



Saint Peter Public Library
601 South Washington Avenue
St. Peter, MN 56082



Books in a Bag (BiBs) – June 2020

Each BiB bag contains 8 copies of the same title. Check out a bag for six weeks.

KEY: NF - Nonfiction LP - Large print copy available (*St Peter* or *TdS*) Au - Audio book available through TdS

Note: For e-book copy, check TdS catalog or ask library staff for assistance.

These books have been purchased since 2016 by Friends of the Library, with funds raised by FOL and patron donations. Below is a comprehensive list of books provided in this program. Summary descriptions follow.

- The Alice Network* (Kate Quinn)
The All-Girl Filling Station's Last Reunion
(Fannie Flagg)
Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl (Anne Frank)
The Art of Hearing Heartbeats (Jan-Phillip Sendker)
At the Edge of the Orchard (Tracy Chevalier)
The Baker's Secret (Stephen P. Kiernan)
The Beach House (Mary Alice Monroe)
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(Erik Larson)
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Dreams of My Mothers (Joel L.A. Peterson)
*The Dressmaker of Khair Khana: Five Sisters, One
Remarkable Family...* (Gayle Tzemach Lemmon)
The Dry Grass of August (Anna Jean Mayhew)
The Elephant Whisperer (Lawrence Anthony)
Ellen Foster (Kay Gibbons)
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Everyone Brave is Forgiven (Chris Cleave)
Evicted: Poverty and Property in the American City
(Matthew Desmond)
Faithful (Alice Hoffman)
A Fall of Marigolds (Susan Meissner)
Falling Through the Clouds (Damian Fowler)
Fishing! (Sarah Stonich)
The Flight Girls (Noelle Salazar)
- A Gentleman in Moscow* (Amor Towles)
Girl at War (Sara Nović)
The Girl Before (Rena Olsen)
The Girl in Building C (Mary Krugerud)
Girl Underwater (Claire Kells)
The Girl with Seven Names (Hyeonseoo Lee)
The Girl You Left Behind (JoJo Moyes)
A Good American (Alex George)
Goodnight, Mr. Wodehouse (Faith Sullivan)
Gray Mountain (John Grisham)
The Great Alone (Kristin Hannah)
The Guise of Another (Allen Eskens)
Handle with Care (Jodi Picoult)
Harry's Trees (Jon Cohen)
The Hours Count (Jill Cantor)
How to Stop Time (Matt Haig)
I Am Malala (Malala Yousafzai)
Inheriting Edith (Zoe Fishman)
Inside the O'Briens (Lisa Genova)
In the Deep Midwinter (Robert Clark)
An Invisible Thread (Laura Schroff)
Just Like Us (Helen Thorpe)
Just Mercy (Bryan Stevenson)
The Keeper of Lost Things (Ruth Hogan)
The Kitchen House (Kathleen Grissom)
The Lake House (Kate Morton)
The Last Bus to Wisdom (Ivan Doig)
The Last Report of the Miracles at Little No Horse
(Louise Erdrich)
The Library Book (Susan Orlean)
The Life We Bury (Allen Eskens)
The Lightkeeper's Daughters (Jean E. Pendziwol)
Little Fires Everywhere (Celeste Ng)
Lilac Girls (Martha Hall Kelly)
A Long Way Home: A Memoir (Saroo Brierly)
Love and Other Consolation Prizes (Jamie Ford)

Maisie Dobbs (Jacqueline Winspear)
The Man from St. Petersburg (Ken Follett)
March (Geraldine Brooks)
Margaret Fuller: A New American Life (Megan Marshall)
The Misremembered Man (Christina McKenna)
Mountain of Light (Indu Sundaresan)
The Muralist (B.A. Shapiro)
Murder by Chance (Pat Dennis)
My Name is Lucy Barton (Elizabeth Strout)
The Natural West (Dan Flores)
The Never-Open Desert Diner (James Anderson)
A Night to Remember (Walter Lord)
Obasan (Joy Kogawa)
One for the Blackbird, One for the Crow (Olivia Hawker)
Ordinary Grace (William Kent Krueger)
The Other Einstein (Marie Benedict)
The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates
 (Wes Moore)
The Paris Architect (Charles Belfoure)
Piano Tide (Kathleen Dean Moore)
A Place at Our Table (Amy Clipson)
Plainsong (Kent Haruf)
Pontoon (Garrison Keillor)
Putin Country: A Journey into the Real Russia
 (Anne Garrels)
Radio Girls (Sarah-Jane Stratford)
Rebecca (Daphne du Maurier)
The Red Address Book (Sofia Lundberg)
The Red Bandanna (Tom Rinaldi)
Red Sparrow (Jason Matthews)

The Rent Collector (Camron Wright)
The Residence (Kate Anderson Brower)
The Riders of the Purple Sage (Zane Grey)
The Seven Sisters: Book One (Lucinda Riley)
The Sewing Machine (Natalie Fergie)
The Shadow Land (Elizabeth Kostova)
The Stars are Fire (Anita Shreve)
Stella Bain (Anita Shreve)
Still Life (Louise Penny)
The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry (Gabrielle Zevin)
Sweetwater Creek (Anne Rivers Siddons)
Swimming in the Moon (Pamela Schoenwaldt)
This Tender Land (William Kent Krueger)
The Things We Keep (Sally Hepworth)
Travels with Charley: In Search of America
 (John Steinbeck)
The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry (Rachel Joyce)
Until They Bring the Streetcars Back
 (Stanley Gordon West)
The Warmth of Other Suns (Isabel Wilkerson)
When Breath Becomes Air (Paul Kalanithi)
When the Emperor Was Divine (Julie Otsuka)
When the Men Were Gone (Marjorie Herrera Lewis)
Where the Wind Leads (Dr. Vinh Chung)
Witnesses to the Holocaust: Stories of Minnesota
Holocaust Survivors & Liberators
 (Laura Zelle & Joni Sussman, editors)
The Women in the Castle (Jessica Shattuck)
Your Oasis on Flame Lake (Lorna Landvik)

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Summaries below are taken from descriptions by publishers, book selling sources, and/or readers.

The Alice Network (Kate Quinn)

LP Au

The novel is based on the true story of a female spy network in France during WWI. The story is told across two timelines, including both World Wars; Eve Gardiner, a former spy, is the link that ties them together. In 1947, Charlie St. Clair is an American college student, unmarried, pregnant, and banished by her parents to Europe to have her “little problem” taken care of. Charlie wants to find her cousin Rose, who she loved like a sister and who vanished in Nazi-occupied France during the war and hasn’t been heard from since. Eve, now a reclusive middle-aged drunk, dismisses Charlie’s request to find Rose—until the last place Rose is known to have worked, and a man’s name, are mentioned. For a price, she agrees to help, and joining them is a young Scot named Finn. The chapters alternate between Eve’s story and Charlie’s, sagas of humor, heartbreak and horror searching for the truth as they face challenges and discrimination because of their gender.

The All-Girl Filling Station’s Last Reunion (Fannie Flagg)

LP Au

Sookie Simmons Poole, now an aging empty nester living in Alabama and looking forward to traveling with her husband Earle, has lived her life under the shadow of her overbearing mother, Lenore, who lives right next door. One day, quite by accident, Sookie discovers a secret about her mother’s past that throws her for a loop and raises questions everything she

ever knew about her family. Her quest for answers takes her to California, to the Midwest, and back in time to the 1940s, to an irrepressible and inspirational Polish woman named Fritz, who ran her family's filling station until she joined the WASPS, an elite but downplayed female branch of the U.S. Air Force.

Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl (Anne Frank)

NF

Discovered in the attic in which she spent the last years of her life, Anne Frank's remarkable diary has become a world classic—a powerful reminder of the horrors of war and an eloquent testament to the human spirit.

In 1942 with the Nazis occupying Holland, a 13-year-old Jewish girl and her family fled their home in Amsterdam and went into hiding. For the next two years, until their whereabouts were betrayed to the Gestapo, the Franks and another family lived cloistered in the "Secret Annexe" of an old office building. Cut off from the world outside, they faced hunger, boredom, the constant cruelties of living in confined quarters, and the ever-present threat of discovery and death. Anne's thoughtful, moving, and surprisingly humorous account offers a fascinating commentary on human courage and frailty and a compelling self-portrait of a sensitive and spirited young woman whose promise was tragically cut short.

The Art of Hearing Heartbeats (Jan-Philipp Sendker)

This poignant love story, set in Burma, spans the decades between the 1950s and the present. When a successful New York lawyer disappears without a trace, neither his wife nor daughter has any idea where he might be, until they find a love letter written many years ago to a Burmese woman named Mi Mi. Intent on solving the mystery and coming to terms with her father's past, Julia travels to Kalaw, Burma, where the woman lived. An old man named U Ba was waiting to tell her the story of Tin Win, a child abandoned by his mother, blind at age 10, who found a home at a local monastery where he fell in love with a crippled young woman, as much of an outsider as he was. This is a story of love, unimaginable hardship, resilience and passion, and the power of love to move mountains.

At the Edge of the Orchard (Tracy Chevalier)

LP Au

1838: James and Sadie Goodenough have settled where their wagon got stuck—in the muddy, stagnant swamps of northwest Ohio. They and their five children work relentlessly to tame their patch of land, buying saplings from a local tree man known as John Appleseed so they can cultivate the fifty apple trees required to stake their claim on the property. James loves the apples, reminders of an easier life back in Connecticut; while Sadie prefers the applejack they make, an alcoholic refuge from brutal frontier life.

1853: Circumstances have forced youngest son Robert to flee Ohio and make his way west, where he is alone in California's Gold Rush country. Restless and haunted by the broken family left behind, he finds some solace in the redwood and giant sequoia groves, collecting seeds for a naturalist who sells plants from the New World to the gardeners of England. For Robert, the pull of family relationships and personal revelations brings depth to a family story that comes full circle. The author conjures a story of adventure, the pioneering spirit, the bawdiness of the period.

The Baker's Secret (Stephen P. Kiernan)

LP

Emmanuelle learned to bake bread at the side of a master, apprenticed at age 13 to Ezra, the village baker. She watched with shame and anger as the enemy brought suffering to the village, when her mentor was forced to wear the six-pointed yellow star on his clothing; she was powerless to help when they pulled Ezra from his shop at gunpoint, the first of many villagers stolen away and never seen again. Now 22, she continues to bake the bread that sustains her fellow villagers, receiving an extra ration of flour to bake a dozen baguettes for the occupying troops. Each day she mixes that extra flour with ground straw, enough to bake two extra loaves—contraband she shares with the hungry villagers. Under the eyes of armed soldiers, she builds a clandestine network of barter and trade that the villagers use to thwart their occupiers.

Emma's gift to her village is more than the sustenance of the crusty loaves. She gives the people a taste of hope—the faith that one day the Allies will arrive to rescue them. And on June 5, 1944 Emma is baking bread as the dawn rises over her village on the Normandy coast of France.

The Beach House (Mary Alice Monroe)

At the unusual request from her mother, Caretta Rutledge—just when her personal life and high-level career were turned upside down—returns to the South Carolina Low-country beach town Isle of Palms where she spent her childhood summers. She repairs the family beach house, becomes a "turtle lady" with a quest to save sea turtles, while renewing old acquaintances thought long lost. But in reconnecting with her mother, she will learn life's most precious lessons: that true love involves sacrifice, family is forever, and the mistakes of the past can be forgiven.

In this first book of the Beach House series, Monroe captures the issues of a generation gap. Women of a certain time were "taken care of" and never learned to stand on their own two feet; as widows, they felt lost and remained in need of a male protector. Cara represents a generation of strong woman who felt the need to break the chain. The book deals with a hurricane of family relationships—betrayal, family rivalry, abuse, a teenage pregnancy, and romance. Grace and fortitude are found in facing adversity, in strong women who support each other, and build each other up.

Becoming (Michelle Obama)

NF LP Au

In a life filled with meaning and accomplishment, Michelle Obama has emerged as one of the most iconic and compelling women of our era. As First Lady of the USA and the first African American to serve in that role, she helped create the most welcoming and inclusive White House in history, while also establishing herself as a powerful advocate for women and girls in the U.S. and around the world, dramatically changing the ways that families pursued healthier and more active lives, and standing with her husband as he led America through some of its most harrowing moments.

Her memoir is a work of deep reflection and mesmerizing storytelling. Michelle Obama invites readers into her world, chronicling the experiences that have shaped her, from her childhood on the South Side of Chicago, to her years as an executive balancing the demands of motherhood and work, to her time living at the world's most famous address. With honesty and lively wit, she describes her triumphs and disappointments, both public and private, telling her full story as she lived it—in her own words and on her own terms. Warm, wise and revelatory, *Becoming* is the deeply personal reckoning of a woman of soul and substance who has defied expectations, and whose story inspires us to do the same.

Before We Were Yours (Lisa Wingate)

LP Au

The novel is based on a true American scandal: Georgia Tann, director of an adoption agency based in Memphis, kidnapped and sold poor children to wealthy families across the country. The story uses alternating older/younger narrators linking the past with the present. In 1939, Memphis, Tennessee, twelve-year-old Rill Foss lives aboard a Mississippi shanty boat with her parents and four siblings. One night, her father must rush their mother to the hospital, leaving Rill in charge. Strangers arrive in force, wrenching the children away and taking them to a Tennessee children's home where the director is cruel, and the children, starved and mistreated, soon realize they will not be returning to their parents. Rill fights to keep her sister and brothers together in a world of danger and uncertainty.

Aiken, South Carolina, present day. Born into wealth and privilege, Avery Stafford appears to have it all—a successful career as a federal prosecutor, a handsome fiancé, and looking forward to a lavish wedding. But when Avery returns home to help her father weather a health crisis, a chance encounter leaves her with uncomfortable questions and compels her to begin a journey through her family's long-hidden history. This fictional saga created around a horrific child trafficking operation in American history is emotional and inspirational, about familial bonds and connection that cannot be broken.

Being Mortal (Atul Gawande)

NF LP Au

This book by a practicing American surgeon tackles the hardest challenge of his profession: how modern medicine can not only improve life but also the process of its ending. Mortal we are; death is inevitable. It is hard, and important, to embrace this concept with planning, not leaving unspoken what matters in the end—i.e., the way we wish to die.

Modern medicine can do miraculous things, but in dealing with end-of-life issues, its effect has been dismal. In the inevitable conditions of terminal disease, aging and death, the goals of the medical establishment seem too frequently to run counter to the interest of the human spirit, failing in providing end-of-life care. Nursing homes are preoccupied with safety. Doctors work to extend life without considering how quality of life is compromised, in the end with devastating procedures extending suffering. The author argues that the objective of medicine should not be to ensure survival at any cost; rather it should be about the quality of life and what it means to die with dignity, a sense of purpose, and most importantly, control over one's life. It's about being able to write the final chapter the way you want to and to enable well-being in the sense one wishes to be alive.

Gawande explores personal stories as well as accounts from individuals with experience in senior living—among them are geriatric doctors and Keren Brown Wilson, one of the originators of the assisted living concept. Regarding medical care in the latter part of life, in regard to age-related frailty, dementia, serious illness and impending death, he postulates that hospice is the most humane model of care. The focus of hospice care is on a person's wants and needs. Many get better after a stay, and leave. Surveys on cost and care options, and more, are discussed.

Blind Your Ponies (Stanley Gordon West)

Au

Sam Pickett never expected to settle in Willow Creek, a dried-up shell of a town on the western edge of the world. He's come here to hide from the violence and madness that have shattered his life, and here he finds what he least expects. There's a spirit that endures in the hard-luck town of Willow Creek, Montana. Every inhabitant of this forgotten outpost has a story, a reason for taking a detour to this place—or for staying. As English teacher and coach of the hapless high school basketball team (zero wins, ninety-three losses), Sam can't help but be moved by the bravery witnessed in the everyday lives of people—including his own young players—finding hope in the midst of their sorrows and broken dreams. Drawing on the strength of the five young men on the team, sharing the hope they display despite insurmountable odds, Sam begins to see a future worth pursuing, both for the team and for himself. Author Stanley Gordon West has filled the town of Willow Creek with characters and their stories—coping with loss with humor, passion, and determination.

***The Chaperone* (Laura Moriarty)**

LP Au

In 1922, only a few years before becoming a famous silent-movie actress and an icon for a generation, 15-year-old Louise Brooks—stunningly beautiful, arrogant, and worldly—leaves Wichita to make it in the big city of New York. Much to her annoyance, her 36-year-old chaperone, Cora Carlisle, is neither mother nor friend and has her own reasons for making the trip. The five weeks they spend together will change their lives forever.

Cora does her best to watch over Louise in a strange and bustling city, and is unprepared for what she finds. Over the course of the summer, her eyes are opened to the promise of the 20th century and a new understanding of possibilities for being fully alive. This fictionalized version of a chaperone who may be described as a chameleon for her changes.

***The Chilbury Ladies Choir* (Jennifer Ryan)**

LP

“Just because the men have gone to war, why do we have to close the choir? And precisely when we need it most!”

As England enters World War II’s dark early days, spirited music professor Primrose Trent emboldens the women of the town to defy the Vicar’s stuffy edict to shutter the church’s choir in the absence of men and instead, ‘carry on singing.’ As the Chilbury Ladies’ Choir, the women of this small village soon use their joint song to lift up themselves and the community, as war tears through their lives. The book is told through letters and journals of unforgettable characters, and each finds strength in the choir’s collective voice as it reverberates in their individual lives. This funny, charming and heart-wrenching novel illuminates the spirit of women on the home front at a time of terrible conflict.

***Commonwealth* (Ann Patchett)**

LP Au

An unexpected romantic encounter irrevocably changes two families’ lives. One Sunday afternoon in Southern California, Bert Cousins shows up at Franny Keating’s christening party uninvited. Before evening falls, he has kissed Franny’s mother, Beverly—thus setting in motion the dissolution of their marriages and the joining of two families. Spanning five decades, *Commonwealth* explores how this chance encounter reverberates through the lives of the four parents and six children involved. Spending summers together in Virginia, the Keating and Cousins children forge a lasting bond that is based on a shared disillusionment with their parents and the strange and genuine affection that grows up between them.

***The Cottingley Secret* (Hazel Gaynor)**

LP Au

1917. When Frances and Elsie, two young cousins from Cottingley, England, claim to have photographed fairies at the bottom of the garden, their parents are astonished. But great novelist Sir Arthur Conan Doyle became convinced of the photographs’ authenticity, and the girls became a national sensation, their discovery offering hope amid a world ravaged by war. The girls would hide their discovery for decades, but Frances longed for the truth to be told.

One hundred years later, in 2017, Olivia Kavanagh finds an old manuscript in her late grandfather’s bookshop. She is fascinated by the story told of two young girls who mystified the world. But in discovering an old photograph, she comes to realize how the fairy girls’ lives intertwine with hers, connecting past to present, blurring her understanding of the real and the imagined. Beginning to understand why a nation once believed in fairies, can Olivia find a way to believe in herself?

***Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania* (Erik Larson)**

NF LP Au

On May 7, 1915 the Cunard liner *Lusitania*, the fastest ship of its day, steaming from New York to Liverpool, was torpedoed by a German U-boat 12 miles off the coast of southern Ireland. It sank in 18 minutes: 1,198 passengers and crew perished, including three German stowaways and 123 Americans. Only six of 22 lifeboats were launched. Many passengers drowned because they donned their life-jackets incorrectly and could not keep their heads bobbing above water. There were 764 survivors. This unprecedented attack on civilians caused a storm of indignation, particularly in the U.S., which expected its citizens to be immune from international violence.

Larson shares the story vividly, examining suspicions about the *Lusitania* being attacked in order to draw the U.S. into WWI, while intertwining the stories of many *Lusitania* passengers, President Wilson, the German U-boat commander, and others who share this part of history.

***The Devil’s Bed* (William Kent Krueger)**

Au

When President Clay Dixon’s father-in-law—a former vice president—is injured in a farming accident, First Lady Kate Dixon returns to Minnesota to be at his side. Assigned to protect her, Secret Service agent Bo Thorsen soon falls under Kate’s spell. He also suspects the accident is part of a trap set for Kate by David Moses, an escaped mental patient who once loved her. What Bo and Moses don’t realize is that they’re caught in a web of deadly intrigue spun by a seemingly insignificant bureaucratic department within the federal government. Racing to find answers before an assassin’s bullet can kill Kate, Bo soon learns that when you lie down with the devil, there’s hell to pay. A haunting, atmospheric, conspiracy thriller.

The Dive From Clausen's Pier (Ann Packer)

At age twenty-three, Carrie Bell has spent her entire life in Wisconsin with the same best friend and the same dependable, easygoing high school sweetheart. Now to her dismay she has begun to find this life suffocating and is considering leaving it—and Mike—behind. But when Mike is paralyzed in a diving accident, leaving seems unforgivable but even more necessary than ever. The story animates this dilemma—and Carrie's startling response to it—with the narrative assurance, exacting realism, and moral complexity we expect from the very best fiction.

The Dovekeepers (by Alice Hoffman)

In 70 CE, in ancient Israel, nine hundred Jews held out for months against the Roman armies at Masada, a mountain in the Judean desert. Only two women and five children survived the siege. Based on this tragic and iconic historical event, Hoffman weaves a tale of four extraordinary bold, resourceful, and sensuous women, each of whom came to Masada by a different path. Yael's mother died in childbirth, and her father, an expert assassin, never forgave Yael for that death. Revka, a village baker's wife, watched the brutal murder of her daughter by Roman soldiers; she brought to Masada her young grandsons, rendered mute by their own witness. Aziza is a warrior's daughter, raised as a boy, a fearless rider and expert marksman who finds passion with a fellow soldier. Shirah, born in Alexandria, is wise in the ways of ancient magic and medicine, a woman with uncanny insight and power. All are dovekeepers, and all are also keeping secrets—about who they are, where they come from, who fathered them, and who they love. The lives of these four complex, fiercely independent women intersect in the desperate days of the siege.

Dreams of My Mothers: A Story of Love Transcendent (Joel L.A. Peterson)

Based on the true story of two mothers' transcendent love for the same biracial, impoverished boy, the mothers' love reaches across the globe, propelling them and him on a riveting and unimaginable path of transformation and triumph. The truth is that love alone is not enough. Transcendent love is exceptionally rare, requiring sacrifice beyond normal boundaries, a faith beyond all doubts, and the courage to dream beyond all hope. The story is American yet global, universal in humanness, and the triumphs are real.

The Dressmaker of Khair Khana: Five Sisters, One Remarkable Family, and the Woman Who Risked Everything to Keep Them Safe (Gayle Tzemach Lemmon)

NF LP

Former ABC journalist Gayle Tzemach Lemmon tells the riveting true story of Kamila Sidiqi and other women of Afghanistan in the wake of the Taliban's fearful rise to power. In what Greg Mortenson, author of *Three Cups of Tea*, calls "one of the most inspiring books I have ever read," Lemmon recounts with novelistic vividness the true story of a fearless young woman who not only reinvented herself as an entrepreneur to save her family but, in the face of ferocious opposition, brought hope to the lives of dozens of women in war-torn Kabul.

The Dry Grass of August (Anna Jean Mayhew)

Au

On a scorching day in August 1954, thirteen-year-old Jubie Watts leaves Charlotte, North Carolina, with her family for a Florida vacation. Crammed into the Packard along with Jubie are her three siblings, her mother, and the family's black maid, Mary Luther. For as long as Jubie can remember, Mary has been there—cooking, cleaning, compensating for her father's rages and her mother's benign neglect, and loving Jubie unconditionally.

Bright and curious, Jubie takes note of the anti-integration signs they pass, and of the racial tension that builds as they journey further south. But she could never have predicted the shocking turn their trip will take. Now, in the wake of tragedy, Jubie must confront her parents' failings and limitations, decide where her own convictions lie, and make the tumultuous leap to independence. Infused with the intensity of a changing time, here is a story of hope, heartbreak, and the love and courage that can transform us—from child to adult, from wounded to indomitable.

The Elephant Whisperer (Lawrence Anthony)

NF

South African conservationist Lawrence Anthony owns Thula Thula, a wildlife reserve in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Formerly a hunting reserve, it is now a game reserve with a lodge for ecotourists, and it had every kind of wildlife in Zululand—except elephants. Asked to accept a herd of 9 'rogue' elephants to the reserve, Anthony's common sense told him to refuse, but he was their last chance; notorious escape artists, the herd would be killed if he did not accept them. He agreed, but before preparations were finished for the move to be completed, the animals broke out again, and the herd's matriarch and her baby were shot. The remaining elephants were traumatized, angry, and very dangerous.

At Thula Thula, there was no doubt they would escape again. This is Anthony's memoir, recounting his battle to create a bond with the very intelligent, resilient elephants and save them from execution, reversing their negative perceptions of humans and earning their trust. They had a lot to teach him as well, about life, loyalty and freedom. Life on a game reserve is an adventure, risky and difficult, and the tale is full of unforgettable characters and exotic wildlife.

Anthony's enthusiasm and love for the bush shine through in hair-raising, sad, sometimes anxious and humorous tales.

Ellen Foster (Kaye Gibbons)

Ellen Foster, an 11-year-old Southern girl, loses her dearly loved mother through suicide and is left to coexist with her alcoholic father. “Old Ellen,” as the protagonist refers to herself, is a tough but tender young soul. The story is told with the freshness of a child who has the wisdom of an adult. Initially, Ellen is resourceful enough to ferret out money for necessities, but when she fears for her own safety, she runs away to live with her art teacher. When a court decides she can no longer remain there, Ellen is briefly shuttled between uncaring relatives and eventually triumphs in finding a “new mamma.” This is a coming-of-age story of a backwoods child persevering through hard times to take matters into her own hands in search of a safe harbor where she can belong

The End of Your Life Book Club (Will Schwalbe)

NF LP Au

During her treatment for cancer, Mary Anne Schwalbe and her son Will spent many hours together sitting in waiting rooms. To pass the time, they talked about the books they were reading. Once, by chance, they read the same book at the same time—and an informal book club of two was born. Through their wide-ranging reading, Will and Mary Anne—and we, their fellow readers—are reminded how books can be comforting, astonishing, and illuminating, changing the way that we feel about and interact with the world around us. A profoundly moving memoir of care-giving and love, the book is about the joy of reading, and how that joy is multiplied when we share it with others.

Everyone Brave is Forgiven (Chris Cleave)

LP

London, 1939. The day war is declared, socialite Mary North abandons finishing school and goes straight to the War Office to volunteer for the war effort. Young, bright, and brave, Mary is certain she’d be a marvelous spy. Tom Shaw, an education administrator, decides to ignore the war—until he learns his best friend Alistair Heath has unexpectedly enlisted. Then the conflict can no longer be avoided. When Mary is—bewilderingly—made a teacher to a group of disenfranchised children, she finds herself defying prejudice to protect the children her country would rather forget.

Set in London during the years 1939-1942, when citizens had slim hope of survival much less victory; and on the strategic island of Malta, which was daily devastated by the Axis barrage, *Everyone Brave is Forgiven* features little-known history and a wartime love story inspired by the real-life love letters between the author’s grandparents.

Evicted: Poverty and Property in the American City (Matthew Desmond)

NF

In *Evicted: Poverty and Property in the American City*, Princeton sociologist and MacArthur "Genius" Matthew Desmond follows eight families in Milwaukee as they struggle to keep a roof over their heads. *Evicted* transforms our understanding of poverty and economic exploitation while providing fresh ideas for solving one of 21st-century America's most devastating problems. Its unforgettable scenes of hope and loss remind us of the centrality of home, without which nothing else is possible. (*Pulitzer Prize for General Nonfiction - 2017*)

Faithful (Alice Hoffman)

LP

After surviving a car accident that takes the life of her best friend Helene, Shelby Richmond feels wayward, lost and alone. With the burden of guilt, Shelby makes a number of destructive choices for herself in the years following and loses all self-love. In New York City, she finds help from a circle of lost and found souls—including a special angel who has been watching over her since that fateful icy night. This is the story of a survivor, and filled with emotion from dark suffering to true happiness—a moving portrait of a young woman finding her way.

A Fall of Marigolds (Susan Meissner)

LP

September 1911. Working on Ellis Island in New York harbor, nurse Clara Wood cannot face returning to Manhattan, where the man she loved fell to his death in the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire. While caring for a fevered immigrant whose own loss mirror hers, she become intrigued by a name embroidered onto the scarf he carries, and finds herself caught in a dilemma that compels her to confront the truth about assumptions she’s made. Will what she learns devastate or free her?

September 2011. On Manhattan’s Upper West Side, widow Taryn Michaels works in a charming specialty fabric store and is raising her daughter alone. Then a long-forgotten photograph appears in a national magazine, taking her back to the terrible day her husband died in the collapse of the World Trade Center Towers—the same day a stranger reached out and saved her. Will a chance reconnection and a century-old scarf with a design of marigolds open Taryn’s eyes to the larger forces at work in her life? [Amazon.com]

Falling Through Clouds: A Story of Survival, Love, and Liability (Damian Fowler)

NF

In August 2003, Grace and Lily Pearson, ages 4 and 3, were flying with their mother in their uncle's plane on their way to their grandpa's birthday party near Lake Superior, when Lily noticed the trees out the window were growing so close she could almost touch them. Before the trees tore into the cabin, Grace had the strange sensation of falling through clouds.

A story of tragedy, survival, and justice, *Falling Through Clouds* relates a young father's fight for his family in the wake of a plane crash that killed his wife, badly injured his two daughters, and thrust him into a David-vs-Goliath legal confrontation

with a multi-billion dollar insurance company. Blindsided when he was sued in federal court by this insurance company, Toby Pearson made it his mission to change aviation insurance law in his home state and nationally, while nursing his daughters to recovery and recreating his own life. The book charts the dramatic journey of a man who turned a personal tragedy into an important victory for himself, his girls, and many other Americans.

***Fishing!* (Sarah Stonich)**

RayAnne Dahl, having left men-dominated world of professional sport fishing, is navigating a new job as a consultant for the first all-women television talk show about fishing (called “Oprah in a boat” by one viewer’s husband). When the show’s host bails, RayAnne is out of her depth at the helm of the show. She rises to the challenge, meanwhile dealing with a fixer-upper house, a clingy rescue dog, and a family just as high-maintenance falling into her career path, bringing more chaos and unwanted advice. But RayAnne says, “I’m a woman, I fish. Deal with it.” The show is an unlikely hit, she gets the admiration of a handsome sponsor; the house and dog are finally in hand, and suddenly her world threatens to capsize, leaving her faced with a gut-wrenching situation and a heartbreaking decision.

This book—a hilarious sage of fishing, family, and three generations of tough, independent women—is the first in a trilogy and approaches the essential question: when should life be steered by the heart and not the rules?

***The Flight Girls* (Noelle Salazar)**

LP

1941. Audrey Coltrane has always wanted to learn to fly. It’s why she implored her father to teach her at the little airfield back home in Texas. It’s why she signed up to train military pilots in Hawaii when the war in Europe began. And it’s why she insists she is not interested in any dream-derailing romantic involvements, even with the disarming Lieutenant James Hart, who fast becomes a friend as treasured as the women she flies with. Then one fateful day, she gets caught in the air over Pearl Harbor just as the bombs begin to fall, and suddenly, nowhere feels safe.

To make everything she’s lost count for something, Audrey joins the Women Airforce Service Pilots program. The bonds she forms with her fellow pilots reignite a spark of hope in the face war, and—when James goes missing in action—give Audrey the strength to cross the front lines and fight not only for her country, but for the love she holds so dear. *The Flight Girls* is a sweeping portrayal of women’s fearlessness, love, and the power of friendships to make us soar.

***A Gentleman in Moscow* (Amor Towles)**

LP Au

He can't leave his hotel. You won't want to. In 1922, Count Alexander Rostov is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal. He receives a life sentence for house arrest in an attic room of the Metropol, a luxury hotel across the street from the Kremlin. Rostov, an indomitable man of erudition and wit, has never worked a day in his life. Outside the hotel’s doors, some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history are unfolding. Unexpectedly, his reduced circumstances provide him entry into a much larger world of emotional discovery.

Brimming with humor, a glittering cast of characters, and one beautifully rendered scene after another, this novel casts a spell as it relates the count’s endeavor to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be a man of purpose.

***Girl at War* (Sara Nović)**

Zagreb, 1991. Ten-year-old Ana Jurić is happy and carefree, living with her family in a small apartment in Croatia’s capital. But as civil war breaks out across Yugoslavia, food rationing, air raid drills, and sniper fire change her life. Neighbors grow suspicious of one another, and Ana’s sense of safety starts to fray. A tragedy loses Ana to a world of guerilla warfare and child soldiers, and she daringly escapes to America to survive.

New York, 2001. Ana is now a college student in Manhattan, trying to move on from her past but unable to escape her memories of war—secrets she has kept from even those closest to her. Haunted by the events that forever changed her family, Ana returns to Croatia after a decade away, hoping to make peace with the place that once was her home. As she faces her ghosts, she must come to terms with her country’s difficult history and the events that interrupted her childhood years before.

Moving back and forth through time, *Girl at War* is an honest, generous, brilliantly written novel that illuminates how history shapes the individual. Nović fearlessly shows the impact of war on one young girl—and its legacy on all of us.

***The Girl Before* (Rena Olsen)**

In an instant, Clara Lawson’s life is torn away. Without warning, her home is invaded by armed men, and she is separated from her husband and daughters. The last thing her husband yells at her is to *say nothing*. This novel’s chapters alternate between the past and present, depicting the fractured life of this young woman. She must come face-to-face with a devastating question: What if everything she thought was normal and good and true . . . wasn’t?

In chapters that alternate between past and present, the novel slowly unpeels the layers of Clara’s life. We see her growing up, raised with her sisters by the stern Mama and Papa G, becoming a poised and educated young woman, falling desperately in love with the forbidden son of her adoptive parents. But now she is sequestered in an institution, questioned by people who call her a different name—Diana—and who accuse her husband of unspeakable crimes. As recollections of

her past collide with new revelations, Clara must question everything she thought she knew, to come to terms with the truth of her history and to summon the strength to navigate her future.

***The Girl in Building C: The True Story of a Teenage Tuberculosis Patient* (Mary Krugerud) NF**

In October 1943, sixteen-year-old Marilyn Barnes (*St. Peter, MN resident, Marilyn Robertz*) was told that her recent bout of pneumonia was in fact tuberculosis. She entered Ah-gwah-ching State Sanatorium at Walker, Minnesota, for what she thought would be a short stay. In January, her tuberculosis spread, and she nearly died. Her recovery required many months of bed rest and medical care.

Marilyn's story of her three-year residency at the sanatorium is preserved in hundreds of letters that she mailed home to her parents, who could visit her only occasionally and whom she missed terribly. The letters functioned as a diary in which Marilyn articulately and candidly recorded her reactions to roommates, medical treatments, Native American nurses, and boredom. She also offers readers the singular perspective of a bed-bound teenager, gossiping about boys, requesting pretty new pajamas, and enjoying Friday evening popcorn parties with other patients.

Selections from this cache of letters are woven into an informative narrative that explores the practices and culture of a midcentury tuberculosis sanatorium and fills in long-forgotten details gleaned from recent conversations with Marilyn, who "graduated" from the sanatorium and went on to lead a full, productive life.

***Girl Underwater* (Claire Kells)**

LP Au

Nineteen-year-old Avery Delacorte is a university sophomore and a competitive and popular swimmer on her west coast university's nationally-ranked swim team. Flying home to Massachusetts on a red-eye flight for Thanksgiving, the plane crashes in a ditch landing in a mountain lake in the Colorado Rockies, and there are only 5 survivors—Avery, three little boys, and Colin Shea, the teammate she has avoided since the first day of her freshman year when he challenged her to swim in her own events, and to be her own person—something she refused to do.

Faced with survival in sub-zero temperatures, with minimal supplies and the dangers of a forbidding nowhere, Avery and Colin must rely on each other in ways they never could have imagined. Avery's anxieties after facing the extreme difficulties of the horrific disaster result in fears even of water as PTSD stalls a complex and conflicted recovery.

***The Girl with Seven Names* (Hyeonseo Lee)**

NF

This North Korean defector's true story lends extraordinary insight into life under one of the world's most ruthless and secretive dictatorships—and the story of one woman's terrifying struggle to avoid capture/repatriation and guide her family to freedom.

As a child growing up in North Korea, Hyeonseo Lee was one of millions trapped by the secretive and brutal communist regime. Her home on the border with China exposed her to the world beyond the confines of the Hermit Kingdom and, as the famine of the 1990s struck, she began to wonder, question and to realize that she had been brainwashed her entire life. Given the repression, poverty and starvation she witnessed surely her country could not be, as she had been told "the best on the planet." At age seventeen, she decided to escape North Korea. She could not have imagined that it would be twelve years before she was reunited with her family.

***The Girl You Left Behind* (JoJo Moyes)**

LP Au

Paris 1916. Sophie Lefèvre must keep her family safe while her adored husband, Édouard, fights at the front. When their town falls to the Germans in the midst of World War I, Sophie is forced to serve them every evening at her hotel. From the moment the new Kommandant sets eyes on Sophie's portrait—painted by her artist husband—a dangerous obsession is born, one that will lead Sophie to make a dark and terrible decision.

London 2006. Almost a century later, Sophie's portrait hangs in the home of Liv Halston, a wedding gift from her young husband before his sudden death. When the painting's worth is revealed, a battle begins over its ownership, testing Liv's belief in what is right.

***A Good American* (Alex George)**

Au

"Everything he'd seen had been unimaginably different from the dry, dour streets of home, and to his surprise he was not sorry in the slightest. He was smitten by the beguiling otherness of it all." And so began my grandfather's rapturous love affair with America—an affair that would continue until the day he died.

This is the story of the Meisenheimer family, told by James, a third-generation American living in Beatrice, Missouri; that was where his German grandparents, Frederick and Jette, found themselves after journeying across the turbulent Atlantic, fording the flood-swollen Mississippi, and were halted by the broken water of the pregnant Jette.

The story tells of Jette's determination to feed a town sauerkraut and soul food; the loves and losses of her children, Joseph and Rosa; and the precocious voices of James and his brothers, sometimes raised in discord...sometimes in perfect harmony. But above all, *A Good American* is about the music in Frederick's heart, a song that began as an aria, was jazzed by ragtime, and became an anthem of love for his adopted country that the family hears to this day.

Goodnight, Mr. Wodehouse (Faith Sullivan)

At the beginning of the 20th century, Nell Stillman is new to the small town of Harvester, Minnesota, when she is widowed. She struggles alone in the chaotic world, penniless yet responsible for her beloved baby boy, Hillyard. Nell makes a place for herself in the community and develops lasting friendships. She teaches at the local school and volunteers at the public library. She becomes a trusted friend and confidant to many of the girls in town, including Arlene and Lark Erhardt. She falls in love with John Flynn, a charming congressman who becomes a father figure for Hillyard. And no matter how difficult her day, Nell ends each evening with a beloved book in her hands. The book celebrates the power of great novels to transform, console, and teach us the value of friendship and love.

Gray Mountain (John Grisham)

LP Au

The year is 2008 and Samantha Kofers' career at a huge Wall Street law firm is on the fast track—until the recession hits and she is downsized, furloughed, and escorted out of the building. Samantha, though, is offered an opportunity to work at a legal aid clinic for one year without pay, all for a slim chance of getting rehired.

In a matter of days Samantha moves from Manhattan to Brady, Virginia, population 2,200, in the heart of Appalachia, a part of the world she has only read about. Samantha's new job takes her into the murky and dangerous world of coal mining, where laws are often broken, communities are divided, and the land itself is under attack. But some of the locals aren't so thrilled to have a big-city lawyer in town, and within weeks Samantha is engulfed in litigation that turns deadly. Because like most small towns, Brady harbors big secrets that some will kill to conceal.

The Great Alone (Kristin Hannah)

LP Au

It is 1974. Ernt Allbright, a former POW, returns home traumatized by what he saw in Vietnam. He impulsively decides to move his family to a plot of land in remote Kaneq, Alaska left to him by a soldier who didn't make it out. There they will live off the grid in America's last true frontier. His wife Cora will do anything and go anywhere for the man she loves. Thirteen-year-old daughter Leni is caught in the riptide of her parents' conflicted relationship, desperately seeking for a sense of stability, hoping that the future for her family will be better in a new land. At first, it's a welcome change, in the midst of a community of strong men and even stronger women. But as winter approaches with the darkness and coldness of Alaska, Ernt's mental state deteriorates and the family is threatened by Ernt's nightmares and flashbacks and by the perils of the wild. With 18 hours of night, Leni and her mother learn the truth that they are on their own, with no one to save them but themselves. This is Leni's story, about her emotional bond with her mother, the search for identity, a tale of love and hope despite the battering life can give, the fight for survival, and the wildness that lives in both man and nature. The muse of *The Great Alone* is Alaska, in all its untamed, stunningly beautiful, dangerous glory. PTSD and domestic violence, bad decisions, the effects of war, mother-daughter love, suspense and adventure create multiple dimensions to Hannah's story.

The Guise of Another (Allen Eskens)

Au

Who was James Putnam? Answering that question may mean salvation for Alexander Rupert, a Minnesota detective whose life is in a serious downward spiral. A Medal of Valor winner, Alexander is now under subpoena by a grand jury on suspicion of corruption. He's been reassigned to the Frauds Unit, where he is shunned by his fellow detectives, and he fears his status-seeking wife may be having an affair. When he happens across a complex case of identity theft, Alexander sees an opportunity to rehabilitate his shattered reputation. But the case explodes into far more than he could have expected, putting him in the path of trained assassin Drago Basta, a veteran of the Balkan wars, who has been searching for "James Putnam" for years. As his life spins out of control, Alexander's last hope may be his older brother, Max, a fellow police detective who steps in to try to save his brother from the carnage his investigation has let loose.

Handle with Care (Jodi Picoult)

Au

Charlotte and Sean O'Keefe's daughter, Willow, was born with brittle bone disease, a severe birth defect that requires Charlotte to act as full-time caregiver and has strained their emotional and financial limits. Willow's teenaged half-sister, Amelia, suffers as well, overshadowed by Willow's needs and lost in her own adolescent turmoil. When Charlotte decides to sue for wrongful birth to obtain a settlement to ensure Willow's future, the already strained family begins to implode. Not only is the defendant Charlotte's longtime friend, but the case requires Charlotte and Sean to claim that had they known of Willow's condition, they would have terminated the pregnancy, a statement that strikes at the core of their faith and family. Picoult individualizes the alternating voices of the narrators, and weaves in subplots to underscore the themes of hope, regret, identity and family, leading up to her signature closing twists.

Harry's Trees (Jon Cohen)

LP

Harry Crane, 34 years old, is working as an analyst for the US Forest Service. Suddenly widowed, he is unable to cope. He leaves his job and his life behind and leaves to lose himself in the remote woods and Endless Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania. There he meets a willfully determined young girl named Oriana. She and her mother Amanda are struggling to pick up the pieces from a tragedy of their own. Roaming the forest, Oriana sees Harry as the key to righting their world.

Harry takes up residence in the woods behind Amanda's house. Harry reluctantly agrees to help Oriana in a ludicrous scheme to escape his past, and in so doing, the unlikeliest of elements—a wolf, a stash of gold coins, a fairy tale called *The Grum's Ledger*, and a wise old librarian name Olive—come together to create an adventure that will fulfill Oriana's wildest dreams and open Harry's heart to a whole new life. This uplifting story is about the redeeming power of friendship and love, and the magic to be found in life's most surprising adventures.

***The Hours Count* (Jill Cantor)**

On June 19, 1953 civilians Ethel and Julius Rosenberg were executed for "conspiracy to commit espionage." The day Ethel was first arrested in 1950, she left their two young sons with a neighbor and never returned home. Brilliantly melding fact and fiction, Jillian Cantor imagines the lives of Ethel and Julius as neighbors, an ordinary-seeming Jewish couple who became the only Americans put to death for spying during the Cold War, in the modern-day witch hunt of McCarthyism.

A few years earlier, in 1947, Millie Stein, her Russian husband Ed, and their young son David, moved into an apartment on the eleventh floor in Knickerbocker Village on New York's Lower East Side. Her new neighbors are the Rosenbergs. Struggling to care for David, who doesn't speak, and isolated from other "normal" families, Millie meets Jake, a psychologist who says he can help David, and befriends Ethel, also a young mother. Millie and Ethel's lives as friends, wives, mothers, and neighbors entwine, even as chaos begins to swirl around the Rosenbergs and the FBI closes in. Millie begins to question her own husband's political loyalty and her marriage, and whether she can trust Jake and the deep connection they have forged while secretly working with David. Caught between these two men, both of whom have their own agendas, and desperate to help her friends, Millie will find herself drawn into the dramatic course of history. As Millie—trusting and naive—is thrown into a world of lies, intrigue, spies and counterspies, she realizes she must fight for what she believes, who she loves, and what is right.

***How to Stop Time* (Matt Haig)**

LP

Tom Hazard has moved back to London, his old home, to settle down as a high school history teacher. On his first day at school, he meets a captivating French teacher who seems fascinated by him. But Tom has a dangerous secret. Although he looks like an ordinary 41-year-old, owing to a rare condition, he's been alive for centuries. Tom has lived history—performing with Shakespeare, exploring the high seas with Captain Cook, and sharing cocktails with Fitzgerald. Now, he just wants an ordinary life.

Unfortunately for Tom, the Albatross Society, the secretive group which protects people like Tom, has one rule: Never fall in love. As painful memories of his past and the erratic behavior of the Society's watchful leader threaten to derail his new life and romance, the one thing he can't have just happens to be the one thing that might save him. Tom will have to decide once and for all whether to remain stuck in the past, or finally begin living in the present.

I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban* (Malala Yousafzai) **NF LP Au*

When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai, refusing to be silenced, fought for her right to an education. On October 9, 2012, at age fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected her to survive. Instead, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. At age sixteen, she became a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest nominee ever for the Nobel Peace Prize (and the youngest recipient of the Prize).

I am Malala is the tale of a family uprooted by global terrorism, of the fight for girls' education, of a father who, himself a school owner, championed and encouraged his daughter to write and attend school, and of brave parents who have a fierce love for their daughter in a society that prizes sons.

***Inheriting Edith* (Zoe Fishman)**

LP

For years, Maggie Sheets has been an invisible hand in the glittering homes of wealthy New York City clients, scrubbing, dusting, mopping, and doing all she can to keep her head above water as a single mother. Everything changes when a former employer dies leaving Maggie a staggering inheritance: a house in Sag Harbor. The catch? It comes with an inhabitant: The deceased's eighty-two-year old mother Edith.

Edith has Alzheimer's—or so the doctors tell her—but she remembers exactly how her daughter Liza could light up a room, or bring dark clouds in her wake. And now Liza's gone, by her own hand, and Edith has been left—like a chaise or strand of pearls—to a poorly dressed young woman with a toddler in tow.

Maggie and Edith are both certain this arrangement will be an utter disaster. But as summer days wane, a tenuous bond forms, and Edith, who feels the urgency of her diagnosis, shares a secret that she's held close for five decades, launching Maggie on a mission that might just lead them each to what they are looking for.

Inside the O'Briens (Lisa Genova)

LP Au

Joe O'Brien is a forty-three-year-old police officer from the Irish Catholic neighborhood of Charlestown, Massachusetts. A devoted husband, proud father of four children in their twenties, and respected officer, Joe begins experiencing bouts of disorganized thinking, uncharacteristic temper outbursts, and strange, involuntary movements. Initially, he attributes these episodes to the stress of his job, but as these symptoms worsen, he agrees to see a neurologist and receives a diagnosis that will change his and his family's lives forever: Huntington's disease—a lethal neurodegenerative disease with no treatment and no cure, and each of Joe's four children has a 50 percent chance of inheriting their father's disease. While Joe struggles to maintain hope and a sense of purpose, Katie and her siblings must find the courage to either live a life "at risk" or learn their fate.

In the Deep Midwinter (Robert Clark)

November 1949. In the aftermath of his brother James's death, Richard MacEwan's life is suddenly rocked by secrets involving his wife Sarah and daughter Anna. Among his brother's papers, Richard finds a letter from Sarah that hints at an infidelity. Then there is Anna's affair with a married man, Charles Norden, which threatens to change her life forever. The story of Richard, Sarah, Anna and Charles—along with the troubling legacy of James—is one of faith and doubt, moral profound and spiritual conflict, and the intricate bonds that hold families together.

This debut novel written by biographer Clark is haunting story of character, and a moral drama that shows not only how love can lead to suffering, but how suffering can lead to love. The setting in 1949-1950 explores dynamic relationships within an upper middle class family in St. Paul, Minnesota, with telling details of cigarettes, women in hats & gloves, 5 o'clock cocktails. Clark deals with the morality of the time and the guilt and suffering of ordinary people.

An Invisible Thread (Laura Schroff)

NF LP

"A straightforward tale of kindness and paying it forward in 1980s New York....an uplifting reminder that small gestures matter." (Kirkus Reviews)

Stopping was never part of the plan...She was a successful ad sales rep in Manhattan. He was a homeless, eleven-year-old panhandler on the street. He asked for spare change; she kept walking. But then something stopped her in her tracks, and she went back. And she continued to go back, again and again. They met up nearly every week for years, their lives both changed by that one small gesture of kindness, and the two built an unexpected, lifelong friendship.

Just Like Us (Helen Thorpe)

Four high school girls whose parents entered this country illegally from Mexico are now completing high school in Denver, Colorado. All four of the girls have grown up in the United States, and all four want to live the American dream—but only two have documents. As the girls attempt to be admitted into college, they discover that only the legal pair sees a clear path forward. Their friendships start to divide along lines of immigration status. *Just Like Us* is a coming-of-age story about girlhood and friendship, as well as the resilience required to transcend poverty. It also explores identity—what it means to steal an identity, what it means to have a public identity, what it means to inherit an identity from parents. The girls, their families, and the critics who object to their presence allow the reader to watch one of the most complicated social issues of our times unfurl in a major American city. And the perspective of the author gives the reader insight into both the most powerful and the most vulnerable members of American society as they grapple with the same dilemma: Who gets to live in America? And what happens when we don't agree?

Just Mercy (Bryan Stevenson)

NF

Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn't commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinkmanship—and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever.

Just Mercy is at once an unforgettable account of an idealistic, gifted young lawyer's coming of age, a moving window into the lives of those he has defended, and an inspiring argument for compassion in the pursuit of true justice. [Amazon.com]

The Keeper of Lost Things (Ruth Hogan)

LP

Every lost item holds within it a story—it may have been a treasured memento, or something useful thoughtlessly left behind. Anthony Peardew collected those items and the histories he imagined for them. Anthony knew loss. His fiancée, Therese, gave him a communion medallion that depicted St. Therese of the Roses as a thank you for the rose garden he planted at what was to be their first home. The day he lost it was the day she died. Anthony began to collect lost items and write stories about their origins. His first story collection was a success, but over the years, his work became ever darker. Upon his death, he left his collection to his assistant, Laura, and she becomes the Keeper of Lost Things. He'd left instructions: Laura should return the items to their rightful owners, in hopes that she'll heal at least one heart. They become key to Laura's own healing after a failed marriage.

The novel ties together the characters' lives and the objects they discover, quietly reminding readers that we are each other's points of connection. When life becomes confusing or sad, showing a bit of kindness and appreciation for each others' stories can lead to redemption.

***The Kitchen House* (Kathleen Grissom)**

LP Au

A dark secret threatens to expose the best and worst in everyone tied to the estate at a thriving plantation in Virginia in the decades before the Civil War. Orphaned during her passage from Ireland, young, white Lavinia arrives on the steps of the kitchen house and is placed, as an indentured servant, under the care of Belle, the master's illegitimate slave daughter. Lavinia learns to cook, clean, and serve food, while guided by the quiet strength and love of her new family.

In time, Lavinia is accepted into the world of the big house, caring for the master's opium-addicted wife and befriending his dangerous yet protective son. She attempts to straddle the worlds of the kitchen and big house, but her skin color will forever set her apart from Belle and the other slaves. Through the eyes of Lavinia and Belle, Grissom's debut novel unfolds in a heartbreaking and hopeful story of class, race, dignity, deep-buried secrets, and familial bonds.

***The Lake House* (Kate Morton)**

LP Au

This mystery is set against the gothic backdrop of 1930s England. In Cornwall, the wealthy Edevane family prepared for its annual midsummer ball at Loenneth, their isolated estate. That night, teenager Alice Edevane was lingering near the nursery when someone kidnapped Theo, the cherished Edevane son. Despite a lengthy investigation, he was never found. The story moves forward to 2003 London, where Det. Sgt. Sadie Sparrow is suspended after speaking to the media about a missing-person case, recently closed, that haunts her. She seeks refuge with her grandfather in Cornwall. On her first morning run there, Sparrow finds the now-dilapidated Loenneth mansion deep in the woods. Curious, Sparrow peers through the windows into tumbledown rooms long ago abandoned in haste. She begins to investigate the 70-year-old Edevane case with help from the Cornwall locals, including a retired copper who was there in 1933 when Theo disappeared. Sparrow locates the now-elderly Alice, a celebrated mystery writer in London, who hands over the keys to the estate so Theo's case can be reopened.

The story moves back and forth in time as Sparrow uncovers what happened to Theo in 1933 while also resolving the recent missing-person case. Morton's plotting is impeccable; her finely wrought characters, brought together in the end by Sparrow's investigation, are as surprised as readers will be by the astonishing conclusion.

***The Last Bus to Wisdom* (Ivan Doig)**

LP

Orphaned Donal Cameron is being raised by his grandmother, the cook at the legendary Double W ranch in Two Medicine Country of the Montana Rockies, a landscape that gives full rein to an eleven-year-old's imagination. But when Gram has to have surgery for "female trouble" in the summer of 1951, all she can think to do is to ship Donal off to her sister in faraway Manitowoc, Wisconsin. There Donal is in for a rude surprise: Bossy and argumentative Aunt Kate is nothing like her sister. She henpecks her good-natured husband, Herman the German, and Donal can't seem to get on her good side either. After one contretemps too many, Kate packs him back to the authorities in Montana, which means to foster care. But as it turns out, Donal isn't traveling alone: Herman the German has decided to fly the coop with him. In the immortal American tradition, the pair meet an ensemble of characters and have rollicking misadventures along the way. Ivan Doig's final novel is a marvelous picaresque showing off his ready empathy for all kinds of people and his perennial gift for spinning a great yarn.

***The Last Report of the Miracles at Little No Horse* (Louise Erdrich)**

For more than a half century, Father Damien Modeste has served his beloved Native American tribe, the Ojibwe, on the remote reservation of Little No Horse. Now, nearing the end of his life, Father Damien dreads the discovery of his physical identity, for he is a woman who has lived as a man. To further complicate his quiet existence, a troubled colleague comes to the reservation to investigate the life of the perplexing, possibly false saint Sister Leopolda. Father Damien alone knows the strange truth of Leopolda's piety, but these facts are bound up in his own secret. He is faced with the most difficult decision: Should he tell all and risk everything . . . or manufacture a protective history for Leopolda, though he believes her wonder-working is motivated solely by evil?

In a masterwork that both deepens and enlarges the world of her previous novels set on the same reservation, Louise Erdrich captures the essence of a time and the spirit of a woman who felt compelled by her beliefs to serve her people as a priest. *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse* is a work of an avid heart, a writer's writer, and a storytelling genius. [Amazon.com]

***The Library Book* (Susan Orlean)**

NF LP

In April 1986, a fire alarm sounded in the Los Angeles Public Library. The fire was disastrous, reaching 2,000 degrees, and it burned for more than 7 hours. By the time it was extinguished, it had consumed 400,000 books and damaged 700,000 more. Investigators descended on the scene, but more than 30 years later, the mystery remains: Did someone intentionally set fire to the library, and if so, whom?

St. Peter Friends of the Library — BiB, Updated June 2020

Orlean introduces us to a cast of characters from libraries past and present, and also reexamines the case of Harry Peak, the blond-haired actor suspected of setting fire to the LAPL in 1986. She chronicles the LAPL fire and its aftermath to showcase the larger, crucial role that libraries lay in our lives, from their humble beginnings as metropolitan initiatives to their place in a national identity. Her discussion of each department of the library, and her journey through the stacks reveal how these beloved institutions provide much more than just books—and why they remain an essential part of the heart, mind, and soul of our country. It is also a master journalist’s reminder that, perhaps especially in the digital era, they are more necessary than ever.

***The Life We Bury* (Allen Eskens)**

LP Au

For an English class, college student Joe Talbert’s task is to interview a stranger and write a brief biography of the person. With deadlines looming, Joe heads to a nearby nursing home to find a willing subject. There he meets Carl Iverson, a dying Vietnam veteran—and a convicted murderer. With only a few months to live, he has been medically paroled to a nursing home after spending thirty years in prison for the crimes of rape and murder. Writing about Carl’s life, especially Carl’s valor in Vietnam, Joe cannot reconcile the heroism of the soldier with the despicable acts of the convict. Joe, along with his skeptical female neighbor, throws himself into uncovering the truth, but he is hamstrung in his efforts by having to deal with his dangerously dysfunctional mother, the guilt of leaving his autistic brother vulnerable, and a haunting childhood memory.

***The Lightkeeper’s Daughters* (Jean E. Pendziwol)**

LP Au

Though her mind is still sharp, Elizabeth Livingstone’s eyes have failed. She lives in a nursing home. No longer able to linger over her beloved books or gaze at the paintings that move her spirit, she fills the void with music and memories of her family, especially her beloved twin sister, Emily. When her late father’s Lightkeeper’s Day Logs are discovered in a wrecked ship and delivered to her, the past suddenly becomes all too present.

Morgan Fletcher is a foster teenage girl who lived with her grandfather until he passed away. A tough exterior gives the appearance she doesn’t care about anything, but the one thing she cares about is the violin that he owned and taught her to play. After spray-painting graffiti on a fence at a home for the elderly, she is pressed into community service at the nursing home.

Elizabeth convinces Morgan to read the day logs to her. The entries take her back in time to her childhood on Porphyry Island on Lake Superior where, 70 years earlier, her father manned the lighthouse and lived with his wife, twin daughters and their two older brothers. Elizabeth and Morgan grow closer as, entry by entry, they begin to realize that both their fates are connected to the isolated island in ways they never dreamed, and Morgan’s connection sheds light on family secrets of Elizabeth’s past and events that permanently changed her life.

Children’s author Jean E. Pendziwol’s adult debut is a story of family, identity, and art that involves a decades-old mystery.

***Little Fires Everywhere* (Celeste Ng)**

LP

In Shaker Heights, a placid, progressive suburb of Cleveland, everything is planned—from the layout of the winding roads, to the colors of the houses, to the successful lives its residents will go on to lead. No one embodies this spirit more than Elena Richardson, whose guiding principle is playing by the rules. Enter Mia Warren, an enigmatic artist and single mother, who arrives in this idyllic bubble with her teenaged daughter Pearl and rents a house from the Richardsons. Soon Mia and Pearl become more than tenants: all four Richardson children are drawn to the mother-daughter pair. But Mia carries with her a disregard for the status quo that threatens to upend this carefully ordered community—and a mysterious past.

When old family friends of the Richardsons attempt to adopt a Chinese-American baby, a custody battle erupts that dramatically divides the town—and puts Mia and Elena on opposing sides. Suspicious of Mia and her motives, Elena is determined to uncover the secrets in Mia’s past. But her obsession will come at unexpected and devastating costs. *Little Fires Everywhere* explores the weight of secrets, the nature of art and identity, and the ferocious pull of motherhood – and the danger of believing that following the rules can avert disaster.

***Lilac Girls* (Martha Hall Kelly)**

LP Au

New York socialite Caroline Ferriday has her hands full with her post at the French consulate and a new love on the horizon. But Caroline’s world is forever changed when Hitler’s army invades Poland in September 1939—and then turns toward France. An ocean away from Caroline, Kasia Kuzmerick, a Polish teenager, senses her carefree youth disappearing as she is drawn deeper into her role as courier for the underground resistance movement. In a tense atmosphere of watchful eyes and suspecting neighbors, one false move can have dire consequences. For the ambitious young German doctor, Herta Oberheuser, an ad for a government medical position seems her ticket out of a desolate life. Once hired, though, she finds herself trapped in a male-dominated realm of Nazi secrets and power.

The lives of these three women are set on a collision course when the unthinkable happens and Kasia is sent to Ravensbrück, the notorious Nazi concentration camp for women. Their stories cross continents—from New York to Paris, Germany, and Poland—as Caroline and Kasia strive to bring justice to those whom history has forgotten.

A Long Way Home: A Memoir (Saroo Brierley)

NF LP

This is the miraculous and triumphant story of Saroo Brierley, a young man who used Google Earth to rediscover his childhood life and home in an incredible journey from India to Australia and back again. At only five years old, Saroo Brierley got lost on a train in India. Unable to read or write or recall the name of his hometown or even his own last name, he survived alone for weeks on the rough streets of Calcutta before ultimately being transferred to an agency and adopted by a couple in Australia.

Despite his gratitude, Brierley always wondered about his origins. Eventually, with the advent of Google Earth, he had the opportunity to look for the needle in a haystack he once called home, and pore over satellite images for landmarks he might recognize or mathematical equations that might further narrow down the labyrinthine map of India. One day, after years of searching, he miraculously found what he was looking for and set off to find his family. *A Long Way Home* is a moving and inspirational true story of survival and triumph against incredible odds. It celebrates the importance of never letting go of what drives the human spirit: hope. (*The movie Lion is based on this book.*)

Love and Other Consolation Prizes (Jamie Ford)

LP Au

For twelve-year-old Ernest Young, half-Chinese orphan and a charity student at a boarding school, the chance to go to the Seattle World's Fair feels like a gift. But once there, amid the exotic exhibits, fireworks and ferris wheels, he discovers that *he* is the one who is actually the prize. He is astounded to learn he will be raffled off—a healthy boy "to a good home." The winning ticket belongs to the flamboyant madam of a high-class brothel, famous for educating her girls. There, Ernest becomes the new houseboy and befriends Maisie, the madam's precocious daughter, and a bold scullery maid named Fahn. Their friendship and affection form the first real family Ernest has ever known—and against all odds, this new life gives him the sense of home he's always desired. But as the Madam Flora's succumbs to her job-related illness and their world of finery begins to crumble, all three must grapple with hope, ambition, and first love.

In 1962, the World's Fair returns to Seattle. Ernest's grown daughter, an investigative reporter, hears a story of a boy who was auctioned off at the 1909 World's Fair over 50 years before. And her mother, suffering from dementia, told her about the boy. She asks Ernest if he is the boy in question, and Ernest realizes he cannot keep his family's secrets hidden any longer. But those secrets include things about his wife that are not his to tell.

Against a backdrop of post-Victorian vice, suffrage, and celebration, this novel is a tale about innocence and devotion—in a world where everything and everyone is for sale. The book is inspired by a true story of a boy who was offered as a prize at Seattle's epic 1909 World's Fair.

Maisie Dobbs (Jacqueline Winspear)

Book 1 of the Maisie Dobbs Mystery Series. Maisie Dobbs started at age 13 as a maid in an aristocratic London household, employed by suffragette Lady Rowan Compton. Lady Rowan's friend, Maurice Blanche, recognized Maisie's intuitive gifts and helped her gain admission to the prestigious Girton College in Cambridge, where Maisie planned to complete her education. But the outbreak of war changed everything. Maisie trained as a nurse, then left for France to serve at the front where she found—and lost—an important part of herself. In 1929, ten years after the armistice, Maisie sets out on her own as a private investigator. Having learned that coincidences are meaningful and truth is elusive, her first case involves suspected infidelity but reveals something very different.

In the aftermath of the Great War, a former officer has founded a working farm known as The Retreat to act as a convalescent refuge for ex-soldiers too shattered to resume normal life. When fate brings Maisie a second case involving The Retreat, she must finally confront the ghost that has haunted her for over a decade.

The Man from St. Petersburg (Ken Follett)

His name was Feliks. He came to London to commit a murder that would change history. A master manipulator, he had many weapons at his command, but against him were ranged the whole of the English police, a brilliant and powerful lord, and the young Winston Churchill himself. These odds would have stopped any man in the world—except the man from St. Petersburg...

March (Geraldine Brooks)

Au

In 1862, Mr. March (from *Little Women*), an abolitionist and chaplain in the Union Army, is driven by his conscience to leave his home and family in Concord, Massachusetts, to participate in the war. His letters home to his family withhold the true extent of the brutality and injustices he witnessed on and off the battlefields. He suffers from a prolonged illness stemming from poor conditions on a Virginia cotton farm. While in hospital, he unexpectedly meets Grace, a literate, intelligent black nurse whom he first met years ago while staying in a large house where as a young woman she was a

slave. The recovering March, full of guilt and grief over surviving when others have perished and scarred by events of the war, returns home to his wife and the Little Women. The novel accurately reflects the principles of Bronson Alcott, notably his belief that children of all races had a right to education and his wish to follow a vegetarian diet. It presents the young Mrs. March as a fiery woman with strong verbal and physical expressions of anger.

***Margaret Fuller: A New American Life* (Megan Marshall)**

NF

Pulitzer Prize finalist Megan Marshall recounts the trailblazing life of Margaret Fuller: Thoreau's first editor, Emerson's close friend, daring war correspondent, tragic heroine. After her untimely death in a shipwreck off Fire Island, the sense and passion of her life's work were eclipsed by scandal. Marshall's inspired narrative brings her back to indelible life. Whether detailing her front-page *New-York Tribune* editorials against poor conditions in the city's prisons and mental hospitals, or illuminating her late-in-life hunger for passionate experience—including a secret affair with a young officer in the Roman Guard—Marshall's biography gives the most thorough and compassionate view of an extraordinary woman. No biography of Fuller has made her ideas so alive or her life so moving.

***The Misremembered Man* (Christina McKenna)**

Jamie McCloone is a middle-aged Irish farmer of modest means and simple ways. Unmarried and lonely, he lives in bachelor squalor and drinks a little too much at the pub. Lydia Devine, also middle-aged and unmarried, is a schoolteacher living with her judgmental, widowed mother. An upcoming wedding and the specter of once again taking her mother as her date sufficiently motivate Lydia to find a male companion by taking out a personal ad in the local paper. Jamie responds, and they eventually arrange a meeting, with ultimately surprising consequences. In the meantime, we learn about Jamie's abusive upbringing in a Catholic orphanage and Lydia's restrictive childhood under her harshly religious parents. These are characters that readers will care about, and McKenna's lyrical dialog and Irish humor and colloquialisms are a delight to read.

***The Mountain of Light* (Indu Sundaesan)**

The novel is based on the tumultuous history of a legendary 186-carat diamond—originating in India—and the men and women who possessed it. As empires rose and fell and mighty kings jostled for power, its glittering radiance never dimmed. It is the “Mountain of Light”—the Kohinoor diamond—and its facets reflect a sweeping story of love, adventure, conquest, and betrayal. Its origins are the stuff of myth, but for centuries this spectacular gem changes hands from one ruler to another in India, Persia, and Afghanistan. In 1850, the ancient stone is sent halfway around the world where it will play a pivotal role in the intertwined destinies of a boy-king of India and a young queen of England—a queen who claims the Mountain of Light and India itself for her own burgeoning empire, the most brilliant jewels in her imperial crown. This tells a magnificent story of loss and recovery, sweeping change and enduring truth, wrapped around the glowing heart of one of the world's most famous diamonds. [Amazon.com]

***The Muralist* (B.A. Shapiro)**

LP Au

When Alizée Benoit, a young American painter working for the Works Progress Administration (WPA), vanishes in New York City in 1940, no one knows what happened to her. Not her Jewish family living in German-occupied France. Not her arts patron and political compatriot, Eleanor Roosevelt. Not her close-knit group of friends and fellow WPA painters, including Mark Rothko, Jackson Pollock, and Lee Krasner. And, some seventy years later, not her great-niece, Danielle Abrams, who, while working at Christie's auction house, uncovers enigmatic paintings hidden behind works by those now famous Abstract Expressionist artists. Do they hold answers to the questions surrounding her missing aunt?

Entwining the lives of both historical and fictional characters, and moving between the past and the present, *The Muralist* plunges readers into the divisiveness of prewar politics and the largely forgotten plight of European refugees refused entrance to the United States. It captures both the inner workings of New York's art scene and the beginnings of the vibrant and quintessentially American school of Abstract Expressionism.

***Murder by Chance* (Pat Dennis)**

Murder by Chance is the debut novel in the Betty Chance mystery series. Can three scrappy, single women of varied ages find happiness in a new travel business specializing in casino junkets? All bets are off when Betty Chance finds a body in a tour bus that arrives at the casino hotel. At fifty, Betty is unemployed, divorced and penniless, after her husband left her for an older, fatter woman. But with her stunningly beautiful niece Lori, she opens Take A Chance Tours, a Chicago-based company specializing in gaming destinations. Betty quickly becomes close friends with Tillie, the perky, effervescent bus driver who happens to be an ex-con. As soon as the tour bus arrives at Moose Lake Bay Resort and Casino in northern Minnesota, Betty and her driver Tillie, discover a dead body in the locked bathroom of their motor coach. The 350-pound corpse is riddled with stab wounds. With Tillie and Lori's help, Betty puts her amateur sleuth ability to work and searches for the killer. An entertaining, humorous, quick read. [Amazon.com]

My Name is Lucy Barton (Elizabeth Strout)

LP Au

In *My Name Is Lucy Barton*, author Elizabeth Strout shows how a simple hospital visit becomes a portal to the most tender relationship of all—the one between mother and daughter.

Lucy Barton is recovering slowly from what should have been a simple operation. Her mother, to whom she hasn't spoken for many years, comes to see her. Gossip about people from Lucy's childhood in Amgash, Illinois, seems to reconnect them, but just below the surface lie the tension and longing that have informed every aspect of Lucy's life: her escape from her troubled family, her desire to become a writer, her marriage, her love for her two daughters. Knitting this powerful narrative together is the brilliant storytelling voice of Lucy herself: keenly observant, deeply human, and truly unforgettable.

The Natural West (Dan Flores)

NF

The Natural West offers essays reflecting the natural history of the American West as written by one of its most respected environmental historians. Developing a provocative theme, Dan Flores asserts that Western environmental history cannot be explained by examining place, culture, or policy alone, but should be understood within the context of a universal human nature.

The Natural West entertains the notion that we all have a biological nature that helps explain some of our attitudes towards the environment. Flores also explains the ways in which various cultures—including the Comanches, New Mexico Hispanos, Mormons, Texans, and Montanans—interact with the environment of the West. Gracefully moving between the personal and the objective, Flores intersperses his writings with literature, scientific theory, and personal reflection. The topics cover a wide range—from historical human nature regarding animals and exploration, to the environmental histories of particular Western bioregions, and finally, to Western restoration as the great environmental theme of the twenty-first century.

The Never-Open Desert Diner (James Anderson)

Anderson's debut novel is about a desert where people go to escape their past, where everyone has a story to tell, secrets, and vulnerability. Ben Jones lives a quiet life, working hard as a trucker on Route 117, an isolated state road in a remote region of the Utah desert. A classic loner, Ben is about to have his truck repossessed and lose his business. But this life is all Ben has, and for the private and eccentric cast of desert rats who live in this area, off the beaten path and off the grid, Ben's visits are their only contact with the outside world. The only notable landmark is the Well-Known Desert Diner, now known by locals as the Never-Open Desert Diner because it hasn't opened in years.

One night Ben comes upon an abandoned house that may have been a prototype in a never-built housing development. He sees a beautiful woman silently playing a cello that has no strings. Against his better judgment, his interest in Claire develops. Dangerous men come looking for her, turning Route 117 upside down in their search. Long-buried mysteries and secrets that go back generations—and secrets within secrets—come to light, with serious and life-threatening consequences not only for them both, but for the other locals who have made this desert their sanctuary. Ultimately, the answers they all seek are connected to the desert's greatest mystery—what really happened all those years ago at the Never-Open Desert Diner? In this story of love and loss, at turns funny, heartbreaking and thrilling, Ben learns the enduring truth that some violent crimes renew themselves across generations, and the importance of the human connection.

A Night to Remember (Walter Lord)

Au

First published in 1955, *A Night to Remember* remains a completely riveting account of the *Titanic's* fatal collision and the behavior of the passengers and crew, both noble and ignominious. Some sacrificed their lives, while others fought like animals for their own survival. Wives beseeched husbands to join them in lifeboats; gentlemen went taut-lipped to their deaths in full evening dress; and hundreds of steerage passengers, trapped below decks, sought help in vain. Walter Lord's classic minute-by-minute recreation is as vivid now as it was upon first publication fifty years ago. From the initial distress flares to the struggles of those left adrift for hours in freezing waters, this semi-centennial edition brings that moonlit night in 1912 to life for a new generation of readers.

Obasan (Joy Kogawa)

The novel centers on the memories and experiences of Naomi Nakane, a 36-year-old schoolteacher in the rural Canadian town of Cecil, Alberta. The death of Naomi's uncle, with whom she had lived as a child, leads Naomi to visit her widowed aunt Aya, whom she calls Obasan (*Obasan* being the Japanese word for "Aunt"). Her brief stay with Obasan becomes an occasion for Naomi to revisit and reconstruct in memory her painful experiences as a child during and after World War II, detailing the years the Canadian government took measures against the Japanese citizens of Canada and their aftereffects. With the aid of a box of correspondence and journals sent to her by her Aunt Emily, Naomi learns that her mother, who had been in Japan before the bombing of Pearl Harbor, was severely injured by the atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki; a finding which changes her perspective of the 'War in the Pacific, and rekindles the heartbreak she experienced as a child.

***One for the Blackbird, One for the Crow* (Olivia Hawker)**

Wyoming, 1876. Living on the frontier, the Bemis and Webber families must rely on each other. With no other settlers for miles, it is a matter of survival. But when Ernest Bemis finds his wife, Cora, in a compromising situation with their neighbor, he doesn't think of survival. In one impulsive moment, a man is dead, Ernest is off to prison, and the women left behind are divided by rage and remorse.

Losing her husband to Cora's indiscretion is another hardship for stoic Nettie Mae. But as a brutal Wyoming winter bears down, Cora and Nettie Mae have no choice but to come together as one family—to share the duties of working the land and raising their children. There's Nettie Mae's son, Clyde—no longer a boy, but not yet a man—who must navigate the road to adulthood without his father to guide him, and Cora's daughter, Beulah, who is as wild and untamable as her prairie home.

Bound by the uncommon threads in their lives and the challenges that lie ahead, Cora and Nettie Mae begin to forge an unexpected sisterhood. But when love blossoms between Clyde and Beulah, bonds are once again tested, and these two resilient women must finally decide whether they can learn to trust each other—or risk losing everything they hold dear.

***Ordinary Grace* (William Kent Krueger)**

LP Au

New Bremen, Minnesota, summer 1961. The Twins were playing their debut season, ice-cold root beers were selling out at the soda counter of Halderson's Drugstore, and Hot Stuff comic books were a mainstay on every barbershop magazine rack. The country had a new, young President, and it was a time of innocence and hope. But for thirteen-year-old Frank Drum it was a grim summer in which death visited frequently and assumed many forms: accident, nature, suicide, murder. Told from Frank's perspective forty years after that fateful summer, *Ordinary Grace* is a moving account of a boy standing at the door of his young manhood, trying to understand a world that seems to be falling apart around him. It is an unforgettable novel about discovering the terrible price of wisdom and the enduring grace of God.

***The Other Einstein* (Marie Benedict)**

LP

Serbian-born Mileva "Mitza" Marić was always different from other girls. Most 20-year-old girls were marrying, but in 1896 she was the only female student studying physics at Zurich Polytechnic, one of the first females to study science at the university level in all Europe. And then charismatic fellow student Albert Einstein took a romantic interest in her and they began a passionate affair, marrying in 1903. The promising future of this fascinating woman who loved and worked with one of the greatest scientists in history was lost, sacrificed to the needs of her family and the ambitious, selfish genius she married. Did she contribute to his "special theory of relativity", her scientific contributions diminished or ignored? This novel and the controversies about a strong, brilliant woman will inspire strong emotion in the reader.

***The Other Wes Moore: One Name Two Fates* (Wes Moore)**

NF

"The chilling truth is that his story could have been mine. The tragedy is that my story could have been his."

Two kids named Wes Moore were born blocks apart within a year of each other. Both grew up fatherless in similar Baltimore neighborhoods and had difficult childhoods; both hung out on street corners with their crews; both ran into trouble with the police. How, then, did one grow up to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated veteran, White House Fellow, and business leader, while the other ended up a convicted murderer serving a life sentence? Wes Moore, the author of this fascinating book, sets out to answer this profound question. In alternating narratives that take readers from heart-wrenching losses to moments of surprising redemption, *The Other Wes Moore* tells the story of a generation of boys trying to find their way in a hostile world.

***The Paris Architect* (Charles Belfoure)**

LP Au

Paris, 1942. Gifted architect Lucien Bernard accepts a commission that will bring him a great deal of money—and maybe get him killed. But if he's clever enough, he'll avoid trouble. All he has to do is design a secret hiding place for a wealthy Jewish man—a space so invisible that even the most determined German officer won't find it. He sorely needs the money, and outwitting the Nazis who have occupied his beloved city is a challenge he cannot resist. But when a hiding space he'd designed fails horribly, and the problem of where to hide a Jew becomes terribly personal, Lucien can no longer ignore what's at stake. *The Paris Architect* asks us to consider what we owe each other, and just how far we'll go to make things right.

***Piano Tide* (Kathleen Dean Moore)**

Do we belong to the Earth or does the Earth belong to us? The question raised by Chief Seathl almost two centuries ago continues to be the defining quandary of the wet, wild rainforests along the shores of the Pacific Northwest. It seethes below the tides of the fictional town of Good River Harbor, a little village pressed against the mountains—homeland to bears, whales, and a few weather-worn families.

In *Piano Tide*, the debut novel by award-winning naturalist, philosopher, activist and author Kathleen Dean Moore, we are introduced to town father Axel Hagerman, who has become wealthy in this remote Alaskan harbor by selling off the spruce, the cedar, the herring and halibut. But when he decides to export the water from a salmon stream, he runs headlong into St. Peter Friends of the Library — BiB, Updated June 2020

young Nora Montgomery, just arrived by ferry with her piano and her dog. Having burned her bridges in the lower 48, Nora aims to disappear into this new homeland, with her piano as her anchor. But when Axel's next business proposition, a bear pit, turns lethal, Nora has to act. The clash, when it comes, is a spectacular and transformative act of resistance.

***A Place At Our Table* (Amy Clipson)**

This is the first book in the "Amish Homestead" series, set in a quiet community in Lancaster County. The Amish value their family time at the kitchen table, where they come together and deal with problems after a long, hard day of work.

Kayla Dienner has suffered heartache, and has vowed to protect her heart at all costs. The death of her older brother Simeon in a fire a year ago is painfully fresh, and she is reminded of her grief every time the fire sirens blare. Then when the family barn catches fire, she meets Jamie Riehl, a firefighter and also an Amish dairy farmer. Running ragged between both jobs, he feels he never has enough time to get things done on the growing farm. He and Kayla are immediately drawn to one another. But Kayla's younger brother Nathan needs someone to look up to, and Jamie, who saved him from the barn fire, encourages him to sign up for fire fighter training. Kayla can't allow herself to go through losing another brother and does all she can to discourage him.

Then Jamie's world is rocked when tragedy strikes his family, and guilt, grieving and loss and pull Jamie and Kayla apart. Can both Kayla and Jamie come to terms with the past, deal with their fears, their losses, and find healing?

***Plainsong* (Kent Haruf)**

LP

In small town Holt, Colorado, a high school teacher is trying to raise his two sons on his own, and the boys are faced with adjusting to having no mother at home. A teenage girl—rejected by her mother, and her father long since disappeared—is pregnant and alone, with nowhere to go. And out in the country, a pair of elderly bachelor brothers works the family homestead, the only world they've ever known. From these unsettled lives, a story is simply told of the lives of these people intersecting; their tribulations and tenacity; their fates overcoming the powerful circumstances of place and station with dignity and humor intact and resonating with hope and beauty; and a story of family that widens to four generations.

***Pontoon* (Garrison Keillor)**

Au

A humorous Lake Wobegon story: A good Lutheran lady prepares to die and wishes her ashes to be cremated and dropped into the lake. Rogue Danish Lutheran pastors come to town. As the wedding of the decade approaches (accompanied by giant shrimp shish kebabs, French champagne, wheels o imported cheese, a hot-air balloon, a flying Elvis, giant duck decoys and, most importantly, Wally's pontoon boat), the good-loving people of Lake Wobegon do what they do best: drive each other slightly crazy.

***Putin Country: A Journey into the Real Russia* (Anne Garrels)**

NF

Over 20 years ago, NPR correspondent Anne Garrels first visited Chelyabinsk, a military-industrial center in Russia's heartland, a thousand miles east of Moscow. Long the home of the Soviet nuclear program, the region contained beautiful lakes, shuttered factories, mysterious closed cities, and some of the most polluted places on earth. Garrels' goal was to chart the aftershocks of the U.S.S.R.'s collapse. Returning again and again, Garrels found that the area's new opportunities were exciting but also traumatic. As the economic collapse of the early 1990s abated, Chelyabinsk grew richer and more cosmopolitan, even as official corruption and intolerance for minorities grew more entrenched. Sushi restaurants proliferated; so did shakedowns. In the neighboring countryside, villages crumbled to the ground. Far from the glitz of Moscow, the Chelyabinsk people were working out their country's destiny person by person.

In *Putin Country*, Garrels crafts a portrait of Middle Russia in the aftermath of the Soviet Union. We meet upwardly mobile professionals, impassioned activists who champion human rights, and ostentatious mafiosi. We discover surprising subcultures—including a vibrant underground gay community and a circle of determined Protestant evangelicals. We watch doctors and teachers trying to cope with inescapable payoffs and institutionalized negligence. As Vladimir Putin tightens his grip on power, and war in Ukraine leads to Western sanctions and a lower standard of living, the local population mingles belligerent nationalism with a deep ambivalence about their country's direction. Through it all, Garrels sympathetically charts an ongoing identity crisis, explaining why Putin commands the loyalty of so many Russians, even those who decry the abuses of power they regularly encounter. Addressing the misconceptions of Putin's supporters and critics, Garrels' portrait of Russia's silent majority engaging reading at a time when cold war tensions are resurgent.

***Radio Girls* (Sarah-Jane Stratford)**

LP

In London, in 1926, the days of early British radio, the story is told of one woman who finds her voice while working alongside the brilliant women and men of the BBC. American-raised Maisie Musgrave is thrilled to land a job as a secretary at the upstart British Broadcasting Corporation, whose use of radio—still new, strange, and electrifying—is captivating the nation. But the hectic pace, smart young staff, and intimidating bosses only add to Maisie's insecurity.

Soon, she is seduced by the work—gaining confidence as she arranges broadcasts by the most famous writers, scientists, and politicians in Britain. She is also caught up in a growing conflict between her two bosses, John Reith, the formidable Director-General of the BBC, and Hilda Matheson, the extraordinary director of the hugely popular Talks programming, who

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each have very different visions of what radio should be. Under Hilda's tutelage, Maisie discovers her talent, passion, and ambition. But when she unearths a shocking conspiracy, she and Hilda join forces to make their voices heard both on and off the air, and then face the dangerous consequences of telling the truth for a living.

Rebecca (Daphne du Maurier)

LP Au

"*Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again . . .*" The novel begins in Monte Carlo, where our heroine is swept off her feet by the dashing widower Maxim de Winter and his sudden proposal of marriage. Orphaned and working as a lady's maid, she can barely believe her good fortune. It is only when they arrive at his massive country estate that she realizes how large a shadow his late wife will cast over their lives—presenting her with a lingering evil that threatens to destroy their marriage from beyond the grave.

First published in 1938, this classic gothic novel is such a compelling read that it won the Anthony Award for Best Novel of the Century

The Red Address Book (Sofia Lundberg)

LP

Doris is a 96-year-old woman living alone in her Stockholm apartment. She has few visitors, but her weekly Skype calls with Jenny, her American grandniece, and her only relative, give her great joy and remind her of her own youth. As a young girl, Doris was given an address book by her father, and ever since she has carefully documented everyone she met and loved throughout the years. Looking now through the little book, Doris sees the many crossed-out names of people long gone and is struck by the urge to put pen to paper. In writing down the stories of her colorful past—working as a maid in Sweden, modeling in Paris during the 30s, fleeing to Manhattan at the dawn of the Second World War—can she help Jenny, haunted by a difficult childhood, unlock the secrets of their family and finally look to the future? And whatever became of Allan, the love of Doris's life?

This charming novel prompts reflection on the stories we all should carry to the next generation, and the surprises in life that can await even the oldest among us.

The Red Bandanna: A Life, A Choice, A Legacy (Tom Rinaldi)

NF LP

During the World Trade Center attack, many acted with selfless bravery, risking, and often losing, their lives. ESPN correspondent Rinaldi focuses on one of these heroes, a Wall Street junior associate named Welles Crowther. Raised in privilege in New York's Rockland County, Crowther was drawn as child to the local firehouse and eventually joined the company. Although Welles successfully navigated Wall Street after college, by the summer of 2001 he'd decided to become an N.Y.C. firefighter. Welles disappeared in the chaos of the WTC attack, but his family heard reports of a young man who'd guided people to safety from the 78th floor of the South Tower. One clue helped to identify Crowther: survivors said their protector wore a red bandana. Rinaldi crafts a meticulous and vivid portrait of Crowther's life and the desperate hours after the jets hit, including thumbnail sketches of those he aided before the towers fell. All too often, Rinaldi projects anticipatory dread before 9/11, relating that Crowther told a friend "I'm going to be part of something big" as if what happened was somehow predestined. This emphasis on premonition tells readers more about the way humans process tragedy than about Crowther's unquestionable courage and competence. In fact, no such embellishment is needed: the young man's actions speak for themselves. (*Publishers Weekly*)

Red Sparrow (Jason Matthews)

Au

(*First book in a trilogy*) In contemporary Russia, state intelligence officer Dominika Egorova has been drafted to become a "Sparrow"—a spy trained in the art of seduction to elicit information from their marks. She's been assigned to Nathaniel Nash, a CIA officer who handles the organization's most sensitive penetration of Russian intelligence. The two young intelligence officers, trained in their respective spy schools, collide in a charged atmosphere of tradecraft, deception and, inevitably, a forbidden spiral of carnal attraction that threatens their careers and the security of America's valuable mole in Moscow. For fans of John le Carré and Ian Fleming and featuring "high-level espionage, pulse-pounding danger, sex, double agents, and double crosses" (Nelson DeMille), *Red Sparrow* is a timely and electrifying thriller that is impossible to put down. (*Amazon*)

The Rent Collector (Camron Wright)

This fictional story, based on actual accounts, follows a Cambodian family that lives at—and makes their living from—Stung Meanchey, the largest municipal waste dump in all of Cambodia. As her husband scavenges the dump for things to sell, Sang Ly tries to find a way to heal her ailing son. When she discovers that the bad-tempered rent collector can read, Sang Ly begs the woman to teach her. The unlikely relationship is the beginning of a life-changing quest. It is a story of hope, determination, and the strength of family. It is the journey of one woman to save her son and another woman's chance at redemption. It demonstrates that even in a dump in Cambodia—perhaps especially in a dump in Cambodia—everyone deserves a second chance.

***The Residence: Inside the Private World of the White House* (Kate Anderson Brower) NF**

A remarkable history with elements of both *In the President's Secret Service* and *The Butler*, *The Residence* offers an intimate account of the service staff of the White House, from the Kennedys to the Obamas. America's First Families are unknowable in many ways. No one has insight into their true character like the people who serve their meals and make their beds every day. Full of stories and details by turns dramatic, humorous, and heartwarming, *The Residence* reveals daily life in the White House as it is really lived through the voices of the maids, butlers, cooks, florists, doormen, engineers, and others who tend to the needs of the President and First Family.

***The Riders of the Purple Sage* (Zane Grey)**

LP

Utah, the summer 1871. Jim Lassiter, a gunslinger dressed in black, shows up in town just in time to save young and beautiful Jane Withersteen, a rancher, from having to marry polygamous Mormon church leader, Elder Tull against her will, effectively ceding her ranch to the church. She gets help from gentile friends while she struggles with the nature of her church and its leaders and tries to keep cowboy Bern Venters and Lassiter from killing the adversaries who are rustling her cattle and slowly ruining her. On his own quest, Lassiter discovers a secret grave on Jane's grounds.

The Riders of the Purple Sage, a classic of the Western genre, "combined adventure, action, violence, crisis, conflict, sentimentality and sex in an extremely shrewd manner." [critic Russel Nye]

***The Seven Sisters: Book One* (Lucinda Riley)**

LP

This story is for the first of six girls named D'Apliese, each adopted as infants from various corners of the world and raised in "Atlantis", a secluded castle home on Lake Geneva, Switzerland. The girls were all named for the stars of the Pleiades Constellation, used by sailors to find their way. Their mysterious and beloved father, a wealthy and eccentric man whom they called Pa Salt, had a unique and treasured relationship with each of his daughters. They had everything they could have wished for except the knowledge of exactly what their father did and, at times, his presence. When they receive the devastating news that Pa Salt has died, they all return to Atlantis for his funeral.

Maia, Ally, Star, Cece, Tiggy and Electra—six grieving sisters—gather, but there is no funeral. Pa Salt's solicitor hands each an envelope from their father. Each is left with a trust fund, a personal message, a mantra, and a tantalizing clue to her identity—along with the co-ordinates for her birthplace engraved on an Armillary Sphere in the castle's garden—if they wish to begin their search. For Maia: "**Hiding away from the world never works, because you still have to meet yourself in the mirror every morning.**"

This is the story of Maia D'Apliese, the eldest sister, as she follows the clues to investigate her beginnings. Her journey takes her to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where she begins to unravel the threads of her story begun 80 years earlier. Riley beautifully integrates the stories of Maia and her great grandmother Bel, describing well the places they go, the people they meet. It is a story of substance with interesting bits of history ... and – What? A surprise ending!

***The Sewing Machine* (Natalie Fergie)**

In 1911, Jean is about to join the mass strike at the Singer factory, and for her, nothing will be the same again. Decades later, in Edinburgh, Connie sews coded moments of her life into a notebook, as her mother did before her. More than 100 years after his grandmother's sewing machine was made, Fred discovers a treasure trove of documents. His family history is laid out before him in a patchwork of unfamiliar handwriting and colorful seams. He starts to unpick the secrets of four generations, one stitch at a time. (Amazon.com)

The Sewing Machine is an uplifting book, a joy to read, and delivers far more than its title might suggest it will. Across four generations and a time span greater than 100 years, a multitude of characters grace its pages. Seemingly disconnected, each is a member of one of two families living ordinary lives and working in decades from the 1910s to 2010s, and their lives reveal some extraordinary secrets. The story comes to focus on Fred's attempt to unpick the secrets of his family history to create a big picture of the past—a narrative with no inevitable end point. Moving back and forth across the decades, we get an insight into the changing role of women over time, of the impact of war on families and communities more widely, of the prejudices faced by unmarried mothers, even in the latter part of the twentieth century, and of the day-to-day struggles of a life with which we are much more familiar, in the near-present day. There are surprises along the way and, even at the end, one unexpected final reveal that places the last piece in the jigsaw.

***The Shadow Land* (Elizabeth Kostova)**

Au

Young American Alexandra Boyd, suffering from the loss of her beloved brother, travels to Sofia, Bulgaria, to start a new life abroad. Soon after arriving, she helps an elderly couple into a taxi and realizes too late that she has kept one of their bags. Inside she finds an ornately carved wooden box engraved with the name Stoyan Lazarov, and finds she is holding an urn filled with human ashes. Trying to find the family to return the item, she first has to uncover the secrets of a talented musician who was shattered by political oppression—a knowledge that holds its own danger.

The novel spans the past and present, unearthing dark secrets of Bulgaria and horrors of a century, traversing the culture and landscape of this mysterious country. Suspenseful and beautifully written, it explores the power of stories, the pull of the past, and the hope and meaning that can sometimes be found after experiencing loss.

***The Stars are Fire* (Anita Shreve)**

LP Au

This novel is based on true events of October 1947. After a summer-long drought, wildfires break out along the Maine coast, soon racing out of control and burning towns and villages from Bar Harbor to Kittery. Grace Holland, living in a strained marriage, is pregnant and at home with two toddlers when her husband Gene leaves to join the volunteer firefighters. The fire unexpectedly turns toward their town, and Grace, her children, her best friend Rosie, and Rosie's two young children, helplessly watch as the flames burn their houses to the ground. The frantic women and children are forced into the ocean's water, and she saves her children by holding them in the sea. By morning, the town no longer exists. Homeless, penniless, with her husband missing, and helped by the kindness of strangers, Grace relocates to her mother-in-law's house. She must discover courage within herself as she works to rebuild her life during a time when women were not seen as capable or independent apart from their husbands.

***Stella Bain* (Anita Shreve)**

LP Au

Stella Bain has no memory of her past when she wakes up in a hospital bed in Marne, France. It is 1916, and she wears the uniform of a British war nurse but speaks with an American accent. As soon as she is able, Stella sets out for London, where she hopes to find answers. What she discovers—with the help of Dr. August Bridge, who takes an interest in her case—both shocks and startles. As Stella's memories come racing back, she must undertake a journey across the ocean to confront the haunted past of the woman she used to be. In this gripping historical drama that transports us from Europe to America and back again, Anita Shreve weaves an engrossing tale about love and memory, set against the backdrop of a war that devastated an entire generation.

***Still Life* (Louise Penny)**

LP Au

Chief Inspector Armand Gamache of the Surêté du Québec and his team of investigators are called in to the scene of a suspicious death in a rural village south of Montreal. Jane Neal, a local fixture in the tiny hamlet of Three Pines, just north of the U.S. border, has been found dead in the woods. The locals are certain it's a tragic hunting accident and nothing more, but Gamache smells something foul in these remote woods, and is soon certain that Jane Neal died at the hands of someone much more sinister than a careless bow hunter. (*This book is first in a series by the author.*)

***The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry* (Gabrielle Zevin)**

LP Au

We are not quite novels. We are not quite short stories. In the end, we are collected works.
A.J. Fikry is the owner of Island Books, and he is cranky for good reason. His wife has died; his store is failing; and a rare collection of Poe poems—his most prized possession—has been stolen. Drifting toward bankruptcy and drinking too much, he pushes people away—even his staff and customers—isolating himself from all the people of Alice Island. These days, even his books give him no pleasure. And then a small package appears at the bookstore—something that will spark a powerful change in A.J. The story is set mostly in a small bookstore, about a bookseller and the life that surrounds the store itself. The locals see changes in him, and he himself is surprised by a life that is not at all what he expected it to be. Each chapter of the book is named after a story that Fikry himself reviews or summarizes as he philosophizes on life and how his worldview contrasts or parallels the story in question. It's about books and the power of stories. And about the power of love, loss, and second chances.

***Sweetwater Creek* (Anne Rivers Siddons)**

LP Au

Emily Parmenter is 12 years old and lonely. Left mostly to herself after her beautiful young mother disappeared and her beloved older brother died, Emily is keenly aware of yearning and loss. Rather than be consumed by sadness, she has built a life around the faded plantation where her remote father and hunting-obsessed brothers raise the legendary Lowcountry Boykin hunting spaniels. It is a meager, narrow, masculine world, but to Emily it has magic: the storied deep-sea dolphins who come regularly to play in Sweetwater Creek; her extraordinary bond with the beautiful dogs she trains; and her almost mystic communion with her own spaniel, Elvis. Emily hides from the world here, and it is enough. And then comes Lulu Foxworth, troubled daughter of a truly grand plantation, who has run away from her hectic Charleston debutante season to spend a healing summer with the quiet marshes and river, and the life-giving dogs. Where Emily's father sees their guest as an entrée to a society he thought forever out of reach, Emily is at once threatened and mystified. Lulu has a powerful enchantment of her own, and this, along with the dark, crippling secret she brings with her, will inevitably blow Emily's magical water world apart and let the real one in—at a terrible price.

***Swimming in the Moon* (Pamela Schoenwaldt)**

Italy, 1905. Fourteen-year-old Lucia and her young mother, Teresa, are servants in a magnificent villa on the Bay of Naples, where Teresa soothes their unhappy mistress with song. But volatile tempers force them to flee, exchanging their warm, gilded cage for the cold winds off Lake Erie and Cleveland's restless immigrant quarters. With a voice as soaring
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and varied as her moods, Teresa transforms herself into the Naples Nightingale on the vaudeville circuit. Clever and hardworking, Lucia blossoms in school until her mother's demons return, fracturing Lucia's dreams.

Lucia is not alone in her struggle for a better life. All around her, friends and neighbors, new Americans, are demanding decent wages and working conditions. Lucia joins their battle, confronting risks and opportunities that will transform her and her world in ways she never imagined.

***This Tender Land* (William Kent Krueger)**

LP

A magnificent novel about four orphans on a life-changing odyssey during the Great Depression.

Minnesota, 1932. The Lincoln School is a pitiless place where hundreds of Native American children, forcibly separated from their parents, are sent to have the 'Indian' taken out of them, stripped of their heritage in every way. It is also home to 10-yr-old Odie O'Banion, a lively orphan whose exploits earn him the superintendent's wrath. He and his brother Albert were sent there when the orphanage was full. Forced to flee, the two of them, their best friend Mose who cannot speak, and a brokenhearted little girl named Emmy steal away in a canoe, heading for the mighty Mississippi, each of them trying to find what they are really looking for, which to Odie is 'home.'

Over the course of one unforgettable summer, these four "vagabonds," as they call themselves, journey into the landscape of the Great Depression and cross paths many people—some kind, some terrible, from struggling farmers and traveling faith healers to displaced families and lost souls of all kinds. Beautifully written, and with the feel of a modern classic, *This Tender Land* is an enthralling, big-hearted epic that shows how the magnificent American landscape connects us all, haunts our dreams, and makes us whole.

***The Things We Keep* (Sally Hepworth)**

LP

Anna Forster, in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease at only thirty-eight years old, knows that her family is doing what they believe to be best when they take her to Rosalind House, an assisted living facility. She also knows there's just one other resident her age, Luke. What she does not expect is the love that blossoms between her and Luke even as she resists her new life at Rosalind House. As her disease steals more and more of her memory, Anna fights to hold on to what she knows, including her relationship with Luke.

When Eve Bennett is suddenly thrust into the role of single mother, she finds herself putting her culinary training to use at Rosalind house. When she meets Anna and Luke, she is moved by the bond the pair has forged. But when a tragic incident leads Anna's and Luke's families to separate them, Eve must question what she is willing to risk to help them.

***Travels with Charley: In Search of America* (John Steinbeck)**

LP Au

An intimate journey across America, as told by one of its most beloved writers. To hear the speech of the real America, to smell the grass and the trees, to see the colors and the light—these were John Steinbeck's goals as he set out, at the age of fifty-eight, to rediscover the country he had been writing about for so many years. With Charley, his French poodle, Steinbeck drives the interstates and the country roads. He dines with truckers, and encounters bears at Yellowstone and old friends in San Francisco. Along the way he reflects on the American character, racial hostility, the particular form of American loneliness he finds almost everywhere, and the unexpected kindness of strangers.

***The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* (Rachel Joyce)**

LP Au

At first glance Harold Fry is a sad, lonely English milquetoast, the human equivalent of a potted geranium. His "unlikely pilgrimage" contrives a way to shake him out of his monotonous life and send him on a voyage of self-discovery. Harold will learn that there is more to life than mowing one's lawn. Readers will learn that one man's quiet timidity should not be taken at face value. Potted geraniums have feelings too.

One day Harold receives a letter from an old acquaintance, Queenie Hennessy, who is dying at a hospice that is 627 miles north of Harold's home near the English Channel. He writes her a postcard and walks down his road to mail it. Then he keeps on going—away from his home, his wife, his life. Harold will walk the entire length of England in hope of keeping Queenie alive. It's hard to say whether this is more surprising to Harold or to his wife, Maureen, whose marriage went stale a long time ago. Maureen is hurt enough to suggest that their estrangement was Queenie-related. In a book that sometimes misleads and manipulates its readers, the author coyly feeds that jealousy flame.

***Until They Bring the Streetcars Back* (Stanley Gordon West)**

1949 St. Paul, MN—that hopeful post-war era where streetcars graced the city, drive-ins bloomed, the internet and shopping centers didn't exist and people hadn't yet fled to the suburbs. This is the gripping story of young Cal Gant, who, despite the shelter of his idyllic life, his rollicking friends, and the mesmerizing girl he loves, stumbles onto and unthinkable lair of violence, terror and murder.

When the haunting Gretchen Luttermann draws him into a strange and secret lie, he finds himself in a heart-stopping struggle with her brutal father, leading Cal to the brink of self-doubt, terror and death itself. Cal must find within himself the

backbone and daring to stand against the horror. Refusing to turn away, the choices he makes and the terrifying path he takes will raise hairs on the back of your neck, leave a catch in your throat and bring your heart to its feet, cheering.

***The Warmth of Other Suns* (Isabel Wilkerson)**

NF

Ida Mae Brandon Gladney, a sharecropper's wife, left Mississippi for Milwaukee in 1937 after her cousin was falsely accused of stealing a white man's turkeys and was almost beaten to death. In 1945, George Swanson Starling, a citrus picker, fled Florida for Harlem after learning of the grove owners' plans to give him a "necktie party" (lynching). Robert Joseph Pershing Foster made his trek from Louisiana to California in 1953, embittered by "the absurdity that he was doing surgery for the United States Army and couldn't operate in his own home town." Anchored to these three stories is Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Wilkerson's extensively researched study of the "Great Migration," the exodus of six million black Southerners out of the terror of Jim Crow to an "uncertain existence" in the North and Midwest. Wilkerson deftly incorporates sociological and historical studies into the novelistic narratives of Gladney, Starling, and Pershing settling in new lands, building anew, and often finding that they have not left racism behind. The drama, poignancy, and romance of a classic immigrant saga hold the reader in its grasp, and resonate long after the reading is done.

***When Breath Becomes Air* (Paul Kalanithi)**

NF LP Au

At the age of thirty-six, on the verge of completing a decade's worth of training as a neurosurgeon, Paul Kalanithi was diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer. One day he was a doctor treating the dying, and the next he was a patient struggling to live. And just like that, the future he and his wife had imagined evaporated. *When Breath Becomes Air* chronicles Kalanithi's transformation from a naïve medical student "possessed," as he wrote, "by the question of what, given that all organisms die, makes a virtuous and meaningful life" into a neurosurgeon at Stanford working in the brain, the most critical place for human identity, and finally into a patient and new father confronting his own mortality.

What makes life worth living in the face of death? What do you do when the future, no longer a ladder toward your goals in life, flattens out into a perpetual present? What does it mean to have a child, to nurture a new life as another fades away? These are some of the questions Kalanithi wrestles with in this profoundly moving, exquisitely observed memoir.

***When the Emperor Was Divine* (Julie Otsuka)**

In 1942, on a sunny day in Berkeley, California, a woman sees a sign in a post office window, returns to her home, and matter-of-factly begins to pack her family's possessions. Like thousands of other Japanese Americans, they have been reclassified, virtually overnight, as enemy aliens and are about to be uprooted from their home and sent to a dusty internment camp in the Utah desert.

In this lean and devastatingly evocative first novel, Otsuka tells their story from five flawlessly realized points of view and conveys the exact emotional texture of their experience: the thin-walled barracks and barbed-wire fences, the omnipresent fear and loneliness, the unheralded feats of heroism. *When the Emperor Was Divine* is a work of enormous power that makes a shameful episode of our history as immediate as today's headlines.

***When the Men Were Gone* (Marjorie Herrera Lewis)**

LP

This debut historical novel is based on the true story of Tylene Wilson, a woman in 1940s Texas who, in spite of extreme opposition, became a female football coach in order to keep her students from heading off to war.

Football is the heartbeat of Brownwood, Texas. Every Friday night for as long as assistant principal Tylene Wilson can remember, the entire town has gathered in the stands, cheering their boys on. Each September brings with it the hope of a good season and a sense of unity and optimism. Now, the war has changed everything. Most of the Brownwood men over 18 and under 45 are off fighting, and in a small town the possibilities are limited. Could this mean a season without football? But no one counted on Tylene, who learned the game at her daddy's knee. She knows more about it than most men, so she does the unthinkable, convincing the school to let her take on the job of coach.

Faced with extreme opposition—by the press, the community, rival coaches, and referees and even the players themselves—Tylene remains resolute. And when her boys rally around her, she leads the team—and the town—to a Friday night and a subsequent season they will never forget. (Amazon)

***Where the Wind Leads* (Dr. Vinh Chung)**

NF

Vinh Chung was born in South Vietnam, just eight months after it fell to the communists in 1975. His family was wealthy, controlling a rice-milling empire worth millions; but within months of the communist takeover, the Chungs lost everything and were reduced to abject poverty. Knowing that their children would have no future under the new government, the Chungs decided to flee the country. In 1979, they joined the legendary "boat people" and sailed into the South China Sea, despite knowing that an estimated two hundred thousand of their countrymen had already perished at the hands of brutal pirates and violent seas.

Where the Wind Leads follows Vinh Chung and his family on their desperate journey from pre-war Vietnam, through pirate attacks on a lawless sea, to a miraculous rescue and a new home in the unlikely town of Fort Smith, Arkansas. There Vinh

struggled against poverty, discrimination, and a bewildering language barrier—yet still managed to graduate from Harvard Medical School. The book is Vinh’s tribute to the courage and sacrifice of his parents, a testimony to his family’s faith, and a reminder to people everywhere that the American dream, while still possible, carries with it a greater responsibility.

***Witnesses to the Holocaust: Stories of Minnesota Survivors & Liberators* (Laura Zelle, Joni Sussman, editors) NF**

The book published a generation ago captures the memories of survivors and their liberators living in Minnesota who experienced the Holocaust—those imprisoned in concentration camps, those who managed to escape internment, and those who liberated the camps. These testimonies of people who rebuilt their lives in the Twin Cities area detail not just the experiences, but the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of a world turned upside down. These are compelling stories not just of pain and death, but also of individual acts of heroism and tenacity, and the resilience and strength of the human spirit. This is a story for generations of witnesses who cherish our democracy, our freedom, and understand the responsibility to protect them.

***The Women in the Castle* (Jessica Shattuck)**

LP Au

Three women, haunted by the past and the secrets they hold.

Set at the end of World War II, in a crumbling Bavarian castle that once played host to all of German high society, the lives and fates of three widows become intertwined. Amid the ashes of Nazi Germany’s defeat, Marianne von Lingenfels returns to the once-grand castle of her husband’s ancestors, an imposing stone fortress now fallen into ruin following years of war. The widow of a resister murdered in the failed July 20, 1944, plot to assassinate Adolf Hitler, Marianne plans to uphold the promise she made to her husband’s brave conspirators: to find and protect their wives, her fellow resistance widows.

First Marianne rescues six-year-old Martin, the son of her dearest childhood friend, from a Nazi reeducation home. Together, they make their way across the smoldering wreckage of their homeland to Berlin, where Martin’s mother, the beautiful and naive Benita, has fallen into the hands of occupying Red Army soldiers. Then she locates Ania, another resister’s wife, and her two boys, now refugees languishing in one of the many camps that house the millions displaced by the war.

As Marianne assembles this makeshift family from the ruins of her husband’s resistance movement, she is certain their shared pain and circumstances will hold them together. But she quickly discovers that the black-and-white, highly principled world of her privileged past has become infinitely more complicated, filled with secrets and dark passions that threaten to tear them apart. Eventually, all three women must come to terms with the choices that have defined their lives before, during, and after the war—each with their own unique share of challenges.

Combining piercing social insight and vivid historical atmosphere, *The Women in the Castle* is a dramatic yet nuanced portrait of war and its repercussions that explores what it means to survive, love, and, ultimately, to forgive in the wake of unimaginable hardship.

***Your Oasis on Flame Lake* (Lorna Landvik)**

LP

Devera and BiDi, best friends fast approaching forty in the small Minnesota town of Flame Lake, were recently voted “Least Changed” at their twentieth high school reunion—a label neither one finds very appealing. Each craves a change in her life: Devera desires a break from her humdrum marital routine; BiDi longs to reconnect with her distant fourteen-year-old daughter (the only girl on the high school hockey team), not to mention jump-start a sex drive stuck in neutral. So when Devera’s husband decides to fulfill his longtime dream of opening a nightclub in his basement, *Your Oasis on Flame Lake* arrives not a moment too soon. Nothing fancy, it’s just a BYOB joint where you can hang out, sing, dance, tell jokes, and be yourself. But then an unexpected crisis throws both families into chaos, forcing them all to take stock of their lives—and learn the power of forgiveness.

120 books