

BOOKAHOLIC

For the Mystery Addict

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WHAT I'VE BEEN READING

ABANDON, Blake Crouch, Minotaur Books. \$25.99

While I know of Blake Crouch from his previous two books and consider him a very smart writer, I was taken by surprise by this thriller that I could not put down. On Christmas Day 1893, in a small mining town in Colorado, every man, woman, and child disappeared. Belongings were left, as were half-eaten meals, but there are no bodies there. In 2009, a history professor invites his journalist daughter to accompany him and two backcountry guides to the town, which is set in the mountains. Explorers have tried before, but the people who went in never came out. Also along on this expedition is a psychic and a paranormal photographer; this is, after all, a ghost town. And there's a blizzard bearing down on the area. The reader goes back and forth in time as the story past and the story present come together to explain what happened in the town of Abandon.

BAD THINGS HAPPEN, Harry Dolan, Amy Einhorn Books. \$24.95

This atmospheric first novel announces the arrival of a very talented writer. In Ann Arbor, Michigan, David Loogan writes and then edits for *Gray Streets*, a mystery magazine. He is friends with the magazine's publisher Tom Kristoll, but is soon drawn into an affair with Laura, Tom's wife. Then people begin to die, and David seems to be the prime suspect. Leading the investigation is Detective Elizabeth Waishkey, who I thought was a wonderfully drawn character, but David can't wait for somebody else to find the killer – he's too afraid of becoming a victim himself.

FRAGMENT, Warren Fahy, Delacorte Press. \$25.00

Summer reading time is here. While many might be thinking of grabbing the latest from James Patterson and heading for the beach, I'd like to suggest this alternative: *The Trident* is a research vessel which has been hired by the reality show *Sealife*. Scientists are on board with the director and crew, and they are heading for Henders Island, an unexplored island in the Pacific. What the scientists find there is an ecosystem unlike anything we know. It's as if the island has been evolving on a separate path for half a billion years, and there is nothing those scientists know that can explain what they find, or how to combat the mutants they meet. The publisher describes this as *Jurassic Park* meets *The Ruins*. Yes, and more. I highly recommend this thrilling and diverting read.

RAVENS, George Dawes Green, Grand Central Publishing. \$ 24.95

The Boatwright family of Georgia has just won \$318 million in the Max-A-Million lottery. Too bad that Shaw McBride and Romeo Zderko happened to stop at the gas

station/convenience store that sold the winning ticket, because when they get wind of that news, they hatch a plan to terrorize the family into giving them half of their winnings. How they do that, and how the Boatwright family goes along with the plan out of fear and more than a touch of the Stockholm Syndrome, is at the core of the story, and it will be necessary to suspend belief at times. I know fans of Green have died waiting for him to write another book. Really! It has been fourteen years since Green's second book, *The Juror* (his first was *Caveman's Valentine* which was an Edgar Award winner). I'm hoping to be around for his next.

A NOTE ABOUT MY VACATION READING

I took one of those vacations where there's nothing to do but lie in the sun, read, and drink wine. The sun was noticeably absent, but that did not interfere with the other two activities. I don't take mysteries on these vacations, hoping to catch up with other reading. Here's my report. All books are available in paperback.

OLIVE KITTERIDGE, Elizabeth Strout. This Pulitzer Prize winner was a must for me. Set in the small town of Crosby, Maine, it is comprised of short stories about the people and events in that town. While residents come and go in the stories, the person who is most consistently present is Olive Kitteridge, seventh grade math teacher at the local high school. We also meet her as a retiree. Put it on your list.

NETHERLAND, Joseph O'Neill. I don't expect anybody to believe me, but this was on my list even before President Obama was reported to be reading it. It is a wonderful story of life in New York post 9/11. Most of the characters are immigrants, but the main character, for me, was the game of cricket. It probably helps if you know something about the game, but it is not a must. This novel won the Pen/Faulkner award and was a *New York Times Book Review* Best Book of the Year.

THE TENNIS PARTNER, Abraham Verghese. This non-fiction book is more than ten years old but is often referenced as one of the great memoirs about male friendship. Verghese was a physician at a teaching hospital in Texas when he met a young resident, who had played tennis on the pro tour. Verghese, whose marriage was, at the time, coming apart, is a tennis player and fan and learned much from the young man, who, as the story progresses, we understand to be a drug addict. The portions of the book about tennis are quite marvelous, but I take issue with the reviews, and that would be all of them, which reference the extraordinary friendship between doctor and student. This friendship went one way only. Verghese seems to have been enamored of this young man (and there has surely not been enough written about the non-sexual homoerotic friendships between men), but said young man gave nothing to Verghese except some tennis tips. If he did, the author forgot to mention it. I think Verghese, who is heterosexual and has remarried, would have given us a stronger book if he had either

understood his feelings for the young man or, having understood them, explored them with the reader. Again, this was a *New York Times* notable book, so I'm in the minority.

COST, Roxana Robinson. I leave the best for last. I had never heard of this book, and only vaguely heard of the author. While on Twitter (and I do recommend you follow book people on that site), I saw a Tweet from one book person to another suggesting that this might just be the best book of the year. It is the story of a family and how they deal with the drug addiction of a member of that family. But two things stand out here for me: the exquisite descriptions of the members of the family from everybody's point of view, including that of the member him/herself, and the chilling portrait of drug addiction. I might not have heard of this book, but it was a *New York Times Book Review* Editor's Choice, a *Washington Post* Top Five Books of the Year, a *Seattle Times* Best Book of the Year, and a *Wall Street Journal* Best Book of the Year.

ON MY RADAR

***BURY ME DEEP*, Megan Abbott, Simon & Schuster. \$15.00**

A Jazz-age tale of gender, class, and a doubled dismemberment. A paperback original.

***THE FATE OF KATHERINE CARR*, Thomas H. Cook, Houghton Mifflin. \$25.00**

Greg Gates writes for his local newspaper, all the while mourning the loss of his son. When he hears the story that Katherine Carr, a missing person, left behind, he comes to believe it holds the key to his own fate.

***ROADSIDE CROSSES*, Jeffery Deaver, Simon & Schuster. \$26.95**

An innocent blog post about a tragic car crash prompts cyber bullies to mount a vicious attack against a troubled teenager, who seeks revenge against fellow classmates. Body-language expert Kathryn Dance and her fellow agents must race against the clock to stop the boy before he completes his plan for revenge.

***THIS WICKED WORLD*, Richard Lange, Little Brown. \$23.99**

A debut novel from the author of the short story collection, *Dead Boys*.

***WHERE THE DEAD LAY*, David Levien, Doubleday. \$25.00**

When Frank Behr's friend and mentor is murdered, Behr wants answers. But he's distracted when he's approached to find two detectives who seem to have gone missing.

***THE DEVIL'S COMPANY*, David Liss, Random House. \$25.00**

Benjamin Weaver is blackmailed into stealing secret documents from the British East India Company.

LET THE GREAT WORLD SPIN, Colum McCann, Random House. \$25.00

Beginning in 1974 with Philippe Petit's tightrope walk between the World Trade Center's towers, a lyrical portrait of the people of New York.

BLIND SIGHT, Terri Persons, Doubleday. \$24.95

Third book in the series featuring supernaturally gifted FBI agent Bernadette St. Clare.

206 BONES, Kathy Reichs, Scribner. \$27.00

Temperance Brennan regains consciousness and discovers that she is in some kind of very small, very dark, very cold enclosed space. She begins, slowly, to remember...

THE DEFECTOR, Daniel Silva, Putnam. \$26.95

Gabriel Allon once again finds himself on the front lines of the war between East and West, where Russian spies and dissidents engage in the old game of cat and mouse.

UNDONE, Karin Slaughter, Delacorte. \$26.00

Bringing together her protagonists from *Faithless* and *Fractured*, Slaughter weaves a terrifying story of abduction and murder.

GET REAL, Donald Westlake, Grand Central. \$23.99

The last in the Dortmunder series from the late, great Westlake.

THE ANGEL'S GAME, Carlos Ruiz Zafon, Doubleday. \$26.95

David Martin is a young novelist living in Barcelona in the 1920s. He receives an offer from a publisher to write a book like no other – one for which “people will live and die.” In return he is promised a fortune and perhaps even more.

FIRST MYSTERIES

SWORN TO SILENCE, Linda Castillo, Minotaur. \$24.95

Introduces Chief of Police Kate Burkholder, who grew up in an Amish community. Sixteen years ago, there was a serial killer on the loose. Now he's back and Kate must find him. But she has a secret. And she'll have to go back into Amish country to find the killer.

RUNNING FROM THE DEVIL, Jamie Freveletti, Wm. Morrow. \$24.95

When her plane goes down in the jungle and the plane's survivors captured by guerillas, a scientist will have to use everything she knows to help her survive.

EVEN, Andrew Grant, Minotaur. \$24.95

Introduces David Trevelyan, a Royal Navy intelligence operator (think James Bond here) who finds himself set up for murder in New York City. Grant is the younger brother of Lee Child.

***THE CUTTING*, James Hayman, Minotaur. \$24.95.**

A psychopath is literally stealing the hearts of young women in this exceptional thriller.

***THE LAST EMBER*, Daniel Levin, Riverhead. \$25.95**

Lawyer and former classics scholar, Jonathan and UNESCO antiquities expert Emil are chasing a mysterious man who has been leading an illegal excavation under the Temple Mount. Their quest reveals a vivid world of archaeological, legal, and religious secrets.

***BLACK WATER RISING*, Attica Locke, Harper. \$25.99**

When lawyer Jay Porter saves a drowning woman he becomes ensnared in a murder investigation that could cost him his practice, his family, and even his life.

***WIFE OF THE GODS*, Kewi Quartey, Random House. \$24.00**

Introduces talented but temperamental Detective Inspector Darko Dawson of Ghana.

***THE BAKER STREET LETTERS*, Michael Robertson, Minotaur. \$24.95**

Two brothers, both lawyers, lease offices on London's Baker Street and begin to receive letters addressed to Sherlock Holmes.

NON FICTION OF NOTE

***DAMES, DOLLS & DELINQUENTS: A COLLECTOR'S GUIDE TO SEXY PULP FICTION PAPERBACKS*, Gary Lovisi, F&W. \$24.99**

This volume full of four-color photographs of the lurid covers of pulp fiction paperbacks is a must for the collector. Prices included.

***A BRIGHT AND GUILTY PLACE*, Richard Rayner, Doubleday. \$24.95**

The secret story of the 1920s Los Angeles water theft and the birth of noir.

NEWS FROM THE U.K.

***ASSASSIN*, Tom Cain, Bantam Press**

Sam Carver is being set up in the third entry in this series. Someone is copycatting his methods, and the target is the President of the United States.

***THE LOVERS*, John Connolly, Hodder & Stoughton**

The US edition of the latest Charlie Parker mystery precedes this edition.

***BRYANT & MAY ON THE LOOSE*, Christopher Fowler, Bantam Press**

The Peculiar Crimes Unit is about to be disbanded. For detectives Bryant and May it seems that retirement is the only option. Then a headless body is found in a freezer...

TARGET, Simon Kernick, Bantam Press

After getting drunk, writer Rob Fallon finds himself in the apartment of his best friend's girlfriend. It is going to be a doozy of a hangover.

THE INCENDIARY'S TRAIL, James McCreet, Macmillan

Murder is rampant in Victorian London. Detective Inspector Newsome recruits a master criminal to help bring the culprits to justice.

THE SILVER LOCOMOTIVE MYSTERY, Edward Marston, Allison & Busby

The Railway Detectives are on the trail of a missing silver coffee pot in the shape of a locomotive.

SURE AND CERTAIN DEATH, Barbara Nadel, Headline

Fourth in the Francis Hancock series set in London during WWII.

ANGEL WITH TWO FACES, Nicola Upson, Faber & Faber

Second mystery featuring writer Josephine Tey as sleuth.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Abbott, Jeff, *Trust Me*, Dutton. \$25.95. Luke Dantry goes undercover from the safety of his computer and infiltrates web-based, home-grown terrorist networks. When he is kidnapped and left for dead, he realizes some of the loners he is following may be more organized than he thought.

Airth, Rennie, *The Dead of Winter*, Viking. \$25.95. The murder of a Polish girl sends John Madden on the trail of a dangerous killer in 1944 London.

Alleyn, Susanne, *The Cavalier of the Apocalypse*, Minotaur. \$24.95. A murdered man is found in a 1786 Parisian cemetery. Struggling writer Aristide Ravel recognizes Masonic symbols surrounding the body.

Baden, Michael and Linda Kenny Baden, *Skeleton Justice*, Knopf. \$25.95. Crime-fighting duo Dr. Jake Rosen and Manny Manfredo return to catch a bizarre serial killer on the streets of New York.

Battles, Brett, *Shadow of Betrayal*, Delacorte. \$25.00. Jonathan Quinn, the "cleaner," returns.

Blatte, Marc, *Humpty Dumpty Was Pushed*, Schaffner Press. \$24.95. A murder outside a popular nightclub draws the attention of Detective Salvatore and his team.

Blundy, Anna, *Breaking Faith*, Minotaur. \$24.95. Featuring war correspondent Faith Zanetti.

Bolton, S.J., *Awakening*, Minotaur. \$25.95. Solitary vet Clara Benning is called in when a charming English village is overrun by poisonous snakes.

Box, C.J., *Below Zero*, Putnam. \$24.95. Latest thriller featuring Wyoming game warden Joe Pickett. From this year's Edgar Winner for best novel.

Brownlee, Nick, *Bait*, Minotaur. \$24.95. Ex-Scotland Yard cop Jake Moore runs a game-fishing business in Kenya. But old habits die hard and he finds himself helping solve a baffling murder case.

Carlson, Ron, *The Signal*, Viking. \$25.95. A down-on-their-luck couple take a trip to their beloved Wyoming family land only to find the woods are far darker than they remembered.

Casey, Kathryn, *Blood Lines*, Minotaur. \$24.95. Texas Ranger Sarah Armstrong has her hands full with two high-profile cases to solve.

Clark, Mary Higgins, *Just Take My Heart*, Simon & Schuster. \$25.95. The queen of suspense delves into the legal battle over the guilt or innocence of a man accused of murdering his wife.

Claudel, Philippe, *Brodeck*, Doubleday. \$26.00. An unnamed European town feels collective guilt over dark secrets in the aftermath of WWII.

Cohen, Gabriel, *Neptune Avenue*, Minotaur. \$24.95. NYPD detective Jack Leightner investigates the murder of a friend and finds himself embroiled in a cat-and-mouse game with his chief suspect, a thuggish local entrepreneur.

Cottam, F.G., *The House of Lost Souls*, St. Martin's. \$24.95. Four students visit a derelict house and within weeks one has committed suicide and the others are descending into madness.

Coulter, Catherine, *Knockout*, Putnam. \$26.95. FBI agents Savich and Sherlock return to investigate another case.

Cussler, Clive, Ed., *Thriller 2*, Mira. \$24.95. Collection of original stories from Jeffery Deaver, Sean Chercover, Lawrence Light, Jon Land, etc.

Daheim, Mary, *The Alpine Uproar*, Random House. \$24.00. A barroom brawl ends in murder and newspaper owner Emma Lord suspects premeditated murder.

Daheim, Mary, *Loco Motive*, Wm. Morrow. \$23.95. The Bed and Breakfast series continues.

Deutermann, P.T., *Nightwalkers*, St. Martin's. \$24.95. Cram Richter will need his German Shepherd companions when he is targeted in the isolated North Carolina countryside by a psychotic stalker.

Doherty, P.C., *The Magician's Death*, Minotaur. \$24.95. An historical mystery featuring Sir Hugh Corbett.

Downie, Ruth, *Persona Non Grata*, Bloomsbury. \$24.95. The reception in ancient Gaul isn't exactly what Gaius Petreius Rysa was hoping for in this historical thriller.

Duns, Jeremy, *Free Agent*, Viking. \$25.95. British Intelligence agent Paul Dark trails a double agent.

Evanovich, Janet, *Finger Lickin' Fifteen*, St. Martin's. \$27.95. Stephanie Plum once again rules the summer.

Gabbay, Tom, *The Tehran Conviction*, Wm. Morrow. \$24.95. Agent Jack Teller suffers the consequences of a youthful choice and now the United States must deal with the blowback.

Gardiner, Meg, *The Memory Collector*, Dutton. \$25.95. Jo Beckett, forensic psychiatrist, is called to an aircraft inbound from London to help deal with a passenger who is behaving erratically.

Gardner, Lisa, *The Neighbor*, Bantam. \$25.00. You never know what's going on behind closed doors.

George, Elizabeth, Ed., *Two of the Deadliest*, Harper. \$25.95. Anthology showcasing stories by women mystery writers both old and new.

- George, Kathleen, *The Odds***, Minotaur. \$24.95. Set in Pittsburgh, this original crime novel examines the often shocking connections in the drug trade.
- Grabenstein, Chris, *Mind Scrambler***, Minotaur. \$24.95. Sea Haven police officers John Ceepak and Danny Boyle must investigate a bizarre murder in the casinos of Atlantic City.
- Haines, Carolyn, *Greedy Bones***, Minotaur. \$24.95. Southern belle P.I. Sarah Booth Delaney finds no shortage of bad blood in a small Mississippi town.
- Hall, Tarquin, *The Case of the Missing Servant***, Simon & Schuster. \$24.00. A new series featuring India's portly, persistent, Punjabi PI Vish Puri.
- Hilton, Matt, *Dead Men's Dust***, Wm. Morrow. Introduces ex-military officer and all-around tough guy.
- Hess, Joan, *Merry Wives of Maggody***, Minotaur. \$24.95. Arly Hanks returns in a mystery set in the town of Maggody, Arkansas (pop. 755). Gee, what are the odds?
- Hockensmith, Steve, *The Crack in the Lens***, Minotaur. \$24.95. An investigation into his own childhood personal tragedy leads 1893 Sherlock Holmes fan "Big Red" Amlingmeyer to a lynching party.
- Hughes, Declan, *All the Dead Voices***, Wm. Morrow. \$24.95. Ed Loy investigates the suspects who were conveniently ignored in a fifteen-year-old murder case.
- Hunt, James Patrick, *The Assailant***, Minotaur. \$24.95. George Hastings investigates the apparent "joy" killing of a high class escort.
- Hurwitz, Gregg, *Trust No One***, St. Martin's. \$24.95. A thirty-something man with a haunted past is summoned by a terrorist holding a nuclear power plant hostage, forcing long buried secrets to surface.
- Jensen, Liz, *The Rapture***, Doubleday. \$24.95. As the environment collapses, an art therapist discovers a teenage killer's shocking secrets.
- Joven, Enrique, *The Book of God and Physics***, Wm. Morrow. \$25.95. A young Jesuit contends with powerful forces to decode a famous mysterious manuscript.
- Kelly, Jim, *Death Wore White***, Minotaur. \$24.95. Rookie detective Peter Shaw and his chain-smoking partner confront a baffling crime that stretches them to the breaking point.
- Knox, Tom, *The Genesis Secret***, Viking. \$26.95. A group of archeologists who may have discovered the Garden of Eden find themselves under siege.
- Koontz, Dean, *Relentless***, Bantam. \$27.00. A best-selling novelist tangles with the wrong book critic – a relentless sociopath.
- Kramer, Julie, *Missing Mark***, Doubleday. \$23.95. A bride- left- at-the- altar story leads TV reporter Riley Spartz to a dangerous missing person case.
- Land, Jon, *Strong Enough to Die***, Forge. \$24.95. Introduces Texas Ranger Caitlin Strong in a new series.
- Lawson, Mike, *House Secrets***, Atlantic. \$22.00. "Fixer" for the Speaker of the House, Joe DeMarco, stumbles upon a political conspiracy that leads to a charismatic potential presidential candidate.
- Lescroart, John, *A Plague of Secrets***, Dutton. \$26.95. Legal thriller featuring Dismas Hardy.
- Lustbader, Eric Van, *Robert Ludlum's The Bourne Deception***, Grand Central. \$27.99. Jason Bourne races to prevent a world war before it's too late.
- Margolin, Philip, *Fugitive***, Harper. \$26.95. Legal thriller.

- McAdam, Colin, *Fall***, Riverhead. \$25.95. Two boarding school friends are forced to face their inner desires when one of their girlfriends goes missing.
- McCain, Charles, *An Honorable German***, Grand Central. \$24.99. A WWII saga about a heroic but conflicted German u-boat commander.
- McMahon, Jennifer, *Dismantled***, Harper. \$24.95. A family seems to be haunted by the subversive political cult they thought they'd left behind.
- Ocean, T. Lynn, *Southern Peril***, Minotaur. \$24.95. Jersey Barnes wonders if she'll ever retire in this adventure in the sun.
- Parker, Robert B., *Brimstone***, Putnam. \$25.95. Virgil Cole and Everett Hitch, western heroes, in their third outing.
- Patterson, James, *Swimsuit***, Little Brown. \$27.99. A supermodel disappears on a Hawaiian photo shoot.
- Pearson, Ridley, *Killer Summer***, Putnam. \$24.95. A Sun Valley Sheriff Walt Fleming thriller.
- Rosenberg, Nancy Taylor, *The Cheater***, Forge. \$24.95. A Lilly Forrester thriller.
- Schwegel, Theresa, *Last Known Address***, Minotaur. \$24.95. The fourth novel from award-winner Schwegel finds a female detective chasing a serial rapist across Chicago.
- Simms, Christopher, *Hells Fire***, Pegasus. \$25.00. The torching of a Manchester church points to Satanists. Jon Spicer investigates.
- Sims, Elizabeth, *The Extra***, Minotaur. \$24.95. Actor Rita Farmer uses her skills to take down L.A. drug dealers.
- Sokoloff, Alexandra, *The Unseen***, St. Martin's. \$24.95. The second novel from the author of *The Price* is based on the Rhine parapsychology experiments at Duke University.
- Stanley, Michael, *The Second Death of Goodluck Tinubu***, Harper. \$24.95. Second in the series featuring Botswana's Detective Kobu.
- Thurlo, Aimee and David, *Bad Samaritan***, Minotaur. \$24.95. Sister Agatha of Our Lady of Hope monastery in Bernadillo, New Mexico, must solve a brutal murder and save her friend and ally, Sheriff Tom Green, who is a suspect.
- Upson, Nicola, *Angel With Two Faces***, Harper. \$24.95. Second in the series featuring mystery writer Josephine Tey as sleuth.
- Unger, Lisa, *Die For You***, Shaye Areheart. \$23.00. What if the man you love is really a stranger?
- Vasquez, Ian, *Lonesome Point***, Minotaur. \$24.95. Two brothers, and the dangerous past that only one of them can survive.
- Ward, Robert, *Total Immunity***, HMH. \$26.00. A vengeful South African jewel smuggler makes the lives of two Los Angeles FBI agents a living hell.
- Wilson, Laura, *The Innocent Spy***, Minotaur. \$24.95. In 1940 London a detective and an undercover MI5 agent suspect that the British mob slaying of a silent film star may be the work of foreign agents. Won the Ellis Peters Historical Dagger Award in the UK.
- Wilson, Robert, *The Ignorance of Blood***, Houghton Mifflin. \$27.00. In his final outing, Inspector Jefe Javier Falcon may be able to bring terrorist bombers to justice, but there will be a devastating price to pay.

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