

THE BOOK RACK NEWSLETTER

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

Vol 16, #6
June 2023
563-355-2310
BookRackQC@Gmail.com

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

Trivia for June 2023

Presidential candidate Andrew Jarrett uses the slogan "Make America Great Again" in "The Parable of the Talents," a 1998 dystopian novel by what sci-fi author?

Read on and find the answer later in the newsletter.

June \$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. I download all our customers who have registered since 2010 and

sort them by the date of last “activity.” That gives me a list numbered 1-N (5442 this month) reflecting all who have had any activity at the store, which was captured by our system (Since June 1, 2021). I use a random generator available via Google search to generator 4 numbers from 1-N (5442 this month). Then I go to my downloaded customer and find those 4 listings matching the random numbers. Voila! I have our winners for the month. This month just for fun I’ve added the winners’ random numbers with their names.

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

The June 2023 winner #1 is:

1611 - Annette Tank

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 **June 30, 2023** to claim your prize:

A \$25 gift certificate from The Book Rack!

June 2023 Holidays and Events at The Book Rack:

June Holidays - Monthly Celebrations

Alzheimer’s and Brain Awareness Month

Great Outdoors Month

National Accordion Awareness Month

National Adopt a Cat Month

June Weekly Events

Fishing Week, Week 1

Lightning Safety Week – Last full week of Month

National Gardening Week – First full week of month

2023 June Daily Holidays, Special and Wacky Days:

June 1 - Dare Day

June 3 - World Bicycle Day
 June 4 - Hug Your Cat Day
 June 5 - World Environment Day
 June 6 - D-Day, WWII
 National Yo-Yo Day
 June 8 - Best Friends Day
 June 9 - Donald Duck Day
 National Flip Flop Day – second Friday in June
 National Strawberry Rhubarb Pie Day – I LOVE these pies!
 June 10 - Herb and Spices Day
 June 11 - National Children’s Day
 National Corn on the Cob Day
 June 14 - Flag Day
 Nursing Assistants Day – date varies
 June 15 - National Prune Day
 Smile Power Day
 June 17 - World Juggler’s Day – Saturday closest to June 17th
 June 18 - Father’s Day – third Sunday
 June 19 - National Kissing Day
 June 20 - National Bald Eagle Day
 June 21 - Finally Summer Day / Summer Solstice
 June 22 - World Rainforest Day
June 22-24 - DAVID R. COLLINS WRITERS’ CONFERENCE
 June 23 - Let it Go Day
 Take Your Dog to Work Day
 June 24 - International Fairy (or Faery) Day
 June 25 - National Catfish Day
 June 26 - Forgiveness Day
 June 27 - National Onion Day
 June 29 - International Mud Day

DAVID R. COLLINS WRITERS’ CONFERENCE

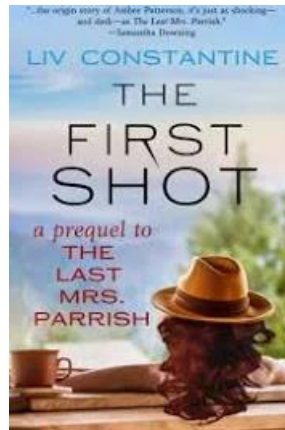
June 22-24, 2023

David R. Collins Writers’ Conference
 Augustana College - Rock Island, IL
 June 22, 23, and 24, 2023

For complete details: <https://www.mwcqc.org/events-opportunities/david-r-collins-writers-conference/>

Book Reviews

The First Shot by Liv Constantine (2021) – General Fiction



In this gripping prequel to the blockbuster one million copy seller and Reese Witherspoon Book Club pick *The Last Mrs. Parrish*, readers will discover exactly how Amber Patterson transformed from small-town girl to master manipulator - after all, practice makes perfect.

Amber Patterson has many secrets. This much is clear when she sneaks out of her home in the dead of night and hitchhikes across state lines to meet up with a man she hasn't seen or spoken to since high school graduation. So begins her desperate attempt to leave her old life behind, and she'll use everything and everyone at her disposal, from social media stalking to the kindness of unsuspecting strangers, to get where she needs to go. It's not long before she's ready for the main event: armed with a new identity and a new purpose, she heads to Gunnison, Colorado, preparing herself to meet her future husband among the wealthy vacationers.

Even the smallest misstep could derail this carefully-laid plan, and in the end, can you even truly outrun your past? *The First Shot* is an absorbing, binge-able thriller that shows just how far some will go to build the lives they want.

Liv Constantine is the pen name of sisters Lynne Constantine and Valerie Constantine. Lynne and Valerie are national and international bestselling authors with over one million copies sold worldwide. Their books have been translated into 28 languages, are available in 33 countries, and are in development for both television and film. Their novels have been praised by USA Today, The Sunday Times, People Magazine, and Good Morning America,

among many others. Their debut novel, THE LAST MRS. PARRISH, is a Reese Witherspoon Book Club selection.

A well written drama matching a recently married young wife and her would-be family on her deceased husband's side. It is an intriguing story that kept my interest and dropped an ending unexpected by me. I give it a B and recommend it. Only available in paperback.

Duel in the Dark by Jay Allan (2016) – Science Fiction/Space Opera



Publisher Marketing:

The Confederation has fought three wars against the forces of the totalitarian Union. Three generations of its warriors have gone off to war, held the line against the larger, more powerful enemy. Now the fourth conflict is imminent, and the Confederation's navy is on alert, positioned behind the frontier, waiting for the attack it knows is coming. The battleship Dauntless has spent the past ten months patrolling the border, deployed far forward of the main fleet, a forlorn hope, an advance guard positioned to give the warning of invasion. But no attack has come. Her crew is exhausted, and the aging battleship needs maintenance. With the fleet mobilized and the forward bases overloaded beyond capacity, she is sent clear across the Confederation, to a planet along the quiet and peaceful far frontier. Her crew is looking forward to a rest, and Dauntless herself is scheduled for a long-overdue maintenance session. But the quiet frontier isn't what it seems...and when a distress call is received from one of the mining colonies on the edge of Confederation space, it falls to Captain Tyler Barron to take Dauntless forward, to find out what is happening, and to put a stop to it. Barron and his crew have their ship-and each other-but they can expect no other help. Suspicion is strong that Union deceit is at play, that the attack is some sort of diversion, intended to draw Confederation forces from the disputed border. The orders are clear. No ships will be transferred from the prospective battle line. Stopping whatever is happening on the rim is Barron's

responsibility, and his alone. Barron is the grandson of the Confederation's great hero, the father of the modern navy. His family name has always carried privilege with it, and crushing responsibility. And now he must prove that he has inherited more from his famous grandfather than name and privilege. He must face the enemy, and win the victory...before the Confederation is caught between two enemies and destroyed. The opponent to Barron is an equally talented hero from another interplanetary Alliance, herself the latest in her family line of distinguished Commanders sent to test the abilities of the Confederation's abilities. What ensues is a one-on-one battle of the two commanders, neither of whom can retreat, negotiate or pursue any outcome other than a victory.

The final battles and the outcome are masterfully conceived by Allan with the suspense ever intensifying. The story took a while to really draw me in, but once I was hooked, I didn't want to stop until I found out the final resolution. You will like/love both commanders and their crews and want neither to lose. What happens? You'll have to read the whole book, but it is certainly worth the time. I give it an A.

Black Skies by Arnaldur Indridason – Mystery 2009



Publisher Marketing:

THE MOST GRIPPING ENTRY YET IN ARNALDUR INDRIDASON'S CELEBRATED INSPECTOR ERLENDUR SERIES.

Arnaldur Indriðason, whom *The Sunday Times* calls one of the most brilliant crime writers of his generation, has thrilled readers around the world with his series set in Reykjavík. In *Black Skies*, Indriðason further cements his position as one of today's top international crime writers.

A man is making a leather mask with an iron spike fixed in the middle of his forehead. Meanwhile, a school reunion has left Inspector Erlendur's colleague Sigurdur Óli unhappy with life in the police force. While Iceland is enjoying an economic boom, Óli's relationship with his wife is on the rocks and soon even

his position in the department is compromised. When a favor to a friend goes wrong and a woman dies before his eyes, Óli has a murder investigation on his hands.

From the villas of Reykjavík's banking elite to a sordid basement flat, *Black Skies* is a superb story of greed, pride, and murder from one of Europe's most successful crime writers.

Another really good book by Indriðason. If you can get past the Icelandic names for people streets and places, you will enjoy the story. A well-crafted mystery. I give it an A-. If you like Camilla Läckberg or Jo Nesbo, I think you'd also find Arnaldur Indriðason an author worth trying.

Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad (1902) - Classic



Publisher Marketing:

Heart of Darkness is a novella written by Joseph Conrad, first published in 1902. The story centers on Charles Marlow, who narrates most of the book. He is an Englishman who takes a foreign assignment from a Belgian trading company as a river-boat captain in Africa. Heart of Darkness exposes the dark side of European colonization while exploring the three levels of darkness that the protagonist, Marlow, encounters: the darkness of the Congo wilderness, the darkness of the Europeans' cruel treatment of the African natives, and the unfathomable darkness within every human being for committing heinous acts of evil. Joseph Conrad (born Józef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski(3 December 1857 - 3 August 1924) was a Polish novelist who wrote in English, after settling in England. Conrad is regarded as one of the great novelists in English, though he did not speak the language fluently until he was in his twenties . He wrote stories and novels, often with a nautical setting, that depict trials of the human spirit in the midst of an indifferent universe. He was a master prose stylist who brought a distinctly non-English tragic sensibility into English literature.

If you've not read Conrad, this is a good book to begin with. Fairly short (80 pages) and filled with his wonderful prose that will provide you a vivid picture of the people and places he takes you. It earns an A from me.

The Star of Istanbul (Christopher Marlowe Cobb Thriller) by Robert Olen Butler (2013)



World War I is in full swing. Germany has allied itself with the Ottoman empire, persuading the caliphs of Turkey to declare a jihad on the British empire, as President Woodrow Wilson hesitates to enter the fray. War correspondent and American spy Christopher Marlowe Cobb has been tasked to follow a man named Brauer, a German intellectual and possible covert SS agent, into perilous waters aboard the ship Lusitania, as the man is believed to hold information vital to the war effort. Aboard the Lusitania on its fateful voyage, Cobb becomes smitten with famed actress Selene Bourgani, who for some reason appears to be working with German Intelligence.

Soon Cobb realizes that this simple actress is anything but, as she harbors secrets that could pour gasoline on the already raging conflict. Following the night of the infamous German U-Boat attack on the Lusitania, Cobb must follow Selene and Brauer into the darkest alleyways of London, then on to the powder keg that is Istanbul. He must use all the cunning he possesses to uncover Selene's true motives, only to realize her hidden agenda could bring down some of the world's most powerful leaders. On his own across the war-torn stages of Europe and the Middle East, Cobb must venture deep behind enemy lines, cut off from his only allies, knowing full well he may not return.

Robert Olen Butler is the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of fourteen novels, six story collections, and a book on the creative process.

Double and triple crosses merge like lanes in a traffic roundabout, and . . . the novel commingles character-driven historical fiction with melodrama and swashbuckling action. Somehow . . . it all works; on one level, Butler is playing with genre conventions in an almost mad-scientist manner, but at the same time,

he holds the reader transfixed, like a kid at a Saturday matinee.-
- *Booklist* (starred review)

I had no idea what to expect of this novel. It captivated me throughout and I give it an A. You've likely not read Butler before, but he's an excellent author to try. You will not be disappointed. I'd compare this book to Martin Cruz Smith's December 6.

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<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! 😊

The June 2023 winner #2 is:

1844 - Kayla, Chris & Sam Jones

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

Katharine Beutner – Killingly – Mystery – 27.95



Based on the unsolved real-life disappearance of a Mount Holyoke student in 1897--a haunting novel of intrigue, long-ing, and terror.

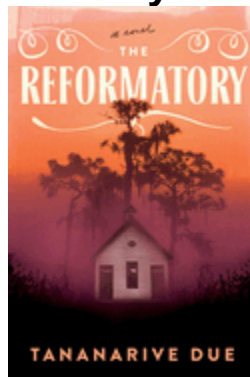
Massachusetts, 1897: Bertha Mellish, "the most peculiar, quiet, reserved girl" at Mount Holyoke College, is missing.

As a search team dredges the pond where Bertha might have drowned, her panicked father and sister arrive desperate to find some clue to her fate or state of mind. Bertha's best friend, Agnes, a scholarly loner studying medicine, might know the truth, but she is being unhelpfully tightlipped, inciting the suspicions of Bertha's family, her classmates, and the private investigator hired by the Mellish family doctor. As secrets from Agnes's and Bertha's lives come to light, so do the competing agendas driving each person who is searching for Bertha.

Where did Bertha go? Who would want to hurt her? And could she still be alive?

Edmund White Award-winning author Katharine Beutner takes a real-life unsolved mystery and crafts it into an unforgettable historical portrait of academia, family trauma, and the risks faced by women who dared to pursue unconventional paths at the end of the 19th century.

Tananarive Due – The Reformatory – Horror – 28.99



A gripping, page-turning novel set in Jim Crow Florida that follows Robert Stephens Jr. as he's sent to a segregated reform school that is a chamber of terrors where he sees the horrors of racism and injustice, for the living, and the dead.

Gracetown, Florida

June 1950

Twelve-year-old Robbie Stephens, Jr., is sentenced to six months at the Gracetown School for Boys, a reformatory, for kicking the son of the largest landowner in town in defense of his older sister, Gloria. So begins Robbie's journey further into the terrors of the Jim Crow South and the very real horror of the school they call The Reformatory.

Robbie has a talent for seeing ghosts, or haints. But what was once a comfort to him after the loss of his mother has become a window to the truth of what happens at the reformatory. Boys forced to work to remediate their so-called crimes have gone missing, but the haints Robbie sees hint at worse things. Through his friends Redbone and Blue, Robbie is learning not just the rules but how to survive. Meanwhile, Gloria is rallying every family member and connection in Florida to find a way to get Robbie out before it's too late.

The Reformatory is a haunting work of historical fiction written as only American Book Award-winning author Tananarive Due could, by piecing together the life of the relative her family never spoke of and bringing his tragedy and those of so many others at the infamous Dozier School for Boys to the light in this riveting novel.

Jake Emanuel & Willie Block - The Edge of Sleep – Horror – 29.00



What if the whole world fell asleep...and didn't wake up again?

Dave Torres, a night watchman in a placid coastal town, knows all about sleep troubles. Since childhood, he's battled terrors and nightmares. Sometimes those battles leak into his waking life, with disastrous consequences for those he loves. Now Dave lives alone and self-medicates to neutralize his dreams. It's not much of a life, he knows.

The morning after Independence Day, Santa Mira, California, is so quiet Dave can hear the ocean from miles away. Traffic signals blink from red to green over empty intersections. Storefronts remain locked up tight. Every radio station whispers static. And all over town, there are bodies, lying right where their owners left them. Dead right where they slept.

Dave--along with his ex-girlfriend, Katie, his best friend, Matteo, and Linda, a nurse he's just met--struggle to unravel the mystery before sleep overtakes them all.

Except the answer to the mystery might lie in the one place that frightens Dave most: His twisted, unnerving dreams. Now Dave and his friends must straddle the liminal boundary between life and death as they fight to save everyone they've ever loved--and to keep their eyes open.

Because if any of them falls asleep now, it will be the last thing they ever do.

The June 2023 winner #3 is: 1628 - Lisa Blair

Heather Graham - Whispers at Dusk (Blackbird Trilogy #1) – Thriller – 30.00



When darkness falls, there's nowhere to hide.

Four bodies have been discovered along Europe's riverbanks, placed with care--and completely drained of blood. Pinpricks on their throats indicate a slender murder weapon, but DNA found in the wounds suggests something far more sinister. Tasked with investigating, the FBI recruits Agents Della Hamilton and Mason Carter to Blackbird, an international offshoot of the Krewe of Hunters. If you want to catch a vampire killer, you need agents who can speak with the dead.

The pair travel to Norway, where the shadowy forests of Lillehammer reveal a gruesome scene. The killer is thirsty for more victims, and the bloodless trail soon leads Della and Mason to a group that believes drinking blood is the key to

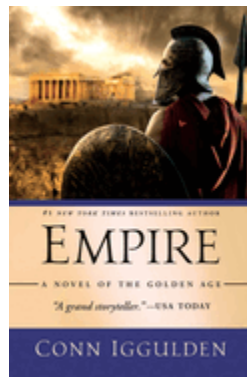
immortality. To catch the culprit of such an intimate crime, the agents will have to get close. Mason's already lost one partner; he's not ready to risk Della as bait. But sometimes justice requires a sacrifice...

David Housewright – In a Hard Wind (Twin Cities P.I. Mac McKenzie Novels #20) – 28.00



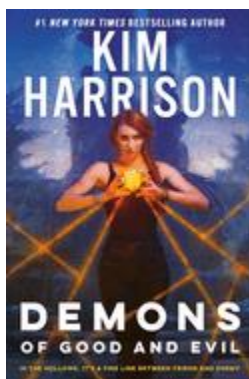
When asked to investigate a murder in a seemingly idyllic Minnesota town, Rushmore McKenzie finds that all the evidence points directly at his client.

Conn Iggulden - Empire: A Novel of the Golden Age – Historical Fiction – 26.95



Pericles returns home more than a hero: he's the leader of Athens, the empire's beacon of light. But even during times of peace, the threat of Sparta--Athens's legendary rival--looms large on the horizon. When a sudden catastrophe brings Sparta to its knees, Pericles sees a golden opportunity to forever shift the balance of power in his city's favor. For sometimes, the only way to win lasting peace is to wage war. Sparta may be weak, but their power is far from extinguished. Soon a ruthless young boy steps forward to lead the Spartans back to greatness. As the drums of battle draw closer, can Pericles rise to victory once more--or will the world's greatest empire fall under his watch?

Kim Harrison - Demons of Good and Evil (Hollows) – Fantasy – 28.00



Rachel Morgan, witch-born demon, suspected that protecting the paranormal citizens of Cincinnati as the demon subrosa would be trouble. But it's rapidly becoming way more trouble than even she could have imagined. While Rachel and her friends may have vanquished the trickster demon Hodin, his mysterious associate known only as "The Mage" is eager to finish what Hodin started, beginning with taking down Rachel's power structure piece by piece. With her world falling apart, Rachel desperately needs help. But with all of her supporters under attack, her only hope is to make a deal with the unlikeliest of allies. . . .

Elin Hilderbrand - The Five-Star Weekend – General Fiction – 30.00



Hollis Shaw's life seems picture-perfect. She's the creator of the popular food blog *Hungry with Hollis* and is married to Matthew, a dreamy heart surgeon. But after she and Matthew get into a heated argument one snowy morning, he leaves for the airport and is killed in a car accident. The cracks in Hollis's perfect life--her strained marriage and her complicated relationship with her daughter, Caroline--grow deeper.

So when Hollis hears about something called a "Five-Star Weekend"--one woman organizes a trip for her best friend from each phase of her life: her teenage years, her twenties, her thirties, and midlife--she decides to host her own Five-Star Weekend on Nantucket. But the weekend doesn't turn out to be a joyful Hallmark movie.

The husband of Hollis's childhood friend Tatum arranges for Hollis's first love, Jack Finigan, to spend time with them, stirring up old feelings. Meanwhile, Tatum is forced to play nice with abrasive and elitist Dru-Ann, Hollis's best friend from UNC Chapel Hill. Dru-Ann's career as a prominent Chicago sports agent is on the line after her comments about a client's mental health issues are misconstrued online. Brooke, Hollis's friend from their thirties, has just discovered that her husband is having an inappropriate relationship with a woman at work. Again! And then there's Gigi, a stranger to everyone (including Hollis) who reached out to Hollis through her blog. Gigi embodies an unusual grace and, as it happens, has many secrets.

Iris Johansen - The Survivor (Eve Duncan #30) – Mystery – 29.00

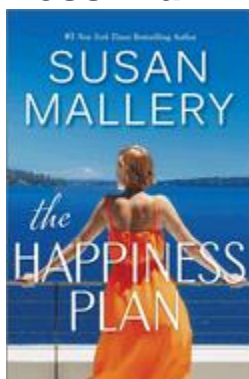


When archeologist Riley Smith comes to ask Eve Duncan for help, Eve has to say no. Traveling halfway around the world on a dangerous quest is not her expertise as a forensic sculptor. But Eve is intrigued by the prospect of an isolated island that holds a secret locked in time.

Traveling to Southeast Asia, Riley is aware of the threat from treasure hunters who are already searching and have no qualms about killing to get what they want. When she successfully evades them and finds the perfectly preserved body of a female warrior, it is just what she needs to entice Eve to help unlock the mystery.

As these two strong women seek answers about this extraordinary past life, Riley makes a living, breathing discovery that will change history. If she can escape the island and survive long enough to share it with the world.

Susan Mallery - The Happiness Plan – Romance – 30.00



Heather is happy . . . ish. She has a successful business, a cute but contemptuous cat, and best friends Daphne and Tori who know where she's broken and love her anyway. So why does she feel crushed when her ex gets serious about someone new? No problem, she has a plan. More connections will hold her together while her world falls apart, so she finally reaches out to the stranger who might be her dad.

Daphne isn't having an emotional affair, despite what her husband believes. *He* started the rift in their marriage when he said they weren't ready for a baby. They used to be the closest couple she knew. Can they find their way back to one another before it's too late?

When Tori forms an inconvenient crush on Daphne's brother-in-law, she suppresses her feelings. Until her apartment floods, and she moves in with the dog-loving doctor. If things go wrong, she could lose her friends. . . but if they go right, she could lose her heart.

Katrina Monroe - Graveyard of Lost Children – Horror – 16.99



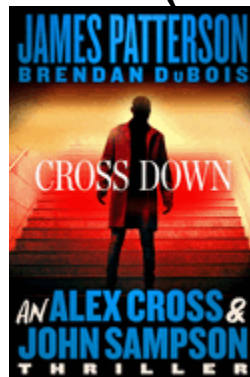
ONCE SHE HAS HER GRIP ON YOU, SHE'LL NEVER LET YOU GO.

At four months old, Olivia Dahl was almost murdered. Driven by haunting visions, her mother became obsessed with the idea that Olivia was a changeling, and that the only way to get her real baby back was to make a trade with the "dead women" living at the bottom of the well. Now Olivia is ready to give birth to a daughter of her own...and for the first time, she hears the women whispering.

Everyone tells Olivia she should be happy. She should be glowing, but the birth of her daughter only fills Olivia with dread. As Olivia's body starts giving out, slowly deteriorating as the baby eats and eats and eats, she begins to fear that the baby isn't her daughter at all and, despite her best efforts, history is repeating itself.

Soon images of a black-haired woman plague Olivia's nightmares, drawing her back to the well that almost claimed her life--tying mother and daughter together in a desperate cycle of fear and violence that must be broken if Olivia has any hope of saving her child...or herself.

James Patterson & Brendan DuBois - Cross Down: An Alex Cross and John Sampson Thriller (Alex Cross Novels) – 30.00



For the first time, John Sampson is on his own.

The brilliant crime-solving duo of Washington, DC's, Metro PD and the FBI has a proven MO: Detective Alex Cross makes his own rules. Detective John Sampson enforces them.

When military-style attacks erupt, brutally sidelining Cross, Sampson is sent reeling. *The patterns are too random--* Sampson's friend, his partner, his *brother--* have told him. *Don't trust anyone.*

As a shadow force advances on the nation's capital, Sampson alone must protect the Cross family, his own young daughter, and every American, including the president.

Wilbur Smith - Nemesis: A Novel of the French Revolution – Thriller – 28.99



A brand-new historical epic from the Master of Adventure, in which three strands of the Courtney family converge in a bloodthirsty bid for revenge.

Paris, 1794. Revolutionary fervour has erupted into the Reign of Terror. A young man, Paul Courtney, hides in a crowd watching as the condemned are brought to the guillotine. Among them is Constance Courtney, Paul's mother. As he watches her brutal execution, he knows he must avoid the same fate and fulfil his promise to her - to survive, no matter what. He joins Napoleon's army and is taken to Egypt, but with the world at war and traitors in every corner, just how far will Paul go to ensure his own survival?

Cape Town, 1806. Adam Courtney has spent his life in service to the navy and in the shadow of his father, the illustrious Admiral Robert Courtney. But when he returns home to Nativity Bay to find the homestead destroyed and the Courtney family murdered, Adam must accept his destiny and seek vengeance. Robert gives Adam the prized family heirloom, the Neptune sword, and makes his son swear on its blade that he will not rest until he has delivered justice. From Cape Town to Calcutta, on a quest for his family's honour, Adam discovers that the enemy he seeks may be closer to him than he realises . . .

Lisa See - Lady Tan's Circle of Women – Women's Literature – 28.00



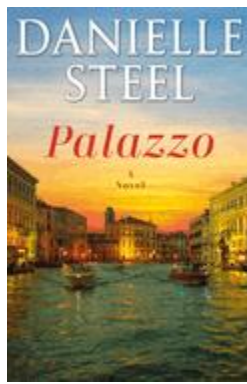
According to Confucius, "an educated woman is a worthless woman," but Tan Yunxian--born into an elite family, yet haunted by death, separations, and loneliness--is being raised by her grandparents to be of use. Her grandmother is one of only a handful of female doctors in China, and she teaches Yunxian the pillars of Chinese medicine, the Four Examinations--looking, listening, touching, and asking--something a man can never do with a female patient.

From a young age, Yunxian learns about women's illnesses, many of which relate to childbearing, alongside a young midwife-in-training, Meiling. The two girls find fast friendship and a mutual purpose--despite the prohibition that a doctor should never touch blood while a midwife comes in frequent contact with it--and they vow to be forever friends, sharing in each other's joys and struggles. *No mud, no lotus*, they tell themselves: from adversity beauty can bloom.

But when Yunxian is sent into an arranged marriage, her mother-in-law forbids her from seeing Meiling and from helping the women and girls in the household. Yunxian is to act like a proper wife--embroider bound-foot slippers, pluck instruments, recite poetry, give birth to sons, and stay forever within the walls of the family compound, the Garden of Fragrant Delights.

How might a woman like Yunxian break free of these traditions, go on to treat women and girls from every level of society, and lead a life of such importance that many of her remedies are still used five centuries later? How might the power of friendship support or complicate these efforts? *Lady Tan's Circle of Women* is a captivating story of women helping other women. It is also a triumphant reimagining of the life of a woman who was remarkable in the Ming dynasty and would be considered remarkable today.

Danielle Steel – Palazzo - Romance – 28.99

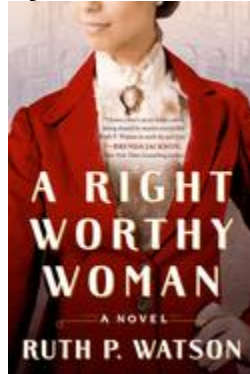


After her parents perish in a tragic accident, Cosima Saverio assumes leadership of her family's haute couture Italian leather brand. While navigating the challenges of running a company at twenty-three, Cosima must also maintain the four-hundred-year-old family palazzo in Venice and care for her younger siblings: Allegra, who survived the tragedy that killed their parents with scars and a spinal injury, and Luca, who has a penchant for wild parties, pretty women, and poker tables.

Cosima navigates her personal and professional challenges with a wisdom beyond her years, but her success has come at a cost: Her needs are always secondary. She's married to the business, and her free time is given to those who rely on her . . . until she meets Olivier Bayard, the founder of France's most successful ready-to-wear handbag company. A brief conversation on her palazzo's terrace turns into a tour of the Saverio workshop, and, fifteen years after her parents' deaths, Cosima has found a confidant.

Now the business is financially stable and generating enough income for the Saverios to live comfortably. Then Luca loses a hefty sum at the casino, and his debt must be repaid with money or his life. Cosima, forced to bail him out, is given an impossible choice: List the palazzo, sell a third of the family business, or let Luca fend for himself. But is there another way to save everything she has fought for before it goes up in flames?

Ruth P. Watson - A Right Worthy Woman – Historical Fiction – 27.99



In the vein of *The Engineer's Wife* and *Carolina Built*, an inspiring novel based on the remarkable true story of Virginia's Black Wall Street and the indomitable Maggie Lena Walker, the daughter of a formerly enslaved woman who became the first Black woman to establish and preside over a bank in the United States.

Maggie Lena Walker was ambitious and unafraid. Her childhood in 19th-century Virginia helping her mother with her laundry service opened her eyes to the overwhelming discrepancy between the Black residents and her mother's affluent white clients. She vowed to not only secure the same kind of home and finery for herself, but she would also help others in her community achieve the same.

With her single-minded determination, Maggie buckled down and went from schoolteacher to secretary-treasurer of the Independent Order of St. Luke, founder of a newspaper, a bank, and a department store where Black customers were treated with respect. With the help of influential friends like W.E.B. DuBois and Mary McLeod, she revolutionized Richmond in ways that are still felt today. Now, her rich, full story is revealed in this stirring and intimate novel.

Susan Wiggs - Welcome to Beach Town – Women's Literature – 30.00



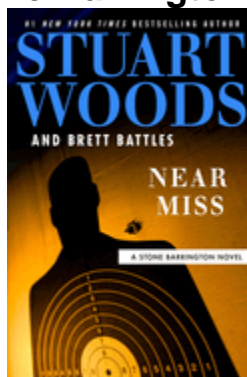
Every town has its secrets...

In idyllic Alara Cove, a California beach town known for its sunny charm and chill surfer vibe, it's graduation day at the elite Thornton Academy. At Thornton, the students are the worldly and overindulged children who live in gated enclaves with spectacular views. But the class valedictorian is Nikki Graziola, a surfer's daughter who is there on scholarship. To the shock of everyone in the audience, Nikki veers off script while giving her commencement address and reveals a secret that breaks open the whole community. As her truth explodes into the light, Alara Cove will face a reckoning.

Nikki Graziola's accusation shakes the foundation of Alara Cove, pitting her against the wealthy family whose money runs the town. Her new notoriety sends Nikki into exile for years, where she finds fame--but not fortune--overseas as a competition surfer...until a personal tragedy compels her to return to Alara Cove.

As Nikki struggles to rebuild her future, she finds that the people of the town have not forgotten her. But time has changed Alara Cove, and old friendships, rivalries, and an unexpected romance draw her back into the life of the beach town she's never quite forgotten, and where joy and redemption may be possible after all.

Stuart Woods - Near Miss (Stone Barrington Novel) – Thriller - 29.00



Following a string of adventures, Stone Barrington is enjoying some downtime in New York City when a chance encounter introduces him to a charming new companion. Too bad she also comes with the baggage of a persistent ex-boyfriend intent on retribution.

As Stone skillfully dodges each disturbance, it becomes clear that there's an even more treacherous game being played behind the scenes. When long-standing grudges resurface, Stone is brought back into the orbit of some familiar enemies. He must use all of his tricks--as well as those of a few old friends--to evade trouble before it's too late. But this time, danger just might catch up with him.

Trivia for June 2023

Presidential candidate Andrew Jarrett uses the slogan "Make America Great Again" in "The Parable"

of the Talents," a 1998 dystopian novel by what sci-fi author?

Answer:

OCTAVIA E. BUTLER

Mass Market Paperback

Jack Campbell - Resolute (The Lost Fleet: Outlands) – Sci Fi – 8.99



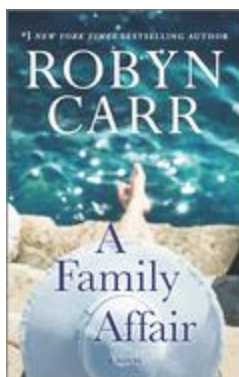
Admiral John "Black Jack" Geary must battle dangers both within and without the Alliance.

Geary knows that some political factions in the Alliance were just trying to get rid of him when he was assigned to escort a diplomatic and scientific mission to the far reaches of humanity's expansion into the galaxy . . . and beyond. But he views his mission as both a duty and an opportunity to make things better wherever he can. And when a crippled Rift Federation ship tumbles out of jump space, Geary leaps into action. But the survivors' story isn't completely adding up.

As Geary investigates, he soon finds himself fending off spies and assassins while leading the fleet as it fights its way across space controlled by the mysterious and hostile aliens whom humans call enigmas. Challenges arrive at every turn, including an unknown alien species that invites the fleet to visit one of their star systems. With little information to go on, Geary must weigh the benefits of potential new allies against the possibility of a trap. The fate of the fleet--and perhaps even the future of humanity--will depend on him making the right decision.

If he can stay alive long enough to do that.

Robyn Carr – A Family Affair – Romance – 9.99



Life's biggest dilemmas can provide its sweetest rewards.

Anna McNichol knows how to take charge. Raised by a single mother, she's worked to ensure her three children have every advantage she didn't. And while her marriage has its problems, she values commitment and believes in till death do us part. Now an empty nester, she's at the peak of her career and ready to seize the opportunity to focus on her future.

But life can change in an instant, and when her husband dies suddenly, Anna's carefully constructed world falls apart. The mysterious young woman at the memorial service confirms her husband had been keeping secrets and Anna is determined to get to the truth.

For once, she doesn't have the answers. Her kids are struggling with their grief, her mother's health is in decline and Anna needs closure. Faced with one challenge after another, she finds support from an unexpected source. And as she puts her life back together, Anna realizes the McNichols may not be perfect but they'll always be family and family is forever.

Brian Freeman - Robert Ludlum's the Bourne Sacrifice (Jason Bourne) – Thriller – 9.99



Jason Bourne tackles a global media conspiracy in the latest electrifying entry in Robert Ludlum's #1 *New York Times* bestselling series.

Jason Bourne has faced many killers before, but none as dangerous or as cruelly inventive as the assassin who calls himself Lennon. Bourne thought he had Lennon cornered in Iceland, only to have the killer escape in a fiery explosion. Now Lennon's trail leads Bourne to New York and then to Washington - and the body count rises with each deadly encounter.

But who is Lennon working for? Bourne believes the assassin has a shadowy new employer called the Pyramid. The only clue to the group's agenda is a young German woman murdered in Washington on her way to a covert meeting. But the woman's entire identity turns out to be a lie, and news reports of her death have been strangely twisted and suppressed.

Finding the truth about this woman may be Bourne's only chance to catch Lennon - and uncover the conspiracy behind the Pyramid. But the chase comes with high stakes. Bourne's former lover, journalist Abbey Laurent, is digging into the mystery too, and Jason's perilous battle against Lennon and the Pyramid will soon put Abbey in the assassin's crosshairs.

Bourne will need to use every bit of his tradecraft and his genius for mayhem to expose this web of lies and murder before Lennon kills the woman he loves.

John Grisham - Sparring Partners -Thriller – 9.99



In his first collection of novellas, law is a common thread, but America's favorite storyteller has several surprises in store.

"Homecoming" takes us back to Ford County, the fictional setting of many of John Grisham's unforgettable stories. Jake Brigrance is back, but he's not in the courtroom. He's called upon to help an old friend, Mack Stafford, a former lawyer in Clanton, who three years earlier became a local legend when he stole money from his clients, divorced his wife, filed for bankruptcy, and left his family in the middle of the night, never to be heard from again--until now. Now Mack is back, and he's leaning on his old pals, Jake and Harry Rex, to help him return. His homecoming does not go as planned.

In "Strawberry Moon," we meet Cody Wallace, a young death row inmate only three hours away from execution. His lawyers can't save him, the courts slam the door, and the governor says no to a last-minute request for clemency. As the clock winds down, Cody has one final request.

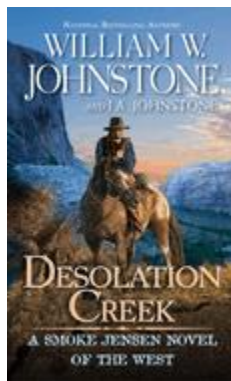
The "Sparring Partners" are the Malloy brothers, Kirk and Rusty, two successful young lawyers who inherited a once prosperous firm when its founder, their father, was sent to prison. Kirk and Rusty loathe each other, and speak to each other only when necessary. As the firm disintegrates, the resulting fiasco falls into the lap of Diantha Bradshaw, the only person the partners trust. Can she save the Malloys, or does she take a stand for the first time in her career and try to save herself?

By turns suspenseful, hilarious, powerful, and moving, these are three of the greatest stories John Grisham has ever told.

The June 2023 winner #4 is:

4362 - Angel Self

William W. Johnstone & J.A. Johnstone - Desolation Creek (Smoke Jensen Novel of the West) – 8.99



The fifth installment in the bestselling prequel series about Smoke Jensen's life and adventures before he became the legendary Mountain Man, is a satisfying tale of revenge as Smoke seeks vengeance after outlaws ambush his old friend Preacher, in the town of Desolation Creek deep in the Montana Territory . . .

Smoke Jensen settled in Colorado to build a legacy for his wife Sally and their family. In the days before their Sugarloaf Ranch would become legendary across the western frontier, the Jensens fought not only to succeed but to survive in an untamed land full of wild, often barbaric men who sought fortune and glory while killing with violent glee...

Building a ranch takes heart and grit. Smoke and Sally Jensen are more than capable of meeting the challenges of shaping the land, raising the livestock, and establishing their brand. But Smoke wasn't always an entrepreneur. He's more apt to settle accounts with a fast draw than a checkbook. And when he learns his old friend Preacher has been ambushed by outlaws, he wastes no time saddling up and hitting the vengeance trail with his fellow mountain men Audie and Nighthawk.

Preacher's attackers have taken over the town of Desolation Creek deep in Montana Territory. Their scurrilous leader, Vernon "Venom" McFadden, has his men harassing terrified homesteaders and townsfolk to get his hands on nearby property that's rumored to be rich with gold. Smoke and his friends--and Sally, who refused to be left behind--drift into town one by one with a plan to root out Venom's gang of prairie rats and put the big blast on each and every one.

Johnstone Country. Where Dying Ain't Much of a Living.

William W. Johnstone & J.A. Johnstone - This Man Must Die (The Buck Trammel Western) – 8.99



Former Pinkerton-turned Wyoming Territory Sheriff Buck Trammel takes on the biggest, meanest criminal in Laramie County - and his equally corrupt lawyer - in his fifth action-packed historical PRISON BREAK!

In the criminal underworld of Laramie County, Lucien Clay was king. He terrorized the locals, robbed the coffers, and ruled the place with an iron fist. Thankfully he's behind bars now--along with a load of other lowlife scum--thanks to Laramie's new sheriff, Buck Trammel. Unfortunately, Buck can only enforce the law while others specialize in working around it: namely, lawyers. And no lawyer is more crooked or corrupt than the belly-crawling snake Clay hired to get him out. By any means possible...

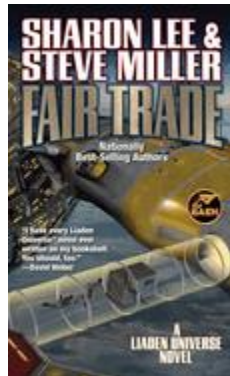
Their breakout plan is simple: The lawyer will wait until midnight. Then he'll break in to the county jail to bust his client out. He'll scale the walls, kill the guards, ambush the deputies, and release the prisoner. There's just one catch: As soon as Clay is freed, the other convicts want out, too. Which sparks total chaos in the prison, creates a distraction for Clay--and unleashes a blood-soaked night of murderous mayhem the new sheriff will never forget. If he survives...

Stephen King - Bag of Bones - Horror – 11.99



Four years after the sudden death of his wife, bestselling novelist Mike Noonan is still grieving. Unable to write and plagued by vivid nightmares set at the western Maine summerhouse he calls "Sara Laughs," Mike reluctantly returns to the lakeside getaway. There, he finds his beloved Yankee town held in the grip of a powerful millionaire, Max Devore, whose vindictive purpose is to take his three-year-old granddaughter, Kyra, away from her widowed young mother, Mattie. As Mike is drawn into Mattie's and Kyra's struggle--and as he falls in love with both of them--he is also drawn into the mystery of Sara Laughs...now the site of ghostly visitations and escalating terrors. What are the forces that have been unleashed here--and just what do they want of Mike Noonan?

Sharon Lee & Steve Miller - Fair Trade (Liaden Universe(r) #24) – Sci Fi – 9.99



THE LIADEN UNIVERSE(R) SERIES CONTINUES

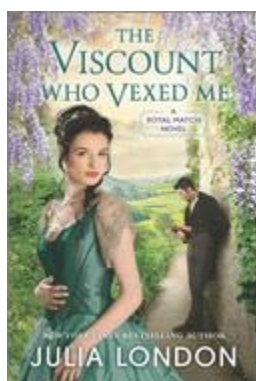
Jethri Gobelyn has risen far: from despised youngest on a Terran family Loop ship to second trader on premier Liaden tradeship *Elthoria* under the guidance of his unlikely foster-mother Norn ven'Deelin Clan Ixin. Master Trader ven'Deelin has taught Jethri much, and she expects great things from him. Indeed, one might say she demands them.

Jethri has inherited a mission from his father, a plan that will allow family Loop ships like the one he grew up on to survive the encroachment of Rostov's Dust. In this, he's backed by several prominent Looper families who are scheduled to meet and plan at the South Axis Trade Fair.

In what seems to be a fortunate pairing of missions, Master Trader ven'Deelin sees Jethri become lead trader on his own small ship, which is scheduled to arrive at the South Axis Fair.

Unfortunately, that "fortunate coincidence" may instead be a test of Jethri's loyalties, as he's thrust into a tangle of grey-trading, mistaken identity, misinformation, and galactic politics. . . .

Julia London - The Viscount Who Vexed Me (Royal Match #3) – Historical Romance – 9.99



Daring. Darling. Determined.

Next to the Season's newest *diamond*, Harriet (Hattie) Woodchurch feels like a plain Jane. But that's of no consequence, since Hattie's plan for her future is to earn enough to live far, far away from her embarrassing family.

That is until Mateo Vincente, Duke of Santiava and newly minted Viscount Abbott, arrives in London. While the shy European's spoken English is impeccable, his writing is less fluent. The *ton* is eager to meet the handsome bachelor, and so many invitations flood in that Mateo needs a correspondence secretary.

With her perfect penmanship and way with words, Hattie is recommended, and the two bond over books and the *ton's* eligible ladies. But when Hattie's friend Flora becomes smitten with the viscount, things get complicated. Flora is tongue-tied in his presence. To help, Hattie feeds her information about Mateo's interests. Soon things turn around and Flora appears on track to become his duchess. Yet for Mateo, something's not quite right. Conversation with Flora isn't as scintillating as it is with Hattie...

Susan Elia MacNeal - Mr. Churchill's Secretary(Maggie Hope #1) – Mystery – 9.99



Publisher Marketing:

BARRY AWARD WINNER - Heralding the arrival of a brilliant new heroine, *Mr. Churchill's Secretary* captures the drama of an era of unprecedented challenge--and the greatness that rose to meet it.

"With any luck, the adventures of red-haired super-sleuth Maggie Hope will go on forever. . . . Taut, well-plotted, and suspenseful, this is a wartime mystery to sink your teeth into." --Kate Quinn, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Rose Code*

London, 1940. Winston Churchill has just been sworn in, war rages across the Channel, and the threat of a Blitz looms larger by the day. But none of this deters Maggie Hope. She graduated at the top of her college class and possesses all the skills of the finest minds in British intelligence, but her gender qualifies her only to be the newest typist at No. 10 Downing Street. Her indefatigable spirit and remarkable gifts for codebreaking, though, rival those of even the highest men in government, and Maggie finds that working for the prime minister affords her a level of clearance she could never have imagined--and opportunities she will not let pass. In troubled, deadly times, with air-raid sirens sending multitudes underground, access to the War Rooms also exposes Maggie to the machinations of a menacing faction determined to do whatever it takes to change the course of history.

Ensnared in a web of spies, murder, and intrigue, Maggie must work quickly to balance her duty to King and Country with her chances for survival. And when she unravels a mystery that points toward her own family's hidden secrets, she'll discover that her quick wits are all that stand between an assassin's murderous plan and Churchill himself.

In this daring debut, Susan Elia MacNeal blends meticulous research on the era, psychological insight into Winston Churchill, and the creation of a riveting main character, Maggie Hope, into a spectacularly crafted novel.

Harper St. George - *The Duchess Takes a Husband* (Gilded Age Heiresses) Historical Romance – 8.99



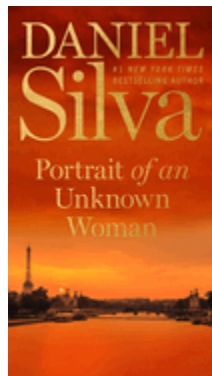
A scandalous arrangement between a London rogue and an American duchess leads to lavish stakes--perfect for fans of *Bridgerton*!

Despite her illustrious title, Camille, Duchess of Hereford, remains what she has always been--a pariah. Though her title means she's technically accepted by London Society, the rebellious widow with her burgeoning interest in the suffrage movement and her American ways isn't exactly high on every hostess's guest list. But Camille starts to wonder if being an outcast is not without its perks when the tantalizing answer to her secret fear appears in the shape of Jacob Thorne, the illegitimate son of an earl and co-owner of London's infamous Montague Club.

Jacob is used to making deals with his club members--he's just not accustomed to them being beautiful women. Nor have the terms ever been so sweetly seductive as Camille's shocking proposition. To finally buy his own club and gain the crucial backing of investors, Camille offers Jacob the respectability of a fake engagement with a duchess. In return, the tempting widow has one condition: she wants Jacob to show her if it's possible for her to experience pleasure in bed.

The lure of such a bargain proves too delicious to resist, drawing the enterprising rogue and the wallflower duchess into a scandalous game and an even more dangerous gamble of the heart.

Daniel Silva - *Portrait of an Unknown Woman* – Thriller - 10.99



In a spellbinding new thriller, Gabriel Allon undertakes a high-stakes search for the greatest art forger who ever lived

Legendary spy and art restorer Gabriel Allon has at long last severed ties with Israeli intelligence and settled quietly in Venice, the only place where he has ever truly known peace. His beautiful wife, Chiara, has taken over the day-to-day management of the Tiepolo Restoration Company, and their two young children are discreetly enrolled in a neighborhood scuola elementare. For his part, Gabriel spends his days wandering the streets and canals of the watery city, bidding farewell to the demons of his tragic, violent past.

But when the eccentric London art dealer Julian Isherwood asks Gabriel to investigate the circumstances surrounding the rediscovery and lucrative sale of a centuries-old painting, he is drawn into a deadly game of cat and mouse where nothing is as it seems.

Gabriel soon discovers that the work in question, a portrait of an unidentified woman attributed to Sir Anthony van Dyck, is almost certainly a fiendishly clever fake. To find the mysterious figure who painted it--and uncover a multibillion-dollar fraud at the pinnacle of the art world--Gabriel conceives one of the most elaborate deceptions of his career.

If it is to succeed, he must become the very mirror image of the man he seeks: the greatest art forger the world has ever known.

Stylish, sophisticated, and ingeniously plotted, *Portrait of an Unknown Woman* is a wildly entertaining journey through the dark side of the art world--a place where unscrupulous dealers routinely deceive their customers and deep-pocketed investors treat great paintings as though they were just another asset class to be bought and sold at a profit. From its elegant opening to the shocking twists of its climax, the novel is a tour de force of storytelling and one of the finest pieces of heist fiction ever written. And it is still more proof that, when it comes to international intrigue and suspense, Daniel Silva has no equal.

Danielle Steel - *The Challenge* – Romantic – 9.99



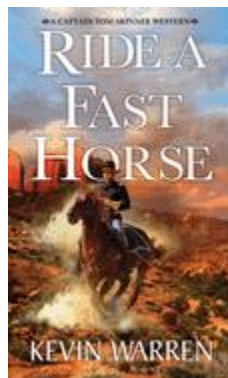
Fishtail, Montana, is home to Anne and Pitt Pollock, local royalty, high school sweethearts, and owners of the successful Pollock ranch. The sprawling foothills of the Beartooth Mountains surround the town, overlooking the Pollocks' property and the nearby ranch belonging to Bill and Pattie Brown. The two couples have known each other since childhood.

Their sons Peter Pollock and Matt Brown are also the best of friends. When they and two other local kids meet Juliet Marshall, new to town after her parents' bitter divorce, the five of them are soon inseparable, spending their summer days swimming, horseback riding, hiking, and fishing.

But one August afternoon, their latest adventure takes a dangerous turn--and quickly escalates into a battle for survival--when they find themselves trapped on Granite Peak. Fear reverberates through the town as their parents grow ever more desperate to hear word that their children have been found. They must place their own trials aside amid a massive search-and-rescue operation. As they come to lean on one another for support, a media frenzy ensues, heightening tensions and testing some already fragile relationships.

In the aftermath of this one fateful event, devastating secrets are revealed, new love appears on the horizon, and families are forced to reconsider what they once held dear.

Kevin Warren - *Ride a Fast Horse (A Captain Tom Skinner Western)* – 8.99



Working cowboy Kevin Warren debuts with the first in a thrilling new Western series, infusing 1889 Arizona Territory with his deep, first-hand knowledge of the cowboy life - its long trails, forest fires, unbroken horses, rough characters, and the vast landscapes of the wild West.

For fans of classic Westerns by Louis L'Amour, Zane Grey, and Ralph Compton.

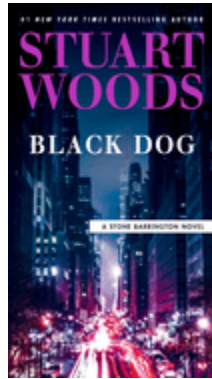
There are two sides to Captain Tom Skinner. One follows orders. One follows his gut. To keep the wild, untamed Arizona Territory safe, he's going with his gut.

Damnably news has reached Fort Verde. Outlaw Jessup Henry and his gang of thugs are raising hell north of Santa Fe, one homestead massacre after another. Now they're on the run in Arizona Territory evading the law. Cavalryman Tom Skinner's command: charge south with his patrol and wipe them out. But Skinner knows the land. Military decree be damned, he's deserting the wayward route--against orders--for the right one. There's more at risk than his career. In Jessup's path is the vulnerable ranch of his newfound love, Veronica, and her family.

After a race to deliverance, Skinner arrives too late. Veronika and her brothers are still alive but what his courageous gal's been through pushes Skinner over the edge. Now it's a breakneck gallop toward vengeance. Every outlaw on the Mongolian Rim is a target. Every bone-jarring mile is more treacherous than the last. This aims to be the bloodiest road a soldier's ever tread. For Skinner and his prey, the one who rides hardest will be the last one alive.

Stuart Woods – Black Dog (Stone Barrington Novel) – Thriller

9.99



Stone Barrington must battle a nasty opponent in this latest action-packed. After returning home from a treacherous adventure, Stone Barrington is all too happy to settle back down in his New York City abode. But when he's introduced to a glamorous socialite with a staggering inheritance, Stone realizes his days are about to be anything but quiet.

As it turns out, Stone's intriguing new companion has some surprisingly familiar ties and other far more sinister ones--including a nefarious enemy who gets too close for comfort. When it becomes clear that this miscreant will stop at nothing to get what he wants, and will endanger all whom Stone holds dear, Stone must step in to protect his friends and prevent a dangerous madman from wreaking havoc across the city.