

#### **Book club summaries**

#### **FICTION**



# The 100-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared – Jonas Jonasson

Humor, adventure

A reluctant centenarian much like Forrest Gump (if Gump were an explosives expert with a fondness for vodka) decides it's not too late to start over.

#### 13 rue Thérèse - Elena Mauli Shapiro

Historical fiction, WWI

American academic Trevor Stratton discovers a box full of artifacts from World War I as he settles into his new office in Paris. The pictures, letters, and objects in the box relate to the life of Louise Brunet, a feisty, charming Frenchwoman who lived through both World Wars.

#### The 19th Wife - David Ebershoff

Historical fiction, religion, polygamy, murder mystery

It is 1875, and Ann Eliza Young has recently separated from her powerful husband, Brigham Young, prophet and leader of the Mormon Church. Expelled and an outcast, Ann Eliza embarks on a crusade to end polygamy in the United States. A rich account of a family's polygamous history is revealed, including how a young woman became a plural wife.

#### 29 - Adena Halpern

Family life, humor, chick lit

75-year-old Ellie Jerome is granted her birthday wish: for just one day, she is 29 years old again. 29 is the story of three generations of women and how one magical day shakes up everything they knew about each other.

#### Abigale Hall - Lauren A. Forry

Trust, WWII, Gothic fiction

Set after WWII, 17-year-old Eliza Haverford and her 12-year-old sister, Rebecca, have lost their parents and are now in the care of their sullen Aunt Bess, who's more than willing to ship the girls off to Wales to work as servants. They find themselves escorted to Thornecroft, an isolated and dilapidated manor house, whose grimy, shabby interior and labyrinthine layout provide the ideal setting for exaggerating fears and hiding appalling truths.

#### The Alchemist - Paulo Coelho

Destiny, spirituality

An Andalusian shepherd boy named Santiago travels from Spain to Egypt in search of a treasure buried in the Pyramids. Along the way he meets a Gypsy woman, a man who calls himself king, and an alchemist, all of whom point Santiago in the direction of his quest. What starts out as a journey to find worldly goods turns into a discovery of the treasure found within.

#### All the Light We Cannot See - Anthony Doerr

#### WWII, power of knowledge, legacy of the past

From the highly acclaimed, multiple award-winning Anthony Doerr, a stunningly ambitious and beautiful novel about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II.

#### All We Ever Wanted Was Everything - Janelle Brown

#### Family life, humor, chick lit

Divorced, dumped, and in debt, Janice Miller and her daughter, Margaret, are forced to wage war with divorce lawyers, debt collectors, drug-dealing pool boys, country club ladies, evangelical neighbours, and nasty social climbers – and in the process all illusions and artifice fall away and they must reckon with something far scarier and more consequential: their true selves.

#### **Alone in the Classroom** – Elizabeth Hay (Canadian Author)

#### Canadian, historical fiction, mystery

In a small prairie school in 1929, Connie Flood helps a backward student, Michael Graves, learn how to read. Observing them and darkening their lives is the principal, Parley Burns, whose strange behaviour culminates in an attack so disturbing its repercussions continue to the present day.

#### And the Dark Sacred Night – Julia Glass

#### Family life, contemporary fiction

Kit Noonan is an unemployed art historian with twins to support, a mortgage to pay, and a frustrated wife who insists that, to move forward, Kit must first confront a crucial mystery about his past. Born to a single teenage mother, he has never known the identity of his biological father.

#### Annabel - Kathleen Winter (Canadian Author)

#### Canadian, gender, historical fiction

A universal concern – the importance of self-determination – takes a highly specific form in Kathleen Winter's first novel, the story of an intersex child born in a remote coastal Labrador village in 1968.

#### Annie Freeman's Fabulous Traveling Funeral - Kris Radish

#### Humor, friendship, death, chick lit

Katherine oldest and dearest friend, the impressible Annie Freeman, left one final request – a traveling funeral – and she wants the most important women in her life as "pallbearers." From Sonoma to Manhattan, Katherine, Laura, Rebecca, Jill, and Marie carry Annie's ashes to the special places in her life. At every stop there's a surprise encounter and a small miracle waiting, as the women share their deepest secrets.

#### The Art of Mending - Elizabeth Berg

#### Family saga, relationshiops

Laura Bartone anticipates her annual family reunion with a mixture of excitement and wariness. When her sister Caroline confronts Laura and their brother, Steve, with devastating allegations about their mother, the three have a difficult time reconciling their varying experiences in the same house. But a sudden misfortune will lead them all to face the past, their own culpability, and their common need for love and forgiveness.

#### The Art of Racing in the Rain - Garth Stein

#### Contemporary fiction, dogs, automobile racing

A heart-wrenching but deeply funny and ultimately uplifting story of family, love, loyalty, and hope, The Art of Racing in the Rain is a beautifully crafted and captivating look at the wonders and absurdities of human life...as only a dog could tell it.



#### The Atomic City Girls - Janet Beard

WWII, historical fiction, romance

In November 1944, eighteen-year-old June Walker boards an unmarked bus, destined for a city that doesn't officially exist. Oak Ridge, Tennessee has sprung up in a matter of months—a town of trailers and segregated houses, 24-hour cafeterias, and constant security checks. There, June joins hundreds of other voung girls operating massive machines whose purpose is never explained. They know they are helping to win the war, but must ask no questions and reveal nothing to outsiders. When the bombing of Hiroshima brings the truth about Oak Ridge into devastating focus, June must confront her ideals about loyalty, patriotism, and war itself.

#### Bad Cree – Jessica Johns



**LARGE** Night after night, Mackenzie's dreams return her to a memory from before her sister Sabrina's untimely death: **PRINT** a weekend at the family's lakefront campsite, long obscured by a fog of guilt. But when the waking world starts closing in, too-a murder of crows stalks her every move around the city, she wakes up from a dream of drowning throwing up water, and gets threatening text messages from someone claiming to be Sabrina— Mackenzie knows this is more than she can handle alone.

#### The Bathing Women - Tie Ning

#### Contemporary fiction, China

The Bathing Women follows the lives of four women—Tiao, a children's book editor; Fan, her sister, who thinks escaping to America might solve her problems; Fei,a hedonistic and self-destructive young woman; and Youyou, a chef-from childhood during the Cultural Revolution to adulthood in the new market economy. This moving novel charts the journey of these women as they grapple with love, sibling rivalry, and, ultimately, redemption.

## **The Beautiful Mystery – Louise Penny** (Canadian Author)

#### Canadian, mystery, crime, detectives

Cloistered in a remote Northern Quebec monastery, 24 monks of the Gilbertine order, long thought to have vanished altogether, sing glorious Gregorian plainchants and exist happily with minimal contact from the outside world. When the choirmaster is found murdered in the abbot's private garden, the reluctant monks have no choice but to call in the police, opening doors long ago sealed shut.

#### A Beauty - Connie Gault (Canadian Author)

#### Canadian, historical fiction, small town

Set in 1930's Saskatchewan, Elena's mother has been dead for many years, and her father, burdened by the hardships of drought, has disappeared, and the eighteen-year-old is an object of pity and charity in her community. A stranger shows up in town and Elena needs only one look and one dance before jumping into his car. What follows is a trip through the prairie towns, their dusty streets, shabby hotel rooms, surrounded by dry fields that stretch out vastly, waiting for rain.

#### Be Frank with Me - Julia Claiborne Johnson

#### Humor, contemporary fiction

Full of heart and countless only-in-Hollywood moments. Be Frank With Me is a captivating and heartwarming story of an unusual mother and son, and the intrepid young woman who finds herself irresistibly pulled into their unforgettable world.

#### Before I Let You Go – Kelly Rimmer

#### Contemporary fiction, family drama

As children, sisters Lexie and Annie were incredibly close. Bonded by the death of their beloved father, they weathered the storms of life together. As adults, Lexie and Annie could not be more different. Lexie is a

successful doctor and happily engaged. Annie is an addict, a thief and a liar. When Annie's newborn baby is in danger of being placed in foster care, Annie phones to beg her sister for help.

#### Bel Canto - Ann Patchett

Music, politics, love

A lavish birthday party held at a South American embassy for powerful businessman Mr. Hosokawa seems a perfect evening – until a band of gun-wielding terrorists takes the party hostage. But what begins as a lifethreatening scenario slowly evolves into something quite different, as terrorists and hostages forge unexpected bonds, and people from different backgrounds become compatriots, intimate friends, and lovers.

#### The Berry Pickers - Amanda Peters



Indigenous, family life, mystery

A four-year-old girl goes missing from the blueberry fields of Maine, sparking a tragic mystery that remains unsolved for nearly fifty years.

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#### Better Luck Next Time - Julia C. Johnson

LARGE It's 1938 and women seeking a quick, no-questions split from their husbands head to the "divorce capital of the world," Reno, Nevada. There's one catch: they have to wait six-weeks to become "residents." Many of included these wealthy, soon-to-be divorcees flock to the Flying Leap, a dude ranch that caters to their every need.

#### ■ Blood and Salt – Barbara Sapergia

Canadian, WWII, historical fiction

Blood and Salt is a work of fiction grounded in actual details about the Banff-Castle Mountain internment camp. It explores the search for a new life and the search for love - all the while asking what it is to be Ukrainian.

#### Blooms of Darkness - Aharon Appelfeld

Historical fiction, WWII, The Holocaust

The narrative follows an 11-year-old Jewish boy who stays with a prostitute in a Ukrainian ghetto during World War II.

#### Blue Shoe - Anne Lamott

Contemporary fiction, family life

Mattie Ryder is newly divorced and living with her two children in her rat-infested childhood home. As she attempts to come to terms with her past, she unravels family secrets and she learns truths that are at the same time painful and liberating.

#### Blue Ticket - Sophie Mackintosh

Dystopian, feminism

Calla knows how the lottery works. Everyone does. On the day of your first bleed, you report to the station to learn what kind of woman you will be. A white ticket grants you marriage and children. A blue ticket grants you a career and freedom. You are relieved of the terrible burden of choice. And once you've taken your ticket, there is no going back. But what if the life you're given is the wrong one?

#### The Book of Longings - Sue Monk Kidd

Historical fiction, religion, feminism

Grounded in meticulous historical research and written with a reverential approach to Jesus's life that focuses on his humanity, The Book of Longings is an inspiring account of one woman's bold struggle to realize the passion and potential inside her, while living in a time, place, and culture devised to silence her.

## The Book of Negroes - Lawrence Hill (Canadian Author)

Historical fiction, slavery, Revolutionary War

Abducted from her African village, Aminata Diallo is sent to live as a slave in America. This novel follows her on a brutal, incredible journey, including her eventual return to Sierra Leone.

#### The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek - Kim Michele Richardson

Historical fiction, Appalachia, Blue People, literacy

Inspired by the true and historical blue-skinned people of Kentucky and the dedicated Kentucky Pack Horse Library Project, The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek provides an authentic Appalachian voice to a story of hope, heartbreak and raw courage and shows one woman's strength, despite it all, to push beyond the dark woods of Troublesome Creek.

### The Bookshop - Penelope Fitzgerald

Historical fiction, books about books, small town

In a small East Anglian town, Florence Green decides, against polite but ruthless local opposition, to open a bookshop. Hardborough becomes a battleground. Florence has tried to change the way things have always been done, and as a result, she has to take on not only the people who have made themselves important, but natural and even supernatural forces too. Her fate will strike a chord with anyone who knows that life has treated them with less than justice.

#### The Bookshop of Yesterdays - Amy Meyerson

Contemporary fiction, books about books, mystery

A woman inherits a beloved bookstore and sets forth on a journey of self-discovery in this poignant debut about family, forgiveness and a love of reading.

#### Braid - Laetitia Colombani

Contemporary fiction, feminism, family life

Smita, Giulia, Sarah: three lives, three continents, three women with nothing in common, but nevertheless bound by a rare expression of courage – like three strands in a braid.

### The Break – Katherena Vermette

Indigenous, Canadian, feminism

NEW When Stella, a young Métis mother, looks out her window one evening and spots someone in trouble on the Break — a barren field on an isolated strip of land outside her house — she calls the police to alert them to a possible crime. In a series of shifting narratives, people who are connected, both directly and indirectly, with the victim — police, family, and friends — tell their personal stories leading up to that fateful night.

#### Brick Lane - Monica Ali

Contemporary fiction, arranged marriage, cultural heritage

The novel centers around the life of follows the life of Nazneen, a Bangladeshi woman who moves to London at the age of 18, to marry an older man, Chanu.

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## Cassandra in Reverse - Holly Smale

**LARGE** Cassandra Penelope Dankworth is a creature of habit. Her life runs in a pleasing, predictable order...until **PRINT** now. She's just been dumped. She's just been fired. Her local café has run out of banana muffins. Then, included Cassie discovers she can go back and change the past. One small rewind at a time, Cassie attempts to fix the life she accidentally obliterated, but soon she'll discover she's trying to fix all the wrong things.

#### The Chilbury Ladies' Choir - Jennifer Ryan

Historical fiction, WWII, village choir

The Chilbury Ladies' Choir unfolds the struggles, affairs, deceptions, and triumphs of a village choir during

World War II. An enchanting ensemble story that shuttles from village intrigue to romance to the heartbreaking matters of life and death, Jennifer Ryan's debut novel thrillingly illuminates the true strength of the women on the home front in a village of indomitable spirit.

#### Cilka's Journey - Heather Morris

Historical fiction, WWII, The Holocaust

In this follow-up to The Tattooist of Auschwitz, the author tells the story, based on a true one, of a woman who survives Auschwitz, only to find herself locked away again.

#### Clock Dance - Anne Tyler

Contemporary fiction, family life

Willa Drake can count on one hand the defining moments of her life. So when she receives a phone call telling her that her son's ex-girlfriend has been shot and needs her help, she drops everything and flies across the country, taking Willa into uncharted territory.

#### The Color of Our Sky - Amita Trasi

India, historical fiction, human trafficking

A sweeping, emotional journey of two childhood friends—one struggling to survive the human slave trade and the other on a mission to save her—two girls whose lives converge only to change one fateful night in 1993.

#### The Color of Tea - Hannah Tunnicliffe

Contemporary fiction, chick lit, romance, China, food

With the heralding of a new year, Grace resolves to do something bold. In a pocket of China, filled with casinos and yum cha restaurants, she opens her own small café called Lillian's. But Grace's immersion in the cafe is taking its toll on her marriage, and when things start to crumble in the cafe, Lillian's suddenly feels like a burden rather than an escape.

#### Come, Thou Tortoise – Jessica Grant (Canadian Author)

Canadian, humor, family life

Audrey Flowers is living quietly in Oregon with Winnifred, her tortoise, when she finds out her dear father has been knocked into a coma back in Newfoundland. Despite her fear of flying, she goes to him, but not before she reluctantly dumps Winnifred with her unreliable friends. When Audrey disarms an Air Marshal en route to St. John's we begin to realize there's something, well, odd about her. And we soon know that Audrey's quest to discover who her father really was – and reunite with Winnifred – will be an adventure like no other.

#### **Consumption – Kevin Patterson** (Canadian Author)

Canadian, historical fiction, tuberculosis

Born on the tundra in the 1950s, Victoria knows nothing but the nomadic life of the Inuit until, at the age of ten, she is diagnosed with tuberculosis and evacuated to a southern sanitarium. When she returns home six years later, she finds a radically different world.

#### **Cool Water – Dianne Warren** (Canadian Author)

Canadian, small town

Juliet, Saskatchewan, is a blink-of-an-eye kind of town. But the heart of the town beats in the rich and overlapping stories of its people; stories that bring the prairie desert and the town of Juliet to vivid and enduring life.

#### The Cranes Dance - Meg Howrey

Contemporary fiction, mental health, ballet, sisters

The Cranes Dance tells the fast-paced story of two exceptionally talented dancers, Kate and Gwen Crane,

their rise to prominence in the high-stress world of New York's most prestigious ballet company, and their eventual fall from grace. Narrated in a voice that is by turns flippant, cynical, heartbroken, and harshly self-critical, the novel offers a visceral portrait of the dancer's life, and the close bond between sisters.

#### **Crow Lake – Mary Lawson** (Canadian Author)

#### Canadian, family life

Four children in northern Ontario struggle to remain a family following the deaths of their parents in a car accident; narrator Kate looks back in adulthood to the sacrifices made by her two older brothers, and tries to come to terms with the long-term effects of their decisions.

#### Cry of the Dove - Fadia Faqir

#### Contemporary fiction, feminism, asylum-seekers

Years ago, Salma was imprisoned for violating the laws of her Bedouin village by becoming pregnant out of wedlock. Now, escaped from her prison and living in exile in England, Salma tries to forge a new life for herself. Salma's past and the cries of her lost child still haunt her, so risking everything, she returns to her village in a desperate attempt to save her daughter.

#### The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time - Mark Haddon

#### Contemporary fiction, mystery, Autism Spectrum Disorder

Christopher Boone has autism, and while he has a brilliant and analytical mind, everyday social interaction is threatening and baffling to him. After being falsely accused of killing his neighbour's dog, Christopher emulates his idol, Sherlock Holmes, in trying to solve the mystery. Along the way, he also discovers the solutions to a lot of other unanswered questions in his life.

## ■ Dance, Gladys, Dance – Cassie Stocks

#### Canadian, humor, ghosts

27-year-old Frieda Zweig is at an impasse. Behind her is a string of failed relationships and half-forgotten ambitions of being a painter; in front of her lies the dreary task of finding a real job and figuring out what "normal" people do with their lives. Then, a classified ad in the local paper introduces Frieda to Gladys, an elderly woman who long ago gave up on her dreams of being a dancer. The catch? Gladys is a ghost.

#### Dancing on Broken Glass - Ka Hancock

#### Contemporary fiction, chick lit, mental illness, breast cancer, married life

A powerfully written novel offering an intimate look at a beautiful marriage and how bipolar disorder and cancer affect it, Dancing on Broken Glass by Ka Hancock perfectly illustrates the enduring power of love.

#### Dancing to the Flute - Manisha Jolie Amin

#### Contemporary fiction, India, music

Kalu is left as a boy at a temple near Hastinapore, India, with no memory of his past. His happy wit and thoughtful manner earn him friends, though, and his talent eventually takes him away from Hastinapore to learn music from a reclusive master.

#### Dear Life - Alice Munro

#### Canadian, short stories

Suffused with Munro's clarity of vision and her unparalleled gift for storytelling, these stories about departures and beginnings, accidents, dangers, and homecomings both virtual and real, paint a vivid and lasting portrait of how strange, dangerous, and extraordinary the ordinary life can be.

#### Demon Copperhead - Barbara Kingsolver

#### Appalachia, small town, coming of age

Set in the mountains of southern Appalachia, this is the story of a boy born to a teenaged single mother in a single-wide trailer, with no assets beyond his dead father's good looks and copper-colored hair, a caustic

wit, and a fierce talent for survival. In a plot that never pauses for breath, relayed in his own unsparing voice, he braves the modern perils of foster care, child labor, derelict schools, athletic success, addiction, disastrous loves, and crushing losses.

#### The Diary - Eileen Goudge

#### Contemporary fiction, romance, chick lit

When the two grown daughters of Elizabeth Marshall discover an old diary of their mother's in her attic, it comes as a shock to learn that the true love of Elizabeth's life was not their father. But is all as it seems? Only the pages of her diary can provide clues to what really happened.

#### The Dictionary of Lost Words - Pip Williams

#### Historical fiction, feminism

Esme is born into a world of words. Motherless and irrepressibly curious, she spends her childhood in the Scriptorium, an Oxford garden shed in which her father and a team of dedicated lexicographers are collecting words for the very first Oxford English Dictionary. Young Esme's place is beneath the sorting table, unseen and unheard. One day a slip of paper containing the word bondmaid flutters beneath the table. She rescues the slip and, learning that the word means "slave girl," begins to collect other words that have been discarded or neglected by the dictionary men.

# NEW Did You Hear About Kitty Karr? – Crystal Smith Paul

Historical fiction, race, mystery

When Kitty Karr Tate, a White icon of the silver screen, dies and bequeaths her multimillion-dollar estate to the St. John sisters, three young, wealthy Black women, it prompts guestions. Lots of guestions. A sprawling page-turner set against the backdrop of the Hollywood machine, an insightful and nuanced look at the inheritances of family, race, and gender—and the choices some women make to break free of them.

#### The Elegance of the Hedgehog – Muriel Barbery

Contemporary fiction, family life, coming of age

An enchanting New York Times and international bestseller about life, art, literature, philosophy, culture, class, privilege, and power, seen through the eyes of a 54-year old French concierge and a precocious but troubled 12-year-old girl. A moving, funny, and triumphant novel that exalts the quiet victories of the inconspicuous among us.

#### The End of the Alphabet - C. S. Richardson

Contemporary fiction, travel, romance, death

Ambrose Zephyr and his wife Zappora Ashkenazi ("Zipper") have achieved a happy and balanced life together. The two live contentedly in a narrow London terrace full of books. That contentment is thrown into turmoil on Ambrose's fiftieth birthday, when they receive the news that he has contracted a mysterious illness that will most certainly lead to his death within the month. In panicked delirium, from beneath their bed Ambrose withdraws an oxblood suitcase containing the ephemera of his long-suppressed life's ambition: to travel the world in a pilgrimage through the alphabet, from Amsterdam to Zanzibar.

#### **Every Summer After - Carley Fortune**

Contemporary fiction, romance, chick lit, coming of age

They say you can never go home again, and for Persephone Fraser, ever since she made the biggest mistake of her life a decade ago, that has felt too true. Until Percy receives the call that sends her racing back to Barry's Bay and into the orbit of Sam Florek—the man she never thought she'd have to live without. Told over the course of six years in the past and one weekend in the present, Every Summer After is a gorgeously romantic look at love and the people and choices that mark us forever.

#### Extensions - Myrna Dev

Canadian, historical fiction, family saga, mystery

When she makes the discovery of a photograph of her grandmother and her twin sister. RCMP Constable Arabella Dryvynsydes decides to investigate how a picture taken in 1914 in the mining town of Extension. B.C. wound up at a garage sale in small-town Saskatchewan almost one hundred years later. As Arabella sifts through caches of long-forgotten letters, she pieces together the heartbreaking truth of her family history and resolves a nearly century-old murder.

#### Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close - Jonathan Safran Foer

#### New York, adventure

Nine-year-old Oskar Schell has embarked on an urgent, secret mission that will take him through the five boroughs of New York. His goal is to find the lock that matches a mysterious key that belonged to his father, who died in the World Trade Center on the morning of September 11.

#### **The Factory Voice – Jeanette Lynes** (Canadian Author)

#### Canadian, historical fiction, WWII

The lives and dreams of four vital, engaging, women revolve around mysterious events at a Fort William military aircraft factory in 1941. The Factory Voice is a quirky, light-hearted mystery about the daily lives of factory workers and in particular of women in a time of transition, both for their personal lives and for the society in general.

#### Finding Dorothy - Elizabeth Letts

Historical fiction, family life, biographical fiction

Hollywood, 1938: As soon as she learns that M-G-M is adapting her late husband's masterpiece for the screen, seventy-seven-year-old Maud Gage Baum sets about trying to finagle her way onto the set. Nineteen years after Frank's passing, Maud is the only person who can help the producers stay true to the spirit of the book—because she's the only one left who knows its secrets.

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#### First Lie Wins - Ashley Elston

ARGE The identity comes first: Evie Porter. Once she's given a name and location by her mysterious boss, Mr. Smith, she learns everything there is to know about the town and the people in it. Then the mark: Ryan Sumner. The last piece of the puzzle is the job. Evie isn't privy to Mr. Smith's real identity, but she knows this job isn't like the others. Ryan has gotten under her skin, and she's starting to envision a different sort of life for herself.

#### Five Davs Left - Julie Lawson Timmer

Contemporary fiction, family life, foster care

Mara Nichols, a successful lawyer, and devoted wife and adoptive mother, has recently been diagnosed with a terminal disease. Scott Coffman, a middle school teacher, has been fostering an eight-year-old boy while the boy's mother serves a jail sentence. Scott and Mara both have five days left until they must say good-bye to the ones they love the most.

#### Five Little Indians – Michelle Good

Indigenous, Canadian, historical fiction, residential schools

Taken from their families when they are very small and sent to a remote, church-run residential school, Kenny, Lucy, Clara, Howie and Maisie are barely out of childhood when they are finally released after years of detention. With compassion and insight, Five Little Indians chronicles the desperate quest of these residential school survivors to come to terms with their past and, ultimately, find a way forward.

#### A Flicker in the Dark - Stacy Willingham

Contemporary fiction, thriller, serial killers

When Chloe Davis was twelve, six teenage girls went missing in her small Louisiana town. By the end of the

summer, her own father had confessed to the crimes and was put away for life, leaving Chloe and the rest of her family to grapple with the truth and try to move forward while dealing with the aftermath.

#### The Forgotten Daughter - Renita D'Silva

#### Contemporary fiction, India, adoption

You were adopted." Raised in England by her caring but emotionally reserved parents, Nisha has never been one to take risks. Now, with the scrawled address of an Indian convent, she begins a search for the mother and family she never knew. And, as her eyes are opened to a side of herself she didn't know existed, Nisha realizes that she must also seek answers to the hardest question of all-why?

#### The Forgotten Garden - Kate Morton

#### Historical fiction, mystery

A dockmaster and his wife take in a tiny girl who is left abandoned on a ship headed for Austrailia in 1913. Finally told the truth on her twenty-first birthday, "Nell" sets out on a journey to England to try to find her real identity. It is not until her granddaughter, Cassandra, takes up the search after Nell's death that all of the pieces of the puzzle are assembled.

#### Fruit of the Drunken Tree - Ingrid Rojas Contreras

#### Coming of age, family life, Hispanic American, Colombia

Seven-year-old Chula lives a carefree life in her gated community in Bogotá, but the threat of kidnappings, car bombs, and assassinations hover just outside her walls, where the godlike drug lord Pablo Escobar reigns, capturing the attention of the nation. When her mother hires Petrona, a live-in-maid from the city's guerrilla-occupied slum, Chula makes it her mission to understand Petrona's mysterious ways. As both girls' families scramble to maintain stability amidst the rapidly escalating conflict, Petrona and Chula find themselves entangled in a web of secrecy.



#### The Future – Catherine Leroux

#### Dystopian, alternate history

In an alternate history of Detroit, the Motor City was never surrendered to the US. Its residents deal with pollution, poverty, and the legacy of racism—and strange and magical things are happening: children rule over their own kingdom in the trees and burned houses regenerate themselves. When Gloria arrives looking for answers and her missing granddaughters, at first she finds only a hungry mouse in the derelict home where her daughter was murdered. But the neighbours take pity on her and she turns to their resilience and impressive gardens for sustenance.

#### The Girl on the Train - Paula Hawkins

#### Contemporary fiction, thriller

Rachel takes the same commuter train every morning, and stops at the signal that allows her to daily watch the same couple breakfasting on their deck. Their life—as she sees it—is perfect. And then she sees something shocking. Now everything's changed. Rachel offers what she knows to the police, and becomes inextricably entwined in what happens next, as well as in the lives of everyone involved.

#### Gone Girl - Gillian Flynn

#### Contemporary fiction, murder mystery, fiction

Amy disappears on her fifth wedding anniversary, and while Nick has not been a model husband, could he really have killed her? Under mounting pressure from the police and the media—as well as Amy's fiercely doting parents—the town golden boy parades an endless series of lies, deceits, and inappropriate behavior.

# The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society – Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows Historical fiction, WWII, romance

The letters comprising this charming novel begin in 1946, when author Juliet Ashton invited articulate – and not-so-articulate – neighbours to write her with their stories of the war and of the German occupation of

Guernsey which had so recently ended. The tragic stories of life under Nazi occupation animate the novel and give it its urgency, while also affirming the power of books to nourish people during hard times.

#### The Guest Book - Sarah Blake

Historical fiction, family saga, racism, classism

An unforgettable love story, a novel about past mistakes and betrayals that ripple throughout generations, The Guest Book examines not just a privileged American family, but a privileged America. The Guest Book follows three generations of a powerful American family, a family that "used to run the world".

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#### The Guest List - Lucy Foley

LARGE On a small island off the coast of West Ireland, guests have gathered for a wedding. The bride and groom are  ${\sf PRINT}$  online magazine publisher Julia "Jules" Keegan and celebrity host and survivalist William Slater. But as a included storm brews, the guests and their shared histories collide with one another, and when the lights go out, a body is found. As old secrets get revealed, the question that remains is, who did it and why?

#### Half Broke Horses - Jeannette Walls

Biographical fiction, historical fiction

Lily Casey Smith, this novel's feisty Texas protagonist, is a frontier teacher, a rancher, a rodeo rider, a poker player, and bootlegger. In Half Broke Horses, she survives droughts, tornados, floods, poverty, and whatever else fate can throw against her. Based on author Jeannette Walls's grandmother, Lily is a plausible character because she has a voice that synchronizes with her history.

#### Hamnet & Judith - Maggie O'Farrell

Historical fiction, family life, renaissance

Set in Stratford, England, in the late 16th century, Hamnet imagines the emotional, domestic, and artistic repercussions after the world's most famous (though never named) playwright and his wife lose one of their twins to the bubonic plague in 1596.

#### Heartbreak Hotel - Deborah Moggach

Contemporary fiction, chick lit, romance, humor

Russell 'Buffy' Buffery has upped sticks from London and moved to a decrepit B&B in Wales. He needs to fill the beds, and what better way than with 'Courses for Divorces'. From cookery to car maintenance, the recently divorced find themselves re-learning all those skills they never thought they'd need again, and a whole lot more besides.

#### Heartburn - Nora Ephron

Contemoprary fiction, chick lit, romance, humor

Seven months into her pregnancy, Rachel discovers that her husband is in love with another woman. The fact that the other woman has "a neck as long as an arm and a nose as long as a thumb and you should see her legs" is no consolation. Food sometimes is, though, since Rachel writes cookbooks for a living. And in between trying to win Mark back and loudly wishing him dead, Ephron's irrepressible heroine offers some of her favorite recipes.

#### Helpless - Barbara Gowdy (Canadian Author)

Contemporary fiction, Canadian, thriller

A single mother's daughter is kidnapped during a blackout and days pass with no clues, only a phone call that she receives from a woman whose voice is familiar, but which she cannot place.

#### The Hive - Gill Hornby

Contemporary fiction, chick lit, romance, humor

It's the start of another school year at St. Ambrose. While the children are busy in the classroom, their

mothers are learning sharper lessons. Lessons in friendship. Lessons in betrayal. Lessons in the laws of community, the transience of power...and how to get invited to lunch.

#### The Home for Unwanted Girls – Joanna Goodman

Historical fiction, Canadian, adoption

Philomena meets Orphan Train in this suspenseful, provocative novel filled with love, secrets, and deceit—the story of a young unwed mother who is forcibly separated from her daughter at birth and the lengths to which they go to find each other.

#### The Hour of the Fox - Kurt Palka

Historical fiction, Canadian, family life, grief, crime

Set against the backdrops of the rugged Atlantic coast, Toronto, and Paris, The Hour of the Fox is emotionally resonant, atmospheric, and unforgettable in its depiction of motherhood and loss.

#### Hour of the Witch - Chris Bohjalian

Historical fiction, thriller, witches, puritanism

A young Puritan woman–faithful, resourceful, but afraid of the demons that dog her soul–plots her escape from a violent marriage in this riveting and propulsive historical thriller.

#### A House Without Windows - Nadia Hashimi

Historical fiction, religion, Afghanistan, cultural tradition/heritage

When she's found with her murdered husband's blood on her hands, Zeba is almost strangled by his outraged cousin. She's rescued only to land in jail, accused of killing her husband. Luckily, Zeba's bother has hired Yusuef, a young lawyer, to represent her.

#### The Huntress - Kate Quinn

Historical fiction, WWII, Night Witches

In the aftermath of war, the hunter becomes the hunted... A battle-haunted English journalist and a Russian female bomber pilot join forces to track the Huntress, a Nazi war criminal gone to ground in America.

#### **The Imposter Bride – Nancy Richler** (Canadian Author)

Historical fiction, Canadian, WWII

The Second World War is over, and mail-order bride Lily Azerov has come to Montreal from Poland, via Palestine, to marry Sol Kramer. In an odd twist of fate, she ends up marrying his brother instead, and soon gives birth to a daughter. But when her child is three months old, Lily goes out one day to buy milk and disappears, abandoning her family and leaving behind a mystery that will take decades to untangle.

#### In Search of April Raintree – Beatrice Mosionier

Indigenous, Canadian, historical fiction, foster care

In Search of April Raintree is the story of two Métis sisters growing up in Winnipeg, Manitoba. They are taken from their home and family and each put into different foster homes. As they each make their way in a society that is, at times, indifferent, hostile, and violent, they both struggle to find their own identity. One embraces her Métis heritage, while the other tries to leave it behind. In the end, out of tragedy, comes an unexpected legacy of triumph and reclamation.

#### In the Lake of the Woods - Tim O'Brien

Historical fiction, Vietnam War, politics, thriller

John Wade is a man in crisis: after spending years building a successful political career, he finds his future derailed during a bid for the U.S. Senate by revelations about his past as a soldier in Vietnam. The election lost by a landslide, John and his wife, Kathy, retreat to a small cabin on the shores of a Minnesota lake-from which Kathy mysteriously disappears.

## Indian Horse – Richard Wagamese

Indigenous, Canadian, historical fiction, residential schools, hockey

Saul Indian Horse is in trouble, and there seems to be only one way out. As he journeys back through his life as a northern Ojibway, from the horrors of residential school to his triumphs on the hockey rink, he must question everything he knows. In Indian Horse, author Richard Wagamese crafted a wise and magical novel about love, family and the power of spirit.

#### The Keeper of Lost Things - Ruth Hogan

Contemporary fiction, humor, romance

A charming, clever, and quietly moving debut novel of of endless possibilities and joyful discoveries that explores the promises we make and break, losing and finding ourselves, the objects that hold magic and meaning for our lives, and the surprising connections that bind us.

#### The Kitchen Daughter - Jael McHenry

Contemporary fiction, chick lit, food, magical realism, ghosts

When Ginny's parents die unexpectedly, she is left on her own for the first time in her 26-year-old life. Unable to cope, Ginny turns her focus to cooking various recipes from the family collection. When the ghosts of the recipe's creators start to appear, does it mean she's going crazy, or is it just her private way of seeking advice and comfort?

#### The Lamplighters - Emma Stonex

Historical fiction, thriller, lighthouse keepers

Inspired by a haunting true story, a gorgeous and atmospheric novel about the mysterious disappearance of three lighthouse keepers from a remote tower miles from the Cornish coast--and about the wives who were left behind.

#### The Last Chance Library - Freya Sampson

Contemporary fiction, romance, books about books

Lonely librarian June Jones has never left the sleepy English village where she grew up. Shy and reclusive, the thirty-year-old would rather spend her time buried in books than venture out into the world. But when her library is threatened with closure, June is forced to emerge from behind the shelves to save the heart of her community and the place that holds the dearest memories of her mother.

#### Left Neglected - Lisa Genova

Contemporary fiction, brain injury, family life

Sarah Nickerson, like any other working mom, is busy trying to have it all. After a brain injury steals her awareness of everything on her left side, Sarah must retrain her mind to perceive the world as a whole. In so doing, she also learns how to pay attention to the people and parts of her life that matter most.



#### Lessons in Chemistry - Bonnie Garmus

Historical fiction, feminism, science, food, humor

Chemist Elizabeth Zott would be the first to point out that there is no such thing as an average woman. But it's the early 1960s and her all-male team at Hastings Research Institute takes a very unscientific view of equality. Except for one: Calvin Evans, the lonely, brilliant, Nobel Prize—nominated grudge holder who falls in love with—of all things—her mind. True chemistry results. Like science, though, life is unpredictable. Which is why a few years later Eizabeth Zott finds herself not only a single mother but also the reluctant star of America's most beloved cooking show, Supper at Six. As her following grows, not everyone is happy. Because, as it turns out, Elizabeth Zott isn't just teaching women how to cook. She's daring them to change the status quo.

#### The Library of Legends - Janie Chang

Historical fiction, books about books, China, mythology

China, 1937. When Japanese bombs begin falling on the city of Nanking, nineteen-year-old Hu Lian and her classmates at Minghua University are ordered to flee. Lian and a convoy of students, faculty and staff must walk 1,000 miles to the safety of China's western provinces, a journey marred by the constant threat of aerial attack. And it is not just the refugees who are at risk; Lian and her classmates have been entrusted with a priceless treasure: a 500-year-old collection of myths and folklore known as the Library of Legends.

#### The Life We Bury - Allen Eskens

#### Contemporary fiction, mystery, crime

Joe Talbert, a junior at the University of Minnesota, receives a class assignment to write a biography of someone who has lived an interesting life. At a nursing home he meets Carl Iverson, a man dying of cancer who has been medically paroled after spending thirty years in prison for the murder of a fourteen-year-old girl. Carl agrees to tell Joe his story, and Joe sets out to unravel the tapestry of the thirty-year-old murder.

# included in kit

#### Little Fires Everywhere - Celeste Ng

ARGE 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. And no one embodies this spirit more than Elena Richardson. Enter Mia Warren who arrives with her teenaged daughter Pearl, and rents a house from the Richardsons. But Mia carries with her a mysterious past and a disregard for the status quo that threatens to upend this carefully ordered community.

#### The Little Old Lady Who Broke All the Rules - Catharina Ingelman-Sundberg

#### Contemporary fiction, humor, crime

Martha dreams of escaping the dull, drab life of the retirement home. She enlists her four oldest friends to rebel against the rules imposed upon them: protesting against early bedtimes, tasteless meals, and a host of unfair cost-cutting measures. As the elderly friends become more daring, their activities escalate, and they devise a cunning plan to rob a bank in order to fund their exciting new lives.

#### The Little Paris Bookshop - Nina George

#### Contemporary fiction, romance, books about books

From his floating bookstore on the Seine River in Paris, Monsieur Perdu prescribes novels for the hardships of life, offering the exact book a reader needs. However, he can't seem to heal himself from his lost love and sets sail in a journey to heal the human soul, dispensing books and wisdom along the way.

#### The Little Wartime Library – Kate Thompson

#### Historical fiction, WWII, books about books, romance

London, 1944: Clara Button is no ordinary librarian. While war rayages the city above her, Clara has risked everything she holds dear to turn the Bethnal Green tube station into the country's only underground library. Down here, a secret community thrives with thousands of bunk beds, a nursery, a café, and a theater offering shelter, solace, and escape from the bombs that fall upon their city.

#### The Lizard Cage - Karen Connelly

#### Historical fiction, Buddhism

Set during Burma's military dictatorship of the mid—1990s, Karen Connelly's exquisitely written and harshly realistic debut novel is a hymn to human resilience and love.

#### Looking for Jane - Heather Marshall

#### Canadian, historical fiction, feminism, abortion, adoption

Weaving together the lives of about three women whose lives are bound together by a long-lost letter, a mother's love, and a secret network of women fighting for the right to choose—inspired by true stories.

#### Love Anthony - Lisa Genova

#### Contemporary fiction, family life, Autistic Spectrum Disorder

Olivia Donatelli's dream of a "normal" life shattered when her son, Anthony, was diagnosed with autism at age three. Now she's alone in Nantucket, desperate to find meaning in her son's short life, when a chance encounter with another woman brings Anthony alive again in a most unexpected way.

#### Lullabies for Little Criminals - Heather O'Neill (Canadian Author)

#### Contemporary fiction, coming of age, loss of innocence, life on the streets

At thirteen, Baby lives with her father, Jules, who takes better care of his heroin habit than he does of his daughter. Although nothing shakes her love for Jules, there's only one career option for an attractive, neglected girl, no matter how bright and imaginative.

#### The Maid - Nita Prose



**LARGE** Molly Gray is maid who has difficulty in social situations, but who takes great pride in her work. Then, one day **PRINT** she finds the dead body of Mr. Black, a wealthy real estate tycoon, in one of the guest rooms, sending her life included into disarray and revealing the messy, gritty activities going on beneath their noses that the hotel.

#### Major Pettigrew's Last Stand - Helen Simonson

#### Multicultural fiction, romance, humor

The Major leads a quiet life valuing the proper things that Englishmen have lived by for generations: honor, duty, decorum, and a properly brewed cup of tea. But then his brother's death sparks an unexpected friendship with Mrs. Jasmina Ali, the Pakistani shopkeeper from the village.

#### A Man Called Ove - Fredrik Backman

#### Contemporary fiction, humor

A grumpy yet loveable man finds his solitary world turned on its head when a boisterous young family moves in next door. Ove continuously pushes his demise from one day to the next, and, as time passes, these characters slowly weave themselves into his life, offering Ove a chance at rebirth.

#### The Marrow Thieves - Cherie Dimaline

#### Indigenous, Canadian, dystopian

In a futuristic world ravaged by global warming, people have lost the ability to dream, and the dreamlessness has led to widespread madness. The only people still able to dream are North America's Indigenous people, and it is their marrow that holds the cure for the rest of the world. But getting the marrow, and dreams, means death for the unwilling donors. Driven to flight, a fifteen-year-old and his companions struggle for survival.

#### Maybe Next Time - Cesca Major

#### Romance, magic realism, chick lit

Dan is Emma's person. She's known it since the first time she saw him dressed in lederhosen on the tube. On their fifteen year 'dateversary', Emma texts a list of everything she should have told Dan that morning. Tell the kids to remember their homework... And their gloves. Can you defrost some sausages? Emma just forgets to write the most important words of all - I love you - and by the end of the day everything changes. Or does it? Emma is given the chance to rewrite their future – if she can just figure out their past.

#### Miss Julia Speaks Her Mind - Ann B. Ross

#### Cozy mystery, Southern, humor

Wealthy and newly-widowed Julia Springer has always used her sharp wit and proper Southern manner as a barrier to presumption. When a woman claiming to be the mistress of her husband arrives on her doorstep with a child in tow, Miss Julia needs to reassess her perception of her life, her marriage, and her standing in the town.

#### The Next Thing on My List - Jill Smolinski

#### Contemporary fiction, chick lit

After a car accident in which her passenger, Marissa, dies, June Parker finds herself in possession of a list Marissa has written: "20 Things to Do by My 25th Birthday." The tasks range from inspiring (run a 5K) to daring (go braless) to near-impossible (change someone's life). To assuage her guilt, June races to achieve each goal herself before the deadline, learning more about her own life than she ever bargained for.

#### Northern Spy - Flynn Berry

#### Historical fiction, thriller, Ireland

The book is about two sisters, Tessa and Marian, and how their bond shifts as one sister becomes involved with the IRA. Tessa does not believe that Marian could have joined the IRA willingly, and is determined to uncover the truth, even though it may jeopardize her infant son.

#### Olive Kitteridge - Elizabeth Strout

#### Contemporary fiction

At times stern, at other times patient, at times perceptive, at other times in sad denial, Olive Kitteridge, a retired schoolteacher, deplores the changes in her little town of Crosby, Maine, and in the world at large, but she doesn't always recognize the changes in those around her. As the townspeople grapple with their problems, Olive is brought to a deeper understanding of herself and her life.

#### Orphan #8 - Kim van Alkemade

#### Historical fiction, Jewish fiction, transgender

In this stunning new historical novel inspired by true events, Kim van Alkemade tells the fascinating story of a woman who must choose between revenge and mercy when she encounters the doctor who subjected her to dangerous medical experiments in a New York City Jewish orphanage years before.

#### Orphan Train - Christina Baker Kline

#### Historical fiction, contemporary fiction, foster care

Penobscot Indian Molly Ayer is close to "aging out" out of the foster care system. A community service position helping an elderly woman clean out her home is the only thing keeping Molly out of juvie and worse. Molly discovers that she has the power to help Vivian find answers to mysteries that have haunted her for her entire life – answers that will ultimately free them both.

#### Orphans of War - Michael Reit

#### Historical fiction, Jewish fiction, WWII, The Holocaust

Amsterdam, 1941. German forces have invaded Amsterdam. As the tension in the city increases, the Dutch Resistance is born. Tormented by what is happening in his city, Christiaan joins the Resistance. He risks everything to shield the oppressed and fight for the freedom of his beloved nation. His brother—Floris—is ruthless and driven to succeed. Promoted to the Bureau of Jewish Affairs, he becomes instrumental in hunting Jews to transport them to the Nazi death camps. Unable to tolerate Floris' actions, his wife—Nora—defies him by secretly joining the Resistance. She bravely risks her life to save orphans from the terror of the transport train and the horrifying fate that awaits them. All while fearfully deceiving the enemy with whom she lives.

#### The Other Boleyn Girl - Philippa Gregory

#### Historical fiction, Tudor England

Mary Boleyn catches the eye of Henry VIII when she comes to court as a girl of fourteen. Dazzled by the golden prince, Mary's joy is cut short when she discovers that she is a pawn in the dynastic plots of her family. When the capricious king's interest wanes, Mary is ordered to pass on her knowledge of how to please him to her friend and rival: her sister Anne.

#### The Other Einstein - Marie Benedict

Biographical fiction, feminism, science, romance

A vivid and mesmerizing novel about the extraordinary woman who married and worked with one of the greatest scientists in history.

#### Outlander - Diana Gabaldon

Historical fiction, romance, fantasy, time travel

Claire Randall has a husband in one century, and a lover in another. In 1945, Claire, a former combat nurse, is back from the war and reunited with her husband on a second honeymoon—when she innocently touches a boulder in one of the ancient stone circles that dot the British Isles. Suddenly she is a Sassenach—an "outlander"—in a Scotland torn by war and raiding border clans in the year of our Lord...1743.

#### The Painted Girls - Cathy Marie Buchanan

Historical fiction, France, art

A heartrending, gripping novel set in belle époque Paris and inspired by the real-life model for Degas's Little Dancer Aged 14 and by the era's most famous criminal trials.

#### The Paper Palace - Miranda Cowley Heller

Contemporary fiction, romance, family life

It is a perfect July morning, and Elle, a fifty-year-old happily married mother of three, awakens at "The Paper Palace" – the family summer place which she has visited every summer of her life. But this morning is different: last night Elle and her oldest friend Jonas crept out the back door into the darkness and had sex with each other for the first time, all while their spouses chatted away inside. Now, over the next twenty-four hours, Elle will have to decide between the life she has made with her genuinely beloved husband, Peter, and the life she always imagined she would have had with her childhood love, Jonas, if a tragic event hadn't forever changed the course of their lives.

#### Peace Like a River - Leif Enger

Historical fiction, coming of age, family saga

Young Reuben Land has little doubt that miracles happen all around us, suspecting that his own father is touched by God. When his older brother flees a controversial murder charge, Reuben, along with his older sister and father, set off on a journey that will take them to the Badlands and through a landscape more extraordinary than they could have anticipated. Enger's novel is at once a heroic quest and a haunting meditation on the possibility of magic in the everyday world.

#### Plainsong - Kent Haruf

Themes: Contemporary fiction, small town, family life

In the small town of Holt, Colorado, a high school teacher is confronted with raising his two boys alone after their mother retreats first to the bedroom, then altogether. A teenage girl—her father long since disappeared, her mother unwilling to have her in the house—is pregnant, alone herself, with nowhere to go. And out in the country, two brothers, elderly bachelors, work the family homestead, the only world they've ever known.

#### The Postmistress - Sarah Blake

Historical fiction, WWII

What would happen if someone did the unthinkable-and didn't deliver a letter? Filled with stunning parallels to today, The Postmistress is a sweeping novel about the loss of innocence of two extraordinary women-and of two countries torn apart by war.

#### The Reader - Bernhard Schlink

Historical fiction, WWII, The Holocaust

Michael Berg is 15 when he begins a long, obsessive affair with Hanna, an enigmatic older woman. He

never learns very much about her, and when she disappears one day, he expects never to see her again. But, to his horror, he does. Hanna is a defendant in a trial related to Germany's Nazi past, and it soon becomes clear that she is guilty of an unspeakable crime.

#### The Reading List - Sara Nisha Adams

#### Contemporary fiction, romance, books about books

An unforgettable and heartwarming debut about how a chance encounter with a list of library books helps forge an unlikely friendship between two very different people in a London suburb.

#### The Red Tent - Anita Diamant

#### Historical fiction, feminism

The Red Tent tells the little-known Biblical story of Dinah, daughter of the patriarch Jacob and his wife, Leah. In Chapter 34 of the Book of Genesis, Dinah's tale is a short, horrific detour in the familiar narrative of Jacob and Joseph. Anita Diamant imaginatively tells the story from the fresh perspective of its women.

#### A Reliable Wife - Robert Goolrick

#### Historical fiction, romance, suspense

Rural Wisconsin, 1909. Ralph Truitt stands alone on a train platform waiting for the woman who answered his newspaper advertisement for "a reliable wife." But when Catherine Land steps off the train from Chicago, she's not the "simple, honest woman" that Ralph is expecting. She is both complex and devious, haunted by a terrible past and motivated by greed.

#### Room - Emma Donoghue

#### Contemporary fiction, thriller, crime

To 5-year-old Jack, Room is the entire world. It is where he was born and grew up; it's where he lives with his Ma as they learn and read and eat and sleep and play. But to Ma, it is the prison where Old Nick has held her captive for seven years. Through determination, ingenuity, and fierce motherly love, Ma has created a life for Jack. But she knows it's not enough...not for her or for him.

#### The Rosie Effect - Graeme Simsion

#### Contemporary fiction, romance, humor, chick lit, Autism Spectrum Disorder

In this highly anticipated sequel to the New York Times bestselling novel The Rosie Project, Don Tillman and his new wife, Rosie, find themselves with a new and unexpected "project"—a baby on the way.

#### The Rosie Project – Graeme Simsion

#### Contemporary fiction, romance, humor, chick lit, Autism Spectrum Disorder

An international sensation, this hilarious, feel-good novel is narrated by an oddly charming and socially challenged genetics professor on an unusual quest: to find out if he is capable of true love.

## The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo - Taylor Jenkins Reid

#### LGBT fiction, thriller

Aging and reclusive Hollywood movie icon Evelyn Hugo is finally ready to tell the truth about her glamorous and scandalous life. But when she chooses unknown magazine reporter Monique Grant for the job, no one is more astounded than Monique herself. Why her? Why now?

#### The Shack - William Paul Young

#### Christian fiction, mystery, inspirational

Mack's youngest daughter, has been abducted during a family vacation, and evidence that she may have been brutally murdered is found in an abandoned shack deep in the Oregon wilderness. Four years later, Mack receives a suspicious note, apparently from God, inviting him back to that shack. Against his better judgment he arrives at the shack on a wintry afternoon and walks back into his darkest nightmare.

#### A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian - Marina Lewycka

#### Ukraine, humor, family life

Sisters Vera and Nadezhda must put aside feuding to save their engineer father from gold-digger Valentina. With her proclivity for satin underwear and boil-in-the-bag cuisine, she will stop at nothing in her pursuit of wealth. But the sisters' campaign to oust Valentina unearths secrets and sends them back to roots they'd much rather forget.

#### Still Alice - Lisa Genova

#### Contemporary fiction, Alzheimer's disease

Alice Howland is a celebrated Harvard professor at the height of her career when she notices a forgetfulness creeping into her life. As confusion starts to cloud her thinking and her memory begins to fail her, she receives a devastating diagnosis: early onset Alzheimer's disease.

#### The Storyteller - Jodi Picoult

#### Historical fiction, contemporary fiction, WWII, family life

Sage Singer is a baker. She works through the night, preparing the day's breads and pastries, trying to escape a reality of loneliness, bad memories, and the shadow of her mother's death. When Josef Weber, an elderly man in Sage's grief support group, begins stopping by the bakery, they strike up an unlikely friendship. Despite their differences, they see in each other the hidden scars that others can't. Everything changes on the day that Josef confesses a long-buried and shame-ful secret and asks Sage for an extraordinary favor. If she says yes, she faces not only moral repercussions, but potentially legal ones as well. With the integrity of the closest friend she's ever had clouded, Sage begins to question the assumptions and expectations she's made about her life and her family.

#### The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie - Alan Bradley (Canadian Author)

#### Historical fiction, mystery, crime

Set in the English countryside in 1950, it features Flavia de Luce, an 11-year-old amateur sleuth who pulls herself away from her beloved chemistry lab in order to clear her father in a murder investigation.

#### **Three Day Road** - Joseph Boyden (Canadian Author)

#### Historical fiction, mystery, crime

Three Day Road refers to a trip taken by an old Cree medicine woman and her nephew, wounded in World War I, as she takes him back home to the bush in a canoe; it also refers to the journey taken after death. Xavier and his friend Elijah were expert sharpshooters in the trenches of France, and both coped with this in very different ways.

#### Three Souls - Janie Chang

#### Historical fiction, Indigenous, Canadian, WWI

Set in 1935 China, this is the story of the ghost of a young woman named Leiyin, who watches her own funeral from above and wonders why she is being denied entry to the afterlife. Beside her are three souls—stern and scholarly yang; impulsive, romantic yin; and wise, shining hun—who will guide her toward understanding. She must, they tell her, make amends.

#### The Truth According to Us - Annie Barrows

#### Historical fiction, family saga, coming of age

Macedonia is the kind of town where everyone knows everyone else's business. Into this environment comes a Layla, commissioned to write a history of the town upon its sesquicentennial. She boards with the Romeyn family whose fortunes have fallen after a series of scandals, befriending reluctant spinster Jottie Romeyn, but Jottie's 12-year-old niece, Willa, deeply distrusts Layla's intentions toward Willa's divorced father, Felix.

#### The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry - Rachel Joyce

#### Contemporary fiction, travel, grief, hope

Harold Fry embarks on a journey after receiving a letter from a woman he hasn't heard from in twenty years. The woman is in a hospice and is writing to say goodbye, so Harold writes a response. But on his way to the mailbox he just keeps going.

#### Water for Elephants: A Novel - Sara Gruen

#### Historical fiction romance, circus work

When Jankowski learns that his parents have been killed in a car crash, he drops out of veterinary school and parlays his expertise with animals into a job with the circus, where he cares for a menagerie of exotic creatures. He falls in love with Marlena, one of the show's star performers—a romance complicated by Marlena's husband, the sadistic circus boss who beats both his wife and the animals Jankowski cares for.

#### When Crickets Cry - Charles Martin

#### Contemporary fiction, Christian

In a small town square of a sleepy Georgia town, a spirited 7-year-old sits at her lemonade stand, raising money for her own heart transplant. As a beat-up bread truck careens around the corner, a strong wind blows Annie's money into the road. A bearded stranger looks up in time to see Annie's yellow dress fluttering in the wind as she runs into the road. What happens next will change both of their lives forever.

#### Where the Crawdads Sing - Delia Owens

#### Historical fiction, romance, mystery, coming of age

In late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. But Kya is not what they say. Sensitive and intelligent, she has survived for years alone in the marsh that she calls home, finding friends in the gulls and lessons in the sand.

#### Wicked - Gregory Maguire

#### Fantasy, world of Oz

Following the traditions of Gabriel García Marquez, John Gardner and J.R.R. Tolkien, Wicked is a richly woven tale that takes us to the other, darker side of the rainbow as novelist Gregory Maguire chronicles the Wicked Witch of the West's odyssey through the complex world of Oz—where people call you wicked if you tell the truth.

### **Zara's Dead – Sharon Butala** (Canadian author)

#### Canadian, murder mystery, female sleuths

Inspired by the unsolved murder of a young girl in 1962 in Saskatoon, Zara's Dead is the fictional retelling of a very real story, one that has captivated the public and eluded answers for decades.

#### **NON-FICTION**

#### Before and After - Judy Christie and Lisa Wingate

#### Adoption, social services, true crime, memoir

The compelling, poignant true stories of victims of a notorious adoption scandal—some of whom learned the truth from Lisa Wingate's bestselling novel Before We Were Yours and were reunited with birth family members as a result of its wide reach.

#### The Boy Who Followed His Father Into Auschwitz - Jeremy Dronfield

#### WWII, The Holocaust, biography

In 1939, Gustav Kleinmann, a Jewish upholster from Vienna, and his sixteen-year-old son Fritz are arrested by the Gestapo and sent to Germany. Imprisoned in the Buchenwald concentration camp, they miraculously

survive the Nazis' murderous brutality. Then Gustav learns he is being sent to Auschwitz—and certain death. For Fritz, letting his father go is unthinkable. Desperate to remain together, Fritz makes an incredible choice: he insists he must go too. To the Nazis, one death camp is the same as another, and so the boy is allowed to follow.

#### ■ The Education of Augie Merasty – Joseph Auguste Merasty (Canadian Author)

Indigenous, Canadian, residential schools, memoir

This is the memoir of Augie Merasty, the chronicle of life in a residential school from one of its survivors. Despite the pain of these childhood memories, Merasty's sense of humour and warm voice shine through in a tale that highlights the importance of reconciliation.

#### The End of Your Life Book Club - Will Schwalbe

Grief & bereavement, books about books, memoir

This is the inspiring true story of a son and his mother, who start a "book club" that brings them together as her life comes to a close.

#### Expecting Adam - Martha Beck

Parenting, Down Syndrome, memoir

This is a wickedly funny, yet wrenchingly sad memoir of a young mother awaiting the birth of a Down syndrome baby, while she pursues a doctorate at Harvard. A former Mormon turned atheist, Beck has several experiences during her pregnancy that challenge her long-held beliefs about religion, education, and what is really important in life.

#### Forgiveness - Mark Sakamoto (Canadian author)

Canadian, WWII, biography

The heart-rending true story of two families on either side of the Second World War-and a moving tribute to the nature of forgiveness.

#### From the Ashes - Jesse Thistle (Canadian author)

Indigenous, Canadian, mental health, addiction recovery, memoir

In this extraordinary and inspiring debut memoir, Jesse Thistle, once a high school dropout and now a rising Indigenous scholar, chronicles his life on the streets and how he overcame trauma and addiction to discover the truth about who he is.

#### The Glass Castle - Jeanette Walls

Child neglect, memoir

Jeannette Walls' parents were far from ideal – in fact, their irresponsibility was often criminal, resulting in their children suffering from constant disruption, neglect, delusions of grandeur, and betrayal. However, Walls does not turn this memoir into a diatribe against them; instead, she shows us how she and her siblings survived by feeling their turbulent life was a glorious adventure.

#### The Happiness Project - Gretchen Rubin

Self-help, inspirational, memoir

In this lively and compelling account, Rubin chronicles her adventures during the twelve months she spent test-driving the wisdom of the ages, current scientific research, and lessons from popular culture about how to be happier. Written with a wicked sense of humour and sharp insight, Gretchen Rubin's story will inspire readers to embrace the pleasure in their lives and remind them how to have fun.

#### I am Hutterite – Mary Ann Kirkby (Canadian Author)

Hutterite colonies, religion, Canadian, memoir

When she was ten years old her parents packed up their seven children and a handful of possessions and left the security of the colony to start a new life. Overnight they were thrust into a world they didn't

understand, a world that did not understand them. More than a history lesson, I Am Hutterite is a powerful tale of retracing steps and understanding how our beginnings often define us.

# If You Tell – Gregg Olsen

True crime, serial killers

For years, behind the closed doors of their farmhouse in Raymond, Washington, their sadistic mother, Shelly, subjected her girls to unimaginable abuse, degradation, torture, and psychic terrors. Through it all, Nikki, Sami, and Tori developed a defiant bond that made them far less vulnerable than Shelly imagined. Even as others were drawn into their mother's dark and perverse web, the sisters found the strength and courage to escape an escalating nightmare that culminated in multiple murders.

#### Kabul Beauty School - Deborah Rodriguez

Afghanistan, cosmetology, women, memoir

Deborah Rodriguez became the Clara Barton of personal style in Afghanistan, shortly after 9/11. Armed with shipping crates filled with donated high-end styling aids, Rodriguez opened a beauty school for burgacovered women and rebel men who found great comfort and control in the lessons she taught and the styles she helped them achieve while their homeland was being systematically destroyed and the very earth under their feet shook with the fervor of life during wartime.

# Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI – David Grann

Native American, true crime, murder, FBI

In Killers of the Flower Moon, David Grann revisits a shocking series of crimes in which dozens of people were murdered in cold blood. It is a searing indictment of the callousness and prejudice toward American Indians that allowed the murderers to operate with impunity for so long.

#### Lake of the Prairies – Warren Cariou (Canadian Author)

Indigenous, Metis, Saskatchewan, racism

Warren Cariou's maternal grandparents were immigrants who came to the harsh country near Meadow Lake and carved out pasture from the raw treed land. His family sank their roots into the place and Cariou grew up with his family legacy, particularly as remembered and influenced by his father, still relatively intact.

#### Lion - Saroo Brierley

India, adoption, memoir

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.

#### A Long Way Gone - Ishmael Beah

Sierra Leone, war, child soldiers, memoir

At the age of twelve, Ishmael Beah fled attacking rebels in Sierra Leone and wandered a land rendered unrecognizable by violence. By thirteen, he'd been picked up by the government army, and Beah, at heart a gentle boy, found that he was capable of truly terrible acts. At sixteen, he was removed from fighting by UNICEF, and through the help of the staff at his rehabilitation center, he learned how to forgive himself, to regain his humanity, and, finally, to heal.

#### Making Toast - Roger Rosenblatt

Family death, grief, parenting, memoir

A revered, many times honored (George Polk, Peabody, and Emmy Award winner, to name but a few) journalist, novelist, and playwright, Roger Rosenblatt shares the unforgettable story of the tragedy that changed his life and his family.

#### Mao's Last Dancer - Li Cunxin

China, ballet, defection

From a desperately poor village in northeast China, to a career that took him across the world, this is the incredible story of Li Cunxin - a story that almost vanished, like so many other peasants' lives, amid revolution and chaos.

#### My Maasai Life - Robin Wiszowaty

Kenya, travel, memoir

Growing up in suburban Illinois, Robin Wiszowaty never pictured herself living with an impoverished Maasai family in rural Kenya. Yet in her early twenties Wiszowaty embarked on an incredible journey that would shake her from complacency, take her to unimaginable locales, and change her life forever. My Maasai Life follows Wiszowaty's remarkable voyage as she explores some of the most remote areas of East Africa and has her eyes opened to the diverse issues facing the fascinating Maasai people.

Peace by Chocolate: The Hadhad Family's Remarkable Journey from Syria to Canada – Jon Tattrie Syria, Canadian, war, food, memoir

This remarkable book tells the extraordinary story of the Hadhad family — Isam, his wife Shahnaz, and their sons and daughters — and the founding of the chocolatier, Peace by Chocolate. From the devastation of the Syrian civil war, through their life as refugees in Lebanon, to their arrival in a small town in Atlantic Canada, Peace by Chocolate is the story of one family. It is also the story of the people of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, and so many towns across Canada, who welcomed strangers and helped them face the challenges of settling in an unfamiliar land.

## Precious Cargo: My Year Driving the Kids on School Bus 3077 - Craig Davidson

Canadian, school buses, disability, memoir

A moving, heartfelt, funny and surprising memoir about one year spent driving a bus for children with special needs.

# Quiet: The Power of Introverts in A World That Won't Stop Talking – Susan Cain Self-help, mental health, psychology

At least one-third of the people we know are introverts. Although they are often labeled "quiet," it it to introverts we owe many of the great contributions to society – from Van Gogh's sunflowers to the invention of the personal computer. Passionately argued, impressively researched, and filled with indelible stories, *Quiet* shows how dramatically we undervalue introverts and how much we lose in doing so.

# Strangers in the House: a Prairie Story of Bigotry and Belonging – Candace Savage Saskatchewan, racism, memoir

Napoléon Sureau dit Blondin built the house in the 1920s, an era when French-speakers like him were deemed "undesirable" by the political and social elite, who sought to populate the Canadian prairies with WASPs only. In an atmosphere poisoned first by the Orange Order and then by the Ku Klux Klan, Napoléon and his young family adopted anglicized names and did their best to disguise their "foreignness."

## They Left Us Everything – Plum Johnson

Canadian, grief, family history, memoir

They Left Us Everything is a funny, touching memoir about the importance of preserving family history to make sense of the past and nurturing family bonds to safeguard the future.

#### Three Cups of Tea - Greg Mortenson

Pakistan, philanthropy, education, memoir

Greg Mortenson recounts the journey that led him from a failed attempt to climb Pakistan's K2, the world's second highest mountain, to successfully establishing schools in remote regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Mortenson combines his unique background with an intimate knowledge of the third world to promote peace with books, not bombs, and to successfully bring education and hope to remote communities in central Asia.



# The Zookeeper's Wife – Diane Ackerman

Poland, WWII, The Holocaust, animals

The Zookeeper's Wife: A War Story by Diane Ackerman is the strange but true tale of a couple who took advantage of their unique situation living in a bombed-out zoo to hide some 300 Jews from the Nazis who terrorized Warsaw during World War II.