

The Book Rack Newsletter

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

Vol 9, #7

July 2016

4764 Elmore Ave, Davenport

563-355-2310

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

<http://www.thebookrackqc.com/>

BookRackQC@Gmail.com

Reading Trivia for July

What writer worked as a Pinkerton detective on cases involving movie comic Fatty Arbuckle and gambler Nicky Arnstein?

Did you know ?

The character, Sherlock Holmes, had his origins in a surgeon friend of Arthur Conan Doyle's called Joseph Bell. He had uncanny powers of observation and diagnosis, which intrigued Doyle.

Monthly Drawings have been suspended for the time being.

July Holidays and Events at The Book Rack:

1 – Canada Day

3 – Disobedience Day - a day for civil or social disobedience as an act of protest.

4 – Independence Day – The Book Rack will be closed. Celebrate safely!



7 – Chocolate Day – One of my favorites!

9 – Author Carol Walz will be at The Book Rack 1-3:00.

17 - Yellow Pig Day is a mathematician's holiday celebrating yellow pigs and the number 17

24 – Parent's Day

25 - Culinarian's Day is a special day for anyone who cooks

30 – Father-in-law Day

30 – International Day of Friendship – a day set aside to promote friendship among peoples, cultures and countries.

Featured Author for July is:

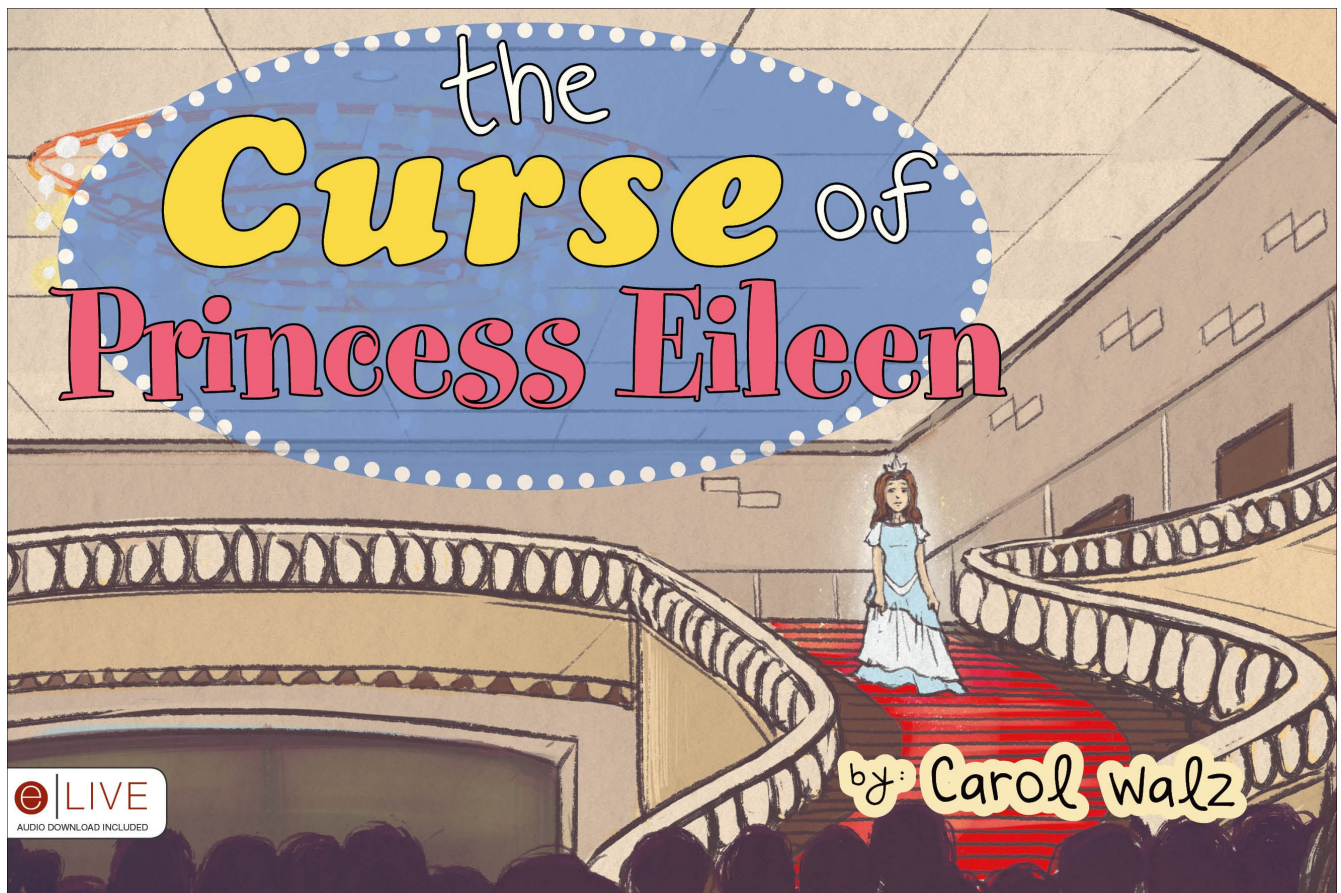
Carol Walz



Carol is the author of “The Curse of Princess Eileen” published by Tate Publishing. “It all began in a faraway land
Everyone there thought that life was grand.

All the townspeople adored their king and queen,
And of course their beloved princess Eileen.”

When Princess Eileen is suddenly cursed on the front steps of the castle, what can the townspeople do? Even the doctor can’t figure out what’s wrong. Will the mysterious stranger be able to break the curse on the princess? Find out in “The Curse Of Princess Eileen”.



Carol will be at The Book Rack July 9, 1-3: PM to visit with customers and sign copies of her book. Please stop is and meet this interesting visiting author and pick up a copy of her book for your favorite young readers.

Attention Book /Reading Clubs

If your club selects books to read a month or more before actually needing them, take advantage of our services. Put in your “Requests” the titles you need and how many copies you think you'll want. As used copies come in, we'll set them aside for you. These will only cost you our regular price of ¼ of the cover price, with store credit applied, or ½ the cover price without store credit.

If you want new copies, we discount most new books 20% and can have them in a couple weeks, or less, and you don't pay shipping.

Of course, when you finish a book and it's still in good, clean condition, bring it in for store credit. You can even set up an account in your book club name and all your members can contribute books and use the credit.

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.

Our July contributing author is Jodie Toohey, returning with another very interesting article.



Five Things You May Not Know About Writers

I think that sometimes, to those who don't write, writers can be a kind of enigma; heck, sometimes we're the same way to ourselves and others. All of this is based on my own unscientific, observational study, of course.

Here are five things I've learned while being around writers the last eight or so years since finding the Midwest Writing Center (<http://www.mwcqc.org>) that made me feel understood and less lonely:

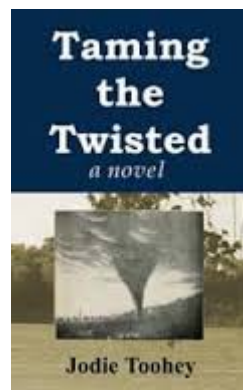
1. A lot of us are introverts. We are less comfortable in social situations, especially with people we don't know, and prefer our characters, who we can control (to a degree). We have conversations with them and they actually become like real people to us; that's not just jargon of the writing industry. We connect with you in the outside world through our words; even if it's fiction, we feel a sense of vulnerability when we put our words out in public.
2. We are in love with our readers. To us, it's all about the readers; not only connecting with them, but receiving their approval. We are delighted to draw our readers in, make them feel, teach them something, or just help them feel understood. Tell us you loved or even just liked something we wrote and you'll make our day (at least).
3. Writing is like breathing to us. We simply cannot not write. It's like an addiction or compulsion. The words, stories, and ideas are always in our head, and we feel like we'll go mad if we don't get them out of there. This is why most writers have slips of paper, sticky notes, or napkins with things written around them everywhere. When we write, we feel like we are being our authentic, genuine, true selves. It's essential to our health.
4. We're always writing, even when we're not. This is another reason for the sticky notes, etc. Even when we don't have paper and pen in our hand or we're not typing in front of a computer screen, we are still writing. We are writing when we're reading. We're writing when we are falling asleep at night and when we do fall asleep. We're writing when we're eating, walking, shopping, bathing, and driving. Even if we don't take the time to put the words on napkins and slips of paper, we're writing.
5. It's the writing that motivates, not the money. Most of the time when I've asked writers what their financial goals are with writing, it's not to be famous, live in a big house, or travel the world. Of course, those things would be nice, but the answer I get more times than not is to write more. Our motivation in earning a living from writing is so we can pay our bills, help our families, and do what we need to do, money-wise, and then spend more time writing. A lot of us who make money at things other than writing (and let's be honest – that's most of us, at least to a degree), do it mainly to support our writing habit while having a roof over our heads and a vehicle in the driveway. We simply want to write.

Next time you sit down with your favorite author's book, I hope you'll feel

the love that comes through the words knowing that book was created for you and knowing your purchase (or borrow) has helped that author write more for you.

Bio:

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 authors, soon-to-be authors, and want-to-be authors from pre-idea to reader with her Wordsy Woman Author Services company. Learn more about Jodie's books at www.jodietoohey.com.



Book Reviews

Read a good or bad book lately? Send us a book review and we'll include it in the next newsletter! (We do reserve the right to edit – just in case it was a really bad book and you use really bad language!)

Our first book review is also by Jodie Toohey and first appeared February 12, 2016 in Jodie's blog, <http://bookreviewsbyjodiet.blogspot.com/>.

THE WAR CAME HOME WITH HIM: A DAUGHTER'S MEMOIR by Catherine Madison

The War Came Home With Him



A Daughter's Memoir

Catherine Madison

I came across [The War Came Home with Him](#) while shopping on Amazon. Other than being a historical account and involving Veterans, who I find have fascinating stories to tell, I also have something in common with the author. Technically, it's actually my father who has it in common with her. My grandfather, my father's father, was also a POW in Korea. It also changed him and he didn't talk about it. My father has been researching my grandfather's captivity, so I thought it might be instructive.

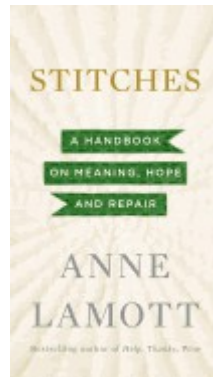
The War Came Home with Him has alternating chapters starting with Alexander Boyson prior to his capture and trading places back and forth with his daughter, Catherine's, story starting when she was a little girl. It beautifully tells the story of both of their lives, his before and after the time he was a prisoner, and hers of her life with him. It's heartbreaking how being a POW negatively impacted the author's life, but it's also hopeful in that it's clear the author has forgiven him, understands him to some degree, and has made peace. This memoir doesn't glorify war or gloss it over; it is what it is, through the author's eyes and the father's. The author's perspective is based on her memories and her father's based on her research and writings her father left behind, making it believable and, as far as I know, highly accurate. I also liked how the author arranged the chapters, subtly tying what her father went through as a Korean War POW to her own memories of how he was as a father, and how he brought that part of the war home with him.

The War Came Home with Him is interesting, tells a good story, and provides deep insight into the author's and her father's life. And I also believe it's an important book. I read it pretty quickly even with the holidays, so, 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 morning hours, I give it an eight and a half.

Source: Madison, Catherine. (2015) *The War Came Home with Him*. University of Minnesota Press.

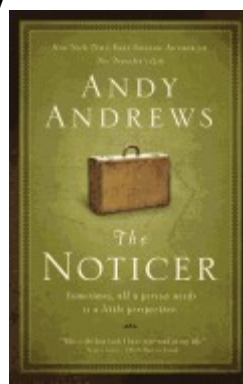
This Next Two Reviews are by Claudia:

***Stitches, A Handbook of Meaning, Hope and Repair* is by Anne Lamott. (2013)**



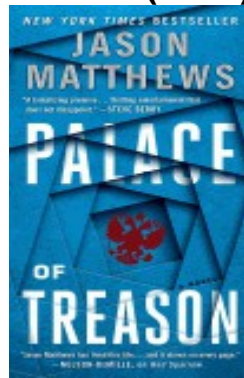
The end piece says “In this book Lamott explores how we find meaning and peace in these loud and frantic times; where we start again after personal and public devastation; how we recapture wholeness after loss; how we locate our true identities in this frazzled age. We begin, Lamott says, by collecting the ripped shreds of our emotional and spiritual fabric and sewing them back together, one stitch at a time.” Lamott writes with sincerity, humor and humanity. This may provide you with some hope in the midst of a life you cannot control.

***The Noticer*, by Andy Andrews**, is a story of a series of people who have strayed from life’s goodness, and who are redeemed through a change in perspective, initiated by a mysterious man named Jones. No one seems to know Jones’ background, anything about his life or family, or where he lives, yet there are few who do not know him or of him. Jones appears at just the moment he is needed, helping individuals see what they have previously missed. Jones says, “My contention is that you are right where you are supposed to be. This may look like barren sand to you, but nothing could be further from the truth. I say to you that as you lay your head down tonight, you are sleeping on fertile ground. Think, learn, pray, plan, dream. For soon.... You will become.” Offering simple wisdom and hope, Jones shows that it just takes a little “perspective” to recognize miracles in our moments, the seeds of greatness tucked into our struggles. Written in 2007, Nancy Lopez, LPGA Hall of Famer, said, “This is the best book I have ever read in my life.” A good little book for a perspective checkup.



The rest are by me:

Palace of Treason by Jason Matthews (2015)



A compulsively readable new novel about star-crossed Russian agent Dominika Egorova and CIA's Nate Nash in a desperate race to the finish.

Captain Dominika Egorova of the Russian Intelligence Service (SVR) has returned from the West to Moscow. She despises the men she serves, the oligarchs, and crooks, and thugs of Putin's Russia. What no one knows is that Dominika is working for the CIA as Washington's most sensitive penetration of SVR and the Kremlin.

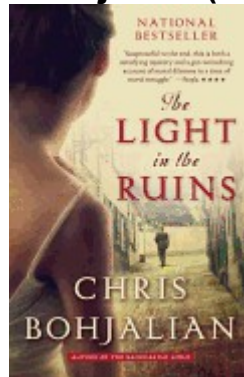
As she expertly dodges exposure, Dominika deals with a murderously psychotic boss; survives an Iranian assassination attempt; escapes a counterintelligence ambush; rescues an arrested agent and exfiltrates him out of Russia; and has a chilling midnight conversation in her nightgown with President Putin.

Complicating these risks is the fact that Dominika is in love with her CIA handler, Nate Nash, and their lust is as dangerous as committing espionage in Moscow. And when a mole in the SVR finds Dominika's name on a restricted list of sources, it is a virtual death sentence.

In 2013 Matthews released his debut novel, "Red Sparrow". I picked it up somewhere, eventually read it and immediately checked to see what other titles he had, only to be disappointed. Well, he finally released this, his second novel, which I bought and read, hoping for a book on par with his first. The wait was worth it and Palace of Treason gets an A-. The story is terrific, with CIA trade craft on full display, characters you can love and some you'll loath. It's a great book to take on vacation where you can sit for long stretches and immerse

yourself in the plot. That said, I would be remiss if I didn't mention a few flaws I feel to be significant. First is Matthews' obsession with food. Every chapter includes a meal of some sort, whether it's a formal dinner or a local food stand favorite, and he takes it further by adding at the end of each chapter an incomplete recipe for one of the courses mentioned. Most of the food discussion was OK, but some seemed contrived and the recipes added nothing meaningful to the story. The second problem is the spirits of Domi's dead comrades who follow her and give their moral support, lurking in the background seen only by Domi. Another unnecessary distraction. Let them rest in peace!! Finally, Domi's ability to see and read auras of everyone around her added a supernatural aspect that detracted rather than added to the story. This is a thriller, not a paranormal book. Strip out these unneeded ornaments and you'd have a sleek, fast, jewel of a book. It's still a great read, but it could have been better.

The Light in the Ruins by Chris Bohjalian (2013)



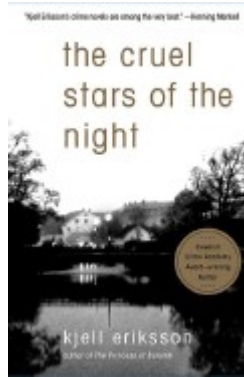
1943: Tucked away in the idyllic hills of Tuscany, the Rosatis, an Italian family of noble lineage, believe that the walls of their ancient villa will keep them safe from the war raging across Europe. Eighteen-year-old Cristina spends her days swimming in the pool, playing with her young niece and nephew, and wandering aimlessly amid the estate's gardens. But when two soldiers a German and an Italian arrive at their doorstep asking to see an ancient Etruscan burial site, the Rosatis bucolic tranquility is shattered and what had been their sanctuary becomes their prison.

1955: Serafina Bettini, an investigator with the Florence Police Department, has her own demons. Serafina has successfully hidden her tragic scars from WWII, at least until she is assigned to a gruesome new case - a serial killer who is targeting the remaining members of the Rosati family one by one. Soon, she will find herself digging into past secrets that involves both the victims and her own tragic history. *The Light in the Ruins* reveals a breathtaking story of moral paradox, human frailty, and the mysterious ways of the heart.

This is a very well written novel, as you would expect from Bohjalian. It touches on the Nazi program to steal great and historic art works from the countries they conquered for return to Germany and the harsh realities of living in an occupied

country during a failing war. I give it a B+. If you like Sarah Dunant, Sue Miller or Jane Hamilton, you may well like Bohjalian.

The Cruel Stars of the Night (Ann Lindell Mysteries) by Kjell Eriksson (2008)



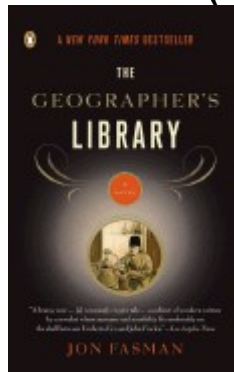
When *The Princess of Burundi* was published, American critics hailed Kjell Eriksson as Sweden's Ed McBain, and they compared him to Henning Mankell. Now *The Cruel Stars of the Night*, the next in this internationally acclaimed crime series, unveils a spellbinding new tale again featuring police inspector Ann Lindell.

The Cruel Stars of the Night opens one snowy day when thirty-five-year-old Laura Hindersten goes to the police to report that her father, a local professor, is missing. Inspector Ann Lindell and her colleagues can find no motive for the man's disappearance. And when the corpses of two elderly men do turn up, neither of the dead men is the missing academic.

Unexpectedly, the police get help from one of the professor's colleagues, who believes there is an astonishing link between the murders and the disappearance of Professor Hindersten. But as the pressure on Lindell increases dramatically, she is shocked to discover that the killer has many more diabolical schemes in store. As she closes in on the killer, she finds herself at great personal risk.

This is my first book by Eriksson. I give it a B. It's a decent mystery, but the ending left me a bit wanting. It just seemed it could have been better.

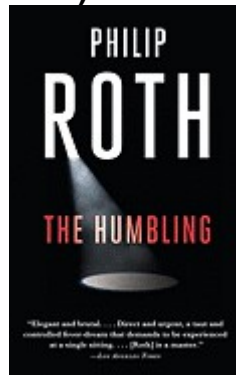
The Geographer's Library by Jon Fasman (2005)



Jon Fasman's dizzyingly plotted intellectual thriller suggests a marriage between Dan Brown and Donna Tartt. When reporter Paul Tomm is assigned to investigate the mysterious death of a reclusive academic, he finds himself pursuing leads that date back to the twelfth century and the theft of alchemical instruments from the geographer of the Sicilian court. Now someone is trying to retrieve them. Interspersed with the present action are the stories of the men and women who came to possess those charmed--and sometimes cursed--artifacts, which have powers that go well beyond the transmutation of lead into gold. Deftly combining history, magic, suspense, and romance--and as handsomely illustrated as an ancient incunabulum--The Geographer's Library is irresistible. (Publisher's Marketing)

I listened to the audio book and it kept me fully engaged. Now part of that probably was Scott Brick, the reader. He also read the book, Hamilton, which is one of my all-time favorite books. However, this book is very enjoyable on its own merits and I give it a solid B. It was well paced, had good action and kept me wondering what the end would bring.

The Humbling by Philip Roth (2009)

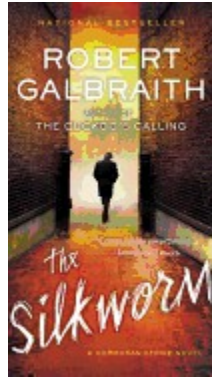


Simon Axler, one of the leading American stage actors of his generation, is now in his sixties and has lost his magic, talent, and assurance. His Falstaff and Peer Gynt and Vanya, all his great roles, "are melted into air, into thin air." When his wife leaves him, and after a stint at a mental hospital, he retires to his upstate New York country house and hopes for deliverance. Into this shattering account of inexplicable and terrifying self-evacuation bursts a counterplot of unusual erotic desire, a consolidation for a bereft life so risky and aberrant that it points not to comfort and gratification but to a yet darker and more shocking end. In this long day's journey into night, told with Roth's inimitable urgency, bravura, and gravity, all the ways that we convince ourselves to our solidity, all our life's performances – talent, love, sex, hope, energy, reputation – are stripped off.

This is my first Roth novel and it was very good. A bit sad, erotic, depressing in

that order, but good literature and study of human nature. I give it a B+ and recommend it. If you like Bernard Malamud, James T Farrell or Upton Sinclair you'll likely like Roth.

The Silkworm by Robert Galbraith aka J.K. Rowling (2014)



Private investigator Cormoran Strike returns in a new mystery from Robert Galbraith, author of the #1 international bestseller "The Cuckoo's Calling." When novelist Owen Quine goes missing, his wife calls in private detective Cormoran Strike. At first, Mrs. Quine just thinks her husband has gone off by himself for a few days--as he has done before--and she wants Strike to find him and bring him home.

But as Strike investigates, it becomes clear that there is more to Quine's disappearance than his wife realizes. The novelist has just completed a manuscript featuring poisonous pen-portraits of almost everyone he knows. If the novel were to be published, it would ruin lives--meaning that there are a lot of people who might want him silenced.

When Quine is found brutally murdered under bizarre circumstances, it becomes a race against time to understand the motivation of a ruthless killer, a killer unlike any Strike has encountered before... (Publisher's Marketing)

Cormoran Strike is great protagonist and is perfectly paired with his assistant, Robin. The plot is at times confusing as they work to unravel the connection between the murder and the story in the manuscript, but it is a mystery novel after all. This is a long book (652 pages) and, frankly, I think only really needed about 450 to tell the story. Galbraith belabors interview dialogues, in particular, taking many pages to complete one, when it could be crisper in a couple. It adds a degree of realism, but made it hard for me to retain a consistent level of attention as I read. Z-z-z-z... I also found her level of language in which the book is written made it hard to read at all quickly. I was constantly having to stop to look up the definition of an unfamiliar word. These weren't foreign or obscure words, just \$20 words, when a \$.50 one would do quite well, thank you very much. Of course, if she intended the book for an audience of graduate level literature students, then it's probably just fine.

In the end I'd say this is a very good book and give it a B+, but it's one that might best be read and enjoyed abridged! However, who am I to critique the writing of one of the most successful writers of the modern era??

Reading Trivia for July

What writer worked as a Pinkerton detective on cases involving movie comic Fatty Arbuckle and gambler Nicky Arnstein?

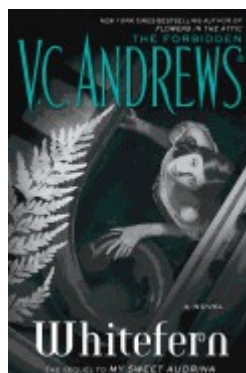
Answer: Dashiell Hammett, author of *The Maltese Falcon* and *The Thin Man*, among other novels of note.

Upcoming New Releases:

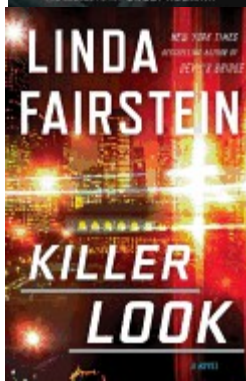
Check out the prices following the title of the book. The first price is the publisher's price. The second price is **The Book Rack** price, which is normally 20% lower. When you pick it at the store there is no shipping cost, though we can also ship it to you. Order now by calling one of the stores 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. The genre follows the price.

Hardcover and Trade Paperback

VC Andrews – *Whitefern* – 26.99/21.60



Ace Atkins – *The Innocents* –



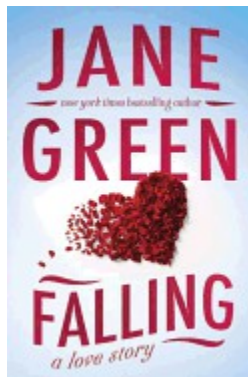
Linda Fairstein – *Killer Look* –

27.00/21.60

28.00/22.40

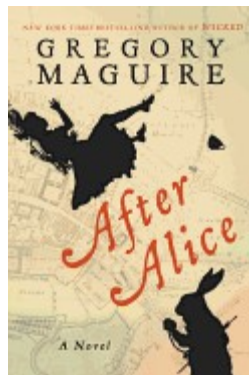
Heather Graham – Deadly Fate – 26.99/21.60

Jane Green – Falling – 26.00/20.80

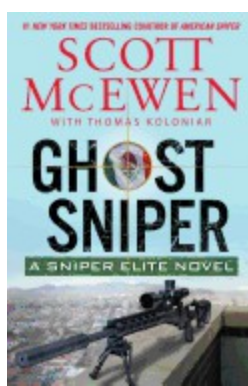


Elin Hilderbrand – Here's to Us – 28.00/22.40

Gregory Maguire – After Alice – 15.99/12.00

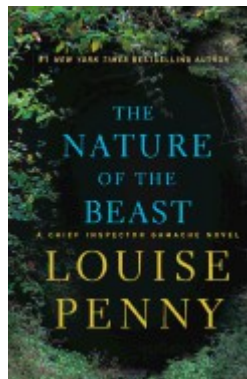


Scott McEwen – Ghost Sniper – 24.99/20.00



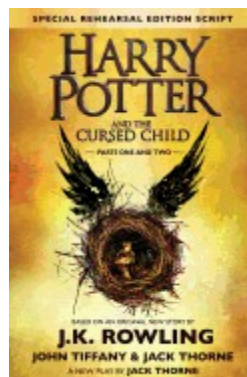
Ridley Pearson – White Bone – 27.00/21.60

Louise Penny – The Nature of the Beast – 15.99/12.80



Tracie Peterson – A Beauty Refined – 14.99/12.00

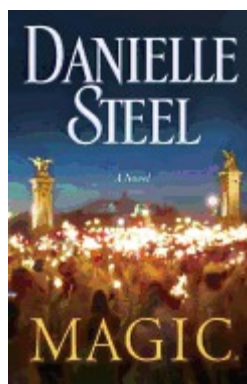
JK Rowlings – Harry Potter and the Cursed Child, Parts I & II – 29.99/24.00



Daniel Silva – The Black Widow – 27.99/22.40

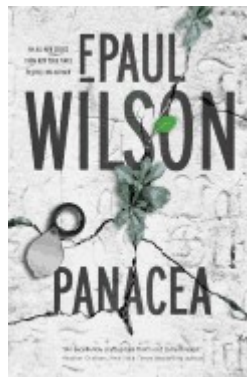
Danielle Steel – Magic –

28.95/23.20



JR Ward – The Angel's' Share – 28.00/22.40

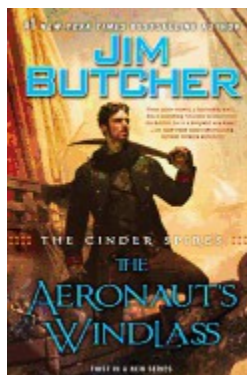
F. Paul Wilson – Panacea – 25.99/20.80



Paperback

Ted Bell – Patriot – 9.99/8.00

Jim Butcher – The Cinder Spires: The Aeronaut's Windlass – 9.99/8.00



Patricia Cornwell – Depraved

Christine Feehan – Shadow Rider



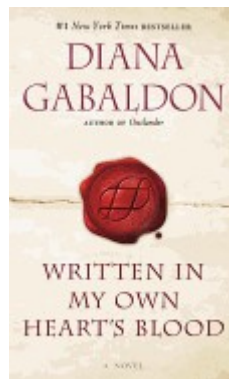
Heart – 9.99/8.00

– 7.99/6.40

William R Forstchen – One Year After – 9.99/8.00



Diana Gabaldon – Written in My Own Heart's Blood – 9.99/8.00



Neil Gaiman – The Ocean at the End of the Lane – 7.99/6.40

Tess Gerritsen – The Bone Garden – 9.99/8.00

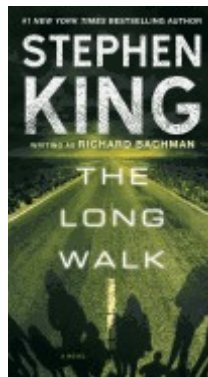


John Gilstrap – Friendly Fire – 9.99/8.00

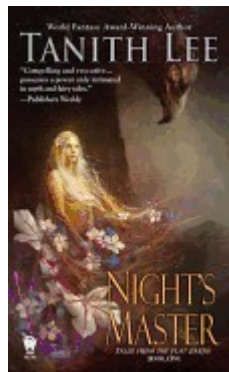
Terry Goodkind – The First Confessor – 9.99/8.00



Stephen King – The Long Walk – 9.99/8.00



Tanith Lee – Night's Master – 7.99/6.40



Carla Neggers – Cold Ridge – 7.99/6.40

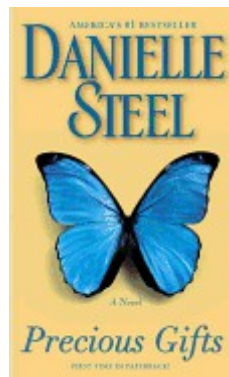
James Patterson – Truth or Die – 9.99/8.00



Louise Penny – The Brutal Telling – 7.99/6.40

Christopher Reich – Invasion of Privacy – 9.99/8.00

Danielle Steel – Precious Gifts – 8.99/7.20



Donna Tartt – The Goldfinch – 10.99/8.80

