

WTBBL Book List:

Cons, Trickery, & Deception

We're diving into tales of trickery, deception, and cunning plots that will leave you questioning everything! Whether it's a classic con, a twisty thriller, or a story where nothing is as it seems, these are our most hoodwinking reads.

Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup by John Carreyrou, 2018. ([DB091456](#))

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist recounts his investigation into Silicon Valley startup Theranos, which claimed its new machine would speed up and simplify blood testing. Describes interviews with insiders, research into the technology, threats he received as he uncovered fraud after fraud, and Theranos's eventual collapse.

Before I Go to Sleep by S. J. Watson, 2011. ([DB073374](#))

Forty-seven-year-old amnesiac Christine Lucas awakens every day believing she's young and single...until her husband tells her otherwise. Every night when she sleeps, she loses everything—her name, her identity, her past, and the people she loves. When she starts keeping a secret journal, she begins to suspect things are far different than they seem.

Cyrano de Bergerac by Edmund Rostand, 1897. ([DB023102](#), [BRZ01278](#))

A classic play that captures the chivalry, bravery, wit, and romance of 17th-Century France. The romance concerns Cyrano, one of the finest swordsmen in France; a gallant soldier, brilliant wit, and tragic poet with the face of a clown.

Fingersmith by Sarah Waters, 2002. ([DB056184](#))

Victorian London. Orphan Sue Trinder was raised by a caring family of petty thieves. To repay them, she helps an elegant con man swindle a wealthy heiress. But the plan is compromised when Sue begins to have feelings for the victim.

The Lawrence Browne Affair by Cat Sebastian, 2017. ([DB104304](#))

Lawrence Browne, the Earl of Radnor, is mad. A brilliant scientist, he hides himself away in his family's crumbling estate, unwilling to venture into the outside world. When an annoyingly handsome man arrives claiming to be Lawrence's new secretary, his carefully planned world is turned upside down. Georgie Turner, a swindler and con man, can slip into an identity faster than he can change clothes. But when his long-dead conscience resurrects and a dangerous associate is out for blood, Georgie escapes to the wilds of Cornwall. Pretending to be a secretary should be easy, but he doesn't expect that the only madness he finds is the one he has for the gorgeous earl.

Liar by Justine Larbelastier, 2009. ([DB069966](#))

Compulsive liar Micah becomes the main suspect in the murder of her friend Zach, a popular guy Micah was seeing outside of school. Micah tries to explain—but no one knows what is true.

Needful Things by Stephen King, 1991. ([DB104305](#), [BR008752](#))

Leland Gaunt, a new resident in Castle Rock, sets up a curio shop, where a person can have anything their heart desires—but for a price! Customers must play a prank on a designated person, and sometimes the jokes have serious consequences.

One of Us is Lying by Karen M. McManus, 2017. ([LP026024](#), [DB088357](#))

When the creator of a high school gossip app mysteriously dies in front of four high-profile students during detention, the four—all subjects of an upcoming post—become suspects. It's up to them to solve the case.

Provenance: How a Con Man and a Forger Rewrote the History of Modern Art by Laney Salisbury, 2009. ([DB072577](#))

Reporters recount an art scam begun in 1986 by self-described British nuclear physicist John Drewe, who paid unemployed artist John Myatt to create dozens of inauthentic masterpieces. Details Drewe's construction of forged records to document the works' provenance, the investigation by Scotland Yard's Art Squad, and the ensuing trial.

Scam goddess : lessons from a life of cons, gifts, and schemes by Laci Mosley, 2024. ([DB124046](#))

Laci recounts how her scammer instincts guided her throughout her life from a religious childhood in rural Texas, to a stint as a city bartender at what might have been a drug front, to swindling her way past the gatekeepers of Hollywood—recounting the greatest true-crime scam stories that inspired her along the way. Whether it's by the beauty industry, capitalism, or the people we date, we're all getting scammed, and Laci dives into it all.

Scambusters! More than Sixty Ways Seniors Get Swindled and How They Can Prevent It by Ron Smith, 2006.

([DB064860](#), [BR017363](#))

Concise manual on recognizing fraudulent activity and avoiding becoming a victim. Describes dozens of scenarios involving banking and credit, nursing homes, health care, online pharmacies, insurance, investments, the Internet, car repairs, charitable donations, shopping, and telemarketing.

Yellowface by R. F. Kuang, 2023. ([DB114930](#), [BR024934](#))

Authors June Hayward and Athena Liu were supposed to become famous authors together. But Athena's a literary darling, and June is literally nobody. When June witnesses Athena's death in a freak accident, she acts on impulse: she steals Athena's just-finished masterpiece, an experimental novel about the unsung contributions of Chinese laborers during WWI. So what if June edits Athena's novel and sends it to her agent as her own work? So what if she lets her new publisher rebrand her as Juniper Song—complete with an ambiguously ethnic author photo? Doesn't this piece of history deserve to be told, whoever the teller? That's what June claims, and the New York Times bestseller list seems to agree. But June can't get away from Athena's shadow, and emerging evidence threatens to bring June's (stolen) success down around her. As June races to protect her secret, she discovers exactly how far she will go to keep what she thinks she deserves.