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#107 — May 8, 2017

- From *The Booklist Reader*
- Adult Books
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It's Mystery Month at *Booklist*, and all 48 reviews in this special, mystery-themed issue are available to subscribers as well as nonsubscribers. Read on, enjoy, and be sure to follow #mysterymonth on Twitter!

## FROM THE BOOKLIST READER



### Meet Hard-Boiled Rule Breaker, Bertha Cool

In the world of hard-boiled detective fiction, Bertha Cool was a revelation. Up until Bertha burst onto the literary scene, women in the mean-streets school of detective novels were given one of two roles to play in a story: either they were some variation of the secretary with a heart of gold or some version of a duplicitous femme fatale.

[read more](#)→



### Talking with Barbara Bourland about her Debut Mystery, *I'll Eat When I'm Dead*

Barbara Bourland's debut mystery, *I'll Eat When I'm Dead* (Grand Central), unfolds from the offices of the fictional *RAGE Fashion Book*, a groundbreakingly ethical magazine. I loved the book's characters, especially tough, smart fashion editor Cat Ono, its industry-insider mood with just the right amount of froth and gloss (in other words, a lot), and the way it delightfully skewered the behemoth fashion and beauty industries.

[read more](#)→

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## BOOKLIST ONLINE MYSTERY MONTH EXCLUSIVE REVIEWS



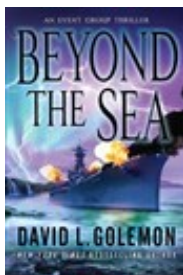
### Adult Books



#### **Baby, Take a Bow**

By Jane Tesh

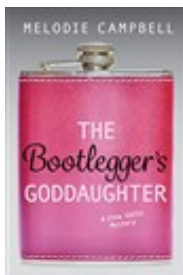
The fifth in the Grace Street mystery series also features a subplot involving Randall's psychic friend, Camden, whose encounter with a ghost leads Randall to concoct a scheme to help a woman sort out the lives of her misguided children. [read more](#)→



#### **Beyond the Sea**

By David L. Golemon

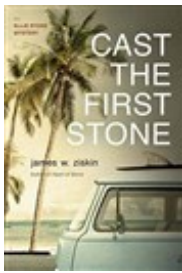
Fans of the series will love the latest in this mix of *The X-Files* and *Treasure Island*. [read more](#)→



#### **The Bootlegger's Goddaughter**

By Melodie Campbell

The novel is a brisk, easy, and appealing read, especially for fans of the series, which is targeted at reluctant adult readers. [read more](#)→



### Cast the First Stone

By James W. Ziskin

This will grab readers interested in historical Hollywood behind the bright lights. [read more→](#)



### Cold Earth

By Ann Cleeves

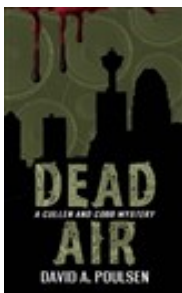
Cleeves' Shetland Islands novels occupy a space somewhere between cozy and noir—"drizzly" might be a good description. [read more→](#)



### Dangerous to Know

By Renee Patrick

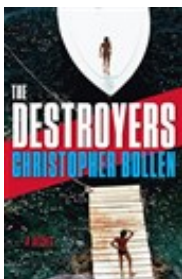
The authors—Renee Patrick is the pseudonym for a husband-and-wife writing team—flesh out Head's character considerably, the story is intricate and surprising, and the partnership between Head and her good friend Frost sets the stage for many further adventures. [read more→](#)



### Dead Air

By David A. Poulsen

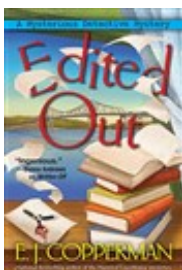
The ex-cop and the writer, introduced in 2014's *Serpents Rising*, make a likable team, and the timely story, with its conspiracy against right-wing celebs, is sure to spark interest. [read more→](#)



### The Destroyers

By Christopher Bollen

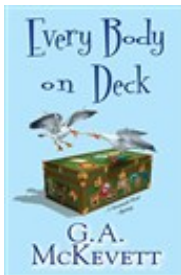
Almost 20 years later, Ian needs Charlie's help; he's been cut off by his father and is plagued by inaccurate reports about having been involved in a terrorist bombing. [read more→](#)



### Edited Out

By E. J. Copperman

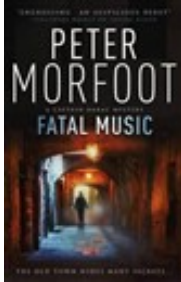
The self-deprecating Rachel and the eccentric, know-it-all Duffy, modeled after Sherlock Holmes, are well-drawn characters who have a unique relationship, and the interesting premise, humor, plot twists, writer's tips, and Rachel's asides to the reader add to the story. [read more→](#)



### Every Body on Deck

By G. A. McKeveitt

Well-drawn, sympathetic characters, especially Savannah and Granny (who is a hoot); satisfying plot twists; and plenty of humor distinguish this lively, long-running cozy series. [read more→](#)



### Fatal Music

By Peter Morfoot

Darac's reflection on his passion for jazz and his connection to his muse create alluring dimension to this gripping thriller. [read more→](#)



### Girl Last Seen

By Nina Laurin

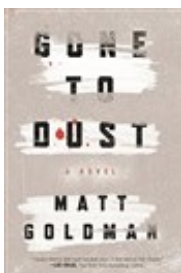
Laurin's novel is nearly as compelling as it is depressing in detailing Lainey's story to a hair-raising, violent climax. [read more→](#)



### The Girl Who Was Taken

By Charlie Donlea

Donlea does a fine job of introducing several characters who have enough in common to be considered suspects, without ever tipping her hand. [read more→](#)



### Gone to Dust

By Matthew Goldman

A murder scene obscured by the dust from hundreds of vacuum cleaner bags opens this clever and compelling mystery set in a Minnesota January. [read more→](#)



### The Good Widow

By Liz Fenton and Lisa Steinke

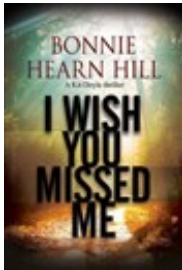
Crossover appeal for fans of domestic, "my life is falling apart" fiction and for readers who enjoy suspense writers like Nicci French. [read more→](#)



### Hell's Detective

By Michael Logan

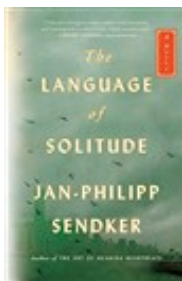
Through the torture and grime, Logan takes readers on a dark-comedy tour of a hell beyond our wildest dreams with this unpredictable detective novel. [read more→](#)



### I Wish You Missed Me

By Bonnie Hearn Hill

Fans of the series (*Goodbye Forever*, 2016) will enjoy seeing Kit's personal relationships develop. [read more→](#)



### The Language of Solitude

By Jan-Philipp Sendker

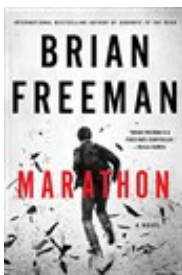
After meeting the brother's family, including his paralyzed, bedridden wife, Min Fang, Paul quickly becomes entangled in a new crusade for justice, this time targeting the water polluters and corrupt politicians responsible for Min Fang's illness. [read more→](#)



### Local Girl Missing

By Claire Douglas

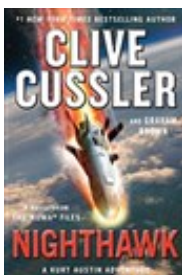
"Girls going missing" is becoming the theme du jour in thriller and psychological fiction, and Douglas (*The Sisters*, 2016) puts her own spin on it. [read more→](#)



### Marathon

By Brian Freeman

As authorities search for Rashid, despite a Muslim leader's assurances that he is a peaceful, nonradicalized man, Basch's tweets inspire actions with dreadful, if sometimes unintended, consequences. [read more→](#)



### Nighthawk

By Clive Cussler and Graham Brown

The *Nighthawk* disappeared during the landing procedure; it was carrying a payload that, if it were to unfreeze, might spark a global catastrophe. [read more→](#)





### **The RagTime Traveler**

By Larry Karp and Casey Karp

Drifting back and forth between past and present, Alan tries to solve his friend's murder and find out how and why Joplin came to write the music that someone in the present day seems inclined to kill to possess.

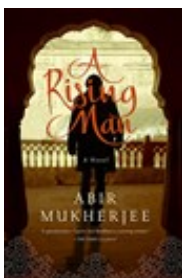
[read more→](#)



### **The Reef**

By Juan Villoro

A funny, fast-paced venture into the dark, imagined core of contemporary Mexico. [read more→](#)



### **A Rising Man**

By Abir Mukherjee

With a sly authorial wit, quirky characters, and historical details that anchor the story to its steamy, exotic locale, this debut novel is the first in what looks to be an entertaining new series similar to Barbara Cleverly's Detective Joe Sandilands mysteries. [read more→](#)

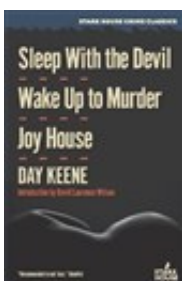


### **The Rules of Backyard Cricket**

By Jock Serong

Readers meet narrator Darren Keefe as he ruminates on childhood memories, but he soon informs his audience that he's trussed up and gagged in the boot of a car and that he's been shot in the knee.

[read more→](#)



### **Sleep with the Devil / Wake Up to Murder / Joy House**

By Day Keene

Their virtues aside, these novels should be recommended to nostalgia lovers and noir fans. [read more→](#)



### **Target Omega**

By Peter Kirsanow

To remain the sole survivor, Michael Garin opts to disappear, making him the prime suspect in the murders of his team members, at least from the perspective of his superiors and the White House. [read more→](#)



### **A Twisted Vengeance**

By Candace Robb

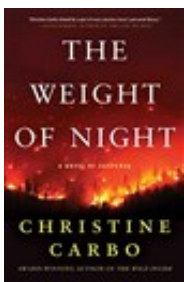
As in her previous mysteries, Robb is an ace at re-creating the medieval setting. [read more→](#)



### **Two Lost Boys**

By L. F. Robertson

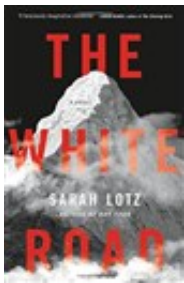
The book focuses more on the preparation for the appeal than the ensuing trial, but readers of legal thrillers will appreciate the detail the author includes about the criminal-justice system. [read more→](#)



### **The Weight of Night**

By Christine Carbo

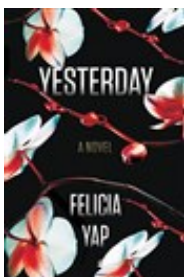
Carbo extols the beauty of her setting and provides sensitive character development. [read more→](#)



### **The White Road**

By Sarah Lotz

Not crime fiction in any traditional sense, this is an expertly fashioned, spine-tingling account of danger, both physical and mental. [read more→](#)



### **Yesterday**

By Felicia Yap

The piecing together of disparate memories and the surprise ending to this speculative-fiction world will thrill mystery fans. [read more→](#)

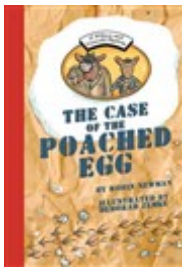
## **Books for Youth**



### **Big Trouble: A Friday Barnes Mystery**

By R. A. Spratt and Phil Gosier

Fans will love guessing the thief's identity, wondering why a princess might be rustivating at Friday's small school, and enjoying the many small mysteries that crop up daily among the students. [read more→](#)



### **The Case of the Poached Egg**

By Robin Newman and illustrated by Deborah Zemke

The short chapters, good use of white space, and plentiful illustrations make this series a great choice for newly independent readers.

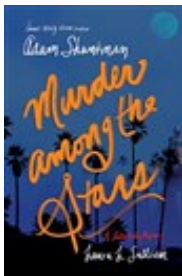
[read more](#)→



### **The Case of the Counterfeit Criminals**

By Jordan Stratford and illustrated by Kelly Murphy

Set in 1826, this chapter book opens with a macabre physician purging 11-year-old Ada's "fevered blood" with leeches, but nothing keeps this feisty heroine down for long. [read more](#)→



### **Murder among the Stars**

By Adam Shankman and Laura L. Sullivan

While Lulu and Freddie are rather modern for their setting—they are knowledgeable of mental illness and staunchly against racism and sexism—they are clever amateur sleuths, enjoyably characterized by snappy dialogue and quick wit. [read more](#)→



### **Panda-monium**

By Stuart Gibbs

Readers who enjoy mysteries and animals will love Gibbs' ability to mingle clues with animal facts. [read more](#)→



### **Washed Ashore**

By Kerr Thomson

There are many interesting aspects to Thomson's debut, particularly his depiction of island life and the slightly mystical incorporation of Gaelic myth. [read more](#)→



### **The X-Files Origins: Agent of Chaos**

By Kami Garcia

A bit of light romance and a solidly crafted 1979 setting add spice to the tale. [read more](#)→

**Audio**



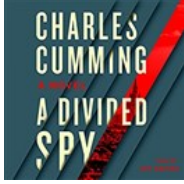


### **The Dark Room**

By Jonathan Moore and read by David Colacci

Colacci's deep tones, redolent of too many long nights spent exposed to life's darker side, give a moving gravitas to Gavin Cain, a San Francisco Police Department homicide inspector who's called away from a cold-case exhumation to investigate a blackmail attempt made upon the mayor.

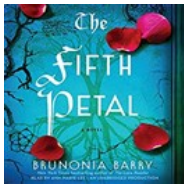
[read more→](#)



### ★ **A Divided Spy**

By Charles Cumming and read by Jot Davies

In this final entry in Cumming's espionage trilogy, series narrator Davies reads the twisty tale of trust and deceit to perfection. [read more→](#)



### **The Fifth Petal**

By Brunonia Barry and read by Ann Marie Lee

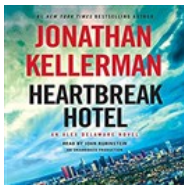
Lee's skillful and atmospheric narration, melodious voice, clear enunciation, and relaxed pace guide listeners through this complex mystery set in time periods past and present. [read more→](#)



### **Garden of Lamentations**

By Deborah Crombie and read by Gerard Doyle

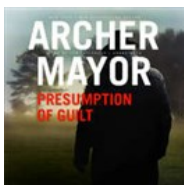
Doyle, who has narrated the last four titles in this long-running series, convincingly interprets the diverse cast of characters with distinctive accents and voices; highlights the emotional undercurrents; and manages to disappear into the story, allowing listeners to engage totally with the characters. [read more→](#)



### **Heartbreak Hotel**

By Jonathan Kellerman and read by John Rubinstein

The real fun here comes with all the bit characters. Los Angeles is a diverse community, and Rubinstein voices many accents: Hispanic workers, Russian secretaries, posh-sounding doctors, and more. [read more→](#)

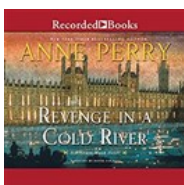


### **Presumption of Guilt**

By Archer Mayor and read by Tom Taylorson

Through his strong voice and the variety of moods he conveys, he gives the story a multidimensional feel that embodies the wide range of emotions—fear, anger, excitement, love, and more—that figure in a murder mystery.

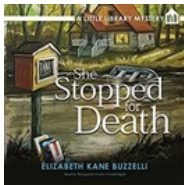
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### **Revenge in a Cold River**

By Anne Perry and read by David Colacci

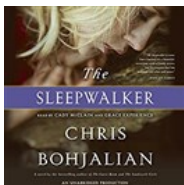
In a crisp English accent, Colacci voices Monk and a host of characters, familiar and new, friends and foes, representing a wide range of English society, from the docks to Whitehall. [read more→](#)



### She Stopped for Death

By Elizabeth Kane Buzzelli and read by Marguerite Gavin

This story is a classic example of a cozy mystery, and Gavin does an admirable job of matching her tone to this style of writing while also maintaining a steady pace. [read more](#)→



### The Sleepwalker

By Chris Bohjalian and read by Cady McClain

Her young-sounding voice leaves listeners unsure of who she is, adding to the intriguing mystery and building tension. [read more](#)→

## WHAT IS A *BOOKLIST ONLINE* EXCLUSIVE REVIEW?

*Booklist Online* exclusive reviews complement *Booklist's* already extensive print coverage, allowing us both to review some subject areas in greater depth and to weigh in more quickly on titles not released for review in advance of publication. Occasionally, we write new reviews of older books, too, to offer fresh perspective on a familiar work. These titles are recommended, with qualifications as noted, for purchase by public and school libraries; for further information, please consult the *Booklist* selection policy.

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