

A Bakers Dozen of Crime Stories

Here's our first report of the year on the Nichols Library's favorite genre. We are short on cozies, but well stocked with police procedurals, noirs, suspense, and international intrigue. And, for a cherry on-top, a first foray into crime by a respected novelist.

Ripper by Isabelle Allende. In this first foray into crime fiction, a series of ritualistic murders remain unsolved and are thought to be unconnected. Super-smart high-schooler Amanda Martín and her friends, who are obsessed with an Internet role-playing game, start their own investigation in a story that is "sharply perceptive, utterly charming, and intensely suspenseful (*Booklist*)."

Stone cold by C. J. Box.. The Governor sends Joe Pickett to investigate a wealthy rancher and philanthropist who is rumored to be a hire killer. What Joe uncovers is a tangled puzzle of murder, and corruption. Despite his orders to merely observe, Pickett's moral code won't allow him to step back. *The Arizona Republic* found *Stone Cold* to be a "blistering page-turner

After I'm gone by Laura Lippman. A philandering schemer's long-time mistress turns up dead years after he skipped town. Facing jail, Felix Brewer has girlfriend Julie Saxony drive him to Philly where he hops a plane to Montreal and disappears. When Julie's body is discovered, Sandy Sanchez, a p.i. who specializes in cold cases, thinks Felix was involved. This is "an elegant novel of the psychological ravages of crime" (*Booklist*).

Black horizon by James Grippando. After explosion on an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico, attorney Jack Swyteck represents the widow of a man killed on the rig in a wrongful-death suit. The consortium that owns the rig claims that her marriage never existed. Grippando has written a "sold legal thriller" from a story "ripped from the recent headlines. *Bone Deep* by Randy Wayne White is another Gulf Coast thriller in which the search for a missing Native American relic impinges on the interests of a large phosphate mining operation.

Saints of the Shadow Bible by Ian Rankin. The Department investigates Detective Rebus for his role in the disappearance of a snitch. Rebus was a member of the Saints of the Shadow Bible, an elite police unit, now disbanded. Billy Saunders, the snitch, had killed a man and walked, likely with the help of the Saints. Thirty years later, the snitch disappears, and Rebus must choose whether to back up his former mates. "Rankin's thriller plotting is sublime as ever (*The Independent*)."

A Nasty Piece of Work by Robert Littell. P.I. Lemuel Gunn is asked to track a man who has skipped bail. His search soon draws the interest of the FBI and rival mobs. "Fans of quirky gumshoes will love Lemuel."

The Accident by Chris Pavone (Ex-Pats). When Isabel Reed receives an anonymous expose of a media mogul, she realizes that it's her best dream and worst nightmare. If published, it would be a guaranteed bestseller; but it might also get her sued or even killed. Pavone is "a reliable new must-read in the world of thrillers (NYT)."

The counterfeit agent by Alex Berenson. A source who claims to be a Revolutionary Guard colonel claims that the Iranians are planning to smuggle enriched nuclear material into the U.S. Ex-agent John Wells is called in to ferret out the truth. In a similar vein, *Graveyard of memories* by Barry Eisler, When a CIA cash delivery to corrupt Japanese official goes violently wrong, bagman John Rain finds himself in the crosshairs of a powerful yakuza clan.

Concealed in death by J.D. Robb. A rehab team at the site of a former shelter for teens discovers two corpses wrapped in plastic bags behind a crumbling wall. In *Killer* by Jonathan Kellerman, Alex Delaware receives a death threat from a woman who's custody plea was denied, due to AD's testimony. When the author of the threat is found slain, it spells trouble for Alex. Finally, in *Private L.A.* by James Patterson, Jack Morgan investigates the disappearance of the biggest superstar couple in Hollywood.