

# BOOKAHOLIC

## For the Mystery Addict

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### WHAT I'VE BEEN READING

***THE ONE FROM THE OTHER*, Philip Kerr, Putnam. \$26.95**

The *Berlin Noir Trilogy* is now a quartet! And how thrilling is that? The year is 1949 and Bernie Gunther is back, this time in Munich where he's working as a PI aiding German ex-soldiers (not without qualms) as they flee, and checking out the Nazi backgrounds of otherwise respectable citizens. He is asked by a woman to find her husband. She doesn't want him back, he ran a concentration camp in Poland, she just wants confirmation that he's dead. This will not be a simple case. This may be the most complex, the best, of all the Gunther novels.

***THE BOOK OF FATE*, Brad Meltzer, Warner Books. \$25.99**

Meltzer, a White House insider, has written a real page-turner set in the DC. A young presidential aide is wounded at a NASCAR meet during an assassination attempt on the president. One of his colleagues is killed, but eight years later that colleague is spotted in Malaysia. What is going on? Well, plenty. This thriller is about the Freemasons and the power they wield in the nation's capital. It is also about the layout of DC and that strange, not quite complete pentagram, at one point of which is the White House. And my understanding is that Dan Brown has also chosen this subject for his next book. Great minds!

***THE INTERPRETATION OF MURDER*, Jed Rubenfeld, Henry Holt. \$26.00**

Not a great fan of historicals, I was totally mesmerized by this terrific first novel. Set in New York in 1909, it tells the tale of Sigmund Freud's visit to these shores. He is here to be honored and is accompanied by his protégé, soon to be rival, Carl Jung. American psychoanalyst (one of the country's first) Dr. Stratham Younger is baffled by the murder of a young woman. And when another heiress barely escapes the killer, Younger calls in Freud to help. This tale is also about New York at that time: the Manhattan Bridge is nearing completion and Rubenfeld evokes this city as seedy neighborhoods begin to be dwarfed by the building boom. It is the theories of Freud (and you must be at least somewhat interested in those to really enjoy this story) juxtaposed with the rise of a modern city that gives this thriller its zing. Freud is known to have returned to Vienna, calling Americans "savages." This is one author's interpretation of why he might have thought that. Highly recommended.

***THE ZERO*, Jess Walter, HarperCollins. \$25.95**

Jess Walter is an author to be reckoned with. After introducing Caroline Mowbray in his first novel, *Over Tumbled Graves*, and featuring her in a lesser role in *Land of the Blind*,

he wrote a completely different book, *Citizen Vince*, and won an Edgar Award for best novel. Now he turns his attention to the attacks of 9/11. Not that he tells you that planes have hit the World Trade Center. He doesn't have to. If you were in this country that day, you recognize the horror, the feeling that the world has tipped off its axis, and, if you were in New York, the dust and that pervasive smell. Brian Remy is a police officer and, days after the attacks, he is not sure what is going on. He wakes one morning with a gunshot wound to the head which seems self-inflicted; he is having trouble with his eyes; he has a girlfriend whose name he can't remember; and he's being recruited by a government agency to help gather all the paper that was scattered in the attacks. Walter is a beautiful writer and I found this novel painful and moving. By the end, I felt that Walter had captured that day perfectly and that any other writer taking on the subject will first have to get past this extraordinary evocation of fear, paranoia, confusion, and bewilderment. I have my own interpretation of what is happening to Brian Remy but when I discussed that recently with another reader, he had another just as plausible interpretation. This is a novel upon which you can overlay your own experiences of 9/11 it seems, and that makes it quite remarkable.

## ON MY READING LIST

### ***THE RIGHTEOUS MEN*, Sam Bourne, HarperCollins. \$24.95**

The victims all have one thing in common. Each of them has performed a single act of exceptional kindness. Now, one by one, they are being killed off. Will Monroe, an ambitious New York Times journalist, smelling a good story, starts to investigate, then his wife is kidnapped. This was published in the UK a couple of months ago and is picking up lots of positive buzz.

### ***THE BEST AMERICAN CRIME WRITING 2006*, Mark Bowden, Editor. \$14.95**

The latest edition of this series compiles the best in crime writing and reporting. Contributors include John Krakauer and William Langewiesche and if those names are not familiar to you, then you have not been keeping up with *The New Yorker*, *Atlantic Monthly*, and a host of other magazines that carry excellent, often award-winning, stories. Catch up with those stories in this anthology. Series Editors are Otto Penzler and Thomas H. Cook. This is a paperback original.

### ***THE GARDENS OF THE DEAD*, William Brodrick, Viking. \$24.95**

Father Anselm, introduced in *The Sixth Lamentation*, was a barrister before he became a monk-cum-detective. When attorney Elizabeth Glendinning is found dead of heart failure in London's East End, Anselm finds himself drawn deeper into her postmortem affairs. But when he reexamines a difficult case he won years earlier, he finally sees his own involvement and becomes aware of the full repercussions of his actions.

**THE MEANING OF NIGHT, Michael Cox, W.W. Norton. \$26.95**

This story is told by Edward Glyver – booklover, scholar, and murderer. Glyver always believed he was destined for greatness and a chance discovery convinces him that he was right. His journey takes him from the depths of Victorian London to Evenwood, one of England's most beautiful and enchanting country houses. His story is one of betrayal, treachery, death, delusion, obsession, and ambition. And at every turn is his deadly rival, the poet-criminal Phoebus Rainsford Daunt. This novel, published first in the UK, is receiving rave reviews.

**UNDER ORDERS, Dick Francis, Putnam. \$25.95**

Death at the races is not unusual, but three in one day really troubles super-sleuth and former jockey, Sid Halley. Halley is at the races on Cheltenham Gold Cup Day to make discreet inquiries into why Lord Enstone's horses are on a losing streak. Halley's search for answers draws him deeper into the dark side of the race game. The Grand Master of thriller writing is back!

**THE WRONG MAN, John Katzenbach, Ballantine. \$25.95**

Michael O'Connell adores Ashley Freeman to the point where he won't take no for an answer. O'Connell goes beyond obsession into rage and unrelenting dependence. Ashley and her family try every reasonable method to extricate her, but they are finally forced to come up with a plan that will destroy not only the threat to Ashley but the predator himself. They must outstalk the stalker. Katzenbach's books are full of twisty plots.

**THE MISSION SONG, John Le Carre, Little Brown. \$26.99**

Bruno Salvador (Salvo), fluent in African languages, works for Mr. Anderson of British Intelligence. He works in the "Chat Room" translating intercepted phone calls, bugged recordings, and voice mail messages. When Mr. Anderson sends him to a mysterious island to interpret a secret conference between Central African warlords, Bruno thinks he is helping Britain bring peace to a bloody corner of the world. But this is Le Carre. All is not what it seems.

**CORONADO, Dennis Lehane, Wm. Morrow. \$24.95**

The good news is that Dennis Lehane has a new book. The not so good news is that it is a compilation of his very excellent short stories. For those of you who have not read his stories, well, you're in for a treat. For those of us who have, we're going to put this on our shelves anyway because there's a new story included: *Until Gwen* which was published last year in *Atlantic Monthly* and has now been adapted for the New York stage under the name *Coronado*.

**VICIOUS CIRCLE, Robert Littell, Overlook Press. \$24.95**

In the near future, the global community is united under the leadership of a visionary woman president of the United States. She brokers a major compromise between Israel and the Palestinian Authority in the hopes of snuffing out the violent flashpoint that fuels the flames of global terrorism. But then, Isaac Apflbaum, a fundamentalist Rabbi, is

taken hostage by Dr. al-Saath, a legendary Palestinian terrorist. As Israel brings an aging and decorated Mossad officer out of retirement to hunt down the terrorist, Apflbaum and al-Saath find themselves building an extraordinary relationship, one that could lead to reconciliation. But the Mossad strike team is closing in. Nobody does this better than Littell.

***FEAR OF THE DARK*, Walter Mosley, Little Brown. \$25.99**

When Paris Minton's cousin, Ulysses S. Grant, or Useless, turns up on his doorstep, it means trouble. Big trouble. So Paris enlists the help of his friend Fearless Jones, and together they encounter mysterious women, desperate blackmail victims, and cheating business partners.

***THE WINTER OF FRANKIE MACHINE*, Don Winslow, Knopf. \$24.00**

Winslow gives us a Mafia story with a difference here. Frank Machianno runs a bait shack on the San Diego waterfront when he's not juggling his other three part-time jobs. He's a fixture in the community: stand-up businessman and devoted father to his daughter. He's also a retired hit man who used to be one of the most feared members of the West Coast Mafia. When a local boss calls in a favor, Frank can't refuse and soon he's being sucked back into his former life where he discovers someone wants him dead. This list is very long and Frank doesn't have much time. And then things get really bad. Winslow's last book, *The Power of the Dog*, showed us that this author has extraordinary depth. Must read.

## FIRST MYSTERIES

***L.A. REX*, Will Beall, Riverhead. \$24.95**

Ben Halloran is a rookie cop, a kid who seems to have drawn the toughest neighborhood in L.A. But Ben has a past and its about to catch up with him. From the moment he and his partner Miguel Marquez hit the streets together, they find themselves dealing with Crip gangsters, the Mexican Mafia, sleazy lawyers, and dirty cops. Ben will be forced to discover his moral principles while he simply tries to stay alive.

***EVENT*, David L. Golemon, St. Martin's Press. \$23.95**

In the summer of 1947 an unidentified object crashed in Roswell, New Mexico. There were no survivors. Now it's happened again, but this time two creatures emerge alive. One is here to help, the other is here for one purpose: the total extinction of mankind. The Event Group is the most secretive organization in the history of the American government, dedicated to solving America's past mysteries so that mistakes are never repeated. Now in the Arizona desert, the Group wages a war for all times.

**THE SHADOW CATCHERS, Thomas Lakeman, St. Martin's Minotaur.****\$23.95**

FBI Special Agent Mike Yeager has been suspended after his most recent case ended tragically. Now he's in the small town of San Cristobal in Nevada where a child was killed, by accident it seems, a few weeks before Mike's arrival. The day after he shows up, an adult is murdered and a child is snatched. Mike doesn't want to get involved, but he can't help himself.

**CHASING THE DEAD, Joe Schreiber, Ballantine. \$16.95**

Just before Christmas, Sue Young returns home from her job to discover that her one-year-old daughter has been kidnapped. The kidnapper has very specific, very strange instructions that will take Sue on a twisted route through a series of small towns in order to rescue her child. Across the back roads of Massachusetts, Sue is met every step of the way with worsening horrors, created by a monster who has no regard for life. This story takes place over the course of a single terrifying night.

**THE HARROWING, Alexandra Sokoloff, St. Martin's Press. \$21.95**

It is the Thanksgiving break and five college students are the only people left on Mendenhall's campus. Each has given up the weekend at home for their own secret reasons. These five establish a tentative rapport but soon become aware of a sixth presence disturbing the silence. Is this a college prank or something darker? It's only Thursday night and the weekend is about to get very long indeed.

## NON MYSTERIES OF NOTE

**ONLY REVOLUTIONS, Mark Z. Danielewski, Pantheon. \$26.00**

Sam and Hailey are two wild and crazy kids who never grow old. Powered by an ever-evolving fleet of cars from a Model T to a Shelby Mustang, these two teenagers crash parties in New Orleans, barrel up the Mississippi, and blast through the Badlands as they try to outrace History itself. From the Civil War to the Iraq War and beyond, Sam and Hailey's journey is mind-blowing. Those of us who read Danielewski's book, *House of Leaves*, know what to expect here.

**HUMAN TRACES, Sebastian Faulks, Random House. \$25.95**

Jacques Rebiere and Thomas Midwinter are both sixteen in 1876. They are united by an ambition to understand how the mind works and whether insanity might one day be treatable. Their search is made urgent by the case of Jacques' brother whose severe illness has, as yet, no name, and they will journey from Victorian lunatic asylum to the plains of unexplored Africa to find answers. Faulks is the author of *Birdsong* and *Charlotte Gray*.

**SMONK, Tom Franklin, Wm. Morrow. \$23.95**

In the town of Old Texas in southwestern Alabama in 1911, a character called E.O. Smonk has been terrorizing the citizenry. Every Saturday night for a year he's been riding his mule into Old Texas, destroying property, killing livestock, seducing women, and beating men. At last the townsfolk, who are harboring a terrible secret themselves, put Smonk on trial. With disastrous and shocking results. Southern gothic.

**IMPERIUM, Robert Harris, Simon & Schuster. \$26.00**

The author of *Fatherland* and *Pompeii* now turns his attention to Rome. The first in a trilogy, *Imperium*, tells the story of Marcus Cicero, a brilliant lawyer, orator, wit, and philosopher. Set against Senate intrigue and electoral corruption, special prosecutors, and political hostesses, Harris' story is about ancient rights of free speech and liberty are being threatened as a result of military adventures abroad. Sound familiar?

**THE ROAD, Cormac McCarthy, Knopf. \$24.00**

After successfully venturing into the world of the mystery, McCarthy takes a trip into the not too distant future and follows a man and his young son as they travel through America. The man can still remember the time before. The boy knows only this time. They are survivors and there is nothing for them but survival. McCarthy is a genius, so this must be read.

## NEWS FROM THE UK

**TUG OF WAR, Barbara Cleverly, Constable**

Joe Sandilands is in France as a guest of a glamorous war widow on her Champagne estate. The widow insists that a mysterious shell-shocked soldier, suffering from amnesia and loss of speech, is her husband. The problem is that four other people have identified him differently.

**ECHO PARK, Michael Connelly, Orion**

In 1993 Marie Gesto disappeared after walking out of a supermarket in Hollywood and Harry Bosch was assigned to the case which was never solved. Thirteen years later, Harry Bosch is in the Open/Unsolved Unit when he gets a call from the DA's office. A man, accused of two killings, is willing to confess to other murders to avoid the death penalty. One of those murders is the killing of Marie Gesto. This UK edition precedes the US.

**BOOK OF LOST THINGS, John Connolly, Hodder & Stoughton**

Twelve-year-old David takes refuge from his grief in the myths and fairytales so beloved by his dead mother. The real world and the fantasy world start to blend and David is propelled into a land populated by heroes, wolves, and monsters as he searches for the legendary Book of Lost Things.

**UNDER ORDERS, Dick Francis, Michael Joseph**

See review, above, and **Collecting**, below.

**SOVEREIGN, C.J. Sansom, Macmillan**

Lawyer Matthew Shardlake is back in a mystery set in 1541. King Henry VIII has set out on a spectacular Progress to the North to overawe his rebellious subjects there. As the Great Progress arrives in York, Shardlake and his assistant Barak stumble upon a cache of secret papers that endanger the king and his throne.

**COLLECTING**

There are books out this month from **Michael Connelly**, **Dick Francis**, and **John Le Carre**. All three books will be published in the UK and the US. And here comes the eternal question: Which is the true first edition?

My understanding is that **Michael Connelly's** book, *Echo Park*, is being published in the UK first. As I write this, I have no information about *Under Orders* from **Dick Francis** and *Mission Song* from **John Le Carre**. From the buzz, I'm gathering that *Under Orders* is a UK first by a nanosecond and that *Mission Song* will be published simultaneously in the UK and the US. What to do?

**Michael Connelly** is an American. Follow the flag. If you're only going to buy one copy, buy the US edition. Me? I'm buying both.

A new book from **Dick Francis** is surely a bonus. None of us thought he would write again after the death of his wife. He's a Brit. Buy British and then pick up a signed US copy when he tours here in September. I'm buying both.

If it's true that **John Le Carre** is a simultaneous publication in the UK and the US, then – buy both!

Look, its going to be an expensive month. Cut back on the lunches!

**BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

**Beaton, M.C., *Love, Lies and Liquor***, St. Martin's Minotaur. \$22.95. Agatha Raisin finds murder yet again. This time in a small, rundown town called Snoth-On-Sea.

**Beckett, Simon, *The Chemistry of Death***, Delacorte. \$22.00. Dr. David Hunter, once a high-profile forensic anthropologist, now lives in an isolated English village hoping his past will remain buried. But a string of twisted killings will require him to use his expertise if the killer is to be stopped.

**Billheimer, John, *Stonewall Jackson's Elbow***, Five Star. \$25.95. When suspicious accidents start to befall winning bidders from a Museum of Frauds auction, failure analyst Owen Allison soon finds himself the latest target.

**Coel, Margaret, *The Drowning Man***, Berkley. \$23.95. Arapaho attorney Vicky Holden and Father John O'Malley take on the black market for priceless Indian relics in a case that resembles a theft from the past.

**Dymmoch, Michael Allen, *Death in West Wheeling***, Five Star. \$25.95. Sheriff Homer Peters investigates four missing persons cases and multiple corpses.

**Doss, James D., *Stone Butterfly***, St. Martin's Minotaur. \$24.95. Charlie Moon investigates murder in southern Colorado.

**Dubois, Brendan, *Primary Storm***, St. Martin's Minotaur. \$23.95. Lewis Cole, who used to work for the U.S. Department of Defense, is now a magazine writer in the small New Hampshire town of Tyler Beach. It's usually quiet except once every four years during the presidential primary. Which is now.

**Dunn, Carola, *Gunpowder Plot***, St. Martin's Minotaur. \$23.95. In the winter of 1924, Daisly Dalrymple Fletcher travels to a friend's house to witness the famous Guy Fawkes celebration. But she is about to get more than a quiet weekend in the country.

**Flora, Kate, *Playing God***, Five Star. \$25.95. Portland Maine police sergeant Joe Burgess investigates what looks like a straightforward case. A prostitute has murdered her john, a local physician.

**Gerritsen, Tess, *The Mephisto Club***, Ballantine Books. \$24.95. Boston Medical Examiner Maura Isles teams up with Detective Jane Rizzoli to investigate a vicious killing that seems to connect to Joyce O'Donnell, the confrontational psychologist who frustrated their earlier pursuit of the notorious murderer known as the Surgeon.

**Grady, James, *Mad Dogs***, Forge. \$24.95. Five CIA killers are forced to break out of the secret insane asylum that holds them. Their psychiatrist is murdered and they are framed for the deed.

**Hamilton, Steve, *A Stolen Season***, St. Martin's Minotaur. \$22.95. The seventh in the Alex McKnight series begins as McKnight and his former partner Leon are standing on the edge of Lake Superior waiting for the July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks to begin. They see a boat run into a line of old railroad pilings. They help rescue the passengers and figure they'll never see them again. They're wrong.

**Hurwitz, Gregg, *Last Shot***, Wm. Morrow. \$24.95. Deputy U.S. Marshal Tim Rackley faces his most deadly adversary – a former Marine as skilled and cunning as Rackley himself.

**Jungstedt, Mari, *Unseen***, St. Martin's Minotaur. \$23.95. The island of Gotland is in the middle of the tourist season when a young woman and her dog are found brutally murdered. The latest in Sweden's wave of crime writers delivers a dark, atmospheric mystery.

**Just, Ward, *Forgetfulness***, Harcourt. \$25.00. A former CIA spy turned respected painter has his life shattered when his wife is killed by terrorists bringing the war in Iraq to his doorstep in the South of France.

**Kahn, Sharon, *Out of the Frying Pan, Into the Choir***, Scribner. \$24.00. A Ruby, the Rabbi's Wife Mystery. This time the Temple Rita Choir is on tour when murder strikes one of their number.

**Kernick, Simon, *A Good Day to Die*, St. Martin's Minotaur. \$24.95.** Dennis Milne, living under an assumed identity in the Philippines, hears that his old friend, Malik, has been gunned down in a restaurant. He returns to the city he once called home to bring the murderer to justice.

**Levack, Simon, *The Shadow of the Lords*, St. Martin's Minotaur. \$23.95.** The second in the Aztec Mystery series set in Mexico in 1517.

**McPherson, Catriona, *The Burry Man's Day*, Carroll & Graf. \$25.95.** In the summer of 1923 in the village of Queensferry, a controversial pagan festival turns ugly when the "burry man" is poisoned. A Dandy Gilver mystery.

**Mankell, Henning, *The Man Who Smiled*, New Press. \$24.95.** Kurt Wallander tries to help a friend whose father died under mysterious circumstances.

**Massey, Sujata, *Girl in a Box*, HarperCollins. \$23.95.** Japanese-American sleuth Rei Shimura, working for a DC agency, goes undercover in a big Tokyo department store where she can listen to conversations not meant for her ears as she checks out the latest fashions and uses her store discount.

**Olson, Karen E., *Secondhand Smoke*, Mysterious Press. \$22.99.** Annie Seymour investigates a suspicious fire in a neighborhood that has more than its share of deadly secrets.

**Power, Jo-Ann, *Missing Member*, St. Martin's Minotaur. \$23.95.** Texas Congresswoman Carly Wagner walks into her office one morning and finds her party's second most powerful man sitting lifeless in her chair.

**Robbins, Harold, with Junius Podrug, *The Devil to Pay*, Forge. \$25.95.** Framed for arson and murder, the only way Nash Novak can raise the money for her defense is to manage the mysterious Colombian coffee plantation she inherited.

**Rusch, Sheldon, *The Boy with Perfect Hands*, Berkley. \$23.95.** The haunting nocturnes of one of the world's greatest composers proves to be the link in a string of serial murders. Elizabeth Hewitt investigates.

**Schorr Mark, *Borderline*, St. Martin's Minotaur. \$23.95.** Psychologist Brian Hanson, a Vietnam Vet and recovering alcoholic is crushed when one of his clients appears to have committed suicide. But he's sure that can't be the truth.

**Simon, Michael, *Little Faith*, Viking. \$23.95.** Murder and corruption connects the state capital, the oil industry, and a powerful evangelical church in Austin Detective Dan Reles's latest case.

**Smith, Alexander McCall, *The Right Attitude to Rain*, Pantheon. \$21.95.** A new installment in the Sunday Philosophy Club series featuring Isabel Dalhousie and her no-nonsense housekeeper, Grace.

**Smith, Taylor, *Slim To None*, Mira. \$24.95.** Security specialist Hannah Nicks plans to even the score against the man who ruined her mission in Iraq two years ago.

**Starr, Jason, *Lights Out*, St. Martin's Minotaur. \$22.95.** Ryan and Jake were both Major League-bound baseball players in high school. Ryan hurt his pitching arm and is now a house painter. Jake made it and is now headed back for a PR homecoming weekend in Brooklyn. There he finds Ryan involved in an intense relationship with his fiancée Christina.

**Tanenbaum, Robert K., *Counterplay*, Atria Books. \$26.00.** This picks up where *Fury* left off, so if you haven't read *Fury*....

**Taply, William G., *Out Cold***, St. Martin's Minotaur. \$24.95. The death of a teenager in his backyard leads Boston attorney Brady Coyne on a deadly quest for the truth.

**Taylor, Sarah Stewart, *Still As Death***, St. Martin's Minotaur. \$24.95. Questions surrounding the provenance of a Harvard museum's Egyptian artifact leads Sweeney St. George to solve mysteries past and present.

**Wilhelm, Kate, *Sleight of Hand***, Mira. \$24.95. A chance reunion with a childhood friend leads Wally Lederer to be accused of theft, then of murder. Attorney Barbara Holloway takes his case.

**Wozencraft, Kim, *The Devil's Backbone***, St. Martin's Press. \$24.95. Kit and Jenny could not have been more different. Jenny becomes a Texas cop while Kit is working as a stripper. One sister's murder leads to the other's investigation of it.

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