Pythagoras' Revenge: A Mathematical Mystery.
By Arturo Sangalli.

Would have guessed that a murder-treasure mystery lay hidden behind a geometric formula familiar to every high-schooler? Weaving a wealth of mathematical scholarship into a compellingly plotted novel, Sangalli recounts a fascinating tale of ancient ars and modern sleuthing as Pythagoras of Samos (forever linked to the triangle theorem bearing his name) perishes amid brutal intrigues sweeping an early Greek colony, yet leaves behind a tantalizing legacy of numerical reasoning and paranormal mysticism. Readers delve deep into that legacy as they join an intrepid late-twentieth-century band of mathematical explorers intent upon recovering a long-lost Pythagorean manuscript containing the distilled wisdom of the secretive philosopher, audaciously even seeking the reincarnated master himself. To be sure, it is the author's own fertile imagination that generates the characters who form this resolute band and then scripts the adventures they encounter in their unlikely international quest. However, readers will learn a great deal about real mathematics and its history as they join Pythagoras' modern epiphanies in pondering the meaning of geometrical patterns, the surprising randomness in numbers, and the logic of mathematical proofs. Though perhaps a bit too conceptual for some, this engaging narrative will persuade many readers that mathematics offers far more excitement than they had previously supposed. —Bryce Christensen

Deadly Quarrel.
By Charles O'Brien. 

O'Brien offers up another fine historical mystery featuring Frenchwoman Anne Cartier. France is in the throes of revolution, and Anne's husband urges her to escape to England to visit her grandfather until the tumult dies down. Arriving in England, she is delighted learning to get their hands on Janice's considerable fortune, and the two are soon on the trail of this a satisfying read for historical-mystery romance. Readers will hope for more from this unlikely couple. An entertaining series starter.

Deja Vu.
By Suzetta Perkins.

The sequel to Perkins' well-received debut, Behind the Veil (2006), tells the story of what happens when Angelica Barnes and Jefferson Myles get out of jail. Clearly influenced by street lit, Perkins churns out a fast and furious plot with dramatic turns and populated mainly with African American characters. As the main narrator, Angelica describes her early release from jail and return to Fayetteville, where she reunites with her best friend. Then it's off to New York, where she rejects a modeling job that requires posing for a lesbian magazine, becomes a stripper instead, and meets her sinister, arms-dealing old boyfriend. The nonstop action, in combination with a text heavy on dialogue, makes for a fast read, and the realistically drawn characters will keep readers engaged. The story can't stand alone, however, so this belongs only in libraries where Behind the Veil has a fan base. Having the words "Zane Presents" on the front cover will ensure demand in urban libraries. —Jessica Mayer

Fire and Ice.
By J. A. Jance. 

Memories of nearly betraying her husband (Partner in Crime, 2002) with another man come rushing back when Cochise County, Arizona, sheriff Joanna Brady picks up the phone to find herself speaking to J. P. Beaumont. Aging, somewhat mellowed, and newly happily married since his latest encounter with Brady, he is working as an investigator for Seattle's Special Homicide Investigation Team (yes... that's S.H.I.T.). This time he's looking into a frustrating series of brutal murders: five young women prostitutes have been bludgeoned, wrapped in identical tarps, and set afire. Finally, there's a break in the case—which brings Beaumont into contact with Joanna once again, linking them together in ways neither can anticipate. Readers get a full-on view of Jance's two popular series, characters in this exploration of how each has gone on with life since they last met. The clever story unfolds smoothly, with characters kept nicely distinct throughout: Beaumont's sardonic voice details the twists and turns of his investigation, while an omniscient narrator tells how tough, energetic Brady balances the complications of her personal life with her law-enforcement obligations. Fans of both characters will be pleased. —Stephanie Zvirin

Greedy Bones.
By Carolyn Haines. 

Southern belle Sarah Booth Delaney, an aspiring Hollywood actress and PI, is back home in Mississippi in this ninth book in the series. Everything is going well with both her acting career and her romance with leading man Graf Mileau, but duty calls on the home front when the husband of her friend Tinkie falls seriously ill. The vicious illness soon has other victims lapsing into comas. It is up to Sarah Booth to discover if the illness is tied into genetically altered boll weevils and cotton plants. Even the scientists from the Centers for Disease Control can't tell for sure if this is a natural plague or an act of terrorism. Although Sarah's pal Tinkie is unable to offer much assistance, because she refuses to leave the side of her comatose husband, her other buddies, Millie and Ceece, lend a helping hand. The plot may be a bit far-fetched, but fans won't mind, as the cast is in fine form (including the helpful ghost, Jitty), and it's good to be back in Mississippi. All in all, one of the more entertaining episodes in the series. —Judy Coon

Havana Fever.
By Leonardo Padura. Tr. by Peter Bush. 

In our review of Padura's last Mario Conde novel (Havana Gold, 2008), we said that the series reads like an extended bolero, each part more moody and rum-soaked than its predecessor. It should come as no surprise, then, to learn that, in his latest adventure, Conde investigates the life and mysterious death of a bolero singer from the 1950's. The story begins in contemporary Cuba, awash now in tourists' dollars but still bearing the scars of the post-Soviet years, and extends back to the Batista era, when Havana was the city of 100 nightclubs. Conde, retired from the police and making a precarious living as an antiquarian book dealer, stumbles on a mother lode of rarities in the crumbling mansion of a brother and sister forced to sell their books to pay for food. Finding a yellowed newspaper clipping describing the allure of a bolerista called Violeta del Rio, Conde begins to investigate the singer's life, unlocking a closet stuffed with guilt, jealousy, and stifled rage. As always, Padura untolls his tale in cascading waves of rambling, lyrical prose that will enthrall James Lee Burke fans just as it may deter those with more minimalist tastes. —Bill Ott

The Lost Throne.
By Chris Kuzneski. 

Former Special Forces agents Jonathon Payne and D. J. Jones continue to work as freelance investigators for secret and dan-