

BOOKNEWS from

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An Awesome August Continues... Booknews Part II

AUTHORS ARE SIGNING...

Some Events will be webcast at <http://new.livestream.com/poisonedpen>.

THURSDAY AUGUST 21 7:00 PM Southwestern Duo

Susan Slater signs [Rollover](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95) August Surprise Me Pick—a caper!

Reavis Wortham signs [Vengeance Is Mine](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95) Red River Mysteries #4

TUESDAY AUGUST 26 7:00 PM

Chelsea Cain signs [One Kick](#) (SimonSchuster \$25.99). Debuts Kick Lannigan

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 27

Margaret Coel signs [Night of the White Buffalo](#) (Berkley \$26.95) Wind River Reservation (Wyoming) #18.

William Kent Krueger signs [Windigo Island](#) (Atria \$24.99) Cork O'Connor #14

THURSDAY AUGUST 28 7:00 PM

Hardboiled Crime discusses Jack Black's [You Can't Win](#) (Feral \$17.95)

SATURDAY AUGUST 30 2:00 PM

Martin Limon signs [The Iron Sickle](#) (Soho \$26.95) The 6th Army MP's assigned to Korea and known to me as the Slicky Boys. Our Sept. Thriller Club Pick

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 1 5:00 PM

Louise Penny signs [The Long Way Home](#) (St Martins \$27.99) Armand Gamache #10

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 3 7:00 PM Thrills!

Gregg Hurwitz signs [Don't Look Back](#) (St Martins \$26.99) Hurwitz also appears with us at the Peoria Library 1:00 PM and on September 4 at the Tempe Library, 3500 S. Rural Road, at 11:00 AM

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 8 Debut

Todd Moss signs [The Golden Hour](#) (Putnam \$26.95) First Mystery Club Pick

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 10 7:00 PM

Judith Starkston signs [Hand of Fire: A Novel of Briseis and the Trojan War](#) (\$18) Debut

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 11 7:00 PM

Reed Farrel Coleman signs [Robert B Parker's Blind Spot](#) (Putnam \$26.95) Jesse Stone. Coleman, the quintessential New Yorker, may spend a few moments in remembrance of 9/11/2001

WRITERS WORKSHOP

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 14 12:00-2:00 PM

Dana Haynes, *How to Write a Kickass Thriller*

Fee: a copy of his book, so \$30.

EVENT BOOKS

Cain, Chelsea. [One Kick](#) (SimonSchuster \$25.99 Aug. 26). Cain shifts publishers and into the start of a series with a truly edgy character. The Stockholm Syndrome is at work, and at moments one can see Uma Thurman in *Kill Bill*. From which you will gather that Kick Lannigan was kidnapped as a child, forced to live on the run and to make movies for pedophiles, and was famously missing for five years until rescued. The rescue led to the suicide of her “mother,” the imprisonment of Mel Riley, her “father”—but alas not to the prosecution of the ring kidnapper Mel supplied because Kick herself initiated the auto nuke that erased all his computer files. There lies the endless guilt. She has an unusual skill set (like Thurman), she’s in therapy, her real mother is getting rich off her ordeal, she’s rescued James whom she calls her brother, she loves her dog Monster, and her conscience provokes her into agreeing to work with a guy called John Bishop to recover two Portland children who’ve gone missing.... Theirs is partly a partnership, and partly war.... I do not understand Kick’s final action but bear in mind “her obituary would begin and end with Mel Riley.” Child abduction is a hideous crime; one can hope that Cain’s propulsive thriller will propel better counter-action. The Indie Next Pick calls it “a gut-wrenching tale of crimes against children and of an unlikely hero, a victim-turned-survivor.” Book critic and bestselling author Lev Grossman adds, “Child kidnapping victim grows up to become ass-kicking vigilante looking for other missing children. Boom!”

Coel, Margaret. [Night of the White Buffalo](#) (Berkley \$26.95 Aug. 27—a week before pub date so we’ll ask her to date them). “The white buffalo calf adds an element of spiritualism to this eighteenth entry in the consistently strong Wind River series.” —*Booklist*. Coel draws upon the Arapaho legend of the white buffalo, a rare calf whose arrival brings on floods of pilgrims. But the rancher, Dennis Carey, has been shot dead in his truck along Blue Sky Highway, exposing the news of the sacred calf to a wider audience, which complicates the investigation. A does the recent disappearances of three cowboys from his ranch. Father John of the Jesuit mission had earlier been puzzled by a large and mysterious penitent at the confessional who confessed to murder and fled. And Vicki Holden is caught up in her law practice and a growing rift with her law partner and lover, Adam. Coel weaves all of this plus the life of the modern cowboy into 18th Wind River Mystery. To order the first 17, please [click here](#)

Coleman, Reed Farrel. [Robert B Parker’s Blind Spot](#) (Putnam \$26.95 Sept. 11). Coleman wrapped up his excellent Moe Praeger series with [The Hollow Girl](#) (\$24.95 Signed) and now steps into the Parker franchise with Police Chief Jesse Stone. It’s been a long time since Stone left L.A., and still longer since the tragic injury that ruined his chances for a major league baseball career. When Stone is invited to a reunion of his old Triple-A team at a hip New York City hotel, he is forced to grapple with his memories and regrets over what might have been. Jesse left more behind him than unresolved feelings about the play that ended his baseball career. The darkly sensuous Kayla, his former girlfriend and current wife of an old teammate is there in New York, too. As is Kayla’s friend, Dee, an otherworldly beauty with secret

regrets of her own. But Jesse’s time at the reunion is cut short when, back in Paradise, a young woman is found murdered and her boyfriend, a son of one of the town’s most prominent families, is missing and presumed kidnapped. This is crime fiction so you may imagine there will be a connection forged between the reunion and the crimes.

Hurwitz, Gregg. [Don’t Look Back](#) (St Martins \$26.99 Sept. 3). Karen reviews: “Known for his thrillers, the author combines, mystery, terror, and constant suspense making this, and other titles, a must read. Single mother Eve Hardaway joins a small group and goes on a long dreamed of trip, to the jungles of Oaxaca, Mexico. Among the group is a married couple, two young men who have been friends since childhood, one being gay, and a young woman with a disability. Early in the trip, Eve, wanders off course, sees a curious and frightening scene of a man throwing machetes at a human-shaped target. Later, she stumbles on items left behind by a journalist who has disappeared. The group eventually is aware of “the man in the woods” who stays hidden, but elicits a fear of danger in everyone. A storm isolates the group, making communication to the outside world impossible, the man in the woods being ever present. Eve puts her fear to work, remembering the strategic business techniques her ex-husband used, the nourishment, medicinal properties, and protections she had observed in the jungle, and the determination to return to her young son and find a new place in life for them. Carve out some time, and treat yourself to this great read.”

Krueger, William Kent. [Windigo Island](#) (Atria \$24.99 Aug. 27). *PW* Stars this: “Edgar-winner Krueger highlights the vulnerability of Native American youth in his excellent 14th Cork O’Connor novel. PI Cork, a former Minnesota sheriff, reluctantly investigates the disappearance of 14-year-old Mariah Arceneaux, who left her home near Bad Bluff, Wis., a year earlier. The battered body of the friend who accompanied her, Carrie Verga, recently washed ashore on Windigo Island in Lake Superior. A plea for help from Mariah’s diabetic mother, Louise, to the sage Henry Meloux ends with Cork’s older daughter, Jenny, rashly vowing to help save Mariah. This move forces Cork’s hand, putting him on the trail of a ruthless man called Windigo. Jenny, Louise, and centenarian Henry play key roles as the mission tests both spiritual and physical powers.”

Limón, Martin. [The Iron Sickle](#) (Soho \$26.95 Aug. 30). The latest in one of my favorite series ever. Signed Aug. 30 to be our Sept. Thriller Club Pick. Here is *PW*’s Starred Review: “Limón brilliantly combines a procedural with a harrowing portrayal of the wounds of war in his ninth novel featuring U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division agents George Sueño and Ernie Bascom (after 2012’s *The Joy Brigade*). Sueño and Bascom, who are serving in South Korea in the 1970s, have developed a reputation for pursuing the truth without regard for the consequences. They must once again balance integrity with professional (and personal) survival in the case of a Korean man, who entered the Seoul compound that houses the office responsible for claims for reparations, compensation, and damages against units attached to United States Forces Korea and slit the throat of its civilian head, C. Winston Barrettsford, with a sickle. Sueño’s fluency in Korean

gives him an advantage in tracking the killer, even as his superiors try to divert the pair with other duties. The murderer, who left a bizarre totem, including wire and a dead rat, strikes again, upping the pressure on the partners to solve the case. The secret at the heart of the crimes is truly chilling, and Limón's nuanced characters enhance a fast-paced, carefully crafted plot." Once again, Limón reminds us of the perils of transferring young men from one culture to another with no preparation.

Moss, Todd. [The Golden Hour](#) (Putnam \$26.95 Sept. 8). The *PW* Starred Review for this Sept. First Mystery Club Pick—like FMC Pick *The American Mission*, by Palmer, set in Africa. Largely in West Africa. "Moss's outstanding debut stars an Amherst college professor turned diplomat, Judd Ryker. An expert in conflict and coup-risk metrics, Judd believes in the Golden Hour principle: international political trauma can be reversed if dealt with swiftly and professionally. His timetable on coups d'état is 100 hours. When he's named the director of a new State Department Crisis Reaction Unit just hours after a coup in Mali, where he once was part of a survey team assessing community water-management in Kidal, his theory is immediately put to the test. But Judd quickly realizes that every organization and country with an interest in Mali has an agenda—and he soon finds himself inundated with misinformation and treated as a pawn in a game where the stakes are about more than simply securing a country's political freedom. An intriguing cast of morally dubious characters, an intricately constructed plot, and a tantalizing cliffhanger make this thriller a page-turner of the highest order. Advance praise from Douglas Preston, W.E.B. Griffin, John Sandford, and Francis Fukuyama."

Penny, Louise. [The Long Way Home](#) (St Martins \$27.99 Sept. 1). Armand Gamache has retired from the Sûreté du Québec and is living leisurely and happily in Three Pines. Then villager Clara, an artist with new-found success, joins him on his hilltop bench to say that her husband Peter, once the more famous artist of the two, has failed to return as promised on the first anniversary of their separation. She's worried. She's not sure she is ready for him to come home, but how can she know until she sees him. Reluctant to leave his new nest, Gamache agrees to search for Peter and together with his former second-in-command, Jean-Guy Beauvoir, and Clara's dear friend Myrna Landers, opens lines of inquiry. Penny takes us back to when the Morrrows were students, tracks Peter's various destinations, and eventually all four set out on a journey down the St. Lawrence. The story is rich with observations about art and ways of experiencing and expressing the world around us. One can't lose sight of the fact that Penny says she identifies with Clara. Or her very personal interpretation of grave sins.

Slater, Susan. [Rollover](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95 Aug. 21). Slater's excellent sequel to 2002's [Flash Flood](#) (\$14.95) takes insurance investigator Dan Mahoney to tiny Wagon Mound, N.Mex., where someone tunneled into the town bank, ignored millions in cash, and took only a valuable necklace belonging to 85-year-old Gertrude Kennedy.

Starkston, Judith. [Hand of Fire: A Novel of Briseis and the Trojan War](#) (\$18). Briseis is the woman Achilles and Agamemnon fought over in *The Iliad*. When Achilles, the half-immortal Greek warrior, takes Briseis captive in the midst of the Trojan War, he gets more than he bargained for: a healing priestess, a strong-willed

princess—and a warrior. She raises a sword against Achilles and ignites a passion that seals his fate. "Why does Briseis love Achilles? This mightiest of Greek warriors has, after all, killed her brothers, destroyed her city, and taken her captive. Finding too much to like in the existential hero Achilles to blame this peculiarity on an ancient version of Stockholm syndrome," Starkston went digging into the past. Her on-the-scene research unearthed some information in cuneiform tablets describing magical rites and political intrigue. A powerful role for Briseis, that of a healing priestess, called in Hittite a *hasawa*, also came to historic light. That role made perfect sense for a woman who fell in love with a half-immortal warrior who was a healer and a bard.

Wortham, Reavis Z. [Vengeance is Mine](#) (Poisoned Pen \$24.95 Aug. 21). Red River Mystery #4. *The Godfather* meets James Lee Burke in a small Texas town... It's 1967, the Summer of Love, when a man on the lam—with a hot blonde—could hide somewhere like Center Springs. No GPS, no cell phones, no credit cards...no digital footprints. So is it bad luck, or fate, that a Vegas hit man and his bombshell could turn Center Springs into a combat zone when a squad of gangsters arrives? Oddly they aren't dispatched after him by his former crime boss—they're after something, and someone, else. Owen Laukkanen has become a Wortham fan and writes: "Great fun. Loaded with healthy doses of humor, adventure and intrigue, populated by a remarkable cast of characters both good and bad, and featuring one heck of an electrifying climax, *Vengeance Is Mine* is a throwback to the pulp era in the best possible sense. A fantastic read."

FIRST NOVELS

Bretherick, Diana. [City of Devils](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). We're in Italy's Turin, 1887. James Murray, a young Scottish doctor fascinated by criminology, arrives to study with Cesare Lombroso, an unconventional and groundbreaking (for the day) scientist... For more, see History/Mystery.

Eve, Nomi. [Henna House Signed](#) (Scribner \$26). In the tradition of Anita Diamant's *The Red Tent*, a debut. This superb, moving book, at times making you angry, is our **August Modern Firsts Club Pick**. Eight-year-old Adela Damri, a Jewish girl living in a conservative religious community in Yemen nearly 100 years ago, has a distant, harsh mother and an ill, shoemaker father. She's isolated until the family of her father's brother arrives and she meets her cousins Asaf and Hani. Adela is betrothed to Asaf and finally gains the protection she lacks in a world where orphaned Jewish children are swept up by an official, The Confiscator, and thrust into Islamic families. (If this seems barbaric, recall that in medieval Christian countries, orphaned Jewish children or those born with Christians in attendance who might die were forcibly baptized and, if living, raised Christian.) Greater still is the influence Hani's friendship has on Adela's sense of self worth. Hani and her mother, a henna artist of great renown, somehow exist outside the constraints of societal expectations. Covered in beautiful temporary art, their skin is a tapestry of stories. We approach the 1930s. Asaf goes traveling—Adela's mother dies as disease sweeps into their small community. The family moves to a larger town. Hani marries. Asaf returns and so does Adela. But then... Can a betrayal ultimately prove to be a sacrifice? Follow the story through WWII and into Israel, learning aspects of history and a culture, including that of henna tattooing, that will surprise you.

Jones, Stephen Lloyd. [The String Diaries](#) (Mulholland Books \$26). The Indie Next Pick: “Usually when we have the eerie feeling that something or someone dark and gruesome is following us, it’s just our vivid imaginations running amuck. But in *The String Diaries* it’s a very real monstrous being who is following Hannah and her family, and it’s been following them for nearly two hundred years as attested to in diaries passed to Hannah from her mother. The worst part is its ability to look like anyone—even someone Hannah loves. Prepare to grit your teeth and shudder. Yes, it’s that good!” The range of this debut thriller extends from the present day, to Oxford in the 1970s, to Hungary at the turn of the 19th century, all tracing back to a man from an ancient royal family with a consuming passion—a boy who can change his shape, insert himself into the intimate lives of his victims, and destroy them. If Hannah fails to end the chase now, her daughter is next in line. Only Hannah can decide how much she is willing to sacrifice to finally put a centuries-old curse to rest. This is the US edition.

Kubicka, Mary. [The Good Girl](#) (Mira \$24.95). “At the outset of Kubicka’s powerful debut, free-spirited 24-year-old Mia Dennett, an art teacher at an alternative high school and a member of a well-heeled, well-connected Chicago family, goes missing. As puzzling as Mia’s presumed kidnapping initially appears, things turn infinitely stranger after her eventual return, seemingly with no memory of what happened to her or, indeed, of her identity as Mia. Key characters share the narrative in chapters labeled either “Before” or “After,” allowing the reader to join shattered mother Eve and sympathetic Det. Gabe Hoffman on their treacherous journey to solve the mystery and truly save Mia. Almost nothing turns out as expected, which, along with the novel’s structure and deep Midwestern roots, will encourage comparisons to *Gone Girl*. Unlike that dazzling duel between what prove to be a pair of sociopaths, this Girl has heart—which makes it all the more devastating when the author breaks it.”—*PW* Starred Review. Actually once you know this is compared to *Gone Girl* you can likely work out the final twist, but it won’t save you from sadness over what the destructive acts cost.

La Seur, Carrie. [The Home Place](#) (Morrow \$25.99). The Indie Next Pick. “Alma Terrebonne, a rising star in a Seattle law firm, has left behind her complicated family and past tragedies in Billings, Montana, until one morning when a call for help pulls her back. Returning to identify her sister, dead apparently from exposure, and to care for her 11-year-old niece, Alma is overcome by guilt, fragile family relations, powerful memories from the past, and the hold the family homestead has over her. Both a tense, page-turning police procedural and a delightful romance with carefully drawn characters, *The Home Place* will resonate with the reader long after the book is finished.”

Minato, Kanae. [Confessions](#) (LittleBrown \$15). The murder of a young science teacher’s trusting four-year-old daughter—by some of her own 13-year-old students—sets in motion a diabolic revenge plot with devastating collateral damage in Minato’s outstanding debut, which inspired the hit Japanese film. Initially, single mother Yuko Moriguchi’s grief mixes with guilt when police rule little Manami’s death accidental; she accepts the blow as yet another in a lengthy series, including the HIV-positive diagnosis that Manami’s father received during Yuko’s pregnancy, which prompted him to break off their engagement. But when she subsequently discovers evidence that points to foul play, Yuko decides to draw on her knowledge of the culprits to exact retribu-

tion far more terrible than the punishment that would have been meted out to such youthful offenders by the authorities.

Minier, Bernard. [The Frozen Dead](#) (St Martins \$25.99). French author Minier’s assured debut adroitly combines a genuinely creepy series of crimes, a literally chilling atmosphere, and a dogged detective. Commandant Martin Servaz, of the regional crime unit in Toulouse, is annoyed to be pulled off the sadistic murder of a homeless man for a case that doesn’t even involve homicide. The mutilated and beheaded corpse of a horse was left suspended at a cable car terminus, terrifying the workers at a water power plant that the tram services. The horse belonged to ultrawealthy Eric Lombard, who owns the plant and has companies all around the world, as well as friends in high places. This is a complex story, often brutal, with a truly terrific sense of the remote Pyrenees and life in an ancient rural community.

Rader-Day, Lori. [The Black Hour](#) (Prometheus \$15.95). “Sociology professor Amelia Emmet, the heroine of Rader-Day’s exceptional debut, returns to Rothbert University, near Chicago, 10 months after a student shot her and killed himself. Struggling with physical and mental problems caused by her injuries, Amelia is equally aware of irony: she’s a scholar of violence in society, yet has no idea why she was attacked, had no acquaintance with the perpetrator, and only the sketchiest of memories of the incident. Nathaniel “Nath” Barber, her teaching assistant and student of Chicago’s gangland past, is eager to investigate and soon links the shooter with associates of Rothbert’s suicide hotline. Meanwhile, a reporter seems too conveniently at hand when trouble arises, an eccentric array of campus colleagues are inclined to blame the victim, and a scion of Rothbert’s founder may have taken entitlement to a new extreme. Chapters that alternate between Amelia and Nath’s viewpoints provide an irresistible combination of menace, betrayal, and self-discovery.”—*PW* Starred Review. *LJ* adds its own Star, ending: “captures the more sinister aspects of campus life. While the author captivates from page one with her psychologically attuned debut, it is the sociological frames that work so well: class, power, and violence. This reviewer was bowled over by the novel’s alternating points of view, superb storytelling, and pitch-perfect take on academia.”

Shafer, David. [Whiskey Tango Foxtrot](#) (Mulholland \$26). “A book to feed our Internet fear.” It’s also a send-up of the self-help movement. The *PW* Starred Review: “Journalist Shafer hits all the right buttons in his debut as he mixes crime fiction, espionage, and SF in a darkly comic novel about paranoia and big business. A battle for control over all the information in the world has begun. The Committee, an international organization comprising industry and media leaders, has plans to privatize the news, the publishing industry, and all other social media. Dear Diary, an online movement, has set itself up as a formidable enemy of the Committee, using politics, spy craft, and technology to thwart its initiatives. Caught up in this war are Leila Majnoun, a disaffected nonprofit worker; Leo Crane, an unorthodox kindergarten teacher who lives off a modest trust fund; and Mark Deveraux, a drug addict who inadvertently becomes a bogus self-help guru and appears to work for the Committee. At times convoluted but never slack, the plot thrives on a realistic approach while seamlessly switching between such locales as Myanmar, London, and Oregon. The Committee’s takeover of the Internet, its ability to change words as they are being typed, and its targeting of enemies’ family members evokes a chilling, Orwellian society.”

Thomas, Matthew. [We Are Not Ourselves Signed](#) (SimonSchuster \$28). “In a sweeping story of post-WWII-to-the-recent-past second-generation Irish New York, author Matthew Thomas has brilliantly rendered the emotional and existential journeys of Eileen Tumulty, as well as the fascinating ethos of a specific time, place and demographic group. Authentically told with the clean, sparse language illustrative of a life lived entirely with little outward emotion, *We Are Not Ourselves* tells in a linear fashion the life journey Eileen makes from her early-1950s girlhood to a sort of spiritual rebirth in her early 60s. Full of boundless wisdom and heart, *We Are Not Ourselves* fearlessly tackles timely subjects such as early-onset Alzheimer’s and the Millennial Generation’s lack of career focus, as well as many timeless themes. This is a book about the impact of one’s parents on one’s future, how the choices we make have much different outcomes than ever imagined, how emotional growth is possible at any age, and most of all about how the immeasurable bonds of love surprise and define us. Eileen’s complicated relationships to both parents, especially to her alcoholic mother, her sometimes-disappointing-but-ultimately-gratifying marriage to Ed, and her deep, evolving love for her son Connell make this a quietly compelling page-turner. Eileen is a stalwart, amazing, unique and moving heroine. This is a book which will stay with me for a long time. —Janet Schneider, Great Neck Library

BRITISH BOOKS

Airth, Rennie. [The Reckoning: A John Madden Novel](#) (Viking \$26.95). The 4th Madden actually, and although it’s shifted us to 1947, it reflects “the lingering curse” of the Great War. Its sequel, WWII, and the Blitz are over, but no one expects “a person like Oswald Gibson,” a seemingly inoffensive worm and recent widower who’s spending time pursuing his passion for fly-fishing, “to be host in broad daylight with a military issue Luger. Mysteriously, Gibson had been writing a (now unfinished) letter that “mentions John Madden, formerly a Scotland Yard detective. . . .” —*NY Times*. To read all four Maddens is a terrific experience. [Click here](#) to order. The first is fabulous; the second portrays the tensions of the 1930s brilliantly.

Brett, Simon. [The Cinderella Killer](#). (Severn \$28.95). In his 19th “role,” aging actor Charles Paris accepts a role in a Christmas Pantomime in Eastbourne. The addition of Kenny Polizzi, an American sitcom star, to the cast, is no bonus, nor is soaps star Tilly or the director whose focus is choreography. “Adding to the fun are Kenny’s agent—or is that babysitter?—as well as Lilith Greenstone, his furiously angry estranged wife, and Gloria van der Groot, a wealthy and persistent stalker. Bemused, Charles hangs out with Kenny, whom he likes. Then Kenny falls off the wagon, a dancer disappears, and a body is found under the Eastbourne pier. The backstage scenes crackle with authenticity and wit. And Charles, a bit frayed around the edges, holds it all together,” says *PW* in its Starred Review. Ordered upon Request.

Christie, Agatha. [After the Funeral](#) (\$12.99). Christie’s mysteries are periodically republished. This Poirot is in sync with the Sophie Hannah Poirot below. When Cora Lansquenet is savagely murdered with a hatchet, the extraordinary remark she made the previous day at her brother Richard’s funeral suddenly takes on a chilling significance. At the reading of Richard’s will, Cora was clearly heard to say, “It’s been hushed up very nicely, hasn’t it. But he was murdered, wasn’t he?” In desperation, the family solicitor turns to Hercule Poirot to unravel the mystery.

Dams, Jeanne M. [Day of Vengeance](#): (Severn \$28.95). American Dorothy Martin’s husband, high-ranking policeman Alan Nesbitt, is heavily involved in the complex and lengthy process of choosing a new bishop for Sherebury Cathedral. The very day that the short list is announced publicly, one of the candidates is found murdered in his own church. With a long list of possible suspects, including Alan himself, Dorothy and Alan start to delve into the history of the victim, hoping to find some clue to a motive for murder. Then a second candidate is found dead, and the case becomes very complicated indeed. Who is murdering England’s clergymen and why? Ordered upon request

Edwards, Martin, ed. [Guilty Parties](#) (Severn \$28.95). A new Crime Writers’ Association anthology assembled by Edwards. A few of the 23 selections are exceptional, notably Paul Freeman’s “The Franklin’s Second Tale,” a brief Chaucerian fable in verse that’s fun to read. Also outstanding are Peter Lovesey’s quietly engrossing “Reader, I Buried Them,” set in a contemporary London monastery, and Christine Poulson’s “What’s the Time, Mr. Wolf?,” which focuses on women who take the law into their own hands. Bernie Crosthwaite’s “The Death of Spiders” is creepy in a way that has nothing to do with how many legs a creature may have. Phil Lovesey’s absorbing “The Last Guilty Party” looks at an old man and his lifetime of despair, while Kate Rhodes’s “The Wide Open Sky” packs an emotional wallop in a mere five pages. Other contributors include Christopher Fowler, John Harvey, and Frances Brody. Ordered upon Request.

Finch, Charles. [An Old Betrayal](#) (\$15.99). The seventh investigation for Charles Lenox, now filling his longtime ambition of Member of Parliament, centers on a case of mistaken identity has Lenox playing for his highest stakes yet: the safety of Queen Victoria herself. Parliamentary politics and a sharp look at PM Benjamin Disraeli make this especially fascinating.

George, Elizabeth. [Just One Evil Act: A Lynley Novel](#) (\$17). *LJ* writes, “The newest installment in George’s Inspector Lynley series picks up directly where [Believing the Lie](#) (\$7.99) left off. Taymullah Azhar, Sgt. Barbara Havers’s friend and neighbor, has come home to an empty house. His girlfriend, Angelina, has left with their daughter, Hadiyyah, leaving no trace. Azhar has no official parental rights to Haddiyah, as he and Angelina never married. Barbara helps Azhar hire a private investigator to try to locate Angelina and Hadiyyah. Several months later, Angelina returns. She and Hadiyyah have been living in Lucca, Italy, with Angelina’s Italian lover. Now Angelina claims that Hadiyyah has been kidnapped and that Azhar is behind it. In a first for George, much of the action takes place in Tuscany, with Barbara’s partner, Insp. Thomas Lynley, acting as a liaison officer for Angelina and Azhar during the search for their daughter. Barbara plays the starring role in the other half of the narrative, and the reader is caught up in just how quickly she goes off the rails, professionally and ethically, in the name of friendship.”

Glazebrook, Olivia. [Never Mind Miss Fox](#) (LittleBrown \$25). Clive and Martha in their university days, at Oxford. Clive has fallen for Martha, and “realizing her worth—afraid to leave her unattended,” he’s brought her along on a family holiday to France. The new couple is joined by Clive’s younger brother, Tom, and his guest, a girl named Eliot Fox. Tom and Eliot are “just friends,” although everyone acknowledges that Tom worships her. But in an English way, things grow more claustropho-

bic and tangled.” Glazebrook draws strong characters: Martha, ambitious and a reluctant mother; Clive, insecure and barely competent; Eliza, an affectingly awkward, intelligent child; and of course Miss Fox, mysterious and damaged, whose motives remain obscure. “As the entangled players rush toward a conclusion that will change each of their lives in profound ways, the distressed marriage and mood of sinister suspense are apt to delight fans of Patricia Highsmith and all that is darkly engrossing.” I’m not that high on this but you be the judge.

Goodwin, Daisy. [The Fortune Hunter](#) (St Matins \$26.99). Goodwin’s second novel travels the difficult protocols of Victorian-era fox hunting, as well as the even more complicated protocols of love and marriage in the era, especially for an intelligent young woman with a fortune. England, 1875: Charlotte Baird is the eligible heiress to “the Lennox Fortune.” See History/Mystery for more.

Hannah, Sophie. [The Monogram Murders Signed](#) (Harper \$25.99). Hercule Poirot’s quiet supper in a 1920s London coffee house is interrupted when a young woman confides to him that she is about to be murdered. She is terrified, but begs Poirot not to find and punish her killer. Once she is dead, she insists, justice will have been done. Later that night, Poirot learns that three guests at a fashionable London hotel have been murdered, and a cufflink has been placed in each one’s mouth. Could there be a connection with the frightened woman? While Poirot struggles to put together the bizarre pieces of the puzzle, the murderer prepares another hotel bedroom for a fourth victim and a police detective whose marked sensitivity oddly sidelines him relies upon Poirot. Signed UK edition: [The Monogram Murders](#) (Collins \$42)

New from Hannah as Hannah: [Kind of Cruel](#) (\$16). Hannah’s addictive seventh psychological thriller featuring husband-and-wife Det. Constable Simon Waterhouse and Det. Sgt. Charlie Zailer explores the differences between feelings and memories. Insomniac Amber Hewerdine’s visit to a hypnotherapist in Silsford, England, leads to her involvement in the investigation of the murder of Katharine Allen, a primary school teacher. At the crime scene is a piece of paper with the enigmatic words of the title. Oddly, the police decide to treat Amber not as a suspect, but almost as a colleague. An earlier murder, by arson, of Amber’s best friend, raises the tension. Readers will begin to wonder how much of what the characters say can be believed. As Amber notes, “A connection in my mind isn’t the same thing as a connection in the real world.” The key to the mystery involves divining the meaning of the words on the piece of paper. A creepy subplot involves some of the most evil mothers in contemporary fiction.

Heley, Veronica. [Murder in Time](#) (Severn \$28.95). Ellie Quicke opens the door to a man who is a stranger but instantly recognizable as the father of her housekeeper’s brilliant but difficult young son. Mikey had been conceived at a party during which his mother Vera, a schoolgirl, had been drugged and raped. Abdi hadn’t wanted anything further to do with her – then. Twelve years later he is a high-flying consultant whose wife cannot have children, and he aims to pay off Vera and adopt Mikey: a suggestion that does not go down well. Ellie discovers that Vera still thinks fondly of her then boyfriend, even though he had also rejected her after that fatal night. But was that because his father had been murdered that same weekend? **Ordered upon Request like all books published by Severn (limited supply and non-returnable; they ship in from the UK).**

Kerr, Philip. [Research Signed](#) (Quercus \$44—only 6 left). You only have to read a few pages to realize that Kerr is hugely enjoying himself with this one-off satire of publishing, British, and bestsellers. Notably one bestseller, modeled on James Patterson, who became an industry by employing a stable of writers. One of them decides to stage a reversal of fortunes. Much of this takes place in Monaco, which also draws vitriol from Kerr’s pen. And in the end we get a kind of morality tale: is fame and fortune worth the price? The prose is super sharp, too.

Macintyre, Ben. [A Spy Among Friends](#) (Crown \$27). A fascinating look at Kim Philby, one of the Cambridge Five spies, who ended up confessing to a colleague, Nicholas Elliott, ironically the man who most believed in him as a British spy asset, and defecting to the USSR. Among all the other emotions this excellent portrait evokes is astonishment at how amateur these big players were. At one point a British agent in I think Holland is betrayed by to the Nazis and has in his pocket a written list of European agents he now puts in appalling danger. The games the men played, some of them for “belly laughs” as Elliott delighted in, again reflects a public-school, amateur mentality. And lord, how they drank! Philby also betrayed the CIA’s paranoid James Jesus Angleton which is a story all by itself. There’s an interesting Afterword by John Le Carré, once briefly a part of MI6 himself, derived from notes he took conversing with Philby’s duped friend. McIntyre notes the four-times married Philby “was a man who was kind of addicted, really, to the drug of faithlessness. And that makes him a fascinating psychological character.”

Rickman, Phil. [The Magus of Hay](#) (\$13.95). A man’s body is found below a waterfall. It looks like suicide or an accidental drowning—until DI Frannie Bliss enters the dead man’s home. What he finds there sends him to Merrily Watkins, the Diocese of Hereford’s official advisor on the paranormal. It’s been nearly 40 years since Hay was declared an independent state by its self-styled king—a development seen at the time as a joke, a publicity scam. But behind this pastiche a dark design was taking shape, creating a hidden history of murder and ritual-magic, the relics of which are only now becoming horribly visible. It’s a situation that will take Merrily—alone for the first time in years—to the edge of madness.

Rimington, Stella. [Close Call](#) (Bloomsbury \$27). The Arab Spring has swept through the Middle East and Liz Carlyle and her compatriots in the Thames House’s counter-espionage division are racing to investigate arms deals in Yemen. There’s a UN embargo forbidding any member country from supplying arms to either side in the uprisings, but Andy Bokus, head of the CIA’s London Station, has evidence that the weapons being smuggled into Yemen are not only being sold to both sides, but are coming from a connection in the UK—a highly embarrassing black mark on the government and, if true, full of disastrous consequences. British-American cooperation widens as Liz teams up with her old rival Bruno McKay, MI6’s Head of Station in Paris, and Isabel Florian of the French domestic service, the DCRI, to trail and trap the elusive weapons dealer. The evidence points to a former French intelligence officer, Antoine Milraud, who leads them all on a mad chase across Europe.... 8th in series. Reviews have been disappointing. I haven’t yet read this.

Sims, Michael, ed. [The Phantom Coach](#) (Bloomsbury \$17). A superior collection of Victorian ghost stories named for one of

them. Includes Charles Dickens and Edith Wharton, Henry James, Thomas Hardy, and Arthur Conan Doyle, and comes with a skillful introduction to the genre and notes on each story. I enjoyed dipping into these tales. A nice Halloween treat for anyone.

Willett, Marcia. [The Sea Garden](#) (Forge \$25.99). Jess Penhaligon is on her way to Devon to receive an award for her botanical painting. Hosting her will be Kate, who gladly welcomes her into her home. Jess's own family fell apart several years ago, so she is grateful for Kate's friendliness—and her close unit of extended family and friends, who embrace Jess just as warmly. As this group begins reminiscing on their pasts and sharing their stories with Jess, it becomes apparent that her family history may be linked with theirs. Long-buried secrets from past generations begin to be uncovered—but at what cost have they been kept hidden?

FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

Adler-Olsen, Jussi. [The Purity of Vengeance](#) (\$16). In 1987, Nete Hermansen plans revenge on those who abused her—especially Curt Wad, a surgeon who was part of a movement to sterilize wayward girls in the 1950s. More than twenty years later, Detective Carl Mørck already has plenty on his mind when he is presented with the case of a brothel owner, a woman named Rita, who went missing in the eighties: New evidence has emerged in the case that sent Carl to Department Q. But when Carl's assistants, Assad and Rose, learn that numerous other people disappeared around the same weekend as Rita, Carl takes notice. Sifting through the evidence, they inch closer to Curt Wad, who is still committed to his twisted beliefs, and whose treatment of Nete only hints at his capacity for evil. 4th in the Department Q series.

Belfoure, Charles. [The Paris Architect](#) (\$14.99). A thrilling debut novel of World War II Paris, from an author who's been called "an up and coming Ken Follett." —*Booklist*. In 1942 Paris, gifted architect Lucien Bernard accepts a commission that will bring him a great deal of money – and maybe get him killed. But if he's clever enough, he'll avoid any trouble. All he has to do is design a secret hiding place for a wealthy Jewish man, a space so invisible that even the most determined German officer won't find it. He sorely needs the money, and outwitting the Nazis who have occupied his beloved city is a challenge he can't resist. But when one of his hiding spaces fails horribly, and the problem of where to hide a Jew becomes terribly personal, Lucien can no longer ignore what's at stake. *The Paris Architect* asks us to consider what we owe each other, and just how far we'll go to make things right.

Carroll, James. [Warburg in Rome Signed](#) (Houghton \$28). We finally negotiated Signed firsts of this, our **August Thriller Club Pick**. Carroll, who explored the history of Catholic anti-Semitism in the nonfiction account *Constantine's Sword*, returns to this theme. David Warburg, newly minted director of the U.S. War Refugee Board, arrives in Rome at war's end, determined to bring aid to the destitute European Jews streaming into the city. Marguerite d'Erasmus, a French-Italian Red Cross worker with a shadowed past, is initially Warburg's guide to a complicated Rome; while a charismatic young American Catholic priest, Monsignor Kevin Deane, seems equally committed to aiding Italian Jews. But the city is a labyrinth of desperate fugitives, runaway Nazis, Jewish resisters, and criminal Church figures. Marguerite, caught between justice and revenge, is forced to play

a double game. At the center of the maze, Warburg discovers one of history's great scandals—the Vatican ratline, a clandestine escape route maintained by Church officials and providing scores of Nazi war criminals with secret passage to Argentina. Warburg's disillusionment is complete when, turning to American intelligence officials, he learns that the dark secret is not so secret... Though without the white-knuckle tension of Graham Greene's *The Third Man*, a yarn that's of a piece with it—and a worthy successor."—*Kirkus*

Cercas, Javier. [Outlaws](#) (Bloomsbury \$26). On a summer day at the arcade, timid 16-year-old Ignacio Cañas encounters two charismatic rebels: El Zarco ("Blue Eyes") and his gorgeous girl, Tere. Entranced, he crosses the border into their dangerous world, becoming their partner in crimes that quickly escalate. Twenty-five years later, Tere materializes in Cañas's office, needing help. Cañas has settled back into middle-class life, becoming a successful defense lawyer. El Zarco has matured into Spain's most notorious criminal. Yet somehow, with new stakes, this three-way affair will begin again with Ignacio fearing revelation of his involvement as well as his unhealthy obsession with this pair.

De Giovanni, Maurizio. [By My Hand](#) (Europa \$17). As Naples prepares for its holiday celebrations, behind the facade of order and happiness imposed by the fascist regime, lurks terrible poverty and blinding desperation. In a luxurious apartment on the Mergellina beach the bodies of a fascist militia officer and his wife have been found. The woman has had her throat cut while the man has been stabbed over sixty times. Seemingly, the hands of two separate killers have been at work. A statuette of San Giuseppe, patron saint of workers, lies in pieces on the floor. At the scene of the crime, Ricciardi, who has the dubious gift of being able to see and hear the last seconds in the lives of those who have suffered a violent death, listens to the enigmatic last words of the couple. Accompanied by his faithful partner Brigadier Raffaele Maione, and once more troubled by two women who compete for his attentions, the Commissario sets to work...

Ferris, Gordon. [Gallowglass](#) (\$12.95). Glasgow. A brief editorial describes the tragic death of their chief crime reporter Douglas Brodie (1912-1947) and staunchly defends him against the unproven charge of murder. It's a brave stance to take, given the weight of evidence. The death is confirmed in the tear-streaked faces of the women by the freshly dug grave. It is spelled out in chiseled letters on the headstone, glistening oil-black in the drizzle. Just four weeks before, a senior banker was kidnapped. His distraught wife pleaded with Brodie to deliver the ransom money and free her husband. The drop went disastrously wrong. Brodie was attacked in the kidnappers' den. He woke with a gun in his hand next to a very dead banker with a bullet in his head. The police, led by Brodie's old foe Sangster, burst in and arrest Brodie. The case is watertight: the bullet comes from Brodie's revolver, the banker's wife denies knowing Brodie, and Brodie's pockets are stuffed with ransom notes. Samantha Campbell deploys all her advocacy skills to no avail. It looks like her lover is for the long drop. But....

Flanagan, Richard. [The Narrow Road to the Deep North](#) (Knopf \$26.95). The virtuosic sixth novel from Tasmanian author Richard Flanagan (*Gould's Book of Fish*), chronicles the life of Dorrigio Evans, an Australian Army colonel and surgeon who is captured by the Japanese during World War II and forced to work

on the Burma-Thailand “Death Railway.” On the Line—as the prisoners of war call the railway’s ever-progressing construction site—Dorrigo and his comrades contend with interminable monsoon rains, starvation, disease and brutal, almost perfunctory beatings at the hands of the Japanese guards. “Flanagan’s book is as harrowing and brutal as it is beautiful and moving. He’s filled the pages with poetry: Basho and Issa are quoted as frequently as Tennyson and Kipling, and his own prose is at turns lyrical and stark.” The story of Flanagan’s *Gould’s Book of Fish* is my favorite ever bookselling adventure: getting 400 books from New Zealand to New York to Scottsdale and intersecting with the author! It made an amazing Modern Firsts Club Pick. We have one Signed first left (\$75).

Fossum, Karin. [I Can See in the Dark](#) (Houghton \$25). Ok. I’m going to say here that I am up to the tonsils in the bleak vision of Nordic crime fiction. Fossum is a terrific writer but in my present mood, I’m not willing to read for a downer. *PW* however gives this standalone a Starred Review (the reviewer may read only a few crime novels a month as compared to me—who reads or at least skims 200 plus—and so is more accepting). So here it is, perhaps helpful to you in making your reading choices: “Riktor works in a nursing home in a small Norwegian town. In almost affectless prose, he describes his circumscribed life, both at the hospital and in his local park, where he observes Miranda, a wheelchair-bound girl; Miranda’s mother; teenage lovers Eddie and Janne; and town drunk Arnfinn. One day, he watches a cross-country skier fall through the ice of a nearby lake, then thrash around helplessly before sinking to his death. Riktor is filled with scorn and a quiet rage, which eventually grows to the point where he begins to abuse his elderly patients. The initially predictable plot takes an unexpected turn after Riktor is arrested for the death of Nelly Friis, one of his patients. “What a wasteland this world is,” the unlikable Riktor muses at one point in this bleak but clever and compelling standalone.” New in paper from Fossum: [Eva’s Eye](#) (\$14.95)

French, Tana. [The Secret Place Signed](#) ((Viking \$27.95 Sept. but order now). The IndieNext Pick: “In her fourth novel, French maintains her masterful prose, engaging characters, and complex but lucid plotting. While the story revolves around the murder of a male student on the grounds of an exclusive Dublin girls’ school, it gains richness and depth with its exploration of the thorny relationship between the investigators, plus the rivalries, adolescent anxieties, and barbed dialogue of the students. The plot launches when the daughter of Detective Frank Mackey — first introduced in French’s *Faithful Place* — brings to the police an anonymous claim about the identity of the murderer of the student a year earlier. A gripping addition to the Dublin Murder Squad series.”

Kepler, Lars. [The Sandman Signed](#) (Collins \$45). He’s Sweden’s most prolific serial killer. Jurek Walter is serving a life sentence. Kept in solitary confinement, he is still considered extremely dangerous by psychiatric staff. He’ll lull you into a sense of calm. Mikael knows him as “the sandman”. Seven years ago, he was taken from his bed along with his sister. They are both presumed dead. He has one target left. When Mikael is discovered on a railway line, close to death, the hunt begins for his sister. To get to the truth, Detective Inspector Joona Linna will need to get closer than ever to the man who stripped him of a family; the man who wants Linna dead.

Koenig, Joseph. [Really the Blues](#) (Pantheon \$25.95). Karen reviews: “Nazi occupied Paris in 1941 is not the best place for a black jazz musician. With racial policies in place and a disdain for jazz, it would be wise for Eddie Piron to stay under the radar. In spite of political policy, an elite group of Nazis, on occasion, reserve a club where they can hear the best jazz performed by the jazz artists, regardless of their color or politics. When a member of Eddie’s band goes missing and is later found murdered, he finds himself pressured into the investigation by someone who knows why he chose not to return to the US when war was looming. A game of subtlety and finesse is essential to his survival. A great picture of the culture and contradictions of a world at war, whether or not you’re a jazz fan.”

Larsson, Åsa. [The Second Deadly Sin](#) (Quercus \$26.99). Dawn breaks in a forest in northern Sweden. Villagers gather to dispatch a rampaging bear. When the beast is brought to ground they are horrified to find the remains of a human hand inside its stomach. In nearby Kiruna, a woman is found murdered in her bed, her body a patchwork of vicious wounds, the word WHORE scrawled across the wall. Her grandson Marcus, already an orphan, is nowhere to be seen. Grasping for clues, Rebecka Martinsson begins to delve into the victim’s tragic family history. But with doubts over her mental health still lingering, she is ousted from the case by an arrogant and ambitious young prosecutor. Before long a chance lead draws Martinsson back into the thick of the action... 5th in series.

Mankell, Henning. [An Event in Autumn: A Kurt Wallander Mystery](#) (Knopf \$14.95). After nearly thirty years in the same job, Inspector Kurt Wallander is tired, restless, and itching to make a change. He is taken with a certain old farmhouse, perfectly situated in a quiet countryside with a charming, overgrown garden. There he finds the skeletal hand of a corpse in a shallow grave. Wallander’s investigation takes him deep into the history of the house and the land, indeed as the body went into the ground 30 years previously, “a good bit of Sweden’s wartime history must be unearthed along with the bones, which leaves Wallander more depressed than he was when we met him.”—*NY Times*. Although Mankell said no more Wallanders—and indeed, how could there be?—this is a story written before the finale. Yay—I’ve missed him, as have you.

McCullough, Colleen. [Bittersweet](#) (SimonSchuster \$26). In her first epic romantic novel since *The Thorn Birds*, Colleen McCullough weaves a sweeping story of two sets of twins—all trained as nurses, but each with her own ambitions—stepping into womanhood in 1920s and 30s Australia. Because they are two sets of twins, the four Latimer sisters are as close as can be. Yet these vivacious young women each have their own dreams for themselves: Edda wants to be a doctor, Tufts wants to organize everything, Grace won’t be told what to do, and Kitty wishes to be known for something other than her beauty. They are famous throughout New South Wales for their beauty, wit, and ambition, but they suffer from a Wicked Stepmother and a quiescent father, a minister. As they step into womanhood, they see limited prospects—WS has blocked the eldest’s desire to become a doctor—and together they decide to enroll in a training program for nurses—a new option for women of their time. As the Latimer sisters become immersed in hospital life and the demands of their training, they meet people and encounter challenges that spark new maturity and independence. They meet men from all walks

of life—local farmers, their professional colleagues, and even men with national roles and reputations—and each sister must make weighty decisions about what she values most. The results are sometimes happy, sometimes heartbreaking, but always . . . bittersweet.

Minier, Bernard. [The Frozen Dead](#) (St Martins \$25.99). This is a complex story, often brutal, with a truly terrific sense of the remote Pyrenees and life in an ancient rural community. See First Novels for more.

Murakami, Haruki. [Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage](#) (Knopf \$25). “Neither Haruki Murakami’s narrative nor his protagonist proves colorless. As Tsukuru meets each of his old friends in turn, he begins to learn his true worth. Murakami (*IQ84*) makes customary digressions through flashbacks to introduce a flare of the mystical, a sliver of philosophy, placed as deliberately as a painter’s brushstrokes. By turns otherworldly and grounded in the essence of human experience, Murakami’s look at becoming who you already are feels both new and timelessly essential.” —Jaclyn Fulwood, blogger at Infinite Reads. A colorful exploration of self-perception through the melancholic but hopeful story of a man who has never understood his own worth.

Vreeland, Susan. [Lisette’s List Signed](#) (Random \$27 pubs Aug. 28, Signed mid-September). In 1937, newlyweds Andre and Lisette Roux move from France’s vibrant capital to the pastoral southeastern town of Roussillon to care for his grandfather, Pascal, who has written that he is dying. A passionate Parisian, Lisette is at first miserable in the backwater town, and infuriated when Pascal turns out to be healthier than he let on: he simply wanted their company, and to share what he remembers about the famous French artists he has known. But Lisette is as fervent about art as she is about Paris, and Andre has trained in his grandfather’s trade of carving fine frames for fine paintings. She is captivated by Pascal’s collection of seven paintings: by Cézanne and Pissarro, and one possibly by Picasso. As a miner in the nearby ochre mines and later a pigment salesman, Pascal made the most of his access to these men, and now shares his recollections with the rapt Lisette—as well as his wisdom about life and love. By the time Pascal eventually dies, Lisette has made a home of sorts in Roussillon; her love for the paintings further compels her to stay in Provence when Andre hides them (for fear of their destruction or seizure by German troops). Inspired by Pascal and his paintings, Andre’s love and the quiet strength and beauty of the Provençal surroundings, she pledges to “learn what makes a painting great,” “learn how to be self-sufficient” and “love without reservation.” She meets Marc Chagall and his wife, Bella, who are hiding in a nearby town. Upon receiving a gift painted specially for her by Chagall, she begins her own art collection and narrative. But war necessarily brings tragedy as well as new beginnings.

Wolmar, Christian. [To the Edge of the World](#) (Public Affairs \$28.99). Icy, bleak, but unusually dramatic is this portrait of earth’s longest railroad and its prominent role in Russia’s development. The building of the 5,750-mile steel ribbon between Moscow and Vladivostok was the usual railroad epic on the vastest scale, with brilliant engineering, creative financing, and an army of laborers and convicts toiling away at perilous tasks in extreme terrain. But unusually for a railroad, the Trans-Siberian

followed its prodigious beginnings with second and third acts instead of just settling down to convey boxcars and sleepers. As the vital transport corridor for Russia’s expanding quasi-colony in Manchuria, it was a primary cause of the Russo-Japanese war in the early 20th century, Wolmar argues; it erupted again during the Russian civil war as a major, if oddly one-dimensional, military theater, fought over by Czech freebooters, bloodthirsty Cossack chieftains, and Trotsky himself chugging back and forth in his armored train. “Wolmar tells this story with aplomb, sprinkling his lucid prose with piquant sketches of personalities, vivid travelogue, and interesting socioeconomic background on the railroad’s success in bringing settlers and industry to the Siberian expanse. There are gripping narratives to be told about transport infrastructure, and surely this is one.” Photos.

AND OUT OF THIS WORLD...

Abercrombie, Joe. [Half a King](#) (Del Ray \$26). “*Half a King* can be summed up in a single word: masterpiece. It’s a coming-of-age story. It’s a Viking saga. It’s a revenge tale and family drama and the return of the prodigal son. But most of all, it’s this: a short time alongside people as weak and blundering as we are and, in the midst of it all, as heroic. Far too short a time, as it turns out. What a wonderful book.”—Myke Cole. “As in all Abercrombie’s books, friends turn out to be enemies, enemies turn out to be friends; the line between good and evil is murky indeed; and nothing goes quite as we expect. With eye-popping plot twists and rollicking good action, this is definitely a full adventure.”—Rick Riordan

Andrews, Ilona. [Magic Breaks](#) (Ace \$25.95). No matter how much the paranormal politics of Atlanta change, one thing always remains the same: if there’s trouble, Kate Daniels is there! As the mate of the Beast Lord, Curran, former mercenary Kate Daniels has more responsibilities than it seems possible to juggle. Not only is she still struggling to keep her investigative business afloat, she must now deal with the affairs of the pack, including preparing her people for attack from Roland, a cruel ancient being with god-like powers. Since Kate’s connection to Roland has come out into the open, no one is safe—especially those closest to Kate. As Roland’s long shadow looms ever nearer, Kate is called to attend the Conclave, a gathering of the leaders from the various supernatural factions in Atlanta. When one of the Masters of the Dead is found murdered there, apparently at the hands of a shapeshifter, Kate is given only twenty-four hours to hunt down the killer. Publisher says this book “includes the bonus Kate Daniels story ‘Magic Tests.’”

Armstrong, Kelley. [Visions: A Cainsville Novel](#) (Dutton \$26.95). *Omens*, the first installment in Kelley Armstrong’s exciting new series, introduced Olivia Taylor-Jones, daughter of notorious serial killers, and Gabriel Walsh, the self-serving, morally ambiguous lawyer who became her unlikely ally. Together, they chased down a devious killer and partially cleared her parents of their horrifying crimes. Their success, however, is short-lived. While Olivia takes refuge in the old, secluded town of Cainsville, Gabriel’s past mistakes have come to light, creating a rift between the pair just when she needs his help the most. Olivia finds a dead woman in her car, dressed to look like her, but the body vanishes before anyone else sees it. Olivia’s convinced it’s another omen, a sign of impending danger. But then she learns that a troubled young woman went missing just days ago—the same woman Olivia found dead in her car. Someone has gone to great lengths

to kill and leave this young woman as a warning. But why? And what role has her new home played in this disturbing murder? “Urban fantasy powerhouse Armstrong (the *Otherworld* series) begins the Cainsville series with a gripping thriller-paced novel featuring a young woman who learns that her wealthy parents adopted her after her biological parents were convicted of being serial killers. Mind control, gunplay, and double crosses will keep readers on edge to the last page.” —*PW* on [Omens](#) (\$16).

Barker, Emily Croy. [The Thinking Woman’s Guide to Real Magic](#) (\$16). “If Hermione Granger had been an American who never received an invitation to Hogwarts, this might have been her story.” —*People*. During a miserable weekend at a friend’s wedding, eager to forget about her disastrous breakup and stalled dissertation, Nora Fischer wanders off and somehow finds herself in another realm. There, she meets glamorous Illissa—who introduces Nora to a decadent new world—and her gorgeous son Raclin. But when the elegant veneer of this dreamland shatters, Nora finds herself in a fairy tale gone incredibly wrong. And the only way she can survive is by learning real magic herself. You can see the wild popularity of Harkness and Grossman—his book is featured in this newsletter, hers was in August Part I—is prompting similar stories. You can also see a tie-in to the concept behind Willig’s *Pink Carnation* series, also featured here.

Bova, Ben. [New Frontiers](#) (Tor \$25.99). Octogenarian Ben Bova is still going strong. He’s written more than 120 works of science fiction and fact, has won the Hugo Award six times, and has edited both *Analog* and *Omni* magazines over his long career. It’s no surprise, then, that his latest collection of short speculative fiction is full of interesting characters and fascinatingly scientific settings. Bova explores ideas with ease, like how to make a golf course on the moon, or what might happen to terminally ill people rich enough to pay for a trip to a better future via cryogenic sleep.

Brooks, Terry. [The High Druid’s Blade: The Defender’s of Shanara](#) (Random \$28). Legend has it that Paxon Leah is descended from the royals and warriors who once ruled the Highlands and waged war with magical weapons. But those kings, queens, and heroes are long gone, and there is nothing enchanted about the antique sword that hangs above Paxon’s fireplace. Running his family’s modest shipping business, Paxon leads a quiet life—until extraordinary circumstances overturn his simple world...and rewrite his destiny. When his brash young sister is abducted by a menacing stranger, Paxon races to her rescue with the only weapon he can find. And in a harrowing duel, he is stunned to discover powerful magic unleashed within him—and within his ancestors’ ancient blade. But his formidable new ability is dangerous in untrained hands, and Paxon must master it quickly because his nearly fatal clash with the dark sorcerer Arcannen won’t be his last

Brown, Jeffrey. [Star Wars: Jedi Academy #2: Return of the Padawan](#) (Scholastic \$12.99). It’s time to return to middle school in a galaxy far, far away. After surviving his first year at Jedi Academy, Roan Novachez thought his second year would be a breeze. He couldn’t have been more wrong. Roan feels like he’s drifting apart from his friends, and it’s only made worse when Roan discovers he’s not the amazing pilot he thought he’d be. When the school bullies take him under their wing, he decides they aren’t so bad after all—or are they? This year, Roan will

have to face alien poetry tests, menacing robots, food fights, flight simulation class, online bullies, more lightsaber duels, and worst of all, a girl who is mad at him. Book #2 for ages 8-12 told through one boy’s comics, journal entries, letters, sketches, e-mails, and more.

Choo, Yangtze. [Ghost Bride](#) (\$14.99). A wondrous coming-of-age story infused with Chinese folklore, romantic intrigue, adventure, and fascinating, dreamlike twists. Malaya, 1893 Li Lan, the daughter of a genteel but bankrupt Chinese family, has few prospects. But fate intervenes when she receives a proposal from the wealthy and powerful Lim family. They want her to become a ghost bride for the family’s only son, who died under mysterious circumstances. Rarely practiced, ghost marriages are often meant to placate a restless spirit. Such a union would guarantee Li Lan a comfortable home for the rest of her days, but at what cost? As she reluctantly considers the offer, Li Lan is unwillingly drawn into the shadowy parallel world of the Chinese afterlife, with its ghost cities and vengeful spirits. There Li Lan must uncover the Lim family’s darkest secrets. Set in the elaborate world of the Chinese afterlife, with its ghost cities, paper servants, and burned funeral offerings, this book is Oprah.com’s Book of the Week, a Carnegie Medal nominee and a Goodreads Choice Award finalist for Best Fantasy.

Connolly, John. [The Creeps: A Samuel Johnson Tale](#) (Atria \$15). Once again, hell threatens to break loose as Samuel Johnson and his ragtag group of friends must defend their town from shadowy forces more threatening than ever before...In this clever and quirky follow-up to *The Gates* and *The Infernals*, Samuel Johnson’s life seems to have finally settled down—after all, he’s still got the company of his faithful dachshund, Boswell, and his bumbling demon friend, Nurd; he has foiled the dreaded forces of darkness not once, but twice; and he’s dating the lovely Lucy Highmore, to boot. But things in the little English town of Biddlecombe rarely run smoothly for long. Shadows are gathering in the skies, a black heart of pure evil is bubbling with revenge, and it rather looks as if the Multiverse is about to come to an end, starting with Biddlecombe. When a new toy shop’s opening goes terrifyingly awry, Samuel must gather a ragtag band of dwarfs, policemen, and very polite monsters to face down...

Grossman, Lev. [The Magician’s Land Signed](#) (Viking \$27.95). In ways, malcontent antihero Quentin Coldwater had no choice. He had to return to Brakebills Preparatory College of Magic and Fillory, the scenes of his early struggles; but a spontaneous act of courage sends his life spiraling in unforeseen directions. The satisfying finale of a fantasy coming-of-age trilogy; a cunning mix of magical lands, ironic Harry Potter references, Narnia retakes, and real world realizations. The *NY Times* review by Sarah Lyall: “If the Narnia books were like catnip for a certain kind of kid, these books are like crack for a certain kind of adult. By the end, after some truly wondrous scenes that have to do with the dawn (and the end) of existence, ricocheting back and forth between the extraordinary and the quotidian, you feel that breathless, stay-up-all-night, thrumming excitement that you, too, experienced as a child, and that you felt all over again when you first opened up *The Magicians* and fell headlong into Mr. Grossman’s world. Brakebills graduates can have a hard time adjusting to life outside... Readers of Mr. Grossman’s mesmerizing trilogy might experience the same kind of withdrawal upon finishing

The Magician's Land.” In the *NY Times* Book Review, Grossman author of other fiction and book critic for *Time*, writes that only in fantasy has he found his real voice. A fellow writer says, “Lev’s series has brilliantly brought back the wonder I felt on those late nights listening to CS Lewis’ *Narnia Chronicles*, but this story is definitely not for little boys and girls. Like the previous two novels, *The Magician’s Land* packs enough twists, turns and surprises to fill several books, but its greatest feat lies in how the story is brought to an end. This is one of the most satisfying ends to a series I have ever read, and although that in and of itself is deserving of high praise, the fact that it can make you feel the excitement and wonder of childhood makes it truly magical. Happy late nights!”

Harkaway, Nick. [Tigerman: A Novel](#) (Knopf \$26.95). All his tours of duty can’t prepare British army Sgt. Lester Ferris, a veteran of the War in Afghanistan, for life on an island facing certain ecological destruction, in Harkaway’s poignant morality tale, equally fueled by emotion and adrenaline. Though the fictional island of Mancreu, located somewhere in the Arabian sea, is no longer officially under the thumb of the British government—the Brits ceded control to an international peacekeeping force—Ferris is appointed brevet-consul, a largely ceremonial post that’s supposedly a last stop for him before he can leave army life behind for good. Mancreu is anything but an island paradise. Long exposed to harsh mining involving the island’s volcano, it’s a ticking time bomb, with the residents waiting for the next in a string of toxic events, known as “Clouds.” The sergeant’s only real friend, and surrogate son, is a comic-book-loving, Internet-slang-spouting teenage boy he calls Robin (think Batman), who helps him navigate Mancreu’s social and political intricacies. Note: Harkaway is the son of author John Le Carré.

Lackey, Mercedes. [The House of the Four Winds](#) (Forge \$25.99). The rulers of tiny, impoverished Swansgaard have twelve daughters and one son. While the prince’s future is assured, his twelve sisters must find their own fortunes. Disguising herself as Clarence, a sailor, Princess Clarice intends to work her way to the New World. When the crew rebels, Clarice/Clarence, an expert with rapier and dagger, sides with the handsome navigator, Dominick, and kills the cruel captain. Dominick leads the now-outlawed crew in search of treasure in the secret pirate haven known as The House of Four Winds. They encounter the sorceress Shamal, who claims Dominick for her own—but Clarice has fallen hard for Dominick and won’t give him up without a fight. Full of swashbuckling adventure and buoyant magic

Mandel, Emily St John. [Station Eleven Signed](#) (Picador UK \$35). For Kirsten Raymonde, Shakespeare came before and after the end of the world. At eight years old, she played a hallucination in a stage production of *King Lear* starring middle-aged film star Arthur Leander. As an adult, she portrays Cordelia, Titania and others for the Traveling Symphony, an orchestra and Shakespearean theater company touring the wasteland of the former United States under the banner of a *Star Trek: Voyager* quote: “Survival is insufficient.” Twenty years after a virus wiped out so much of the human population that no statisticians were left to tally up the damage, many comforts are relics of a lost past: electricity, medicine, digital technology, automobiles. The Traveling Symphony offers cultural enrichment in exchange for food and shelter in loosely governed towns. In one such place, the company meets a dangerous cult leader known as the Prophet and his rabidly loyal

followers. When the performers inadvertently attract the Prophet’s wrath, they struggle to escape. Their intended destination, an airport rumored to hold a Museum of Civilization, may also hold the key to the Prophet’s true identity—and link directly back to Arthur Leander, whose rise to fame, fortune and regret is told in interludes between pieces of the Symphony’s story. Thoroughly chilling, Mandel’s vision of the apocalypse gives humanity neither blame nor control; the collapse snuck up. Still, Mandel uses the before-and-after timeline to place modern life under a microscope. **A SciFi/Fantasy Club Pick.**

CATS AND DOGS, OH MY...

Berenson, Laurien. [Death of a Dog Whisperer](#) (Kensington \$24). PW enthuses: “The intricacies of championship dog showing and the complexities of murder intertwine in Berenson’s entertaining 17th Melanie Travis mystery. Amiable, handsome, and talented dog whisperer Nick Walden is gunned down in his home, possibly by someone he knows. His sister Claire enlists dog-loving amateur sleuth Melanie to help find Nick’s killer. The long list of suspects includes Nick’s clients; his snobby girlfriend, Diana Lee; and Melanie’s own Aunt Peg. Melanie uses her keen investigative instincts to sniff out clues in her lovely town in Connecticut’s Fairfield County, all while balancing two children, six standard poodles, and marital problems. Melanie’s engaging narration, with its slightly sarcastic flair, makes her utterly relatable. Fans will roll over with joy, and new cozy readers will likely scoop up the rest of the series.”

Cooney, Ellen. [The Mountaintop School for Dogs](#) (Houghton \$24). Evie is stuck at The Inn, managed by the stern and mysterious Mrs. Auberchon, although she’s supposed to join a training program at The Sanctuary. That’s what she signed up for—never mind that she lied and doesn’t know the first thing about animals except what she’s learned from a breed guide, from the notes someone keeps leaving, and from videos online, like one that asks: Please can more people be nicer to dogs? Once up on the mountain with staffers, volunteers, and her dog students, Evie takes notes on the new things she’s learning. Alpha. Forgiveness. Play. Rehabilitation. Like the racing greyhound who refuses to move, the golden retriever who returns every time he’s adopted, and the Rottweiler who’s a hopeless candidate for search-and-rescue, Evie came from a troubled past. She writes: “Rescue. Best. Verb. Ever.” As she creates her own training manual, she may even write an entry on herself. A worthy shelf-mate to books by Garth Stein and Carolyn Parkhurst and hailed by John Grogan of [Marley and Me](#) (\$13.95) as “a book that will grab your heart and not let go.”

Grumpy Cat. [The Grumpy Guide to Life](#) (Chronicle \$12.95). Only one figure is indifferent enough to tell the cranky truth: Grumpy Cat. Following the success of her *New York Times* best-selling debut, the (apparently) disgruntled feline is back with this demotivational guide to everyday life, love, friendship, and more. Featuring many new photos of Grumpy Cat’s famous frown and packed with uninspiring observations to help anyone get in touch with their inner grouch. The internet sensation has a form of feline dwarfism, hence her fab face. She’s a local resident whose owner says she’s actually super sweet.

Rosenfelt, David. [Dogtripping: 25 Rescues, 11 Volunteers, and 3 RVs on Our Canine Cross-Country Adventure](#) (\$15.95). After 20 years as a marketing executive in the movie business, Rosenfelt

lived a quiet, pet-free life in Southern California writing mystery novels. Then he married a woman who came with a dog. When Debbie retired, she and David decided they were ready for “real weather” and to be closer to family. They bought a remote, 10-acre wooded lot with a lake in Maine—and then moved 25 dogs (most weighing more than 50 pounds) cross-country. You may say, of driving from California to Maine with 25 dogs: “That man is crazy” or “What a blast.”

Yow, David. [Copy Cat: And a Litter of Other Cats](#) (Akashic \$23.95). Yow’s cat portraits, captured here for the first time in book form, are bold, striking, hilarious, whimsical. Each portrait is based around a pun, but they capture so much more than wordplay. All cat lovers will find something to relish in this gorgeous coffee-table book. Yow says: “I love cats. Always have. The only time I didn’t have a cat was a brief hell in Chicago where I lived in an apartment whose landlord didn’t allow them. At that place, I had a life-sized cardboard cutout of a cat which I named Toody. I also love wordplay. I’m the only adult I hang out with who still gets a kick out of puns. I make up palindromes. I used to write songs and poems (these days, I leave that for the songwriters and poets); in this book of cat-pun drawings, I have made a concerted effort to come up with ideas that range from really funny to really amusing. The entire litter of animals in this book is rendered in line drawings that are ‘colored in’ with photographic textures, and each cat is dropped into a photographic setting. Yep, that’s the truth.”

NEW BOOKS

Barlow, Toby. [Babayaga: A Novel of Witches in Paris](#) (\$16). “This supernatural-spy-thriller-romance-history is one of the most entertaining books you’ll read [this season]—or decade.”—*San Francisco Chronicle*. “Tolkien meets Graham Greene meets Anne Rice in this wild, surrealistic caper.”—*New York Magazine*. “A fun brew of witches, CIA spies, and fraught romance.... Barlow casts a magical spell.”—*People*. Unclassifiable, so it goes here...

Borg, Todd. [Tahoe Ghost Boat Signed](#) (Thriller Press \$16.95). When 15-year-old Gertie is kidnapped as part of an extortion plot, Tahoe Detective Owen McKenna gets involved. But McKenna finds himself up against his toughest opponent yet, a killer the FBI calls Mikhailo the Monster. McKenna is overwhelmed by Mikhailo’s small group of twisted men whose orders are to kill the girl...

Brown, Sandra. [Mean Streak](#) (Grand Central \$26). “With her husband slow to report her disappearance in the North Carolina wilderness (they’d been quarreling), pediatrician and marathon runner Emily Charbonneau wakes up the captive of a man who won’t reveal his name. But he could be her rescuer; there’s something suspicious about that husband.”—*LJ. Gone Girl*, Brown style.

Carcattera, Lorenzo. [The Wolf](#) (Ballantine \$25). Vincent Marelli is The Wolf, head of one of the largest crime syndicates in operation. Although he mostly shies away from world politics, one chance mistake will cost him dearly. When his wife and daughter are murdered in a commercial airline attack, the Wolf and his associates set out to destroy every known terrorist organization in the world. It’s a classic revenge tale...on a much larger scale. If anyone can pull off a “mafia vs. terrorists” story, it’s Carcattera. “By alternating Marelli’s first-person narrative with glimpses into the sinister Russian and terrorist mind sets, Carcattera makes one group of bad guys convincingly bring down another group of bad guys and proves how murky that demarcation between good and

evil really is.”—*PW* Starred Review. For fans of *The Godfather*. I admire the way Carcattera links NYC with Naples so well.

Carter, Stephen L. [Back Channel](#) (Knopf \$27.95). In the prologue of Carter’s intriguing what-if thriller, Margo Jensen, a bright 19-year-old Cornell student, meets privately in Washington, D.C., with President Kennedy, who is trying to navigate the Cuban Missile Crisis without triggering nuclear war. Earlier that fall, Margo became involved in a covert intelligence operation through a brilliant Cornell professor of hers, Lorenz Niemeyer, who’s an expert on Conflict Theory. Margo learns that a Russian chess champion, Vasily Smyslov, has alerted the U.S. to a surprise Soviet move in Cuba. The only way to get more details from Smyslov is to send an American counterpart, Bobby Fischer, to Russia to sound him out, and Fischer will only go if Margo, whom he considers to be a good-luck charm, accompanies him. “Carter makes this audacious premise convincing and manages to build suspense around a historical event with a known outcome.”—*PW*

Child, Lee. [Personal Signed](#) (Bantam UK \$45). Once a go-to hard man in the US military police, Jack Reacher is now a drifter of no fixed abode. But the army once again tracks him down—someone has taken a long-range shot at the French president. Only one man could have done it. And Reacher is the one man who can find him... The Signed US edition: [Personal](#) (Random \$28). We still have half a dozen signed UK copies of last year’s Reacher: [Never Go Back](#) (Bantam \$45)

Coelho, Paulo. [Adultery](#) (Knopf \$24.95). A woman in her thirties begins to question the routine and predictability of her days. In everybody’s eyes, she has a perfect life: happy marriage, children, and a career. Yet what she feels is an enormous apathy. All that changes when she encounters a successful politician who had, years earlier, been her high school boyfriend. As she rediscovers the passion missing from her life, she will face a life-altering choice.

Corleone, Douglas. [Payoff](#) (St Martins \$25.99). When movie studio mogul Edgar Trenton’s teenage daughter, Olivia, is kidnapped during a violent home invasion in Calabasas, California, former U.S. Marshal Simon Fisk is called upon to ensure a smooth ransom exchange. But once it becomes clear that the kidnappers never intended to return Olivia to her parents, Simon must follow a lethal trail that will lead him from the powdery white sand beaches of the Cayman Islands through the wild jungles of Costa Rica, and into some of the darkest and deadliest cities of South America.

Crider, Bill. [Half in Love with Artful Death](#) (St Martins \$24.99). A new Texas Sheriff Dan Rhodes makes a pleasant, diverting mystery. The local community college and an antique dealer team up to have a workshop for artists. One local man, Burt Collins, isn’t fond of the art, and he isn’t fond of having the artists in town. Rhodes is called to the antique store because Collins has been accused of vandalizing some paintings. But before Rhodes can take Collins into custody, a near riot breaks out. Rhodes gets the situation under control with the help of college math instructor and wannabe cop Seepy Benton. Later that day Rhodes has to help the county animal control officer round up some runaway donkeys, and that evening there’s a robbery at a local convenience store. After looking into the robbery, Rhodes goes by to see Collins and talk to him about the vandalism. Collins isn’t talking because he’s been killed, his head bashed in with a bust of Dale Earnhardt, Jr.

Cussler, Clive. [The Eye of Heaven Signed](#) (Putnam \$28.95). Baffin Island: Husband-and-wife team Sami and Remi Fargo are on a climate-control expedition in the Arctic, when to their astonishment they discover a Viking longship in the ice, perfectly preserved—and filled with pre-Columbian artifacts from Mexico. How can that be? As they plunge into their research, tantalizing clues about a link between the Vikings and the legendary Toltec feathered serpent god Quetzalcoatl—and a fabled object known as the Eye of Heaven—begin to emerge. But so do many dangerous people. Soon the Fargos find themselves on the run through jungles, temples, and secret tombs, caught between treasure hunters, crime cartels, and those with a far more personal motivation for stopping them. On-sale date is Sept. 2. Cussler is not doing a public signing for this new Fargos novel. A new Dirk Pitt comes: [Havana Storm](#) (Putnam \$28.95 Oct. 28)

Doig, Ivan. [Sweet Thunder](#) (\$16). In the winter of 1920, a quirky bequest draws Morrie Morgan back to Butte, Montana, from a year-long honeymoon with his bride, Grace. But the mansion bestowed by a former boss upon the itinerant charmer, who debuted in Doig's bestselling *The Whistling Season*, promises to be less a windfall than a money pit. And the town itself, with its polyglot army of miners struggling to extricate themselves from the stranglehold of the ruthless Anaconda Copper Mining Company, seems—like the couple's fast-diminishing finances—on the verge of implosion. These twin dilemmas catapult Morrie into his new career as editorialist for the *Thunder*, the fledgling union newspaper that dares to play David to Anaconda's Goliath. Amid the clatter of typewriters, the rumble of the printing presses, and a cast of unforgettable characters, Morrie puts his gift for word-slipping to work. As he pursues victory for the miners, he discovers that he is enmeshed in a deeply personal battle as well—the struggle to win lasting love for himself.

Elkins, Aaron/Charlotte. [The Art Whisperer](#) (Thomas & Mercer \$14.95). In her 3rd investigation, art conservator Alix London spots a forgery at the Palm Springs Brethwaite Museum, her current employer. The senior curator refuses to decommission the “Jackson Pollack.” Alix, already the object of on-line trolls conducting a smear campaign, is attacked in her hotel room by an intruder in a hoodie. Worse, her ex, FBI Special Agent Ted Ellesworth, shows up to check out the Pollack...

Feiffer, Jules. [Kill My Mother](#) (Liveright \$27.95), a graphic novel, “is a tribute to film noir and detective fiction... But *Kill My Mother* isn't mere pastiche. The story is a thoughtful meditation on female identity and whether the not-so-simple art of murder can ever be defended as a moral necessity. It is a story about stories, the myths we have to create in order to keep putting one foot in front of the other... I know what I think: *Kill My Mother* is terrific.”—Laura Lippman, *New York Times Book Review*

Fertig, Mark. [The 101 Best Film Noir Posters From the 1940s-1950s](#) (Fantagraphics \$35). Speaks for itself, no? Releases Sept. 1.

Fesperman, Dan. [Unmanned Signed](#) (Knopf \$28). A timely thriller that brings drone warfare to the streets of America. There is treachery here—in the government, in big business and among the technology geeks who make it all work... a thriller nuanced with moral ambiguity. Well-written and dense with complicity, this is an action-packed glimpse of intrusive technology in which the good guys never have clear moral standing.” —*Kirkus Reviews*. “Timely... Fesperman delineates the capabilities of modern drone

aircraft in details that evoke wonder as well as chills at their disturbing implications for personal privacy. The technical information will keep readers turning the pages up to the rousing conclusion.” —*PW*. I like the opening scene which is so misleading...

Flagg, Fannie. [All-Girl Filling Stations Last Reunion](#) (\$15). Sookie Poole of Point Clear, Alabama, has just married off the last of her daughters and is looking forward to relaxing and perhaps traveling with her husband, Earle. The only thing left to contend with is her mother, the formidable Lenore Simmons Krackenberry. Lenore may be a lot of fun for other people, but is, for the most part, an overbearing presence for her daughter. Then one day, quite by accident, Sookie discovers a secret about her mother's past that knocks her for a loop and suddenly calls into question everything she ever thought she knew about herself, her family, and her future. Sookie begins a search for answers that takes her to California, the Midwest, and back in time, to the 1940s, when an irrepressible woman named Fritzi takes on the job of running her family's filling station. Soon truck drivers are changing their routes to fill up at the All-Girl Filling Station. Then, Fritzi sees an opportunity for an even more groundbreaking adventure.

Florio, John. [Blind Moon Alley](#) (Seventh Street \$15.95). It's Prohibition. It's Philadelphia. And Jersey Leo doesn't fit in. Jersey is an albino of mixed race. Known as “Snowball” on the street, he tends bar at a speakeasy the locals call the Ink Well. There, he's considered a hero for having saved the life of a young boy. But when his old grade school buddy, Aaron Garvey, calls from death row and asks for one last favor, all hell breaks loose. This is the second novel in the Jersey Leo crime series.

Goines, Donald. [Daddy Cool](#) (\$15). Reissued, a blast from the past. Although he's the best hired killer money can buy, even Daddy Cool isn't safe from domestic trouble. He's got two lazy stepsons who've turned stickup men, a wife he's outgrown and barely tolerates, and a beloved daughter who's left home to live with her boyfriend, a young pimp on the make. It's taken a toll on Daddy Cool and thrown off his game. A routine assignment, for example, results in the deaths of his mark and an unexpected witness. Things get even worse when he discovers his daughter has started working the streets for her boyfriend.

Guinn, Jeff. [Manson](#) (\$15). An authoritative account of the life of Charles Manson, filled with surprising new information and previously unpublished photographs: “A riveting, almost Dickensian narrative... four stars” —*People*

Hallinan, Timothy. [Herbie's Game Signed](#) (Soho \$25). How I miss Donald E. Westlake, especially writing as Richard Stark. Hallinan's LA burglar lacks the cold steel of Parker, but his warmer persona fits these capers really well. Hallinan has upped his game in this 4th in series. The August Indie Next Pick: “Amiable burglar Junior Bender is forced to chase down a stolen list of names before everyone on it ends up dead. First to fall is Junior's mentor and surrogate father, Herbie, who stole the list in the first place. This delightful mystery poses the question: Do we ever really know the people we love, and do we need to know everything in order to love them?” “If mysteries, thrillers, or just plain dark reads are your thing, then you'll love this summer's crop of twisty-turny heart-pounders... Junior Bender, the criminal who does detective work for other criminals, returns for a fourth hard-boiled mystery.” —*Entertainment Weekly*. An Indie Next Pick for August.

Harris, Charlaïne, ed. [An Apple for the Creature](#) (\$16). Your worst school nightmares—taking that math test you never studied for, finding yourself naked at a school assembly, not knowing which door to enter through—will pale in comparison to these 13 stories that take academic anxiety to realms you never dared to imagine. Authors include Rhys Bowen, Charlaïne, Steve Hocken-smith...

Haynes, Dana. [Gun Metal Heart Signed](#) (St Martins \$25.99 Sept. 14). Fans of Taylor Stevens' Vanessa Michael Munro, or Greg Rucka's heroines, should rush to grab this second for Daria Gibrón after [Ice Cold Kill](#) (\$9.99; \$25.99). In Haynes's brisk, darkly humorous sequel, Diego, a Mexican bodyguard, asks an old colleague of his, Israeli ex-spy Daria Gibrón, for help. Now an independent operative, Daria has been lying low in an Italian village far from the eye of various international espionage and crime organizations. Diego suspects that members of a Serbian paramilitary group, the White Scorpions, have seized his fellow bodyguard, Vince. Diego and Vince were protecting Italian engineer Gabriella Incantada, the inventor of a military-grade avionic control device. Meanwhile, Minister Dragan Petrovic, a Serb official, has hired a stunning but lethal blonde known as Major Arcana to get Gabriella's device for him. With some under the radar assistance from senatorial adviser John Broom, Daria—"a hand grenade in high heels"—embarks on a series of explosive deeds of derring-do across Europe in this high voltage, high-body-count thrill ride." Haynes, formerly known to readers as Conrad Haynes, will teach a workshop on Writing Thrillers at noon the same day as his book event.

Lamb, Wally. [We Are Water](#) (\$15.99). Annie Oh—wife, mother, and artist—has shaken her family to its core. After twenty-seven years of marriage and three children, Annie has fallen in love with Viveca, the wealthy, cultured, confident Manhattan art dealer who orchestrated her professional success. The two plan to wed in the Oh family's hometown of Three Rivers, Connecticut, where gay marriage has recently been legalized. But this provokes mixed reactions and opens a Pandora's box of toxic secrets—dark and painful truths that have festered below the surface of the Oh's lives. Told in the alternating voices of the Oh's. This was a 2013 Modern Firsts Pick in hardcover.

Lehane, Dennis. [The Drop Signed](#) (Harper \$24.99). We're working out details for this early September release of a "return" to *Mystic River* territory that is shortly to be a motion picture. Check our website calendar to see if Lehane will sign it here.

Lippman, Laura. [After I'm Gone](#) (\$14.99). An intriguing tale centered on a philandering schemer whose long-time mistress turns up dead years after he skipped town. Hmm... The damage done by disappearances seems to be a theme this month.

Maron, Margaret. [Designated Daughters Signed](#) (Grand Central \$27). Judge Deborah Knott is summoned to her elderly and ailing Aunt Rachel's bedside where she is dying of a stroke—but has surprised her caregiver by suddenly starting to speak. When she arrives, the dying woman is surrounded by her children and half of Colleton County, NC. What a shock when, after she quiets again, an hour later Aunt Rachel is found dead in her bed. And someone impulsively, and not carefully, has smothered her with a pillow. What did Aunt Rachel say that provoked her murder? It takes two family trees, helpfully provided by Maron, to keep the kin straight as you follow various investigative lines. This is a warm book

about family and the cycle of generations, and about caring for the family elders. And it's nice to see Deborah loving being married!

Masters, Sam. [The China Dogs](#) (Harper \$11.99). In the blistering heat of Miami, fatal dog attacks are running at record levels. Swimmers, walkers, and homeowners have been shockingly savaged to death. The public is starting to panic. It seems the summer sun or some unknown virus is turning man's best friend into his worst of enemies. Lieutenant "Ghost" Walton shrugs it off as a freak coincidence. But when the body count rises, and the perimeter of blood and carnage widens across Miami-Dade county, the seasoned special ops detective with a nose for trouble senses there is something darker behind the pattern of violence, and he's going to find out what it is. While his previous missions have prepared him for all kinds of danger, Ghost doesn't anticipate falling hard for a beautiful and feisty out-of-towner with a murky past... and facing a threat to national security.

Melinek, Judy, MD. [Working Stiff: Two Years, 262 Bodies, and the Making of a Medical Examiner](#) (Scribner \$25). Just two months before the September 11 terrorist attacks, Dr. Judy Melinek began her training as a New York City forensic pathologist. With her husband T.J. and their toddler Daniel holding down the home front, Judy threw herself into the fascinating world of death investigation—performing autopsies, investigating death scenes, counseling grieving relatives. Working Stiff chronicles Judy's two years of training, taking readers behind the police tape of some of the most harrowing deaths in the Big Apple, including a firsthand account of the events of September 11, the subsequent anthrax bio-terrorism attack, and the disastrous crash of American Airlines flight 587

Menino, Holly. [A Distance to Death](#) (St Martins \$25.99). A book for horse lovers and wilderness rides, as in the Sierra Nevadas filled with spectacular gorges and fords. It's the Tevis endurance ride. Tink Elledge maneuvers the trail, a pack of elite riders racing to the finish line, and the murder of a brilliant scientist. ...

Mitchell, David. [The Bone Clocks Signed](#) (Sphere/Little Brown UK \$45). The No. 1 Indie Next Pick for Sept. is also our Modern Firsts Club Pick in the signed UK edition—US not signed, or would be tip-ins if you see them around. "Once again, Mitchell's inventiveness and imagination prove to be nothing short of genius. He combines dark fantasy, boldly original prose, and finely drawn characters who will keep the reader riveted from Holly Sykes' initial angst-ridden teen thought to the very last, hopeful sentence. Mitchell proves once again that he is a writer of no equal when it comes to the invention of language, place, and time, taking the reader to the edge of both the real and the imagined as if he were guiding you personally by the hand. I will not have to persuade anyone into enjoying *The Bone Clocks*!"

O'Dell, Tawni. [One of Us](#) (Gallery \$25). A forensic psychologist forced to face his own demons after discovering his small hometown terrorized by a serial killer. Dr. Sheridan Doyle—a fastidiously groomed and TV-friendly forensic psychologist—is the go-to shrink for the Philadelphia District Attorney's office whenever a twisted killer's mind eludes other experts. But beneath his Armani pinstripes, he's still Danny Doyle, the awkward, terrified, bullied boy from a blue-collar mining family, plagued by panic attacks and haunted by the tragic death of his little sister and mental unraveling of his mother years ago. Returning to a hometown grappling with its own ghosts, Danny finds a dead body at the infamous Lost Creek gallows where a band of rebellious Irish

miners was once executed. Strangely, the body is connected to the wealthy family responsible for the miners' deaths...

Patterson, James/Michael White. [Private Down Under](#) (\$16). With the best detectives in the business, cutting edge technology and offices around the globe, there is no investigation company quite like Private. Now, at a glittering launch party overlooking the iconic Opera House, Private Sydney throws open its doors. Craig Gisto and his newly formed team have barely raised their glasses, however, when a young Asian man, blood-soaked and bullet-ridden, staggers into the party, and what looks like a botched kidnapping turns out to be a whole lot more. Within days the agency's caseload is full....

Potter, Maximilian. [Shadows in the Vineyard](#) (Hachette \$27). Wine and crime—irresistible! An expansion of an article in *Vanity Fair*; Potter's first book is "a whodunit with a culprit worthy of a Woody Allen film." The author "ushers readers into the Burgundy cellars of Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, one of France's most prestigious wineries, and introduces its proprietor, the humble Aubert de Villaine, as he outlines a plot to extort a million Euros from him." The author's passion for his subject is palpable from the outset, as is his fondness for the troubled Villaine, particularly when he receives the first of three packages containing a detailed map of his winery and an ominous threat: some of the vines have been compromised. The race is on as Villaine receive more menacing missives, and the police attempt to head off the extortionist before centuries-old vines are irrevocably damaged. In its starred review, *PW* writes that "even the most devout teetotaler will have a hard time putting this one down."

Rucka, Greg. [Bravo Signed](#) (LittleBrown \$28). The follow up to [Alpha](#) (\$8). Jad Bell, still recovering from emotional and physical trauma, is tasked with bringing in the Uzbek, the principal orchestrator of the terrorist attack that nearly cost Bell his wife and daughter. But the Uzbek's employer, the Architect, has already set an even deadlier attack in motion. Two women in deep cover are at the heart of his plot. The American may have crucial intel, but considering she's been someone else for years, can it—and she—be trusted? Familiar Rucka tropes about love and family enrich the story.

White, Randy Wayne. [Haunted Signed](#) (Putnam \$28). Out now but by the time our copies catch up with RWW in Florida it will be September. This is the 3rd Hannah Smith thriller and thrill it does thanks to some dangerous creatures, only a few of which are human. Plus—there's a haunted house! Which had a role in the Civil War, site of a bloody skirmish in which two of Hannah's distant relatives played a part. The house is endangered by a condo project, so Hannah becomes engaged both in halting it and in her family history. It begins when a rich Palm Beach widow hires her to prove the seller didn't disclose everything he knew about the house when he unloaded it. What Hannah learns is that ghosts take a back seat to real dangers and that a palmetto burn may have surprising consequences. There's a bit of *Deliverance* here, but so much more. 3rd in series (no Doc Ford in this one).

Willig, Lauren. [Mark of the Midnight Manzanilla Signed](#) (NAL \$16). It's fall in Cambridge—the wrong Cambridge, the one in Massachusetts. Eloise has reluctantly left Colin, Selwick Hall, and England to fulfill her Harvard teaching position and finish her dissertation on *Aristocratic Espionage During the Wars with France 1789-1815*. (Her source material mostly lies at Selwick

Hall). In keeping with the Halloween, she and colleague Megan are teaching Le Fanu, Stoker, and *The Castle of Otranto*. With her birthday also approaching, Colin is due to arrive for a four-day visit. Then we jump back to October, 1806, London. The Little Season is in full swing, and Sally Fitzhugh has had enough of the endless parties and balls. And of a rampant vampire craze sparked by the novel *The Convent of Orsino*. When she hears a rumor that the reclusive Duke of Belliston is an actual vampire, she cannot resist the challenge of proving such nonsense false. At a ball in Belliston Square, she ventures across the gardens and encounters the mysterious Duke, Lucien. He is well versed in the trouble gossip can bring. He's returned home to dispel the rumors of scandal surrounding his parents' deaths, which hint at everything from treason to dark sorcery. While he searches for the truth, he welcomes his fearsome reputation—until a woman is found dead in Richmond, her blood drained.... Willig has fun reminding us that 200 years ago, the paranormal was, as today, the rage. And in setting up the next book, which will be the final one in this lively series riffing on *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (was he fiction?).

OUR AUGUST MASS MARKET PAPERBACK PICKS

For reviews see the August Booknews, Part I

Bowen, Rhys. [Heirs and Graces](#) (\$7.99)
Coyle, Cleo. [Billionaire Blend](#) (\$7.99)
Flynn, Gillian. [Gone Girl](#) (\$9.99)
Forsyth, Frederick. [The Kill List](#) (\$9.99)
Grafton, Sue. [W is for Wasted](#) (\$7.99)
Grisham, John. [Sycamore Row](#) (\$9.99)
Mason, Jamie. [Three Graves Full](#) (\$9.99)
O'Connell, Carol. [It Happens in the Dark](#) (\$9.99)
Ryan, Hank Phillippi. [Wrong Girl](#) (\$7.99)
White, Randy Wayne. [Deceived](#) (\$9.99)
White, Stephen. [Compound Fractures](#) (\$9.99)

OUR AUGUST TRADE PAPERBACK PICKS

For reviews, see the August Booknews Part I

Alexander, Tasha. [Behind the Shattered Glass](#) (\$14.99)
Benn, James R. [Blind Goddess](#) (\$15.95)
Cook, Thomas H. [Sandrine's Case](#) (\$15)
Dean, Anna. [A Place of Confinement](#) (\$15.99)
Deaver, Jeffery. [The October List](#) (\$15)
Faye, Lyndsay. [Seven for a Secret](#) (\$16)
Finch, Charles. [An Old Betrayal](#) (\$15.99)
Hayes, J. M. [The Spirit and the Skull](#) (\$14.95)
Keller, Julia. [Bitter River](#) (\$14.99)
Mayor, Archer. [Three Can Keep a Secret](#) (\$15.99)
Rogan, Barbara. [Dangerous Fiction](#) (\$15)
Sallis, James. [Others of My Kind](#) (\$14)
Vichi, Marco. [Death and the Olive Grove](#) (\$14.95)

HISTORY/MYSTERY

✧Adkins, Roy. [Jane Austen's England](#) (\$17). It's vanishing more every year. Adkins explores the customs and culture of the real England of her everyday existence depicted in her classic novels as well as those by Byron, Keats, and Shelley. Drawing upon a rich array of contemporary sources, including many previously unpublished manuscripts, diaries, and personal letters, Roy and Lesley Adkins vividly portray the daily lives of ordinary people, discussing topics as diverse as birth, marriage, religion, sexual practices, hygiene, highwaymen, and superstitions.

Anderson, Scott. [Lawrence in Arabia](#) (\$17.95). Set aside the movie and Peter O'Toole and grapple with, in the words of T.E. Lawrence, "a sideshow of a sideshow." Amidst the slaughter in European trenches, the Western combatants paid scant attention to the Middle Eastern theater. As a result, the Arab Revolt against the Turks in World War One was "shaped to a remarkable degree by a small handful of adventurers and low-level officers far removed from the corridors of power." Curt Prüfer was an effete academic attached to the German embassy in Cairo, whose clandestine role was to foment Islamic jihad against British rule. Aaron Aaronsohn was a renowned agronomist and committed Zionist who gained the trust of the Ottoman governor of Syria. William Yale was the fallen scion of the American aristocracy, who traveled the Ottoman Empire on behalf of Standard Oil, dissembling to the Turks in order gain valuable oil concessions. At the center of it all was Lawrence. In early 1914 he was an archaeologist excavating ruins in the sands of Syria; by 1917 he was the most romantic figure of World War One, battling both the enemy and his own government to bring about the vision he had for the Arab people. The intertwined paths of these four men – the schemes they put in place, the battles they fought, the betrayals they endured and committed – mirror the grandeur, intrigue and tragedy of the war in the desert. Prüfer became Germany's grand spymaster in the Middle East. Aaronsohn constructed an elaborate Jewish spy-ring in Palestine, only to have the anti-Semitic and bureaucratically-inept British first ignore and then misuse his organization, at tragic personal cost. Yale would become the only American intelligence agent in the entire Middle East – while still secretly on the payroll of Standard Oil. And the enigmatic Lawrence rode into legend at the head of an Arab army, even as he waged secret war against his own nation's imperial ambitions. And this is leaving out the role of Englishwoman Gertrude Bell who became central to the shaping of Iraq....

✎Baker, Lori. [The Glass Ocean](#) (\$16). "In this hauntingly beautiful debut set in the mid-19th Century in the coastal English town of Whitby, 16-year-old Carlotta Dell'oro recounts the lives of her ill-fated parents. A sensitive young artist, Leo Dell'oro meets the beautiful, cruel Clotilde Girard at her father's lodgings above an antiques shop. A larger-than-life explorer, Felix Girard has commissioned Leo and several others to join him on an expedition to a distant island to document the remains of a prehistoric creature. At sea, Leo finds himself the object of Clotilde's ridicule, even as he starts to fill his pages with sketches of her. When the mission proves to be a sham and Felix goes missing, Clotilde is beside herself. She eventually marries Leo and settles, unhappily, with him in a rented house in Whitby. Leo takes a menial job working for a glassmaker who carries on an inappropriate friendship with Clotilde right under his nose. While Leo retreats into himself and his art, Clotilde hatches a plan of escape in order to find her beloved papa, only to be thwarted when she discovers, to her horror, that she's pregnant. Gorgeously written and elegantly evocative, Baker's prose brings the Dell'oros' world to life and drives home the tragedy of their fruitless longings."—*Booklist* Starred Review

Beauman, Sally. [The Visitors](#) (Harper \$27.99). I wanted to love this book by Beauman who wrote a knockout follow-up to DuMaurier's *Rebecca*. Although Egyptology, the discovery and opening of King Tut's tomb, the roles of Howard Carter, Lord Caernarvon (of Highclere Abbey, aka "Downton"), and Flinders

Petrie (think Elizabeth Peters' Amelia Peabody series) are fascinating, the choice of narrator, a young girl, and the overwhelming detail made this a plod—for me. Instead, go for Beauman's [Rebecca's Tale](#) (\$14.95), set in 1951 but in one section creating a voice for the dead Rebecca.

Bretherick, Diana. [City of Devils](#) (Pegasus \$25.95). We're in Italy's Turin, 1887. James Murray, a young Scottish doctor fascinated by criminology, arrives to study with Cesare Lombroso, an unconventional and groundbreaking (for the day) scientist. Just hours after Murray's first visit with Lombroso, a mutilated body is discovered nearby in the Piazza Statuto. A note with the corpse points the finger at the celebrated Lombroso. Rallying a team composed of Ottolenghi, his fellow apprentice; local investigator Tullio; and the enigmatic though lovely housekeeper Sofia, Murray sets himself to understand a serial killer and clear Lombroso's name. The theories explored (Lombroso and Ottolenghi are real as is their work described here) and their application caught my interest more than the plot. Dr. Joseph Bell, a Conan Doyle mentor, gets a nod or two. Recommended to students of Victorian crime.

Burton, Jessie. [The Miniaturist](#) (Harper \$26.99). The Indie Next Pick: "When 18-year-old Nella Oortman arrives in Amsterdam in 1686 as the wife of a rich merchant trader, she finds herself living in a city that glitters with wealth and sharing a beautiful home that holds dark secrets with a distant husband and his sharp-tongued sister. When her husband gives Nella a perfect replica of their home as a wedding present, she employs a miniaturist to furnish the cabinet-sized piece but those creations bring about eerie and unexpected events. This is a beautiful and intriguing tale, highly recommended for fans of both historical fiction and suspense." And it portrays a closed and claustrophobic society seen elsewhere in the 17th Century. The signed UK edition was our August History/Mystery Pick.

Campbell, Cate. [The Benedict Bastard](#) (Kensington \$15). In that faraway summer of 1920, everyone Bronwyn knew was giddy about the new decade and the unfolding of a peacetime era. Port Townsend was recovering from the collapse that had threatened the city twenty years before. Businessmen were growing fat on the boom in lumber sales, and planning their profits from the new paper mill. The more daring among them padded their incomes by importing Canadian liquor for the speakeasies in Seattle. The boys who made it safely home from the war were celebrated as heroes, and had their pick of Port Townsend beauties. Bronwyn and her friends read *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar* and planned their debuts. They cut their hair and rolled their stockings, and tried, in secret, to learn to smoke cigarettes. The girls grew up in blissful ignorance of their own physiology. They were told their monthly periods were the curse of women. No one explained why, or how, they were connected to the great mystery. Bronwyn's view of romance was more Jane Austen than D. H. Lawrence, more Snow White than *The Scarlet Letter*. The union of men and women was a misty, magical idea, a fantasy of white silk and flowers, of veils and pearls and wedding cakes. Enter Preston Benedict...

✎Campion, Emma. [A Triple Knot](#) (Crown \$16). Joan of Kent, renowned beauty and cousin to King Edward III, is destined for a politically strategic marriage. As the king begins a long dynastic struggle to claim the crown of France, plunging England into the Hundred Years' War, he negotiates her betrothal to a potential

ally and heir of a powerful lordship. She secretly pledges herself to one of the king's own knights, one who has become a trusted friend and protector. Now she must defend her vow as the king—furious at Joan's defiance—prepares to marry her off to another man. But Joan, haunted by nightmares of her father's execution at the hands of her treacherous royal kin, fears the king's selection. A novel of the Fair Maid of Kent, set against the court of Edward III.

Downie, Ruth. [Tabula Rasa](#) (Bloomsbury \$26) immediately transports the reader to another time and place with an evocative description of work on Hadrian's Wall in the midst of an unrelenting rainstorm ("It was easy to believe that the rain threw itself at you personally; hard not to feel persecuted and aggrieved when it found its way into your boots no matter how much grease you slathered on them"). When Candidus, Roman medico Gaius Ruso's new clerk, goes missing, Ruso uses his many connections—he's rumored to be personally acquainted with Emperor Hadrian, and is married to a local, Tilla, whose relatives view him, understandably, with distrust—to find out what happened to Candidus. The 6th investigation for Ruso, all of them a pleasure.

✠Evans, James. [Tudor Adventures: The Hunt for the Northeast Passage](#) (Pegasus \$27.95). In the early 1500s, John Cabot's son Sebastian moved to Spain, where he learned the art of navigation and mapmaking. He also learned to rely only on firsthand knowledge gained by carefully recorded observation. "Lured back to England during the reign of Edward VI, Cabot updated the world map, indicating a passage to "Cathay" traveling north of Scandinavia. Seeing this as England's route to the great riches of the East, he partnered with Richard Chancellor, a brilliant scholar and the first Englishman to master oceangoing navigation. In 1553, Chancellor and Sir Hugh Willoughby led three ships on an expedition to find the Northeast Passage. In 1551, to fund the expedition, the three men formed a pioneering joint-stock business, the Muscovy Company, a precursor to the East India Company. Evans fully investigates the story of the Muscovy Company's voyage and examines what happened to the men and their ships. A wonderful adventure story, especially for those in awe of men who dared to breach the wilderness 500 years ago."—*Kirkus Reviews*

Eve, Nomi. [Henna House Signed](#) (Scribner \$26). This superb, moving book, at times making you angry, is our August Modern Firsts Club Pick. Yemen in 1920, a small Jewish community.... See First Novels.

✠Goodwin, Daisy. [The Fortune Hunter](#) (St Matins \$26.99). Goodwin's second novel travels the difficult protocols of Victorian-era fox hunting, as well as the even more complicated protocols of love and marriage in the era, especially for an intelligent young woman with a fortune. England, 1875: Charlotte Baird is the eligible heiress to "the Lennox Fortune." Her lovely, reckless mother was her father's second wife, and she died young in a hunting accident, leaving her fortune to Charlotte. Charlotte's brother, Fred, is engaged to Augusta Crewe, an ambitious woman from a good family who'd rather settle for Fred than stay unmarried (and she covets the Lennox diamonds). Charlotte is more interested in photography—especially composing unusual portraits and developing the plates and prints herself. When Bay Middleton, an expert horseman and friend of Fred, arrives for hunting season at Melton, Augusta's family home, he and Char-

lotte form an unlikely alliance that turns into love. An enchanting page-turner."—*PW* Starred Review

✠Gregory, Susanna. [The Lost Abbot](#) (\$13.95). Matthew Bartholomew doesn't want to travel to Peterborough in the summer of 1358, but his friendship with the lovely Julitta Holm has caused a scandal in Cambridge, so he has no choice. He is one of a party of Bishop's Commissioners, charged to discover what happened to Peterborough's abbot, who went for a ride one day and has not been seen since... A rerelease of one of the chapters in this popular medieval series.

Lovell, Julia. [The Opium Wars](#) (Overlook \$35). Lovell, a lecturer in modern Chinese history and literature at the University of London, expounds in great detail upon the myriad causes and results of the 19th-century Opium Wars. The book is primarily a blow-by-blow account of the war's "chaotically interesting" events, supplemented by close studies of the important personalities involved. Toward the end of the 18th century, the British Empire was running up a serious trade deficit in the Orient. The "perfect solution" to their situation, they came to believe, was to import more Indian opium into China. By the 1830s, however, Qing government administrators began to grow anxious over booming opium consumption and forced the lucrative trade into the black market, cutting British profits, which helped fund the Royal Navy. Conflict escalated as Britain repeatedly attempted to reinstate the opium trade's legality, but opium had become a convenient scapegoat for the Qing rulers. "Lovell painstakingly follows the intricate webs of trades, treaties, accusations, and recriminations between the two empires that has culminated in a the contemporary state of affairs in which Chinese citizens simultaneously lambaste the West while competing for visas and study-abroad opportunities. Lovell masterfully condenses into one volume a dense, difficult conflict, the results of which are still can still be felt 170 years later."

Manning, Kate. [My Notorious Life](#) (\$16). Axie Muldoon's story begins on the streets of 1860s New York. The impoverished child of Irish immigrants, she grows up to become one of the wealthiest and most controversial women of her day. In vivid prose, Axie recounts how she is forcibly separated from her mother and siblings, apprenticed to a doctor, and how she and her husband parlay the sale of a few bottles of "Lunar Tablets for Female Complaint" into a thriving midwifery business. Flouting convention and defying the law in the name of women's rights, Axie rises from grim tenement rooms to the splendor of a mansion on Fifth Avenue, amassing wealth while learning over and over never to trust a man who says "trust me." When her services attract outraged headlines, Axie finds herself on a collision course with a crusading official—Anthony Comstock, founder of the Society for the Suppression of Vice. It will take all of Axie's power to outwit him in the fight to preserve her freedom and everything she holds dear. Inspired by the true history of an infamous physician who was once called "the Wickedest Woman in New York."

Miley, Mary. [The Impersonator](#) (\$15.99). A debut follows vaudeville actress Leah Randall as she takes on the most challenging role of her young life—impersonating an heiress, Jessie Carr, who went missing seven years earlier, in 1917. Jessie's smarmy Uncle Oliver approaches Leah, currently unemployed and a dead ringer for his niece, with an irresistible offer: impersonate Jessie and share her \$10 million inheritance with him in six months,

when Jessie would have turned 21. Leah gets more than she bargained for, however, after she leaves for the Carrs' estate on the coast of Oregon, Cliff House. There are two attempts on her life before she even arrives. The family's Pinkerton investigators are excruciatingly thorough. And what about that bizarre series of local murders? I'd like to think Leah will return.

✚Parker, Kate. [The Counterfeit Lady](#) (Berkley \$15). Who would suspect antiquarian bookseller Georgia Fenchurch of leading a double life—as a private investigator for the clandestine Archivist Society in Victorian London? When England's national security is compromised, Georgia must pose as a titled lady to root out a spy? The blueprints at stake remind me of a Sherlock Holmes story: "The Bruce Partington Plans." This is fun although it's clearly an American writing it.

✚Parris, S J. [Treachery](#) (\$18). August, 1583. Giordano Bruno, a heretic fleeing the Inquisition, finds a new life working as a spy for Sir Francis Walsingham. Along with his friend, Sir Philip Sidney, Bruno travels to Plymouth on the Queen's behalf. There, they meet Sir Francis Drake, who is preparing to launch a daring expedition against the Spanish, which could turn the tide of war. Unbeknownst to Bruno, however, Sidney plans to stowaway with Drake's fleet and return a hero – dragging Bruno with him to the New World. But when a murder occurs aboard Drake's own ship, fear and suspicion grip the fleet and threaten to abort the expedition before it begins. Navigating the jealousies and loyalties of the crew, Bruno learns that someone with a deadly grudge is shadowing his investigation. 4th in this Elizabethan series.

Rappaport, Helen. [The Romanov Sisters](#) (St Martins \$27.99). They were the Princess Dianas of their day—perhaps the most photographed and talked about young royals of the early twentieth century. The four captivating Russian Grand Duchesses—Olga, Tatiana, Maria and Anastasia Romanov—were much admired for their happy dispositions, their looks, the clothes they wore and their privileged lifestyle. Over the years, the story of the four Romanov sisters and their tragic end in a basement at Ekaterinburg in 1918 has clouded our view of them, leading to a mass of sentimental and idealized hagiography. With this treasure trove of diaries and letters from the grand duchesses to their friends and family, we see them more clearly. And sadly, have learned we have to give up the idea that Anastasia survived....

Rowland, Laura Joh. [The Shogun's Daughter](#) (\$15.99). Japan, 1704. In an elegant mansion a young woman named Tsuruhime lies on her deathbed, attended by her nurse. Smallpox pustules cover her face. Incense burns, to banish the evil spirits of disease. After Tsuruhime takes her last breath, the old woman watching from the doorway says, "Who's going to tell the Shogun his daughter is dead?" The death of the Shogun's daughter means there is no heir...and danger for Sano Ichiro, the Shogun's investigator, who has a new political quagmire to navigate....

Sides, Hampton. [In the Kingdom of Ice](#) (Knopf \$28.95) "chronicles American naval officer George Washington De Long's harrowing 1879 expedition to the North Pole, an account as frightening as it is fascinating. Each page envelops readers in the bravery of De Long and the crew of the Jeannette, their indefatigable quest for the "Polar Grail," and their dogged will to survive. News mogul James Gordon Bennett Jr., a colorful personality who famously sent Sir Henry Stanley to Dr. David Livingstone,

was De Long's patron, mostly because he desired another front-page stunner for his paper. De Long's journal entries are mixed in with Sides' description of a voyage fraught with peril—their steamboat was wedged in ice for two winters and, upon released, was crushed. Seeking rescue, the crew hauled supplies hundreds of miles across Arctic ice fields. Impeccable writing, a vivid re-creation of the expedition and the Victorian era, and a taut conclusion make this an exciting gem."—*PW*

✚Sims, Michael, ed. [The Phantom Coach](#) (Bloomsbury \$17). A superior collection of Victorian ghost stories named for one of them. Includes Charles Dickens and Edith Wharton, Henry James, Thomas Hardy, and Arthur Conan Doyle, and comes with a skillful introduction to the genre and notes on each story. I enjoyed dipping into these tales. A nice Halloween treat for anyone.

✚Todd, Charles. [Unwilling Accomplice Signed](#) (Harper \$27). WWI Nurse Bess Crawford #6 in a series I truly enjoy—it lacks the melancholy of the Ian Rutledge mysteries. Bess, home on leave, is asked to accompany a wounded soldier to Buckingham Palace, where he's to be decorated by the king. The next morning, when Bess goes to collect him, Wilkins' room is empty and he's nowhere to be found. Both the army and the nursing service blame Bess for losing a patient, a hero at that, but label him a deserter. Feeling her reputation besmirched and that of her father as well, Bess sets off with the aid of family friend Simon to track down the missing soldier across England... As ever with the Todds, the meticulous record-keeping of the British Army commands respect as the case develops into a countryside chase.

Tremayne, Peter. [The Devil's Seal Signed](#) (Headline \$43). The 25th Sister Fidelma Mystery. When a curious deputation of religieus arrives in Cashel, death follows close behind and Sister Fidelma and her companion, Eadulf, seem unable to stem the bloodshed and discover the sinister reason behind it. Is one of the deputation responsible? What was the Venerable Verax, the elderly scholar from Rome, hiding? Was there an evil secret behind the austere and arrogant Bishop Arwald of Magonsaete? Indeed, what was the real reason behind Eadulf's own brother, Egric's, unexpected appearance at Cashel to coincide with these events? Victims and suspects combined to make a tangled skein that results in one of the most complex and bloody mysteries that Fidelma and Eadulf have ever had to face.