A good read

This month, Eithne Farrar gets stuck into a thriller, a comic memoir, a savvy spending guide, and more

Accidents Happen
by Louise Millar (£7.99, Pan) 
Nerve-shredding thriller that taps into the fear that bad luck is always lurking. Louise Millar's jittery compulsive second book pitches you head-first into the panic-stricken world of Kate Parker, a raw bundle of nerves. Convinced that she's cursed -- her parents were killed in a freak accident and her husband was murdered -- she's determined to keep her ten-year-old son, Jack, out of harms way. Obsessing over safety stats, and alienating others with her bizarre, overprotective behaviour, a chance meeting with an Oxford professor changes Kate. Encouraging her to take chances, he gradually relaxes -- so much so that when her sinister, oddball neighbour takes an untoward interest in her family, Kate dismisses it. Is her new-found confidence blinding her to the truth?

Happy Money: The New Science of Smarter Spending
by Elizabeth Dunn and Michael Norton (£20.99, Penguin) 
How to get more bang from your buck. Dunn and Norton's mission statement is clear and simple: Remember, the goal is to wiring the most happiness out of every dollar. Great! Point us in the direction of the costpoint. More is more, right? Hang on, though: Dunn and Norton, professors of psychology and marketing respectively, have applied cutting-edge science to the art of splashing the cash, and apparently it's not the amount of money that matters, it's what you do with it. There are five concepts to get to grips with: Buy experiences, make it a treat, pay now, consume later and, lastly, 'invest in others.' We're better off heading to a gig, or gallery than upgrading our phones; booking our holiday months ahead will increase that sense of anticipation, and giving to charity will give us a glow. And that stupid-back everyday later? Save it for once a week, and truly savour the flavour.

One Hundred Names
by Cecelia Ahern (£14.99, Harper Collins) 
A self-centred girl learns how it's not all about her -- it's really about everyone else. Kitty Logan's world is messed up. Having falsely accused a man of a crime, her journalistic career is on the skids, she's been dumped by her boyfriend, her family is unsympathetic and -- as a heart-breaking full stop to her list of woes -- her mentor, Constance, is dying. Drowning in self-pity, Kitty takes on the task of writing the story Constance dreamed of working on, but never managed to, and heads off to find the connection between the 100 random names.

COFFEE-TABLE COOL

To coincide with the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibition, Punk: Chaos to Couture has been compiled by punk legends to showcase how haute couture has taken visual cues from the punk movement. Striking
by Andrew Bolton (£20, Yale University Press)