

offbeat, witty debut, is a reader of Lao-tzu and proprietor of a bait and tackle shop in tourist-ridden Pine Cove, Calif. The no-longer-young Brine maintains his equanimity when approached by Gian Hen Gian, king of the Djinn, who asks Gus to help him capture and return to Hell a people-eating demon named Catch, a Satan-like monster who slaughters humans, and is now about to graze his way through the sleepy Big Sur village. Both the demon and the Djinn have been trapped in this world since each was enlisted by King Solomon to help build his temple in Jerusalem. Catch, currently under the power of a 90-year-old seminarian to whom he gave eternal youth, is looking for a new master and has his eye on Rachel, a rather dim-witted member of the Pagan Vegetarians for Peace, a witches' coven trying to summon up earth spirits. Moore sustains a brisk pace in his complex plot by shifting focus among these unlikely characters and other walking wounded, including a transvestite druggie interested in computer sex. Tension builds as readers await the beginning of Catch's inevitable rampage, never sure until the resolution whether good or evil will triumph. *Film rights to Hollywood Pictures.* (Jan.)

MIAMI

Pat Booth. Crown, \$20 ISBN 0-517-58415-8

Peripatetic bestselling author Booth (*Palm Beach; Beverly Hills*) returns with another extravagant, name-dropping whirl through the enclaves of the famed and wealthy. Ex-model Christa Kenwood, blessed with stunning looks and business smarts, launches a model agency in steamy, jumping Miami after luring top talent Lisa Rodriguez from a competitor who vows awful revenge. Bouts of wild love-making and recriminations with a new paramour, a hard-headed Pulitzer Prize-winning author, exhilarate Christa rather than exhaust her. In no time she plans a million-dollar perfume campaign bankrolled by billionaire Mary Whitney, who promptly causes complications when she tries to buy sex and affection from Lisa's gorgeous, very religious boyfriend Rob. Hormones run amok, checkbooks are exercised and tempers loosed in an endless round of vengeful acts. Painting characters and dialogue in bright, crude colors, Booth goes way over the top: Lisa murders family members responsible for her blighted childhood; Mary offers Rob \$1 million to save starving children in exchange for one night in the back of her limo. Relying on sheer energy and her trademark lusty sex, Booth sustains a frantic pace in an effort to

propel this novel past too many sticking points. (Jan.)

BEYOND EDEN

Catherine Coulter. Dutton, \$20 ISBN 0-525-93397-2

The latest potboiler from the prolific Coulter (*False Pretenses*) combines a spicy romance—between a late-blooming beauty and a tough ex-cop—with a brisk mystery. Gawky and impressionable Lindsay Foxe, 16, develops a crush on prince Alessandro di Contini when he marries her sophisticated half-sister. Two years later, in 1983, Alessandro lures Lindsay to Paris, gets her drunk, then brutally rapes and beats her. As she is examined in a hospital emergency room, her hysterical cries are overheard by S. C. Taylor, a New York policeman injured on vacation. He does not move to comfort her; later, his guilt and the legal constraints on his ability to aid rape victims in New York haunts him so grievously that he resigns from the force and becomes a private investigator. Lindsay, now ostracized by her inexplicably hostile family and terrified of men, becomes a successful model, professional name Eden. Her employer hires Taylor to protect her and a smoldering relationship begins as Lindsay is targeted by a would-be killer. The romance is heady; the mystery, sometimes frenzied, is nonetheless intriguing. (Jan.)

STOLEN BEGINNINGS

Susan Lewis. HarperCollins, \$22 ISBN 0-06-01766-X

In this interminable novel of romantic suspense, Lewis (*Dance While You Can*) introduces two cousins, one (Marian) a madonna and the other (Madeleine), a whore. The two share a flat in Bristol. Madeleine works as stripper while dreaming of a career as a model/actress. Plain Marian, who has a degree in philosophy, is an office temp. Gorgeous Madeleine is sexy, narcissistic, devious, ready to do absolutely anything to further her ambitions. Only heart-of-gold Marian sees beneath her brassy exterior to the insecure waif. Madeleine steals Marian's boyfriend, Paul O'Connell, as well as her £750,000-winning football lottery ticket. Paul, a Svengali-like aspiring novelist, and Madeleine take the money and run off to London, where it finances the start of both their careers. Meanwhile Marian is hired by a London producer making a film about an American millionairess who dabbled in art and drugs and mysteriously disappeared—an enigma that reverberates within Marian's own life. The novel follows the two women in the glamorous, sultry worlds of modeling and moviemaking in London, New York, Paris, Florence. Lewis embel-

lishes this misbegotten mishmash with lengthy, lurid descriptions of sex, murder, insanity, sado-masochism and more sex. (Jan.)

LITTLE FOLLIES:

The Personal History, Adventures, Experiences & Observations of Peter Leroy (so far)

Eric Kraft. Crown, \$22 ISBN 0-517-58543-X

Peter Leroy, who runs an old ocean-side vacation hotel with his wife, Albertine, lavishes Proustian recall on childhood adventures in and around Babbington, Long Island, "Clan Capital of America." Ostensibly about building a shortwave radio, boating up the Bolotmy River, playing an undressing game in the closet with a female classmate, these whimsical, nostalgic tales of postwar, Studebaker-studded America ripple with Freudian undercurrents stirred by childhood's hidden terrors and repressed yearnings. Some readers may find these lovingly detailed yarns, embellished with quaint drawings and maps, overly sentimental, but Kraft (*Herb'n'Lorna*) has won a following with his Peter Leroy saga (all but one of these stories were originally appeared as paperback novellas). In the previously unpublished entry, "The Young Tars," Peter joins a do-gooders' club for exemplary pupils and learns hard-knock adult lessons about hierarchy, favoritism and getting an edge over the next guy. (Feb.)

★ DAUGHTERS OF THE NEW WORLD

Susan Richards Shreve. Doubleday/Talese, \$20 ISBN 0-385-26796-7

This substantial, unsentimental family saga by the author of *A Country of Strangers* limns five generations of self-actualized American women, beginning in 1890 with 16-year-old Anna Jermyn's arrival from Liverpool. Within the following year Anna marries a doctor and travels with him to Wisconsin to work on a Chippewa reservation. She chronicles her hopes and insecurities in brief letters to her deceased mother; letters that, on her own death in 1903, become the property of her young daughter, Amanda. Raised without a female role model but sustained by her mother's wisdom, Amanda sees strength in masculinity, poses as a male photojournalist in WW I and becomes pregnant in France, giving birth to a daughter, Sara, who grows into a gentle, nurturing woman. The novel's focus shifts as each daughter begets another. By 1989, Amanda, a respected artist with two great-grandchildren, observes that hers was "an ordinary American family, of course, and what was extraordinary about them... was their survival... in a century that had moved with the