

life.” An arresting narrative from beginning to end, Tollifson’s short novel introduces a cast of characters you’ll remember for some time. (*BookLife*)

## Mystery/Thriller

### Die Again

**Tess Gerritsen.** Ballantine, \$27 (352p) ISBN 978-0-345-54385-1

In bestseller Gerritsen’s spellbinding 11th novel featuring Det. Jane Rizzoli of the Boston PD and medical examiner Maura Isles (after 2012’s *Last to Die*), Leon Gott, taxidermist and avid hunter, is eviscerated in his West Roxbury home, and the rare snow leopard pelt he was preserving is stolen. Rizzoli and Isles suspect that Gott’s death is related to the Botswana safari on which his son vanished six years earlier—and to a murderous sub-Saharan African cult and unsolved killings across the U.S. Gerritsen alternates the search for a cunning human predator with the first-person narrative of Millie Jacobson, the safari’s only survivor, who adds to the visceral horror with her account of how a group of trapped, terrified people turned on each other. Backstory and character development are occasionally sacrificed to pacing, but Gerritsen excels at describing the harsh, often lethal majesty of the Okavango Delta in this satisfying page-turner sure to please longtime Rizzoli and Isles fans and new readers alike. *Author tour.* Agent: Meg Ruley, *Jane Rotrosen Agency.* (Jan.)

### ★ The Convert’s Song

**Sebastian Rotella.** Little, Brown/Mulholland, \$26 (336p) ISBN 978-0-316-32469-4

Valentine Pescatore, the hero of Rotella’s excellent second thriller, left his job as a U.S. Border Patrol agent to become a PI in Buenos Aires, Argentina. There he runs into Raymond Mercer, his former best friend, whom he hasn’t heard from since they were teenagers in Chicago. A charming, failed singer, Raymond has converted to Islam, but is vague about what he does for a living. When hundreds are killed in a terrorist attack at a shopping mall near the city’s garment district, the authorities suspect that Raymond and Valentine committed the crime. To clear his name, Valentine works with French agent Fatima Belhaj to pursue Raymond across the globe,

from South American jungles to Paris and Baghdad. Valentine realizes how little he knows about his former friend. Is Raymond a terrorist or an informant, a spy or a scam artist? Rotella (*Triple Crossing*) ratchets up the action with an absorbing look at international politics. Agent: *Bonnie Nadell, Hill Nadell Literary Agency.* (Dec.)

### The Voices

**F.R. Tallis.** Pegasus Crime (Norton, dist.), \$25.95 (384p) ISBN 978-1-60598-656-2

Well-rounded characters and evocative prose distinguish this supernatural thriller from Edgar-finalist Tallis (*The Forbidden*). Composer Christopher Norton and his pregnant wife, Laura, purchase a home near London’s Hampstead Heath in 1974. During renovations, the builder finds some abandoned items, including a clockwork monkey that Christopher decides to retain so that his child can play with a toy another once cherished. Disturbing events begin when the Nortons’ daughter, Faye, is just two years old. As Christopher works on a movie score, he finds odd noises on his recordings. Laura is terrified when the toddler disappears for a few moments, and remains unnerved when she finds an entranced Faye behind a locked door near the monkey toy. Things only go downhill from there. This haunted house story

doesn’t break any new ground, but fans of subtle horror will find a lot to like. Agent: *Clare Alexander, Aitken Alexander Associates (U.K.).* (Dec.)

### Big Finish

**James W. Hall.** Minotaur, \$25.99 (304p) ISBN 978-1-250-00501-4

Edgar-winner Hall’s heart-pounding 14th Thorn novel (after 2013’s *Going Dark*) takes the hard-bitten Florida PI to Pine Haven, N.C., where Thorn’s newly discovered son, Flynn Moss, and his fellow Earth Liberation Front activists target a hog factory farm in an “action” that goes awry. Shortly after, Thorn receives the latest in a series of postcards from Flynn, dropped anonymously at the office of his PI friend, Sugarman, and bearing only two words: “Help Me.” The rescue attempt mounted by the pair soon becomes complicated as Sugar’s girlfriend, Tina Gathercole, and an FBI agent, Madeline Cruz, attach themselves to the effort. Meanwhile, murderous ex-con X-88 and his girlfriend, Pixie, descend on Pine Haven with evil intent. Hall keeps the tension mounting as motives and alliances shift with the foul-scented wind. Even as violence looms, Hall’s talent for description adds a balancing, poetical note. Agent: *Richard Pine, Inkwell Management.* (Dec.)

## ★ The Wolf and the Lamb: A Jerusalem Mystery

**Frederick Ramsay.** Poisoned Pen, \$24.95 (314p) ISBN 978-1-464203-26-8; \$14.95 trade paper ISBN 978-1-464203-28-2

Ramsay audaciously sets his outstanding third Jerusalem mystery (after 2013’s *Holy Smoke*) at the very time of Jesus’s arrest. When Pontius Pilate, emperor’s prefect of Judea and overseer of Palestine, is arrested for murdering his rival, Aurelius Decimus, all the evidence is against him. Pilate was caught literally red-handed, covered in blood at the scene of the crime, with his dagger stuck in Decimus’s corpse. Pilate insists he was framed. Since he doesn’t believe he will get justice from his Roman countrymen, he turns to Rabban Gamaliel, chief rabbi of the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of first-century Israel. The rabbi’s commitment to justice compels him to accept the case, despite his loathing for his “client” and the consequences to his own standing if his fellow Jews get wind of his role. Meanwhile, the Dagger Men, a sect of Jewish assassins, begin their reign of terror. Ramsay brings the tumult of the time to vivid life while neatly integrating the events leading to Christ’s crucifixion into the whodunit story line. (Dec.)

