

# Parade Picks

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## THE MOST THRILLING READS EVER

Gothic dramas, serial killers and derring-do secret agents. Which mysteries, thrillers and suspense novels are considered the greatest of all time? These bestselling writers share their picks. —Michael Giltz



### 1 **Winter's Bone** by Daniel Woodrell

Before Jennifer Lawrence starred as an Ozark teen in the Hollywood adaptation, *Winter's Bone* was a hit, according to **James Patterson** (whose novel with Dolly Parton, *Run, Rose, Run*, is out March 7). "It's rare, maybe a 100,000 to 1 shot, that a novel will succeed on every level—story, characters, dialogue and description that rises to the level of poetry. But that's what Woodrell achieved here."

### 2 **A Judgement in Stone** by Ruth Rendell

"You know the victims, killer and motive from the first sentence," says author **Donna Leon** (her latest Brunetti mystery, *Give Unto Others*, is out March 15). "But the reader spends the next 300 pages hoping to prevent these poor lambs from leading themselves to the slaughter."

### 3 **True Grit** by Charles Portis

Author **Jasper Fforde** (*The Constant Rabbit*) says this stone-cold classic (narrated by an unforgettable 14-year-old girl) belongs in the celebration of thrillers: "A revenge story, manhunt,

thriller and a story of trust, love, bravery and tenacity—*True Grit* has it all."

### 4 **A Perfect Spy** by John le Carré

No one writes espionage like le Carré, says *The Bone Collector* author **Jeffery Deaver**. "I've picked *A Perfect Spy* because it is also one of the most engrossing and harrowing portraits of a father-son relationship I've ever read."

### 5 **The Talented Mr. Ripley** by Patricia Highsmith

It is one of the best (if not the best) thrillers of all time, says **Karin Slaughter**, whose latest novel, *Girl, Forgotten*, hits shelves later this year. "Tom Ripley is not just a classic antihero, he is a precursor to so many flawed men we're meant to root for, from Don Draper to Tony Soprano."

### 6 **Live and Let Die** by Ian Fleming

For author **Ken Follett** (*Never*), this second entry in the James Bond series—more brutal and blunt than the films—leads the thriller pack. "I remember asking my father what a martini was," Follett

says. "'Some kind of drink,' he said grumpily, clearly having no idea. I could hardly wait to find out."

### 7 **Room** by Emma Donoghue

The darkest novels don't plunge us into depravity but shine a light so we can confront them. That's why *Room* captured the imagination of bestselling author **Kristin Hannah** (*Firefly Lane*, *The Four Winds*). "It's quite simply one of the most powerful, most beautiful novels I've ever read," she says. "It's one of those stories that lingers and makes you see the world in a slightly different way."

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