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NEWSLETTER #94 - MAY 6, 2016

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MUST-HAVE BESTSELLERS

1. [End of Watch](#), by Stephen King
2. [Valiant Ambition](#), by Nathaniel Philbrick
3. [The Emperor's Revenge](#), by Clive Cussler and Boyd Morrison
4. ['Til Death Do Us Part](#), by Amanda Quick
5. [The Weekenders](#), by Mary Kay Andrews
6. [Hide Away](#), by Iris Johansen
7. [Lily and the Octopus](#), by Steven Rowley
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Top 10 Mystery Novels, 2016

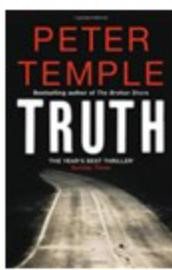
Top 10 SF, Fantasy, & Horror



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THE PETER TEMPLE PROJECT

Booklist Executive Editor Keir Graff has been reading in order the works of Australian crime-fiction great Peter Temple. Learn more at [The Booklist Reader](#).



★ [Truth](#), by Peter Temple

Chief Inspector Stephen Villani, a supporting character in Temple's magnificent novel, [The Broken Shore](#) (2005), is called to the scene of a murder in a state-of-the-art high-rise in Melbourne. A young woman, possibly a prostitute, lies dead in a barren luxury apartment. Soon after, Villani surveys a far more gruesome scene: the corpses of three men, tortured, in a blood-soaked tin shed. There appears to be no connection. [>>read](#)

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FROM THE BOOKLIST READER

[The Year's Best Crime Novels, 2016](#)

By Bill Ott

Comic caper novels, psychological thrillers, and history-mystery blends dominate the best crime fiction reviewed in *Booklist* from May 1, 2015, through April 15, 2016. If you love that special brew of light and dark that characterizes the best caper novels, you have to be a little giddy after a year in which three writers of the caliber of Stephen Dobyns ([Is Fat Bob Dead Yet?](#)), Timothy Hallinan ([King Maybe](#)), and Thomas Perry ([Forty Thieves](#)) chose to leaven suspense with laughter. [>>read more](#)



[Publishing U: Writing Killer Dialogue](#)

By Catriona McPherson

The bad news about dialogue is, while dull description is skippable and flat narration still tells you what's happening, clunky speeches kill a book stone dead. Tin-eared, unrealistic dialogue shouts that these people aren't real—so it would be dumb to care about them. The good news about bad dialogue is that it usually stinks because of one of a few fixable problems with form, content, and/or purpose. [>>read more](#)



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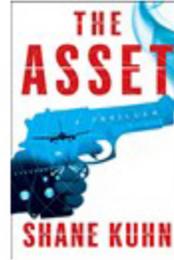
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Adult Books

The Asset, by Shane Kuhn

"This thriller just plain works. It has a hero with a riveting skill set. It has a propulsive plot. It has writing that's economical and witty."

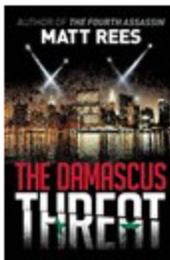


Clamour of Crows, by Ray Merritt

"Debut author Merritt clearly enjoys both wordplay and children's lit, peppering his narrative with puns, collective noun, and references to the work of L. Frank Baum (described as Ben's ancestor), Kay Thompson, Ludwig Bemelmans, and—especially—J. R. R. Tolkien. Unusually clever and literate crime fiction."

The Cracked Spine, by Paige Shelton

"Her boss, Edwin, is as mysterious as his want ad, but Delaney does learn that he had recently purchased a Shakespeare first folio, which is now missing, and that—even more shocking—Edwin's sister, Jenny, who most recently had the manuscript in her possession, has been murdered."

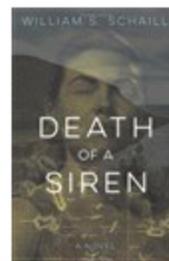


The Damascus Threat, by Matt Rees

"And his insights into the training that agents receive are really chilling. Under attack? Run toward the gunfire. Then the fear 'is no longer in charge.'"

Death of a Siren, by William S. Schiell

"The local color adds to a clever multilayered plot, which includes some pre-WWII intrigue (Ecuador had a considerable German immigrant population at the time) and a satisfying conclusion."

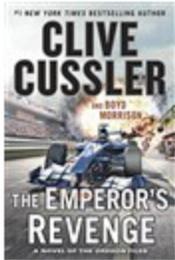
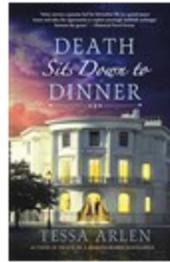


Death on the Sapphire, by R. J. Koreto

"Lady Frances is a strong, clever protagonist, in the mold of Frances Brody's Kate Shackleton and Jacqueline Winspear's Maisie Dobbs."

Death Sits Down to Dinner, by Tessa Arlen

"Arlen effectively uses historical detail—the looming war with Germany, the beginnings of the British air force, the *Downton Abbey* mix of servants and gentry—both to evoke the era and to connect to the murder plot."

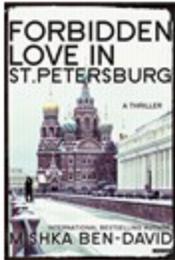
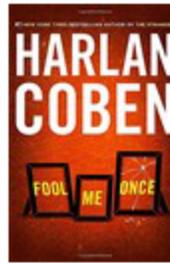


The Emperor's Revenge, by Clive Cussler and Boyd Morrison

"Soon Cabrillo realizes that the robbery was merely the first step in an elaborate scheme to destroy the world's economic stability and that the key to stopping the villains lies deep in the past."

Fool Me Once, by Harlan Coben

"The pace never falters, buoyed by Maya's urgent investigations and the myriad plot twists, which keep readers off balance, wondering what's happening and whom to believe."

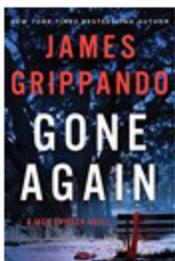


Forbidden Love in St. Petersburg, by Mishka Ben-David

"The novel has a solid sense of intrigue and suspense, and its depiction of the world of international espionage feels accurate (as it should, since the author is a former Mossad agent)."

The Girl from Home, by Adam Mitzner

"Caine is an unlikely hero, but his smarts ultimately redeem him in this fast-paced, twisty thriller."



Gone Again, by James Grippando

"The latest Swytek legal thriller is tightly plotted and efficiently written: not a lot of wasted time or words here."

Hell's Gate, by Bill Schutt and J. R. Finch

"Coauthors Schutt and Finch are experts in the sciences, and the scenes involving the biology behind what's really going on in the jungle—there's a touch of horror in the mix—are fascinating."



The Hemingway Thief, by Shaun Harris



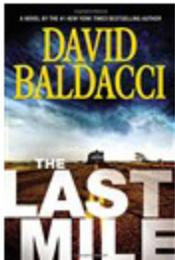
"That real-life lost manuscript has intrigued Hemingway buffs for decades, and this alternate version of what really happened will fan the fires once again."

Killer Reunion, by G. A. McKeve

"McKeve keeps this series fresh, smart, and fun by varying the settings and continuing to develop the strong relationship between Savannah and Dirk."



The Last Mile, by David Baldacci



"The story might be a bit more convoluted than it needs to be, but the characters are solid, and Decker moves from an interesting one-off protagonist to an engaging and multilayered series lead."

Late One Night, by Lee Martin

"As evidence against Ronnie mounts, his erratic behavior has everyone talking, even leading Brandi to question the innocence he steadfastly maintains."



Leave Her to Hell / Let Me Kill You, Sweetheart / Take Me Home, by Fletcher Flora

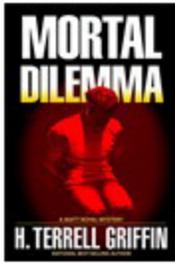
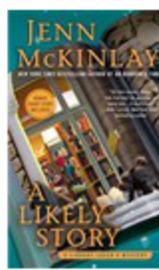


"The dialogue is terse, the narration is colorful (anybody who can describe a character as having 'a face like half a walnut' deserves serious attention), and the stories are garish and shocking in a way that makes us unable to stop reading."

A Likely Story, by Jenn McKinlay

"McKinlay deftly creates a stifling and dangerous atmosphere as Lindsey is chased through a narrow tunnel carved amid the house's piles of

belongings."

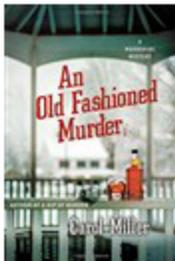


Mortal Dilemma, by H. Terrell Griffin

"What fascinates is the subtext, in which Griffin's people wonder if this world of mass murders, emotion-free killing, and state-sanctioned slaughter is the new normal."

Murder Never Knocks, by Mickey Spillane and Max Allan Collins

"This novel supplies the goods: hard-boiled ambience, cynicism, witty banter, and plenty of tough-guy action."

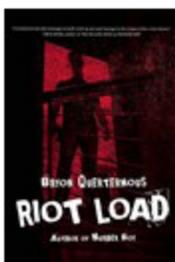
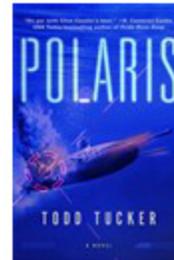


An Old Fashioned Murder, by Carol Miller

"Third in the Moonshine Mystery series, this is a lively closed-house murder in which the victims, sadly, were the nicest of the inn's guests."

Polaris, by Todd Tucker

"Fans of military-fiction stalwarts Tom Clancy and Patrick Robinson are the target audience, and they will be pleased to discover that Tucker delivers the goods."



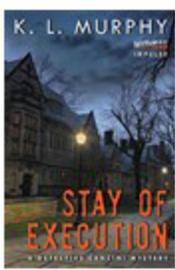
Riot Load, by Bryon Quattermous

"A friend asks Dominick to steal a sperm sample. Attempting to oblige, Dominick is carjacked."

Someone Must Die, by Sharon Potts

"Potts vividly portrays the atmosphere of student protest in 1969–70 in a narrative in which secrets are buried and the desire for revenge festers over decades and turns pathological."



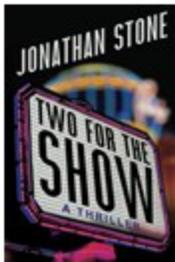
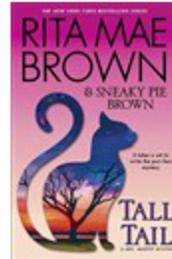


Stay of Execution, by K. L. Murphy

"But new evidence—that DNA—proclaims him not guilty. Instead of slinking away, Spradlin moves back to town and tells the locals, 'I forgive you.'"

Tall Tail, by Rita Mae Brown and Sneaky Pie Brown

"Keeping the characters and plotlines straight can be taxing but proves more than worth the effort for the richness of the story and especially its fascinating conclusion."

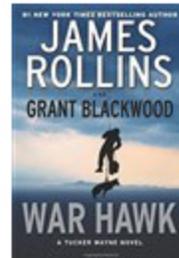


Two for the Show, by Jonathan Stone

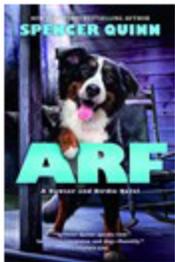
"It's being fed to him by a fellow behind the scenes named Chas, who uses credit-card information from your ticket purchase to go online, learning things you thought nobody knew."

War Hawk, by James Rollins and Grant Blackwood

"Military and corporate worlds collide, and the two authors do a phenomenal job of making the reader think about the ramifications of employing such technology, all while keeping the pages turning."



Books for Youth



Arf, by Spencer Quinn

"The bayou, its colorful inhabitants, the well-paced plot, and Bowser's cheerfully unreliable narration make this a delightful sequel to [Woof](#) (2015)."

The Case of the Stolen Space Suit, by Steve Brezenoff and illustrated by Lisa K. Weber

"After-hours museums (especially these stand-ins for the Smithsonian complex) are wonderful settings, and the children solving the case have distinctly realized interests and personalities."



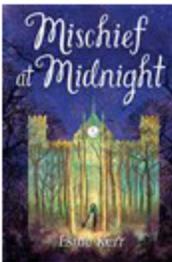
Knigtley & Son: 3 of a Kind, by Rohan Gavin



"There's plenty of mystery, suspense, and humor here, but series fans will mainly enjoy watching the many idiosyncratic characters in action once again."

[The Long Game: A Fixer Novel](#), by Jennifer Lynn Barnes

"She has agreed to help someone run for student-council president, a move that doesn't seem like it would make her the target of a sadistic fellow student."



[Mischief at Midnight](#), by Esme Kerr

"This sequel has all intrigue of the first, not to mention the focus on friendships, and returning readers will be satisfied."

[Scarlet and Ivy: The Lost Twin](#), by Sophie Cleverly

"With the help of her roommate, Ivy uncovers a web of lies and a dangerous adversary, growing from a shy, easily intimidated girl to a strong leader."

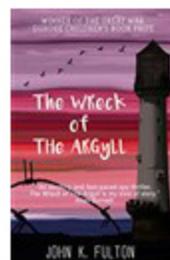


[The Search for the Homestead Treasure](#), by Ann Treacy

"Extensive research and a compelling protagonist make this title a great fit for classes exploring their family trees."

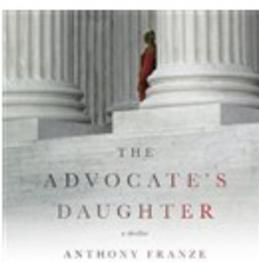
[The Wreck of the Argyll](#), by John K. Fulton

"Told through parallel narratives based on a true event, the story is action packed, fast paced, and easy to follow, making it ideal for middle-grade readers."



Audio

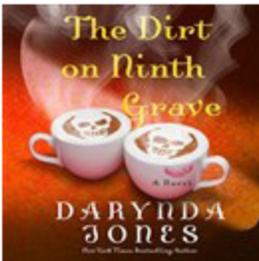
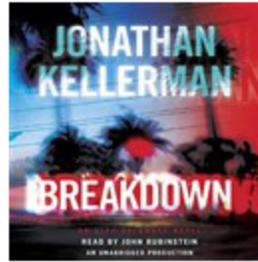
[The Advocate's Daughter](#), by Anthony Franze and read by Robert Petkoff



"In his portrayal of Sean, Petkoff's no-nonsense, low tones first convey confidence, but that diminishes into serious rage and poor decisions."

Breakdown, by Jonathan Kellerman and read by John Rubinstein

"Rubinstein's expressive baritone compels listeners' attention as the twists and turns multiply, increasing the tension and adeptly voicing familiar series characters."

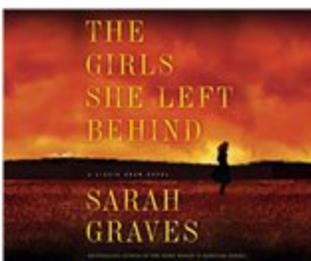
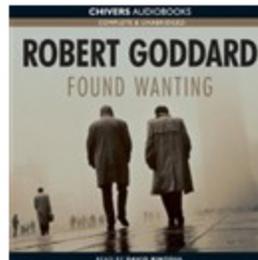


The Dirt on Ninth Grave, by Darynda Jones and read by Lorelei King

"King's vocalizations are just as fresh as the first time around, and her spot-on delivery is the perfect match to Jones' razor-sharp dialogue, quirky plot twists, and sexy innuendos."

Found Wanting, by Robert Goddard and read by David Rintoul

"From his cadence and inflection in the first moments, Rintoul's urbane baritone establishes Eusden's character and his dilemma."

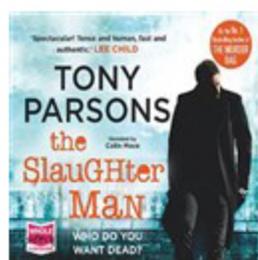


The Girls She Left Behind, by Sarah Graves and read by Kirsten Potter

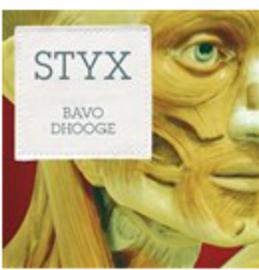
"So skillfully does she build tension within her characters that we don't realize that one of them has grown teeth and morphed into our villain until the gripping finish."

The Slaughter Man, by Tony Parsons and read by Colin Mace

"This dark and compelling story is smartly read by Mace, who allows the author's words to provide most of the atmosphere and suspense."



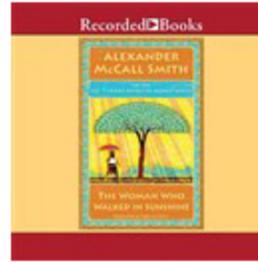
Styx, by Bavo Dhooge and Josh Pachter and read by Kirby Heyborne



"Heyborne never fails to deliver high tension at just the right moments, like when Styx nearly apprehends the Stuffer, but the elevator floors tick by with a slowness that makes the listener want to scream in frustration."

[The Woman Who Walked in Sunshine](#), by Alexander McCall Smith and read by Lisette Lecat

"Lecat clearly savors her task, presenting its wry, deadpan humor in lilting, Botswanan-accented British enunciation and rhythm."



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