



Great Reads

For you & your book club



NOVELS • MYSTERIES • HISTORICAL FICTION • NARRATIVE NONFICTION
PERENNIAL CLASSICS • BELOVED AUTHORS • AWARD WINNERS AND MORE



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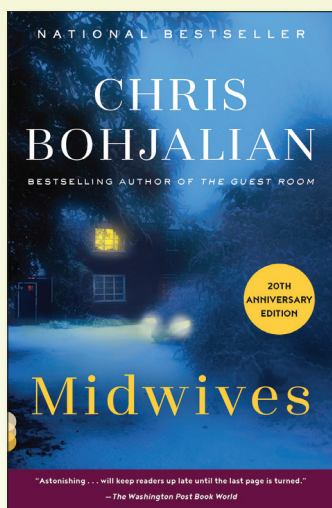
CHRIS BOHJALIAN



© Victoria Blewer

CELEBRATE THE
20TH ANNIVERSARY OF *MIDWIVES*!

A contemporary classic that has sold more than two million copies and was a selection of Oprah's original Book Club, *Midwives* is a compulsively readable novel that explores questions of human responsibility that are as fundamental to our society now as they were when the book was first published twenty years ago.



Midwives

"A treasure.... It is a rare pleasure when a finely written novel also grips us with sheer storytelling power."

—*The Oregonian*

On an icy winter night in an isolated house in rural Vermont, a seasoned midwife named Sibyl Danforth takes desperate measures to save a baby's life. She performs an emergency cesarean section on a mother she believes has died of stroke. But what if—as Sibyl's assistant later charges—the patient wasn't already dead? The ensuing trial bears the earmarks of a witch hunt, forcing Sibyl to face the antagonism of the law, the hostility of traditional doctors, and the accusations of her own conscience. Exploring the complex and emotional decisions surrounding childbirth, *Midwives* engages, moves, and transfixes us as only the very best novels ever do.

Chris Bohjalian talks about the origin of *Midwives*:

Q: Twenty years have passed since *Midwives* was first published, but it still feels relevant. Is there anything you would want to update or change if you were writing it today?

A: The midwife who set me on the path to write the book—telling me about her work at a dinner party one summer night and then allowing me to interview her for hours on end—is a lovely, brilliant, kind woman named Carol Gibson Warnock. She's also very funny. When I began writing the novel, I never thought it would be a courtroom drama; I thought it would be a gently comic, coming-of-age novel narrated by a young woman raised by a hippie midwife in rural Vermont.

But then my mother was diagnosed with cancer and it was clear she was going to die, and the novel changed. It morphed into a far more complex and morally ambiguous story.

I would end up deleting many of those early, lighthearted scenes

about the "peace, love, and tie-dye" culture of Vermont in the late 1960s and 1970s, but a few still remain.

The reality is that the book is set two generations ago now. It's set in a particular moment in time, that era when Carol Gibson Warnock and her peers were part of a movement that had its roots in the counterculture and back-to-the-land movements in Vermont.

But its themes are pretty universal and obviously relevant today. We were all born and we all will die. In between, we all aspire to do what we love in this world and—most of us, anyway—to minimize the pain we cause others. Think of the novel's epigraph: "We are each of us responsible for the evil we may have prevented" (James Martineau). And so while there may be scenes that I would approach differently now, I really wouldn't update or change anything of consequence. I love the way it brings to life that era: it was at once so hopeful and so innocent. And I think that's why Sibyl's betrayal by the medical and legal professions in the novel is so devastating.

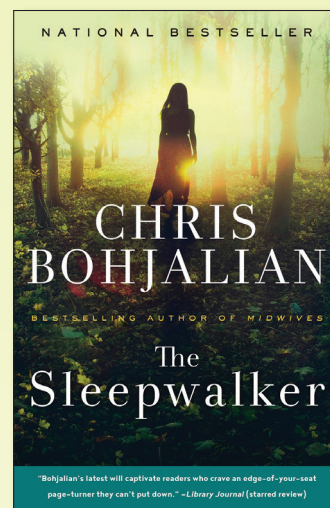
The Sleepwalker

“Masterful.... The kind of mystery that builds to a startling climax.” —*The Boston Globe*

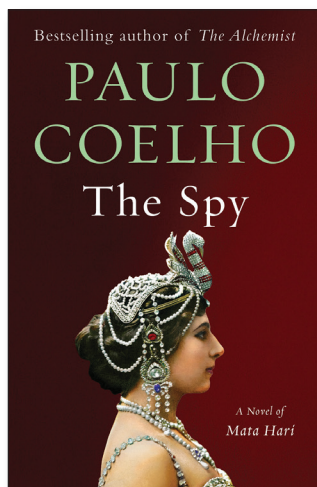
When Annalee Ahlberg goes missing, her children fear the worst. Annalee is a sleepwalker whose affliction manifests in ways both bizarre and devastating.

The morning of Annalee’s disappearance, a search party combs the nearby woods. Annalee’s husband flies home from a business trip. Her eldest daughter, Lianna, is questioned by a young, hazel-eyed detective. And her little sister, Paige, takes to swimming the Gale to look for clues. When the police discover a small swatch of fabric from a nightshirt, hanging from a tree branch, it seems certain Annalee is dead, but Gavin Rikert, the hazel-eyed detective, continues to call, continues to stop by the Ahlbergs’ Victorian home. As Lianna peels back the layers of mystery surrounding Annalee’s disappearance, she finds herself drawn to Gavin, but she must ask herself: Why does the detective know so much about her mother? Why did Annalee leave her bed only when her father was away? And if she really died while sleepwalking, where is the body?

Conjuring the strange and mysterious world of parasomnia, a place somewhere between dreaming and wakefulness, *The Sleepwalker* is a masterful novel from one of our most treasured storytellers.



THE NEW NOVEL FROM THE BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *THE ALCHEMIST*



The Spy Paulo Coelho

“Coelho has taken the Mata Hari story and fashioned it into a short dynamo of a novel.”

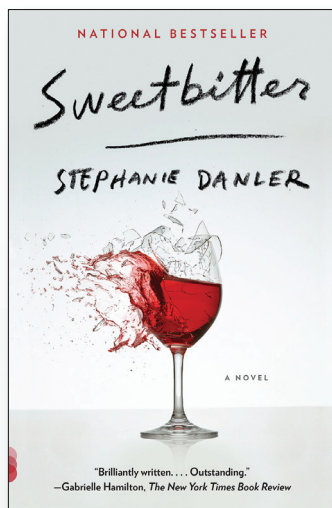
—*Los Angeles Times*

When Mata Hari arrived in Paris she was penniless. Within months she was the most celebrated woman in the city. As a dancer, she shocked and delighted audiences; as a courtesan, she bewitched the era’s richest and most powerful men. But as paranoia consumed a country at war, Mata Hari’s lifestyle brought her under suspicion. In 1917, she was arrested in her hotel room on the Champs Elysees, and accused of espionage.

Told in Mata Hari’s voice through her final letter, *The Spy* is the unforgettable story of a woman who dared to defy convention and who paid the ultimate price.

Her only crime was to be an independent woman.





Sweetbitter

Stephanie Danler

“Brilliantly written.... Outstanding.... Stephanie Danler’s first novel, *Sweetbitter*, is the *Kitchen Confidential* of our time.”

—Gabrielle Hamilton, *The New York Times Book Review*

Newly arrived in New York City, twenty-two-year-old Tess lands a job working front of house at a celebrated downtown restaurant. What follows is her education: in champagne and cocaine, love and lust, dive bars and fine dining rooms, as she learns to navigate the chaotic, enchanting, punishing life she has chosen. The story of a young woman’s coming-of-age, set against the glitzy, grimy backdrop of New York’s most elite restaurants, *Sweetbitter* deftly conjures the nonstop and high-adrenaline world of the food industry and evokes the infinite possibilities, the unbearable beauty, and the fragility and brutality of being young and adrift.

Tess’s Birthday Cake and Wine Pairing:

“Taste,” Chef said, “is all about balance. The sour, the salty, the sweet, the bitter. Now your tongue is coded. A certain connoisseurship of taste, a mark of how you deal with the world, is the ability to relish the bitter; to crave it even, the way you do the sweet.” (p. 17)

This is one of twenty-two-year-old Tess’s first lessons in taste after she secures a coveted waitressing position at a celebrated downtown Manhattan restaurant. Her culinary education will serve her well not only in her new



© Nick Vonderman

role, but in every aspect of her life, from her budding romance to the friendships she forms along the way.

To immerse yourself more deeply in the *Sweetbitter* world, Stephanie Danler recommends you and your book club try out this recipe for bittersweet chocolate cake, along with a Poulsard wine, a pairing which you can find on page 269 of the novel. Let the richness of the cake, combined with the bitterness of the wine, remind you and your reading group to relish all the flavors of life.

Bittersweet Chocolate Cake

Serves: 8

Ingredients

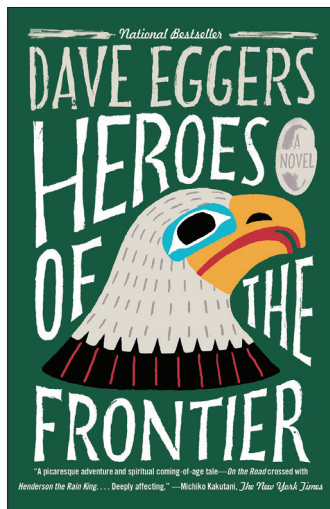
8 ounces bittersweet (not unsweetened) or semisweet chocolate, chopped
4 tablespoons (1 ¼ sticks) unsalted butter, cut into pieces
4 large eggs, separated
2/3 cup sugar
3 ½ tablespoons all-purpose flour
Powdered sugar

Preparation

Preheat oven to 325°F. Line bottom of 9-inch-diameter cake pan with 2-inch-high sides with waxed paper. Butter sides of pan and paper. Dust paper with flour. Melt chocolate and butter in top of double boiler over simmering water, stirring until smooth. Cool slightly. Whisk yolks and sugar in large bowl until pale yellow. Mix in flour, then chocolate mixture. Using electric mixer, beat whites in another bowl until stiff but not dry. Fold into chocolate mixture. Pour batter into prepared pan. Bake until toothpick inserted into center comes out with only a few moist crumbs attached, about 25 minutes. Cool completely in pan on rack. Run small sharp knife around sides of pan to loosen cake. Turn cake out onto platter and cool. (Can be prepared 8 hours ahead. Cover with cake dome and let stand at room temperature.) Sift powdered sugar over cake and serve.



Recipe Source: <http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/bittersweet-chocolate-cake-1863>



Heroes of the Frontier

Dave Eggers

“A picaresque adventure and spiritual coming-of-age tale—*On the Road* crossed with *Henderson the Rain King*.... Deeply affecting.”

—Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times*

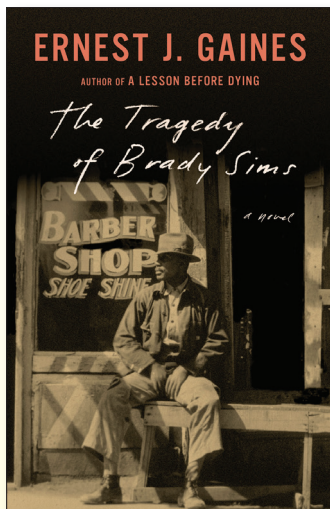
Longlisted for an Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Fiction

A captivating, often hilarious novel of family and wilderness from the bestselling author of *The Circle*, this is a powerful examination of our contemporary life and a rousing story of adventure.

Josie and her children’s father have split up, she’s been sued by a former patient and lost her dental practice, and she’s grieving the death of a young man senselessly killed. When her ex asks to take the children to meet his new fiancée’s family, Josie makes a run for it, figuring Alaska is about as far as she can get without a passport. Josie and her kids, Paul and Ana, rent a rattling old RV named the Chateau, and at first their trip feels like a vacation: They see bears and bison, they eat hot dogs cooked on a bonfire, and they spend nights parked along icy cold rivers in dark forests.

But as they drive, pushed north by the ubiquitous wildfires, Josie is chased by enemies both real and imagined, past mistakes pursuing her tiny family, even to the very edge of civilization.

A tremendous new novel from the bestselling author of *The Circle*, *Heroes of the Frontier* is the darkly comic story of a mother and her two young children on a journey through an Alaskan wilderness plagued by wildfires and a uniquely American madness.



The Tragedy of Brady Sims

Ernest J. Gaines

From the award-winning author of *A Lesson Before Dying*—Ernest J. Gaines’s new novella revolves around a courthouse shooting that leads a young reporter to uncover the long story of race and power in his small town and the relationship between the white sheriff and the black man who “whipped children” to keep order.

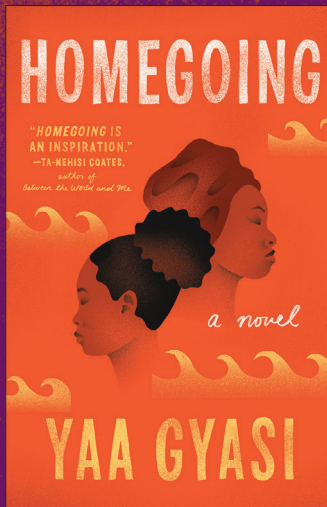
After Brady Sims pulls out a gun in a courtroom and shoots his own son, who has just been convicted of robbery and murder, he asks only to be allowed two hours before he’ll give himself up to the sheriff. When the editor of the local newspaper asks his cub reporter to dig up a “human interest” story about Brady, he heads for the town’s barbershop. It is the barbers and the regulars who hang out there who narrate with empathy, sadness, humor, and a profound understanding the life story of Brady Sims—an honorable, just, and unsparing man who with his tough love had been handed the task of keeping the black children of Bayonne, Louisiana, in line to protect them from the unjust world in which they lived. And when his own son

makes a fateful mistake, it is up to Brady to carry out the necessary reckoning. In the telling, we learn the story of a small southern town, divided by race, and the black community struggling to survive even as many of its inhabitants head off northwards during the Great Migration.

Three things to ask yourself while reading *The Tragedy of Brady Sims*:

1. What constitutes justice and who gets to choose how it is doled out?
2. Why do we tell stories? What can a long, meandering tale (like one told in a barbershop) reveal that facts alone can’t?
3. Brady Sims makes some morally ambiguous choices throughout the novel. Do you think he’s honorable? Check your thoughts and opinion on this question at various points in the story.





Homegoing Yaa Gyasi

PEN / Hemingway Award Winner, NBCC's John Leonard First Book Prize Winner

One of the Best Books of the Year: *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, NPR, Time, Oprah.com, *Harper's Bazaar*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Mother Jones*, *Esquire*, *Elle*, *Paste*, *Entertainment Weekly*, the Skimm, and more!

“Brims with compassion.... Yaa Gyasi has given rare and heroic voice to the missing and suppressed.” —NPR

Ghana, eighteenth century: two half-sisters are born into different villages, each unaware of the other. One will marry an Englishman and lead a life of comfort in the palatial rooms of the Cape Coast Castle. The other will be captured in a raid on her village, imprisoned in the very same castle, and sold into slavery.

Homegoing follows the parallel paths of these sisters and their descendants through eight generations: from the Gold Coast to the plantations of Mississippi, from the American Civil War to Jazz Age Harlem. Yaa Gyasi's extraordinary novel illuminates slavery's troubled legacy both for those who were taken and those who stayed—and shows how the memory of captivity has been inscribed on the soul of our nation.

The Sisters:

Effia

A beautiful young woman, Effia is born to an Asante woman enslaved by the Fante people. Abandoned in her mother's haste to escape, Effia is left with her father and his first wife, Baaba, a woman who cannot love her and who resents her very existence. Baaba beats her unwanted stepchild and marries her off to the white governor of Cape Coast Castle as soon as she reaches

womanhood. Bound to a man tasked with running the slave trade on the Gold Coast, Effia focuses her attention on having a child, all the while trying not to see or hear the suffering of those who are enslaved beneath her husband's castle.

Esi

Unbeknownst to Effia, her half sister, Esi, is one who passes through the forsaken dungeons beneath the castle. Born to Effia's mother and her Asante husband, Esi is taken captive as a teenager during a Fante raid. She suffers in the dungeon for days on end, haunted by happy memories of her childhood in Asanteland.

Esi is eventually taken to America to be yet another mistreated slave on a plantation in the South. Her descendants in America will face generation after generation of racial tension and pain, illustrating just how much this nation has been shaped by the sins of its past.

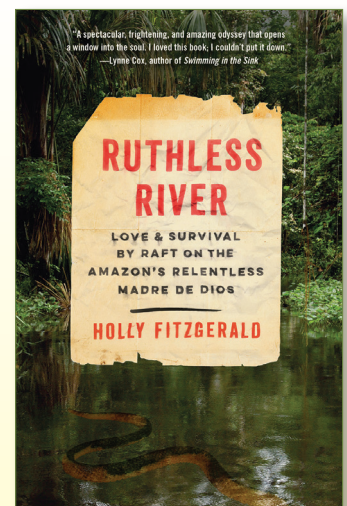
Ruthless River Holly FitzGerald

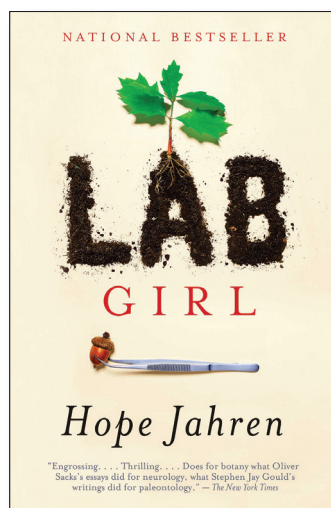
“A spectacular, frightening, and amazing odyssey that opens a window into the soul. I loved this book; I couldn't put it down.”

—Lynne Cox, author of *Swimming in the Sink*

Holly FitzGerald and her husband, Fitz—married less than two years—set out on a yearlong honeymoon adventure of a lifetime, backpacking around the world. Five months into the trip their plane crash lands in Peru at a penal colony walled in by jungle, and their blissfully romantic journey turns into a terrifying nonstop labyrinth of escape and survival.

On a small, soon-ravaged raft that quickly becomes their entire universe through dangerous waters alive with deadly animals and fish, their only choice: to continue on, despite the rush of insects swarming them by day, the sounds of encroaching predators at night. Without food or means of communication, with no one to hear their cries for help or on a search-





Lab Girl Hope Jahren

“Engrossing. . . . Thrilling. . . . Does for botany what Oliver Sacks’s essays did for neurology, what Stephen Jay Gould’s writings did for paleontology.”

—*The New York Times*

Winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award, the American Association for the Advancement of Science/Subaru Science Books & Film Prize for Excellence in Science Books

Finalist for the PEN/E.O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award

One of the Best Books of the Year: *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, TIME.com, NPR, *Slate*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *Newsday*, *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, *Kirkus Reviews*

Geobiologist Hope Jahren has spent her life studying trees, flowers, seeds, and soil. *Lab Girl* is her revelatory treatise on plant life—but it is also a celebration of the lifelong curiosity, humility, and passion that drive every scientist. In these pages, Hope takes us back to her Minnesota childhood, where she spent hours in unfettered play in her father’s college laboratory. She tells us how she found a sanctuary in science, learning to perform lab work “with both the heart and the hands.” She introduces us to Bill, her brilliant, eccentric lab manager. And she extends the mantle of *scientist* to each one of her readers, inviting us to join her in observing and protecting our environment. Warm, luminous, compulsively readable, *Lab Girl* vividly demonstrates the mountains that we can move when love and work come together.



© Erica Morrow

A day in the garden with Hope Jahren

At dinner parties, when people ask me what I do for a living, I tell them, “I am a scientist. I study how plants work.” I should give them the better answer, which is this: “I am the most overeducated gardener that you will ever meet.”

I get the opportunity to talk about gardening pretty often. I used to attend big professional meetings and say things like “the glucose moieties within phenylglucazone from *Triticum aestivum* differ from that attached to carbons-3 through -6 by at least nine percent” to the other sixty or so people in the world who

care, about eight of whom were probably listening. But my life has changed thanks to *Lab Girl*, when I discovered that only by writing down the untold story of how we do science, can I finally understand *why* we did it in the first place.



Holly FitzGerald on *Love and Survival*:

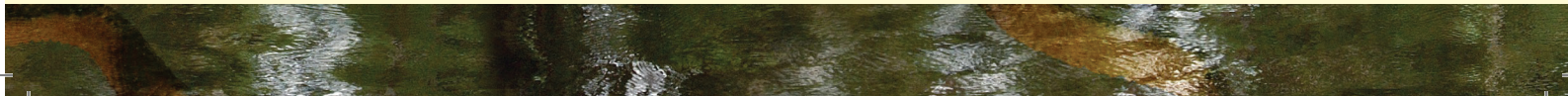
Q: Was writing this book a healing exercise for you?

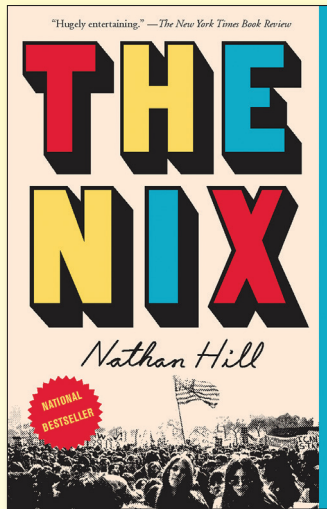
A: I didn’t begin writing *Ruthless River* to heal. If I had, I probably should have written the book far earlier. But, yes, in the long run, as I got deeper into it and searched for meaning, I believe the writing process was healing.

Q: You describe your experiences so vividly in the book. How did you capture it so clearly after so many years? Is there one particular memory that stands out from all the rest?

A: As you may imagine, those kind of experiences never really go away.... The times when I thought I was losing my husband stand out first in my mind, but all the memories are intense: swimming, being caught in quickmud, the bees...

and-rescue expedition to find them, the author and her husband make their way, fighting to conquer starvation and navigate the brute force of the river, their only hope for survival, in spite of hunger and weakening resolve, to somehow, miraculously hang on and find their way east to a large riverside town, before it is too late.





The Nix

Nathan Hill

A New York Times and Washington Post Notable Book
Entertainment Weekly's #1 Book of the Year

"The best new writer of fiction in America." —John Irving

committed an absurd crime that electrifies the nightly news and inflames a politically divided country. The media paints Faye as a radical hippie with a sordid past, but as far as Samuel knows, his mother was an ordinary girl who married

her high-school sweetheart. Which version of his mother is true? Two facts are certain: she's facing some serious charges, and she needs Samuel's help.

To save her, Samuel will have to embark on his own journey, uncovering long-buried secrets about the woman he thought he knew, secrets that stretch across generations and have their origin all the way back in Norway, home of the mysterious Nix. As he does so, Samuel will confront not only Faye's losses but also his own lost love, and will relearn everything he thought he knew about his mother, and himself.

Nathan Hill on writing

Q: It took you ten years to complete *The Nix*. Can you tell us a little about your research and writing process?

A: I began writing the book in 2004 and I didn't make an outline until like 2011. I had no idea where the story was going. I didn't know what I was doing. I didn't have a plot. I had a basic situation and two characters (Samuel and Faye, who for years were named "the boy" and "the mother"), and so the writing I was doing was more like exploration. I wasn't writing to describe things that happened. I was writing to discover them. Which is much slower. ... I remember noting in my journal: "This will be very hard." Then when I came back to those sections a year or so later, I realized

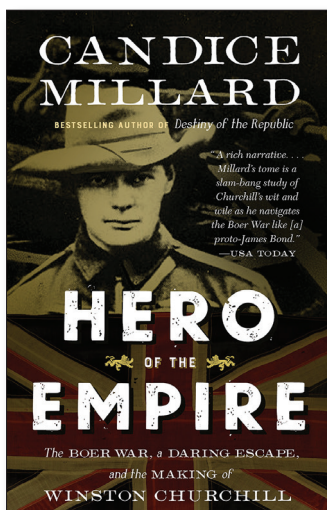
that I'd learned how to write them. Writing the novel taught me how to write the novel, if that makes sense.

Q: As a debut novelist whose first full-length book met such wide acclaim, do you have any tips for other aspiring writers?

A: I'd say that aspiring writers should think much more about *writing* than about publishing. That was certainly my mistake when I was younger—I came out of my MFA program thinking: *How do I get published?* I moved to New York City with a bunch of other aspiring writers, and we were just so very careerist and ravenous, keeping track of who was publishing in what journal and who was getting lunches with editors and so on. The pressure we felt to do well was crippling.



© Michael Lionstar



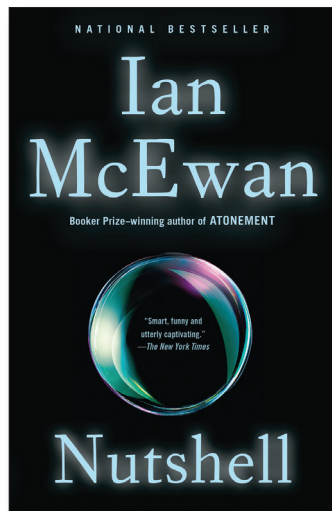
Hero of the Empire

Candice Millard

"A thrilling account.... This book is an awesome nail-biter and top-notch character study rolled into one."

—New York Times Critic Jennifer Senior's Top Ten Books of 2016

At the age of twenty-four, Winston Churchill was utterly convinced it was his destiny to become prime minister of England. He arrived in South Africa in 1899, valet and crates of vintage wine in tow, to cover the brutal colonial war the British were fighting with Boer rebels and jump-start his political career. But just two weeks later, Churchill was taken prisoner. Remarkably, he pulled off a daring escape—traversing hundreds of miles of enemy territory, alone, with nothing but a crumpled wad of cash, four slabs of chocolate, and his wits to guide him.



Nutshell

Ian McEwan

“Smart, funny and utterly captivating.” —*The New York Times*

Trudy has been unfaithful to her husband, John. What’s more, she has kicked him out of their marital home, a valuable old London town house, and in his place is his own brother, the profoundly banal Claude. The illicit couple have hatched a scheme to rid themselves of her inconvenient husband forever. But there is a witness to their plot: the inquisitive, nine-month-old resident of Trudy’s womb.

As Trudy’s unborn son listens, bound within her body, to his mother and his uncle’s murderous plans, he gives us a truly new perspective on our world, seen from the confines of his. McEwan’s brilliant recasting of Shakespeare lends new weight to the age-old question of Hamlet’s hesitation, and is a tour de force of storytelling.

A refresher on the main characters in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*

- **Hamlet:**
Our protagonist, the young prince of Denmark who is mourning his recently deceased father. Hamlet suspects foul play.
- **Gertrude:**
Hamlet’s mother who married her late husband’s brother just a month after he passed.
- **Claudius:**
Hamlet’s uncle and Gertrude’s new husband, also the man Hamlet suspects of poisoning his father.
- **The Ghost:**
Hamlet’s father’s spirit, who appears to his son seeking justice.
- **Polonius:**
A counselor to King Claudius.
- **Ophelia:**
Polonius’s daughter, and Hamlet’s rejected lover.
- **Horatio:**
Hamlet’s closest friend.
- **Rosencrantz and Guildenstern:**
Former friends of Hamlet’s who are hired by Claudius and Gertrude to spy on the prince.

History buff? Check out these real-life adventure tales similar to *Hero of the Empire*:

- *Desert Queen* by Janet Wallach
- *Founding Brothers* by Joseph J. Ellis
- *Bold Spirit* by Linda Lawrence Hunt

Bestselling author Candice Millard spins an epic story of bravery, savagery, and chance encounters with a cast of historical characters—including Rudyard Kipling, Lord Kitchener, and Mohandas Gandhi—with whom Churchill would later share the world stage. But *Hero of the Empire* is more than an extraordinary adventure story, for the lessons Churchill took from the Boer War would profoundly affect twentieth-century history.



ALEXANDER

© Michael Lionstar



Chance Developments

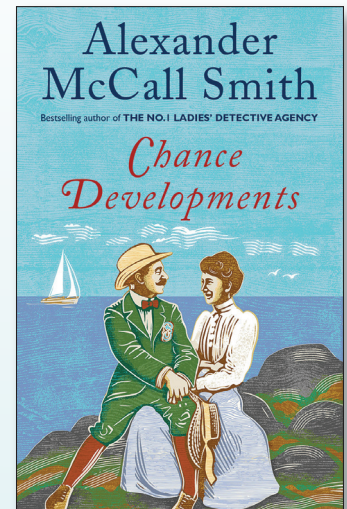
“A profoundly moving exploration of the idea that, sometimes, love really can conquer all.”

—*The Scotsman*

From the bestselling author of the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series comes this splendid collection. Inspired by

vintage photographs, these five lyrical stories capture the surprising intersections of love and friendship that alter life's journeys.

A smiling girl leading a younger girl astride a pony, and a boy in a kilt on a tricycle beside them, gives rise to a story of a lifelong romance between the two riders. A dapper, roguish-looking man perching on a lady's knee sparks the story of a ventriloquist and an animal handler who work in a circus, and who, under the most delightfully unexpected circumstances, fall in love. The image of a woman haloed by light in a train station becomes the lighthearted tale of a nun's decision to leave the sisterhood and discover what the big city has to offer. Charming and poignant, this collection brims with the flourishes of grace and humor that could only come from the pen of Alexander McCall Smith.



Behind the Book: The Photos that Inspired *Chance Developments*



© Historic Environment Scotland

From “The Woman with the Beautiful Car”

The man who waits for the right girl may find that the right girl has herself not been waiting. That's a thought—just a thought, but, like at least some thoughts, it happens to be true (pp. 175–176).



© Historic Environment Scotland

From “Angels in Italy”

We carry with us the clothes of childhood, don't we? We keep them on long after they have ceased to fit (p. 59).

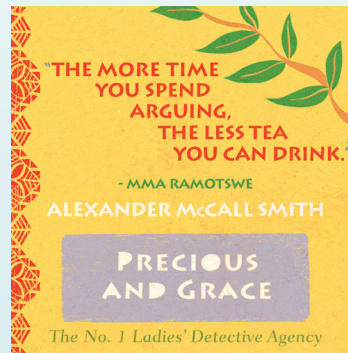
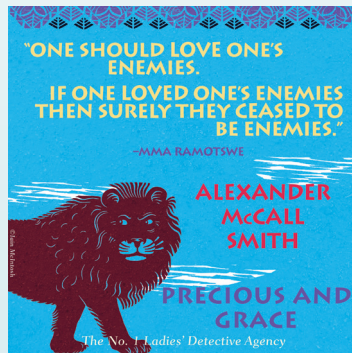
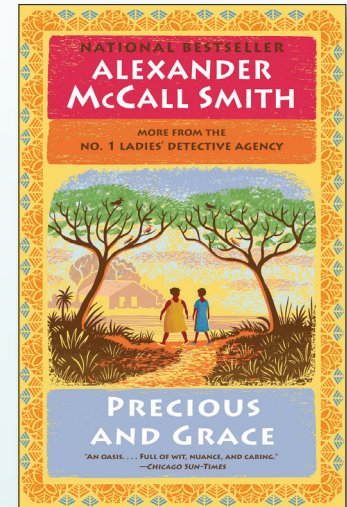
Alexander McCall Smith

Precious and Grace

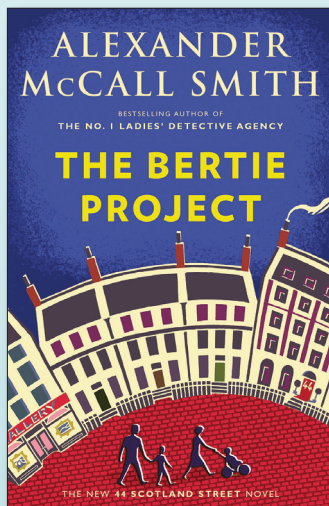
“Entrancing.... A tapestry of extraordinary nuance and richness.”

—*The Wall Street Journal*

In this latest installment of this beloved and bestselling series, changes are afoot at the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency. Mma Makutsi, who has recently been promoted to co-director, has been encouraging Mma Ramotswe to update to more modern office practices. An unusual case, however, will require both of them to turn their attention firmly to the past. A young Canadian woman who spent her early childhood in Botswana requests the agency's help in recalling her life there. Precious and Grace set out to locate the house that the woman lived in and the caretaker who looked after her many years ago. But when the journey takes an unexpected turn, they are forced to consider whether some things are better left in the past.



Precious Ramotswe shares some pearls of wisdom:



The Bertie Project

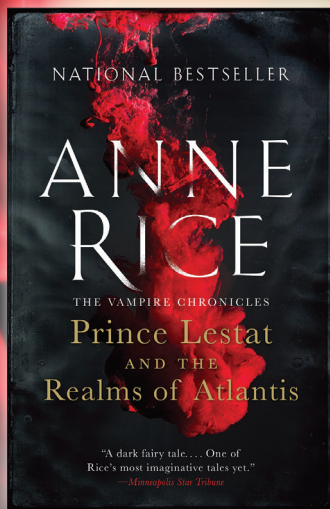
“Vivid and seamless.... McCall Smith’s assessments of fellow humans are piercing and profound.” —*San Francisco Chronicle*

Bertie’s mother, Irene, returns from the Middle East to discover that, in her absence, her son has been exposed to the worst of evils—television shows, ice cream parlors, and even unsanctioned art at the National Portrait Gallery. Her wrath descends on Bertie’s long-suffering father, Stuart. But Stuart has found a reason to spend more time outside of the house and seems to have a new spring in his step. What does this mean for the residents of 44 Scotland Street?

The winds of change have come to the others as well. Angus undergoes a spiritual transformation after falling victim to an unexpected defenestration. Bruce has fallen in a rather different sense for a young woman who is determined to share with him her enthusiasm for extreme sports. Matthew and Elspeth have a falling out with their triplets’ au pair, while Big Lou continues to fall in love with her new role as a mother. And as Irene resumes work on what she calls her Bertie Project, reinstating Bertie’s Italian lessons, yoga classes, and psychotherapy, Bertie begins to hatch a project of his own—one that promises freedom.



© Iain McIntosh



Prince Lestat and the Realms of Atlantis

Anne Rice

“One of Rice’s most imaginative tales yet.”

—*Minneapolis Star Tribune*

In this ambitious, rich new vampire novel of vision and power, the indomitable vampire hero, Lestat de Lioncourt, returns...caught up in an urgent and fundamental quest to understand the origins of the Undead and the deeper meanings of existence for both mortals and immortals. Now Lestat, Prince of the vast tribe of the Undead, finds himself at war with a strange, ancient, otherworldly form that has somehow taken possession of his immortal body and spirit, and it is through this perilous and profound struggle that we come to be told the hypnotic tale of a great sea power of ancient times:

a mysterious heaven on earth situated on a boundless continent in the Atlantic Ocean.

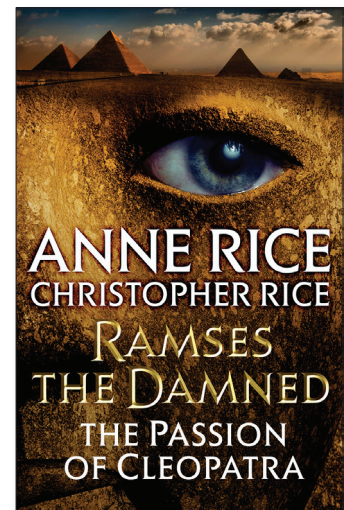
As we learn of the mighty, resonant powers and perfections of this lost kingdom of Atalantaya, the lost realms of Atlantis, we come to understand how and why the vampire Lestat, indeed all the vampires, must reckon so many millennia later with the terrifying force of this ageless, all-powerful Atalantaya spirit. An exhilarating novel that deepens Rice’s vampire mythology as it brings together the ancient worlds and beings of the Vampire Chronicles and opens up to us a whole new universe of characters, history, storytelling, and legend.

Ramses the Damned: The Passion of Cleopatra

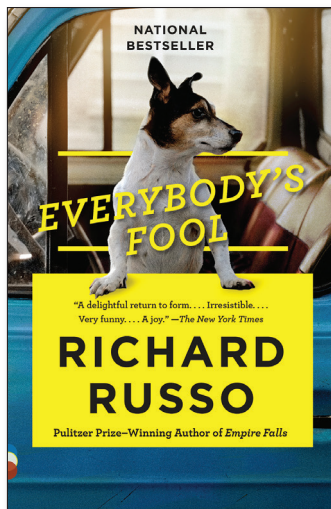
Anne Rice and Christopher Rice

From the iconic and bestselling author of *The Mummy* and the *Vampire Chronicles*, a mesmerizing, glamorous new tale of ancient feuds and modern passions.

Ramses the Great, former pharaoh of Egypt, is reawakened by the elixir of life in Edwardian England. Now immortal with his bride-to-be, he is swept up in a fierce and deadly battle of wills and psyches against the once great Queen Cleopatra. Ramses has reawakened Cleopatra with the same perilous elixir whose unworldly force brings the dead back to life. But as these ancient rulers defy one another in their quest to understand the powers of the strange elixir, they are haunted by a mysterious presence even older and more powerful than they, a figure drawn forth from the mists of history who possesses spectacular magical potions and tonics eight millennia old. This is a figure who ruled over an ancient kingdom stretching from the once-fertile earth of the Sahara to the far corners of the world, a queen with a supreme knowledge of the deepest origins of the elixir of life. She may be the only one who can make known to Ramses and Cleopatra the key to their immortality—and the secrets of the miraculous, unknowable, endless expanse of the universe.



Available
November 2017



Everybody's Fool

Richard Russo

“A delightful return to form.... Irresistible.... Very funny.... A joy.”

—*The New York Times*

In these pages, Richard Russo returns to North Bath, the Rust Belt town first brought to unforgettable life in *Nobody's Fool*. Now, ten years later, Doug Raymer has become the chief of police and is tormented by the improbable death of his wife—not to mention his suspicion that he was a failure of a husband. Meanwhile, the irrepressible Sully has come into a small fortune, but is suddenly faced with a VA cardiologist's estimate that he only has a year or two left to live.

As Sully frantically works to keep the bad news from the important people in his life, we are reunited with his son and grandson . . . with Ruth, the married woman with whom he carried on for years . . . and with the hapless Rub Squeers, who worries that he and Sully aren't still best friends. Filled with humor, heart, and hard-luck

characters you can't help but love, *Everybody's Fool* is a crowning achievement from one of the great storytellers of our time.

More Small Towns Reading List:

From the dying Rust Belt town of North Bath, New York, with its uncanny geography and quirky citizens in *Everybody's Fool*, to the “Athens of the Midwest,” a college town that forces a boutique potato farmer's daughter and a Sufism course into the same story in *A Gate at the Stairs*, we'd recommend any of these books about small towns for a book club meeting.

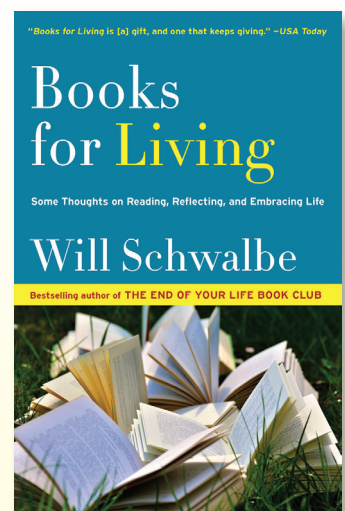
- *The Arsonist* by Sue Miller
- *A Gate at the Stairs* by Lorrie Moore
- *Plainsong* by Kent Haruf
- *World and Town* by Gish Jen
- *Goodnight, Nebraska* by Tom McNeal

Books for Living

Will Schwalbe

**“A beautiful, powerful, warm, funny, awe-inspiring odyssey.
An absolutely astonishing gift to all of us who have spent our
lives loving books.”** —LOUISE PENNY

Why is it that we read? Is it to pass time? To learn something new? To escape from reality? For Will Schwalbe, reading is a way to entertain himself but also to make sense of the world, to become a better person, and to find the answers to the big (and small) questions about how to live his life. In this delightful celebration of reading, Schwalbe invites us along on his quest for books that speak to the specific challenges of living in our modern world, with all its noise and distractions. In each chapter, he discusses a particular book—what brought him to it (or vice versa), the people in his life he associates with it, and how it became a part of his understanding of himself in the world. Rich with stories and recommendations, *Books for Living* is a treasure for everyone who loves books and loves to hear the answer to the question: “What are you reading?”



Will Schwalbe on the power of books

“Books remain one of the strongest bulwarks we have against tyranny—but only as long as people are free to read all different kinds of books, and only as long as they actually do so. The right to read whatever you want whenever you want is one of the fundamental rights that helps preserve all the other rights. It's a right we need to guard with unwavering diligence. But it's also a right we can guard with pleasure. Reading isn't just a strike against narrowness, mind control, and domination: It's one of the world's great joys” (from *Books for Living*, p. 257).

FROM PAGE TO SCREEN

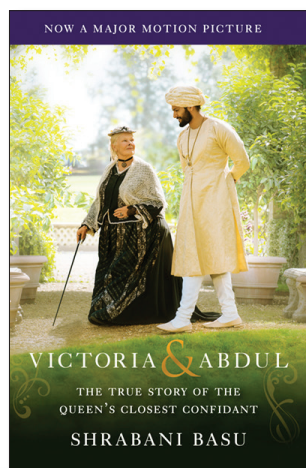
Victoria & Abdul

Shrabani Basu

Now a Major Motion Picture starring Dame Judi Dench from director Stephen Frears.

“One of the great love stories of all time.”

—Phillip Knightley, *Khaleej Times*



Tall and handsome Abdul was just twenty-four years old when he arrived in England from Agra to wait on tables for Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. Within a year, Abdul had grown to become a powerful figure at court, the Queen's teacher, or Munshi, her counsel on Urdu and Indian affairs, and a friend close to the Queen's heart. "I am so very fond of him," Queen Victoria would write in 1888, "He is so good and gentle

and understanding....a real comfort to me."

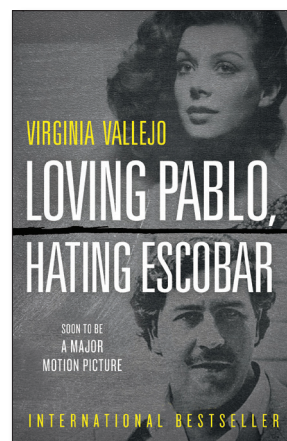
This marked the beginning of the most scandalous decade in Queen Victoria's long reign. Drawn from never-before-seen firsthand documents that had been closely guarded secrets for a century, Shrabani Basu's *Victoria & Abdul* is a remarkable history of the last years of the nineteenth century in English court, an unforgettable view onto the passions of an aging Queen, and a fascinating portrayal of how a young Indian Muslim came to play a central role at the heart of the British Empire.

Loving Pablo, Hating Escobar

Virginia Vallejo

Soon to be a Major Motion Picture starring Javier Bardem and Penelope Cruz.

A revealing memoir of Colombian television journalist Virginia Vallejo's affair with the "King of Cocaine,"



notorious Medellín drug lord, Pablo Escobar. At thirty-three, Virginia Vallejo was part of the media elite. A renowned anchorwoman and socialite, and a model who appeared on magazine covers worldwide, Vallejo was the darling of Colombia's most powerful politicians and billionaires. Meeting Pablo Escobar in 1983, then becoming his mistress for many years, she witnessed the rise of a drug empire that was characterized by Escobar's

far-reaching political corruption, his extraordinary wealth, and a network of violent crime that lasted until his death in 1993.

In *Loving Pablo, Hating Escobar* Vallejo offers a compelling work of both intimate reflection and critical journalism—a unique perspective on the Colombian drug wars and the endlessly fascinating figure of Pablo Escobar.

Movie tie-in editions titled: *Escobar*

Also available in Spanish: *Amando a Pablo, odiando a Escobar*

The Handmaid's Tale

Margaret Atwood

The #1 New York Times Bestseller—
Now a critically acclaimed Hulu original series

“Shockingly relevant.”—*Los Angeles Times*

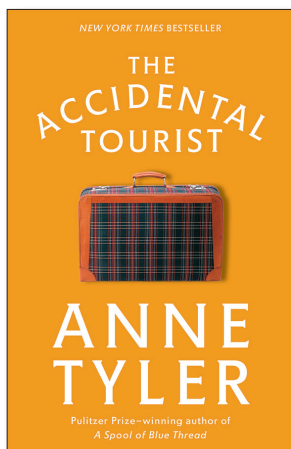
“Read it while it's still allowed.”—*Houston Chronicle*



BOOK CLUB CLASSICS BY ANNE TYLER

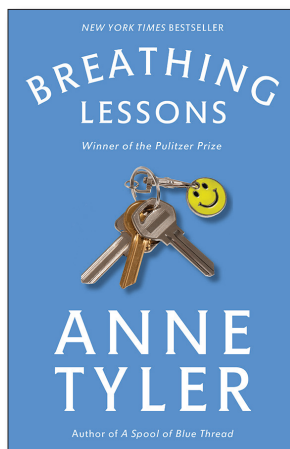


© Michael Lianster



The Accidental Tourist

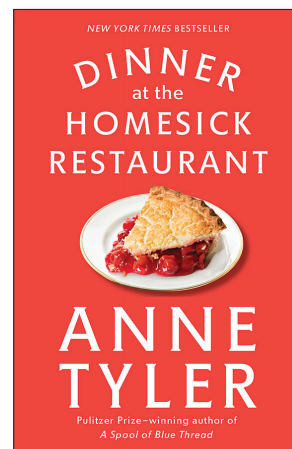
“A delight....
A graceful comic
novel about getting
through life.”
—*The Wall Street Journal*



Breathing Lessons

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize

“A wonderful
novel, glowing with
the insight and
compassion of an
artist’s touch.”
—*The Boston Globe*



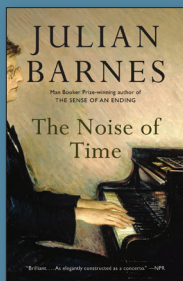
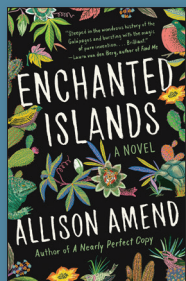
Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant

“A book that should
join those few that
every literate person
will have to read.”
—*The Boston Globe*

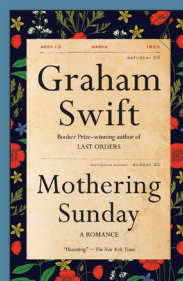
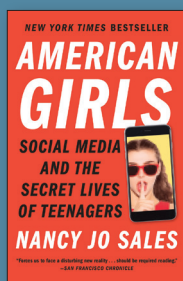
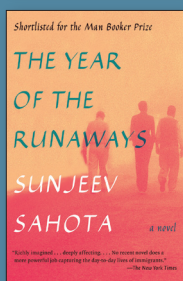
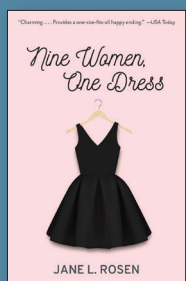
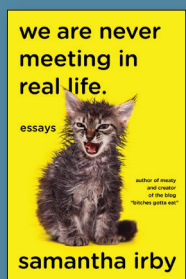
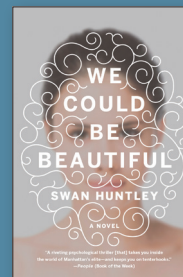
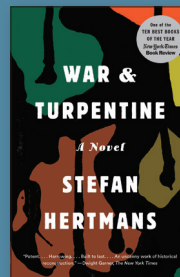
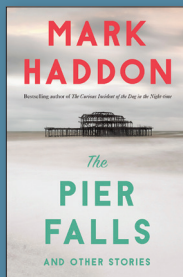
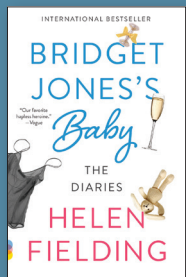
Things You Might Not Know About Anne Tyler:

- She met her husband when she was engaged to someone else.
- *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* was her favorite novel before she wrote *A Spool of Blue Thread*.
- She doesn’t read reviews of her books.
- As a citizen of Baltimore, she is a huge fan of *The Wire*.
- She majored in Russian at Columbia University and thought it would be fun to be a translator or interpreter.





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