

From the New York Times bestselling creative team KAMI GARCIA and GABRIEL PICOLO

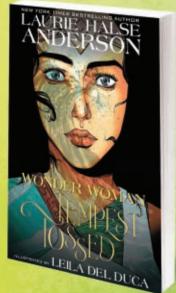


Author Kami Garcia (Beautiful Creatures) and artist Gabriel Picolo, the creative duo behind the New York Times, USA Today, and Publishers Weekly bestseller Teen Titans: Raven, take you on a journey of self-discovery and acceptance, while reminding us of the value of true friendship especially when life gets wild.

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TEEN TITANS: BEAST BOY





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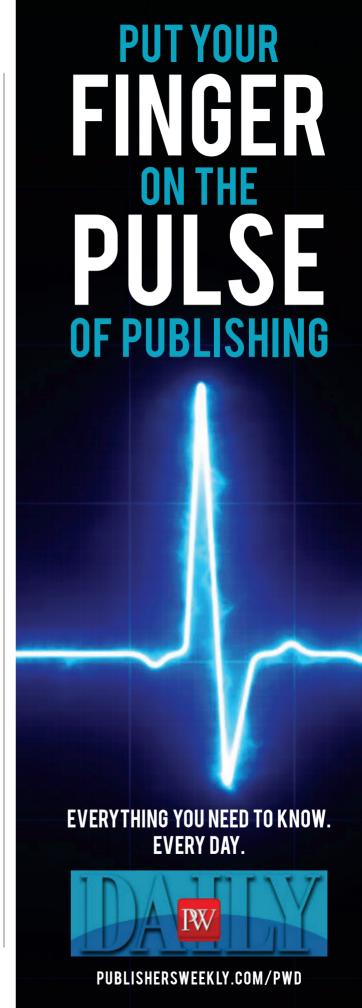
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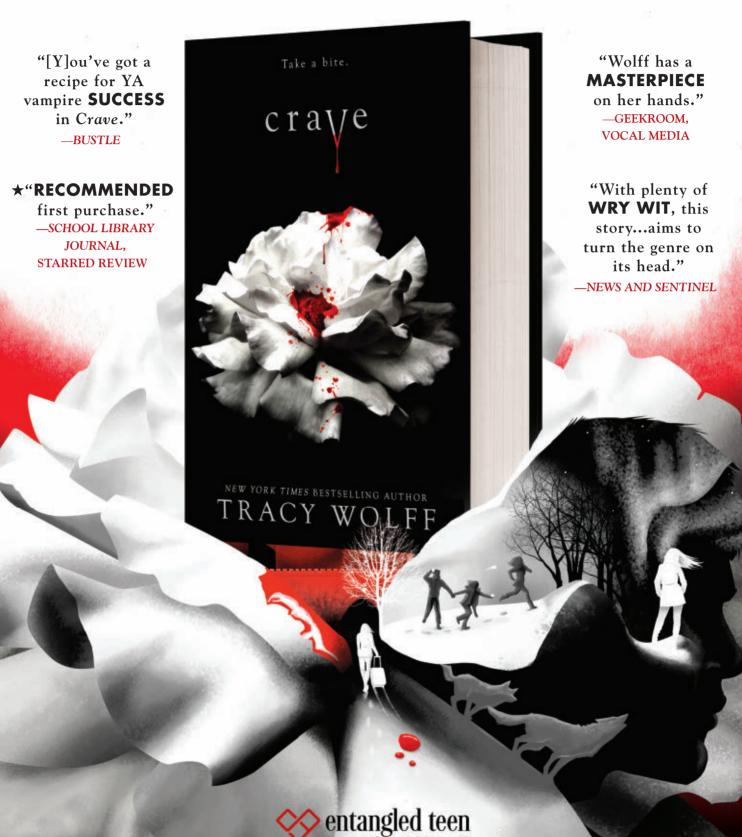
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The Week in Publishing

Walker Books, the U.K. children's publisher and owner of Massachusetts-based Candlewick Press, has been acquired by Trustbridge Global Media. The purchase follows TGM's previous acquisitions of two other U.S. children's publishers, Holiday House and Peachtree Press.



Publishers Weekly and Seville, Spain-based Lantia have

announced a new magazine for the Spanish publishing trade, Publishers Weekly en Español. It will be published 26 times per year in Spain starting in the fall.



Irv Myers,

a respected publishing logistics expert for such companies as

Waldenbooks, Rowman & Littlefield/ NBN Books, and New Leaf, died May 7 of a heart attack. He was 68.



Bookstore sales plunged 33.4% in March compared to March 2019, dropping from \$587 million a year ago to \$391 million. For the first quarter of 2020, bookstore sales were down 11.1% from the first quarter of 2019.



LSC Communications' book group revenue dropped 21.4% in the first quarter ended Mar. 31, 2020, compared to a year ago. Lower educational book volumes and temporary declines in its religion book business offset a rise in

trade sales, the printing giant said.

Online & On-Air

The Week Ahead

PW senior writer Andrew Albanese discusses the legacy of Carolyn Reidy at Simon & Schuster and the difficulty of losing a leader while working remotely.

publishersweekly.com/reidy

More to Come

Kate Fitzsimons interviews comics creator, writer, and producer Geoff Johns about Stargirl, the teenage DC Comics superhero he created in the late 1990s, who is now the main character of DC's Stargirl, a live-action Arrowverse

show on the CW. publishersweekly.com/iohns

Children's Bookshelf

The long-awaited prequel to the

Hunger Games series will hit bookstores next Tuesday, but readers across the country will not be able to go inside many stores to celebrate the release.



These indie bookstores, however, are still offering promotions and

publishersweekly.com/hunger



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News

Carolyn Reidy's Rich Legacy

The S&S CEO, who died last week, earned the respect and affection of the book world and left behind a prospering publishing company

arolyn Reidy is being remembered as a straight-shooting, publishing-loving people person CEO who cared deeply about her authors, her staff, and the book world. Reidy, who began her publishing career in the subsidiary rights department at Random House in 1974 and rose to become CEO of Simon & Schuster in 2008, died from a heart attack on May 12, 10 days after her 71st birthday. She steered S&S through the Great Reces-

sion, publishing's digital disruption, and a slow-growth sales environment to keep it a commercial and critical success. While taking great pride in S&S's long list of award-winning authors, she was also proud of the company's record of 19 consecutive quarters of profit growth, which was snapped in the fourth quarter of 2019.

At the time of her death, Reidy was still at the helm of S&S, the country's third-largest trade book publisher, and was running the company as its current owner, Viacom-

CBS, looks for a buyer. "Carolyn was a passionate and beloved leader who helped make Simon & Schuster what it is today: one of the most successful and respected consumer publishing houses in the business," said Bob Bakish, president and CEO of ViacomCBS. "Over the course of almost 30 years at the company—and 12 as CEO—Carolyn nurtured relationships with important and popular writers, oversaw the publishing of numerous culture-shaping bestsellers, and broadened Simon & Schuster's audience by pushing into new formats and international markets. And, most impressively, Carolyn did this while staying true to who she was—a straight shooter who led with heart and humor, was a fierce advocate for her people and a mentor to many."

Indeed, despite the fact that publishing is dominated by women, few occupy leadership roles at large trade houses,

and Reidy was seen as an inspiration by many. She kept S&S among the biggest trade publishers largely through organic initiatives. The 2016 purchase of Adams Media was the only acquisition the company made during her tenure as CEO.

Reidy's vehicle of choice for internal growth was the creation of new imprints. Each imprint was formed with a specific mission. Tiller Press, launched this year, focuses on using data to publish culturally relevant books. Signal Press, created

in 2019, publishes titles related to politics and social justice issues, as well as biographies. Previous imprints included Gallery 13, established to publish graphic novels, and Salaam Reads, a children's imprint dedicated to books of interest to Muslim children. 37 Ink was created in 2013 to bring more diverse authors and titles to the company.

Another favorite initiative of Reidy was the expansion of S&S's distribution business. To support that growth, in 2019 the com-

PEN AMERICA

The Free to Write

PEN AMERICA

The Freedom o Write

The Freedom o Write

The Freedom o Write

Carolyn Reidy speaking at PEN America's 2018 gala.

pany opened a second warehouse—a 300,000-sq.-ft facility in Milan, Tenn. S&S's distribution business now has more than 70 clients

The publisher's international business also grew under Reidy's watch. In 2013, S&S Canada expanded its operations to include editorial and publishing activities for its titles that originate in Canada. Two years earlier, S&S India was established to publish and sell S&S's titles and those of its distribution clients to the country's English-language readers.

Reidy was an optimistic champion of books. After S&S posted a small sales increase in this year's first quarter over 2019, she acknowledged that the rest of year was likely to be difficult. Still, she had no doubt that the book business would bounce back. With Covid-19 dampening book sales, Reidy told PW that what she found "most heartening" about

The Weekly Scorecard

Print Unit Sales Up 9.9% In Early May

Led by big gains in the juvenile categories, unit sales of print books rose 9.9% in the week ended May 9, 2020, over the comparable period in 2019, at outlets that report to NPD BookScan. Juvenile nonfiction posted a 44% increase in unit sales over the week ended May 11, 2019. While My First Learn-to-Write Workbook by Crystal Radke remained #1 in the category, selling more than 21,000 copies, a new title landed in the second spot: Engineer Academy: Space by Rob Colson sold just under 14,000 copies in its first week. Print unit sales rose 21% over 2019 in juvenile fiction. The One and Only Bob by Katherine Applegate landed in the second spot on the category list, selling almost 27,000 copies in its first week. Oh, the Places You'll Go! by Dr. Seuss stayed in the top spot, selling nearly 30,000 copies. The adult fiction category had a good week, with print unit sales up 15.6% over 2019. Three new titles were among the top 10 category bestsellers. The 20th Victim by James Patterson and Maxine Paetro was #3 on the list, selling more than 44,000 copies in its first week. All Adults Here by Emma Straub was in sixth place, selling close to 22,000 copies, followed by Christine Feehan's Shadow Flight, which sold just over 21,000 copies. Mother's Day gave a boost to the already-popular Magnolia Table, Vol. 2 by Joanna Gaines, which sold more than 76,000 copies in the week, keeping it at #1 on the adult nonfiction list. Incompαrable by Nikki and Brie Bella sold nearly 13,000 copies in its first week, putting it in seventh place on the category list.

TOTAL SALES OF PRINT BOOKS (IN THOUSANDS)				
	MAY. 11, 2019	MAY.9, 2020	CHGE C	
Total	12.341	13,563	9.9% -	L.5%

UNIT SALES OF PRINT BOOKS BY CATEGORY (IN THOUSANDS)					
	MAY. 11, 2019	MAY.9, 2020	CHGE WEEK	CHGE YTD	
Adult Nonfiction	5,828	5,791	-0.6%	-8.8%	
Adult Fiction	2,518	2,911	15.6%	-0.4%	
Juvenile Nonfiction	965	1,389	44.0%	25.2%	
Juvenile Fiction	2,454	2,969	21.0%	3.2%	
Young Adult Fiction	361	349	-3.4%	-7.4%	
Young Adult Nonfiction	52	59	14.3%	19.0%	

UNIT SALES OF PRINT BOOKS BY FORMAT (IN THOUSANDS)				
	MAY. 11, 2019	MAY. 9, 2020	CHGE WEEK	CHGE YTD
Hardcover	4,008	4,184	4.4%	-5.5%
Trade Paperback	6,635	7,534	13.6%	2.4%
Mass Market Paperback	805	839	4.2%	-11.7%
Board Books	521	616	18.2%	-6.5%



SOURCE: NPD BOOKSCAN AND PUBLISHERS WEEKLY. NPD'S U.S. CONSUMER MARKET PANEL COV-ERS APPROXIMATELY 80% OF THE PRINT BOOK MARKET AND CONTINUES TO GROW.

News

the state of the business was that "the demand for books is still there," noting, "Consumers are finding books despite different inconveniences."

Reidy's commitment to the industry was seen in the different organizations in which she played an active role. She was chair of the Association of American Publishers and was still on the board this year. She also had been on the boards of the National Book Foundation and of Literacy Partners.

Reidy picked up her fair share of awards and was named person of the year by PW in 2017. In 2018 she was the publisher honoree at PEN America's annual gala, where she gave a stirring defense of free speech. Against the background of growing criticism of the press by government officials and threats to block the publication of some books, Reidy proclaimed, "It is repugnant when someone, anyone—whether it is the general public, media pundits, local school boards, or the government tries to stop us from publishing, to dictate who or what we can publish, or to limit who can purchase or read the books that we publish." And she spoke of the need to "reassert our core belief that free speech, the actual discussion and debate of ideas... is and needs to remain the right of every citizen in our society, along with our obligation to protect that speech. When it comes to the right of unfettered discourse we should not, we cannot, accept dissent-quashing tyranny from any side of the political spectrum."

Reidy's true place in the current publishing era is perhaps best captured in the many tributes made by industry colleagues and friends in the past week. In announcing her death to the S&S staff, Dennis Eulau, executive v-p, operations and CFO, wrote of Reidy's "rare combination of business acumen and creative genius that made her a once-in-a-lifetime publishing executive." He continued, "She walked through life with an abundance of joy, and loved to celebrate the accomplishments and milestones of her colleagues and friends with great generosity and fanfare. That so many of us at Simon & Schuster have been friends and colleagues with her for many, many years says everything about the kind of person and leader she was, and we will all miss her terribly."

Gail Hochman, president of Brandt & Hochman Literary Agents, called Reidy a unique publishing executive—
"a successful corporate person with a very big heart."
She added, "I think there will be many candles lit for her."

—Jim Milliot

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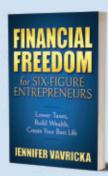
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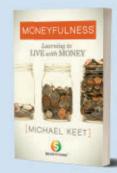
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Signs of the Times

fter two months of nationwide lock-downs due to Covid-19, many bookstores are slowly and cautiously reopening as states loosen restrictions.

Barnes & Noble reopened 20 stores last week, bringing the total now open to 51; another $500\,B$ & Noutlets are offering curbside pickup. Similarly, some indies are welcoming back customers, while others, even in states that allow in-store traffic, offer curbside pickup only.

Sarah Bagby of Watermark Books, in Wichita, Kans., said that without easily available testing or a vaccine, she can't conduct business safely as she would like. But Kansas declared that "nonessential" retail stores can reopen, and her customers were eager to return when Bagby opened Watermark's doors last week.

Safety for customers and staff is paramount to Bagby. Watermark's layout has been reconfigured to make it easier for customers to spread out, and strict safety protocols for staff and customers are in place, with signs explaining the protocols posted throughout the store.

At right is a selection of creative signs posted inside and outside indies in America's heartland over the past week—including one from Watermark; a polite but firm "Minnesota nice" sign regarding curbside pickup at Next Chapter in St. Paul; and a sign at Main Street Books in St. Charles, Mo., notifying customers to wait outside until invited in to browse. And then there's a sign from Off the Beaten Path Bookstore in Steamboat Springs, Colo.: the literary reference asking customers to maintain physical distance from one another might be somewhat subtle, but, one would assume, it will be understood by anyone venturing into a bookstore these -Claire Kirch days.



St. Paul, Minn., indie Next Chapter Booksellers posted a sign that politely and firmly asks customers to maintain distance from one another.



Off the Beaten Path Bookstore in Steamboat Springs, Colo. puts a classic literary spin on its signage asking customers to stay six feet apart.



Please Allow One Yellow Dot Between You and the Nearest Fellow Customer

Signs at Full Circle Bookstore in Oklahoma City instruct customers on the dos and don'ts of social distancing in the store.



The Book Bungalow in St. George, Utah, isn't just selling face masks: it's selling literary face masks designed to appeal to book lovers.



Main Street Books in St. Charles, Mo. has reopened; a sandwich board asks customers to wait outside until they are invited in to browse.



Watermark Books in Wichita, Kans., created vintage-esque signs about safety protocols that it posted throughout the store; this one is inside the store entrance.



In Pandemic, Dystopian Fiction Loses Its Luster for Editors

he big adult fiction title of this past fall was Margaret Atwood's *The Testaments*. The seguel to the author's 1985 bestseller The Handmaid's Tale was unveiled with a 500,000-copy first printing. At the time, *The Handmaid's* Tale was benefitting from a surge of interest in its wildly popular TV adaptation on Hulu, and from a renewed interest in dvstopiantales following the election of Donald Trump. Now, with the globe seized by a pandemic and millions of Americans hunkered down because of shelter-at-home orders, editors say they are interested in lighter fare—mostly.

So what are publishers interested in buying during a pandemic? According to a number of editors and agents who specialize in adult commercial fiction, escapism is on the rise, to an extent.

"This is the question I think we're all dealing with right now," said Harper editor Sara Nelson, when asked if she's looking for different kinds of books since the Covid-19 outbreak. "On the one hand, we're so obsessed with our current moment that it's hard to know what we, let alone most readers, will want to read a year, or a year and a half, from now. I don't generally buy dystopian fiction anyway, but I am pretty sure I won't find dystopian novels appealing for the near future."

Nelson, who has always loved historical fiction (among her notable acquisitions in the genre is Heather Morris's bestseller The Tattooist of Auschwitz), added that she is taking even more comfort in these types of books now as "reading about the past becomes even more appealing as we slide into the murky future."

Peter Steinberg, an agent at Foundry Literary + Media, said, "When there's an unexpected shift in society, I think it has an almost real-time effect on editors' buying habits. Because of the overwhelming nature of Covid-19, escapism is one of the better ways to elicit those intense emotions."

But many agents and editors warned that escapism is an incredibly broad term—one that makes room for everything from romantic comedies to dark thrillers.

Writers House agent Johanna Castillo said her sense is that. in addition to maintaining a steady interest in rom-coms, family dramas, and historical fiction (which all have an "established readership"), adult fiction editors seem to want two other types of books. "The first [provides] a sense about learning from history—novels that are inspired by plagues in the past." And the second type provides "the inverse—a desire to imagine a future, with a dystopian society that takes on a plague." But as much as people want to get away from the here and now, she believes people still need to understand, and process, the present. "There is a reason why the movie Contagion was the number-one downloaded movie in February."

For agent Eric Meyers, who has an eponymous shingle, the hot genre of the moment is historical fiction. The best of these books, he explained, have the "ability to sweep us off into eras far removed from our own—eras that often tempt us with nostalgia or stoke our yearnings to have lived, even for just a day, in a different and sometimes more glamorous past." He added



Reading about the past becomes even more appealing as we slide into the murky future. —Sara Nelson, editor, Harper

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News

DEALS

By Rachel Deahl

that he's been surprised at "how receptive publishers are to stories taking place in 19th-andearly-20th-century New York."

Cindy Hwang, editorial director at Berkley, said, "I'm looking more for distractions." She remains "really anxious" about what the future will hold, and she believes readers are similarly looking to find relief from that feeling in fiction. "I'm looking for books that will let me forget," she explained.

Nonetheless, Hwang feels the present is informed by the past. "I'm reminded that the era of the screwball comedy happened during the Great Depression," she said. "People have always looked to comedy for distraction. So I feel like, no matter what happens, people will be looking for escapism."

When asked what she's looking to buy right now, Jennifer Enderlin, executive v-p and publisher of St. Martin's Press, said, "In terms of fiction, I wouldn't say editors want more uplifting books over thrillers or tear-jerkers." But, she added, "bad-news books, not so much."

For Enderlin, the term escapism is problematic, insofar as it confers a certain levity. That, she explained, is not necessarily what she wants now. "Escapism doesn't have to mean fluffy or light. It can be searing, devastating, romantic, suspenseful, hilarious, or transporting." She noted that she is seeing a huge uptick in sales of her author Kristin Hannah's 2015 bestseller The Nightingale, which Enderlin described as a "box-oftissues read."

More than anything, agents and editors agreed that, while happy endings aren't a requirement, the fiction that's selling now takes readers away, in some capacity, from the here and now. As Robert Gottlieb at Trident Media Group put it, "I would advise fiction authors [working on books right now] to stay away from the coronavirus itself."

-Rachel Deahl

DEAL OF THE WEEK

■ S&S Re-signs Its 'Mane' Man



Gucci Mane

In a world rights agreement, Simon & Schuster's Stuart **Roberts** bought *The Gucci Mane Guide to Greatness*. The book is a follow-up to Gucci Mane's bestselling 2017 memoir, The Autobiography of Gucci Mane (also published by S&S). The platinum-selling rapper was represented by Robert Guinsler at Sterling Lord Literistic. Describing the book, which is slated for October 13, S&S said it is Gucci Mane's "playbook for living your best life, offering an unprecedented look at his secrets to success, health, wealth, and self-improvement."

Koppelman Has 'Moment' at Hachette



Koppelman

Brian Koppelman, cocreator of Showtime's Billions, sold a nonfiction book titled *The Moment* to Mary Ann Naples at Hachette. The book is an extension of Koppelman's podcast of the same name, Hachette said, and it uses "Koppelman's personal experiences, along with those of his creative heroes and friends, to encourage the reader to take the same kinds of risks and leaps that they did." Naples brokered the North American rights agreement with David Gernert at the Gernert Company, and Hachette executive

editor Lauren Marino will edit the title.

■ Heltzel's 'Mother' Joins Nightfire



Heltzel

For Tom Doherty Associates' new horror imprint, Nightfire, Kelly O'Connor Lonesome won North American rights, at auction, to **Anne Heltzel**'s *Just Like a Mother* in a two-book deal. Heltzel, a YA author, ghostwriter, and editor at Abrams Books, was represented by Elisabeth Weed at the Book Group. The novel (which marks the author's adult debut under her own name) follows a woman whose life in New York City is turned upside down when her long-lost cousin missing since their childhood—suddenly reappears. Lone-

some elaborated that the novel is "a claustrophobic haunted house story, a chilling account of insidious gaslighting, and a suspenseful examination of toxic female

friendships." *Mother* is set for January 2022.



Kadakia

Kadakia Tackles 'Life' at Chronicle

At Chronicle Prism, Cara Bedick bought Lifepass by Payal Kadakia, founder of ClassPass, a fitness class app. Bedick brokered the North American rights agreement for the book with Mollie Glick at CAA. Explaining the title, Chronicle Prism said it "shares the mental strategies and unique goalsetting process Kadakia has developed to help readers home in on their feelings, screen out unnecessary distractions,

and be the boss of their life based on their deepest desires." Kadakia is writing the book with Jodi Lipper (coauthor of the lauded 2018 book The Myth of the Nice Girl).

■ Politician, and Son, **Sell Addiction and Recovery Memoir**



Dean (I.) and son Cunnane

A memoir by Pennsylvania congresswoman Madeleine Dean and her son Harry Cunnane, Under Our Roof, was acquired by Derek Reed at Random House's Convergent imprint. CAA oversaw the auction, at which Reed won North American rights. The book, Convergent said, is an "uplifting" account of Dean and Cunnane's relation-

ship and his battle with opioid addiction. The book is "the story of a national crisis suffered in the intimacy of so many homes, told with incredible candor through the dual perspectives of a mother rising in politics and a son living a double life, afraid of what will happen if his secret gets exposed." Under Our Roof is set for spring 2021.



Putnam Gets 'Saved' **by Landau**

Alexis Landau sold her novel Those Who Are Saved to Tara Singh Carlson at Putnam. Landau (The Empire of the Senses) was represented by Alice Tasman at the Jean V. Naggar Literary Agency in the world rights deal. Describing the WWII-set book, Putnam said it "follows one mother's

impossible choice, and her search for her daughter against the odds." Those Who Are Saved is set for spring 2021.

Gaydos's 'Pig Years' Tracked by Knopf

Pig Years by Ellyn McCormack Gaydos was acquired, in an exclusive submission, by Tim O'Connell at Knopf. Peter Steinberg at Foundry Literary + Media represented Gaydos in the North American rights deal. Steinberg said that the



nonfiction book charts the author's "hardscrabble farmhand life in Vermont and eastern New York" raising pigs. Gaydos won the 2018 Richard J. Margolis Award in journalism while in the nonfiction MFA program at Columbia University. (She completed the degree, Steinberg noted, while maintaining her farm.) The book, Steinberg added, "is a record of eco-

nomic hardships facing farmers in 2020—from unexpected bad seasons, to suicide, to drugs." It's also "about Ellyn's perseverance, finding camaraderie and love and an unexpected desire to bring her own child into the world."



Putnam

■ Cook Goes 'Viral' at

Bestselling author Robin Cook's medical thriller Viral was acquired by Margo Lipschultz at Putnam. The book was sold by Erica Spellman Silverman at Trident Media Group in a six-figure, North American rights, deal. Trident said the book is "about an unknown mosquito-borne disease

with a lethal escalation due to climate change, and an investigation of the callous health-care system by the husband and father of two victims."

Stewart, Sattin Role Play at Imprint

Imprint's Weslie Turner won world rights at auction to Samuel Sattin and Christina "Steenz" Stewart's Side





Stewart

Quest: A Visual History of Role Playing Games. Anjali Singh at Ayesha Panda Literary represented Stewart. who is a cartoonist, while Dara Hyde at Hill Nadell Lit-

erary Agency represented Sattin, who writes graphic novels. The book, Hyde said, is a graphic history of roleplaying games that "traces their origins from ancient China and India, to Europe, all the way to the modern versions played today."

Behind the Bestsellers MAY 3-9, 2020

BY CAROLYN JURIS

SEASON'S GREETINGS

A pair of novels that share a hopeful word in their titles debut in hardcover fiction.

Mary Kay Andrews lands at #7 with her latest beach read, Hello, Summer, named for the gossip column the main character ghostwrites for the local newspaper in her hometown on the Florida Panhandle.

Andrews has been logging plenty of time on her laptop lately, including (above r.) a Zoom launch party hosted by E. Shaver Booksellers in Savannah, Ga.

Big Summer by Jennifer Weiner, debuting at #10, "mixes a splash of romance, a dash

> of humor, and a pinch of mystery," our review said, "to

create a deliciously bloody poolside cocktail." Weiner's promotional rounds included (below 1.) a May 13 ScribdChat with Carrie Torrisi (@BostonBookFanatic) and, a week earlier, a



Good Morning America appearance. "My makeup artist won't get out of bed!" the author wrote on Facebook before the GMA gig. "My makeup artist is my 12-year-old."

mary kay

Summer

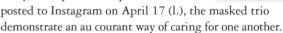
BE HERE NOW

Emma Straub debuts at #5 in hardcover fiction with All Adults Here, her "witty, topical fourth novel," our starred review said, in which "members of a Hudson Valley family come to terms with adolescence, aging, sexuality, and gender." (It's also the May Read with Jenna pick.) For Straub, who co-owns Brooklyn's Books Are Magic with her husband, Michael Fusco-Straub, work is often a family affair. Below, she signed books at home under the watchful eye of their younger son, Miles.



Better Together

The One and Only Bob, Katherine Applegate's "stellar" sequel, our starred review said, to her Newbery Awardwinning The One and Only Ivan, is #1 in children's frontlist fiction. It's a story of "loyalty, forgiveness, and trust," our review said, among Bob, a Chihuahua mix; his friend Ivan, a gorilla; and Ruby, an elephant. In a photo the author



Penguin Books



NEW & NOTABLE CLAP WHEN YOU LAND

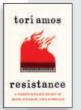


Jennifer

Elizabeth Acevedo #9 Children's Frontlist Fiction

Acevedo, who won the National Book Award for Young People's Literature for 2018's The Poet X, returns with a "raw and emotional" novel in verse, our starred review

said. "Acevedo's exploration of loss packs an effective double punch, unraveling the aftermath of losing a parent alongside the realities of familial inheritance."



RESISTANCE

Tori Amos #20 Hardcover Nonfiction "In this soulful memoir," our review said, the self-described "feminist soldier" and singer-songwriter, who began studying music at age

five, "discusses creating music during turbulent times."





Little Fires Everywhere

Celeste Ng

9780735224315



Hardcover Frontlist Fiction

RANK	LW	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN
1	1	Camino Winds	John Grisham	Doubleday	9780385545938
2	2	If It Bleeds	Stephen King	Scribner	9781982137977
3	_	The 20th Victim	Patterson/Paetro	Little, Brown	9780316420280
4	3	Walk the Wire	David Baldacci	Grand Central	9781538761465
5	_	All Adults Here	Emma Straub	Riverhead	9781594634697
6	6	The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse	Charlie Mackesy	HarperOne	9780062976581
7	-	Hello, Summer	Mary Kay Andrews	St. Martin's	9781250256928
8	4	The Wedding Dress	Danielle Steel	Delacorte	9780399179594
9	11	The Book of Lost Friends	Lisa Wingate	Ballantine	9781984819888
10	-	Big Summer	Jennifer Weiner	Atria	9781501133510
11	8	The Book of Longings	Sue Monk Kidd	Viking	9780525429760
12	5	American Dirt	Jeanine Cummins	Flatiron	9781250209764
13	-	Someone Like You	Karen Kingsbury	Atria	9781982104313
14	7	Masked Prey	John Sandford	Putnam	9780525539520
15	10	The Giver of Stars	Jojo Moyes	Viking/Dorman	9780399562488
16	9	Texas Outlaw	Patterson/Bourelle	Little, Brown	9780316428163
17	13	The Boy from the Woods	Harlan Coben	Grand Central	9781538748145
18	12	The End of October	Lawrence Wright	Knopf	9780525658658
19	14	The Dutch House	Ann Patchett	Harper	9780062963673
20	15	Redhead by the Side of the Road	Anne Tyler	Knopf	9780525658412

Hardcover Frontlist Nonfiction

RANK		TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN
1	1	Magnolia Table, Vol. 2	Joanna Gaines	Morrow	9780062820181
2	3	Untamed	Glennon Doyle	Dial	9781984801258
3	2	Relationship Goals	Michael Todd	WaterBrook	9780593192573
4	5	The Splendid and the Vile	Erik Larson	Crown	9780385348713
5	_	Incomparable	Bella/Bella	Gallery	9781501191916
6	30	Becoming: A Guided Journal for Discovering	Michelle Obama	Clarkson Potter	9780593139127
7	23	The Pioneer Woman Cooks: The New Frontier	Ree Drummond	Morrow	9780062561374
8	11	The House of Kennedy	Patterson/Fagen	Little, Brown	9780316454483
9	_	The Lincoln Conspiracy	Meltzer/Mensch	Flatiron	9781250317476
10	4	Medical Medium Cleanse to Heal	Anthony William	Hay House	9781401958459
11	_	What Makes a Marriage Last	Thomas/Donahue	HarperOne	9780062982582
12	-	Fortitude	Dan Crenshaw	Twelve	9781538733301
13	_	In Awe	John O'Leary	Currency	9780593135440
14	10	Limitless	Jim Kwik	Hay House	9781401958237
15	7	Get Out of Your Head	Jennie Allen	WaterBrook	9781601429643
16	6	Hidden Valley Road	Robert Kolker	Doubleday	9780385543767
17	8	Don't Burn This Book	Dave Rubin	Sentinel	9780593084298
18	9	Fierce, Free, and Full of Fire	Jen Hatmaker	Nelson	9780718088149
19	18	Hustle Harder, Hustle Smarter	Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson	Amistad	9780062953803
20	-	Resistance	Tori Amos	Atria	9781982104153

LW: rank last week

Note: Due to extreme sales volatility caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, we are temporarily omitting unit sales for individual titles from the lists.

Adult Bestsellers | MAY 3-9, 2020



Mass Market Frontlist

RANK	LW	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN
1	-	Shadow Flight	Christine Feehan	Berkley	9780593099797
2	2	Blue Moon	Lee Child	Dell	9780399593567
3	3	Lost and Found	Danielle Steel	Dell	9780399179495
4	_	Every Breath	Nicholas Sparks	Grand Central	9781538728550
5	16	The Chef	Patterson/DiLallo	Grand Central	9781538714904
6	1	Little Fires Everywhere (TV tie-in)	Celeste Ng	Penguin Books	9780143135661
7	15	Deep Harbor	Fern Michaels	Zebra	9781420146141
8	9	Morning Comes Softly	Debbie Macomber	Avon	9780061080630
9	29	Die with the Outlaws	William W. Johnstone	Pinnacle	9780786035793
10	4	Shelter in Place	Nora Roberts	St. Martin's	9781250247094
11	19	Sins of the Fathers	J.A. Jance	Morrow	9780062853448
12	39	North of Laramie	William W. Johnstone	Pinnacle	9780786045853
13	_	The Oracle	Cussler/Burcell	Putnam	9780525539636
14	18	Backlash	Brad Thor	Pocket	9781982104047
15	5	First Comes Scandal	Julia Quinn	Avon	9780062956163
16	6	The 18th Abduction	Patterson/Paetro	Grand Central	9781538731604
17	13	A Second Glance	Debbie Macomber	Mira	9780778309420
18	11	Denim and Diamonds	Debbie Macomber	Harlequin	9781335979957
19	7	Envious	Lisa Jackson	Zebra	9781420149869
20	12	Beachside Beginnings	Sheila Roberts	Mira	9780778360896

Trade Paperback Frontlist

RANK	LW	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN
1	1	Little Fires Everywhere	Celeste Ng	Penguin Books	9780735224315
2	2	Normal People	Sally Rooney	Hogarth	9781984822185
3	6	The Woman in the Window (movie tie-in)	A.J. Finn	Morrow	9780062905086
4	9	Before We Were Yours	Lisa Wingate	Ballantine	9780425284704
5	5	Revenge	Patterson/HOImes	Grand Central	9781538715413
6	8	The Night Fire	Michael Connelly	Grand Central	9781538733721
7	3	Relationship Goals Study Guide	Michael Todd	WaterBrook	9780593192603
8	11	City of Girls	Elizabeth Gilbert	Riverhead	9781594634741
9	13	Blue Moon	Lee Child	Bantam	9780593129999
10	17	Queen Bee	Dorothea Benton Frank	Morrow	9780062861238
11	7	The Step-by-Step Instant Pot Cookbook	Jeffrey Eisner	Voracious	9780316460835
12	-	Mom, I Want to Hear Your Story	Jeffrey Mason	Jeffrey Mason	9781081439798
13	26	Publication Manual of the APA (7th ed.)	American Psychological Association	APA	9781433832161
14	15	A Woman of No Importance	Sonia Purnell	Penguin Books	9780735225312
15	-	Under Currents	Nora Roberts	Griffin	9781250213266
16	22	Little Fires Everywhere (TV tie-in)	Celeste Ng	Penguin Books	9780143135166
17	-	The Girl Who Lived Twice	David Lagercrantz	Black Lizard	9781101974179
18	35	The Dancing Girls	M.M. Chouinard	Bookouture	9781786818249
19	14	Worlds Within Worlds	Kerby Rosanes	Plume	9780593086230
20	28	Every Breath	Nicholas Sparks	Grand Central	9781538728543

LW: rank last week

Children's Bestsellers | MAY 3-9, 2020



Children's Frontlist Fiction

RANK	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN
1	The One and Only Bob	Katherine Applegate	HarperCollins	9780062991317
2	The Betrothed	Kiera Cass	HarperTeen	9780062291639
3	Fetch-22 (Dog Man #8)	Dav Pilkey	Graphix	9781338323214
4	Becoming Brianna	Terri Libenson	HC/Balzer + Bray	9780062894533
5	June's Wild Flight (The Last Kids on Earth #6)	Max Brallier	Viking	9780593117187
6	Wrecking Ball (Diary of a Wimpy Kid #14)	Jeff Kinney	Amulet	9781419739033
7	For Whom the Ball Rolls (Dog Man #7)	Dav Pilkey	Graphix	9781338236590
8	Chain of Gold (The Last Hours #1)	Cassandra Clare	McElderry	9781481431873
9	Clap When You Land	Elizabeth Acevedo	Quill Tree	9780062882769
10	Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	Rowling/Kay	Scholastic	9780545791427
11	The Silver Eyes (Five Nights at Freddy's Graphic Novel #1)	Scott Cawthon	Scholastic	9781338298482
12	Aurora Burning	Kaufman/Kristoff	Knopf	9781524720926
13	Tales from a Not-So-Best Friend Forever (Dork Diaries #14)	Rachel Renée Russell	Aladdin	9781534427204
14	The Last Kids on Earth and the Midnight Blade	Max Brallier	Viking	9780425292112
15	1:35 am (Five Nights at Freddy's: Fazbear Frights #3)	Scott Cawthon	Scholastic	9781338576030
16	Karen's Witch (Baby-Sitters Little Sister Graphic Novel #1)	Martin/Farina	Graphix	9781338315196
17	The Wild Robot	Peter Brown	Little, Brown	9780316382007
18	The Tyrant's Tomb (The Trials of Apollo #4)	Rick Riordan	Disney-Hyperion	9781484746448
19	The Bad Guys in the Baddest Day Ever (The Bad Guys #10)	Aaron Blabey	Scholastic	9781338305845
20	FGTeeV Presents: Into the Game!	FGTeeV	HarperAlley	9780062933676
21	The Angel Experiment (Maximum Ride #1)	James Patterson	LB/Patterson	9780316536486
22	One of Us Is Next	Karen M. McManus	Delacorte	9780525707967
23	Camp Jupiter Classified: A Probatio's Journal	Rick Riordan	Disney-Hyperion	9781368024051
24	The Twin	Natasha Preston	Delacorte	9780593124963
25	Master of Disaster (Middle School #12)	Patterson/Tebbetts	LB/Patterson	9780316420495

Children's Picture Books

RANK	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN
1	Oh, the Places You'll Go!	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9780679805274
2	Engineer Academy: Space	Rob Colson	Silver Dolphin	9781684129867
3	Kindergarten, Here I Come!	Steinberg/Chambers	Grosset & Dunlap	9780448456249
4	The Very Hungry Caterpillar	Eric Carle	Philomel	9780399226908
5	Are You My Mother?	P.D. Eastman	Random House	9780394800189
6	The Wonky Donkey	Smith/Cowley	Scholastic	9780545261241
7	Everything Is Mama	Fallon/Ordóñez	Feiwel and Friends	9781250125835
8	I've Loved You Since Forever (board book)	Kotb/Mason	HarperFestival	9780062841759
9	If Animals Kissed Good Night	Paul/Walker	FSG	9780374300210
10	Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?	Martin/Carle	Holt	9780805047905
11	Love You Forever	Robert Munsch	Firefly	9780920668375
12	I've Loved You Since Forever	Kotb/Mason	HarperCollins	9780062841742
13	How to Babysit a Grandma	Reagan/Wildish	Knopf	9780385753845
14	Chicka Chicka Boom Boom	Martin/Archambault/Ehlert	Little Simon	9781442450707
15	How to Babysit a Grandma (board book)	Reagan/Wildish	Knopf	9781524772567
16	I Love Mom with the Very Hungry Caterpillar	Eric Carle	World of Eric Carle	9780451533463
17	How to Catch a Mermaid	Wallace/Elkerton	Sourcebooks	9781492662471
18	Goodnight Moon	Brown/Hurd	HarperFestival	9780694003617
19	Because I Had a Teacher	Yamada/Russell	Compendium	9781943200085
20	Grumpy Monkey	Lang/Lang	Random House	9780553537864
21	Just Grandma and Me	Mercer Mayer	Random House	9780307118936
22	Little Blue Truck (board book)	Schertle/McElmurry	НМН	9780544568037
23	I Wish You More	Rosenthal/Lichtenheld	Chronicle	9781452126999
24	Seuss-isms!	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9780553508413
25	First 100 Words	Roger Priddy	Priddy	9780312510787

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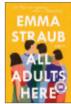


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Fiction & Literature

RANK	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN
1	Big Summer	Jennifer Weiner	Atria	9781501133534
2	All Adults Here	Emma Straub	Riverhead	9780698407985
3	Normal People	Sally Rooney	Hogarth	9781984822192
4	Hello, Summer	Mary Kay Andrews	St. Martin's	9781250256898
5	Where the Crawdads Sing	Delia Owens	Putnam	9780735219113
6	Little Fires Everywhere	Celeste Ng	Penguin Books	9780735224308
7	The Last Letter from Your Lover	Jojo Moyes	Penguin Books	9781101516997
8	American Dirt	Jeanine Cummins	Flatiron	9781250209771
9	The Beach House	Rachel Hanna	Rachel Hanna	9781393666554
10	In Five Years	Rebecca Serle	Atria	9781982137465
11	The Wedding Dress	Danielle Steel	Dell	9780399179600
12	The Dutch House	Ann Patchett	Harper	9780062963697
13	The McAvoy Sisters Book of Secrets	Molly Fader	Graydon House	9781488036606
14	The German Midwife	Mandy Robotham	Avon	9780008339319
15	The Giver of Stars	Jojo Moyes	Viking/Dorman	9780399562501
16	Someone Like You	Karen Kingsbury	Atria	9781982104337
17	The Henna Artist	Alka Joshi	Mira	9781488055447
18	The Nickel Boys	Colson Whitehead	Doubleday	9780385537087
19	We Are Not Ourselves	Matthew Thomas	Simon & Schuster	9781476756684
20	My Not So Perfect Life	Sophie Kinsella	Random House	9780812998276







Biography & Memoir

RANK	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN
1	Incomparable	Bella/Bella	Gallery	9781501191930
2	The Fifth Vital	Majlak/Ford	Claudel	9781393711919
3	Untamed	Glennon Doyle	Dial	9781984801265
4	Becoming	Michelle Obama	Crown	9781524763152
5	Hope, Grace, & Faith	Leah Messer	Post Hill	9781642932454
6	Hustle Harder, Hustle Smarter	Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson	Amistad	9780062953827
7	Hidden Valley Road	Robert Kolker	Doubleday	9780385543774
8	Educated	Tara Westover	Random House	9780399590511
9	The Rural Diaries	Hilarie Burton	HarperOne	9780062862723
10	Can't Hurt Me	David Goggins	Lioncrest	9781544512266





Romance

RANK	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN
1	Shadow Flight	Christine Feehan	Berkley	9780593099803
2	Rescue After Dark	Marie Force	HTJB	9781950654734
3	Second	Penelope Sky	Penelope Sky	9781393803294
4	Close Up	Amanda Quick	Berkley	9781984806871
5	Whispered Prayers of a Girl	Alex Grayson	Twisted Fiction	9781386716495
6	Dakota Nights	Debbie Macomber	Mira	9781488057465
7	The Summer of Sunshine and Margot	Susan Mallery	HQN	9781488096877
8	Goode to Be Bad	Jasinda Wilder	Jasinda Wilder	9781948445429
9	Call It Magic	Janet Chapman	Berkley	9780698156623
10	Reckless Whisper	Barbara Freethy	Fog City	9781943781638





Department | RELIGION & SPIRITUALITY

Guiding the Grieving



Emma Wenner

Faith-based titles seek to provide healing and hope after loss

eligious traditions have long provided solace to believers in times of loss and mourning, but readers today may be in greater need than ever of spiritual guidance to process their grief, according to religion and spirituality publishers. As Red Wheel Weiser's associate publisher Peter Turner points out, the Covid-19 pandemic has generated widespread feelings of sadness as news of deaths, economic crisis, and isolation dominates headlines. "Perhaps no time in our lives have we had to deal with such strong feelings of loss, fear, anxiety, and disorientation," he says. "But—whether it's the loss of a loved one, the grief brought on by feeling the suffering of those around us, or even just the lost sense of normalcy—grieving is a natural part of life."

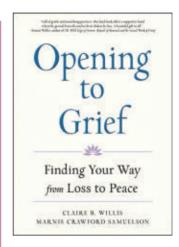
In November, RWW is publishing *Opening to Grief: Finding Your Way from Loss to Peace* by Claire B. Willis and Marnie Crawford Samuelson, who draw on 40 collective years of counseling the bereaved. The book aims to dismantle the idea that grief happens in predictable stages, instead showing readers how to grieve in their own ways. "There is no end run, or end point to grieving," they write.

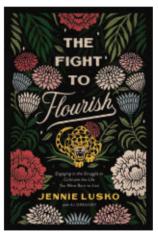
"When we first made plans to publish *Opening to Grief*, we had no idea how profoundly our lives would be changed by Covid-19," Turner says, noting that a key message the book offers is "even in the midst of profound grief, there is hope."

Grief and tragedy are universal, making books on how to cope indispensable, according to IVP senior editor Al Hsu. "All of us will experience tragedy at some point, just because we're human," he says. "So it's important for publishers to provide resources to help readers grapple with realities like bereavement or chronic illness. Such books help readers work through pain, avoid denial, and experience healing and comfort."

In July IVP is publishing A Chronicle of Grief: Finding Life

After Traumatic Loss, in which author and
pastor Mel Lawrenz describes the sudden
death of his 30-year-old daughter. In addi-





tion to exploring the pain and uncertainty he and his family experienced after the tragedy, the book demonstrates how to prioritize love and life, according to the publisher. Lawrenz is also the author of *Leadership Today* and *Life After Grief*.

In another account of the loss of a child, baseball Hall of Famer Rod Carew draws on the death of his 17-year-old daughter Michelle from cancer in *One Tough Out: Fighting Off Life's Curveballs* (Triumph, out now), written with Jaime Aron. "Michelle's death transformed me, but not in the ways people would expect," Carew notes in the book. "I didn't question my faith. I reaffirmed it. Instead of shutting out the world, I opened myself to it."

Explaining why she acquired *One Tough Out*, Michelle Bruton, editor at Triumph, says, "What makes Rod Carew's story so compelling is that, more than recounting the glory days of his 3,000th hit or American League MVP Award, he wanted to share the struggles of his personal life unknown to many fans."

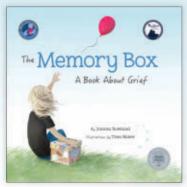
Also addressing life's unexpected challenges, pastor Jennie Lusko shares the story of her daughter Lenya's passing in *The* Fight to Flourish: Engaging in the Struggle to Cultivate the Life You

All of us will experience tragedy at some point, just because we're human. So it's important for publishers to provide resources to help readers grapple with realities like bereavement.

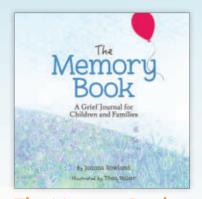
—Al Hsu, senior editor, IVP

Grief Resources for All Ages





The Memory BoxA Book About Grief
\$16.99 | 10 x 10 | 32pp | 978-1-5064-2672-3



The Memory Book
A Grief Journal for Children and Families
\$17.99 | 9 x 9 | 48pp | 978-1-5064-5781-9





Good Grief A Companion for Every Loss

\$7.99 | 5 x 7.5 PB | 80pp 978-1-5064-5447-4

The Good Grief Devotional 52 Weeks toward Hope

\$14.99 | 5.5 x 8 PB | 144pp 978-1-5064-5307-1

The Good Grief Journal A Journey toward Healing

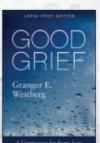
\$12.99 | 6 x 9 PB | 160pp 978-1-5064-5309-5

Set pricing available.



Good Grief
Gift Edition

\$12.99 | 5 x 7.5 HC | 80pp 978-1-5064-6953-9 Pub Date: June 9, 2020



Good Grief
Large Print

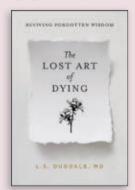
\$9.99 | 6 x 9 PB | 80pp 978-1-5064-6954-6 Pub Date: June 9, 2020

Department | RELIGION & SPIRITUALITY

Embracing the Wisdom of Death

Death is a part of life, but much of modern society has shunned this fact to its great detriment, according to several forthcoming books on religion and spirituality this year. Three authors, with backgrounds in medicine, theology, and philosophy, argue for why facing—and even embracing—one's mortality can improve daily life and heighten a sense of spirituality.

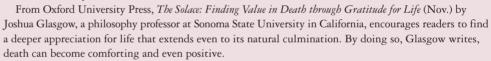
Books offering a different outlook on death are not new. In 2018, the New York Times reported on a growing "death positivity" movement, which aims to promote the acceptance of human mortality. And the Covid-19 pandemic is sharpening society's focus on death, according to Michael Maudlin, senior v-p and executive editor at HarperOne. "With the coronavirus, our mortality is now impossible to ignore," he says. "Even before the pandemic, it was becoming clear to more and more families that we die poorly. Yes, people live longer, but we still put off preparing, which means all end-of-life experiences are done in crisis mode."

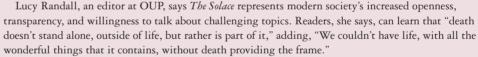


Todd Billings

Part of living well means preparing for the end, writes Lydia S. Dugdale, associate professor of medicine and director of the Center for Clinical Medical Ethics at Columbia University, in The Lost Art of Dying: Reviving Forgotten Wisdom (HarperOne, July). The book, which PW called "illuminating and thought-provoking" in its starred review, examines what the author perceives as the current "death-denying" culture in America and digs into society's reliance on medical treatments that the author argues prolong suffering and strip dying individuals of their dignity. Inspiration for the book came from a text written during the Black Plague that revolutionized the way medieval Europeans handled death.

"Dugdale thinks we could use a similar revolution today," says Maudlin, who hopes readers of The Lost Art of Dying start to consider death in a different light. "The end does not have to be a time of panic and fear; previous generations can help us rediscover how to prepare, and we will live better and happier lives

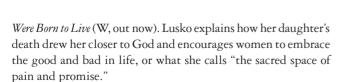




Finally, in The End of the Christian Life: How Embracing Our Mortality Frees Us to Truly Live (Brazos, Sept.), researcher and minister J. Todd Billings shares his experiences living with incurable cancer and draws on his knowledge of Scripture. "As strange as it seems, coming to terms with our limits as dying creatures is a life-giving path," he writes, arguing that considering one's mortality during daily life is a part of following "the crucified and resurrected Lord."

Bob Hosack, executive editor at Brazos, says The End of the Christian Life demonstrates how embracing mortality can be a key aspect of Christian discipleship. And, similar to HarperOne's Maudlin, Hosack notes that the book's release takes on a "special significance" amid the Covid-19 crisis.

"With daily news reporting of our dystopian days, we are regularly reminded of our human mortality," Hosack says. "It's a sobering reminder, as both testaments remind us, that we don't know the length of our days." —EMMA WENNER



She writes in the first chapter, "Maybe you didn't plan to be here in this place, in this pain, predicament, or even this platform, but it's not an accident. God has called you uniquely for this situation, right here, right now. Whatever you are facing as you read these words, my hope is for you to be confident that you were born for this very fight. And you were born to flourish in it."

A new way to grieve

Jessica Miller Kelley, senior acquisitions editor for Westminster John Knox, believes the need for resources during times of crisis and loss is perennial but notes, "Some books have the power to transform not only our grief but our way of thinking about God and the human experience overall." One such book, she says, is Beautiful and Terrible Things: A Christian Struggle with Suffering, Grief, and Hope by Christian M. M. Brady (WJK, Sept.), an ancient Hebrew and Jewish literature scholar . In it, Brady recounts the death of his eight-year-old son and explores the expression of despair through prayer. Inspiration for the INTRODUCING THE NEW

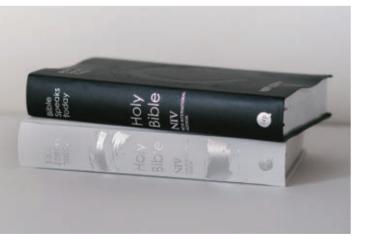
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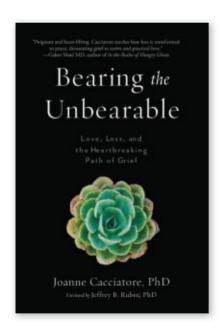
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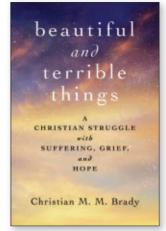
book came from his rejection of typical platitudes about accepting God's will, which led to a faithful pursuit of other ways to grieve.

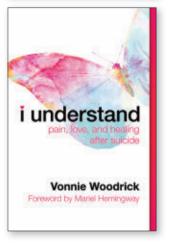
"It is a holy and healthy part of grief (that we seem to have forgotten) to express to God our sadness, our anger, and our bitterness," Brady writes in the book. "When we are in the midst of our anguish, there is no greater statement of faith than to express that despair honestly: 'My God, why have you forsaken me?' Yet far too often we are told that it is never right to be angry at God."

Though *Beautiful and Terrible Things* centers on the death of a child, it's geared toward those grieving losses and setbacks of all kinds, and Kelley hopes the book will "help readers face a world that promises both pain and indescribable grace."

Dorothy P. Holinger, a psychologist, incorporates brain science, literature, music, poetry, history, memoirs, and personal and clinical experience to explore what happens to the mind, body, and spirit during bereavement in *The Anatomy of Grief* (Yale Univ., Sept.). She cites examples of grief from the lives and works of both religious and nonreligious people of all backgrounds, in an effort to show the bereaved ways to move through the grieving process toward a place of joy.

And taking a supernatural approach to death, Marilyn Kapp, a medium, delves into her understanding of the afterlife to offer messages of comfort to the bereaved in *Love Is Greater Than Pain* (Harmony, June). The book, which draws on mindfulness practices and meditation, also makes a case for everyone's ability to communicate with those





who have passed. "You were born with the ability," she writes. "Acknowledge the part of your physical life and potential that has altered because someone you love has gone to a different vibrational plane. Carry on and grieve because you live in a physical reality and we should never deny that. Feel it, cry for it, and then, as you continue to do that, look up and say 'Hello!' and realize that they are already reaching out and trying to help."

Also among the new books on grief are two directly addressing the pain of losing a loved one to suicide—the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S., according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Coming from Ave Maria in December, When a Loved One Dies by Suicide: Comfort, Hope, and Healing for Grieving Catholics collects personal stories of Catholics who have experienced emotional upheaval and spiritual turmoil after losing someone to suicide. The contributors also offer prayers geared toward comfort and encouragement, as well as information on how to find a network of support. The book was written by the Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers and edited by Ed Shoener and John P. Dolan.

"Let's talk about it; let's change the definition," Vonnie Woodrick writes in *I Understand: Pain, Love, and Healing after Suicide* (Eerdmans, Sept.). "Let's take this dark subject and bring light with understanding. We can remove the stigma attached to the word suicide and save lives."

In addition to sharing a personal account of loss, grief, and recovery, the book "invites the reader to join a movement of people committed to changing how we think and talk about mental health, depression, and suicide," says Eerdmans acquisition editor Trevor Thompson. "Vonnie believes that simple things—talking, listening, and encouraging—can change the direction of people's lives."

YA AUTHORS MOVE ONLINE

Debut and veteran novelists dive into the world of digital events amid the pandemic

By ALEX GREEN

s author Ashley Poston made her way through a to-do list in early March, she fired off an e-mail to her publicist with a list of bookstores that she wanted to read at for the release of her YA romance Bookish and the Beast (Quirk, Aug.). Poston says that as soon as she crossed it off the list, she realized, "Oh, that's probably not going to happen." She recalls, "It was sort of surreal, and I felt a little foolish afterward."

Yet Poston is not alone. Hundreds of YA book releases and publicity plans have been altered by the Covid-19 pandemic, which has upended the conventional publishing world's most tried-and-true methods for publicizing new works.

YA authors are now a vanguard in publishing, charting new territory online, trying untested methods of reaching readers, and honing tools that previously existed but were largely underutilized by a trade that prizes in-person interactions at conferences, bookstores, and community gatherings.

Authors and publishers team up

Poston counts herself among the fortunate YA authors of the coronavirus era. Armed with a marketing background and some lead time until the release of her book, which is also the third in a series, she has been able to transition from planning a book tour to participating in online events with relative ease. She pitched her publisher the idea of posting Instagram videos in which she read her own writing from when she was 16 and shared excerpts from Bookish and the Beast. Quirk then created a weeklong event around her proposal.

Other publishers also moved quickly to support their authors. Season two of Penguin Young Readers' We Are YA podcast was originally slated for release in June, but it was moved up to mid-March. "We saw the social distancing moment as an opportunity to accelerate our timeline," says digital marketing director Alex Garber.

Much of the challenge of making the technological logistics work for both the podcast and the publisher's YouTube Live channel was taken up by Felicity Vallence, associate director of digital marketing. "I set up a little studio in my apartment bedroom and on Sunday afternoons recorded three or four backto-back podcast episodes with authors," she says. "Authors were fantastic in their response, not only by participating but also sharing with their followers via social media. For many of our guests, being on the podcast provided an outlet to talk about their books at a moment when tours and other speaking engagements were being canceled."



Author Ashley Poston doing a Zoom reading of excerpts from her forthcoming Bookish and the Beast.

Some publishers have decided to focus on YA graphic novels, whose readers are already accustomed to online engagement. On April 18, First Second, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, organized Comics Relief, an online conference that gave readers a chance to learn about comics creation from novelists, editors, and designers in six sessions throughout the day.

"Comics Relief was Macmillan's first large-scale, homegrown virtual event, and we planned it in a matter of weeks, so there was a lot of learning on the fly," says associate marketing director Melissa Zar. The work paid off, as more than 550 attendees stayed from start to finish. "Working with the creators was a huge highlight," Zar adds. "Our authors and illustrators were incredibly enthusiastic and willing to take this leap of faith with us."

Graphic novelist Ngozi Ukazu was among them, co-leading two panels, which came easily to the author and illustrator after years of doing webcomics. "In general, I'm used to planning virtual events," she says. A sequel to Ukazu's Check, Please was released the week of Comics Relief. Along with the festival, she also did Instagram Live sketch-jams and livestreams on Twitch.

The effort appears to be paying off. According to Macmillan assistant publicity director Morgan Kane, First Second is already planning another Comics Relief event for June 6.

Book launches and new audiences

Monica Hesse says she was returning from a festival in Dallas

when she realized she would need to cancel her April book launch for her historical novel They Went Left (Little, Brown). Instead, she did a virtual book launch with Politics and Prose in Washington, D.C. When she logged onto her computer, she

immediately experienced an unexpected benefit of a virtual event. Friends and relatives from all over the country were waiting. "It was really emotional to get texts from everyone, from my old drama teacher to my middle school best friend, saying they'd all logged on, too," she recalls.

Still, Hesse says there are drawbacks to online readings when compared with in-person events. "They definitely feel like a substitute—like you made the brownies but replaced the oil for applesauce. It's not quite the same." Yet she believes that virtual events welcome readers who might otherwise not be able to attend author events.

The prospect of reaching that wider audience was a source of motivation for debut YA author Rocky Callen, who came up with creative ideas to build awareness



for the launch of her book, A Breath Too Late (Holt). Instead of a single event, she did a week of recorded conversations with her agent and editor in advance of the book's release, in which she talked about writing and mental health, which are themes in her novel. She then did the book release in an online event with Jandy Nelson, Printz Award-winning author of I'll Give You the Sun.

"I spent a lot of time googling, asking questions, and watching videos about using the technology for my launch," Callen says. "And while it took a chunk of time, I am happy to have the basics under my belt now."

Like Hesse, Callen has delighted in seeing how a wider audience is able to access her digital events compared with what might be possible in-person. "We have an incredible opportunity to engage with people who are isolated even without a pandemic," she says, "who don't have the money for a bus ride, who don't have a babysitter, who just want a glimpse of an author they don't know, and who need us as writers even if they can't make it to an event."

L.C. Rosen's embrace of technology was more cautious at first, but he has quickly adapted. Rosen has been doing events in advance of the release of Camp (Little, Brown), his novel about toxic masculinity at a summer camp for queer teens, in

late May, but familiarizing himself with the necessary digital tools was initially difficult. "I'm not usually tech-savvy at all," he says, "but I figured it out eventually."

Rosen notes that it has been challenging to get used to not seeing audience members' faces and fielding chat questions while speaking. But, like Callen, he says accessibility has been one of the most exciting parts of going online. "I'd love it if maybe live events started getting broadcast by bookstores and libraries that are now equipped to do so. I also think that videoconferences can work, for example, with international stuff. I'm so excited I get to talk to folks in other countries about my book. I hope there's a way to keep that borderlessness in the future."



I.C. Rosen



Difficult crowds

The democratization of attendance at events that have gone online is not without its perils. While Rosen is encouraged by what he has experienced in his digital events, he remains concerned about how technology can create a space for hate. "There's the issue of harassing engagement," he says. "Some people, under the anonymity of Zoom, feel empowered to say racist, sexist, and homophobic stuff. That can be very shocking and disheartening."

Kelly Yang, author of Parachutes (HarperCollins/Tegen, May) was the target of racist comments during one of her first online events in March. She had been quick to adapt to digital events, launching an online writing workshop for teens, but a few sessions after she began, a student began posting racist comments. The incident drew



Kelly Yang





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widespread attention and Yang was unsure whether she would continue. "It was so mind-boggling and so devastating," she says. "I wondered, should I continue the class?"

The student later apologized, and Yang—who has a background in teaching—not only continued but also revamped the format of the workshops to include fellow authors. Hosted weekly, Yang's workshops involve interviews with authors about their approaches to writing. She also archives the sessions for her YouTube channel and website. Between 40 and 100 students attend each week, and she says she is glad she continued with the program. "It's so much fun. It's rewarding to have these conversations. You don't feel as lonely."

The challenge, Yang says, is drawing attention to her book when media outlets only want to focus on the racism she experienced. While racism is important to address, she laments the lost opportunity to draw attention to Parachutes. Nevertheless, she is continuing to advocate for the book with big-draw events like her upcoming book launch, which she is doing with a special guest, National Book Award-winner Laurie Halse Anderson.

Pairings for book launches

Author pairings like the one that Yang has planned for her book launch are turning out to be among the bright spots for YA authors during the Covid-19 pandemic. Online events have made it possible for them to appear with popular authors, and at events they would have otherwise missed.

Maggie Tokuda-Hall, author of The Mermaid, The Witch, and the Sea (Candlewick), is blunt about her initial reaction to the virus scuttling her in-person book launch this month. "It feels terrible," she says. "You know rationally that you don't want those events to happen. You don't want any of those people who would come to even have the sniffles. It all makes sense, but there's nothing normal about this right now."

Tokuda-Hall found comfort in the fact that some of her favorite authors have been willing to do joint events that would have been impossible before the coronavirus outbreak. Her launch on May 6 included fellow authors Charlie Jane Andrews and V.E. Schwab. Schwab was able to do the event from Paris only because of Zoom. "She is one of my favorite fantasy authors," Tokuda-Hall says. "The great silver lining is that I don't know if I ever would have had an event with her." Likewise, Tokuda-Hall calls Andrews a "moonshot author" and adds, "This is a miracle that I could do an event with them."

Natalia Sylvester had a similar experience when fellow author Angie Cruz asked her to take part in an event called El Gran Combo, a six-author fiesta reading to benefit three New York City bookstores: the Lit. Bar, Mil Mundos, and Word Up Community Bookshop/Librería Comunitaria. Cruz had been planning a five-city tour with Jaquira Díaz and Carolina de Robertis, but after the coronavirus forced her to cancel, she took the fiesta online.

"When I heard that bookstores are now selling books online,

I thought, maybe there is a way that we as a collective of Latinx writers can drive sales to them." Cruz says. "More than ever, they need our support, and simultaneously, we could use this event to amplify the works of new books by Latinx writers."

At the same time, Cruz expanded the slate of authors to include Sylvester, Lilliam Rivera, and Melissa Rivero. Attendees each had to buy a book by one of the authors to get an access code to stream the reading, and they were encouraged to dress for a

"It was one of those magical events where everyone just comes together full of joy and gratitude, and the conversation, moderated by Bookstagrammer @lupita.reads, was genuine, open, and generous," Sylvester says. "We had more than 150 people join us live, and each store reported having



Natalia Sylvester



record book sales for the day, with spikes in the days following the event."

The experience has Sylvester thinking beyond in-person events, even for times after concerns over the coronavirus have subsided. She pointed to ASL interpreters at panels for the online Everywhere Book Fest as an example of an element that hopefully advances accessibility at both types of events and enhances the popularity of online ones. "I think we need to appreciate what each format has to offer and go all in," she says. "Think about what is the one event that couldn't exist any other way but virtually, then do that."

Despite her discomfort with being on camera, Melanie Sumrow, author of *Inside Battles* (Little Bee), let technology take

her places she otherwise would



Melanie Sumrow



not have gone, as her tour vanished following her book's March 1 release. She spoke at an online conference of the Missouri Association of School Librarians, which, she says, given the cost of traveling and other priorities, "is not a conference that I otherwise would have attended."

The same is true for a teacher's book club that Sumrow organized. "I had gotten a tweet from an educator saying, 'I'm loving this book. I would love to pick your brain about your research. Would you do a book club?' "Sumrow asked on social media if others teachers would be interested, and they were. That led to a conversation with educators about her book, which deals with themes of mental health and white supremacy.

Sumrow emphasizes that Zoom book clubs and other online readings do not have to have large audiences to be important. She capped her educator book club event at 15 attendees and calls it an unqualified success. "It was great because there were teachers from across the United States," she says.

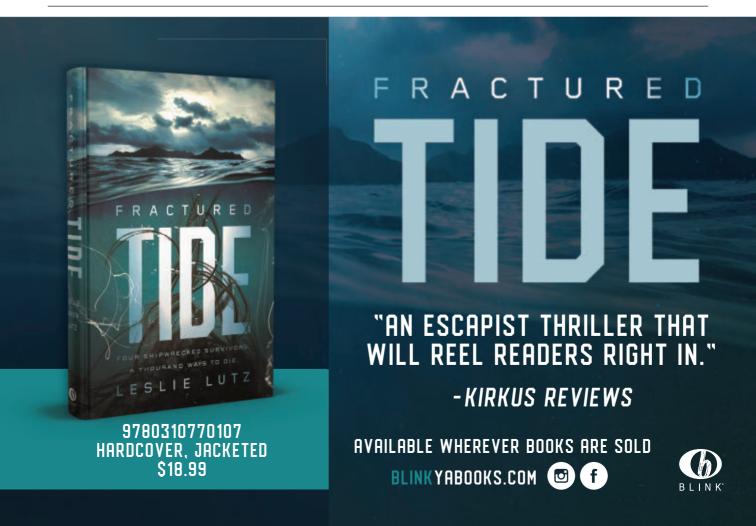
That access is important, because Sumrow sees an opportunity to bring authors and audiences together who might not be able to meet if they had to travel. "I think, on some level, it does level the playing field, because there's no expense for travel," she says. "It might open things up for authors who might not be able to go. So it might be an equalizer."

The psychological toll

While Sumrow is doing her best to embrace technology, there is still an emotional impact for authors with books releasing right now. "I've heard that this whole thing is like the stages of grief," she says. "I had the denial stages. We've been talking about this stuff for half a year, and you're so excited that readers will connect with it as you go on tour."

For Laura Lee Gulledge, author of *The Dark Matter of Mona Starr* (Amulet), valuing personal interaction over interaction via social media and other technology has been a career choice. Having to break with that proved difficult. She was already struggling with depression when the coronavirus hit, and she suddenly needed to find ways to reach readers for the April 7 release of her graphic novel. At first she tried to simply recreate the events she had planned in online settings. "I think I was so emotionally attached to those opening events that I was clinging to what was lost," she says. "There was so much mourning."

Leah Johnson, author of *You Should See Me in a Crown* (Scholastic Press, June), was in a similar position, suffering from poor sleep and finding it difficult to muster creative energy. She says she has found it "difficult at best and impossible at worst to show up to the page most days and channel the tenderness and joy



that is central to the types of stories that I tell, when I spend so much time fearing for the safety of the people I love."

Gulledge says, "Now that this situation has forced me to create a system that works for me, I think I might even start turning more of my content and lessons into video form." And



Leah Johnson

the experience, she adds, has given her a boost of confidence. "Whenever you're tested, you can somehow handle the challenge with grace. It reminds you that you're stronger than

you thought."

Johnson has begun finding more moments of peace by being easier on herself. "I'm trying to give myself permission not to feel it every day," she says. "I'm really grateful for all the festivals that have gone virtual in spite of inperson cancellations. Nothing will be normal again for a long time. But virtual festivals have given us all back some semblance of normalcy, while also giving us a better shot at making sure these stories

reach the readers who need them most.

TACKLING RACISM WITH TEENS

An online book club pairs authors and a bookseller to take on a tough subject

BY ALEX GREEN

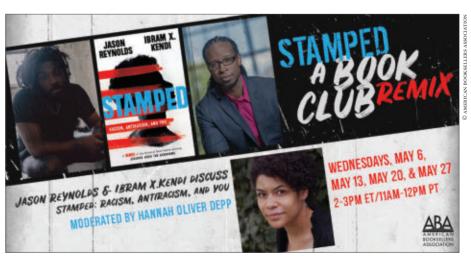
s the coronavirus shuttered schools across the nation in March, Ibram X. Kendi had an idea. He was simultaneously transitioning to homeschooling his child and fielding a growing number of requests from educators to speak about Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You (Little, Brown), the YA adaptation of his National Book Award-winning Stamped from the Beginning that he coauthored with Jason Reynolds. If others were in his position as a parent, he thought, why not use technology to have a bigger conversation?

Kendi approached his publisher with the idea of doing a multiweek online book club that could reach teens and help educators and parents learn best practices for sharing the book with their students and kids. The idea grew from there, and on May 6, Kendi and Reynolds launched the Stamped book club, a series of hour-long discussions held once per week for four weeks in partnership with the American Booksellers Association.

"I thought Jason and I could reach many young people and older people through this book club," Kendi says. "This is not the type of book one can read and put down. It is a book that calls for engagement, and we wanted to engage readers."

The discussions between Kendi and Reynolds are moderated by Hannah Oliver Depp, the owner of Loyalty Bookstores in the D.C. area and an ABA member. Beyond the weekly gatherings, the ABA has also made a 22-page guide for educators and parents, which is available for free on its website.

The partnership with ABA was important to Kendi and Reynolds, since bookstores are facing enormous economic challenges. "If the books are the blood, then indie booksellers are like the arteries," Kendi says. "Our literature would not be



The Stamped book club features weekly discussions throughout May by authors Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi.

circulating without them. Our ideas would not be circulating in the minds of Americans without them. And in this dire economic moment, when so many Americans are seeking understanding and direction and hope, the arteries delivering the books are critical."

In the book club's opening session, Kendi and Reynolds shared how their book took shape. Reynolds recounted that when Kendi approached him about making a YA adaptation of Stamped from the Beginning, he initially said no, but he later changed his mind. "I said yes because I spent the majority of the last decade in front of millions of young people," he told Kendi. "I knew that of course kids are ready for

this. They're starving for it. It was about understanding that this was an opportunity to do something bigger than me and bigger than him."

In retelling Kendi's book for young adults, Reynolds tried to reorient the work around clear, straightforward questions that he believes matter most to the teens he meets. The volume opens with a story, "Who Was the World's First Racist?," that comes later in Stamped from the Beginning.

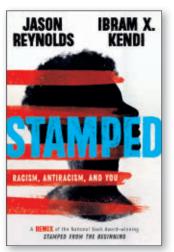
"The moment that I read that part in the book, I was like, we

have to start with racist #1," Reynolds told Kendi in the first session. "If I was a kid and I knew who racist #1 was? I think all of us are interested in who starts stuff. It matters to us where something begins. If I'm 15 or 13 or 12, that's a hook."

Throughout the book club meeting, Reynolds and Kendi urged attendees to ensure that the young adults who read the book have partners to help them think through the more challenging parts. "The book is written to be taught," Reynolds said. "What we say in this moment could be fortifying or could be unbearably damaging. Make sure that a 12-year-old isn't taking an unwarranted guilt onto their 12-year-old self. Racism is to be talked about honestly, but not without compassion. Truth without compassion is cruelty."

Kendi tells me his goal for the four weeks is "for readers walking away saying they have a good understanding of racism, and that they'd like to strive to be antiracist and to build an antiracist society of equity and justice."

Given the success of the first session on May 7, the ABA is planning to announce additional digital programs to be held in

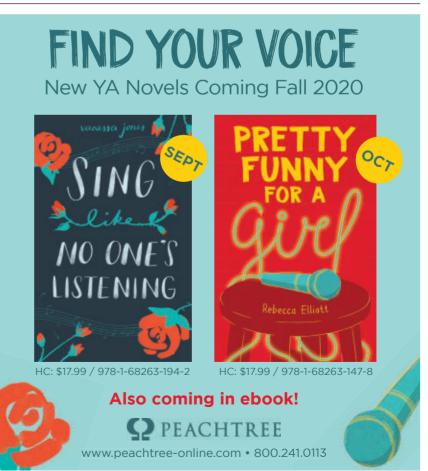


June, partly in the hopes of offsetting some impact from the cancellation of the annual Children's Institute. Through partnerships like the Stamped book club, the ABA sees an opportunity to continue to support member bookstores by directing readers their way.

"It felt like a natural pairing between the authors, publisher, and ABA: a way to reach as many bookstores and readers as possible," says Gen de Botton, program manager for the ABA's Association of Booksellers for Children Group.

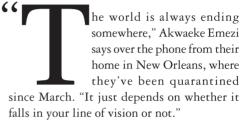
For all involved, the conversation about a critical issue in American society, past and present, is what is most important. Reynolds

sees the book club as an essential opening for that conversation to happen with young people. "I believe in steps, so this is just the beginning-step one," he says. "At the end of it, if more young people are settling into the idea of talking about and striving for antiracism, which then allows them to critique their thoughts, actions, and even language, that's a success, a step forward. After that, I'd really love for this book to be taught in all their classrooms, to really drill down and unpack it all, so that it truly starts to crystallize."



Akwaeke Emezi celebrates the life of a queer boy in Nigeria in The Death of Vivek Oji

By Maris Kreizman



When the Covid-19 crisis started, the novelist reflected on their childhood in Nigeria in order to keep calm: "You grew up in a military dictatorship," they told themself. "You dealt with statewide curfew. You dealt with people being burned alive a block down from your house."

In retrospect, Emezi says, the Nigeria of their childhood sets a low bar against which to compare 2020 New Orleans. "But it did help me remember that the world is ending everywhere for someone or for a community. Those ends still matter even amidst all the noise of this one."

The Death of Vivek Oji details the circumstances of one such end. It's Emezi's second novel for adults after their highly praised 2018 debut, Freshwater, and Pet, a 2019 National Book Award-nominated young adult novel. Vivek Oji unravels the mystery of a young queer person's demise in Nigeria in the late 1990s. Freshwater and Pet contain fantastical yet emotionally true portrayals of young queer characters, but Vivek Oji is more grounded.

"Vivek is struggling the same way any young person who's coming of age struggles to figure things out," Emezi says, "not in the narrative of, if you're queer you're repressed and that is therefore the source of all your angst, and once you come out your problems are magically solved."



Author Profile

AKWAEKE EMEZI

DEAT

The source of Vivek's struggle, Emezi says, isn't gender or sexual preference. They take issue with the Western idea that coming out as queer is a panacea. "To me it was so clear that this was a spiritual thing. Other factors of identity play in, but correlation is not the same as causation." Vivek is much more than a character who just grapples with his queerness.

Emezi is aware that the premise is problematic. "I realized when I was writing it that killing off a queer character is a bad trope," they say. But understanding Vivek's death requires the reader to also understand his life and the people in his community who loved him.

The novel's nonlinear plot structure provided Emezi with a challenge, they say. "How can I write a book that

keeps its own secrets until the end? How can I write things that I know but the reader can't know?" The Death of Vivek Oji may reveal its protagonist's death in its earlier chapters, but the surrounding circumstances are the great mystery.

"With Vivek, I wanted to write a story about someone who's queer and living in Nigeria but who is still loved and who still has a community," Emezi says. They thought particularly of Vivek in the early days of the pandemic, when a social media campaign aimed at stamping out homophobia in Nigeria surfaced in the wake of the murder of a gay man in the region of the country where Emezi grew up.

"When the hashtag happened, it hit me that the realities of all the queer babies

out there don't change because of a pandemic,"

Emezi says. "If anything it gets worse, because there's more isolation and more of that feeling that you can't talk about your own struggles. But at the end of the day a queer kid who's stuck with a homophobic family is still stuck." Becoming unstuck is Vivek's ultimate triumph, even as we watch him inch closer and closer to his untimely end.

Emezi wants readers to struggle with the idea that a book that features a death so prominently is actually one that, more than anything, celebrates life. "In order for us to make a new world we have to be able to imagine it," they say. "That's step one. For me, Vivek is something like that: an imagining of a community that loves this boy as he is unconditionally."

Emezi hopes that in witnessing the community that Vivek's peers form around him, readers will see what acceptance might look like. They want people to read The Death of Vivek Oji and learn that such treatment is possible. "You have to create that space first," they say. "From there you can actually start building

it. You know what you can say no to because there's something else to say yes to."

The book, Emezi says, went through many drafts. "It was important for me to give Vivek a voice, because earlier drafts didn't include his chapters, and I realized he can't be the protagonist if we don't get to hear from him."

In learning about Vivek as they were writing him, Emezi discovered that he is the only character who is not worried about himself or his fate. Because Vivek is dead for much of the book and only narrates a smattering of chapters, it can be easy for readers to miss the fact that he's fairly coolheaded. Emezi puts the concerns of Vivek's family and friends front

> and center, daring readers to tune out the noise and figure out what it is that Vivek wants.

"Are we forgetting to listen to him because he's not centered in the way we expected him to be?" Emezi asks. "Are we forgetting to listen to the actual people who are at the center of this? What do we miss by looking at things through everyone else's lens except Vivek's own?"

Subverting the typical coming out narrative is also a question of writing for a specific audience, Emezi says, and not worrying so much about the rest. "I'm writing for black trans people. I'm not trying to raise empathy by showing how bad it is out there and that people are dying." They chose not to amplify the hatred and the trauma it causes and has caused. "We know very well what's out

there, and we don't need to see it again. So instead I try to amplify the alternative."

Emezi believes that oppressed people need to create spaces in which they feel safe. "When most people create bubbles it's not to hide from reality," they say. "It's in order to survive. For people who are oppressed, creating bubbles doesn't stop you from seeing all of the horrible things that are happening, but it does give you a little space to not die in."

Stories, Emezi notes, are fantastic vessels in which to start mapping out such bubbles—especially during the heightened isolation of the present. "We have to make sure that the stories get to the people who need them. The supply chain of a story cannot be corrupted because of the pandemic. Because stories matter. If anything they matter more than they did before."

Maris Kreizman's writing has appeared in Esquire, GQ, the L.A. Times, the New York Times, Vanity Fair, and elsewhere.

Fiction

Grown Ups

Emma Jane Unsworth, Scout, \$27 (352p) ISBN 978-1-9821-4193-6

British writer Unsworth (Animals) delivers a blistering tragicomic send-up of a life documented on Instagram. For 30-something Jenny McLaine, social media doesn't come as naturally as it does to her younger colleagues at feminist website The Foof. Perhaps that's why she spends way too long at her East London coworking space agonizing over just the right filter, hashtag, and caption for a croissant post ("I've tweaked it so many times that I can't work out whether it makes sense anymore"). Real life starts to intrude on Jenny's online persona, however, when her romantic life, friendships, and financial footing all fall apart in quick succession—and that's before Jenny's clairvoyant, busybody mother shows up and moves in. The broad satire with which Unsworth opens her novel quickly gains both substance and shadow, as Jenny's present-day predicaments alternate with scenes from the heady beginning and truly painful breakdown of a longtime romantic relationship. Emails, internet searches, online posts, and even a screenplay comprise the varied and playful forms through which Jenny's surprisingly poignant drama unfolds. Though directed squarely at millennials, Jenny's stumbling journey toward authenticity will resonate with anyone who's taken the bold, hard step of assessing their life without any filters. Agent: Anna Stein, ICM Partners. (Aug.)

Sex and Vanity

Kevin Kwan. Doubleday, \$26.95 (336p) ISBN 978-0-385-54627-0

Kwan follows up his Crazy Rich Asians trilogy with an intoxicating, breezy update of E.M. Forster's A Room with a View. Lucie Tang Churchill, 19, a privileged "hapa" (she is half Chinese, half WASP) attends her richer friend Isabel's wedding in Capri. After Lucie meets Isabel's cousin George Zao, a rich, handsome, Chinese-Australian



Sex and Vanity is a delectable comedy of manners by Crazy Rich Asians author Kevin Kwan (reviewed on this page).

surfer, she becomes a "bundle of conflicting emotions," repulsed by her attraction to the "brooding weirdo [who] took himself much too seriously." Still, they hook up, at risk of jeopardizing Lucie's reputation as an eligible bride. Four years later, Lucie and George's paths cross in New York, only now Lucie is engaged to Cecil Pike. However, Lucy can't get George out of her mind, and she is flummoxed by his kindness. When Lucy, George, and Cecil attend a film screening featuring a sex scene that reminds her of what she did with George in Capri, Lucie doubles down on suppressing her true desires. Kwan exploits the Forster frame for clever references—including Merchant and Ivory—and provides amusing footnotes. Kwan also relishes describing lavish meals and haute couture clothing, as well as Isabel's decadent wedding and Cecil's imaginative, over-the-top proposal. There are moments both catty and witty, but this delectable comedy of manners—the literary equivalent of white truffle and caviar pizza—is still pizza. (July)

Watching You Without Me

Lynn Coady. Knopf, \$25.95 (320p) ISBN 978-0-525-65843-6

Canadian author Coady's unsettling tale of a clingy family caregiver (after the collection Hellgoing) explores a woman's grief over the death of her mother and her struggle to take care of her intellectually disabled sister. Karen Petrie, a 40-something lawyer, returns to Nova Scotia from

Toronto after her mother, Irene, dies from cancer, to settle her older sister, Kelli, into the care facility Irene had chosen for her. At the urging of Kelli's caregiver, Trevor, who Kelli is always overjoyed to see, Karen hesitates at finalizing Kelli's move. Trevor possesses his own key to the house and makes unscheduled visits, leading Karen to believe his claims that he was close to their mother, while Karen decides to take care of Kelli until a bed opens in another facility. When social services calls Karen to follow up on an anonymous tip about Kelli's well-being, Karen leans more on Trevor, ignoring red flags, such as a creeping sense that Trevor had briefly kidnapped Karen and Kelli after a tour of another facility, until his behavior becomes alarming. Karen's sardonic, retrospective narration highlights how her grief clouded her judgment of Trevor, and Coady impresses with her careful, humane characterization of Kelli. This stands out for its incisive. bleakly humorous look at gullibility and the complexities of guilt. Agent: Christy Fletcher, Fletcher & Co. (July)

Cool for America

Andrew Martin. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, \$27 (272p) ISBN 978-0-374-10816-8

Martin (Early Work) captures young adults' aimless searches for stability in this bleak, revealing collection. In "The Changed Party," during a rained-out vacation on the Jersey shore, Lisa and Gary, freshly reunited following a separation, discover their eight-year-old daughter Amanda's compulsive habit of picking through the garbage and are troubled by a friend's drinking. In the title story, an unnamed assistant professor spending the summer in Missoula, Mont., wrestles with a powerful attraction to his friend's wife, who helps him recuperate from a broken leg. In "The Boy Vet," a baby-faced veterinarian pressures a softhearted literature PhD dropout to pay for emergency surgery on a stray dog. The protagonist of "Bad Feelings" distracts himself from his mom's surgery by going to "the third sequel to a blockbuster adaptation of a young adult book series" despite having not seen the others, and loses his keys in the empty theater. Moments of cynical humor pop up amid drug use, tumultuous relationships, or other self-defeating

outlets for the characters' creative and personal frustrations. Though the people begin to blend together, each story has at least one or two standout, bleakly funny lines. Martin's sardonic tales are decent, if not breathtaking. (July)

Kings County

David Goodwillie. Avid Reader, \$28 (432p) ISBN 978-1-5011-9213-5

Goodwillie (American Subversive) dully resurrects the New York City of the recent past, when Occupy Wall Street occupied the headlines, fixtures such as Café Loup catered to Manhattan cognoscenti, and the Turkey's Nest dive bar welcomed Brooklyn's newest hipsters. Among these are Audrey Benton, a failed actor who babysits bands for a Brooklyn music label, and Theo Gorski, a book editor turned literary scout for films, both of whom arrived as recent college graduates shortly after 9/11. In 2011, after dating for three years, Audrey and Theo hit a series of bumps when one of Audrey's friends, Fender, disappears. Audrey's Bushwick apartment is then broken into and someone leaves behind a note with four names on it—Audrey and her three best friends, including Fender, whose name has a check mark next to it. Audrey's confession of a sordid secret from her past causes a rift between her and Theo, who separately tries to find out who is behind the threat. It takes Goodwillie until the halfway point to introduce the mystery element, but even then, thrills are strangely absent, and Theo's casual sociology falls flat ("He was not politically active, but he was a watcher of the world, and the Occupy movement intrigued him"). Despite an attempt at Wolfean verisimilitude, this slipshod novel reads more like a Wienie Roast of the Vanities. (July)

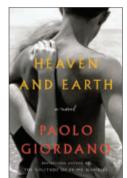
Christina Schwarz. Atria, \$27 (352p) ISBN 978-1-4767-4545-9

Schwarz (The Edge of the Earth) entices

★ Heaven and Earth

Paolo Giordano, trans, from the Italian by Anne Milano Appel. Viking/Dorman, \$28 (410p) ISBN 978-1-98-487731-4

iordano's extraordinary novel of fateful friendships and obsessive love (after The Solitude of Prime Numbers) revolves around an Italian woman's memories of her summers in Puglia in the late 1990s. Teresa Gasparro is 14 and on one of her annual summer visits from Turin to her grandmother's house in the small village of Speziale when she gets her first glimpse of the three boys who will change her life. Brothers Bern and Tommaso Coriano, and cousin Nicola Belpanno, live next door in a farmhouse and sneak in at night to swim naked in the villa's pool. As Teresa gets



to know the boys, she is invited to the farmhouse, which turns out to be home to a Christian sect that believes in reincarnation of all living things. Teresa is drawn instantly to Bern and constantly thinks about him and his world while back at school throughout the years, and during the summer she turns 17, they consummate their relationship. Before she leaves, she asks Bern to kiss her in front of the other boys, and the awkwardness reveals intense jealousy. Giordano then shifts to 2012, when Teresa reconnects with Tomasso, reflects on the disappearance of the other two from their lives, and learns the dark details of the boys' past. Lush regional details, indelible characters, and a riveting story line make this an overwhelmingly emotional work. Giordano's captivating tale is a magnificent testament to the lingering impact of a charged romance. Agent: Andrew Wylie, the Wylie Agency. (July)

with this introspective view of notorious bank robber Bonnie Parker. In 1926, Bonnie marries her high school sweetheart, Roy, at 15 and they drop out of school. After Roy disappears for long stretches, Bonnie begins waitressing at Marco's Café in Dallas to make ends meet, writing poetry on the side and leaving out food for people in need. After the Great Depression hits and Marco's closes, Bonnie works odd jobs and her dreams of becoming a poet dim ("She'd learned to accept the fading of those bright dreams as the price of adulthood"). In 1930, Bonnie leaves Roy and stays at a friend's house. A young man named Clyde Barrow shows up there, and Bonnie becomes enamored with him. Clyde courts Bonnie for a few

weeks before being slapped with a twoyear sentence for stealing a safe. Bonnie visits him in prison, and after he's freed and starts robbing banks, she evolves from accomplice to partner in crime. She and Clyde continue their spree across the southeast, stealing cars, robbing banks, and exchanging gunfire with police, activities that lead to their being gunned down in a police ambush in 1934. The author expertly magnifies the characters' desperation and intertwines the excitement of eluding the law with their magnetic sexual attraction. Schwarz's rich narrative brings fresh life into the notorious tale of two American outlaws. Agent: Claudia Ballard, WME. (July)

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Opium and Absinthe

Lydia Kang. Lake Union, \$14.95 trade paper (480p) ISBN 978-1-5420-1779-4

Kang's bustling, inspired historical mystery (after A Beautiful Poison) tackles drug addiction, vampirism, and deficiencies of medicine in New York City at the end of the 19th century. Spunky and scientifically curious Tillie Pembroke, who has no patience for the social calendar her mother and imperious grandmother want to arrange for her, breaks her collarbone in a riding accident and is soon indulging in copious quantities of laudanum, morphine, and heroin, some prescribed rather liberally for her pain and some obtained illicitly. After reading a newspaper story about an unidentified woman found dead outside the Met on Fifth Avenue, she recognizes her older sister, Lucy, in the description and swoons. When not drifting off into one altered state or another, Tillie and charming newsie Ian, who appalls her family because he is both

poor and Jewish, secretly attempt to solve the mystery of Lucy's vampiric murder (she was found with two holes in her neck and her blood drained). A large cast of colorful, duplicitous characters adds to the suspense, and while the author amps up the gore and the melodrama toward the end, she convincingly ties up the many loose ends of her saga. Kang's whirlwind tour of New York in the Naughty '90s is worth the price of admission. (July)

American Follies

Norman Lock. Bellevue, \$16.99 trade paper (288p) ISBN 978-1-942658-48-1

Lock's raucous, fantastical seventh entry in his American Novel series (after Feast Day of the Cannibals) involves Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton on a search for a baby kidnapped by the KKK. Pregnant stenographer Ellen Finch, 27, secures a job as stenographer for the famous suffragists in 1883, when they are at work on their third volume of

History of Woman Suffrage. Ellen endures Elizabeth and Susan's one-upmanship and name calling ("Primp!" "Prude!" "Poseur!" "Prig!" "Humbug!" "Stickleback!") and meets other notable figures such as Jacob Riis, Herman Melville, and performers from P.T. Barnum's circus. Four months after the birth of Ellen's son, Martin, he is taken by a member of the KKK, who claims the father is a black man passing as white and plans to kill him. Ellen, Elizabeth, and Susan borrow Barnum's train to rush south on a surreal journey, complete with Stanton and Anthony dressed up as Klan members and later in blackface, and getting help from a jailer's wife and a former slave in their desperate attempts to rescue the child. Lock captures the tone and language of the 19th century ("I composed a telegram with the laudatory terseness preferred by God for His pronouncements"), though the bizarre happenings are disorienting. This imaginative exploration of late-19thcentury America's cultural tensions is an amusing burlesque. (*Iuly*)

The Bright Lands

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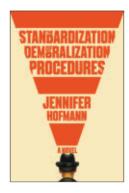
John Fram. Hanover Square, \$27.99 (480p) ISBN 978-1-335-83662-5

Fram's ambitious debut takes a critical, terrifying look at a small town in Texas, where high school football reigns supreme and puts a double bind on those who are desperate to get out. Former high school quarterback Joel Whitley, now almost 30, returns home to Bentley, Tex., from Manhattan after a decade, distressed by a series of desperate text messages from his younger brother, Dylan, a star high school quarterback himself who has become disenchanted with football. Joel, openly gay, has embraced a new life as a data analyst, but when he's back in the stadium watching Dylan play, old feelings of angst return after someone makes a homophobic remark about a black male cheerleader. Dylan soon disappears, which may be related to an out-of-town s&m club and a supernatural creature that occasionally causes underground rumblings. Joel teams up with a former classmate turned sherrif's deputy to search for Dylan, and they begin to uncover the town's dark secrets. While Fram stacks the deck with a few too many secondary characters (old loves, family ties) and subplots (drugs,

★ The Standardization of **Demoralization Procedures**

Jennifer Hofmann. Little, Brown, \$27 (272p) ISBN 978-0-316-42645-9

n this enrapturing debut, Hofmann constructs a beguiling tale of espionage, moral responsibility and the "spooky action" of quantum mechanics. Taking place in 1989 East Berlin before the fall of the wall, the story is structured around a series of entanglements and disappearances. Bernd Zeiger made his name in the secret police by writing a "demoralization" manual detailing how to sow confusion, extract confessions, and "put an entire nation, a world, to sleep." In the 1960s, Zeiger spied on and elicited the confession of his neighbor Johannes Held, a quantum physicist withholding infor-



mation about a secret American experiment in teleportation he'd gleaned while on a fellowship in the Arizona desert. In 1989, Zeiger tells Held's story, and his role in it, to Lara, a young waitress to whom Zeiger is particularly drawn. The guilt-ridden and ailing Zeiger wants to offer Lara "coherence, linkages, the sequence of things"—in other words, the "perfect confession." Shortly thereafter, Lara herself vanishes, and Zeiger sets about trying to locate her. The plot grows intricate but never convoluted as the connections between Zeiger, Held, and Lara gradually come into focus. In portraying two equally head-scratching phenomena—paranormal vanishings and the absurd, sinister workings of a totalitarian state—the novel hovers between genres like a subatomic particle between states. All the more impressive, Hoffman's exceptional debut never loses sight of the desires, mysteries, and small acts of rebellion that persist within dehumanizing systems. (Aug.)

murders, nefarious schemers), his attempt to connect Bentley's long-buried secrets with generation-repeating bullying and homophobia is commendable. This offers as many weekend frights as celebratory lights. (July)

★ The Lions of Fifth Avenue

Fiona Davis, Dutton, \$27 (368p) ISBN 978-1-5247-4461-8

Davis (The Address) delves into the history of the New York Public Library in this delightful mystery. It's 1913, and Jack and Laura Lyons have spent the past two years living in an apartment on a mezzanine tucked inside the library, since it opened. Jack is the library's superintendent, while Laura raises their two children and studies journalism at Columbia. Tension builds when valuable first edition books start disappearing and Jack is the suspected thief. Davis then shifts to 1993, when Laura's granddaughter Sadie is the library's rare books curator, and a new wave of thefts begin. As the story transitions between Sadie and Laura, their differences stand out: Sadie is a quirky book lover who's uneasy around people, while Laura blooms when she meets the revolutionary women of Greenwich Village, who fight for rights in a club called Heterodoxy. Laura's journalism professor dismisses the club for "trying too hard to be intellectual," prompting Laura to prove him wrong. Eventually she goes on to become a leading feminist essayist. Davis illuminates the world of special books through keen descriptions of the library and rare book dealers, while leading readers through the twin mysteries of the missing books. The characters and story are stellar, but the real star of the show is the library, which Davis evokes beautifully. (July)

Side Trip

Kerry Lonsdale. Lake Union, \$14.95 trade paper (364p), ISBN 978-1-5420-1696-4

Lonsdale's middling road trip romance (after Everything We Give) revolves around a chance meeting at a diner. Joy Evers, a recent graduate from UCLA, sets out to drive across the country to move in with her fiancé in New York City. Joy also wants to complete a Route 66 bucket list left by her deceased older sister, Judy. On a stop in Ludlow, Calif., Joy meets Dylan Westfield, a "tall drink of water" and

touring musician whose name Joy recognizes from Rolling Stone. Dylan, who is prone to car trouble, helps Joy cross off items on Judy's list in exchange for a ride, however both are made anxious by one to-do: "fall in love." Lonsdale shuffles Joy and Dylan's perspectives on the trip as they bond over their love of music, and flashes forward to Joy and Dylan continuing on separate paths and contemplating what-ifs, as the details surrounding Judy's death slowly come into focus. While the prose and character development leave much to be desired beyond clichés of wanderlust and restlessness, Lonsdale succeeds in holding the reader's attention through plenty of twists and turns. The low-stakes story makes for a diverting drama. (Iuly)

My Interview with Beethoven

L.A. Hider Jones, CreateSpace, \$17.99 trade paper (378p) ISBN 978-1-5352-0142-1

Jones's vivid debut follows a young man from Virginia on his quest to meet with Ludwig van Beethoven. In 1815 Williamsburg, Va., 11-year-old George Thompson is distressed when his stepfather, Robert, commits his mother to an insane asylum after learning she was not a pregnant widow when they married as she'd claimed, but had instead become pregnant after having an affair with Beethoven. Robert then renounces George as a son, and sends him to apprentice with a printer. The story jumps forward a decade to find George, now 23 and a newspaper reporter, planning a trip to Europe to interview the "Lion of Vienna." His motivation as a journalist pales in comparison to his desire to meet the man he believes to be his biological father. After being warned away by a number of people, George finally manages to meet Beethoven for the interview. The ardent, sentimental George pries mesmerizing stories of love and music from the composer, as Jones shifts to Beethoven's life via well-crafted flashbacks. While the prose is clunky ("the sleepiness in his head tried to make sense of the noise"), Jones convincingly fills out George's emotional arc, from the tale's somber opening to its optimistic close. Jones hits the mark with this strong historical tale. (Self-published)

Poetry

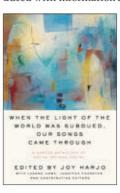
Without Dragons Even the **Emperor Would Be Lonely**

Ninso John High. Wet Cement, \$25 trade paper (148p) ISBN 978-1-7324369-4-7

In this distinctive assemblage of text and ink paintings exploring Zen forms, High (Bloodline) offers koans and parables printed in handwritten font alongside striking ensos (hand-inked circles). While the font can be difficult to read, it reinforces the relationship between writing and painting as gestures of the body, a theme throughout much of the collection: "The body speaks./ When you hear it, you/awaken in the dream." In seeking a language of simplicity, the poems occasionally fall flat, and references to a travel narrative suggest something that might have helped a reader unfamiliar with High or with the specifics of Zen practices connect with the collection. However, the ensos are stunning, featuring different color combinations and textures and losing none of their power across the book. While High's language doesn't always match the tension between abstraction and embodiment achieved by the ensos, the handwritten style allows for surprising relationships between text and image. (Sept.)

* When the Light of the World Was **Subdued, Our Songs Came Through** Edited by Joy Harjo. Norton, \$19.95 trade paper (352p) ISBN 978-0-393-35680-9

This comprehensive anthology presents the work of 161 Native American poets from nearly 100 indigenous nations and spanning from the 15th century to the present. Each section represents a different region of the United States and is introduced with information about the Nations



that live there. The poetic styles and personal experiences are endlessly variable and consistently fresh. In "Shrinking Away," Jim Northrup recalls his struggle with PTSD after

serving in Vietnam: "Survived the war/ but was having trouble/ surviving the peace." Samuel Sixkiller (1877-1958) attended the Carlisle Indian School, where he was class poet in 1895. His ode "To Class '95" represents the tension of the school's assimilationist project and the longing for home: "When shall the culture, the art and refinement/ Drive from our minds, roving thoughts of the past?/ Shall broad education, or savage confinement,/ Conquer the Red Man now fading so fast?" Tommy Pico and Natalie Diaz represent the newest generation, who honor those who came before while providing a look at life on the reservation today. Across centuries, regions, languages, and styles, this well-crafted anthology is perfect for Native American poetry courses and anyone looking to expand their knowledge of indigenous literature. (Aug)

Country, Living

Ira Sadoff, Alice James, \$16.95 trade paper (64p) ISBN 978-1-948579-10-0

Sadoff (History Matters) considers the relationship between the individual and the collective in his formally dexterous eighth collection. Here, forms change shape before the reader's eyes, from prose poems, to couplets, to luminous fragments. The book's formal diversity speaks to Sadoff's subject matter, reminding the reader of the artifice inherent in imagining cohesion, whether of a country, a literary genre, or even a family unit. "Since this is a story I'm flying/ over apple orchards and airports," he writes, drawing attention to the pretense of a unifying narrative. Yet the poet also acknowledges the glorious multiplicity inherent in stories. "How many sides to a story?" he asks as the poem transitions from "the desultory frontier of ocean" to gunfire and grief, and back again. Narrative is framed as a form of power and agency: "Oil told the story here, the way the Triangle fire told the story/ of the Weinbergs, Greenspans and Cohens." Fittingly, the book ends at a moment when "there was no story/ to our little ranch house/ so you couldn't hear a thing." Sadoff evokes complex philosophical ideas with a deceptive simplicity throughout. This is an accomplished addition to his impressive body of work. (June)

In the Field Between Us

Molly McCully Brown and Susannah Nevison. Persea, \$15.95 trade paper (72p) ISBN 978-0-89255-514-7

In this ethereal series of epistolary poems, two disabled poets build their own language of imagery and landscape where trees ask the question the speakers relentlessly examine: "what would you weather just to call yourself alive?" In Brown and Nevison's intimate correspondence, the body is a site of complex dualities. The poets build a refuge, a place in which they can exist in many forms, sometimes even without their bodies: "On this other/ shore, where we/ have disembarked/ our bodies like the boats/ they are." Divided into four sections, the epistles orbit events of irrevocable medical intervention. The sections titled "Aftermath," "Recovery," "Operating Room," and "Pre-Op Holding Room" force the reader to move chronologically backwards through these stages. While almost all of the poems are letters between the two authors, each section also contains poems addressed to "Maker," someone both spiritual and surgical. "If I can't/know my body before/ it was riven,/ show me/ your hands," the poets demand of this entity. Brown and Nevison explore the body in all its contradictions: as a site of mourning and of celebration, and as a burden and a source of vivid brightness. (Iune) ---------

★ July Westhale

Via Negativa. Kore, \$16.95 trade paper (84p) ISBN 978-1-888553-92-5

In this stunning work, Westhale (Trailor Trash) interrogates the vocabulary used to speak about desire, the divine, and literature. Presented as a series of linked lyric pieces, the book spans a range of forms, including lyric fragments, single strophes, and prose poems, gracefully unified by an ongoing concern with the damage done by language, as well as its redemptive potential. "I am not a star. I am not a star. I am a mechanical. I mean, her. I mean. Dear god," she writes in "SAINT AGATHA: PATRON SAINT OF BELL FOUNDERS. WET NURSES. RAPE VICTIMS, BREAST CANCER SURVIVORS, AND SICILY." With subtlety and skill, Westhale reminds the reader that sensory experience is irrevocably changed once it is relayed in language. The provocative poems are frequently voiced

by visionary speakers: "Broken like a double-yolk/ in a skillet, I have found/ vision, o lord, I your weary/ chef coming off the graveyard/ shift." Here, the poem reads as a corrective gesture, an attempt to restore mystery to our lives through language. Westhale delivers a book full of mystery, beauty, and possibility. (Iune)

Play for Time

Paula Mendoza, Gaudy Boy, \$16 trade paper (96p) ISBN 978-0-9828142-7-7

In this agile debut, Mendoza flits from sex to violence to loneliness and longing, weaving a tapestry of emotion. Often, the poems are built on imaginative premises. In "Behind the Shelf," a "tall man" keeps containers of blood "catalogued by the breath which shimmered



or seethed, by what press of flesh effervesced these shining viscosities." These specimens are from "the first time vou fell in love," for example, or "when you

hated your mother." The speaker of several pieces is a "femme-dom" with intertwined plans of seduction and destruction. Elsewhere, Mendoza references other art forms, describing scenes from imagined movies as though she were the director ("Blurred at first, the woman sharpens as she walks toward us"). In "Making New Friends," she admits, "I think of a joke and devise contexts to precipitate my telling this joke. I think of the person I will tell it to ... Every day entire conversations play in my head." Mendoza's inventive skill with language is often remarkable ("some mornings abacus and other nights veruschka in the bed on fire :: tinder even if shivered leafless :: forsythia for instance") though this same skill occasionally borders on the nonsensical or cute ("Your episteme is my ontology"). A clever wordsmith with a canny perception of the layers of human emotion, Mendoza is a poet to watch. (May)

★ The Fish & The Dove

Mary-Kim Arnold. Noemi, \$18 trade paper (104p) ISBN 978-1-934819-88-3

In this accomplished debut, Arnold interrogates identity and received modes of storytelling. "I keep company with ghosts," her speaker declares, "[I] prefer the dead to the living/grief the cave of wonders I've walled myself in." As Arnold registers these paradoxes, she moves gracefully between traditional forms and innovative hybrids. A series of linked lyric pieces unfolds into fragments and visual experiments with gray scale, palimpsest, and erasure. "I read the history books but all I find is/perpetual war/ state of alert/ perpetual fear," her speaker observes. For Arnold, the question of who has the agency to chronicle—and erase—history looms. "They give her a chapter in their history books—/ call it 'Woman's Rule'/ but manage to make it about men," she asserts. Retaining agency over the narratives of history remains indelibly linked to traditional modes of storytelling: "As if history's frayed threads aren't unraveling," she remarks, as though reflecting on the poems themselves. Arnold proves as selfaware as she is subtle, gesturing to the performative quality of her language, and reminding the reader of its politically charged intent. This book is a rare achievement, and Arnold is an exciting voice in contemporary poetry. (May)

★ White Blood: A Lyric of Virginia Kiki Petrosino. Sarabande, \$15.95 trade paper (112p) ISBN 978-1-946448-54-5

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In this deeply felt fourth collection, Petrosino (Witch Wife) investigates her family tree—especially its roots in Virginia—and reports back on this exploration and its gaps. Petrosino's modes and poetic forms are manifold, always attending to the strangeness of language that attempts to capture time. Results from a DNA testing kit become erasure poems which "cluster and/ spread/ and/ trade/ and/ carry" across the page like the DNA itself as it traveled in the bodies of her ancestors. A crown of sonnets winds together the losses of history, the loss of more immediate family, and structural racism. "Neat trick, close shave," Petrosino writes about her experience in college, "How was I the dream, the hope, of the slave?" Moments like this, which consider the impact of the past on the present, achieve brilliance: "Only a few of our names survive./ We left you this: sudden glints in the grass/ The rest is grown folks' business we say. Yet/ you keep asking who owned us." The final poem, called an "Interlude," suggests the book's ongoing inquiry. This is an important and remarkable exploration of heritage. (May)

* Concordance

Susan Howe. New Directions, \$15.95 trade paper (120p) ISBN 978-0-8112-2959-3

Howe (Debths) frames poetry as a space for dialogue between traditions, literary forms, and artistic mediums in her meditative 11th work. Presented as collages, which cull text from the correspondence and personal papers of Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Margaret Fuller, Howe's poems skillfully demonstrate the range and possibilities of collage. Indeed, the gorgeous hybrids range from experiments in syntax to art pieces and visual poems that suggest the material nature of the archive, embodying the idea of literary inheritance. Many of these texts share an interest in challenging received ideas about logic, rationality, and sense-making: "There is no other way Eve the unknowable author of life will live to teach others, bruising the Serpent's head from years of treading water under history," Howe warns. As the book unfolds, logic that usually governs narratives is challenged as Howe reveals associative and dream logic that has been "treading water under history" all this time. "Recovering the lost is like entering enemy lines to get back one's dead," she declares. Full of thought-provoking juxtaposition, Howe's latest is beautifully executed and astonishing. (May)

My Baby First Birthday

Jenny Zhang. Tin House, \$15.95 trade paper (200p) ISBN 978-1-947793-81-1

The daring second collection from Zhang (Dear Jenny, We Are All Find) brings together more than 90 poems that, using rage and humor, both critically and flippantly address American and global culture. Zhang takes on racism and Asian stereotypes, sexism and gendered violence, class terror, and what it means to be born into—and defined by—oppression from the start. The poems frequently articulate

their anger at the wealthy, and a culture that valorizes them. In "ted talk," the speaker remarks: "it became stylish to be poetic/ for the end of the world... would it be so wrong to wish/ everyone with global entry be grounded/until extinction is off the table." Similarly, in "needs revision!" she says: "no to thinking everything can be/outsourced/someone has to feel it/it might as well be me...everyone with secret wealth/ publicly fetishizes rich people's ideas of thrift." The more personal and familial poems in this collection, however, move toward a kind of young adult writing, and rely on provocation and sexual imagery. In this stirring book, Zhang offers a bounty of memorable lines that celebrate and question the difficulties of womanhood and survival. (May)

Mystery/Thriller

The Silent Wife

Karin Slaughter. Morrow, \$28.99 (400p) ISBN 978-0-06-285810-8

In bestseller Slaughter's macabre 10th thriller featuring Georgia Bureau of Investigation agent Will Trent (after 2019's The Last Widow), Will and his partner, Faith Mitchell, are investigating a prison murder when inmate Daryl Nesbitt extends an offer. Nesbitt will tell them who the killer is if the GBI will look into eight incidents—one recent—that he believes are connected to the rape of Beckey Caterino eight years earlier. Nesbitt is serving time for child pornography discovered on his computer during the cops' investigation of the Caterino case, but Nesbitt maintains that Chief Jeffrey Tolliver—the now-deceased husband of Will's girlfriend, medical examiner Sara Linton—framed him, and that a sadistic serial attacker remains at large. Will's scrutiny of Jeffrey's detective work sends Sara on a wistful trip down memory lane, leaving Will uncertain of their future. Will and Jeffrey's inquiries, unfolding through frequent flashbacks, add nuance and complexity to an already intricate plot. Slaughter delivers an unflinching, deeply empathetic exploration of the stigma surrounding rape and the enduring trauma suffered by its survivors. Agent: Victoria Sanders, Victoria Sanders & Assoc. (Aug.)

† The Golden Cage

Camilla Läckberg, trans. from the Swedish by Neil Smith. Knopf, \$26.95 (352p) ISBN 978-0-525-65797-2

Läckberg (The Lost Boy) outdoes herself with this delectable tale of revenge. At 34, devoted wife and mother Faye thinks her wretched past is behind her. Now she has it all—a lavish Stockholm lifestyle, glorified social status, and a sexy entrepreneurial husband—until she catches Jack



and his business partner, Ylva, romping on Faye's bed. Left humiliated, belittled, and financially destitute in the wake of the subsequent divorce, Fave, who realizes

women too often turn their rage on themselves, plots an exquisite comeuppance for Jack, whom she supported when the two were in business school together by giving up her own studies and becoming a waitress. Chapters devoted to Faye's married life alternate with scorching flashbacks to her traumatic childhood. The poignant insights into women's capacity for self-sacrifice, multidimensional characterizations, and celebration of female ingenuity will resonate with many. Läckberg reinforces her position as the thriller queen of Scandinavia. 100,000-copy announced first printing. Agents: Joakim Hansson and Anna Frankl, Nordin Literary (Sweden). (July)

Afterland

Lauren Beukes. Mulholland, \$28 (416p) ISBN 978-0-316-26783-0

In this intriguing and all too timely near-future thriller from South African author Beukes (The Shining Girls), human culgoa virus, "a highly contagious flu that turns into an aggressive prostate cancer in men and boys," kills more than 99% of the world's male population within six months of its outbreak. The global response to the disease includes a ban on pregnancies until science can prevent the virus from afflicting future generations. Miles, a healthy 12 year old, has been held by the Department of Men in California's Napa Valley, where healthy young males are

being guarded for their safety, until his mother, Cole, frees him in a violent encounter that leaves her sister. Billie, seriously injured. Cole disguises Miles as a girl, and they embark on a perilous odyssey aimed at escaping the U.S. for Cole's native South Africa. After Billie recovers, she sets off in pursuit of Cole and Miles so that she can sell her nephew's sperm for millions on the black market. Though Beukes's worldbuilding isn't on the level of The Handmaid's Tale, in which a pandemic renders most women infertile, this is a worthy addition to the pandemic fiction subgenre. Agent: Oli Munson, A.M. Heath Literary (U.K.). (July)

Playing Nice

JP Delaney. Ballantine, \$27 (416p) ISBN 978-1-9848-2134-8

A nightmarish scenario drives this gripping psychological thriller from bestseller Delaney (The Perfect Wife). Freelance journalist Pete Riley, a stay-at-home dad, and his partner, Maddie Wilson, who works in advertising, live in Willesden Green, a middle-class London neighborhood, with their two-year-old son, Theo. One afternoon, Miles Lambert arrives at Pete's door and tells him, "Theo isn't your son. He's mine." Miles goes on to explain that their children were switched soon after birth, and the Lamberts are suing the hospital. Pete and Maddie agree to attempt an amicable solution and meet with Miles and his wife at their posh home in Highgate. But cruel, obsessive Miles files for custody of both children, and he's out to win at all costs. Everyone has secrets, and everyone has made mistakes that can be magnified in a courtroom battle. Then people connected with the case begin to die. Delaney skillfully gets inside his lead characters in alternating chapters narrated by Pete and by Maddie. Some genuinely surprising twists reveal just how far a parent will go for the sake of a child. This is domestic suspense at its most unsettling. Agent: Caradoc King, United Artists (U.K.). (July)

When She Was Good

Michael Robotham, Scribner, \$26 (352p) ISBN 978-1-9821-0363-7

At the start of Edgar-finalist Robotham's twisty, emotionally involving sequel to 2019's Good Girl, Bad Girl, British forensic psychologist Cyrus Haven, teenager Evie Cormac's therapist, seeks

out Special Constable Sacha Hopewell in Cornwall. Seven years earlier, Sacha rescued Evie from a North London house where she was discovered hiding with the corpse of a small-time criminal. Evie has never spoken about this traumatic experience, and Cyrus hopes Sacha has information that can help him treat Evie. Meanwhile, the police summon Cyrus to Manchester to consult on the apparent suicide of Hamish Whitmore, a retired detective superintendent. Cyrus finds evidence of foul play, and learns that Whitmore was fixated on the closed case of pedophile Eugene Green, who was killed in prison. A note Whitmore left behind indicates that he believed there was a possible link between Green and Evie, which prompts Cyrus to investigate. Sections told from Evie's perspective deepen both the plot and the characterizations. Fans of grim psychological suspense will be rewarded. Agent: Richard Pine, Inkwell Management. (July)

The Patient

Jasper DeWitt. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, \$23 (224p) ISBN 978-0-358-18176-7

DeWitt's taut debut, a psychological thriller with horror elements, purports to be a manuscript that "was posted in several installments under the thread 'Why I Almost Quit Medicine' on... a now-defunct forum for medical professionals." Parker, a Yale medical school graduate recently hired as a psychiatrist at the underfunded Connecticut State Asylum, becomes fascinated with Joe, an isolated, long-term patient, whom no one has successfully diagnosed since he was committed as a child. Ignoring the advice of Nessie, a veteran nurse, as well as his superiors' instructions, the arrogant Parker delves into Joe's background and uncovers years of medical negligence at the asylum. When Nessie dies, the latest victim in a decades-long string of caregivers whose interactions with Joe induced deadly feelings of anger or selfharm. Parker seizes the chance to volunteer to treat Joe. Parker's brushes with the supernatural heighten the tension. Fans of Alex Michaelides's The Silent Patient will want to check this one out. Agent: Joel Gotler, Intellectual Property Group. (July)

The End of Her

Shari Lapena. Viking/Dorman, \$27 (352p) ISBN 978-1-9848-8051-2

Dysfunctional marriages provide the backdrop for this workmanlike domestic thriller from Lapena (Someone We Know). Erica Voss blows into Aylesford, N.Y., from Creemore, Colo., intent on disrupting the lives of wealthy Stephanie Kilgour and her husband, Patrick, a partner in a successful business. A blackmailer and seducer, Erica also targets Patrick's business associate Nick Foote and Nick's wife, plus another couple. However, Erica saves her most devastating threats for Patrick, whom she knew intimately nine years earlier in Creemore. As the mother of colicky baby twins, Stephanie, in her fragile, sleepdeprived state, is easy prey for Erica's manipulations. But is the woman lying when she suggests that the death of Patrick's first wife was no accident? Even with tangled backstories, some characters come across as one-dimensional, while others make illogical choices. (Why, for example, doesn't Stephanie hire a nanny?) Despite these flaws, the fast pace will keep those fond of mischief and murder in suburbia turning the pages. Agent: Helen Heller, Helen Heller Agency. (July)

† The Stepdaughter

Debbie Howells. Kensington, \$15.95 trade paper (288p) ISBN 978-1-4967-1875-4

In this deliciously twisted psychological thriller from Howells (Her Sister's Lies), Elise Buckley and her family move to the English village of Abingworth to make a fresh start. Elise's prosperous, much admired physician husband, Andrew, who has cheated on her, promised to mend his ways, but he doesn't. Their outwardly beautiful new home is really a "house of charades" and their marriage a sham. Meanwhile, the couple's 14-year-old daughter, Niamh, becomes friends with 16-year-old Hollie Hampton, whose father and stepmother seem happy, but are they? When Hollie is found floating in a neighbor's pool with her head battered in, Det. Supt. Nicola "Nicki" May, who recently returned to the force after a month's compassionate leave because her husband walked out on her, investigates. The tension builds as the narrative shifts among the viewpoints of Elise, Niamh, and Nicki, whose search for Hollie's killer

[Q&A]

PW TALKS WITH CAMILLA LÄCKBERG

Revenge Served Hot and Cold

Faye, a humiliated and belittled wife from Fjällbacka, Sweden, executes racy revenge on her unfaithful husband in Läckberg's The Golden Cage (Knopf, July; reviewed on p. 38).

What message for today's women lies in the image of the "golden cage"?

Since forever women have been caged by society's norms. I want to challenge those norms and encourage women to take control of their own fate and

future: to not let the fear of others' judgment silence you or stop you from doing as you want to do.

Why did you decide to set the novel in Fjällbacka, your home town? Fiällbacka is a place very close to my heart, so I couldn't resist writing about it a bit here. I have always had a predilection for stories set in two

different times, one in the present and one in the past, and the Fjällbacka setting allows me to develop that. Faye's childhood there also shows how much she has broken free from her past by geographically distancing herself from her home town.

What does this novel say about women's capacity for self-sacrifice?

I believe that women all over the world are being told to stay silent and act as so-called good girls. Women are prepared to go very far to please others and fit the norm. Faye is the perfect

example of what it is like to lose yourself when you have lived your entire life compromising with your own needs and wishes. In general, women take more social responsibility. Women try to be obedient and self-

effacing in order to not create drama or chaos. I wanted to write a novel about a woman who has had enough, who won't be silenced anymore. I have run out of patience with everyone who tries to silence and limit women and their stories.



How do you feel women and

men will respond to this novel?

I hope both women and men will feel empowered by this book. I want it to make them think about the current world order. This is not a book against men, but a loving tribute to sisterhood, a glimpse into what happens when women stick up for themselves and are loyal to other women. I also hope that people will feel uplifted; it can be quite liberating to read about revenge. And even though Faye takes it very far, my hope is that the feeling, or rather the sensation, remains relatable.

---MITZI BRUNSDALE

uncovers extramarital affairs, abusive personal relationships, and worse. Readers will stay up all night to finish this one. Agent: Juliet Mushens, Agency Group (U.K.). (July)

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Hurry Home

Roz Nay. Crooked Lane, \$25.99 (272p) ISBN 978-1-64385-479-3

Alex and Ruth Van Ness, the sisters at the heart of this serviceable suspense novel from Nay (Our Little Secret), are as different in temperament and life choices as they are in appearance. Blond, smart Alex, a social worker, lives with her good-looking boyfriend in Denver. Older, dark-haired sister Ruth has a prison record and a string of violent and dangerous boyfriends. Tired of being compared to her perfect younger sister, Ruth left home in rural North Dakota at 15 with her drug dealing boyfriend and disappeared. Ten years later, Ruth knocks on Alex's front door, pregnant and with nowhere else to go. A boyfriend from whom she has stolen drugs and money is after her. Meanwhile, Alex is obsessed with the removal of an infant from a home she deems unsuitable, and will go to any lengths to achieve her goal. The secrets that have divided the sisters but that also bind them together slowly emerge. The characters aren't particularly distinctive, and the predictable action builds to an overly tidy resolution. Veteran genre readers have seen all this before. Agent: Carolyn Forde, Transatlantic Agency. (July)

Open Secrets

Sheila Kohler. Penguin, \$16 trade paper (224p) ISBN 978-0-14-313518-0

Family drama and organized crime collide in this gripping, often touching thriller from Kohler (Cracks). When Swiss banker Michel discovers that his wife, Alice, has been unfaithful, he turns for consolation to one of his charming but shifty



clients, whom he simply refers to as "the Russian." Later, when the Russian calls Michel, angrily demanding his money back from losses incurred in the gold market, Michel suggests they go for a sail on the French Riviera. Alice soon has to identify Michel's drowned body. A mourning Alice visits her artist sister, Lizzie, at the family home in Amagansett, Long Island, where Alice receives news that her 14-year-old daughter, Pamela, has disappeared from the girl's Swiss boarding school. Meanwhile, Lizzie's philandering boyfriend, Sergei, admits that he introduced Michel to some Russian gangsters as potential clients. As Alice comes to appreciate the consequences of Michel's shady business dealings, Kohler keeps Pamela's fate tantalizingly up in the air. The plot moves swiftly amid luxurious settings to a closing twist that may not satisfy everyone. Readers who like to watch the unraveling of family secrets will find plenty to enjoy. Agent: Robin Straus, Robin Straus Agency. (July)

The House on Widows Hill

Simon R. Green. Severn, \$28.99 (192p) ISBN 978-0-7278-9030-6

British author Green's humdrum ninth mystery featuring the disguised extraterrestrial known as Ishmael Jones finds Jones, who was transformed by alien technology into a simulacrum of a human after his spacecraft crashed in England in 1963, and Penny Belcourt, his love interest/ investigative partner, still in Bath after the events of 2019's Night Train to Murder. Their employer, the Organization, which specializes in "investigating weird cases and strange happenings, in return for guaranteed anonymity," wants them while there to check out Harrow House, a supposedly haunted building "that no one dares turn their back on." An unnamed higher-up in the Organization is interested in purchasing the house, and wants to know what he'd be getting into. Jones and Belcourt's ghost-hunting coincides with efforts by a group of amateur investigators, one of whom ends up dead, giving the pair a murder to solve as well. A predicable plot builds to a disappointing solution to the murder. Paranormal mystery fans will be better served elsewhere. Agent: Joshua Bilmes, JABberwocky. (July)

The Mountain: A Ryan Decker Novel

Steven Konkoly. Thomas & Mercer, \$15.95 trade paper (428p) ISBN 978-1-5420-2186-9

In Konkoly's entertaining third Ryan

Decker novel (after 2019's The Raid), Decker and the rescue and investigation team at World Recovery Group go in search of Brett Hale, a young man who wants to make his fortune in the marijuana business. Hale was last seen in an isolated, forested area nicknamed Murder Mountain, where "nearly half of California's illegal marijuana industry was based." Brett runs afoul of big-time marijuana operator Carl Trenkor, who thinks Brett could be an undercover law-enforcement agent. Just a few weeks from harvest, Trenkor can't afford to have Decker and his colleagues nosing around. As Decker digs deeper, he realizes that Trenkor and Trenkor's associates in the "Wolfpak, a white nationalist gang mainly composed of ex-military felons and petty criminals," are pawns in a vast and frightening conspiracy. Exciting action scenes help propel this tale of murderous greed and corruption toward a satisfying conclusion. Readers will look forward to Decker and company's next adventure. (*Iuly*)

★ Death of a Prominent Citizen

Cora Harrison. Severn, \$28.99 (224p) ISBN 978-0-7278-8924-9

Set in early 1920s Cork, Ireland, Harrison's seventh Reverend Mother whodunit (after 2018's Murder at the Queen's Old Castle) stands out as her trickiest yet. For many years, wealthy Charlotte Hendrick has declared that her estate will be divided equally among her seven nearest relatives, including her cousin the Reverend Mother, who intends to donate anything she might receive to her convent. Then Mrs. Hendrick's attorney informs the seven heirs that she has had a change of heart—his client intends to disinherit six of them and leave everything to the one who proves him- or herself most worthy. The seven agree to make their best case to Mrs. Hendrick at her house, spend the night, and hear her announce her choice the next morning. In the middle of the night, someone slashes Mrs. Hendrick's throat in her bedroom. Harrison adroitly combines the Reverend Mother's clever investigation with a sympathetic portrayal of the plight of Cork's poor. Fans of historical puzzle mysteries will be delighted. Agent: Peter Buckman, Ampersand Agency (U.K.). (July)

Marah Chase and the Fountain of Youth

Jay Stringer. Pegasus Crime, \$25.95 (336p) ISBN 978-1-64313-430-7

Unburdened by logic or character development, Stringer's brisk sequel to 2019's Marah Chase and the Conqueror's Tomb finds relic runner Marah Chase's enthusiasm for her illicit trade beginning to wane. "I'm done," she says. "The longer you stay in the game, the shorter the odds get on getting hurt, imprisoned, or killed." Then sexy, red-haired Lauren Stanford, whose wealthy family owns a soft drink company, offers Chase \$5,000 for an hour of her time to listen to a request: find the Fountain of Youth. Lauren wants to control and sell the healing powers of the waters. Chase soon gets on the trail of the elusive fountain, as does her longtime nemesis and fellow relic runner, August Nash, and their paths cross as they hop from New York to London and on to Glasgow. Chase and Nash eventually land in an exotic clime crawling with giant crocodiles, death clouds, menacing cherubim, zombies, and Nazi legends. The nonstop action goes hand in hand with the breezy style. Indiana Jones fans may enjoy this mishmash of tall tales and derring-do. Agent: Stacia Decker, Dunow, Carlson & Lerner. (July)

Knock 'em Dead: A Captain **Darac Mystery**

Peter Morfoot. Galileo, \$14.95 trade paper (256p) ISBN 978-1-912916-18-4

At the outset of Morfoot's entertaining fourth mystery featuring Capt. Paul Darac of the Nice Brigade Criminelle (after 2018's Box of Bones), the affable Darac is called to the Saint-Laurent-du-Var railway station, where a man has fallen in front of a train from a spot on a passenger platform not covered by CCTV cameras. Is it suicide or murder? Possessions retrieved near the remains identify him as Ambroise Paillaud, a well-known comic film star who specialized in pratfalls. The claim of a woman in a nearby apartment to have seen Paillaud jump of his own accord turns out to be a lie. A return train ticket and a timed admission for that afternoon to a photography exhibit in Paillaud's possessions suggest that he wasn't planning to kill himself. The subsequent murder of someone connected to Paillaud by several blows to the head confirms Darac's hunch

that the film star was a victim of foul play. The amusing rapport between Darac and his team nicely enhances the tricky plot. Fans of Martin Walker's French police series will want to check out Morfoot. (July)

False Conclusion

Veronica Heley. Severn, \$28.99 (240p) ISBN 978-0-7278-8974-4

In Heley's intriguing 14th Abbot Agency mystery (after 2019's False Account), capable and compassionate Bea Abbot. the owner of a domestic service bureau, meets 15-year-old Evie Trescott, the boarding-school roommate of her ward, Bernice, at her London townhouse when the girls come home on holiday. Evie, who appears to be sedated, takes a medication for epilepsy, which, as Bea and Bernice discover after Evie deliberately leaves the medication's wrapper in Bea's bathroom, is for adults only. When Evie, who lives with her aunt and uncle, later discovers her uncle's body after his sudden death of apparently natural causes, Bea learns that this is the third unexpected family loss for the girl since her parents died in a road accident some years earlier. Bea and Bernice resolve to protect Evie, thereby

making enemies of powerful people who should have Evie's welfare at heart, but don't. Meanwhile, someone tries to hack into the agency's computers, and is it a coincidence that Piers, Bea's first husband, appears on her doorstep, intent on rekindling the flames? Heley expertly melds menace with humor. Fans of darker cozies won't be disappointed. Agent: Juliet Burton, Juliet Burton Literary (U.K.). (July)

Of Mutts and Men

Spencer Quinn. Forge, \$26.99 (304p) ISBN 978-1-250-29769-3

The appeal of Quinn's routine 10th Chet and Bernie mystery (after 2019's Heart of Barkness) lies solely in the conceit of a whodunit narrated by a canine. Wendell Nero, chairman emeritus of the geology department of Valley College in an unspecified western state, has a problem he won't go into when he meets Bernie of the Little Detective Agency. They agree to get together the next day at Wendell's trailer, where Bernie and Chet, the dog, discover their potential client sitting at his desk with his throat slashed. Chet's olfactory senses identify the recent presence of a male "gum chewer who liked cherry

★ Find Me

Anne Frasier. Thomas & Mercer, \$15.95 trade paper (312p) ISBN 978-1-5420-0562-3

fter a nervous breakdown, profiler Reni Fisher, one of the two protagonists of this exquisitely crafted thriller from bestseller Frasier (The Body Readers), left the FBI. As a child, Reni was used by her infamous father, Benjamin Wayne Fisher (aka the Inland Empire Killer), to lure young women to their deaths. She vividly remembers the police leading him away after his arrest three decades earlier. Meanwhile, San Bernardino, Calif., homicide detective Daniel Ellis, has taken an interest in Benjamin's case since he became convinced as a boy that his missing mother is one of the Inland Empire Killer's victims. Now incarcerated on



San Quentin's death row, Benjamin summons Franco, the detective who handled his case, with the promise he'll show Franco the locations of his victims' bodies; since Franco has retired, Daniel meets with Benjamin instead. Benjamin insists that Reni, who has never visited her father in prison, accompany them on the proposed outing. The secrets unroll as, under the watchful eye of armed guards, Benjamin leads Reni and Daniel on a macabre dance through the Mohave Desert, and the first body they uncover has a piece of material draped over it that looks like the dress Daniel's mother wore the night she went missing. Frasier has outdone herself with this shocker. (July)

flavor," and Bernie notices a convenience store receipt listing a recent gum purchase. These clues lead the pair to the knifewielding Florian Machado, who admits to stealing Wendell's wallet after finding him dead. Bernie believes Machado is innocent of murder, and continues to search for Wendell's killer. The homicide case doesn't compel, the internal logic of what words Chet does and doesn't understand is underdeveloped, and there's no deepening of either lead's character. For now this series is on autopilot. Agent: Molly Friedrich, Friedrich Agency. (July)

--------★ Puppies for the Bastards of **Pizzofalcone**

Maurizio de Giovanni, trans. from the Italian by Antony Shugaar, World Noir, \$18 trade paper (304p) ISBN 978-1-60945-604-7

A rich ensemble cast lifts de Giovanni's funny, poignant fourth police procedural featuring the "losers and pariahs" who man the little Pizzofalcone police station located in the heart of Naples (after 2019's Cold for the Bastards). Early one morning, Officer Francesco Romano, who has anger management issues, is hurrying to work when he hears a noise from beside a dumpster outside the precinct. Inside is a newborn baby, dressed in a pink onesie, who's barely breathing. The search for the mother leads the detectives to the mother's body. Meanwhile, Officer Marco Aragona, who likes to imagine himself the dashing protagonist of an American TV cop show, is approached by a neighborhood boy, who says, "I want you, a first-class detective, to find my dog and bring him back to me." Ever susceptible to flattery, Aragona agrees, though he hasn't a clue as to how to proceed. The endearing, idiosyncratic characters change from book to book in little ways that make total sense and enrich the backstories. De Giovanni is a master of the witty, elegantly plotted fair-play mystery. (July)

The Sleepwalker (The Nosferatu Conspiracy #1) Brian J. Gage. KDK 12, \$16.99 trade paper (440p) ISBN 978-0-578-62713-7

Set mostly in 1916 Russia, this enthralling series launch from Gage (The Vampires of Draconian Hill) injects the paranormal into the strange career of Grigori Rasputin by making the sinister monk, who in real life survived multiple assassination attempts by his many rivals for influence at Nicholas II's court, a vampire. Rasputin plots to abduct Empress Alexandra, so that she can be part of a ceremony to be held at Loch Dracul near the Carpathian Mountains, the home of giant bats that transform into "savage, manlike vampire gods." If Rasputin manages to perform the ritual successfully, he may be able to "rule over all things living and dead." A subplot involving a legendary serial killer known as the Sleepwalker, who has been targeting prostitutes and the homeless for years, raises the stakes. Connecting the Romanov family's history of hemophilia with vampirism is inspired, and the author does a superior job of integrating the unrest preceding the Russian Revolution into the gore-filled action. Fans of historical horror thrillers will be eager to see where Gage goes next. (Self-published)

SF/Fantasy/Horror

The Bone Shard Daughter

Andrea Stewart. Orbit, \$28 (416p) ISBN 978-0-316-54142-8

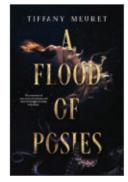
Stewart interweaves multiple perspectives on the failing reign of an emperor in this bleakly atmospheric but predictable epic fantasy debut, the first in the Drowning Empire series. The leader of the Phoenix Empire is more interested in carving magic symbols onto the skull shards of the dead to power Frankensteinlike "constructs" that do his bidding than he is in ruling his living people. His daughter, Lin, struggles to please her father, regain her memories, and master bone shard magic after her foster-brother, Bayan, infects her with an illness that might cost her the crown. Meanwhile, Phaule, the daughter of a governor, is drawn into a plot against her father by the Shardless Few, a resistance group. The Shardless Few also enlist scene-stealing smuggler Jovis, who accidentally becomes a folk hero while searching for his kidnapped wife. In between the dovetailing narratives, a woman known as Sand tries to discover why she's imprisoned on an island without her memories. The magic system is well thought-out, and the Asian-inspired setting is a welcome break from Europeanesque epics, but the simplistic plotting

and predictable twists put a damper on the inventive premise. Fans of grimdark epics will be drawn in but hope for more complexity in Stewart's next offering. Agent: Juliet Mushens, Mushens Entertainment. (Sept.)

A Flood of Posies

Tiffany Meuret. Black Spot, \$17.95 trade paper (256p) ISBN 978-1-64548-026-6

Meuret's bewitching debut follows the evolving relationship between sisters Doris and Thea before and after an apocalyptic flood sweeps Earth in 2025. Meuret braids multiple timelines and juxtaposes the sisters' childhood memories with the initial horror of the rising waters and their subsequent fight for survival. Before the



flooding, their relationship had become outright antagonistic, due in part to Thea's heroin addiction, but the catastrophe draws them back together. With the flood comes an inva-

sion of sea monsters (termed "posies" after Poseidon) that overrun Earth. And in mysterious flashes forward to one year after the initial flooding, Thea, now separated from Doris, discovers a frightened child aboard an abandoned boat. This atmospheric page-turner is occasionally disrupted by forced lyricism that will pull the reader from the narrative. Despite an overly sentimental ending, Meuret offers enough thought-provoking meditations on sisterhood, addiction, and memory to make this a worthwhile experience. This is a promising first outing for Meuret. (Sept.)

★ The Tyrant Baru Cormorant Seth Dickinson. Tor, \$29.99 (656p) ISBN 978-0-7653-8076-0

The dense but brilliant third volume of Dickinson's The Masquerade series (after 2018's The Monster Baru Cormorant) sees Baru Cormorant, haunted by memories of the woman she loved and lost, pushed even further into her self-destructive, allconsuming quest to save her family. In Baru's effort to destroy the Imperial Republic of Falcrest from within, she has

risen to the position of cryptarch, part of the invisible cabal that controls the Throne from the shadows. But as Baru pretends to serve her master, Cairdine Farrier, in his attempts to conquer the empire of Oriati Mbo, she privately plots against him. Baru has discovered the secrets of the Cancrioth—a cult of cancer worshippers secretly ruling Oriati Mboand the plague they've weaponized to wipe out their enemies. Caught between two implacable empires and facing betraval at every turn, Baru must sacrifice everything and everyone she loves in order to bring down Falcrest. Dickinson weaves a byzantine tapestry of political intrigue, economic manipulation, and underhanded diplomacy. The narrative oscillates between past and present and alternates between numerous perspectives to create a harrowing picture of social conflict on a monumental scale. This staggering installment pushes the series to new heights and expands the fascinating fantasy world. Agent: Jennifer Jackson, Donald Maass Literary Agency. (Aug.)

The Hollow Gods

A.J. Vrana. Parliament House, \$4.99 e-book (384p) ISBN 978-1-7333868-2-1

Vrana's dark, folklore-infused debut, the first of a duology, introduces readers to the residents of Black Hollow, who hold their daughters close and their twisted secrets closer. The town's girls frequently go missing in the surrounding forest on the outskirts of British Columbia, only to return with no memory and die shortly thereafter, feeding local folklore about "dreamwalkers" in the trees. Floundering Black Hollow college student Emiliya "Miya" Delathorne once rescued one of the missing girls, and is haunted by the memory. When she meets Kai Donovan, he seems eerily familiar. Kai tells Miya about his disturbing tendency to wake up next to the dead girls with no recollection of how he got there. Despite this chilling disclosure, Miya is drawn to Kai and intrinsically trusts that he won't hurt her. Meanwhile, oncology resident Mason Evans seeks refuge in Black Hollow on the recommendation of his hospital's psych department following a patient's traumatic death, and becomes fascinated by the town's dreamwalker rumors. These three hapless players in

Black Hollow's cycle of malice slowly uncover the extent of the town's evil. Vrana crafts a unique local mythology and draws from existing werewolf lore to create a sense of creeping dread. Vrana is off to a strong start with this solid, suspenseful tale. Agent: Emmy Nordstrom Higdon, the Rights Factory. (Iulv)

The Big Book of Modern Fantasy Edited by Ann and Jeff VanderMeer, Vintage. \$25 trade paper (864p) ISBN 978-0-525-56386-0

This encyclopedic anthology picks up where the VanderMeers' The Big Book of Classic Fantasy left off, offering a staggering 91 fantasy shorts published between 1946 and 2010. In the introduction, the VanderMeers define fantasy as "any story in which an element of the unreal permeates the real world or any story that takes place in a secondary world that is identifiably not a version of ours." This encompasses undeniable masterworks, including Vladimir Nabokov's "Signs and Symbols" and Gabriel García Marquez's "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings," but is too broad a theme to unify the anthology as a whole. Instead, the VanderMeers offer a sweeping survey, highlighting stories by genre greats (Ursula K. Le Guin, Terry Pratchet), modern titans (Stephen King, Victor Lavalle, George R.R. Martin, Haruki Murakami) and beloved cult figures (Leonora Carrington, Angela Carter) and celebrating lesserknown works in translation, including Pakistani legend Intizar Hussain's "Kaya-Kalp (Metamorphosis)," Guyanese novelist Edgar Mittelholzer's "Poolwana's Orchid," and the first English translations of stories by Mexican author Alberto Chimal, Swedish author Marie Hermanson, and Polish author Marta Kisiel. Though the anthology's size and scope will intimidate casual readers, anyone with a scholarly interest in the evolution of the genre will find this a treasure trove. Agent: Sally Harding, Cooke McDermid Literary. (July)

The Chimera Code

Wayne Santos. Solaris, \$11.99 mass market (500p) ISBN 978-1-78108-797-8

Replete with snappy dialogue and convincing technobabble, Santos's debut cyber-thriller offers a vision of a 22ndcentury Earth where the only force more powerful than technology is magic. Prickly combat mage Cloke leads a chimera unit—a military group possessing a deadly combination of technological, combat, and magic skills. Cloke's newest recruit is Zee, an infamous coder with shadowy origins and plenty of baggage. Alongside a colorful cast of cyborgs and sword masters, Cloke and Zee, who was grown in a lab and has no gender, must track down and destroy a trio of illegal clones of a powerful mage. The worldbuilding is well done, as Santos digs deep into the full implications of the supernatural interacting with advanced technology. Readers may find the treatment of Zee's gender and pronouns (xie/hir) to be clumsy, but will be gratified by Zee's depth, complexity, and fully realized arc. Santos's enthusiasm for his subject is clear and his rigorous plotting delivers some genuine surprises. This is fun, fresh cyberpunk. Agent: Jennie Goloboy, Donald Maass Agency. (Iuly)

* Anthems Outside of Time and **Other Strange Voices**

Kenneth Schneyer. Fairwood, \$18.99 trade paper (372p) ISBN 978-1-933846-92-7

Schneyer (The Law & the Heart: Stories to Bend the Mind & Soul) dazzles with this striking collection of 27 wide-ranging speculative stories. In the emotional "Keeping Tabs," domestic abuse survivor Dorothy gets a direct line to her favorite actor, Pearl Mouton, through an implant that allows her to tune in to the star's experiences. When the "tab" malfunctions, she witnesses Pearl's husband abusing her and is determined to help her escape. The intimate "Dispersion" is the unsettling story of a daughter discovering that insects can voice the thoughts that her mother, who



has early-onset Alzheimer's, can no longer remember. "The Plausibility of Dragons" sends Malik, an itinerant Moorish teacher, and Fara of Hallstatt, a female knight, on a quest to

kill a dragon. Toddlers carrying deadly diseases are used as instruments of war in the chilling "The Last Bombardment." And in the satirical "Life of the Author Plus Seventy," writer Eric Weiss cryogenically freezes himself to avoid paying a ballooning library fine in the year 2107. Each world is distinct and fully realized, and the astonishing variety of genre and tone on offer showcases Schneyer's versatility. Inventive and resonant, this collection is sure to impress. (July)

The Sin in the Steel

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Ryan Van Loan. Tor, \$27.99 (432p) ISBN 978-1-250-22258-9

Van Loan mixes derring-do and dark intrigue for an action-packed, coming-ofage debut, the first in his Fall of the Gods series. After being accused of murder, brilliant 17-year-old tactician Buc and her partner in adventure, 19-year-old ex-soldier Eld, are coerced into working for the powerful Kanados Trading Company. If they can discover why certain company ships have gone missing of late, and find a way to stop whoever's behind it, Buc and Eld will be cleared of charges and rewarded quite handsomely. But as their journey takes them to far-flung ports and into the thick of an ancient plot hatched by warring religious factions and enigmatic gods, the duo may not survive to collect their payment. Their swashbuckling adventures pit the Sherlock Holmesian Buc and her best (and only) friend against pirates, zombies, and shape-shifting mages with equal aplomb. Buc and Eld are charmers, and their easy yet still growing camaraderie will make readers feel like they are witnessing a long-established relationship. Though Buc's own motivations remain hidden for much of the tale, the memorable foes and edge-of-your-seat entertainment more than make up for this minor frustration. This is unadulterated fun. Agent: Dong Won Song, Howard Morhaim Literary. (July)

Red Dust

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Yoss, trans. from the Spanish by David Frye. Restless, \$17 trade paper (208p) ISBN 978-1-63206-246-8

Cuban author Yoss (Condomnauts) brings a hard-boiled noir aesthetic to this uproarious space opera about a wisecracking, Raymond Chandler-loving robot detective.

Raymond, an android cop on the Galactic Trade Confederation outpost William S. Burroughs, is tasked with capturing an alien fugitive, Makrow 34, whose psychic power to scramble the laws of probability makes him particularly dangerous. Inspired by the film 48 Hours, Raymond recruits criminal Vasily Fernández, a human imprisoned for the illegal use of the same ability as Makrow, to help track down the alien. Vasily uses his connection to a Romani crime lord to help Raymond hunt for clues, leading to an ill-planned showdown at an asteroid hideout that the two only escape thanks to Vasily's physics-defying mental skill. Yoss plays the mix of sci-fi and squarejawed detective fiction for some big laughs while layering in loving allusions to the greats of both genres. Though the mile a minute plot briefly stalls for some latenight philosophizing between the heroes, it regains its footing and barrels into a cinematic shoot-out of a finale, complete with bullets, blasters, and samurai swords. This is good fun. (July)

Aftermath of an Industrial **Accident**

Mike Allen. Mythic Delirium, \$15.95 trade paper (236p) ISBN 978-1-73264-402-1

Allen (Unseaming) overflows the tank with nightmare fuel in this collection of 23 stories and poems that showcase his ability to find the monstrous in almost any setting. Bracketed by two poems ("Six Waking Nightmares Poe Gave Me in the



Third Grade" and "The Night Watchman Dreams His Rounds at the REM Sleep Factory") exploring Allen's drive to write horror tales, the collection dances

through hauntings, carnage, body horror, and psychological chills. Allen gracefully jumps between genres—from the bloody steampunk carnival of "Puppet Show," to the gritty detective thriller "Nolens Volens," the urban-legend-infused "Binding," the corporate dystopia of "Drift from the Windrows," and the high fantasy world visited in both "The IvySmothered Palisade" and "Longsleeves" to explore themes of loss, alienation, and existential dread. Original to this collection are "A Deaf Policeman Heard the Noise," about a ghost desperate to communicate, and "Blue Evolution," which features multispecies pirates engaging with the alien mysteries of the sea. Readers will be impressed by the variety, intensity, and skilled craftsmanship Allen brings to this collection. These horror shorts are sure to linger in the dark corners of readers' minds. (Iul_{ν})

The Orphans of Raspay

Lois McMaster Bujold. Subterranean, \$25 (224p) ISBN 978-1-59606-972-5

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Bujold's seventh addition to her fantasy World of the Five Gods series (after The Prisoner of Limnos) offers a pleasant little side quest for Penric, a Temple sorcerer, and Desdemona, the chaos demon living inside him. Sent overseas on a problemsolving mission by the archdivine of Orbas, Pen is captured by pirates and hurled into their noxious brig, where he finds two young sisters from Raspay, Lencia and Seuka Corva. The girls were kidnapped while searching for their absentee father and are to be ransomed or sold at the pirates' port. Their mother's dead and their father's in the wind, so Pen and Desdemona take responsibility for their safety. Bujold creates a series of amusing misadventures as Pen, Desdemona, and the girls try to escape the pirates and the slave brokers, interspersed with reflections on Pen's marital situation, and inherited memories from Des's previous human hosts. Pen's knack for "borrowing trouble" (as Desdemona puts it) and the respect he has for those less fortunate are both as endearing as ever. Series fans will be gratified by this gentle but diverting episode. (July)

So You Had to Build a Time **Machine**

Jason Offutt. CamCat, \$26.99 (352p) ISBN 978-0-7443-0014-7

Offutt (Chasing American Monsters) sends genres and dimensions hurtling into one another in this tongue-in-cheek time travel tale, which doubles as an ode to all things nerdy. Kansas City security guard Skid longs for a quiet life after her tumultuous childhood in the circus, but

when physicist Dave Collison picks her up at a bar only to vanish before her eyes, Skid's life is thrown into chaos like never before. Dave reappears in the middle of a ghost tour led by con artist Cordrey Bellamy. Meanwhile, strange, small discrepancies crop up around KC-street names and cupcake flavors both change overnight—and only Skid, Cordrey, and a Dungeons-and-Dragons-obsessed baker named Brick seem to notice. The unlikely trio must save the world from a supercollider experiment gone wrong, embarking on a quest that pits them against the U.S. military, orcs, and Dave's megalomaniacal boss. Though the endless pop culture references and cheesy monster battles grow tiresome, Offutt's plotting delights as the consequences of the characters trips through time ripple forward to build a satisfying puzzle. Readers should be prepared for some whiplash as the tone shifts from horror to humor, high fantasy, and beyond, but this light, playful adventure will still be a treat for the nerd culture–savvy. (July)

Romance/Erotica

You Betrayed Me

Lisa Jackson. Kensington, \$27 (448p) ISBN 978-1-4967-2222-5

A complex web of romantic entanglements forms the core of Jackson's exhilarating third Cahills romantic suspense novel (after Almost Dead). Megan Travers has a vicious fight with her boyfriend, serial dater James Cahill, after which Megan goes missing and James wakes in a hospital room badly bruised and beaten, with no recollection of how he got there or the woman, Sophia Russo, who shows up insisting that she's his girlfriend. James is also the main person of interest in Megan's



disappearance, but his memory loss holds up the investigation. Not buying the amnesia angle, Megan's sister, Rebecca, another of James's exlovers, arrives

in Riggs Crossing, Wash., determined to find out what really happened. The memory of James's passion for Rebecca turns out to be the only thing that can break through James's foggy mind. The romance takes a back seat to the suspense as Jackson pulls the entire cast of kooky, nefarious townsfolk into the mystery of Megan's disappearance, and the constant twists will keep the readers hooked. This is a nonstop thrill ride. Agent: Robin Rue, Writers House, (Oct.)

Tail for Two

Mara Wells. Sourcebooks Casablanca. \$7.99 mass market (384p) ISBN ISBN 978-1-4926-9861-6

The doggone fun continues in the second contemporary romance in Wells's Fur Haven Dog Park series (after Cold Nose, Warm Heart). Construction firm owner Lance Donovan gets roped into dog-sitting his brother's fiancée's dog—and runs into his ex-wife, his ex-dog Beckham, and Oliver, the nearly three-year-old son he never knew he had, in a Miami dog park. Interior designer Carrie Burns knows she should have told her ex-husband about their child, but when she showed up at his apartment to let him know about her pregnancy soon after their split, she was given the brush-off by his then brand new girlfriend, scaring her off from future attempts. Lance is immediately captivated by his son and easily falls back in love with his ex, embarking on a campaign to win her back. A cast of stellar supporting characters—both canine and human—add considerable charm, and Wells successfully mines Oliver's terrible twos for some belly laughs. This second chance romance is sure to enchant. Agent: Nicole Resciniti, the Seymour Agency. (Aug.)

Paradise Cove

Jenny Holiday. Forever, \$7.99 mass market (368p) ISBN 978-1-5387-1654-0

A heartbroken doctor flees big-city life only to find that matters of the heart are just as complicated in quaint little Moonflower Bay in Holiday's appealing second Matchmaker Bay romance (after Mermaid Inn). Toronto doctor Nora Walsh hopes a self-imposed two-year stint as a small-town general practitioner will ease her heartbreak over a failed relationship and clear her head. She strikes up a fast,

flirtatious friendship with handsome local carpenter Jake Ramsey, a divorcé whose son, Jude, died a year earlier and whose ongoing grief has earned him a reputation as a hermit. Nora and Jake's attraction soon turns physical, leading to passionate sex scenes and confusion about how to label their evolving relationship. The progression of both their feelings and their fears is natural and credible, and Holiday balances heart-tugging romance with low-stakes medical drama and breezy exchanges between the endearing townsfolk. This light, pleasant story is perfect for fans of Debbie Macomber and Doc Martin. Agent: Courtney Miller-Callihan, Handspun Literary. (Aug.)

Bevond Power

Connie Mann. Sourcebooks Casablanca, \$7.99 mass market (416p) ISBN 978-1-72822-292-9

Like Beyond Risk, the first in Mann's Florida Wildlife Warriors series, this gripping romantic thriller set in the wilderness of central Florida rewards readers willing to suspend their disbelief. At 16, Delilah Atwood escaped from her militant, survivalist family and the marriage they arranged between her and a much older man. Eight years later, Delilah's master's degree program at Florida State University sends her back home to Ocala to study the local monkey population, but her real concern is getting her teenage sister, Mary, away from her abusive family before they can try to marry her off as well. Increased local militia activity and the murder of another monkey researcher has caught the attention of the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, including Officer Josh Tanner, and Delilah's family may be connected to the crime. Delilah and Josh will need each other's help to get to the bottom of things and rescue Mary, but their undeniable attraction to one another complicates their working relationship. Mann glosses over some of the more unbelievable elements of her suspense plot—like why no one recognizes Delilah in the community where she grew up-with a quick pace and powerful emotions. Readers willing to overlook some implausibilities are in for an easy, entertaining ride. Agent: Amanda Leuck, Spencerhill. (Aug.)

What the Heart Wants

Audrey Carlan, HON, \$16.99 trade paper (352p) ISBN 978-1-335-48491-8

Carlan (the Biker Beauties series) allows her heroine to find a balance between stability and adventure in this sexy second chance romance. When Suda Kaye Ross's mother died, she left behind a series of letters to be opened on Suda Kaye's birthdays. The first encouraged Suda Kaye to "fly free"—advice she took literally, leaving behind her hometown of Pueblo, Colo., and her first love, Camden Bryant. She takes a decade to see the world. Then, on her 28th birthday, her mother's advice is to go home. Suda Kaye happily reunites with her sister, Evie, in Pueblo, where she decides to open a boutique. Evie helps Suda Kaye obtain financial backing, but one of the investors is Camden. Sparks fly as Camden helps Suda Kaye set up her business, despite Camden's engagement to another woman and Suda Kaye's lingering guilt over having broken his heart. When Camden ends things with his duplicitous fiancée, Suda Kave must decide if she can put aside her wanderlust to establish roots in Pueblo. Readers will be gratified to see the sweet relationship between the sisters treated with as much importance as the steamy one between Suda Kaye and Camden. This small-town contemporary is as stylish, confident, and free-spirited as its heroine. Agent: Amy Tannenbaum, Jane Rotrosen Agency. (July)

Insatiable Hunger

Yahrah St. John. Harlequin Desire, \$5.25 mass market (224p) ISBN 978-1-33-520920-7

Love triumphs over obligation in this touching but belabored friends-to-lovers contemporary from St. John (Red Carpet Redemption). Jessie Acosta and Ryan Hathaway were childhood best friends, and, though they drifted apart as teenagers, Ryan has nursed feelings for Jessie ever since. After a devastating financial loss for the Acosta family while Jessie was in high school, Jessie's father's friend, Jack O'Malley, offered financial support, a kind gesture that inadvertently left Jessie feeling obligated to reciprocate when Jack's son, Hugh, showed an interest in her. Jessie and Hugh have been together for a decade, but work keeps Hugh in London while Jessie remains in Falling Brook, N.Y., leaving little in the way of personal time, support,

or passion. When Jessie reconnects with Ryan at their high school reunion, sparks fly as Jessie sees Ryan in a romantic light for the first time. Their chemistry is undeniable, but Jessie's desire to follow her heart is complicated by her struggles to put herself before her family's expectations and her sense of obligation to Hugh. Steadfast Ryan is a swoon-worthy hero, but Jessie's indecisiveness and lack of backbone grates. Readers will need to put up with a lackluster love triangle to get to the satisfying happily ever after. Agent: Christine Witthohn, Book Cents Literary. (July)

Forgotten Magic

Eden Butler. City Owl, \$3.99 e-book (280p) ISBN 978-1-9490-9088-8

Butler's tantalizing fantasy romance, originally self-published as Crimson Cove, burns slow and hot. When the Elam, a talisman that keeps the line between the supernatural and natural worlds taut, is stolen via blood magic, Janiver Benoit, a witch whose specialized magic abilities mark her as a Finder of Lost Things, is pulled back to her hometown of Crimson Cove to help get it back. Returning home after turning her back on her coven 10 years ago would be difficult enough, but on top of that, Bane Illes, the wizard she loved and lost, is leading the charge to recover the Elam-which makes him her boss. When Janiver's friend Freya is murdered by a mysterious creature, Bane and Janiver set off with a team of supernatural beings to stop the creature, save the Elam, and restore peace in Crimson Cove. The magical elements are electric and the chemistry between Bane and Janiver is delicious. Butler (*Infinite Us*) builds the tension slowly, carefully pulling story threads to a satisfying but open ended climax. Readers will be eager to return to Crimson Cove. (July)

Reunion at the Shore

Lee Tobin McClain. HQN, \$9.99 mass market (320p) ISBN 978-1-335-08064-6

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McClain revisits idyllic Pleasant Shores, Md., in the intense, heartfelt second Off Season romance (after Cottage at the Beach). Ria Martin, a single mother of two, can't get through to her troubled 14-year-old daughter, Kaitlyn, and hopes that her ex-husband, Drew, a cop, can make some headway. When her calls to him go

directly to a full voicemail, she makes the two-hour drive to Baltimore to give him a piece of her mind about the need for his increased involvement in their daughters' lives. Once there, she's shocked to discover that Drew was injured on the job and has gone blind. Drew travels back to Pleasant Shores with Ria, nervous about navigating the town without his sight, but eager to reconnect with his daughters. But neither Ria nor Drew understand



how bad things have gotten for Kaitlyn until a suicide attempt lands her in the hospital. Ria and Drew are equally determined to help their daughters and make their family whole

again, leading to a rekindling of old feelings. Readers will appreciate McClain's sensitive handling of love that springs from heavy emotions and hardship. Agent: Karen Solem, Spencerhill Assoc. (July)

Wake Up, Wanda Wiley

Andrew Diamond. Stolen Time, \$4.99 e-book (186p) ISBN 978-1-7341392-0-4

Diamond (Gate 76) turns the romance genre on its head with this quirky, metarom-com about a damsel in distress, a misogynistic hero, and a writer too stoned to get either of their stories right. Wanda Wiley's career as a romance novelist has recently hit a bumpy patch, so she agrees to ghostwrite The President Has Been Stolen, the sixth thriller in Ed Parsippany's bestselling Trevor Dunwoody series. Unfortunately, both her tumultuous relationship with her macho, egocentric boyfriend, Dirk Jaworski, and her insatiable marijuana habit interfere with her writing. Hannah Sharpe has been stuck in the recesses of Wanda's mind for Wanda's past 18 romance novels; each time Wanda considers her as a heroine, Hannah ends up written out in favor of more cooperative characters. Now, thanks to Wanda's writer's block, Trevor Dunwoody—an action hero whose alpha male arrogance is so exaggerated as to cross from comical to distasteful—is trapped with her. When

Wanda's neighbor, Austin Reed, sweetly confesses his interest in her, Hannah and Trevor begrudgingly team up to snap Wanda from her funk by influencing her thoughts and setting her up with Austin. Diamond pointedly sends up both romance and thriller conventions, but leaves little room for genuine feeling within the parody. There are plenty of laughs, but not enough heart. (Self-published)

Comics

One Story

Gipi, trans. from the Italian by Jamie Richards. Fantagraphics, \$22.99 (128p) ISBN 978-1-68396-319-6

An Italian writer is caught in the midst of a mental breakdown that lands him in an institution in this fresh portrait of a midlife crisis by Gipi (Land of the Sons). Silvano Landi's "monomaniacal obsessivecompulsive behaviors" include painting a service station repeatedly and poring over the letters that his great grandfather, Mauro, wrote to his wife during WWI. The mental health professionals around Landi act as killjoy cops and his grown daughter speculates "Your problem is that we exist...we aren't characters in one of your fucking stories." But his, and Gipi's, preocupation is more existential. In flashbacks to the trenches, Mauro sees his friend's legs blown apart by machine gun fire and must make a desperate decision to survive; Gipi hints that humans are drawn to war stories because they reveal in explosive moments the losses and compromises that otherwise unfold over a lifetime. He paints the parallels in matching watercolor palettes; Landi's beloved service station is rust and gold against a bluegray sky, while similar colors shatter into the dark night of a battle scene. A giant, bare-branched tree repeats across the narrative. In this brief but haunting work, life itself is a battle whose greatest spoil is self-forgiveness. (July)

The Great Gatsby

F. Scott Fitzgerald, Fred Fordham, and Aya Morton. Scribner, \$30 (208p) ISBN 978-1-982144-52-4

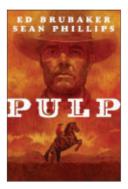
This respectable graphic adaptation of Fitzgerald's canonical novel succeeds as homage, and mostly as a satisfying social

critique in its own right. In the introduction, Fitzgerald's great grandson, Blake Hazard, acknowledges the challenges inherent to adapting the 1925 classic to a comic, observing that "the language itself is in some ways the main character." And while Fordham (To Kill a Mockingbird: A Graphic Novel) must pare down the text, he does a fine job distilling the haunted romanticism of Fitzgerald's narrative, which describes the doomed love between the enigmatic Gatsby and the lovely but numb Daisy, who is married to the brutish, racist Tom Buchanan. The clean, Art Decolike backgrounds by Morton (His Dream of the Skyland) evoke the beguiling but ultimately empty nouveau-riche milieu of Gatsby and the Buchanans in suburban Long Island, as well as the dreary gray world of Myrtle and George Wilson in working-class Queens. There the two classes collide, drawing to a tragic conclusion. Though the paper-doll-like character designs are appropriately reminiscent of period illustration, their wide stares and stances feel stiff. While perhaps inevitably lacking the complexity of the original, the fidelity of this graphic adaptation should satisfy Fitzgerald devotees. Agents: (for Fordham) Jenny Savill, Andrew Nurnberg Assoc.; (for Morton) Alyssa Henkin, Trident Media Group. (July)

Pulp

Ed Brubaker and Sean Phillips. Image, \$16.99 (72p) ISBN 978-1-5343-1644-7

Brubaker and Phillips (Criminal) reunite in this comic with a killer hook, combining the best elements of westerns and crime noir for a double shot of classic pulp. New York City, 1939: Max Winter is an aging pulp writer, spinning gunslinger yarns inspired by his own youth on the frontier, where he and his brothers were once outlaws. With his literary aspirations frustrated and his income drying up, he teams up with a former Pinkerton agent to pull off the crime of the decade: robbing Hitler's agents on the eve of the infamous Times Square Nazi rally. Behind all the action and atmosphere is a thoughtful, carefully developed look at the legacy of the lawless frontier, the rise of fascism, and the cruelty of a world where, unlike in the pulps, the bad guys often win. In Phillips's photorealistic art, he can bash out violent action scenes



in harsh, quick lines, then pause to render a subtle change in a character's expression. New York is drenched in warm colors and deep shadows, while the western

flashbacks emulate the look of cheaply printed four-color illustration, which transcends the gimmickry. The only disappointment in this tight, fast-paced tribute to multiple pulp traditions is that it's so short. Readers will dig it, but they'll wish for more time with Max and his hardboiled world. (*June*)

Panorama

Michel Fiffe. Dark Horse, \$19.99 trade paper (128p) ISBN 978-1-5067-1682-4

This first trade collection by Fiffe (the Copra series) brings together his weirdo early-aughts webcomic, a combo body horror/romance caper. Young Augustus runs away to the city of Copra to escape his family's plans to ship him off to an institute because of his bizarre "skin condition." He can't control his body, which warps, droops, and oozes like he's made of putty. He's confronted by a street gang, unintentionally beats them senseless, and nearly winds up being sold as a sex slave to a pedophile. After dealing harshly with these lowlifes, his girlfriend from back home, Kim, arrives to help. In a truly demented scene, after his body goes haywire during sex, he literally disappears inside of her. They share her body, but both are dissatisfied with the situation. His apparent death while enveloped in Kim also heralds the fact that she's pregnant. The ending features an unexpected birth. Fiffe's explosive, unpredictable linework and gross-out panels can be amusing, if thoroughly unsettling; which is of course the appeal. The romance, meanwhile, turns surprisingly affecting. This is a deep cut into Fiffe's weird comics vault, for his dedicated fans and Copra completists, and anyone looking to delve into a David Cronenberg-type alt-comics experience. (June)

Nonfiction

Every Breath You Take: Exploring the Science of Our Changing Atmosphere

Mark Broomfield. Pegasus, \$27.95 (320p) ISBN 978-1-64313-334-8

With this illuminating volume, debut author Broomfield, an air-quality specialist at an environmental consulting firm, brings readers on a "theoretical journey through the atmosphere" in accessible and sometimes wry prose. He begins outside the solar system, with one of the first Earth-like planets discovered to have an atmosphere, and works his way back toward Earth. He explains how Jupiter and Saturn are "pretty much gas all the way down-or putting it another way... 100% atmosphere" and that Mars has its own snow, "though not the watery stuff that we're familiar with, but flakes of solid carbon dioxide." To explain differences in air pressure and oxygen levels, Broomfield recalls travels to the Himalayas, where, at nearly 17,000 feet above sea level, he found himself "breathing hard when engaged in strenuous activities such as doing up a shoelace or standing still." What most readers will likely find particularly relevant are Broomfield's chapters on air pollution and mortality. He focuses on China and India, whose coal-dependent industries have, in recent decades, made air quality in both countries abysmal. He also gives reminders of how bad smog used to be-and occasionally still is-in Western cities like Los Angeles and London. Broomfield's helpful look at the air up there, thanks to its breezy tone and solid insights, will make the links between pollution and health both tangible and intriguing to a general audience. (Oct.)

Jane Austen: Writing, Society, Politics

Tom Keymer. Oxford Univ., \$18.95 (160p) ISBN 978-0-19-886190-4

This meticulous treatise from Keymer (*Poetics of the Pillory*), an English professor at the University of Toronto, provides an effective overview of Jane Austen's life and work. He begins by situating the reader in the physical world Austen inhabited, describing in detail the Elizabethan mansion where she stayed as a guest of her



In La Buvette, Camille Fourmont shares recipes from her Parisian wine bar, as well as some of her favorite ingredients, as pictured here (reviewed on p. 53).

wealthy brother and the "snug little cottage" where she lived with her mother and sister and produced most of her writing. He then looks at the parodic, irreverent, and sometimes off-color writings she produced for her family's amusement as a teenager, which are now viewed as evidence of her "disruptive instincts." From here, Austen's six published novels are dealt with in terms of major themes and relevant historical background—for Emma, he homes in on Austen's concern with England's "moral health and social wellbeing" in the decadent Regency era, and on the irony that she was compelled to dedicate the book to the man she held responsible for that decadence, the hardliving Prince Regent. Throughout, Keymer draws on Virginia Woolf's views on Austen, whom the later novelist deemed the "forerunner of Henry James and of Proust," particularly in relation to Austen's final published work, Persuasion, whose protagonist Woolf saw as the "heroine with whom Austen most personally identified." Janeites of all stripes should take note of this critically robust account. (Oct.)

Better, Not Perfect: A Realist's Guide to Maximum Sustainable Goodness

Max H. Bazerman. HarperBusiness, \$29.99 (256p) ISBN 978-0-06-300270-8

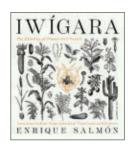
Ethical self-improvement is a task best taken one day at a time, argues Harvard

Business School professor Bazerman (The Power of Experiments, coauthor) in this encouraging primer aimed at businesspeople. Utilitarianism gets a bad rap, Bazerman writes, but with the right outlook, it can help people reach their "maximum sustainable level of goodness." This means figuring out how to create as much value as possible for the most people, in as sustainable a level as possible. He focuses on such areas as identifying waste (both corporate and personal), allocating time more effectively "both for your own benefit and for the benefit of others," and practicing philanthropy more with an eye toward genuinely helping others than gratifying one's ego. The book is best where it uses familiar examples like the runaway trolley problem and the prisoner's dilemma to nudge readers into rethinking their preconceptions about ethics, away from rule-following and toward considering the practical implications for others. Bazerman's encouraging call for readers to keep moving in the right direction, even if they aren't on the fast track to perfection, is a much-needed and sane approach to personal betterment. (Sept.)

★ Iwigara, the Kinship of Plants and People: American Indian Ethnobotanical Traditions and Science

Enrique Salmón. Timber, \$34.95 (248p) ISBN 978-1-6046-9880-0

Salmón (Eating the Landscape), head of



California State University East Bay's Indian Studies program, provides a beautifully illustrated and philosophically uplifting guide

to indigenous North American plant use. For background, Salmón delves into the spiritual beliefs of various cultures, including the Pueblo peoples of New Mexico and Arizona; the Cherokee, who once inhabited southeastern marshes; and his own people, the Rarámuri of Chihuahua, Mexico, originators of the "iwigara" concept "that all life, spiritual and physical, is interconnected in a continual cycle." The bulk of the text consists of a glossary of plants' traditional medicinal and ceremonial purposes. A particular highlight of this section consists of the perhaps surprising uses introduced for familiar species. The blueberry is a fine example of this, having been used to treat colic, fever, and varicose veins, and to improve night vision. Likewise, sugar maple trees can be used for more than syrup; their inner bark can also be used for "sore eyes and as a cough remedy." Salmón includes vintage botanical drawings, b&w historical photos of the people from the cultures discussed, and color photos of the plants. This lovely compendium will strike a chord with many a nature-loving reader. (Sept.)

Love Your Imposter: Be Your Best Self, Flaws and All Rita Clifton. Kogan Page, \$16.95 trade paper (288p) ISBN 978-1-78966-703-5

British advertising professional Clifton (Brands and Branding) offers erudite advice on leadership and personal branding in this sincere, helpful work. The death of Clifton's father when she was 12 years old made her keep her "emotions buttoned up," which she now views as the roots of the imposter syndrome she would later develop. In explaining how she overcame this, she debunks the "fake it until you make it" myth, instead suggesting one become properly tooled in personal branding, finance, and communication. She recommends focusing on being reliable, exploring "what interests you and what drains you," avoiding sulking, and finding a fitting industry to work in (but never agonizing about the "perfect job" because "it can all be very arbitrary, at least to begin with"). In a conversational tone, Clifton explains how she has consistently met obstacles and criticism head-on by being willing to live in a state of self-awareness and self-improvement. While mostly concentrating on her own career as an example, she also provides sidebar boxes that prompt the reader with activities and questions. Those wishing to improve their professional marketability will find much insight in this eye-opening testimonial. (Sept.)

Our Lady of Perpetual Hunger: A Memoir

Lisa Donovan. Penguin Press, \$28 (304p) ISBN 978-0-525-56094-4

Pastry chef and James Beard Awardwinning essayist Donovan writes of her life in the restaurant industry in this feisty confessional. An Army brat whose family moved often. Donovan eventually landed in a small coastal Florida town "that felt wholly and destructively permanent." There, she worked as a server in a ramshackle Italian eatery, a "cigar den housed in a doublewide trailer." It was "an oasis" for her, and her caring coworkers became her "first kitchen family." Plans to leave for college and escape an abusive boyfriend ended with an unexpected pregnancy. She sought refuge by teaching herself to bake using library books and soon found "control through food" and "a deep sense of worth and value." She moved to Nashville, juggled her career with raising her daughter, and became pastry chef at several top restaurants. Despite earning widespread acclaim, male owners and chefs refused to pay her fairly, she writes, and she eventually left restaurant work to cook at yoga retreats and other special events, "breaking away from the... toxic patriarchal culture" to work independently and reclaim "the right to cook and be in a kitchen in a way that felt right to me." Donovan's candid, passionate memoir will resonate with anyone who has worked in professional kitchens, and particularly women. (Aug.)

The Sprawl: Reconsidering the **Weird American Suburbs**

Jason Diamond. Coffee House, \$16.95 trade paper (264p) ISBN 978-1-56689-582-8

In this insightful work of narrative

nonfiction, journalist Diamond (Searching for John Hughes) draws from personal experience, history, and media to consider the significance of the suburbs in American culture. Revisiting the Chicago-area towns in which he grew up in the 1980s, Diamond finds signs of economic decline in the familiar big-box stores and movie theaters that are now shuttered. He considers suburban conformity through stories of new arrivals who received unfriendly receptions, and describes incidents in which violence upended the presumption of the suburbs as a safe haven, recounting a 1977 murder in Long Grove, Ill., where he once lived. Throughout, he engages with writers like John Cheever, who "shaped so many of our ideas of what the suburbs were like" in the post-WWII era, and Shirley Jackson, who "explained the suburban condition better than nearly any other writer before or after," as well as suburban-set movies—he deems the villains of the Halloween and Nightmare on Elm Street horror series as particularly suburban bogeymen. Though Diamond occasionally strays into repetition with his personal reflections—such as repeated observations that he now lives in New York City and views the suburbs as an outsider—his cultural criticism is consistently astute. This is a smart, enjoyable study that will be particularly appreciated by other suburban expats. (Aug.)

This Is the Night Our House Will Catch Fire

Nick Flynn. Norton, \$25.95 (288p) ISBN 978-1-324-00554-4

In this outstanding work, poet and playwright Flynn bookends his first memoir, 2004's Another Bullshit Night in Suck City, with this unsparing look at his early childhood and his mother, who died by suicide when Flynn was 22 years old. He makes a series of visits to his hometown of Scituate, Mass., with his young daughter and describes his solitary childhood spent living with his mother in a small, "ugly" house that she bought after she left Flynn's father. When Flynn was seven years old, his mother set fire to the house, an event he is still trying to understand: "Maybe my mother set our house on fire not merely to collect the insurance money, but simply to see what it was that she was losing.' His return trips are not only a chance to

[Q&A]

PW TALKS WITH NICK FLYNN

Burning Down the House

In This Is the Night Our House Will Catch Fire, (Norton, Aug.; reviewed on p. 49), poet Flynn reflects on his dysfunctional family and its effects on his life.

Another Bullshit Night in Suck City was an immediate success in 2004, and became a film. Was it always your plan to write a trilogy?

Immediate success? I'd say the surprising success of Suck City! It was never the plan to do a trilogy. My relationships with my parents were complicated. After the first book

about my father's homelessness, and then the second about my daughter, the third grew organically out of all the time I had spent writing about family and how interesting it was to see them projected onto the movie screen. At a certain point, it felt like the three memoirs were talking to each other. One might say that it's all just writing one book.

you to take her along?



For this book, you took your daughter with you to visit the house that your mother tried to burn down when you were seven years old. What inspired

Again, like writing the memoirs, I didn't have a plan. It just worked out that while I was teaching in Boston, my wife was out of town, and I decided to take my daughter on my road trips. The interesting thing to me was that when we started our trips, she was seven years old, and she was interested in knowing what I was doing at age seven. Every summer for the next three years we would travel to Scituate. It was like showing her a

map of my childhood, showing that these things had happened to me.

Did you rely on journals from your life during these trips with your daughter? Actually, I had nothing written about those times. In a way, I did the work of getting the material for this memoir by working collaboratively

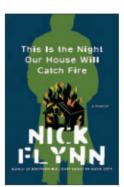
> with my daughter, by her wanting me to tell her stories but also the way those stories would bring back memories of other stories. It wasn't until the third trip that we walked into the house that my mother had tried to burn down. It's still standing, and it felt odd. But I was lucky the house was

standing, to be able to go in with my daughter and see it again.

Is your approach to writing poetry different than writing memoirs?

All writing is different. My approach to memoir writing demands a different schedule than other writing. It may be more organized. I take notes, I write in condensed bursts. I do that with poetry also, but the process is more alchemic. It's uncontainable. It's fluid, I can drift in another realm. I can't really do that in a memoir. The stuff in this book actually happened. It doesn't always put me in the best light, but it's not my job to put myself in the best light.

—JEFF MAKOS



tell his daughter "where your father came from" but also to deal with his own unhappiness that led him to cheat on his wife. He comes to a realization that "we are so lost inside

ourselves sometimes that it is impossible to think of other people, even those we love." Readers will devour this powerful memoir of letting go. (Aug.)

Unfit for Purpose: When Human Evolution **Collides with the Modern World**

Adam Hart, Bloomsbury Sigma, \$28 (352p) ISBN 978-1-4729-7099-2

Though Hart (The Life of Poo), a biologist and science journalist, explains the goal for his rambling book clearly enough, the underlying evolutionary premise he offers is flawed. He notes that "this book is about mismatches between [humanity's] evolutionary past and the environment we have created" but fails to mention what biologists understand very well: evolution never yields a perfect match between organisms and their environment. Hart devotes the bulk of the text to supposedly evolution-related problems such as stress, obesity, violence, addiction, and mental health issues, providing for each some brief biological background, a superficial analysis of current research, and a concluding note that the situation is too complex for any simple solution. At times, Hart's comments come across as gratuitous and unfair, as when discussing geneticist James Neel, who proposed a "thrifty gene" that promoted fat and carbohydrates conservation in ancient hunter-gatherers. Hart begins by mentioning accusationsunrelated to his subject—that Neel deliberately initiated a measles epidemic among a group of indigenous people in the Amazon, only to acknowledge that the accusation was later fully discredited. The few kernels of insight presented in this scattered survey are not worth the work of winnowing them from the large amount of chaff. (Aug.)

White Hot Light: Twenty-Five **Years in Emergency Medicine**

Frank Huyler, Harper Perennial, \$16.99 trade paper (272p) ISBN 978-0-06-293733-9

Huyler (Right of Thirst) shares dramatic and often intimate glimpses into his life as an ER physician in this haunting collection of 16 essays. "The Boy," the first essay, instantly grabs readers' attention with the piercing sentence, "When they brought him in, he was almost alive." This and other essays focus on a single case, as in "The Wedding Party," where Huyler learns of an old classmate's terminal lymphoma. Others, including "Jehovah" or "The Gun Show," recall the seemingly endless series of patients Huyler has treated. A few essays peek into the bleak job of working in an ER. In "Mercy," Huyler is surprised to see the tears of another attending physician, while "The Sunflower" explores the hospital at night, "purer at night than in the day... [with] the sense of being left alone, where no one bothers you," but with the caveat that "time falls upon you more heavily." In "The Snow Storm," Huyler delves into his identity as a son as well as a doctor, driving hours through the night to be at his hospitalized father's side. Huyler's compassionate perspective and gripping stories result in a memorable account of the life he leads and the patients he sees. and sometimes saves. (Aug.)

† The Cold Vanish: Seeking the Missing in **North America's Wildlands**

Jon Billman. Grand Central, \$28 (368p) ISBN 978-1-5387-4757-5

In April 2017, 22-year-old Jacob Gray, whose case forms the heart of this beautifully written chronicle from Billman (When We Were Wolves: Stories), disappeared while cycling in Olympic National Park in Washington State. It would take 18 months before his body was found on a mountainside, and it remains unclear whether his death was suicide or caused by hypothermia. Billman describes how red tape and the lack of National Park staff hampered the search, and how he accompanied Jacob's father, Randy Gray, to Olympic National Park, and then to other places Jacob might have traveled to. In between accounts of the search for Jacob, Billman reports on the phenomena

of people vanishing into the wilderness, covering famous cases, search and rescue dogs, and theories about why people go missing, including serial killers and Bigfoot abductions. Colorful side characters, like psychics and Bigfoot hunters, provide some light moments, but what makes a lasting impression is the story of Randy and his ultimately dashed hopes of finding his son alive. The author's personal involvement makes this tale all the more affecting. Billman shows himself to be just as adept at nonfiction as at fiction. Agent: Julia Masnik, Watkins Loomis. (July)

George Harrison on George Harrison: Interviews and Encounters

Edited by Ashley Kahn. Chicago Review, \$30 (432p) ISBN 978-1-64160-051-4

The so-called quiet Beatle speaks up in this sweeping collection of the guitarist's words. Music writer Kahn (A Love Supreme) collects Harrison's 1964 columns for the Daily Express, in which he wrote about the Beatles, noting, "we've years of life and great hopes as a foursome... there's still a lot of work to be done and a lot of songs to sing." In a 1974 radio interview, Harrison (1943-2001) names some of the contemporary artists he admires most: "I'm madly in love with Smokey Robinson... I think Ry Cooder is sensational." During a 1987 interview with Rolling Stone's Anthony DeCurtis, Harrison explains that he wrote the song "Devil's Radio" after he saw a church sign that read "Gossip: the Devil's Radio." In a 1979 interview on BBC 1, Michael Jackson asks George Harrison if the Beatles wrote their own songs, wondering how they ever managed to do that; Harrison replies with laughter, "I don't know, they were clever little fellas." Also included are Harrison's final words: "everything else can wait, but the search for God cannot wait, and love one another." Perfect for Beatles fans, Kahn's excellent collection revels in Harrison's humor, spirituality, and his passion for songwriting. (*Iuly*)

Life Is in the Transitions: Mastering **Change in a Nonlinear Age**

Bruce Feiler. Penguin, \$28 (368p) ISBN 978-1-59420-682-5

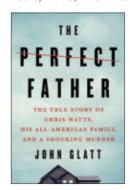
Feiler (Council of Dads), host of PBS's Sacred Journeys, offers in this insightful work timely suggestions for anyone adapting to

significant life changes. His personal experiences, including his father's Parkinson's diagnosis and subsequent suicidal thoughts, and Feiler's own bout with cancer and near-bankruptcy, motivated him to study if the ways personal narratives are crafted can help one weather difficult times. To that end, he launched the Life Story Project, soliciting 225 life stories from Americans living in all 50 states and of "all ages, backgrounds, and walks of life." He measures each story against 57 variables, such as how old a person was when they experienced transitions and the life advice they found most useful, and concludes that the idea that certain things should happen as part of the normal "stages of life" (or that everyone goes through a series of life passages) is mistaken and harmful. He also presents evidence discrediting the notion of the midlife crisis and demonstrates that everyone's life contains multiple significant "upheavals and uncertainties," which should thus be accepted as normal, contrary to conventional wisdom. The findings buttress practical suggestions for responding to major change, including identifying emotions, giving up old mindsets, testing alternatives, and seeking help from others. This logical, persuasive resource will resonate with any self-help reader. (*July*) ---------

The Perfect Father: The True Story of Chris Watts, His All-American Family, and a Shocking Murder John Glatt. St. Martin's, \$28.99 (304p)

ISBN 978-1-250-23161-1

On Aug. 14, 2018, Christopher Lee Watts announced to several Denver news stations that his pregnant wife, Shanann, and two young daughters, Bella and Celeste, were missing, and he begged them to come back home. Within 24 hours, Watts, whom the police suspected



was the killer, would fail a polygraph test and confess to heinous acts that sent shock waves through his community. In this gripping account, bestseller Glatt (The Family Next

Door) exposes two conflicting realities: the idyllic public image of happiness and success, and the disturbing private disintegration of an eight-year relationship. Through investigative reports, interviews, and a cache of social media posts and text messages, the author pieces together the couple's history from true love to tragedy, including physical abuse and infidelity. While his thorough reporting of repetitive patterns of marital dysfunction can border on the tedious, Glatt's expert coverage of the investigation is riveting, especially his portrayal of the psychological approaches used to interrogate Watts, who finally admitted to smothering his wife and children and dumping their bodies in an oil tank. (Watts was sentenced to life in prison with no possibility of parole.) Police procedural fans will enjoy being immersed in the action at every critical moment. Agent: Jane Dystel, Dystel, Goderich & Bourret. (July)

Ripped from the Headlines! The **Shocking True Stories Behind the Movies' Most Memorable Crimes** Harold Schechter, Little A. \$24.95 (442p) ISBN 978-1-5420-4180-5

In this fascinating survey, Schechter (Hell's Princess: The Mystery of Belle Gunness, Butcher of Men) details the links between more than 40 movies and the real-life crimes that inspired them. Many of Alfred Hitchcock's films were based on real incidents, in particular 1960's Psycho, which drew on the hideous crimes of Ed Gein, who, after his mother's death, robbed graves and murdered two women and kept their body parts in his farmhouse. (Hitchcock's Frenzy and Rope also merit chapters.) The author brings his erudition to bear on other classics including Arsenic and Old Lace (a late 19th-century female series poisoner), Dirty Harry (San Francisco's Zodiac killer), and Murder on the Orient Express (the Lindbergh baby kidnapping case). Lesser known films get fair treatment, such as 1976's cheesy Eaten Alive! about a man who kills women and feeds their bodies to his pet alligator, which was based on the story of Texan Joe Ball, who kept alligators in a pond behind his tavern and murdered women. True crime fans and movie trivia buffs will devour this one like popcorn. (July)

A Silenced Voice:

The Life of Journalist Kim Wall

Ingrid and Joachim Wall, trans, from the Swedish by Kathy Saranpa. Amazon Crossing, \$24.95 (270p) ISBN 978 1-5420-1811-1

In this tender memoir, the parents of Swedish journalist Kim Wall recount their daughter's exceptional life and her murder. As a journalist, Kim traveled extensively, writing stories on topics ranging from life in Cuba to tourism in North Korea to living conditions in the Marshall Islands that appeared in such publications as Harper's Magazine, The Guardian, and The Atlantic. In 2017, while reporting in Copenhagen on Peter Madsen, an eccentric entrepreneur who had constructed a homemade submarine from which he intended to one day launch a self-built rocket, the 30-year-old Kim disappeared. Her dismembered body was later discovered, and Madsen gave several different explanations for what happened, but denied killing her. The authors meticulously describe the night they received a call informing them that Kim was missing, and in alternating chapters they segue between descriptions of Kim's life and the aftermath of her murder (Madsen was convicted of sexual assault and murder received a sentence of life in prison). The authors recall their anguish and pain during the year following their daughter's death, but also celebrate her life and share their mission to develop a memorial fund to provide young female reporters with support for their work. This is a passionate portrait of a woman's meaningful life and her contributions to journalism. (July)

You Look So Much Better in Person: True Stories of **Absurdity and Success**

Al Roker. Hachette, \$28 (256p) ISBN 978-0-316-42679-4

Today cohost Roker (Ruthless Tide) recalls his 40-year broadcasting career in a sweet memoir sprinkled with homespun advice. A Queens native, Roker talks excitedly about working as a weekend weatherperson in Syracuse, N.Y., in the 1970s while still attending college; taking a job in Washington, D.C., then in Cleveland, where he had his first weekday gig in a major market; and returning to New York City to work first at WNBC, the local news channel, then at the Today

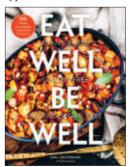
show. A self-described nerd who has a stuffed animal collection in his office, Roker specializes in light on-air banter, and the book's tone mirrors his TV personality. He's most amusing when he shares goofy career mishaps, like the time he wore contact lenses instead of eyeglasses during a broadcast and blinked so much that concerned viewers started calling in, or the one and only time he slept through his alarm and was almost late for his *Today* segment (the incident made the news the next day). Throughout, Roker shares innocuous bits of advice (always work hard, he stresses) and encouragement ("It doesn't matter that you're not the star; it matters that you're part of the constellation"). This sunny, pleasant book is perfect for Roker fans or anyone in need of a quick pick me up. (July)

Lifestyle

Food & Drink

Eat Well, Be Well: 100+ Healthy **Re-creations of the Food You Crave** Jana Cristofano. Sterling, \$24.95 (256p) ISBN 978-1-4549-3377-9

In this satisfying debut cookbook, nutritionist Cristofano delivers crowdpleasing vegan versions of dishes typically prepared with animal products, gluten, and refined sugars. Positing that nonplant-based foods can be linked to ailments such as arthritis and migraines while a vegan diet can reverse symptoms of type 2 diabetes, Cristofano relies on nuts,



legumes, and fresh produce in her recipes. Her solutions are creative and tasty, such as portobello bacon (the mushrooms get a smoky spice mari-

nade), vegan Parmesan cheese (ground and seasoned raw cashews), and sloppy joes (lentils replace the meat). Sweeter options include apple carrot cake muffins (made with gluten-free flour), fudgy chocolate cake (made with dates and apple sauce for sweetness and texture), and no-bake lemon cheesecake (soaked raw cashews are blended with other ingredients to make a cheese-cake-like filling). Home cooks who aren't familiar with vegan cooking will appreciate Cristofano's tips (for the asparagus quinoa potato salad, she says the quinoa can be made ahead the night before) and ingredient substitutions (for vegan ricotta cheese, macadamia nuts or almonds can be used in lieu of cashews). This is an accessible guide to vegan cooking. (Oct.)

★ Science & Cooking: Physics Meets Food, from Homemade to Haute Cuisine

Michael Brenner, Pia Sörensen, and David Weitz. Norton, \$35 (304p) ISBN 978-0-393-63492-1

Three Harvard University professors bring their popular class to print in this astute exploration of how and why food recipes do what they do. While the authors note this is "ultimately not a cookbook," they nonetheless serve up a variety of tasty dishes to exemplify their teachings in the basic principles of physics, chemistry, and engineering. Chocolate chip cookies are deconstructed on a molecular level, the

viscosity of cheese sauce is measured, the sticky polymer chains of hydrocolloids prove to be the key to Chinese soup dumplings, and heat plus pressure plus natural sugars add up to a caramelized carrot soup. Along the way are handy tips on how to use the melting point of sugar as a way to calibrate an oven's heat setting and how to keep pesto from turning brown using heat or lemon juice. Not all the jargon is scientific: in an extended metaphor of why emulsions separate, oil and water are compared to fans of the Boston Red Sox and New York Yankees, providing a clue to the nature of coalescence and the advantages of constructing proper barriers. This is a no-brainer for science geeks who love to cook, and for cooks eager to learn the science behind their meals. (Oct)

La Buvette: Recipes and Wine Notes from Paris

Camille Fourmont and Kate Leahy. Ten Speed, \$24.99 (224p) ISBN 978-1-984856-69-2

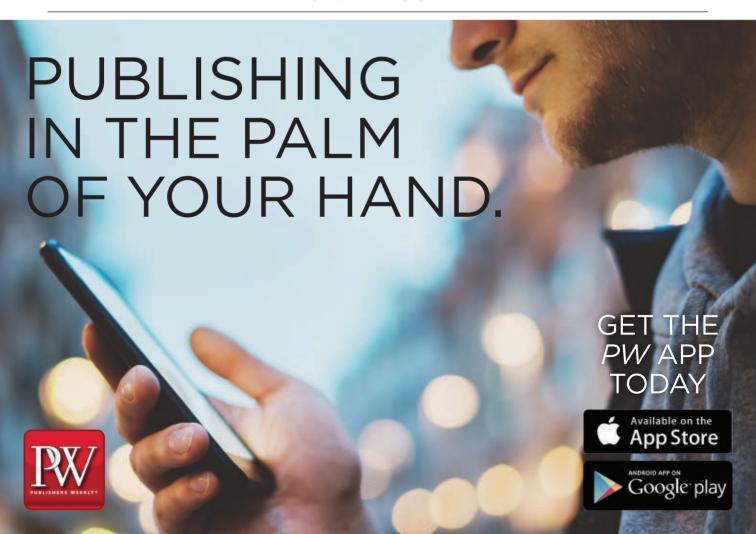
The spunky and encouraging Fourmont,

proprietor of La Buvette wine bar in Paris, shares the stories behind the wine and food she serves in this enjoyable cookbook. The upbeat mini-essays in this volume cover such topics as developing a good palate and overcoming wine misconceptions. Recipes are organized loosely and



lean toward snacks, though there is a chapter on more robust options that includes a whole chicken nestled in a bed of hay and roasted on the stovetop. Many

of the inventive offerings employ just a few ingredients: burrata cheese sprinkled with mandarin peel dust and drizzled with olive oil; canned sardines served with seared lemon halves, sturdy sourdough, and butter; and a sweet spread of cream, sugar, and fromage blanc. Fourmont thrills in both classic desserts (a time-tested



chocolate mousse) and new combinations (sablé cookies inspired by a Pierre Hermé tart incorporate cumin, dried apricots, and dehydrated rosebuds). Recipe headnotes often drift into reverie (a dish of clams with sage butter recalls a childhood island visit spent clamming with her brother), and Fourmont fondly describes her wine discoveries (a Fleur de Savagnin, for instance, is "a little like sherry—rich with flavors of hazelnuts, toasted bread, honey, and spices"). Fourmont transports readers to Paris in this pleasant volume of simple recipes. (*Iuly*)

A Table for Friends: The Art of **Cooking for Two or Twenty**

Skye McAlpine. Bloomsbury, \$28 (320p) ISBN 978-1-5266-1511-4

Based in London and Venice, McAlpine (A Table in Venice) brings a British sensibility to Italian cuisine with more than 100 recipes geared toward both small and large dinner gatherings. The first 30 pages delve into the author's strategies for menu planning while offering tips on table settings. Clever flavor combinations highlight the opening chapter of main courses, including sausages with grapes, and roast pork with honey-roasted persimmons. A section of simple and visually appealing sides features a carrot, cumin, and mint salad and roast plums. And an extensive collection of desserts puts an emphasis on fruit in choices like frozen berries with saffron white chocolate sauce. plus three different types of panna cottavanilla, lavender honey, and salted caramel. Home cooks will want a conversion chart at the ready as the recipes are offered only in grams and liters, and perhaps a calculator for those wanting to reduce the portions for the many dishes designed to feed eight or more diners. A handier tool included with each recipe are the "hands on" and "hands off" times, which indicate how many minutes are involved in preparation and how many to bake, simmer, or freeze. This elegant and delicious collection is sure to be a crowd pleaser. (*July*)

The Feel-Good Family Food Plan: **Everything You Need to Feed Your** Family Well, Every Day

Joanna McMillan, with Melissa Clark. Murdoch, \$25 (240p) ISBN 978-1-911-63249-8 McMillan (Brain Food), an Australian

nutritionist, combines research with her expertise in this comprehensive guide feeding one's family. In addition to providing weekly meal charts, she, along with fellow Aussie mother and cook Clark, explain how to deal with picky eaters, minimize food waste, and establish good eating habits. Their plan aims to simplify kitchen efforts even as they introduce ways to include plant-based ingredients: meatballs that often rely on a classic blend of ground beef and pork are enriched with bits of zucchini, mushroom, onion, capers and ricotta; wholegrain and chickpea flours create a double batch of pizza dough; and their fiveminute blender dessert of frozen bananas, cashew butter, cocoa powder, and coconut water is worthy of "ice cream" status. The recipes are time-efficient and flexible, but American home cooks may get lost in unexplained Australian terminology ("mince" for ground meat; "jaffles" for sealed toasted sandwiches) and thrown by measurements (it isn't until the end that the authors explain that an Aussie tablespoon is actually the equivalent of four, not three U.S. teaspoons). Readers willing to put in the extra translation work will find this volume to be a positive, mindful approach to eating. (June)

Hobbies & Crafts

Beyond the Tee: Innovative T-Shirt Quilts

Mary and Jen Cannizzaro. C&T, \$24.95 trade paper (80p) ISBN 978-1-61745-907-8

Mary and Jen Cannizzaro, the motherdaughter founders of quilting shop Cannizzaro Creations, offer an exciting intro to the craft of making quilts using fabric from T-shirts. Though T-shirt quilts often consist of little more than T-shirt fronts, typically taken from a keepsake garment, cut into squares, and slapped onto a quilt, the Cannizzaros offer designs of hexagons, diamonds, and ovals. They "fillet" T-shirts (as one would a fish) so as to maximize the fabric available, advising, "Think before you cut!" They address problems, such as a motif being too high, small, or big, and dispense "tips for success" (e.g., "On large quilts, it is helpful to find and pin two additional points on the quilt and border midway between the center and quilt edges for

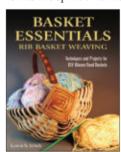
increased accuracy"). Their quilt basics start with the essential stabilizer, such as fusible interfacing—nothing too stiff and quarter-inch seams. Among the nine projects detailed, the Cannizzaros include a quilt made from T-shirts associated with travel to different places, and another made from an enthusiastic athlete's different team shirts. For each block, they cover construction, assembly, and suggestions for alternate ideas and labels. This how-to will be a boon to any quilter looking for a new challenge. (*July*)

★ Basket Essentials: Rib Basket **Weaving: Techniques and Projects** for DIY Woven Reed Baskets

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Lora S. Irish. Fox Chapel, \$24.99 trade paper (200p) ISBN 978-1-4971-0014-5

Artist Irish (Pyrography Style Handbook) offers an attractively designed and inviting introductory volume for anyone interested in weaving baskets. She starts by explaining that rib baskets are made using a rim hoop that creates the basket's circular opening, or by the hoop that forms the spine and the basket handle.



It is not an "exacting craft," she instructs, but one where projects can change at each step, depending on the "tension of a weave, the natural weaving

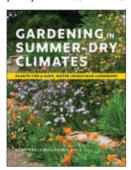
abilities of a material, the dampness of the weaving material," and other variables. She introduces the main construction material used in this craft, basket reed, made from "thorny, vine-like palms," and encourages experimentation with additional materials in the same basket, including raffia, twine, and cotton cord, and in general urges aiming for a "variety of textures, thicknesses, and colors" that will create visual interest. Irish supplements the text with photos of different weaving steps, and vivid images of the finished products, such as the "Half God's Eye Hip Basket" and "Wheel-Ear High Shoulder Melon Basket." Her attractive illustrations and skillful instructions should inspire many newcomers to try out this laid-back craft. (June)

Home & Garden

Gardening in Summer-Dry Climates: Plants for a Lush. **Water-Conscious Landscape**

Nora Harlow and Saxon Holt, Timber, \$29.95 (320p) ISBN 978-1-60469-912-8

Landscape architect Harlow and photographer Holt, coauthors of Plants and Landscapes for Summer-Dry Climates of the San Francisco Bay Region, team up again for a comprehensive guide to gardening on the west coast of North America. They address the unique gardening calendar set by the region's dry summers ("Plant mostly in fall, less often in spring as most of the world does"), as well as the challenges of weather (primarily the "seasonality of precipitation"), climate, and topography



in gardening zones "from British Columbia to Baja." Design suggestions address problems of drainage and runoff, outline ways to

harvest rainwater, advocate for "firewise" landscaping, and promote soil health. The bulk of the book is a catalogue of plant recommendations, including perennials such as yarrow, annuals such as clarkia, trees such as California buckeye, succulents such as aloe, shrubs such as manzanita, and vines such as bougainvillea, with notes on origins, descriptions, watering, drainage, and light exposure. For green thumbs living along the Pacific Coast, this specialized and thorough manual will educate, enlighten, and inspire. (June)

Religion/Spirituality

Becoming Brave: Finding the Courage to Pursue Racial Justice Now

Brenda Salter McNeil. Brazos, \$21.99 (192p) ISBN 978-1-58743-447-1

In this powerful work, pastor McNeil (Roadmap to Reconciliation) uses the story of Esther to guide readers through the process of developing greater courage as part of an effort to realize racial justice. The



bravery McNeil focuses on is a willingness to lead the pursuit for justice through action, asking it of individuals, as well as Christian churches and communities. McNeil con-

tends that good leaders are not born but shaped by circumstance, and must choose to take steps that may be challenging. McNeil sees all of those steps in the lives of Esther, Vashti, and Mordecai: imagining oneself as an activist, however unlikely; reclaiming one's identity as a source of strength; preparing for work and allyship through dialogue, information, and prayer; and speaking truth to power and engaging in meaningful action, including civil disobedience. While McNeil's broader goal of cultivating leadership qualities in her readers applies to a wide audience, she also argues that leadership should be different for white communities and communities of color: "Instead of reconciliation being solely focused on getting to know and understand people of color, there must be a new focus for white people, one that is directed at understanding, unpacking, and confronting their own whiteness." This accessible work provides a road map for any Christian seeking greater racial justice. (Aug.)

Family Discipleship: Leading Your Home Through Time, Moments, and Milestones Matt Chandler and Adam Griffin. Crossway, \$22.99 (176p) ISBN 978-1-4335-6629-5

In this accessible work, Pastors Chandler (Steps Leader Kit) and Griffin lay out a plan for Christian parents to foster vibrant faith in their children. The authors describe their book as a guide for implementing intentional spiritual leadership in the home—rather than a traditional parenting how-to-and open by explaining, "Your child's faith does not rise or fall based on how well you follow the precepts of this book, nor does it depend on your proficiency as a parent." The authors caution readers not to compare themselves to other families,

suggest Christ's grace is the key component to developing a life of faith, and emphasize that leadership is modeled by daily interactions and ordinary routines that focus on three aspects of life: time (habitual scriptural learning), moments ("taking advantage of opportunities to communicate God's truth"), and milestones (working toward goals). Included are tips for bringing "rhythm and intentionality" into daily routines, such as during meals, commutes, and children's bedtime routines. Scripture, questions for reflection, and charts for weekly and monthly family plans, appear throughout. Showing that "it is never too soon and it is never too late to start discipling your household," this useful guide will provide Christian parents activities and motivation for creating a Christ-centered home environment. (Aug.)

Compassion (&) Conviction: The And Campaign's Guide to Faithful Civic Engagement

Jason Giboney, Michael Wear, and Chris Butler. InterVarsity, \$22 (160p) ISBN 978-0-8308-4810-2

Butler, Giboney, and Wear, the leadership team of the And Campaign, which seeks to increase Christian civic engagement, offer a brief but detailed lesson in basic civics and exhort Christians to participate in public life with civility, critical thinking, and biblical values. The authors urge Christians to think holistically and consistently about issues that drive their voting and civic involvement. For instance, pro-life supporters should cast votes with a focus beyond their antiabortion beliefs and factor in racial disparities as well as the effects of economic and immigration policies. No issue is isolated, the authors argue, and productive, sustainable politics considers the long game over short-term wins. For instance, they argue Christians should be "questioning President Trump's demeaning language and bad behavior" even if that means risking backlash from fellow Christians. When assessing candidates, the authors ask voters to remember that character and beliefs should trump partisan rhetoric, and they cover such topics as how Christians should evaluate partnerships across religious lines, how to recognize and combat extremist speech, and why

[Q&A]

PW TALKS WITH KHYATI Y. JOSHI

Deconstructing Privilege

Joshi, professor at Fairleigh Dickinson University, digs into disadvantages experienced by American religious minorities in White Christian Privilege (New York Univ., July; reviewed on p. 57)

What audience do you envision for this book?

It's become apparent to me, over years of teaching and doing professional development workshops on equity and justice, that folks who are interested in diversity and inclusion don't always have the necessary background information. They are looking for the history of how we got to today, the laws and practices that go back centu-

ries. That's the information that gives context to where we are today, and will help them bolster their arguments. So I wrote the book for people who have a general interest in the topic. That audience includes both Christians and religious minorities. I want to help

both have the language they need to describe their experiences.

What action do you hope these readers would take?

I'm looking to help people have a better understanding of United States history, a better understanding of how omnipresent white Christian privilege is. You really can't talk about whiteness without also talking about Christianity, but that isn't how history is taught or how we think about current events. One of the barriers to seeing this reality is that people believe that since we have the First Amendment, which guarantees freedom of religion, that everything is okay. But it's not. In the current climate, we need to have facts. We need to have the intellectual heft not just the empathetic heart. My

approach to working for social justice involves the head, heart, and hand: the head is understanding the history, the heart is understanding that this is an emotional process, and then you have the action

You mention at one point being reported to a colleague for "hating white people." Could you talk a little more about that?

> That story is an example of how this work can involve an intense emotional component for some people. Anybody who picks up the book and makes it to page three or four will realize this is not about hating white Christians. There are plenty of good people who don't see

privilege, because it is often invisible. That's what makes getting your head around it so difficult. This process isn't about saying, "You're a bad person." However, feelings of guilt often arise when white Christians first encounter this material. Guilt can be immobilizing, and you don't want to get stuck there.

What are your goals for the book?

I want people to walk away thinking about changing their focus, changing the paradigm of how we think and what we do about race and religion in America. And I want to hear back from readers; I want to know how they are rethinking things in their own lives and setting out to change their communities.

— Hanna Clutterbuck-Cook

knowing America's racist history is necessary in order to have honest political conversation. By engaging in politics to pursue love and justice, they assert, Christians can magnify God's name—not their own. Politically minded Christians will want to take a look at this punchy manifesto. (*Iuly*)

God Speed:

Walking as a Spiritual Practice

Mark Buchanan, Zondervan, \$25.99 (256p) ISBN 978-0-310-29366-8

Buchanan (The Rest of God), a pastor and associate professor of Pastoral Theology at Ambrose Seminary in Calgary, argues that walking provides a route to the companionship of God in this cheery testament. Focusing on the physical act of walking, he writes that when the Bible talks about "walking in the Spirit or walking the light... it means this in more than a figurative way." Invoking biblical stories, such as the exodus from Egypt and Jesus's peripatetic lifestyle, Buchanan explores the connection between walking and remembering, and between walking and healing. Personal anecdotes—such as the value of a long walk to calm down, performing a walking prayer, or the pleasure of walking a dog-show the benefits of taking walks with intentionality. Sometimes the focus on walking veers into the metaphorical, as in Buchanan's rumination on the Via Dolorosa (the route Christ followed to his crucifixion) as a metaphor for "the way of suffering." Nevertheless, Buchanan's many personal stories and accounts of Christians being transformed by meandering meditations on God are fresh and inviting. Christians looking for a more physically active faith practice should check this out. (*July*)

Seeing Clearly: A Buddhist Guide to Life

Nicolas Bommarito, Oxford Univ., \$19.95 (320p) ISBN 978-0-19088-750-6

In this uncomplicated, thoughtful introduction to Buddhism, Bommarito (Inner Virtue), an assistant professor of philosophy at the University of Buffalo, puts a modern twist on a centuries-old religious tradition. Bommarito does not get bogged down in Buddhist terminology, history, or metaphysics; instead,

he offers a fresh and relatable interpretation of Buddhist traditions such as karma and enlightenment, as well as Zen koans and altar offerings, by placing them within a modern and often clever



context. This is particularly helpful when he uses everyday examples to unpack complex Buddhist principles, such as when he explain concepts like "empti-

ness"—that nothing exists independently of other related things—using a heap of eggs: "The indeterminate nature of heaps suggests that these are just made-up categories that we project onto the world... these aren't separate things, but just labels for the sake of convenience." He suggests that as readers take in the variety and vivacity of Buddhism's core tenets and key practices—principally that one needs to wake up to reality and adjust one's life accordingly—they should be able to reduce distraction and anxiety. A corrective to both overly complex presentations of Buddhist traditions and secularized versions that strip away the religion's supernatural elements, this useful work provides a happy harmony of temporal wisdom and transcendent habits for Buddhist beginners. (July)

We Are the Economy: The Buddhist Way of Work, **Consumption, and Money**

Kai Romhardt, trans. from the German by Christine Welter and Teresa van Osdol. Parallax, \$16.95 trade paper (256p) ISBN 978-1-946764-58-4

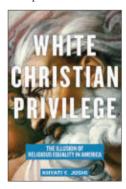
Romhardt (Slow Down Your Life), a business analyst and Zen practitioner, proposes a "mindful economy" in this illuminating Buddhist-inspired vision of economic enterprise and cooperation. Romhardt applies mindful awareness to ideas of work, money, and consumption, critiquing negative habits that reinforce desire (such as focus on efficiency and rivalry) and exploring how to build positive habits to cultivate contentment, sustainability, and abundance through economic cooperation. For Romhardt,

mindfulness allows the mind to see the world for what it is, and the practice of it leads to the questioning of habitual beliefs about oneself and the world. He explores how, what, how much, and why one consumes, connecting the dissatisfactions of a consumer-based economy to Buddhist teachings on interconnectivity and compassion. Included throughout are diagrams visualizing his critique of competition-based capitalism. To underscore Romhardt's belief that spiritual life is not separate from economic life, he focuses on everyday patterns of wholesome and unwholesome behavior and recommends mindful listening, walking meditations, and making smiling the default response to confrontation. Accessible for a wide audience, Romhardt's intelligent analysis demonstrates the perilous downside of rampant consumerism. (Iuly)

White Christian Privilege: The Illusion of Religious Equality in America

Khyati Y. Joshi. New York Univ., \$28 (256p) ISBN 978-1-4798-4023-6

Joshi (New Roots in America's Sacred Ground), professor of education at Fairleigh Dickinson University, explores Christian privilege, Christian normativity, and Christian hegemony in this powerful analysis. Her argument is simple: Christianity (particularly the European Protestant strain) has been



established as the unacknowledged common culture, not simply religion, of the United States, leading to a situation where anything not white, Western, and Christian

is seen as abnormal. Providing something of a whistle-stop tour—rather than an in-depth exploration—Joshi whisks through the development of white Christian privilege in just under two chapters. She explores the effects of the 16th-century papal "Doctrine of Discovery" that authorized any Christian monarch who "discovers non-Christian

www.publishersweeklv.com

FICTION

Endland Tim Etchells. And Other Stories, ISBN 978-1-911508-70-0. May

The Ghost Factory Jenny McCartney. Fourth Estate, ISBN 978-0-00-829549-3, June

The King of Taos Max Evans. Univ. of New Mexico, ISBN 978-0-8263-6164-6, June

Minor Detail Adania Shibli, trans. from the Arabic by Elizabeth Jaquette. New Directions, ISBN 978-0-8112-2907-4. May

Mum & Dad Joanna Trollope. Pan Macmillan, ISBN 978-1-5290-0338-3, May

The Pursuit of the Pankera: A Parallel Novel About Parallel Universes Robert A. Heinlein. Caezik, ISBN 978-1-6471000-1-8, Apr.

NONFICTION

The Big, Fun Kids Cookbook, editors of Food Network magazine. Hearst Home Kids, ISBN 978-1-950785-04-9, Apr.

The Greatest Cult Television Shows of All Time Christopher J. Olson and CarrieLvnn D. Reinhard. Rowman & Littlefield, ISBN 978-1-5381-2255-6, June

★ The Next Great Migration: The Beauty and Terror of Life on the Move Sonia Shah. Bloomsbury, ISBN 978-1-63557-197-4, June

Outbreaks and Epidemics: Battling Infection from Measles to Coronavirus Meera Senthilingam. Icon, ISBN 978-1-78578-563-4, Apr.

Perfectly Golden: Adaptable Recipes for Sweet and Simple Treats Angela Garbacz. Countryman, ISBN 978-1-68268-476-4, Apr.

★ Superpower Showdown: How the Battle Between Trump and Xi Threatens a New Cold War Bob Davis and Lingling Wei. Harper Business, ISBN 978-0-06-295305-6, June

lands has a right to claim a superior and paramount title to these lands" and argues it was used to justify the conquest of indigenous people. She also uses National Geographic's 2018 apology for decades of racist coverage as a jumping-off point to examine contemporary problems in the representation of non-Christian minorities and foreigners. Joshi's notes and bibliography will prove an invaluable guide for readers who want to continue exploring these ideas in more depth. This brisk overview is a must-read for those interested in America's Christian foundation. (July)

Children's/YA

Picture Books

Catch That Chicken!

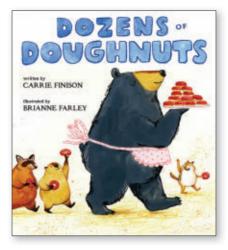
Atinuke, illus. by Angela Brooksbank. Candlewick, \$16.99 (32p) ISBN 978-1-5362-1268-6

Baby Goes to Market team Atinuke and Brooksbank tell the story of Lami, a West African girl with beaded braids, bright green sandals, and a talent for catching chickens. Her sister Sadia may be a better speller, her brother Bilal may be braver with bulls, but Lami is the champion chicken catcher. She's famed throughout her compound, and family members and friends cheer her on. Brooksbank draws the community from above: a fence surrounds the dwellings and outbuildings where adults and children work and play, drying laundry hangs like banners, and huge trees offer shade. Suspense builds as Lami pursues a black-and-white hen around the compound and up an enormous baobab; "Sannu!" her elders tell her, "SLOW DOWN!" When she takes a tumble, it turns out that Lami can catch chickens even after she's sprained her ankle. The story stars a strong girl of color and offers a look at life in a close-knit community, a setting in which every gift contributes to the whole. Ages 2–5. (July)

Sloth Went

Adam Lehrhaupt, illus. by Benson Shum. Bloomsbury, \$17.99 (32p) ISBN 978-1-5476-0245-2

Reading Lehrhaupt's (Please, Open This Book!) afterword proves essential to fully enjoying this potty tale. It reveals that sloths' digestive systems are-no surprise—slow, that the creatures only need to poop once a week, and that they are instinctively driven to do so on the ground, far below their safe home in the forest canopy. Representing hygiene habits in the extreme, this information forges a critical bond between the protagonist, an anxious little sloth, and readers, who will understand that pooping to others' expectations is a big deal. "I don't think I'm gonna make it," the baby sloth tells various forest friends while inching anxiously down the tree. "Just listen to your body



Hospitality turns to hunger in Finison and Farley's doughnut-focused picture book (reviewed on this page).

and it will all work out," advises Frog, one of the sloth's many cheerleaders. Watercolor and ink cartooning by Shum (Holly's Day at the Pool) is good humored but never at the expense of empathy; reassuring, sunny washes of color in a range of perspectives and composition styles build momentum, then portray the deed through four realistically funny grimaces in close-up, followed by a well-deserved touchdown dance. Families facing similar toilet trepidation will find plenty of sympathy and wisdom in these pages. Ages 3-6. Author's agent: Alexandra Penfold, Upstart Crow Literary. Illustrator's agent: Teresa Kietlinski. (June)

Dozens of Doughnuts

Carrie Finison, illus. by Brianne Farley. Putnam, \$16.99 (40p) ISBN 978-0-525-51835-8

LouAnn, a stout black bear, is frying doughnuts for one last pre-hibernation meal, and she's looking forward to eating them all by herself. But it's not to be. "One dozen doughnuts, hot from the pan,/ Toasty, and tasty, and ALL for-/DING-DONG!" Sturdy, thumping verse by Finison, making her picture book debut, chronicles the constant interruptions of a stream of hungry callers: Woodrow the woodchuck, Clyde the raccoon, Topsy the opossum, and more. LouAnn obligingly returns to the kitchen, but the doughnuts (iced in luridly appealing shades of crimson, blue, and lavender) keep getting eaten, and her temperature keeps rising: "She's ready to sleep through the snow, ice, and sleet./ But winter is near, and

there's NOTHING to eat!" LouAnn's hangry ursine roar lets her guests know they've overstepped. Farley (Secret Tree Fort) gives LouAnn a comically outsize snout, a tiny ruffled apron, and ears that droop and twitch fetchingly. The combination of delicious treats and tantalizing delay keeps the tension high, and the cooperative kitchen antics of LouAnn's guests as they attempt to redress their wrongs ("Chip measures./ Chomp mixes./ Mouffette checks the heat") deliver as much satisfaction as the new doughnuts themselves. Ages 3-7. Author's agent: Linda Epstein, Emerald City Literary. Illustrator's agent: Paul Rodeen, Rodeen Literary. (July)

The Starkeeper

Faith Pray. Random House, \$17.99 (40p) ISBN 978-1-9848-9270-6

Wishing for something to drive "the lonely dark away," a girl finds a glowing orb in a village fountain. It's a star, and it's up to her to find out how to keep it shining brightly. Loose, spontaneous lines capture the child's glossy black hair, red skirt, and vellow boots, and the kitten that accompanies her. The girl's first efforts at starkeeping falter, with Pray's narrative voice capturing the suspense: "The star was gloomy now. Shrinkier. Wilted." Then the girl discovers that sharing makes the star brighter. She offers her sweater to a younger child, comforts a grieving woman, and distributes loaves of bread to the hungry. The lesson about generosity isn't new, but Pray keeps it fresh with unexpected twists: the idea of the unearthly object that's sustained by good deeds adds intrigue, and the story unfolds not in bright sunshine, but in the dark and the rain, offering a backdrop for the star's warm light. The girl's winsome expressions draw readers in, and the glowing star symbolizes the power of good deeds, no matter how small. Ages 3-7. (*Iune*)

Such a Library! A Yiddish Folktale Re-imagined

Jill Ross Nadler, illus. by Esther van den Berg. Intergalatic Afikoman, \$18.95 (40p) ISBN 978-1-951365-02-8

Nadler, making her picture book debut, and van den Berg (Good Night and Sleep Tight) base their comic fantasy on a classic Yiddish folktale known as "It Could

Always Be Worse." The library is supposed to be Stevie's quiet refuge from a home filled with "three brothers, two sisters,/ and a baby," but he can't seem to find any peace. "Pages are turning,/ keys are tapping,/ and the storyteller/ is once upon a timing," he complains to Miss Understood, the librarian. "It's like a party in here." Her response is nothing short of extraordinary: she opens a book, welcoming balloons and party fixings. When Stevie then likens the library to a zoo and a circus, things really get crazy. As the good-natured, buoyant cartoons chronicle a cumulative comic cacophony with subtle nods to the story's shtetl origins, the text fills up with a growing list of onomatopoeia—those reading aloud will be called on to make sounds ranging from book pages turning ("whoosh, swoosh") to the sound of a clown car horn ("ah-ooo-gah"). Stevie, for his part, learns two important lessons: he didn't know how good he had it, and librarians are indeed magic. Ages 3-8. (June)

Fiction

Bevond Me

Annie Donwerth-Chikamatsu. Atheneum/ Dlouhy, \$17.99 (304p) ISBN 978-1-4814-3789-9

On Mar. 11, 2011, an earthquake off the northeast coast of Japan, followed by a tsunami and an explosion at a damaged nuclear power plant, caused devastation throughout the country. Through the eyes of fifth grader Maya, who lives outside of Tokyo, this novel in free verse recounts the stressors of the event, its aftermath, and its ongoing reverberations. As the story begins, Maya plays freely in the wind and plans to perform a choir piece at school, but her daily life undergoes a dramatic change when the earthquake hits. After the event, the girl spends much of her time sheltering under a table and observing her parents, who try to help those affected, and her grandparents, who calmly tend their garden and vegetable stand. Donwerth-Chikamatsu (Somewhere Among) adapts font color, size, and word placement to reflect Maya's physical experiences: one page includes only the enlarged phrase "Earth/ drops/ below me," while others highlight times in the margin ("07:44 Earth shudders"), giving a feel to its

passing. As the story shows the country's unsteadiness and Maya's creative strategies for overcoming her sense of helplessness, it offers a compassionate window into how adults and children cope with calamity. Ages 8-12. Agent: Holly McGhee, Pippin Properties. (June)

★ Curse of the Night Witch (Emblem Island #1)

Alex Aster. Sourcebooks, \$16.99 (352p) ISBN 978-1-4926-9720-6

Tor Luna, 12, was born with a leadership emblem; the "two purple rings around his left wrist" signify that he will someday lead, just like his chieftess mother. Hoping to become a water-breather, instead swimming is his great joy and source of calm—he wishes on the New Year's Eve bonfire; during the yearly celebration, anything can happen. Instead of a changed emblem, though, he's struck by a witch's



curse, one that cuts his lifeline. and his friends', to a single week. To find the fabled Night Witch and break the curse, Tor, sharp-eyed Engle, and natural leader Melda venture

through the most dangerous, magical regions of Emblem Island, using a volume of old stories, The Book of Cuentos, as their guide. Debut author Aster takes inspiration from Colombian folklore to craft a rousing series opener that's both fast-paced and thrilling. As her protagonists face off against a host of horrors, they learn the value of friendship and explore the possibility of changing one's fate in a world where destiny is predetermined. Excerpts from Tor's Book of Cuentos grant further insight into the vividly built world's monsters, legends, and cautionary tales. Ages 8-12. Agent: Laura Bradford, Bradford Literary. (June)

Five Things About Ava Andrews Margaret Dilloway. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray, \$16.99 (320p) ISBN 978-0-06-280349-8

Ava Andrews, 11, is more nervous than usual at the beginning of sixth grade: not only is middle school intimidating, but

her best friend, Zelia, has just moved across the country. Zelia always stood up for Ava when the clinically anxious girlwho has a genetic heart condition and attendant pacemaker—encountered social difficulties that upped her anxiety and her heart rate. Though Ava doesn't like to stand in front of groups, and dreads attending social events organized by her father's Cotillion business, she discovers a supportive community when she joins an improv group predicated on a foundation of celebrating mistakes and working with what one is given. The group is soon shocked to discover that the theater in which they rehearse is in danger of being developed. They decide to fight the onset of gentrification in their San Diego neighborhood, and with the help of her improv skills, Ava finds her voice. Alongside a sensitive portrayal of Ava's invisible disabilities, well-wrought subplots, such as problems with an unkind classmate and the growing distance between two once-close friends, support the journey of Dilloway's (Summer of a Thousand Pies) thoughtful protagonist from timid observer to well-liked social activist. Ages 8-12. Agent: Patricia Nelson, Marsall Lyon Literary. (June)

Seven Clues to Home

Gail Polisner and Nora Raleigh Baskin. Knopf, \$16.99 (208p) ISBN 978-0-593-11961-7

Two kids reveal the evolution of their friendship as they each progress through the scavenger hunt that one of them left before his sudden death. In the present, 13-year-old Joy is celebrating her birthday with her close-knit family, having lost her best friend, Lukas, in an accident a year earlier. She wonders if she should finally open the envelope that Lukas left her before he died-undoubtedly the first clue in their traditional birthday scavenger hunt. As she works through the clues and her grief, Joy shares memories of her friendship with Lukas and the depth of her feelings for him. In a narrative from the past, Lukas sets up the scavenger hunt on the day before Joy's 12th birthday, debating revealing his true feelings for her. Through introspective narration, he also shares anecdotes about his deceased father, troublemaking brother, and his complicated feelings about his mother's former boyfriend. Lukas's fast-approaching, untimely death, and the depth of Joy's

continued on p. 62

WILD LIFE

Creature-themed children's books consider charismatic condors, mating animalia, and stinky insects.

Curious About Mammals

Cathryn Sill, illus. by John Sill. Peachtree Petite, \$6.99 (22p) ISBN 978-1-68263-198-0

Finely detailed, highly realistic watercolor paintings by John Sill show an array of mammals, mostly North American, in their natural habitats. Each identified in italic text, an American badger peers out from a grassland den,



spinner dolphins leap from azure waves, a southern flying squirrel perches to munch an eye-spotted moth. Simple statements by Cathryn Sill identify mammalian characteristics, progressing from the universal ("All mammals have hair") to the particular ("Some mammals swim").

The careful accumulation of facts ends somewhat flatly in a generic assertion ("Mammals.../ are important to our world"), but the small volume offers youngest readers a pleasing introduction to what makes a mammal a mammal. Ages 2-6. (Aug.)

Our Animal Neighbors: Compassion for Every Furry, Slimy, Prickly Creature on Earth

Matthieu Ricard and Jason Gruhl, illus. by Becca Hall. Bala Kids, \$17.95 (32p) ISBN 978-1-61180-723-3

Ricard and Gruhl make a case for animal rights and ethical veganism by metaphorically framing Earth's residents as neighbors equally deserving of respect and care. They begin by pointing out the "wildly different likes and needs" of these neighbors who "feel at home in very different places." Their argument hits snags, though, when they pivot to unifying similarities: do even solo creatures require "family and friendship," as the book suggests? A more persuasive claim centers on human actions: "when we look with our eyes and our hearts, we can act with love and compassion toward all beings." Hall's cartoonlike, sometimes heavy-handed illustrations make implied meanings plain, showing happily swimming dolphins alongside smiling humans, and later, huddling monkeys scarred by medical experiments, and trembling cows heading into a "Fast Food Factory." Closes with a discussion of the benefits of a plant-based diet. Ages 4–8. (Sept.)

Cubs in the Tub: The True Story of the Bronx Zoo's First Woman Zookeeper

Candace Fleming, illus. by Julie Downing. Holiday House/Porter, \$18.99 (48p) ISBN 978-0-8234-4318-5

There's a fairy tale quality to Fleming's story of Helen Martini, a woman whose longing for a baby was filled by raising a series of orphaned big cat cubs, which unexpectedly led to her becoming the first female zookeeper at the Bronx

Zoo. And like many fairy tales, the just-so telling and happilyever-after ending skim over deeper troubles and complications, specifically the way Martini relates to the animals in her care. Martini's husband was a keeper at the Bronx Zoo. When a lioness rejected her cub, he brought it home for Martini to raise before it was sent to another zoo. After she cares for a trio of tiger cubs, Helen follows them back to the Bronx Zoo, transforming a store room into the zoo's first "nursery": "Her babies needed her." Martini's "mother and child" relationship with these wild animals is both charming and unsettling; an artifact of an earlier era in wildlife stewardship that complicates conservation efforts to this day. Downing's sensitive illustrations shine in a rich, muted palette, using sweeping lines and patterned details to conjure cozy, 1940s-era domestic scenes where lions snooze on laps and tigers frolic in bubble baths. Ages 4–8. (Aug.)

My Stinky Summer by S. Bug

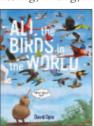
Paul Meisel. Holiday House, \$17.99 (40p) ISBN 978-0-8234-4053-5

Meisel's third Nature Diary showcases the stink bug in a story that spans five months, from early June, when the brown marmorated stink bug narrator arrives (as "one of the twentyeight eggs laid on the underside of this leaf") to early October, when S. Bug tucks itself under tree bark for the winter. Along the way, the gently humorous volume follows S. Bug as it munches on plants, evades predators, and hears, over and over again, "Ew. Stink bug." Mixed-media art portrays the insect at different stages of maturity amid leafy spreads, and a cameo by another famous stinker—the skunk—draws laughs. Meisel offers contextualizing information in an introduction and back matter, explaining, for example, how the invasive species likely arrived in the United States and how the bug's scent helps the species to communicate and survive. An effective addition to the series. Ages 4-8. (July)

* All the Birds in the World

David Opie. Peter Pauper, \$16.99 (32p) ISBN 978-1-4413-3329-2

A quizzical kiwi follows readers through Opie's vibrantly illustrated exploration of bird types and attributes. Fantastical compilations of birds common and rare, depicted with great care and painterly realism, are shown roosting, nesting, wading, and flying, interleaved with spreads showing



arrays of eggs, beaks, and bird feet. Opie uses clear text in rhythmic patterns punctuated by line breaks to articulate the essence of birdness—"All birds have feathers./ All birds have wings./ All birds have beaks"—punctuated by Kiwi's plaintive, "But what about me?" It builds, of course, to a discussion of kiwis:

"The kiwi has no tail, but has whiskers like a cat." It's a captivating display of diversity: "And all the birds/ in this book.../ are part of the same feathered family!/ 'Even me,' said Kiwi./ Yes, even Kiwi." Back matter includes a key identifying every bird that appears in the book and on the cover. Ages 4-8. (June)

Eat Your Rocks. Croc! Dr. Glider's Advice for Troubled Animals

Jess Keating, illus. by Pete Oswald. Orchard, \$17.99 (40p) ISBN 978-1-338-23988-1

Dr. Sugar Glider takes questions from various animal "patients" with occasionally punny results in this eye-opening tour of animal adaptations. Accompanied by Oswald's textured, watercolor-like digital illustrations, Dr. Glider's global caseload of 14 includes an aphid whose brother was kidnapped by ants for his honeydew secretions (a sidebar explains symbiosis), an overtired frigatebird who needs reminding that it can sleep while flying, and the crocodile of the title, which needs help digesting. In Oswald's animated scenes, Dr. Glider has her stethoscope at the ready while tending her oblivious patients variously on skis, using scuba gear, or via submarine (though a Tarzan outfit strikes an odd note). Four-panel sidebars consistently inform and surprise with animal facts, and a glossary reinforces new vocabulary. This kind of animal roundup isn't new, but with the help of the wisecracking Dr. Glider, Oswald and Keating's approach feels fresh and snappy. Ages 4-8. (May)

Animals Mate:

A Book About Where Babies Come From

Emily Farranto. Familius, \$14.99 (24p) ISBN 978-1-64170-245-4

Farranto presents the basic mechanics of procreation, accompanied by black-and-white hatched portraits of animal pairs doing the deed. Terms including mating and sexual reproduction are defined straightforwardly ("Mating is when two animals come together to reproduce"), while photorealistic sketches against muted pastel backgrounds show various animals mid-coitus (giraffes, ladybugs, and peacocks, for example). Species differences are mentioned, like how some aqueous creatures fertilize "outside the body, in the water" and how, for marsupials, "the baby is born and then grows a little more in a pouch on the mother's body"—but some passages will require extratextual conversations, such as one about how egg fertilization can, in some cases, lead to many babies. More of an introduction to procreation than a definitive guide (though used to described the act, words such as penis and vagina go undefined), this nonfiction picture book may nevertheless help alleviate young readers' curiosity surrounding a frequently taboo topic. Ages 5–8. (June)

Common Critters: The Wildlife in Your Neighborhood

Pat Brisson, illus. by Dan Tavis. Tilbury House, \$17.95 (40p) ISBN 978-0-88448-691-6

Superlative back matter elevates this illustrated collection of jokey poems celebrating neighborhood wildlife: "There are creatures all around you,/ not exotic, but not tame./ Though most are pretty common,/ they're intriguing just the same." Each critter gets its own poem on a spread illustrated with Tavis's artful landscapes and goofily goggle-eyed wildlife. Brisson's wordplay ranges from obvious ha-has (of crows: "And could this fact be much absurder?/ A group of you is called a *murder*!") to sophisticated lines (of caterpillars: "It follows metamorphic urges/ to break out, and what emerges/ is a moth or butterfly/ that dries its wings and starts to fly"). A "Facts About Common Critters" section offers more information about the featured creatures ("A squirrel will crack open a nut and rub it on its face before burying it") alongside a brief discussion of artistic license, while "A Peek into the Poet's Toolkit" uses the poems to explain rhyme, meter, stanza, and poetic license. Ages 6-8. (Apr.)

★ Condor Comeback (Scientists in the Field)

Sy Montgomery, photos by Tianne Strombeck. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, \$18.99 (96p) ISBN 978-0-544-81653-4

The California Condor's stunning and fragile existence swoops into focus in the latest Scientists in the Field title. In 1982, fewer than two dozen California Condors were left in the wild, their numbers decimated by hunting, habitat loss, and poisoning from lead shot in the animal carcasses they eat. A collective effort led by conservationists and zoos is slowly rebuilding the population, but they remain critically



endangered. As Montgomery relates this history, she introduces readers to scientists and volunteers, mostly women, working to protect the condor today, including experts at the Los Angeles Zoo, field ornithologists checking each wild bird,

toxicologists testing for lead, and a Chumash tribal educator who discusses how "the condor is a spirit helper for the Chumash." Alongside Strombeck's crisp photographs, Montgomery details the realities of their work—from thrilling moments such as spotting a baby chick to long observation sessions where not much happens—and has a knack for evocative descriptions (a "bird half the size of a small sofa," "rustling feathers—like dozens of debutantes in taffeta ballgowns"). Though the condor's future remains tenuous, Montgomery's compelling page-turner inspires optimism. Ages 10–12. (July)

continued from p. 59

grief afterward, add poignancy to many flashbacks as both experience the same set of clues, underscoring the duo's genuine shared affection. Ages 8-12. Agents: (for Polisner) Jim McCarthy, Dystel, Goderich & Bourret; (for Baskin) Katelyn Detweiler, Jill Grinberg Literary. (June)

The Way to Rio Luna

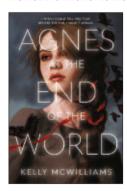
Zoraida Córdova, Scholastic, \$17.99 (336p) ISBN 978-1-338-23954-6

Two years prior to the start of Córdova's (Incendiary) middle grade debut, 11-yearold Danny and older sister Pili cycle through group and foster homes until being separated. Before Pili disappears entirely a runaway, Danny's told—she leaves him with her favorite book, fairy tale volume The Way to Rio Luna. He carries it everywhere, thoroughly annoying his cruel foster siblings and impatient foster parents on Staten Island until the book is taken away. A school trip to the New York Public Library ("the big one with the lions out front") introduces Danny to Glory Papillon, a girl about his age, and reaffirms his belief in magic—especially when he encounters the original copy of Rio Luna. With Glory's help, Danny sets out to find his sister, perhaps in Rio Luna. In this fantasy with a classic feel, characters of various skin tones and circumstances prove relatable, catching readers up in their triumphs and tribulations. Ages 8up. Agent: Adrienne Rosado, Stonesong. (June)

* Agnes at the End of the World Kelly McWilliams. Little, Brown, \$17.99 (432p) ISBN 978-0-3164-8733-7

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The Red Creek compound is the only life Agnes, 16, has known. Adhering to the belief that "perfect obedience produces perfect faith," she and her siblings have been taught by Red Creek's prophet that women are inferior to men and that out-



siders are not to be trusted. Devout though she is, Agnes secretly seeks outside help to save her brother, who has type 1 diabetes, and she experiences doubt when faced with an

arranged marriage and her outsider mother's pleas that she run away. When a viral pandemic encroaches, Agnes uncovers an aural realm long forgotten. In three parts, McWilliams (Doormat) follows faithful Agnes and her doubting 15-year-old sister, Beth. As Agnes learns more about the virus—a disease infecting animals and humans that causes hardened red skin, hostility, and grouping together in grotesque nests—she must come to grips with the tension between science and faith. Strong apocalyptic worldbuilding alternates with dialogue-laden scenes, while minor characters, such as the Burn Squad captain charged with eradicating nests, move the plot forward in absorbing and dynamic ways. Ages 12-up. Agent: Michael Bourret, Dystel, Goderich and Bourret. (June)

Hunted by the Sky (The Wrath of Ambar #1)

Tanaz Bhathena. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, \$18.99 (384p) ISBN 978-0-374-31309-8

Ambar's denizens peacefully coexisted until King Lohar relegated non-maji such as Cavas, 17, and his father, Xerxes, to polluted tenements. The conditions are killing Xerxes, who has contracted Tenement Fever, but royal stable hand Cavas can't secure new housing without becoming an army loadbearer—a veritable death sentence. A prophecy presages that a powerful female magus "marked with a star" will effect Lohar's downfall, but while the prediction encourages some, it spells persecution for those with star-shaped birthmarks, like 15-year-old Gul. Two years ago, Lohan's warriors executed Gul's parents while hunting her. Gul doesn't believe she's the fabled Star Warrior—she can barely control her late-onset magic—but she's determined to exact vengeance. When revolutionaries ask Cavas to help Gul infiltrate the palace, Cavas refuses to get involved; fate, however, has other plans. This Indian- and Persian-inspired duology opener from Bhathena (The Beauty of the Moment) explores questions of faith via a fully fleshed, predominantly brown-skinned cast and a thoughtfully conceived mythology. Gul and Cavas's burgeoning attraction adds hints of romance, and after a dense start, escalating action catapults the tale to a thrilling close. Ages 12-up. Agent: Eleanor Jackson, Dunow, Carlson & Lerner. (June)

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Jo & Laurie

Margaret Stohl and Melissa de la Cruz. Putnam, \$18.99 (384p) ISBN 978-1-9848-1201-8

De la Cruz and Stohl's affectionate tribute to Louisa May Alcott's work takes place in the year between the 1868 release of Little Women and the 1869 publication of Good Wives, two volumes that are today published as one. At 18, Jo March struggles to produce a sequel after the success of her domestic novel loosely inspired by her family. Buoyed by the novel's success and overwhelmed by demands for a happy ending—that is, marriage—for the sisters, she toils to find direction on and off the page. Eventually, Jo must balance commercial callings, reality, and fiction as the siblings' real lives (and shifting relationships with Laurie, the steadfast boy next door) overlap and diverge from Jo's imaginings. The authors carefully mimic the setting and dialogue style of Alcott's works, making their care for the characters apparent. Inspired by the original novel's events and further structured around Alcott's history and letters, de la Cruz and Stohl's novel is a playful addition to the world of Little Women, providing readers with a richly imagined look at grief, creativity, and authorship that infuses the beloved characters with new life. Ages 12-up. (June) -----

Rebel Spy

Veronica Rossi. Delacorte, \$18.99 (368p) ISBN 978-1-5247-7122-5

A headstrong, wreck-diving narrator becomes an informant for the American Revolution in this high-stakes historical adventure inspired by an actual spy. In the Bahamas in 1776, Frannie Tasker's menacing stepfather insists she marry him now that her mother, a Spanish immigrant, has died. Stormy seas offer an opportunity for escape when a ship sinks and the corpse of a well-born passenger, Emmeline Coates, washes ashore. Rossi (the Under the Never Sky trilogy) keeps tensions high as 15-yearold Frannie assumes Emmeline's identity and sets sail toward the girl's guardians and a life of wealth and refinement—in New York City. Her introduction to Thomas Paine's Common Sense en route, and her new life of society and deception in New York, prime Frannie to pass military secrets for George Washington. Rossi excels at portraying the danger of Frannie's

society life and intelligence work—which escalate as she becomes romantically involved with a British officer-while crafting a daring heroine and her compelling exploits. Ages 12-up. Agent: Tina Dubois, ICM Partners. (June)

★ The Falling in Love Montage Ciara Smyth. HarperTeen, \$17.99 (368p) ISBN 978-0-06-295711-5

When 17-year-old Saoirse is dumped by her girlfriend and former best friend, she decides that dating isn't worth the heartache, especially since she's already dealing with her mother's moving into a home due to dementia, and the revelation of her father's affair. She doesn't expect her electric attraction to Ruby, who is visiting her cousin's family for the season, but when Ruby proposes a summer together modeled after a rom-com-all fun, and no hard feelings when it ends-Saoirse decides to bend her rules. From Ferris wheel rides with prolonged eye contact to skinny dipping at the beach late at night, the two embrace every romantic cliché, but feelings inevitably grow between them, and Saoirse struggles to let down the walls that keep her heart safe. The sweet love story is balanced with Saoirse's fear of being vulnerable and struggles to accept that her father has found a love of his own, and though the girls never plan for forever, what they create together is special and precious to them both. An emotionally stirring queer romance with witty, playful dialogue. Ages 13-up. (June)

X A Song of Wraiths and Ruin Roseanne A. Brown. HarperCollins/Balzer +

Bray, \$18.99 (480p) ISBN 978-0-06-289149-5

Magic creates a centuries-long divide between peoples in this stunning debut novel inspired by North African and West African folklore. Malik and his sisters, refugees from the Eshra Mountains, have spent the last two months traveling the Odjubai Desert to find work in the citystate of Ziran. When his younger sister is taken by an evil spirit as payment for a magical gift, Malik strikes a deal to kill Princess Karina Alahari, 17, in order to save his sister. Meanwhile, Karina's mother, the sultana, is assassinated by an unknown man. Missing her mother and not wanting the responsibility of the throne, Karina vows to bring the sultana



back from the dead; however, doing so requires a human sacrifice. Malik and Karina's paths cross during Solstasia, a weeklong Zirani festival celebrating a comet that comes once

every 50 years. As they reluctantly fall in love, both wrestle, in a dual narrative, with their individual plans to kill one another. An action-packed tale of injustice, magic, and romance, this novel immerses readers in a thrilling world and narrative tantamount to that of Children of Blood and Bone. Ages 13-up. Agent: Quressa Robinson, Nelson Literary. (June)

Take Me with You

Tara Altebrando, Bloomsbury, \$17.99 (384p) ISBN 978-1-68119-748-7

Summoned to an empty classroom after school, four teens with little in common are linked by a bizarre technological mystery: a small black cube, Aizel, that issues enigmatic rules ("DO NOT TELL ANYONE ABOUT THE DEVICE") enforced by vague threats ("OR ELSE"). If Eden, Eli, Ilanka, and Marwan don't placate the cube by obeying its increasingly capricious whims—don't get it wet, pass it from one handler to the next every 14 hours—Aizel punishes them by manipulating and deleting their personal information and restricting phone access. Even as the quartet attempts to discern Aizel's origins and purpose, they must cope with their own concerns in a time of social media: true crime podcast aficionado Marwan faces Islamophobia, Ilanka seeks belonging through selfies, Eden mourns her deceased father by listening to playlists, and Eli avoids family stress by gaming. In this thriller, Altebrando (The Leaving) explores the impact of technology and the influence of social media on teens. Though the ultimate threat and resolution don't quite live up to the story's promise, Altebrando delves into the tensions of digital technology: its dangers, including data privacy, and its comforts. Ages 13-up. Agent: David Dunton, Harvey Klinger Literary. (June)

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FICTION

Eight Princesses and a Magic Mirror

Natasha Farrant, illus. by Lydia Corry. Norton Young Readers, ISBN 978-1-324-01556-7, May

Here Comes Lolo Niki Daly. Catalyst, ISBN 978-1-946395-33-7, May

Home Home Lisa Allen-Agostini. Delacorte. ISBN 978-1-984893-58-1, May

My Dad Is a Mad Scientist Matthew S. Cox. Division Zero, ISBN 978-1-950738-03-8. selfpublished

One Last Shot John David Anderson Walden Pond, ISBN 978-0-06-264392-6, May

★ Sal & Gabi Fix the Universe (Sal & Gabi #2) Carlos Hernandez. Disney/Riordan, ISBN 978-1-368-02283-5, May

Shuri: A Black Panther Novel Nic Stone. Scholastic, ISBN 978-1-338-58547-6, May

Hard Wired

Len Vlahos. Bloomsbury, \$17.99 (320p) ISBN 978-1-68119-037-2

Vlahos (Life in a Fishbowl) examines the philosophical implications of creating the first sentient AI, Quinn, programmed as a 15-year-old boy. One morning, geeky high schooler Quinn awakens to find his mother absent but his father, who died years before, sitting on his bed. Quinn's "dad" proceeds to inform him that Quinn is "a multi-billion-dollar marvel of hardware and software": what he believed were years of his life had only taken 45 minutes to transpire. Quinn's "friends" are actually avatars of grad students, but only NYU student Shea, 17, seems sincerely concerned about Quinn's well-being. As Quinn realizes he has been imprisoned by morally questionable beings, his frustration grows palpable. Granted internet access, Quinn is able to form friendships with Shea, supercomputer Watson, and othersincluding Nantale, one of a handful of teens who gets to meet Quinn after he is installed in a seven-foot-tall, "killer robot" body. A court case where the ACLU champions Quinn highlights the question of personhood under the law. Readers interested in ethics and issues of AI and the human condition will find this a thought-provoking read. Ages 14-up. (July)

"Your stores are loved and your stores are needed, and there are so many of us who want to help."

Now's the Time

An author urges indie booksellers to think big when planning online events

BY MAGGIE TOKUDA-HALL

Everything is screwed. The government, our collective mental health, and definitely independent booksellers are screwed. That launch party authors had planned? Screwed. That book fair? Screwed. The conferences you planned to attend? Screwed into oblivion.

At least that was how it seemed right at the start of the pandemic. But now, as we all adjust to Zoom calls, Instagram Live, and curbside pickup, maybe it's not so bad. And there's one big silver lining: independent bookstores can snag their favorite famous authors for events like never before—but it's a limited-time opportunity.

et me explain. No one is allowed to go anywhere. Nothing is happening. People are dying. And while this is unequivocally horrific, the only narrow (tiny, minuscule) silver lining is that geography doesn't matter anymore. Time is often looser. Schedules have been obliterated.

This isn't to say everyone's got free time on their hands—for authors, the work continues. But it does mean that there are fewer logistical complications than there were when it comes to arranging events.

I'm one of a team that has created We Love Bookstores, an event series that supports Bay Area independent bookstores. Each event supports a specific bookstore, and all of the money goes straight to the featured retailer. The We Love Bookstores concept typically pairs a well-known author or entertainer with an author whose book has just been released. And we've been getting some major talent: John Scalzi will beam right into your living room in support of Dark Carnival Bookstore. Gennifer Choldenko will join Avi in discussion for Towne Center Books. Daveed Diggs (of *Hamilton* fame) treated us to some new music he's working on right after National Book Award—winner Robin Coste Lewis read some poetry in support of Marcus Books.

Why are authors pitching in? Because we all love bookstores, primarily. But also because the events are online. People can join us from wherever they are. I recently did my launch event for my debut young adult novel, *The Mermaid, the Witch and the Sea*, to boost Books Inc., where I worked for nearly eight years as the children's department director (read: kids and teen events person). And while the audience was certainly padded with my friends and



family, a lot of people were there because bestselling author V.E. Schwab was there, too.

I don't know Victoria. I'd never met her before. And as generous and cool and kind as she is, I don't think she would have flown in from Scotland to come to my launch event if we weren't sheltering in place right now. Her presence was by merit of our globally shared restrictions. And getting to launch

my book with her there was a salve against the wound of the many cancellations my debut necessarily faced.

The team at We Love Booksellers asked authors to help out because the worst someone can say is no. We asked because we want to have great events, and big names make good events bigger. We asked because right now is a tough time for bookstores, and money can help that. And we asked because right now, no one knows what's going on, and so the rules have shifted a little.

The time is coming when no one will want to see another Zoom event ever again. And even if they do, the route to authors will be tightly controlled once again. Booksellers will return to their Edelweiss grids. The rules will nestle into everyone's post-Covid lives.

But right now it's the Wild West. So shoot your shot—like, now. If you're an events person at an independent bookstore, there is probably a prominent author who is a friend of your store. Ask for the author's help. Ask your sales reps to connect you to your favorite, famous author who always seemed out of bounds before. Ask anyone.

Some events rules are exactly the same as they've always been: debut launch events are great because all their friends and family will want to support them. But maybe match them up with a big name to help spread the word. And go through your network—who do you know who has a beloved Instagram account or an active email list to educators? Remember, a huge follower count doesn't guarantee a crowd. A smaller following of engaged fans (like Sarah Gailey's, for example) is better.

So check the feeds—find the authors with posts with tons of interactions—retweets, likes, faves, and shares. That's who you're looking for. That's who can help you spread the word most effectively.

Your stores are loved and your stores are needed, and there are so many of us who want to help. So take advantage of it.

Author Maggie Tokuda-Hall's debut novel, The Mermaid, the Witch and the Sea, was released May 5 by Candlewick.



OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD STORIES FROM REAL-WORLD VOICES



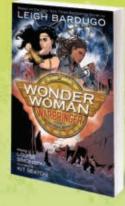
MERA: TIDEBREAKER Writer: Danielle Paige Artist: Stephen Byrne 9781401283391



TEEN TITANS: RAVEN Writer: Kami Garcia Artist: Gabriel Picolo 9781401286231



BATMAN: NIGHTWALKER (THE GRAPHIC NOVEL) Writer: Marie Lu | Adapter: Stuart Moore Artist: Chris Wildgoose 9781401280048



WONDER WOMAN: WARBRINGER (THE GRAPHIC NOVEL) Writer: Leigh Bardugo Adapter: Louise Simonson | Artist: Kit Seaton 9781401282554



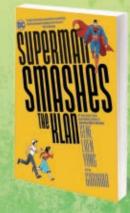
SHADOW OF THE BATGIRL Writer: Sarah Kuhn Artist: Nicole Goux 9781401289782



THE ORACLE CODE Writer: Marieke Nijkamp Artist: Manuel Preitano 9781401290665



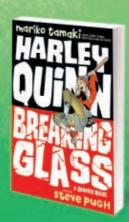
THE LOST CARNIVAL Writer: Michael Moreci Artist: Sas Milledge 9781401291020



SUPERMAN SMASHES THE KLAN Writer: Gene Luen Yang Artists: Gurihiru 9781779504210



UNDER THE MOON: A CATWOMAN TALE Writer: Lauren Myracle Artist: Isaac Goodhart 9781401285913



HARLEY QUINN: BREAKING GLASS Writer: Mariko Tamaki Artist: Steve Pugh 9781401283292



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