

BOOKAHOLIC

For the Mystery Addict

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EDGAR NOMINEES

BEST MYSTERY NOVEL

Missing by Karin Alvtegen
Blue Heaven by C.J. Box
Sins of the Assassin by Robert Ferrigno
The Price of Blood by Declan Hughes
The Night Following by Morag Joss
Curse of the Spellmans by Lisa Lutz

BEST FIRST NOVEL BY AN AMERICAN AUTHOR

The Kind One by Tom Epperson
Sweetsmoke by David Fuller
The Foreigner by Francie Lin
Calumet City by Charlie Newton
A Cure for Night by Justin Peacock

BEST PAPERBACK ORIGINAL

The Prince of Bagram Prison by Alex Carr
Money Shot by Christa Faust
Enemy Combatant by Ed Gaffney
China Lake by Meg Gardiner
The Cold Spot by Tom Piccirilli

WHAT I'VE BEEN READING

NO SURVIVORS, Tom Cain, Viking. \$25.95

The Accident Man, the first in this series featuring Samuel Carver, was a sensation chronicling as it did the death of a certain beloved Princess in a tunnel in Paris. After that adventure, Carver is lying in a Swiss sanitarium being tended to by his lover, Alix Petrova. When the former employers of Alix force her to leave Carver in order to seduce an American military official, Carver springs back into action amazingly quickly. As Carver searches for Alix, he must also stop a Texas billionaire who plans to reactivate a stolen Soviet suitcase nuke in order to ignite a holy war and bring about the Rapture. This, like its predecessor, is a breathless page-turner.

UNTIL IT'S OVER, Nicci French, Minotaur Books. \$25.95

Oh, this was fun. Astrid Bell is a bicycle messenger who, on her way home one day, is knocked off her bike by one of her neighbors. It's not a bad accident and Astrid's roommates help her home. The next day they learn that the neighbor was beaten to death hours later. Then Astrid stumbles over another body while delivering a package. This is surely not a coincidence. Astrid has six roommates, and the fun here is trying to figure out which of them is the murderer and why. Or maybe it isn't any of them!

DROOD, Dan Simmons, Little Brown. \$26.99

I'm not going to pretend that I have finished this nearly 800-page mystery from Simmons, who is surely one of the most interesting writers at work today. Here, he has taken as his character Charles Dickens, who, while traveling by train to London in 1865, was involved in a terrible accident at Staplehurst. While tending to the injured and dying, Dickens meets a strange man, also helping, who tells Dickens that his name is Drood. Drood seems to glide rather than walk, and Dickens notices that the injured tended by Drood seem to be dead by the time Dickens gets to them. He becomes obsessed with this man and is determined to find him in London. Helping him is his friend and the narrator of this tale, Wilkie Collins. Collins reveals Dickens as a rather bombastic narcissist while also revealing that he (Collins) is no shrinking violet. Despite the heft and Victorian setting of this tome, the story moves right along. Another page turner from the author of *The Terror*.

CITIZEN VINCE, Jess Walter, Harper Perennial. \$14.95

This won the Edgar Award for Best Novel a few years ago, but I did not have an opportunity to read it then, even though Walter is one of my favorite authors. A treat deferred because this is such a satisfying read. In 1980, as the country gets ready to vote for either Jimmy Carter or Ronald Reagan, Vince Camden works at his witness protection job at Donut Make You Hungry. His new life consists of this job, all-night poker games, stolen credit cards, and hookers. But when he sees a familiar face in town, Vince realizes that his sordid past is catching up with him. This is great stuff from an underrated author. If you enjoyed *Over Tumbled Graves*, you'll recognize Alan Dupree, the partner of Caroline Mabry, as a much younger man.

ON MY RADAR**THE SILENT MAN, Alex Berenson, Putnam. \$24.95**

This third thriller featuring CIA agent John Wells finds our hero exhausted after his undercover work in Afghanistan and Pakistan. When he and colleague – and fiancée – Jennifer Exley are driving to work, traffic comes to a standstill due to accidents on two bridges into Washington. A pretty big coincidence, and Wells begins to get a very bad feeling. By the end of the day, several people will be dead or severely injured, and Wells will be following a trail to Russia where he uncovers a plan of almost unimaginable consequences in motion. Berenson's first novel, *The Faithful Spy*, won an Edgar Award and was called "one of the best spy stories ever told" by *The Wall Street Journal*.

A DARKER DOMAIN, Val McDermid, Harper, 24.95

This stand alone by McDermid has at its heart the miner's strike of 1984. Mick Prentice, a Scot, leaves his family to join the strikebreakers down south. He's labeled a scab and is as good as dead as far as his friends and relatives are concerned. Twenty-three years later, a young woman walks into a police station to report Mick Prentice missing. Detective Inspector Karen Pirie, head of the Cold Case Review Team, wants to know why it's taken so long for anyone to notice.

THE RENEGADES, T. Jefferson Parker, Dutton. \$26.95

Deputy Sheriff Charlie Hood, introduced in *L.A. Outlaws*, patrols the American West, hunting down modern day criminals. He usually cruises the highways alone, but he's been assigned a partner named Terry Laws, a veteran who everyone calls "Mr. Wonderful." When Laws is shot dead, Hood realizes that Mr. Wonderful didn't always live up to his name. He sets out to find the gunman and finds that the bad guys sometimes wear white hats and the good guys must seek justice in shades of grey. Parker has won the Edgar Award more than once and very few writers have done that.

NIGHT AND DAY, Robert B. Parker, Putnam. \$25.95

Why, it seems like only yesterday that I was telling you about a new Robert B. Parker mystery! I exaggerate – it was a couple of months ago. This is the latest in his Jesse Stone series set in Paradise, Massachusetts, a town that doesn't seem to live up to its name.

THE VILLA GOLITSYN, Piers Paul Read, Overlook Press. \$23.95

Overlook, that admirable publishing company, is once again reissuing an excellent thriller, this one first published in 1981. This is set in Nice at the home of Willy Ludley who, a decade ago, was presumed to be a traitor after an act of treason in Indonesia. Simon Milson of the Foreign Office is there to try to confirm that Ludley was the traitor in order to clear the other suspect in that debacle who is now up for an embassy post in Washington. The atmosphere at the Villa is tense and fuelled by alcohol and sexual temptations as Ludley and Milson struggle with their principles and their pasts in a moral no-man's land.

THE SHANGHAI MOON, S.J. Rozan, Minotaur Books. \$24.95

Rozan returns to her series characters, Lydia Chin and Bill Smith, after an absence of seven years. Chin is estranged from her fellow P.I. and is hired by a lawyer specializing in the recovery of Holocaust assets when a cache of jewelry dating back to World War II is discovered in Shanghai. Chin and her former mentor, Joel Pilarsky, are set to investigate when Pilarsky is murdered. Bill Smith reappears, just in time to join Chin in checking on the disappearance of the Shanghai Moon, one of the world's most sought after missing jewels.

REVELATION, C.J. Sansom, Viking. \$25.95

Fans know by now that this is the hottest historical series on the planet! This is only Matthew Shardlake's fourth outing, and it has been eagerly anticipated. It is 1543 and King Henry VIII is wooing Lady Catherine Parr, a woman he wants for his sixth wife. Meanwhile lawyer Shardlake is working hard to defend a boy, a religious fanatic, who is being held in the notorious Bedlam hospital for the insane. When an old friend of Shardlake's is murdered, his search for the killer leads him back to Bedlam, but also to Catherine Parr.

FIRST MYSTERIES

***THE MANUAL OF DETECTION*, Jedediah Berry, Penguin Press. \$25.95**

This imaginative work of fiction is set in an unnamed city where Charles Unwin toils as a clerk in a huge detective agency. What he knows about solving mysteries comes from the reports he's filed for detective Travis Sivart. When Sivart goes missing and his supervisor is murdered, Unwin finds himself suddenly promoted to detective. Unwin is then framed for murder and must go on the run while pondering troubling questions: Why does the mummy at the Municipal Museum have modern-day dental work? Where have all the city's alarm clocks gone? And why is his copy of the profound *Manual of Detection* missing Chapter 18? Those of you looking for a run-of-the-mill detective story may want to pass this one by.

***HANGMAN BLIND*, Cassandra Clark, Minotaur Books. \$24.95.**

Introducing Abbess Hildegard who, in November of 1382, sets out for York from the Abbey of Meaux. This is a perilous mission for the Abbess who is trying to secure the future of her priory in these unsettling times when there are rival popes, a boy king, and a shaky peace in the aftermath of the murder of Wat Tyler, who led the English Peasant's Revolt.

***POSED FOR MURDER*, Meredith S. Cole, Minotaur Books. \$24.95**

Lydia McKenzie is about to have a one-woman show of her photographs, a series tied to actual murders committed in New York. Lydia has used models and posed them in the clothes and positions in which the actual victims were found. But her opening is shut down and Lydia is taken in for questioning when the model for one of her photographs is found murdered. This is the winner of the St. Martin's Minotaur/Malice Domestic Best First Traditional Mystery Novel Competition.

NEWS FROM THE U.K.

***THE CORONATION*, Boris Akunin, Weidenfeld & Nicolson**

The Grand Duke Georgii Alexandrovich is in Moscow for his coronation. His children are snatched by bandits while walking with their governess. Fandorin rescues the Duke's daughter, but he can't rescue her brother. When a ransom note is received, Fandorin investigates.

***WHISPERS OF THE DEAD*, Simon Beckett, Bantam**

Forensic anthropologist David Hunter returns to the Body Farm in Tennessee where he learned his trade. A body – bound, tortured, and decomposed beyond recognition – is found nearby. Fingerprints at the scene would appear to identify the killer, but Hunter will find that nothing is what it seems....

***RED BONES*, Ann Cleeves, Macmillan**

Cleeves continues her series set on the Shetland Islands. When a young archeologist discovers human remains, the island community wonders if this is an ancient find or a more contemporary mystery. Meanwhile an elderly woman is shot on her land in what appears to be an accident, but her grandson calls in Jimmy Perez anyway.

ALEXANDRIA, Lindsay Davis, Century

The latest Marcus Didius Falco mystery is set in the great cosmopolitan city, where Falco investigates a mysterious death at the world-famous library.

DEATH OF A PILGRIM, David Dickinson, Constable

In 1905 a young man lays dying in a New York hospital. When he recovers, his father organizes a family pilgrimage to Saint James The Greater in Santiago de Compostela in Spain. When these 20th century pilgrims begin to die, Lord Powerscourt is summoned to investigate.

BAD THINGS, Michael Marshall, HarperCollins

On a beautiful summer afternoon, four-year-old Scott Henderson walked out onto a jetty over a lake in Washington State and never came back. Three years later, his father receives an email from a stranger claiming to know what happened to the little boy.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Arruda, Suzanne, *The Leopard's Prey*, Obsidian. \$23.95. Kenya 1920 is the setting for this mystery featuring animal wrangler, photo journalist, and amateur detective, Jade del Cameron.

Atherton, Nancy, *Aunt Dimity Slays the Dragon*, Viking. \$24.95. A Renaissance fair comes to the small English village of Finch, and Lori Shepherd, with the help of otherworldly Aunt Dimity, must keep the medieval revelry from ending in tragedy.

Banks, Ray, *Sucker Punch*, HMH, \$25.00. In this second novel featuring Cal Innes, a boxing tournament in Los Angeles turns deadly.

Bernhardt, William, *Nemesis: The Final Case of Eliot Ness*, Ballantine. \$26.00. In the fall of 1945, Eliot Ness faces a new kind of criminal – America's first serial killer. Based on fact.

Carr, John Dickson, *13 to the Gallows*, Crippen & Landru. \$43.00 Four never-before-published plays written in the 1940s for the BBC by one of the greatest writers of the Golden Age of detective fiction.

Child, Lincoln, *Terminal Freeze*, Doubleday. \$24.95. A glacial expedition by a group of scientists leads to the discovery of an ancient animal frozen in ice. When they decide to thaw the animal out on live television, despite warnings, they make another terrifying discovery – it may not be dead.

Crider, Bill, *Murder in Four Parts*, Minotaur Books. \$24.95. Sheriff Dan Rhodes is asked to join the Clearview Barbershop Chorus. He thinks there may be an ulterior motive. And there is.

Ellis, Robert, *The Lost Witness*, Minotaur Books. \$25.95. In the follow-up to *City of Fire*, Robbery-Homicide Detective Lena Gamble, disgraced after being held accountable for the way her first case played out, is given her first murder investigation in eight months. But this high profile case may just be the chief's way of setting her up for another fall.

Fairstein, Linda, *Lethal Legacy*, Doubleday. \$26.00. An investigation leads Alex Cooper and her team into the depths of the New York Public Library to search for missing items that collectors and enthusiasts would kill for.

Grisham, John, *The Associate*, Doubleday. \$27.95. A young attorney learns that his employers expect him to lie, steal, and risk his life for the law firm.

Harris, Rosemary, *The Big Dirt Nap*, Minotaur Books. \$24.95. Paula Holliday, gardener, is asked by her friend to tag along on an all-expenses-paid junket. Paula can even write an article on the *titan arum*, a rare flower on display at the hotel. But a murder makes the idea of this trip less fun.

Harwood, John, *The Séance*, HMH, \$25.00. Harwood's second novel, after *The Ghost Writer*, is set in late Victorian England in a world of apparitions, disappearances, and unnatural phenomena, of betrayal and murder. Years ago, a family disappeared at Wraxford Hall, a decaying mansion in the English countryside. Now the Hall belongs to Constance Langton, and she will descend into the darkness of the Wraxford mystery to find the truth – even at the cost of her life.

Higgins, Jack, *A Darker Place*, Putnam. \$26.95. A novel of espionage and revenge set in a shadowy and violent world where things – and people – are seldom what they seem.

Hill, Susan, *The Risk of Darkness*, Overlook Press. \$24.95. In his third outing, Simon Serrailer must come to terms with his feelings for a female Anglican priest even as he deals with the grief of a widowed husband, a derangement that turns into obsession and threats, violence and terror.

Mackinnon, Colin, *The Contractor*, St. Martin's Press. \$24.95. In Mackinnon's second spy thriller, an American contractor working for the CIA must stop a rogue nuclear physicist from building an atomic bomb.

Malmont, Paul, *Jack London in Paradise*, Simon & Schuster. \$25.00. The story of the last year of Jack London's life and his relationship with filmmaker Hobart Bosworth.

Palmer, Michael, *The Second Opinion*, St. Martin's Press. \$25.95. When Dr. Petros Sperelakis is severely injured in a hit-and-run accident, two of his children, both physicians, want treatment withheld. Another daughter, Thea, who has Asperger's syndrome, is not so sure. Was this really an accident? Only Petros knows for sure, and he begins to blink a terrifying message to Thea, who must confront a conspiracy of doctors to uncover a practice that touches every single person who has ever had a medical test. You have been warned!

Pentecost, Hugh, *The Battles of Jericho*, Crippen & Landru. \$29.00. Fifteen stories featuring red-bearded artist John Jericho. The lost classics were originally published between 1964 and 1976.

Pickens, Cathy, *Can't Never Tell*, Minotaur Books. \$24.95. This Southern Fried Mystery finds the usual high per-capita death rate in Dacus, South Carolina.

Robb, J.D., *Promises In Death*, Putnam. \$26.95. In New York City in 2060, Lieutenant Eve Dallas faces down a cop killer.

Robinson, Peter, *All the Colors of Darkness*, Wm. Morrow. \$25.99. When a group of children discover a man's body hanging from a tree, Chief Inspector Alan Banks and Detective Inspector Annie Cabbot find themselves in a dangerous shadow-world.

Stabenow, Dana, *Whisper to the Blood*, Minotaur Books. \$24.95. Alaska is so "in" right now that I can't believe that Stabenow will not pick up new fans this year. Faithful Kate Shugak admirers have always known that this is one of the best series from the state that sits right next to Russia. When a popular skiing champ is murdered along with a long-standing opponent of mining in the area, Kate investigates.

Willig, Lauren, *The Temptation of the Night Jasmine*, Dutton. \$25.95. This is the fifth installment in the Pink Carnation series. Romance, intrigue, swashed buckles, or is it buckled swashes?

Wood, Lee, *Kingdom of Silence*, Minotaur Books. \$24.95. D.S. Keen Dunliffe must stop a group of activists before murder turns to massacre.

Young, Robyn, *The Fall of the Templars*, Dutton. \$25.95. Knight Templar Will Campbell returns to the West to discover that the Temple has forged an alliance with his enemy, King Edward of England. I'm not sure if this is the last book in a trilogy (which I think was the original intention), or if Young is going to extend her popular series.

Winspear, Jacqueline, *Among the Mad*, Henry Holt. \$25.00. Maisie Dobbs must help catch a man who threatens murder on a massive scale, and mentions her name in the process.

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