

Book Club in a Bag Descriptions – June 2017

Full descriptions follow with separate [Fiction](#) and [Non-Fiction](#) sections. Audio (TB), MP3 CD (MP3), eBook or eAudio (via 3M Cloud and Net Library) and Large Print (LP) versions available as indicated. Some eBooks or eAudio may have an “on order” status.

Fiction

419 by Will Ferguson

(e-Book)

A car tumbles through darkness down a snowy ravine.

A woman without a name walks out of a dust storm in sub-Saharan Africa.

And in the seething heat of Lagos City, a criminal cartel scours the Internet, looking for victims.

Lives intersect. Worlds collide. And it all begins with a single email: "Dear Sir, I am the daughter of a Nigerian diplomat, and I need your help..."

When Laura Curtis, a lonely editor in a cold northern city, discovers that her father has died because of one such swindle, she sets out to track down—and corner—her father’s killer. It is a dangerous game she’s playing, however, and the stakes are higher than she can ever imagine.

Woven into Laura’s journey is a mysterious woman from the African Sahel with scars etched into her skin and a young man who finds himself caught up in a web of violence and deceit.

And running through it, a dying father’s final words: "You, I love."

Above All Things by Tanis Rideout

(LP, e-Book)

The Paris Wife meets **Into Thin Air** in this breathtaking debut novel of obsession and divided loyalties, which brilliantly weaves together the harrowing story of George Mallory's ill-fated 1924 attempt to be the first man to conquer Mount Everest, with that of a single day in the life of his wife as she waits at home in England for news of his return.

A captivating blend of historical fact and imaginative fiction, **Above All Things** moves seamlessly back and forth between the epic story of Mallory's legendary final expedition and a heartbreaking account of a day in the life of Ruth Mallory. Through George's perspective, and that of the newest member of the climbing team, Sandy Irvine, we get an astonishing picture of the terrible risks taken by the men on the treacherous terrain of the Himalaya. But it is through Ruth's eyes that a complex portrait of a marriage emerges, one forged on the eve of the First World War, shadowed by its losses, and haunted by the ever-present possibility that George might not come home.

Drawing on years of research, this powerful and beautifully written novel is a timeless story of desire, redemption, and the lengths we are willing to go for honour, glory, and love.

The Alchemist by Paul Coelho

(LP, TB, e-Book)

A fable about following one’s dream, listening to one’s heart, and reading life’s omens as a traveller learns about life while crossing the desert.

All That Matters by Jan Goldstein

(MP3, e-Book)

Depressed over a breakup and her estrangement from her father, Jennifer attempts suicide and is reunited with her grandmother who whisks her off to New York City, where Jennifer learns how to trust and hope again.

All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr

(LP, e-Book, e-Audio)

Marie-Laure lives with her father in Paris near the Museum of Natural History, where he works as the master of its thousands of locks. When she is six, Marie-Laure goes blind and her father builds a perfect miniature of their neighborhood so she can memorize it by touch and navigate her way home. When she is twelve, the Nazis occupy Paris and father and daughter flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure's reclusive great-uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum's most valuable and dangerous jewel. In a mining town in Germany, the orphan Werner grows up with his younger sister, enchanted by a crude radio they find. Werner becomes an expert at building and fixing these crucial new instruments, a talent that wins him a place at a brutal academy for Hitler Youth, then a special assignment to track the resistance. More and more aware of the human cost of his intelligence, Werner travels through the heart of the war and, finally, into Saint-Malo, where his story and Marie-Laure's converge.

- Winner of the 2015 Pulitzer Prize

Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy

(MP3, e-Book)

Anna Karenina tells of the doomed love affair between the sensuous and rebellious Anna and the dashing officer, Count Vronsky. Tragedy unfolds as Anna rejects her passionless marriage and must endure the hypocrisies of society. Set against a vast and richly textured canvas of nineteenth-century Russia, the novel's seven major characters create a dynamic imbalance, playing out the contrasts of city and country life and all the variations on love and family happiness.

Annabel by Kathleen Winter 

(e-Book)

A universal concern—the importance of self-determination—takes a highly specific form in Kathleen Winter's first novel, the story of an intersex child born in a remote coastal Labrador village in 1968. Intersex births are considerably more common in real life than in fiction, and Montreal-based Winter has created a thoughtful treatment of this rarely discussed topic. A dramatic, thematically rich novel.

Arcadia by Lauren Groff

(LP, e-Book)

In the fields of western New York State in the 1970s, a few dozen idealists set out to live off the land, founding a commune centered on the grounds of a decaying mansion called Arcadia House. Arcadia follows this romantic utopian dream from its hopeful start through its heyday. Arcadia's inhabitants include Handy, the charismatic leader; his wife, Astrid, a midwife; Abe, a master carpenter; Hannah, a baker and historian; and Abe and Hannah's only child, Bit. While Arcadia rises and falls, Bit, too, ages and changes. He falls in love with Helle, Handy's lovely, troubled daughter. And eventually he must face the world beyond Arcadia.

Atonement by Ian McEwan

(TB, e-Book)

On a summer day in 1935, thirteen-year-old Briony Tallis witnesses a moment's flirtation between her older sister, Cecilia, and Robbie Turner, the son of a servant. But Briony's incomplete grasp of adult motives and her precocious imagination bring about a crime that will change all their lives, a crime whose repercussions *Atonement* follows through the chaos and carnage of World War II and into the close of the twentieth century.

- *2002 Commonwealth Writers' Prize winner*

Bel Canto by Ann Patchett**(TB, LP, e-Book)**

Inspired by an incident that took place in 1996, when a group of terrorists took over the Japanese Embassy in Lima, Peru.... Somewhere in South America, at the home of the country's vice president, a lavish birthday party is being held for powerful businessman. It is a perfect evening—until a band of gun-wielding terrorists takes the entire party hostage. But what begins as a panicked, life-threatening scenario slowly evolves into something quite different, a moment of great beauty, as terrorists and hostages forge unexpected bonds, and people from different continents become compatriots. Friendship, compassion, and the chance for great love lead the characters to forget the real danger that has been set in motion...and cannot be stopped.

- *2002 Orange Prize for Fiction winner, 2002 PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction winner*

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel by Deborah Moggach

When Ravi Kapoor, an overworked London doctor, reaches the breaking point with his difficult father-in-law, he asks his wife: "Can't we just send him away somewhere? Somewhere far, far away." His prayer is seemingly answered when Ravi's entrepreneurial cousin sets up a retirement home in India, hoping to re-create in Bangalore an elegant lost corner of England. Several retirees are enticed by the promise of indulgent living at a bargain price, but upon arriving, they are dismayed to find that restoration of the once sophisticated hotel has stalled, and that such amenities as water and electricity are . . . infrequent. But what their new life lacks in luxury, they come to find, it's plentiful in adventure, stunning beauty, and unexpected love.

The Birth House by Ami McKay **(MP3, e-Book)**

When Dr. Gilbert Thomas, self-proclaimed expert in hygienic, pain-free childbirth, opens a practice in a Nova Scotia coastal village during the World War I years, it sets the stage for a classic conflict between long-held traditions and modern medicine.

The Book of Negroes by Lawrence Hill **(MP3, e-Book)**

In 1745, slavers steal eleven-year-old Aminata from her village and march her three months' westward to the Atlantic Ocean. She is placed on a slave ship and transported to South Carolina where she is sold. She endures hellish conditions throughout her long life, but she never loses her determination to escape captivity and to return to her village, but her life leads her into paths that she cannot predict.

- *Winner of 2007 Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize, 2008 Commonwealth Writers' Prize, 2009 Canada Reads*

Burial Rites by Hannah Kent –**(e-Book)**

Set against Iceland's stark landscape, Hannah Kent brings to vivid life the story of Agnes, who, charged with the brutal murder of her former master, is sent to an isolated farm to await execution. Horrified at the prospect of housing a convicted murderer, the family at first avoids Agnes. Only Tóti, a priest Agnes has mysteriously chosen to be her spiritual guardian, seeks to understand her. But as Agnes's death looms, the farmer's wife and their daughters learn there is another side to the sensational story they've heard.

Bury Your Dead by Louise Penny **(TB, LP)**

Taking leave during Quebec's Winter Carnival after a case gone wrong, a disgruntled Chief Inspector Armand Gamache is unable to avoid assisting a politically charged investigation involving a historian's murder during a search for a famous figure's burial site.

Caleb's Crossing by Geraldine Brooks**(TB, LP, e-Audio)**

Bethia Mayfield is a restless and curious young woman growing up in Martha's vineyard in the 1660s amid a small band of pioneering English Puritans. At age twelve, she meets Caleb, the young son of a chieftain, and

the two forge a secret bond. Bethia's father is a Calvinist minister who seeks to convert the native Wampanoag, and Caleb becomes a prize in the contest between old ways and new, eventually becoming the first Native American graduate of Harvard College. Inspired by a true story, *Caleb's Crossing* brilliantly captures the triumphs and turmoil of two brave, openhearted spirits who risk everything in a search for knowledge at a time of superstition and ignorance.

Cellist of Sarajevo by Steven Galloway  (TB, e-Book)

In a city under siege, four people whose lives have been upended are ultimately reminded of what it is to be human. A novel of great intensity and power, and inspired by a true story, *The Cellist of Sarajevo* poignantly explores how war can change one's definition of humanity, the effect of music on our emotional endurance, and how a romance with the rituals of daily life can itself be a form of resistance.

The Chaperone by Laura Moriarty (LP, TB, e-Audio)

The New York Times bestseller and the *USA Today* #1 Hot Fiction Pick for the summer, *The Chaperone* is a captivating novel about the woman who chaperoned an irreverent Louise Brooks to New York City in 1922 and the summer that would change them both.

Only a few years before becoming a famous silent-film star and an icon of her generation, a fifteen-year-old Louise Brooks leaves Wichita, Kansas, to study with the prestigious Denishawn School of Dancing in New York. Much to her annoyance, she is accompanied by a thirty-six-year-old chaperone, who is neither mother nor friend. Cora Carlisle, a complicated but traditional woman with her own reasons for making the trip, has no idea what she's in for. Young Louise, already stunningly beautiful and sporting her famous black bob with blunt bangs, is known for her arrogance and her lack of respect for convention. Ultimately, the five weeks they spend together will transform their lives forever.

Drawing on the rich history of the 1920s,'30s, and beyond—from the orphan trains to Prohibition, flappers, and the onset of the Great Depression to the burgeoning movement for equal rights and new opportunities for women—Laura Moriarty's *The Chaperone* illustrates how rapidly everything, from fashion and hemlines to values and attitudes, was changing at this time and what a vast difference it all made for Louise Brooks, Cora Carlisle, and others like them.

Circling the Sun by Paula McLain (LP, TB, e-Book)

Brought to Kenya from England as a child and then abandoned by her mother, Beryl is raised by both her father and the native Kipsigis tribe who share his estate. Her unconventional upbringing transforms Beryl into a bold young woman with a fierce love of all things wild and an inherent understanding of nature's delicate balance. But even the wild child must grow up, and when everything Beryl knows and trusts dissolves, she is catapulted into a string of disastrous relationships. Beryl forges her own path as a horse trainer, and her uncommon style attracts the eye of the Happy Valley set, a decadent, bohemian community of European expats who also live and love by their own set of rules. But it's the ruggedly charismatic Denys Finch Hatton who ultimately helps Beryl navigate the uncharted territory of her own heart. The intensity of their love reveals Beryl's truest self and her fate: to fly. Set against the majestic landscape of early-twentieth-century Africa, McLain's powerful tale reveals the extraordinary adventures of a woman before her time, the exhilaration of freedom and its cost, and the tenacity of the human spirit.

Coventry by Helen Humphreys (MP3, e-Book)

Helen Humphreys draws on history to delve into the lives torn asunder by the German attack of November 14, 1940. Harriet, a widow from World War I, is atop Coventry Cathedral, part of the nightly watch, when first the factories and then the church are set on fire. In the ensuing chaos she bonds with a young man, very much like the husband she lost, who relies on her to find the way back to his home where he left his mother. There, the youth's mother awaits his arrival and rethinks the life that has brought her to this city and her life raising her son alone. Together, these two women must face a world as immeasurably changed as their own selves.

Crow Lake by Mary Lawson

(MP3)

This debut novel concerns a young woman, Kate Morrison, a zoologist who is hundreds of miles away from her childhood home of Crow Lake in the isolated regions of northern Ontario. Yet she can't escape the memories of her past, the car accident that killed her parents, her older brother who took her out to the pond to teach her about the wildlife there, and the violence of the neighbours whose lives were intertwined with her family. Embarking on a new love, Kate must come to grips with her past to fashion her own future.

The Curiosity by Stephen P. Kiernan

(e-Book)

Michael Crichton meets *The Time Traveler's Wife* in this powerful debut novel in which a man, frozen in the Arctic ice for more than a century, awakens in the present day. A gripping, poignant, and thoroughly original thriller, Stephen Kiernan's provocative debut novel raises disturbing questions about the very nature of life and humanity—man as a scientific subject, as a tabloid plaything, as a living being: A curiosity.

The Dinner: A Novel by Herman Koch, translated by Sam Garrett

(LP, TB, e-Book, e-Audio)

A summer's evening in Amsterdam and two couples meet at a fashionable restaurant. Between mouthfuls of food and over the delicate scraping of cutlery, the conversation remains a gentle hum of politeness - the banality of work, the triviality of holidays. But the empty words hide a terrible conflict and, with every forced smile and every new course, the knives are being sharpened... Each couple has a fifteen-year-old son. Together, the boys have committed a horrifying act, caught on camera, and their grainy images have been beamed into living rooms across the nation; despite a police manhunt, the boys remain unidentified - by everyone except their parents. As the dinner reaches its culinary climax, the conversation finally touches on their children and, as civility and friendship disintegrate, each couple shows just how far they are prepared to go to protect those they love.

Eon by Greg Bear

YA In the year 2000, a huge potato-shaped asteroid, nicknamed the Stone by Americans, appears in orbit around the earth. Exploration shows that it is divided into seven man-made, hollowed-out chambers, indicating that it had been inhabited. Scientists discover that it was built by Earth people, but in the far distant future, and that a nuclear war is imminent. It becomes crucial that theoretical mathematician Patricia Vasquez discover why the former inhabitants left and where they went. Although *Eon* is far too long, its story of futuristic cities and life forms stirs the imagination. Readers travel to worlds where humans may exist as memories in the City Memory Bank, corporeal representatives (ghosts) or incarnations. Other humanoid life forms also exist, and in an amazing array of shapes, from snake-like creatures to floating blobs.

Evening Chorus by Helen Humphries

(e-Book)

Downed during his first mission, James Hunter is taken captive as a German POW. To bide the time, he studies a nest of redstarts at the edge of camp. Some prisoners plot escape; some are shot. And then, one day, James is called to the Kommandant's office.

Meanwhile, back home, James's new wife, Rose, is on her own, free in a way she has never known. Then, James's sister, Enid, loses everything during the Blitz and must seek shelter with Rose. In a cottage near Ashdown forest, the two women jealously guard secrets, but form a surprising friendship. Each of these characters will find unexpected freedom amid war's privations and discover confinements that come with peace.

Every Fifteen Minutes by Lisa Scottoline

(e-Book)

The personal life of Dr. Eric Parrish, chief of the psychiatric unit at Havemeyer General Hospital in Philadelphia's suburbs, is even more of a challenge than his job. His wife, Caitlin, has filed for divorce, and, as a result, he rarely gets to spend time with his seven-year-old daughter, Hannah. Distraction arrives in the forms

of Kristine Malin, an attractive medical student, and a friendly, flirtatious friendship with emergency doctor Laurie Fortunato. Things start to unravel for Eric when he has to field a sexual harassment claim and is implicated in the murder of a young woman. The misfortunes pile up, and both his career and his custody battle for Hannah are placed in jeopardy. Many characters who seem to be gunning for Eric are likely candidates for a sociopathic diagnosis. Once the red herrings are dispatched, the identity of the culprit who plots his downfall is a genuine surprise.

Every Man Dies Alone by Hans Fallada

(MP3)

This never-before-translated masterpiece—by a heroic best-selling writer who saw his life crumble when he wouldn't join the Nazi Party—is based on a true story. It presents a richly detailed portrait of life in Berlin under the Nazis and tells the sweeping saga of one working-class couple who decides to take a stand when their only son is killed at the front. With nothing but their grief and each other against the awesome power of the Reich, they launch a simple, clandestine resistance campaign that soon has an enraged Gestapo on their trail, and a world of terrified neighbours and cynical snitches ready to turn them in.

Factory Voice by Jeanette Lynes 

(MP3)

Rich with forties language and imagery, especially the sights and sounds of an assembly plant, *The Factory Voice* is a quirky, light-hearted mystery about the daily lives of factory workers and in particular of women in a time of transition, both for their personal lives and for the society in general.

- *2010 Pass the Book title*

Fauna by Alissa York 

(e-Book)

The wide Don Valley ravine that bisects Toronto is home to countless species of urban wildlife, including human waifs and strays. When Edal Jones can't cope with the casual cruelty she encounters in her job as a federal wildlife officer, she finds herself drawn to an unlikely beacon of solace: an auto-wrecker's yard. Guy Howell offers sanctuary to animals and people alike. Well versed in the delicate workings of damaged beings, Guy might just stand a chance at mending Edal's heart. But before love can bloom, the little community must come to terms with a different breed of lost soul—a young man whose brutal backwoods childhood is catching up with him, causing him to persecute the creatures that call the valley home.

- *2012 Pass the Book title*

Finding Home by Eric Wright 

Will Prentice, who immigrated to Canada from England thirty years ago, realizes that sometimes you have to leave home to find it. The week after his wife asks him for a divorce, Will returns to England to attend his mother's funeral. Embarking on a driving tour of the English countryside, he begins to reexamine his life back home in Canada. His driving companion is his uncle's grandson, Fred, a recent Cambridge graduate at a crossroads in his life who is interested in Canadian Studies. As Fred drives Will through various English boroughs, Will talks him through a journey across Canada reawakening Fred's imagination and defining the heart of his own passion.

The Flame Throwers by Rachel Kushner

(TB)

The year is 1975 and Reno—so-called because of the place of her birth—has come to New York intent on turning her fascination with motorcycles and speed into art. Her arrival coincides with an explosion of activity in the art world—artists have colonized a deserted and industrial SoHo, are staging actions in the East Village, and are blurring the line between life and art. Reno meets a group of dreamers and raconteurs who submit her to a sentimental education of sorts. Ardent, vulnerable, and bold, she begins an affair with an artist named Sandro Valera, the semi-estranged scion of an Italian tire and motorcycle empire. When they visit Sandro's family home in Italy, Reno falls in with members of the radical movement that overtook Italy in the seventies.

Betrayal sends her reeling into a clandestine undertow.

The Flamethrowers is an intensely engaging exploration of the mystique of the feminine, the fake, the terrorist. At its center is Kushner's brilliantly realized protagonist, a young woman on the verge. Thrilling and fearless, this is a major American novel from a writer of spectacular talent and imagination.

Flee, Fly, Flown by Janet Hepburn

(e-Book)

Lillian and Audrey hatch a plot to escape from Tranquil Meadows Nursing Home, "borrow" a car, and spend their hastily planned vacation time driving to destinations west. They set out on their journey having forgotten that their memory problems might make driving and following directions difficult. Then they meet up with the unsuspecting Rayne, a young man also heading west in hope of reconciling with his family. Without minimizing the realities of old age, dementia, and frailty, Lillian and Audrey's story is rich with laughter, adventure, and hope.

The Gathering by Anne Enright

(MP3)

As nine members of the Hegarty clan gather for the wake of their drowned brother Liam, his sister Veronica remembers the secret he shared with her about what happened in their grandmother's house thirty years ago, a betrayal that spans three generations.

- *2007 Man Booker Prize Winner*

Generation A by Douglas Coupland 

(MP3, e-Book))

In the near future, bees are extinct—until one autumn when five unconnected individuals in Iowa, New Zealand, Paris, Ontario, and Sri Lanka are stung. Immediately snatched up by ominous figures in hazmat suits, interrogated separately in neutral IKEA-like chambers, and then released as 15-minute celebrities into a world driven almost entirely by the internet, these five unforgettable people endure a barrage of unusual and highly 21st-century circumstances. A charismatic scientist with dubious motives eventually brings the quintet together on a remote Canadian island. But their shared experience unites them in a way they could never have imagined.

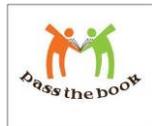
Go Set a Watchman by Harper Lee

(e-Book, e-Audio)

Maycomb, Alabama. Twenty-six-year-old Jean Louise Finch—"Scout"—returns home from New York City to visit her aging father, Atticus. Set against the backdrop of the civil rights tensions and political turmoil that were transforming the South, Jean Louise's homecoming turns bittersweet when she learns disturbing truths about her close-knit family, the town, and the people dearest to her. Memories from her childhood flood back, and her values and assumptions are thrown into doubt. Featuring many of the iconic characters from *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Go Set a Watchman* perfectly captures a young woman, and a world, in painful yet necessary transition out of the illusions of the past—a journey that can only be guided by one's own conscience.

The Golem and the Jinni by Helene Wecker

(LP, TB, e-Book, e-Audio)



Chava is a golem, a creature made of clay, brought to life by a disgraced rabbi who dabbles in dark Kabbalistic magic. When her master, the husband who commissioned her, dies at sea on the voyage from Poland, she is unmoored and adrift as the ship arrives in New York in 1899.

Ahmad is a jinni, a being of fire, born in the ancient Syrian desert. Trapped in an old copper flask by a Bedouin wizard centuries ago, he is released accidentally by a tinsmith in a Lower Manhattan shop. Though he is no longer imprisoned, Ahmad is not entirely free – an unbreakable band of iron binds him to the physical world.

The Golem and the Jinni is their magical, unforgettable story; unlikely friends whose tenuous attachment challenges their opposing natures – until the night a terrifying incident drives them back into their separate

worlds. But a powerful threat will soon bring Chava and Ahmad together again, challenging their existence and forcing them to make a fateful choice.

The Heart Specialist by Claire Holden Rothman  (MP3)

Set in Montreal at the turn of the 20th century, *The Heart Specialist* is the epic story of Agnes White, a lonely orphaned girl fascinated by the “wrong” things—microscopes, dissections, and anatomy instead of more ladylike interests—who rises to the status of one of the world’s most celebrated pioneering women doctors. Developing a fascination for science against the approval of her prim grandmother, Agnes resolves to follow in the footsteps of her renowned physician father, who disappeared after being accused of his handicapped sister’s murder. Inspired by the career of Maude Abbott, one of Canada’s first female physicians, *The Heart Specialist* is a novel about the mysterious, painful journey into selfhood.

The Heretic’s Daughter by Kathleen Kent (LP, e-Book, e-Audio)

The Heretic’s Daughter is a novel of the Salem witch trials. We have all heard of them, but author Kathleen Kent has more than heard of them. She is a tenth-generation descendant of Martha Carrier, who was hanged for being a witch in Salem in 1692. Stories of Martha have been passed down through her mother’s family for generations. Kent has taken fact and blended it with fictional license to tell the story of Martha, her husband Thomas and their five children. The book opens with Martha’s daughter Sarah writing a letter to her granddaughter in 1752, finally revealing the secret she has guarded for sixty years. From this letter, we go back and relive Sarah’s past.

High Mountains of Portugal by Yann Martel – New (e-Book)

In Lisbon in 1904, a young man named Tomás discovers an old journal. It hints at the existence of an extraordinary artifact that—if he can find it—would redefine history. Traveling in one of Europe’s earliest automobiles, he sets out in search of this strange treasure. Thirty-five years later, a Portuguese pathologist devoted to the murder mysteries of Agatha Christie finds himself at the center of a mystery of his own and drawn into the consequences of Tomás’s quest. Fifty years on, a Canadian senator takes refuge in his ancestral village in northern Portugal, grieving the loss of his beloved wife. But he arrives with an unusual companion: a chimpanzee. And there the century-old quest will come to an unexpected conclusion.

The House Girl by Tara Conklin (TB)

The House Girl, the historical fiction debut by Tara Conklin, is an unforgettable story of love, history, and a search for justice, set in modern-day New York and 1852 Virginia. Weaving together the story of an escaped slave in the pre-Civil War South and a determined junior lawyer, *The House Girl* follows Lina Sparrow as she looks for an appropriate lead plaintiff in a lawsuit seeking compensation for families of slaves. In her research, she learns about Lu Anne Bell, a renowned prewar artist whose famous works might have actually been painted by her slave, Josephine. Featuring two remarkable, unforgettable heroines, Tara Conklin’s *The House Girl* is riveting and powerful, literary fiction at its very best.

Irma Voth by Miriam Toews  (e-Book)

Nineteen-year-old Irma Voth lives in a Mennonite community in northern Mexico. It’s been six years since her family up and left Canada to escape the prying eyes of the government and preserve their religious freedom, but Irma still misses the minor freedoms she had. Things change for Irma when a film crew moves into the empty house next door. They’ve come to make a movie about the Mennonite community, and have made a deal with Irma’s father to stay on their land. At first bemused by the ragged and absurd crewmembers, Irma comes to embrace the passion and creative freedom of their world—but in doing so brings on the wrath of her father, who is determined to keep her from it at all costs.

The Island Walkers by John Bemrose 

(e-Book)

Across a bend of Ontario's Attawan River lies the Island, where, for generations, the Walkers have lived among other mill workers. But in the summer of 1965, with the threat of mill closures looming, the Walkers grapple with their personal crises, just as the rest of the town fights to protect its way of life. Superbly crafted and deeply moving, this book is at once a love letter to a place, a gripping family saga, and testimony to the emergence of an important new novelist.

The Jade Peony by Wayson Choy 

Chinatown, Vancouver, of the early 1940s provides the backdrop for this fresh, uplifting, award-winning first novel, told through the reminiscences of the three young children of an immigrant Chinese family. Each experience a very different childhood, and mingling with the realities of Canada and the horror of war are the family secrets of Poh-Poh, their grandmother.

- *1995 Trillium Award winner, 1995 City of Vancouver Book Award winner*

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

(e-Book, e-Audio)

A gripping, heart-wrenching, and wholly remarkable tale of coming-of-age in a South poisoned by virulent prejudice, it views a world of great beauty and savage inequities through the eyes of a young girl, as her father—a crusading local lawyer—risks everything to defend a black man unjustly accused of a terrible crime.

***Pulitzer Prize**

The Lace Reader by Brunonia Barry

(TB, LP, e-Book)

Towner Whitney, a dazed young woman descended from a long line of mind readers and fortune tellers, has survived numerous traumas and returned to her hometown of Salem, Massachusetts, to recover. Any tranquility in her life is short-lived when her beloved great-aunt Eva drowns under circumstances suggesting foul play. Towner's suspicions are taken with a grain of salt given her history of hallucinatory visions and self-harm. The mystery enmeshes local cop John Rafferty, who had left the pressures of big city police work for a quieter life in Salem and now finds himself falling for the enigmatic Towner as he mourns Eva and delves into the history of the eccentric Whitney clan.

The Language of Flowers by Vanessa Diffenbaugh

(TB, LP, e-Book)

The Victorian language of flowers was used to convey romantic expressions: honeysuckle for devotion, asters for patience, and red roses for love. But for Victoria Jones, after a childhood spent in the foster-care system, her only connection to the world is through flowers and their meanings. Now eighteen and with nowhere to go, Victoria realizes she has a gift for helping others through the flowers she chooses for them. But an unexpected encounter with a mysterious stranger has her questioning what's been missing in her life. And when she's forced to confront a painful secret from her past, she must decide whether it's worth risking everything for a second chance at happiness.

The Last Runaway by Tracy Chevalier

(LP, TB)

The New York Times bestselling author Tracy Chevalier introduces Honor Bright, a modest English Quaker who moves to Ohio in 1850, only to find herself alienated and alone in a strange land. Sick from the moment she leaves England, and fleeing personal disappointment, she is forced by family tragedy to rely on strangers in a harsh, unfamiliar landscape. Nineteenth-century America is practical, precarious, and unsentimental, and scarred by the continuing injustice of slavery. In her new home Honor discovers that principles count for little, even within a religious community meant to be committed to human equality. However, drawn into the clandestine activities of the Underground Railroad, a network helping runaway slaves escape to freedom, Honor befriends two surprising women who embody the remarkable power of defiance. Eventually she must

decide if she too can act on what she believes in, whatever the personal costs. A powerful journey brimming with color and drama.

Late Nights on Air by Elizabeth Hay  (MP3, e-Book)

Accepting a position at a northern Canadian radio station in 1975, Dido Paris disarms a hard-bitten broadcaster with her beauty and vocal talents before controversy surrounding a proposed gas pipeline triggers call-in-listener debates on the air.

- 2007 Scotiabank Giller Prize winner

Life After Life by Kate Atkinson – New (e-Book)

On a cold and snowy night in 1910, Ursula Todd is born, the third child of a wealthy English banker and his wife. Sadly, she dies before she can draw her first breath. On that same cold and snowy night, Ursula Todd is born, lets out a lusty wail, and embarks upon a life that will be, to say the least, unusual. For as she grows, she also dies, repeatedly, in any number of ways. Ursula's world is in turmoil, facing the unspeakable evil of the two greatest wars in history. What power and force can one woman exert over the fate of civilization — if only she has the chance?

- 2013 Costa Book Awards Winner

The Light Between Oceans by M. L. Stedman (LP, TB, e-Book)

After four harrowing years on the western front, Tom Sherbourne returns to Australia and takes a job as the lighthouse keeper on Janus Rock, nearly half a day's journey from the coast. To this isolated island, where the supply boat comes once a season, Tom brings a young, bold, and loving wife, Isabel. Years later, after two miscarriages and one stillbirth, the grieving Isabel hears a baby's cries on the wind. A boat has washed up onshore carrying a dead man and a living baby. Tom, who keeps meticulous records and whose moral principles have withstood a horrific war, wants to report the man and infant immediately. But Isabel insists the baby is a "gift from God," and against Tom's judgment, they claim her as their own and name her Lucy. When she is two, Tom and Isabel return to the mainland and are reminded that there are other people in the world. Their choice has devastated one of them.

Lone Wolf by Jodi Picoult

On an icy winter night, a terrible accident forces a family divided to come together and make a fateful decision. Cara, once protected by her father, Luke, is tormented by a secret that nobody knows. Her brother, Edward, has secrets of his own. He has kept them hidden, but now they may come to light, and if they do, Cara will be devastated. Their mother, Georgie, was never able to compete with her ex-husband's obsessions, and now, his fate hangs in the balance and in the hands of her children. With conflicting motivations and emotions, what will this family decide? And will they be able to live with that decision, after the truth has been revealed? What happens when the hope that should sustain a family is the very thing tearing it apart?

- Book set generously donated by the Luscious Ladies Literary Group!

Longbourn by Jo Baker (LP, TB, e-Book and e-Audio)

Pride and Prejudice was only half the story...

In this irresistibly imagined belowstairs answer to *Pride and Prejudice*, the servants take center stage. Sarah, the orphaned housemaid, spends her days scrubbing the laundry, polishing the floors, and emptying the chamber pots for the Bennet household. But there is just as much romance, heartbreak, and intrigue downstairs at Longbourn as there is upstairs. When a mysterious new footman arrives, the orderly realm of the servants' hall threatens to be completely, perhaps irrevocably, upended. Jo Baker dares to take us beyond the drawing rooms of Jane Austen's classic—into the often overlooked domain of the stern housekeeper and

the starry-eyed kitchen maid, into the gritty daily particulars faced by the lower classes in Regency England during the Napoleonic Wars—and, in doing so, creates a vivid, fascinating, fully realized world that is wholly her own.

Lookaway, Lookaway by Wilton Barnhardt

(LP, TB, e-Audio)

One of Slate's and Kirkus Review's Best Books of 2013 and The New York Times, National Public Radio, and Indie Bound bestseller: "Lookaway, Lookaway is a wild romp through the South, and therefore the history of our nation, written by an absolute ringmaster of fiction." —Alice Sebold, New York Times bestselling author of *The Lovely Bones*. Jerene Jarvis Johnston and her husband Duke are exemplars of Charlotte, North Carolina's high society, where old Southern money—and older Southern secrets—meet the new wealth of bankers, boom-era speculators, and carpetbagging social climbers.

In *Lookaway, Lookaway*, Wilton Barnhardt has written a headlong, hilarious narrative of a family coming apart, a society changing beyond recognition, and an unforgettable woman striving to pull it all together. She will stop at nothing to keep what she has—but is it too much to ask for one ounce of cooperation from her heedless family?

Lost and Found by Brooke Davis

(TB)

Millie Bird, seven years old and ever hopeful, always wears red gumboots to match her curly hair. Her struggling mother, grieving the death of Millie's father, leaves her in the big ladies' underwear department of a local store and never returns. Agatha Pantha, eighty-two, has not left her house—or spoken to another human being—since she was widowed seven years ago. She fills the silence by yelling at passersby, watching loud static on TV, and maintaining a strict daily schedule. Karl the Touch Typist, eighty-seven, once used his fingers to type out love notes on his wife's skin. Now that she's gone, he types his words out into the air as he speaks. Karl's been committed to a nursing home, but in a moment of clarity and joy, he escapes. Now he's on the lam. Brought together at a fateful moment, the three embark upon a road trip across Western Australia to find Millie's mother. Along the way, Karl wants to find out how to be a man again; Agatha just wants everything to go back to how it was. Together they will discover that old age is not the same as death, that the young can be wise, and that letting yourself feel sad once in a while just might be the key to a happy life.

Lost for Words by Edward St. Aubyn

(e-Book, e-Audio)

The judges on the panel of the Elysian Prize for Literature must get through hundreds of submissions to find the best book of the year. Meanwhile, a host of writers are desperate for Elysian attention: the brilliant writer and serial heartbreaker Katherine Burns; the lovelorn debut novelist Sam Black; and Bunjee, convinced that his magnum opus, *The Mulberry Elephant*, will take the literary world by storm. Things go terribly wrong when Katherine's publisher accidentally submits a cookery book in place of her novel; one of the judges finds himself in the middle of a scandal; and Bunjee, aghast to learn his book isn't on the short list, seeks revenge. *Lost for Words* is a witty, fabulously entertaining satire that cuts to the quick of some of the deepest questions about the place of art in our celebrity-obsessed culture, and asks how we can ever hope to recognize real talent when everyone has an agenda.

Loving Frank by Nancy Horan

(TB, e-Book)

Drawing on years of research, Horan weaves little-known facts into a compelling narrative, vividly portraying the conflicts and struggles of a woman forced to choose between the roles of mother, wife, lover, and intellectual. In 1903, Mamah Borthwick Cheney and her husband, Edwin, had commissioned Frank Lloyd Wright to design a new home for them. During the construction of the house, a powerful attraction developed between Mamah and Frank, and in time the lovers, each married with children, embarked on a course that would shock Chicago society and forever change their lives.

The Lowland by Jhumpa Lahiri

(LP, TB, e-Book)

Growing up in Calcutta, born just fifteen months apart, Subhash and Udayan Mitra are inseparable brothers, one often mistaken for the other. But they are also opposites, with gravely different futures ahead of them. It is the 1960s, and Udayan--charismatic and impulsive--finds himself drawn to the Naxalite movement, a rebellion waged to eradicate inequity and poverty: he will give everything, risk all, for what he believes. Subhash, the dutiful son, does not share his brother's political passion; he leaves home to pursue a life of scientific research in a quiet, coastal corner of America.

But when Subhash learns what happened to his brother in the lowland outside their family's home, he comes back to India, hoping to pick up the pieces of a shattered family, and to heal the wounds Udayan left behind--including those seared in the heart of his brother's wife.

Suspenseful, sweeping, piercingly intimate, *The Lowland* expands the range of one of our most dazzling storytellers, seamlessly interweaving the historical and the personal across generations and geographies. This masterly novel of fate and will, exile and return, is a tour de force and an instant classic.

The Magic Strings of Frankie Presto by Mitch Albom – New

(LP, TB, e-Book)

This is the epic story of Frankie Presto—the greatest guitar player who ever lived—and the six lives he changed with his six magical blue strings

Frankie, born in a burning church, abandoned as an infant, and raised by a music teacher in a small Spanish town, until war rips his life apart. At nine years old, he is sent to America in the bottom of a boat. His only possession is an old guitar and six precious strings. His amazing journey weaves him through the musical landscape of the 1940s, '50s and '60s, with his stunning playing and singing talent affecting numerous stars (Duke Ellington, Hank Williams, Elvis Presley) until, as if predestined, he becomes a pop star himself. He makes records. He is adored. But Frankie Presto's gift is also his burden, as he realizes the power of the strings his teacher gave him, and how, through his music, he can actually affect people's lives. At the height of his popularity, tortured by his biggest mistake, he vanishes. His legend grows. Only decades later, having finally healed his heart, does Frankie reappear just before his spectacular death—to change one last life. With the Spirit of Music as our guide, we glimpse into the lives that were changed by one man whose strings could touch the music—and the magic—in each of us.

A Man Called Ove by Fredrik Backman – New

(LP, TB, e-Audio)

A grumpy yet loveable man finds his solitary world turned on its head when a boisterous young family moves in next door. Meet Ove. He's a curmudgeon, the kind of man who points at people he dislikes as if they were burglars caught outside his bedroom window. He has staunch principles, strict routines, and a short fuse. People call him *the bitter neighbor from hell*, but must Ove be bitter just because he doesn't walk around with a smile plastered to his face all the time? Behind the cranky exterior there is a story and a sadness. So when one November morning a chatty young couple with two chatty young daughters move in next door and accidentally flatten Ove's mailbox, it is the lead-in to a comical and heartwarming tale of unkempt cats, unexpected friendship, and the ancient art of backing up a U-Haul. All of which will change one cranky old man and a local residents' association to their very foundations.

The Man Who Smiled by Henning Mankell

(TB, MP3, e-Book)

A lawyer, driving home through the fog, stops after he sees “a human-sized effigy” propped on a chair in the middle of a deserted highway. Gustaf Torstensson gets out of the car to investigate, is hit from behind and was “dead before his body hit the damp asphalt.” The police accept the assailant's claim that it was an accident, but when Torstensson's son, Sten, is shot dead just two weeks later, the brooding detective Wallender, who's on sick leave and vowing to retire from the Ystad police force, decides to pursue the killer and resume his career. The chief suspect—a powerful, globe-trotting Swedish businessman who's the smiling man of the title—leads Wallender on an exquisitely plotted search for motive and evidence.

Major Pettigrew's Last Stand by Helen Simonson**(TB, LP, e-Book, e-Audio)**

The story centres on Ernest Pettigrew, a retired British army major, and his fight to keep his greedy relatives (including his son, Roger) from selling a valuable family heirloom—a pair of hunting rifles that symbolizes much of what he stands for, or at least what he thinks he does. He discovers an unexpected ally in his neighbour, the Pakistani shopkeeper Jasmina Ali. On the surface, Major Pettigrew's and Mrs. Ali's backgrounds and life experiences couldn't be more different, but they discover that they have the most important things in common

Middlesex by Jeffrey Eugenides**(TB, e-Book)**

The breathtaking story of Calliope Stephanides and three generations of the Greek-American Stephanides family who travel from a tiny village overlooking Mount Olympus in Asia Minor to Prohibition-era Detroit, witnessing its glory days as the Motor City, and the race riots of 1967, before they move out to the tree-lined streets of suburban Grosse Pointe, Michigan. To understand why Calliope is not like other girls, she has to uncover a guilty family secret and the astonishing genetic history that turns Callie into Cal, one of the most audacious and wondrous narrators in contemporary fiction.

- *2003 Pulitzer Prize winner*

Mr. Penumbra's 24 Hour Bookstore by Robin Sloan**(LP, TB, e-Book, e-Audio)**

The Great Recession has shuffled Clay Jannon out of his life as a San Francisco Web-design drone—and serendipity, sheer curiosity, and the ability to climb a ladder like a monkey has landed him a new gig working the night shift at Mr. Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore. But after just a few days on the job, Clay begins to realize that this store is even more curious than the name suggests. There are only a few customers, but they come in repeatedly and never seem to actually buy anything, instead “checking out” impossibly obscure volumes from strange corners of the store, all according to some elaborate, long-standing arrangement with the gnomic Mr. Penumbra. The store must be a front for something larger, Clay concludes, and soon he's embarked on a complex analysis of the customers' behavior and roped his friends into helping to figure out just what's going on. But once they bring their findings to Mr. Penumbra, it turns out the secrets extend far outside the walls of the bookstore.

Moloka'i by Alan Brennert

Set in Hawai'i more than a century ago, *Moloka'i* is an extraordinary epic of a little-known time and place—and a deeply moving testament to the resiliency of the human spirit. Rachel Kalama, a spirited seven-year-old Hawaiian girl, dreams of visiting far-off lands like her father, a merchant seaman. Then a rose-colored mark appears on her skin, and those dreams are stolen from her. Taken from her home and family, Rachel is sent to Kalaupapa, the quarantined leprosy settlement on the island of Moloka'i. Here her life is supposed to end—but instead she discovers it is only just beginning. *Moloka'i* is the true-to-life chronicle of a people who embraced life in the face of death.

The Moonstone by Wilkie Collins**(TB, e-Book)**

Stolen from the forehead of a Hindu idol, the dazzling gem known as “The Moonstone” resurfaces at a birthday party in an English country home—with an enigmatic trio of watchful Brahmins hot on its trail. Laced with superstitions, suspicion, humour, and romance, this 1868 mystery draws readers into a compelling tale with numerous twists and turns.

The Nest by Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney – [New](#)

(LP, TB, e-Book, e-Audio)

Every family has its problems. But even among the most troubled, the Plumb family stands out as spectacularly dysfunctional. Years of simmering tensions finally reach a breaking point on an unseasonably cold afternoon in New York City as Melody, Beatrice, and Jack Plumb gather to confront their charismatic and reckless older brother, Leo, freshly released from rehab. Months earlier, an inebriated Leo got behind the wheel of a car with a nineteen-year-old waitress as his passenger. The ensuing accident has endangered the Plumbs' joint trust fund, "The Nest," which they are months away from finally receiving. Meant by their deceased father to be a modest mid-life supplement, the Plumb siblings have watched The Nest's value soar along with the stock market and have been counting on the money to solve a number of self-inflicted problems. Melody, a wife and mother in an upscale suburb, has an unwieldy mortgage and looming college tuition for her twin teenage daughters. Jack, an antiques dealer, has secretly borrowed against the beach cottage he shares with his husband, Walker, to keep his store open. And Bea, a once-promising short-story writer, just can't seem to finish her overdue novel. Can Leo rescue his siblings and, by extension, the people they love? Or will everyone need to reimagine the futures they've envisioned? Brought together as never before, Leo, Melody, Jack, and Beatrice must grapple with old resentments, present-day truths, and the significant emotional and financial toll of the accident, as well as finally acknowledge the choices they have made in their own lives.

Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro

(TB, MP3, e-Book)

A reunion with two childhood friends—Ruth and Tommy—draws Kath and her companions on a nostalgic odyssey into the supposedly idyllic years of their lives at Hailsham, an isolated private school in the serene English countryside, and a dramatic confrontation with the truth about their childhoods and about their lives in the present.

The Night Circus by Erin Morgenstern

(TB, LP, e-Book, e-Audio)

The circus arrives without warning. No announcements precede it. It is simply there, when yesterday it was not. It is called *Le Cirque des Rêves*, and it is only open at night. But behind the scenes, a fierce competition is underway—a duel between two young magicians, Celia and Marco, who have been trained since childhood expressly for this purpose by their mercurial instructors. Unbeknownst to them, this is a game in which only one can be left standing. Despite themselves, however, Celia and Marco tumble headfirst into love. True love or not, though, the game must play out, and the fates of everyone involved, from the cast of extraordinary circus performers to the patrons, hang in the balance, suspended as precariously as the daring acrobats overhead.

The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah - [New](#)

(TB, LP, e-Book)

Despite their differences, sisters Vianne and Isabelle have always been close. Younger, bolder Isabelle lives in Paris while Vianne is content with life in the French countryside with her husband Antoine and their daughter. But when the Second World War strikes, Antoine is sent off to fight and Vianne finds herself isolated so Isabelle is sent by their father to help her.

As the war progresses, the sisters' relationship and strength are tested. With life changing in unbelievably horrific ways, Vianne and Isabelle will find themselves facing frightening situations and responding in ways they never thought possible as bravery and resistance take different forms in each of their actions.

Nineteen Minutes by Jodi Picoult

(MP3, e-Book)

In the aftermath of a small-town school shooting, lawyer Jordan McAfee finds himself defending a youth who desperately needs someone on his side, while detective Patrick Ducharme works with a primary witness, the daughter of the judge assigned to the case.

Old City Hall by Robert Rotenberg

It should be an open-and-shut case. Canada's leading radio-show host, Kevin Brace, has confessed to killing his young wife. He had come to the door of his luxury condominium with his hands covered in blood and told the newspaper deliveryman: "I killed her." The trouble is, Brace refuses to talk to anyone—including his own lawyer—after muttering those incriminating words. With the discovery that the victim was actually a self-destructive alcoholic, the appearance of strange fingerprints at the crime scene, and a revealing courtroom cross-examination, the seemingly simple case begins to take on all the complexities of a hotly contested murder trial.

One Thousand White Women by Jim Fergus

An Indian request in 1854 for 1,000 white brides to ensure peace is secretly approved by the U.S. government in this alternate-history novel. Their journey west is described by May Dodd, a high-society woman released from an asylum where she was incarcerated by her family for an affair. What follows is the story of May's adventures: her marriage to Little Wolf, chief of the Cheyenne nation, and her conflict being caught between two worlds, loving two men, living two lives. Jim Fergus has so vividly depicted the American West that it is as if these diaries are a capsule in time.

Orphan Train by Christina Baker Kline – New

(e-Book)

Christina Baker Kline's *Orphan Train* is an unforgettable story of friendship and second chances that highlights a little-known but historically significant movement in America's past—and it includes a special PS section for book clubs featuring insights, interviews, and more. Penobscot Indian Molly Ayer is close to "aging out" out of the foster care system. A community service position helping an elderly woman clean out her home is the only thing keeping Molly out of juvie and worse...As she helps Vivian sort through her possessions and memories, Molly learns that she and Vivian aren't as different as they seem to be. A young Irish immigrant orphaned in New York City, Vivian was put on a train to the Midwest with hundreds of other children whose destinies would be determined by luck and chance. Molly discovers that she has the power to help Vivian find answers to mysteries that have haunted her for her entire life—answers that will ultimately free them both.

The Painted Girls by Cathy Marie Buchanan

(TB, LP)

1878 Paris. Following their father's sudden death, the van Goethem sisters find their lives upended. Without his wages and with the small amount their laundress mother earns disappearing into the absinthe bottle, eviction from their lodgings seems imminent. With few options for work, Marie is dispatched to the Paris Opéra, where for a scant seventeen francs a week, she will be trained to enter the famous ballet. Her older sister, Antoinette, finds work as an extra in a stage adaptation of Émile Zola's naturalist masterpiece *L'Assommoir*. Set at a moment of profound artistic, cultural, and societal change, *The Painted Girls* is a tale of two remarkable sisters rendered uniquely vulnerable to the darker impulses of "civilized society." In the end, each will come to realize that her salvation, if not survival, lies with the other.

The Paris Wife by Paula McLain

(TB, LP, e-Book)

The Paris Wife captures a remarkable period of time and a love affair between two unforgettable people: Ernest Hemingway and his wife Hadley. Following a whirlwind courtship and wedding, the pair set sail for Paris, where they become the golden couple in a lively and volatile group—the fabled "Lost Generation." Surrounded by beautiful women and competing egos, Ernest struggles to find the voice that will earn him a place in history. Hadley strives to hold on to her sense of self as the demands of life with Ernest grow costly and her roles as wife, friend, and muse become more challenging. Despite their extraordinary bond, they eventually find themselves facing the ultimate crisis of their marriage.

People of the Book by Geraldine Brooks

(TB)

The plot revolves gracefully around the true story of the Sarajevo Haggadah, a fourteenth-century Sephardic holy book that somehow survived centuries of hatred and destruction. Into this real-life epic tale of heroism

and chance, Brooks has skilfully woven a historical fiction of uncanny force. In her hands, this improbable, even wondrous story of one document's survival becomes both a timely meditation on faiths in conflict and a tense historical thriller. Superb storytelling; a literary masterpiece tinged with the excitement of rediscovery.

Please Look After Mom by Kyung-Sook Shin

(TB, LP, e-Book)

When sixty-nine-year-old Sonyo is separated from her husband among the crowds of the Seoul subway station, her family begins a desperate search to find her. Yet as long-held secrets and private sorrows begin to reveal themselves, they are forced to wonder: how well did they actually know the woman they called Mom? Told through the piercing voices and urgent perspectives of a daughter, son, husband, and mother, *Please Look After Mom* is at once an authentic picture of contemporary life in Korea and a universal story of family love.

- *Winner of the 2011 Man Asian Literary Prize*

The Red Notebook by Antoine Laurain

Heroic bookseller Laurent Letellier comes across an abandoned handbag on a Parisian street. There's nothing in the bag to indicate who it belongs to, although there's all sorts of other things in it. Laurent feels a strong impulse to find the owner and tries to puzzle together who she might be from the contents of the bag. Especially a red notebook with her jottings, which really makes him want to meet her. Without even a name to go on, and only a few of her possessions to help him, how is he to find one woman in a city of millions?

A Reliable Wife by Robert Goolrick

(TB, LP)

Set in a small Wisconsin farming town in the 1890s, this is the story of Ralph Truitt, a wealthy businessman who advertises for “a reliable wife” in a Chicago newspaper. The woman who answers describes herself as “a simple, honest woman,” when in fact she is a courtesan of great beauty, haunted by a terrible past. She plans to win this man's heart and then poison him and leave Wisconsin a wealthy widow. What she has not counted on is the passion she finds in Ralph, who also harbours secrets and whose past is far from pure.

Rockbound: The Classic Novel of Nova Scotia's South Shore by Frank Porter Day 

(MP3)

To the harsh domain of Rockbound—governed by the sternly righteous and rapacious Uriah Jung—comes the youthful David Jung to claim his small inheritance. Filled with dreamy optimism and a love for the unspoken promises of the night sky, David tries to find his way in a narrow, unforgiving, and controlled world. His conflicts are both internal and external, locking him in an unceasing struggle for survival. Enormously evocative of the power, terror, and dramatic beauty of the Atlantic sea, and unrelenting in its portrait of back-breaking labour, cunning bitterness, and family strife, *Rockbound* is a story of many passions—love, pride, greed, and yearning—all formed and buffeted on a small island by an unyielding wind and the rocky landscape of the human spirit.

- *2005 Canada Reads winner*

Room by Emma Donoghue 

(TB, LP, e-Book)

To five-year-old-Jack, Room is the world.... It's where he was born, it's where he and his Ma eat and sleep and play and learn. Room is home to Jack, but to Ma, it's the prison where she's been held since she was nineteen—for seven long years. But Jack's curiosity is building alongside her own desperation—and she knows that Room cannot contain either indefinitely. Told in the inventive, funny, and poignant voice of Jack, *Room* is a celebration of resilience—and a powerful story of a mother and son whose love lets them survive the impossible.

- *2010 Commonwealth Writers' Prize winner, 2010 Rogers Writers' Fiction Trust winner*

The Rosie Project by Graeme Simison**(LP, TB, e-Book)**

A first-date dud, socially awkward and overly fond of quick-dry clothes, genetics professor Don Tillman has given up on love, until a chance encounter gives him an idea.

He will design a questionnaire—a sixteen-page, scientifically researched questionnaire—to uncover the perfect partner. She will most definitely not be a barmaid, a smoker, a drinker or a late-arriver. Rosie is all these things. She is also fiery and intelligent, strangely beguiling, and looking for her biological father a search that a DNA expert might just be able to help her with.

The Round House by Louise Erdrich**(LP, TB, e-Book)**

The Round House won the National Book Award for fiction. One of the most revered novelists of our time—a brilliant chronicler of Native-American life—Louise Erdrich returns to the territory of her bestselling, Pulitzer Prize finalist *The Plague of Doves* with *The Round House*, transporting readers to the Ojibwe reservation in North Dakota. It is an exquisitely told story of a boy on the cusp of manhood who seeks justice and understanding in the wake of a terrible crime that upends and forever transforms his family. Riveting and suspenseful, arguably the most accessible novel to date from the creator of *Love Medicine*, *The Beet Queen*, and *The Bingo Palace*, Erdrich's *The Round House* is a page-turning masterpiece of literary fiction—at once a powerful coming-of-age story, a mystery, and a tender, moving novel of family, history, and culture.

- 2012 [National Book Award for Fiction](#)

Rules of Civility by Amor Towles**(TB, LP, e-Book)**

This sophisticated and entertaining first novel presents the story of a young woman whose life is on the brink of transformation. On the last night of 1937, twenty-five-year-old Katey Kontent is in a second-rate Greenwich Village jazz bar when Tinker Grey, a handsome banker, happens to sit down at the neighboring table. This chance encounter and its startling consequences propel Katey on a year-long journey into the upper echelons of New York society—where she will have little to rely upon other than a bracing wit and her own brand of cool nerve.

Rush Home Road by Lori Lansens **(MP3, e-Book)**

Born in the first decade of the twentieth century in Rusholme (inspired by the real town of Buxton), in southwestern Ontario, an all-black community settled by fugitive slaves, Adelaide “Addy” Shadd has never fully recovered from a series of traumatic events in her life. Now an old woman, she lives a quiet existence, but her whole world changes when she takes in Sharla Cody, an abandoned five-year-old child. Addy is glad of the company, but not sure if she’s up to the job of mothering this sweet, awkward little girl. Nor is she sure how much longer she’ll be around to do so. How she manages is part of the story.

Secret Daughter by Shilpi Somaya Gowda

In India in 1984, destitute Kavita secretly carries her newborn daughter to an orphanage, knowing her husband will do away with the baby just as he had with their firstborn daughter. That same year in San Francisco, two doctors, Somer and Krishnan, suffer their second miscarriage and consider adoption. They adopt Asha, a ten-month-old Indian girl—Kavita’s daughter. Asha is the child that binds the destinies of these two women. We follow both families, invisibly connected until Asha’s journey of self-discovery leads her back to India.

- *Book set generously donated by the Luscious Ladies Literary Group!*

The Secret History by Donna Tartt**(e-Book, e-Audio)**

Richard Papen arrived at Hampden College in New England and was quickly seduced by an elite group of five students, all Greek scholars, all worldly, self-assured, and, at first glance, all highly unapproachable. As Richard is drawn into their inner circle, he learns a terrifying secret that binds them to one another...a secret about an incident in the woods in the dead of night where an ancient rite was brought to brutal life...and led to a gruesome death. And that was just the beginning...

The Sense of an Ending by Julian Barnes**(TB, LP)**

This intense novel follows Tony Webster, a middle-aged man, as he contends with a past he never thought much about—until his closest childhood friends return with a vengeance: one of them from the grave, another maddeningly present. Tony thought he left this all behind as he built a life for himself, and his career has provided him with a secure retirement and an amicable relationship with his ex-wife and daughter, who now has a family of her own. But when he is presented with a mysterious legacy, he is forced to revise his estimation of his own nature and place in the world.

- *2011 Man Booker Prize winner*

The Siege of Bitterns by Steve Burrows 

Inspector Domenic Jejeune's success has made him a poster boy for the U.K. police service. The problem is Jejeune doesn't really want to be a detective at all; he much prefers watching birds.

Recently reassigned to the small Norfolk town of Saltmarsh, located in the heart of Britain's premier birding country, Jejeune's two worlds collide when he investigates the grisly murder of a prominent ecological activist. His ambitious police superintendent foresees a blaze of welcome publicity, but she begins to have her doubts when Jejeune's most promising theory involves a feud over birdwatching lists. A second murder only complicates matters.

To unravel this mystery, Jejeune must deal with unwelcome public acclaim, the mistrust of colleagues, and his own insecurities. In the case of the Saltmarsh birder murders, the victims may not be the only casualties.

The Sisters Brothers by Patrick deWitt **(TB, e-Book)**

Hermann Kermit Warm is going to die: Eli and Charlie Sisters can be counted on for that. Though Eli has never shared his brother's penchant for whiskey and killing, he's never known anything else. On the road to Warm's gold-mining claim outside San Francisco—and from the back of his long-suffering one-eyed horse—Eli struggles to make sense of his life without abandoning the job he's sworn to do. Patrick DeWitt, acclaimed author of *Ablutions*, doffs his hat to the classic Western, and then transforms it into a comic tour-de-force with an unforgettable narrative voice that captures all the absurdity, melancholy, and grit of the West—and of these two brothers, bound to each other by blood and scars and love.

- *2011 Governor General's Literary Award for Fiction*
- *2011 Stephen Leacock Medal for Humor*
- *2011 Writers' Trust of Canada Fiction Prize winner*

Snow Child by Eowyn Ivey**(LP)**

Alaska, 1920: a brutal place to homestead, and especially tough for recent arrivals Jack and Mabel. Childless, they are drifting apart. In a moment of levity during the season's first snowfall, they build a child out of snow. The next morning the snow child is gone—but they glimpse a young, blonde-haired girl running through the trees. This little girl, who calls herself Faina, hunts with a red fox at her side, skims lightly across the snow, and somehow survives alone in the wilderness. As Jack and Mabel struggle to understand this child who could have stepped from the pages of a fairy tale, they come to love her as their own. But in this beautiful, violent place things are rarely as they appear, and what they eventually learn about Faina will transform all of them.

Somewhere in France by Jennifer Robson 

(TB)

Lady Elizabeth Neville-Ashford wants to travel the world, pursue a career, and marry for love. But in 1914, the stifling restrictions of aristocratic British society and her mother's rigid expectations forbid Lilly from following her heart. When war breaks out, the spirited young woman seizes her chance for independence. Defying her parents, she moves to London and eventually becomes an ambulance driver in the newly formed Women's Army Auxiliary Corps—an exciting and treacherous job that takes her close to the Western Front. Assigned to a field hospital in France, Lilly is reunited with Robert Fraser, her dear brother Edward's best friend. The handsome Scottish surgeon has always encouraged Lilly's dreams. She doesn't care that Robbie grew up in poverty—she yearns for their friendly affection to become something more. Lilly is the most beautiful—and forbidden—woman Robbie has ever known. Fearful for her life, he's determined to keep her safe, even if it means breaking her heart.

The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry by Gabrielle Zevin

(TB, e-Book)

The irascible A. J. Fikry, owner of Island Books—the only bookstore on Alice Island—has already lost his wife. Now his most prized possession, a rare book, has been stolen from right under his nose in the most embarrassing of circumstances. The store itself, it seems, will be next to go.

One night upon closing, he discovers a toddler in his children's section with a note from her mother pinned to her Elmo doll: "I want Maya to grow up in a place with books and among people who care about such kinds of things. I love her very much, but I can no longer take care of her." A search for Maya's mother, A. J.'s rare book, and good childcare advice ensues, but it doesn't take long for the locals to notice the transformation of both bookstore and owner, something of particular interest to the lovely yet eccentric Knightley Press sales rep, Amelia Loman, who makes the arduous journey to Alice Island thrice each year to pitch her books to the cranky owner.

The Story of Edgar Sawtelle by David Wroblewski

(TB, e-Book)

In the backwoods of Wisconsin, the Sawtelle family breeds and trains dogs. Edgar, born mute, has developed a special way of communicating with one of the Sawtelle dogs. When his father unexpectedly dies, mute Edgar cannot summon help via the telephone. His guilt and grief give way to the realization that his father was murdered.. Edgar goes on the run, accompanied by three loyal dogs. His quest for safety provides a classic coming-of-age story with an ironic twist.

Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie by Alan Bradley 

(LP, TB, e-Book, e-Audio)

Readers meet Flavia de Luce, a precocious, pig-tailed eleven year old. Flavia spends the summer of 1950 tinkering in the well-appointed chemistry lab in her family's English manor and plotting revenge on her older sisters (who do things like lock her in the attic). But the young chemist turns sleuth when a dead bird with a stamp on its beak is discovered on the doorstep, a dying man is found in the cucumber patch, and her philatelist (stamp collecting) father is named a murder suspect.

Ten Things I Learnt about Love by Sarah Butler

(LP, TB, e-Book, e-Audio)

A uniquely heart-wrenching and life-affirming novel for fathers and daughters everywhere. Alice has just returned to London from months of travelling abroad. She is late to hear the news that her father is dying, and arrives at the family home only just in time to say goodbye. Daniel hasn't had a roof over his head for years, but to him the city of London feels like home in a way that no bricks and mortar ever did. He spends every day searching for his daughter; the daughter he has never met. Until now....Heart-wrenching and life-affirming, this is a unique story of love lost and found, of rootlessness and homecoming and the power of the ties that bind. It is a story for fathers and daughters everywhere.

Three Day Road by Joseph Boyden

(MP3)

In this haunting debut novel, two young Cree Indians become infantry snipers in the trenches of World War I. Set in Canada and the battlefields of France and Belgium, *Three Day Road* is a mesmerizing novel told through the eyes of Niska—a Canadian Oji-Cree woman living off the land who is the last of a line of healers and diviners—and her nephew Xavier. In part inspired by the legend of Francis Pegahmagabow, the great Indian sniper of World War I, *Three Day Road* is an impeccably researched and beautifully written story that offers a searing reminder about the cost of war.

- *2005 Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize winner*

The Tower, the Zoo and the Tortoise by Julia Stuart

(LP, e-Book, e-Audio)

Balthazar Jones lives in the Tower of London with his wife, Hebe, his 181-year-old pet tortoise, and a few eccentric neighbours. Balthazar is a Beefeater. The white-hot flame of his and Hebe's love has dwindled in the few years since their son died. Their marriage is teetering on the brink of extinction, when Balthazar is unexpectedly tasked with setting up an elaborate menagerie within the Tower to house the many exotic animals given to the Queen. Life at the Tower is about to get all the more interesting. Penguins escape, giraffes go missing, and the Komodo dragon sends innocent tourists running for their lives. Still, that chaos is nothing compared to what happens when his wife, Hebe, makes a surprise announcement. What's a Beefeater to do?

The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry by Rachel Joyce

(LP, e-Book)

Meet Harold Fry, recently retired. He lives in a small English village with his wife, Maureen, who seems irritated by almost everything he does. Little differentiates one day from the next. Then one morning a letter arrives, addressed to Harold in a shaky scrawl, from a woman he hasn't heard from in twenty years. Queenie Hennessy is in hospice and is writing to say goodbye. But before Harold mails off a quick reply, a chance encounter convinces him that he absolutely must deliver his message to Queenie in person. In his yachting shoes and light coat, Harold Fry embarks on an urgent quest. Determined to walk six hundred miles to the hospice, Harold believes that as long as he walks, Queenie will live.

We Need to Talk About Kevin by Lionel Shriver

(e-Book, e-Audio, MP3)

That neither nature nor nurture bears exclusive responsibility for a child's character is self-evident. But generalizations about genes are likely to provide cold comfort if it's your own child who just opened fire on his fellow algebra students and whose class photograph—with its unseemly grin—is shown on the evening news coast-to-coast. If the question of who's to blame for teenage atrocity intrigues news-watching voyeurs, it tortures our narrator, Eva Khatchadourian. In relating the story of Kevin's upbringing, Eva addresses her estranged husband, Frank, through a series of startlingly direct letters.

- *2005 Orange Prize for Fiction winner*

When the Night Comes by Favel Parrett

Isla is a lonely girl who moves to Hobart with her mother and brother to try to better their lives. It's not really working until they meet Bo, a crewman on an Antarctic supply ship, the Nella Dan, who shares stories about his adventures with them—his travels, bird watching, his home in Denmark, and life on board the ship. Isla is struggling to learn what truly matters and who to trust, while this modern Viking is searching to understand his past and to find a place in this world for himself. Though their time together is short, it is enough to change the course of both their lives.

Wild Girl by Kate Forsyth

One of six sisters, Dortchen Wild lives in the small German kingdom of Hesse-Cassel in the early 19th century. She finds herself irresistibly drawn to the boy next door, the handsome but very poor fairy tale scholar Wilhelm Grimm. It is a time of tyranny and terror. Napoleon Bonaparte wants to conquer all of Europe, and Hesse-Cassel is one of the first kingdoms to fall. Forced to live under oppressive French rule, Wilhelm and his brothers quietly rebel by preserving old half-forgotten tales that had once been told by the firesides of houses grand and small over the land. As Dortchen tells Wilhelm some of the most powerful and compelling stories in what will one day become his and Jacob's famous fairy tale collection, their love blossoms. But Dortchen's father will not give his consent for them to marry and war, death, and poverty also conspire to keep the lovers apart. Yet Dortchen is determined to find a way.

Non-Fiction

Always Looking Up by Michael J. Fox

(LP, TB, e-Book)

Fox has taken what some might consider cause for depression and turned it into a beacon of hope for millions. Now, in *Always Looking Up*, he writes about the personal philosophy that carried him through his darkest hours, and speaks with others who have emerged from difficult periods with optimism to spare. With humour and wit, Fox shows how he became a happier, more satisfied person by recognizing the gifts of everyday life.

An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth by Chris Hadfield

As Commander of the International Space Station, Chris Hadfield captivated the world with stunning photos and commentary from space. *An Astronaut's Guide* gives us a rare insider's perspective on just what that kind of thinking involves, and how earthbound humans can use it to achieve success and happiness in their lives. Astronaut training turns popular wisdom about how to be successful on its head. Instead of visualizing victory, astronauts prepare for the worst; always sweat the small stuff; and do care what others think.

Audition: A Memoir by Barbara Walters

(LP)

Walters really does let readers see what's behind her TV persona, and in many ways, what she reveals is an insecure woman whose life has been one audition after another. The daughter of a night-club impresario and a mother who wanted a more stable life, her family's ups and downs led her to believe that one day she would be financially responsible for them, and that eventually happened. But this insecurity is also what propelled her forward; her strong work ethic and some good timing also helped to shape her amazing career. However, all that success came at a price. It affected her marriages and her daughter, and it engendered amazing hostility from male colleagues unwilling to give this pioneer a break. A smart, funny, fascinating book in which Walters captures possibly her most elusive subject: herself.

The Autistic Brain by Temple Grandin

(TB, e-Book)

Temple Grandin may be the most famous person with autism, a condition that affects 1 in 88 children. Since her birth in 1947, our understanding of it has undergone a great transformation, leading to more hope than ever before that we may finally learn the causes of and treatments for autism.

Weaving her own experience with remarkable new discoveries, Grandin introduces the advances in neuroimaging and genetic research that link brain science to behavior, even sharing her own brain scan to show which anomalies might explain common symptoms. Most excitingly, she argues that raising and educating kids on the autism spectrum must focus on their long-overlooked strengths to foster their unique contributions. *The Autistic Brain* brings Grandin's singular perspective into the heart of the autism revolution

Behind the Beautiful Forevers by Katherine Boo

(LP, TB, e-Book, e-Audio)

Annawadi is a makeshift settlement in the shadow of luxury hotels near the Mumbai airport, and as India starts to prosper, Annawadians are electric with hope. But then terror and a global recession rock the city and suppressed tensions over religion, caste, sex, power, and economic envy turn brutal. As the tenderest individual hopes intersect with the greatest global truths, the true contours of a competitive age are revealed. And so, too, are the imaginations and courage of the people of Annawadi. With intelligence, humor, and deep insight into what connects human beings to one another in an era of tumultuous change, *Behind the Beautiful Forevers* carries the reader headlong into one of the twenty-first century's hidden worlds, and into the lives of people impossible to forget.

- *2012 National Book Award for Nonfiction winner*

Blood, Bones and Butter by Gabrielle Hamilton

(TB, e-Book, e-Audio)

Before Gabrielle Hamilton opened her acclaimed New York restaurant Prune, she spent twenty fierce, hard-living years trying to find purpose and meaning in her life. *Blood, Bones & Butter* follows an unconventional journey through the many kitchens Hamilton has inhabited through the years: the rural kitchen of her childhood; the kitchens of France, Greece, and Turkey, where she was often fed by complete strangers and learned the essence of hospitality; the soulless catering factories that helped pay the rent; Hamilton's own kitchen at Prune, with its many unexpected challenges; and the kitchen of her Italian mother-in-law, who serves as the link between Hamilton's idyllic past and her own future family—the result of a difficult and prickly marriage that nonetheless yields rich and lasting dividends.

Bossypants by Tina Fey

(LP, TB, e-Book, e-Audio)

Before Liz Lemon, before "Weekend Update," before "Sarah Palin," Tina Fey was just a young girl with a dream: a recurring stress dream that she was being chased through a local airport by her middle-school gym teacher. She also had a dream that one day she would be a comedian on TV. From her youthful days as a vicious nerd to her tour of duty on *Saturday Night Live*; from her passionately half-hearted pursuit of physical beauty to her life as a mother eating things off the floor; from her one-sided college romance to her nearly fatal honeymoon—from the beginning of this paragraph to this final sentence. Tina Fey reveals all, and proves what we've all suspected: you're no one until someone calls you bossy.

Brain on Fire: My Month of Madness by Susannah Cahalan

(LP, TB, e-Audio)

A gripping memoir and medical suspense story about a young New York Post reporter's struggle with a rare and terrifying disease, opening a new window into the fascinating world of brain science.

One day, Susannah Cahalan woke up in a strange hospital room, strapped to her bed, under guard, and unable to move or speak. Her medical records—from a month-long hospital stay of which she had no memory—showed psychosis, violence, and dangerous instability. Yet, only weeks earlier she had been a healthy, ambitious twenty-four year old, six months into her first serious relationship and a sparkling career as a cub

reporter. Susannah’s astonishing memoir chronicles the swift path of her illness and the lucky, last-minute intervention led by one of the few doctors capable of saving her life. As weeks ticked by and Susannah moved inexplicably from violence to catatonia, \$1 million worth of blood tests and brain scans revealed nothing. The exhausted doctors were ready to commit her to the psychiatric ward, in effect condemning her to a lifetime of institutions, or death, until Dr. Souhel Najjar—nicknamed Dr. House—joined her team. He asked Susannah to draw one simple sketch, which became key to diagnosing her with a newly discovered autoimmune disease in which her body was attacking her brain, an illness now thought to be the cause of “demonic possessions” throughout history.

With sharp reporting drawn from hospital records, scientific research, and interviews with doctors and family, *Brain on Fire* is a crackling mystery and an unflinching, gripping personal story that marks the debut of an extraordinary writer.

Call the Midwife by Jennifer Worth

(TB)

When twenty-two-year-old Jennifer Worth, from a comfortable middle-class upbringing, went to work as a midwife in the poorest section of postwar London, she not only delivered hundreds of babies and touched many lives, she also became the neighborhood’s most vivid chronicler. Here, at last, is the full story of Chummy’s delightful courtship and wedding. We also meet Megan’s mave, identical twins who share a browbeaten husband, and return to Sister Monica Joan, who is in top eccentric form. As in Worth’s first two books, *Call the Midwife: A Memoir of Birth, Joy, and Hard Times* and *Call the Midwife: Shadows of the Workhouse*, the vividly portrayed denizens of a postwar East End contend with the trials of extreme poverty—unsanitary conditions, hunger, and disease—and find surprising ways to thrive in their tightly knit community.

Cocktail Hour Under the Tree of Forgetfulness by Alexandra Fuller

(LP)

A story of survival and war, love and madness, loyalty and forgiveness, *Cocktail Hour Under the Tree of Forgetfulness* is an intimate exploration of Fuller’s parents and of the price of being possessed by Africa’s uncompromising, fertile, death-dealing land. We follow Tim and Nicola Fuller hopscotching the continent, restlessly trying to establish a home. War, hardship, and tragedy follow the family even as Nicola fights to hold on to her children, her land, her sanity. But just when it seems that Nicola has been broken by the continent she loves, it is the African earth that revives and nurtures her. *Cocktail Hour Under the Tree of Forgetfulness* is Fuller at her very best.

Curtains: Adventures of an Undertaker in Training by Tom R. Jokinen

(e-Book)

If Bill Bryson were to join a Winnipeg funeral home as an apprentice, and if he searched for the meaning of life and death while he was at it, you’d have *Curtains*—enlightening, full of life in the midst of death, and very funny. At forty-four, Tom Jokinen began to question the secular funeral rites that are taking over the industry: is this really the way we want to say our final goodbyes? So he decided to quit his job in order to become an apprentice undertaker. *Curtains* is about what he found, from the mundane to the macabre. For anyone who’s secretly wondered why they paid \$2,000 for a five-pound bag of dust—or questioned whether that dust was really the person they loved—*Curtains* lifts the veil on the funeral industry in the twenty-first century.

Dead Wake by Erik Larson – [New](#)

(LP, TB, e-Book)

On May 1, 1915, with WWI entering its tenth month, a luxury ocean liner as richly appointed as an English country house sailed out of New York, bound for Liverpool, carrying a record number of children and infants. The passengers were surprisingly at ease, even though Germany had declared the seas around Britain to be a war zone. For months, German U-boats had brought terror to the North Atlantic. But the *Lusitania* was one of the era’s great transatlantic “Greyhounds”—the fastest liner then in service—and her captain, William Thomas Turner, placed tremendous faith in the gentlemanly strictures of warfare that for a century had kept civilian ships safe from attack. Germany, however, was determined to change the rules of the game, and Walther

Schwieger, the captain of *Unterseeboot-20*, was happy to oblige. Meanwhile, an ultra-secret British intelligence unit tracked Schwieger's U-boat, but told no one. As U-20 and the *Lusitania* made their way toward Liverpool, an array of forces both grand and achingly small—hubris, a chance fog, a closely guarded secret, and more—all converged to produce one of the great disasters of history.

- The book was named Book of the Year in the History Category by World Magazine.^[3]
- Won the [Goodreads](#) Choice Award for History & Biography in 2015

Dispatches from the Edge by Anderson Cooper

(TB)

In this gripping, candid, and remarkably powerful memoir, he offers an unstinting, up-close view of the most harrowing crises of our time, and the profound impact they have had on his life. Writing with vivid memories of his childhood and early career as a roving correspondent, Cooper reveals for the first time how deeply affected he has been by the wars, disasters, and tragedies he has witnessed, and why he continues to be drawn to some of the most perilous places on earth. *Dispatches from the Edge* is an unforgettable memoir that takes us behind the scenes of the cataclysmic events of our age and allows us to see them through the eyes of one of America's most trusted, fearless, and pioneering reporters.

The End of Your Life Book Club by Will Schwalbe - New

(LP)

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

*An *Entertainment Weekly* and *BookPage* Best Book of the Year

Escape from Camp 14 by Blaine Harden

(LP, TB, e-Audio)

Acclaimed journalist Blaine Harden tells the story of Shin Dong-hyuk and through the lens of Shin's life unlocks the secrets of the world's most repressive totalitarian state. Shin knew nothing of civilized existence—he saw his mother as a competitor for food, guards raised him to be a snitch, and he witnessed the execution of his own family. This harrowing narrative of Shin's life and remarkable escape offers us a look at one of the world's darkest nations and spins a riveting tale of endurance, courage, and survival.

Esther by Julie Wheelwright

In 1703, a war party of French soldiers and Abenaki warriors raided the village of seven-year-old Puritan girl Esther Wheelwright, taking thirty-nine captives and killing a handful of men, women and children. That Esther managed to survive the 200-mile journey by foot through swamps and forests to a Jesuit mission in New France is astonishing. That she was adopted quite happily, into a family of her Abenaki captors, is equally amazing. But for the Wheelwright family, who waited years before they had word that Esther had even survived the raid, this was a tragedy.

When Esther's release from her Abenaki family was finally negotiated through a French Jesuit who took her to the city of Quebec, it was too late. At the age of fourteen, Esther broke her parents' hearts by refusing to go home; they never saw her again. Instead, she remained in Quebec, the capital of New France, where, against all odds, she rose through the ranks to become Mother Superior—and a pivotal figure after the siege of Quebec in 1759.

The Film Club: A True Story of a Father and Son by David Gilmour

(MP3)

When his fifteen-year-old son, Jesse, starting failing the 10th grade, the Canadian film critic/novelist let him drop out of school. Gilmour didn't home-school him, send him to boarding school. Instead, Gilmour required Jesse to watch three movies a week with him and to not use drugs. This pleasant, wise memoir describes the films they watched, ranging from Akira Kurosawa's *Ran* to *Basic Instinct*, and the chats about life, love and booze they triggered. By the end, the son finds his way.

Fry Chronicles by Stephen Fry

Thirteen years ago, *Moab is my Washpot* Stephen Fry's autobiography of his early years, was published to rave reviews and was a huge bestseller. In those thirteen years since, Stephen Fry has moved into a completely new stratosphere, both as a public figure, and a private man. Now he is not just a multi-award-winning comedian and actor, but also an author, director and presenter. Much loved by the public and his peers, Stephen Fry is one of the most influential cultural forces in the country. This dazzling memoir promises to be a courageously frank, honest and poignant read. It will detail some of the most turbulent and least well known years of his life with writing that will excite you, make you laugh uproariously, move you, inform you and, above all, surprise you.

Furiously Happy by Jenny Lawson - [New](#)

(TB, e-Book)

In *Furiously Happy*, a humor memoir tinged with just enough tragedy and pathos to make it worthwhile, Jenny Lawson examines her own experience with severe depression and a host of other conditions, and explains how it has led her to live life to the fullest: "I've often thought that people with severe depression have developed such a well for experiencing extreme emotion that they might be able to experience extreme joy in a way that 'normal people' also might never understand. And that's what *Furiously Happy* is all about."

Jenny's readings are standing room only, with fans lining up to have Jenny sign their bottles of Xanax or Prozac as often as they are to have her sign their books. *Furiously Happy* appeals to Jenny's core fan base but also transcends it. There are *so many* people out there struggling with depression and mental illness, either themselves or someone in their family—and in *Furiously Happy* they will find a member of their tribe offering up an uplifting message (via a taxidermied roadkill raccoon). *Let's Pretend This Never Happened* ostensibly was about embracing your own weirdness, but deep down it was about family. *Furiously Happy* is about depression and mental illness, but deep down it's about joy—and who doesn't want a bit more of that?

Galileo's Daughter by Dava Sobel

(TB, e-Audio)

Inspired by a long fascination with Galileo, and by the remarkable surviving letters of his daughter Maria Celeste, a cloistered nun, Dava Sobel has crafted a biography that dramatically recolors the personality and accomplishments of a mythic figure whose early-seventeenth-century clash with Catholic doctrine continues to define the schism between science and religion. It is also a stunning portrait of Galileo's daughter, a person hitherto lost to history, described by her father as "a woman of exquisite mind, singular goodness, and most tenderly attached to me."

Moving between Galileo's grand public life and Maria Celeste's sequestered world, Sobel illuminates the Florence of the Medicis and the papal court in Rome during the pivotal era when humanity's perception of its place in the cosmos was about to be overturned. During that same time, while the bubonic plague wreaked its terrible devastation and the Thirty Years' War tipped fortunes across Europe, Galileo sought to reconcile the Heaven he revered as a good Catholic with the heavens he revealed through his telescope.

The Ghost Map: The Story of London’s Most Terrifying Epidemic by Steven Johnson (TB, e-Audio)

A historical chronicle of Victorian London’s worst cholera outbreak. Johnson traces the day-by-day efforts of Dr. John Snow, who put his own life on the line in his efforts to prove his previously dismissed contagion theory about how the epidemic was spreading. Part medical mystery and part social history, this page-turner is also a timely look at current and future threats from contagious diseases.

Gold Diggers: Striking it Rich in the Klondike by Charlotte Gray 

The remarkable story of the Gold Rush, told for the first time through the lives of six very different people, including miner William Haskell, saintly priest Father Judge, young writer Jack London, savvy businesswoman Belinda Mulrooney, British journalist Flora Shaw, and Mountie Sam Steele. Interweaving their experiences during this extraordinary moment in history, Gray presents a fascinating panorama of a subarctic town where miners, dance hall girls, preachers and lawmakers were thrown together.

H is for Hawk by Helen MacDonal – [New](#) (LP, TB, e-Book)

The instant *New York Times* bestseller and award-winning sensation, Helen Macdonald's story of adopting and raising one of nature's most vicious predators has soared into the hearts of millions of readers worldwide. Fierce and feral, her goshawk Mabel's temperament mirrors Helen's own state of grief after her father's death, and together raptor and human "discover the pain and beauty of being alive" (*People*). *H Is for Hawk* is a genre-defying debut from one of our most unique and transcendent voices.

- 2014 [Costa Book of the Year](#)
- 2014 [Samuel Johnson Prize](#)

Helpless: Caledonia’s Nightmare of Fear and Anarchy, and How the Law Failed All of Us by Christie

Blatchford 

(e-Book)

The author tells the full story of Caledonia and the Grand River land dispute for the first time—a story that no part of the press or media in Canada has been prepared to tackle with the unflinching objectivity that Christie Blatchford displays. The many revelations, never before reported, will shock and appal.

Home: A Memoir of My Early Years by Julie Andrews (TB, LP)

Spanning events from her 1935 birth to the early 1960s, she covers her rise to fame and ends with Walt Disney casting her in *Mary Poppins*. Setting the stage with a family tree backdrop, she balances the sad struggles of relatives and hard drinkers with mirthful family tales and youthful vocal lessons amid rationing and the London Blitz: The heart of her book documents the rehearsals, tryouts, and smash 1956 opening of “*My Fair Lady*.” Readers will rejoice, since Andrews is an accomplished writer who holds back nothing while adding a patina of poetry to the antics and anecdotes throughout this memoir of bittersweet backstage encounters and theatrical triumphs.

Honeymoon with My Brother by Franz Wisner (MP3)

This is the true story of Franz Wisner, a man who thought he had it all. Just days before they were to be married, his fiancée called off the wedding. He decided to have a wedding and a honeymoon anyway—there just wouldn’t be a bride at the ceremony, and Franz’s travel companion would be his brother, Kurt. During the “honeymoon,” Franz reconnected with his brother and began to look at his life with newfound perspective. The brothers decided to leave their old lives behind them. They quit their jobs, sold all their possessions, and traveled around the world, visiting fifty-three countries for the next two years. Franz recounts this remarkable journey, during which he turned his heartbreak into an opportunity to learn about himself, the world, and the brother he hardly knew.

A House in the Sky by Amanda Lindhout - New

As a child, Amanda Lindhout escaped a violent household by paging through issues of *National Geographic* and imagining herself in its exotic locales. At the age of nineteen, working as a cocktail waitress in Calgary, Alberta, she began saving her tips so she could travel the globe. Aspiring to understand the world and live a significant life, she backpacked through Latin America, Laos, Bangladesh, and India, and emboldened by each adventure, went on to Sudan, Syria, and Pakistan. In war-ridden Afghanistan and Iraq she carved out a fledgling career as a television reporter. And then, in August 2008, she traveled to Somalia—“the most dangerous place on earth.” On her fourth day, she was abducted by a group of masked men along a dusty road. Held hostage for 460 days, Amanda converts to Islam as a survival tactic, receives “wife lessons” from one of her captors, and risks a daring escape. Moved between a series of abandoned houses in the desert, she survives on memory—every lush detail of the world she experienced in her life before captivity—and on strategy, fortitude, and hope. When she is most desperate, she visits a house in the sky, high above the woman kept in chains, in the dark, being tortured.

- 2014 CBC Bookie Award for Best Canadian Nonfiction

How to be a Woman by Caitlin Moran

(e-Book, e-Audio)

Though they have the vote and the Pill and haven't been burned as witches since 1727, life isn't exactly a stroll down the catwalk for modern women. They are beset by uncertainties and questions: Why are they supposed to get Brazilians? Why do bras hurt? Why the incessant talk about babies? And do men secretly hate them? Caitlin Moran interweaves provocative observations on women's lives with laugh-out-loud funny scenes from her own, from the riot of adolescence to her development as a writer, wife, and mother. With rapier wit, Moran slices right to the truth—whether it's about the workplace, strip clubs, love, fat, abortion, popular entertainment, or children—to jump-start a new conversation about feminism. With humor, insight, and verve, *How To Be a Woman* lays bare the reasons female rights and empowerment are essential issues not only for women today but also for society itself.

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot

(LP, TB, e-Book, e-Audio)

In 1951, Henrietta Lacks, a poor African-American woman in Baltimore, Maryland, died of cervical cancer in Johns Hopkins Hospital—but not before her surgeon extracted some tissue samples. These dime-sized slices, the first to successfully grow and replicate in a test tube, became the foundation of the HeLa cell line. These cells have made possible some of modern medicine's greatest discoveries, from the polio vaccine to in vitro fertilization to gene mapping. But who was Henrietta Lacks, beyond an unwitting (and non-consenting) tissue donor? To find out, journalist Rebecca Skloot spent a decade researching Lacks and her descendants. The result is an in-depth biographical portrait that also reflects on medical ethics.

John A: The Man Who Made Us by Richard Gwyn

(MP3, e-Book)

This book—the first of two—follows Macdonald's life from his birth in Scotland, his coming to Canada as a boy with his parents, his entry into law and then into politics, the tragedies of his personal life and then the triumph of Confederation. Gwyn comments, “All but certainly, no Macdonald, no Canada.”

- 2008 Charles Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction winner

Just Kids by Patti Smith

(TB, e-Book, e-Audio)

In 1969, Patti Smith and Robert Mapplethorpe set up camp at the Hotel Chelsea and soon entered a community of the famous and infamous—the influential artists of the day and the colourful fringe. It was a time of heightened awareness, when the worlds of poetry, rock and roll, art, and sexual politics were colliding and exploding. In this milieu, two kids made a pact to take care of each other. Scrappy, romantic, committed to create, and fueled by their mutual dreams and drives, they would prod and provide for one another during the hungry years. *Just Kids* begins as a love story and ends as an elegy. It serves as a salute to New York City during the late sixties and seventies and to its rich and poor, its hustlers and hellions. A true fable, it is a portrait of two young artists' ascent, a prelude to fame.

Just Watch Me: The Life of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, 1968 - 2000 by John English



(e-Book)

Written with exclusive access to Trudeau's private papers and letters, this second volume takes us from sixties' Trudeaumania to his final days when he debated his faith. John English reveals how, for Trudeau, style was as important as substance, and how the controversial public figure intertwined with the charismatic private man and committed father. He traces Trudeau's deep friendships (with women especially, many of them talented artists, like Barbra Streisand) and bitter enmities; his marriage and family tragedy. He illuminates his strengths and weaknesses — from Trudeaumania to political disenchantment, from his electrifying response to the kidnappings during the October Crisis, to his all-important patriation of the Canadian Constitution, and his evolution to influential elder statesman.

Ketchup is a Vegetable and other Lies Moms tell Themselves by Robin O'Bryant

If you don't have anything nice to say about motherhood, then... read this book. Robin O'Bryant offers a no holds barred look at the day to day life of being a mother to three, running a household and the everyday monotony of parenting. It's not always pretty but it's real. Whether she's stuffing cabbage in her bra... dealing with defiant yet determined daughters... yelling at the F.B.I... or explaining the birds and the bees to her preschooler... you're sure to find dozens of humorous and relatable situations. From the creator of Robin's Chicks, one of the South's most popular blogs on motherhood, misunderstandings and musings, comes a collection of essays that will not only make you laugh and cry, but realize that you're not alone in your journey.

Sit back and relax, pour yourself some "mommy juice," throw a fresh diaper on your baby and deadbolt the bedroom door to keep your kids out... because once you start reading you'll be too busy wiping away tears of laughter to wipe anybody's butt.

Lab Girl by Hope Jahren – New

(LP)

Acclaimed scientist Hope Jahren has built three laboratories in which she's studied trees, flowers, seeds, and soil. Her first book is a revelatory treatise on plant life—but it is also so much more.

Lab Girl is a book about work, love, and the mountains that can be moved when those two things come together. It is told through Jahren's stories: about her childhood in rural Minnesota with an uncompromising mother and a father who encouraged hours of play in his classroom's labs; about how she found a sanctuary in science, and learned to perform lab work done "with both the heart and the hands"; and about the inevitable disappointments, but also the triumphs and exhilarating discoveries, of scientific work.

Yet at the core of this book is the story of a relationship Jahren forged with a brilliant, wounded man named Bill, who becomes her lab partner and best friend. Their sometimes rogue adventures in science take them from the Midwest across the United States and back again, over the Atlantic to the ever-light skies of the North Pole and to tropical Hawaii, where she and her lab currently make their home.

They Left Us Everything: A Memoir by Plum Johnson

(e-Book)

After almost twenty years of caring for elderly parents—first for their senile father, and then for their cantankerous ninety-three-year-old mother—author Plum Johnson and her three younger brothers experience conflicted feelings of grief and relief when their mother, the surviving parent, dies. Now they must empty and sell the beloved family home, which hasn't been de-cluttered in more than half a century. Twenty-three rooms bulge with history, antiques, and oxygen tanks. Plum remembers her loving but difficult parents who could not have been more different: the British father, a handsome, disciplined patriarch who nonetheless could not control his opinionated, extroverted Southern-belle wife who loved tennis and gin gimlets. The task consumes her, becoming more rewarding than she ever imagined. Items from childhood trigger memories of her eccentric family growing up in a small town on the shores of Lake Ontario in the 1950s and 60s. But unearthing new facts about her parents helps her reconcile those relationships with a more accepting perspective about who they were and what they valued.

- 2015 RBC Taylor Prize

Little Princes by Conor Grennan

(LP, TB)

In search of adventure, twenty-nine-year-old Conor Grennan embarked on a yearlong journey around the globe, beginning with a three-month stint volunteering at an orphanage in civil war-torn Nepal. But a shocking truth would forever change his life: these rambunctious, resilient children were not orphans at all but had been taken from their families by child traffickers who falsely promised to keep them safe from war before abandoning them in the teeming chaos of Kathmandu. For Conor, what started as a footloose ramble became a dangerous, dedicated mission to unite youngsters he had grown to love with the parents they had been stolen from—a breathtaking adventure, as Conor risked everything in the treacherous Nepalese mountains to bring the children home. This gripping story by a children's-rights advocate recounts his experiences as a boy growing up in Sierra Leone in the 1990s, during one of the most brutal and violent civil wars in recent history. Told in a conversational, accessible style, this powerful record of war ends as a beacon to all those experiencing violence around them by showing them that there are other ways to survive than by adding to the chaos.

The Lost Child of Philomena Lee by Martin Sixsmith

When she fell pregnant as a teenager in Ireland in 1952, Philomena Lee was sent to the convent at Roscrea in Co. Tipperary to be looked after as a fallen woman. She cared for her baby for three years until the Church took him from her and sold him, like countless others, to America for adoption. Coerced into signing a document promising never to attempt to see her child again, she nonetheless spent the next fifty years secretly searching for him, unaware that he was searching for her from across the Atlantic.

Philomena's son, renamed Michael Hess, grew up to be a top Washington lawyer and a leading Republican official in the Reagan and Bush administrations. But he was a gay man in a homophobic party where he had to conceal not only his sexuality but, eventually, the fact that he had AIDs. With little time left, he returned to Ireland and the convent where he was born: his desperate quest to find his mother before he died left a legacy that was to unfold with unexpected consequences for all involved.

Lost in Shangri-La by Mitchell Zuckoff

(LP, TB)

On May 13, 1945, twenty-four American servicemen and WACs boarded a transport plane for a trip over "Shangri-La," a beautiful and mysterious valley deep within the jungle-covered mountains of Dutch New Guinea. But the pleasure tour became a battle for survival when the plane crashed. Miraculously, three passengers pulled through: Margaret Hastings, John McCollom, and Kenneth Decker. Badly injured, the trio faced certain death unless they left the crash site. Caught between man-eating head hunters and enemy Japanese, the wounded passengers endured a harrowing journey into the unknown that would lead them straight into a primitive tribe of superstitious natives who had never before seen a white man—or woman. Drawn from interviews, declassified U.S. Army documents, personal photos and more, *Lost in Shangri-La* recounts this incredible true-life adventure for the first time.

On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft by Stephen King

Part memoir, part master class by one of the bestselling authors of all time, this superb volume is a revealing and practical view of the writer's craft, comprising the basic tools of the trade every writer must have. King's advice is grounded in his vivid memories from childhood through his emergence as a writer, from his struggling early career to his widely reported, near-fatal accident in 1999—and how the inextricable link between writing and living spurred his recovery. Brilliantly structured, friendly and inspiring, *On Writing* will empower and entertain everyone who reads it—fans, writers, and anyone who loves a great story well told.

- *Winner of the 2001 Bram Stoker Award for Best Non-Fiction; 2000 Locus Award for Best Non-Fiction*

The Paper Garden by Molly Peacock

(e-Book)

At once a biography of an extraordinary eighteenth-century gentlewoman and a meditation on late-life creativity, it is a beautifully written tour de force. Mary Granville Pendarves Delany (1700-1788) was the daughter of a minor branch of a powerful family. Married off at 16 to a 61-year-old drunken squire to improve the family fortunes, she was widowed by 25. In mid-life she found love and married. Upon her husband's death 23 years later, she arose from her grief, picked up a pair of scissors and, at the age of 72, created a new art form, mixed-media collage. Delicately, Peacock has woven parallels in her own life around the story of Mrs. Delany's and, in doing so, has made this biography into a profound and beautiful examination of the nature of creativity and art.

The Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking by Susan Cain (LP, TB, e-Book)

At least one-third of the people we know are introverts. They are the ones who prefer listening to speaking; who innovate and create but dislike self-promotion; who favor working on their own over working in teams. In *Quiet*, Cain argues that we dramatically undervalue introverts and shows how much we lose in doing so. She charts the rise of the Extrovert Ideal throughout the twentieth century and explores how deeply it has come to permeate our culture. She also introduces us to successful introverts—from a witty, high-octane public speaker who recharges in solitude after his talks, to a record-breaking salesman who quietly taps into the power of questions. Passionately argued, superbly researched, and filled with indelible stories of real people, *Quiet* has the power to change how we see introverts and, equally important, how they see themselves.

Sisters in the Wilderness by Charlotte Gray

(MP3)

In the inhospitable and hardscrabble bush of Canada, facing a pioneering existence that they never even knew existed, the well-educated, but modestly married, British born Strickland sisters, Susanna and Catharine, turned to the pen to ease their loneliness and isolation. Both women had great influence on England's understanding of colonial Canada, as well as on Canada's own vision of its young self. Their writings have become central to all Canadian studies courses and are considered classic examples of pioneer memoirs.

The Sociopath Next Door by Martha Stout

(TB)

We are accustomed to think of sociopaths as violent criminals, but in *The Sociopath Next Door*, Harvard psychologist Martha Stout reveals that a shocking 4 percent of ordinary people—one in twenty-five—has an often undetected mental disorder, the chief symptom of which is that that person possesses no conscience. He or she has no ability whatsoever to feel shame, guilt, or remorse. One in twenty-five everyday Americans, therefore, is secretly a sociopath. They could be your colleague, your neighbor, even family. And they can do literally anything at all and feel absolutely no guilt. The fact is, we all almost certainly know at least one or more sociopaths already. Part of the urgency in reading *The Sociopath Next Door* is the moment when we suddenly recognize that someone we know—someone we worked for, or were involved with, or voted for—is a sociopath. But what do we do with that knowledge? To arm us against the sociopath, Dr. Stout teaches us to question authority, suspect flattery, and beware the pity play. Above all, she writes, when a sociopath is beckoning, do not join the game.

This Is Your Brain on Music by Daniel J. Levitin

This ground-breaking union of art and science explores the connection between music - its performance, its composition, how we listen to it, why we enjoy it - and the human brain. Drawing on the latest research and on musical examples ranging from Mozart to Duke Ellington to Van Halen, Levitin reveals:

- How composers produce some of the most pleasurable effects of listening to music by exploiting the way our brains make sense of the world
- Why we are so emotionally attached to the music we listened to as teenagers, whether it was Fleetwood Mac, U2, or Dr. Dre
- That practice, rather than talent, is the driving force behind musical expertise
- How those insidious little jingles (called *earworms*) get stuck in our head

A Three Dog Life by Abigail Thomas

(MP3, e-Book)

When Abigail Thomas's husband, Rich, was hit by a car, his skull was shattered, his brain severely damaged. Subject to rages, terrors, and hallucinations—and with no memory of what he did the hour, the day, the year before—he was sent to live in a nursing facility that specializes in treating traumatic brain injuries. This tragedy is the ground on which Abigail had to build a new life. How she built that life is a story of great courage and change, of moving to a small country town, of a new family composed of three dogs, knitting, and friendship, of facing down guilt and discovering gratitude.

Tiger: A True Story of Vengeance and Survival by John Vaillant



(TB, e-Book)

Deep in the frigid Siberian wilderness, an Amur tiger hunts. Fearsome strength commands a calculating mind that relentlessly stalks its newest prey: man. John Vaillant provides an unforgettable true account of a lethal collision between man and beast in a remote Russian village during the late 1990s. At its core, *Tiger* is the story of a desperate poacher who picked the wrong tiger to accost. Yet it engages the reader on political, socioeconomic, and conservation fronts to explain how the stage was set for a deadly showdown. Vaillant is careful to keep the bone-chilling storyline taut by capturing the intensity of an animal worthy of our greatest respect and deepest fears.

Traveling with Pomegranates by Sue Monk Kidd - [New](#)

(LP, TB)

Sue Monk Kidd has touched the hearts of millions of readers with her beloved novels and acclaimed nonfiction. Now, in this wise and engrossing dual memoir, she and her daughter, Ann, chronicle their travels together through Greece and France at a time when each was on a quest to redefine herself and rediscover each other.

As Sue struggles to enlarge a vision of swarming bees into a novel, and Ann ponders the classic question of what to do with her life, this modern-day Demeter and Persephone explore an array of inspiring figures and sacred sites. They also give voice to that most protean of human connections: the bond of mothers and daughters.

Unbearable Lightness: A Story of Loss and Gain by Portia de Rossi

(TB)

In this searing, unflinchingly honest book, Portia de Rossi captures the complex emotional truth of what it is like when food, weight, and body image take priority over every other human impulse or action. She reveals the heartache and fear that accompany a life lived in the closet, a sense of isolation that was only magnified by her unrelenting desire to be ever thinner. With the storytelling skills of a great novelist and the eye for detail of a poet, de Rossi makes transparent as never before.

Unbroken: A WWII Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption by Laura Hillenbrand (TB, LP, e-Book)



On a May afternoon in 1943, an Army Air Forces bomber crashed into the Pacific Ocean and disappeared. Then, on the ocean surface, a face appeared. It was that of young lieutenant Louis Zamperini. In boyhood, he'd been an incorrigible delinquent. As a teenager, he had channeled his defiance into running, a talent that had carried him to the Berlin Olympics. But when war had

come, the athlete had become an airman, embarking on a journey that led to his doomed flight. Ahead of Zamperini lay thousands of miles of open ocean, leaping sharks, a foundering raft, thirst and starvation, enemy aircraft, and, beyond, a trial even greater. Driven to the limits of endurance, Zamperini would answer desperation with ingenuity; suffering with hope, resolve, and humor; brutality with rebellion. His fate, whether triumph or tragedy, would be suspended on the fraying wire of his will.

- *2013 Pass the Book title*

Undress Me In the Temple of Heaven by Susan Jane Gilman (TB)

In 1986, fresh out of college, Gilman and her friend Claire yearned to do something daring and original that did not involve getting a job. Inspired by a place mat at the International House of Pancakes, they decided to embark on an ambitious trip around the globe, starting in the People's Republic of China. At that point, China had been open to independent travelers for roughly ten minutes. Armed only with the collected works of Nietzsche, an astrological love guide, and an arsenal of bravado, the two friends plunged into the dusty streets of Shanghai. Unsurprisingly, they quickly found themselves in over their heads. As they ventured off the map deep into Chinese territory, they were stripped of everything familiar and forced to confront their limitations amid culture shock and government surveillance. What began as a journey full of humor, eroticism, and enlightenment grew increasingly sinister-becoming a real-life international thriller that transformed them forever.

The Zookeeper's Wife by Diane Ackerman (TB, LP)

The Zookeeper's Wife tells the remarkable WWII story of Jan Zabinski, the director of the Warsaw Zoo, and his wife, Antonina, who sheltered 300 Jews as well as Polish resisters in their villa and in animal cages and sheds. Using diaries, other contemporary sources and her own research in Poland, Ackerman takes us into the Warsaw ghetto and the 1943 Jewish uprising and also describes the Poles' revolt against the Nazi occupiers in 1944.