows of its existence. A compelling thriller for book lovers!” I didn’t want to choose between Pavone and Steinhauer for our **March Thriller Club Pick** but went with *The Accident* as I’m a sucker for the literary tropes.

Penman, Sharon Kay. [A King’s Ransom](#) (Putnam \$35 in stock). Penman flung herself into a literary affair with Richard, Coeur-de-Lion, the warrior king who spent most of his reign outside England, married but produced no heir, and inspired legends (think of Robin Hood as we know him). The favorite of his mother, Queen Eleanor, but not of Henry II, his father, Richard’s life, and that of his sibs, was shaped by his wildly dysfunctional family. His brother and heir, John, did not measure up. But Penman’s task in two volumes is to portray Richard and she does an ace job. Start with [Lionheart](#) (\$16) and then progress to *Ransom*, the story of his last years. Taken captive by the Holy Roman Emperor while on his way home from a crusade, he spent 15 months imprisoned while his mother used all her wiles to ransom him. Then he had five years left....

Perry, Anne. [Death on Blackheath](#) (Random \$27 out March 25 Signed April 9). As Victoria’s reign draws to an end. Britain’s wealth and power are global. It’s a charmed era for its Empire, but greed and corruption ever coil in its heart. Thomas Pitt, risen to commander of the powerful Special Branch (MI6), is charged with keeping Britain safe from spies and traitors. Why is he ordered to investigate the blood, hair, and shards of glass discovered outside the home of naval weapons expert Dudley Kynaston, and the simultaneous disappearance of Mrs. Kynaston’s beautiful lady’s maid? Maybe the key lies in the mutilated body of an unidentified young woman soon found near the scientist’s home....

Reed, Mary. [Ten for Dying](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95). “Ding-Dong! The witch is dead...” Those words belong to the Munchkins in the movie classic *The Wizard of Oz*. But some early version of them was surely echoing around much of 548 Constantinople in the wake of the death of Empress Theodora. A woman some loved but many hated, reviled. And all feared. The widower, Emperor Justinian, is mourning her this hot summer. And so devastated is he, he’s tried to call it murder and now sent his Lord Chamberlain, John, the investigator Justinian assigned to the (in his view, unsatisfactory) imperial murder inquiry (in *Nine for the Devil*), into exile. And in some fear for his

life as Justinian can be quirkily vengeful, or forgiving. But wait, someone else wishes to bring Theodora back to life. And visits her tomb in the Church of the Holy Apostles for a secret ceremony. The scene becomes chaotic: apparent demons vanish into the night along with one of the city’s holiest relics, a fragment of the shroud of the Virgin. With John having set sail with his lover Cordelia and servants to Greece, this crime scene falls to Felix, Captain of the Palace Guard, when Justinian orders him to find the missing relic. Felix, already overwhelmed with gambling debts, an ambitious new mistress, unfamiliar political shoals, and the loss of his exiled friends, is further shaken when someone deposits a corpse at his house. An ill-advised attempt to dispose of it puts Felix in the frame for murder while derailing his investigation into the vanished relic.

Riches, Anthony. [The Emperor’s Knives](#) (Hodder \$36 in stock). The seventh novel in Anthony Riches’ acclaimed Empire sequence brings Marcus Aquila back to Rome, hunting the men who destroyed his family. But the revenge he craves may cost him and those around him dearly. The young centurion’s urge to exact his own brutal justice upon the shadowy cabal of assassins who butchered his family means that he must face them on their own ground, risking his own death at their hands. A senator, a gang boss, a praetorian officer and, deadliest of all, champion gladiator Mortiferum—the Death Bringer—lie in wait. The knives are unsheathed, and ready for blood...

Sanderson, Brandon. [Words of Radiance](#) (Forge \$27.99 March 14). [The Way of Kings](#) (\$8.99), the first of a promised ten-volume Stormlight Archive series published in 2010. (Then Sanderson completed Robert Jordan’s *Wheel of Time*.) Now we get Volume Two, full of intertwined storylines featuring Shallan, Kaladin, Szeth, Dalinar, Jasnah, and others. “Kaladin’s situation echoes the Parable of the Faithful Servant and while most readers will miss the significance, both the myth behind the ascension of the lighteyes and certain aspects of the Parshendi recall the Curse of Lamanites, a now obscure bit of American folklore.”

Stein, Triss. [Brooklyn Graves](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95). Brooklyn’s “hipster” culture is hot—so hot the Brooklyn label has real currency both in the US and abroad. But Brooklyn is more than restaurants and wine bars, music, museums, shopping, and its splendid Botanic Garden. Its history includes a rich variety of immigrants, artists, a whole spectrum of incomes and occupations. And famously, its Brownstones and their—and the borough’s—history. It’s a great place for a treasure hunt. Who can resist that? Susan Vreeland wrote of Louis Comfort Tiffany’s studios and its artists in *Clara and Mr. Tiffany*. Unsung but for chance Clara Driscoll’s career underscored the vital role played in Tiffany’s by women. In her second investigation for Erica Donato, Triss Stein imagines yet another woman artist of the era along with the possibility of lost Tiffany works to discover among the mausoleums at Brooklyn’s famed Greenwood Cemetery. Where, one morning, the body of a Russian immigrant is found. Erica, ordered by her employer at the history museum to serve as temporary factotum to an arrogant art expert, has by chance taken the expert to the crime scene. But she has another personal connection: her teen-aged daughter is friends with the murdered man’s family. “*Brooklyn Graves* consistently surprises and twists. The layers Stein has created—Erica’s historical perspective, Dima’s murder, Erica’s relationship with her daughter—come together and create something very

similar to a mosaic, a Tiffany design. Each section of the story eventually comes together and creates a very lovely picture.”—CriminalElement.com

Steinhauer, Olen. [The Cairo Affair](#) (St Martins \$26.99 March 19). The Indie Next Pick: “Steinhauer has once again produced an extremely well-constructed page-turner, this time set in Egypt during the initial Libyan uprising. Layers of deceit, betrayal, and duplicity permeate this story of an alleged American plan to steal the revolution from the hands of the Libyan people. The CIA in Cairo is turning Egyptian secret service members; the Egyptians spy on the other services and have sources in many foreign embassies; and there is a leak of the Libyan plan that points to an American diplomat who is murdered. Plenty of intrigue, unreliable sources, shifting allegiances, and philosophy—Steinhauer manages it all superbly.” This is a fabulous book; all of his books are in fact. I think of him as John Le Carré as was, back in Smiley’s day. For his earlier books, [click here](#). His bestselling breakthrough is [The Tourist](#) (\$9.99) introducing the Milo Weaver trilogy. His years living in Budapest shaped his early stories set in a fictional Eastern European country. I find all his work to be brilliant, absorbing, the kind of books you sink into as you gobble them up.

Walters, Louise. [Mrs. Sinclair’s Suitcase](#) (Hodder \$35). Roberta likes to collect the letters and postcards she finds in second-hand books. When her father gives her some of her grandmother’s belongings, she finds a baffling letter from the grandfather she never knew—dated after he supposedly died in the war. Dorothy is unhappily married to Albert, who is away at war. When an aeroplane crashes in the field behind her house she meets Squadron Leader Jan Pietrykowski, and as their bond deepens she dares to hope she might find happiness. But fate has other plans for them both, and soon she is hiding a secret so momentous that its shockwaves will touch her granddaughter many years later... A first novel by an Oxfordshire author in the vein of the charming bestseller [The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie](#) (\$15).

White, Randy Wayne. [Bone Deep](#) (Putnam \$26.95 March 11). Doc Ford can’t shake his yen for fishing guide Hannah Smith of White’s second series, but he’s not lost his edge. It’s keenest when it comes to protecting Florida’s artifacts, so when a stone fetish belonging to a Crow Indian tribe is stolen and a friend of Tomlinson’s enlists him and Ford to recover it, off they go. The search leads to central Florida and its infamous Bone Valley where the ruthless operators of a billion-dollar phosphate industry’s strip mines and a ruthless subculture of black-marketers trading in illegal fossils and artifacts actively repel public exposure—and nosy outsiders.... 21st in a richly rewarding series. To buy #1-10, and the two Hannah Smiths, [click here](#).

SIGNED BOOKS FOR APRIL (so far)

Albert, Susan Witt. [Death Come Quickly](#) (Berkley \$27). When China’s and Ruby’s friend Karen Prior is mugged in a mall parking lot and dies a few days later, China begins to suspect that her friend’s death was not a random assault. Karen was a filmmaker supervising a student documentary about the fifteen-year-old murder of a woman named Christine Morris and the acquittal of the man accused of the crime. Is it possible that the same person who killed Christine Morris targeted Karen? Delving into the cold case, China learns the motive for the first

murder may be related to a valuable collection of Mexican art. Enlisting the help of her San Antonio lawyer friend Justine Wyzinski—aka the Whiz—China, a lawyer before becoming an herbalist, enlists the help of her business partner Ruby and husband, PI Mike McQuaid, in an investigation that weaves herbal lore and legal into the plot. 22nd in a Texas-based series.

Atherton, Nancy. [Aunt Dimity and the Wishing Well](#) (Viking \$28). When a strapping young Australian named Jack MacBride arrives in Finch to wrap up his late uncle’s affairs, heads turn in the sleepy Cotswold village. Lori Shepherd, American mother of twins and wife to a Boston lawyer practicing in England, volunteers to help Jack clear out his uncle’s overgrown garden. After Lori laughingly tosses a coin into the garden’s old well and makes a wish, she is baffled to find that the wish seems to have come true. Word spreads, and the villagers turn out in droves to make wishes of their own. But as they soon learn, one person’s wish is another person’s worst nightmare and the village is thrown into chaos. As more and more wishes come true, Lori resolves to find out what’s really going on. Is handsome Jack somehow tricking his neighbors? Or are they fooling themselves? With Aunt Dimity’s otherworldly help, Lori discovers that the truth is even more marvelous than a magical wishing well. “Lori’s latest is perfect for those who prefer charmingly low-key puzzles to blood-soaked chills and thrills!”—*Kirkus Reviews*

Baldacci, David. [The Target](#) (Grand Central \$30). “At the start of bestseller Baldacci’s tense third thriller featuring CIA hit man Will Robie (after 2013’s *The Hit*), Earl Fontaine, a terminally ill Alabama death row prisoner, plans one last killing that will personally affect Robie and his fellow agent, Jessica Reel. Meanwhile in Washington, D.C., the U.S. president authorizes an operation to assassinate a foreign leader. Evan Tucker, the head of the CIA, recommends Robie and Reel, whose recent exploits have earned them the CIA’s highest medal, for the job. When that mission is scrubbed, Robie and Reel end up attempting a dangerous incursion into North Korea to rescue a couple of prisoners from the notorious Bukchang labor camp, a move that results in North Korea deciding to retaliate against the U.S. on its own territory. In unsparing detail, Baldacci depicts the brutal conditions in the North Korean camp, in particular their impact on 25-year-old Yie Chung-Cha, a prisoner groomed as a deadly assassin.”—*Publishers Weekly*. This is my favorite Baldacci series.

Barr, Nevada. [Destroyer Angel](#) (St Martins \$26.99 April 8). A three-years married Ranger Anna Pigeon is no less intrepid than when she pursued villains across our National Parkers unattached. Her wanderlust undiminished, she joins an autumn camping trip along the Iron Range’s Fox River in upstate Minnesota, reuniting with paraplegic Heath Jarrod, Heath’s daughter, and a woman who designs outdoor gear and her daughter. Designer Leah will use the group vacation to shake down her new line of equipment for making the outdoors more accessible to the handicapped. While the naturally solitary Anna floats on the river in a canoe, their camp is invaded by a quartet of armed men, leaving the Ranger to mount whatever rescue mission she can. “Barr touches again on her recurring theme, that man is the biggest threat in nature, as Anna works unseen to disarm the thugs and free her friends. Barr’s gift for depicting breathtaking scenery elevates the story, as does Anna’s complex, ever-evolving personality.”—*PW Starred Review*

Bradley, Alan. [Dead in Their Vaulted Arches](#) (Orion \$46). With Bradley living on the Isle of Man, it's challenging to get signed copies of this new investigation for almost-teen Flavia de Luce. The young chemist and sleuth is ever on the trail of what happened to her long-missing mother, Harriet. But now Harriet's coming home... in a coffin. With the funeral train comes the start of revelations that shake the whole DeLuce family...

Brennan, Allison. [Notorious](#) (St Martins \$24.99). A kind of *Gone Girl* suspense set in Atherton, a bastion of the Bay Area rich for decades. Leafy lots and family mansions mean kids could range into trouble undetected until needing protection. It's this background that brings Max Revere, star of a true crime TV series, home when childhood friend Kevin O'Neal, destroyed by suspicion surrounding the murder of Lindy Ames as a teen, now commits suicide. Believing Kevin an unlikely suicide and jarred by the shooting death of a construction worker at her circle's old high school, Max does what she does best: work a cold case. Nothing original here; the interest lies more in the landscape. But Max could prove an interesting investigator once past all the introductory stuff.

Connolly, John. [Wolf in Winter](#) (Hodder \$39). The community of Prosperous, Maine has always thrived when others have suffered. Its inhabitants are wealthy, its children's future secure. It shuns outsiders. It guards its own. And at the heart of the Prosperous lie the ruins of an ancient church, transported stone by stone from England centuries earlier by the founders of the town... But the death of a homeless man and the disappearance of his daughter draw the haunted, lethal private investigator Charlie Parker to Prosperous. Parker is a dangerous man, driven by compassion, by rage, and by the desire for vengeance. In him the town and its protectors sense a threat graver than any they have faced in their long history, and in the comfortable, sheltered inhabitants of a small Maine town, Parker will encounter his most vicious opponents yet. Charlie Parker has been marked to die so that Prosperous may survive. Prosperous, and the secret that it hides beneath its ruins... 12th in the Charlie Parker series.

Cumming, Charles. [Colder War](#) (Collins \$32). From the winner of the CWA Ian Fleming Steel Dagger 2012 for Best Thriller of the Year comes a gripping and suspenseful new spy novel. Perfect for fans of John le Carré, Charles Cumming is 'the master of the modern spy thriller' (Mail on Sunday) MI6's Head of Station in Turkey is killed in a mysterious plane crash. Amelia Levene, chief of the Secret Intelligence Service, wants the incident investigated – quickly and quietly. The only man she can trust is Thomas Kell, a disgraced spy searching for redemption. Arriving in Istanbul, Kell discovers that MI6 operations in the region have been fatally compromised: a traitor inside Western Intelligence threatens not just the Special Relationship, but the security of the entire Middle East. Kell's search for the mole takes him from London, to Greece, and into Eastern Europe. But when Kell is betrayed by those closest to him, the stakes become personal. He will do anything to see this operation through – including putting himself, and others, in the line of fire...

Davidson, Hilary. [Blood Always Tells](#) (Forge \$25.99 April 23). Dominique Monaghan just wanted to get even with her two-timing, married boyfriend, a washed-up boxer stuck in a toxic marriage to a dangerously spoiled socialite. But an elaborate blackmail scheme soon lands her in the middle of an unexpected

kidnapping . . . and attempted murder. But who is actually out to kill whom? Desmond Edgars, Dominique's big brother, has looked out for his wayward sister ever since their mother was convicted of murdering Dominique's father many years ago, so when he receives a frantic phone call from Dominique in the middle of the night, he drops everything to rush to the rescue. But to find out what has really happened to his sister, the stoic ex-military man must navigate a tangled web of murder and deception, involving a family fortune, a couple of shifty lawyers, and a missing child, while wrestling with his own bloody secrets... "Hilary Davidson is the master of plot twists!"—Tess Gerritsen. "A tale of revenge and redemption that keeps the reader guessing until the last page"—Harlan Coben

Davis, Lindsey. [Enemies at Home](#) (Hodder \$42). Young, widowed and fiercely independent, Flavia Alba lives alone on the Aventine Hill in Rome and makes a good living as a hired investigator. An outsider in more ways than one, Albia has unique insight into life in ancient Rome, and she puts it to good use going places no man could go, and asking questions no man could ask. Even as the dust settles from her last case, Albia finds herself once again drawn into a web of lies and intrigue. A mysterious death at a local villa begs may be murder and, as the household slaves are implicated, Albia is once again forced to involve herself. Flavia Alba's second investigation after *The Ides of April*.

Donoghue, Emma. [Frog Music](#) (Picador \$41). San Francisco, 1876: a stifling heat wave and smallpox epidemic have engulfed the City. Deep in the streets of Chinatown live three former stars of the Parisian circus: Blanche, now an exotic dancer at the House of Mirrors, her lover Arthur, and his companion Ernest. When an eccentric outsider joins their little circle, secrets unravel, changing everything – and leaving one of them dead. *Frog Music* is inspired by true events and paints a warts-and-all picture, not pretty, underlining the Sinophobia and merciless roles assigned to women. The Indie Next Pick: "Donoghue has a knack for that great alchemy of turning research—letters, family trees, and newspaper articles buried in archives—into fiction that lives and breathes on the page."

Fforde, Jasper. [The Eye of Zoltar](#) (Hodder \$32). Book 3 in The Last Dragonslayer YA series. The Mighty Shandar, the most powerful wizard the world has ever seen, returns to the Ununited Kingdoms. Clearly, he didn't solve the Dragon Problem, and must hand over his fee: eighteen dray-weights of gold. But the Mighty Shandar doesn't do refunds, and vows to eliminate the dragons once and for all—unless sixteen-year-old Jennifer Strange and her sidekicks from the Kazam house of enchantment can bring him the legendary jewel, The Eye of Zoltar. The only thing that stands in their way is a perilous journey with a 50% Fatality Index through the Cambrian Empire to the Leviathan Graveyard, at the top of the deadly Cadir Idris Mountain. It's a quest like never before,

Freeman, Brian. [The Cold Nowhere](#) (Quercus \$24.95). A terrific opener has a terrified 16-year-old diving from an old tanker-turned-museum into the icy waters of Lake Superior off Duluth to escape someone chasing her, someone she believes is trying to kill her. And so begins the 8th dark, surprising, a pulse-pounding investigation for Lt. Jonathan Stride of the Duluth PD. He's estranged from Serena, working uneasily with partner

Maggie Bei after they unwisely slept together, and haunted by the stabbing death of Catalina Moreno's mother some ten years back. Stride is determined to protect Cat, the knife-carrying child who's bounced around far too much for her years, seen too much. But does she indeed see a killer after her? Answers lie in the past. Great atmosphere, a strong story.

Gable, Michelle. [A Paris Apartment](#) (St Martins \$25.99 April 29). When April Vogt's boss tells her about the discoveries in a cramped, decrepit ninth arrondissement apartment, the Sotheby's continental furniture specialist does not hear the words "dust" or "rats" or "shuttered for seventy years." She hears Paris. She hears escape. From New York, from a possibly dying marriage. And from grief over the Parisian post she lost when the small museum where she worked closed. Arriving at the seven rooms crammed with fabulous furniture—and wait, is that a portrait by the Master of Swish?—a stunned April finds beneath the dust and cobwebs and stale perfumed air lies a goldmine. Not one of actual gold (or painted ostrich eggs or mounted rhinoceros horns or bronze bathtub, but incredible furniture, that painting, and the letters and documents that may supply provenance. They reveal this is all about a life, two lives, one lived in the end of the Belle Époque, another ending in 1940, plus there is a woman still living as the 100-year-lease on the apartment now expires. With the help of a salty (and annoyingly sexy) Parisian solicitor and the courtesan's private documents, April tries to uncover the secrets buried in the apartment. As she digs into one woman's life, April can't help but take a deeper look into her own. I'm happy to say that debut author Gable avoids cliché. Warmly recommended to fans of historical fiction/mystery, lovers of auctions and fine furniture and art, and of all things French. "*A Paris Apartment* winds between past and present, between two passionate women and their lives, loves and fortunes. Informed and assured, debut author Gable's prose is fresh and emotionally complex. □ Glimpses into Parisian life, the arts, and the high-end antiques trade are piquant accents to an exceptional mystery."—Sophie Littlefield

Hubbard, Janet. [Bordeaux The Bitter Finish](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95 April 1). NYPD detective Max Maguire returns to France as bodyguard to a famous American wine critic. Max's mother is French—so Max is not only bilingual but blessed, or cursed, with disapproving (and devious) French relatives. Max is not just escorting the critic, she's also keeping an eye on a very expensive bottle of wine whose authenticity is in dispute, a pawn in cut-throat wine wars involving critics, wine collectors, and auction houses. Checked into their Paris hotel, it's not long before Max discovers her client dead in her room and the bottle stolen from the hotel's safe. So she has no choice but to team up with examining magistrate Olivier Chaumont, the man she had fallen in love with the year before while solving a murder in Champagne. Olivier's sidekick, Commissaire Abdel Zeroual joins in. Max has no police role in France but she stays a step ahead of the French investigators using tactics learned back in New York, while Olivier weaves in and out of Bordeaux society where he is certain the murderer lurks. Is this something local, or is there really a counterfeit wine operation in play? Moving back and forth from Bordeaux to Manhattan among vintners, restaurateurs, auctioneers, collectors, the rich, as well as among less privileged players, everyone is propelled towards a shocking climax. The sequel to [Champagne, The Farewell](#) (\$24.95).

Kuhn, Shane. [The Intern's Handbook](#) (SimonSchuster \$25). Interns are invisible. That's the secret behind HR, Inc., the elite "placement agency" that doubles as a network of assassins for hire who take down high-profile targets that wouldn't be able to remember an intern's name if their lives depended on it. At the ripe old age of almost twenty-five, John Lago is already New York City's most successful hit man. He's also an intern at a prestigious Manhattan law firm, clocking eighty hours a week getting coffee, answering phones, and doing all the grunt work actual employees are too lazy to do. He was hired to assassinate one of the firm's heavily guarded partners. His internship provides the perfect cover, enabling him to gather intel and gain access to pull off a clean, untraceable hit. Part confessional, part DIY manual, here is John's final assignment, a twisted thrill ride in which he is pitted against the toughest—and sexiest—adversary he's ever faced: Alice, an FBI agent assigned to take down the same law partner he's been assigned to kill. This Indie Next Pick calls this "A darkly funny novel of office work and assassination—something like what you might get if Joshua Ferris and Josh Bazell ever collaborated. It's full of misdirection, red herrings, and characters so layered with secret identities and hidden agendas that even they may not know the truth. If you learn nothing else from this exciting, exhilarating debut, take this lesson to heart: If the intern offers to make you coffee, just say 'No.'"

Leon, Donna. [By Its Cover](#) (Heinemann \$40). When several valuable antiquarian books go missing from a prestigious library in the heart of Venice, Commissario Brunetti is immediately called to the scene. The staff suspects an American researcher has stolen them, but for Brunetti something doesn't quite add up. Taking on the case, the Commissario begins to seek information about some of the library's regulars, such as the ex-priest Franchini, a passionate reader of ancient Christian literature, and Contessa Morosini-Albani, the library's chief donor, and comes to the conclusion that the thief could not have acted alone. However, when Franchini is found murdered in his home, the case takes a more sinister turn and soon Brunetti finds himself submerged in the dark secrets of the black market of antiquarian books. Alongside his ever-faithful team of Ispettore Vianello and Signorina Elettra, he delves into the pages of Franchini's past and into the mind of a book thief in order to uncover the terrible truth. The 23rd case for Brunetti.

Lovesey, Peter. [The Stone Wife](#) (LittleBrown \$42). Bath's Supt. Peter Diamond is called to a local auction house where, just as the bidding got exciting, armed robbers staged a holdup. Their target: Lot 129, a medieval sculpture on a block of stone. Could it represent Chaucer's Wife of Bath? Sadly someone died trying to protect it...

Mark, David. [Sorrow Bound](#) (Quercus \$43). Philippa Longman will do anything for her family. Roisin McAvoy will do anything for her friends. DS Aector McAvoy will do anything for his wife. Yet each has an unknown enemy - one that will do anything to destroy them. *Sorrow Bound* is a powerful police procedural thriller about how those with the biggest hearts make the easiest targets; and how the corrosive venom of evil can dissolve the bonds between good people, until all they are bound by is grief.

Mones, Nicole. [Night in Shanghai](#) (Houghton \$25). The author of three of my favorite books ever now writes what she calls "The first novel based on the true experiences of

African American musicians in the Chinese jazz age—and what happened when World War II exploded around them.” At its center lie an American jazz man bent on upping his skills, and a Chinese woman, a committed Communist. They make their way, separately and together, up to the moment Japanese battleships appear at the mouth of the Huangpu. The poignant last scene reminds me of David Mitchell’s *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob De Zoet*. Central to Mones’ story are the Jews of Shanghai, many having fled to the city from Europe: Holocaust history unknown to most Americans, and Black history too. Readers of SJ Rozan will recognize Jewish history she portrayed in *Shanghai Moon*.

Moore, Christopher. [The Serpent of Venice](#) (Morrow \$26.99). Three prominent Venetians await their most loathsome and foul dinner guest, the erstwhile envoy from the Queen of Britain: the rascal-Fool Pocket. This trio of cunning plotters—the merchant, Antonio; the senator, Montessor Brabantio; and the naval officer, Iago—have lured Pocket to a dark dungeon, promising an evening of sprits and debauchery with a rare Amontillado sherry and Brabantio’s beautiful daughter, Portia. But their invitation is, of course, bogus. The wine is drugged. The girl isn’t even in the city limits. Desperate to rid themselves once and for all of the man who has consistently foiled their grand quest for power and wealth, they have lured him to his death. (How can such a small man, be such a huge obstacle?). But this Fool is no fool . . . and he’s got more than a few tricks (and hand gestures) up his sleeve. Greed, revenge, deception, lust, and a giant (but lovable) sea monster combine to create a riotous tale.

Pearson, Ridley. [Kingdom Keepers VII: The Insider](#) (Disney \$17.99 April 28). The Kingdom Keepers’ senior year in high school is almost over. For more than three years, things have been quiet. Their battles are long behind them, they agree, the threat to the Disney realm silenced albeit at great cost. But inside the catacombs of the Aztec temple where Finn Whitman faced down his nemesis, the monstrous Chernabog, a new threat brews. Deception and betrayal rock the Kingdom Keepers as the merciless group of Disney villains known as the Overtakers stage an unexpected comeback. But a discovery by the Keepers provides them with one hope of victory: a lost icon—one believed to be gone forever.

Simon, Clea. [Panthers Play for Keeps](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95) More Pet Noir. When Pru Marlowe takes a dog for a walk, she doesn’t expect to find a body. But Spot, a service dog in training, has too good a nose not to lead her to the remains of the beautiful young woman, and despite her own best instincts, Pru can’t avoid getting involved. The young woman seems to have been mauled by a wild cat – and Pru knows there have been no pumas in the Berkshire woods for years. And while Wallis, Pru’s curmudgeonly tabby, seems fixated on the idea of a killer cat, Spot has been sending strange signals to Pru’s own heightened senses, suggesting that the violent death was something more than a tragic accident. As motives multiply, a cougar of a different sort sets her eyes on Pru’s sometime lover, and another woman disappears. With panther panic growing, Pru may have to put aside her own issues – and her own ideas of domesticity – to solve a savage mystery.

Swanston, Andrew. [The King’s Return](#) (Transworld \$39). Spring 1661. After years of civil war followed by Oliver Cromwell’s joyless rule as Lord Protector, England awaits the coronation of

King Charles II. The mood in London is one of relief and hope for a better future. But when two respectable gentlemen are found in a foul lane with their throats cut, it becomes apparent that England’s enemies are using the newly re-established post office for their own ends. There are traitors at work and plans to overthrow the king. Another war is possible. Thomas Hill, in London visiting friends, is approached by the king’s security advisor and asked to take charge of deciphering coded letters intercepted by the post office. As the body count rises and the killer starts preying on women, the action draws closer to Thomas –and his loved ones. He finds himself dragged into the hunt for the traitors and the murderer, but will he find them before it’s too late?

Woods, Stuart. [Carnal Curiosity](#) (Putnam \$26.95 April 10). The presidential race where POTUS’s wife bids to succeed him is heating up, aided by their friend Stone Barrington and other well-heeled Manhattanites and national players. It’s all a bit distracting. So when a series of clever crimes goes down to which Stone is a material witness, he and his former partner Dino are drawn into a world of fraud and high-end security, where systems are designed to keep people safe, but don’t. When I say “drawn” I mean Stone can’t resist seduction and being seduced. . . . As ever, fun and fast paced and women as bravura as men.

Zevin, Gabrielle. [The Storied Life of A J Fikry](#) (Algonquin \$27). **Our April Modern Firsts Pick** is the No. 1 Indie Next Pick for April—of course, it’s about books. “Fikry is a bookseller with a small shop in a sleepy island resort town off the coast of Massachusetts. He’s a bit cantankerous, but with good reason: his wife, the ‘people person’ of the relationship, has recently died and his prized possession, a rare copy of Tamerlane, has gone missing. Despite those losses, there’s one strange addition, a baby girl left on his doorstep with an explicit request for Fikry to take her in. Zevin’s novel offers the reality of both death and rebirth, held together by the spirit of the bookstore. It’s a romantic comedy, a spiritual journey, and if you include the chapter openings, a collection of short story criticisms as well. In short, it’s a celebration of books and the people who read them, write them, and sell them.”

Zimmerman, Jean. [Savage Girl](#) (Viking \$27.95 April 3). The Starred Review from *PW*: “The prologue of Zimmerman’s superior historical thriller will suck most readers in instantly. On the night of May 19, 1876, 22-year-old Hugo Delegate awaits the arrival of the police at a house overlooking Manhattan’s Gramercy Park, the site of a savage murder committed by either him or a ‘girl murderess.’ Hugo soon reveals that the victim, a ‘longtime acquaintance and sometime friend,’ is but the latest in a series, and after his arrest, he presents the complex backstory to his defense attorney. Flashback to June 1875. Hugo, a Harvard student recently released from a sanatorium, accompanies his family on a cross-country trip. In Virginia City, Nevada, he becomes fascinated with a sideshow freak, the so-called Savage Girl, allegedly raised by wolves. Hugo’s parents decide to civilize the girl, and introduce her into society on their return to New York. Zimmerman—[The Orphanmaster](#) (\$16), a 2013 History Pick—keeps the truth hidden until the end, combining suspense with an unsettling look into a tormented mind.”

SIGNED BOOKS FOR MAY (Wow! Might even be more)

Atkins, Ace. [Robert B Parker's Cheap Shot](#) (Putnam \$26.95 May 9). Kinjo Heywood is one of the New England Patriots' marquee players—a hard-nosed linebacker who's earned his reputation as one of the toughest guys in the league. When off-field violence repeatedly lands Heywood in the news, his slick agent hires Spenser to find the men who he says have been harassing his client. Heywood's troubles seem to be tied to a nightclub shooting from two years earlier. But when Heywood's nine-year-old son, Akira, is kidnapped, ransom demands are given, and a winding trail through Boston's underworld begins, Spenser puts together his own all-star team of toughs. It will take both Hawk and Spenser's protégé, Zebulon Sixkill, to watch Spenser's back and return the child to the football star's sprawling Chestnut Hill mansion. A controversial decision from Heywood only ups the ante...

Beechey, Alan. [This Private Plot](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95). If a blackmail letter drives a man to suicide, is the sender guilty of murder? "Yes," says Oliver Swithin, author of bestselling Finsbury the Ferret children's stories and amateur sleuth, who is on holiday in an ancient village. A midnight streak with his naked girlfriend—Scotland Yard's Effie Strongitham—abruptly ends in the discovery of a corpse. Retired radiobroadcaster Dennis Breedlove has hanged himself from the old gibbet. Evidence suggests blackmail may have driven this celebrity to suicide. Irresistibly intrigued, Oliver believes discovering the dead man's secret will lead to the identity of the blackmailer. But in Britain today, when shame is a ticket to fame, why suicide? What if it wasn't? When the mystery abruptly turns inside out, black-clad strangers attack Oliver in the night. The Vicar behaves strangely. So do the village's five unmarried Bennet sisters, a mysterious monk, the persistent, self-effacing Underwood Tooth, and Oliver's Uncle Tim, Effie's superior at the Yard and a part-time Shakespearean actor. Plus Oliver's aunt and his mother. Who else might play a role in *This Private Plot*? Two William Shakespeares? It's time to put the laugh back into slaughter with the long-awaited third chapter in the career of Oliver Swithin. Yet under the clever wordplay and bawdy jokes lies an inventive and, yes, scholarly plot. Our British Crime Club Pick for May.

Berry, Steve. [The Lincoln Myth](#) (Ballantine \$29). September 1861: All is not as it seems. With these cryptic words, a shocking secret passed down from president to president comes to rest in the hands of Abraham Lincoln. And as the first bloody clashes of the Civil War unfold, Lincoln alone must decide how best to use this volatile knowledge: save thousands of American lives, or keep the young nation from being torn apart forever? The present: In Utah, the fabled remains of Mormon pioneers whose nineteenth-century expedition across the desert met with a murderous end have been uncovered. In Washington, D.C., the official investigation of an international entrepreneur, an elder in the Mormon Church, has sparked a political battle between the White House and a powerful United States senator. In Denmark, a Justice Department agent, missing in action, has fallen into the hands of a dangerous zealot—a man driven by divine visions to make a prophet's words reality. And in a matter of a few short hours, Cotton Malone has gone from quietly selling books at his shop in Denmark to dodging bullets in a high-speed boat chase. Once he draws enemy blood, Malone is plunged into a deadly conflict—a constitutional war secretly set in motion more than two hundred years ago.

Bolton, Sharon. [A Dark and Twisted Tide](#) (Transworld \$32). Lacey Flint is living in London's riverboat community having joined the marine policing unit when she finds a shrouded body in the River Thames. Now living in a houseboat on the River Thames, Lacey Flint is becoming a part of London's weird and wonderful riverboat community. But at dawn one hot summer morning, Lacey finds the body of a shrouded young woman in the river. She assumes it was chance, but further investigation leads her team to suspect it was deliberately left for her to find. She is no longer a detective, but as she begins to suspect someone is watching her very closely, she can't help but be drawn into the investigation.

Butcher, Jim. [Skin Game](#) (Roc \$27.95 Signed June 5). Because as Winter Knight to the Queen of Air and Darkness, Harry Dresden never knows what the scheming Mab might want him to do. Usually, it's something awful. Mab has just traded Harry's skills to pay off one of her debts. And now he must help a group of supernatural villains—led by one of Harry's most dreaded and despised enemies, Nicodemus Archleone—to break into the highest-security vault in town, so that they can then access the highest-security vault in the Nevernever. It's a smash and grab job to recover the literal Holy Grail from the vaults of the greatest treasure hoard in the supernatural world—which belongs to the one and only Hades, Lord of the freaking Underworld and generally unpleasant character. Worse, Dresden suspects that there is another game afoot that no one is talking about. And he's dead certain that Nicodemus has no intention of allowing any of his crew to survive the experience. Especially Harry. Dresden's always been tricky, but he's going to have to up his backstabbing game to survive this mess... 15th in the Dresden Files series.

Cussler, Clive/Graham Brown. [Ghost Ship](#) (Putnam \$28.95 May 27) NUMA Files. In Sept.: [Eye of Heaven](#) (Putnam \$27.95) with Russell Blake.

Deaver, Jeffery. [The Skin Collector](#) (Grand Central \$28 May 17). A new killer is on the loose: a criminal inspired by the Bone Collector. And Lincoln Rhyme must untangle the twisted web of clues before the killer targets more victims-or Rhyme himself. The killer's methods are terrifying. He stalks the basements and underground passageways of New York City. He tattoos his victims' flesh with cryptic messages, using a tattoo gun loaded with poison, resulting in an agonizing, painful death. When a connection is made to the Bone Collector—the serial killer who terrorized New York more than a decade ago—Lincoln Rhyme and Amelia Sachs are immediately drawn into the case. What is the message behind the victims' tattoos? Does the killer's own inking—a fanged centipede sporting a woman's face—hold any significance? And what is his ultimate mission?

Dennison, Hannah. [Murder at Honeychurch Hall](#) (St Martins \$24.99 May 10). TV Antiques celebrity Kat Sandford has left the network, is dodging her boyfriend's ex who is bent on revenge, and learns her widowed mother Iris has recklessly purchased a collapsing carriage house on an isolated estate down in Devon. Horrified—after all, Kat's father ran her mother's quiet life—Kat rushes to ancient Honeychurch Hall where she receives several surprises. The family at the Hall is clearly odd. Then the nanny goes missing, the housekeeper is killed, and Iris is accused of the deed. Kat has to wonder if she knows her mother at all... or herself.

Dicker, Joel. [The Truth about the Harry Quebert Affair](#) (Quercus \$48). August 30, 1975. The day of the disappearance. That summer Harry Quebert fell in love with fifteen-year-old Nola Kellergan. Thirty-three years later, her body is dug up from his yard along with a manuscript copy of his career-defining novel. Quebert is the only suspect. Marcus Goldman—Quebert’s most gifted protégé—throws off his writer’s block to clear his mentor’s name. Solving the case and penning a new bestseller soon blur together. As his book begins to take on a life of its own, the nation is gripped by the mystery of “The Girl Who Touched the Heart of America.” But with Nola, in death as in life, nothing is ever as it seems. Here is a stunning debut mystery and a love story like no other. And a **First Mystery Club Pick**. Note, the US edition will be a paperback original (Penguin \$16) and the author will visit us from Switzerland on June 12. We recommend getting the US edition to read so as to keep your UK First Mystery Club Pick pristine.

Doerr, Anthony. [All the Light We Cannot See](#) (Scribner \$27). In 1944, the U.S. Air Force bombed the Nazi-occupied French coastal town of St. Malo. Doerr (*Memory Wall*) starts his story just before the bombing, then goes back to 1934 to describe two childhoods: those of Werner and Marie-Laure. We meet Werner as a tow-headed German orphan whose math skills earn him a place in an elite Nazi training school—saving him from a life in the mines, but forcing him to continually choose between opportunity and morality. Marie-Laure is blind and grows up in Paris, where her father is a locksmith for the Museum of Natural History, until the fall of Paris forces them to St. Malo, the home of Marie-Laure’s eccentric great-uncle, who, along with his longtime housekeeper, joins the Resistance. Doerr throws in a possibly cursed sapphire and the Nazi gemologist searching for it, and weaves in radio, German propaganda, coded partisan messages, scientific facts, and Jules Verne. Eventually, the bombs fall, and the characters’ paths converge, before diverging in the long aftermath that is the rest of the 20th century. If a book’s success can be measured by its ability to move readers and the number of memorable characters it has, Story Prize-winner Doerr’s novel triumphs on both counts. Along the way, he convinces readers that new stories can still be told about this well-trod period, and that war—despite its desperation, cruelty, and harrowing moral choices—cannot negate the pleasures of the world.

Downing, David. [Jack of Spies](#) (Soho \$27.95 May 20). How I love this book. From the German territory of Tsingtau, 1913, to Shanghai, by ship to San Francisco, by train to New York (why can’t we still take the Overland Limited before changing trains in Chicago?), down to Veracruz, then over to Ireland and London. A part time spy, Jack McColl, Scottish car luxury automobile salesman who speaks nine languages, faces more and more difficult choices that push him towards accepting regular employment in British intelligence, all while war draws near and the Irish American woman he fell for in China and their many nights of hot sex—friends with benefits, or something more?—colors his every decision. So does his sense of patriotism and the role of religion. Wow! I loved the luxury of the pace as the story unfolds, never feeling rushed from one big bang to another, but never losing a quiet sense of urgency. Downing not only captures the era, he writes in its style, like say Erskine Childers—a fact lost on reviewers accustomed to slam-bang spy stories. Our **May History Club Pick** rather than our Thriller Club Pick, which will be Finder, below.

Finder, Joseph. [Suspicion](#) (Dutton \$27.95 May 30). When single father Danny Goodman suddenly finds himself unable to afford the private school his teenage daughter adores, he has no one to turn to for financial support. In what seems like a stroke of brilliant luck, Danny meets Thomas Galvin, the father of his daughter’s new best friend, who also happens to be one of the wealthiest men in Boston. Galvin is aware of Danny’s situation and out of the blue offers a \$50,000 loan to help Danny cover his daughter’s tuition. Uncomfortable but desperate, Danny takes the money, promising to pay Galvin back. What transpires is something Danny never imagined. The moment the money is wired into his account, the DEA comes knocking on his door. Danny’s impossible choice: an indictment for accepting drug money that he can’t afford to fight in court, or an unthinkable treacherous undercover assignment helping the government get close to his new best friend.

Grecian, Alex. [The Devil’s Workshop](#) (Putnam \$26.95 May 29). How I love the Victorian noir by Grecian. It’s clever, dark, but not grungy (a fad in much historical fiction I find). London, 1890. Four vicious murderers have escaped from prison, part of a plan gone terribly wrong, and now it is up to Walter Day, Nevil Hammersmith, and the rest of Scotland Yard’s Murder Squad to hunt down the convicts before the men can resume their bloody spree. But they might already be too late. The killers have retribution in mind, and one of them is heading straight toward a member of the Murder Squad, and his family. And that isn’t even the worst of it. During the escape, the killers have stumbled upon the location of another notorious murderer, one thought gone for good but now prepared to join forces with them. Jack the Ripper is loose in London once more....

Guinn, Jeff. [Glorious](#) (Putnam \$26.95 May 8). Life in the Arizona Territory in 1872. “A trip to Glorious, Arizona, in Jeff Guinn’s new western novel is like a cool draft beer after a long, hot day on a dusty trail. *Glorious* is old-fashioned in the very best way: It’s good-hearted, optimistic, compelling, comfortable, and extremely well-told. It’s wonderful when an author clearly has affection for his characters, and readers will feel the same way.”—CJ. Box. “If, like me, you’ve been waiting for the next Louis L’Amour or Zane Grey, the good news is his name is Jeff Guinn. His newest novel, *Glorious*, has all the elements of a fabulous western: compelling characters, breath-taking scenery, and something more—an unblinking take on the western frontier.”—Craig Johnson.

Harris, Charlaine. [Midnight Crossroad](#) (Ace \$27.95 May 9). Welcome to Midnight, Texas, a town with many boarded-up windows and few full-time inhabitants, located at the crossing of Witch Light Road and Davy Road. It’s a pretty standard dried-up western town. There’s a pawnshop (someone lives in the basement and is seen only at night). There’s a diner (people who are just passing through tend not to linger). And there’s new resident Manfred Bernardo, who thinks he’s found the perfect place to work in private (and who has secrets of his own). Stop at the one traffic light in town, and everything looks normal. Stay awhile, and learn the truth...

Hart, Carolyn. [Death at the Door](#) (Berkley \$25.95). A Death on Demand mystery with all the fun of Broward Island’s only mystery bookstore, a browse through current mystery writers Hart admires, and five painting with clues. And the murder of a

difficult woman, the wife of a sculptor, many would like to see dead—a tribute thus to the Agatha Christie style detective novel which Hart loves.

Harvey, John. [Darkness, Darkness](#) (Morrow \$42). Thirty years ago, the Miners' Strike threatened to tear the country apart, turning neighbor against neighbor, husband against wife, father against son—enmities which smoulder still. Resnick, recently made up to inspector, and ambivalent at best about some of the police tactics, had run an information gathering unit at the heart of the dispute. Now, in virtual retirement, and still grieving over the violent death of his former partner, the discovery of the body of a young woman who disappeared during the Strike brings Resnick back to the front line to assist in the investigation into the woman's murder - forcing him to confront his past in what will assuredly be his last case.

Hayes, Terry. [I Am Pilgrim: A Thriller](#) (Atria \$26.99). Hugely hot debut thriller, a **First Mystery Club Pick**, arriving early June. I stayed glued to it. Do not miss this one! The *PW* Starred Review: "Screenwriter and producer Hayes (Payback) makes his fiction debut with an exceptional thriller that boasts an utterly credible narrator who has had so many covert identities he can barely remember his original name. Soul-weary Scott Murdoch (aka the Pilgrim) has retired from the top echelon of ultrasecret espionage, but duty and faith in the human spirit call him back into service. A lone-wolf Middle Eastern native whom the Pilgrim code names "the Saracen" has a sure-fire bioterrorist plot to destroy the United States. In the cinematic chase that ensues, the action traverses the globe, from the Oval Office to the dusty trails of Afghanistan, each scene fleshed out in the smallest resonating detail (e.g., a Down syndrome child's laughter, the endless nausea of waterboarding)." *The Times* calls it, "a 21st century thriller: a high concept plot, but with finely drawn protagonists. The plot twists and turns like a python in a sack. The style is visceral, gritty and cinematic...A satisfying and ambitious book, written with skill and verve." *The Irish Independent* adds, "Massive in many senses, but none more so than its ability to exert a vice-like grip on the reader....Destined to be spy thriller of the year."

Hewson, David. [The House of Dolls](#) (Macmillan \$35). Anneliese Vos, sixteen-year-old daughter of Amsterdam detective, Pieter Vos, disappeared three years ago in mysterious circumstances. Her distraught father's desperate search reveals nothing and results in his departure from the police force. Pieter now lives in a broken down houseboat in the colorful Amsterdam neighborhood of the Jordaan. One day, while Vos is wasting time at the Rijksmuseum staring at a doll's house that seems to be connected in some way to the case, Laura Bakker, a misfit trainee detective from the provinces, visits him. She's come to tell him that Katja Prins, daughter of an important local politician, has gone missing in circumstances similar to Anneliese. In the company of the intriguing and awkward Bakker Vos finds himself drawn back into the life of a detective. A life which he thought he had left behind. Hoping against hope that somewhere will lay a clue to the fate of Anneliese, the daughter he blames himself for losing... I eat up anything by Hewson—but I miss the Roman cops.

Hunter, Stephen. [Sniper's Honor](#) (SimonSchuster \$27.99 May 21). Bob Lee Swagger uncovers why WWII's greatest sniper was erased from history...and why her disappearance still matters

today. Ludmilla "Mili" Petrova was once the most hunted woman on earth, having raised the fury of two of the most powerful leaders on either side of World War II: Joseph Stalin and Adolf Hitler. But Kathy Reilly of *The Washington Post* (Hunter's old employer) doesn't know any of that when she encounters a brief mention of Mili in an old Russian propaganda magazine, and becomes interested in the story of a legendary, beautiful female sniper who seems to have vanished from history. Reilly enlists former marine sniper Bob Lee Swagger to parse out the scarce details of Mili's military service. The more Swagger learns about Mili's last mission, the more he's convinced her disappearance was no accident—but why would the Russian government go to such lengths to erase the existence of one of their own decorated soldiers? And why, when Swagger joins Kathy Reilly on a research trip to the Carpathian Mountains, is someone trying to kill them before they can find out?

Iles, Greg. [Natchez Burning](#) (Morrow \$27.99 May 11). The murder of retired nurse Viola Turner in the small Mississippi town of Natchez sets off a firestorm of vicious attacks to prevent the unearthing of long-buried secrets. Penn Cage, a former prosecutor and now the town's mayor, becomes personally involved when his father, Dr. Tom Cage, is arrested for Viola's death. Reporter Henry Sexton has accumulated years of information about the Double Eagles, a small splinter cell of the Ku Klux Klan. A young Dr. Cage and his nurse Viola had the misfortune of crossing paths with them during the 1960s. The septuagenarian members have never stopped their illegal operations, and now their children continue their violent legacy. With fiancée Caitlin, Penn must use Henry's information to uncover the truth and save his father. In this first of a trilogy, best-selling author Iles brings back his Southern lawyer (*The Devil's Punch Bowl*) in an absorbing and electrifying tale that thriller fans will be sure to devour."—*Library Journal* Starred Review. In awarding its Star, *Kirkus* notes, "Iles is a master of regional literature, though he's dealing with universals here, one being our endless thirst to right wrongs. A memorable, harrowing tale." And the *PW* Star begins: Much more than a thriller, Iles's deftly plotted fourth Penn Cage novel (after 2008's *The Devil's Punchbowl*) doesn't flag for a moment, despite its length. In 2005, the ghosts of the past come back to haunt Cage—now the mayor of Natchez, Miss.—with a vengeance...." Volume One.

Johnson, Craig. [Any Other Name](#) (Viking \$26.95 May 15). Walt Longmire is sinking into high-plains winter discontent when his former boss, Lucian Conally, asks him to take on a mercy case in an adjacent county. Detective Gerald Holman is dead and Lucian wants to know what drove his old friend to take his own life. With the clock ticking on the birth of his first grandchild, Sheriff Walt learns that the by-the-book detective might have suppressed evidence concerning three missing women. Digging deeper, Walt uncovers an incriminating secret so dark that it threatens to claim other lives even before the sheriff can serve justice—Wyoming style.

Kerr, Philip. [Prayer](#) (Putnam \$26.95 May 12). Gil Martins, an agent with the FBI's Domestic Terrorism Unit, confronts the violence generated by extremism within our nation's borders every day. But when Gil discovers he played a key role in wrongly condemning an innocent man to death row, it shakes his faith—in the system, in himself, and in God—deeply. It even estranges him from his wife and son. His problems become more than personal as things heat up in Houston. A serial killer

terrorizing the morally righteous turns out to have religious motivations, upping the case from homicide to domestic terrorism. A number of prominent secular icons die or are grievously injured abruptly and under suspicious circumstances, the latest of which is a New Atheist writer who's fallen into an inexplicable coma. Left and right, it seems Gil can't escape the power of God and murder. As Gil investigates both cases, he realizes that there may be a connection—answering his prayers in a most terrifying way.

Also by Kerr, a YA novel: [The Winter Horses](#) (Random \$16.99). Set in 1941 in war-torn Ukraine, Kerr's novel is also a tale of survival—not only of Jewish orphan Kalinka, but of Przewalski's horses, a rare breed of wild horse that dates back tens of thousands of years. “The story opens on the Askaniya-Nova animal sanctuary where Max, the longtime caretaker, has been ordered by the SS to kill all of the animals, including the nearly extinct Przewalski's horses. As Max struggles with the demands of a cruel Nazi officer who has turned the reserve into his headquarters, he meets Kalinka who is travelling alone after witnessing the deaths of her family. With Max's guidance and support, Kalinka and the last pair of the horses embark on a journey across the Ukrainian wilderness. As Kalinka faces frightening obstacles, her ability to communicate with the horses and other fantastical elements give her the courage to face serious threats and her own fears. Threads of “Little Red Riding Hood” and “Hansel and Gretel” contribute to the sense that this is an “old” story handed down through generations. Like the best stories told around a campfire, it is spellbinding, but it can also be terrifying.”—*School Library Journal*

Koryta, Michael. [Those Who Wish Me Dead](#) (LittleBrown \$26 June 6). When 13-year-old Jace Wilson witnesses a brutal murder, he's plunged into a new life, issued a false identity and hidden in a wilderness skills program for troubled teens. The plan is to get Jace off the grid while police find the two killers. The result is the start of a nightmare. The killers, known as the Blackwell Brothers, are slaughtering anyone who gets in their way in a methodical quest to reach him. Now all that remains between them and the boy are Ethan and Allison Serbin, who run the wilderness survival program; Hannah Faber, who occupies a lonely fire lookout tower; and endless miles of desolate Montana mountains. The clock is ticking, the mountains are burning, and those who wish Jace Wilson dead are no longer far behind.

Lescroart, John. [The Keeper](#) (Atria \$26.99 May 7). On the evening before Thanksgiving, Hal Chase, a guard in the San Francisco County Jail, drives to the airport to pick up his step-brother for the weekend. When they return, Hal's wife, Katie, has disappeared without a clue. By the time Dismas Hardy hears about this, Katie has been missing for five days. The case strikes close to home because Katie had been seeing Hardy's wife, a marriage counselor. By this time, the original Missing Persons case has become a suspected homicide, and Hal is the prime suspect. And the lawyer he wants for his defense is none other than Hardy himself. And the man Hardy wants working with him is former Homicide Chief Abe Glitsky.

Lotz, Sarah. [The Three](#) (LittleBrown \$26 June 6). Four simultaneous plane crashes. Three child survivors. A religious fanatic who insists the three are harbingers of the apocalypse. What if he's right? A debut.

Mai Jia. [Decoded](#) (Farrar \$26). In his gripping debut novel, Mai Jia reveals the mysterious world of Unit 701, a top-secret Chinese intelligence agency whose sole purpose is counterespionage and code breaking. Rong Jinzhen, an autistic math genius with a past shrouded in myth, is forced to abandon his academic pursuits when he is recruited into Unit 701. As China's greatest cryptographer, Rong discovers that the mastermind behind the maddeningly difficult Purple Code is his former teacher and best friend, who is now working for China's enemy—but this is only the first of many betrayals. Brilliantly combining the mystery and tension of a spy thriller with the psychological nuance of an intimate character study and the magical qualities of a Chinese fable, *Decoded* discovers in cryptography the key to the human heart. Both a riveting mystery and a metaphysical examination of the mind of an inspired genius, it is the first novel to be published in English by one of China's biggest novelists.

McGarrity, Michael. [Backlands](#) (Dutton \$28.95 May 13) advances the story of Patrick Kerney; his ex-wife, Emma; and their young son, Matthew, shortly after the tragic battlefield death of their eldest son, CJ, at the end of World War I. Scarred by the loss of an older brother he idolized, estranged from a father he barely knows, and deeply troubled by the failing health of a mother he adores, eight-year-old Matthew is suddenly and irrevocably forced to set aside his childhood and take on responsibilities far beyond his years. When the world spirals into the Great Depression and drought settles like a plague over the nation, Matt must abandon his own dreams to salvage the Kerney ranch. Plunged into a deep trough of dark family secrets, hidden crimes, broken promises, and lies, Matt must struggle to survive on the unforgiving, sun-blasted, drought-stricken Tularosa Basin. Book Two in McGarrity's American West trilogy set in the raw, untrammled New Mexico backlands during the Roaring Twenties, the Great Depression, and World War II and giving us the backstory of New Mexico cop Kevin Kerney.

Milchman, Jenny. [Ruin Falls](#) (Random \$26 out in late April, signed June 13). Liz Daniels has every reason to be happy about setting off on a rare family vacation, leaving her remote home in the Adirondack Mountains behind for a while. Instead, she feels uneasy. Her children, eight-year-old Reid and six-year-old Ally, have met their paternal grandparents only a handful of times. But Liz's husband, Paul, has decided that, despite a strained relationship with his mother and father, they should visit the farm in western New York where he spent his childhood. On their way to the farm, the family stops at a hotel for the night. In the morning, when Liz checks on her sleeping children, all of her anxiety from the day before comes roaring back to life: Ally and Reid are nowhere to be found. Blind panic slides into ice-cold terror as the hours tick by without anyone finding a trace of her kids. Soon, Paul and Liz are being interviewed by police, an Amber Alert is issued, and detectives are called in. Frantic worry and helplessness threaten to overtake Liz's mind—but in a sudden, gut-wrenching instant she realizes that it was no stranger who slipped into the hotel room that night. From the author of First Mystery Pick *The Cover of Snow*.

Palmer, Daniel. [Desperate](#) (Kensington \$25 May 1). Gage Dekker still blames himself for the car accident that claimed the lives of his first wife and young son. Then he meets Anna, who understands grief all too well. Within a year, Gage and Anna are married. After a heartbreaking miscarriage, they begin the long

adoption process, until fate brings Lily into their lives. Young, pregnant, and homeless, Lily agrees to give her baby to Gage and Anna in exchange for financial support. But something isn't right once Lily enters their lives. At work and at home, Gage is being sabotaged, first in subtle ways; then things take a more sinister turn. Every attempt he makes to uncover the truth only drives a wedge between him and Anna.

Preston, Douglas. [The Kraken Project](#) (Forge \$26.99 May 16). NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center is designing a probe which will be dropped into the Kraken Mare, one of the methane seas of Titan. There, it will embark on a journey of exploration. As the probe is being tested at Goddard, things go awry, and an explosion kills seven scientists. The AI program in the probe, a powerful, self-modifying AI called "Dorothy," flees into the Internet. Series character Wyman Ford is tapped by the president's science advisor to track down the software with the help of Dorothy's creator, Melissa Veld. As the two of them trace Dorothy in her wanderings in cyberspace, they realize Dorothy's horrific experiences in the wasteland of the Internet have changed her—utterly. But for the better...or worse? At the same time, they learn Dorothy is being pursued by a pair of Wall Street high-frequency traders, who want to turn her into an algorithmic-trading slave-bot. Preston & Child have two books for you this year: a Gideon Crew signed here Aug. 12; and a Pendergast for November.

Quirk, Matthew. [The Directive](#) (LittleBrown \$26 June 6). After escaping the corrupt back rooms of Washington, DC, in the Edgar-nominated First Mystery Club Pick *The 500*, Mike Ford is again playing a dangerous game—this time the stakes are even higher. Mike's brother is in over his head in a powerful conspiracy to steal a secret worth billions of dollars from the little-known but unbelievably influential trading desk at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. In an effort to help, Mike soon finds himself trapped by the dangerous men in charge—and forced to call on all the skills of his criminal past in order to escape.

Rollins, James. [The Kill Switch](#) (Morrow \$27.99 May 16). The explanation for the resurgence of animal-heroes in fiction? First of all, I think that interest has always been there in the popular mindset, whether it be Lassie from the old television serials or the horse protagonist from *The Black Stallion* or even the rabbits from *Watership Down*. I think this new rise in interest could be correlated to a rise in our understanding of the bond shared between humans and companion animals. I think pet owners already had an innate understanding of this link. Yet, now science and popular media have shown it not only to be real, but also supported by research that suggests animals are more intelligent than we ever imagined, capable of experiencing true emotional love, and in the case of dogs, have a consciousness level equivalent to that of a human child. So it makes it easier to craft animals in significant roles in books without it coming off as wish fulfillment or fantasy. In my particular case, by pairing of a soldier with his military war dog (in *The Kill Switch*), it offered me the opportunity to display all of this in an action setting, while taking advantage of my background as a veterinarian to write scenes from the dog's point of view, to put the reader in that four-legged soldier's paws, and experience that bond from the other side, from the dog's perspective.

Sandford, John. [Field of Prey](#) (Putnam \$28.95 May 6). The night after the fourth of July, Layton Carlson Jr., of Red Wing, Minnesota, finally got lucky. But he'd picked an abandoned farmyard in the middle of cornfields to give up his virginity: nice, private, and quiet. The only problem—something smelled terrible. He mentioned it to a county deputy he knew, and when the cop took a look, he found a body stuffed down a cistern. And then another, and another. By the time Lucas Davenport was called in, the police were up to fifteen bodies and counting. Worse, when Lucas began to investigate, he made some disturbing discoveries of his own. The victims had been killed over a great many years, one every summer, regular as clockwork. How could this have happened without anybody noticing?

Thomas, Will. [Fatal Enquiry](#) (St Martins \$25.99 May 29). Some years ago, Cyrus Barker matched wits with Sebastian Nightwine, an aristocrat and sociopath, and in exposing his evil, sent Nightwine fleeing to hide from justice somewhere in the far corners of the earth. The last thing Barker ever expected was to encounter Nightwine again—but the British government, believing they need Nightwine's help, has granted him immunity for his past crimes, and brought him back to London. Nightwine, however, has more on his mind than redemption—and as Barker and Llewellyn set out to uncover and thwart Nightwine's real scheme, they find themselves in the gravest danger of their lives. "This is what Conan Doyle would write after taking tea with Lee Child..."—Julia Spencer-Fleming

And on

June 3: Grimes, Martha. [Vertigo 42: A Richard Jury](#) (Scribner \$26)

June 10: Gabaldon, Diana. [Written in My Own Heart's Blood](#) (Delacorte \$35)

June 12: Joel Dicker

June 13: Reed Farrel Coleman, Jenny Milchman

June 17: Kevin Hearne. [Shattered: The Iron Druid Chronicles](#) (Random \$26)

June 19: Ridley Pearson. [Red Room](#) (Putnam \$26.95)

Tucker, Neely. [Ways of the Dead](#) (Viking \$26).

June 21: Donis Casey. [Hell with the Lid Blown Off](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95)

Eileen Brady's debut, [Muzzled](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95)

June 25: Lisa See, [China Dolls](#) (Random \$27)

June 30: Jacqueline Winspear, [The Care and Management of Lies](#) (\$26.99).

July 1: Jeff Abbott, Megan Abbott

July 16: Brad Taylor, [Days of Rage](#) (Dutton \$26.95)

July 21: Silva, Daniel. [Heist](#) (Harper \$27.99) Gabriel Allon