

NEWS

MYSTERY LOVERS BOOKSHOP

514 Allegheny River Boulevard • Oakmont, Pennsylvania 15139 • (412) 828-4877
December 2005-January 2006

Hours: 10 to 5 Monday to Saturday, Noon to 4 Sunday

Nancy Atherton



The creator of Aunt Dimity returns to MLB on Saturday, February 11 at 10 for a Coffee & Crime Breakfast. Aunt Dimity and the Deep Blue Sea is reviewed on page 2. Cost is \$5, reservations needed.

Nancy Martin



Come join us on Monday, March 6 at 7 pm for a party to celebrate publication of Nancy's fifth Blackbird Sisters mystery: *Have Your Cake and Kill Him Too*. All are welcome, please call if you can join us.

T. Jefferson Parker



Edgar-winner T. Jefferson Parker will be at MLB on Sunday, March 5 at noon for a brunch & author talk with his new book *The Fallen*. Cost is \$12 and reservations essential.

Valentine's Day Tea & Tales

Sunday, Feb. 12 at 2 pm

A well-loved MLB tradition returns when we host storyteller Alison K. Babusci in a program of tales of love from around the world along with an elegant assortment of tea of goodies. Cost is \$10, reservations essential. Suitable for all ages.

Michele Martinez



Michele Martinez joins the Women Lawyers Book Club for a dinner and CLE talk on Tuesday, February 7. Please call for details.

M.J. Rose

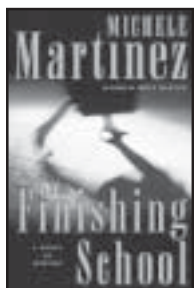
M.J. Rose presents her "Buzz Your Book" Seminar on Sunday, January 29 at 1 pm. See page 8 for details.



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Just Published..

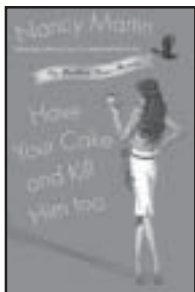
In *The Finishing School* (Harper, \$23.95), Michele Martinez brings back sexy single mom and NY Federal Prosecutor Melanie Vargas in another first-rate thriller. Two posh schoolgirls OD right



before Christmas in a case festooned with politics, career pitfalls and pot-boiling suspense. A similar career of the author lends frightening verisimilitude to this not to be missed thriller. Don't miss

Michele's appearance at MLB on Tuesday, February 7 when she presents a CLE program on Fourth Amendment issues including the current controversy on warrantless wiretaps.

Pittsburgh's own Nancy Martin glows in the latest Blackbird Sisters mystery set in the changing social scene of Philadelphia's mainline. The fifth of the sexy society series, *Have Your Cake and Kill Him Too* (NAL, \$19.95), brings many shades of meaning to Cupcakes and you will find this the most delicious of the series. Politics, pregnancy and one bratty heiress in the mix make for more fun. Celebrate with Nancy on Monday March 6 at 7 pm at Mystery Lovers and send her off on the US Tour with a toast and nibble some, what else?—specially styled cupcakes.



Aunt Dimity and the Deep Blue Sea (Viking, \$22.95) by Nancy Atherton is the 11th in the cozy series that we have loved since *Aunt Dimity's Death*. Wouldn't you just love an enchanted cottage with a magic diary and the perfect husband and twins? Then you can understand the fear and peril when Lori Shepherd boards the helicopter in her yard and whisks the boys to safety, she hopes, in a Scottish Castle on

a very mysterious isle on the stormy coast. Bodyguards, elegant meals and puzzles fill her days. Join Nancy on Saturday, February 11 at 10 am for a Coffee & Crime Breakfast and more tales of Aunt Dimity. This event is perfect for young readers, particularly middle school girls, too.



T. Jefferson Parker will be at MLB on Sunday, March 5 with his newest novel, *The Fallen*. Look for a review in the next News.

British sleuths

A new Janet Neel mystery is a reason for staying home and reading over any other entertainment. *Ticket to Ride* (St. Martin's, \$24.95) is the latest that will keep those lights burning until you get to the last page. Dead Serbian immigrants on a beach, muddied and suffocated, involves a smart young immigration attorney in a complex human puzzle. Engaging female character and top notch writing reward.

The ever popular Ian Rutledge series continues with Charles Todd's *A Long Shadow* (Morrow, \$23.95) where a series of cartridge casing, with odd engravings, take Rutledge on a most curious path that seems to lead back to the War. We'll have signed copies but in limited quantities. Call today.



In John Harvey's second Frank Elder novel, *Ash & Bone* (Harcourt, \$25), London Detective Maddy Mirch is found raped and murdered shortly after witnessing a questionable shooting of a drug kingpin. Because of his former romantic relationship with the victim, retired

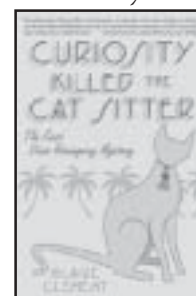
inspector Frank Elder asks to assist in the investigation. The timing could not be worse for Elder when personal problems come back to haunt him. *Ash and Bone* presents us with the best sort of English police procedural. The earlier *Flesh & Blood* will be in paper in the summer. [JW]

Jim Kelly's superb series featuring journalist Philip Dryden continues with *The Moon Tunnel* (St. Martin's, \$24.95) where an archaeological dig turns up a body—from a WW II POW camp that had been on the site fifty years earlier. Dryden is intrigued by the case because the victim was shot, in a tunnel, headed into the camp and forensic evidence dates the body to much after the war. A story rich in plot and character.

Classic murder mystery with an aristocratic flair is on tap with David Roberts' *A Grave Man* (C&G, \$25) the sixth in the series featuring Lord Edward Corinth and journalist Verity Browne. Edward is once again called upon by Winston Churchill for a little sleuthing, this time into a medical clinic with a suspicious agenda. Roberts' series is a nice combo of country house murder and the larger political issues of the inter-war years.

Cozy types

Curiosity Killed the Cat Sitter (St.



Martin's, \$23.95), Blaise Clement's impressive first entry in the Dixie Hemingway series, is a sure keeper, with well-developed characters, seamless prose and a winning plot. Dixie Hemingway (no

relation to Ernest, alas), ex-deputy in the Sarasota County Sheriff's Department, earns her living as a pet sitter as she works through the debilitating grief precipitated by the death of her husband and daughter

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in a freak traffic accident. Dixie is drawn into action when she discovers a body in the kitchen of one of her cat sitting clients. Fortunately, curiosity *doesn't* kill this cat sitter. [LM]

Prescription for the winter blues, this newest in the Arly Hanks series from Joan Hess is just what the doctor ordered. *Malpractice in Maggody* (S&S, \$23) pokes fun at the health spa industry, herbal medicine, professional sports, the entertainment industry, well, just about everyone. With a cast of memorable character to boot. [JA]

In the entertaining *Island Intrigue* (Poisoned Pen, \$24.95), Wendy Howell Mills introduces a fabulous new sleuth in Sabrina Dunsweeney, a middle-aged teacher from Cincinnati who is taking time to regroup from a cancer scare and her mother's death by vacationing on quaint Comico Island. Comico isn't quite the relaxing venue she anticipated, though, as family feuds and unresolved mysteries reignite, resulting in the death of a recently returned islander. [LM]

Dead Roots (Kensington, \$20) finds Nancy J. Cohen's hairdresser sleuth Marla Shore taking her fiancé to meet her family. The situation is tense enough but tales of hidden jewels in the old hotel they're meeting in followed by the death of her aunt bring things to a boil. An always enjoyable series.

Quick takes

Stephen King, despite oft announced retirement, is at it again with *Cell* (Scribner, \$26.95) where civilization ends through cell phone-induced mutations.

On a cheerier note, Lilian Jackson Braun fans will find that all is well in Moose County as Koko and Yum-Yum return in *The Cat Who Dropped a Bombshell* (Putnam, \$23.95).

Jill Churchill's Grace & Favor series continues with *Who's Sorry Now* (Morrow, \$23.95) where the impoverished brother and sister find a very old skeleton on the grounds.

MLB best seller Linda Fairstein's *Death Dance* (Scribner, \$26) sets DA Alexandra Cooper on the trail of a dancer who disappeared in the midst of a performance at Lincoln Center.

A woman's life is ripped apart when the past catches up in Iris Johansen's breathless *On the Run* (Bantam, \$26).

"Home Repair is Homicide" continues with Sarah Graves' *Nail Biter* (Bantam, \$22) where Jake investigates the death of a fundamentalist preacher.



Foreign shores

Snow falls gently upon the dead body of a woman lying on the marble floor of the Pantheon, thus starts *The Sacred Cut* (Delacorte, \$22.00), David Hewson's third book in his Roman detective series, which started with *A Season for the Dead*. The position of the naked corpse suggests the well-known Leonardo da Vinci drawing and carved on her back is a design of ancient and mystical symbolism of the novel's title. This well plotted, fast moving and full of local color. [JA]

In *Mark of the Lion* (NAL, \$23.95) Suzanne Arruda introduces readers to Jade del Cameron, a World War I ambulance driver, who travels to Africa to fulfill a pledge made to a dying soldier. Arruda provides a fascinating look at the clash of cultures in changing times against a wonderfully vivid backdrop; the East African setting resonates with mystery. I eagerly await Jade's next adventure in 1920's Sub-Saharan Africa.

Roy Lewis presents a winning amalgam of archeology, history and detection

in *Grave Error* (C & G, \$25.). When prominent archeologist Arnold Landon attends a conference in Rome, he discovers a world of underground intrigue involving professional grave robbers. Meanwhile, a police detective in Northumberland is trying desperately to crack a smuggling ring specializing in purloined artifacts. When the plots converge, sparks fly. Make no mistake about it, *Grave Error* is good stuff. [LM]

Martin O'Brien begins an excellent series with a Gallic twist in *Jacquot and the Waterman* (St. Martin's, \$24.95) introducing Chief Inspector Daniel Jacquot of the Marseilles police. Although Jacquot, a former rugby star, is fond of good food and the blues his current case is considerably less charming—a series of murders by drowning of young women. O'Brien brings much of the liveliness of Marseille to this debut effort.

Mystery of the past

Fans of Sharon Kay Penman's historicals will thrill to *Sorrow Without End* (Poisoned Pen, \$24.95), Priscilla Royal's third medieval mystery featuring Eleanor, prioress of Tyndal. This gripping medieval thriller recreates perilous times with a vengeance, as Crowner Ralf investigates the murder of a soldier slain with a dagger sporting a cryptic design. Read this fascinating novel to see how faith and justice triumph over the evil perpetrated by a medieval serial killer. [LM]

What's a sempster? Is a question I've heard frequently while reading Margaret Frazer's *The Sempster's Tale* (Berkley, \$24.95), the fifteenth Dame Frevisse mystery in this wonderful series with an authentically Chaucerian twist. The sempster in question is Anne Blakhall, a



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Just Published...continued from page 3

seamstress who is a highly independent woman, carrying on her embroidery business after her husband's death. Dame Frevisse of St. Fridewold's nunnery crosses paths with Anne and her lover Daved, a Jewish merchant. Murder, mayhem, rebellion and anti-Semitism take over, and it remains for Dame Frevisse to resolve matters by solving mysteries. [LM]

Creole detective Valentin St. Cyr returns to Storyville in David Fulmer's colorful third novel, *Rampart Street* (Harcourt, \$25). Storyville, the red light district of New Orleans, was a dangerous place in 1910 so the murder of a wealthy white man there didn't seem too unusual but nothing in this case adds up as Valentin undertakes an investigation on behalf of the man's daughter. Fulmer's research into life in New Orleans in the early 20th century pays off as this wonderful novel unfolds with detail of the high and low life in the most racially and

culturally diverse city in America.

The unfolding and interlocking stories of London's Soho in the Fifties that are Pip Granger's chosen field continue in the completely charming *No Peace for the*

Wicked (Poisoned Pen, \$24.95). The chief character is Lizzy, Jenny's mother from the earlier *The Widow Ginger*, and it through Jenny's friend Rosie that Lizzy is introduced the whole world of the café on Compton Street and its eccentric denizens. A delightful evocation of a time past with a bit of a mystery mixed into the plot.

Karen Harper's latest Queen Elizabeth mystery, *The Fatal Fashione* (St. Martin's, \$23.95) uses the introduction of starch into the English fashion world as the starting point for a plot involving the murder of a royal starcher. How else did they get those enormous collars to stand up?

Try one of these

Nicci French's latest, *Catch Me When I Fall* (Warner, \$24.95) is an extraordinary

novel that follows the life of a young London professional woman, Holly, as her life runs completely off the rails. A one night stand leads to a stalking but that's only a part of the story as we gradually see that Holly is moving from inappropriate behavior to mental illness. I read this book in a single sitting—couldn't put it down.

Combining a love of food with his notoriety as Vito on the Sopranos, Joseph R. Gannascoli, with Allen C. Kupfer, has created *A Meal to Die For* (Forge, \$22.95) in which Benny Lacoco, "The Food Fence," prepares a meal for some mob pals while he reminisces about his life of crime.



Includes recipes, concrete shoes optional.

N.M. Kelby's *Whale Season* (Areheart, \$23) is a rollicking, raucous, over-the-top Florida crime novel set in the little town of the title. Starting with

a Jesus impersonator who is actually a serial killer, this plot has nowhere to go but sideways although the backstory of the various characters lends a depth often missing from comic crime novels.

Ever since Tracy Dunham made her debut last year with the clever and engaging *Wishful Sinful*, I've been eagerly awaiting her next book. Yes, *The River Knows* (Berkley, \$23.95) is every bit as good as its predecessor, revisiting series star Tal Jefferson, recovering in her home town from alcoholism and her big city law career. Small town Wynnton, S.C. is no halcyon scene, however, as murder and racial tensions rise to the fore, implicating Tal's beloved secretary. It remains for Tal to get to the bottom of things, in this wonderful series that is only getting better. [LM]

Something different

In Jesse Kellerman's *Sunstroke* (Putnam, \$24.95) we start with Gloria Mendez who is quietly in love with her boss. When he disappears on his annual vacation to Mexico she is determined to track him down: dead or alive. Her investigation

exposes aspects of his life that are unexpected and more complicated than she ever could have predicted. The search is twisted and suspenseful; a great effort for this first time author who happens to be Jonathan and Faye Kellerman's son. [JW]

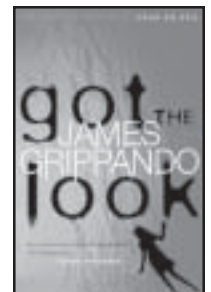
Twist Phelan revisits Pinnacle Peak in *Spurred Ambition* (Poisoned Pen, \$24.95), her third captivating mystery featuring attorney Hannah Dain, who has an uncanny knack for stumbling into mysteries in the course of her employment. Reeling from shock at discovering that she is the product of an affair and not her father's daughter at all, Hannah goes on an existential quest to discover who she really is. *Spurred Ambition* fascinates, as does its author, who retired in her thirties from a lucrative career in law and now devotes her energy to writing, traveling, and performing endurance sports. [LM]

Escape from the dreary depths of winter by basking in the balmy clime of South Florida in *Got the Look*

(HarperCollins, \$24.95), James Grippando's most recent gripping suspense in the Jack Swyteck series. Miami heats up as a maniacal kidnapper eludes FBI agent Andie Henning and targets Miami lawyer Swyteck's new girlfriend. Brace yourself for a stunning conclusion in this first-rate thriller. And don't forget to check out the backlist of equally worthy Grippando titles! [LM]

Go behind the scenes of the broadcast news industry with Sally Harrington, Laura Van Wormer's glamorous news anchor and accidental sleuth making her sixth newsworthy appearance in the compelling *Mr. Murder* (Mira, \$24.95). Sally's career and romantic life, both exciting in their own right, take on secondary roles as Sally is targeted by a vicious killer whom she must outwit to preserve her life. For a glimpse at how the news world operates, meet *Mr. Murder*. Once the introduction has been made,

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Also Noted: A listing, by author, of new books not reviewed elsewhere in the News

Felony & Mayhem titles, all \$14.95

- Barnard, Robert; *Death on the High C's*; witty mystery with opera setting
- Carkeet, David; *Double Negative*; Edgar-nominated academic mystery has plenty of fun with linguistics
- Graham, Caroline; *The Killings at Badger's Drift*; first Inspector Barnaby, classic British mystery
- Hightower, Lynn; *Satan's Lambs*; at last, the Shamus-winning first in the Lena Padgett series
- Ironside, Elizabeth; *Death in the Garden*; superb British mystery as woman investigates death, sixty year earlier, of her great-aunt's husband.
- Kaminsky, Stuart M.; *Death of a Dissident*; first for Moscow detective Porfiry Rostnikov
- Mann, Paul; *Season of the Monsoon*; first for Bombay police inspector George Sansi
- Price, Anthony; *The Labyrinth Makers*; an espionage classic as ill-equipped Ministry of Defense researcher assigned to mystery of WW II era fighter found at the bottom of a lake
- Apodaca, Jennifer; *Batteries Required* (Kensington, \$6.50); dating service owner Samantha Shaw
- Arnott, Jake; *Truecrime* (Soho, \$12); conclusion to the London crime epic begun in *The Long Firm*
- Babson, Marian; *Please Do Feed the Cat* (SMP, \$6.50); another of Babson's delightful cat-infused mysteries in which a feline on a diet wanders into neighboring houses looking for something better to eat
- Barnes, Linda; *Cold Case* (SMP, \$6.99); Boston PI Carlotta Carlyle, reissue
- Bissell, Sallie; *Legacy of Masks* (Bantam, \$6.99); prosecutor Mary Crow returns home to North Carolina
- Bonanno, Joe; *The Good Guys* (Warner, \$7.50); mobster teams up with Donnie Brasco to write novel
- Broadbent, Tony; *Spectres in the Smoke* (St. Martin's, \$23.95); Jethro the burglar in post-War London, sequel to *The Smoke*
- Colley, Barbara; *Married to the Mop* (Kensington, \$22); cleaning service owner Charlotte LaRue
- Cornwell, Bernard; *The Pale Horseman* (Harper, \$25.95); set in the England of King Alfred, sequel to *The Last Kingdom*
- Curzon, Clare; *Last To Leave* (St. Martin's, \$23.95); Superintendent Mike Yeading
- Depoy, Phillip; *A Minister's Ghost* (St. Martin's, \$23.95); folklorist Fever Devlin
- Deutermann; P.T.; *The Cat Dancers* (St. Martin's, \$24.95); cops track vigilantes in North Carolina hills
- Dezenhall, Eric; *Turnpike Flameout* (St. Martin's, \$23.95); NJ pollster Jonah Eastman
- Duffy, Stella and Lauren Henderson, editors; *Tart Noir* (Berkley, \$7.99); a wealth of bad girl mystery with Liza Cody, Laura Lippman, Jenny Siler and a host of others
- Dymmoch, Michael Allen; *White Tiger* (St. Martin's, \$24.95); Chicago detective John Thinnis
- Eccles, Marjorie; *The Shape of Sand* (St. Martin's, \$23.95); standalone novel of three daughters who seek answers to their mother's disappearance forty years earlier
- Evanovich, Janet; *Manhunt* (Harper, \$7.50); early romance, reissued
- Fielding, Joy; *Mad River Road* (Atria, \$25); ex-con and woman seeking new life on collision course
- Fielding, Joy; *Puppet* (Pocket, \$9.95); attorney comes home to defend her estranged mother in a murder trial
- Folsom, Allan; *The Exile* (Forge, \$7.99); author of *Day After Tomorrow* does not fulfill early promise in this lumbering cop drama/glitzy novel/conspiracy thriller
- Francis, Dick; *Nerve and Come to Grief* (both Berkley, \$7.99); reissues
- Frazer, Margaret; *The Widow's Tale* (Berkley, \$6.99); medieval abbess Dame Frevisse
- Frey, Stephen; *The Chairman* (Ballantine, \$7.99); young hot-shot takes over financial firm
- Frey, Stephen; *The Protégé* (Ballantine, \$24.95); financial thriller
- Fulmer, David; *Jass* (Harcourt, \$14); turn-of-the-century New Orleans detective Valentin St. Cyr
- Gardner, Lisa; *Alone* (Bantam, \$7.99); SWAT team sniper fears he may have been set up to commit murder
- Geagley, Brad; *Day of the False King* (S&S, \$24); Egyptian detective Semerket
- Greenwood, Kerry; *Urn Burial* (Poisoned Pen, \$24.95); Phyrne Fisher, '20s Australian sleuth
- Hambly, Barbara; *The Emancipator's Wife* (Bantam, \$14); historical novel of Mary Todd Lincoln
- Hardwick, Gary; *Executioner's Game* (Harper, \$7.50); CIA agent sent to Detroit to execute his mentor
- Harrison, Janis; *Bindweed* (St. Martin's, \$23.95); florist Bretta Solomon
- Hart, Ellen; *A Killing Cure* (St. Martin's, \$13.95); Jane Lawless, reissue
- Holland, David; *The Devil's Game* (St. Martin's, \$24.95); Victorian mystery with Rev. Tuckworth of Bellminster
- Holmes, Rupert; *Swing* (Random, \$13.95); murder at the 1940 San Francisco World's Fair, complete with CD containing clues
- Iggulden, Conn; *Emperor: The Field of Swords* (Dell, \$6.99); in the third installment Caesar conquers Gaul
- Iles, Greg; *Blood Memory* (Pocket, \$9.95); forensic odontologist confronts secrets from her past and serial killer
- Iles, Greg; *Turning Angel* (Scribner, \$25.95); friendship threatened by murder accusation
- Jecks, Michael; *The Crediton Killings* (Avon, \$7.50); fourth in the Simon Puttock series, now in US edition

Please see Also Noted, page 10

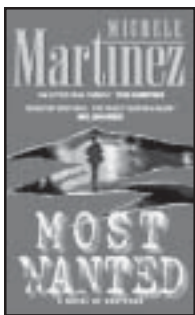
More books, more reviews: it's all at mysterylovers.com

New Arrivals in Paperback

T. Jefferson Parker picked up a well-deserved Edgar for *California Girl* (Harper, \$7.99), an epic story of Orange County, California from the mid-Fifties to the '70s that features three brothers whose lives change dramatically over that time. The spark for the story, however, is the discovery of the body of a girl they all knew from childhood and the investigation of her death will leave none of their lives unchanged. Don't miss Jeff Parker's Sunday Brunch author talk on Sunday, March 5.



Newcomer Michele Martinez, a former New York attorney, introduces Melanie Vargas, an ingenious and enterprising U.S.



prosecutor, in *Most Wanted* (Harper, \$6.99), a gripping legal thriller that will keep you reading long into the night. Its gritty depiction of crimes and the legal system ensure that *Most Wanted* will appeal to readers,

especially to fans of novels in the vein of Linda Fairstein's. [LM] Don't miss Michele at MLB on Tuesday, February 7.

Crème de la crime

If you enjoyed *Road to Perdition* and wondered what happened to the son you'll find out in *Road to Purgatory* (Harper, \$7.99) by Max Allan Collins. Set in 1942 as Michael O'Sullivan returns to Chicago and takes up his war against the Capone mob.

Pulitzer Prize winner Michael Chabon re-imagines the nineteenth century detective novel in *The Final Solution*

(Harper, \$12.95) wherein an 89 year old man, vaguely remembered as a famous detective, now devoted to bee-keeping encounters a nine year old boy; a refugee from Nazi Germany. A master storyteller at the height of his power.

Twist Phelan's second Pinnacle Peak mystery, *Family Claims* (Poisoned Pen, \$14.95), is an absorbing combination of legal thriller and psychological suspense as lawyer Hannah Dain struggles with her family relations while saving her career from a deal gone south. Phelan keeps a nice balance between the personal issues and the danger that Hannah faces—threads that naturally intertwine in the exciting climax.

John Lescroart's superb new novel *The Motive* (Signet, \$7.99) begins with a fire in a beautiful San Francisco Victorian. Evidence of arson and two bodies, dead before the fire started, make for a high profile investigation for Abe Glitsky. Lescroart expertly weaves the human threads of this confusing case into a fast-paced story that will keep you guessing all the way through.

The Secret Smile (Warner, \$4.99) by Nicci French is a terrifying study of the power of lies. It begins with a brief affair between Miranda and a charming psychopath named Brian. After she dumps him, he worms his way into her family, taking up with her sister and wreaking havoc while Miranda finds that no one will believe her about Brian. A powerful novel of suspense.

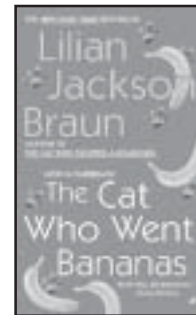
Quick Takes

Hamish Macbeth investigates the death of a visiting writer in M.C. Beaton's *Death of a Bore* (Warner, \$6.99).

Nary a courtroom scene to be found in Grisham's latest, *The Broker* (Dell, \$7.99), a thriller about a famous lobbyist given a presidential pardon as part of a CIA plot.

Tamar Myers' latest comic mystery, *Assault and Pepper* (Signet, \$6.99) brings back the usual crazy cast of Hernia, Pennsylvania characters including B&B owner Magdalena Yoder.

FBI profiler Jessica Coram faces a puzzling case identical to an earlier crime in Robert W. Walker's *Absolute Instinct* (Berkley, \$7.99).



The Cat Who Went Bananas is Lilian Jackson Braun's twenty-seventh in her cat-centric series. If you haven't read them, do!

James Patterson does "Black Widow" in *Honeymoon* (Warner, \$13.95) written by

Howard Roughan.

Deborah Crombie's *In a Dark House* (Avon, \$7.50) is a wonderful addition to her Duncan Kincaid and Gemma James series.

Felony & Mayhem

Felony & Mayhem sounds like the generic mystery plot but it's actually a fine, new publisher who is bringing back to life some wonderful recent mystery classics that have fallen out of print. Recent revivals, all at \$14.95, include:

Susan Wolfe's fascinating legal thriller *The Last Billable Hour*, set in the Silicon Valley of the late '80s, and featuring a nerdy associate who teams

up with a female detective to sort out the murder of a partner in his firm.

Long before *Sex and the City*, Marissa Piesman was chronicling the life of the



Looking for a British publication? Ask us.

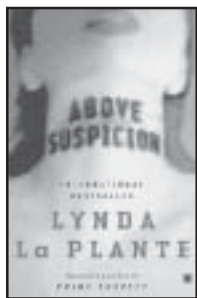
single professional woman in Manhattan with hilarious results. Her debut *Unorthodox Practices* introduced attorney Nina Fischman who has perpetual boyfriend trouble and becomes involved in the suspicious deaths of two residents of rent controlled apartments.

Satan's Lambs, Lynn Hightower's superb Shamus-winning first novel in the Lina Padgett series, a PI who specializes in abused women.

Other Felony & Mayhem titles can be found in the Also Noted article.

English whodunit

From Lynda La Plante, the creator of the Prime Suspect series on PBS comes this new offering, *Above Suspicion* (Touchstone, \$14). Already a best seller in the UK, we are introduced to new rookie detective, Anna Travis. In her first homicide case, an eight-year killing spree of prostitutes, Anna finds herself convinced that the killer is



a very well known and beloved personality. Even if she found indisputable proof of his guilt would a jury convict him? Is her perpetrator indeed above suspicion? [JA]

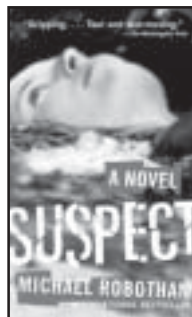
Darkness Falls (Leisure, \$6.99) by Margaret Murphy begins her series featuring London barrister Clara Pascal whose comfortable life comes to a sudden end when she finds herself abducted and chained in a cellar without food, water or contact with the kidnapper. Frantic effort to find her alternate with Clara's struggle to unravel her situation in this high-octane suspenser.

The Smoke (F&M, \$14.95) is a charming debut by Tony Broadbent featuring Jethro, a London born and bred cat burglar who burgles the wrong house—the Soviet Embassy—and then needs all his Cockney wits to maneuver between the cops, MI5, the Soviets and some gangsters. Set in 1946, Broadbent brings the post-war atmosphere to life and fills the book with Jethro's professional commentary related in a slangy and humorous way.

In Michael Robotham's stylish, chilling

new thriller *Suspect* (Vintage, \$7.99), London clinical psychologist Joe

O'Loughlin's life takes a turn for the worse when a former client is murdered and the police finger him as the prime suspect. At the risk of losing everything he loves—wife, child, career, home—Joe fights to clear his reputation and to nail the man he suspects is the actual killer, a client who has been shadowing him for reasons unknown. The gripping ending of this fascinating psychological study is guaranteed to take you by surprise. [LM]



Deadly Dance (SMP, \$6.99) is the fourteenth in the MLB bestselling series about the attractive early retiree with the big bucks, Agatha Raisin. For fans who know her name always appears in the title, let's just say this is a big change for the lady of leisure with the smart mouth who is addicted to falling in love. Now operating the busy detective agency in the Cotswolds, Agatha is sleuthing more. A very satisfying change for the smart woman of mystery with a new cast of colorfully realized characters blending with a few old favorites.

Anthony Eglin begins a fascinating new series with a garden theme in *The Blue Rose* (SMP, \$6.99). A young couple's happiness with their new home in the Wiltshire countryside is shattered by the discovery of a blue rose bush—a genetic impossibility—in their garden. As news leaks out a series of sinister events leads to murder along a trail of secret experiments and coded journals.

Back again

Reissue of Aaron Elkins thoroughly delightful Gideon Oliver series continues with the Edgar-winning number four: *Old Bones* (Berkley, \$6.99) which takes the Skeleton Detective to Mont St. Michel where a pile of bones has been found in a chateau cellar.

Patricia MacDonald is one of the best suspense writers around so it's a pleasure to see a reissue of *The Unforgiven* (Pocket,

\$6.99), her Edgar-nominated first book. Released from prison after serving 12 years for a murder she didn't commit Maggie Spenser is ready to start a new life but her old life isn't quite gone yet—someone isn't ready to forgive and forget.

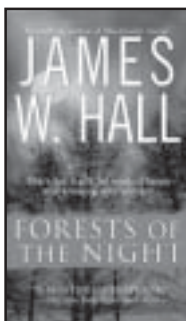
Ed McBain fans will love to see *The Gutter and the Grave* (Hard Case, \$6.99), reissue of a 1958 pulp paperback about an ex-cop, now Bowery bum who takes on one last case. Also from Hard Case, *Night Walker* (\$6.99) by Donald Hamilton, the creator of Matt Helm, with a long out of print classic about a hitchhiker who wakes up with his face in bandages, someone else's name and a woman who claims to be his wife.

Poisoned Pen has brought back *At Risk* and *Dead Man's Touch* (both \$14.95), the first two of Kit Ehrman's splendid equine mysteries featuring thoroughbred stable manager Steve Cline. The third, *Cold Burn* (\$14.95), is just out in paper as well.

P.I. types and more

It's been a while since we've seen paperback of a Bill Pronzini Nameless detective mystery so *Nightcrawlers* (Forge, \$6.99) is a great way to introduce yourself to this classic PI series set in California. A missing partner and a call from a name out of the past set up the action in this 29th entry in this fine series.

In James W. Hall's *Forests of the Night* (SMP, \$6.99) Miami cop Charlotte Monroe is happily married to defense attorney Parker although their teenage daughter's gradual descent into schizophrenia is putting considerable strain on their relationship. Into this volatile mix comes Jacob Panther, a Cherokee Indian, childhood friend of Parker's and a fugitive on charges of bank



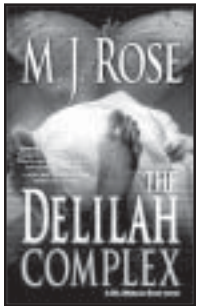
robbery and murder. Beyond the deft plotting and tense action, Hall has created a believable set of characters, particularly Charlotte and her daughter. Please see *New Arrivals in Paper*, page 12

Looking for a mystery dinner party game? Call us

Very Original

Reviews of books published for the first time as paperbacks

M. J. Rose brings us a hot, hot, hot adventure for sex therapist Dr Morgan Snow in *The Delilah Complex* (Mira, \$6.99) where she soon meets her match with The Scarlett Society. This is a full-on thriller with an erotic edge and a wholly wonderful character. Don't miss M.J. Rose's "Buzz Your Book" Seminar at Mystery Lovers on Sunday January 29. Get your rez TODAY



for a marketing program for writers from the woman Time magazine calls "the poster girl of e-publishing" who has a lifetime experience in advertising that she's turned into book promotion know-how.

Fabulous Firsts

The first in a new series is always an occasion to celebrate but Lee Goldberg's TV adaptations double your pleasure. No longer restricted by time and space of TV production, this terrific TV writer's latest, *Mr. Monk Goes to the Firehouse* (Signet, \$6.99) brings everyone's favorite OCD detective to print. Hooray.

Another bright and shiny first is *A Killer Collection* (Berkley, \$6.99) from J.B. Stanley. The world of North Carolina pottery collectors and artists sets the stage for world class intrigue from this knowledgeable newcomer. Informed and clever, sleuth Molly Appleby easily solves the case of murder of the collector. We have loved this area of folk art and country ever since Margaret Maron's *Uncommon Clay* and her guided tour of the area when we visited.

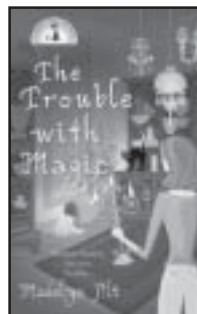
More chicklit mystery fun awaits in Jennifer Sturman's *The Jinx* (Red Dress Ink, \$12.95). Boston's the scene where mergers and acquisitions exec Rachel Benjamin hopes for quality time with her new guy and gets a serial murder to solve. Sassy and satisfying.

J.A. Jance joins the ranks of Very

Original this month with a brand-new series in *Edge of Evil* (Avon, \$7.99) that introduces ex-TV journalist Alison Lawson who has been cut loose from her high-profile broadcast job in favor of a "younger face." Moving back to her hometown of Sedona, Alison starts a blog aimed at others similarly "cut loose" but a series of disturbing posts raise a specter of danger far worse than losing a job. An excellent suspenser, well-plotted and with an appealing sleuth and setting.

Come on! Take the Plunge! Use your real Name!

Bless those publishers who still believe the new and fresh should still be printed for those of us who are voracious paperback mystery readers. *Blessed is the Busybody* (Berkley, \$6.99) by Emilie Richards combines the clerical mystery, small town setting and contemporary family. Minister's wife Aggie Sloan-Wilcox has to find the real killer of the young women whose body landed on her doorstep to free her husband of the suspicion that his code of confidentiality complicates. Well done.



Paranormal doesn't quite capture the charm and verve of the sleuth Maggie O'Neill in *The Trouble With Magic* (Berkley, \$6.99) by Madelyn Alt. She has a new job at Enchantments and too soon a murder to solve so her boss, the real witch, can come out from under the cloak of suspicion, fear and attitude. Good Job!

Lynn Abercrombie launches an interesting new series with *The Body Box* (Pinnacle, \$6.99) featuring African-American detective Mechelle Deakes who is demoted to the cold case squad after being busted in a drug buy. Her investigation into a series of child murders going back twenty years leads to possible

accusations against other cops in this hard-edged thriller with some pretty grisly forensic details balanced by the feisty character of Mechelle and her slightly shady partner. Abercrombie, incidentally, is actually the prolific Edgar-winner, Walter Sorrels.

As the above three, this is another mystery with a pseudonym; this time for two sisters—an artist and an historian. *Feint of Art* (Signet, \$6.99) by Hailey Lind is full of fakes, forgeries and real murder.



More than one

A real favorite in the new books of 2005 was Maggie Sefton's knitting mystery set in Colorado and featuring telecommuting CPA and heiress Kelly Flynn. *Needled to Death* (Berkley, \$6.99) has me salivating over the luscious fibers and more that satisfied with the night of page turning the latest puzzle provoked. This is a darn good series with vivid and breathing characters and a tight plot.

Another figure skating mystery is here just in time with *Axel of Evil* (Berkley, \$6.99) from Alina Adams, a writer not new to the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat of the skating world. Start with *Murder on Ice* and *On Thin Ice* (Both \$5.99) and have a stash of three for just under \$20 to carry you through those commercials during the February Winter Olympics.

Christopher Fowler is back with the superb *Seventy-Seven Clocks* (Bantam, \$6.99), the third Bryant and May mystery, in what is rapidly becoming my new favorite series from the U.K. Set retrospectively — since Bryant met his demise in series opener *Full House* (Bantam, \$6.99) — this wonderfully quirky example of British Gothic takes the two detectives from the Peculiar Crimes Unit on one of

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their most peculiar missions of all. [LM]

Beverly Connor's series with forensic anthropologist Diane Fallon continues with *Dead Secret* (Onyx, \$7.99) where she finds not one but three skeletonized remains: one in an unmapped cave, another in a car submerged in a quarry and yet a third in the woods. Does something tie these victims together? The answer lies in Diane's investigation of the tales that dead men tell.



Bel Barrett's bouts with the perils of menopause, aging and teaching in a community college, have always colored the story line in these bright mysteries by Jane Isenberg. *Hot Wired* (Avon, \$6.99) is the super 8th in the

hot series where a cyber slam leads to the death of the nasty poet and Bel's the suspect. Great work.

History and mystery, Oh my!

Fans of the historical mystery, rejoice! Peter Tremayne's *An Ensuing Evil and Others* (St. Martin's, \$14.95) has arrived just in time to deliver you from the throes of a 21st century winter. Consisting of fourteen superb historical mystery stories ranging in time and place from 8th Century Scotland to Victorian England, this wonderful book explores radically divergent settings and historical conditions, accompanied by a fascinating assortment of detectives. [LM]

Ashley Gardner's Regency mysteries featuring Captain Gabriel Lacey of the 35th Light Dragoons are dead-on ethical dilemmas in the polite world of English drawing rooms. When his insufferable former commander becomes a murder suspect in *A Body in Berkley Square* (Berkley, \$7.99), Lacey is on the scene in the fifth of this intelligent and textured series. Top drawer.

Kate Kingsbury's Manor House Mystery series set in WW II England is back for an eighth and the next to the last book. *Wedding Rows* (Berkley, \$6.99) means Earl and Elizabeth can celebrate and hope that all of Sitting Marsh joins

the festivities until an untimely death starts the plot rolling. The last is due out in September.

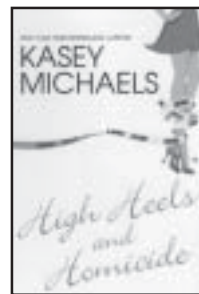
Robert W. Walker uses the background of the Chicago World's Fair of 1893 to good effect in his series debut *City for Ransom* (Avon, \$6.99). Police Inspector Alastair Ransom is on the trail of a serial killer in this historical mystery rich in the period flavor and excitement of the World Exposition.

Thou Shalt Not Kill (C&G, \$15.95) is a unique anthology, edited by Anne Perry, with stories based on tales from the bible. Writers from Marcia Talley and Nancy Pickard to Peter Robinson and Simon Brett take on the challenge with gusto.

Anne Perry herself is one of the contributors to Maxim Jakubowski's anthology *Past Poisons* (ibooks, \$12.95), a tribute to Ellis Peters with stories by Steven Saylor, Peter Tremayne and others.

Lighter side

Margaret Searles takes her two senior sleuths Mrs. Millet and Mrs. Hark on their second eventful trip together in the cleverly constructed *Devonshire Cream* (Wrinklers Press, \$14). Even though the police are on the case, the charming and ever-curious Margaret and Judy take it upon themselves to expedite matters, hastening a solution to several crimes. I can't wait to see where they go for their next trip! [LM]



Frisky and fun, *High Heels and Homicide* (Kensington, \$14.), the forth whodunit, is a colorful delight.

A second helping of delicious suspense and humor in Alison Gaylin's *You Kill Me* (Signet, \$6.99); a sequel to *Hide Your Eyes* featuring Manhattan pre-school teacher and theatrical wannabe Samantha Leiffer. Her cop boyfriend is acting strange, notes warn her of dire consequences and then

folks start dying. A snappy series with a nice combination of dark and light moments.

For a series with a unique and entertaining perspective, try Victoria Laurie's *Psychic Eye Mysteries*, now into the third entry, *A Vision of Murder* (Signet, \$6.99). Professional psychic Abby Cooper gets more than she bargained for when she buys a house in the fixer-upper category and discovers that it contains uninvited tenants of the ghostly variety. [LM]

Yasmine Galenorn's fourth *Chintz n' China* mystery, *A Harvest of Bones* (Berkley, \$6.99), means an Autumn mystery for Emerald O'Brien and friends when ghosts descend and secrets must sleep. A charm included.

Suspense on tap

Allison Brennan makes a spectacular debut with *The Prey* (Ballantine, \$6.99), featuring FBI agent turned romance writer, Rowan Smith, who thinks she has evaded her nightmarish past until a killer uses one of her books as a roadmap to murder. Look for the conclusion to this trilogy in February and March. [LM]

Those who like their crime novels fast-paced and noir will enjoy Sean Doolittle's *Rain Dogs* (Dell, \$6.99) a tale of burnt-out Chicago reporter Tom Coleman who seeks a new direction in life when he inherits a canoe rental business in rural Nebraska. There's a good bit of humor in Doolittle's depiction of Coleman's grappling with running a small business with his eccentric employees but things turn serious when a crooked cop turns up with an investigation that centers on Coleman himself.

Perfect for the Thomas Harris fan is *Bone Thief* (Pinnacle, \$6.99) by Thomas O'Callaghan which finds NYPD cop John Driscoll fighting his own demons while leading a troubled investigative unit in the hunt for a psycho who keeps bones of his victims as trophies.

Please see *Very Original*, page 13

See what we're reading at www.mysterylovers.com/staff

Also Noted continued from page 5

- Kane, Andrea; *I'll Be Watching You* (Avon, \$7.50); radio talk show host stalked by psycho
- Kane, Andrea; *Wrong Place, Wrong Time* (Morrow, \$21.95); murder among the horse show set
- Kava, Alex; *A Perfect Evil* (Mira, \$4.99); a chance to enjoy the first Maggie O'Dell book at a nice price
- Kelman, Judith; *The Session* (Berkley, \$24.95); therapist in cat-and-mouse game with ruthless killer
- Long, Jeff; *The Wall* (Atria, \$25); climbing thriller set at El Capitan
- Martini, Steve; *Double Tap* (Jove, \$7.99); attorney Paul Madriani takes on a case with an uncooperative client
- McDonald, Gregory; *Son of Fletch* (Vintage, \$12); Fletch discovers a son
- McKinty, Adrian; *Hidden River* (Pocket, \$7.99); disgraced Northern Irish cop comes to America to investigate murder
- McMahon, Neil; *Revolution No. 9* (Harper, \$7.50); ER doc Carroll Monks
- Miscione, Lisa; *Smoke* (St. Martin's, \$23.95); crime writer Lydia Strong and PI Jeff Mark
- Monsour, Theresa; *Dark House* (Berkley, \$7.99); St. Paul homicide detective Paris Murphy
- Mosley, Walter; *The Wave* (Aspect, \$22.95); a speculative novel
- Nelscott, Kris; *War at Home* (St. Martin's, \$14.95); Smokey Dalton seeks missing student entangled in 1969 anti-war movement
- Penman, Sharon Kay; *Dragon's Lair* (Ballantine, \$6.99); Justin DeQuincy, now in mass market
- Perez-Reverte, Arturo; *Purity of Blood* (Putnam, \$23.95); 17th century swordsman Diego Alatriste
- Preston, Douglas and Lincoln Child; *Dance of Death* (Warner, \$7.99); agent Prendergast confronts his diabolical brother Diogenes
- Reilly, Matthew; *7 Deadly Wonders* (S&S, \$23); another attempt at a Dan Brown home run, sadly a foul ball
- Roe, Caroline; *Consolation for an Exile* (Berkley, \$7.99); 14th century physician Isaac of Girona
- Seranella, Barbara; *An Unacceptable Death* (St. Martin's, \$23.95); Munch Mancini
- Stewart, Mariah; *Voices Carry* (Pocket, \$6.99); sequel to *Brown-Eyed Girl*, reissue
- Sullivan, Eugene; *The Majority Rules* (Forge, \$7.99); weak thriller by federal judge who should stick to writing opinions
- Swift, Virginia; *Bye Bye Love* (Avon, \$6.99); college prof "Mustang" Sally Adler
- Tremayne, Peter; *Leper's Bell* (St. Martin's, \$23.95); *Sister Fidelma*, now in US edition
- Tremayne, Peter; *The Haunted Abbot* (Signet, \$6.99); *Sister Fidelma*, now in US edition
- Waiwai, Lono; *Wiley's Refrain* (St. Martin's, \$24.95); Wiley heads to Hawaii
- Walker, Sue; *The Reunion* (Harper, \$13.95); adults haunted by teen experiences in experimental asylum
- Willeford, Charles; *The Shark-Infested Custard* (Vintage, \$12); Florida noir with a touch of humor, reissue

Just Published... continued from page 4

you'll want to check out the previous series entries, as well. [LM]

Tough guys & gals

Max Allan Collins concludes the trilogy begun with *Road to Purgatory* with *Road to Paradise* (Morrow, \$24.95). In this spellbinding capstone to the series set in the early 1970s, the middle-aged Mafioso Michael Satariano fights to keep what is his in this breathless crime novel. [LM]

A film star turns up dead on a location shoot in Marti MacAlister's home town in Eleanor Taylor Bland's latest novel *A Dark and Deadly Deception* (St. Martin's, \$23.95). The skeletonized remains of a second body found during renovations provide a link to the first

case in this latest in a fine series.

Richard Hawke's debut novel, *Speak of the Devil* (Random, \$21.95), reads like the work of a more experienced writer as it should since Hawke is none other than our old friend Tim Cockey. His new series featuring New York PI Fritz Malone is a bit darker—it starts with a gunman shooting up the

Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade—although touches of humor grace this smoothly plotted story of a man extorting the city for millions with threatened

acts of terror. A pleasure to read.

Kevin Kerney gets more than he bargained for in Michael McGarrity's *Nothing But Trouble* (Dutton, \$24.95), tenth in this fine western-set series. A simple job as consultant to a movie shoot turns into a complex case of drug smuggling and murder set in a remote corner of New Mexico that McGarrity brings to vivid life.

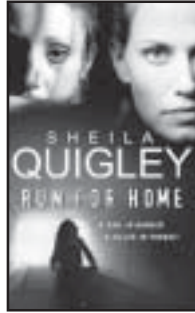
Dana Stabenow takes us in a new and scary direction with *Blindfold Game* (St. Martin's, \$23.95). Coast Guard Cutter Sojourner Truth goes up against terrorists on a Russian freighter with a dirty bomb. Detonation would ensure the slow death of nearly 300,000 civilians on the Alaskan coast. This is one thrilling ride—and a realistic threat. [JW]



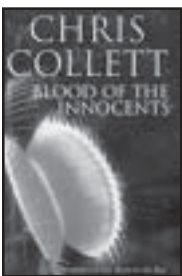
Free shipping on orders of \$45 or more: call right now

What's New in British Mystery?

Sheila Quigley has created quite a stir in Britain where this 55 year old grandmother, who lives in Sunderland in North East England, signed a six-figure deal for her debut book: *Run For Home* (Arrow, \$11.95). Introducing Detective Inspector Lorraine Hunt, the book is set largely in the bleak domain of a public housing project, terrain that the author knows well from her own upbringing. A young girl is kidnapped and her sixteen-year-old sister desperately seeks to find her while keeping her distance from the police who she does not trust. Quigley's realistic settings and characters and her non-stop plot combine for a breathless read. A good bet for Rankin or Stephen Booth fans.



Chris Collett follows up *Worm in the Bud* with *Blood of the Innocents* (Piatkus, \$13.95) where Birmingham DI Tom Mariner faces the seemingly unrelated cases of two teens who go missing the same day. The racial issues of modern day Britain are evident in these cases, however, since one is the daughter of prominent Muslim professionals who have been the subject of racial harass-

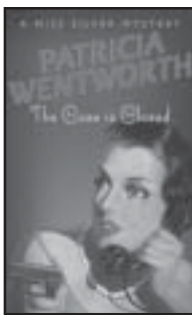


ment while the other is the working class poor product of a council estate. An absorbing crime novel particularly when Mariner teams up with Asian liaison officer Jamilla Begum. Kathryn Fox's *Malicious Intent* (Hodder, \$13.95) introduces freelance pathologist Dr. Anya Crichton in a scorching debut full of forensic detail and breathtaking suspense. Asked to look into the seemingly innocent suicide of a teenager, Anya notices similarities between the girl's death and other cases she is

working on with detective Sergeant Kate Farrer. As she delves deeper, the pathological findings point that the deaths are not only linked, but part of a sinister plot that may involve Anya more personally than she realizes.

Three more of the terrific Charlie Priest novels by Stuart Pawson have been reissued: *Chill Factor*, *Over the Edge* and *Laughing Boy* (all A&B, \$13.95).

If you've been through Christie, Tey and Marsh and you're looking for an old-fashioned British cozy then Patricia Wentworth will fill the bill nicely. A prolific writer, starting in 1924, she is best known for her series of books



featuring spinster detective Miss Silver; a governess turned private enquiry agent. A reissue program is just beginning beautiful covers reminiscent of the earlier era in which they were written.

Out of the Past (Hodder, \$13.95) is available now, more in coming months.

Detective Inspector Wesley Peterson, amateur archaeologist, returns in Kate Ellis' latest: *A Cursed Inheritance* (Piatkus, \$13.95) where the death of a reporter reawakens interest in an unsolved family murder twenty years earlier. Clues lead Peterson to the early history of the United States and the ill-fated Jamestown settlement.

Ian Rankin, famous for his Edinburgh-set John Rebus novels, has a reissue of his first-ever book, *The Flood* (Orion, \$29.95). An interesting combination of coming-of-age and crime novel it concerns a young woman who had been a victim of a mining accident years earlier who now has a grown son who's relationship with a homeless girl forces both to face secrets from the past.

In Alanna Knight's *Ghost Walk* (A&B, \$13.95) we find Rose McQuinn, on the eve of her marriage, suddenly receiving

word that her first husband, Danny Quinn, may still be alive. This sequel to *The Inspector's Daughter* (A&B, \$13.95), brings Victorian Edinburgh to life as Rose investigates a mysterious letter, supposedly from Danny, while two deaths suggest that more is afoot.

Bailiff Simon Puttock and his partner Sir Baldwin Furnhill find a real puzzler on their hands in Michael Jecks' *A Friar's Bloodfeud* (Headline, \$25). Murder strikes close to home when Simon's servant Hugh goes missing with his cottage burned to the ground, a woman's torso inside but no sign of Hugh. The latest is a superior medieval mystery series.

With *Necropolis Railway* (Faber, \$15.95) Andrew Martin launched a unique series featuring Jim Stringer, a country boy who comes to London in 1903 to fulfill his dream of working on the railway but finds himself working on the Necropolis Railway, a train that carried coffins along with the bereaved from London to Brookwood cemetery. Jim finds himself shunned by his fellow workers and embroiled in the mystery of his predecessor disappearance all the while struggling to survive in a huge city



that he knows nothing about. Martin's depiction of turn of the century London, as seen by his naïve protagonist, is fascinating and often hilarious and the nature of the ghoulish railway that operated until 1945 is fascinating. *Blackpool Highflyer* is a second adventure for Jim Stringer (Faber, \$15.95).

The Tainted Relic (S&S, \$14.95) is a delightful set of linked novellas written by some of the foremost practitioners of historical mystery including Michael Jecks, Susanna Gregory, Bernard Knight and others using their series characters.

Open every Sunday from noon to 4

New Paperbacks continued from page 7

Gracey; the latter an aspiring actress who hears voices: Joan Crawford, Barbara Stanwyk and Steven Spielberg. Hall's dissection of their painful relationship and the developments that lead Charlotte to a better understanding of her daughter are among the best features of this book.

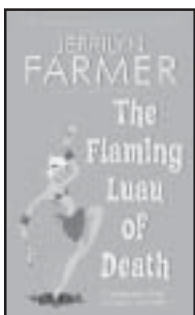
Gulf War vet Jack Keller is a bounty hunter, introduced in J.D. Rhoades' exciting debut, *The Devil's Right Hand* (SMP, \$6.99) and all he wants to do is run down a mope who has skipped bail. The mope, however, has



just done an armed robbery and killed an old man and the victim's son plans on taking revenge his own way. Non-stop action of the old, hardboiled type is the result in this exciting debut that features a no nonsense protagonist with plenty of guts.

Veteran Chicago cop Abe Lieberman makes a welcome return in Stuart M. Kaminsky's *The Last Dark Place* (Forge, \$6.99) where Abe is escorting a mobster to the airport only to have him gunned down. An excellent series with a cop who relies more on his heart and his brain than on his gun to get results.

A little humor



Party planner Madeline Bean goes to Hawaii to throw a bachelorette shindig in Jerrilyn Farmer's *Flaming Luau of Death* (Avon, \$6.99). Only problem is—the bride-to-be is actually still married to her first husband. A cute

and quirky addition to this series.

Ruby, the Rabbi's wife, is sleuthing again in Sharon Kahn's *Which Big Giver Stole the Chopped Liver* (Berkley, \$6.99)—it was in the shape of Texas, no less. Another kosher kozy brings the

Temple Rita gang of Eternal, Texas back on stage for a hilarious reunion from rabbi's wife Kahn. Crafty and sane, Ruby tracks down the killer in the beautifully plotted mystery using an e-mail correspondence with a best friend to move along the action with her life and loves.

Cleaning service owner Charlotte LaRue returns in Barbara Colley's delightful *Wiped Out* (Kensington, \$6.50) where a gardening group's meeting goes from gossip to death by poisoning.

Tabloid photographer, ex-con and parolee Nina Zero isn't your average girl next door but she's the perfect tour guide to the weird end of celebrity Los Angeles in Robert Eversz' *Digging James Dean* (S&S, \$14). A report of grave robbery at the tomb of James Dean starts the action in the fast-paced, quick-witted mystery that takes a number of unexpected turns including Nina's reunion with her long-lost sister.

Claire Matturo's funny and fast-paced series with Florida attorney Lilly Cleary goes to round two in *Wildcat Wine* (Harper, \$6.99). Two dead bodies is bad enough but when the third turns out to be her firm's most hated partner the police really turn up the heat. An engaging sleuth in a snappy series that begins with *Skinny Dipping*.

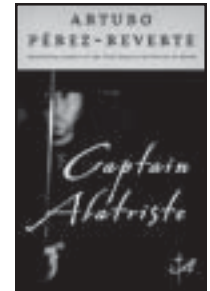


Secrets of the past

Fans of 18th century mystery will get a nautical tour in Edwin Thomas' clever *The Blighted Cliffs* (Dunne, \$14.95), first in a trilogy. Young lieutenant Martin Jerrold no sooner arrives in Dover than he finds himself with a dead body and an accusation of murder. Under threat from his Uncle of being cut off without a guinea, the reluctant Martin finds himself set upon by smugglers, attacked at sea and desperate to clear his name. A very amusing book with plenty of nautical and historical background.

More history than mystery is Simon Scarrow's *When the Eagle Hunts* (Griffin, \$13.95), the third novel featuring Roman centurion Macro, stationed in Britain in 44 AD. The abduction of a general's family by Druids leads Macro on a dangerous rescue mission in this well written yarn.

With *Captain Alatrisme* (Plume, \$14) Arturo Perez-Reverte returns to historical settings in beginning a new series of novels with the title character, a seventeenth century soldier,



retired by wounds, who now works as a swordsman for hire in Madrid. He's hired by the man who leads the Spanish Inquisition to waylay some travelers in a complex plot that Alatrisme does not fully comprehend. A rich work of historical adventure.

Edgar nominee Rhys Bowen's Irish immigrant PI Molly Murphy goes undercover in *In Like Flynn* (SMP, \$6.99), the fourth in this clever turn-of-the-century series. She's been hired to infiltrate the household of a senator whose wife has come under the spell of a pair of fraudulent psychics who promise to put her touch with her kidnapped and presumed dead son. Molly will need all her native wit to come out this situation in one piece in this newest in an award-winning series.

No series surpasses Fiona Buckley's Ursula Blanchard mysteries in capturing the political intrigues of Elizabethan England. *Siren Queen* (S&S, \$13) is no exception, as Ursula, half-sister to Queen Elizabeth, finds herself embroiled in solving two murders and serving in her unofficial capacity as spy for the Queen. Queen Elizabeth even plays a cameo role, as she upholds the justice that Ursula seeks. Don't miss Buckley's superb recreation of a particularly turbulent historical period. [LM]

Matthew Shardlake, the lawyer who works for Cromwell, was introduced in *Please see New Arrivals in Paper, page 13*

Need a book? Not a mystery? Not a problem, we'll order it

New Paperbacks continued from page 12

C.J. Sansom's excellent *Dissolution*. In *Dark Fire* (Penguin, \$14) he accepts another assignment, that of finding a lost cache of a legendary weapon: dark fire. Terrific atmosphere and historical accuracy is combined with a truly likable protagonist in Shardlake.

Readers of the historical mystery of Peter Tremayne and Margaret Frazer will love Priscilla Royal's debut *Wine of Violence* (Poisoned Pen, \$14.95) which introduces Eleanor of Wynthorpe, the newly installed prioress at Tyndal Priory on the remote East Anglian coast. When a monk is killed Eleanor teams up with the local coroner in a fascinating 12th century version of CSI. A stellar combination of plot and historical accuracy. The second, *Tyrant of the Mind* (\$14.95) is also available.

Exotic settings

In *The Vanished Hands* (Harvest, \$14) Robert Wilson returns to Seville policeman Javier Falcon, where the death of a wealthy contractor and his wife creates a

puzzling case. Falcon is still recovering from the trauma described in the earlier *Blind Man in Seville* and his investigation will stir up echoes of that case as



Falcon finds ties to various powerful interests as well as the puzzle of just who the victim really was. A complex and finely wrought mystery.

Noir-Italian style. Now translated from the Italian, *The*

Goodbye Kiss (Europa Editions, \$14.95) takes the reader to places and situations no tourist ever sees, at least not willingly. And since the writer, Massimo Carlotto is an ex-con himself—he brings a sharp, simple and at times, brutal clarity to his prose. Giorgio Pellegrini wants back in Italy. His time on the run to be over and he will do anything to get back there and stay. This is a very different read. For one thing the main character is a criminal and plans to continue being a criminal.

He is also unrepentant and willing to use anyone to make a better life for himself. Filled with corruption, crime, prostitution, drug dealers and death, this is as hardboiled and intriguing as it gets. [JA]

Born an Inuit but raised by an Anglo family Alaska State Trooper Nathan Active is not completely accepted by the natives in the village where he is stationed and that provides much of the plot tension in *Shaman Pass* (Soho, \$11) by Stan Jones as Nathan tries to solve the murder of a tribal leader stabbed with an antique harpoon. A sequel to *White Sky*, *Black Ice* in an evocative series that brings remote Alaska to life.

With Russia much in the news it's timely that Martin Cruz Smith has returned to the Arkady Renko character introduced in *Gorky Park*. *Wolves Eat Dogs* (Simon, \$14) takes Renko to Chernobyl as he investigates the death of a billionaire businessman. Smith provides a vivid picture of the new Russia while keeping a fast-paced plot moving in this tense thriller.

Very Original continued from page 9

When two newlyweds are murdered in an Arizona campground, Detective Laura Cardinal is enlisted to investigate in J. Carson Black's tense *Dark Side of the Moon* (Signet, \$7.99). Still reeling from a tragedy of her own, and teamed with a partner who's working her last nerve, Laura's already walking an emotional tightrope. What she discovers—a secret of a love gone bad, an underground society, and a high stakes conspiracy—could send her over the edge.

A D.A. about to prosecute the case of a lifetime receives threatening messages in Linda Castillo's *Dead Reckoning* (Berkley, \$6.99). Secrets from her past may be the lever used to derail her prosecution in this nicely executed work of romantic suspense.

PI Abby Sinclair is hired by a Congressman to rid him of a stalker in Michael Prescott's fast-moving *Mortal Faults* (Onyx, \$7.99) but her investiga-

tion runs right into an FBI operation run by an agent with whom Abby already has a history.

Ben Tennant works for the witness protection program where he's known as The Laundry Man—because he helps people clean up their pasts. In Rob Palmer's *No Time to Hide* (Leisure, \$6.99), the return of a former client leads to an international chase for a missing nuke.

A fascinating bit of "what-if" history in Michael Murray's well-researched *Raven* (ibooks, \$7.99) where a researcher comes across references in declassified WW II to Operation Raven. A British commando strike on a train deep in Germany just before the planned invasion of Britain seems connected to the fact that the invasion never occurred and to a secret that people will kill to protect.

Linda Lael Miller wraps up her excellent romantic suspense trilogy, begun with *Don't Look Now*, with *One Last Look* (Pocket, \$13) where attorney Claire Westbrook follows former Phoenix homicide detective Tony Sonterra to the small town where he is the newly installed sheriff. A series of sinister happenings slowly uncover secrets of the town in this satisfying conclusion.

David Kent's exciting Department Thirty series continues with *The Black Jack Conspiracy* (Pocket, \$7.99) with a plot that reaches right to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

Peter Clement's *The Inquisitor* (Ballantine, \$6.99) is an excellent medical thriller in which a doctor, fighting a SARS outbreak at his hospital, begins to fear a more sinister explanation for the epidemic.

It's no mystery...

An assortment of interesting books that, although not mysteries, we thought would appeal to our customers. Remember, when it comes to books, MLB can get it for you. We're more than happy to order any book you want, mystery or not.

If you liked Joanne Harris' *Chocolat* because it was a love story, *Gentlemen & Players* (Morrow, \$24.95) is not a love story. If you loved *Five Quarters of the Orange* because it was a historical-suspense novel, this is not. You will love this novel because it is a superbly crafted and thrilling

tale of revenge. Set at an elite British grammar school in the ultimate clash of class and privilege. Harris' novel unfolds as an elaborate game of chess complete with pawns and paupers, bishops and bullies, kings and queens as well. [JA]

Mary-Ann Tirone Smith, best known to mystery readers as the author of the popular Poppy Rice books including *Love Her Madly* and *She's Not There*, takes her talent in a new direction in the beautifully-written but startling *Girls of Tender Age: A Memoir* (Free Press, \$24). This is no sunny autobiography; indeed, Smith's account of growing up in 1950s Hartford, Connecticut can be downright chilling at

times. The author's home life was challenging, due to her brother's autistic rages, but complacency was forever fractured in her neighborhood when a sexual predator slaughtered one of Smith's fifth-grade classmates just three doors away from Smith's own residence. Given the trauma of her formative experiences, it is no wonder that, in adulthood, Mary-Ann Tirone Smith turned to a life of crime writing. [LM]

Historical

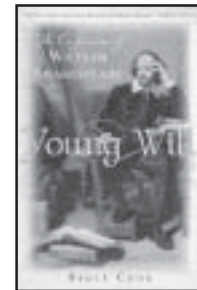
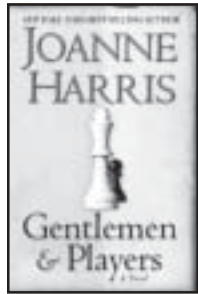
Set in the crucial years before the Reformation forever changed Europe, *The Illuminator* (Griffin, \$13.95) by Brenda Rickman Vantrease is a gripping historical novel about the impact of ideas. Finn, the illuminator of the title, works not only for the Church but also, secretly, for John Wycliffe who wishes to translate the Bible into English—a project that puts them all in danger. A beautiful rendering of what Barbara Tuchman called “the calamitous 14th century.”

Thread of Grace (Fawcett, \$14.95) by Maria Doria Russell is a riveting novel is set in a small coastal Italian town in the last years of WW II where the village's Jews

and Catholics mingle uneasily with the German occupiers. Russell spins out a dozen compelling stories from the French refugees making their way over the Alps to Italy to the German doctor responsible for the deaths of thousands; a series of plots that converge in the small town of Porto Sant' Andrea. Endlessly fascinating and full of historical detail. [JW]

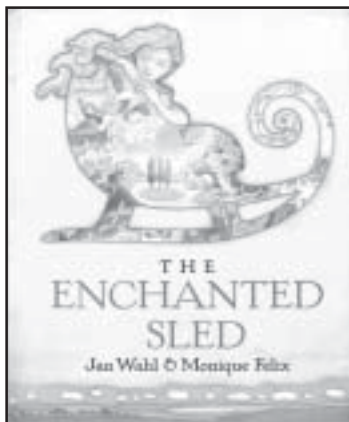
In *Young Will* (Griffin, \$13.95) Bruce Cook, better known to mystery readers as Bruce Alexander, author of the Sir John Fielding series, imagines the life of William Shakespeare during the period from 1582 to 1592. In a series of confessions Shakespeare describes

his rise to fame, his acting career and his many love affairs. With vivid writing in an Elizabethan style, Cook brings life to the London of that era and the colorful world of the theater. There is even room for the dark figure of Kit Marlowe as well as the woman who inspired the sonnets.



Kids books at MLB

As a gentle reminder of the offerings of our children's book department, we will feature a different children's book in each issue of the MLB News. The reviews by our daughter Alison Babusci, storyteller and kindergarten teacher, will appeal to parents, kids and collectors of children's books. Do call us at (412) 828-4877 first for new baby, parent or grandparent, birthday and teacher gift ideas from the hundreds of books for young readers books in our store.



The Enchanted Sled by Jan Wahl and illustrated by Monique Felix ages 2 and up (picture book)

“On my rusty sled I go
into swirling lands of snow...”

The Enchanted Sled (Creative Editions, \$16.95) is an imaginative journey into a wonderland created in a child's imagina-

tion. The absolutely *breathtaking* illustrations are reminiscent of the artwork of Gustav Klimt, but with a cooler palette and a more whimsical subject. Wahl's uncomplicated verse is a perfect complement to the rich landscape of Felix's illustrations. [AKB]

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Coming Events

- Sunday, January 29 1 PM **M.J. Rose** teaches authors how to promote in “Buzz Your Book.” \$15 cost includes a copy of *The Delilah Complex*.
- Tuesday, February 7 6:30 PM **Michele Martinez** book club dinner to discuss *Finishing School* and 4th amendment issues. CLE credit available. Call for details.
- Saturday, February 11 10 AM **Nancy Atherton** is our guest for a Coffee & Crime breakfast with *Aunt Dimity and the Deep Blue Sea*. Reservation needed, \$5.
- Sunday, February 12 2 PM **Valentine Tea & Tales** with storyteller Alison K. Babusci with stories from around the world plus tea & goodies. \$10, reservations needed.
- Sunday, March 5 NOON Brunch with **T. Jefferson Parker**. The Edgar-winner will be here with *The Fallen*. Brunch is \$12, reservations necessary.
- Monday, March 6 7 PM **Nancy Martin** celebrates publication of *Have Your Cake and Kill Him Too*, the latest Blackbird Sisters, with a party at MLB. Please join us.

New Year's Resolutions

Often I am asked, “What else can we do to help to keep you guys here?” Well, I’ve been thinking about it and here are my suggestions:

1. Give a book as a gift to everyone this year. Just call and our crack staff can help you with ideas for any occasion. We can wrap and ship it, too.
2. Get your office, group, company or club to send MLB gift baskets for Get Well, Congratulations, Retirement, New Baby or other events.
3. Buy *all* your books here—we can order any book in print in the US or UK for you. Just drop a line or call with the list.
4. Get your school or library to buy books from Mystery Lovers. We offer discounts to libraries and a special chance to get the used books donated by our customers--3,000 in 2005.
5. Have a book sale as part of your meeting or event. We have done lectures, office parties, Christmas parties or school events. Just call Mary Alice and we’ll noodle an idea.
6. Attend an event at the store this year. All events are at www.mysterylovers.com and you can make reservations online. Your support is important to our standing with publishers, writers and the media. Also, it’s fun.
7. Write to local magazines, newspapers, television or radio and suggest a regular book segment. We can talk about gift books, mystery books, travel books, cook books, you know.
8. Have your “other” book group buy all their books through MLB. We can offer a discount and ship to the location or the group may want to have a meeting here.
9. Send us some sample newsletter names or join a friend for \$5 and they’ll get it for a year! Perfect for a favorite teacher or librarian too. We can send a note telling them of your gift.
10. Make a pledge to support locally owned businesses who support you. Every economic study has shown that locally owned businesses contribute two to three times more financially than chains to the local economy. [ABA]

Many of you already do some or all of these and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts. The purchase of even a single additional paperback by each person reading this newsletter would make an untold difference to our 2006 results.

Our wishes for a joyous New Year from Richard, Mary Alice & the MLB staff.



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