

The background of the cover is a painting of the exterior of a Heffers bookshop. The building has a dark brown wooden facade with the word 'heffers' in a large, white, stylized script font. A man with glasses, wearing a blue sweater and light-colored trousers, stands in the foreground holding a green book. The overall style is painterly and somewhat abstract.

# THE HEFFERS CRIME FICTION TOP 100

SELECTED BY RICHARD REYNOLDS

**heffers**  
of Cambridge

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# Introduction

Approaching my 40<sup>th</sup> year as a bookseller, all bar two here at Heffers, and having produced many catalogues and reading lists for our customers, I thought it would be a great challenge to put one together with my hundred favourites – madness! There's nothing quite like losing oneself in a great story and selecting a hundred favourites has been no easy task.



Perusing our bookshelves at home including my loft study (a little tricky with stacks all over the floor), together with the shelves at Heffers, resulted in a list of around 400 titles. I was able to whittle this down by restricting myself to one title per author and by making sure I represented a wide range of sub-genres. As it is a selection of my favourites, the titles chosen are, of course, totally subjective.

I hope all of my choices have a sense of noteworthiness and wonder. Some have been chosen for their clever use of language, the ingenuity of the plotting, for the odd scare or their amusing and quirky qualities. I've deliberately chosen some books that are the first in a series that gave me the feeling that I'd be there for the long haul.

I'm sure there will be some surprising exclusions but I trust you'll discover books here that are entertaining and sharply etched - a cut above the norm. It's been a time-consuming but hugely enjoyable exercise to arrive at this list.

I hope you will enjoy looking through this catalogue, discovering new treats and re-discovering some old favourites. Our customers never need any urging but I'd love to hear your own selections that haven't made it in here.

## **Richard**

Heffers Bookshop, Cambridge, April 2019

## **A note on our editor**

Richard Reynolds is undoubtedly one of this country's, and by extension, the world's, great booksellers. His knowledge of and enthusiasm for crime fiction are matched only by his delight in putting the right books in customers' hands.

When he's not busy selling crime books in Cambridge, Richard spends his time judging them. Having spent four years on the Crime Writers Association's Ian Fleming Steel Dagger Panel for thrillers, he has been for several years Chairman of the crime Writers Association's Gold Dagger award for best crime novel of the year.

Working with several publishers, including Oleander Press and Ostara, Richard has been involved in publishing several guides to crime writing and instrumental in bringing many classic titles back into print.



**Rennie Airth: River of Darkness (1999)** In the aftermath of WWI, inhabitants of a small Surrey village are stunned after several horrific killings at a country house, a bungled burglary believed to be the cause. A meticulously plotted masterpiece of psychological suspense.

**Eric Ambler: Mask of Demitrios (1937)** A former lecturer and crime writer's small degree of literary success provides perfect copy in this absorbing thriller.

**Margery Allingham: Tiger in the Smoke (1952)** Great characterisation, a strong sense of place and a menacing perpetrator elevates this Golden Age jewel above many detective stories from this period.

**Belinda Bauer: Blacklands (2009)** An achingly brilliant, cat-and-mouse psychological suspense debut. The first of the Exmoor trilogy was a deserved winner of the 2010 CWA Gold Dagger award.

**E. C. Bentley: Trent's Last Case (1913)** This early classic of the Golden Age, a departure from the mysteries that preceded it, is a delightful literary treat introducing artist, journalist and amateur detective, Philip Trent.

**Anthony Berkeley: The Poisoned Chocolates Case (1929)** A bet, a box of chocolates and a murder. This parody of the Detection Club is a delicious treat!

**Bill Beverly: Dodgers (2016)** A winner of both the 2016 CWA John Creasey award for best first novel and the Gold Dagger for best novel, is a strikingly atmospheric debut packed with poetic dialogue and believable twists.

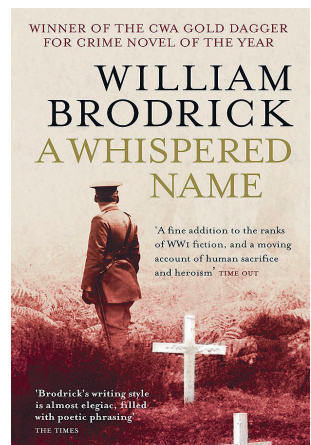
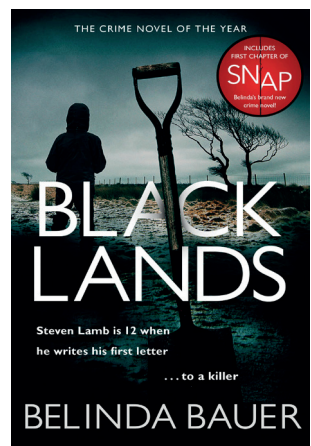
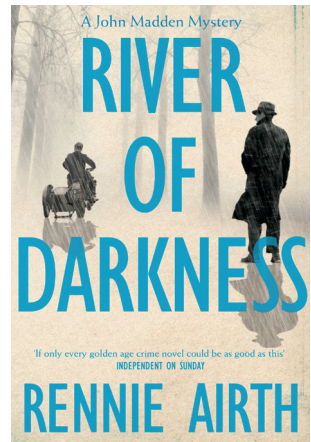
**Nicholas Blake: The Beast Must Die (1938)** A crime writer's motif for perfect murder is stymied after his intended victim is bumped off by a third party! For poet and amateur detective, Nigel Strangeways, untangling truth from fiction is far from simple.

**Stephen Booth: Black Dog (2000)** In a tale set against the dramatic Derbyshire landscape, secrets, lies and rivalries are much in evidence, with detectives Ben Cooper and Diane Fry cutting their teeth on a difficult case.

**William Brodrick: A Whispered Name (2008)** From the carnage of the Western Front of 1917 to the present day and back, the 2009 CWA Gold Dagger award winner has three stories running parallel in a thought-provoking and lyrical mystery featuring investigator Father Anselm.

**Alison Bruce: The Promise (2016)** The sixth of the Cambridge-set procedural series delivers great character interplay, a cleverly constructed plot and further reveals Gary Goodhew's backstory.

**John Buchan: The Thirty-Nine Steps (1915)** The granddaddy of all thrillers, introducing intrepid adventurer hero, Richard Hannay, on a mission to halt the deadly enemy. A rip-roaring read!



**James Lee Burke: The Tin Roof Blowdown (2007)** An unforgettable read with vivid and heart-wrenching descriptions of New Orleans in the aftermath of hurricane Katrina.

**James M. Cain: Double Indemnity (1943)** Perhaps best known as a film, sharp dialogue peppers this noir conspiracy novella, delivering a dark and complex tale of manipulation, murder and dames. Who knew taking out car insurance could be so perilous?

**Caleb Carr: The Alienist (1994)** In their first investigation, psychologist Dr Laszlo Kreisler and reporter John Schuyler Moore, relentlessly pursue the perpetrator behind a glut of grotesque murders in seamy and flamboyant 1890s New York - a brilliantly realised debut.

**John Dickson Carr: The Hollow Man (1935)** Voted one of the best locked-room mysteries ever – a case for Dr Gideon Fell investigating two interconnected impossible crimes with a fair presentation of all the clues – ingenious!

**John le Carré: A Murder of Quality (1962)** In a beautifully written, old-fashioned detective story, almost everyone falls under suspicion after a teacher's wife dies in suspicious circumstances at Carne College. Retired spy, George Smiley, is brought in for a little bit of 'sniffing around'.

**Sarah Caudwell: The Shortest Way to Hades (1984)** In a finely honed plot, changing an estate's trust arrangements couldn't have been simpler, that is, until a family member 'throws a spanner in the works' resulting with her being terminally silenced!

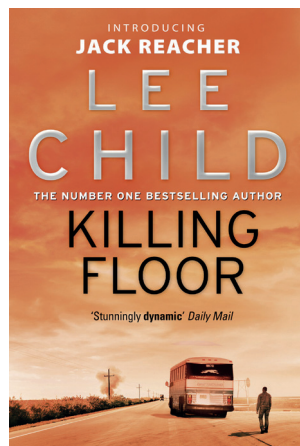
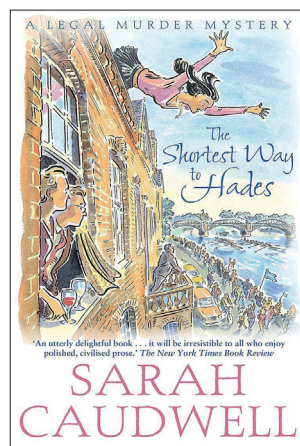
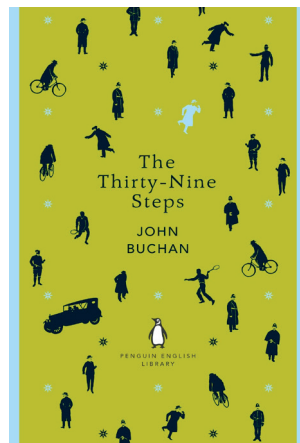
**Raymond Chandler: The Big Sleep (1939)** Oodles of complications occupy a world-weary and cynical PI Philip Marlowe in the first of seven hard-boiled novels featuring him. Sharp dialogue pervades this noir classic – pure gold from first scene to last word.

**Kate Charles: Snares of Death (1992)** An evangelical vicar ruffles feathers with a new posting at a church in Norfolk. When he's found bludgeoned to death some months later, a fellow clergyman, in the frame for the deadly deed, employs solicitor David Middleton-Brown to represent him.

**Lee Child: Killing Floor (1997)** Enthusiasts for thrillers where a lone-ranger clears out the bad guys, will love this great page-turner of a debut, with ex-MP Jack Reacher wrongfully arrested by corrupt police when he arrives in town.

**Agatha Christie: The Murder of Roger Ackroyd (1926)** Everyone, apart from the parlour-maid, has an alibi after a man is found murdered in his locked study. Everything is relevant for Hercule Poirot's 'little grey cells' as he misses nothing. One of my all-time favourite reads – just marvel at one of her most ingenious mysteries!

**Ann Cleeves: Crow Trap (1999)** An atmospheric and fascinating mystery, told from the point of view of three women researchers, staying in a remote cottage on the windswept North Pennine moors.





**Harlan Coben: Tell No One (2001)** In a rip-roaring, well-paced thriller, David Beck receives an email from his dead wife. He questions whether this is some sick joke or did she really survive eight years ago? With the FBI on his trail can he find the truth before more deaths mount up?

**Joan Coggin: Who Killed the Curate? (1944)** Set at Christmas, 1937, this is the first of a quirky and humour-laden series, featuring Lady Lupin Lorrimer, a fun-loving socialite, now married to the village vicar. Clueless about clerical matters, she has a penchant for detection, assuming the role with hilarious results after the poisoning of her husband's blackmailing curate.

**John Colapinto: About the Author (2001)** An aspiring author with writer's block but an active love life, discovers that his exploits are the subject of an unpublished novel, penned by his housemate! His next step is worthy of Highsmith!

**Michael Connelly: The Poet (1996)** In his refusal to accept that his policeman twin committed suicide, Crimebeat reporter Jack McEvoy decides to make further enquiries, unearthing similar cases of a fiendish and poetic serial killer who leaves a trail of clues. Just when you think it's over, it's not – an unputdownable, intricate tale.

**Arthur Conan Doyle: The Hound of the Baskervilles (1902)** A huge success when serialised in the Strand Magazine of 1901-02, with readers of the time discovering that Holmes's dogged perseverance tracking the culprit, on the foggy and boggy bleak landscape of Dartmoor, paid off.

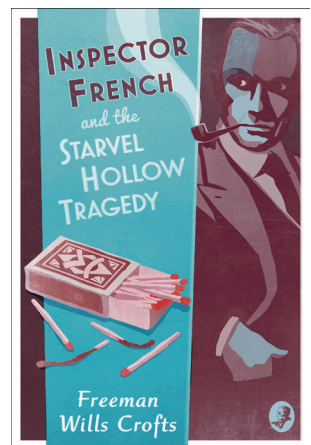
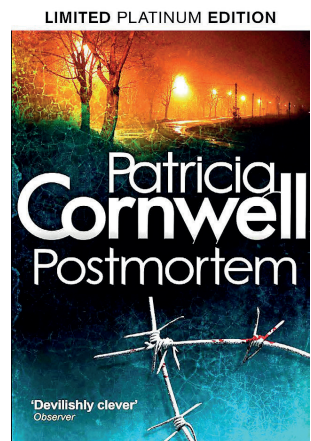
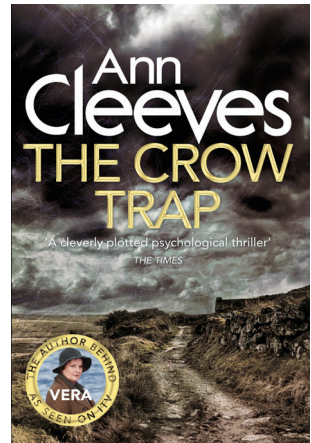
**Patricia Cornwell: Postmortem (1990)** The stuff of nightmares with a serial killer on the loose in the city and one who wants medical examiner Kay Scarpetta dead. The first and best in the series with a strong cast of supporting characters and a story with sufficient twists to keep the reader hooked.

**Colin Cotterill: The Coroner's Lunch (2004)** Dr Siri, a soon-to-retire surgeon, finds he's been re-assigned as the Laotian state coroner without experience or inclination. Nicely rounded quirky characters with a good dollop of dry wit – an all-round refreshing read.

**Edmund Crispin: The Moving Toyshop (1946)** In this glorious madcap extravaganza and bibliophile's treat, an impoverished poet holidaying in Oxford, finds a toyshop surprisingly open late at night, ventures upstairs and finds a strangled corpse. He enlists help from don detective, Professor Gervase Fen.

**Freeman Wills Crofts: Inspector French and the Starvel Hollow Tragedy (1927)** A verdict of accidental death is given, following the demise of a miser and his servants in a house fire. Reports of burnt bank notes in circulation mean someone should be brought to account.

**Lionel Davidson: Kolymisky Heights (1994)** An Oxford don receives a coded message from a former Russian colleague now working at an off-the-grid underground Siberian research station. Tremendous – a richly described masterly thriller.



**Lindsey Davis: The Silver Pigs (1989)** Imperial Rome, AD 70. Smuggling and fraud lie at the heart of this hugely enjoyable romp, introducing wisecracking private informer, Marcus Didius Falco. With a strong cast of supporting characters and a delightful blend of history and black comedy.

**Colin Dexter: Last Seen Wearing (1976)** A two-year-old cold case of a seventeen year-old girl's disappearance is assigned to Oxford's Inspector Morse. A well-constructed story with a nicely realised cast of characters.

**Michael Dibdin: Dead Lagoon (1994)** Acute observations of Italian life with detective Aurelio Zen, seconded from Rome back to his roots in Venice to investigate undesirables tormenting an elderly countess.

**Umberto Eco (Translated from the Italian by William Weaver): The Name of the Rose (Italy, 1980; UK, 1983)** Coded manuscripts, secret symbols and a labyrinthine library suffuse this educative and multi-award winning mystery, set in 1327, with Brother William of Baskerville despatched to investigate heresy in a wealthy Italian Abbey.

**James Ellroy: L.A. Confidential (1990)** In a complex hard-boiled staccato-sentenced epic, the line between good and evil is more than blurred in the third of the L.A. Quartet, with three LAPD officer's lives changed forever after their involvement in a 1951 Christmas incident.

**Dan Fesperman: Lie in the Dark (1999)** It's no easy task separating military casualties from murder victims in war-torn Sarajevo. A complex multi-layered plot and vivid depiction of the locale are amongst the many strengths of this exciting debut thriller, the recipient of the 1999 CWA John Creasey award.

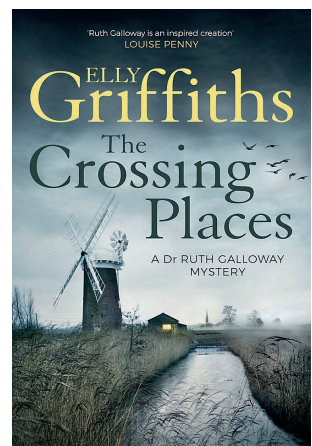
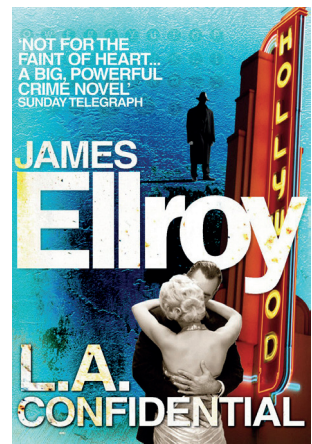
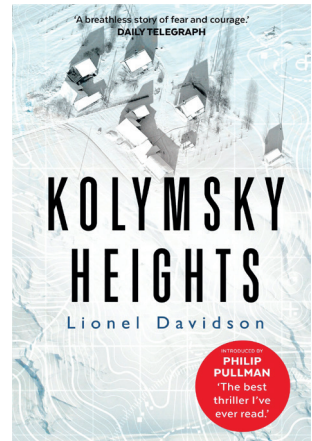
**C. S. Forester: Payment Deferred (1926)** A bleak story of a financially-challenged bank clerk, first contemplating murder, then dealing with the aftermath of it. From a writer better known for his Hornblower series, this is psychological suspense at its best – chilling.

**Frederick Forsyth: The Day of the Jackal (1971)** In a totally absorbing and gripping thriller, an unnamed English assassin unknown to the French authorities is hired to kill Charles de Gaulle.

**Frances Fyfield: Blood from Stone (2008)** A slow reveal from minute threads woven through the plot supplies significant clues in an ingenious, multi-layered psychological thriller and winner of the 2008 CWA Duncan Lawrie Prize for best novel.

**Susanna Gregory: A Masterly Murder (2000)** The newly appointed Master of Michaelhouse had commissioned building works, dismissed staff and generally made life unpleasant for all concerned. Deft handling of historical detail makes the sixth of these Cambridge-based mysteries a hugely enjoyable read.

**Elly Griffiths: Crossing Places (2009)** After a child's bones are discovered on a Norfolk beach, archaeologist heroine, Ruth Galloway, is asked to assist the police with their investigations. A swift flowing plot, atmospheric setting and interesting characters – all in all a terrific series.



**John Grisham: A Time to Kill (1989)** A compelling courtroom thriller debut set in a small Mississippi town and involving a lawyer's defence of a young black father, accused of shooting dead two perpetrators who'd horrifically assaulted his daughter. A harrowing yet terrific read – not for the faint-hearted.

**Dashiell Hammett: The Maltese Falcon (1930)** Sam Spade is the hunter and the hunted in this cracking nightmare of a hard-boiled novel. Captivating plot, priceless jewels, red herrings, a femme fatale, gangsters and a great opener - it's all here from a master storyteller.

**Jane Harper: The Dry (2016)** Almost everyone has something to hide in this Australian-set humdinger of a debut. With razor-sharp characterisation she skilfully peels back the layers of secrets and lies within a drought-ridden farming community.

**John Harvey: Lonely Hearts (1989)** There appears to be no rhyme or reason why single women are under attack from a killer, until a link is found to a 'lonely hearts' club. For DI Charlie Resnick, jazz fiend and cat-loving Nottingham detective, the hunt is on in this hard-hitting first case.

**Mick Herron: Dead Lions (2013)** Jackson Lamb and his motley crew of 'slow horses' succeed where betters fail in the second of the 'Slough House' series after an ex-Cold War spy is terminated on a bus. Sharp dialogue, dry wit and plenty of action – a winning formula for a hugely enjoyable series.

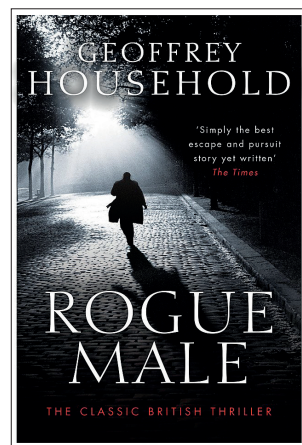
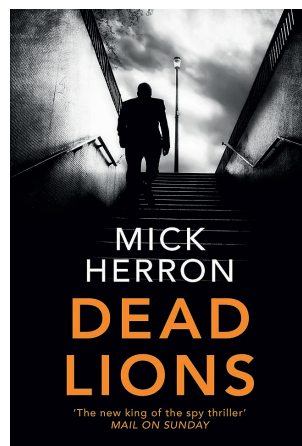
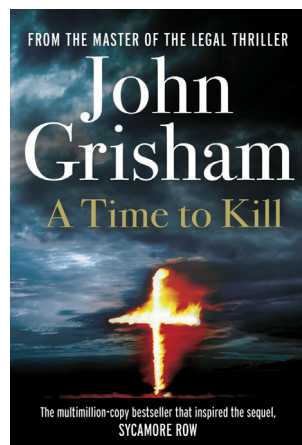
**Patricia Highsmith: The Talented Mr Ripley (1955)** A riveting tale of a charming sociopath intent on the good life, committing murder in Italy, spending time covering his tracks – and moving on. A one-sitting read.

**Reginald Hill: Bones and Silence (1990)** A sharp-humoured, top-notch police procedural featuring loutish police superintendent Dalziel in a *Rear Window* scenario viewed through a whiskey-soaked haze.

**Peter Hoeg (Translated from the Danish by Felicity David): Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow (Denmark, 1992; UK, 1993)** Winner of the 1992 CWA Silver Dagger award, poetic prose permeates this chillingly atmospheric and ingenious thriller revealing Denmark's darker side and introducing an unforgettable heroine in Smilla Jaspersen.

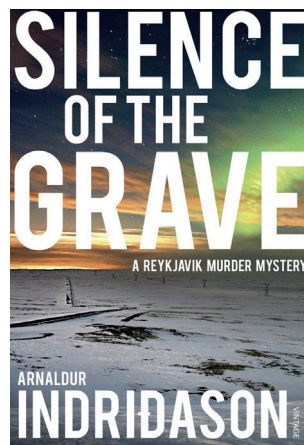
**Geoffrey Household: Rogue Male (1939)** It's 1939 and from the outset of this incredible thriller we are made aware of the lie of the land, of the unnamed man travelling through it and what his purpose may be.

**Frances Iles: Malice Aforethought (1931)** From the chilling opening sentence both murderer and intended victim are known. The question is how does Dr Bickleigh go about it and will he be successful? An early example of the inverted detective story brilliantly succeeds in holding our attention throughout.





**Arnaldur Indridason: (Translated from the Icelandic by Bernard Scudder): *Silence of the Grave* (Iceland, 2002; UK, 2005)** In a finely tuned mystery spanning a 70-year period, a child at a birthday party is discovered sucking on a human bone, given to her by her brother. Inspector Erlandur and his team make their investigations and uncover horrific savagery from the past.



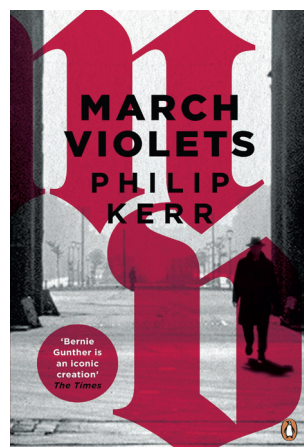
**Michael Innes: *Death at the President's Lodging* (1936)** Much confusion and confirmation of alibis is sought by the Fellows, after the President of St Anthony's College in Oxford, is found shot dead in his locked study, those with any motive being key holders.

**P. D. James: *A Taste for Death* (1986)** There's a complex case for Commander Dalgliesh when the bodies of a former cabinet minister and a tramp are discovered in St Matthew's Church Paddington. An engrossing procedural delivering on all fronts.

**Ragnor Jonasson (Translated from the Icelandic by Quentin Bates): *Snowblind* (Iceland, 2010; UK, 2015)** A great sense of place and characterisation mark out the first of the Dark Iceland series as one to hook readers into devouring the rest!

**Jim Kelly: *The Water Clock* (2002)** A glorious debut with journalist Philip Dryden investigating two murders, thirty years apart, amidst the bitter winter landscape of the Cambridgeshire Fens.

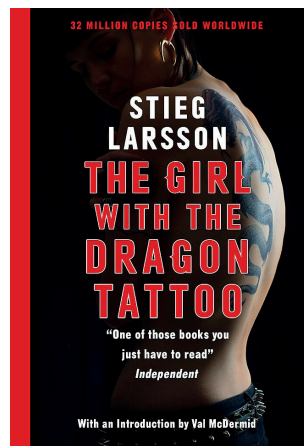
**Philip Kerr: *March Violets* (1989)** In a brilliantly realized first case, set in pre-WWII Berlin, PI Bernie Gunther tramps the Nazi-occupied mean streets in pursuit of a prominent businessman's daughter and son-in-law's killer. A terrific sense of authenticity with dialogue crackling with black humour.



**Laurie R. King: *The Beekeeper's Apprentice* (1994)** A happy day for readers of the Sherlockian canon when Sherlock Holmes, though retired and happily chasing bees on the Sussex Downs, encounters budding theologian, Mary Russell, intellectually matching him and sharing his flair for deduction and danger.

**Andrey Kurkov (Translated from the Russian by George Bird): *Death and the Penguin* (Russia, 1996; UK, 2001)** Corruption is one of the themes of this endearing black comedy, a brilliant Ukrainian-set satire just after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Viktor, a short story writer, has recently adopted a depressed penguin called Misha, with hilarious and unexpected consequences.

**Stieg Larsson (Translated from the Swedish by Reg Keeland): *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (Sweden, 2005; UK, 2008)** In a multi-award winning novel, the first in the Millennium series, an unlikely pair, disgraced journalist Mikael Blomqvist and a computer hacker with a photographic memory, Lisbeth Salander, investigate strange goings-on within a tightly-knit family. Horrifically brilliant!



**Dennis Lehane: *Prayers for Rain* (1999)** Strong storytelling and strength of prose are paramount in the fifth of the PI Patrick Kenzie & Angela Gennaro series.

**Donna Leon: Death in a Strange Country (1993)** An American soldier's body found in the canal is thought to have been the result of a mugging gone awry, though Commissario Brunetti believes it's more a case of corruption in high places.

**Elmore Leonard: Swag (1976)** Slick dialogue runs throughout this masterpiece of Detroit-set craziness, with small-time armed robbery the name of the game for Frank Ryan and Ernest Stickley Jnr.

**Peter Lovesey: Bloodhounds (1996)** An endearing homage to reading groups, in a fourth case for Bath detective, DS Peter Diamond, as he's investigating a rash of thefts from museums, including a rare Penny Black and the end of a chapter for a crime reader on a locked boat – worthy of John Dickson Carr.

**Val McDermid: A Place of Execution (1999)** In the shadow of the Moors Murders, two presentations of a story thirty-five years apart. A hauntingly uncomfortable yet riveting read.

**Daphne du Maurier: Rebecca (1938)** The consequences of marrying too soon are all too obvious when an introverted young lady meets and marries a wealthy widower. A perfect novel of dark psychological suspense with an unforgettable opening line setting the scene.

**Henning Mankell (Translated from the Swedish by Steven T. Murray): Sidetracked (Sweden, 1995; UK, 1999)** With an unsettling suicide by immolation and a hatchet-wielding moped rider scalping his victims on the loose too, the fifth of the Kurt Wallander series sees him grappling with several horrific murders and struggling to find links between them. The 2001 CWA Gold Dagger award.

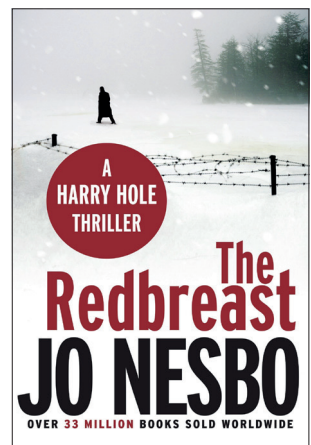
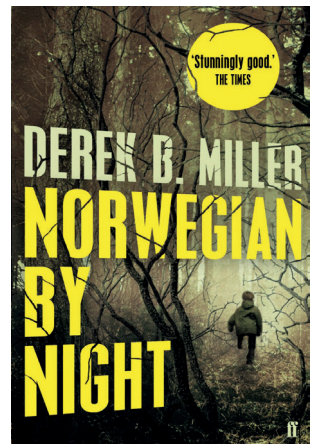
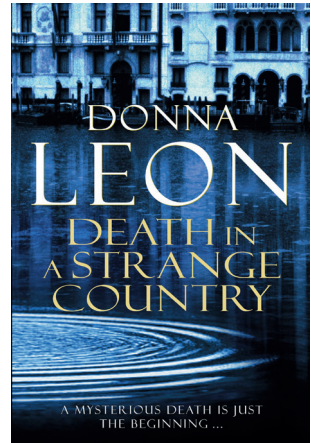
**Derek B. Miller: Norwegian by Night (2012)** An octogenarian widower and Korean war veteran reluctantly relocates to Norway at the behest of his grand-daughter and her husband. No sooner has he arrived at their home, a woman is murdered in their apartment block. I loved it – winner of the 2013 CWA John Creasey award for debut novel.

**A. A. Milne: The Red House Mystery (1922)** Written prior to Winnie-the-Pooh, dead bodies and quirky characters abound in his only detective story, set at a country-house party.

**Denise Mina: Garnethill (1998)** Recently released from a psychiatric hospital and waking from an alcohol-fuelled night out in Glasgow, Maureen O'Donnell finds her boyfriend lying horrifically murdered in her living room. Now in the frame for murder, with gritty resolve she determines to find the killer. Winner of the 1998 CWA John Creasey award for debut novel.

**Abir Mukherjee: A Rising Man (2016)** A rich seam of humour is found in the first of the Captain Sam Wyndham & Sergeant "Surrender-Not" Banerjee mysteries, where brilliant interplay between characters alongside a cleverly constructed plot convincingly brings Colonial Calcutta to life.

**Jo Nesbo (Translated from the Norwegian by Don Bartlett): Redbreast (Norway, 2000; UK, 2006)** An engrossing tale of covert traitors and multiple murders in Oslo with loner detective Harry Hole doggedly searching for the truth.



**Sara Paretsky: Bloodshot (aka Toxic Shock) (1988)** A gripping story of corruption, cover-ups and environmental issues within South Chicago's industry, occupies tough-talking PI, VI Warshawski in her fifth case.

**Louise Penny: Still Life (2005)** Perceptive and highly literate investigator, Chief Inspector Armand Gamache of the Surete, and his team, are brought to the remote off-the-map Quebec village of Three Pines to investigate the suspicious death of a long term inhabitant. A terrific opening story in a wonderful series.

**Henry Porter: Empire State (2003)** A twisty, multi-layered page-turner of a thriller with a superb opening scene. Espionage fiction at its best!

**Raymond Postgate: Verdict of Twelve (1940)** An interesting snapshot of England is portrayed in this old fashioned courtroom mystery. Each juror's personality is revealed together with the shaping of their lives so far. The trial and the jurors' deliberations take up the remainder of this compelling tale with tension maintained until the final page.

**Ian Rankin: Black and Blue (1997)** Edinburgh detective John Rebus is after a copy-cat killer in the style of the notorious 'Bible John' whilst investigating the murder of an oil worker. Great dialogue and characterisation are the hallmarks of his books and this one's no exception. Winner of the 1997 CWA Macallan Gold Dagger.

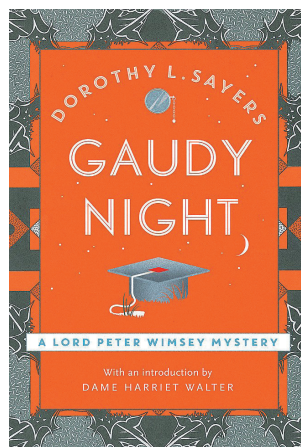
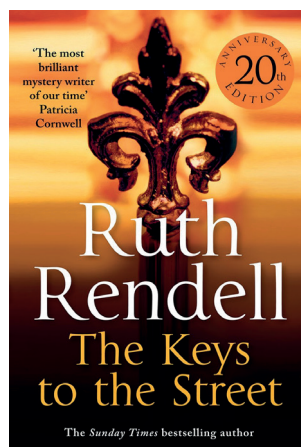
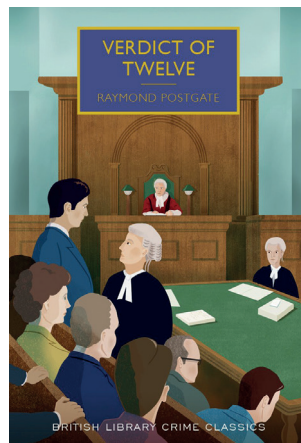
**Ruth Rendell: The Keys to the Street (1996)** In her psychological novels there's often a dark surprise in store and this one's no different. A spate of murders around Regent's Park sees victims impaled on spiked railings, causing much consternation to the residents, especially so for Mary Jago, hiding from a bully of a boyfriend.

**Peter Robinson: In a Dry Season (1999)** Set in the Yorkshire Dales, the tenth case is a wonderful game-changer with a plot switching backwards and forwards between WWII and the late twentieth century.

**C.J. Sansom: Dark Fire (2004)** In this brilliant Tudor mystery, winner of the 2005 CWA Ellis Peters Historical Dagger, set three years after *Dissolution*, it's 1540 AD, and Matthew Shardlake has two cases on his hands – dealing with an unscrupulous fellow lawyer and defending a girl accused of killing her cousin.

**Dorothy L. Sayers: Gaudy Night (1935)** Cruel messages, small acts of vandalism and nasty problems at Oxford's Shrewsbury College, discovered by Harriet Vane when invited back for the 'Gaudy' celebrations. Realising she's not the only target of these threatening letters, a little low-level 'detecting' becomes necessary, later calling on Lord Peter to add his valuable assistance – splendid!

**Yrsa Sigurdardottir (Translated from the Icelandic by Bernard Scudder & Anna Yates): My Soul to Take (Iceland, 2006; UK, 2009)** A richly detailed plot and a great sense of place are found in this tale of an architect, responsible for designing a new health resort, found dead, the owner accused of his murder.





**Daniel Silva: The Confessor (2003)** In a blisteringly-paced thriller, art restorer and Mossad spy, Gabriel Allon, seeks justice for an old friend, a German Jewish professor and scholar, who's been murdered whilst working on a controversial book. Meanwhile in Rome, the newly elected Pope, wants to open up archives revealing the Catholic church's actions during WWII.

**Georges Simenon (Translated from the French by Roz Schwartz): The Madman of Bergerac (France, 1932; UK, 2015)** From the most translated French author of the Twentieth century, intrepid Inspector Maigret conducts this investigation from his bed with Madame Maigret on hand to nurse and assist him. These stories never fail to impress – there's a plentiful supply of new translations – catch them whilst they remain in print!

**Maj Sjöwall & Per Wahloo (Translated from the Swedish by Lois Roth): Roseanna (Sweden 1965; UK 1968)** A baffling case for meticulous policeman, DI Martin Beck, as there's no discoverable identification on record after a woman's naked body is pulled from the canal. Great characterisation, sense of place and pace is evident in the first of ten remarkable stories.

**Martin Cruz Smith: Gorky Park (1981)** Moscow, 1981, and three mutilated bodies have been found in the snow. A cynical investigator Arkady Renko, suspicious of all around him, makes his enquiries as he must, only to discover the KGB have been there before him. A terrific Cold War thriller.

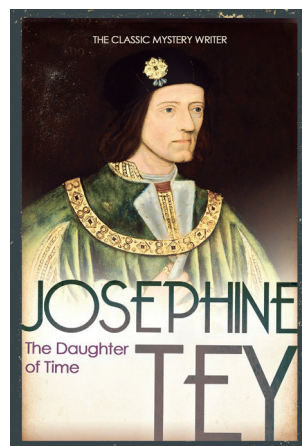
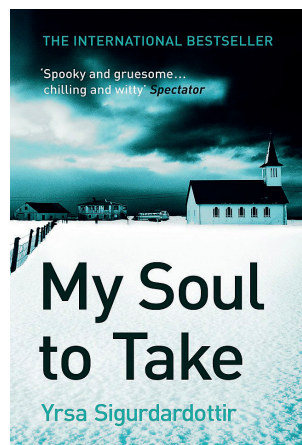
**Leonie Swann (Translated from the German by Anthea Bell): Three Bags Full (Germany, 2005; UK, 2006)** No silence of the lambs here in this wonderfully woolly tale, where a nightly diet of bed-time detective fiction read by their beloved shepherd, George, empowers a determined Miss Maple and her crime-fighting flock to investigate his unexpected slaughter.

**Donna Tartt: The Secret History (1992)** Scholastic skulduggery is firmly on the curriculum here in this astonishingly well-paced murder mystery with first chapter echoes of Dr Bickleigh's *Malice Aforethought*.

**Andrew Taylor: Fallen Angel (The Roth Trilogy) (2002)** A powerfully atmospheric mystery, where shadows of past evil haunt the present. The author expertly traces the influences shaping a psychopath's mind, commencing with *The Four Last Things* with an abduction and murder in a churchyard, violence echoing down the years in *Judgement of Strangers* and the horror unearthed bit by bit in *Office of the Dead*.

**Josephine Tey: The Daughter of Time (1951)** Scotland Yard Inspector Alan Grant, bored and confined to bed after an embarrassing accident whilst in pursuit of a miscreant, becomes interested in Richard III and the killings of the Princes in the Tower. A superb story published shortly before the author's death.

**Charles Todd: A Test of Wills (1996)** In a meticulously plotted debut mystery set post-WWI, Ian Rutledge, a shell-shocked Scotland Yard detective, is despatched by his unsupportive superiors to Warwickshire, after the shooting of a colonel.



**Nicola Upson: Nine Lessons (2017)** Links with M.R. James's ghost stories are integral to the plot of this intriguing case, investigated by methodically-minded DCI Archie Penrose. He's summoned to a Hampstead church after the organist's body is found buried alive in a stone tomb, together with a cryptic note attached to a photograph of a building. The image strikes a chord with Archie, bringing him to Cambridge where close friends, Josephine Tey and Bridget Foley, now reside.

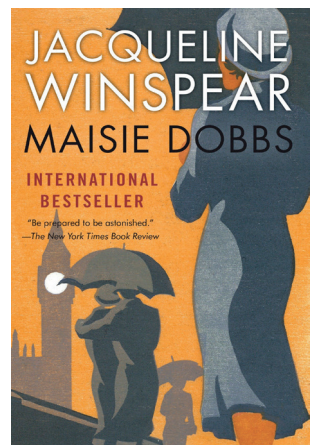
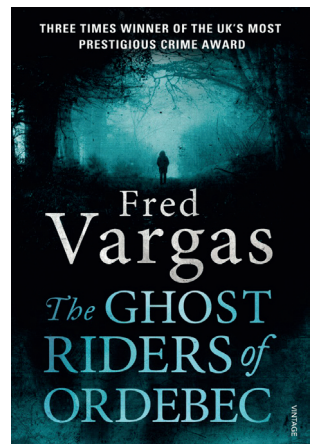
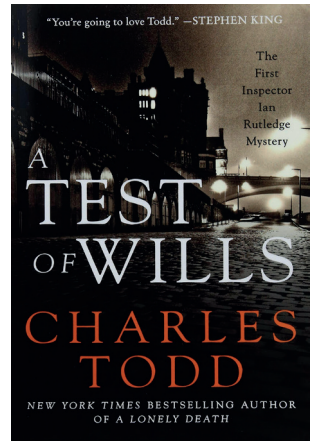
**Fred Vargas (Translated from the French by Sian Reynolds): The Ghost Riders of Ordebec (France, 2011; UK, 2013)** From the first sentence this is extraordinary – a cruelly treated pigeon which Commissaire Jean-Baptiste Adamsberg promises to avenge, a murder and a frame up in Paris and a death and a disappearance in Normandy with a tale recounted of a ghostly band of hell-bound horsemen. A treat – and even more so if you haven't read the others!

**Luis Fernando Verissimo (Translated from the Portuguese by Margaret Jull Costa): Borges and the Eternal Orang-Utans (Portugal, 2000; UK, 2004)** There's a constant sense of the absurd and lots of literary allusions littering this witty and beautifully written novella.

**Minette Walters: The Ice House (1992)** There'd been newspaper reports about the disappearance of David Maybury from Streech Grange, arousing police suspicion ten years before. Now the discovery of a faceless and long-dead body found in the deserted ice house, invites further newspaper involvement and the police too. A deserved winner of the 1992 CWA John Creasey award.

**S. J. Watson: Before I Go to Sleep (2011)** Great debut concerning a woman who loses her memory each night while she sleeps, and fails to recognise her husband Ben, when waking up. More worryingly though, in her diary she finds she has written: don't trust Ben.

**Jacqueline Winspear: Maisie Dobbs (2003)** Set in the interwar years, an enquiring mind, and more importantly funds, enable Maisie Dobbs to set herself up as a private investigator in London. A seemingly undemanding first case turns out to be anything but, bringing back the horrors of the recent conflict. This is an assured and immensely readable debut and perfect scene-setter to the rest of the series.



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