

**Rockport Public Library
Summer Reading for Grown-Ups
Fiction Reading Suggestions
2010**

The List is divided into sections by type (genre) of book. There is also a list of "Previews of Coming Attractions", books that are not published yet but will be during the summer. The last list contains "Popular Series" which gives the most current title published in the series.

Genre Key: L – Literary H – History M&T – Mystery & Thriller P – Popular

Copies of all the titles listed are available at Rockport Public Library and Toad Hall Bookstore.

Contemporary Fiction

Author	Title	Genre
Alison, Rosie	The Very Thought of You	L
<p>England, 31st August 1939: the world is on the brink of war. As Hitler prepares to invade Poland, thousands of children are evacuated from London to escape the impending Blitz. Torn from her mother, eight-year-old Anna Sands is relocated with other children to a large Yorkshire estate which has been opened up to evacuees by Thomas and Elizabeth Ashton, an enigmatic childless couple. Soon Anna gets drawn into their unravelling relationship, seeing things that are not meant for her eyes - and finding herself part-witness and part-accomplice to a love affair, with unforeseen consequences. A story of longing, loss and complicated loyalties, combining a sweeping narrative with subtle psychological observation.</p>		
Allende, Isabelle	Island Beneath the Sea	L
<p>Zarité, called Tété, is born into slavery in the colony of Saint-Domingue, where enslaved Africans are worked to death by the thousands, and European men prey on women of color. So it is with Tété and her "master," the deeply conflicted plantation owner Toulouse Valmorain, who relies on her for everything from coerced sex to caring for his demented first wife, his legitimate son, and their off-the-record daughter. When the slave uprising that gives birth to the free black republic of Haiti erupts, Toulouse, Tété, and the children flee to Cuba, then to New Orleans. In a many-faceted plot, Allende animates irresistible characters authentic in their emotional turmoil and pragmatic adaptability. She also captures the racial, sexual, and entrepreneurial dynamics of each society in sensuous detail while masterfully dramatizing the psychic wounds of slavery. Allende evokes the spiritual energy that still sustains the beleaguered people of Haiti and New Orleans.</p>		
Alexie, Sherman	War Dances	L 2010 Pen/Faulkner Winner
<p>From National Book Award-winner Alexie comes a new collection of stories, poems, question and answer sequences, and hybrids of all three and beyond. In a penetrating voice that mixes humor with anger, Alexie pointedly asks, "If it is true that children pay for the sins of their fathers, then is it also true that fathers pay for the sins of their children?" Many of the stories revolve around the complexities of fatherhood; in the title story, the Native American narrator recalls his alcoholic father's death as he confronts his own mortality, and "The Ballad of Paul Nonetheless" is the tale of an eccentric vintage clothing salesman whose sexual attraction to his wife fades following the birth of their children. The collection also contains stirring defenses of artistic integrity; "Fearful Symmetry" is an incisive account of working as a young screenwriter for a Hollywood studio, and the poem "Ode to Mix Tapes" endorses hard work as the key ingredient behind any creation. Alexie unfurls highly expressive language, and while at times his jokes bomb and the characters' anger can feel forced, overall this is a spiritedly provocative array of tragic comedies.</p>		
Bakker, Gerbrand	The Twin	L 2010 Dublin Prize Winner
<p>Henk was more popular and athletic than Helmer, his identical twin, while growing up on a small rural Netherlands farm. Henk was their father's favorite son. Naturally lovely Riet chooses to marry him instead of Helmer. After Henk dies in an auto accident a couple of months before the wedding, Helmer is forced to leave college and return to the family farm. With deep bitterness, he spends days mucking the stalls and milking cows. Now, 37 years later, Helmer moves his invalid father upstairs to get him out of the way and slowly transforms the living space to be more suitable</p>		

for a bachelor. After a few correspondences from recently widowed Riet, Helmer agrees to take in her teenage son. She feels that hard farm work will give him some direction. Colmer's superb translation allows the novel's authentic voice to be heard by American readers. Bakker captures Helmer's true feelings with excellent inner dialogue. His ongoing feud with his father instills an unusual bond between the two. Readers will appreciate the setting of farmland, canals, windmills, and green pastures, and see how family dynamics are ongoing and changing.

Baldwin, Rosecrans

You Lost Me There

L (Aug)

By turns funny, charming, and tragic, Rosecrans Baldwin's debut novel takes us inside the heart and mind of Dr. Victor Aaron, a leading Alzheimer's researcher at the Soborg Institute on Mount Desert Island in Maine. Victor spends his days alternating between long hours in the sterile lab and running through memories of his late wife, Sara. He has preserved their marriage as a sort of perfect, if tumultuous, duet between two opposite but precisely compatible souls. But one day, in the midst of organizing his already hyperorganized life, Victor discovers a series of index cards covered in Sara's handwriting. They chronicle the major "changes in direction" of their marriage, written as part of a brief fling with couples counseling. Sara's version of their great love story is markedly different from his own, which, for the eminent memory specialist, is a startling revelation. Victor is forced to reevaluate and relive each moment of their marriage, never knowing if the revisions will hurt or hearten. Rosecrans Baldwin shows himself here to be a young writer bursting with talent and imagination who deftly handles this aching love story with sensitivity and unexpected maturity. "You Lost Me There" is a treasure of a book filled with beautiful, intelligent prose, a book that wears its smarts lightly and probes its emotions deeply.

Banville, John

The Infinities

L

Booker Prize-winner Banville gives us a day in the life of the Godley siblings, who have gathered at the bedside of their comatose father with their stepmother. Narrated from the perspective of the god Hermes, the tale oscillates between the Godley family on Earth and the lives of the immortal gods. The two worlds collide throughout the novel, as the gods intervene in events transpiring among Godley family members. The drama that ensues results from the gods' ability to impersonate human beings on Earth, where they often engage in lascivious activity. At the same time, the interplay between the gods and human beings explores larger existential concepts concerning identity. The plot unfolds like a matryoshka doll, as the masks of individual characters are removed to reveal other masks. Choosing introspective character description over rich plotlines, Banville puts his writing prowess on full display. This work will appeal to readers who enjoy the work of John Updike or Vladimir Nabokov.

The Particular Sadness of Lemon

Bender, Aimee

Cake: A Novel

L

Rose Edelstein is nearly nine when she first tastes her mother's feelings baked into a slice of birthday cake. Her "mouth was filling up with the taste of smallness of upset." Meals become an agony for Rose, and she subsists on junk food from the school vending machine. When her mother begins an affair, Rose can taste that, too. Her brilliant older brother, Joseph, seems to have some type of autism spectrum disorder, though it is never named. Rose grows up and manages what she now considers her food skill, discerning not only the city of production but also the personality and temperament of the growers and pickers. She also draws closer to her father, finally understanding his prepossessions. This is an unusual family, even by California standards. Bender deconstructs one of our most pleasurable activities, eating, and gives it a whole new flavor. She smooths out the lumps and grittiness of life to reveal its zest.

Berg, Elizabeth

The Last Time I Saw You

L

To each of the men and women in "The Last Time I Saw You", this reunion means something different. A last opportunity to say something long left unsaid, an escape from the bleaker realities of everyday life, a means to save a marriage on the rocks, or an opportunity to bond with a slightly estranged daughter, if only over what her mother should wear.

Blake, Sarah

The Postmistress

L

Debut novelist Blake weaves together the story of three women before and during WWII. The story takes place in alternating locations in Cape Cod and war torn Europe in 1940. 40-year-old postmistress Iris James and young newlywed Emma Trask go about their daily lives in Franklin, MA on the Cape.

They follow American reporter Frankie Bard who works with Edward R. Morrow on the radio as she delivers powerful and personal accounts from the London Blitz and elsewhere in Europe. Trask waits for the return of her husband who is a volunteer doctor stationed in England. James comes across a letter with valuable information that

produce filigreed wood furniture. Ignoring the asylum for his business pursuits, Matthew seeks investors, including the Tennyson family, of whom Alfred's brother, Septimus, is a patient at High Beach. John, meanwhile, spirals into a fantasy world fueled by his obsession with a dead childhood sweetheart, Mary. Things become complicated when John deludes himself into thinking a fellow patient is his dead love. All the while, Alfred, who is at the asylum to be near his brother, is fruitlessly pursued by Matthew's adolescent daughter, Hannah. While Alfred, unfortunately, is the least convincing character, John's madness is richly imagined, and Matthew comes off as powerfully sympathetic as he grows ever more desperate to raise funds for his business gamble. There's a manneredness to the storytelling that devotees of 19th-century British literature will appreciate.

Franzen, Jonathan

Freedom

L (Aug)

A darkly comedic novel about family. Patty and Walter Berglund were the new pioneers of old St. Paul—the gentrifiers, the hands-on parents, the avant-garde of the Whole Foods generation. Patty was the ideal sort of neighbor, who could tell you where to recycle your batteries and how to get the local cops to actually do their job. She was an enviably perfect mother and the wife of Walter's dreams. Together with Walter—environmental lawyer, commuter cyclist, total family man—she was doing her small part to build a better world. But now, in the new millennium, the Berglunds have become a mystery. Why has their teenage son moved in with the aggressively Republican family next door? Why has Walter taken a job working with Big Coal? What exactly is Richard Katz—rocker and Walter's college best friend and rival—still doing in the picture? Most of all, what has happened to Patty? Why has the bright star of Barrier Street become “a very different kind of neighbor,” an implacable Fury coming unhinged before the street's attentive eyes? In his first novel since “The Corrections”, Jonathan Franzen has given us an epic of contemporary love and marriage. Freedom comically and tragically captures the temptations and burdens of liberty: the thrills of teenage lust, the shaken compromises of middle age, the wages of suburban sprawl, the heavy weight of empire. In charting the mistakes and joys of the book's intensely realized characters as they struggle to learn how to live in an ever more confusing world, Franzen has produced an indelible and deeply moving portrait of our time.

Giordano, Paolo

The Solitude of Prime Numbers

L

Italian author and mathematician Giordano created an international bestseller. He follows two scarred people whose lives intersect but can't seem to join in his cerebral yet touching debut. Alice and Mattia, both survivors of childhood traumas, are the odd ones out amid the adolescent masses in their high school. Mattia has never recovered from the loss of his sister, while Alice still suffers the effects of a skiing accident that damaged her physically and stunted her ability to trust. Now teenagers, Mattia, also addicted to self-injury, has withdrawn into a world of numbers and math, and Alice gains control through starving herself and photography. When they meet, they recognize something primal in each other, but timing and awkwardness keep their friendship on tenuous ground until, years later, their lives come together one last time. Giordano uses Mattia and Alice's trajectory to ask whether there are some people—the prime numbers among us—who are destined to be alone, or whether two primes can come together.

Goodman, Allegra

The Cookbook Collector

L

Crisp, accomplished Emily Markowitz is CEO of a data-storage startup in late 1990s California. Her sister, Jessica, is a messy, passionate graduate student in philosophy who's involved with the charismatic leader of Tree Savers and works in a rare-books store owned by the older, slightly grumpy George. George got rich off of Microsoft and now follows his first love, and he's impressed when Jess manages something brilliant with a woman who wants but doesn't want to part with an astonishing cookbook collection. Frantically different, the sisters are still bound by memories of the mother they lost as children; Emily strains to persuade Jess to invest in her startup even as Jess strains to see what Emily sees in her fiance, go-getter Jonathan, who has his own startup back East. Meanwhile, their father, who appreciates techie overachiever Emily more than wise Jess, is strangely resistant to the Bialystokers moving in next door. Alas, 9/11 brings not just family tragedy but the revelation of some uncomfortable truths and a realignment of relationships. Goodman is remarkably successful in creating rich, engaging characters and a complex story of love and identity.

Grushin, Olga

The Line

L

Grushin's first novel, “The Dream Life of Sukhanov”, is now followed by a work of equal merit. The eponymous line is a conceit that showcases the hopes and dreams of a slice of Soviet society after “the Change,” the repressive period following the Revolution of 1917. In Grushin's line, one of many thousands that stretched across the Soviet Union over the decades, citizens stand and wait for some initially unspecified goods to be put up for sale by the state. It finally turns out that the kiosk will be selling tickets for a concert to be conducted by a supposedly returning

expatriate composer (in real life, a line like this actually formed for a concert by Igor Stravinsky). With only one ticket allowed per person, three members of a family of four take turns waiting for an entire year. Their motives are mixed and shifting, and in the end astonishing secrets are revealed.

Gwin, Minrose

The Queen of Palmyra

L

The protagonist of this affecting and disturbing bildungsroman, Florence Forrest, lives in Millwood, Miss., the small segregated town where her father, Win, a burial insurance salesman, is the proud leader of the local Klansmen. It's 1963, and Florence can't figure out why her mother, Martha, fears Win and focuses her attention on making runs to bootleggers. Florence spends days at her grandparents' house where she irritates the surly black housekeeper, Zenie (named for Zenobia, the queen of ancient Palmyra), and the afternoons with Zenie's family in Shake Rag, the neighborhood on the black side of town. Zenie has no particular affection for Florence or her kin, but tolerates the lot of them out of necessity. The civil rights movement is sweeping through the South, and when Zenie's pretty, ambitious niece, Eva, comes to town to sell insurance to earn money for college, Millwood will never be the same. This thought-provoking novel shows the terror and tragedy in one divided Southern community whose residents have no interest in reconciling. The blacks want their equal rights while Win and his followers would rather kill than relinquish power.

Hamann, Hillary Thayer

Anthropology of an American Girl

L

Hamann's debut traces the sensual, passionate, and lonely interior of a young woman artist growing up in windswept East Hampton at the end of the 1970s. The book begins as a two-pronged tragedy befalls 17-year-old narrator Eveline: her best friend's mother (more maternal than her own) dies, and Eveline is raped by two high school students. Her brutalized interior, exquisitely rendered by Hamann, leads Eveline to a series of self-realizations that bears obvious comparison to that iconic nonconformist Holden Caulfield. The difference, though, is Eveline's femininity threatens to subsume her fragility. Over the course of the book, she falls deeply in love with a stormy figure who helps bring her to disturbing conclusions. Eveline-bent on self-destruction but capable of deep passion, stifled by circumstance but constantly blossoming-is a marvelously complex and tragic figure of disconnection, startlingly real and exposed at all times.

Harding, Paul

Tinkers

L (2010 Pulitzer Prize Winner)

George Washington Crosby has eight days to live. After this first line, the life of George and of his father, Howard, who left when George was 12, is explored through the metaphor of George's hobby of repairing clocks. Howard was a peddler, traveling with a cart and mule through eastern Maine around the turn of the century. This isolated profession allowed him to keep his affliction, epilepsy, successfully hidden from most everyone until, finally, his wife decides he has to be institutionalized for the safety of her children. It is to avoid this that Howard disappears. George, as he lays dying, considers his life and family coming in and out of reality and history. Harding, an MFA from Iowa Writer's Workshop, creates a beautifully written study of father-son relationships and the nature of time.

Harrison, Jim

The Farmer's Daughter

L

Resilient, larger-than-life characters appear in this collection of three novellas by prolific writer and poet Harrison. In the title story, Sarah lives a self-sufficient existence on a Montana farm with her father. When she attends the local fair, a run-in with a rough group of musicians shatters her innocence. The eponymous "Brown Dog Redux" is a poignant tale about a Native American who escapes to Canada to avoid placing his disabled daughter in a group home, but they are smuggled back to Michigan when their underground help risks exposure. Once home among familiar lakes and woods, Brown Dog understands the need for a special school. In "The Games of Night," Samuel contracts a rare blood disease after being bitten by a wolf cub. He suffers monthly seizures coinciding with the phases of the moon, but a reunion with a childhood friend gives him hope. Excellent fare for Harrison's devoted followers. New readers with a fondness for Hemingway's Michigan stories or Cormac McCarthy's spare regional novels will also find these tales much to their liking. Highly recommended.

Haslett, Adam

Union Atlantic

L

This is a timely and often deeply engaging debut novel by an acclaimed short-story writer whose earlier collection of short fiction was a finalist for both the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award. The novel begins slowly, as Haslett introduces his characters and sets his story in motion, but by midpoint, it becomes riveting. The year is 2002, and the villain at the heart of this story is Doug Fanning, a financier at an American bank who has built his career by cynically and sometimes criminally exploiting federal banking law. Fanning ends up leveraging himself into billions of dollars of debt, a situation that comes to threaten the viability of world financial markets (there are shades of Lehman Brothers here). Haslett handles this superbly, skillfully depicting the complexity and drama. He presents a

have turned her promising academic career into an American nightmare. Despite her Harvard doctorate and uncanny financial sense, Jane is betrayed by the most important men in her life: her father, her thesis advisor, and the father of her child. When a final catastrophe robs her of any remaining emotional resources, Jane leaves Boston for any place in which she can disappear. Disappearance, however, is not really an option in our Internet-driven world, and everyone Jane encounters suffers a similarly traumatic loss. Kennedy's fast-paced story keeps the reader engaged and rooting for Jane's eventual return to the world. The opportunity to rescue a missing child is the trigger for her realization that life can continue. Kennedy is incredibly popular in Europe but has not published a novel in the United States in ten years. This oversight will be remedied when several of his novels are finally released within the next year. Readers who enjoy well-written mainstream works like those of Richard Yates, Richard Russo, Jodi Picoult, and Jane Smiley will be happy to add Kennedy to their list of favorites.

Knight, Michael

The Typist

L, H (Aug)

Private Francis Vancleave is stationed in Tokyo just after World War II, serving as a typist for General MacArthur. His position puts him in contact with the elite units billeted near the Emperor's Palace; in fact, his roommate, Clifford, is in the Honor Guard and arranges for Francis to become a Saturday companion for MacArthur's young son. The narrator's strong first-person voice contrasts with his retiring, impassive demeanor, giving the novel a pensive tone that has more in common with an Alice Munro story than a typical war novel. Francis is hypersensitive to his bleak, war-torn surroundings and the plight of the ever-present panpan girls (prostitutes). Yet he barely reacts when he receives word of his wife's affair back in the States or when he learns of Clifford's growing entanglement in Tokyo's black market. But Francis's experiences subtly change him; he moves from being a typist-merely recording what passes before him-to taking charge of his life. With its spare, economical prose, this novel brings a different slant to the theme of war and relationships.

Kwok, Jean

Girl in Translation

L

Living in squalor among rats and roaches in a virtually abandoned unheated apartment building in Brooklyn, NY, 11-year-old Kimberly Chang narrates how, after recently immigrating from Hong Kong, she and her mother strive to eke out a life together working in an illegally run sweat shop. Though she was once the top-ranked pupil in her class in Hong Kong, Kimberly's English skills are so limited that she must struggle to keep up in school while still translating for her mother and attempting to hide the truth of her living situation from her well-to-do classmates and only true friend, Annette. Drawing on her own experiences as an immigrant from Hong Kong (though she herself went to Harvard and Columbia, while Kimberly earns a spot at Yale), Kwok adeptly captures the hardships of the immigrant experience and the strength of the human spirit to survive and even excel despite the odds.

Lamont, Ann

Imperfect Birds

L

Lamott returns to some of her favorite characters in this exploration of raising a teenager in today's difficult world. In Rosie, Rosie was a child dealing with her mother's alcoholism. In Crooked Little Heart, she was a 13-year-old tennis champion beginning to understand boys, self-doubt, and the continued stress with her mother. In this novel, Rosie is now 17, and while she holds it together in school, her hidden life is all about drugs and alcohol. Since Rosie masks it so well, her mother, Elizabeth, now a recovered alcoholic, tries to give her room to experiment. But once the bottom falls out, Elizabeth realizes the consequences of her misplaced trust. Lamott covers faith and its part in life and personal struggles-a topic that's close to her heart and nicely portrayed through Elizabeth's best friend, the spiritual Rae. This is a deft, moving look at an extremely fragile and codependent mother-daughter relationship and how an out-of-control teenager affects a life, a friendship, and a marriage.

The Thieves of Manhattan: A

Langer, Adam

Memoir Novel

L

Aspiring New York novelist Ian Minot's career is going nowhere. He has a day job in a coffee shop and a Romanian girlfriend, Anya, whose about-to-be published short stories have her poised for literary stardom. He is likewise enraged at the easy success of Blade Markham, whose bogus (a la James Frey) memoir has skyrocketed to the top of the best sellers list. Thus, he's ready to listen when Jed Roth, an embittered former editor, presents him with a scheme to take Roth's unpublished novel, A Thief in Manhattan, call it a memoir, try to publish it under his own name, and reap the fame and fortune that will soon come his way. The carefully plotted ruse goes swimmingly until just before the publication date, when the events of the so-called memoir inexplicably begin to become real. A dizzyingly inventive comic thriller that is at once a sardonic take on the hypocrisies of the publishing world and an exploration of the sometimes fluid boundaries between the real and the imaginative in literature.

Lee, Chang-Rae

The Surrendered

L

June Singer is a middle-aged Korean woman living in the United States and dying of cancer, but before she dies, she wants to accomplish two things: find her son, who is drifting around Italy, and make a redemptive pilgrimage to the Chapel of Bones. She enlists the unwilling help of Hector, her son's father, whom she hasn't seen since the 1950s, when she was a child in a Korean orphanage and Hector was an ex-soldier working as the handyman. Throughout June and Hector's painful journey, we learn about the Tanners, the couple who ran the orphanage; Sylvie Tanner's childhood as a daughter of missionaries who were slain in front of her; the possessive love that June and Hector had for Sylvie; and the resulting calamity that has haunted them their whole lives. This is a completely engrossing story of great complexity and tragedy. Lee's ability to describe his characters' sufferings, both physical and mental, is extraordinarily vivid; one is left in awe of the human soul's ability to survive the most horrific experiences.

Levy, Andrea

The Long Song

L

Author of "Small Island", Levy is a British writer of Jamaican descent and draws upon history to recall the island's slave rebellion of 1832. The unreliable narrator pretends to be telling the story of a woman called July, born as the result of a rape of a field slave, but it soon becomes obvious that the narrator is July herself. Taken as a house slave when she's eight years old, July is later seduced by the pretentiously moralistic English overseer after he marries the plantation's mistress; his clergyman father has assured him that "a married man might do as he pleases." Related in July's lilting patois, the narrative encompasses scenes of shocking brutality and mass carnage, but also humor, sometimes verging on farce. Levy's satiric eye registers the venomous racism of the white characters and is equally candid in relating the degrees of social snobbery around skin color among the blacks themselves, July included. Slavery destroys the humanity of everyone is Levy's subtext, while the cliffhanger ending suggests (one hopes) a sequel.

Madden, Deidre

Molly Fox's Birthday

L (Orange Prize Finalist)

This ruminative novel takes place over the course of a day, one of many a playwright spends in her actress friend's Dublin home over the course of a summer. The nameless narrator, an accomplished playwright to whom Irish actress Molly Fox has loaned her Dublin home, reflects on her 20-year-long friendship with Molly and the rise of both of their careers as she avoids the work of writing her next play. As she wanders through the house peeking at Molly's personal belongings, awards, and theater memorabilia, the narrator realizes that, in some ways, Molly is as much of an enigma to her now as when they first met. She also explores her relationships with a college friend, Andrew, and her older brother, Tom, a priest. There isn't much in the way of plot-it mostly consists of a series of flashbacks-but readers who enjoy this cerebral and meandering variety of first-person Euro-fiction will be enthralled at Madden's unassuming yet moving story.

Magendi, Kathryn

Tender Graces

L

The death of her troubled mother and memories of her abused grandmother lure a woman back to the Appalachian hollow where she was born. Virginia Kate Carey, the daughter of a beautiful mountain wild-child and a slick, Shakespeare-quoting salesman, relives her turbulent childhood and the pain of her mother's betrayals. Haunted by ghosts and buried family secrets, Virginia Kate struggles to reconcile three generations of her family's lost innocence.

Marlantes, Karl

The Matterhorn: A Novel of the Viet Nam War

L

Even as the Vietnam War recedes into the past, the despair, confusion, and mythology it generated retains a grip on our culture. Debut novelist Marlantes offers a realistic, in-the-trenches look at that war. Matterhorn is a remote jungle base of operations held by the marines. We follow a young reserve lieutenant, Waino Mellas, as he nervously begins command of a squad ordered to take out a North Vietnamese machine gun nest; afterward, the squad is sent into the jungle for obscure reasons. This is the beginning of a long and murderous journey, with little food or water, constant rain, impassable terrain, and enemy ambushes. The soldiers bond with one another, but their faults and divisions are magnified, as racial tensions mount and cultural differences are revealed. The battle scenes, at which the author excels, are frequent, brutal, and viscerally energetic, and the skillfully rendered dialog reveals a bunch of strangers attempting to communicate in life-defeating circumstances. In the end, there are no real victors.

Mazetti, Katarina

Benny & Shrimp

L

Mazetti's debut, a bestseller in her native Sweden, centers on two lonely, 30-something singles living in rural Sweden as they attempt to overcome the inner obstacles keeping them apart. The dialogue-heavy story is told in breezy, alternating first-person accounts that paint a vivid portrait of life in northern Sweden. Desiree, better known

Moran, Johanna

The Wives of Henry Oades L

When Henry Oades is posted to New Zealand in 1890, he considers the move a chance for adventure. Content with life in London, Margaret reluctantly accompanies him with their children. When their isolated cottage is attacked by the Maori, Margaret and the children are abducted and presumed dead. Fleeing from his memories, Henry resettles in California, where he marries Nancy, a young widow with a baby. Six years later, Margaret and her children, having finally escaped captivity, arrive at Henry's Berkeley farm. Weathering threats, harassment, and lawsuits, Nancy and Margaret slowly develop a supportive relationship that enables their blended family to survive.

Mueenuddin, Daniyal

In Other Rooms, Other Wonders L (2010 Pulitzer Prize Finalist)

In eight beautifully crafted, interconnected stories, Mueenuddin explores the cutthroat feudal society in which a rich Lahore landowner is entrenched. A complicated network of patronage undergirds the micro-society of servants, families and opportunists surrounding wealthy patron K.K. Harouni. In "Nawabdin Electrician," Harouni's indispensable electrician, Nawab, excels at his work and at home, raising 12 daughters and one son by virtue of his cunning and ingenuity-qualities that allow him to triumph over entrenched poverty and outlive a robber bent on stealing his livelihood. Women are especially vulnerable without the protection of family and marriage ties, as the protagonist of "Saleema" learns: a maid in the Harouni mansion who cultivates a love affair with an older servant, Saleema is left with a baby and without recourse when he must honor his first family and renounce her. Similarly, the women who become lovers of powerful men, as in the title story and in "Provide, Provide," fall into disgrace and poverty with the death of their patrons. An elegant stylist with a light touch, Mueenuddin invites the reader to a richly human, wondrous experience.

Nemirovsky, Irene

Dimanche and Other Stories L

Ten luminous and newly translated stories by Nemirovsky, who died at Auschwitz, expose the miseries that undermine happy families. Set mostly in France, where the author immigrated after the Russian revolution, these accomplished tales create worlds full of secrets and treacheries, such as in the title story, set on one typical Sunday at a bourgeois Parisian home where the middle-aged wife and mother, Agnes-once embittered by her husband's taking of a mistress, but now apathetic to his wanderings-remembers her own lost love. "Flesh and Blood" is a masterpiece of familial subterfuge revolving around an aged matriarch who falls ill and tries to keep peace among her three self-absorbed sons and their grasping wives. In "The Spell," a young visitor to a messy Russian household gleams dark mysteries around a lovelorn aunt's romantic sorcery; several of the tales, such as "The Spectator" and "Monsieur Rose," capture aloof, prosperous gentlemen fleeing Paris in advance of the Nazis. In this superlative translation, Nemirovsky's characters emerge full-fleshed, and her voice remains timeless and relevant.

Nicholls, David

One Day L

Emma Morley and Dexter Mayhew get together (almost) following their graduation in 1988. We catch up with them annually on July 15, St. Swithin's Day, the British equivalent of Groundhog Day but with rain. Here, it's a prognosticator of how their lives are turning out. She's been in love with Dex for years, while he's been in bed with more women than we can count. He gets a job in "media" as a late-night TV presenter on music/rock star interview shows. She works at a crappy Mexican restaurant before altering course and becoming a teacher. Do they eventually find their way back to each other? Nicholls doesn't take the easy route, throwing lots of relationships and obstacles in our protagonists' paths. This tale of youthful dreams coming true and perhaps not being so dreamy is written with great verve and charm, reminiscent of the works of Mike Gayle. A coming-of-age story for all of us who might still be wondering what we want to be when we grow up.

Norman, Howard

What is Left the Daughter L

Set on the Atlantic coast of Canada during WWII, Norman's latest is an expertly crafted tale of love during wartime. Wyatt Hillyer loses both his parents on the same day when they jump from different bridges in Halifax, Nova Scotia, after they discover they are both having affairs with the woman next door. Wyatt's aunt and uncle take him in, and Wyatt becomes his uncle's apprentice in his sled and toboggan business and, despite the circumstances, soon falls in love with his adopted cousin, Tilda. Yet he must resign himself to loving from a distance when Tilda brings home Hans Moehring, a German university student. The two begin a courtship harshly complicated by reports of U-boat attacks on Canadian ships, and Tilda's father becoming increasingly uneasy about this potential enemy in their midst. Norman's writing is effortless, and his plot is grand in scope but studded with moments of tenderness and intimacy that help crystallize the anxiety and weariness of life on the home front. That Norman is able to achieve so much in 250 pages is a testament to his mastery of the craft.

O'Farrell, Maggie

The Hand that First Held Mine L

Lexie Sinclair moves from the Cornwall area to post-World War II London and begins a thrilling new life under the tutelage of her lover, Innes Kent, an editor and art collector. Even the eventual knowledge that he is legally married doesn't alter her allegiance to him, and she becomes the mother of his son, as well as a respected art critic. In between chapters about Lexie and Innes, readers meet contemporary London artist Elina, who lives with her boyfriend Ted. They have just had a son together, and Elina, who almost died in childbirth, is housebound during her recovery. Growing into his new role as a father, Ted suffers confusing flashbacks about his own childhood. Gradually, a trail of connection between these two nontraditional families is revealed. Devious acts have been committed, darkly affecting these innocent, decent, and well-developed characters. O'Farrell brings to mind Sue Miller but with a British and darker flavor; her sure hand for psychological suspense continues to be most impressive.

Orringer, Julie

The Invisible Bridge

L

In September 1937, Andras Levi leaves Budapest for Paris, where he will study at the Ecole Speciale on a scholarship. Before he leaves, he encounters Elza Hasz, who asks him to carry a letter to Paris addressed to C. Morgenstern. Andras posts the letter and begins his studies, getting help from a Hungarian professor, a desperately needed job from a theater director he met on the train, and an introduction to some friends from an actress at the theater. The daughter is sullen and disinterested, but the mother turns out to be Claire Morgenstern, recipient of the mysterious letter, and it is with Claire that Andras launches a tumultuous affair. Soon, a painful secret about Claire's past emerges-and then war comes to sweep everything aside. With historic detail, a complex cast of characters, and much coincidental crossing, this book has a big, saga-like feel.

Parkhurst, Carolyn

The Nobodies Album

L, M&T

The beautiful people face their personal demons in this truly novel novel about writing, motherhood, and second chances. Rock star Milo Frost stands accused of murdering his girlfriend. Olivia Frost drops everything, including her latest manuscript, to help clear her son's name. Words and deeds, however, prove more difficult to resolve in life than they do in Olivia's books. Parkhurst's brilliantly plotted chapters alternate between Olivia's attempts to solve the murder and excerpts from her novels, gradually revealing just how closely life and art can be connected. As the mystery unfolds, readers slowly come to understand the tragedy that precipitated Olivia's writing career and her subsequent estrangement from Milo. Fans of metafiction will enjoy the way Parkhurst gently pushes the envelope of story and questions the relationship between life and art. Mystery lovers, meanwhile, will savor the many twists and red herrings Parkhurst lobs at them on the way to solving the crime.

Pasulka, Brigid

**A Long Long Time Ago and
Essentially True**

**L (Winner of the Hemingway
Foundation / Pen Award)**

Pasulka's delightful debut braids together two tales of old and new Poland. The old is the fairy tale love story of the Pigeon, a young man so entranced by village beauty Anielica that he builds her family a house to prove his devotion. When war comes to Poland, the Pigeon works for the resistance, guarding the town and his Jewish sister-in-law with creativity and bravery. After the war, he and Anielica get engaged and the Pigeon brings his family to Krakow, but the fabled promises of the golden city and the glories of communism prove hollow. The new tale is about Anielica and the Pigeon's granddaughter, Beata, whose plainness has earned her the nickname Baba Yaga. Now living in a much-changed Krakow, Beata is a bar girl with no hopes of love or plans for the future. When tragedy strikes and Beata uncovers family secrets, she brings together the old and new to create her own bright future. Pasulka creates a world that's magical despite the absence of magical happenings, and where Poland's history is bound up in one family's story.

Petterson, Per

I Curse the River of Time

L

Petterson, author of "Out Stealing Horses" returns with the story of Arvid Jansen, who at 37, sees his world falling apart. His divorce is imminent, the Cold War is over, and the life choices he made to burnish his credibility with the Communist Party now seem sadly irrelevant. Eschewing the college education his parents toiled so hard to provide him, Arvid chose shift work in a factory, a decision that caused a rift with his mother, all the more untenable now that she's been diagnosed with cancer. Crippled by grief, guilt, and an unlovely excess of self-pity, Arvid tries to come to grips with the present by reexamining the past, in particular the effect of his younger brother's death on the family dynamic. The atmosphere is as gray as the stark Norwegian landscape. Melancholy permeates every character like a dense Oslo fog. Yet, this author's gift is his ability to convey so much emotion in such a spare prose style. Petterson's reputation and the litany of prizes awarded to this work after its release in Europe last year make it an essential read.

Picoult, Jodi

House Rules

L

In life some things are never to be broken-especially if you are an autistic child who takes "everything" literally. For example, some things that can't be broken are the house rules: tell the truth, brush your teeth, and, most important, take care of your brother; he's the only one you've got. In this 18th novel from Picoult, Jacob Hunt is a teenager with Asperger's syndrome and a morbid fascination with forensic science. He can recite all the intricacies of fingerprint analysis and recall the episode and number of his favorite TV crime show, but he can't feel your pain or emotions. For emotional intelligence Jacob has a tutor-until the tutor is found murdered. When Jacob is questioned, the same hallmark signs of his Asperger's that made him quirky also make him look very guilty-even to those who love him. Picoult has many fans, and they won't be disappointed here. She is the master of telling a story that at first glance seems predictable but seldom is.

Pomerantz, Sharon

Rich Boy

L (Aug)

Robert Vishniak is a striver-not a bad thing in America, land of opportunity and pulling oneself up by the bootstraps. Growing up working-class Jewish in northeast Philadelphia, he quickly realizes that there is more to life than the same old neighborhood, family, and friends. He's fortunate to be good-looking and hard-working, and he gets accepted at Tufts University. There he rooms with Sanford Trace, whose family is filthy rich and powerful. Trace can't be bothered to really attend classes-which is why he is at Tufts rather than Harvard with the rest of his friends. The combination of a successful college career and the right friends launches Robert on the proverbial path to riches, career climbing, and beautiful women. In this study of money, class, and love, debut novelist Pomerantz includes a few twists on the usual poor-boy-meets-rich-girl tale, giving the reader a different look at life in America from the Sixties to the Eighties. This novel will appeal to fans of family sagas and coming-of-age stories and has echoes of Fitzgerald and Gatsby.

Quindlen, Anna

Every Last One

L

Mary Beth Latham seems to have an idyllic life in a Vermont town as the wife of a respected doctor and the mother of three teenagers. But her son Max has been withdrawn and depressed, unlike his outgoing and popular twin, Alex, and her moody and sensitive daughter, Ruby, wants to break up with her emotionally needy boyfriend, who is practically a member of the family. Quindlen gives her readers an ominous sense of impending tragedy, but it still arrives with a shock. The book is divided into before and after, and it is compulsive reading. You might find yourself racing through the story, which could be drawn from today's headlines or TV news, and only later reflecting on how skillful the author is in her portrayal of family life in all its little details and in her flawless pacing. This gripping novel will undoubtedly be the choice of many book groups, too.

Girl by the Road at Night: A Novel

Rabe, David

of Viet Nam

L

Taking as its background the Vietnamese national poem, "The Tale of Kieu," this, too, is the story of a beautiful woman who encounters misfortune in a time of crisis. Set during the Vietnam War, it involves Lan, an attractive prostitute, who meets Whitaker, an aimless and somewhat innocent American soldier who seems bewildered both by the complexities of civilian life and by the senselessness of the war. Drawn to her (as she is to him) for reasons that are never completely clear, he attempts to protect her from the advances of a pair of South Vietnamese soldiers, which leads to her eventual downfall. Returning to the subject matter of his 1970s Vietnam War plays, Rabe presents, in some ways, a simple story encompassing a small number of scenes and elements, yet it's rich with underlying ironies and complexities.

Rachman, Tom

The Imperfectionists

L

At the Caffè Greco in Rome, circa 1953, Atlanta financier Cyrus Ott makes an offer that can't be refused. He will establish an international English-language newspaper to be run in Italy by Betty, the woman he once loved, and her husband, Leo, a hack writer for a Chicago daily. Within the building's walls an entire history of the print news business plays out over a 50-year span as writers, editors, and accountants grow in professional stature, squander their reputations, and fade into obsolescence. A former editor for the Paris branch of the International Herald Tribune, Rachman makes outstanding use of his credentials to place readers in the center of a newsroom so palpable one can hear the typewriters clacking and feel the uncomfortable undercurrent of professional jealousy among the writers jockeying for position. Navigating the minefields of relationships, parenthood, loneliness, and failure, each realistically imperfect character, developed through intimate, candid detail, becomes a story unto himself (or herself). With its evocative Italian setting and its timely handling of an industry in flux, this polished, sophisticated debut can be relished in one sitting or read piecemeal as a satisfying series of vignettes linked by historical references to the Ott family empire.

Reiken, Frederick

Day for Night

L

A novel with a sawbuck of narrators could easily devolve into an unreadable mess, but in Reiken's able hands becomes a compelling tale in which one thread deftly connects 10 people. Beverly Rabinowitz, a middle-aged New Jersey doctor born in Poland during WWII, is taking a vacation trip to Florida with her cancer-stricken boyfriend, David. Beverly's musings while on her trip introduce four characters who will later become narrators: Jordan, David's son; Tim Birdsey, a tour guide/musician; Dee, the lead singer in Birdsey's band; and Jennifer, Beverly's oldest daughter. Characters continue to appear: FBI agent Leopold Sachs; Miriam, a childhood friend and an analyst; Vicki, a veterinarian; and Amnon Grossman, an Israeli soldier accused of murdering a Palestinian boy. The story moves dizzily through Florida, Utah, New Jersey, and Israel, among other places, and includes plot lines involving fugitives from justice, the Holocaust, and the Palestinian/Israeli conflicts—all illustrating that observations depend on the observer. An imaginative and exciting read.

Ross, Adam

Mr. Peanut

L

This highly creative first novel revolves around the troubled and overactive imagination of David Pepin, brilliant computer game designer and entrepreneur, and his relationship with his wife, Alice. David dreams of killing Alice but not committing the deed himself. Alice dies with a handful of peanuts in her mouth to which she is fatally allergic. David claims her death is a suicide, the Police think it is murder. The Police investigators are also having some marital woes and there is a flash back sequence. A circuitous plot and mystery puzzle unfolds. There is some shape shifting related to levels of reality combined with three or maybe four alternate endings to the book. Coupled with the mystery puzzle, the book honestly depicts the dual nature of marriage, being connected and unconnected, as well as the juxtaposition of violence and love. A highly creative novel recommended for ambitious readers.

Simonson, Helen

Major Pettigrew's Last Stand

L

Sixty-eight-year-old Maj. Ernest Pettigrew has settled into a genteel life of quiet retirement in his beloved village of Edgecombe St. Mary. Refined, gentlemanly, unwaveringly proper in his sense of right vs. wrong, and bemused by most things modern, he has little interest in cavalier relationship mores, the Internet, and crass developments and is gently smitten by the widowed Mrs. Ali, the lovely Pakistani owner of the local shop where he buys his tea. After the unsettling death of his brother, Bertie, the Major finds his careful efforts to court Mrs. Ali (who shares his love of literature) constantly nudged off-course by his callow son, Roger; a handful of socialite ladies planning a dinner/dance at the Major's club; and the not-so-subtle racist attitudes his interest in Mrs. Ali engender. This irresistibly delightful, thoughtful, and utterly charming and surprising novel reads like the work of a seasoned pro. In fact, it is Simonson's debut. One cannot wait to see what she does next.

Smiley, Jane

Private Life

L

In 1905 Missouri, quiet 27-year-old Margaret Mayfield marries Capt. Andrew Jackson Jefferson Early, a naval officer and an astronomer who is considered a genius and a little odd. By the time they make their way by train to their new life in California, the reader understands that Captain Early is actually somewhat crazy in his obsessions. This is a conclusion that Margaret herself is slow to draw, even as their lives together grow more troubled. Smiley reminds us how difficult it was for all but the boldest women to extract themselves from suffocating life situations 100 years ago. While dealing with intimate matters, this novel also has an epic sweep, moving from Missouri in the 1880s to the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, up to the Japanese internment camps of World War II, with the scenes from Margaret's Missouri childhood reminiscent of Willa Cather. Not a highly dramatic page-turner but rather a subtle and thoughtful portrayal of a quiet woman's inner strength.

Soli, Tatjana

The Lotus Eaters

L

Seen through the lens of young American freelance photographer Helen Adams, this evocative debut novel is a well researched exploration of Vietnam between 1963 and 1975, when the United States pulled out of the conflict. Helen, who has come to Vietnam partly to discover what really happened to her brother, is determined to see the real Vietnam, combat and all. The narrative focuses on Adams, Pulitzer Prize-winning combat photojournalist Sam Darrow, and his Vietnamese assistant, Linh, revealing their relationships, loyalties, and ambitions and the terrible toll the war takes on them all. As readers, we come to understand the characters' attraction to and ambivalence about the war, how love can survive and thrive under such extreme conditions (Helen and Linh have an affair), the courage needed to report under war conditions and the journalistic principles involved, and the fragile beauty of this war-torn country and its people.

Truong, Monique

Bitter in the Mouth

L

From Monique Truong comes a brilliant, mesmerizing, beautifully written novel about a young woman's search for identity and family, as she uncovers the secrets of her past and of history. Growing up in the small town of Boiling Springs, North Carolina, in the 70's and 80's, Linda believes that she is profoundly different from everyone else, including the members of her own family. "What I know about you, little girl, would break you in two" are the cruel, mysterious last words that Linda's grandmother ever says to her. Now in her thirties, Linda looks back at her past when she navigated her way through life with the help of her great-uncle Harper, who loves her and loves to dance, and her best friend Kelly, with whom Linda exchanges almost daily letters. For as long as she can remember, Linda has experienced a secret sense—she can "taste" words, which have the power to disrupt, dismay, or delight. Even as Linda makes her way north to Yale and New York City, she still does not know the truth about her past. Then, when a personal tragedy compels Linda to return to Boiling Springs, she gets to know a mother she never knew and uncovers a startling story of a life, a family. Revelation is when God tells us the truth. Confession is when we tell it to him. This astonishing novel questions many assumptions—about what it means to be a family and to be a friend, to be foreign and to be familiar, to be connected and to be disconnected—from others and from the past, our bodies, our histories, and ourselves.

Udall, Brady

The Lonely Polygamist

L

Udall's long-awaited novel depicts a lively, humorous, and sometimes tragic picture of Golden Richards, his four demanding wives, and his 28 children. They are an unruly Mormon clan, scattered among three separate houses in rural Utah. Richards, a hapless graying contractor with a limp and a sinus condition, supports them with his less-than-successful construction business. To avoid bankruptcy, he takes a job in Nevada, a project he tells everyone is a senior citizens' home but in fact it is a bordello. That's only one of Golden's secrets. The sister wives hold weekly summits to schedule Golden's visits from wife to wife, house to house. He doesn't have a home of his own, so he frequently takes refuge in a playhouse built for a daughter who died in a tragic accident. In trying to help, he often makes things worse, but he valiantly makes one last effort to bring harmony to his fractious family. Udall observes with a keen eye for the ridiculous while showing compassion.

Vida, Vendela

The Lovers

L

Is it wise to return to the scene of your honeymoon after the sudden death of your spouse? That's what Yvonne, a seemingly sensible history teacher, decides to do in Vida's polished and unnerving third novel. Vida has created a brilliant, topsy-turvy, twenty-first-century variation on E. M. Forster's "Passage to India". Dodging her adult children, the mismatched twins glossy Matthew and rehab-veteran Aurelia, Yvonne, in deep shock, rents a fancy house on the coast of Turkey built by the landlord for his mistress. Yvonne is befriended by the landlord's aggressively inquisitive ex-wife, and becomes attached to Ahmet, a boy who collects and sells seashells. As she tries to adjust to widowhood while navigating perplexing social situations and painful memories, things go disastrously wrong. Vida creates an atmosphere at once molten and chilling as she deftly exposes the wounding reverberations of timeless conflicts between men and women, parents and children, East and West, appearance and truth.

Waldman, Ayelet

Red Hook Road

L

It's a beautiful summer day in Maine and perfect weather for the smiling young couple who just got married. Never mind that the groom's mother, Jane, doesn't really like John's marrying a "from awayer"—the name the locals give to people who just spend their summers in East Red Hook near the water. Jane is a Tetherly and, having lived her whole life in East Red Hook, considers her family real Mainers. The bride's mother, Iris Hewins Copaken, insists that she is native since her family's summer home was built in 1879, but since she and husband Daniel spend most of their time in New York City, Jane doesn't see it that way. Now, the guests are waiting for the young couple to show up, but when John's brother, Matt, arrives with two policemen, life as the Tetherlys and Copakens knew it ends. Over the course of four summers, they work through grief, new beginnings, and more loss. Waldman has written a tale of two families forced together through love and tragedy. Fans of Waldman's work and readers who enjoy family sagas will find this book a pleasure.

Wallace, Joseph

Diamond Ruby

L

As a girl, Ruby Thomas faces torment over her unusually long arms. After losing most of her family to the 1918 flu epidemic, a 13-year-old Ruby is determined to protect her two nieces. With little help from her older brother, now a broken man, Ruby uses those long arms, first to kill squirrels to feed the family and then to become part of a carnny show throwing fast balls as 17-year-old Diamond Ruby. It's a hard life, and it gets harder when rum runners and gamblers take over. Even as she makes a career for herself on a minor league team, Ruby is dogged by greed and corruption. Her determined love for her family, help from some unlikely friends, and a critical throw finally give her the break she has earned. Ruby is a keeper—a believable heroine living in a fully re-created New York world of

baseball and Prohibition. There are echoes of Betty Smith's "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn", but this story holds its own, allowing Diamond Ruby her place as a literary gem. This debut novel by a baseball historian may also appeal to YA readers.

Walls, Jeannette

Half Broke Horses

L

No one familiar with Walls's affecting memoir, "The Glass Castle", will be surprised by her subtitle here: Walls is a careful observer who can give true-life stories the rush and immediacy of the best fiction. Here she novelizes the life of her grandmother, giving herself just the latitude she needs to create a great story. Lily Casey Smith is one astonishing woman, tough enough to trot her pony across several hundred miles of desert to her first job when she's only a teenager. After a brief stint in Chicago and marriage to a flim-flam man, she's back in the West, teaching again and eventually remarrying, helping her fine new husband at the gas station, raising her children, and running hootch if she must to make ends meet during the Depression. Her story is at once simple and utterly remarkable, for this is one remarkable woman—a half-broke horse herself who's clearly passed on her best traits to her granddaughter. Told in a natural, offhand voice that is utterly enthralling, this is essential reading for anyone who loves good fiction—or any work about the American West.

Wilson, Edward O.

Anthill

L

Raphael Semmes Cody, half Mobile, AL, gentry and the rest, Clayville, AL, redneck, is a lonely kid who revels in summers spent exploring the Nokobee swampland, an environmentally sensitive tract bordering Florida's panhandle, home to longleaf pines, swallowtail kites, snakes, gators, and bugs. Best of all, Nokobee is where Raff Cody crosses paths with Florida State science Professor Fred Norville, who recognizes a fellow naturalist in the calm, self-contained young man who prefers the company of ants to that of people. Norville's influence and the Semmes family's money combine to secure Raff a first-class education in nearby Tallahassee, a law degree from Harvard, and the opportunity to return to Mobile with a plan to protect Nokobee for future generations. Famed naturalist Wilson, himself a Harvard-educated Alabama native, has won Pulitzers for his nonfiction. Touted as a novel, this book reads more like creative nonfiction, especially in light of the jarring inclusion of Raff's 70-page thesis on the Trailhead ant colony. Though his characters come off as one-dimensional, Wilson excels at describing the pungent smells and tranquil silence of the disappearing wetlands of Alabama.

Wilson, Susan

One Good Dog

L

Readers of Wilson's other novels, mainly women's romantic fiction in the vein of Kristin Hannah, are in for a big surprise. Adam March is a rising star in the corporate world when he explodes and slaps his female assistant. His fall from a great height leaves him doing community service at a homeless shelter, with no job, no income, and almost no money after a divorce. Doing a favor for the shelter's head, he takes on a rescued pit bull that had once been used in dog fights. The last thing Adam wants is a dog, but Chance helps Adam learn what is truly important, and Adam rescues Chance from the brutally short life of a fighter. Narrated in two voices, Adam's and Chance's, this work will remind readers of Garth Stein's "The Art of Racing in the Rain" and should appeal to dog lovers and fans of Spencer Quinn's "Dog on It". It evokes both laughter and tears, but the ending assures you that humans and dogs are capable of redemption.

HISTORY

Belfer, Lauren

A Fierce Radiance

H

Thirty-six-year-old Claire Shipley is a most modern woman in 1941. A gifted, focused photographer for LIFE magazine, a divorced single mother, and fearless in the pursuit of her career, she stumbles upon an enormous story when she is sent to cover the use of an experimental, hard-to-produce drug, penicillin, on infections. Having lost one child to septicemia, she is fiercely protective of her son. When her original story is killed, she is asked by the U.S. government to pursue it as a patriot, keeping an eye on the big pharmaceutical companies who are supposed to be mass-producing patent-free penicillin for use on the battlefield but are really working on the much more profitable cousin drugs. With an exquisite artist's eye for detail that puts readers right in the middle of New York City and the World War II fronts and incorporating all the elements of a hot, sprawling, page-turning romance—not to mention espionage, murder, crime-scene deceptions, big business intrigue, and family estrangements—Belfer once again blends fiction and facts with riveting results.

Bennett, Victoria

The Queen's Lover

H

Bennett returns to medieval Europe with the story of French princess Catherine de Valois (1401-37). As the neglected youngest daughter of mad King Charles VI and the dissolute Queen Isabeau, Catherine endures a childhood filled with fear and upheaval. Her only stable influence comes from her tutor, the renowned poet and writer Christine de Pizan. It is through Christine that Catherine first meets Owain Tudor, a young man descended from the once powerful royal family of Wales. Raised in England after his family's capture and imprisonment, Owain now serves as a devoted page in Henry V's household. Catherine and Owain develop a deep friendship, one that will sustain her through her brief marriage to the English king in the wake of his victory at Agincourt, widowhood, and role as mother of an infant Henry VI, the future ruler of England and France. Despite the suggestive title, readers searching for a steamy historical romance may have to look elsewhere. Instead, Bennett offers a compelling and occasionally solemn coming-of-age tale about a young woman who must navigate her conflicting roles as daughter, sister, wife, and mother.

**The Transformation of
Bartholomew Fortuno** **H**

Bryson, Ellen

Inspired by a vintage circus photograph, Bryson's first novel tells the fictional story of the unusual relationship between two human curiosities from P.T. Barnum's American Museum. Bartholomew Fortuno, the world's thinnest man, is asked by Barnum to keep an eye on his latest acquisition-Iell Adams, the bearded woman, who is kept in seclusion until the impresario can introduce her to the world. Fascinated by her and desiring a transformative experience, Bartholomew falls hopelessly in love with Iell, much to the surprise of his fellow Curiosities. Bartholomew also gets caught in the middle of a war between Barnum and his jealous wife for control of Iell's future. The story culminates at Barnum's birthday party, where Bartholomew is shocked to discover Iell's big secret. Though thin on plot, this work sympathetically conjures up the backstage world of Barnum's museum and the pecking order of his Curiosities, and magically transports the reader back in time to Gilded Age New York. Fans of "Water for Elephants" are sure to want to enter this wondrous midway attraction of a novel.

Turbulence **H (Aug)**

Foden, Giles

Author of "The Last King of Scotland", Foden centers on historical fiction about forecasting the weather for the D-day landings of World War II. The story is narrated through the diary of Henry Meadows, a brilliant young scientist assigned the difficult task of finding the reclusive Wallace Ryman, the originator of numerical weather forecasting. A crucial formula for forecasting the weather on the day of the invasion, the Ryman number defines the amount of turbulence in any given situation. With the clock ticking, Meadows must not only find Ryman but also understand his theory to ensure Allied success. A genuinely engaging character, Ryman is based on British scientist Lewis Fry Richardson, an ardent pacifist who applied mathematics to the systematic investigation of the causes of war. This work is lively, engaging, and readable, though readers unfamiliar with the principles of physics may find the detailed, scientific language distracting to the pace of the novel. Fans of Foden's historical fiction will not be disappointed.

A Murderous Procession **H, M&T**

Franklin, Ariana

In the fourth installment of Franklin's "Mistress of the Art of Death" series, King Henry II orders Adelia Aguila to accompany his ten-year-old daughter Joanna to Palermo to marry his cousin, the king of Sicily. To make sure Adelia returns to England, Henry holds her daughter as a "ward." Also joining the procession are Mansur, Adelia's Arab protector, and Rowley, the Bishop of St. Albans and father of her daughter. The expedition soon starts to go badly, with deaths, delays, and illness further complicated by the reappearance of the outlaw Scarry seeking vengeance for his lover's death. Sprinkled with fascinating historical facts about the medieval period, Franklin's plots always intrigue.

**The Confessions of Catherine de
Medici: A Novel** **H**

Gortner, C.W.

History has depicted Catherine de Medici (1519-89), wife of one king and mother of three, as a grotesque monster, poisoning and murdering to gain and maintain control over the French throne. After the death of Henri II, she began the struggle of her life-keeping one son after the other on the throne through the religious wars that threatened to tear France apart. In this meticulously researched novel, Gortner gives us a Catherine who is passionate yet sometimes naive. Most of her decisions following her husband's death are made to keep peace in France or safeguard her children. Yet she is still held responsible for the 1572 St. Bartholomew's Day massacre, in which thousands of French Protestants were slaughtered. Historical fiction fans will appreciate the vivid details of Renaissance France.

Gunning, Sally**The Rebellion of Jane Clarke****H**

As a young woman in Colonial Massachusetts, Jane Clarke rebels against her domineering father; she feels he is pushing her into a marriage she is unsure about. Jane is then sent from her small seaside village on Cape Cod to live in Boston with an elderly aunt. There, in 1769 and 1770, Jane gets caught up in a much larger rebellion, as conflict grows between Bostonians and the Redcoats, who are stationed in the city by the British government. Jane herself gets caught up in the violence when she witnesses British soldiers shooting into a crowd, a history-making incident that would come to be called the Boston Massacre. This well-researched and lively novel captures the mood of those turbulent times. It will especially appeal to readers who enjoy historical fiction and young adult readers willing to immerse themselves in a realistic novel with no vampires or other supernatural creatures.

Gregory, Philippa**The Red Queen****H (Aug)**

Margaret Beaufort is certain of one thing from a very young age: God has destined her for something great. She likens herself to Joan of Arc and longs to be a leader, a figure of importance. Unfortunately, the reality is that for much of her life she is but a pawn in others' games. She clings to the certainty that she is destined for greatness, convinced that her son by Edmund Tudor is the rightful heir to the English throne. Much of her adult life is spent planning, scheming, and looking out for chances to bring Henry Tudor to his true destiny and herself into prominence. The second entry in Gregory's new series, "The Cousins' War," presents a main character far less sympathetic than Elizabeth Woodville of "The White Queen". Margaret is self-centered, self-important, and single-minded, but these qualities enable her to persist against overwhelming odds in her quest to see her son crowned king of England. Like Gregory's other historicals, excellent characterization and a well-researched story will hold the interest of readers, especially fans of the Tudor dynasty.

Grissom, Kathleen**The Kitchen House****H**

Grissom's unsentimental debut twists the conventions of the antebellum novel just enough to give readers an involving new perspective on what would otherwise be fairly stock material. Lavinia, an orphaned seven-year-old white indentured servant, arrives in 1791 to work in the kitchen house at Tall Oaks, a Tidewater, Va., tobacco plantation owned by Capt. James Pyke. Belle, the captain's illegitimate half-white daughter who runs the kitchen house, shares narration duties, and the two distinctly different voices chronicle a troublesome 20 years: Lavinia becomes close to the slaves working the kitchen house, but she can't fully fit in because of her race. At 17, she marries Marshall, the captain's brutish son turned inept plantation master, and as Lavinia ingratiates herself into the family and the big house, racial tensions boil over into lynching, rape, arson, and murder. The plantation's social order's emphasis on violence, love, power, and corruption provides a trove of tension and grit, while the many nefarious doings will keep readers hooked to the twisted, yet hopeful, conclusion.

Hoover, Michelle**The Quickening****H**

Hoover's powerful debut tells the story of the intertwined fortunes of two early 20th-century Midwestern farm women. From the time Enidina Current and her husband, Frank, move into the hardscrabble farmhouse a day's wagon ride away from Enidina's family, their closest neighbors, Jack and Mary Morrow, perplex them, though their proximity and shared farm work often bring the two couples together. Sharing the narrative, stoic Enidina struggles through several miscarriages before finally bearing twins, while the more delicate Mary reels from disappointment, most of all in her volatile husband. Moving through the Depression, the families are driven farther apart from each other, even while Mary's youngest spends most of his time in the Current household, until an accident and a betrayal drive the final wedge into their lives. In this finely wrought and starkly atmospheric narrative, Hoover's characters carry deep secrets, and their emotions are as intense as the acts of nature that shape their world.

Kingsolver, Barbara**The Lacuna****H (2010 Orange Prize Winner)**

Diego Rivera's mural in Mexico's Palacio Nacional was only half complete the day young Harrison Shepherd stood transfixed before it, but he would be forever captive to the extraordinary power of the imagination. A solitary child, a devourer of books, left to his own devices by a mother chasing unattainable men and a father pencil pushing for the government back in the States, Harrison observes and he writes. When a quirk of fate lands him in the home of Communist sympathizers Rivera and Frida Kahlo, Rivera's wife, Harrison becomes enmeshed in the turbulent history that will inform his life and work. Through the distinctive voices of Harrison and his insightful amanuensis, Violet Brown, Kingsolver paints a verbal panorama spanning three decades and two countries. World War I veterans protesting for benefits denied, the unleashing of the atomic bomb, the McCarthy hearings, censorship of the arts, and abuse by the press corps lend credence to the sentiment that the more things change, the more they remain the same. As in "The Poisonwood Bible", Kingsolver perfects the use of multiple points of view, even reprinting actual newspaper articles to blur the line between fact and fiction. This is her most ambitious, timely, and powerful novel

yet.

Kostova, Elizabeth

The Swan Thieves

H

Psychiatrist Andrew Marlow, devoted to his profession and the painting hobby he loves, has a solitary but ordered life. When renowned painter Robert Oliver attacks a canvas in the National Gallery of Art and becomes his patient, Marlow finds that order destroyed. Desperate to understand the secret that torments the genius, he embarks on a journey that leads him into the lives of the women closest to Oliver and a tragedy at the heart of French Impressionism. Kostova's masterful new novel travels from American cities to the coast of Normandy, from the late 19th century to the late 20th, from young love to last love. The Swan Thieves is a story of obsession, history's losses, and the power of art to preserve human hope.

Mantel, Hilary

Wolf Hall

H (2009 Booker Prize Winner)

As Henry VIII's go-to man for his dirty work, Thomas Cromwell (1485-1540) isn't a likely candidate for a sympathetic portrait. He dirtied his hands too often. In the end, Henry dropped him just as he had Cromwell's mentor, Cardinal Wolsey, who counseled the king before him. But as Mantel reminds us, Cromwell was a man of many parts, admirable in many respects though disturbing in others. Above all, he got things done and was deeply loyal to his masters, first Wolsey and then the king. Nor was Henry always bloated and egomaniacal: well into his forties, when in good spirits, the king shone brighter than all those around him. 2009 Booker Prize winner, this is in all respects a superior work of fiction, peopled with appealing characters living through a period of tense high drama: Henry's abandonment of wife and church to marry Anne Boleyn. It should appeal to many readers, not just history buffs. And Mantel achieves this feat without violating the historical record.

Min, Anchee

Pearl of China

H

As a girl in Maoist China, Min was ordered to denounce Pearl S. Buck; now she offers a thin sketch of the Nobel laureate's life from the point of view of fictional Willow Yee, a fiercely loyal friend. A lifelong friendship begins in Chin-kiang when Willow meets Pearl, whose missionary father converts Willow's educated but impoverished father. Under threat from hostilities toward foreigners, Pearl departs for the safety of Shanghai, and, later, to America for college, but she returns for her wedding to find that Willow is the satisfied founder of a newspaper and a very unhappy wife. While a changing China swirls around them, their friendship is tested as they both fall in love with the same poet. As the 1949 revolution looms, Pearl flees China, and Willow's husband becomes Mao's right-hand man, leading to a fateful showdown with Madam Mao when Willow refuses to denounce her lifelong friend. Though the setting and revolutionary backdrop are inherently dramatic, Min's account of an epic friendship is curiously low-key, with some sections reading more like a treatment than a narrative.

Mitchell, David

The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet

H

It is a rare novel that's so captivating that the reader feels transported through time and fully immersed in an unfamiliar culture and place, and this is such a novel. Mitchell returns with a story set at the turn of the 18th century around Dejima, an artificial island located in Nagasaki Bay and used as a trade outpost by the Dutch East Indies Company. A small group of mostly Dutch merchants lives on Dejima under the watchful eye of Japanese guards, government officials, and translators. Clerk Jacob de Zoet comes to Dejima for a period of five years to make his fortune and return to marry his wealthy fiancée in Holland. An honest man, Jacob intends to put the company's financial records in order and root out corruption, but after meeting midwife Orito Aibagawa, he becomes entangled in events far more sinister than forged ledgers. This painstakingly researched and original novel is hard to pin to any one genre, for it is a historical novel and cultural study with plenty of intrigue and mystery mixed in. It is intelligent and utterly readable at the same time.

Oliveira, Robin

My Name is Mary Sutter

H

Despite her skill as a midwife, Mary Sutter cannot overcome the obstacle that bars her from further medical training: her gender. The Civil War changes everything. After her brother enlists in the Union Army, Mary follows him from Albany to Washington, DC, to volunteer as a nurse. She ends up at the ramshackle Union Hotel, crowded with recruits dying of disease, where Dr. William Stipp reluctantly agrees to hire her. As Union losses mount, her work becomes essential. But she relents to her mother's pleas to return home to help her twin sister through childbirth. After failing to save her sister, Mary returns to the front, where she eventually performs surgery in partnership with Stipp, whose admiration for her skill deepens to love before new family concerns carry her home again. Oliveira deftly depicts the chaotic aftermath of battles and develops her own characters while incorporating military and political leaders of the time. The historic details enrich the narrative without overshadowing Mary's struggles. This

well-written, compelling debut will engage readers of historical fiction, especially those interested in the Civil War.

Parris, S.J.

Heresy

H, M&T

Readers first meet Dominican monk Giordano Bruno as he examines a prohibited text in the monastery privy. Discontented with the Church's teachings, Bruno is a believer of Copernicus's heliocentric theory of the universe. After escaping the Inquisition, he spends years on the run, offering his services as a teacher and ever on the lookout for Hermes Trismegistus's divine Egyptian text. To be Catholic in 1583 England is synonymous with sedition, and an odd twist of fate sees Bruno employed by Queen Elizabeth. His cover: to participate in a debate at Oxford; his purpose: to ferret out heresy at the university. What Bruno finds is a lovely young woman, a group of secretive Fellows, and a series of brutal murders. Parris's debut historical thriller shines a light on the religious turmoil of 16th-century England, when men swore an oath to one faith but practiced another. Narrator Bruno (based on the real-life philosopher) is lively and sympathetic, and dedicated readers will be wholly satisfied in the end. Recommended for fans of historical thrillers along the lines of Katherine Neville's "The Eight" and Matthew Pearl's "The Dante Club".

Peters, Elizabeth

A River in the Sky

H, M&T, Amelia Peabody series

Quelling a riot at the Temple Mount and chasing a villain through an ancient tunnel are the latest adventures of the Emerson family, as they detour to Palestine in 1910 when a mysterious German archaeologist, Frau Von Eine, and her Muslim partner, Mansur, kidnap son Ramses, who is working in Palestine. Ameila Peabody and husband Radcliffe, meanwhile, investigate amateur archaeologist Morley, who has ties to the villains. Much of the book centers around the search for Ramses and his escape. Descriptions of the history, culture, archaeology, and landscape impart significance and realism while educating the reader.

Stott, Rebecca

The Coral Thief

H

In 1815 on his way to Paris, young medical student Daniel Conner is robbed of his letters of introduction and his rare coral samples by a mysterious woman. Thus begins his frantic search for his belongings and the thief in postrevolutionary Paris. To restore his name and appointment at the famous Jardin des Plantes botanical garden and museum, Daniel is drawn into an underground of thieves, philosophers, students, artists, and thugs. When he finally tracks down Lucienne, the beautiful coral thief, Daniel becomes intoxicated with her mystery and her vast knowledge of the natural world. As he learns about Lucienne's dark secrets, Daniel is slowly pulled into a daring heist to steal a precious diamond hidden in the museum where he works. Like Catherine Delors's "Mistress of the Revolution", this strong historical novel contrasts the era's passion for science, philosophy, and history with its desire for love, devotion, and beauty. The prose is elegant and well paced, and the plot is filled with exciting twists and turns.

MYSTERY & THRILLER

Baldacci, David

Deliver Us From Evil

M&T

Ostensibly, Baldacci's latest is another novel (after "The Whole Truth", 2008) about Shaw, the enigmatic agent working for an enigmatic organization. But it feels a lot more like the launch of a brand-new series, as though Baldacci is using a familiar character, Shaw, to segue to a new series lead: Regina "Reggie" Campion, a beautiful and deadly woman who works for an even-more-enigmatic group dedicated to ridding the world of evil. Both Shaw and Reggie are after the same man, Evan Waller, although each of them is unaware of it. To Shaw, Waller is a dealer in black-market nuclear materials; to Reggie, he's the former Fedir Kuchin, a Ukrainian mass murderer. Reggie and Shaw both arrive in Provence, where Waller/Kuchin is vacationing. This is a very clever novel, and full marks go to Baldacci for pulling off an especially difficult type of story—one in which neither of the central characters knows entirely what's going on, while the reader is omniscient. It's a lot of fun watching the two scope each other out, trying to determine whether the other is a threat (even as their mutual attraction grows).

Berenson, Alex

The Midnight House

M&T

Berenson's latest ingeniously plotted and fast-paced story again offers superspy John Wells, who is called upon by shifty CIA superiors to investigate the systematic murders of members of a now-disbanded supersecret interrogation team known as the Midnight House. Our well-equipped hero deduces that both the dead interrogators and agency executives harbored an extraordinarily dangerous political secret as well as participated in various forms of financial corruption. The story features emotionally affecting and high-action scenes in vividly portrayed settings; memorable characters contribute to the reader's comprehension of how the CIA's overseas "rendition" program may have been

of enormous benefit to national security but also grossly immoral and personally destructive to its participants, terror suspects and interrogators alike. Arguably Berenson's best thriller yet, this outstanding novel stands on the top rung of commercial spy fiction.

Black, Benjamin

Elegy for April

M&T

Black, the pen name chosen by Irish novelist John Banville, aptly describes the third darker-than-night 1950s crime novel featuring Dublin pathologist Quirke. Shaky and newly released from a drying-out facility, lifelong alcoholic Quirke is attempting to start anew when his daughter, Phoebe, calls for his help, convinced that best friend April is missing and has met a bad end. April, a junior doctor, has a reputation for promiscuity, and her own family members immediately distance themselves from the situation. Quirke joins forces with DI Hackett, and each in his own unconventional way works to get to the bottom of April's disappearance. As with Black's previous novels, Quirke wanders the seedy city streets, uncovering racism, Catholic hypocrisy, and grim family secrets. Quirke and Phoebe are wounded, tortured individuals bound by a fierce if unspoken love. Black's latest reads more like a fascinating father-daughter character study than a whodunit; new readers may want to start with Black's first, *Christine Falls*, for Quirke's complete backstory.

Bolton, S.J.

Blood Harvest

M&T

In Bolton's superb third thriller, the Fletchers-mother Alice, father Gareth, 10-year-old Tom, six-year-old Joe, and two-year-old Millie-receive an icy welcome on moving to isolated Heptonclough, England. When Tom swears he sees a young girl watching him from the shadows, everyone assumes it's his overactive imagination or maybe local kids playing a joke. But when one such prank puts Millie's life in danger, the Rev. Harry Laycock, a vicar who's also new to the area, suspects something more sinister might be at work. Through Dr. Evi Oliver, a psychiatrist, Harry meets a patient of Evi's, Gillian Royle, who's still distraught over the death of her young daughter in a mysterious house fire three years earlier. Harry soon discovers disturbing links between the death of Gillian's daughter and the fates of two other girls. Bolton expertly balances the gothic supernatural elements with a crackling psychological plot, leaving readers breathless until the last page.

Box, C.J.

Nowhere to Run: A Joe Pickett Novel

M&T, Series

Heading into the Wyoming backcountry while responding to a hunting complaint, game warden Joe Pickett senses someone lurking in the woods. Rumors have been flying about this region ever since a world-class female runner disappeared here a few years ago. But it's not until Joe is ambushed and almost killed and staggers out of the forest talking about twin survivalist-type guys and a lone woman that things get really crazy. The runner's parents, the media, and mercenaries descend. Box's latest thriller is an intense story of multiple crimes that asks rhetorically how much government interference is mandatory when people just want to be left alone. Echoing themes from earlier books, Box views the quandary from all sides in this well-structured novel. A perfect choice for readers who like political issues mixed in with their suspense, this title can be read as a stand-alone. However, series readers will enjoy Nate Romanowski's growing role as sidekick.

Bradley, Alan

The Weed that Strings the Hangman's Bag

M&T, Flavia de Luce Series

When our heroine, conducting a mock funeral for herself in the village churchyard, encounters a weeping red-headed woman, the 11-year-old's precocious wit and sympathy immediately charm the tearful Nialla: "I like you, Flavia de Luce." The many readers who made Bradley's *The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie* a best seller will concur, and newcomers, too, will fall under Flavia's spell in this second sleuthing adventure. Nialla is the assistant to master puppeteer Rupert Porson, whose van has broken down in the English hamlet of Bishop's Lacey. When he is fatally electrocuted during a performance, Nialla becomes a suspect in his murder. Putting aside her chemistry experiments and poisoning plots against her tormenting older sisters, Flavia sets out on her trusty bike, Gladys, to investigate. While the plot at times stretches credulity, with some characters veering close to stereotypes, Flavia is such an entertaining narrator that most readers will cheerfully go along for the ride.

Burke, James Lee

The Glass Rainbow

M&T

It takes an incredible writer to keep fresh an 18th novel featuring a character that refuses to change, but Burke does so with what may be one of the best in his Robicheaux series. Dave is trying only to serve his duty as a New Iberia, LA, deputy, but as usual his conscience and need to see justice through draw him into trouble. Investigating a series of murders involving young female victims, he discovers a link that involves a former criminal-turned-best-selling author, as well as a local socialite who is involved romantically with Dave's daughter. Dave's best friend and longtime partner, Clete Purcel, provides a helping hand, along with some always-welcome color. As with most of the

Robicheaux titles, the story is one of good vs. evil, with little mystery beyond the motivation of individuals. Burke also continues to set the gold standard when it comes to setting, making his readers feel like they're in New Iberia with Dave and Clete. Another beautifully crafted effort by a multi-Edgar Award winner, this is an outstanding addition to one of America's best mystery series. Burke fans will not be disappointed.

Cameron, Kenneth

The Bohemian Girl

M&T

Just back from a stay in a Transylvanian prison, American author Denton receives a letter sent months earlier from a woman who claimed to be in danger and sought his help. He also finds himself the stalking victim of a man who wants Denton's success and identity. In this successful follow-up to his Edgar Award-nominated debut, "The Frightened Man", Cameron displays his knowledge of life in Edwardian England and the tense political landscape that existed in Europe prior to World War I. Sure to appeal to readers who love historical mysteries intertwined with the edgy interpersonal relationships.

Camillieri, Andrea

The Wings of the Sphinx

M&T, Inspector Montalbano Series

A tattoo of a sphinx moth on the left shoulder of the victim is the only lead Sicilian Inspector Salvo Montalbano has when the nude body of a young woman, shot in the face, is found in a dump. His investigation leads to the discovery of several other young women with the same tattoo, all from the same town in Russia and connected to the politically sensitive Benevolence, a Catholic association purportedly doing good deeds and saving souls. At the same time, the shrewish wife of a rich businessman is nagging Montalbano to find her husband, kidnapped from his home under strange circumstances. And the inspector himself is at a crossroads with his longtime lover, Livia. Montalbano, now 56, is still able to enjoy a good lunch at his favorite trattoria as he sniffs out deception and corruption. But he is increasingly bothered by violence, particularly toward the young, as he ponders what the future holds for him.

Carcattera, Lorenzo

Midnight Angels

M&T

This superior religious artifact quest thriller from Carcattera careens through the streets of Florence with quick stops at various museums and galleries for interesting sidebars on the life and work of Michelangelo ("the Divine One"). Two major groups are trying to find three Michelangelo statues, the Midnight Angels, long thought to be myth rather than reality: the secretive Vittoria Society, whose members locate stolen and lost art objects and return them to their rightful owners, and the Immortals, led by the Raven, a master thief who's as dangerous as he is ruthless. Early on, Kate Westcott, an American art student in Florence and the ward of the Vittoria Society's leader, tracks down the Midnight Angels, aided by her handsome Italian boyfriend, Marco. Many people die as Kate and friends fight to prevent the Immortals from stealing the Angels. The author's solid, well-executed premise will keep readers turning the pages.

Carrell, Jennifer Lee

Haunt Me Still

M&T

The sequel to "Interred with Their Bones" finds academic-turned-director Kate Stanley and secret agent Ben Pearl catching up in a new production of Macbeth that will feature objects from the original play and that is being staged by a descendant of the infamous Scottish king. Many actors consider Shakespeare's play to be cursed. While Kate isn't superstitious, she starts to wonder when she sees a vision of a young girl bound and gagged and when one of the cast members turns up brutally murdered a few days later. The action eventually picks up as Kate chases around England and on to America, searching for an original Macbeth manuscript that seems to have strong ties to one of England's most famous occult scholars. Readers who enjoy historical and literary thrillers and are willing to put up with an occult subplot may be interested.

Castillo, Linda

Pray for Silence

M&T

In her second mystery, Castillo brings back Police Chief Kate Burkholder in the town of Painters Mill, OH. Barely recovered from the serial killings of the previous year, the town and its small police department are once again rocked by the unthinkable. Someone has killed an entire Amish family of seven. Horrible as the crime is, what scares Kate is the lack of motive. With the help of her small but capable team and her on again/off again love interest, John Tomasetti, Kate works by trial and error until she finds a key piece of evidence that opens new possibilities. Though the violence level is high, the brutality is offset by Kate's and her team's very capable police procedure and investigation.

Chiavarini, Jennifer

The Aloha Quilt

M&T

In this latest entry to the bestselling Elm Creek Quilts series, quilting queen Bonnie Markham explores Hawaii and learns about the islands' quilting traditions while setting up a tropical quilt camp. Weary from a difficult divorce battle,

Bonnie leaves beloved Elm Creek Manor and takes up her friend's invitation to start the camp; once in Hawaii, she gets to work on hiring staff and making her version of a Hawaiian quilt. When her mean-spirited ex-husband-to-be demands half her share in Elm Creek as part of the settlement, Bonnie takes drastic measures to protect the estate and her friends. Still, the big changes are hard to take, and Bonnie's not sure she can follow through. With homey details and a strong sense of the connections that bind women, friends, and families, Chiaverini lovingly crafts her tale about a woman stitching together a new life and a new project. Series fans will enjoy this latest entry, and those new to the quilting bee should have no problem finding their groove.

Child, Lee

61 Hours

M&T

Large and deadly, footloose former army major Jack Reacher returns in his 14th outing. This time, the retired military cop gets stranded by a ferocious blizzard in the town of Bolton, SD. Reacher has to deal with a hired assassin, a prison breakout, a mob of biker thugs, a secret government installation, a clutch of senior citizen tourists who thought a frigid vacation in South Dakota would save money, and a witness who needs protection from a murderous drug lord from Mexico. Just an ordinary day on the job for Reacher as the "61 hours" count down to an exciting climax. Child's protagonist is a wandering knight who always finds trouble and inevitably solves it, with satisfying violence. As usual, Child's writing is superb. Not only is this thriller believable, but the descriptions of the blizzard will make readers want to hug their furnaces.

Clark, Mary Higgins

The Shadow of Your Smile

M&T, P

When a deceased nun, Sister Catherine, becomes a candidate for sainthood in this gripping thriller from bestseller Clark, Monica Farrell, a 31-year-old Manhattan pediatrician, becomes the target of those who don't want her to inherit what's left of a fortune created by her unknown grandfather, Alex Gannon, with whom Catherine had a secret love child before she took up holy orders. That child, given up for adoption, became Monica's father. Monica must now testify whether two boys became cancer-free due to prayers to Sister Catherine so she can qualify for beatification. Meanwhile, Olivia Morrow, Catherine's 82-year-old dying cousin, ponders whether to tell Monica she's Alex's granddaughter. Clark skillfully mixes spiritual questions with down and dirty deeds as she reveals Gannon Foundation funds have been steadily siphoned off by greedy heirs and associates who will stop at nothing, even murder, to keep their criminal misbehavior under wraps.

Cleverly, Barbara

Strange Images of Death

M&T, Joe Sandilands Mystery

Set in 1926, Cleverly's excellent eighth mystery to feature British Cmdr. Joe Sandilands takes Sandilands to France, where Dorcas Joliffe, a precocious teenager who regards the Scotland Yarder as an honorary uncle, enlists his aid in finding her long-lost mother. Another inquiry, as the pair travel through Provence, soon takes precedence. When someone smashes a stone effigy to pieces in a medieval chapel, the steward in charge of the chapel ask Sandilands to help find the person responsible. This act of vandalism proves to be merely the prelude to the murder of Estelle Smeeth, an attractive young Englishwoman stabbed to death in the same chapel. Cleverly keeps the plot complex, but less convoluted than in Folly du Jour, returning to the form that made the first six in the series models of their kind. Golden age fans who appreciate deceptive storytelling enhanced by in-depth characterization will be more than satisfied.

Connelly, John

The Whisperers

M&T

Charlie Parker, Louis, Angel, and even the Collector are back in Connolly's eighth Parker thriller. Parker is contacted by the father of a recently returned Iraqi veteran who committed suicide, even though he had what he'd called "a good war." When Parker starts asking questions, he finds that this is not the only member of Stryker C who has taken his own life and that there is something "hinky" going on. As with anything Parker is involved with, the supernatural is at play, and lots of big guns, too. Parker is kidnapped and an attempt is made to scare him off the investigation but instead he calls in Angel and Louis to watch his back as he finds out what the men of Stryker C are up to. A typical Charlie Parker novel chock-full of action and monsters, both human and not, that will be snapped up by his fans.

Cook, Robin

Cure

M&T

The bestselling author and master of the medical thriller returns with another heart-pounding story of medical intrigue. With her young son's potentially fatal neuroblastoma in complete remission, New York City medical examiner Laurie Montgomery returns to work, only to face the case of her career. The investigation into the death of CIA agent Kevin Markham is a professional challenge-and has Laurie's colleagues wondering if she still has what it takes after so much time away. Markham's autopsy results are inconclusive, and though it appears he's been poisoned, toxicology fails to corroborate Laurie's suspicions. While her coworkers doubt her assassination theory,

her determination wins over her husband, fellow medical examiner Jack Stapleton, and together they discover associations to a large pharmaceutical company and several biomedical start-ups dealing with stem-cell research. Laurie and Jack race to connect the dots before they are consumed in a dangerous game of biotech espionage.

Coontz, Deborah

Wanna Get Lucky?

M&T

Coontz, who lives in Las Vegas, takes full advantage of the mecca's naughty rep, giving it a comical twist or two that's occasionally laugh-out-loud funny. Thirtysomething casino exec Lucky O'Toole, the self-made daughter of a celebrated madame, is a tough, smart, wisecracking adrenaline junkie, whose energy matches the eye-popping glitz and frenetic pace of the casino business. Unfortunately, while she is exceptionally good at solving the casino's problems without judging the proclivities of its customers, she has a serious lack of personal life. Then murder, blackmail, and some business finagling give her the chance to use her mean right cross, and some tantalizing new opportunities for romance allow her to reevaluate her priorities and get her raging libido under control. Complete with designer duds, porn conventions, partner-swapping parties, and clever repartee, this is chick-lit gone wild and sexy, lightly wrapped in mystery and tied up with a brilliantly flashing neon bow. As the first in a series, *Wanna Get Lucky?* hits the proverbial jackpot.

Cortez, Sarah and Martinez, Liz

(ed)

Indian Country Noir

M&T

Written by both Native American and non-Native authors, the 14 stories in this worthy volume in Akashic's noir series range geographically from northern Canada to Puerto Rico and from New York's Adirondacks to Los Angeles. One of the more impressive entries is Melissa Yi's moving "Indian Time," about Mohawk Fred Redish's painful attempts to visit his young sons under the care of his white mother-in-law. "JaneJohnDoe.com," David Cole's story of a woman forced to forge a new identity for a drug lord or see her family slain, works perfectly. Leonard Schonberg's "Lame Elk," about an alcoholic's last chance to reform, is a noir gem. Co-editor Martinez's poignant "Prowling Wolves" recounts the sad fate of Iwo Jima flag-raiser Ira Hayes. Other contributors include Lawrence Block, Jean Rae Baxter, Reed Farrel Coleman, and Gerard Houarner.

Coulter, Catherine

Whiplash: FBI Series #14

M&T, Series

In Coulter's fab 14th FBI paranormal romantic thriller, FBI special agents Dillon Savich and his wife, Lacey Sherlock, look into the possible haunting of a U.S. senator by his dead wife as well as a more earthly crime: Germany's Schiffer Hartwin Pharmaceutical, which has its U.S. headquarters in Connecticut, might be deliberately withholding an inexpensive cancer fighting drug, Culovert, to force cancer patients to require the far more expensive Eloxium, in short supply. The FBI probe dovetails with one by PI and part-time ballet teacher Erin Pulaski, who's hired by a Yale professor worried about his cancer-stricken father being affected by the shortage. In a wild coincidence, Bowie Richards, the FBI special agent in charge of the New Haven field office, also hires Erin-to babysit his daughter, a ballet student of hers. The attraction between Bowie and Erin grows as they help Dillon and Lacey crack a complicated double case. Coulter fans will want to see more of this new crime-fighting duo.

Cronin, Justin

The Passage

M&T, SF

A human-created virus has infected humankind, mutating most into superstrong, near-immortal vampiric creatures. The "virals"-also called "jumpers" and "dracs" (after Dracula, of course)-can leap 20 feet through the air at a bound and split a human (or a horse, or a cow) in half with their bare hands. A small band of men and women embark on a cross-country trek, looking for a way to protect the few remaining uninfected humans from extinction. With them travels an enigmatic prepubescent girl who talks to the virals with her mind and seems to have been born 100 years before. The monsters in this compulsive nail biter are the scariest in fiction since Stephen King's vampires in Salem's Lot. Although the novel runs 700 pages, Cronin is a master at building tension, and he never wastes words. Shout it from the hills! This exceptional thriller should be one of the most popular novels this year and will draw in readers everywhere.

Cussler, Clive & Scott, Justin

The Spy: An Isaac Bell Adventure

M&T, Series

It is 1908, and the dark clouds of World War I are beginning to gather. A naval arms race of epic proportions is under way, and the world's powers will stop at nothing to develop the best warships and, simultaneously, use deadly force to halt the development of other nations' navies. When several of America's leaders in naval technology are murdered, Isaac Bell and the Van Dorn Detective Agency are brought in to both solve the crimes and stop the killers. A consummate assassin simply named the Spy is behind it all, but whom does he serve and why? As with the previous two Isaac Bell novels, this title is rich in period detail, features exciting chases and nasty villains, and is a great fun read. Since Cussler and Scott are dealing with history, the series cannot go over the top like so many of

Cussler's futuristic novels. Better, Isaac Bell is a superb action hero who moves elegantly and lethally through the period.

DeMille, Nelson

The Lion

M&T

Asad Khalil (aka "The Lion"), the ruthless Libyan terrorist who menaced ex-NYPD cop John Corey in "The Lion's Game", returns to the U.S. 18 months after 9/11, bent on finishing old business in DeMille's fast-paced fifth John Corey thriller. In Los Angeles, Khalil dispatches the last of the eight American pilots who dropped the bombs that killed Khalil's family in the historic 1986 raid on Tripoli. In New York City, a daring encounter with Corey, a member of the federal Anti-Terrorist Task Force, and Corey's FBI agent wife, Kate Mayfield, who's also a member of the ATTF, sets the stage for the mano a mano struggle both Corey and Khalil crave. DeMille splices gripping action scenes with accounts of Khalil's horrifically inventive attacks and the ATTF's futile countermeasures. While Corey isn't much more appealing than his foe, those who enjoy starkly black-and-white battles between good and evil will be satisfied.

Doiron, Paul

The Poacher's Son

M&T

Mike Bowditch, 24, is a rookie game warden for the state of Maine. He's also the son of Jack Bowditch, legendary woodsman, brawler, womanizer, and poacher whom Mike has not seen in over two years. One hot summer night while Mike is out answering a call about a bear stealing a pig, Jack leaves Mike a cryptic message on his answering machine. The next morning, Mike learns that his father is wanted in the murders of a paper company representative and a sheriff's deputy. Through a long few days, Mike jeopardizes his dream job to help the father whose attention he could never get. A richly imagined portrait of the vanishing wilderness in New England's farthest reaches, Doiron's well-written debut is also a taut thriller and a thoughtful examination of the complicated relationship between father and son.

**A Colourful Death: A Cornish
Mystery**

Dunn, Carola

M&T

Once again murder disrupts the quiet life of widowed charity shop owner Eleanor Trewynn, who's settled in the village of Port Mabyn with her Westie, Teazle, in British author Dunn's delightful second cozy set in 1960s Cornwall. On returning from a train trip to London, Eleanor's artist friend and neighbor, Nick Gresham, discovers that someone has slashed several of his paintings in his Port Mabyn shop. Rather than go to the police, a furious Nick sets out to confront rival artist Geoffrey Monmouth, who Nick is sure is the culprit. Accompanied by an anxious Eleanor, Nick finds Geoff stabbed to death in his Padstow bungalow. When the authorities detain Nick, Eleanor determines to track down the real killer, who just might be one of the young artists living communally on a local farm. Bolstered by strong characters, the fast-moving plot builds to a satisfying conclusion.

Eisler, Barry

Inside Out

M&T

Eisler, who spent a covert three years with the CIA's Directorate of Operations, drives this locomotive of a story full speed into the facade on the war on terror. Black ops soldier Ben Treven is sent to find a rogue specialist who stole 92 videotapes from a secret prison at Guantanamo Bay. Fast-action scenes alternate with Treven's education in the cynical arts of policymaking, and the quickening pace of the story culminates in a bombshell revelation. One sex scene fits neither the story nor the characters, and the violence may make even the most jaded reader uncomfortable, but this is a relentless and revelatory look into the human cost of those who torture on behalf of their country.

Evanovich, Janet

Sizzling Sixteen

M&T, Stephanie Plum Series

In this Stephanie Plum adventure from Evanovich, a personal case distracts the Trenton, N.J., bondswoman from tracking the usual group of eccentric skips-the kidnapping of her cousin, Vinnie, who's being held for ransom in the high six figures. As Stephanie, sidekick Lula, and office manager Connie soon realize, Vincent Plum Bail Bonds is seriously in the red due to Vinnie's gambling. Vinnie's also gotten caught up with local mobster Bobby Sunflower in a complicated scheme. Even though her sleazy cousin isn't her favorite person and chasing oddball felons isn't her ideal career, Stephanie knows family loyalty counts for something, plus she owes him for giving her a job all those years ago. So with Lula and Connie in tow-and romantic interests Morelli and Ranger lurking in the background-Stephanie must save the day once again. Evanovich is at her best spinning the bizarre subplots involving Stephanie's bail jumpers, but the larger story simply recycles elements from previous installments.

Ferraris, Zoe

City of Veils

M&T

Ferraris, author of "Fiinding Nouf", again explores women in Saudi Arabia who are expected to lead quiet lives

circumscribed by Islamic law and tradition. But Katya, one of the few women in the medical examiner's office, is determined to make her work mean something. When the body of a brutally beaten woman is found on the beach in Jeddah, the city's detectives are ready to dismiss the case as another unsolvable murder-chillingly common in a city where the veils of conservative Islam keep women as anonymous in life as the victim is in death. If this is another housemaid killed by her employer, finding the culprit will be all but impossible. Only Katya is convinced that the victim can be identified and her killer found. She calls upon her friend Nayir for help, and soon discovers that the dead girl was a young filmmaker named Leila, whose controversial documentaries earned her many enemies. With only the woman's clandestine footage as a guide, Katya and Nayir must confront the dark side of Jeddah that Leila struggled to expose: an underworld of prostitution, violence, exploitation, and jealously guarded secrets. Along the way, they form an unlikely alliance with an American woman whose husband has disappeared. Their growing search takes them from the city's car-clogged streets to the deadly vastness of the desert beyond. Award-winning author Ferraris combines a thrilling, fast-paced mystery with a rare and intimate look into women's lives in the Middle East.

Fossum, Karin

Broken

M&T

In a stark departure from her award-winning Inspector Sejer series, Fossum offers insight into the mind and work of a mystery writer. A first-person author, with a line of potential characters waiting at her door, is awakened one night by a man who jumps the line, so anxious is he to have his story told. He is Alvar Eide, who at 42 leads a solitary life working in an art gallery and believes himself to be a good person. Then he falls in love with a painting, priced at a sum that would take all his savings, and befriends a young heroin addict, a skinny girl with translucent skin, who follows him home and insinuates herself into his life, with predictably tragic results. Eide's story is interrupted repeatedly by his meetings with the author, as he questions his story and she shares hers in a structure that seems both self-indulgent and illuminating on Fossum's part. With its remarkably detailed portrait of Eide, this suspenseful story may be regarded as a gift by Fossum's devotees; others may find it more a fleshed-out novelette, albeit in the author's typically crisp and insightful prose.

French, Tana

Faithful Place

M&T (July)

In 1985, Frank Mackey and Rosie Daly were 19, in love, and planning to run away together from Ireland to start a new life in England. When Rosie failed to meet him, Frank stayed in his hometown of Dublin, estranged from his dysfunctional family. But 22 years later, Frank, now on the Dublin Police Undercover Squad and boss of Det. Cassie Maddox, finds his history in upheaval when his colleagues unearth Rosie's remains in a dilapidated house in his old neighborhood, and he's pulled back into his family of four siblings and their alcoholic, wife-beating father. When his younger brother dies days later-accident, suicide, or murder?-in the yard of the same old house, Frank connives to stay in the loop of the investigation as he tries to put the pieces together and his nine-year-old daughter becomes a key player in the case. With French's masterly portrayal of family dynamics and responsibility and her adept depiction of young love and parental devotion, fans are unlikely to miss Maddox, the protagonist of her first two best sellers. Psychological suspense at its best.

Furst, Alan

Spies of the Balkans: A Novel

M&T

In his intense yet subtle way, Furst takes readers to the Greek city of Salonika in October 1940, just months before the Germans hoist their occupying flag on the Acropolis the following April. Senior police official Costa Zannis, calm yet passionate in his lusty body and loyal soul, has insinuating ways that lead him to deep and sensitive knowledge that others covet. Just as Fascist Italy starts its attack on Greece, Zannis begins working with confederates in other Balkan cities to shepherd escaping German Jews to safety in Turkey until time runs out for them all. With ten novels behind him, Furst has perfected a historical espionage genre that illuminates an ordinary man whom fate has picked for quiet heroism. Furst fans will argue about their favorite books, but the Balkan twists and turns in this masterly triumph of plotting, history, and character development will be a hit this summer.

Live to Tell: An Inspector D. D.

Gardner, Lisa

Warren Novel

M&T

In her newest thriller Gardner once again successfully borrows from the headlines. Detective D.D. Warren is called to the home of a family of five-four of whom are now dead and the fifth, the dad, lying comatose in the hospital. What initially appears to be a simple, if horrifying, case of murder/suicide quickly turns into something else when a second family is found dead at home. Warren's investigations run parallel to the stories of two other women. Danielle Burton is the lone survivor of the murder of her own family by her father 25 years ago, while Victoria Oliver is living in near isolation as she cares for her severely mentally disturbed eight-year-old son. The connections among the three plot threads become increasingly clearer as both women are drawn into Warren's investigation. Gardner's writing gets stronger with each new thriller, and the scary possibilities this novel suggests are certainly plausible enough to work. This will strongly appeal to suspense readers,

George, Elizabeth

This Body of Death

M&T, Inspector Lynley Series

Isabelle Ardery is an ambitious detective with a habit of sneaking off to the ladies' room to down a miniature bottle of vodka or two. She has just been named acting superintendent of Thomas Lynley's former department when the body of a young woman is found in a London cemetery. Under pressure to find the killer quickly in order to prove herself, Ardery persuades Lynley to return from retirement to help her. The murder victim is Jemima Hastings, a young woman who, nine months before, abruptly left her thriving cupcake business and her boyfriend, roof-thatcher Gordon Jossie, in Hampshire and moved to London. Clues lead Ardery's team to Hampshire, where Jossie has a mysterious new girlfriend. Details about the craft of thatching and the care of the ponies that roam freely in Hampshire's New Forest, a former royal hunting ground, make this an informative as well as an entertaining novel. George's many fans will welcome Lynley's return to New Scotland Yard.

Grahame-Smith, Seth

Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter

M&T, SF

In the pseudonymous Moorat's fantasy, June 19, 1837, heralds an auspicious night. The young Princess Victoria, only 18, becomes England's new monarch. Demon forces hatch a plan to take down the queen and usurp her empire. The story, told with delightful, understated British humor, is not for the squeamish. The zombie scenes are especially disgusting, as zombies have appalling table manners. Yet within this gory tale lurks a beautiful romance between Victoria and Albert proving that love can conquer all. Recommended for historical urban fantasy and paranormal romance fans.

Haig, Brian

The Capitol Game

M&T

A small, insignificant company on the edge of bankruptcy has discovered an alchemist's dream: a miraculous polymer - paint it on a vehicle, any vehicle and voila, you have the equivalent of 30 inches of steel. With war raging in Iraq and Afghanistan, the polymer promised to save thousands of lives, promising to change the course of both wars as well as making its owner billions in profit. Jack Wiley, a successful Wall Street banker, somehow learns of the polymer and makes a plan. To make his dream come true, Wiley goes to The Capitol Group, one of the country's largest, richest and most powerful corporations. Jack and the Capitol Group will partner up for a quick, bloodless takeover of the small company that developed the polymer. A partnership made in heaven? Jack's smarts and Capitol Group's power and influence should be a marriage made in heaven, making them all rich beyond imagination. Once they own the patents they will steamroll Congress and the Pentagon to get the polymer into production, via a no-bid, fast-track contract. And it goes to plan until the Pentagon's investigative service began nosing around.

Hall, Tarquin

The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing

M&T, A Vish Puri Mystery

On the very day he is predicted to die, Dr. Suresh Jha is struck down, in the midst of a knock-knock joke during the Rajpath Laughing Club meeting, by a towering apparition of the goddess Kali. Since the rationalist Jha was known as "the Guru Buster" and adversary of India's powerful Mararaj Swami, the "supernatural occurrence" of his death makes news and intrigues Delhi detective Puri, who sends one of his many operatives to infiltrate Swami's ashram in a well-orchestrated ploy that turns deadly dangerous. But Puri's home life is also never simple: his daughter has just returned home awaiting the birth of twins, and his wife, Rumpi, and irrepressible widowed mother, Mummy-ji, take off on their own to solve an armed robbery at their kitty club. Puri's intuitive powers are even more evident in the second in Hall's entertaining series. The detective despairs of his city's worsening conditions and rails against American drivers as he copes with enervating heat and solves murders, while enjoying his native food despite the excess pounds that give him the nickname Chubby. With humor and grace, Hall provides appealing characters, a strong sense of place, a complex plot, and mouth-watering Indian cuisine.

Hart, John

The Last Child

M&T (2010 Edgar Winner)

When 12-year-old Alyssa Merrimon disappeared a year ago, her family fell apart. Her twin brother, Johnny, became obsessed with trying to find her, their father took off, not to be heard from again, and their mother sank into a world of drugs and booze, helped along by an abusive, wealthy boyfriend. Det. Clive Hunt is also obsessed, both with finding Alyssa and with her mother, and his preoccupation costs him his marriage and jeopardizes his job. But this is Johnny's story and his quest to find the sister he lost. Taking his mother's car while she's passed out and occasionally taking along his best friend, Jack, Johnny spies and keeps meticulous records on the townsfolk of small Raven County, NC. The world is a dark place when seen through his eyes, and Johnny is an unforgettable character in this finely drawn yet disturbing thriller. With his best novel yet, the Edgar Award-winning Hart firmly cements his place alongside the greats of the genre.

Harvey, John**Far Cry****M&T**

When Londoners Ruth and Simon Pierce's ten-year-old daughter Heather dies in an apparent fall while on a camping trip with a friend's family on the Cornish coast, they are devastated. Divorced, Ruth moves to Cambridge, remarries, and has another daughter, Beatrice, who at the age of ten disappears on the way home from a class. Meanwhile, a convicted pedophile is released in Cambridgeshire, and DI Will Grayson is convinced that he may have committed other crimes and even be threatening Will's own children. DS Helen Walker goes to Cornwall to investigate the death of Ruth's first daughter, while Will pulls out all stops in trying to find Beatrice. Harvey skillfully weaves these threads together to reach a wrenching conclusion that fully illustrates again his complete mastery of plot and character. Grayson and Walker first appeared in *Gone to Ground*, but Harvey's reputation was built on his Charlie Resnick series. Any reader seeking an excellent author with a long track record of the very best of contemporary mystery fiction must become familiar with Harvey's considerable body of work.

Haynes, Dana**Crashers****M&T**

A large passenger plane crashes outside of Portland, OR, with very few survivors, and the investigation begins almost immediately. Former National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) pathologist Dr. Leonard Tomzak happens to be close by the crash site and takes command at once of "The Crashers" team as the search for the truth begins. Simultaneously, the FBI starts to suspect that the plane was brought down by terrorists. All too soon, they realize that the terrorists will strike again. in three days. As Tomzak takes control of his team, he has to fight jealousies, turf wars, and his own feelings of inadequacy. The plane crash scenes are extremely graphic but absolutely essential to the reader's understanding of the aftermath of a plane downed by a terrorist strike. Although the ending is just a little over the top, this thriller debut is filled with excitement and knowledge of NTSB procedures and problems.

Howard, Linda**Veil of Night****M&T**

Jaclyn Wilde is a wedding planner who loves her job—usually. But helping Carrie Edwards with her Big Day has been an unrelenting nightmare. Carrie is a bridezilla of mythic nastiness, a diva whose tantrums are just about as crazy as her demands. But the unpleasant task at hand turns seriously criminal when Carrie is brutally murdered and everyone involved with the ceremony is accusing one another of doing the deed. The problem is, most everyone—from the cake maker and the florist to the wedding-gown retailer and the bridesmaids' dressmaker—had his or her own reason for wanting the bride dead, including Jaclyn. Assigned to the case, Detective Eric Wilder finds that there's too much evidence pointing toward too many suspects. Compounding his problems is Jaclyn, with whom he shared one deeply passionate night before Carrie's death. Being a prime suspect means that Jaclyn is hands-off just when Eric would rather be hands-on. As the heat intensifies between Eric and Jaclyn, a cold-blooded murderer moves dangerously close. And this time the target is not a bride but one particularly irresistible wedding planner, unaware of a killer's vow.

**Grace Under Pressure: A Manor
House Mystery****Hyzy, Julie****M&T**

Launching the Manor of Murder series with plenty of thrills and laughs, Hyzy creates the well-researched and believable estate of Marshfield Manor, part mansion and part museum. As assistant curator Grace Wheaton is handling a loud disturbance in the tea room, gunshots ring out from the fourth floor. Head curator Abe is killed, and the murderer mysteriously vanishes from the study. When billionaire Bennett Marshfield reveals that he's been receiving threatening letters from someone who might be the killer, Grace undertakes an amateur investigation, which includes looking into a local Ponzi scheme and her own family secrets. Well-drawn characters like busybody secretary Frances, handsome landscape architect Jack, and stalking wannabe PI Ronny are supported by lively subplots, laying series groundwork to rival Marshfield Manor's own elaborate structure.

Jackson, Joshilyn**Backseat Saints****M&T**

On the surface, she's Ro Grandee, dutiful wife of a handsome Texan with ready fists. But underneath her flowery skirts and painful bruises lurks Rose Mae, a fierce Southern spitfire who's already escaped an abusive father. These days Rose seems resigned to taking punches, working in the Grandee family gun shop, and waltzing with the vacuum cleaner until an oddly familiar airport gypsy foretells a fortune that is murder-literally. Rose's husband is going to kill her, unless she manages to kill him first. Rose takes her dog, Gretel, and her Pawpy's old gun and runs for her life, blazing a harrowing trail from Texas to Alabama and on to California and exhuming a heap of family skeletons along the way. Jackson has crafted a riveting read that simply flies off the page with prose as luscious as sweet tea and spicy as Texas chili.

**Queen of the Night: A Novel of
Suspense**

Jance, J.A.

M&T

Dedicated to the late Tony Hillerman, Jance's brilliant fourth suspense novel featuring former homicide detective Brandon Walker and his wife, novelist Diana Ladd, spans some 50 years, from a murder in 1959 in San Diego to a rash of killings in Thousand Oaks, Calif., and Tucson, Ariz., in 2009. Interwoven with these crimes are legends of the Tohono O'odham Indians (aka the Desert People) and the lives of such contemporary Native people as Lani Walker, Brandon and Diana's adopted daughter. Jance's masterful handling of a complex cast of characters makes it easy for the reader to appreciate the intricate web of relationships that bind them across generations. The title refers to the night-blooming Cereus, a desert plant that blooms once a year and is of great symbolic importance to the Tohono. Jance, perhaps best known for her J.P. Beaumont series, has crafted a mystery that Hillerman would be proud of and that her fans will love.

**Hangman: A Decker/Lazarus
Novel**

Kellerman, Faye

M&T

Even as LAPD detective Peter Decker investigates the suspicious death of neonatal nurse Adrianna Blanc, his friend Terry and her over-the-edge husband go missing (separately), leaving Decker and wife Rina Lazarus tending their son.

Kenyon, Sherrilyn

No Mercy: A Dark-Hunter Novel

M&T, SF

Live fast, fight hard and if you have to die then take as many of your enemies with you as you can. That is the Amazon credo and it was one Samia lived and died by. Now in contemporary New Orleans, the immortal Amazon warrior is about to learn that there's a worse evil coming to slaughter mankind than she's ever faced before. Shapeshifter Dev Peltier has stood guard at the front of Sanctuary for almost two hundred years and in that time, he's seen it all. Or so he thought. Now their enemies have discovered a new source of power- one that makes a mockery of anything faced to date. The war is on and Dev and Sam are guarding ground zero. But in order to win, they will have to break the most cardinal of all rules and pray it doesn't unravel the universe as we know it.

**God of the Hive: A Novel of
Suspense Featuring Mary Russell
and Sherlock Holmes**

King, Laurie

M&T

King's delightful new Mary Russell/Sherlock Holmes novel picks up right where the previous book, *The Language of Bees*, left off. Holmes and Russell have just escaped the clutches of a demented Thomas Brothers, but they are still in danger and wanted by the police. Holmes decides the safest move is to separate. He will take care of his wounded son Damian, while Russell flees with Damian's young daughter, Estelle. Communicating with each other via cryptic ads in the London Times and phone calls to trusted friends doesn't prove as safe as in the past. What they really need to know is the identity of the person controlling Brothers. Fortuitous encounters with helpful strangers are amusing but stretch credibility. And where is Mycroft during all the tumult? King's writing only gets better, especially as she continues to tweak the Holmes canon.

Koontz, Dean

Frankenstein: Lost Souls

M&T, SF

Koontz revisits his successful Frankenstein paperback series with this first hardcover edition of a new trilogy that picks up where the first series left off. The mysterious Deucalion, plagued by his gruesome appearance and carrying the burden of being of Victor Helios's first creation, has moved from New Orleans to Montana, alongside Victor and his fabricated wife, Erika 5. Also arriving in town are Detectives Carson O'Connor and Michael Maddison. The characters' renewed alliance tests not only their strength but also their humanity as a whole. Fans of the first trilogy will have no trouble following this story, yet Koontz is careful not to alienate new readers. This successful mix of crime-inspired detective story and sci-fi adventure is ideal for Koontz devotees as well as readers who enjoy genre crossovers.

Koryta, Michael

So Cold the River

M&T

Hired to make a documentary of a dying but secretive billionaire's early years in rural West Baden Springs, IN, Eric Shaw finds more than he bargained for in a small town still mired in its former glory and a hotel that holds more than just memories. A mysterious antique water bottle, a town reluctant to let go of old connections to fame and infamy, hallucinations, and a resurgent evil combine to bring readers a gripping chiller that will keep them guessing-and looking under the covers-until the last page. This "Midwestern Gothic" by Los Angeles Times book prize winner Koryta is a departure from the author's prior novels, but it's being positively compared to Stephen King, Joe Hill, and Peter Straub. Fans of horror and supernatural suspense will enjoy his latest, and darkest, work yet.

Lackberg, Camilla

The Ice Princess

M&T

Erica Falck, a local-girl-makes-good writer from the tiny resort town of Fjällbacka, Sweden, stumbles onto a crime scene involving a close childhood friend. Erica is struggling to meet her publisher's deadline on a biography she no longer finds stimulating when her writer's instinct is piqued by her friend's mysterious death. At various points just about everyone in town is implicated, but Erica's senses keep her on the killer's trail, and the result is an ending that comes out of nowhere. Lackberg clearly has a gift for laying out an intricate plot and building suspense. Her list of characters is long and complex but not overwhelming, and she manages successfully to weave in a variety of subplots. The winner of several Swedish writing awards.

Larsson, Steig

The Girl who Kicked the Hornet's Nest

M&T, Series (3rd in the Millennium Trilogy)

The exhilarating third book and conclusion to bestseller Larsson's Millennium trilogy (after *The Girl Who Played with Fire* and *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*) finds Lisbeth Salander, the brilliant computer hacker who was shot in the head in the final pages of *Fire*, alive, though still the prime suspect in three murders in Stockholm. While she convalesces under armed guard, journalist Mikael Blomkvist works to unravel the decades-old coverup surrounding the man who shot Salander: her father, Alexander Zalachenko, a Soviet intelligence defector and longtime secret asset to Sapov, Sweden's security police. Estranged throughout *Fire*, Blomkvist and Salander communicate primarily online, but their lack of physical interaction in no way diminishes the intensity of their unconventional relationship. Though Larsson (1954-2004) tends toward narrative excess, his was an undeniably powerful voice in crime fiction that will be sorely missed.

Lawson, Mike

House Justice: A Joe DeMarco Thriller

M&T, Series

When a CIA officer in Iran is captured and murdered because of a congressional leak, the Speaker of the House sends his fixer, Joe DeMarco, to find those responsible in this fifth book in the series. One step behind an unknown killer, Joe works with beautiful CIA agent Angela DeCaprio to find the leakers, who are being tracked and killed one by one. As usual, Joe is in the dark about the multiple conspiracies he uncovers, but he won't, or can't, let go. Lawson has honed his skill to write a perfect political thriller-fast-moving, cynical, but ultimately moral.

Leon, Donna

A Question of Belief

M&T, Series

It's hot as Hades in Venice, and Commissario Guido Brunetti is feeling the heat in this 19th installment in the best-selling series. Not only is the temperature soaring, but Brunetti is working on several hot, puzzling cases. As always, he is a superb police detective-calm, deliberate, and insightful as he investigates with a reflective thoroughness. However, he's not completely adept at performing electronic searches, so he relies upon his ingenious, mysterious administrative assistant, Signorina Elettra, to perform her computer magic, which provides him with information crucial to his work. Unfortunately, just when Brunetti thinks he can finally escape on vacation to cooler climes, he is recalled to Venice because of a brutal murder. In the end, he solves one case, but the solution to the other remains hellishly ambiguous. Leon's daring, provocative conclusion leads us to reflect upon the pernicious consequences of the usual culprits: sex, love, ambition, and greed. An excellent read, especially for those who enjoy intelligent, urbane, literary mysteries set in Europe.

Lustbader, Eric Von

Robert Ludlum's The Bourne Objective

M&T, Series

No one is what he or she seems to be. Lustbader's fifth installment of Ludlum's saga of rogue agent Jason Bourne finds Bourne in possession of a ring with a cryptic engraving. Bourne, a product of the newly reformed ruthless and clandestine American Central Intelligence program called Treadstone, is still being hunted by his former employer. Treadstone is anxious to capture Bourne and Russian Leonid Arkadin, two of their top lethal graduates, to find out where their training went wrong. If that fails they want to manipulate the killer-with-a-conscience Bourne and the unscrupulous Arkadin into destroying each other. As Bourne works to put the shattered pieces of his memories back together, he doesn't know whom or what to trust. And time is running short for Bourne as various parties work to gain control over the ring, a key to unimaginable wealth, and terminate the indestructible Bourne. Thriller addicts who love intricate webs of conspiracy mixed with an adrenalin rush of action and adventure will snap this one up.

Mankell, Henning

The Man from Beijing

M&T

A 2006 massacre in Sweden reverberates back to 19th-century China and America in this stand-alone by the author of the Kurt Wallander mysteries. When 19 of the 22 residents of a Swedish hamlet are brutally murdered, Judge

owlhoots and murderous Apaches in the town of Appaloosa. Cole and Hitch used to be the law in town, but now Appaloosa has a corrupt, ambitious, and deadly police chief named Amos Callico backed up by 12 rifle-toting cops of dubious background, and though Callico sees Cole and Hitch as impediments to his plans for extortion and high political office, his threats don't worry the boys much. Meanwhile, Cole kills the son of a prominent rancher in a fair fight, renegade Apaches plan an attack on the town, and a mysterious dandy arrives in town with a sinister agenda. Fortunately, Cole and Hitch are smart and resourceful, and there's trickery, gunplay, and throat-cutting until only a few folks are left standing. Lean, fast, and full of snappy dialogue, it's everything a series fan would expect.

Parker, Robert

Split Image

M&T, Jesse Stone series

Bestseller Parker's enjoyable ninth novel featuring Paradise, Mass., police chief Jesse Stone, focuses on Stone's deepening connection with PI Sunny Randall. Both Jesse and Sunny are still recovering from failed relationships, and Parker does a nice job of integrating their separate therapy sessions (in Sunny's case, with Susan Silverman, the significant other of Parker's best-known detective, Spenser) with two criminal investigations. The parents of 18-year-old Cheryl DeMarco ask Sunny for help in getting Cheryl out of a religious cult, while Stone probes the gunshot murder of Petrov Ognowski, a mob soldier whose boss, Reggie Galen, is the next-door neighbor of another gangster. Neither case is particularly compelling on its own, but they effectively serve as plot devices for the main characters to understand more about themselves and each other.

**Patterson, James & Marklund,
Liza**

Postcard Killers

M&T

Paris is stunning in the summer NYPD detective Jacob Kanon is on a tour of Europe's most gorgeous cities. But the sights aren't what draw him--he sees each museum, each cathedral, and each cafe through the eyes of his daughter's killer. The killing is simply marvelous Kanon's daughter, Kimmy, and her boyfriend were murdered while on vacation in Rome. Since then, young couples in Paris, Copenhagen, Frankfurt, and Stockholm have been found dead. Little connects the murders, other than a postcard to the local newspaper that precedes each new victim. Wish you were here. Now Kanon teams up with the Swedish reporter, Dessie Larsson, who has just received a postcard in Stockholm--and they think they know where the next victims will be. With relentless logic and unstoppable action, The Postcard Killers may be James Patterson's most vivid and compelling thriller yet.

**Patterson, James and Paetro,
Maxine**

The 9th Judgement

M&T

The most personal. A young mother and her infant child are ruthlessly gunned down while returning to their car in the garage of a shopping mall. There are no witnesses, and Detective Lindsay Boxer is left with only one shred of evidence: a cryptic message scrawled across the windshield in bloodred lipstick. The most dangerous. The same night, the wife of A-list actor Marcus Dowling is woken by a cat burglar who is about to steal millions of dollars' worth of precious jewels. In just seconds there is a nearly empty safe, a lifeless body, and another mystery that throws San Francisco into hysteria. Lindsay spends every waking hour working with her partner, Rich--and her desire for him threatens to tear apart both her engagement and the Women's Murder Club. Before Lindsay and her friends can piece together either case, one of the killers forces Lindsay to put her own life on the line--but is it enough to save the city? With unparalleled danger and explosive action.

Pearson, Ridley

In Harm's Way

M&T

The New York Times-bestselling author delivers another extraordinary Walt Fleming thriller. Sun Valley sheriff Walt Fleming's budding relationship with photographer Fiona Kenshaw hits a rough patch after Fiona is involved in a heroic river rescue and she attempts to duck the press. Despite her job and her laudable actions, she begs Walt to keep her photo out of the paper, avoiding him when he can't. Then Walt gets a phone call that changes everything: Lou Boldt, a police sergeant out of Seattle, calls to report that a recent murder may have a Sun Valley connection. After a badly beaten body is discovered just off a local highway, Walt knows there is a link--but can he pull the pieces together in time?

**Agents of Treachery:
Breathtaking, Never Before
Published Spy Fiction from**

Penzler, Otto (ed.)

Today's Most Exciting Writers

M&T

This remarkable collection of 14 short stories explicating tradecraft from the OSS of World War II through today's "sleepers" and terrorists is contributed by leading contemporary American and British stars in spy fiction. Editor Penzler has chosen well as no disappointments lurk here, and the stories move the reader on a roller coaster of moods from dismal through the brightest of lights and back again. Prominent among the contributors, Charles

McCarry summons West African horrors, John Lawton offers a hilarious con job, James FINDER springs a sudden surprise, John Weisman demonstrates that it's hard for a spy to stay alive, and Dan Fesperman's storytelling shines, as does Stella Rimington's. Verdict Those spy fans who enjoy the excellent writing in the celebrated novels of these contributors will discover no loss of tension or excitement here and are likely to acquire new appreciation for the skill with which the authors deliver their tales.

Pickard, Nancy

The Scent of Rain and Lightning M&T

Pretty young schoolteacher Jody Linder doesn't stray too far from small-town Rose, KS, returning to teach at her own high school. Jody is emotionally fragile, yet she's stubborn enough to live in the same house where her father was murdered 23 years earlier-the same night her mother vanished, also presumed dead. Raised by her grandparents and her uncles, Jody's believed their side of the story all her life. Town drunk Billy Crosby was convicted-wrongfully perhaps-of the murder. The bombshell that Billy is being released from prison opens up Jody's personal floodgates. She suddenly realizes how little she knows about her town and her family's motives. New revelations begin a thaw in Jody's heart and unleash in her a new determination to find the real killer. Stylistically similar with flashbacks, a determined young heroine, and a snappy twist, this novel is a worthy successor to the author's much-acclaimed *The Virgin of Small Plains*. Pickard's superb storytelling transports the reader into the characters' world, making all too real their dilemmas, their choices, and their willingness to believe the unlikely.

**Preston, Douglas and Child,
Lincoln**

Fever Dream M&T

Special Agent Pendergast returns in a new thriller with personal ramifications. Twelve years earlier, he watched in horror as his wife was mauled and killed by a lion in the African veldt. Now, while digging through stuff in his Louisiana home, he stumbles on the rifle that she had with her that fateful day and discovers that it had been loaded with blanks. Pendergast quickly enlists his friend Lieutenant D'Agosta to help him uncover a crafty murderer. Their journey will unveil terrible secrets his wife kept from Pendergast during their marriage and an obsession she had with the famed naturalist-painter John James Audubon. This is no dream; it's the authors' best book in years. Pendergast has to rein in his feelings to pay attention to the details, and it's fun to see the role reversal between him and the usually emotional D'Agosta. Not to be missed by either newcomers or die-hard fans.

Reichs, Christopher

Rules of Betrayal M&T

Reich's outstanding third thriller featuring Dr. Jonathan Ransom finds the courageous surgeon, who no longer works for Doctors Without Borders, in the hinterlands of Afghanistan, where he gets caught in a Taliban raid that ends with him being choppered out of a vicious firefight. As in the two previous novels, Jonathan becomes enmeshed in a mission that's run by Division, a secret U.S. government agency. The series' ongoing and fascinating twist is that Jonathan's wife, the extremely capable and extremely deadly Emma, may or may not be a Division agent, a Russian spy, or something else entirely. Jonathan willingly enters the dark world of espionage to rescue Emma after she falls afoul of Taliban warrior Sultan Haq and an evil arms dealer known as Lord Balfour. Emma's liberation of a nuclear bomb lost by the U.S. in the mountains of Pakistan in 1980 leads to an untied thread that will have readers eagerly awaiting the next installment.

Reichs, Kathy

Spider Bones M&T

Forensic anthropologist Temperance Brennan has a puzzle on her hands. A man has drowned under suspicious circumstances. His fingerprints identify him immediately, but here's the thing: the man apparently died more than 40 years ago. And if this is really him, then who is buried in his grave? The thirteenth Brennan novel is fairly typical of the series: a tightly plotted tale with engaging characters whose personal lives can be at least as interesting as the cases they're investigating. Reading a new Brennan novel is like hooking up with old friends: you know what to expect, but that's OK, because you also know you'll have a good time. Reichs, a former forensic anthropologist herself, whose early books were occasionally a bit clunky, has developed into a solid writer.

Roberts, Nora

The Search M&T

The serviceable latest from Roberts centers on Fiona Bristow, a professional canine search-and-rescue trainer, who moved to Orcas Island in Puget Sound eight years earlier, just after barely escaping from a serial killer. The story opens with Simon Doyle, an artisan cabinetmaker who arrives on the island with a puppy in tow. It's the puppy that brings Fiona and Simon together, and the romance gets off to a rocky start; he's grumpy and plainspoken; she doesn't scare easily. Then a serial killer begins operating within striking distance, and all Fiona's hard-won peace and equanimity begins to wobble: the man who almost killed her is in prison, but he's got a disciple on the outside. The serial killer plot is very familiar and without much to distinguish it, but the romance is finely done, with Roberts's

trademark banter lighting up the page. Fiona and Simon are the main attraction, but the setting and the supporting characters-with paws and without-provide a vivid backdrop

Rollins, James

The Devil Colony

M&T

Deep in the Rocky Mountains, a gruesome discovery-hundreds of mummified bodies-stir international attention and fervent controversy. Despite doubts to the bodies' origins, the local Native American Heritage Commission lays claim to the prehistoric remains, along with the strange artifacts found in the same cavern: gold plates inscribed with an unfathomable script. During a riot at the dig site, an anthropologist dies horribly: burned to ash in a fiery explosion in plain view of television cameras. All evidence points to a radical group of Native Americans, including one agitator, a teenage firebrand who escapes with a vital clue to the murder and calls on the one person who might help: her uncle, Painter Crowe, director of Sigma Force. To protect his niece and uncover the truth, Painter will ignite a war across the nation's most powerful intelligence agencies. Painter Crowe joins forces with Commander Gray Pierce to penetrate the shadowy heart of a dark cabal, one that has been manipulating American history since the founding of the thirteen colonies. But can he discover the truth-one that could topple governments-before it destroys all he holds dear?

Ross, Ann B.

Miss Julia Renews Her Vows

M&T, Series

Southern flower Miss Julia re-materializes in her droll 11th adventure, and this time out, the busybody is as busy as ever: she wraps up some business from Miss Julia Delivers the Goods by making sure thrice married rogue Mr. Pickens settles down with Hazel Marie, who is pregnant with their twins. She also contends with the return of rival doyenne Francie Pitts and puts on her detective hat to clear the name of her friend and hired help, Etta Mae Wiggins, who's accused of burglary and assaulting Francie. Meanwhile, Sam, Julia's long-suffering husband, has the audacity to suggest marriage counseling. Worse, the shrink is a man from her past-Dr. Fred Fowler, a "Christian psychologist with thirty years of experience in rekindling the flame of Christ-like love in limping marriages." Can feigning the flu save her from a confrontation and, gasp, rekindle their passion? And does Francie have designs on Sam? Ross answers these questions in trademark tart fashion. Series fans will have a ball, but those unfamiliar should definitely start with an earlier volume.

Sanford, John

Storm Prey

M&T, Series

In his 20th Prey novel, Sandford continues to deviate from the pulse-pounding serial killer thrillers of the early 1990s that put Minneapolis cop Lucas Davenport on the map. Davenport still has his sharp mind, quick reflexes, and dirty mouth, but now marriage and fatherhood give him something to lose. And as head of Minnesota's Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, he's working with a larger cast of law enforcement agents and a wider variety of criminals. The morning that his wife, surgeon Weather Karkinnen, is set to separate conjoined twins, she sees a man who just robbed the hospital pharmacy. Davenport calls Virgil Flowers to protect Weather and help him catch the robbers before they can identify her as the witness. The bikers behind the drug heist are portrayed as petty criminals, but the doctor and hit man they're working with are slowly revealed as out-and-out sociopaths. This fast-paced crime novel with bad guys so calmly amoral will have readers dead-bolting their doors for weeks.

**The Dark End of the Street: New
Stories of Sex and Crime by**

Santlofer, Jonathan (ed.)

Today's Top Authors

M&T

In one fast-paced story, a strong and aggravated man considers the pretty woman at the bar while he fingers the knife in his pocket. But what becomes of his prey when they move to the bedroom? In another tale, a man remembers the victim of a ghastly murder who visited the same hair salon as he does. And a Don Juan of a protagonist has a hobby of marrying vulnerable women, getting access to their bank accounts, and then robbing them blind. But there is much more to this collection than dark-haired vixens and crimes of passion. Some stories are brooding, some twisted; some bring righteous satisfaction, some linger in the back of your mind. What is truly on display is an impressive collection of literary talent: a group of some of the best writers we have, weaving fresh and memorable stories from a pair of classic themes. Taken as a whole, they are a rare treat for fans of great fiction, whether it's high literature, good old-fashioned suspense, or anything in between. Original black-and-white art by Jonathan Santlofer completes this innovative, exciting, and irresistibly intriguing book, a true literary gem.

**Skein of the Crime: A Knitting
Mystery**

Sefton, Maggie

M&T

Sefton's somber eighth knitting mystery to feature Fort Connor, Colo., financial consultant Kelly Flynn gets off to a slow start, but gradually picks up steam. While Kelly's romance with her longtime architect boyfriend, Steve Townsend, suffers, she helps her IT consultant friend, Megan Smith, plan Megan's upcoming wedding and teach a

House of Lambs pun knitting class. When Holly Kaiser, a college student who had been dating the son of a Lambspun knitting teacher, dies of a drug overdose, Kelly once again turns amateur sleuth. The more Kelly learns about Holly, who was far too fond of Ecstasy, the more she suspects the fatal overdose was no accident. The action builds to an intriguing cliffhanger. Directions for a braided knit scarf and a carrot cake recipe are a bonus.

Silva, Daniel

The Rembrandt Affair

M&T, Gabriel Allon Series (July)

Having reached "the pinnacle of world-class spy thriller writing", Silva has produced his most extraordinary novel to date—a tale of greed, passion, and murder spanning more than half a century, centered on an object of haunting beauty. Two families, one terrible secret, and a painting to die for. Determined to sever his ties with the Office, Gabriel Allon has retreated to the windswept cliffs of Cornwall with his beautiful Venetian-born wife Chiara. But once again his seclusion is interrupted by a visitor from his tangled past: the endearingly eccentric London art dealer, Julian Isherwood. As usual, Isherwood has a problem, one only Gabriel can solve. In the ancient English city of Glastonbury, an art restorer has been brutally murdered and a long-lost portrait by Rembrandt mysteriously stolen. Despite his reluctance, Gabriel is persuaded to use his unique skills to search for the painting and those responsible for the crime. But as he painstakingly follows a trail of clues leading from Amsterdam to Buenos Aires and, finally, to a villa on the graceful shores of Lake Geneva, Gabriel discovers there are deadly secrets connected to the painting. And evil men behind them. Filled with remarkable twists and turns of plot, and told with seductive prose, *The Rembrandt Affair* is more than just summer entertainment of the highest order. It is a timely reminder that there are men in the world who will do anything for money.

Slaughter, Karin

Broken

M&T

Two of New York Times best-selling author Slaughter's (*Undone*; *Fractured*) literary worlds collide as she brings us Special Agent Will Trent (*Triptych*; *Fractured*) and Dr. Sara Linton from her Grant County series in one explosive, fast-paced murder mystery. A dead college student, enmity between local law enforcement and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, and Sara's crippling memories combine to catapult readers through a quick-moving story that will keep them guessing until the end. Move over, Catherine Coulter—Slaughter may be today's top female suspense writer. Avid mystery and law-enforcement thriller fans as well as those who loved her series characters will devour Slaughter's latest.

Smith, Alexander McCall

The Double Comfort Safari Club

M&T, The Ladies No. 1 Detective Agency Series

As in 2009's *Tea Time* for the Traditionally Built, the previous entry in this beguiling, bestselling series, a personal crisis for one of the leads, rather than a mystery, drives the plot of Smith's superb 12th novel set in Botswana featuring his infinitely understanding sleuth, Precious Ramotswa. When a delivery truck backs into Phuti Radiphuti, the fiancée of Mma Ramotswa's prickly and insecure assistant, Grace Makutsi, and crushes his leg against a wall, Phuti's rude aunt won't allow Grace to visit her beloved in the hospital. Meanwhile, the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency tries to help the executor of an American woman, who wished to leave some money to a kind tour guide, but couldn't recall the guide's name. The resolution to the problem of another client, who was cheated out of his home by a gold-digger, might strike some as unduly fortuitous, but it makes sense within the framework of these books, which are more about humanity than logic.

Thompson, Victoria

Murder on Lexington Avenue

M&T

The murder of a wealthy, influential businessman has Det. Frank Malloy investigating the complications of the dead man's family life and rivalries between two schools for the deaf. The case has personal ramifications for Malloy as his own son attends one of the schools. Thompson's 12th historical set in turn-of-the-century New York City and featuring Malloy and midwife Sarah Brandt skillfully balances several unusual plot lines: a secret pregnancy, the tense conflict among educators on how to teach the deaf (sign language vs. lip reading), and an ongoing relationship between the victim's deaf daughter and her tutor. Thompson embellishes her beautifully constructed mysteries with little-known historical tidbits.

Thor, Brad

Foreign Influence

M&T

Navy SEAL turned covert operative Scot Harvath is called to action once again in Brad Thor's hottest political thriller yet. Buried within the black ops budgets of the Department of Defense, a new spy agency has been created. Unfettered by the oversight of self-serving politicians, it reports only to a secret panel of military insiders. Its job is to target America's enemies—both foreign and domestic—under a charter of three simple words: Find, Fix, and Finish. Recruited as a field operative, Scot Harvath has just returned from his first assignment abroad when a bombing in Rome kills a group of American college students. The evidence points to a dangerous colleague from Harvath's past

and a plan for further attacks on an unimaginable scale. Harvath is tasked with leveraging his relationship to lure the man out of hiding and kill him on the spot. But what if it is the wrong man? Simultaneously, a young woman is struck by a taxi in a hit-and-run in Chicago. With only two intoxicated witnesses and over five thousand cabs in the city, the Chicago Police have given up on their investigation. But when the family's attorney digs deeper, he will uncover a shocking connection to the bombing in Rome and the perpetrators' plans for America. As the story rockets to its conclusion, the plots intersect in a race to prevent one of the most audacious and unthinkable acts of war in the history of mankind.

Turow, Scott

Innocent

M&T

It took Turow more than 20 years to bring us the sequel to his best-selling first novel, "Presumed Innocent", and it was worth the wait. Now 60 and long after being acquitted of murdering his mistress, Rusty Sabich has become chief judge of the Kindle County, IL, appellate court and is running for the state supreme court. When his wife dies in her sleep, Sabich waits 24 hours before calling his son or anyone else, setting off suspicions of foul play with his old nemesis, acting prosecutor Tommy Molto. The coroner determines she died of natural causes, but Molto and his chief deputy, Brand, quietly start building a case, convinced Sabich is trying to get away with murder again. This is a beautifully written book with finely drawn characters and an intricate plot seamlessly weaving a troubled family story with a murder. Draws in the reader and doesn't let go until the last page.

Upson, Nicola

Angel with Two Faces

M&T, a Josephine Tey Mystery

No classic detective fiction aficionado will want to miss Upson's compelling sequel to 2008's *An Expert in Murder*, which introduced mystery author Josephine Tey (1896-1952) as sleuth. In 1935, Tey's close friend, Scotland Yard Inspector Archie Penrose, has returned on holiday to Cornwall, his childhood home, where he ends up attending the funeral of estate worker Harry Pinching, who drowned in Loe Pool, rumored to take a life every seven years. Most locals believe Pinching's death was an accident, but Penrose and Tey, who joins the inspector in Cornwall, soon pick up on ominous undercurrents in the community that suggest otherwise. As the pair attempt to uncover the truth, Penrose witnesses another death that's unquestionably murder. The subtle prose succeeds both at evoking the quiet splendor of the Cornish landscape and in capturing the tragedy and torment that plague many of the characters.

Walker, Martin

The Dark Vineyard: A Mystery of the French Country Side

M&T, sequel to Bruno, Chief of Police

Age-old French traditions collide with global commerce in Walker's lyrical sequel to *Bruno, Chief of Police*. When vandals attack a secretive research station hidden in the hills near Saint-Denis, Bruno Courreges, the rural village's only municipal policeman, looks into the matter. Meanwhile, winemaker Francois Cresseil and the young man he has just adopted, Max Vannes, both die of mysterious causes. Max's seductive Canadian girlfriend; the scion of a rich American winery looking to buy up tracts of fertile land; protesting "ecolos"; representatives from a variety of government agencies; and a host of colorful locals all complicate what turns into a murder investigation, which calls on Bruno's tact as well as his shrewdness. Walker evokes his French community's celebrations of wine, food, love, and friendship with obvious affection but without sentimentality. His villagers are no more immune from modern times than the rest of us—they just drink better wine.

White, Michael

Beautiful Assassin

M&T

In 1942, heroic Red Army sniper Tat'yana Levchenko, the eponymous heroine of this mildly compelling WWII-era thriller from White, travels to America as a goodwill ambassador. Her ostensible mission is to drum up financial and material support for the U.S.S.R. and to persuade FDR to open a second front in Europe. Stalin's secret police have other goals in mind, but Tat'yana wants only to return to her beloved homeland and continue killing German soldiers. Eleanor Roosevelt takes a shine to the young woman, who becomes the darling of the American press. Reluctantly, the beautiful sniper goes along with her espionage agent handler's demand that she spy on the first lady. In the end, Tat'yana must make a fateful choice involving an American army captain she's grown to love. Some readers may find Tat'yana's ethical and romantic struggles in the U.S. a letdown after the first part of the novel detailing her actions in the battle of Sevastopol.

Winslow, Don

Savages

M&T

Spare, clipped expository prose and hip, spot-on dialogue propel this visceral crime novel from Winslow. The future is looking good for Laguna Beach, Calif., marijuana growers Ben and Chon, until they receive an ominous e-mail from the Baja Cartel. Attached is a photograph showing the decapitated bodies of other independent drug dealers. The message is clear: sell your product through us or else. Ben and Chon try to resist, but matters escalate after

cartel thugs abduct Ophelia, the guys' beautiful young playmate and accomplice, and hold her for a cool \$20 million ransom. Meanwhile, Elena "La Reina" Sanchez Lauter, the leader of the Baja Cartel, must deal with rival drug gangs and potential overthrow from within. Ben and Chon propose a trade that Elena can't refuse, setting the stage for the violent and utterly satisfying ending. Winslow's encyclopedic knowledge of the border drug trade lends authenticity.

Winspear, Jacqueline

The Mapping of Love and Death

M&T, Maisie Dobbs series

Winspear's seventh Maisie Dobbs novel finds the detective employed by the parents of a soldier and cartographer, Michael Clifton, who fought during World War I. Missing for 16 years, the bodies of Clifton and his unit are discovered in France. The postmortem reveals that while the unit perished during a shelling attack, Clifton was already dead from a crushed skull. The only clues found with the body are Clifton's deteriorated journal and love letters to an unnamed nurse. There's also the dilemma of the California land purchase, potentially lucrative, that Clifton made just before he enlisted. With no deed of sale or will apparent, the land is mired in legal entanglements. This case has long grown cold, but Maisie is too relentless an investigator to let it prevent her from bringing a murderer to justice. An engaging plot coupled with captivating characters makes this the best Dobbs novel to date. Highly recommended for historical mystery aficionados who enjoy intriguing whodunits wrapped in a wartime love story.

Wolf, Inger Ash

The Taken

M&T

Lovers of twisty but plausible plotting and an out-of-the-ordinary lead will embrace Wolfe's standout second police procedural featuring Canadian Det. Insp. Hazel Micallef. A bizarre case brings Micallef, who depends on her ex-husband and his new wife as she recovers from a serious back injury suffered in the line of duty, back into action sooner than planned. A body fishermen dredge up from the bottom of a lake in Port Dundas, Ont., turns out just to be a mannequin, but numbers on the dummy lead Micallef to a Web site streaming video that appears to show a man being tortured by his abductor. In a frantic search for clues, Micallef concludes that the kidnapping is somehow linked to a fictional story being run in installments in the local newspaper. It's a testament to Wolfe's storytelling gifts that her reveal of the criminal's identity about midway through heightens rather than diminishes the tension.

POPULAR

Antalek, Robin

The Summer We Fell Apart

P

The arrival of Miriam, a Swiss high school student, in the Haas household is actually a minor incident in the scope of this story. The true focus is on each of the Haas siblings-Kate, Finn, George, and Amy-and to some extent their always distracted parents, Marilyn, the B-movie actress, and Richard, the one-hit-wonder playwright. An odd bunch of individuals, this family together forms a mostly dysfunctional and tentative unit. What would-be fifth sibling Miriam brings to their existence is intermittent-she's sometimes the accepted outsider, and, for handsome and tragic Finn, she is someone who loves him and tries to save him from self-destruction. The narrative shifts from sibling to sibling, allowing each character to present his or her perspective and life situation. In the final pages, Marilyn is given the same opportunity. Readers learn how the children have coped with minimal parental intervention and later see them as adults struggling to make their own way. Debut author Antalek provides a captivating look at a modern family over the course of 15 years. Her memorable characters are ultimately likable despite their flaws.

Balogh, Mary

A Secret Affair

P

Wealthy, beautiful, and newly widowed, Hannah Reid, Duchess of Dunbarton, does exactly what the ton expects her to do-she decides to take a lover. Her choice? The sinfully handsome and perennially single yet untitled Constantine Huxtable, a man as dangerously appealing as he is unmarriageable-and perfect for her needs. Naturally, nothing goes as either had planned in this neatly choreographed romance that will fascinate readers as Balogh gradually peels away the layers of this complex, secrets-laden story with tantalizing skill and sympathetic care. Poignant, thought-provoking, deliciously sensual, and completely enthralling, this polished gem is the last in the Huxtable quintet and one that Balogh's fans have been anxiously awaiting.

Barry, Brunonia

The Map of True Places

P (RPL Author Program July 14)

Barry's follow-up to her wildly popular debut, *The Lace Reader*, offers readers a healthy sampling of celestial navigation, fairy tales, half-truths, witchcraft, and intrigue. Psychotherapist but troubled young woman Zee Finch strikes out on an emotional journey to acquire knowledge and insight about her family's past. On the threshold of marriage, she finds herself in deep despair over a patient's suicide and is compelled to reexamine the chaotic years preceding her own mother's suicide; however, this compulsion loosens Zee's grip on reality. Navigating between

truth and fiction, Zee is finally able to move forward. Barry wisely places her novel in atmospheric Salem, MA, as literary history, sailing, and witchcraft form the backbone of this tale. Zee's a vulnerable, likable character, and the dramatic narrative brings her experiences to life. Although readers will be perched on the edge of their seats while consuming this mesmerizing, suspenseful tale, there are a few convoluted and confusing aspects among the details. Fans will also appreciate the brief reappearances of characters from Barry's debut.

Bass, Elizabeth

Miss You Most of All

P

Bass's sparkling debut will inspire laughs and tears as the sisters of Sassy Spinster Farm experience one of the most memorable summers of their lives. Cancer survivor Rue Anderson; her sister, Laura Rafferty; and military veteran Webb Saunders run a successful Sweetgum, Tex., farm where boarders can learn "hands-on about planting, harvesting, canning, and storing." Despite some problems-Rue's just out of chemo and sharing custody of her 11-year-old daughter with her now engaged to be married ex-husband-things have a way of running themselves until the unexpected arrival of Heidi Dawn Bogue, Rue and Laura's bratty little stepsister, who's all grown up, on the run from a Brooklyn "psycho embezzler mobster," and seeking sanctuary even though she knows Laura despises her. With bountiful grace and a real feeling for her characters, Bass creates a three-hanky delight by finding the earthy, homespun humor the women learn to embrace even in the most difficult situations.

Blackwell, Elise

An Unfinished Score

P

As she prepares dinner for her husband and their extended family, Suzanne hears on the radio that a jetliner has crashed and her lover is dead. Alex Elling was a renowned orchestra conductor. Suzanne is a concert violist, long unsatisfied with her marriage to a composer whose music turns emotion into thought. Now, more alone than she's ever been, she must grieve secretly. But as complex as that effort is, it pales with the arrival of Alex's widow, who blackmails her into completing the score for Alex's unfinished viola concerto. As Suzanne struggles to keep her double life a secret from her husband, from her best friend, and from the other members of her quartet, she is consumed by memories of a rich love affair saturated with music. Increasingly manipulated by her lover's widow and tormented by the concerto's many layers, Suzanne realizes she may lose everything she's spent her life working for.

Brashares, Ann

My Name is Memory

P

Most of us recycle everyday without giving it much thought. But what if we were recyclable? Daniel, who thinks of himself as a recycled soul, is different from everyone else-he remembers all his past lives. For over 1000 years, he's been learning how actions in one life affect the next and discovering that not everyone who returns has good intentions. But most of all, he remembers Sophia, despite her changing name and form, and while Sophia can't quite remember him, she's inexplicably drawn to get as close to him as she can. Although circumstances keep them apart time and time again, Daniel has mastered patience and has boundless faith that one day they will live a lifetime together. Brashares's second adult novel is reminiscent of Audrey Niffenegger's *The Time Traveler's Wife*, and Daniel and Sophia's near misses and chance encounters captivate and entrance us.

Brown, Sandra

Tough Customer

P

A new novel from bestseller Brown, full of her trademarks: tight plotting, breathless twists, edge-of-your-seat suspense, and sizzle.

Bushnell, Candace

The Carrie Diaries

P

This polished prequel to *Sex and the City* reveals the ample drama that filled Carrie Bradshaw's life before her move to Manhattan. With wit and insight, Carrie chronicles her emotionally charged senior year at a small Connecticut high school. While her friends' lives seem to be falling into place-especially on the dating and sex fronts-Carrie has just been rejected by a summer writing seminar in New York City, and laments, "I have nothing figured out at all." She falls hard for a slick underachiever who eventually leaves her for one of her best friends, while her widower father grapples with single parenthood, made tougher by Carrie's rebellious youngest sister's antics. Readers should be amused by some of the period details (Carrie's 18-year-old friends can drink legally), though they don't weigh heavily on the story, making the early 1980s setting feel almost incidental. Similarly, there's little that shouts, "This is the Carrie Bradshaw you know and love," as opposed to any other thoughtful teenager slowly coming into her own. But readers should enjoy witnessing Carrie's burgeoning independence and confidence as a writer.

Cabot, Meg

Insatiable

P, SF

Cabot winningly applies her trademark likably fallible protagonists and breezy storytelling to a vampire war in New York City. TV writer Meena Harper creates fabulous plots for *Insatiable*, the second-highest-rated soap opera, thanks to her burdensome if lucrative psychic ability to see into the future and determine how people are going to

die. And just as *Insatiable* is switching to a vampire theme to attract a younger demographic, a spate of chilling murders-by-exsanguination grips New York City. Enter Lucien Antonescu, a sexy, melancholic Romanian history professor/vampire who recognizes that the murders are the work of rogue vampires who have broken away from his order. (Lucien happens to be the son of Vlad the Impaler, whom Bram Stoker gave such a bad rep.) Lucien's opposition: Alaric Wulf, a sympathetic detective from the Palatine Guard, who hopes to use Meena and her prophetic gift to stop the murders and track down Lucien. Unfortunately for Alaric, Meena is a little in love with Lucien. Cabot is less concerned with creating a convincing family tree for Lucien than with creating sparks between her characters, who feel pleasantly natural even as they live alongside the vampires next door.

Cook, Claire

The Seven Year Switch

P

Roll out your beach blanket for this sweet summer read about making mistakes and moving on. Struggling and sassy single mom Jill-left to raise three-year-old Anastasia when husband Seth runs away to join the Peace Corp-is just about over the devastating loss when Seth reappears seven years later ready to pick up where they left off. Jill wrestles with her still-raw anger and her precocious daughter's heart-breaking need for her daddy back in her life. "Honey, if you don't forgive him, it'll eat you alive," counsels Jill's boss and best friend, Joni. For his part, "It wasn't the life we planned," Seth explains. But Anastasia helps him remember it's the life he needs while Jill discovers letting go teaches you how to hold onto new possibilities. Cook creates an impossible-not-to-love cast of imperfect, funny, wistful, and wise characters.

Crouch, Katie

Men and Dogs

P

When Hannah Legare was a young girl, her father disappeared on a routine fishing trip. Years later, Hannah finally confronts her past when she is forced to recuperate at home in Charleston, SC, after a drunken accident in San Francisco. This is not Hannah's best moment. Her marriage is failing, owing to her serial adultery; her sex-toy business is tanking; she drinks too much; and she holds her mother, stepfather, and brother Palmer at a distinct distance. By digging into the past-her father's disappearance, the state of her parents' marriage, and unfinished business with her high school boyfriend-Hannah doesn't really discover the answers but learns just enough about love and herself that she can face her present reality. Hannah is not exactly a likable character, but she reflects enough humor in her brokenness to be memorable. Crouch's second novel sounds formulaic, but as in her best-selling *Girls in Trucks*, she writes with a dark, twisty, but approachable Southern charm.

Dallas, Sandra

Whiter than Snow

P

From bestselling author of *Prayers for Sale* comes the moving and powerful story of a small town after a devastating avalanche, and the life changing effects it has on the people who live there. "Whiter Than Snow" opens in 1920, on a spring afternoon in Swandyke, a small town near Colorado's Tenmile Range. Just moments after four o'clock, a large split of snow separates from Jubilee Mountain high above the tiny hamlet and hurtles down the rocky slope, enveloping everything in its path including nine young children who are walking home from school. But only four children survive. "Whiter Than Snow" takes you into the lives of each of these families: There's Lucy and Dolly Patch two sisters, long estranged by a shocking betrayal. Joe Cobb, Swandyke's only black resident, whose love for his daughter Jane forces him to flee Alabama. There's Grace Foote, who hides secrets and scandal that belies her genteel façade. And Minder Evans, a civil war veteran who considers his cowardice his greatest sin. Finally, there's Essie Snowball, born Esther Schnable to conservative Jewish parents, but who now works as a prostitute and hides her child's parentage from all the world. Ultimately, each story serves as an allegory to the greater theme of the novel by echoing that fate, chance, and perhaps even divine providence, are all woven into the fabric of everyday life. And it's through each character's defining moment in his or her past that the reader understands how each child has become its parent's purpose for living. In the end, it's a novel of forgiveness, redemption, survival, faith and family.

Ellis, Bret Easton

Imperial Bedrooms

P

Ellis explores what disillusioned youth looks like 25 years later in this brutal sequel to "Less Than Zero". Clay, now a screenwriter, returns at Christmas to an L.A. that looks and operates much as it did 25 years ago. Trent is now a producer and married to Clay's ex, Blair, while Julian runs an escort service and Rip, Clay's old dealer, has had so much plastic surgery he's unrecognizable. While casting a script he's written, Clay falls for a young, untalented actress named Rain Turner, and his obsession and affair with her powers him through an alcoholic haze that swirls with images of death, mysterious text messages, and cars lurking outside his apartment. The story takes on a creepy noirish bent-with Clay as the frightened detective who doesn't really want to know anything-as it barrels toward a conclusion that reveals the horror that lies at the center of a tortured soul. Ellis fans will delight in the characters and Ellis's easy hand in manipulating their fates.

Lowcountry Summer: A Plantation

Frank, Dorothea Benton

Novel

P, Series

Here's one for the Southern gals as well as Yankees who appreciate Frank's signature mix of sass, sex, and gargantuan personalities. In this long-time-coming sequel to "Plantation", opinionated and family-centric Caroline Wimby Levine has just turned 47, but she's less concerned with advancing middle age than she is with son Eric shacking up with an older single mom. She's also dealing with a drunk and disorderly sister-in-law, Frances Mae; four nieces from hell; grieving brother Tripp; a pig-farmer boyfriend with a weak heart; and a serious crush on the local sheriff. Then there's Caroline's dead-but-not-forgotten mother, Miss Lavinia, whose presence both guides and troubles Caroline as she tries to keep her unruly family intact and out of jail. With a sizable cast of minor characters with major attitude, Frank lovingly mixes a brew of personalities who deliver nonstop clashes, mysteries, meltdowns, and commentaries; below the always funny theatrics, however, is a compelling saga of loss and acceptance.

Gabalton, Diana

An Echo in the Bone

P

The seventh installment of Gabaldon's popular Outlander series will not disappoint her fans, who've been chomping at the bit since "A Breath of Snow and Ashes" (2005). Highlander Jamie Fraser and his time-traveling wife, Claire, find themselves in the midst of the American Revolution. Jamie is fighting on the winning side-but he fears facing in battle his illegitimate son, William, a lieutenant in the British army. Meanwhile, in the 20th century, daughter Brianna and family have settled at the Fraser ancestral home, where they face their own perils. Readers anticipating a lengthy visit with Jamie and Claire may be vexed to find that a goodly chunk of the story is devoted to William; but his adventures include all the thrilling elements Outlander addicts have come to crave. Relish this book-it might be a long stretch until the next fix.

Giffin, Emily

Heart of the Matter

P

Tessa Russo is a Boston stay-at-home mother of two young children. Her husband, Nick, is a busy pediatric surgeon. Valerie Anderson is a single mom of six-year-old Charlie. Their lives intersect when Charlie is badly burned at a sleepover party, and Nick becomes his doctor. Much to Nick's chagrin, Tessa is on the fast track to joining the inner circle of a clique of uptight and wealthy suburban moms; meanwhile, he increasingly devotes himself to Charlie and Valerie. His relationship with Valerie builds gradually as they fool themselves into believing that they are just friends. That is, until Tessa goes out of town. Best-selling author Giffin's fifth novel is fast paced and well written; readers will be eager to find out how the relationships evolve and how the characters deal with the messy reality of adultery.

Pride and Prejudice and Zombies:

The Classic Regency Romance

Now with Ultraviolet Zombie

Grahame-Smith, Seth

Mayhem

P

You'll either love or loathe the idea of this classic rewritten to include hordes of brain-seeking zombie "unmentionables" and a Shaolin-trained Elizabeth Bennett. It is silly, of course, and at times unnecessarily crude (Do we really need this many puns on the word balls?), but it's also a great deal of fun-particularly when Elizabeth dreams about beheading her wayward sister Lydia. As Grahame-Smith has retained 85 percent of the original text, Austen aficionados may enjoy seeing the familiar story through this new lens. Fans of satirical zombie films and horror-comedies like Shaun of the Dead and Army of Darkness will enjoy it, too.

Green, Jane

Promises to Keep

P

In Green's 12th novel, Callie Perry is a happily married photographer with two wonderful kids, a lovable sister, Steffi, and a best friend, Lila. Problems are minor: Steffi can never settle down, Lila has finally found love but the guy has a nightmare of an ex, and Callie and Steffi's divorced parents haven't spoken in 30 years. But then Callie, a breast cancer survivor, is diagnosed with a rare and incurable complication of the disease. Suddenly realizing that she has only months to live, she begins the painful process of saying good-bye. While the subject matter is intense and personal, it's far from depressing; the characters are warm, funny and realistic. Green manages to create an authentic tale of a woman who truly loves her life and family and is trying to do the right thing for them before she dies. While Green breaks up her chapters with recipes (presumably because Steffi is a cook), this peculiar modern conceit in women's literature feels like a misstep. Another entry in Green's chick-lit repertoire.

Harris, Charlaine

Dead in the Family

P, Sookie Stackhouse series

After the brief but deadly Faery War, Sookie Stackhouse is hurt and she's angry. Just about the only bright spot in

her life is the love she thinks she feels for vampire Eric Northman who is under scrutiny by the new Vampire King because of their relationship. And as the political implications of the Shifters coming out are beginning to be felt, Sookie's connection to the Shreveport pack draws her into the debate and up against a Fae who wants her dead.

Harris, E. Lynn

In my Father's House

P

Before he died last year, Harris wrote this series debut introducing Bentley L. Dean. Disowned by his father and estranged from his Detroit family after coming out, Bentley launched an African American modeling agency in Miami that was becoming quite successful until the recession hit. Now strapped for cash, he agrees to provide hot male models to an A-list party and reluctantly sends his 18-year-old protege, Jah, when one of the other models drops out. There Jah meets and falls in love with African American movie star (but married and closeted) Seth Sinclair. Bentley knows that keeping Seth happy will mean steady work, a cash flow, and networking opportunities for his business, but is he willing to sacrifice his integrity and Jah? Full of romance, intrigue, and betrayal, Harris's novel will attract readers of gay fiction, African American fiction, and, of course, his many fans.

Hiaasen, Carl

Star Island

P

Twenty-two-year-old pop star Cherry Pye is attempting a comeback from her latest drug and alcohol disaster. Ann DeLusia is Cherry's "undercover stunt double," portraying Cherry whenever the singer is too wasted to go out in public. But, one night, Ann-as-Cherry is mistakenly kidnapped from a South Beach hotel by an obsessed paparazzo named Bang Abbott. Now the challenge for Cherry's handlers is to rescue Ann while keeping her existence secret from the public-and from Cherry herself. A further complication: Ann has had a bewitching encounter with Skink, the unhinged former governor of Florida, and now he's heading for Miami to find her. Will Bang achieve his fantasy of a private photo session with Cherry? Will Cherry sober up in time to lip-synch her concert tour? Will Skink track down Ann before Cherry's posse does? All will be revealed in Carl Hiaasen's hilarious spin on life in the celebrity fast lane.

Hilderbrand, Elin

The Island

P

Two generations of women come together off the coast of Nantucket as they spend the summer in the family beach cottage. They're all there for different reasons: Chess is trying to mend her broken heart after her ex-fiance dies in a tragic accident; her sister, Tate, is eager to escape boredom and figure out what she really wants from life; their mother, Birdie, is still coming to terms with her divorce; and Birdie's sister, India, is trying to help them all-while dealing with her own secret pain. For those looking for a slower-paced novel to savor, this latest by Hilderbrand will fit the bill.

Isaacs, Susan

As Husbands Go

P

Imagine being the smart and adored wife of a marvelous and successful man as well as the proud, if harried, mother of his darling four-year-old triplet boys in New York City. Then, one seemingly ordinary day, your thoroughly reliable husband does not return home from work. Isaacs vividly conveys the initial panic and gut-wrenching fear that Susie Gersten feels in those first hours as she contacts family members, his colleagues, and the police. Days go by with no word, and Susie fears the worst. Nothing, however, could have prepared her for the news that her beloved husband, Dr. Jonah Gersten, was found murdered in a call girl's apartment. Susie can't accept it, and by asking questions and challenging assumptions, she fights for the memory of her good marriage. Issacs's latest novel depicts the hardship of a sudden death and the capacities of a clever and spirited woman to stay engaged in the world while struggling with grief. For all of its serious aspects, there are good measures of wit and fun here. All of Isaacs's novels have been New York Times best sellers-this one will be no exception.

Kiernan, Kristy

Between Friends

P

Kiernan again demonstrates her ability to portray true-to-life relationships between women. Ali Gutierrez is mother to 15-year-old Letty thanks to the egg donation of her best friend, Cora. Ali wants to have another child, but first has to convince her husband, Benny, and then Cora, to endure the process one more time. Cora, a free-spirit who's just returned to America from a teaching excursion in Chile, has news of her own-she has a debilitating genetic kidney disease, and she's not sure how to break the news to Ali. Meanwhile, Letty's going through growing pains with her bad-news boyfriend, and when poor choices begin endangering her life, it takes all three of her parents-Benny, Ali, and Cora-to try to save her. With realistic dialogue and pinpointed emotions, Kiernan paints a persuasive portrait of the bonds between mothers, daughters, and friends in this inspiring, heartbreaking tale.

Kleypas, Lisa

Married by Morning

P

For two years, Catherine Marks has been a paid companion to the Hathaway sisters, a pleasant position, with one caveat. Her charges; older brother, Leo Hathaway, is thoroughly exasperating. Cat can hardly believe that their

constant arguing could mask a mutual attraction. But when one quarrel ends in a sudden kiss, Cat is shocked at her powerful response and even more so when Leo proposes a dangerous liaison. Leo must marry and produce an heir within a year to save his family home. Catherine's respectable demeanor hides a secret that would utterly destroy her. But to Leo, Cat is intriguing and infernally tempting, even to a man resolved never to love again. The danger Cat tried to outrun is about to separate them forever, unless two wary lovers can find a way to banish the shadows and give in to their desires.

Lansens, Lori

The Wife's Tale

P

Mary Gooch is beyond shock when her husband leaves the night before their silver anniversary party. Jimmy Gooch has always loved her, but with each new trauma—two early miscarriages, her father's death, even the loss of her feral cat—Mary has felt less worthy of his affection and more hungry. Now weighing 302 pounds, Mary can't seem to move past her malaise. Finding \$25,000 in their bank account, Mary flies, for the first time, from their small Canadian town to her mother-in-law's home in Southern California, determined to wait for her prodigal spouse. While there, she loses her appetite but discovers a measure of self-worth through the "kindness of strangers." Lansens's portrait of a woman who hides behind the Kenmore as protection from life's heartache is earthy and primal in its pain. Yet Lansens doesn't resort to an overnight makeover to save Mary. Instead, our heroine uncovers a hidden strength she had all along.

LeCraw, Holly

The Swimming Pool

P

LeCraw's thoughtful debut novel tells of two families whose lives are entwined by tragedy, secrecy, and scandal. Marcella Atkinson's heart was broken the night her affair with Cecil McClatchey ended and his wife was murdered. Never entirely cleared as a suspect in her killing, Cecil himself died soon after. Years later, her own marriage destroyed by the affair, Marcella is again thrown into contact with the McClatchey family when her daughter Toni (ignorant of her mother's adultery) is employed by Cecil's daughter, Callie, who for her own reasons must seek solace with her brother Jed in their family's summer home on Cape Cod. Jed's discovery of Marcella's old swimsuit in a closet leads him to her and to an entirely new relationship. This exceptionally complex and accomplished novel does not read like the work of a beginning writer. With a strong underlying theme of longing woven throughout, LeCraw's work skillfully takes these characters through varying emotional journeys. An insightful piece, not just for beach or airplane reading. An author to watch.

Macomber, Debbie

Summer on Blossom Street

P, Series

The fifth entry in Macomber's "Blossom Street" series follows her successful format of introducing new as well as familiar characters through their joint association at Lydia Goetz's Seattle knit shop. This time, Lydia is offering a "Knit to Quit" class, which attracts a woman trying to forget her unfaithful boyfriend, a man ordered by his doctor to reduce stress, and another young woman trying to give up smoking. Under the gentle guidance of Lydia and her cantankerous sister, Margaret, the class succeeds in coping with their issues in a variety of ways. Macomber manages to remain optimistic if not a tad unrealistic in resolving all of the dilemmas presented and ensuring a happy and satisfying conclusion. Knitting definitely plays a role here, but it shouldn't deter readers who don't have a passion for the needle arts from enjoying this title. Macomber shows no signs of fatigue in keeping her fictional Blossom Street books unique and entertaining.

McCall Smith, Alexander

Corduroy Mansions

P, Series

Within one building in London's eclectic Pimlico district, on three separate floors, live the seven tenants of Corduroy Mansions. William and his freeloading adult son Eddie inhabit the top floor. Four young women—Caroline, Jo, Dee, and Jenny—share the middle flat and are as different from one another as could be. And quiet, unobtrusive Basil Wickramsinghe lives alone on the ground floor. As they go about their daily business, friends, family, and coworkers are brought into the mix, and their lives are explored as well. A bit of soap opera drama, a bit of thoughtful philosophizing, and a little canine comedy all mix into this slowly paced story of a disparate, engaging group of people. A nice choice if you're looking for a smart beach book or a story to ponder on a rainy afternoon, but beware of the possible soporific effect of a few passages. Despite the languid pace, McCall Smith's new series is off to a promising start, and readers will be particularly interested to see what will become of canine resident Freddie de la Haye.

McNeil, Gil

Needles and Pearls

P

A brief affair after the death of her philandering husband yields a surprising result for a shopkeeper in McNeil's warm and fuzzy sequel to *The Beach Street Knitting Society and Yarn Club*. Jo Mackenzie's succeeded in rehabbing her Gran's wool shop in Broadgate, a lovely seaside town in England. Her *Stitch and Bitch* class is popular; her two

young boys, Archie and Jack, have settled in; and her Gran's getting married. But Jo's liaison with Daniel Fitzgerald, a globe-trotting photographer, has ended, leaving Jo to sort out what's next. Big changes and a bevy of stressful obstacles test her mettle and reorder her world. Will Martin Trent, the newly divorced son of her Gran's friend, be a part of it? It's a little on the chatty side, but McNeil spins a comfy, hopeful yarn with believable characters.

Meacham, Leila

Roses

P

It's been almost 30 years since the heyday of giant epics in the grand tradition of Edna Ferber and Barbara Taylor Bradford, but Meacham's debut might bring them back. This story of two founding families in a small East Texas town spans the 20th century. When Mary Toliver inherits her family's cotton plantation, Somerset, in 1916, it tears apart her family; her mother turns to alcohol, and her brother leaves. Mary's obsession with Somerset even causes her to lose the love of her life, timber magnate Percy Warwick. By the time she's 85, Mary is determined that the family curse will not continue and, despite her grandniece's love of Somerset, plans for the plantation to be sold after her death. Mary Toliver and Percy Warwick can't share anything more than friendship, but Mary's actions might allow Rachel to see past Somerset to the man who loves her. Readers who like an old-fashioned saga will devour this sprawling novel of passion and revenge.

The Short Second Life of Bree

Meyer, Stephanie

Tanner

P, Series

Fans of The Twilight Saga will be enthralled by this riveting story of Bree Tanner, a character first introduced in Eclipse, and the darker side of the newborn vampire world she inhabits. In another irresistible combination of danger, mystery, and romance, Stephenie Meyer tells the devastating story of Bree and the newborn army as they prepare to close in on Bella Swan and the Cullens, following their encounter to its unforgettable conclusion.

Miller, Linda Lael

McKetricks of Texas: Garrett

P, Series

Devastated by the discovery of revered mentor/longtime employer U.S. Senator Morgan Cox's infidelity and public display of poor judgment, Garrett McKetrick heads home to the Silver Spur Ranch to regroup. But instead of leisurely examining his options, he must deal with cattle rustlers, an all-too-attractive houseguest and her precocious son, and elder brother Tate's ultimatum to either help run the ranch or sell it. High-school teacher Julie Remington, four-year-old Calvin, and their three-legged dog, Harry, are temporarily occupying the main houseguest suite while their rented home is being fumigated. Although Julie and Garrett have no history to overcome like her sisters and his brothers, her own insecurities seem likely to prevent her from reaching out to grab happiness, be it ever so fleeting. Miller's fast-moving, emotional contemporary romance continues the McKetricks series' plotlines, with more installments to come.

Morais, Richard C.

The Hundred-Foot Journey

P

With his debut novel, longtime Forbes magazine correspondent Morais delves into a rich, imagery-filled culinary world that begins in Bombay and ends in Paris, tracing the career of Hassan Haji as he becomes a famed Parisian chef. Narrated by Hassan, the story begins with his grandfather starting a lowly restaurant in Bombay on the eve of WWII, which his father later inherits. But when tragedy strikes and Hassan's mother is killed, the Hajis leave India, and, after a brief and discontented sojourn in England, destiny leads them to the quaint French alpine village of Lumiere. There, the family settles, bringing Indian cuisine to the unsuspecting town, provoking the ire of Madame Mallory, an unpleasant but extremely talented local chef. From vibrantly depicted French markets and restaurant kitchens to the lively and humorously portrayed Haji family, Morais engulfs the reader in Hassan's wondrous world of discovery. Regardless of one's relationship with food, this novel will spark the desire to wield a whisk or maybe just a knife and fork.

Niffenegger, Audrey

Her Fearful Symmetry

P

Niffenegger follows up her spectacular "The Time Traveler's Wife" with a beautifully written if incoherent ghost story. When Elspeth Noblin dies, she leaves everything to the 20-year-old American twin daughters of her own long-estranged twin, Edie. Valentina and Julia, as enmeshed as Elspeth and Edie once were, move into Elspeth's London flat bordering Highgate Cemetery in a building occupied by Elspeth's lover, Robert, and the novel's most interesting character, Martin, whose wife is long suffering due to his crushing and beautifully portrayed OCD. The girls are pallid and incurious; they wander around London and spend time with Robert and Martin and Elspeth's ghost. Valentina's developing relationship with Robert arouses mild jealousy, and when Valentina pursues her interest in fashion design, Julia disapproves, which leads Valentina and Elspeth to concoct an extreme plan to allow Valentina to lead her own life.

**The Three Weissmanns of
Westport**

Schine, Cathleen

P

Drawing on Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*, Schine has written a witty update in which a late-life divorcee exiles Betty Weissmann and her adult daughters, Annie and Miranda, from a luxurious life in New York to a shabby beach cottage in Westport, CT. Annie is the serious daughter and Miranda the drama queen. Both women find unexpected love, while Betty, a sweet, frivolous spendthrift, struggles with her newly impoverished state. What comfort the Weissmanns enjoy is owing to the generosity of Cousin Lou, a Holocaust survivor and real-estate mogul, whose goal in life is to rescue everyone, whether or not rescue is needed. While beautifully preserving the essence of the plot, Schine skillfully manages to parallel the original novel in clever 21st-century ways—the trip to London becomes a holiday in Palm Springs; the scoundrel Willoughby becomes a wannabe actor. Austen lovers and those who enjoyed updates like Paula Marantz Cohen's *Jane Austen in Boca* and *Jane Austen in Scarsdale* should appreciate this novel.

Schmidt, Heidi Jon

The House on Oyster Creek

P (Aug)

An only child with physical limitations, Henry Tradescome has always disliked his family summer home in Wellfleet, MA. But Henry's wife, Charlotte, is thrilled to raise their four-year-old daughter in the house he's just inherited. Founder/editor of an alternative New York newspaper, Henry is 20 years Charlotte's senior. She's never felt she was Henry's intellectual equal, but now, at 42, Charlotte accepts that it's long past time she stopped caring. The Tradescomes move to the Cape, where Charlotte runs afoul of the longtime residents, including the farmers who work the oyster claims along the beach. A "washashore," Charlotte is only slightly less despised than the tourists. Still, she discovers an inner strength and confidence, especially in the company of Darryl Stead, whose claim is behind her house. When Charlotte sells off part of the land to ensure her family's future, the repercussions serve only to illuminate her naivete. Schmidt conveys the unassailable bond of tradition in a tightly knit community along with the ins and outs of oyster culture. Her writing is nuanced and clever as it relays her characters' persistence in the face of life's obstacles. Superior literary fiction.

Siddons, Anne River

Burnt Mountain

P (Aug)

Born to a wealthy family in Middletown, Georgia, the only place Thayer Wentworth felt at home was at her summer camp -- Camp Greyledge on Burnt Mountain in North Georgia. It was there that she came alive and where she met Nick Abrams, her first love...and first heartbreak. Years later, to her family's dismay, Thayer marries Aengus, an Irish professor, and they move into her deceased grandmother's house in Atlanta, only miles from her beloved Camp Greyledge, now a boy's camp called Camp Forever. There, Aengus and Thayer lead quiet and happy lives until Aengus is invited up to Camp Forever to tell old Irish tales to the campers. As Aengus spends less and less time at home and becomes more and more distant, Thayer begins to realize something is not quite right at Camp Forever, and that the man she married is not the man she thought she knew.

Steel, Danielle

Family Ties

P

Steel's latest bestseller-to-be follows Annie Ferguson, who inherits her sister's three children when she dies in a plane crash. Annie does her best to raise them and manages to build a career for herself as a promising architect, even if it means putting much of the rest of her life on hold. Once the children are grown, Annie realizes that there are a slew of other problems facing them—abusive relationships, culture clashes, and the painful process of finding one's way in life—and as Annie gently leads her inherited brood through the gauntlet of growing up, she finds her own happiness.

Thayer, Nancy

Beachcombers

P

Thayer explores a family's attempts to move on from memories of a mother who lost her battle with depression. Abbie, Emma, and Lily are sisters with aspirations of moving away from their childhood Nantucket home, but when Emma loses everything, they all find themselves back under the same old roof for the summer—and grappling to get along. Determined to help Emma out of her depression, Abbie creates a business that sees the girls performing odd jobs around the island. Emma, however, finds true solace and friendship in her widowed father's renter, Marina, who is restarting her life after a failed marriage. As the sisters come together as a family, they begin to take on new members as each woman stumbles into romance that is, at times, sudden and melodramatic. The four separate romantic relationships will draw love story enthusiasts, but none of the relationships is fully fleshed out. Attempts at tackling clinical depression are contrived and, surprisingly, treated as an afterthought, but the themes of sisterly support and personal healing are heartwarming and will appeal to fans of women's fiction, especially those who read Debbie Macomber and Elin Hilderbrand.

Weiner, Jennifer

Fly Away Home

P

Sometimes all you can do is fly away home . . . When Sylvie Serfer met Richard Woodruff in law school, she had wild curls, wide hips, and lots of opinions. Decades later, Sylvie has remade herself as the ideal politician's wife—her hair dyed and straightened, her hippie-chick wardrobe replaced by tailored knit suits. At fifty-seven, she ruefully acknowledges that her job is staying twenty pounds thinner than she was in her twenties and tending to her husband, the senator. Lizzie, the Woodruffs' younger daughter, is at twenty-four a recovering addict, whose mantra HALT (Hungry? Angry? Lonely? Tired?) helps her keep her life under control. Still, trouble always seems to find her. Her older sister, Diana, an emergency room physician, has everything Lizzie failed to achieve—a husband, a young son, the perfect home—and yet she's trapped in a loveless marriage. With temptation waiting in one of the ER's exam rooms, she finds herself craving more. After Richard's extramarital affair makes headlines, the three women are drawn into the painful glare of the national spotlight. Once the press conference is over, each is forced to reconsider her life, who she is and who she is meant to be. Written with an irresistible blend of heartbreak and hilarity, "Fly Away Home" is an unforgettable story of a mother and two daughters who after a lifetime of distance finally learn to find refuge in one another.

Weisberger, Lauren

Last Night at Chateau Marmont

P

The bestselling author of "The Devil Wears Prada", with a delicious novel about what happens when your guilty pleasure becomes your worst nightmare.

White, Karen

On Folly Beach

P

The latest Southern novel from the acclaimed bestselling and award-winning author of "The Memory of Water". To most people, Folly Beach, South Carolina, is simply the last barrier island before the Atlantic. To some, it's a sanctuary, which is why Janie Hamilton's mother encourages her to buy the local book store, Folly's Finds, hoping it will distract Janie from the loss of her husband in Afghanistan. Janie is at first resistant, but intrigued after finding love letters and an image of a beautiful bottle tree in a box of used books from Folly's Finds, and decides to take the plunge. The store's seller insists on one condition: Janie must allow Lulu, the late owner's elderly sister, to continue selling her bottle trees from its back yard. Historically, bottle trees were brought by African slaves to the American South, and Janie had grown up with one in her backyard, and it has always been a symbol of refuge to her. Janie generally ignores Lulu as she sifts through the love letters, wanting to learn more. But the more she discovers of the letters' authors, the closer she feels to Lulu. As details of a possible murder and a mysterious disappearance during World War II are revealed, the two women discover that circumstances beyond their control, sixty years apart, have brought them together, here on Folly Beach. And it is here that their war-ravaged hearts can find hope for a second chance.

Wolff, Isabel

A Vintage Affair

P

Vintage clothing lover Phoebe opens her own resale boutique in London's Blackheath neighborhood, meeting much success. She's grateful for the hustle and bustle the shop provides, because it lets her forget her guilt over the death of her best childhood friend, not to mention that she just left her fiance at the altar. When the elderly Mrs. Bell contracts with Phoebe to sell her entire wardrobe, Phoebe finds herself reeled in by the story of Mrs. Bell's childhood friend, thought lost in the horrors of the Holocaust. Additionally, our heroine's got not one but two new suitors keeping her on her toes. Sounds like a lot, but Wolff manages to keep every story line interesting and on track, including plenty of fashion talk. With a wide cast of realistic, wonderfully drawn characters, a deft blending of the past with the present, and a seemingly effortless managing of several plots at once, this charming deserves a place in all popular fiction collections.