



Best Fiction of 2011: Mysteries

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While selecting this year's best fiction, Kirkus' reviewers and I engaged in a lot of arm wrestling, chair hurling and booze swilling. Not really. Though I may have just nailed the key elements of an Ernest Hemingway novel. The process was more cheery than all that: we singled out the books we loved reading most, the ones we would recommend to friends. And that's where you come in. Whether you like mysteries, thrillers, science fiction, good ole' fashioned literary novels—we have something for you.

There are 90 books to choose from, in 8 categories (best debut fiction, best story collections, etc.). Each book is a standout, and selections are listed in alphabetical order.

For those who like their books to double as bricks, 2011 was your year. Fine (and long) novels from Stephen King, Haruki Murakami, Neal Stephenson and John Sayles are among the picks. This year we also saw a lot of Nordic crime fiction vying for attention. Those who miss Stieg Larsson can take solace in thrillers from two other masters of the form: Henning Mankell and Jo Nesbø. And there's more, much more. As a bonus you can read interviews with some of the featured authors: Tom Perrotta, Anne Patchett, Marcia Clark. Have fun!

Back of Beyond	C. J. Box
Dead Dogs and Englishmen	Elizabeth Kan Buzzelli
Drawing Conclusions	Donna Leon
Echoes of the Dead	Sally Spencer
The Kind of Diamonds	Simon Tolkien
Lucifer's Tears	James Thompson
Misterioso	Arne Dahl
Now You See Me	S. J. Bolton
Rizzo's Fire	Lou Manfredo
The Rock Hole	Reavis z. Worthan
Stealing Mona Lisa	Carson Morton
The Stranger You Seek	Amanda Kyle Williams

Best Fiction of 2011: Thrillers

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Bloodmoney	David Ignatius
The Complaints	Ian Rankin
Eyes Wide Open	Andrew Gross
Gentlemen's Hour	Don Winslow
Guilt By Association	Marcia Clark
The Informant	Thomas Perry
Reamde	Neal Stephenson
Read on Read	Edward Conion
The Snowman	Jo Nesbo
Thick as Thieves	Peter Spiegelman
Trackers	Deon Meyer
The Trinity Six	Charles Cumming
The Troubled Man	Henning Mankell
Very Bad Men	Harry Dolan
Woodcutter	Reginald Hill