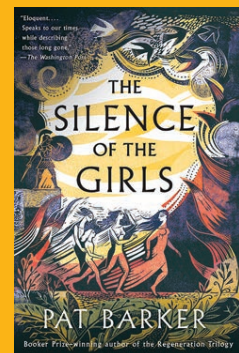
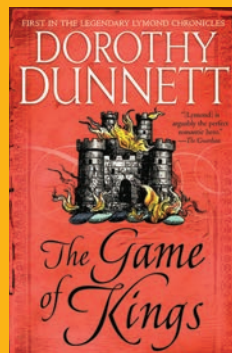
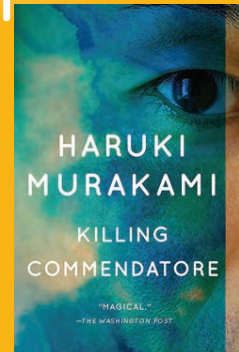
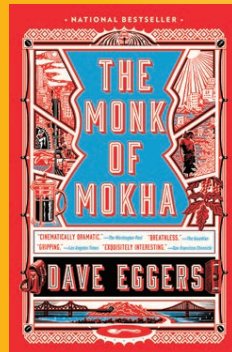
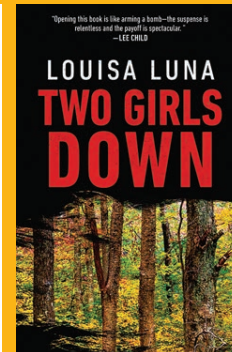
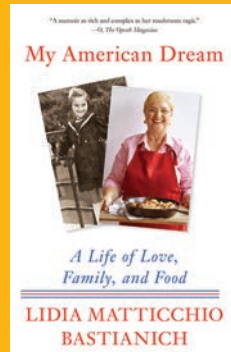
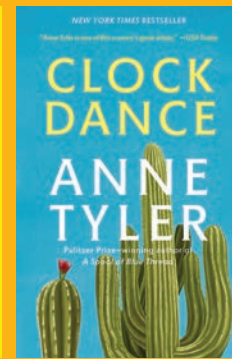
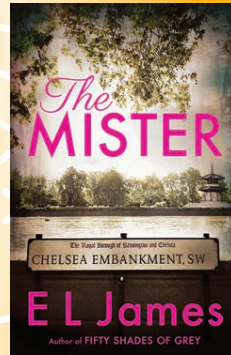
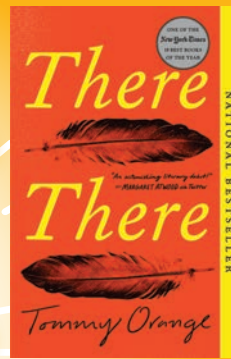


# GREAT READS

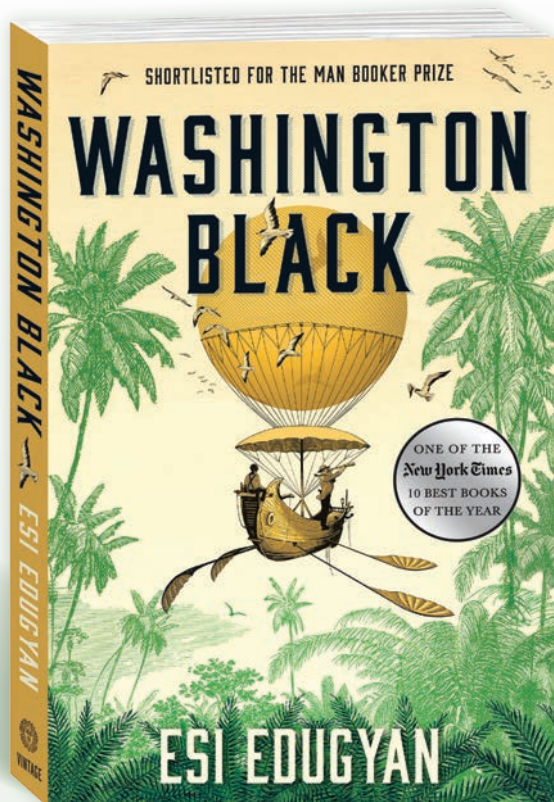
## FOR YOU AND YOUR BOOK CLUB

NOVELS  
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AWARD WINNERS  
AND MORE





# ONE OF THE *NEW YORK TIMES* 10 BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR



## Washington Black Esi Edugyan

**“A daring work of empathy  
and imagination.”**

—*The New York Times Book Review*



© Tamara Poppitt

Eleven-year-old George Washington Black—or Wash—a field slave on a Barbados sugar plantation, is initially terrified when he is chosen as the manservant of his master's brother. To his surprise, however, the eccentric Christopher Wilde turns out to be a naturalist, explorer, inventor, and abolitionist. Soon Wash is initiated into a world where a flying machine can carry a man across the sky, where even a boy born in chains may embrace a life of dignity and meaning, and where two people, separated by an impossible divide, can begin to see each other as human.

But when a man is killed and a bounty is placed on Wash's head, they must abandon everything and flee together. Over the course of their travels, what brings Wash and Christopher together will tear them apart, propelling Wash ever farther across the globe in search of his true self. Spanning the Caribbean to the frozen Far North, London to Morocco, *Washington Black* is a story of self-invention and betrayal, of love and redemption, and of a world destroyed and made whole again.

**A Best Book of the Year: *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Washington Post*, *Time*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Financial Times*, *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, *NPR*, *The Economist*, *Bustle*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *Slate*, *Kirkus Reviews***

**Shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, The Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence, The Rogers Writers' Trust Prize**

**One of Barack Obama's Favorite Books of the Year**

**Winner of the Scotiabank Giller Prize**

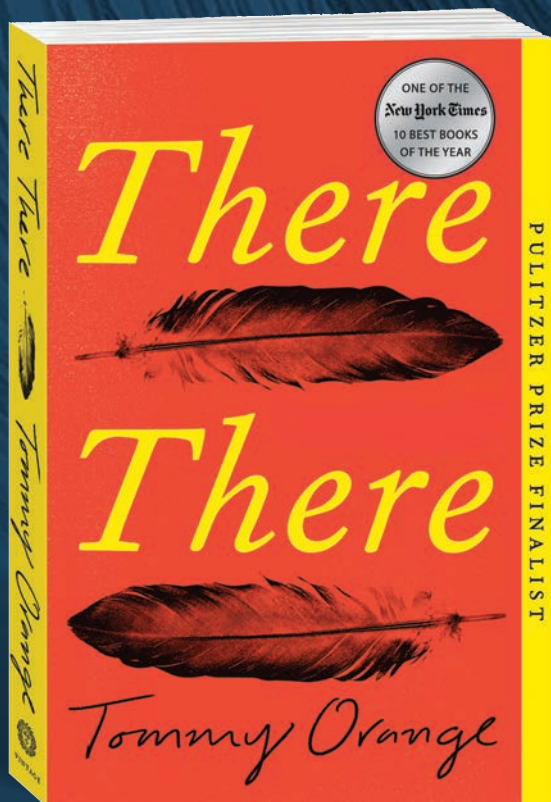
### **Editor Diana Miller on her reaction upon reading *Washington Black*:**

“I was...bowled over by the way *Washington Black* takes on big, important questions about humanity—freedom, betrayal, self-determination, redemption—while simultaneously juggling an intricate plot. It's a rare accomplishment to create an exciting page-turner, filled with action and drama and incident, that can speak to larger issues, ones that in fact are still keeping us up at night in today's world.”

Read more on [ReadingGroupCenter.com](http://ReadingGroupCenter.com)



# ONE OF THE *NEW YORK TIMES* 10 BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR



## There There Tommy Orange

**“An astonishing literary debut!”**

—Margaret Atwood via Twitter

Tommy Orange’s shattering novel follows twelve characters from Native communities all traveling to the Big Oakland Powwow, all connected to each other in ways they may not yet realize. Together, this chorus of voices tells of the plight of the urban Native American—grappling with a complex and painful history, with an inheritance of beauty and spirituality, with communion and sacrifice and heroism. Hailed as an instant classic, *There There* is at once poignant and laugh-out-loud funny, utterly contemporary, and always unforgettable.

**Winner of the PEN/Hemingway Award, NBCC’s John Leonard First Book Prize, and Center for Fiction First Novel Prize**

**Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Fiction**

**A Best Book of the Year: *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, NPR, *Time*, *O*, *The Oprah Magazine*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, and more!**



© Elena Seibert

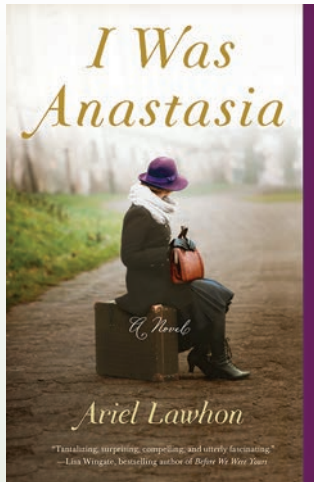
### **Tommy Orange on native representation:**

“I knew I wanted to write a multigenerational, multivoiced novel about Native people living in Oakland. My wanting to write it largely had to do with there not already being a novel about Native people who live in cities, and very few novels set in Oakland. Native people suffer from poor representation as it is, but having little representation in literature, as well as no (literary) version of our (urban Native) experience, was what made me want to write into that space, that void, and try to honor and express fully all that it entails to be Native and be from Oakland.”

—From an interview on [thenewyorker.com](http://thenewyorker.com)



# HISTORICAL FICTION



## I Was Anastasia

Ariel Lawhon

**“Compelling and utterly fascinating.”**

—Lisa Wingate, author of *Before We Were Yours*

An enthralling feat of historical suspense that unravels the extraordinary twists and turns in Anna Anderson’s fifty-year battle to be recognized as Anastasia Romanov. Is she the Russian Grand Duchess or the thief of another woman’s legacy?

*Countless others have rendered their verdict. Now it is your turn.*

Russia, July 17, 1918: Under direct orders from Vladimir Lenin, Bolshevik secret police force Anastasia Romanov, along with the entire imperial family, into a damp basement in Siberia, where they face a merciless firing squad. None survive. At least that is what the executioners have always claimed.

Germany, February 17, 1920: A young woman bearing an uncanny resemblance to Anastasia Romanov is pulled shivering and senseless from a canal. Refusing to explain her presence in the freezing water or even acknowledge her rescuers, she is taken to the hospital where an examination reveals that her body is riddled with countless horrific scars. When she finally does speak, this frightened, mysterious young woman claims to be the Russian grand duchess.

As rumors begin to circulate through European society that the youngest Romanov daughter has survived the massacre at Ekaterinburg, old enemies and new threats are awakened. The question of who Anna Anderson is and what actually happened to Anastasia Romanov spans fifty years and touches three continents. This thrilling saga is every bit as moving and momentous as it is harrowing and twisted.

“Who wants to just survive?  
**Wouldn’t you rather live?”**



*“This is how  
the human heart beats,  
a twisted staccato  
of love and envy,  
anger and relief.”*



“Every woman trades on something. Beauty is easy enough to come by. So is charm. Talent won’t set you apart. Neither will intelligence....

**But royalty?  
Now that’s something special.”**

### Ariel Lawhon on *I Was Anastasia*’s unconventional timeline:

“I knew, almost immediately, that half of the narrative needed to be told in reverse so that the two points of view would collide at a very specific moment, right in the middle. I knew it was risky. I knew it would be hard to write. But I’ve always loved a good puzzle. So I got to work.”

Read more on [ReadingGroupCenter.com](http://ReadingGroupCenter.com)

## The Silence of the Girls

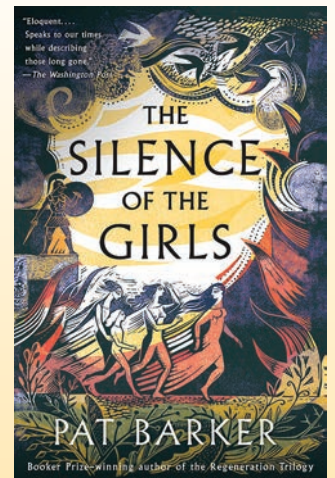
Pat Barker

A Women’s Prize for Fiction Finalist

**“Refreshingly modern.... A masterful and moving novel.”** —*The Economist*

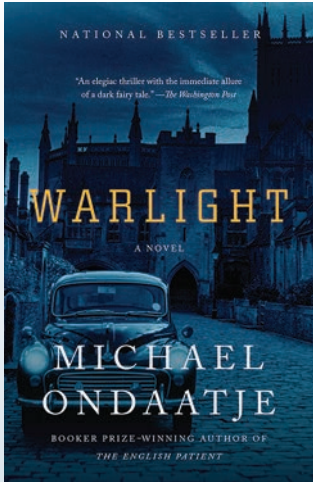
From the Booker Prize-winning author of the *Regeneration* trilogy comes a brave and masterful retelling of *The Iliad*, as experienced by the captured women living in the Greek camp in the final weeks of the Trojan War.

The ancient city of Troy has withstood a decade under siege of the powerful Greek army, who continue to wage bloody war over a stolen woman—Helen. In the Greek camp, another woman watches and waits for the war’s outcome: Briseis. She was queen of one of Troy’s neighboring kingdoms, until Achilles, Greece’s greatest warrior, sacked her city and murdered her husband and brothers. Briseis becomes Achilles’s concubine and must adjust quickly in order to survive a radically different life. When Agamemnon, the brutal political





# HISTORICAL FICTION



## Warlight Michael Ondaatje

Longlisted for the Man Booker Prize

A Best Book of the Year: *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and NPR

“An elegiac thriller with the immediate allure of a dark fairy tale.”

—*The Washington Post*

It is 1945, and London is still reeling from years of war. Fourteen-year-old Nathaniel and his older sister, Rachel, seemingly abandoned by their parents, have been left in the care of an enigmatic figure they call The Moth. They suspect he may be a criminal and grow both more convinced and less concerned as they come to know his eccentric crew of friends: men and women with a shared history, all of whom seem determined now to protect and educate (in rather unusual ways) the siblings. But are they really what and who they claim to be? And how should Nathaniel and Rachel feel when their mother returns without their father after months of silence—explaining nothing, excusing nothing? A dozen years later, Nathaniel begins to uncover all he didn't know or understand during that time, and it is this journey—through reality, recollection, and imagination—that is told in this magnificent novel.

### Michael Ondaatje on the meaning of “warlight”

“Well, I think I sort of invented it, in a way, when I was writing the book...describing the river during the war where it was very dark because of bombing raids by the Germans. And that kind of almost underground light, that very little reflection... well, it's difficult to describe this, but it was kind of the echo of light, I guess, on the people in the story as a result of the war.”

—From an interview on npr.org

### The opening lines of *Warlight*:

“In 1945 our parents went away and left us in the care of two men who may have been criminals. We were living on a street in London called Ruvigny Gardens, and one morning either our mother or our father suggested that after breakfast the family have a talk, and they told us that they would be leaving us and going to Singapore for a year. Not too long, they said, but it would not be a brief trip either. We would of course be well cared for in their absence. I remember our father was sitting on one of those uncomfortable iron garden chairs as he broke the news, while our mother, in a summer dress just behind his shoulder, watched how we responded. After a while she took my sister Rachel's hand and held it against her waist, as if she could give it warmth.”

leader of the Greek forces, demands Briseis for himself, she finds herself caught between the two most powerful of the Greeks. Keenly observant and coolly unflinching about the daily horrors of war, Briseis finds herself in an unprecedented position to observe the two men driving the Greek forces in what will become their final confrontation, deciding the fate not only of Briseis's people, but also of the ancient world.

### Pat Barker shares her thoughts on writer's block:

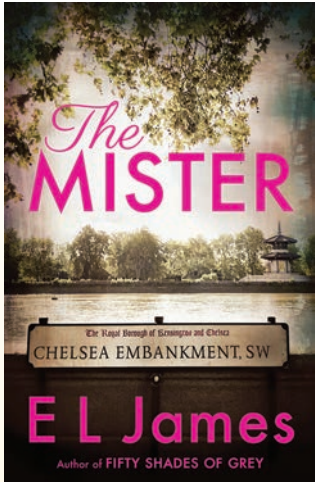
I don't believe in using the term. Everybody in any line of work has bad days when nothing goes right and they are expected to work through them, I don't see why it should be different for writers. If the words keep drying up on a particular project it may be the wrong project for you or perhaps you're trying to write it before it's ready to be written. Take a break, do something else, let it settle in your mind—then try again.

From an interview on LitHub.com





# COMPELLING AND BRILLIANT FICTION



**“Passion aplenty.”**

—*People*

**“Over-the-top romantic.”**

—*Booklist*

## The Mister

E L James

**“With heart-racing danger and steamy desire, readers are left breathless to the very last page.”** — *Women’s World*

The #1 *New York Times* bestseller—a thrilling new romance from E L James, author of the phenomenal bestselling *Fifty Shades Trilogy*

London, 2019. Life has been easy for Maxim Trevelyan. With his good looks, aristocratic connections, and money, he’s never had to work and he’s rarely slept alone. But all that changes when tragedy strikes and Maxim inherits his family’s noble title, wealth, and estates, and all the responsibility that entails. It’s a role he’s not prepared for and one that he struggles to face.

But his biggest challenge is fighting his desire for an unexpected, enigmatic young woman who’s recently arrived in England, possessing little more than a dangerous and troublesome past. Reticent, beautiful, and musically gifted, she’s an alluring mystery, and Maxim’s longing for her deepens into a passion that he’s never experienced and dares not name. Just who is Alessia Demachi? Can Maxim protect her from the malevolence that threatens her? And what will she do when she learns that he’s been hiding secrets of his own?

From the heart of London through wild, rural Cornwall to the bleak, forbidding beauty of the Balkans, *The Mister* is a roller-coaster ride of danger and desire that creates nail-biting excitement to the very last page.



## The Flight Attendant

Chris Bohjalian

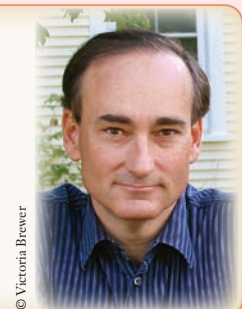
**“An expertly turned thriller.”** —*USA Today*

Cassandra Bowden is no stranger to hungover mornings. She’s a binge drinker, her job with the airline making it easy to find adventure, and the occasional blackouts seem to be inevitable. When she awakens in a Dubai hotel room, she tries to piece the previous night back together. She quietly slides out of bed and looks at the man she spent the night with. She sees his dark hair. His utter stillness. And blood, a slick, still wet pool on the crisp white sheets. Afraid to call the police—she’s a single woman alone in a hotel room far from home—Cassie begins to lie. She lies as she joins the other flight attendants and pilots in the van. She lies on the way to Paris as she works the first class cabin. She lies to the FBI agents in New York who meet her at the gate. Soon it’s too late to come clean—or face the truth about what really happened back in Dubai. Could she have killed him? If not, who did?

### Chris Bohjalian on *The Flight Attendant*’s two main characters:

My goal as a novelist is never to write the same book twice. *The Flight Attendant*, my twentieth book, is a thriller. In it you’ll meet Cassie Bowden and Elena Orlov, two women who couldn’t be more different: imagine a sort of id and ego, separated at birth, facing off in a world in which it seems likely neither will survive. But it was such a gift to me to spend time with them. They always surprised me and they always went beyond the evidence.

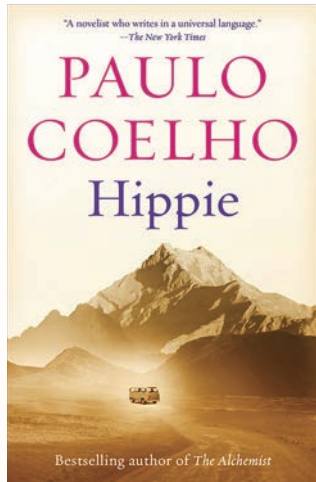
Read more on [ReadingGroupCenter.com](http://ReadingGroupCenter.com)



© Victoria Brewer



# COMPELLING AND BRILLIANT FICTION



**“Beautifully written....  
An inspiring read.”**

—*People*

## HIPPIE

Paulo Coelho

**“A novelist who writes in a universal language.”** —*The New York Times*

Drawing on the rich experience of his own life, bestselling author Paulo Coelho takes us back in time to relive the dreams of a generation that longed for peace. In *Hippie*, he tells the story of Paulo, a young, skinny Brazilian man with a goatee and long, flowing hair who dreams of becoming a writer, and Karla, a Dutch woman in her twenties who has been waiting to find a companion to accompany her on the fabled hippie trail to Nepal.

After meeting each other in Amsterdam, she convinces Paulo to join her on a trip aboard the Magic Bus that travels from Amsterdam to Istanbul and across Central Asia to Kathmandu. As they embark on this journey together, Paulo and Karla explore a love affair that awakens them on every level and leads to choices and decisions that will set the course for their lives thereafter.



### Paulo Coelho on nostalgia and hippie values:

**Q:** Your new novel, *Hippie*, is based on your experiences exploring South America and Europe in the 1970s. Why write this story now?

**A:** We have lost the ability to hear what our neighbors have to say. We have polite conversations, but at the end of the day, we don't hear them. There was a moment in time when we were full of hope and we thought that we were going to change the world.

**Q:** What did your generation fail to understand about society?

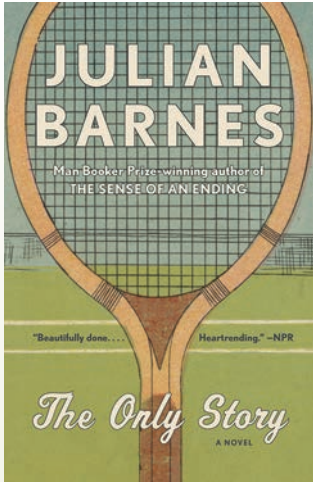
**A:** My generation understood that once a hippie, always a hippie. Of course, I could not be a hippie today, sitting comfortably here in Geneva. But my values are still the same: simplify your life, eat healthy, respect women. My generation understood the mind and our desire to journey—but then it came time to support ourselves. And it became difficult to broker a peace between the two.

—From an interview on time.com





# COMPELLING AND BRILLIANT FICTION



## The Only Story

Julian Barnes

A Best Book of the Year: *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Financial Times*

“Beautifully done.... Heartrending.” —NPR

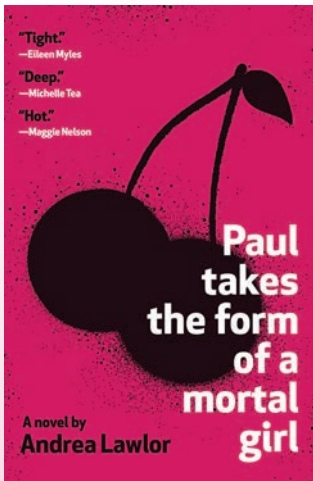
One summer in the sixties, in a staid suburb south of London, nineteen-year-old Paul comes home from university and is urged by his mother to join the tennis club. There he's partnered with Susan Macleod, a fine player who's forty-eight, confident, witty, and married, with two nearly adult daughters. She is a warm companion, her bond with Paul immediate. And soon, inevitably, they are lovers.

Basking in the glow of one another, they set up house together in London. Decades later, Paul looks back at how they fell in love and how—gradually, relentlessly—everything fell apart. Poignant, vivid, and profound, *The Only Story* is a searing novel of memory, devotion, and how first love fixes a life forever.

Do you adore unconventional love stories? Check out these heart-warming novels similar to *The Only Story*:

- *Love in the Time of Cholera* by Gabriel García Márquez
- *The Night Circus* by Erin Morgenstern
- *Our Souls at Night* by Kent Haruf

Read more on [ReadingGroupCenter.com](http://ReadingGroupCenter.com)



## Paul Takes the Form of a Mortal Girl

Andrea Lawlor

“A fantasy spin on all-too-pertinent issues of gender and sex.”

—*Harper's Bazaar*

It's 1993 and Paul Polydoris tends bar at the only gay club in a university town thrumming with politics and partying. He studies queer theory, has a dyke best friend, makes zines, and is a flaneur with a rich dating life. But Paul's also got a secret: he's a shapeshifter. Oscillating wildly from Riot Grrrl to leather cub, Paul transforms his body and his gender at will as he crosses the country—a journey and adventure through the deep queer archives of struggle and pleasure.

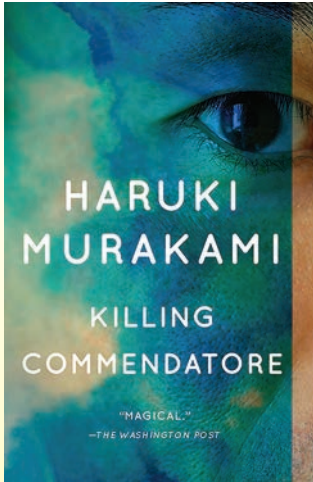
**Andrea Lawlor on the boom in transgender fiction:**

“I'm excited about what's happening. It's a flowering with deep roots. A lot of writers have been here for a long time, and now people are paying more attention. The thing that's exciting about books is there's not just one. I hate to be the one, I don't ever want to be a representative of a type. Because I can't live on one book, I need a book a day.”

—From an interview on [theguardian.com](http://theguardian.com)



# COMPELLING AND BRILLIANT FICTION



"Today when I awoke from a nap the faceless man was there before me. He was seated on the chair across from the sofa I'd been sleeping on, staring straight at me with a pair of imaginary eyes in a face that wasn't"

—From *Killing Commendatore*

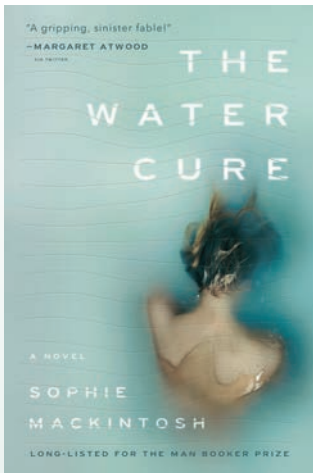
## Killing Commendatore

Haruki Murakami

A Best Book of the Year: *Washington Post*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Financial Times*, *Library Journal*, *LitHub*, and *Kirkus Reviews*

"Expansive and intricate...touches on many of the themes familiar in Mr. Murakami's novels: the mystery of romantic love, the weight of history, the transcendence of art, the search for elusive things just outside our grasp." —*The New York Times*

In *Killing Commendatore*, a thirty-something portrait painter in Tokyo is abandoned by his wife and finds himself holed up in the mountain home of a famous artist, Tomohiko Amada. When he discovers a previously unseen painting in the attic, he unintentionally opens a circle of mysterious circumstances. To close it, he must complete a journey that involves a mysterious ringing bell, a two-foot-high physical manifestation of an Idea, a dapper businessman who lives across the valley, a precocious thirteen-year-old girl, a Nazi assassination attempt during World War II in Vienna, a pit in the woods behind the artist's home, and an underworld haunted by Double Metaphors. A tour de force of love and loneliness, war and art—as well as a loving homage to *The Great Gatsby*—*Killing Commendatore* is a stunning work of imagination from one of our greatest writers.



## The Water Cure

Sophie Mackintosh

Longlisted for the Man Booker Prize

A Most Anticipated Book of the Year by *Entertainment Weekly*, *Vogue*, *The Washington Post*, *Huffington Post*, *Vulture*, *LitHub*, *Refinery29*, and more

"A gripping, sinister fable!" —Margaret Atwood via Twitter

King has tenderly staked out a territory for his wife and three daughters, Grace, Lia, and Sky. He has lain the barbed wire; he has anchored the buoys in the water; he has marked out a clear message: *Do not enter*. Or viewed from another angle: *Not safe to leave*. Here women are protected from the chaos and violence of men on the mainland. The cult-like rituals and therapies they endure fortify them from the spreading toxicity of a degrading world.

But when their father, the only man they've ever seen, disappears, they retreat further inward until the day two men and a boy wash ashore. Over the span of one blistering hot week, a psychological cat-and-mouse game plays out. Sexual tensions and sibling rivalries flare as the sisters confront the amorphous threat the strangers represent. Can they survive the men?

A haunting, riveting debut about the capacity for violence and the potency of female desire, *The Water Cure* both devastates and astonishes as it reflects our own world back at us.

### An excerpt from *The Water Cure*:

"Once we had a father, but our father dies without us noticing.

It's wrong to say that we don't notice. We are just absorbed in ourselves that afternoon when he dies. Unseasonable heat. We squabble, as usual. Mother comes out on the terrace and

puts a stop to it by raising her hand, a swift motion against the sky. Then we spend some time lying down with lengths of muslin over our faces, trying not to scream, and so he dies with none of us women bearing witness, none of us accompanying him."



# COMPELLING AND BRILLIANT FICTION



## Blood Communion

Anne Rice

**“Fans old and new will find this book an effusive celebration of a saga now more than forty years in the making.”** —*Publishers Weekly*

The Vampire Chronicles continue with a riveting, rich saga—part adventure, part suspense—of Prince Lestat and the story of the Blood Communion as he tells the tale of his coming to rule the vampire world and the eternal struggle to find belonging, a place in the universe for the undead, and how, against his will, he must battle the menacing, seemingly unstoppable force determined to thwart his vision and destroy the entire vampire netherworld.

“I’m the vampire Lestat. I’m six feet tall, have blue-gray eyes that sometimes appear violet, and a lean athletic build.... I’ve been alive on this earth for more than two hundred fifty years and I am truly immortal, having survived any number of assaults on my person, and my own suicidal recklessness, only becoming stronger as the result.”

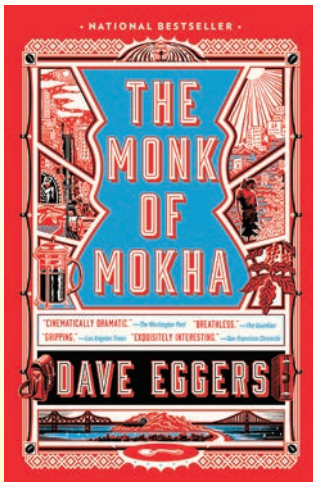
—from *Blood Communion*

New to the Vampire Chronicles? If you want to start at the beginning, here’s the list in publication order. But, if you want to start with *Blood Communion*, just keep this for future reference!

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <i>Interview with the Vampire</i> | <i>Merrick</i>                                  |
| <i>The Vampire Lestat</i>         | <i>Blood and Gold</i>                           |
| <i>The Queen of the Damned</i>    | <i>Blackwood Farm</i>                           |
| <i>The Tale of the Body Thief</i> | <i>Blood Canticle</i>                           |
| <i>Memnoch the Devil</i>          | <i>Prince Lestat</i>                            |
| <i>Pandora</i>                    | <i>Prince Lestat and the Realms of Atlantis</i> |
| <i>The Vampire Armand</i>         | <i>Blood Communion</i>                          |
| <i>Vittorio, the Vampire</i>      |   |

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## BIOGRAPHY



## The Monk of Mokha

Dave Eggers

**“Exquisitely interesting.... This is about the human capacity to dream—here, there, everywhere.”** —*San Francisco Chronicle*

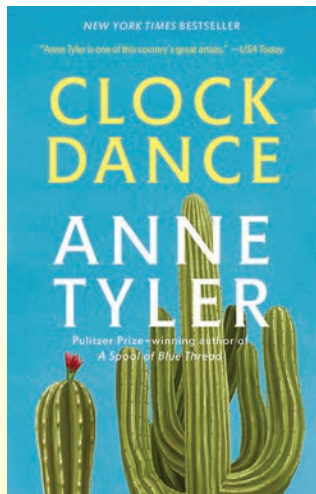
*The Monk of Mokha* is the exhilarating true story of a young Yemeni American man, raised in San Francisco, who dreams of resurrecting the ancient art of Yemeni coffee but finds himself trapped in Sana’a by civil war.

Mokhtar Alkhanshali is twenty-four and working as a doorman when he discovers the astonishing history of coffee and Yemen’s central place in it. He leaves San Francisco and travels deep into his ancestral homeland to tour terraced farms high in the country’s rugged mountains and meet beleaguered but determined farmers. But when war engulfs the country and Saudi bombs rain down, Mokhtar has to find a way out of Yemen without sacrificing his dreams or abandoning his people.

An excerpt from *The Monk of Mokha*:

“Mokhtar Alkhanshali and I agree to meet in Oakland. He has just returned from Yemen, having narrowly escaped with his life. An American citizen, Mokhtar was abandoned by his government and left to evade Saudi bombs and Houthi rebels. He had no means to leave the country. The airports had been destroyed and the roads out of the country were impassable. There were no evacuations planned, no assistance provided.”

# COMPELLING AND BRILLIANT FICTION



## Clock Dance

Anne Tyler

A Best Book of the Year: *O, The Oprah Magazine, Real Simple, The Christian Science Monitor*

“Tyler’s stirring story celebrates the joys of self-discovery and the essential truth that family is ours to define.” —*People*

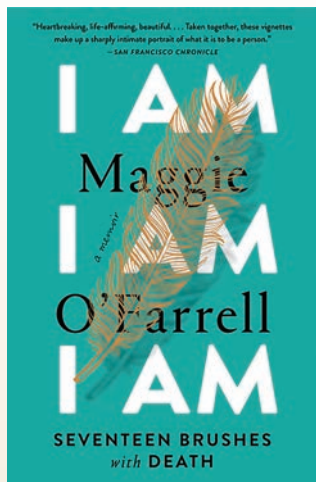
A charming novel of self-discovery and second chances from the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *A Spool of Blue Thread*

Willa Drake has had three opportunities to start her life over: in 1967, as a schoolgirl whose mother has suddenly disappeared; in 1977, when considering a marriage proposal; and in 1997, as a young widow trying to hold her family together. So, she is surprised when in 2017 she is given one last chance to change everything, after receiving a startling phone call from a stranger. Without fully understanding why, she flies across the country to Baltimore to help a young woman she’s never met. This impulsive decision, maybe the first one she’s consciously made in her life, will lead Willa into uncharted territory—surrounded by eccentric neighbors who treat each other like family, she finds solace and fulfillment in unexpected places. A bewitching novel of hope and transformation, *Clock Dance* gives us Anne Tyler at the height of her powers.

### An excerpt from *Clock Dance*:

“So, do you think you could find yourself a flight that gets in this evening? I mean, it must be afternoon for you still, right? And I am losing my *mind* here, I tell you. I cannot wait to set eyes on you. Me and Cheryl and Airplane all three—we’ll have our noses pressed to the window watching out for you.”

## & MEMOIR



## I AM, I AM, I AM

Maggie O'Farrell

“Heartbreaking, life-affirming, beautiful.... Taken together, these vignettes make up a sharply intimate portrait of what it is to be a person.” —*San Francisco Chronicle*

On seventeen occasions, Maggie O'Farrell has stared death in the face—and lived to tell the tale. In this astonishing memoir, she shares the near-death experiences that have punctuated and defined her life. O'Farrell stitches together these discrete encounters to tell the story of her entire life. In taut prose that vibrates with electricity and restrained emotion, she captures the perils running just beneath the surface, and illuminates the preciousness, beauty, and mysteries of life itself.

### Maggie O'Farrell on bonding with her readers over near-death experiences:

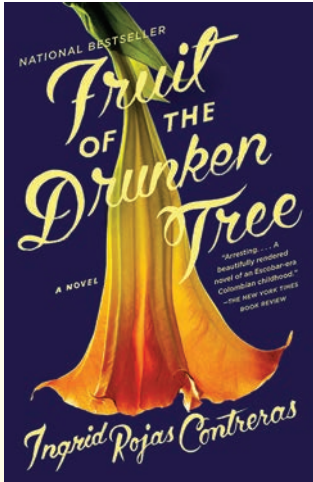
**Q:** What has surprised you most about readers' reactions to the book?

**A:** I didn't foresee how it would unlock people's recollections of their own brushes with death. Usually, the conversations you have with readers after a literary event go no deeper than, "Shall I sign this book for you? How do you spell your name?" With *I Am*, I'm finding that people are wanting to share or disclose sometimes very personal and often traumatic tales from their own lives. I'm always very honored to be the recipient of these stories.

Read more on [ReadingGroupCenter.com](http://ReadingGroupCenter.com)



# FAMILY STORIES



## Fruit of the Drunken Tree

Ingrid Rojas Contreras

**“Original, politically daring, and passionately written.”** —*Vogue*

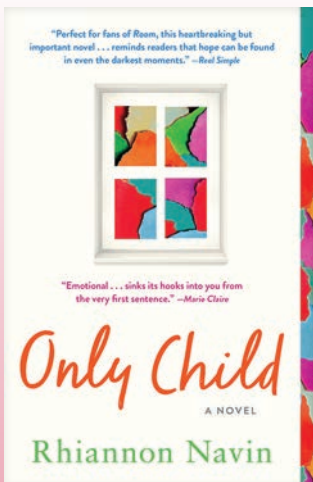
Seven-year-old Chula and her older sister Cassandra enjoy carefree lives thanks to their gated community in Bogotá, but the threat of kidnappings, car bombs, and assassinations hover just outside the neighborhood walls, where the godlike drug lord Pablo Escobar continues to elude authorities and capture the attention of the nation.

When their 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. But Petrona's unusual behavior belies more than shyness. She is a young woman crumbling under the burden of providing for her family as the rip tide of first love pulls her in the opposite direction. As both girls' families scramble to maintain stability amidst the rapidly escalating conflict, Petrona and Chula find themselves entangled in a web of secrecy that will force them both to choose between sacrifice and betrayal.

### Ingrid Rojas Contreras on the origins of her novel:

*“Fruit of the Drunken Tree is a product of a childhood spent listening to the stories of the women around me in Colombia. I grew up in Bogotá a quiet and curious child, and my favorite activity was to listen. Maybe it was because my energy was always running low—I never had the urge to run and climb trees like other children—or maybe it was because I was a nervous child, and my nervousness compelled me to try to understand the inscrutable danger that surrounded me. The television made me nervous, as did being outside—but who was the enemy? I didn't know. That is why, as a young girl, I spent a lot of time trying to seem invisible.”*

Read more on [ReadingGroupCenter.com](http://ReadingGroupCenter.com)



## Only Child

Rhiannon Navin

**“Perfect for fans of *Room*, this heartbreaking but important novel... reminds readers that hope can be found in even the darkest moments.”** —*Real Simple*

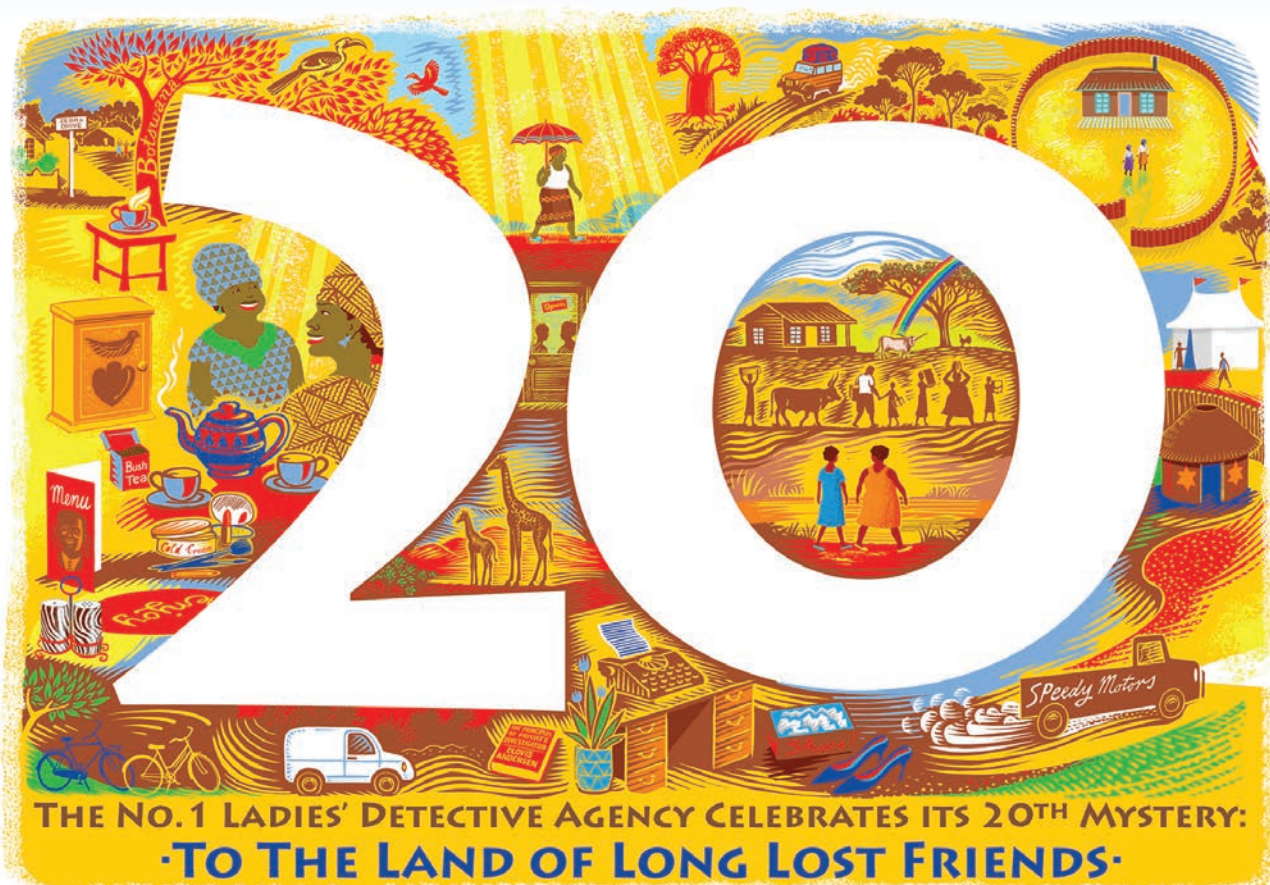
First grader Zach Taylor is in his classroom when a gunman enters the school auditorium and the unthinkable happens, irrevocably changing the very fabric of this close-knit community.

While Zach's mother pursues a quest for justice, and Zach's father retreats into his work, Zach finds solace in the healing world of books and art. Armed with his new insights, and the optimism and stubbornness only a child could have, Zach becomes determined to help the adults in his life rediscover the universal truths of love and compassion they need to pull them through their darkest hour.

### Rhiannon Navin on the wisdom of children:

*“I began writing *Only Child* without an agenda. I simply needed an outlet for all the fears and worries I am experiencing as a mother of three young children.... I wanted my story and my little protagonist's experience speak for itself. I hope my readers will consider the importance of our children's voices, be reminded how much wisdom and emotional depth our children possess.... I hope my readers will find themselves in a hopeful place when they reach the end of my book. Maybe they will even feel inspired to take action to be part of the solution, to make sure their child or their neighbor's child or the child across town doesn't have to become the next Zach.”*

Read more on [ReadingGroupCenter.com](http://ReadingGroupCenter.com)

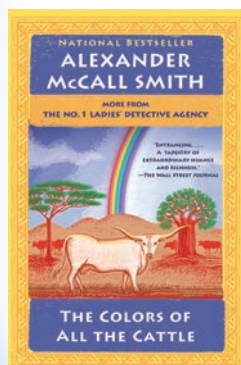


The No.1 Ladies' Detective Agency, Tears of the Giraffe, Morality for Beautiful Girls, The Kalahari Typing School for Men, The Full Cupboard of Life, In The Company of Cheerful Ladies (also known as The Night-Time Dancer), Blue Shoes and Happiness, The Good Husband of Zebra Drive, The Miracle at Speedy Motors, Tea Time for the Traditionally Built, The Double Comfort Safari Club, The Saturday Big Tent Wedding Party, The Limpopo Academy of Private Detection, The Minor Adjustment Beauty Salon, The Handsome Man's De Luxe Cafe, The Woman Who Walked in Sunshine, Precious and Grace, The House of Unexpected Sisters, The Colors of All the Cattle.

 Alexander McCall Smith

Illustration: Iain McIntosh

In November 2019 Alexander McCall Smith's 20th mystery in the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series will be published. Get ready by reading the 19th mystery, *The Colors of All the Cattle*.



## The Colors of All the Cattle

Alexander McCall Smith

“Captures the intimate rhythms of daily life in Botswana—and women in particular—in wise, gentle prose.” —*Entertainment Weekly*

In this installment of the beloved and bestselling No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series, Precious Ramotswe finds herself running for office—much to her dismay.

Catch up on the entire No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series with this complete guide to the books: <http://knopfdoubleday.com/2019/05/14/a-guide-to-the-no-1-ladies-detective-agency-series/>



**SIT BACK IN YOUR FAVORITE CHAIR AND GET READY TO BE**



## My Sister, the Serial Killer

Oyinkan Braithwaite

Winner of the Los Angeles Times Book Prize

Shortlisted for the 2019 Women's Prize for Fiction

Nominated for the Best First Novel Anthony Award

**“Pulpy, peppery and sinister, served up in a comic deadpan. . . . This scorpion-tailed little thriller leaves a response, and a sting, you will remember.”** —*The New York Times*

A short, darkly funny, hand grenade of a novel about a Nigerian woman whose younger sister has a very inconvenient habit of killing her boyfriends.

*“Femi makes three, you know. Three and they label you a serial killer.”*

Korede is bitter. How could she not be? Her sister, Ayoola, is many things: the favorite child, the beautiful one, possibly sociopathic. And now Ayoola’s third boyfriend in a row is dead.

Korede’s practicality is the sisters’ saving grace. She knows the best solutions for cleaning blood, the trunk of her car is big enough for a body, and she keeps Ayoola from posting pictures of her dinner to Instagram when she should be mourning her “missing” boyfriend.



## Social Creature

Tara Isabella Burton

A Best Book of the Year: *The New York Times*, *Vulture*, *NPR*

Nominated for the Shirley Jackson Award for Best Novel

**“Diabolical.... A wicked original with echoes of the greats (Patricia Highsmith, Gillian Flynn).”** —Janet Maslin, *The New York Times*

For readers of Gillian Flynn and Donna Tartt, a dark, propulsive and addictive debut thriller, splashed with all the glitz and glitter of New York City

Louise has nothing. Lavinia has everything. After a chance encounter, the two spiral into an intimate, intense, and possibly toxic friendship. A *Talented Mr. Ripley* for the digital age, this seductive story takes a classic tale of obsession and makes it irresistibly new.

**17 REFRESHING Books to Read This Summer** —*The New York Times* • **18 Books We CAN'T WAIT to Read This Summer** —*Vulture* • **BRILLIANT Books to Bring to the Beach This Summer** —*Refinery29* • **TOP BOOKS of Summer** —*O, The Oprah Magazine* • **The BEST New Books** —*People* • **The 20 BEST READS for Your Summer Break** —*New York Post* • **BEST New Books for June** —*Popsugar* • **12 PAGE-TURNING New Books to Read in June** —*Brit + Co*

### An excerpt from *Social Creature*

“They go through both bottles of champagne right there on the High Line, with nothing but the stars over them.... They drink and Lavinia tells Louise about all the places they will go together, when they finish their stories, when they are both great writers—to Paris and to Rome and to Trieste.... Lavinia will never go. She is going to die soon.”



## TOTALLY ENGROSSED BY THESE GRIPPING PAGE-TURNERS

Not that she gets any credit.

Korede has long been in love with a kind, handsome doctor at the hospital where she works. She dreams of the day when he will realize that she's exactly what he needs. But when he asks Korede for Ayoola's phone number, she must reckon with what her sister has become and how far she's willing to go to protect her.

Sharp as nails and full of deadpan wit, Oyinkan Braithwaite's deliciously deadly debut is as fun as it is frightening.

**The opening lines of *My Sister, the Serial Killer*:**

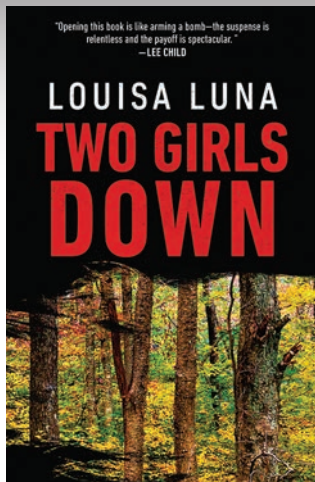
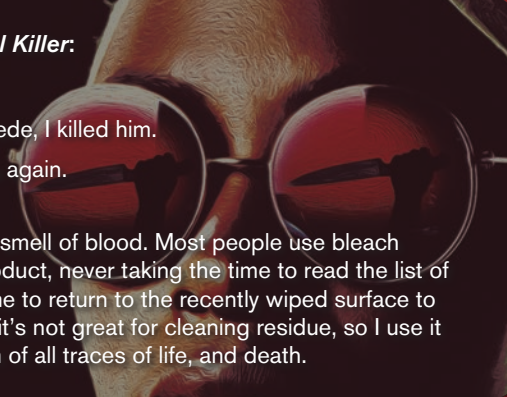
### Words

Ayoola summons me with these words—Korede, I killed him.

I had hoped I would never hear those words again.

### Bleach

I bet you didn't know that bleach masks the smell of blood. Most people use bleach indiscriminately, assuming it is a catchall product, never taking the time to read the list of ingredients on the back, never taking the time to return to the recently wiped surface to take a closer look. Bleach will disinfect, but it's not great for cleaning residue, so I use it only after I have first scrubbed the bathroom of all traces of life, and death.



## Two Girls Down

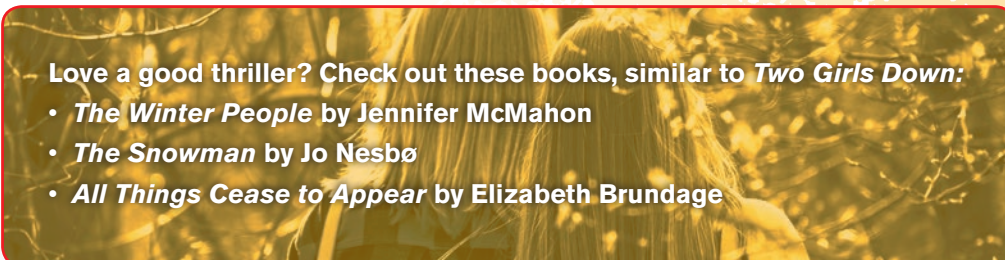
Louisa Luna

**“Opening this book is like arming a bomb—the suspense is relentless and the payoff is spectacular.”** —Lee Child

When two young sisters disappear from a strip mall parking lot in a small Pennsylvania town, their devastated family hires Alice Vega, an enigmatic bounty hunter from California, to do what the authorities cannot. Immediately shut out by a local police department already stretched thin by budget cuts and the growing OxyContin and meth epidemics, Vega enlists the help of a disgraced former cop, Max Caplan, to cut through the local politics. Vega and Cap will go to extraordinary lengths to untangle a complex web of lies, false leads, and dangerous relationships to locate the girls before time runs out.

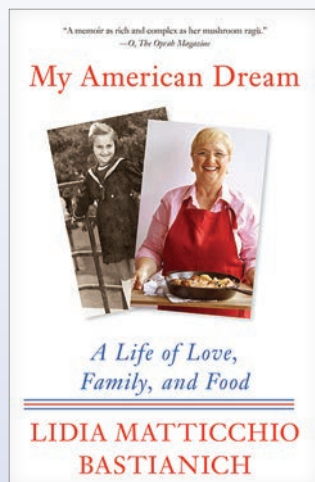
**Love a good thriller? Check out these books, similar to *Two Girls Down*:**

- *The Winter People* by Jennifer McMahon
- *The Snowman* by Jo Nesbø
- *All Things Cease to Appear* by Elizabeth Brundage





# FOODIE MEMOIRS



## My American Dream Lidia Matticchio Bastianich

“A memoir as rich and complex as her mushroom ragù.” —*O, the Oprah Magazine*

For decades, beloved chef Lidia Bastianich has introduced Americans to Italian food through her cookbooks, TV shows, and restaurants. Now, in *My American Dream*, she tells her own story for the very first time. Born in Pula, on the Istrian peninsula, Lidia grew up surrounded by love and security, learning the art of Italian cooking from her beloved grandmother. But when Istria was annexed by a communist regime, Lidia's family fled to Trieste, where they spent two years in a refugee camp waiting for visas to enter the United States. When she finally arrived in New York, Lidia soon began working in restaurants, the first step on a path that led to her becoming one of the most revered chefs and businesswomen in the country.

Read the book while enjoying Lidia's mouthwatering fried mozzarella skewers:



RECIPE  
BY  
THE  
BOOK

### FRIED MOZZARELLA SKEWERS

Pair the warmth of Lidia's storytelling from her new memoir, *My American Dream*, with this mouthwatering recipe for fancy grilled cheese.

No one can resist fried cheese, and these Italian mini-sandwiches are no exception. They are a classic dish in Italian American cooking, and especially beloved by anyone fond of grilled cheese sandwiches. Firm white bread is recommended in the recipe, but multigrain or whole wheat will be just as delicious.

Serves 4

#### INGREDIENTS:

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil  
5 cloves garlic, chopped  
4 anchovy fillets  
3 tablespoons drained tiny capers in brine  
2 tablespoons unsalted butter  
½ cup dry white wine  
3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

8 slices firm white bread, crusts removed  
12 ounces fresh mozzarella, thinly sliced  
All-purpose flour for dredging  
2 large eggs  
2 tablespoons milk  
Vegetable oil for frying  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh Italian parsley

#### METHOD:

**Make the sauce:** Pour the olive oil into a large skillet and set over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot, add the chopped garlic and cook until it is sizzling and fragrant, taking care not to burn it. Add the anchovies and capers, and stir until they both dissolve into the oil. Plop in the butter; once it is melted, pour in the white wine and lemon juice. Bring to an energetic simmer, and cook until reduced by half, about 6 to 7 minutes. Remove and keep warm.

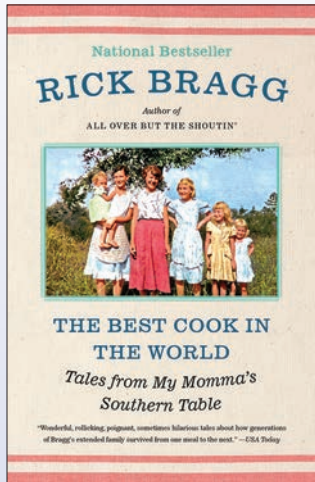
Layer four slices of bread on your work surface. Top with the sliced mozzarella, trimming the cheese to fit within the edges of the bread. Top with remaining bread to make four sandwiches, and seal each sandwich at each corner with a toothpick.

Spread the flour on a rimmed plate. Beat the eggs and milk together in a wide, shallow bowl. Heat about ½ inch vegetable oil in a skillet over medium heat; the oil is ready when a crust of bread sizzles on contact.

Dredge the sandwiches well in the flour, making sure to coat all sides and tap off the excess. Soak the sandwiches on all sides in the egg, letting the excess egg drip back into the bowl. Carefully ease the sandwiches into the oil, and fry until they're golden brown on both sides and the cheese is melted, about 1 to 2 minutes per side. Remove the sandwiches, and drain well on paper towels. Remove the toothpicks from sandwiches and use a serrated knife to cut them in half on the diagonal.

Return the sauce to a simmer and stir in the parsley. Spread the sauce on four serving plates, then top each plate with a sandwich and serve hot.

# FOODIE MEMOIRS



## The Best Cook in the World

Rick Bragg

“Wonderful, rollicking, poignant, sometimes hilarious tales about how generations of Bragg’s extended family survived from one meal to the next.” —*USA Today*

Part cookbook, part memoir, *The Best Cook in the World* is Pulitzer Prize-winner Rick Bragg’s loving tribute to the South, his family and, especially, to his extraordinary mother. Here are irresistible stories and recipes from across generations. They come, skillet by skillet, from Bragg’s ancestors, from feasts and near famine, from funerals and celebrations, and from a thousand tales of family lore as rich and as sumptuous as the dishes they inspired. Deeply personal and unfailingly mouthwatering, *The Best Cook in the World* is a book to be savored.

Reading Rick Bragg's *The Best Cook in the World* is like sitting down with family for a good old-fashioned home-cooked meal. Bragg brings us into his childhood kitchen, where grudges were settled, confidences were shared, victories were celebrated, and hardships were overcome with a full belly and a full-bellied laugh. He invites us to try our hand at the Southern classics he grew up with by carefully translating his mother's "you know, hon, just *some*"s into recipes anyone can follow, like this one for Sweet Potato Cobbler. We are so grateful Bragg has preserved the legacy of this cuisine, which was born out of finding joy in and making the best out of what you can get your hands on, and that he has shared it with us. We hope you enjoy this mouthwatering recipe and his heartfelt ode to his mother, grandmother, family, and the South.



### SWEET POTATO COBBLER

#### INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds sweet potatoes  
1 stick butter  
1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon  
2 cups flour  
2 cups sugar  
2 cups whole milk

#### METHOD:

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees.

Bake your sweet potatoes, skin on, for about ½ hour. Cool, peel, and cut into big chunks. If they're medium-sized potatoes, you can split them lengthwise, and then cut across about three or four times. You do not want bite-sized pieces, but something bigger.

The size of your baking dish will determine your texture. If you want a crispier crust, use a bigger, shallower pan. If you want a fluffier, softer crust, use a smaller, deeper one.

My mother uses a pan that she would use for a large pound cake.

“You don’t need no liquid in this. The sweet taters will make a little.”

Pour in the sweet potatoes. Cut one stick butter into about six sections, and spread it out among the sweet potatoes. Sprinkle a little cinnamon, no more than a teaspoon, over the potatoes.

“The sweet is in the batter,” she said.

Combine the flour and sugar, and stir in the milk, until you get a batter about the consistency of pancake batter or a little thicker. Pour about half of it over the sweet potatoes. Set the bowl down, pick up the baking dish, give it a gentle shake or two, then bang down, smartly but not hard enough to send batter flying or crack your baking dish, on the counter.

“Gets it shook down in there real good,” she said.

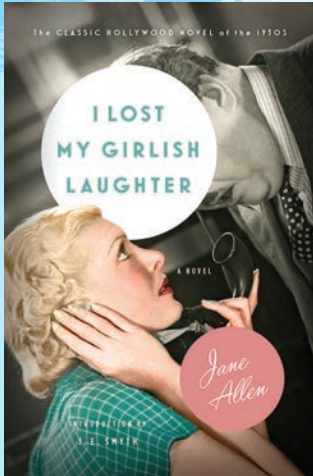
Then pour the rest of the batter in, and sprinkle with your remaining cinnamon.

Bake for about 30 minutes or so, until the crust is golden brown.

This cobbler can be served as dessert, of course, but it can also be served as a side dish, particularly delicious with roast pork, even if you have to imagine the pork.

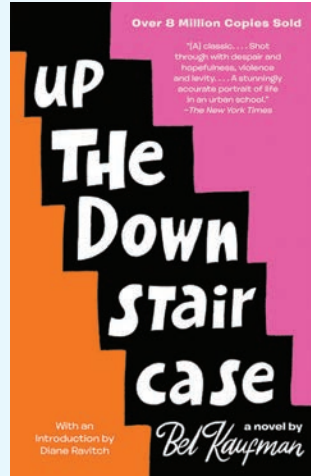


# NEW EDITIONS OF BELOVED WORKS



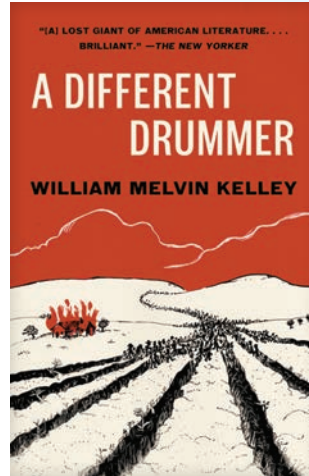
## I Lost My Girlish Laughter Jane Allen

This lost literary gem of Hollywood in the 1930s is a thinly veiled send-up of the actors, producers, writers, and directors of the Golden Age of the studio system.



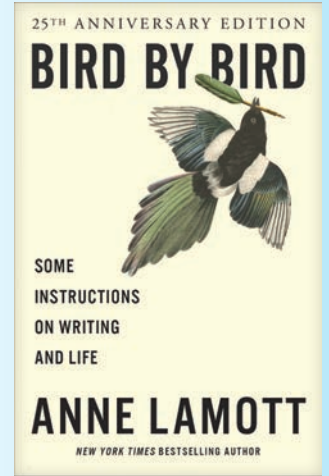
## Up the Down Staircase Bel Kaufman

"[A] classic.... Shot through with despair and hopefulness, violence and levity.... A stunningly accurate portrait of life in an urban school."  
—*The New York Times*



## A Different Drummer William Melvin Kelley

"[A] lost giant of American literature.... Brilliant."  
—*The New Yorker*



## Bird by Bird Anne Lamott

25<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary Edition  
"A warm, generous and hilarious guide through the writer's world and its treacherous swamps."  
—*Los Angeles Times*

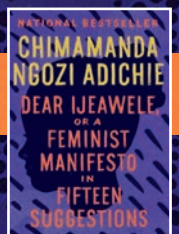
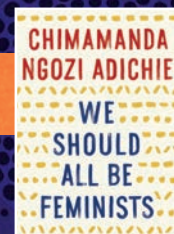
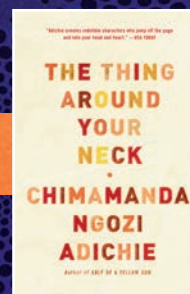
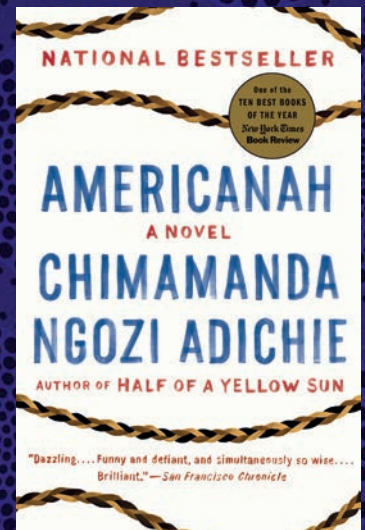


© Wani Olatunde

# CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE

"A brilliant novelist  
and a serious thinker."  
—*The Guardian*

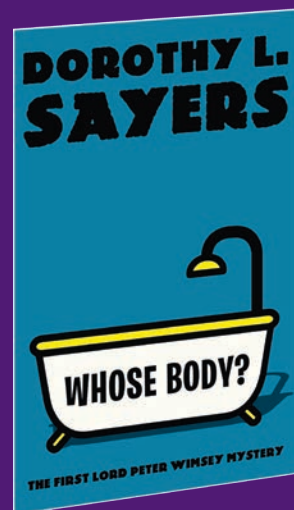
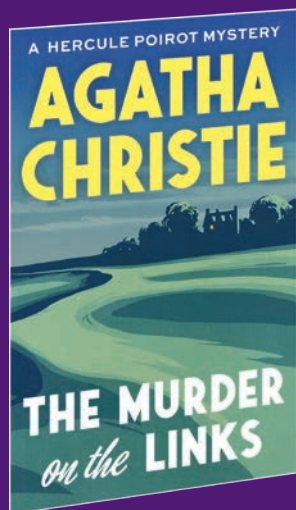
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“Agatha Christie created  
the modern murder mystery.”

—*The New Yorker*

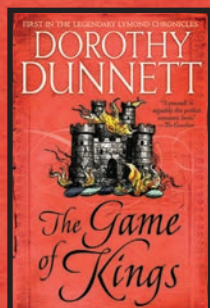
“Sayers brought  
to the detective  
novel originality,  
intelligence, and wit.”

—P. D. James



Before George R. R. Martin's *A GAME OF THRONES*  
and Diana Gabaldon's *OUTLANDER*, there was  
— DOROTHY DUNNETT'S —  
*The Lymond Chronicles*

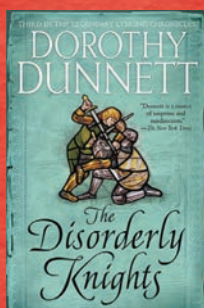
“Exciting, dangerous, fascinating.” —*The Boston Globe*



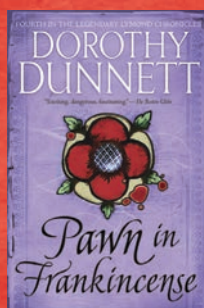
The Game of Kings  
Book 1



Queens' Play  
Book 2



The Disorderly Knights  
Book 3



Pawn in Frankincense  
Book 4

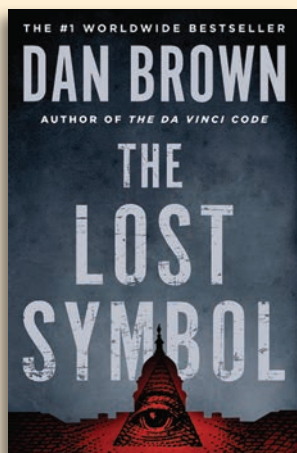


The Ringed Castle  
Book 5



Checkmate  
Book 6

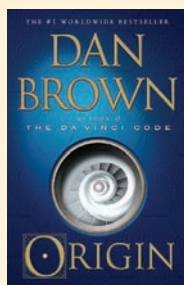
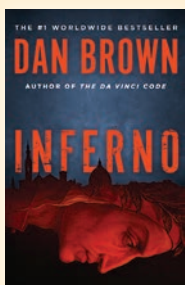
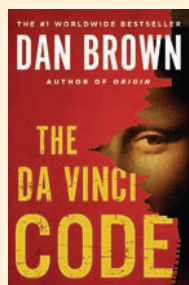




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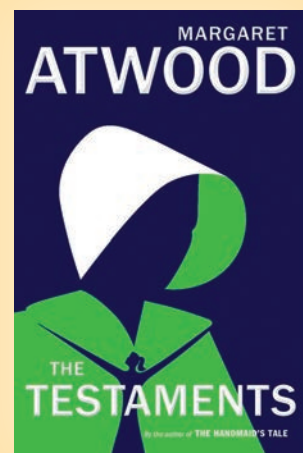
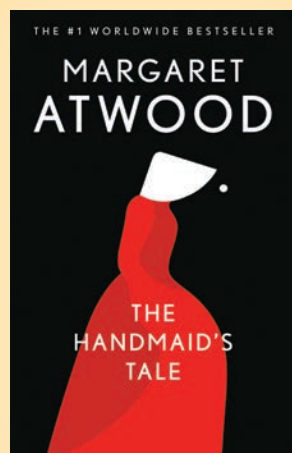


## The Handmaid's Tale

has a new look and Margaret Atwood's sequel,

## The Testaments,

has just been published.



Margaret Atwood's other books are also getting a beautiful new series look—including *The Blind Assassin*, which is now available. Keep an eye out for those announcements so you can refresh your Margaret Atwood library of books.

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