

Death Row

By Jon Katz

Private Investigator Kit DeLeeuw takes a stroll down death row—a macabre nickname for nursing homes and assisted-care facilities. DeLeeuw's best friend, Benchley Carrolton, has suffered a stroke and is taken to Elston Manor, one of the better-run facilities in New Jersey. Its owner, a state legislator, wants to retire on his string of nursing homes, but his plans may be in jeopardy when DeLeeuw begins to suspect that Carrolton has met with foul play while at Elston Manor. Katz's writing is particularly solid. Not only does he do a terrific job of portraying modern suburban life, but his mystery is so well plotted, and so shrouded in ambiguity, that the reader can barely guess what crimes have been committed, much less how they will be solved. Also nice is Katz's way with characters—nothing cardboard here. And DeLeeuw's first-person musings on life as boomer sandwiched between sullen adolescents and ailing parents will ring true for many mystery fans.

Available at Wayne in Fiction



Barbed-Wire Kiss

By Wallace Stroby

Ex-cop Harry Rane, recovering from the death of his wife and forced into semi-retirement by a bullet wound, comes to the rescue of his longtime friend Bobby. Bobby has made a big mistake: he has invested money with a partner for a "one-time" drug buy. The partner has disappeared with the cash, but the supplier, a suspicious character under scrutiny by New Jersey cops, still wants his money. Fortunately, Rane devises a plan meant to keep the heat off his friend. Hard-hitting prose and tidy plotting complicated by crime bosses, ex-girlfriends, pregnant wives, and bumptious Jersey-shore surroundings make for an excellent first mystery.

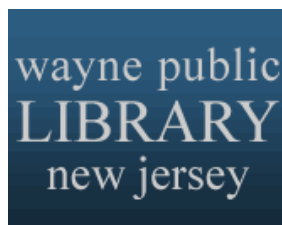
Available at Wayne & Preakness in Fiction

Open and Shut

By David Rosenfelt

Defense attorney Andy Carpenter just might be the biggest wiseacre to hit the genre since Archie Goodwin. His courtroom antics have already ticked off judges and juries throughout Passaic County, and he'd probably be in jail himself if not for the New Jersey legal system's tremendous respect for Andy's late father, ex-DA Nelson Carpenter. But now Andy's become an irritant to someone still more dangerous than trial judge Walter "Hatchet" Henderson—someone willing to use threats, beatings, and bullets to keep Andy from inheriting his father's strange legacy: \$22 million in an account no one knew about, a photo of Nelson in his 20s with three other young men, and a case that he prosecuted successfully seven years ago, now due for retrial on a technicality. And since Andy promised his father he'd defend Willie Miller in what looks like an open-and-shut case—the murder of Denise McGregor, whose body Willie was found standing over in an alley behind a bar, whose fingernails were lined with traces of Willie's skin, and whose blood was smeared on a knife with Willie's prints all over it—he'll do just that, even if it imperils his shaky reconciliation with his wife Nicole, his livelihood, his reputation, and his life. The new-love subplot with his female investigator, perhaps meant to lend manic Andy some gravitas, is just a distraction from the brisk dialogue, careful plotting, and solid spadework in Rosenfelt's series opener.

Available at Wayne in Fiction



Wayne Public Library

461 Valley Road, Wayne, NJ 07470

Phone: 973-694-4272

Preakness Branch Library

1006 Hamburg Tpke, Wayne, NJ 07470

Phone: 973-694-7110

www.waynepubliclibrary.org

updated 5-10

Authors from the Garden State!



The mosquito is the state bird of New Jersey.

~ Andy Warhol

Jersey is my hometown, and I love it. I'll probably have houses in other places, but that's my home, and nobody's kicking me out of there.

~ Michelle Rodriguez

The results of a new study are out this week saying that New Jersey is one of the most livable states in the country. The study has a margin of error of 100 percent.

~ Conan O'Brien

Tilt-a-Whirl

By Chris Grabenstein

This impressive debut by New York City advertising executive-turned-mystery writer Grabenstein is set in idyllic Sea Haven, a touristy summer town that will be very familiar to readers knowledgeable about the New Jersey shore and follows cop extraordinaire John Ceepak and his part-time junior partner, Danny Boyle. Ceepak is a former military policeman just back from Iraq who lives by a strict moral code of absolute honesty and integrity, a code that is constantly challenged as he and Boyle set out to find the culprit in the murder of a real estate mogul and the subsequent kidnapping of his daughter. The story is related by Boyle, whose youthful inexperience and desire to be a kid are the perfect foil for Ceepak's mature, by-the-book demeanor. Grabenstein's writing is direct and punchy, providing many laugh-out-loud moments. Though a bit surreal, the ending is unexpected and satisfying and wraps up a good pace.

Available at Wayne in Fiction

First, Do No Harm

By Larry Karp

Martin Firestone, a computer technician, has decided to change his life by attending medical school. When he tells his father, renowned artist Leo Firestone, the elder Firestone reacts with tremendous anger. Shocked at his father's reaction, Martin nevertheless stands his ground. Leo then asks his son to meet him for lunch and proceeds to tell him about his paternal grandfather. Dr. Samuel Firestone, Leo's father, was a legend in Hobart, N.J., a doctor whom everyone-rich or poor-could count on in an emergency. He had a sixth sense about medicine and made house calls at any time of the day or night. Samuel Firestone also knew the darkest secrets of everyone in his community, and when he took his young son (Leo) on as an assistant, he inadvertently set a tragic series of events in motion. Karp's story, steeped in descriptions of 1940s smalltown life, builds to a shattering climax that will haunt readers as much as the book's characters.

Available at Wayne in Fiction

The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao

By Junot Diaz

Things have never been easy for Oscar, a sweet but disastrously overweight, lovesick Dominican ghetto nerd. From his home in New Jersey, where he lives with his old-world mother and rebellious sister, Oscar dreams of becoming the Dominican J. R. R. Tolkien and, most of all, of finding love. But he may never get what he wants, thanks to the fukú – the curse that has haunted the Oscar's family for generations, dooming them to prison, torture, tragic accidents, and, above all, ill-starred love. Oscar, still waiting for his first kiss, is just its most recent victim.

Diaz immerses us in the tumultuous life of Oscar and the history of the family at large, rendering with genuine warmth and dazzling energy, humor, and insight the Dominican-American experience, and, ultimately, the endless human capacity to persevere in the face of heartbreak and loss.

Available at Wayne & Preakness in Fiction and on Audio-CD



Shakedown

By Charlie Stella

In this smoothly compact and often funny crime thriller, New York City's Feast of San Gennaro is only days away when Tommy Agro and John Forzino decide to shake an extra payoff out of Bobby Gennaro, a young ex-mob bookmaker. Determined to distance himself from the wiseguys and keep all the money he's skimmed, Bobby is tough enough for the job but likable enough to appeal to most readers. The grief he gets from his fiancée, Lin Yao, is more than understandable, under the circumstances. Stella moves like a king cat through his usual New York—New Jersey Mafia milieu, though as Det. John DeNafria wryly observes, "Look at what's become of the mob. They're in tatters." Tommy Agro, with his frequent misspeaking—"women were always his Italy's heel"—is a special highlight this outing.

Available at Wayne in Fiction



Death in a Hot Flash: a Bel Barrett Mystery

By Jane Isenberg

Professor Bel Barrett has enough on her plate teaching English at a Jersey City community college. Between hot flashes, she's worrying about her two grown kids and whether her significant other is becoming less significant. Yet somehow Bel lets a colleague, Vinny Vallone—part-time Funeral Services Education teacher, big-time undertaker—flatter her into believing that the future of feminism in the funeral business depends on her acting as a role model by teaching his class how to research and write. But before Bel actually gets into co-teaching the inner-city undertaker wannabes, Vinny the undertaker turns into Vinny the deceased. There's no doubt it's murder, and suspicion is focused on one of Bel's students, a young reformed ex-gangster. Bel doesn't believe the born-again ex-con murdered Vinny and, as always, she makes it her business to right a wrong. With no shortage of suspects, Bel sets out to catch a killer, despite the strong possibility that her nose for news may land her in a hot spot even she can't fan her way out of.

Available at Wayne in Large Type- Fiction

