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Award-winning Wirral novelist, **Margaret Murphy**, who pens thrillers as **A.D. Garrett** and **Ashley Dyer**, recommends two books per month, across a range of styles and a mixture of new and old.

November Road by Lou Berney
HarperCollins ISBN-10: 0008309337



November Road unfolds in the wake of President Kennedy's assassination. Frank Guidry knows everyone – as a loyal and long-serving lieutenant to New Orleans Mob boss, Carlo Marcello, it's what he's paid to do. He's a self-aware hedonist intent on enjoying every minute of life, and his talent for deception has served him well. Then President Kennedy is assassinated, and Guidry realises he knows too much. Conspiracy theories about JFK's assassination abound, but in *November Road*, Marcello planned and arranged the shooting, then set about erasing anything or anyone that might link him to the crime (and there is support for this version of events). Which is bad news for Frank Guidry, who suspects he's next on the list, leaving him with two options: run, or die.

Charlotte is on the run, too – from a stultifying marriage to a hopeless drunk. A housewife from small town Oklahoma, she takes the brave decision to head west to California in the hope of making a better life for herself and her two young daughters. Guidry, like the manipulative narcissist he is, feels no compunction in using the little family to disguise and shield himself from the ruthless and unstoppable killer sent after him. But Charlotte is no ordinary housewife, and Guidry begins to appreciate her wit, intelligence and strength. *November Road* could be described as a road-trip novel, even a romance of sorts – albeit a tense and suspenseful one, set as it is against a backdrop of mafia affiliations, political shenanigans, and psychopaths who own yachts and ranch houses, and have the means to make people disappear in horrifying ways. But it is much, much more than this. In his clever, stylish, atmospheric and immersive novel, Lou Berney explores the influence of the past on our future, the redemptive power of goodness, and the possibility of second chances. Masterfully written, beautifully filmic, this novel is a must-read for 2019.

The Method by Shannon Kirk
ISBN-10: 9781608091867



Finding a truly distinctive voice for your characters is a huge challenge for any writer. So I was thrilled to find Shannon Kirk's *The Method*, which introduces a truly unique voice: a pregnant teenage girl, snatched off the street. Ah, you might think, the standard 'woman in jeopardy' trope, surely? No. Not at all. Kirk subverts that hoary cliché with humour, inventiveness and panache. Lisa, the 'victim', is just sixteen years old. Faced with a terrifying situation (and there are some highly suspenseful and genuinely frightening moments in this novel) she is likeable, vulnerable and indomitable in a way that always seems entirely plausible. She is also cool and calculating – an ice-cold observer of the people, situations and surroundings she's thrust into – and she is creative and ruthless in making the best use of the tiny, incremental snippets of information she gleans. What is she? A sociopath? Autistic savant? You decide – I wouldn't dream of spoiling it for you – but do prepare to have your expectations thwarted in the most enjoyable way.