

Books Review

Grab your ear buds: Here are three great audiobooks to distract you from reality

By Katherine A. Powers

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The Current

Past and present merge in “[The Current](#),” Tim Johnston’s atmospheric, exquisitely suspenseful novel of two murders separated by 10 years. Audrey’s friend, Caroline, is driving her from their Southern college up to Minnesota, where Audrey’s father, a former sheriff, is dying. On the way, the young women narrowly escape violent molestation by two louts in an Iowan gas station — only to have their car maliciously bumped onto the fragile ice of the Black Root River, under which runs a powerful current. Tragedy ensues. Ten years earlier, up in Audrey’s hometown, a young woman was drowned in the same river. The two episodes develop into an increasingly interwoven mesh of victims, suspects, motives, revenge and grief. Audrey, a determined sleuth, is intent on getting to the bottom of both incidents. Sarah Mollo-Christensen delivers the general narration in a low, gentle voice, modulating her tones unobtrusively to capture the dialogue among the characters. This is a masterly performance of a first-rate thriller, one that completely dissolves the barrier between story and listener. (HighBridge, Unabridged, 14½ hours)

The Forgiven

Lawrence Osborne’s 2012 novel “[The Forgiven](#)” — a tale of clashing cultures, mutual misunderstanding and death set in Morocco — is finally [available as an audiobook](#). David Henniger is an alcoholic London society doctor; his wife, Jo, is a blocked writer. Driving on a lonely road to a grotesquely extravagant three-day party, David, not quite sober and bickering with Jo, hits a young man, killing him instantly. When the couple show up at their hosts’ elaborately restored estate with a corpse, no one is pleased, especially the help, already repulsed by the party itself — a bacchanal of booze, drugs and sexual excess. The dead man’s father appears, insisting that David travel back with him to his remote village. For what — compensation, atonement, revenge? Narrator Ralph Lister gives marvelous renditions of the diverse characters in both accent and mood, from the many Moroccans to David, who alternates between a choleric Colonel Blimp and “a plump, sullen toad.” (Random House Audio, Unabridged, 10¾ hours)

The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee: Native America from 1890 to the Present

David Treuer, an Ojibwe novelist and critic, offers a counternarrative to “[Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee](#),” Dee Brown’s best-selling 1970 history of the obliteration of American Indian life and culture. Treuer’s book, “[The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee](#),” is a colorful, thoroughly engaging mix of history, memoir, reportage,