

History Mysteries

Clive Cussler's Isaac Bell Series

Isaac Bell is a no-nonsense detective working for the Van Dorn Detective Agency driven by his sense of justice, he travels early-twentieth-century America pursuing thieves and killers and sometimes criminals of much worse.

The Chase: 1906: For two years, the western states of America have been suffering an extraordinary crime spree: a string of bank robberies by a single man who cold-bloodedly murders any and all witnesses and then vanishes without a trace. Fed up by the depredations of the Butcher Bandit, the U.S. government brings in the best man they can find—a tall, lean, no-nonsense detective named Isaac Bell, who has caught thieves and killers coast to coast. But Bell has never had a challenge like this one. From Arizona to Colorado to the streets of San Francisco during its calamitous earthquake and fire, he pursues what is quickly becoming clear to him is the sharpest criminal mind he has ever encountered, and the woman who seems to hold the key to the bandit's identity. Using science, deduction, and intuition, Bell repeatedly draws near only to grasp at thin air, but at least he knows his pursuit is having an effect. Because his quarry is getting angry now, and has turned the chase back on him. The hunter has become the hunted. And soon it will take all of Isaac Bell's skills not merely to prevail . . . but to survive. **(Fiction & Large Print Cussler)**

The Wrecker: In 1907 investigating a series of attacks on the Southern Pacific Railroad's Cascades express lines, Detective Bell learns of the existence of an elusive saboteur who recruits and murders his own accomplices while engineering schemes of maximum havoc. **(Fiction & Large Print Cussler)**

The Spy: It is 1908, and international tensions are mounting as the world plunges toward war. When a brilliant American battleship gun designer dies in a sensational apparent suicide, the man's grief-stricken daughter turns to the legendary Van Dorn Detective Agency to clear her father's name. Van Dorn puts his chief investigator on the case, and Isaac Bell soon realizes that the clues point not to suicide but to murder. And when more suspicious deaths follow, it becomes clear that someone—an elusive spy—is orchestrating the destruction of America's brightest technological minds... and the murders all connect to a top-secret project called Hull 44. But that is just the beginning. As the intrigue deepens, Bell will find himself pitted against German, Japanese, and British spies, in a mission that encompasses dreadnought battleships, Teddy Roosevelt's Great White Fleet, Chinatown, Hell's Kitchen, and the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Isaac Bell has certainly faced perilous situations before, but this time it is more than the future of his country that's at stake—it's the fate of the world. **(Fiction & Large Print Cussler)**

The Race: It is 1910, the age of flying machines is still in its infancy, and newspaper publisher Preston Whiteway is offering \$50,000 for the first daring aviator to cross America in less than fifty days. He is even sponsoring one of the prime candidates—an intrepid woman named Josephine Frost—and that's where Bell, chief investigator for the Van Dorn Detective Agency, comes in. Frost's violent-tempered husband has just killed her lover and tried to kill her, and he is bound to make another attempt. Bell has tangled with Harry Frost before; he knows that the man has made his millions leading gangs of thieves, murderers, and thugs in every city across the country. He also knows that Frost won't be only after his wife, but after Whiteway as well. And if Bell takes the case . . . Frost will be after him, too. **(Fiction & Large Print Cussler)**

The Thief: On the ocean liner Mauretania, two European scientists with a dramatic new invention are barely rescued from abduction by the Van Dorn Detective Agency's intrepid chief investigator, Isaac Bell. Unfortunately, they are not so lucky the second time. The thugs attack again—and this time one of the scientists dies. What are they holding that is so precious? Only something that will revolutionize business and popular culture—and perhaps something more. For war clouds are looming, and a ruthless espionage agent has spotted a priceless opportunity to give the Germans an edge. It is up to Isaac Bell to figure out who he is, what he is up to, and stop him. But he may already be too late . . . and the future of the world may just hang in the balance. **(Fiction & Large Print Cussler)**

The Striker: It is 1902, and a bright, inexperienced young man named Isaac Bell, only two years out of his apprenticeship at the Van Dorn Detective Agency, has an urgent message for his boss. Hired to hunt for radical unionist saboteurs in the coal mines, he is witness to a terrible accident that makes him think that something else is going on, that provocateurs are at work and bigger stakes are in play; little does he know just how big they are. Given exactly one week to prove his case, Bell quickly finds himself pitted against two of the most ruthless opponents he has ever known, men of staggering ambition and cold-bloodedness . . . who are not about to let some wet-behind-the-ears detective stand in their way. **(Fiction & Large Print Cussler)**

The Bootlegger: It is 1920, and both Prohibition and bootlegging are in full swing. When Isaac Bell's boss and lifelong friend Joseph Van Dorn is shot and nearly killed leading the high-speed chase of a rum-running vessel, Bell swears to him that he will hunt down the lawbreakers, but he doesn't know what he is getting into. When a witness to Van Dorn's shooting is executed in a ruthlessly efficient manner invented by the Russian secret police, it becomes clear that these are no ordinary criminals. Bell is up against a team of Bolshevik assassins and saboteurs—and they are intent on overthrowing the government of the United States. **(Fiction & Large Print Cussler)**

The Assassin: As Van Dorn private detective Isaac Bell strives to land a government contract to investigate John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil monopoly, the case takes a deadly turn. A sniper begins murdering opponents of Standard Oil, and soon the assassin--shooting with extraordinary accuracy at seemingly impossible long range--kills Bell's best witness, a brave and likable man. Then the shooter detonates a terrible explosion that sets the victim's independent refinery ablaze. Bell summons his best detectives to scour the site of the crime for evidence. Who is the assassin and for whom did he kill? But the murders--shootings, poisonings, and staged accidents--have just begun as Bell tracks his phantom-like criminal adversary from the "oil fever" regions of Kansas and Texas to Washington, D.C., to the tycoons' enclave of New York, to Russia's war-torn Baku oil fields on the Caspian Sea, and back to America for a final, desperate confrontation. And this one will be the most explosive of all. **(Fiction Cussler)**

Fiona Buckley's Ursula Blanchard Series

Ursula Blanchard is a lady-in-waiting to Queen Elizabeth I of England, in the midst of court scandals and treachery. Ursula's wit and resourcefulness help her as she spies and sleuths, protecting the crown and solving the occasional murder. (Wikipedia.org)

To Shield the Queen: Rumor has linked Queen Elizabeth I to her Master of Horse, Robin Dudley. And what rumors, at that: but for his ailing wife, Amy, Dudley would wed her majesty, the gossipmongers are whispering. To quell idle tongues, Elizabeth dispatches Ursula Blanchard to tend to the sick woman's needs. But not even Ursula can prevent the "accident" that takes Amy's life. Did she fall or was she pushed? Was Ursula a pawn of Dudley and the Queen? Suddenly Ursula finds herself at the center of the scandal, trying to protect Elizabeth as she loses her heart to a Frenchman who may be flirting with sedition against her Queen. She can trust no one, neither her lover nor her monarch, as she sets out to find the truth in a glittering court that conceals a wellspring of blood and lies. **(Mystery Buckley)**

The Doublet Affair: Ursula Blanchard is back, defending her mistress, Queen Elizabeth I -- this time from a plot to overthrow the Queen and usurp her throne, a task that will test Ursula's sharp wits and investigative skills to the limits. Torn between her duties and her personal life, Ursula has asked permission from the Queen to leave the court for a time. But Queen Elizabeth will only grant that request if Ursula will first assist Sir William Cecil in his investigation of a troubling plot against Elizabeth -- one that could place her cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots, on the throne of England. Ursula's role will test her sharp eyes and cunning wiles. Already, one of Cecil's most trusted spies is dead. As Ursula follows directions and joins the household of her old friends Ann and Leonard Mason -- now under suspicion of involvement in this Catholic plot -- Ursula knows her own life may depend on her abilities to discover the truth in a dangerous web of deceit. **(Mystery Buckley)**

Queen's Ransom: Eager for a respite from her role as handmaiden to Queen Elizabeth I, Ursula Blanchard agrees to travel to France to help her first husband's father bring his young ward home to England. But duty soon calls. Fearing that the pro-Catholic forces threatening to tear France asunder will spread to Protestant England, the Queen instructs Ursula to deliver a secret letter personally to Catherine de Médicis, offering to mediate the crisis. Not only will the perilous journey separate Ursula from her young daughter, it will bring her closer to a man she can neither trust nor forget -- her estranged second husband, Matthew de la Roche, avowed Catholic and enemy of Elizabeth. As it becomes clear that someone seeks to thwart her mission, she realizes she can trust no one but herself, and that only she can uncover the truth hidden in the shadows of treason, greed, and desire that darken her way. **(Mystery Buckley)**

To Ruin a Queen: Still loyal to her royal mistress but needing to be with her French husband, Matthew de la Roche, Ursula begins to build a new life for herself at Matthew's chateau. She loves Matthew, although she longs desperately for her little girl, Meg, left behind in England. But when Meg's passage is finally arranged, the child is missing. Where is she, and could her disappearance be part of a plot to tempt Ursula back to her homeland? Frightened for her child, Ursula follows a trail that leads to the home of the ancient Mortimer family, the mysterious Vetch Castle, a grim, haunted keep on the Welsh border. There she finds castle owner Philip Mortimer, who boasts that he will force Queen Elizabeth to restore the fortunes of his once-great family. There, too, Ursula finds Philip's mother, the aging but still beautiful Lady Thomasine, who is frightened by her son's claims and pleads for Ursula's help in discovering what it is that he knows. What deadly secrets does this castle hide? What ghostly faces look from the windows of the deserted southwest tower? What has Philip Mortimer discovered? The secrets of Vetch Castle could be dangerous, especially if they concern the Queen -- dangerous to the Mortimers and to Ursula and those she loves, as she soon learns to her peril. **(Mystery Buckley)**

Queen of Ambition: Ursula Blanchard, loyal lady of the Queen's Presence Chamber and gifted sleuth, is at home amid the glittering complexities of the royal court. Now, Ursula has a new part to play in the service of her Queen -- a role that exposes her to hidden dangers in the famed university town of Cambridge. Assigned as a harbinger for the Queen's upcoming Summer Progress to Cambridge, Ursula is placed in charge of not only Her Majesty's comfort, but also her safety. For Ursula, that means undertaking menial employment in a pie shop to investigate rumored political perils behind a swashbuckling student playlet conceived at the University to entertain the Queen. Even in such a bastion of Protestant power and scholarly pursuits as Cambridge, protecting the Queen is not purely academic. When a handsome young student's all-too-conveniently timed death rouses her suspicions, Ursula applies her superior powers of observation to untangling a mystifying jumble of oddities, coincidences, secrets, and ciphers that surround her...and discovers ominous signs of treason. **(Mystery Buckley)**

A Pawn for a Queen: Widowed once again, Ursula, a sometime waiting woman and spy for Elizabeth, intends to live quietly with her small daughter, Meg, at Withy-sham, their country home. But word comes that her devoutly Catholic cousin, Edward Faldene, has set off for Scotland, carrying a secret list of families loyal to Elizabeth's rival, Mary, Queen of Scots. If caught, Edward could be tried for treason. His family begs Ursula to go after him and try to bring him home before it's too late.

Ursula agrees. She wants to help her cousin, but she also wants to retrieve the list before it can be used to hurt Elizabeth. The families named there could help raise an army to topple her from her throne. It's a dangerous mission. Before, Ursula had worked for the Queen or for her Secretary of State, Sir William Cecil. As an emissary of the Queen, even a secret emissary, she had power. This time she's on her own. **(Mystery Buckley)**

The Fugitive Queen: It is 1568, three years since Ursula Blanchard exchanged her work as a spy in the service of her half-sister, Queen Elizabeth, for the relative calm of married life. But when Elizabeth summons her, loyal Ursula senses there is more to her seemingly benign request than meets the eye. She is to pluck Penelope Mason, her inappropriately flirtatious protégé, from court and find the disgraced girl a husband, and she is also to deliver a secret warning to Elizabeth's arch rival, Mary, Queen of Scots. Gradually, Ursula comes to understand the true delicacy and danger of this mission. Exiled after the suspicious death of her husband, Mary is now a fugitive queen and a "guest" in northern England's daunting Bolton Castle. Ursula, with her blade-sharp acuity, can outsmart Mary's notorious charm and sidestep treasonous traps while extracting the truth. But can she protect those who look to her -- including young Penelope -- from a deadly game where, to those who hunger for power at all costs, murder is a small price to pay? **(Mystery Buckley)**

The Siren Queen: Happily married and enjoying the life domestic, Ursula has her mind on family matters, not court treachery, as she begins to plan a betrothal for her young daughter Meg. When the powerful Duke of Norfolk extends an invitation for Ursula and her family to travel to London to meet Edmund Dean, a potential suitor, Ursula's hopes are quickly dashed: there is something in Dean's eyes that Ursula distrusts. Furthermore, she has also stumbled upon a rapidly accelerating plot closing in on her dear half-sister, Queen Elizabeth I, whom she is sworn to protect. When murder strikes the Duke's household, and a ciphered correspondence hints at the return of the deposed Mary, Queen of Scots, it's up to Ursula to keep the intrigue under wraps while racing to preserve the Queen's life. With Meg quickly falling in love with the wrong man, Ursula must walk a knife's edge to save her innocent daughter...and an unknowing throne. **(Mystery Buckley)**

Laurie R. King's Mary Russell series

When a modern young woman literally stumbles into Sherlock Holmes, a brilliant mystery series begins. It is 1915, and Holmes is retired and quietly engaged in the study of honeybees, when he meets fifteen-year-old Mary Russell—gawky, egotistical, and recently orphaned, and with an intellect to impress even Sherlock Holmes—and match him wit for wit. Under his reluctant tutelage, this very modern twentieth-century woman proves a deft protégée and a fitting partner for the Victorian detective.

The Beekeeper's Apprentice: 1915, Sherlock Holmes is retired and quietly engaged in the study of honeybees in Sussex when a young woman literally stumbles onto him on the Sussex Downs. Fifteen years old, gawky, egotistical, and recently orphaned, the young Mary Russell displays an intellect to impress even Sherlock Holmes. Under his reluctant tutelage, this very modern, twentieth-century woman proves a deft protégée and a fitting partner for the Victorian detective. They are soon called to Wales to help Scotland Yard find the kidnapped daughter of an American senator, a case of international significance with clues that dip deep into Holmes's past. **(Mystery King)**

A Monstrous Regiment of Women: The dawn of 1921 finds Mary Russell, Sherlock Holmes's brilliant young apprentice, about to come into a considerable inheritance. Nevertheless, she still enjoys her nighttime prowls in disguise through London's grimy streets, where one night she encounters an old friend, now a charity worker among the poor. Veronica Beaconsfield introduces Russell to the New Temple of God, led by the enigmatic, electrifying Margery Childe. Part suffragette, part mystic, she lives quite well for a woman of God from supposedly humble origins. Despite herself, Russell is drawn ever deeper into Childe's circle. When Veronica has a near-fatal accident, and turns out to be the fourth bluestocking in the group to meet with misadventure after changing her will, Russell and Holmes launch a quiet investigation. But the Temple may bring the newly rich Russell far closer to heaven than she would like. **(Mystery King)**

The Moor: In the eerie wasteland of Dartmoor, Sherlock Holmes summons his devoted wife and partner, Mary Russell, from her studies at Oxford to aid the investigation of a death and some disturbing phenomena of a decidedly supernatural origin. Through the mists of the moor there have been sightings of a spectral coach made of bones carrying a woman long-ago accused of murdering her husband—and of a hound with a single glowing eye. Returning to the scene of one of his most celebrated cases, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Holmes and Russell investigate a mystery darker and more unforgiving than the moors themselves. **(Mystery King)**

O Jerusalem: At the close of the year 1918, forced to flee England, Sherlock Holmes and his nineteen year old apprentice Mary Russell enter British-occupied Palestine under the auspices of Holmes's enigmatic brother, Mycroft. Their arrival coincides with a rash of unsolved murders that has baffled the authorities and seems unrelated to the growing tensions in the area among Jew, Moslem, and Christian. Still, no one is too pleased at Holmes's insistence on reconstructing the most recent homicide in the desert gully where it occurred. What they unexpectedly uncover will lead Russell and Holmes through an exotic gauntlet of labyrinthine bazaars, verminous hovels, cliff-hung monasteries—and into mortal danger. In the jewel-like city of Jerusalem, they will at last meet their adversary, whose lust for power could reduce the city's most ancient and sacred place to rubble and ignite a tinderbox of hostilities just waiting for a spark.... **(Mystery King)** *Note this novel takes place in the middle of *The Beekeeper's Apprentice*

Justice Hall: Only hours after Holmes and Russell return from solving one riddle on the moor, another knocks on their front door... literally. It's a mystery that begins during the Great War, when Gabriel Hughenfort died amidst scandalous rumors that have haunted the family ever since. But it's not until Holmes and Russell arrive at Justice Hall, a home of unearthly perfection set in a garden modeled on Paradise, that they fully understand the irony echoed in the family motto, *Justicia fortitudo mea* est: "Righteousness is my strength." A trail of ominous clues leads Holmes and Russell from an English hamlet to fashionable Paris to the wild prairie of the New World. But as the moment of reckoning approaches, will justice be done...or have they been lured straight into an elusive killer's perfectly baited trap? **(Mystery King)**

The Game: It's only the second day of 1924, but Mary Russell and her husband, Sherlock Holmes, find themselves embroiled in intrigue. It starts with a New Year's visit from Holmes's brother Mycroft, who comes bearing a strange package containing the papers of an English spy named Kimball O'Hara—the same Kimball known to the world through Kipling's famed Kim. Inexplicably, O'Hara withdrew from the "Great Game" of espionage and now he has just as inexplicably disappeared. When Russell discovers Holmes's own secret friendship with the spy, she knows the die is cast: she will accompany her husband to India to search for the missing operative. But Russell soon learns that in this faraway and exotic land, it's often impossible to tell friend from foe—and that some games aren't played for fun but for the highest stakes of all... life and death. **(Mystery King)**

Locked Rooms: En route to San Francisco to settle her family's estate, Mary Russell, in the company of husband Sherlock Holmes, falls prey to troubling dreams—and even more troubling behavior. In 1906, when Mary was six, the city was devastated by a catastrophic earthquake. For years Mary has insisted she lived elsewhere at the time. But Holmes knows better. Soon it is clear that whatever unpleasantness Mary wanted to forget hasn't forgotten her. A series of mysterious deaths leads Russell and Holmes from the winding streets of Chinatown to the unspoken secrets of a parent's marriage and the tragic "accident" that Mary alone survived. What Russell discovers is that even a forgotten past never dies . . . and it can kill again. **(Mystery King)**

The Language of Bees: For Mary Russell and her husband, Sherlock Holmes, returning to the Sussex coast after seven months abroad is a delicious anticipation. But the longed for sweetness of their homecoming is quickly tempered by a bitter memory from her husband's past. Mary had met Damian Adler only once before, but the talented and troubled young man is enlisting her help again, this time in a desperate search for his missing wife and child. From suicides among the Standing Stones to a bizarre religious cult, from the heart of Bohemian London to dark secrets on the streets of Shanghai, Russell will find herself on the trail of a killer more dangerous than any she's ever faced - a killer Sherlock Holmes himself may be protecting for reasons near and dear to his heart. **(Mystery & Mystery Large Print King)**

God of the Hive: Mary Russell and Sherlock Holmes are each on the trail, seeking to expose a ruthless villain and ensure the safety of Holmes' artist son, Damian Adler, and Adler's half-Chinese daughter, three-year-old Estelle. The search involves the British practitioners of a religious cult called *The Children of Lights* with roots in Shanghai, China. The plot picks up in the summer of 1924 near an ancient circle of standing stones on Orkney Island, shortly after religious fanatic Thomas Brothers, who seeks to unleash psychic energies through human sacrifice, shot Holmes's artist son, Damian Adler. Holmes's search for medical help to save his son's life takes him to Holland, while Mary travels through Britain in an effort to keep Estelle safe from Brothers and his allies. Brothers' shadowy connections have led to a conspiracy deeply entrenched in the highest echelons of government. Mycroft Holmes finds himself questioned and under suspicion and the family members are actively pursued by Scotland Yard. In the process a modern-day Robin Goodfellow emerges to lend aid to Mary and her kin. **(Mystery & Mystery Large Print King)**

Pirate King: In England's budding silent-film industry, megalomaniac Randolph Fflytte is king. At the request of Scotland Yard, Mary Russell is dispatched to investigate rumors of criminal activities. At Lisbon rehearsals for "Pirate King", based on Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Pirates of Penzance", thirteen blond-haired, blue-eyed actresses meet the real buccaneers Fflytte has recruited to provide authenticity. But when the crew embarks for Morocco and the actual filming, troubles escalate. **(Mystery & Mystery Large Print)**

Garment of Shadows: In a strange room in Morocco, Mary Russell is trying to solve a pressing mystery: Who am I? She has awakened with shadows in her mind, blood on her hands, and soldiers pounding on the door. Out in the hive like streets, she discovers herself strangely adept in the skills of the underworld, escaping through alleys and rooftops, picking pockets and locks. She is clothed like a man, and armed only with her wits and a scrap of paper containing a mysterious Arabic phrase. Overhead, warplanes pass ominously north. Meanwhile, Holmes is pulled by two old friends and a distant relation into the growing war between France, Spain, and the Rif Revolt led by Emir Abd el-Krim--who may be a Robin Hood or a power mad tribesman. The shadows of war are drawing over the ancient city of Fez, and Holmes badly wants the wisdom and courage of his wife, whom he's learned, to his horror, has gone missing. As Holmes searches for her, and Russell searches for herself, each tries to crack deadly parallel puzzles before it's too late for them, for Africa, and for the peace of Europe. **(Mystery & Mystery Large Print King)**

Dreaming Spies: It is a normal afternoon in Sussex when Russell and Holmes return home to find a peculiar addition to their garden: a beautiful stone that once occupied the Imperial gardens in Kyoto. The stone immediately recalls the spring of 1924, when, on their way back from India (*The Game*), Russell and Holmes agreed to perform a small but exceedingly dangerous job for the emperor of Japan. At the time, Russell encountered a young Japanese woman on board their ship who tutored the two foreigners about her country and guided them into a secret meeting with the Prince Regent himself. Now, when Russell heads for Oxford to resume her long-delayed studies, she comes face-to-face with that very same young Japanese woman--and quickly realizes Miss Sato Haruki is not all that she seems... **(Mystery & Mystery Large Print King)**