

# The Book Rack Newsletter

*It just makes sense to buy your books at The Book Rack!*

Vol 8, #12  
December 2015

4764 Elmore Ave, Davenport  
563-355-2310

*Store Hours: 10:00 - 6:00 Monday - Sunday*

<http://www.thebookrackqc.com/>  
[BookRackQC@Gmail.com](mailto:BookRackQC@Gmail.com)

## Reading Trivia for December

In the novel "Futility", published in 1898 - fourteen years before the sinking of the Titanic - an "unsinkable" luxury liner was lost after hitting an iceberg on its maiden voyage. What was the ship's name?

See below for the trivia answer

## Did you know?

"The last straw breaks the camel's back" came from Florence Nightingale's *Notes on Nursing*, 1861

## December Holidays and Events at The Book Rack:

December 1 – Eat a Red Apple Day

4 – Santa's List Day

5 - Repeal Day - - The 21st Amendment ends Prohibition. Let's drink to that!

6 – Chanukah/חנוכה begins, ending Dec 14

6 - Cassandra Niles & Lilly Setterdahl Book Signings  
8 – Take It in the Ear Day – The origin and intent of this day are unknown, so we've hijacked it and hear by declare it audio book day!  
12 – National Ding-a-Ling Day  
13 – International Children's Day  
18 – Bake Cookie's Day – YUM!  
21 – Look on the Bright Side Day & The Winter Solstice  
24 – Christmas Eve – The Book Rack will close at 4:00.  
25 – Christmas Day – The Book Rack will be closed – **Merry Christmas!**  
31 – New Years Eve – The Book Rack will close at 4:00  
Jan 1 – New Years Day – The Book Rack will be closed

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*Gift Certificates From*

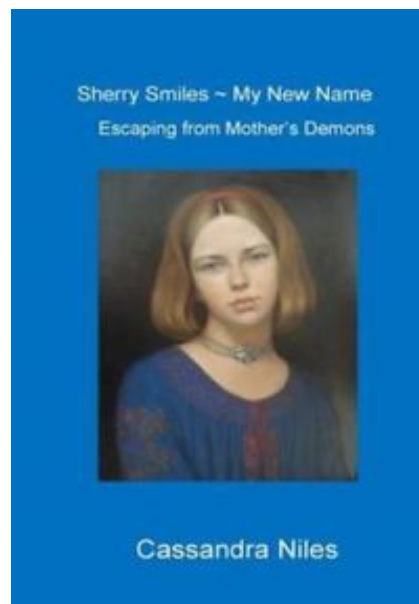
**The Book Rack**

*Make Great Gifts for Readers on*

*Your Holiday List*

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**Featured Local Authors: Lilly Setterdahl & Cassandra Niles**



## ***Sherry Smiles-My New Name: Escaping Mother's Demons by Cassandra Niles***

### **Growing up homeless**

#### **Review:**

**Sherry Smiles—My New Name: Escaping Mother's Demons is the story of three children growing up on the road with an erratic mother after the separation from their father. They have to keep moving because Mom says, "We are being followed." The youngest is a toddler when the story begins. The author does not claim to have total recall of these early events, but relates them in vignettes. One senses that the memories are painful to her and difficult to share in print. The children are cold and sick while having to live in an old hearse, tents pitched in the snow, or a homemade camper while being hustled to the Pacific Ocean, New York, the Canadian border, and into Mexico in a rumbling half-ton truck with peeling paint. Their mode of traveling is embarrassing to the eldest child, but her love for Mom makes her stay with her. When she is 14, she says to her mom, "Don't worry. I'm in charge now."**

**By the time she enters college, she has sporadically attended 13 different parochial schools and a military school. The reader is sure to be rooting for the kids. It is a compelling story and an unusual childhood memoir. The lack of treatment of the mentally ill has consequences even today.**

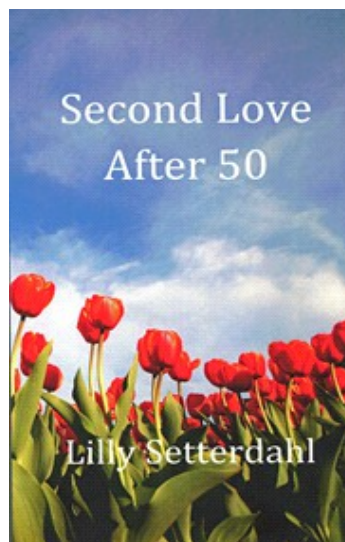
**As an adult, the author is determined to find a valid medical reason for her mother's illness. The last half of the book contains family letters from happier times and resources referring to material about mental illness.**

**Lilly Setterdahl publishes 19th book, a love story**

*Second Love After 50* is Lilly's first contemporary novel, but her 19th book. Previously, she has authored 16 nonfiction books, one of which was *Swedes in Moline, Illinois, 1847-2002*. Another notable book was *Not my time to die: Titanic and the Swedes on board*. Her two historical novels are *Hero of the Titanic* and *Maiden of the Titanic*.

*Second Love After 50* is a family-oriented love story set in Illinois with multi-ethnic characters. It centers around a 52-year old widow of the baby-boom generation, who gets a chance at second love when least expected. Amazon.com \$10.95, paperback, 290 pages.

Lilly Setterdahl was born in Sweden and has lived in East Moline since 1971. Her first book was published in 1981. She has received many rewards for her writings from Sweden and the United States.



**We hope you will stop in and visit with this very talented local author. If you can't make it on the day he is at the store, please check out his books on our Local Author shelves.**

**Free Verse** is a regular, monthly, feature by one of our wonderful Quad Cities area local authors. Each month we enjoy writing by a different talent. These articles and poems are on a variety of topics bound to be of interest to many of our readers. Please help spread the word by forwarding the newsletter to others. Give these folks as wide an audience as possible, please.

## WHY I'LL NEVER GIVE A NEGATIVE BOOK REVIEW

By Jodie Toohey

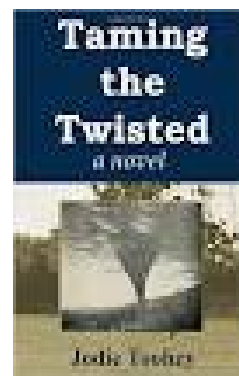
If you've ever perused the local authors' section at the Book Rack, you may have noticed my books on the shelf – there are five of them. So, knowing I'm an author, it probably won't surprise you to know that I enjoy reading books (and no matter how much reading time I get, I always want more). I usually have several books going at the same time in print and digital versions: a research book for my next book project, a historical fiction book, a business/book marketing book, and a writing craft book. When I'm done reading, I like to write reviews, especially the historical fiction since I'm basically "studying" those for my own projects.

It occurred to me not too long ago that I'll never give a negative book review. Not because I want to spare any feelings or because I'm trying to put forth a positive vibe. (I do those things, but that's not the reason.) The reason is because I believe I can only give a fair review if I read the entire book and give every word a chance. But I never finish reading "bad" books. If I'm not pulled in by the first few chapters or if something suddenly turns me off (like a recent book that seemed to be getting too soap-operish on me), I close it and put it away.

Another phenomenon I've noticed is that I always give books I purchased more of a chance than those I check out from the library, get as a free e-book, or that are loaned to me. It could be that because I've put money into the book, I feel like I have a greater investment, and so, feel more compelled to finish it. Or it could be that I'm simply more selective of the books I purchase rather than borrow, so the chances of me buying a book I don't like is slim. Therefore, I usually finish them (and fortunately, I know if I don't, I can always take them to the Book Rack.)

How do you read books? Will you never leave a bad review because you'll never finish reading a "bad" book? Do you leave bad reviews without reading the entire book? Or are you one of those people who feels compelled to read a book all the way through once you start, no matter how bad it is? I'd love to know. Just send me an email at [jodie@wordswoman.com](mailto:jodie@wordswoman.com).

Jodie Toohey's latest book is *Taming the Twisted*, a novel that tells the story of Abigail Sinkey who finds herself entangled in abandonment, her parents death, a murder, scandal, and romance after a tornado destroys her town of Camanche, Iowa, on June 3, 1860. She's also the author of four additional books, two poetry collections - *Crush and Other Love Poems for Girls* (2008) and *Other Side of Crazy* (918studio, 2013) - as well as two novels, *Missing Emily: Croatian Life Letters* (2012) and *Melody Madson – May It Please the Court?* (2014). When she is not writing fiction or poetry, Jodie helps people say what they want to say through her professional writing and editing business, Wordsy Woman Word Sales and Service. Learn more about Jodie's books at [www.jodietoohy.com](http://www.jodietoohy.com).



## **Cook Book of Note:**

**“Odd Bits: How To Cook The Rest Of The Animal”,  
by Jennifer McLagan (2011) New:\$35.00/Used \$12.50**

In a world of costly prime cuts--stately crown roasts, plump pork chops, and regal racks of lamb--it's easy to forget about (and steer clear of) the more economical, but less lovable parts of the beast--bellies, brains, cheeks, combs, gizzards, hearts, hocks, kidneys, lungs, marrow, necks, shanks, spleens, tongues, trotters, and, oh yes, testicles.

Historically, these so-called odd bits have had a regular place on our plates and in our culinary repertoires. In fact, many are considered delicacies and routinely appear in regional specialties. So why do we eschew and waste valuable protein? When have our sensibilities become so squeamish? In short--when did we decide offal had become awful? Jennifer McLagan, award-winning author of "Bones" and "Fat," is on a crusade to bring the nose-to-tail style of cooking and eating out of the closet and back onto to our dining tables. Her mission: restoring our respect for the whole animal, developing a taste for its lesser known parts, and learning how to approach them in the kitchen as confidently as we would a steak or a burger.

Serious food lovers will delight in the sheer variety of the dishes that await, ranging from simple to challenging:

- Headcheese for the Unconvinced
- Veal Cheeks with Swiss Chard and Olives
- Cheese and Just a Little Brain Fritters
- Lamb Neck with Quince and Turnip
- Brisket Braised with Caramelized Onions and Chile
- Sweetbreads with Morels and Fresh Fava Beans
- Moroccan-Style Braised Heart
- Minted Tripe and Pea Salad
- Wild Boar Shanks with Cranberries and Chocolate
- Bone Marrow and Mushroom Custard

Much more than a cookbook, "Odd Bits" delves into the rich geographical, historical, and religious roles of these unusual meats. McLagan's enthusiasm for her subject is contagious, and with her insight and humor will convert even non-believers to the pleasure of odd bits.

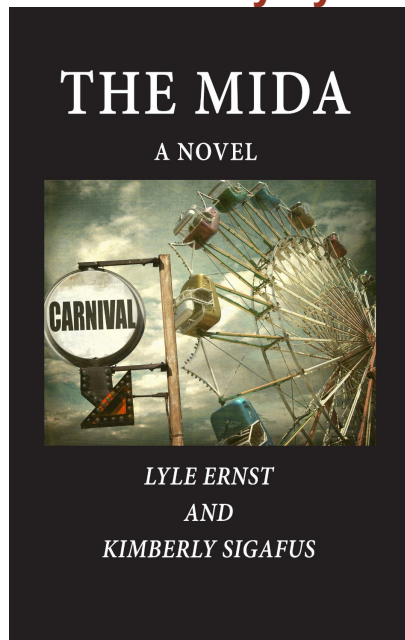
**This book is in very good condition and will not only provide you *interesting* menu items for your family and friends, but will be a wonderful addition to your environmentally conscious library and a lively topic of conversation at your next dinner party! Better get there first! We only have**

one used copy.

## Book Reviews:

Our first book review is by Jodie Toohey and first appeared January 30, 2015 in Jodie's blog, <http://bookreviewsbyjodiet.blogspot.com/>.

### THE MIDA by Lyle Ernst and Kimberly Sigafus



*The Mida* by [Lyle Ernst](#) and [Kimberly Sigafus](#), according to the back-of-book blurb, takes place in 1952. However, it's not historical per se. Other than the subtle absence of cell phones and computers, the story would fit into most any time period.

The book tells the story of a time-traveling circus headed up by an Ojibwa woman and the trouble it faces in the current, as-of-the-story, time and through time itself. There are numerous characters and the story is written in the third person omniscient point-of-view. The main characters seem to be Mesa, the carnival owner, and Tony. But it's hard to tell if that was the authors' intent as many of the characters are central to the story.

It took me awhile to catch on to who-was-who, but I was able to do so as the tangled mysteries unfolded. (To help, the authors might consider a free character guide download.) These mysteries involve murder, the carnival's existence, romance, and family ties. It has something for just about



everyone: twists, betrayal, loss, violence, superheroes, and witches. I can't pigeon-hole it into just one genre - it's part fantasy, part murder-mystery, part romance. But once I was able to get over the hump of learning the characters, I found myself hooked in the story and wondering how it would turn out. I can't say the ending was a complete surprise - but only because I had no suspicions about "who done it." There's really no more I can say without the risk of giving away spoilers...

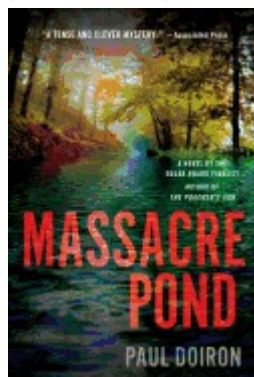
I enjoyed Lyle's and Kimberly's writing. The book contained lots of good dialogue, interesting phrases, subtle humor, and fresh ways of describing scenes.

[The Mida](#) is a good read. On a can't-put-it-down-scale of one for I couldn't even finish it to ten for I was up until the wee hours, I give it a seven and a half.

(P.S. I've received insider information that a sequel is in the works and I'm looking forward to seeing what trouble these characters get themselves into next.)

Source: Ernst, Lyle & Sigafus, Kimberly. (2014). *The Mida*. McIver Publishing: Freeport, Illinois.

**Massacre Pond: A Novel (Mike Bowditch Series #4) by Paul Doiron (St. Martin's Press, \$15.99, 336 pages) (2014)**



Paul Doiron's fourth novel, *Massacre Pond*, continues the Mike Bowditch saga. Bowditch is a game warden in Maine who struggles with his internal



demons mostly attributed to his rebel father, a poacher and key figure in the introduction to the series in Doiron's debut novel, *The Poacher's Son*. This reviewer had not read any of the author's previous books. Upon researching his preceding works, it became clear that readers' thoughts on them are decidedly mixed. This book is of fine quality, meaning that either earlier commentaries are off base or Doiron has matured into being a solid storyteller.

In "*Massacre Pond*" Bowditch is called to investigate the slaughter of seven moose on private property, which is intended to become a wildlife sanctuary in the midst of a logging community. The idea of a sanctuary angers many natives, as outsider and conservationist Elizabeth Moore is perceived as an arrogant do-gooder throwing her money around at the expense of jobs for the locals. Owners of the local mill are less than thrilled with Moore's presence.

A dull but good-hearted caretaker of the Morse property, Billy Cronk, is central to the initial events and eventual climax of the story – entangled in a web of power and money, although his motives are as pure as any of the book's myriad of characters.

Bowditch is somewhat self-absorbed but is genuine enough to be likable. And this is part of the attraction of the story. The characters are all just complicated enough to provide a touch of reality to the tale; part of a genre in which plot is typically everything and depth and complexity of characters is provided short shrift.

Bowditch appears to be more of a cop than a game warden. If there are lines of division in real life, they are not evident in the telling of this story. The ending is an obvious – bordering on cheesy, lead-in to the next book in the series. However, overall, this novel, in and of itself, is a solid one. Doiron's writing and storytelling surpass many similar attempts at crime/suspense/mystery/intrigue. So, without respect to what may have led up to this novel or what may come next, "*Massacre Pond*" is worth the read.

Well recommended.

Dave Moyer

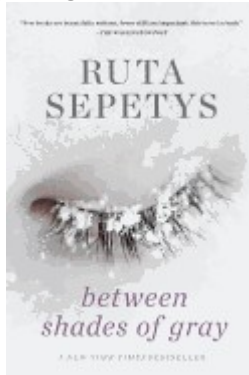
*A review copy was provided by the publisher. Dave Moyer is an education administrator and the author of *Life and Life Only: A Novel*.*

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*This review originally appeared on the Joseph's Reviews site:*  
<http://josephsreviews.wordpress.com/>

## The next review is by Claudia:

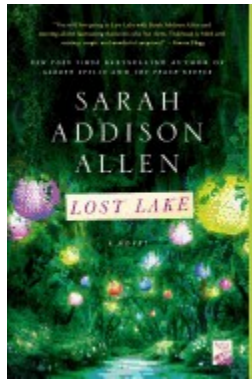
### Between Shades of Gray by Ruta Sepetys



is a fictionalized account of a Lithuanian family deported by Joseph Stalin after his forced 1941 annexation of Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia pursuant to an agreement with Adolf Hitler. While Hitler's atrocities and murder of millions of human beings is well known, Stalin, too, was responsible for the deaths of millions of innocents. Sepetys is herself Lithuanian and wrote this story after learning of her own family's experiences. Fifteen year old Lina's father has been missing for several days before the evening that secret police arrive and give Lina, her younger brother Jonas, and their mother Elena 20 minutes to gather items before they are herded to a railway station. After weeks in a rail cattle car, then 10 months in a prison camp, they are sent to the Arctic Circle – Siberia. They face extreme hardship, given life through Sepetys' well-developed characters. Lina documents their experiences through her drawings, one of the many risks taken by various characters to survive and to tell their stories. While Ruta Sepetys' characters are fictional, factual instances recounted by survivors are found throughout the book. The fact that few of us know about Stalin's atrocities, and that some of the survivors did not speak until well after 1991, when Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania once again gained independence is both amazing and upsetting. *Between Shades of Gray* has been used in local Junior High reading groups. Excellent book.

## The rest of the reviews are mine:

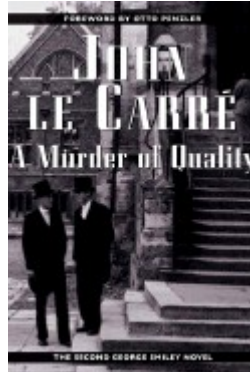
### Lost Lake by Sarah Addison Allen (2013)



The first time Eby Pim saw *Lost Lake*, it was on a picture postcard. Just an old photo and a few words on a small square of heavy stock, but when she saw it, she knew she was seeing her future. That was half a life ago. Now *Lost Lake* is about to slip into Eby's past. Her husband, George, is long passed. Most of her demanding extended family are gone. All that's left is a once-charming collection of lakeside cabins succumbing to the Southern Georgia heat and damp, and an assortment of faithful misfits drawn back to *Lost Lake* year after year by their own unspoken dreams and desires. It's not quite enough to keep Eby from calling this her final summer at the lake, and relinquishing *Lost Lake* to a developer with cash in hand. Until one last chance at family knocks on her door. *Lost Lake* is where Kate Pheris spent her last best summer at the age of twelve, before she learned of loneliness and heartbreak and loss. Now she's all too familiar with those things, but she knows about hope, too, thanks to her resilient daughter, Devin, and her own willingness to start moving forward. Perhaps at *Lost Lake* her little girl can cling to her own childhood for just a little longer... and maybe Kate herself can rediscover something that slipped through her fingers so long ago. One after another, people find their way to *Lost Lake*, looking for something that they weren't sure they needed in the first place: love, closure, a second chance, peace, a mystery solved, a heart mended. Can they find what they need before it's too late? At once atmospheric and enchanting, *Lost Lake* shows Sarah Addison Allen at her finest, illuminating the secret longings and the everyday magic that wait to be discovered in the unlikeliest of places. "*Lost Lake*" is a love note to second chances, hopeful and entrancing. (Publisher's Marketing)

I really enjoyed *Lost Lake*. I listened to it while driving and it was delightful. While it had some suspense, it had no violence, sex or violence and a happy ending. It is just a great story and wonderful diversion from my more typical fare. I give it an A and a sincere recommendation.

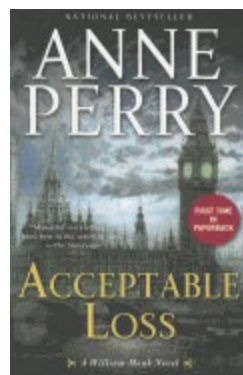
## **A Murder of Quality, A George Smiley Novel by John Le Carre' (1992)**



A bloody and apparently senseless murder had been committed at Carne School, one of the oldest and most glittering ornaments in the British public school system. George Smiley, whose connections with Carne were complicated by sentiment, had had a curious forewarning of the crime and, in a private capacity, pursued its investigation. Without his espionage-trained insight into the workings of the human mind, Smiley might never have solved the case. But logic and insight were hardly enough to spare him the emotional aftermath of a conclusion he did not want to face.

Le Carre' is the master of the intelligent mystery. This was the second of the Smiley novels and just a terrific who-done-it. I give it an A and commend it to you. If you've not read LeCarre', you really should try him and this would be a good start.

## **Acceptable Loss by Anne Perry (2011)**



Perry's William and Hester Monk story is a mesmerizing masterpiece of innocence and evil on London's docks, outshines all her previous novels in this successful and beloved series.

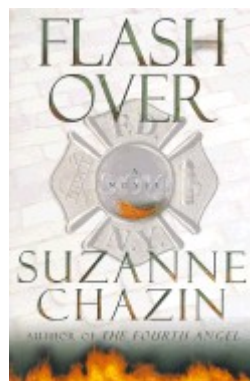
When the body of a small-time crook named Mickey Parfitt washes up on the tide, no one grieves; far from it. But William Monk, commander of the River Police, is puzzled by the expensive silk cravat used to strangle Parfitt. How did this elegant scarf--whose original owner was obviously a man of substance--end up imbedded in the neck of a wharf rat who richly deserved his sordid end?

Dockside informers lead Monk to what may be a partial answer--a floating palace of corruption on the Thames managed by Parfitt, where a captive band of half-starved boys are forced to perform vile acts for men willing to pay a high price for midnight pleasures. Although Monk and his fearless wife, Hester, would prefer to pin a medal on Parfitt's killer, duty leads them in another direction--to an unresolved crime from the past, to blackmail and more murder, and to a deadly confrontation with some of the empire's most respected men.

To a superlative degree, "Acceptable Loss" provides colorful characters, a memorable portrait of waterfront life, and a story that achieves its most thrilling moments in a transfixed London courtroom, where Monk faces his old friend Oliver Rathbone in a trial of nearly unbearable tension--in sum, every delectable drop of the rich pleasure that readers expect from an Anne Perry novel. (Publisher's marketing)

I've read and enjoyed Perry a couple prior times, but this one is by far the best. It's a great mystery and courtroom thriller in one. I give it an A and strong recommendation!

## Flash Over by Suzanne Chazin (2002)

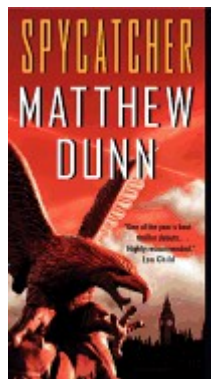


In this new novel, Georgia investigates the deaths of two doctors, both

victims of fires that show signs of a "flashover"-the overwhelming combustion of a room and its contents by simultaneous ignition. She suspects the connection between them might be that each worked on the board approving "line of duty" compensation for disabled firefighters. Georgia is grasping for straws when the bottom of her life drops out: her best friend, a woman detective with the NYPD, disappears, and the man found in the woman's blood-spattered apartment is Georgia's boyfriend and fellow marshal, Mac Marenko. Betrayal-both private and professional-has never hit so close to home. Georgia finds frightening evidence that greed and deception are the cause of these recent deaths and perhaps one more to come-her own. (Publisher's marketing)

This was my first Chazin novel and I loved it! Her fire fighting knowledge and portrayal was excellent. It's an intelligent mystery with great characters. I give it an A- and recommend you try Chazin.

### **Spycatcher by Matthew Dunn (2011)**



Will Cochrane is the CIA's and MI6's most prized asset ... and their deadliest weapon. Since childhood, the only world he has ever known is a clandestine realm of elaborate lies and unholy alliances where trust is rare, betrayal comes cheap, and a violent death is often the penalty for being outplayed by an opponent. Cochrane has never been outplayed ... so far.

Now his controllers have a new game: neutralize one of the world's most wanted terrorists, believed to be a general in the Islamic Revolutionary Guards. Cochrane's unpredictability makes him the one agent capable of catching his adversary off guard, and he believes he has the perfect plan. But on a breakneck race through the capitals of Europe and into America's northeast, the spycatcher will discover that his prey knows the game all too well ... and his agenda is more terrifying than anyone could have



imagined." Publisher's Marketing)

Matthew Dunn was a real spy, working in the British M16 running agents, coordinating and participating in special operations, and acting in deep-cover roles throughout the world. He was trained in all aspects of intelligence collection, deep-cover deployments, small arms, explosives, military unarmed combat, surveillance, and infiltration. In other words, he knows intimately about the world he writes about!

Spycatcher was absolutely non-stop action! I can think of no book in this genre that compares in pace, except possibly the Bourne series. While Dunn's the expert in the field, it seemed to me he stretched Cochrane's capabilities beyond what can be considered realistic, which I found a bit disappointing. His description of the combat scenes was detailed and exciting, which I do like. I give it a B+ and recommend it to those who like Ludlum, Fleming, Coes and Tom Wood.

Spycatcher is the first of a series of books featuring Will Cochrane, so if you like it, you have more to enjoy.

## Reading Trivia for December

In the novel *Futility*, published in 1898 - fourteen years before the sinking of the Titanic - an "unsinkable" luxury liner was lost after hitting an iceberg on its maiden voyage. What was the ship's name?

**Answer:** The Titan. It was the creation of the author Morgan Robertson.

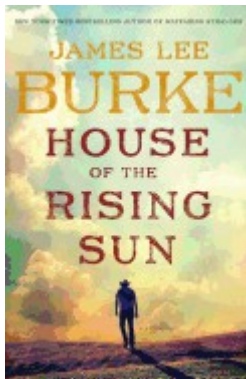
## Upcoming New Releases:

Check out the prices following the title of the book. The first price is the publisher's price. The second price is the **Book Rack** price. When you pick it at the store there is no shipping cost, though we can ship it to you. Order now by calling one of the stores or stopping in. We do ask for prepayment on all special orders. **You can also add any of these titles to your request list.** Some will come in soon and others may take a while, but most will get to you eventually.



## Hardcover:

James Lee Burke – House of the Rising Sun – 27.99/22.40



Stella Cameron – Out Comes the Evil – 28.95/23.20

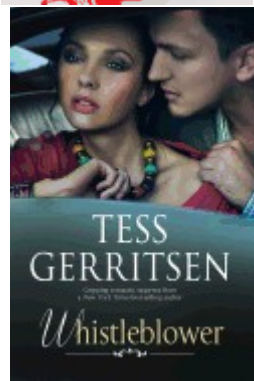
Tom Clancy – Commander in Chief – 29.95/24.00



Kresley Cole – Sweet Ruin – 26.00/20.80



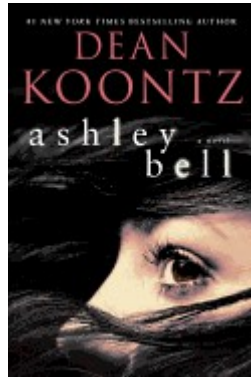
Cleo Coyle – Dead to the  
Tess Gerritsen –



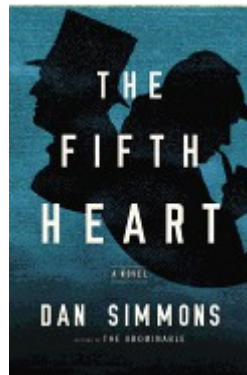
Last Drop – 26.95/21.60

Whistleblower – 28.95/23.20

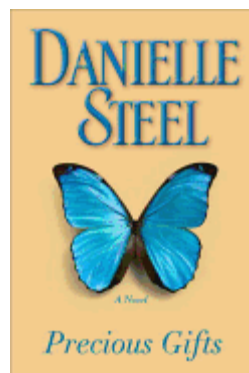
**Dean Koontz – Ashley Bell – 28.00/22.40**



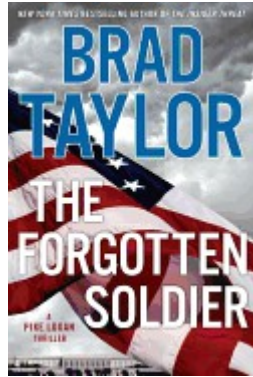
**Denise Mina – Blood, Salt, Water – 26.00/20.80**  
**Dan Simmons – The Fifth Heart – 17.99/14.40**



**Danielle Steel – Precious Gifts – 28.00/22.40**

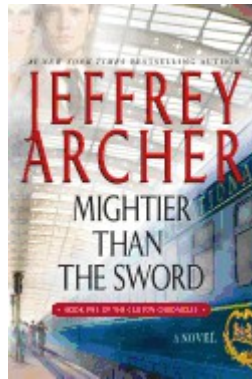


**Brad Taylor – The Forgotten Soldier – 26.95/21.56**

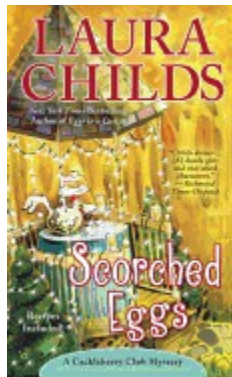


**Paperback:**

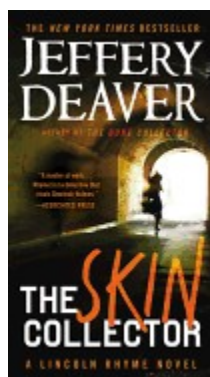
**Jeffrey Archer – Mightier Than the Sword – 9.99/8.00**



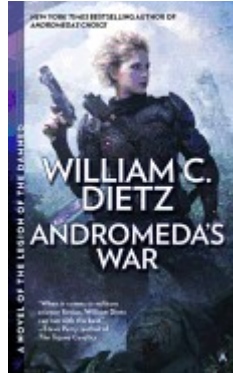
**Laura Childs – Scorched Eggs – 7.99/6.40**



**Jeffrey Deaver – The Skin Collector – 9.99/8.00**

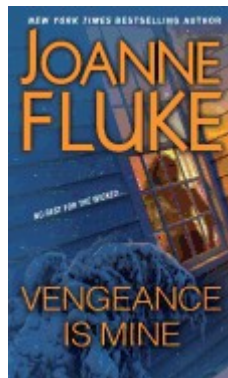


**William C Dietz – Andromeda's War – 7.99/6.40**



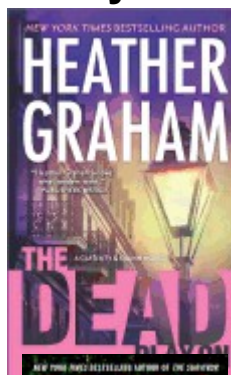
**Christine Feehan – Wild Cat – 7.99/6.40**

**Joanne Fluke – Vengeance Is Mine – 7.99/6.40**



**Tess Gerritsen – Ice Cold – 9.99/8.00**

**Heather Graham – The Dead Play On – 7.99/6.40**

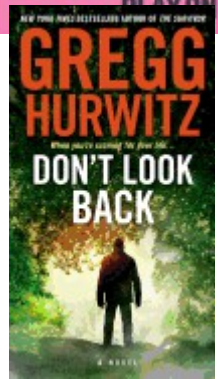


**Jack Higgins – Rain On**

**Greg Hurwitz – Don't Look**

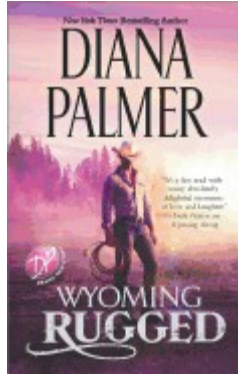
**The Dead – 9.99/8.00**

**Back – 9.99/8.00**



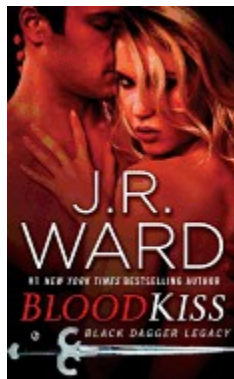
**William W Johnstone – Bloodshed of the Mountain Man –  
7.50/6.00**

**Dianna Palmer – Wyoming Rugged – 7.99/6.40**



**James Patterson – Invisible – 9.99/8.00**

**JR Ward – Blood Kiss – 7.99/6.40**



**Jennifer Weiner – Best Friends Forever – 7.99/6.40**

**Stuart Woods – Hot Pursuit – 9.99/8.00**

