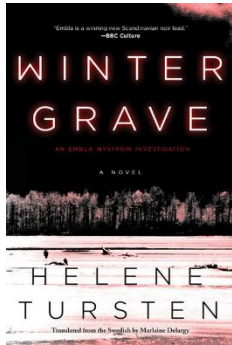
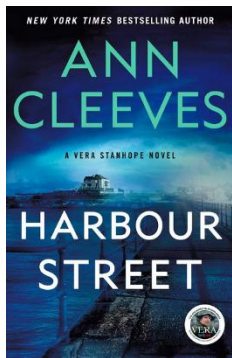


Merry Murderers



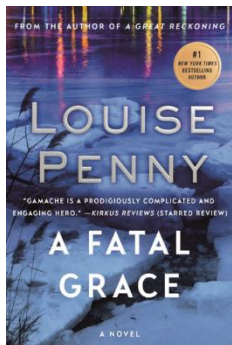
Winter Grave by Helene Tursten

When a little girl disappears a few weeks before Christmas, suspicion falls on the last person she was seen with: the teenage loner who gave her a ride home after school. Complicating the matter is the fact that detectives can hardly get a word out of him. When a second child disappears and a police officer is found dead, tensions in the small town of Strömstad reach an all-time high. Meanwhile, 28-year-old Detective Inspector Embla Nyström has just returned to work and is still recovering from her recent brush with a killer. With the passing of each dark winter day, the odds of finding the children alive shrink, and desperation mounts. Their parents want answers and will stop at nothing to get them.



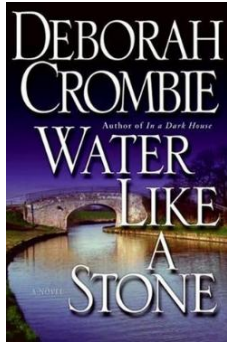
Harbour Street by Ann Cleeves

As the snow falls thickly on Newcastle, the shouts and laughter of Christmas revelers break the muffled silence. Detective Joe Ashworth and his daughter Jessie are swept along in the jostling crowd onto the Metro. But when the train is stopped due to the bad weather, and the other passengers fade into the swirling snow, Jessie notices that one lady hasn't left the train: Margaret Krukowski has been fatally stabbed. Arriving at the scene, DI Vera Stanhope is relieved to have an excuse to escape the holiday festivities. As she stands on the silent, snow-covered station platform, Vera feels a familiar buzz of anticipation, sensing that this will be a complex and unusual case.



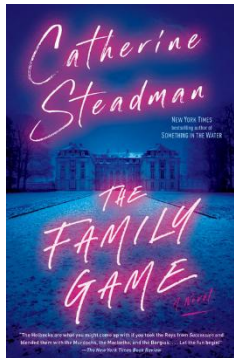
A Fatal Grace by Louise Penny

Welcome to winter in Three Pines, a picturesque village in Quebec, where the villagers are preparing for a traditional country Christmas, and someone is preparing for murder. No one liked CC de Poitiers, who managed to alienate everyone, right up until the moment of her death. When Chief Inspector Armand Gamache, of the Sûreté du Québec, is called to investigate, he quickly realizes he's dealing with someone quite extraordinary. CC de Poitiers was electrocuted in the middle of a frozen lake, in front of the entire village, as she watched the annual curling tournament. With his trademark compassion and courage, Gamache digs beneath the idyllic surface of village life to find the dangerous secrets long buried there. For a Quebec winter is not only staggeringly beautiful but deadly, and the people of Three Pines know better than to reveal too much of themselves.



Water Like a Stone by Deborah Crombie

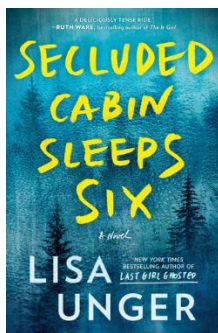
Detective Superintendent Duncan Kincaid and his partner, Sergeant Gemma James, take their sons to picturesque Cheshire for their first family Christmas with Duncan's parents - a holiday both dreaded and anticipated. But not even the charming town of Nantwich and the dreaming canals can mask the tensions in Duncan's family, which are tragically heightened by the discovery of an infant's body hidden in the wall of an old dairy. As Duncan and Gemma help the police investigate the infant's death, another murder strikes closer to home, revealing that far from being idyllic, Duncan's childhood paradise holds dark and deadly secrets.



The Family Game by Catherine Steadman

It's the holiday season and Harriet Reed, a novelist on the brink of literary stardom, is newly engaged to Edward Holbeck, the heir of an extremely powerful family. And even though Edward has long tried to sever ties with them, news of the couple's upcoming marital bliss has the Holbecks inching back into their lives with one invite after another. As Harriet is drawn into their lavish world, the family seems perfectly welcoming, even if some of their traditions, like a "Christmas demon" called Krampus, seem creepy at best. So when Edward's father, Robert, hands Harriet a tape of a book he's been working on, she is desperate to listen. It's a confession to a grisly murder. Feeling isolated and confused, Harriet must work out

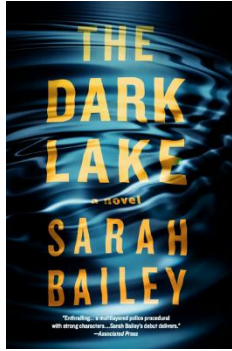
if this is part of a plan to test her loyalty or something far darker.



Secluded Cabin Sleeps Six by Lisa Unger

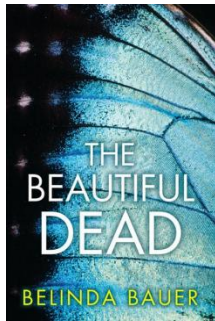
What could be more restful than a weekend Christmas getaway with family and friends? An isolated luxury cabin in the woods, spectacular views, a hot tub and a personal chef. But the dreamy weekend is about to turn into a nightmare. A deadly storm is brewing. The rental host seems just a little too present. The personal chef reveals that their beautiful house has a spine-tingling history. And the friends have their own complicated past, with secrets that run blood deep. How well does Hannah know her brother, her own husband? Can she trust her best friend? Meanwhile, someone is determined to ruin the weekend, looking to exact a payback for deeds

long buried. Who is the stranger among them?



The Dark Lake by Sarah Bailey

The small Australian town of Smithson, New South Wales, is leading up to Christmas – and they are suffering a real heat spell. Detective Sergeant Gemma Woodstock is deeply unnerved when a high school classmate is found strangled, her body floating in a lake. And not just any classmate, but Rosalind Ryan, whose beauty and inscrutability exerted a magnetic pull on Smithson High School, first during Rosalind’s student years and then again when she returned to teach drama. As much as Rosalind’s life was a mystery to Gemma when they were students together, her death presents even more of a puzzle. Despite her many admirers, did anyone in the town truly know her?



The Beautiful Dead by Belinda Bauer

This is one exclusive that Eve Singer, an attractive iWitness News crime reporter, doesn’t want. While covering the stabbing of a young woman just feet from throngs of London Christmas shoppers, Eve catches the eye of the murderer, who decides she would be the perfect amanuensis to aid his grandiose series of gruesome “exhibitions.” When the killer contacts Eve about her coverage of his crimes, she is suddenly on the inside of the biggest murder investigation of the decade. But as the killer becomes increasingly obsessed with her, Eve realizes there's a thin line between inside information and becoming an accomplice to murder--possibly her own.

Book list created by Burlington Public Library, 12/4/2025