

The Book Rack Newsletter

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

Vol 14, #12 December 2021
563-355-2310

*Store Hours: 10:00 - 6:00 Daily (except New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, July 4,
Thanksgiving and Christmas)*

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

Another **Holiday Special** from Your Book Rack!

You can now use up to \$3.00 of your store credit toward your purchase of any Puzzle at The Book Rack. While we're announcing it now to help you weather the gift shortage, higher prices for almost everything and the weather, this special won't end after Christmas.

It's the Holiday Season!

That means **The Book Rack** Gift Certificates are

20% OFF!

From now until Christmas gift certificates in any denomination are discounted 20%. No limit in value and no limit in the number you can buy. Buy a \$10.00 Gift Certificate for \$8.00. Buy a \$50.00 one for \$40.00, or go all in with a \$100.00 for \$80.00.

If you have store credit, give a gift certificate and some store credit. Give a \$20 gift certificate and \$20 in store credit and you've really gives a \$40 gift! Just include a note with your card and ask the recipient to bring the note to the store when they plan to use the gift. We'll take it from there. Or, you can add the credit to their account, if they have one, or set one up in their

name. Just make sure they know about the account!

Trivia for December 2021

Who wrote the poem The Pied Piper of Hamelin??

Read on and find the answer later in the newsletter.

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\$25 Gift Certificate Winners!

We try to give away four (4) \$25.00 Gift Certificates to The Book Rack account holders each month. (It's harder than you think!)

The names are selected from all our registered customers who have registered or had a trade, Request List addition or purchase in the past 2-years (Since November 1, 2019).

All a winner must do is read the newsletter and find your name listed below, then come in and claim your reward. No purchase is required, and you don't have to register separately from your initial account registration.

The December 2021 winner #1 is:

Kate Cooper

See the other 3 winning names elsewhere in the newsletter, below. Find your name and just call or stop at the store on or before November 31, 2021 to claim your prize:

A \$25 gift certificate from The Book Rack!

.....

A Poetic Gift for the Season and these Viral times

From Local Author

Ellen Tsagaris

Twass the Night Before Virus

Twass the night before Virus,
And all thru the house,
Not a creature was stirring,
They all had been doused.

The children were nestled
All snug in their beds,
While visions of toilet paper
Rolled in their heads.

The stockings were hung
All six feet apart,
And me and our Mamma,
Were building an ark.

When out on the lawn there
Arose such a clatter,
We sprang to our web cam
To see what was the matter.

Way to the window, I
Flew like a flash,
I peaked through the shutter,
And sat on the sash.

When what to my mask covered
Eyes should appear,
But a respirator led by 8 tiny
Masked deer.

With a little old driver,
So feverishly quick,
I knew in a moment we all
Would be sick.

When laying a finger
To wipe off his nose,
And giving a sneeze,

Down our chimney he goes.

I flew for the stockings,
I felt like a jerk,
But for a bottle of sanitizer,
I'd just go berserk!

The old elf he coughed,
On the cookies we left,
All gluten free, since,
All his notes we had read.

In haste he left bottles,
Of vintage unclear,
Not cider, or syllabub,
Or even light beer,

But alcohol, face masks,
And hand soap galore,
Paper towels, Scott, Bounty
A real paper hoard

And then in a flash,
He donned his own mask,
And grabbed rolls of tissue,
From inside his sack.

As I peaked from the corner,
All six feet away,
He laughed in his face cover,
So hard that he swayed.

He tossed me a pack,
Charmin, Northern, who knows,
And then up the chimney,
I watched as he rose.

Be safe, he exhorted to all in the house,
Merry Christmas, wash your hands,
And be kind to your spouse!

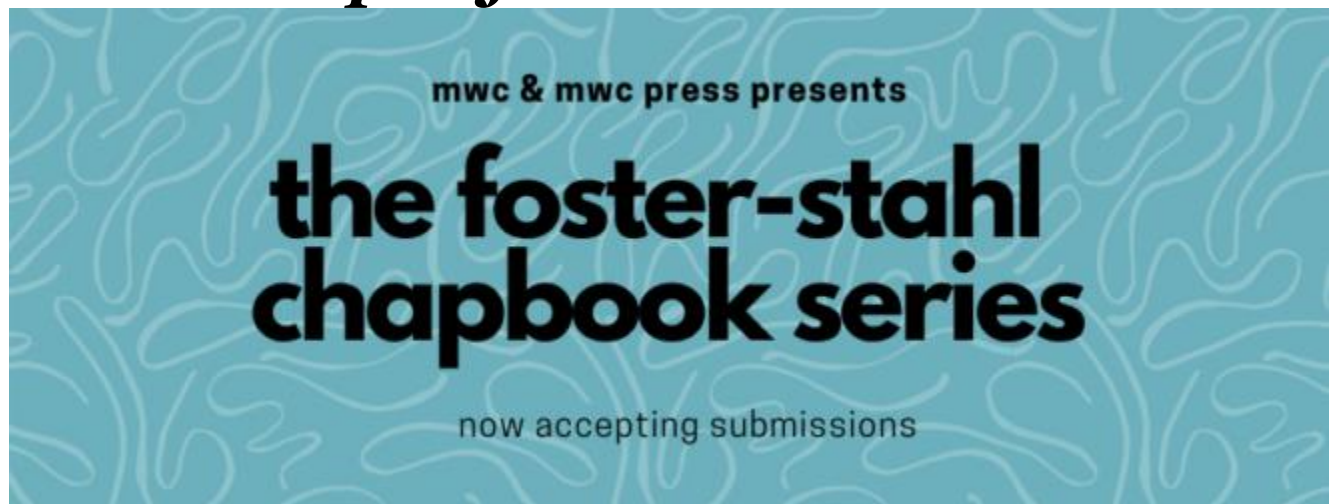
Books We Need

**Bonus of 10% extra credit for these books
when brought in on/before November 30**

**Any Manga or Graphic Novels (Children's and Adult)
The Babysitter's Club (original novels)**

Kristin Hannah
Dune series - Frank Herbert
Colleen Hoover
Stephen King & any other **Horror** (besides Dean Koontz)
Sarah J. Maas
New Age & Wicca (Crystals, Tarot, Chakra, Zodiac, Astrology)
Sweet Valley Twins/High

The Foster-Stahl Chapbook Series is Open for Submissions!



MWC Press, the press imprint of The Midwest Writing Center, is thrilled to announce The Foster-Stahl Chapbook Series is open for submissions for its second year. The Series looks to publish outstanding short collections of poetry, prose (fiction or nonfiction), or hybrid work from poets and writers living in the upper Midwest region (this includes the following states served by Arts Midwest: IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, ND, OH, SD, WI). Submissions for the second year of the series are open now.

Are you a writer?? Then [click here to learn more about this opportunity.](#)

December 2021 Holidays and Events at The Book Rack:

Month:

- **Safe Toys and Gifts Month**
- **World Food Service Safety Month**

- Write a Friend Month

December 4 – Santa's List Day

5 – David Dorris will again visit The Book Rack and sign copies of his books 11-1:00

7 - Pearl Harbor Day

10 - Human Rights Day

- Nobel Prize Day

12 - International Children's Day

15 - Bill of Rights Day

21 - Winter Solstice - the shortest day of the year

23 - Festivus

24 - National Chocolate Day – The Book Rack will close at 4:00

25 – Christmas Day – The Book Rack will be closed!

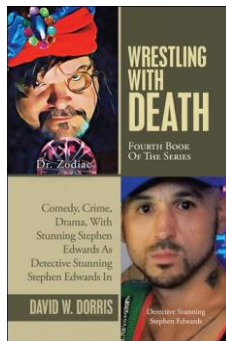
30 - Bacon Day

31 – New Year's Eve – The Book Rack will close at 4:00

January 1, 2022 – New Year's Day – The Book Rack will be closed

Featured Author

David Dorris



David will be at [The Book Rack](#), Sunday, October 31, 11-1:00. Stop by and visit David and check out his growing list of published books. Set in the Quad Cities (with scenes at [The Book Rack](#)), you may well recognize some places referenced in the books. That make reading a little extra enjoyable.



Book Reviews

Review by Claudia:

Midnight Sun by Jo Nesbø (2017) - Thriller



Midnight Sun is set in an isolated corner of Norway, where Jon Hansen has fled under an alias to escape Oslo's biggest crime lord: The Fisherman. **Ulf has one small problem--his former boss, Oslo's most notorious drug kingpin, wants him dead.**

He was once the kingpin's fixer, but after betraying him, Ulf is now the one his former boss wants fixed. Hiding out at the end of the line in northern Norway, Ulf lives among the locals. A mother and son befriend him, and their companionship stirs something deep in him that he thought was long dead. As he awaits the inevitable arrival of his murderous pursuers, he questions if redemption is at all possible or if, as he's always believed, "hope is a real bastard."

This isn't a typical thriller, but the simple "focused story of a young man trying to escape the consequences of crime and facing hard choices about love, religion and life itself." (***Washington Post***) An easy read, it's also easy to root for the young protagonist who has made some poor decisions and done some bad things, but largely for some good reasons. Recommended.

Book Reviews by Bob

Project Hail Mary by Andy Weir (2021) – Science Fiction



**A lone astronaut.
An impossible mission.
An ally he never imagined.**

Ryland Grace is the sole survivor on a desperate, last-chance mission - and if he fails, humanity and the earth itself will perish. Except that right now, he doesn't know that. He can't even remember his own name, let alone the nature of his assignment or how to complete it. All he knows is that he's been asleep for a very, very long time. And he's just been awakened to find himself millions of miles from home, with nothing but two corpses for company. His crewmates dead, his memories fuzzily returning, Ryland realizes that an impossible task now confronts him. Hurtling through space on this tiny ship, it's up to him to puzzle out an impossible scientific mystery-and conquer an extinction-level threat to our species. And with the clock ticking down and the nearest human being light-years away, he's got to do it all alone.

Or does he?

An irresistible interstellar adventure as only Andy Weir could imagine it, *Project Hail Mary* is a tale of discovery, speculation, and survival to rival *The Martian* -- while taking us to places it never dreamed of going.

Truly a terrific book. The story is wonderfully creative, lots of science and creativity and it's very readable. I give it an A. Get it!

The Devil May Care by David Housewright (2014) – Mystery



Riley Brodin is the granddaughter of Walter Muehlenhaus—a man as rich, powerful, and connected as anyone since the days of J. P. Morgan. Despite her family's connections, it's McKenzie she reaches out to when her relatively new boyfriend goes missing. Despite his reservations about getting involved with the Muehlenhaus family—again—McKenzie agrees to look for one Juan Carlos Navarre. What he finds, though, is a man who appears to be a ghost.

The house-mansion, really—he told Riley he owned is a rental, barely lived in and practically devoid of personal effects. The restaurant he claimed to own is owned by another and Navarre is merely an investor. He apparently has no friends, no traceable past, and McKenzie isn't the only one looking for him. Whoever Juan Carlos Navarre is and wherever he's gone, the one thing that is clear is that he's trouble, and is perhaps someone—as Riley's family makes clear—better out of the picture. Unfortunately for everyone, McKenzie likes trouble and trouble likes him.

The 11th book in Housewright's McKenzie series is quite well done. A good pace, likable characters — those you're meant to like — and an interesting plot line. I think if you are familiar with the Twin Cities you'll be particularly attracted by this entire series. I give it a B+. The series now has 18 books in it, so you'll have plenty to read if you find him a new favorite author.

The Penny Jumper by James Grippando (2016) – Thriller



THE PENNY JUMPER is a 160-page novella by famed New York Times bestselling author James Grippando. It also includes a collection of three other short stories.

THE PENNY JUMPER introduces, Ainsley Grace, brilliant young astrophysicist at MIT who has always dreamed big. Her current passion, “Project Cosmic Company,” will integrate strategic observatories around the globe to build the world’s largest and most powerful telescope.

Things haven’t come easy for Ainsley. Her mother, an equally brilliant young astrophysicist, died when Ainsley was just a child. Ainsley struggled to fit in as the “brainiac” who started college at age sixteen, earning her Ph.D. before most people her age had even settled on a major. Everything seems to be falling into place when Ainsley teams up with her mother’s former colleague at MIT to finish Project Cosmic Company, a project on which her mother had been working when she died.

Then the dream unravels.

Encouraged by her mother’s former colleague, Ainsley takes a short-term opportunity to pay off her mountain of college debt by writing stock trading codes for a high-frequency trading firm on Wall Street. Her job is to make sure that her firm’s supercomputers are faster than any others on Wall Street.

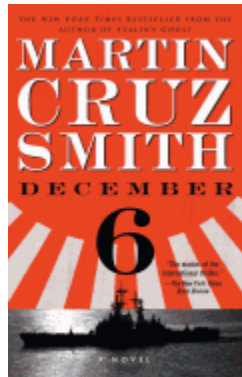
Because she is able to draw on the same algorithms, she’s been writing for Project Cosmic Company, it’s a snap. And because astrophysicists are Wall Street’s new whiz kids, it pays well. But there is a hidden price that comes with Ainsley’s work. The world of high-frequency trading is “survival of the

quickest,” and the difference between making a billion and losing a billion dollars could be less than a nanosecond. With stakes this high, Ainsley finds herself caught in the middle of a secret and deadly battle for speed. When Ainsley is framed and indicted for stealing Wall Street trade secrets, her personal life, her career dreams, and even her groundbreaking research at MIT are turned upside down...and the terrible truth about people she trusted most is revealed.

A wonderful, fast-paced story you'll read quickly and crave more of Ainsley Grace. "The Penny Jumper is James Grippando exactly as you love him. Playing with the real-world problems to make sure you have real world nightmares. This one's a killer." - [Brad Meltzer](#)

I give it an A. Get it, read it, love it!

December 6 by Martin Cruz Smith (2006) – Thriller



Set in the crazed, nationalistic Tokyo of late 1941, December 6 explores the coming world war through the other end of history's prism -- a prism held here by an unforgettable rogue and lover, Harry Niles. In many ways, Niles should be as American as apple pie: raised by missionary parents, taught to respect his elders and be an honorable and upright Christian citizen dreaming of the good life on the sun-blessed shores of California. But Niles is also Japanese: reared in the aesthetics of Shinto and educated in the dance halls and backroom poker gatherings of Tokyo's shady underworld to steal, trick and run for his life. As a gaijin, a foreigner --especially one with a gift for the artful scam -- he draws suspicion and disfavor from Japanese police. This potent mixture of stiff tradition and intrigue -- not to mention his brazen love affair with a Japanese mistress who would rather kill Harry than lose him -- fills Harry's final days in Tokyo with suspense and fear. Who is he really

working for? Is he a spy? For America? For the emperor? Now, on the eve of Pearl Harbor, Harry himself must decide where his true allegiances lie. Suspenseful, exciting and replete with the detailed research Martin Cruz Smith brings to all his novels, December 6 is a triumph of imagination, history and storytelling melded into a magnificent whole.

December 6 is thrilling, suspenseful and fun to read. I had a hard time putting it down. It was unique to me, with its setting in Japan as it planned and executed its attack on Pearl Harbor. It's not a military thriller, though there is plenty of military intrigue and strategy. It's the personal thriller of Harry Niles. An excellent read. I give it a solid A.

The December 2021 winner #2 is: Sandra Dick

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Did You Know?

Writers who died before reaching 40

- Robert Burns died of rheumatic heart disease at 36
- Charlotte Bronte died at 39 from tuberculosis. Her sisters Emily (30) and Anne (29) also died of the same disease.
 - Stephen Crane died at 28 of tuberculosis.
 - Dylan Thomas drank himself to death at 39.

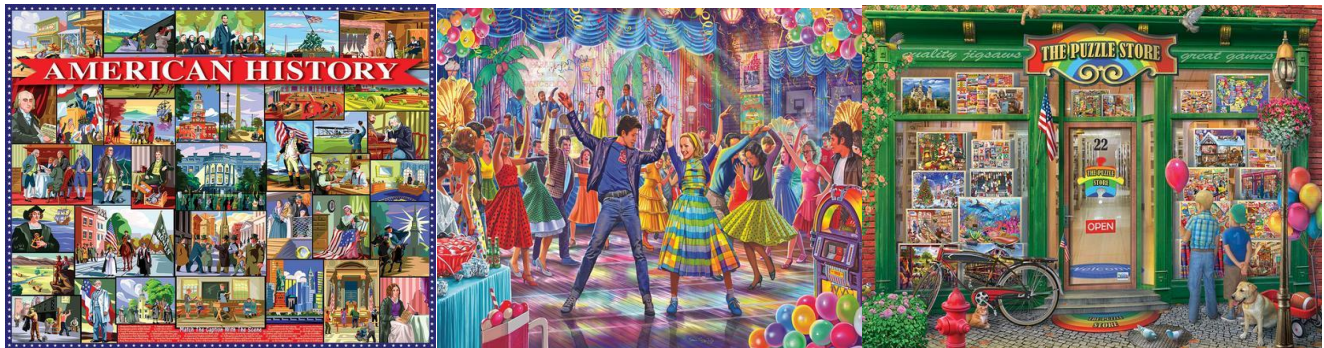
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If you need a book and can't find it on our site, please try:

<https://www.ChrisLandsSearch.com>

This will search hundreds of other independent bookstores around the world to help you. If all else fails...there's always AMAZON, or better yet, pick another book! 😊

Puzzles Make Great Gifts



These are just a few of the ones we offer for only
\$17.99, or less

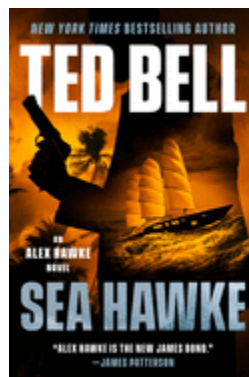
Recent and Upcoming New Releases:

Check out the prices following the title of the book. Those prices are the publisher's prices. **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 many will get to you eventually.

Hardcover and Trade Paperback

Ted Bell – Sea Hawke, An Alex Hawke Novel – 28.00 – Thriller



After saving the kidnapped heir to the British throne, gentleman spy and MI6 legend Alex Hawke is due for some downtime. He's got a new custom built sailing yacht and a goal: to get closer to his son Alexi during an epic cruise across the seven seas.

But fate and the chief of MI6, Lord David Trulove, have other plans.

There's an unholy alliance of nations who are plotting to attack Western democracies. The wily intelligence leader plans to use Hawke to drive a knife into the heart of this conspiracy. From an island base off Cuba to a secret jungle lair deep in the Amazon, on the land and the seas, the master spy and his crew of incorrigibles are in for the fight of their lives--the fight for freedom.

Alice Blanchard – The Witching Tree, A Natalie Lockhart Novel – 27.99 – Mystery



Welcome to Burning Lake, a small, isolated town with a dark history of witches and false accusations. Now, a modern-day witch has been murdered, and Detective Natalie Lockhart is reluctantly drawn deep into the case.

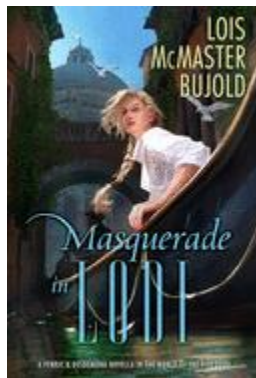
As legend has it, if you carve your deepest desire into the bark of a Witch Tree, then over time as the tree grows, it will swallow the carvings until only a witch can read them.

Until now.

Detective Natalie Lockhart gained unwanted notoriety when she and her family became front and center of not one, but two sensational murder cases. Now she's lost her way. Burned out and always looking over her shoulder, Natalie desperately thinks that quitting the police force is her only option left.

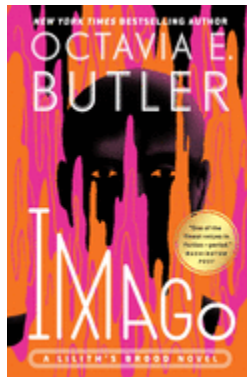
All that changes when a beloved resident--a practicing Wiccan and founder of the town's oldest coven--is killed in a fashion more twisted and shocking than Natalie has ever seen before, leaving the town reeling. Natalie has no choice but to help solve the case along with Detective Luke Pittman, her boss and the old childhood friend she cannot admit she loves, even to herself. There is a silent, malignant presence in Burning Lake that will not rest. And what happens next will shock the whole town, and Natalie, to the core.

Lois McMaster Bujold – Masquerade in Lodi – 40.00 – Fantasy



Bastard's Eve is a night of celebration for most residents in the canal city of Lodi--but not for sorcerer Learned Penric and his Temple demon Desdemona, who find themselves caught up in the affairs of a shiplost madman, a dangerous ascendant demon, and a very unexpected saint of the fifth god. This novella falls between Penric's Fox and Penric's Mission in the internal chronology of the Penric & Desdemona tales.

Octavia Butler – Imago, A Lilith's Brood Novel – 16.99 – Sci Fi

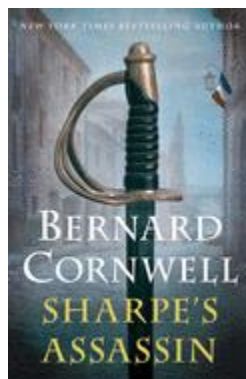


After the near-extinction of humanity, a new kind of alien-human hybrid must come to terms with their identity -- before their powers destroy what is left of humankind.

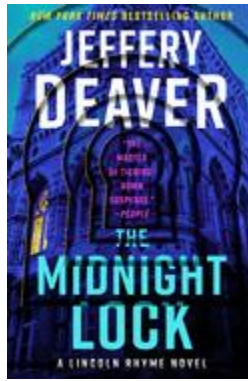
Since a nuclear war decimated the human population, the remaining humans began to rebuild their future by interbreeding with an alien race -- the Oankali -- who saved them from near-certain extinction. The Oankalis' greatest skill lies in the species' ability to constantly adapt and evolve, a process that is guided by their third sex, the *ooloi*, who are able to read and mutate genetic code.

Now, for the first time in the humans' relationship with the Oankali, a human mother has given birth to an *ooloi* child: Jodahs. Throughout his childhood, Jodahs seemed to be a male human-alien hybrid. But when he reaches adolescence, Jodahs develops the *ooloi* abilities to shapeshift, manipulate DNA, cure and create disease, and more. Frightened and isolated, Jodahs must either come to terms with this new identity, learn to control new powers, and unite what's left of humankind -- or become the biggest threat to their survival.

Bernard Cornwell – Sharpe's Assassin – 27.99 – Historical Fiction



Jeffrey Deaver – The Midnight Lock, A Lincoln Rhyme Novel – 28.00 – Thriller



A woman awakes in the morning to find that someone has picked her apartment's supposedly impregnable door lock and rearranged personal items, even sitting beside her while she slept. The intrusion, the police learn, is a message to the entire city of carnage to come. Lincoln Rhyme and Amelia Sachs are brought in to investigate and soon learn that the sociopathic intruder, who calls himself the Locksmith," can break through any lock or security system ever devised. With more victims on the horizon, Rhyme, Sachs and their stable of associates must follow the evidence to the man's lair... and discover his true mission.

Their hunt is interrupted when an internal investigation in the police force uncovers what seems to be a crucial mistake in one of Rhyme's previous cases. He's fired as a consultant for the NYPD and must risk jail if he investigates the Locksmith case in secret.

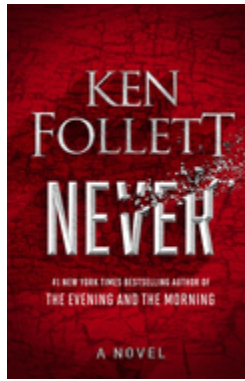
The Midnight Lock is a roller-coaster read that takes place over just a few days' time, features surprise after surprise and offers a fascinating look at the esoteric world of lockpicking.

Janet Evanovich and Steve Hamilton – The Bounty, A Fox and O'Hare Novel – 17.00



Straight as an arrow special agent Kate O'Hare and international con man Nick Fox have brought down some of the biggest criminals out there. But now they face their most dangerous foe yet--a vast, shadowy international organization known only as the Brotherhood. Directly descended from the Vatican Bank priests who served Hitler during World War II, the Brotherhood is on a frantic search for a lost train loaded with \$30 billion in Nazi gold, untouched for more than seventy-five years somewhere in the mountains of Eastern Europe. Kate and Nick know that there is only one man who can find the fortune and bring down the Brotherhood--the same man who taught Nick everything he knows: his father Quentin

Ken Follett – Nunca/Never – 24.95 – Thriller



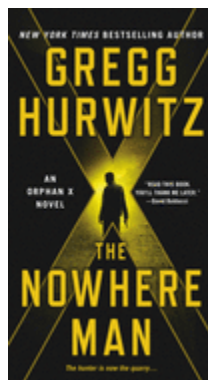
"Every catastrophe begins with a little problem that doesn't get fixed." So says Pauline Green, president of the United States, in Follett's nerve-racking drama of international tension.

A shrinking oasis in the Sahara Desert; a stolen US Army drone; an uninhabited Japanese island; and one country's secret stash of deadly chemical poisons: all these play roles in a relentlessly escalating crisis.

Struggling to prevent the outbreak of world war are a young woman intelligence officer; a spy working undercover with jihadists; a brilliant Chinese spymaster; and Pauline herself, beleaguered by a populist rival for the next president election.

Never is an extraordinary novel, full of heroines and villains, false prophets and elite warriors, jaded politicians and opportunistic revolutionaries. It brims with cautionary wisdom for our times, and delivers a visceral, heart-pounding read that transports readers to the brink of the unimaginable.

Gregg Hurwitz – The Nowhere Man, An Orphan X Novel – 17.99 – Thriller



Who is *THE NOWHERE MAN*?

He is spoken about only in whispers. He comes to those in greatest need of his protection. There is no enemy he cannot fight. He lives by his own code. He takes no prisoners. His name is Evan Smoak.

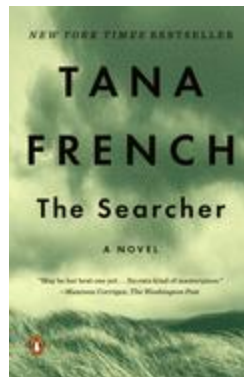
Taken from a group home when he was young, Evan was raised and trained as an Orphan, an off-the-books black box program designed to create the perfect deniable intelligence asset: An assassin. Evan was Orphan X--until he used everything he'd learned to disappear and reinvent himself as the Nowhere Man. But now, his new life has been interrupted by a surprise attack from an unlikely source. Captured, drugged, and spirited off to a remote location, Evan finds himself heavily guarded from everything he knows. His captors think they have him trapped and helpless in a virtual cage, but they do not know that they're dealing with one of the deadliest, most resourceful men on earth.

Jonathan Franzen – Crossroads – 30.00 – General



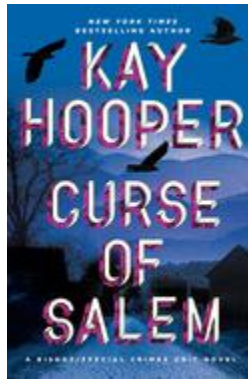
It's December 23, 1971, and heavy weather is forecast for Chicago. Russ Hildebrandt, the associate pastor of a liberal suburban church, is on the brink of breaking free of a marriage he finds joyless--unless his wife, Marion, who has her own secret life, beats him to it. Their eldest child, Clem, is coming home from college on fire with moral absolutism, having taken an action that will shatter his father. Clem's sister, Becky, long the social queen of her high-school class, has sharply veered into the counterculture, while their brilliant younger brother Perry, who's been selling drugs to seventh graders, has resolved to be a better person. Each of the Hildebrandts seeks a freedom that each of the others threatens to complicate

Tana French – The Searcher – 18.00 – Thriller



Cal Hooper thought a fixer-upper in a bucolic Irish village would be the perfect escape. After twenty-five years in the Chicago police force and a bruising divorce, he just wants to build a new life in a pretty spot with a good pub where nothing much happens. But when a local kid whose brother has gone missing arm-twists him into investigating, Cal uncovers layers of darkness beneath his picturesque retreat, and starts to realize that even small towns shelter dangerous secrets.

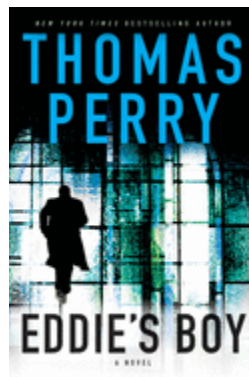
Kay Hooper – Curse of Salem – 27.00 – Paranormal



The small town of Salem has been quiet for months--or so Bishop and his elite Special Crimes Unit believe. But then Hollis Templeton and Diana Hayes receive a warning in Diana's eerie gray time between the world of the living and the realm of the dead that a twisted killer is stalking Salem, bent on destroying in the most bloody and horrifying way possible the five families that founded the town.

The stakes are high, especially for new friends Nellie Cavendish and Finn Deverell, both members of the Five, and this time Bishop and his wife Miranda will lead the team to hunt down a vicious killer and uncover a dark and ancient curse haunting Salem.

Thomas Perry – Eddie's Boy, A Butcher's Boy Novel – 17.00 - Thriller



Michael Shaeffer is a retired American businessman, living peacefully in England with his aristocratic wife. But her annual summer party brings strangers to their house, and with them, an attempt on Michael's life. He is immediately thrust into action, luring his lethal pursuers to Australia before venturing into the lion's den--the States--to figure out why the mafia is after him--again--and how to stop them. Eddie's Boy jumps between Michael's current predicament and the past. We glimpse the days before he became the Butcher's Boy, the highly skilled mob hit man who pulled a slaughter job on some double-crossing clients and started a mob war, to his childhood spent apprenticed to Eddie, a seasoned hired assassin. And we watch him pit two prominent mafia families against each other to eliminate his enemies one by one. He's meticulous in his approach, using his senior contact in the Organized Crime Division of the Justice Department for information, but never allowing her to get too close to his trail. But will he be able to escape this new wave of young contract killers, or will the years finally catch up to him?

Jodi Picoult – Wish You Were Here – 28.99 – General



Diana O'Toole is perfectly on track. She will be married by thirty, done having kids by thirty-five, and move out to the New York City suburbs, all while climbing the professional ladder in the cutthroat art auction world. She's an associate specialist at Sotheby's now, but her boss has hinted at a promotion if she can close a deal with a high-profile client. She's not engaged just yet, but she knows her boyfriend, Finn, a surgical resident, is about to propose on their romantic getaway to the Galápagos--days before her thirtieth birthday. Right on time. But then a virus that felt worlds away has appeared in the city, and on the eve of their departure, Finn breaks the news: It's all hands on deck at the hospital. He has to stay behind. *You should still go*, he assures her, since it would be a shame for all of their nonrefundable trip to go to waste. And so, reluctantly, she goes. Almost immediately, Diana's dream vacation goes awry. Her luggage is lost, the Wi-Fi is nearly nonexistent, and the hotel they'd booked is shut down due to the pandemic. In fact, the whole island is now under quarantine, and she is stranded until the borders reopen. Completely isolated, she must venture beyond her comfort zone. Slowly, she carves out a connection with a local family when a teenager with a secret opens up to Diana, despite her father's suspicion of outsiders.

In the Galápagos Islands, where Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection was formed, Diana finds herself examining her relationships, her choices, and herself--and wondering if when she goes home, she too will have evolved into someone completely different.

James Rollins – The Starless Crown – 28.99 - Fantasy



A gifted student foretells an apocalypse. Her reward is a sentence of death.

Fleeing into the unknown she is drawn into a team of outcasts:

A broken soldier, who once again takes up the weapons he's forbidden to wield and carves a trail back home.

A drunken prince, who steps out from his beloved brother's shadow and claims a purpose of his own.

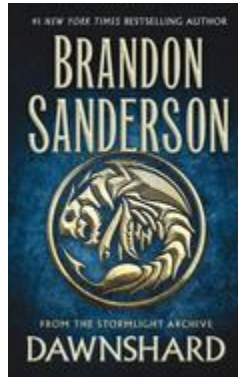
An imprisoned thief, who escapes the crushing dark and discovers a gleaming artifact - one that will ignite a power struggle across the globe.

On the run, hunted by enemies old and new, they must learn to trust each other in order to survive in a world evolved in strange, beautiful, and deadly ways, and uncover ancient secrets that hold the key to their salvation.

But with each passing moment, doom draws closer.

WHO WILL CLAIM THE STARLESS CROWN?

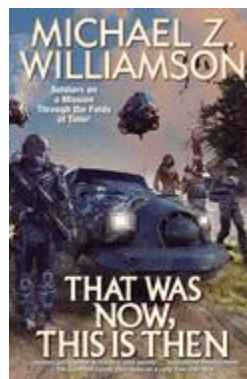
Brandon Sanderson – Dawnshard, From the Stormlight Archive – 10.99 – Fantasy



When a ghost ship is discovered, its crew presumed dead after trying to reach the storm-shrouded island Akinah, Navani Kholin must send an expedition to make sure the island hasn't fallen into enemy hands. Knights Radiant who fly too near find their Stormlight suddenly drained, so the voyage must be by sea.

Shipowner Rysn Ftori lost the use of her legs but gained the companionship of Chiri-Chiri, a Stormlight-ingesting winged larkin, a species once thought extinct. Now Rysn's pet is ill, and any hope for Chiri-Chiri's recovery can be found only at the ancestral home of the larkin: Akinah. With the help of Lopen, the formerly one-armed Windrunner, Rysn must accept Navani's quest and sail into the perilous storm from which no one has returned alive. If the crew cannot uncover the secrets of the hidden island city before the wrath of its ancient guardians falls upon them, the fate of Roshar and the entire Cosmere hangs in the balance.

Michael Z Williamson – That Was Now, This is Then – 25.00 – Sci Fi

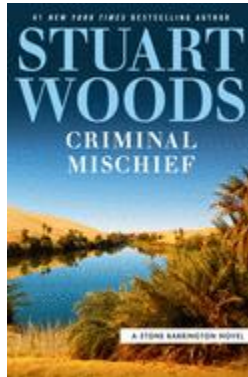


SOLDIERS OUT OF TIME

Then: First Lieutenant Sean Elliott and nine other mixed-service U.S. soldiers on a convoy in Afghanistan suddenly found themselves and their MRAP vehicle thrown back to Earth's Paleolithic Age. And they were not alone. Displaced Romans, Neolithic Europeans, and more showed up as well. Some would be allies. Some became deadly foes.

Now: Scientists from an almost unimaginably far future need the survivors' advice and support to reconnoiter and ultimately recover other groups displaced in time. The problem is not all of those other groups *want* to be recovered or even understand where they are. Prehistory is an ugly place, fascinating to visit, but no place for a civilized person to live. But the future, gorgeous as it is, has a darker side that dampens the appeal. In the end, only inventiveness, grit, and a thirst for freedom from the fickle tides of time can keep Sean and the displaced Americans alive and on a path to finally find a place--and a time--to call home.

Stuart Woods – Criminal Mischief, A Stone Barrington Novel – 28.00 – Mystery



After a dangerous adventure has him traveling up and down the coast, Stone Barrington is looking forward to some down time at his Manhattan abode. But when an acquaintance alerts him to a hinky plot being hatched across the city, he finds himself eager to pursue justice.

After the mastermind behind it all proves more evasive than anyone was expecting, Stone sets out on an international chase to places he's never gone before. With the help of old friends--and alluring new ones--Stone is determined to see the pursuit through to the end, even if it means going up against a foe more unpredictable than he has ever faced...

The December 2021 winner #3 is:

Marianne Yount

Trivia for December 2021

Who wrote the poem The Pied Piper of Hamelin?

Answer

Robert Browning in 1842

Mass Market Paperback

Mary Balogh – Someone Perfect, A Westcott Novel – 8.99 – Romance

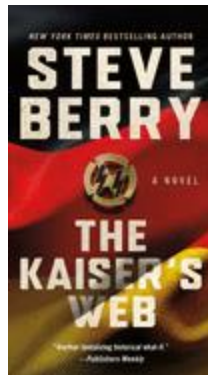


As a young man, Justin Wiley was banished by his father for mysterious reasons, but now his father is dead, and Justin has been Earl of Brandon for six years. A dark, dour man, he nonetheless takes it as his responsibility to care for his half-sister Maria when her mother dies. He travels to her home to fetch her back to the family seat at Everleigh Park.

Although she adored him once, Maria now loathes Justin, and her friend Lady Estelle Lamarr can see immediately how his very name upsets her. When Justin arrives and invites Estelle and her brother to accompany Maria to Everleigh Park to help with her distress, she begrudgingly agrees for Maria's sake.

As family secrets unravel in Maria's homecoming, Justin, too, uncovers his desire for a countess. And, while he may believe he's found an obvious candidate in the beautiful 25-year-old Lady Estelle, she is most certain that they could never make a match...

Steve Berry – The Kaiser's Web – 9.99 – Thriller



A secret dossier from a World War II-era Soviet spy comes to light containing information that, if proven true, would not only rewrite history -- it could impact Germany's upcoming national elections and forever alter the political landscape of Europe.

Two candidates are vying to become Chancellor of Germany. One is a patriot having served for the past sixteen years, the other a usurper, stoking the flames of nationalistic hate. Both harbor secrets, but only one knows the truth about the other. They are on a collision course, all turning on the events of one fateful day -- April 30, 1945 -- and what happened deep beneath Berlin in the *Fürherbunker*. Did Adolph Hitler and Eva Braun die there? Did Martin Bormann, Hitler's close confidant, manage to escape? And, even more important, where did billions in Nazi wealth disappear to in the waning days of World War II? The answers to these questions will determine who becomes the next Chancellor of Germany.

From the mysterious Chilean lake district, to the dangerous mesas of South Africa, and finally into the secret vaults of Switzerland, former-Justice Department agent Cotton Malone discovers the truth about the fates of Hitler, Braun, and

Bormann. Revelations that could not only transform Europe, but finally expose a mystery known as the Kaiser's web.

Barbara Taylor Bradford – In The Lion's Den, A House of Falconer Novel – 9.99

Jack Carr – The Devil's Hand, A Thriller – 9.99



It's been twenty years since 9/11. Two decades since the United States was attacked on home soil and embarked on twenty years of war. The enemy has been patient, learning, and adapting. And the enemy is ready to strike again. A new president offers hope to a country weary of conflict. He's a young, popular, self-made visionary...but he's also a man with a secret.

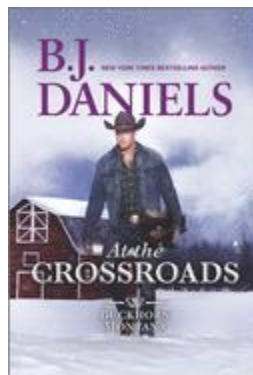
Halfway across the globe a regional superpower struggles with sanctions imposed by the Great Satan and her European allies, a country whose ancient religion spawned a group of ruthless assassins. Faced with internal dissent and extrajudicial targeted killings by the United States and Israel, the Supreme Leader puts a plan in motion to defeat the most powerful nation on earth.

Meanwhile, a young PhD student has gained access to a bioweapon thought to be confined to a classified military laboratory known only to a select number of officials. A second-generation agent, he has been assigned a mission that will bring his adopted homeland to its knees.

With Jack Carr's signature "absolutely intense" (Chuck Norris) writing and "gripping authenticity" (*The Real Book Spy*), *The Devil's Hand* is a riveting and timely thriller that will leave you gasping for breath.

Kate Collins – Big Trouble in Little Greektown, A Goddess of Greene St. Mystery – 8.99

B.J. Daniels – At the Crossroads, Buckhorn, Montana – 9.99 – Romance



They're running for their lives, desperate for a second chance...

Once, Alexis Brand and Culhane Travis were partners, both on and off the job. Now the former deputy turned bounty

hunter is on her former lover's trail after he's charged with killing the ex-wife Alexis didn't know he had. Burying the feelings that still tie her to him, Alexis tracks down Culhane easily enough. But deadly trouble has followed him to this small Montana town, forcing them to flee from the law together and Alexis to guard secrets she hoped she'd never have to reveal.

Culhane's desperate attempt to find out who's framing him is the reason he's returned to Buckhorn, Montana. Instead, he's unwittingly dragged the woman he loves into danger. Alexis offers Culhane forty-eight hours to clear his name before turning him in--plenty of time to realize he never wants to be without her again. But will it be long enough to get the answers they need...before their enemies close in?

A Buckhorn, Montana Novel

Melissa de la Cruz – Never After: The Thirteenth Fairy – 7.99 - Children's 9-12



Discover a new middle-grade fantasy saga from the #1 New York Times bestselling author of The Descendants series, Melissa de la Cruz, where real life and fairy tales collide!

Nothing ever happens in Filomena Jefferson-Cho's sleepy little suburban town of North Pasadena. The sun shines every day, the grass is always a perfect green, and while her progressive school swears there's no such thing as bullying, she still feels bummed out. But one day, when Filomena is walking home on her own, something strange happens. Filomena is being followed by Jack Stalker, one of the heroes in the Thirteenth Fairy, a series of books she loves about a brave girl and her ragtag group of friends who save their world from an evil enchantress. She must be dreaming, or still reading a book. But Jack is insistent--he's real, the stories are real, and Filomena must come with him at once!

Soon, Filomena is thrust into the world of evil fairies and beautiful princesses, sorcerers and slayers, where an evil queen drives her ruthless armies to destroy what is left of the Fairy tribes. To save herself and the kingdom of Westphalia, Filomena must find the truth behind the fairytales and set the world back to rights before the cycle of sleep and destruction begins once more.

Mark Greaney – Relentless, A Gray Man Novel – 9.99 – Thriller



The first agent disappearance was a puzzle.

The second was a mystery.

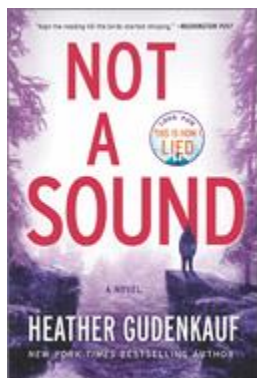
The third was a conspiracy.

Intelligence operatives around the world are disappearing. When a missing American agent re-appears in Venezuela, Court Gentry, the Gray Man, is dispatched to bring him in, but a team of assassins has other ideas. Court escapes with his life and a vital piece of intelligence.

Meanwhile, CIA agent Zoya Zakharova is in Berlin. Her mission: to infiltrate a private intelligence firm with some alarming connections. The closer she gets to answers, the less likely she is to get out alive.

Court and Zoya are just two pieces on this international chessboard, and they're about to discover one undeniable truth--sometimes capturing a king requires sacrificing some pawns.

Heather Gudenkauf – Not A Sound – 9.99 – Thriller

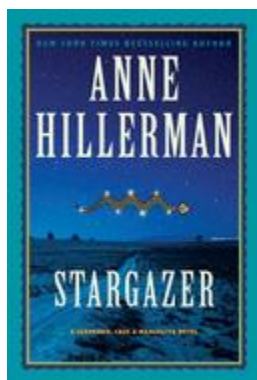


A shocking discovery and chilling secrets converge in this gripping novel from *New York Times* bestselling author Heather Gudenkauf

When a tragic accident leaves nurse Amelia Winn deaf, she loses everything that matters--her job, her husband, David, and her stepdaughter, Nora. Now, two years later and with the help of her hearing dog, Stitch, she is finally getting back on her feet. But when she discovers the body of a fellow nurse in the dense bush by the river, deep in the woods near her cabin, she is plunged into a disturbing mystery that could shatter the carefully reconstructed pieces of her life all over again.

As clues begin to surface, Amelia finds herself swept into an investigation that hits all too close to home. But how much is she willing to risk in order to uncover the truth and bring a killer to justice?

Anne Hillerman – Stargazer, A Leaphorn, Chee & Manuelito Novel – 9.99 – Mystery



What begins as a typical day for Officer Bernadette Manuelito--serving a bench warrant, dealing with a herd of cattle obstructing traffic, and stumbling across a crime scene--takes an unexpected twist when she's called to help find an old friend. Years ago, Bernie and Maya were roommates, but time and Maya's struggles with addiction drove them apart. Now Maya's brother asks Bernie to find out what happened to his sister.

Tracing Maya's whereabouts, Bernie learns that her old friend had confessed to the murder of her estranged husband, a prominent astronomer. But the details don't align. Suspicious, Bernie takes a closer look at the case only to find that nothing is as it seems. Uncovering new information about the astronomer's work leads Bernie to a remote spot on the Navajo Nation and a calculating killer.

The investigation causes an unexpected rift with her husband and new acting boss, Jim Chee, who's sure Bernie's headed for trouble. While she's caught between present and past, Chee is at a crossroads of his own. Burdened with new responsibilities he didn't ask for and doesn't want, he must decide what the future holds for him and act accordingly.

Can their mentor Joe Leaphorn--a man also looking at the past for answers to the future--provide the guidance both Bernie and Chee need? And will the Navajo heroes that stud the starry sky help them find justice--and the truth they seek?

William W. Johnstone and J.A. Johnstone – Slaughter of the Mountain Man – 8.99 – Western

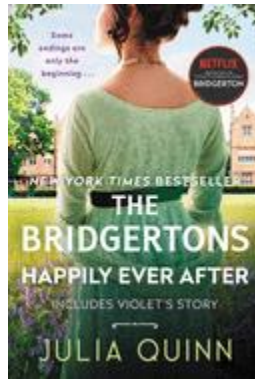
Jonathan Kellerman – Serpentine, An Alex Delaware Novel – 9.99 – Thriller



LAPD homicide lieutenant Milo Sturgis is a master detective. He has a near-perfect solve rate and he's written his own rule book. Some of those successes the - toughest ones - have involved his best friend, the brilliant psychologist Alex Delaware. But Milo doesn't call Alex in unless cases are different. This murder warrants an immediate call. Milo's independence has been compromised as never before, as the department pressures him to cater to the demands of a mogul: a hard-to-fathom, megarich young woman who is obsessed with reopening the coldest of cases the decades-old death of the mother she never knew. The facts describe a likely loser: a mysterious woman found with a bullet in her head in a torched Cadillac that has overturned on infamously treacherous Mulholland Drive. No physical evidence, no witnesses, no apparent motive. And a slew of detectives have already worked the case and failed. But as Delaware and Sturgis begin digging, the mist begins to lift. Too many coincidences. Facts turn out to be anything but. And as they soon discover, very real threats lurking in the present.

Jane Ann Krentz – All the Colors of the Night – 8.99 – Romance

Julia Quinn – The Bridgertons: Happily Ever After – 9.99 – Romance



Ever wonder what happens *after* the Happily Ever After?

Julia Quinn's Bridgerton series remains one of the most beloved among historical romance readers, and this collection of "second epilogues"--stories that take place after the original books end--offers fans more from their favorite characters.

Also unique to this volume is a novella featuring Violet Bridgerton, beloved mother of the eight Bridgerton siblings, in addition to second epilogues for *The Duke and I*; *The Viscount Who Loved Me*; *An Offer from a Gentleman*; *Romancing Mister Bridgerton*; *To Sir Phillip, With Love*; *When He Was Wicked*, *It's in His Kiss*; and *On the Way to the Wedding* sure to satisfy the legions of Julia Quinn fans.

Robert J. Randisi – The Trail Drive Series: Sagebrush Trail, A Ralph Compton Western – 7.99

Kathy Reichs – A Conspiracy of Bones, A Temperance Brennan Novel – 9.99 – Thriller



It's sweltering in Charlotte, North Carolina, and Temperance Brennan, still recovering from neurosurgery following an aneurysm, is battling nightmares, migraines, and what she thinks might be hallucinations when she receives a series of mysterious text messages, each containing a new picture of a corpse that is missing its face and hands. Immediately, she's anxious to know who the dead man is, and why the images were sent to her.

An identified corpse soon turns up, only partly answering her questions.

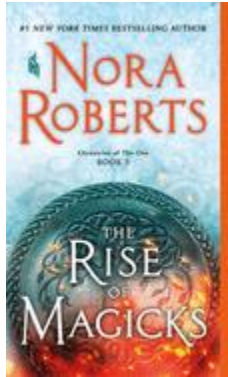
To win answers to the others, including the man's identity, she must go rogue, working mostly outside the system.

That's because Tempe's new boss holds a fierce grudge against her and is determined to keep her out of the case.

Tempe bulls forward anyway, even as she begins questioning her instincts. But the clues she discovers are disturbing and confusing. Was the faceless man a spy? A trafficker? A target for assassination by the government? And why was he carrying the name of a child missing for almost a decade?

With help from law enforcement associates including her Montreal beau Andrew Ryan and the quick-witted, ex-homicide investigator Skinny Slidell, and utilizing new cutting-edge forensic methods, Tempe draws closer to the astonishing truth.

Nora Roberts – The Rise of Magicks, Chronicles of The One, Book 3 – 8.99 – Fantasy



After the sickness known as the Doom destroyed civilization, magick has become commonplace, and Fallon Swift has spent her young years learning its ways. Fallon cannot live in peace until she frees those who have been preyed upon by the government or the fanatical Purity Warriors, endlessly hunted or locked up in laboratories, brutalized for years on end. She is determined to save even those who have been complicit with this evil out of fear or weakness--if, indeed, they can be saved.

Strengthened by the bond she shares with her fellow warrior, Duncan, Fallon has already succeeded in rescuing countless shifters and elves and ordinary humans. Now she must help them heal--and rediscover the light and faith within themselves. For although from the time of her birth, she has been The One, she is still only one. And as she faces down an old nemesis, sets her sights on the enemy's stronghold, and pursues her destiny--to finally restore the mystical shield that once protected them all--she will need an army behind her...

Gena Showalter – The Warlord – 9.99 – Romance

Nicholas Sparks – The Rescue – 9.99 – Romance

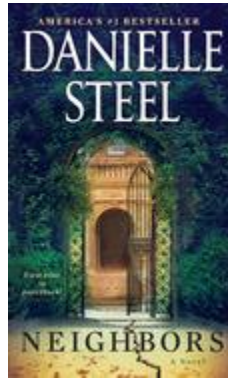


Volunteer fireman Taylor McAden couldn't bring himself to take one risk: to fall in love. When he meets single mother Denise Holton, who's involved in a near-fatal car crash during a violent storm in their small North Carolina town, Taylor must look into his past and see if it's not too late to take a chance on the future.

The December 2021 winner #4 is:

Julie Sanders

Danielle Steel – Neighbors – All That Glitters – 8.99 – General



Meredith White was one of Hollywood's most recognizable faces. But a personal tragedy cut her acting career short and alienated her from her family. For the last fifteen years, Meredith has been living alone in San Francisco with two trusted caretakers. Then, on a muggy late summer day, a massive earthquake strikes Northern California, plunging the Bay Area into chaos. Without a moment's hesitation, Meredith invites her stunned and shaken neighbors into her mostly undamaged home as the recovery begins.

These people did not even realize that movie star Meredith White was living on their street. Now, they are sharing her mansion, as well as their most closely kept secrets. Without the walls and privacy of their own homes, one by one, new relationships are forged. For every neighbor there is a story, from the doctor whose wife and children fear him, to the beautiful young woman dating a dishonorable man, to the aspiring writer caring for a famous blind musician.

In the heart of the crisis, Meredith finds herself venturing back into the world. And thanks to the suspicions and the dogged detective work of a disaster relief volunteer, a former military officer named Charles, a shocking truth about her own world is exposed. Suddenly Meredith sees her isolation, her estranged family, and even her acting career in a whole new light.

Filled with powerful human dramas, *Neighbors* is a penetrating look at how our world can be upended in a moment. In a novel of unforgettable characters and stunning twists, acts of love and courage become the most powerful forces of all.

Sabaa Tahir – A Sky Beyond the Storm, An Ember in the Ashes Novel – 11.99 – Young Adult



Picking up just a few months after *A Reaper at the Gates* left off...

The long-imprisoned jinn are on the attack, wreaking bloody havoc in villages and cities alike. But for the Nightbringer, vengeance on his human foes is just the beginning.

By his side, Commandant Keris Veturia declares herself Empress, and calls for the heads of any and all who defy her rule. At the top of the list? The Blood Shrike and her remaining family.

Laia of Serra, now allied with the Blood Shrike, struggles to recover from the loss of the two people most important to her. Determined to stop the approaching apocalypse, she throws herself into the destruction of the Nightbringer. In the process, she awakens an ancient power that could lead her to victory--or to an unimaginable doom.

And deep in the Waiting Place, the Soul Catcher seeks only to forget the life--and love--he left behind. Yet doing so

means ignoring the trail of murder left by the Nightbringer and his jinn. To uphold his oath and protect the human world from the supernatural, the Soul Catcher must look beyond the borders of his own land. He must take on a mission that could save--or destroy--all that he knows.

Tim Washburn – Stampede, A Rocking R. Ranch Western – 8.99