

BOOK VOTING REFERENCE LIST FOR 2024-2025

ONLINE AT: <https://mbfan.site/votehelps.html>

BEFORE VOTING, CONSIDER THE 21 CHOICES CAREFULLY:

Read carefully all of the book information on the Book Voting Reference List (following pages) including the "Blurb" and other information.

As you go through the details of each book below, or with the online version at mbfan.site/votehelps.html, keep track of your impressions using the Worksheet! Use a simple code, like:

- + (Yes!), √ (OK, Maybe), or – (No!)OR,
- 5 (Definite); 4 (Strong Possible); 3 (OK, Maybe); 2 (Doubtful); 1 (Absolutely not).

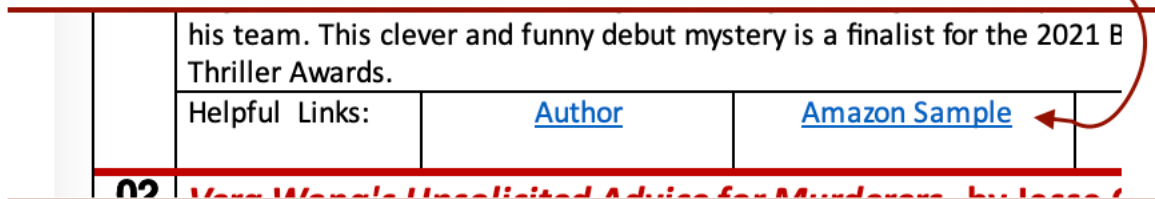
If you are in doubt about a book, try to read a "sample" that includes one or more of the first chapters. That should help clarify if you will like it enough to try reading it.

To read a "sample," go to the Amazon website and find the book. A shortcut is to ditch these printed pages and **read this 12 page handout about the 21 books online:**

<https://mbfan.site/votehelps.html>

That way, if you want to read a sample, you can....

[click the "Helpful Link" to go directly to the correct Amazon page.](#)



	his team. This clever and funny debut mystery is a finalist for the 2021 B Thriller Awards.	
Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample

BUT, if you have to use this printed hand-out, you can still go to the Amazon website yourself: go on to Amazon and put the book's *Title and Author* in Amazon search box under "Books." Your search may bring up several books, but if you include the title AND the author's last name, the right book should be near the top of the list. Click on the book to go to the book's *dedicated sales page*.

A large picture of the book is on the top left side of the dedicated sales page. The clickable button that opens a sample from the book, is directly under the large picture of the book. SEE NEXT PAGE. [Occasionally there is an Audible sample as well.]

[If the Sample does not include enough pages, check to see that you are looking at the "Kindle" selection -- not the hardback or paperback.]

If you still have questions, *read the reviews on the Amazon page for the book.*

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Back to results

The Body in the Library: A Miss Marple Mystery (Miss Marple Mysteries Book 2) Kindle Edition by Agatha Christie (Author) | Format: Kindle Edition

4.4 ★★★★★ 6,109 ratings
3.8 on Goodreads 109,109 ratings
Book 2 of 12: Miss Marple Mysteries
500+ bought or read in past month

The iconic Miss Marple must investigate the case of a girl found dead in Agatha Christie's classic mystery, *The Body in the Library*

It's seven in the morning. The Bantrys wake to find the body of a young woman in their library. She is wearing an eye-catching heavy makeup, which is now smeared. How did she get there? How did she die? How did she get into the library? The Bantrys invite Miss Marple into their home to investigate. Amid rumors of scandal, she baits a clever trap to catch a ruthless killer.

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Finally, feel free to contact Dick or Maddy with questions about any of the 21 books and we will try to find the answer so that you can vote in confidence.

Use the Worksheet! When ready to cast your vote, go to the online ballot page. You will get an email with a link.

In any case, this is that link to the ballot: <https://forms.gle/TdK1DygZGTmEx4pp9>

BOOK VOTING REFERENCE LIST FOR 2024-2025

01	<i>The Thursday Murder Club</i> by Richard Osman		
	Series? / Yr Pub?	#1/4 in the Thursday Murder Club series	2020
	Type?	Cozy mystery	
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> four septuagenarians in a luxury retirement community who combine their talents to form a club to investigate real cold case murders.	
	<p>BLURB: The Thursday Murder Club takes place in Coopers Chase Retirement Village, an upscale retirement community in Kent, England, built ten years earlier on the land surrounding the old convent of the Sisters of the Holy Church.</p> <p>The Thursday Murder Club meets weekly in the Jigsaw Room to investigate cold cases. Elizabeth, who doesn't talk about her former top-secret job, formed the club with Penny Gray, a former inspector with the Kent Police, who provided files of unsolved cases. Ibrahim Arif, a psychiatrist, and Ron Ritchie, former trade union leader and rabble rouser, joined the weekly meetings that hosted experts of all kinds to help them analyze the cold cases. After Penny's health necessitated a move to the attached nursing home, Elizabeth asked Joyce, a former nurse, some questions about how long it would take to die from stab wounds. Pleased with her response, Joyce was invited to the next meeting, along with Police Constable Donna De Freitas, there to present "Practical Tips for Home Security," which the murder aficionados have no interest in, instead peppering her with questions about her job.</p> <p>The following day Coopers Chase owner Ian Venthan, hosts a community meeting to talk about the expanded development he is planning, which will require removal of trees and relocating the convent graveyard, not a popular idea with the residents or Father Matthew Mackie. After the meeting Ian severs his relationship with his builder Tony Curran, a former drug boss, who immediately plans to kill Ian. Instead, Curran is bludgeoned to death in his own kitchen, giving the Thursday Murder Club their first real-life case to investigate.</p> <p>Detective Chief Inspector Chris Hudson brushes off the septuagenarian sleuths, but Donna is eager for her first murder investigation, and goes along when they manage to get her added to his team. This clever and funny debut mystery is a finalist for the 2021 Barry, Edgar, Lefty, and Thriller Awards.</p>		
Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews
02	<i>Vera Wong's Unsolicited Advice for Murderers</i> by Jesse Q. Sutanto		
	Series? / Yr Pub?	This is a standalone, non-series book. Or not. We'll see.	2023
	Type?	Cozy mystery; Comical mystery.	
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> An Asian-American female tea shop owner in San Francisco, CA.	
<p>BLURB: Vera Wong is a lonely little old lady—ah, lady of a certain age—who lives above her forgotten tea shop in the middle of San Francisco's Chinatown. Despite living alone, Vera is not needy, oh no. She likes nothing more than sipping on a good cup of Wulong and doing some healthy detective work on the Internet about what her Gen-Z son is up to.</p> <p>Then one morning, Vera trudges downstairs to find a curious thing—a dead man in the middle of her tea shop. In his outstretched hand, a flash drive. Vera doesn't know what comes over her, but after calling the cops like any good citizen would, she sort of . . . swipes the flash drive from the body and tucks it safely into the pocket of her apron. Why? Because Vera is sure she would do</p>			

	<p>a better job than the police possibly could, because nobody sniffs out a wrongdoing quite like a suspicious Chinese mother with time on her hands.</p> <p>Vera knows the killer will be back for the flash drive; all she has to do is watch the increasing number of customers at her shop and figure out which one among them is the killer. What Vera does not expect is to form friendships with her customers and start to care for each and every one of them. As a protective mother hen, will she end up having to give one of her newfound chicks to the police?</p>			
	Helpful Links:	Author & Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews
03	<i>The Body in the Library</i> by Agatha Christie			
	Series? / Yr Pub?	#3/17 in the Miss Jane Marple series	1942	
	Type?	Cozy mystery; Traditional mystery; Classic from the Golden age of mysteries.		
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> An "spinster" amateur detective in the rural English village of St Mary Mead.		
	<p>BLURB: It's seven in the morning in the English village of St Mary Mead. At the Bantry family estate the maid awakens the missus to tearfully report that there is a body downstairs in the family library. The dead young woman is wearing an evening dress and heavy makeup, which is now smeared across her cheeks. But who is she? How did she get there? And what is the connection with another dead girl, whose charred remains are later discovered in an abandoned quarry?</p> <p>The respectable Bantrys invite Miss Marple into their home to investigate. Amid rumors of scandal, she baits a clever trap to catch a ruthless killer.</p>			
	Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews
04	<i>A Calamity of Souls</i> by David Baldacci			
	Series? / Yr Pub?	This is a standalone, non-series book.	2024	
	Type?	Legal drama-thriller		
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> two lawyers (a female and male) who each bring something necessary to the legal fight's success. It takes place in 1968 Virginia.		
	<p>BLURB: In 1968-southern-Virginia, a racially-charged murder case sets a duo of white and Black lawyers against a deeply unfair system as they work to defend their wrongfully-accused Black defendants.</p> <p>Jack Lee is a white lawyer from Freeman County, Virginia, who has never done anything to push back against racism, until he decides to represent Jerome Washington, a Black man charged with brutally killing an elderly and wealthy white couple. Doubting his decision, Lee fears that his legal skills may not be enough to prevail in a case where the odds are already stacked against both him and his client. And he quickly finds himself out of his depth when he realizes that what is at stake is far greater than the outcome of a murder trial.</p> <p>Desiree DuBose is a Black lawyer from Chicago who has devoted her life to the causes of justice and equality for everyone. She comes to Freeman County and enters a fractious and unwieldy partnership with Lee in a legal battle against the best prosecutor in the Commonwealth. Yet DuBose is also aware of powerful outside forces at work to blunt the victories achieved by the Civil Rights era.</p>			

	<p>Lee and DuBose could not be more dissimilar. On their own, neither one can stop the prosecution's march towards a guilty verdict and the electric chair. But together, the pair fight for a chance for a fair trial and true justice.</p> <p>Over a decade in the writing, <i>A Calamity of Souls</i> breathes richly imagined and detailed life into a bygone era, taking the reader through a world that will seem both foreign and familiar.</p>			
	Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews
05	<i>Devil's Corner</i> by Lisa Scottoline			
	Series? / Yr Pub?	This is a standalone, non-series book.		2005
	Type?	Legal thriller		
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> a female prosecutor in Philadelphia, PA		
	<p>BLURB: "Vicki Allegretti always wondered what it would feel like to look into the barrel of a loaded gun, and now she knew." So begins an action-packed tale of murder and conspiracy set on the gritty streets of Philadelphia.</p> <p>This is a a stand-alone thriller featuring a gutsy new heroine, Vicki Allegretti.</p> <p>When prosecutor Vicki Allegretti arrives at a rowhouse to meet a confidential informant, she finds herself in the wrong place at the wrong time—and is almost shot to death. She barely escapes with her life, but cannot save the two others gunned down before her disbelieving eyes. Stunned and heartbroken, Vicki tries to figure out how a routine meeting on a minor case became a double homicide. Then she sets out to see justice done. She can identify the killers—now all she has to do is find them. Vicki's suspicions take her to Devil's Corner, a city neighborhood teetering on the brink of ruin—thick with broken souls, innocent youth, and a scourge that preys on both. But the deeper Vicki probes, the more she becomes convinced that the murders weren't random and the killers were more ruthless than she thought. Agreeing with her is her office crush, golden boy Dan Malloy—who is unfortunately too married to give Vicki the kind of support a girl really needs.</p> <p>When another murder thrusts Vicki together with an unlikely ally, she buckles up for a wild ride down a dangerous street—and into the cross-hairs of a conspiracy as powerful as it is relentless. Set against the pulsing, real backdrop of a modern American city, with a storyline driven by the strong female characters and breakneck pace that has become her trademark, <i>Devil's Corner</i> is Lisa's most satisfying novel yet.</p>			
	Helpful Links:	Author	Sample	Reviews
06	<i>Poison</i> by John Lescroart			
	Series? / Yr Pub?	#19/21 in the Dismas Hardy series		2018
	Type?	Legal thriller		
	Lead character & Setting?	Features an ex-cop bartender, then ex-Assistant District Attorney turned defense attorney in San Francisco, CA		
	<p>BLURB: San Francisco attorney Dismas Hardy is looking forward to easing into retirement and reconnecting with his family after recovering from two glancing gunshot wounds courtesy of a recent client. But this plan is cut short when, against his wife's wishes, he is pulled back into the courtroom by the murder of Grant Wagner, the wealthy owner of a successful family business.</p> <p>The prime suspect is Wagner's bookkeeper, Abby Jarvis, a former client of Hardy's who had been receiving large sums of cash under-the-table from the company—but she insists that she's innocent and Dismas wants to believe her.</p> <p>As he prepares for trial, Dismas probes deeply into the Wagner clan's history, discovering dark secrets, jealous siblings, gold-digging girlfriends, startling betrayals, and menacing blackmailers.</p>			

	Suspense builds as the trial date looms, and the closer Dismas gets to the Wagners, the clearer it becomes that he has a large target painted on his back. <i>Poison</i> is a nail-biter that will keep you guessing until the very last page.			
	Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews
07	<i>The Last Alibi</i>, by David Ellis			
	Series? / Yr Pub?	#4/4 in the Jason Kolarich series		2013
	Type?	Legal thriller		
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> a male criminal defense attorney in Illinois.		
	<p>BLURB: Jason Kolarich's newest client, James Drinker, is a bit of an oddball. A funny-looking, geeky loner, he walks into Jason's office one day with a preemptive concern: two women have recently been murdered, seemingly by the same killer, and Drinker thinks he will be the police's main suspect. One woman was his ex-girlfriend, he says, and the other was a friend. He's the only link between the victims and he has no alibi for the night of either murder—surely the police will realize it soon. Believing he's the target of a frame-up, Drinker hires Kolarich for his defense.</p> <p>Something about James Drinker seems off from the start, but Kolarich doesn't give it too much thought. Until another murder occurs. And then another. And as he begins to probe his client's life and story more closely, it quickly becomes clear that nothing about James Drinker is what it seems... and that the target of the frame-up isn't Drinker, but Kolarich.</p> <p>Unable to stop a serial killer—and prove his own innocence—without breaking his sworn attorney-client privilege, Jason Kolarich must hunt for the truth about James Drinker, the series of brutal murders, and why he's been set up to take the fall. The answers will be beyond anything he could have imagined</p>			
	Helpful Links:	Author	Sample	Reviews
08	<i>The Law of Innocence</i> by Michael Connelly			
	Series? / Yr Pub?	#6/7 Mickey Haller [Lincoln Lawyer] series. (Includes Harry Bosch as a private investigator for Haller)		2020
	Type?	Legal thriller		
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> a defense attorney and retired police detective in Los Angeles, CA.		
	<p>BLURB: Defense attorney Mickey Haller is pulled over by police, who find the body of a client in the trunk of his Lincoln. Haller is charged with murder and can't make the exorbitant \$5 million bail slapped on him by a vindictive judge.</p> <p>Mickey elects to defend himself and must strategize and build his defense from his jail cell in the Twin Towers Correctional Center in downtown Los Angeles, all the while looking over his shoulder—as an officer of the court he is an instant target.</p> <p>Mickey knows he's been framed. Now, with the help of his trusted team, including Harry Bosch, he has to figure out who has plotted to destroy his life and why. Then he has to go before a judge and jury and prove his innocence.</p>			
	Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews

09	<i>Maisie Dobbs</i> by Jacqueline Winspear		
	Series? / Yr Pub?	#4/4 in the Jason Kolarich series	2003
	Type?	Historical traditional mystery; P.I. mystery	
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> a female P.I.-type character in 1920s England	
	<p>BLURB: Maisie Dobbs isn't just any young housemaid. Through her own natural intelligence—and the patronage of her benevolent employers—she works her way into college at Cambridge. When World War I breaks out, Maisie goes to the front as a nurse. It is there that she learns that coincidences are meaningful and the truth elusive.</p> <p>After the War, Maisie sets up on her own as a private investigator. But her very first assignment, seemingly an ordinary infidelity case, soon reveals a much deeper, darker web of secrets, which will force Maisie to revisit the horrors of the Great War and the love she left behind.</p>		
Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews
10	<i>Murder in Montmartre</i> by Cara Black		
	Series? / Yr Pub?	#4/21 in the Aimée LeDuc series	2006
	Type(s)?	Traditional P.I. mystery	
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> a female owner of a detective agency specializing in corporate security in Paris, France.	
	<p>BLURB: Aimée Leduc, Parisian private investigator, has a new client: childhood friend, Laure, now a policewoman.</p> <p>Laure's partner, Jacques, had set up a meeting in Montmartre with an informer. When Laure reluctantly goes along as backup, Jacques is lured to an icy rooftop, where he is shot to death. Laure's gun has been fired, gunpowder residue is found on her hands, and she is charged with her partner's murder.</p> <p>The police close ranks against the alleged cop killer. Aimée is determined to clear Laure. In doing so, she encounters separatist terrorists, Montmartre prostitutes, a surrealist painter's stepdaughter, a crooked Corsican bar owner, and learns of "Big Ears"—the French "ear in the sky" that records telephonic and electronic communications—which the Security Services monitor. Identifying Jacques' murderer brings her closer to solving her own father's death in an explosion in the Place Vendôme years earlier. It still haunts her. She cannot rest until she finds out who was responsible.</p>		
Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews
11	<i>Death in Brittany</i> by Jean-Luc Bannalec		
	Series? / Yr Pub?	#1/8 in the Georges Dupin series	2015
	Type?	Traditional mystery; Police procedural	
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> a male police detective in Brittany, France.	
	<p>BLURB: Georges Dupin, a former Paris detective, has been exiled to Pont-Aven, the idyllic seaside village in Brittany, France. Dupin has mostly adjusted to his exile, especially now that he has located all the places to get good coffee, and has vowed to control the out-spoken tendencies that caused his reassignment to the remote Breton coast.</p> <p>Tourist season has begun when the body of Pierre-Louis Pennec, the 91-year-old owner of the legendary Central Hotel, is found stabbed to death in the bar of his hotel. Dupin is pressured to bring the case to a quick conclusion before the tourists are frightened away, but Dupin moves at</p>		

	<p>his own pace, with frequent breaks to linger over coffee, wine, and good food. The more questions Dupin asks, the more hidden aspects he uncovers about Pennec’s history. The suspect list grows, and as secret after secret is revealed, Dupin realizes that little was actually unknown in the insular village.</p> <p>Dupin is an old-fashioned detective, relying on observation and analysis of the facts to narrow his pool of suspects and identify the killer. This mystery was written by Jörg Bong, a German publisher, critic, editor, and writer and subsequently translated into English.</p>			
	Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews
12	<i>What She Found</i> by Robert Dugoni			
	Series? / Yr Pub?	#9/9 in the Tracy Crosswhite series	2022	
	Type?	Police Procedural; Mystery Thriller		
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> a female police detective in Seattle, WA.		
	<p>BLURB: Seattle Police Detective Tracy Crosswhite has agreed to look into the disappearance of investigative reporter Lisa Childress. Solving the cold case is an obsession for Lisa’s daughter, Anita. So is clearing the name of her father, a prime suspect who became a pariah. After twenty-five years, all Anita wants is the truth—no matter where it leads.</p> <p>For Tracy, that means reopening the potentially explosive investigations Lisa was following on the dark night she vanished: an exposé of likely mayoral graft; the shocking rumors of a reserved city councilman’s criminal sex life; a drug task force scandal compromising the Seattle PD; and an elusive serial killer who disappeared just as mysteriously as Lisa.</p> <p>As all the pieces come together, it becomes clear that Tracy is in the midst of a case that will push her loyalties and her resilience to the limit. What she uncovers will come with a greater price than anyone feared.</p>			
	Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews
13	<i>Night Moves</i> by Jonathan Kellerman			
	Series? / Yr Pub?	#33/39 in the Alex Delaware series	2018	
	Type?	Mystery-thriller; has some aspects of a Police procedural		
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> a male consulting forensic psychologist as the major investigator who often works with an LAPD homicide detective.		
	<p>BLURB: Even with all his years of experience, LAPD homicide detective Milo Sturgis knows there are crimes his skill and savvy cannot solve alone. That's when he calls on brilliant psychologist Alex Delaware to read between the lines, where the darkest motives lurk. And if ever the good doctor's insight is needed, it's at the scene of a murder as baffling as it is brutal.</p> <p>There's no spilled blood, no evidence of a struggle, and, thanks to the victim's missing face and hands, no immediate means of identification. And no telling why the disfigured corpse of a stranger has appeared in an upscale L.A. family's home. Chet Corvin, his wife, and their two teenage children are certain the John Doe is unknown to them. Despite that, their cooperation seems guarded. And that's more than Milo and Alex can elicit from the Corvins' creepy next-door neighbor -- a notorious cartoonist with a warped sense of humor and a seriously antisocial attitude.</p> <p>As the investigation ensues, it becomes clear that this well-to-do suburban enclave has its share of curious eyes, suspicious minds, and loose lips. And as Milo tightens the screws on potential persons of interest -- and Alex tries to breach the barriers that guard their deepest secrets -- a strangling web of corrupted love, cold-blooded greed, and shattered trust is exposed.</p>			

	Though the grass may be greener on these privileged streets, there's enough dirt below the surface to bury a multitude of sins. Including the deadliest.			
	Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews
14	<i>Northern Lights</i> by Nora Roberts			
	Series? / Yr Pub?	This is a standalone, non-series book.	2004	
	Type?	Police procedural; Romantic suspense		
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> a male.		
	<p>BLURB: In the tiny remote town of Lunacy, Alaska, two lonely souls are searching for love and redemption...</p> <p>As a Baltimore cop, Nate Burke watched his partner die on the street—and the guilt still haunts him. With nowhere else to go, he accepted the job as Chief of Police in Lunacy with the hopes of starting over. Despite the name, Lunacy provides a balm for Nate’s shattered soul—and an unexpected affair with pilot Meg Galloway warms his nights...</p> <p>But other things in Lunacy are heating up. Nate suspects the killer in an unsolved murder still walks the snowy streets. His investigation will unearth the secrets and suspicions that lurk beneath the placid surface, as well as bring out the big-city survival instincts that made him a cop in the first place. And his discovery will threaten the new life—and the new love—that he has finally found for himself.</p>			
	Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews
15	<i>Return to Blood</i> by Michael Bennett			
	Series? / Yr Pub?	#2/2 in the Hana Westerman series. Take Note: This is the same character series as our Oct '23 book, <i>Better the Blood</i> .	2024	
	Type?	Suspense thriller; Literary mystery		
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> a New Zealand Māori woman, and former police detective who can't help looking into a wrongful conviction.		
	<p>BLURB: Māori detective Hana Westerman was introduced to us in <i>Better the Blood</i>. After the perils of that case, Hana Westerman turned in her badge and abandoned her career as a detective in the Auckland CIB.</p> <p>Hoping that civilian life will offer her the opportunity to rest and recalibrate, she returns to her hometown of Tātā Bay, where she moves back in with her beloved father, Eru. Yet the memories of the past are everywhere, and as she goes for her daily run on the beach, Hana passes a local monument to Paige, a high school classmate who was murdered more than twenty years ago and hidden in the dunes overlooking the sea. A Māori man with a previous record was convicted of the crime, although Eru never believed he was guilty.</p> <p>When her daughter finds another young woman’s skeleton in the sands, Hana soon finds herself awkwardly involved. Investigators suspect that this is Kiri Thomas, a young Māori woman who disappeared four years earlier, after battling years of drug addiction. Hana and her daughter Addison are increasingly captivated by the story behind this unsolved crime, but without the official police force behind her, Hana must risk compromising her own peace and relationships if justice is to be served.</p> <p>Along the way, <i>Return to Blood</i> takes readers further into Māori culture and traditions as it engages us more deeply into the story of Hana Westerman.</p>			
	Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews

16	<i>Smallbone Deceased</i> by Michael Gilbert		
Series? / Yr Pub?	#4/6 Hazlerigg series	1950	
Type?	Traditional mystery; Police procedural; Classic from the Golden age of mysteries.		
Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> a British Detective Inspector in 1950s London, England.		
<p>BLURB: This tale of murder and chicanery at a respected law firm in postwar London, located in a building making up the very real historic Lincoln's Inn, has continued to delight readers since it was first published in 1950.</p> <p>When the body of Marcus Smallbone, an important client at the firm of Horniman, Birley, and Craine, is found stuffed into a hermetically sealed deed box, only solicitor Henry Bohun is above suspicion because he is so newly arrived at the firm.</p> <p>In fact, the astute Inspector Hazlerigg enlists Henry's aid as an undercover sleuth, a job he is ideally suited for because of his keen intellect and boundless energy. Henry suffers from a form of insomnia which enables him to sleep no more than two hours a night, giving him ample time to indulge in amateur detection while shouldering his work load at the office.</p> <p>It is at first assumed that the firm's recently deceased founder, Abel Horniman, had committed the crime, but when another murder follows it becomes apparent that the killer is still very much at large. The mundane details of the firm's daily operations are incorporated into a tightly plotted and wryly humorous narrative, in which suspects abound and clues are fairly planted.</p>			
Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews
17	<i>The House at Sea's End</i> by Elly Griffiths		
Series? / Yr Pub?	#3/14 in the Ruth Galloway series	2012	
Type?	Traditional English police procedural; Romantic suspense		
Lead character & Setting?	Features: a forensic archaeologist, and a detective chief inspector working in the Saltmarsh area of Norfolk, England.		
<p>BLURB: Forensic archaeologist Ruth Galloway is just back from maternity leave, and finding it difficult to balance her need for intellectually challenging work and her desire to be with baby daughter Kate. The presence of DCI Harry Nelson—the married father of her daughter, Kate—does not help.</p> <p>Ruth's first assignment back on the job is to help identify some human bones found on a remote Norfolk beach at Broughton Sea's End, near an old house that is threatened by erosion. Sea's End House is owned by Jack Hastings, Member of the European Parliament, whose father was the captain of the Home Guard.</p> <p>Ruth determines that the skeletons of six men, buried with their hands tied behind them, are about 50-70 years old, probably from the war years when the Home Guard was protecting this stretch of the Norfolk coast from German invasion. Ruth and DCI Harry Nelson talk to the few remaining Home Guard veterans, who were just barely old enough to be part of the Home Guard 70 years earlier.</p> <p>When one of the old men is killed immediately after telling Nelson there are some things he can't discuss because he took a blood oath, Nelson suspects that someone is willing to kill to protect a 70-year-old secret. Who else is at risk?</p>			
Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews

18	<i>Storm Cell</i> by Brendan DuBois		
	Series? / Yr Pub?	#10/12 in the Lewis Cole series	2017
	Type?	Mystery Thriller	
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> a retired intelligence analyst in coastal New Hampshire.	
	<p>BLURB: Retired intelligence analyst Lewis Cole must try to save his friend Felix Tinios from being sent to death row after a conviction on first degree murder—but Felix refuses to accept Lewis' assistance.</p> <p>Felix is being charged for the brutal murder of a local businessman—witnesses place him at the location; the recovered murder weapon belonged to Felix; and his fingerprints are all over the crime scene. It seems to be the proverbial open-and-shut case, but Lewis refuses to believe his friend—even though Felix is a former enforcer for the Boston mob—was responsible.</p> <p>As he engages in his one-man attempt to free his friend, two FBI agents come to him with disturbing news: they have word that unless Felix is freed from prison in just three days, he will be murdered while in custody. With time running out, the FBI nipping at his heels, and with Felix's own lawyer refusing to help, Lewis is on his own as he desperately tries to clear his friend's name before Felix departs prison . . . as a dead man.</p>		
Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews
19	<i>The Blood Promise</i> by Mark Pryor		
	Series? / Yr Pub?	#3/9 in the Hugo Marston series. Take Note: This is the same character series as our Feb '24 book, <i>The Bookseller</i> .	2014
	Type?	Traditional mystery-thriller.	
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> a US State Department Security Chief at the US Embassy in Paris, France. [He is assigned to London in later books.]	
	<p>BLURB: In post-Revolution Paris, an old man signs a letter in blood, then hides it in a secret compartment in a sailor's chest. A messenger arrives to transport the chest and its hidden contents, but then the plague strikes and an untimely death changes history.</p> <p>Two hundred years later, Security Chief Hugo Marston is safeguarding an unpredictable but popular senator who is in Paris negotiating a France/U.S. dispute. The talks, held at a country chateau, collapse when the senator accuses someone of breaking into his room.</p> <p>Theft becomes the least of Hugo's concerns when someone discovers the sailor's chest and the secrets hidden within, and decides that the power and money they promise are worth killing for. But when the darkness of history is unleashed, even the most ruthless and cunning are powerless to control it.</p>		
Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews
20	<i>The Spy Coast</i> by Tess Gerritsen		
	Series? / Yr Pub?	#1/2 in the Martini Club series.	2023
	Type?	Spy or Action thriller; Mystery-thriller.	
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> a retired female CIA operative living in the seaside village of Purity, Maine, part of the "Martini Club" of former spies	
	<p>BLURB: In post-Revolution Paris, an old man signs a letter in blood, then hides it in a secret compartment in a sailor's chest. A messenger arrives to transport the chest and its hidden contents, but then the plague strikes and an untimely death changes history.</p>		

	<p>Two hundred years later, Security Chief Hugo Marston is safeguarding an unpredictable but popular senator who is in Paris negotiating a France/U.S. dispute. The talks, held at a country chateau, collapse when the senator accuses someone of breaking into his room.</p> <p>Theft becomes the least of Hugo's concerns when someone discovers the sailor's chest and the secrets hidden within, and decides that the power and money they promise are worth killing for. But when the darkness of history is unleashed, even the most ruthless and cunning are powerless to control it.</p>			
	Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews
21	<i>The Lost Man</i> by Jane Harper			
	Series? / Yr Pub?	This is a standalone, non-series book.		2018
	Type?	Domestic Thriller		
	Lead character & Setting?	<i>Features</i> skeptical family members in adjacent ranches in a remote part of Queensland, Australia.		
	<p>BLURB: The book begins with the discovery of the body of Cameron Bright at an old stockman's grave in the middle of the family's remote cattle property in Queensland, Australia. Eldest brother Nathan and youngest brother Bub are shocked by the death, and no one can understand why Cameron left his Land Cruiser eight kilometers away to walk to certain death from exposure in the brutal December heat. The Land Cruiser is fully operable, so Cameron's death is assumed to be suicide, though Nathan can't believe his brother would choose this awful death over a quick shot to the head from one of the many ranch weapons. Cameron had been running the family ranch since their father's death with the help of Bub and Uncle Harry, a non-relative who has worked on the ranch since the three brothers were small.</p> <p>Also living in the family home are their widowed mother, Cameron's wife and two small daughters, and a young couple working as nanny and seasonal ranchhand. Nathan lives a three-hour drive away on a much smaller adjacent ranch, a wedding gift from his father-in-law. Nathan's teenage son Xander is visiting for the holidays, a reluctant concession from his angry ex-wife. As the days pass, Nathan begins to suspect that someone had a hand in Cameron's death, but no one is happy with his questions, which bring long buried secrets and resentments to the surface.</p> <p>Suspects are few in the isolated outback area, and Nathan has misgivings about everyone on the family ranch.</p>			
	Helpful Links:	Author	Amazon Sample	Reviews