

By Book or by Crook

[by Nader Sadre]



You have two choices. Bundle on layers and layers of clothing and face the frosty weather, or put on your favorite PJs, light a few candles, and curl up with an absorbing new book. You decide.

Fatal Distraction: Or How I Conquered My Addiction to Celebrities and Got a Life

by M.E. Fredericks

If you're reading this magazine, you're probably familiar with the concept of celebriholism, the excessive need to be famous or be around famous people. This tendency can lead to crippling bouts of vapidty and should be avoided at all costs. To that end, check out *Distraction*, a quirky, self-mocking tale of one woman's recovery from star worship. *Thomas Dunne Books*; \$23.95.

many dangers of literature and excessive self-reflection. Rich characters and deft writing compensate for a somewhat slow plot. *St. Martin's Press*; \$22.95.

Dot in the Universe: A Novel

by Lucy Ellmann

A sort of philosophical journey for housewives and debutantes, this book approaches the outer boundaries of existential despair and comes out with a litany of reasons for persevering in a meaningless universe. Told in Ellmann's characteristically caustic prose, *Dot* is perfect fare for those bleak winter weekends. *Bloomsbury*; \$13.95.

Fabulous!: A Loving, Luscious, and Light-hearted Look at Film from the Gay Perspective

by Donald F. Reuter

Four dozen classics of modern American cinema get the gay salute in this frothy attempt to find the fruity in our favorite movies. Notable mentions include *All About Eve*, *Sunset Boulevard*, and *Double Indemnity* (along with everything featuring Cary Grant). *Broadway Books*; \$16.95.

An Almost Perfect Moment

by Binnie Kirshenbaum

On the surface it's an unremarkable drama set in 1970s Brooklyn among housewives and schoolteachers, but *Perfect Moment* is irresistibly absorbing, filled with more pathos than a season of *The Simple Life*. Kirshenbaum's pitiable heroes pursue dignity and happiness by abusing those closest to them, and somehow emerge both noble and poetic in defeat. *Ecco*; \$24.95.

Anything You Say Can and Will be Used Against You

by Laurie Lynn Drummond

A dozen stories by former police officer Drummond detail the psychological torment of upholding the law. A healthy dose of complicated ethics, suspenseful chase scenes, and intelligent, thoughtful protagonists make for a lively, eye-opening read. *HarperCollins*; \$23.95.

The Island of Bicycle Dancers

by Jiro Adachi

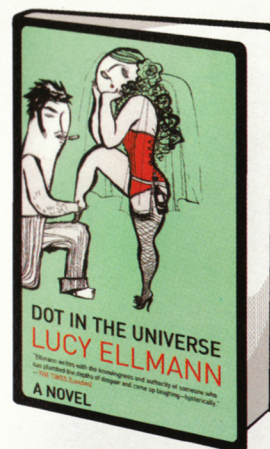
Nothing spells trouble like a sheltered Korean girl falling for a bike messenger—especially when her English is fuzzy and her morals loose. A fun and engaging debut by the Hungarian-Japanese author about a side of New York not seen since *Quicksilver*. *St. Martin's Press*; \$22.95.

Departures

by Lorna J. Cook

Oh, the emotional strains of self-discovery among the upper-middle class, or something like that. Writing about the family of an English professor living in Connecticut, Cook illustrates the

ABOVE: Authors Starsky & Cox work out the kinks in your kinky relationship with *Sextrology*.



Gotham Tragic

by Kurt Wenzel

A burned-out writer pens a fatwa-inspiring story as a has-been investment banker swindles billions from shareholders. Sound familiar? Despite the recycled plotlines, *Gotham* is a satisfying story about fame, envy, and greed, with all the usual suspects making the standard mistakes. *Little Brown & Company*; \$23.95.