**The Widow by Fiona Barton**
BANTAM PRESS, £12.99 (EBOOK £5.99)
REVIEW BY HEATHER DOUGHTY

Hotly tipped as 2016’s The Girl On The Train, The Widow comes with great expectations as this year’s unputdownable psychological thriller. Fiona Barton’s crime debut is an emotional rollercoaster from the get-go. The titular character is Jean Taylor, the devoted wife of accused murderer Glen. Each chapter is told from a different perspective, including the sceptical detective, the savvy reporter and the warm-down widow. Barton expertly jumps back and forth between time frames from the date that ‘Baby Bella’ vanished, to the present day where Jean Taylor is dealing with her husband’s sudden death. The novel keeps the reader guessing at every turn.

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**The Promise by Robert Crais**
ORION, £16.99 (EBOOK £8.99)
REVIEW BY HARRIET SHEPHARD

The Promise is the 16th novel in Robert Crais’s series of books following LA detectives Elvis Cole and Joe Pike. But this time they are joined by LAPD officer Scott James and his faithful patrol dog Maggie, the heroes of his stand-alone novel Suspect. The two worlds collide from the opening chapters, when Cole’s investigation into the disappearance of a grieving mother leads him to the same house that James is chasing an armed thief into. The tension is held taut and the action doesn’t stop. The inclusion of chapters from Maggie’s point of view is a bit ridiculous. However, this is a clever tale that is much more than just another cheesy thriller.
**Dark Matter And The Dinosaurs: The Astounding Interconnectedness Of The Universe by Lisa Randall**

**BODLEY HEAD, £25 (EBOOK £13.99)**

**REVIEW BY AMY NICHOLSON**

If you've been craving a more substantial read following a season of stocking stuffers, physicist Lisa Randall's latest book might be just what you're looking for. In *Dark Matter And The Dinosaurs*, she suggests a wildly exciting idea – that dark matter could be responsible for influencing the movement of celestial bodies. As a result, the asteroid or comet falling to earth that brought about the extinction of the dinosaurs could be due to this force – which therefore has had a huge influence over the development of our own species. Randall's style is clear to understand and engaging, even when she's exploring the kinds of concepts you'd usually only find inside a university’s physics department.

**Why Fonts Matter by Sarah Hyndman**

**VIRGIN BOOKS, £16.99**

**REVIEW BY NILIMA MARSHALL**

Can fonts really alter the taste of your food? One graphic designer certainly thinks typography has a big influence on our lives. Sarah Hyndman explains how fonts have different personalities while pointing out that there's a subtle art behind how they elicit emotional responses. She uses the example of clothes retailer Gap, who changed their logo five years ago, only to revert back following protests from loyal customers. The author says that research suggests fonts on food packaging are “designed to stimulate a craving or hunger”. So next time you pick up a can of baked beans, or a magazine, remember there's a chance they are subtly speaking to you.