

trucks. At home, she gives bottles and cans to Isaiah, the sweet homeless man who hangs around her 43rd Street apartment, annoying first-floor tenant Mrs. Dovner. When Mrs. Dovner sends beat cop Santos Reyes to warn Anna, he realizes that her ministrations to Isaiah aren't illegal and asks her on a date instead. But even their growing romance isn't enough to get the police to investigate Isaiah's eventual murder, so Anna takes on that burden herself, soon discovering a hidden world of homeless folk where looks can be immensely, and tragically, deceiving.

This series kickoff by the author of the Jane Stuart suburban mysteries (*Crushing Crystal*, 2004, etc.) shows a nice eye for city life, even though Anna's better at collecting the trash than at connecting the dots. (Agent: Maureen Walters/Curtis Brown)

Massey, Sujata

SHIMURA TROUBLE

Severn House (256 pp.)

\$28.95

Jun. 1, 2008

ISBN: 978-0-7278-6601-1

Even on vacation, hyper-curious Rei Shimura can't resist probing a dangerous old mystery.

When elderly Toshiro Shimura survives a stroke, his daughter Rei fulfills a personal commitment to take care of him. Her promise puts a strain on her two part-time careers as an antiques dealer and undercover spy. And when Toshira receives an invitation from a long-lost relative named Edwin inviting him to a family reunion in Hawaii, Rei can't bear to be the party pooper, even though she's slightly suspicious of this overly friendly newfound cousin. Nevertheless, after telling her boss and sometime lover, commitment-phobic Michael Hendricks, what she'll be doing, Rei dives into the three-week odyssey with typical verve. It doesn't take long to learn that Edwin has an ulterior motive. He wants Toshiro's help in recovering a piece of property he believes was stolen from him during World War II. At a coffee bar called Aloha Morning, Rei flirts with owner Kainoa Stevens and learns more about Josiah Pierce, the alleged disreputable land baron. A little research uncovers the curious fact that all the landowners whose property passed to Pierce Holdings were women. The case soon reaches a boiling point. Luckily, both Michael and ex-lover Hugh join Kainoa on the scene, so that it's raining men.

Rei's tenth adventure (*Girl in a Box*, 2006, etc.) meanders a bit, but the upbeat narrative and resourceful heroine make for an appealing read.

Nesser, Håkan

MIND'S EYE

Trans. by Laurie Thompson

Pantheon (288 pp.)

\$22.95

Jun. 10, 2008

ISBN: 978-0-375-42503-5

Sweden's brilliant Detective Chief Inspector Van Veeteren solves a knotty puzzle—a little too late—in this first installment in the Van Veeteren series (*The Return*, 2007, etc.); two other volumes in the series have already been published in the United States.

At some point during a wild, alcohol-fueled, orgiastic night, schoolteacher Janek Mitter murdered his wife and colleague. Or so the police quickly decide, acting on the law-enforcement truism that when the corpse is a spouse, you can give odds forever that the surviving spouse is guilty. In due course, Mitter is arrested, indicted, convicted and bundled off to spend the rest of his natural life in a mental institution. But the outcome doesn't sit well with near-legendary homicide cop DCI Van Veeteren, who, aware that things are seldom what they seem, squirms at the ease with which Mitter has been warehoused. Events bear him out when Mitter is murdered. Convinced that the two homicides are inextricably connected, and annoyed at his own weak-kneed response to the prodding of his celebrated instincts, Van Veeteren launches a much deeper investigation. It carries him back to the dark corners of some extremely complex lives before finally confronting him with a motive for murder that manages to shock even him.

Amiable Van Veeteren is a sly, cocksure sleuth.

Paoletti, Marc

SCORCH

Five Star (300 pp.)

\$25.95

May 16, 2008

ISBN: 978-1-59414-657-2

Ad exec Paoletti's debut thriller stars the perfect vigilante: a Navy SEAL turned Hollywood special-effects technician.

Even if he is the nephew of Loki Productions president Gary Stanford, explosives rigger Ned Brandenburg is a menace whose careless work is endangering everyone involved in making *Bringing Them Back*, and it's no wonder that effects supervisor David Cole tosses him off the set. But Dave has no idea how costly his gesture will be. Stanford isn't just somebody's uncle; he's a connected guy who set up Loki Productions to launder mob money. Averse to pressure from subordinates, he hires Frank Ruger, another SEAL who's cherished a special grudge against Dave ever since their tour in Iraq, to teach him a horrifying lesson. Somehow Dave escapes the scene of his planned demise and, sought by the police for murder, goes into hiding, plotting revenge on the men responsible. The bones of the plot are familiar from innumerable genre films from *D.O.A.* and *Death Wish* to the *Rambo* franchise. What Paoletti adds to the requisite talent for staging inventive action sequences is an exquisite sensitivity to physical pain and something of Elmore Leonard's gift for cutting out the parts everybody skips anyway. The formula allows limited suspense—practically all of the cast will die—but the author handles the timeworn plot with complete conviction.

Pedestrian prose and razor-sharp focus strongly suggest that this project was conceived as a movie, and it won't be happy till it becomes one.

Perry, Thomas

FIDELITY

Otto Penzler/Harcourt

(368 pp.)

\$25.00

Jun. 1, 2008

ISBN: 978-0-15-101292-3

A private eye's wife and former partner goes back on the job to find out who made her a widow.

The shock Emily Kramer feels when her husband is shot down on a strange street deepens when she learns that he's cleaned out his retirement account, their savings account, even the household account, and that Kramer Investigations is broke as well. Clearly Phil Kramer was hiding something big from her. Phil has been a man of many secrets, any of which could have gotten him killed. Nor is Emily the only one who's looking for them, as she realizes when a masked man takes her prisoner, interrogates her about Phil's work and threatens to kill her if she doesn't share the information he insists she must have about his last case. Jerry

Hobart, the hit man who killed her husband, has accepted a new contract to kill Emily. But he's decided that instead of collecting \$200,000 from millionaire Theodore Forrest for a simple job, he'd rather uncover the secret that made Phil's life so dangerous that Ted Forrest couldn't afford to leave him alive. The pattern soon resolves itself into one of Perry's patented triangular competitions. Emily races to track down her husband's biggest secret before the masked man can find it. Jerry, discounting her claims that she knows nothing, keeps her in his sights while he hunts the information that will make her dispensable. And Forrest takes strong measures to make sure that the unsavory details of the case Phil worked for him nine years ago never see the light of day. The characters aren't among Perry's most memorable, and the suspense is moderate by his high standards. But the back stories the tale requires are integrated into the action a lot more smoothly than they were in *Silence* (2007).

Mid-grade thrills from a pro's pro.

Pope, Barbara Corrado
CÉZANNE'S QUARRY

Pegasus (384 pp.)

\$25.00

Jun. 11, 2008

ISBN: 978-1-933648-83-5

How is the (in)famous 19th-century artist Paul Cézanne connected with a beautiful murder victim? Aix-en-Provence in southern France, 1885. During the summer recess of the court, veteran police inspector Albert Franc importunes young judge Bernard Martin to view a newly discovered body in the absence of the vacationing prosecutor. Martin is amazed to recognize the red-headed victim, found strangled in a quarry on the outskirts of the city. She is Solange Vernet, a law student whose intelligence and beauty captivated Martin in a casual meeting at a bookstore, where they discussed Darwin and the law. Martin feels compelled to assist Franc in his investigation. They first question Solange's lover, British scholar Charles Westbury, who, clearly nervous, casts suspicion upon his acquaintance Paul Cézanne, impugning the artist's character. Concealing his grief until he's away from the precinct, Westbury dissolves in tears and determines to track down Cézanne, "the cause of it all." This is easier said than done, both for the prime suspect and the police. The bohemian Cézanne, it seems, has a loyal pack of friends willing to conceal him. Questioning the artist only deepens the dilemma: Who was this mystery woman who called herself Solange Vernet? Emile Zola figures prominently in the answer.

Pope's debut includes much fascinating information about the artist and life in late 19th-century France. Its mystery feels more like a MacGuffin enlivening a picaresque roman à clef.

Rendell, Ruth
NOT IN THE FLESH

Crown (304 pp.)

\$25.95

CD \$29.95

Jun. 10, 2008

ISBN: 978-0-307-40681-1

CD 978-1-846-57129-9

Chief Inspector Reginald Wexford and his Kingsmarkham colleagues (*End in Tears*, 2005, etc.) deal with not one but two bodies of men whose relatives long ago gave up hope of ever hearing from them again. Jim Belbury's truffle dog makes the first discovery: a man interred 11 years ago in a drainage ditch. John Grimble and his friend Bill Runge had dug the ditch back when Grimble expected permission to replace the tumbledown house on Old Grimble's Field with four new homes. They filled in the ditch when permission was denied. DI Mike Burden, searching the boarded-up house, finds a second corpse, this one waiting eight years in its underclothes to be found. Ancient former neighbor Irene McNeil tells Wexford that her late husband Ron shot the intruder in self-defense when he brandished a knife, and for a time it seems that the killers may be easier to identify than the victims. New inquiries into open missing-persons cases and repeated conversations with other neighbors—especially dying fantasy novelist Owen Tredown and the two wives, present and past, who live with him—only deepen the mystery. Back in the present, Wexford's daughter Sheila, cast in the starring role in a film adaptation of Tredown's most famous book, tries to enlist her father in the battle against the circumcision of young Somali girls in the neighborhood—an episode that at least hints at a happy ending.

Rich, tangled and as sharply observed as ever.

Upson, Nicola
AN EXPERT IN MURDER

Harper/HarperCollins

(304 pp.)

\$24.95

Jun. 1, 2008

ISBN: 978-0-06-145153-9

A detective inspector and a real-life writer team up to solve several murders in 1930s London. Josephine Tey is traveling from Scotland to attend the closing-week celebration of her successful historical drama *Richard of Bordeaux*. Aboard the train, she befriends Elspeth Simmons, an enthusiastic young devotee of the play. When Elspeth is murdered in the train carriage at King's Cross Station while Tey chats with friends, the writer is drawn into the investigation. Scotland Yard DI Archie Penrose was the best friend of Tey's lover, who died in World War I. Now Penrose, who'll become the model for Tey's policeman hero Alan Grant, has fallen in love with Tey. A second murder strikes closer to home when Tey's mentor, theatrical manager Bernard Aubrey, is found poisoned in his office at the theater. The killings may well be related and the murderer may be among the people involved in the play. Elspeth's boyfriend, who works backstage, some of the leading actors, even members of Elspeth's adopted family, have possible motives, many grounded in the war's bitter past. Penrose and Tey must deal with their own complicated feelings about the war and each other as they mine the past for clues.

The actual Josephine Tey, of course, wrote the historical gem *The Daughter of Time* (1951) and seven other classic murder mysteries. Though not up to Tey's standards, Upson's debut is a most promising valentine. (*Agent: Karolina Sutton/ICM*)