

The St Zita Society

“A venerated creator. An adored, tragic interpreter. An uncomplicated, memorable melody. Ambiguous, evocative words. Faith and uncertainty. Pain and pleasure.” Today, “Hallelujah” is one of the most-performed rock songs in history. It has become a staple of movies and television shows as diverse as *Shrek* and *The West Wing*, of tribute videos and telethons. It has been covered by hundreds of artists, including Bob Dylan, U2, Justin Timberlake, and k.d. lang, and it is played every year at countless events—both sacred and secular—around the world. Yet when music legend Leonard Cohen first wrote and recorded “Hallelujah,” it was for an album rejected by his longtime record label. Ten years later, charismatic newcomer Jeff Buckley reimagined the song for his much-anticipated debut album, *Grace*. Three years after that, Buckley would be dead, his album largely unknown, and “Hallelujah” still unreleased as a single. After two such commercially disappointing outings, how did one obscure song become an international anthem for human triumph and tragedy, a song each successive generation seems to feel they have discovered and claimed as uniquely their own? Through in-depth interviews with its interpreters and the key figures who were actually there for its original recordings, acclaimed music journalist Alan Light follows the improbable journey of “Hallelujah” straight to the heart of popular culture. *The Holy or the Broken* gives insight into how great songs come to be, how they come to be listened to, and how they can be forever reinterpreted.

No Night is Too Long is a classic crime novel by bestselling, prize-winning author Barbara Vine. Tim Cornish thought he'd gotten away with murder. For months after he'd killed his lover off the Alaskan coast, there hadn't been a word. But then the letters started to arrive. It seems that someone knows what Tim has done . . . This compelling thriller delivers such a dark picture of romantic love that murder seems its natural mate. Frightening, suspenseful, and deeply unsettling, *No Night is Too Long* is a modern crime masterpiece and will be enjoyed by readers of P.D. James and Ian Rankin. 'The Rendell/Vine partnership has for years been producing consistently better work than most Booker winners put together' Ian Rankin 'She deploys her peerless skills in blending the mundane, commonplace aspects of life with the murky impulses of desire and greed' Sunday Times Barbara Vine is the pen-name of Ruth Rendell. Ruth has published fourteen novels under the Vine name, two of which, *Fatal Inversion* and *King Solomon's Carpet*, won the prestigious Crime Writers' Association Gold Dagger Award. Also available in Penguin by Barbara Vine: *The Minotaur*, *The Blood Doctor*, *Grasshopper*, *The Chimney Sweeper's Boy*, *The Brimstone Wedding*, *No Night is Too Long*, *Asta's Book*, *King Solomon's Carpet*, *Gallowglass*, *The House of Stairs*, *A Dark-Adapted Eye*.

What connects a kidnapped baby, a woman's body left to rot in a cove in Yugoslavia, a suspicious suicide and the century-old case of a wife who poisons her husband? The answer: Wexford. In the first of five cases, Wexford is brought in to deal with a di

Edgar Award Finalist: In London, a missing child unites three mothers in grief, madness, and murder. When Benet Archdale was a young girl in North London, her mother, Mopsa, made her nervous. The woman was unsound, and posed ever-present dangers. Yet Benet understood her sickness and forgave her threats. In pursuit of a relatively sane life as a novelist and loving single parent, Benet has since kept Mopsa at a distance. But it's not only the sudden death of Benet's two-year-old son that shakes her safe world. It's the past. Mopsa has returned to be at her inconsolable daughter's side. Nurturing, rational, and seemingly cured, Mopsa is going to do everything she can to ease Benet's grief. Then, on the other side of town, the child of a barmaid has gone missing. Authorities fear the search can't end well. As Benet and Mopsa are drawn into the disappearance, the secrets, lies, and desperation of three mothers will converge—by chance and by design. For them, it's a crime that is at once a delusion, an escape, and a nightmare. “No one surpasses Ruth Rendell when it comes to stories of obsession, instability, and malignant coincidence,” says Stephen King of this New York Times–bestselling author, and all three come into play in this novel, a winner of the Crime Writers' Association Silver Dagger Award. A classic of psychological suspense, *The Tree of Hands* was adapted twice for the screen: first in 1989, as *Innocent Victim* starring Lauren Bacall and Helen Shaver; then again in 2001, for the French film *Alias Betty*.

INCLUDES AN EXCERPT OF RENDELL'S FINAL NOVEL, *DARK CORNERS* This captivating novel about residents and servants on one block of a posh London street is a “sex comedy and a social satire, of the ‘Upstairs Downstairs’ variety, with a few murders mixed in for our added delight” (*The Washington Post Book World*). Life on Hexam Place appears orderly on the outside: drivers take their employers to and from work, dogs are walked, flowers are planted in gardens. But beneath this tranquil veneer, this quintessentially London world of servants and their masters is set to combust. Henry, the handsome valet to Lord Studley, is sleeping with both the Lord's wife and his university-age daughter. Montserrat, the Still family's lazy au pair, assists Mrs. Still in keeping secret her illicit affair with a television actor—in exchange for pocket cash. June, the haughty housekeeper to a princess of dubious origin, tries to enlist her fellow house-helpers into a “society” to address complaints about their employers. Meanwhile, Dex, the disturbed gardener to several families on the block, thinks a voice on his cell phone is giving him godlike instructions—commands that could imperil the lives of all those in Hexam Place.

From a New York Times–bestselling author: A chilling psychological thriller about one man's murderous obsession with his childhood sweetheart. Growing up in the roughest part of London, Guy Curran never imagined he would fall in love with a rich girl. But from the moment he meets Leonora Chisholm, he knows it's their destiny to be together. They have a short, passionate teenage fling—over almost before it begins. Leonora moves on, but Guy never will. His love for her is dangerous, and it will destroy them both. Over the next ten years, Guy becomes a millionaire, selling hard drugs and bad art to the jet set of Western Europe. He and Leonora remain friends, sharing weekly lunches—until the day he learns she's fallen in love with someone else. Seized by murderous jealousy, Guy is about to embark on a mad quest to claim the woman he desires—or die trying. “Rendell is a master of depicting the long, slow slide into madness” and *Going Wrong* shows her brilliant ability to walk the line between elegance and terror (*Publishers Weekly*).

Life in the well-manicured London locale of Hexam Place is not as placid and orderly as it appears. Behind the tranquil gardens and polished entryways, relationships between servants and their employers are set to combust. Henry, the handsome valet to Lord Studley, is sleeping with both the Lord's wife and his university-age daughter. Montserrat, the Still family's lazy au pair, is helping to hide Mrs. Still's illicit affair with a television actor—for a small fee. June, the haughty housekeeper to a princess of dubious origin, is hard at work forming a “society” for servants to

address complaints about their employers. Meanwhile, a disturbed gardener, Dex, believes a voice in his cellphone is giving him godlike instructions--that could endanger the lives of all who reside in Hexam Place. A deeply observed and suspenseful update to the upstairs/downstairs genre, *The St. Zita Society* is Ruth Rendell at her incisive best.

Jock Lewis was supposed to have died in a terrible train crash at Paddington. Minty, his girlfriend, received a letter telling her so. But, curiously, the police haven't been in touch. And Jock has borrowed all her savings. Zillah also got a letter informing her that her husband, Jerry Leach, was dead. Something about it struck her as suspicious, but she chooses not to mention her doubts to her fiancé, an up-and-coming Conservative Member of Parliament. Fiona, a successful banker, met Jeff Leigh before the Paddington crash. And although he never seemed to have a job, and borrowed money from her, she is utterly devoted to him -- and can't understand why he suddenly disappeared. As the novel progresses, it slowly becomes apparent how the lives of these women might be connected, and how they may figure into a series of vicious stabbing deaths that have shocked and terrified the citizens of London. With consummate skill, Ruth Rendell pulls the colourful strands of this harrowing story ever tighter, increasing the tension page by page.

New York Times bestselling author Peter Robinson brings back Detective Chief Inspector Alan Banks and his colleague DI Annie Cabbot in a case riddled with corruption. A decorated policeman is murdered on the tranquil grounds of the St. Peter's Police Treatment Centre, shot through the heart with a crossbow arrow, and compromising photographs are discovered in his room. Detective Chief Inspector Alan Banks is well aware that he must handle the highly sensitive and dangerously explosive investigation with the utmost discretion. And as he digs deeper, he discovers that the murder may be linked to an unsolved missing persons case from six years earlier—and the current crime may involve some very bad, crooked cops. A pulsating, electrifying novel of suspense *Watching the Dark* is one of Peter Robinson's finest novels. "Ambitious...Robinson shows a keen awareness of the global reach of crime."—New York Times Book Review

FBI analyst Cassidy Bishop is assigned to the "For You" killer's task force after a series of sadistic murders bearing the same signature arise in different parts of the country. The homicides are both calculated and savage, occurring in different states, but bearing the same signature: the words "for you" scribbled at each crime scene. The case chills Cassidy, bringing back memories of her own encounter with a violent criminal five years earlier. Cassidy's mentor, legendary agent Talia "The Confessor" Crossen knows the task force assignment is Cassidy's chance to prove to her colleagues that she belongs in the Behavior Analysis Unit. For five years, other FBI agents and profilers scoffed at Cassidy's appointment to the BAU, believing she was only offered the position in exchange for her silence about the brutal assault that almost killed her. The stakes rise when the task force links the killer's signature to Cassidy. As more and more bodies turn up, Cassidy must delve into her past and the mysterious death of her twin sister, which holds the key to uncovering the killer's identity. The closer Cassidy comes to finding the killer, the closer she comes to a deadly confrontation that could cost her everything--including her own life. When Carl sells a box of slimming pills to his close friend Stacey, inadvertently causing her death, he sets in train a sequence of catastrophic events which begin with subterfuge, extend to lies, and culminate in murder. In Rendell's dark and atmospheric tale of psychological suspense, we encounter mistaken identity, kidnap, blackmail, and a cast of characters who are so real that we come to know them better than we know ourselves. Infused with her distinctive blend of wry humour, acute observation and deep humanity, this is Rendell at her most memorable and best.

From the multi-award-winning author of *The Babes in the Wood* and *The Rottweiler*, a chilling new novel about obsession, superstition, and violence, set in Rendell's darkly atmospheric London. Mix Cellini (which he pronounces with an 'S' rather than a 'C') is superstitious about the number 13. In musty old St. Blaise House, where he is the lodger, there are thirteen steps down to the landing below his rooms, which he keeps spick and span. His elderly landlady, Gwendolen Chawcer, was born in St. Blaise House, and lives her life almost exclusively through her library of books, so cannot see the decay and neglect around her. The Notting Hill neighbourhood has changed radically over the last fifty years, and 10 Rillington Place, where the notorious John Christie committed a series of foul murders, has been torn down. Mix is obsessed with the life of Christie and his small library is composed entirely of books on the subject. He has also developed a passion for a beautiful model who lives nearby — a woman who would not look at him twice. Both landlady and lodger inhabit weird worlds of their own. But when reality intrudes into Mix's life, a long pent-up violence explodes.

Discovering an earthen tunnel in their 1944 London suburb, six children share a summer of subterranean exploration and reunite six decades later when a box with skeletal remains is found in the same location. By the Edgar Award-winning author of the Inspector Wexford series. 60,000 first printing.

The award-winning author of *Babes in the Woods* and *The Rottweiler* brings us another gripping Inspector Wexford novel. A lump of concrete dropped deliberately from a little stone bridge over a relatively unfrequented road kills the wrong person. The driver behind is spared. But only for a while... One particular member of the local press is gunning for the Chief Inspector, distinctly unimpressed with what he regards as old-fashioned police methods. But Wexford, with his old friend and partner, Mike Burden, along with two new recruits to the Kingsmarkham team, pursue their inquiries with a diligence and humanity that make Ruth Rendell's detective stories enthralling, exciting and very touching. While Inspector Wexford tries to convince Mike Burden that a man Wexford has long known, Eric Targo, is the killer behind a series of apparently motiveless murders, the Rahmans, a respectable Pakistani immigrant family, not only must contend with their daughter's controversial marriage, but also with their being linked to something far more disturbing. By an Edgar-winning author

A stranger lures a child into his car with the promise of sweets. A young man spots his fiancée's double in a public park of ill repute. An executive visits the secluded home of a former employee whose intentions are frightfully unclear. A modest soul weds the woman he rescues from suicide—only to fall victim to an unfathomable form of possessiveness...

In the eleven tales gathered in *The Fallen Curtain*, Ruth Rendell—the grande dame of the literary mystery—lays bare the twisted inner workings of the unbalanced mind. Here are eleven tales of haunting psychological accuracy: the gesture that betrays a parent's madness, the childhood memory clouded with denial, the utterance that introduces the threat of violence in a situation as benign as a dinner date. Instantly engaging, maddeningly addictive, *The Fallen Curtain* testifies to the enduring talents of a master of the genre.

A Sight for Sore Eyes tells three stories, and for the longest time, the reader has no inkling of how they will come together. The first is a story of a little girl who has been scolded and sent to her room when her mother is brutally murdered; as Francine grows up, she is haunted by the experience, and it is years before she even speaks. Secondly, we become privy to the life of a young man, Teddy, born of unthinking young parents, who grows up almost completely ignored. Free of societal mores, he becomes a sociopath, who eventually discovers that killing can be an effective way to get what he wants. Thirdly, we meet Harriet, who from an early age has learned to use her beauty to make her way in the world. Bored by marriage to a wealthy, much older man, she scans the local newspapers for handymen to perform odd jobs around the house, including services in the bedroom. When these three plots strands finally converge, the result is harrowing and unforgettable. *A Sight for Sore Eyes* is not just the work of a writer at the peak of her craft. It is an extraordinary story by a writer who, after 45 books, countless awards, and decades of international acclaim, is still getting better with every book.

In this collection of eleven stories, murder is committed out of fear, jealousy, cupidity, and also sheer compulsion, while the settings include an African game park, a sinister ruined cemetery, an East Anglian seaside resort, and the gloomy purlieus of Epping Forest.

A girl experiments with the occult to keep her family together in this psychological thriller from the New York Times—bestselling author of *Dark Corners*. In a quiet house in the London suburb of Manningtree, fifteen-year-old Pup and his emotionally damaged older sister, Dolly, have become closer than ever since the death of their mother. Pup's bookish obsession with witchcraft gives their disordered life a sense of purpose. Dolly isn't sure what to expect from the talisman Pup makes her, until their father brings home a vulgar new wife. Then, Dolly, resentful and suddenly empowered, makes a deadly wish—the first of many. In a depressed neighborhood on the other side of town, a paranoid hermit has been questioned in a series of brutal murders. Lately, he's taken to living in a tunnel behind a fort of mattresses, where he keeps his knives. Soon, his life and the lives of Pup and Dolly will converge. As one of them struggles toward something close to sanity, the other two will descend even further into darkness. "Only Rendell can show us how chillingly easy it is for ordinary people to slide into criminal behavior," and in *The Killing Doll*, the tumble is relentless (Oprah.com). "Rendell, who perfected the art of the truly suspenseful psychological thriller" is a three-time recipient of the Edgar Award, and the author of numerous bestsellers (The Boston Globe).

Inspectors Wexford and Burden discover a complex and sordid web of blackmail, scandal, and murder during their investigation into the death of one child and the disappearance of another. Reprint. 25,000 first printing.

He was young, arrogant, wealthy and in the bloom of health—or was he? "Undoubtedly one of the best writers of English mysteries and chiller-killer plots."—The Los Angeles Times Like any small community, Linchester has its intrigues: love affairs, money problems, unhappy marriages. But the gossip is elevated to new heights when young Patrick Selby dies on the very night of his beautiful wife's birthday party. The whole neighborhood was there, witness to the horrible attack of wasp stings Patrick suffered at the end of the evening. But did Patrick die of a wasp sting? Dr. Greenleaf thinks not. Heart failure, more likely. Still, Greenleaf isn't at peace about his death. After all, everyone in Linchester hated Patrick. With the help of a certain naturalist, Dr. Greenleaf begins to think about murder. . . . "Rendell is awfully good."—The New York Times Book Review

When four bodies are discovered in a house in St. John's Wood, former Chief Inspector Wexford is pulled out of retirement to follow a complex trail of clues, only to have his life thrown into turmoil by a devastating personal tragedy.

From Edgar Award-winning author Ruth Rendell, quiet, pretty Mary Jago could never have suspected that a series of unspeakable murders in the park contained threads that tangled around her simple, ordinary life. Set near London's Regent's Park, where the city's wealthiest, poorest, kindest, and most vicious citizens all cross paths, *The Keys to the Street* reminds us how interconnected life can be and how we're often surrounded by people that we fail to see. Mary generously donates her bone marrow to save the life of a young man she doesn't know, which will change her life forever. It leads to her bitter break up with Alistair and then to a relationship with the young man whose life she saved, Leo Nash. But when the homeless who seek refuge in the park start turning up murdered and impaled on the spiked railings that surround it, Mary is closer to danger than she ever could have imagined.

Sixteen Civil War widows living in St. Louis respond to a series of meetings conducted by a land speculator who lures them west by promising "prime homesteads" in a "booming community." Unbeknownst to them, the speculator's true motive is to find an excuse to bring women to the fledging community of Plum Grove, Nebraska, in hopes they will accept marriage proposals shortly after their arrival! Sparks fly when these unsuspecting widows meet the men who are waiting for them. These women are going to need all the courage and faith they can muster to survive these unwanted circumstances--especially when they begin to discover that none of them is exactly who she appears to be.

From award-winning author Ruth Rendell – "without a doubt the grand dame of British crime fiction," (The Gazette) – comes the chilling new Inspector Wexford novel. Searching for truffles in a wood, a man and his dog unearth something less savoury—a human hand. The body, as Chief Inspector Wexford is informed later, has lain buried for ten years or so, wrapped in a purple cotton shroud. The post mortem cannot reveal the precise cause of death. The only clue is a crack in one of the dead man's ribs. Although the police database covers a relatively short period of time, it stores a long list of Missing Persons. Men, women and children disappear at an alarming rate—hundreds every day. So Wexford knows he is going to have a job on his hands to identify the corpse. And then, only about twenty yards away from the woodland burial site, in the cellar of a disused cottage, another body is discovered. The detection skills of Wexford, Burden, and the other investigating officers of the Kingsmarkham Police Force, are tested to the utmost to see if the murders are connected and to track down whoever is responsible.

The Copper Peacock: a hideous bookmark given to Bernard, a writer, by his attractive cleaning lady, Judy. She had brought order to a hitherto chaotic life, but now the bookmark destroys all this, shattering his razor sharp sensibilities. If only she had given herself, then she might have lived... In this, and eight other landmark short stories, including the Wexford tale *An Unwanted Woman*, Ruth Rendell once again proves she is the mistress of crime and mystery genres.

An invitation to readers from every walk of life to rediscover the impractical splendors of a life of learning In an overloaded, superficial, technological world, in which almost

everything and everybody is judged by its usefulness, where can we turn for escape, lasting pleasure, contemplation, or connection to others? While many forms of leisure meet these needs, Zena Hitz writes, few experiences are so fulfilling as the inner life, whether that of a bookworm, an amateur astronomer, a birdwatcher, or someone who takes a deep interest in one of countless other subjects. Drawing on inspiring examples, from Socrates and Augustine to Malcolm X and Elena Ferrante, and from films to Hitz's own experiences as someone who walked away from elite university life in search of greater fulfillment, *Lost in Thought* is a passionate and timely reminder that a rich life is a life rich in thought. Today, when even the humanities are often defended only for their economic or political usefulness, Hitz says our intellectual lives are valuable not despite but because of their practical uselessness. And while anyone can have an intellectual life, she encourages academics in particular to get back in touch with the desire to learn for its own sake, and calls on universities to return to the person-to-person transmission of the habits of mind and heart that bring out the best in us. Reminding us of who we once were and who we might become, *Lost in Thought* is a moving account of why renewing our inner lives is fundamental to preserving our humanity.

Sometimes it's best to leave the past alone. For when biographer Martin Nanther looks into the life of his famous great-grandfather Henry, Queen Victoria's favorite physician, he discovers some rather unsettling coincidences, like the fact that the doctor married the sister of his recently murdered fiancée. The more Martin researches his distant relative, the more fascinated—and horrified—he becomes. Why did people have a habit of dying around his great grandfather? And what did his late daughter mean when she wrote that he's done "monstrous, quite appalling things"? Barbara Vine (a.k.a. Ruth Rendell) deftly weaves this story of an eminent Victorian with a modern yarn about the embattled biographer, who is watching the House of Lords prepare to annul membership for hereditary peers and thus strip him of his position. Themes of fate and family snake throughout this teasing psychological suspense, a typically chilling tale from a master of the genre.

A finger, a lock of hair, a crucifix, a chalice—if such items belonged to a saint, they are considered to be relics and as such are venerated by the Catholic Church. Anyone who thinks that relics are remnants of the Middle Ages should log on to eBay. On any day of the week the online shopper will find a thriving business in the sale of these items, ranging from the dust from the tomb of Christ to splinters of the True Cross to bone fragments of countless holy men and women. In *Saints Preserved: An Encyclopedia of Relics*, author Thomas J. Craughwell takes us on an exhilarating journey through the life and death of more than three hundred saints and along the way enlightens us about the sometimes strange bits and pieces that the saints left behind. Including entries on the famous (Saint Peter, Saint Francis, Saint Thérèse of Lisieux) and the not so famous (Saint Foy, Saint Sicaire, Saint Chrysogonus), *Saints Preserved* also features information on such notable relics as the Holy House where Jesus, Mary, and Joseph lived; the Crown of Thorns; the Holy Grail; and the seven places that claim to possess the head of Saint John the Baptist—among them a mosque in Damascus. Moreover, this book includes major relics that are enshrined in the United States—for example, the complete skeleton of the Roman martyr Saint Vibiana enshrined in a cathedral in Los Angeles. From the extraordinary Aachen relics to the remains of Saint Zita, *Saints Preserved* is an indispensable compendium for spiritual seekers, history buffs, and anyone interested in deepening their understanding of the Catholic faith.

When millionaire banker, Preston Still, kills his wife's lover by pushing him down the stairs, he looks to the family au-pair to help him dispose of the body. But the au pair belongs to the Saint Zita Society, a self-formed group of drivers, nannies and gardeners, who are servants to the rich - and whose intentions are not entirely benign. Accident murder, illicit affairs, and a young man recently released from a hospital for the criminally insane come together with devastating consequences in Ruth Rendell's gripping new crime novel. A Ruth Rendell mystery, first published in 1979 and shortlisted for the Edgar Allan Poe Award for best crime novel in 1980. Alan Groombridge is trapped. Husband to a woman he doesn't like, father to two children he never wanted, and manager of a tiny branch of the Anglian-Victoria bank, he is doomed to a life of domestic boredom and tedious routine. All that keeps him afloat is his one fantasy: stealing enough of the bank's money to allow him just one year of freedom - one year in which to live a different sort of life. But one day the bank is robbed, the manager and cashier disappear and what was once a place of dull and dreary repetition becomes the scene of a brutal, chilling nightmare that might never end...

A lonely man stumbles into a dangerous game in this twisting novel of psychological suspense by the New York Times–bestselling author of *The Crocodile Bird*. In a desolate alley on the bank of the Thames, a spy slips through the shadows. Mungo is the Director General of English intelligence, and he knows Moscow Centre has been watching him for weeks, but there is no spy in London better at losing a tail. Satisfied he hasn't been followed, he drops off his message and disappears into the night. It's a classic scene of Cold War espionage, save for one detail: Mungo isn't a spy at all. He's a teenager, playing an epic game of make-believe. John Creevey, still reeling from the implosion of his marriage, is dreaming of taking revenge against his wife's lover when he discovers one of Mungo's coded signals. Unaware that the message is simply part of a child's game, he becomes obsessed with uncovering the rest of the spy network—a tragic misunderstanding that threatens to turn this imaginary war into something very real—and very deadly. "Rendell has brilliantly interwoven these compelling strands into one masterful tale of suspense," writes *Library Journal*. Three-time Edgar Award winner Ruth Rendell was a master of psychological suspense, and *Talking to Strange Men* is one of the most unusual espionage stories in the history of the Cold War.

In a house filled floor to ceiling with books, a lonely middle-aged man scrutinises new publications for editing errors. He is obsessive, writing angry letters to each author he finds fault with. Books are his life - and in an unexpected way have led a terrible guilt to fester inside him. Just when he thinks that all is buried and forgotten, a work of fiction with uncanny resemblances to his own story sends him back to the dark precipice. Part of the *Storycuts* series, this short story was previously published in the collection *Piranha To Scurfy*.

INCLUDES AN EXCERPT OF RENDELL'S FINAL NOVEL, DARK CORNERS Ruth Rendell is widely considered to be crime fiction's reigning queen, with a remarkable career spanning more than forty years. Now, in Portobello, she delivers a captivating and intricate tale that weaves together the troubled lives of several people in the gentrified neighborhood of London's Notting Hill. Walking to the shops one day, fifty-year-old Eugene Wren discovers an envelope on the street bulging with cash. A man plagued by a shameful addiction—and his own good intentions—Wren hatches a plan to find the money's rightful owner. Instead of going to the police, or taking the cash for himself, he prints a notice and posts it around Portobello Road. This ill-conceived act creates a chain of events that links Wren to other Londoners—people afflicted with their own obsessions and despairs. As these volatile characters come into Wren's life—and the life of his trusting fiancée—the consequences will change them all. Portobello is a wonderfully complex tour de force featuring a dazzling depiction of one of London's most intriguing neighborhoods—and the dangers beneath its newly posh veneer.

INCLUDES AN EXCERPT OF RENDELL'S FINAL NOVEL, DARK CORNERS From "one of the most remarkable novelists of her generation" (People) a "refined, probing, and intelligent" (USA TODAY) mystery in the masterful Inspector Wexford series...more enthralling than ever after fifty years. A female vicar named Sarah Hussein is discovered strangled in her Kingsmarkham vicarage. A single mother to a teenage girl, Hussein was working in a male-dominated profession. Moreover, she was of mixed race and wanted to modernize the church. Could racism or sexism have played a factor in her murder? Maxine, the gossipy cleaning woman who discovered the body, happens to also be in the employ of retired Chief Inspector Wexford and his wife. Wexford is intrigued by the unusual circumstances of the murder, and when he is invited by his old deputy to tag along with the investigators, he leaps at the chance. As Wexford searches the Vicar's house, he sees a book on her bedside table. Inside the book is a letter serving as a bookmark. Without thinking much, Wexford puts it into his pocket. Wexford soon realizes he has made a grave error in removing a piece of valuable evidence from the scene without telling anybody. Yet what he finds inside begins to illuminate the murky past of Sarah Hussein. Is there more to her than meets the eye? No Man's Nightingale is Ruth Rendell's masterful twenty-fourth installment in one of the great crime series of all time, an "absorbing and rewarding" (Seattle Times) mystery that explores issues of sexism, class, and racism. As Stephen King said: "No one surpasses Ruth Rendell."

Martin Urban is a quiet bachelor with a comfortable life, free of worry and distractions. When he unexpectedly comes into a small fortune, he decides to use his newfound wealth to help out those in need. Finn also leads a quiet life, and comes into a little money of his own. Normally, their paths would never have crossed. But Martin's ideas about who should benefit from his charitable impulses yield some unexpected results, and soon the good intentions of the one become fatally entangled with the mercenary nature of the other. In the Lake of Darkness, Ruth Rendell takes the old adage that no good deed goes unpunished to a startling, haunting conclusion.

From the New York Times—bestselling author of A Dark-Adapted Eye: A unique psychological thriller about a gentle young man tempted to kill for love. Philip Wardman is disgusted by murder. He cannot tolerate violent films or the local news, and when his friends discuss such things he often leaves the room. At his sister's wedding, Philip becomes infatuated with a strange, silver-haired woman named Senta Pelham. They sleep together after the reception, and Philip finds himself falling headfirst into obsessive, all-consuming love. He wants to marry Senta and live an ordinary life—but before they can, she has a murderous idea. To prove the unconventionality of their love, Senta proposes that each of them commit a murder. Shocked by the idea, but unable to resist his beloved, Philip is drawn into a maze of violence and deceit—and is horrified to find that he feels quite at home. "Subdued tones, stultifying atmosphere, and omniscient narration mark this telling depiction of mutual psychological obsession," writes Library Journal. Ruth Rendell was one of the twentieth century's finest thriller writers, and The Bridesmaid is one of her most chilling.

'Eunice Parchman killed the Coverdale family because she could not read or write.' Eunice, the Coverdales' housekeeper, guns down four of her employers in the space of fifteen minutes one Valentine's Day. None of them suspected anything. Her motive remained hidden. As the police investigate, Eunice schemes to escape the blame – desperate to preserve the terrible secret of her illiteracy. But Eunice's blindness to a crucial aspect of the world throws her plans into jeopardy... A gripping tragedy of crime and class, widely regarded as one of Ruth Rendell's seminal masterworks and a crime fiction classic.

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