

The Book Rack Newsletter

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

Vol 10, #2
February 2017

4764 Elmore Ave, Davenport
563-355-2310

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

<http://www.thebookrackqc.com/>
BookRackQC@Gmail.com

Trivia for February

What classic work of literature was initially burned and then rewritten from scratch because the author's wife didn't like it?

See below for the answer.

Did you know?

Jonathan Swift was committed to the care of guardians in 1742 when he lost his mind. In his will he left 8000 British Pounds for the erection of a mental home in Dublin. The instructions came with this characteristic epithet:

*He gave what little wealth he had
To build a house for fools and mad
And showed by one satiric touch
No nation wanted it so much!*

February Holidays and Events at The Book Rack:

February is Black History Month
- Creative Romance Month

February 2 – Groundhog Day

2 - Candlemas - the last holiday of the Christmas season

5 – Superbowl Sunday – **The Book Rack will be open!!**

11 – Make a Friend Day

12 – Abraham Lincoln's Birthday

14 – Valentine's Day



20 – Northern Hemisphere Hoodie-Hoo Day - It is a day to chase away winter blahs, and bring in **spring**.

20 – President's Day

25 – Local Author Mike Bayles will be at The Book Rack 11-1:00

26 – Oscar Night

28 – Mardi Gras/Fat Tuesday

29 – Leap Day – Happy **real** Birthday to those born Feb 29

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.

This month we have an Excerpt from the sci-fi novel

BLACK KNIGHT APOCALYPSE

By Sean Leary

Hollywood, California

1968

The dusk rolled in, musky and oppressive, like a weight to the chest. The sun's light was dying slowly, bleeding out in rusted flame, but the darkening indigo pool drowning it offered little respite from the heat.

Frank Case had arrived unexpectedly.

He knew the bearded man was home, that much the man knew.

How much more he knew, the man was not sure.

"Frank," he said, as he opened the door, with forced cordiality.

Case merely nodded, gestured to the man, then moved without invitation to the back of the house, where he slid the large glass doors to the side and took a spot facing out over the city falling to night in the distance.

Case sat outside. He seemed cool, untouchable, completely comfortable despite the heat, despite being dressed in a crisp, tight black suit, black thin tie, white shirt. His greying hair was close-cropped and stylish, his face tanned and youthful.

A few moments later, the bearded man walked outside, handed Case a drink. Case looked it over a second, then nodded a thank you.

"You don't have to worry, I wouldn't poison you," the bearded man said, with a halted, uncomfortable chuckle.

"I know you wouldn't," Case said, with a smile. "You wouldn't want to deal with anyone who would follow me."

The bearded man nodded, and sat, uncomfortably. He was dressed in loose, off-white linen pants and a white linen shirt, opened to the middle of his chest, revealing golden chains from which a range of charms hung. He was a rounded man, heavy-set, tanned, with long, dark, wiry hair and a thick beard, each speckled with strings of gray. He wore small, circular, silver-rimmed glasses over his prominent nose and breathed heavily in the humid air, sweating in the late California summer.

They sat in silence. On an elaborately crafted deck. Beautiful foliage and brilliant glasswork about them, catching the fading light.

The sound of the city and the muted howls of coyotes rolled up the valley towards them, but as it had since the second man arrived, silence reigned, and they sat, outside of the presence of two other men in identical dark suits and glasses who had somehow slipped into the house behind them, unnoticed until now by the bearded man.

The other two men stood sentinel inside, while Case and the bearded man remained outside, beyond the glass doors, where they could speak freely.

The bearded man perched, chunky and disheveled, his nervous, ponderous gaze peering through the slight clear circles. Case sat casually, a thin knife, immaculately tailored and cut from his hair to his jaw to the dark suit which held him like a sheathe.

The man in white broke the silence.

"This is about the film," he said.

The man in black nodded. "In part."

“You are unhappy with it?”

“Not with it.”

“With me?”

Case was silent.

The man’s heart began to beat quickly. He wiped the sweat from his brow. He took a deep breath. Collected himself.

“One request?” the man in white said.

The man in black gestured and nodded.

“Can you make it look like an overdose rather than a suicide? My family . . .”

The man in black stopped him, shook his head slightly. “If we were going to kill you, you would be dead already.”

The man in white lightened, leaned back in his chair.

“I liked the movie,” Case said. “Capulet liked the movie. It will do exactly what we want it to do.”

A quizzical look drew upon the face of the man in white.

“Is this about . . . the other project? The first project?”

Case was silent.

The man in white took a large drink.

Case was cold in his response. “You really shouldn’t drink so much.”

The man in white looked at Case, quizzically.

Case leaned forward and his eyes pierced the man in white’s gaze.

“You really . . . should not . . . drink so much.”

The man in white’s gaze turned away sheepishly and his chin buried into his chest.

“Is there something that . . . you seemed very pleased when I had finished . . .”

Case looked at him squarely.

“We know.”

“Know?”

Case shook his head slowly, disappointed.

“I like you, Stanley,” Case said. “I appreciate your work, not just for Capulet, but as an artist.”

“Thank you.”

“We knew things about you that you didn’t even know about yourself before we even approached you,” the man in black said. “We knew exactly how you would react to the first project, to all of the information we gave you, to all of the things you now know, and we knew where it would lead you, and where we would lead you.”

“Where you would lead me?”

The man in black leaned back in his chair.

“Capulet knows all.”

The man in white shifted uncomfortably.

“Are you . . . going to . . .”

“No, again, as I said, we are not going to kill you,” the man in black said, then leaned forward. “But we will have to, unfortunately, eliminate the two you have mistakenly told.”

“Two?”

“We have no qualms with the third, he is already ours,” the man in black said.

“Capulet . . .” the man in white whispered, as the picture of a friend, of one he thought a friend, appeared in his mind, and he faded in his chair, his hand wringing at his furrowing brow.

“How do you think he knew so much?” the man in black said. “His stories . . . he knew . . . about Huxley, Orwell . . . the first mission . . . the merchandise? The Knight? All of these conspiracy theorists popping up . . . did you not think some of them might be ours?”

The man in white, embarrassed at his foolishness, his face reddened and withering, looked up.

“Why? Why hide it? This is a new era, look around us. If people knew, the people who see, who see these things, who connect the puzzle, don’t you believe . . .”

“You are incredibly naïve.”

“I am hopeful,” the man in white replied. “I believe . . .”

The man in black interrupted him sternly.

“We don’t believe,” he said. “We know. That’s our job. To know.”

“But . . .”

“You read Brookings,” Case said. “We were quite clear.”

“But, Frank . . . you’re a good man, I know . . .”

Case finished his drink and stood up.

“I’m sorry, but this is how it has to be,” Case said.

“But . . .” the man in white began, softly, but his voice betrayed his surrender.

“You won’t be there, there will be no way of connecting you to it,” Case said. “We have your next project. You will begin your next project. Then you will not hear from us for a long while, until we need you again.”

The man in white began to sob, quietly.

“I didn’t want to have to do it this way,” the man in black said.

“Frank . . . I know you’re a good . . .” the man in white began.

“Repeat after me,” the man in black commanded.

“Can’t you . . .”

“Repeat. After. Me.”

The man in white broke down for a few seconds, then collected himself, took a deep breath, sat up, and looked forward.

The man in black paused a moment, softened his gaze, sighed.

“I’m sorry, Stan, I respect you. That’s why you’re not dead. That’s why I brought you in when

Pollux just wanted you gone after the first project. I saw the potential in you, I saw how we could help each other, and I liked your work,” Case said. “But everyone is just a piece on the board. Even me.”

The man in white looked up at him.

“One more, and then you’ll be on your own for a while,” the man in black said. “But if the cracks appear, you know what to do. Or we will. And I don’t want to do that.”

The man in white nodded, looked up at the other man.

“I liked the film,” Case said, placing his hand on the other man’s shoulder. “Very much.”

The man in white gave him a slight smile.

The man in black returned his salutation, then went steely again and removed his hand from his shoulder, crossing his arms across his chest.

“Repeat after me,” Case said.

The man in white sat upright, took a deep breath, curled his hands into fists.

“Repeat . . . after me,” Case repeated, in a calm tone.

And his gaze pierced forward towards the other man.

The man in white relaxed, surrendered.

“Magician,” the man in black began.

“Magician,” the man in white replied.

“Kappa.”

“Kappa.”

“Umbrella.”

“Umbrella.”

The words continued, as the night fell about them, and their voices became drowned by the growing howls and the symphonies of the black of space.

Until Case was done.

And he left.

Hoping he wouldn’t have to return.

But knowing he probably would.

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From the science-fiction novel BLACK KNIGHT APOCALYPSE, in stores worldwide and at The Book Rack

Featured Local Author

Mike Bayles

Mike Bayles, a lifelong, Midwest resident, writes about human connections with nature and with each other. As a child, he found a deep appreciation for nature when he and his parents spent summers at a cottage in Minnesota. In Minnesota, his father worked as a vocational counselor in a prison near Saint Cloud, Minnesota, and his mother was a stay-at-home mom who occasionally sold Avon products. He was an only child who enjoyed visiting his aunts and uncles who lived on farms.

Mike studied mostly math and science in high school, but his biggest accomplishment was a term paper he wrote for junior year English where he compared *Beowulf* and *Paradise Lost* as epic poems.

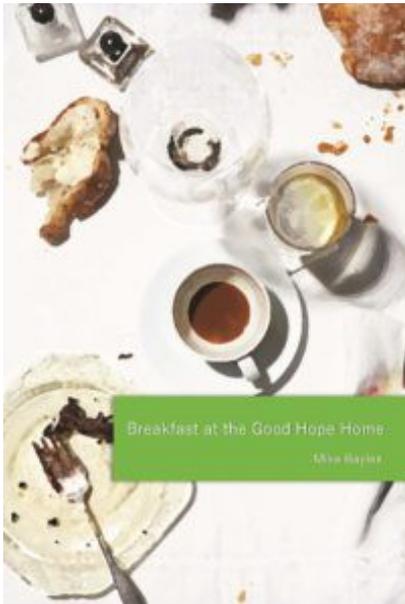
In college, he majored in Sociology and took many Psychology courses. He wrote his first short story for a Creative Writing course at Iowa State University. He started college at Iowa State University and completed his B.A. Degree in Sociology at The University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls.

After graduation, he worked as a child welfare worker and in marketing research and customer service, and after his father, Robert, died from Alzheimer's disease, he found his new life by writing poetry and prose.

Mike will be at The Book Rack February 25, 11-1:00 with his newly released book. Stop in, visit with Mike and pick up a copy for yourself or others.

BREAKFAST AT THE GOOD HOPE HOME

The life of a young man changes in many ways after his father who is suffering from Alzheimer's disease is placed in a nursing home's care. As the disease progresses, he loses the father as well as the family he had known. He must also help his mother, who has not accepted the disease's consequences.



The son tries to find meaning in his visits with his father after his father becomes unresponsive, and he finds a spiritual connection. He clings to stories his father told and learns to value his heritage. He learns to let go when he visits his father alone for the last time and is drawn back to his mother

Released in February, 2017.

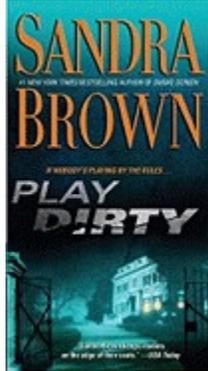
Book Reviews

A Long Way Down, by Nick Hornby, is about four people who inadvertently



meet on the roof of the Toppers' House, a 15 story building in London, on New Year's Eve. The three Britons and one American come from different backgrounds but are accidentally joined in a common purpose: suicide. Told from the perspective of each person (Martin, a former TV talk show host; JJ, a musician; Jess, a teenage girl; and Maureen, a mother of a severely handicapped son) Hornby tells a story of four individuals confronting the limits of choice, circumstance, and their own mortality. This is a tale of connections made and missed, punishing regrets, and the grace of second chances. Intense, hilarious, provocative, and moving, A Long Way Down is a novel about suicide that is, surprisingly, full of life.

Play Dirty by Sandra Brown (2007)



After five long years in federal prison, Griff Burkett is a free man. But the disgraced Cowboys quarterback can never return to life as he knew it before he was caught cheating. In a place where football is practically a religion, Griff committed a cardinal sin, and no one is forgiving.

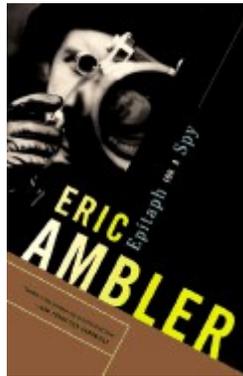
Foster Speakman, owner and CEO of Sun South Airlines, and his wife, Laura, are a golden couple. Successful and wealthy, they lived a charmed life before fate cruelly intervened and denied them the one thing they wanted most -- a child. It's said that money can't buy everything. But it can buy a disgraced football player fresh out of prison and out of prospects.

The job Griff agrees to do for the Speakmans demands secrecy. But he soon finds himself once again in the spotlight of suspicion. An unsolved murder comes back to haunt him in the form of his nemesis, Stanley Rodarte, who has made Griff's destruction his life's mission. While safeguarding his new enterprise, Griff must also protect those around him, especially Laura Speakman, from Rodarte's ruthlessness. Griff stands to gain the highest payoff he could ever imagine, but cashing in on it will require him to forfeit his only chance for redemption...and love.

Griff is now playing a high-stakes game, and at the final whistle, one player will be dead.

Sandra Brown is one of our best selling authors, so chances are your at least picked up one of her books, if your not already a fan. She doesn't write "prescription" novels, where each is similar to previous ones. She brings a different approach to each of the thrillers I've read, including Play Dirty. She is always a very readable writer. High literature is not her objective – she writes to entertain. She succeeds admirably. If you like thrillers by Iris Johansen, Linda Howard or Harlan Coben, I think you'll enjoy Play Dirty. I give it a B.

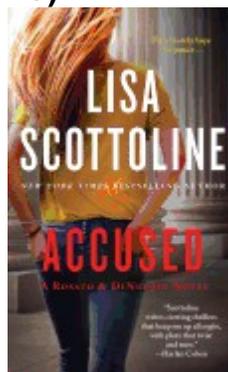
Epitaph for a Spy, by Eric Ambler (1938)



When Josef Vadassy arrives at the Hotel de la Reserve at the end of his Riviera holiday, he is simply looking forward to a few more days of relaxation before returning to Paris. But in St. Gatien, on the eve of World War II, everyone is suspect—the American brother and sister, the expatriate Brits, and the German gentleman traveling under at least one assumed name. When the film he drops off at the chemist reveals photographs he has not taken, Vadassy finds himself the object of intense suspicion. The result is anything but the rest he had been hoping for.

Eric Ambler is considered one of the real giants of the spy/thriller genre. He wrote his last book in 1981 and died in 1991. In *Epitaph for a Spy*, Vadassy is used by the French intelligence as a pawn as they try to determine which of the hotel guests is the spy who filmed a secret naval installation for the Germans in pre-war Italy. While amateurish and bumbling at times, he drives forward in his search, putting himself in danger. It's a good story written well, but I found it rather a slow read, struggling to maintain my attention. It lacks the adrenaline stimulating suspense of today's books. I give it a C+. A good read and only 260 pages, but be prepared for a bit of a slog getting through it. If you like Alan Furst, John leCarre, Georges Simenon or Graham Greene you should give Ambler a try.

Accused by Lisa Scottoline (2013)



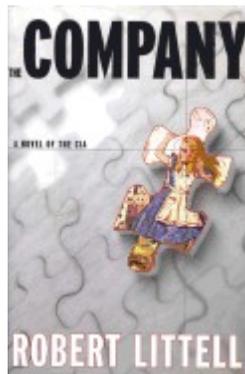
The all-female law firm of Rosato & Associates has always been on the side of

what is right. But true justice isn't always black and white. . .

Mary DiNunzio, who just made partner, takes on her most unusual case yet, brought to the firm by Allegra Gardner, a thirteen-year-old genius from an extraordinarily wealthy family. Allegra's sister, Fiona, was murdered six years ago, and it seemed like an open-and-shut case: the accused, Lonnie Stall, was seen fleeing the scene; his blood was on Fiona and her blood was on him; and, most damning, Stall pleaded guilty. But young Allegra believes Stall is innocent and wrongly imprisoned. The powerful Gardner family and Allegra's own parents oppose reopening the case, so taking it on is risky. But Rosato & Associates can never resist an underdog. Was justice really served all those years ago? It will take Mary and her team of unstoppable lawyers, plus one teenager, to learn the truth.

The lawyerly parts of the book are great with suspense, cleverness, and tense interaction with witnesses, the deceased's family, police and other lawyers. However, she also included too much of Mary's personal life and it gets too "soft" taking too much of the edge off the suspense. I do like Scottoline and would still recommend this the book, but be warned it's not a cliff hanger! I give it a C+.

The Company by Robert Littell (2002)

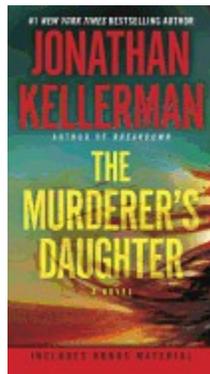


An engrossing, multi-generational, wickedly nostalgic yet utterly candid saga, bringing to life through a host of characters-historical and imagined-the over 40 years of the CIA-"the Company" to insiders. At the heart of the novel is a stunningly conceived mole hunt involving such rivals and allies as the MI6, KGB, and Mossad Racing across a canvas that spans the legendary Berlin Base in the 1950s-the front line of the simmering Cold War-to the Soviet invasion of Hungary, the Bay of Pigs, the Afghan war, the Gorbachev putsch, and other major theatres of operation for the CIA, *The Company* tells a thrilling story of agents imprisoned in double lives, fighting an enemy that was amoral, elusive,

formidable Littell tells it like it was: CIA agents, fighting not only the good fight, but sometimes the bad one as well. Littell also brilliantly lays bare the warring within the Company to add another dimension to the spy vs. spy game: the battles between the counterintelligence agents in Washington, like the utterly obsessive real-life mole hunter James Angleton, and the covert action boys in the field, like The Company's Harvey Torriti-the Sorcerer-a brilliant and brash rule breaker and dirty tricks expert who fights fire with fire, and his Apprentice, Jack McAuliffe, recruited fresh out of Yale, who learns tradecraft and the hard truths of life in the field. As this dazzling anatomy of the CIA unfolds, nothing less than the world's future in the second half of the twentieth century is at stake. At once a celebration of a long Cold War well fought, an elegy for the end of an era, and a reckoning for a profession in which moral ambiguity created a wilderness of mirrors, *The Company* is the Cold War's devastating truth, its entertaining tale, its last word.

WOW! What a great spy novel!! Be aware it's 894 pages but they are all wonderfully written and the story is as timely as ever. It reads much faster than you would expect for a book this long. If you like Le Carre', David Ignatius, Charles Cumming, or Tariq Ali, you have to read Littell. This is just one of his several spy thrillers that should be at the top all spy aficionados reading list. I give it an A+.

The Murderer's Daughter by Jonathan Kellerman (2015)

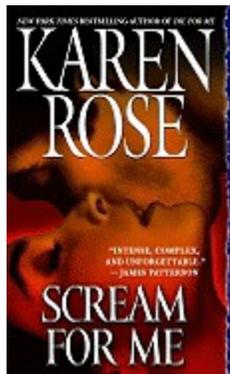


From the creator of the acclaimed Alex Delaware series comes a tour de force stand-alone novel that illustrates perfectly why Jonathan Kellerman has justly earned his reputation as a master of the psychological thriller (*People*). A brilliant, deeply dedicated psychologist, Grace Blades has a gift for treating troubled souls and tormented psyches perhaps because she bears her own invisible scars: Only five years old when she witnessed her parents' deaths in a bloody murder-suicide, Grace took refuge in her fierce intellect and found comfort in the loving couple who adopted her. But even as an adult with an accomplished professional life, Grace still has a dark, secret side. When her two

worlds shockingly converge, Grace's harrowing past returns with a vengeance. Both Grace and her newest patient are stunned when they recognize each other from a recent encounter. Haunted by his bleak past, mild-mannered Andrew Toner is desperate for Grace's renowned therapeutic expertise and more than willing to ignore their connection. And while Grace is tempted to explore his case, which seems to eerily echo her grim early years, she refuses - a decision she regrets when a homicide detective appears on her doorstep. An evil she thought she'd outrun has reared its head again, but Grace fears that a police inquiry will expose her double life. Launching her own personal investigation leads her to a murderously manipulative foe, one whose warped craving for power forces Grace back into the chaos and madness she'd long ago fled.

Grace Blades is an interesting and engaging protagonist with reputation, success, beauty and money, but a darker side that draws her into an even darker past. Kellerman does a wonderful job building the suspense and winding the tale deeper into the danger with twists and turns you'd not expect. I give this book a B+. If you like Robert Crais, Jeffrey Deaver, Robert B Parker or J.A. Jance, you'll likely enjoy Kellerman.

Scream for Me by Cynthia Eden (2014)



Nothing is deeper than the desire they can't fight or deadlier than the evil they can't escape.

FBI agent Kyle McKenzie only has eyes for and fantasies about his partner, Cadence Hollow. She's a profiler with a knack for getting inside killers' heads and the woman Kyle can't get out of his. And though her beauty and brains come with an all-business attitude, she's hardly blind to her fellow agent's ardor or immune to his appeal. But surrendering to the passionate possibilities is

something they've never dared to do until a terrifying case puts their lives and their love on the line.

Sleepy Paradox, Alabama, is in the throes of its worst nightmare. A woman's disappearance is covered with the fingerprints of a psychopath known as the Night Hunter. And the local law needs Cadence and Kyle's special skills to end the predator's terror spree once and for all. But the Hunter knows the agents darkest secrets and deepest fears and vows to use the desire they share to destroy them.

A good serial killer suspense tale. If you like profiler books, you'll enjoy this one. I give it a B-.

The Ghosts of Belfast by Stuart Neville (2009)



Northern Ireland's Troubles may be over, but peace has not erased the crimes of the past. Gerry Fegan, a former paramilitary contract killer, is haunted by the ghosts of the twelve people he slaughtered. Every night, at the point of losing his mind, he drowns their screams in drink. But it's not enough. In order to appease the ghosts, Fegan is going to have to kill the men who gave him orders.

From the greedy politicians to the corrupt security forces, the street thugs to the complacent bystanders who let it happen, all are called to account. But when Fegan's vendetta threatens to derail a hard-won truce and destabilize the government, old comrades and enemies alike want him dead.

“Not only one of the finest thriller debuts of the last ten years, but also one of the best Irish novels, in any genre, of recent times.”

John Connolly

" "Slate The best first novel I've read in years . . . It's a flat-out terror trip."

James Ellroy

““The Ghosts of Belfast” is a smart and atmospheric thriller about the many causes served and corrupt pockets lined courtesy of sectarian hatred.”

Maureen Corrigan, NPR.org

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. It surprised me. I give it an A- and highly recommend it.

Trivia for February

What classic work of literature was initially burned and then rewritten from scratch because the author's wife didn't like it?

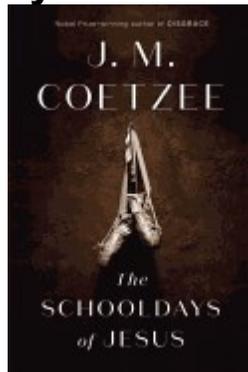
Answer: *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, by Robert Lewis Stevenson

Upcoming New Releases:

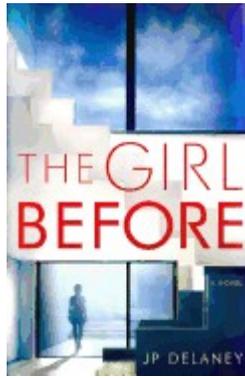
Check out the prices following the title of the book. The price is the publisher's price. The [The Book Rack](#) price is normally 20% lower. When you pick it up at the store there is no shipping cost, though we can also ship it to you. Order now by calling the store or stopping in. We do ask for prepayment 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 and Trade Paperback

JM Coetzee – *The Schooldays of Jesus* – 27.00

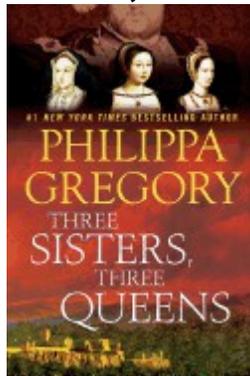


JP Delaney – *The Girl Before* – 27.00

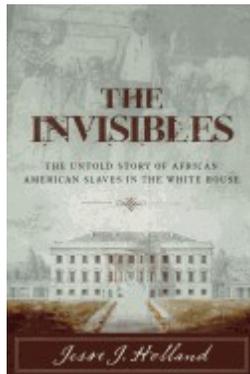


Lisa Gardner – Right Behind You – 27.00

Philippa Gregory – Three Sisters, Three Queens – 16.99



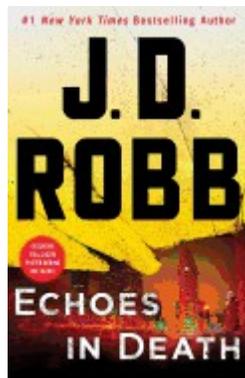
Jesse J Holland – The Invisibles – 25.95



Jonathan Kellerman – Heartbreak Hotel – 28.99

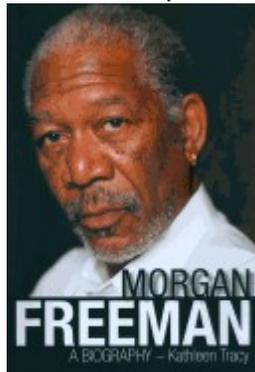
James Patterson – Bullseye – 15.99

JD Robb – Echoes in Death – 27.99



Charles Todd – Racing the Devil – 26.99

Kathleen Tracy – Morgan Freeman, A Biography – 17.95

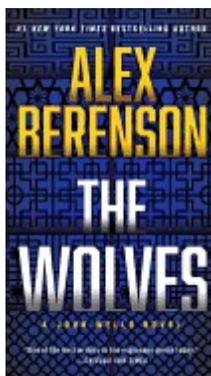


Timothy Tyson – The Blood of Emmett Till – 27.00



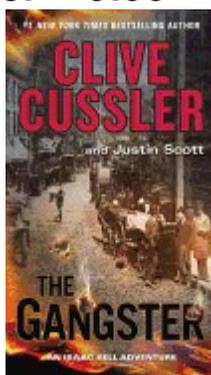
Paperback

Alex Berenson – The Wolves – 9.99



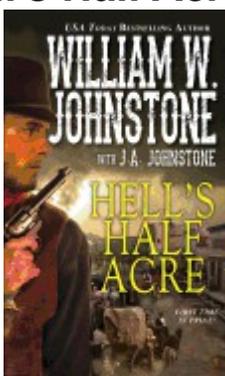
Steve Martini – Blood Flag – 9.99

Clive Cussler – The Gangster – 9.99



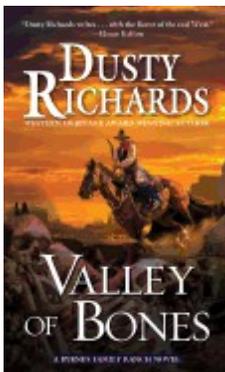
Joanne Fluke – Wedding Cake Murder – 7.99

William W. Johnstone – Hell's Half Acre – 7.99

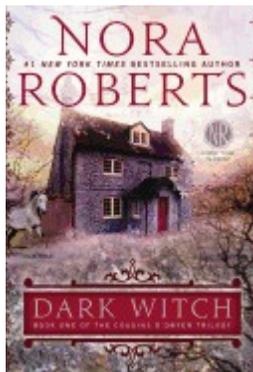


Brad Meltzer – The House of Secrets – 9.99

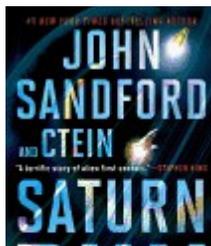
Dusty Richards – Valley of Bones – 7.50



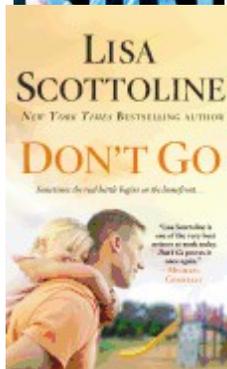
Nora Roberts – Dark Witch – 7.99



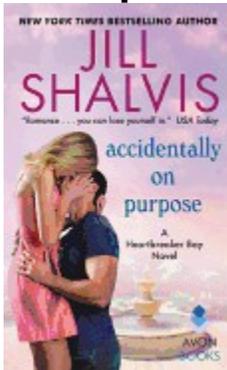
Karen Rose – Every Dark Corner – 7.99
John Sanford – Saturn Run – 9.99



Lisa Scottoline – Don't Go – 8.99



Jill Shalvis – Accidentally on Purpose – 7.99



Danielle Steel – The Apartment – 8.99

