



# The Plot Thins ...

FROM YOUR PARTNERS IN CRIME & IMAGINATION

2009 continues to be a year of great authors ...

VOLUME 17 NUMBER 4

## Randy Wayne White

Signs *Dead Silence*

Thursday, March 19, 7:00 PM

“Doc” Ford is on another rescue mission; he intercedes in an attempt to kidnap a U.S. senator, resulting in the kidnappers taking a contest-winning teen who was accompanying the senator in his stead. Now the young man’s been buried alive, and it will take all of his and Doc’s resources to save him before his kidnappers’ 36 hour deadline. *Publishers Weekly* called *Dead Silence* “high-octane,” and commented: “the action roars along as Doc does what Doc does best: kick butt.” Join “kick-butt” author Randy Wayne White on Thursday, March 19, at 7:00 PM for another evening of Florida *noir*, and maybe some tales of some of Randy’s incredible true life adventures.

## Earlene Fowler

Signs *Love Mercy*

Saturday, March 21, 2:00 PM

*Love Mercy*, the eponymous lead character of the first in Earlene Fowler’s new family saga trilogy, lives in Morro Bay in San Celina County – a setting familiar to Benni Harper fans from *The Mariner’s Compass*. Indeed, *Love Mercy* Johnson and her family are neighbors of Benni and her family, or at least a future version thereof, since the new series is set a decade or so later than the Benni Harper mysteries. The widowed Love is enjoying a quiet life in her seaside town when her banjo-playing, heart-broken granddaughter unexpectedly shows up, stirring up all sorts of family issues. Earlene will bestow a creamer of the sort that might be collected by Love and Magnolia at the Buttercream Café on one lucky reader at our event on Saturday, March 21, 2:00 PM.

## Michael Boatman and S.G. Browne

Sign *The Revenant Road* and *Breathers: A Zombie’s Lament*

Sunday, March 22, 2:00 PM

Actor and writer Michael Boatman will visit on Sunday, March 22, at 2:00 PM, with his first horror novel, *The Revenant Road*. While Michael may be best known to the public for his screen roles, including television series *Spin City* and *ARLI\$S*, his fiction has drawn praise from the likes of Joe Lansdale. Writer Obadiah Grudge is enjoying life as the author of critically panned but immensely popular mysteries, when his father’s death not only leaves an emotional hole in his life, but also apparently a supernatural vacancy. A vacancy Obadiah is obliged to fill – or die trying. Michael also has a story in comic anthology *Lords of Justice*, and an original short story collection, *God Laughs When You Die*.

What kind of author has a section of his web site entitled “Stuff Leaking Out of my Head”? A zombie (fiction) author, of course! Debut author S.G. Browne joins Michael in creating entertaining mayhem with *Breathers: A Zombie’s Lament*. (See Maryelizabeth’s review on the back page.) Newly minted zombie Andy Warner and his fellow Undead Anonymous meeting members are struggling to adjust to their unlife, when they stumble across a revitalizing mystery substance. Can they band together against the contempt and fear of their families and the public, marauding bands of frat boys and neighborhood dogs, and being the subject or periodic scientific experiments? A zombie’s lot is a difficult one.

## Carola Dunn

Signs *Manna from Hades*

Tuesday, March 24, 7:00 PM

Cozy mystery author Carola Dunn explores a new setting (Cornwall) and a new time period (the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) in *Manna from Hades*. Widow Eleanor Trewynn runs the charity shop in her small fishing village, where her niece, Megan, is a member of the police force. Familial relationships suffer when Eleanor is entangled in receiving stolen goods, and discovers a murder victim in her storeroom. Daisy Dalrymple fans, never fear – Daisy’s next adventure will be *Sheer Folly*. Find out more about both series, and Carola’s regency romances, when she visits on Tuesday, March 24, at 7:00 PM.

## Cassandra Clare and Lisa McMann

Sign *City of Glass* and *Fade*

Thursday, March 26, 7:00 PM

Young adult fiction lovers of all ages are encouraged to join us on Thursday, March 26, at 7:00 PM. Best-selling authors Cassandra Clare and Lisa McMann will discuss and sign their respective series, *The Mortal Instruments Series*, and *The Wake Series*. Our Young Adult Program Coordinators Samantha and Suzanne will be on hand to provide information to students, parents, teachers and librarians about MG’s services for schools and libraries.

*City of Glass*, the third and final installment in *The Mortal Instrument Series*, finds Shadowhunter siblings Clary and Jace battling their father, Valentine, as well as emotional demons from their tainted family history. Readers can look forward to Cassandra’s next series set in the Victorian era, called *The Infernal Devices*, which will include the ancestors of current characters, and other familiar faces like Magnus Bane.

*Fade* author Lisa recently appeared at the Tucson Festival of Books. The theme of her panel? “Dorks, Nerds and Geeks: How daily mortification, ridicule and unpopularity as a teen can turn you into a superstar YA author. In your face, high school!” Her tales about Janie, Cabel, and accessing other peoples’ dreams and nightmares will conclude in 2010’s *Gone*.

Learn about our *Fantastic Young Adult Program for Schools and Libraries!* Contact the store for information.

## Lisa Lutz

Signs *Revenge of the Spellmans*

Friday, March 27, 7:00 PM

Lisa Lutz, a favorite author in our Signed First Mystery Program since her debut, *The Spellman Files*, also has been nominated for an Edgar Award for Best Novel for *Curse of the Spellmans*, as well as having a movie option on the first in the series. Private eye Izzy Spellman and the rest of her detecting family earned a starred *Publishers Weekly* review for their antics in *Revenge of the Spellmans*, and a stellar review from Terry (on our web site). Can Izzy juggle her therapy sessions, being blackmailed, and working for the family’s firm again, while helping out her neighbor and tracking a suspected spouse for a client? Spend the evening with Lisa on Friday, March 27, at 7:00 PM.

## Dianne Emley

Signs *The Deepest Cut*

Saturday, March 28, 2:00 PM

Time has passed in the life of Pasadena police detective Nan Vining since she was first attacked and left for dead, but she and her daughter remain traumatized by the event, and determined to catch her attacker. *The Deepest Cut* leads Nan, daughter Emily, and readers to a confrontation with The Bad Man who has haunted her work as a cop and her relationships as a mother and lover through *The First Cut* and *Cut to the Quick*. (See our Guest Review on our web site.) If Los Angeles romantic suspense author Dianne Emley looks familiar when she visits on Saturday, March 28, at 2:00 PM, perhaps you remember her earlier mysteries as Dianne Pugh.

## Paul Levine

Signs *Illegal*

Sunday, March 29, 2:00 PM

Paul Levine, author of the Terry-endorsed Solomon and Lord novels, introduces *Illegal* this way on his web site: “Say hello to Jimmy (Royal) Payne, the trouble-prone hero of *Illegal*. Did I say ‘hero’? He’s a lawyer who skims money from a bribery sting, punches out cops, and skips town when he’s jailed for contempt. And yet the plight of a twelve-year old Mexican boy touches Payne’s cynical heart. I think it’s my most powerful novel yet.” Inspired by real events, *Illegal* tackles the issues of illegal immigration, human trafficking, and sexual slavery. Welcome the author and screenwriter (*First Monday*, *JAG*, etc.) on Sunday, March 29, at 2:00 PM for an afternoon of criminal humor.

Events continue on the back page

## March Events Continue

(from the Front page)

### Raymond E. Feist

Signs Rides a Dread Legion: Book One of the Demonwar Saga  
Tuesday, March 31, 7:00 PM

A decade has passed since the Darkwar. Midkemia and Kelewan are experiencing a fitful peace. The peace is disrupted by the arrival of high elf conjurer Laromendis, whose people are suffering at the hands of the Demon King's Legion, and who are determined to reclaim their ancestral home at any price, even if that land is now occupied by the inhabitants of Midkemia. Fans have thrilled to the fantastic adventures of Pug the magician and his friends and allies for 25 years. Join Raymond E. Feist at the launch party for *Rides a Dread Legion: Book One of the Demonwar Saga* at Mysterious Galaxy on Tuesday, March 31, at 7:00 PM.

### Looking Ahead into April and more:

Dani & Eytan Kollin – April 2; Ace Atkins – April 6; Ann Aguirre – April 10; Michele Scott – April 11; M.K. Scott – April 11; Diana Killian – April 11; Harley Jane Kozak – April 19; Linda O. Johnston – April 19; John Everson – April 24; The Nebula Awards® in Los Angeles – April 24 & 25; The Los Angeles Times Festival of Books – April 25 & 26; Robert Dugoni – April 27; Mysterious Galaxy's Sweet Sixteen Birthday Bash – May 9; and on into summer, with Lee Child, Gregg Hurwitz, the staff of the Clarion Workshop, Comic-Con International, and much more!

## Rave Reviews

### Death's Daughter: A Calliope Reaper-Jones Novel by Amber Benson

An entertainingly self-absorbed protagonist and an internationally diverse mix of mythologies help the debut solo novel by Amber stand out in the increasingly crowded sub-genre of urban fantasy. Middle child Calliope Reaper-Jones has spent the last three years actively trying to avoid her family, especially her father and his job as the immortal head of Death, Inc. When her mundane workday is abruptly disrupted by the appearance of her father's Executive Assistant, Callie is reluctant to reengage with her past. Only news of the disappearance of her father, older sister, and all of Death, Inc.'s key executives manages to lure her home. Matters are further complicated by the news that, in the absence of a designated and prepared heir, the Devil wants to replace Callie's father with his own candidate for Death, the devilishly charming Devil's Protégé. Callie tackles three daunting tasks, assigned by a cadre of deities from Norse, Indian and Greek mythologies, and aided and frustrated by her teenage sister, Clio, and the Devil's Protégé, among others. Amber's macabre and occasionally visceral sense of humor serves readers well. Ace Books pbo, \$7.99. — MeH

### Charmed and Dangerous by Candace Havens

I'm charmed ... and it's dangerous to my work schedule! I don't know how I missed this series when it first came out, but I am hooked now! *Charmed and Dangerous* features Bronwyn, a high witch now living in Sweet, Texas where powerful white magic and a coven of witches protects the town. And now that Bronwyn can sleep at night (without worrying about daemons coming at her at all hours), she is more than able to do her day job, a one-witch secret service. She protects the British Prime Minister and anyone else who wants to buy her services. She will tell you that her purpose is "To rid the world of evil, one bad guy at a time." And while she is able to handle her job responsibilities without raising an eyebrow, it's her personal life that is challenging. She's funny, she's quirky, and there is plenty of action. Fans of MaryJanice Davidson who want to switch to witches and warlocks for a while will love this one. Berkley Sensation pbo, \$7.99. — tlq

### Red-Headed Stepchild by Jaye Wells

Sabina Kane is a red-head because all vampire offspring are red-heads. Even the unlikely hybrid products of a vampire / mage union, since the two races have a historical enmity stemming all the way back to the conflict between founders Lilith and Hekate. Because of her outsider status, Sabina is best-suited for one job in vampire society – assassin. Being assigned to infiltrate a cult and investigate rumors its charismatic leader is looking to sabotage the vampires' position is just the start of her headaches – she also has to deal with a demon attack, a persistently annoying mage whose world view is in complete conflict with hers, and being roommates with an incredibly perky faery. Some interesting new magic rules and relationships make this a fun new urban fantasy. Orbit pbo, \$7.99, in April. — MeH

### Loser's Town by Daniel Depp

Screenwriter and former bookseller Depp ventures into the terrain of Hollywood *noir*, something we suspect he has a certain amount of insider perspective into. (He is also Johnny's brother.) Former stuntman David Spandau is a part time rodeo competitor who also works for the kind of Hollywood investigation agency that sends out staff to protect high-profile young actors from threatening fan letters and the like. When the threat turns out to be a flimsy cover-up for a young man being blackmailed by a local small-time gangster with aspirations of being a producer, David intervenes. While there are plenty of Tinsletown characters here, the most memorable ones are those on the fringe – the hired thugs, the tired club personnel, and David's ex and her family and their ranch. Violent and profane, but also accurate, at least to my limited perception, of the extremes people will go to while pursuing the Hollywood dream. Simon & Schuster, \$25.00. — MeH

## Zombies 'R Us

### Breathers by S.G. Browne

In the world of *Breathers*, zombies have been acknowledged as real, and are basically treated as a public nuisance. Andy Warner returned from the car accident that killed (thoroughly) his wife; now he spends his time in his parents' basement, and attending Undead Anonymous meetings. He has no job. His daughter is effectively an orphan. He is one misstep away from being confined and used for surgical practice. And even the regular consumption of products that mimic embalming fluids aren't enough to keep him relatively intact. Until... Dark, occasionally oozing humor and a straightforward delivery enliven this *Zombie's Lament*. Recommended for anyone who doesn't mind a little dismemberment and cannibalism with their star-crossed romance. Broadway tpo, \$14.00. — MeH

### Zombie Queen of Newbury High by Amanda Ashby

After three days of moping and a lot of Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream, Mia Everett has to admit that her boyfriend of five dates — six if you count football practice — is tired of her. Rob Ziggerman has hooked up with Samantha Griffin. Her hypochondriac best friend Candace has a perfect solution — visit the old witch who helps with her vitamin supplements. She and Mia ditch school, buy a love potion, and rush back to the senior assembly to cast the spell. When Rob's interest in Mia returns, the two friends think they are home free.

The following day, the New Guy stops Mia to talk to her. Chase Miller, smart and quiet, has been in town six months and informs her that he works for the Department of Paranormal Containment as a *Zombie Exterminator*. According to Chase, Mia's spell will turn everyone at the assembly into flesh-eating *Zombies* and she will be their first meal after they turn, in about four days. Somehow they have to get a copy of the spell along with the required ingredients and repeat the chant at the next gathering of the senior class ... or Chase will have to gas the infected teenagers — and their teachers.

Then her developing interest in Chase complicates their working together. The book is an easy, enjoyable read and the banter among the teenagers is laugh-out-loud. Penguin pbo, \$7.99.

— Guest Reviewer Sandra Hale

### The Forest of Hands and Teeth by Carrie Ryan

While the lighter side of zombies has been explored in other recent works (see above), *The Forest of Hands and Teeth* deals with a number of the dark themes, including the question of how one responds to the transformation of a loved one into a seemingly soulless, dangerous "thing," without ever using the term "zombie." This is *I am Legend* meets *The Gate to Women's Country*, with a teenage protagonist. Mary's village is both refuge and prison, as the inhabitants surround themselves with a fence and rituals to keep the Unconsecrated out. There are fenced paths that lead away through the Forest, but no one uses them any more, and the general belief is that there are no safe havens to be found at the end of them. But Mary longs for a larger world, perhaps one that even includes the mythological ocean her mother told her stories about. Will she sacrifice her safety, and that of others, to expand her horizons? A rich and complex novel, satisfying for mature teen readers and adults. Delacorte Press, \$17.99, in April. — MeH

Check our in-store *Zombie* display for more works of the undead, including books by Max Brooks, Jeff Mariotte, and Ryan Mecum.

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