

DECEMBER '11



The Sisters

A Novel, by Nancy Jensen

"This is a powerful story of family through three generations, beginning with two sisters from a small town in Kentucky. In 1927, a tragedy and a misunderstanding separate them when they are both in their teens. We follow their stories and those of their daughters up to 2007. Jensen shows us that strong women are able to use lives cobbled together out of fear and pain as building blocks to create something resembling happiness, or at least stability. This debut novel is a page-turner with characters that remain with the reader long after the book is closed."

—Marian Nielsen, Orinda Books, Orinda, CA



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The Angel Makers

by Jessica Gregson

"Based on a true story, this tale involves a young orphan who lives with the town midwife in a remote area of Hungary. Together, they help the town's wives resolve their issues with their abusive husbands—with the help of arsenic. During World War I, these women learn to cope for themselves, and then take matters into their own hands after their husbands return. But will they get away with it?"

—Beth Carpenter, The Country Bookshop, Southern Pines, NC



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Catherine the Great

Portrait of a Woman, by Robert K. Massie

"This is an admiring biography of the minor German princess who, through cleverness, audacity, and ambition, deposed her incompetent husband, a grandson of Peter the Great, to become Empress of Russia. An 'enlightened' autocrat, Catherine did not succeed at all she attempted, but Massie argues persuasively that she truly earned the title bestowed upon her by the Russian people. What a woman, what a book!"

—Arlene Cook, Watermark Book Company, Anacortes, WA



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Mourad

New Moroccan: The Cookbook, by Mourad Lahlou

"Foodies and book-lovers rejoice! Lahlou's new book is the perfect title for your holiday gift list. This cookbook reads like a memoir, with an engaging introduction by the self-taught chef, several special sections to help the home cook get started, and more than 100 recipes that are perfectly presented, all interspersed with beautiful food and location photographs. You'll want to read this cookbook from start to finish, but save time for cooking—the food is delicious!"

—Roni K. Devlin, Literary Life Bookstore & More, Grand Rapids, MI



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Harbor

A Novel, by John Ajvide Lindqvist

"We've had a lot of ice-cold Scandinavian mysteries lately, but now here is a fantastic new thriller from a Swedish master of suspense. *Harbor* is the story of a father's refusal to abandon his desperate search for his vanished daughter. He must search beneath the ice as well as through decades of secrets that an entire town has conspired to keep hidden. This highly complex story skips though time, each event slowly adding levels of both character and context. Original and chilling!"

—Flannery Fitch, Bookshop Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA



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The Drop

by Michael Connelly

"Harry Bosch continues his single-minded pursuit of justice as a confusing cold case leads him to murders spread over 20 years. At the same time, the Los Angeles detective is forced to negotiate departmental politics when he is assigned to investigate the seeming suicide of a councilman's son. Over the course of many novels, Connelly continues to create an intriguing, nuanced character, and the tribute to his ability is that a fresh Bosch appears in every novel and never grows stale."

—Bill Cusumano, Nicola's Books, Ann Arbor, MI



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Family Legacy

by Jack O'Halloran

"Two boys, both named Jack, born into different dynasties—one Mafia, one political—are each destined to play a major role in American history. This fast-paced novel about the early days of the Mafia and the lives of immigrants coming to the United States looking for streets paved with gold reveals a world where crime and politics, money and murder, power and greed are all linked. This debut will grab your attention from the beginning and not let go until the powerful conclusion."

—Karen Briggs, Great Northern Books & Hobbies, Oscoda, MI



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DECEMBER '11

Second Read

Writers Look Back at Classic Works of Reportage, James Marcus and the Staff of the Columbia Journalism Review, Eds.

"Covering a range of long-form journalism from classics such as James Agee's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* to less well-known works including Rian Malan's *My Traitor's Heart* and Betty McDonald's *Anybody Can Do Anything*, contemporary journalists offer fresh looks at the work of previous generations in this rich collection."

—Sarah Rettger, Newtonville Books, Newton, MA



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DECEMBER '11

Blue Nights

by Joan Didion

"In *The Year of Magical Thinking*, Didion was able to clearly convey her emotions following the death of her husband while maintaining every bit of her iconic and masterful style. *Blue Nights* is both a continuation of that earlier book and a completely different work that takes the form of a stream-of-consciousness examination of life told through memory snapshots of the life and loss of her daughter, Quintana Roo, as well as Didion's own doubts and fears. This is a haunting, beautiful book."

—Michael Link, Joseph-Beth Booksellers, Cincinnati, OH



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DECEMBER '11

BarnHeart

The Incurable Longing for a Farm of One's Own: A Memoir,
by Jenna Woginrich

"This is the delightfully entertaining story of a young woman who longs to own her own farm. Woginrich wants to plant her garden, raise chickens and sheep, and play her banjo—all excellent pursuits, but hard to do while holding down a nine-to-five job and struggling on a rented farm. By sheer determination, she finally gets her own farm and everything that goes along with it. Written with great humor, and sure to be enjoyed by those with farm envy!"

—Sherri Gallentine, Vroman's Bookstore, Pasadena, CA



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420 Characters

Stories, by Lou Beach

"Edgy and funny, smart, dark, and thought-provoking, Beach's short-short stories reveal world's of meaning in single paragraphs. While perhaps not for everyone, they are definitely an entertaining read and are accompanied by collages by the author."

—Carol Schneck, Schuler Books & Music, Okemos, MI



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DECEMBER '11

Stone of Kings

In Search of the Lost Jade of the Maya, by Gerard Helferich

"In the spirit of Indiana Jones, author Helferich takes us on an amazing journey through history and into the mountains of Guatemala in search of the lost jade of the Maya. If you relish great fireside tales of adventure or going into the jungles from your armchair, you'll enjoy this book. And if you happen to be a gem or rock lover, even better! By the way, you may be surprised to learn that jade comes in more colors than just green—especially the good stuff!"

—Linda Bond, Auntie's Bookstore, Spokane, WA



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Three-Day Town

A Deborah Knott Mystery, by Margaret Maron

"In her latest Deborah Knott mystery, Maron injects an added spark by spiriting Deborah and her husband, Dwight, to a new locale—a delayed honeymoon in New York City. Circumstances, including a murder at their borrowed apartment, bring them in contact with Maron's detective from another series, Sigrid Harald, and introduce a new cast of fascinating personalities. I'm always glad to see a new mystery from Maron and look forward to more of both Knott and Harald!"

—Rosemary Pugliese, Quail Ridge Books & Music, Raleigh, NC



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DECEMBER '11

Walt Disney's Donald Duck

"Lost in the Andes": The Complete Carl Barks Disney Library, by Carl Barks

"In Carl Barks' Duckburg, we see all the human frailties: Donald Duck's anger, Scrooge's ambition, and the Beagle Boys' greed. Barks was a virtuoso artist and writer who combined breakneck action with detailed and subtle art. You will find a master at his peak in 'Lost in the Andes,' and your inner-child will thank you."

—Eric Schultheis, Books Inc., San Francisco, CA



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DECEMBER '11

I Am Half-Sick of Shadows

A Flavia de Luce Novel, by Alan Bradley

"The latest adventure featuring 11-year-old chemist/sleuth Flavia de Luce is a Christmas gift in itself. Flavia's home is brimming with people as there is a film crew renting the manor to make a new movie and a Christmas Eve blizzard has stranded half of the citizens of Bishop's Lacey there as well. When a murder takes place, Flavia has to divide her time between 'helping' the police solve the crime and finishing the trap she is making to catch Father Christmas. The result is delightful!"

—Linda Walonen, Bay Books, San Ramon, CA



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Rain Falls Like Mercy

A Novel, by Jack Todd

"In 1940s Wyoming, they're used to the occasional mean drunk, some stolen cattle, or Friday night fights, but what's new to them is the killing and mutilation of a young girl. Sheriff Tom Call is on the case, and all he can tell from the crime scene is that the killer has remarkably small feet. That's not much to go on, and when WWII breaks out there's nobody left to care about the fate of one little girl. Todd's novel reads like a three-part play: the initial murder investigation involving several key players; the war years when the players are sent overseas and experience both terror and brutality; and finally post-war, where the killer is back from the shadows and ready for fresh blood. Recommended for fans of Westerns, crime stories, mysteries, and even history, as the WWII section is rich in detail."

—Peter Schulte, Tattered Cover Book Store, Denver, CO



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The Wedding Quilt

An Elm Creek Quilts Novel, by Jennifer Chiaverini

"Written in Chiaverini's soft and gentle style, this latest in the series will appeal to quilters and non-quilters alike. Sarah has planned to make a quilt for her daughter as a wedding gift and has asked family and friends to sign blocks. Flashbacks take place as quilts, passions, traditions, struggles, and loves are remembered and shared."

—Cheryl Kroger, Chapters Books & Gifts, Seward, NE



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Sybil Exposed

The Extraordinary Story Behind the Famous Multiple Personality Case, by Debbie Nathan

"The powerful story of Sybil and her personalities has been absorbed into American culture since the 1973 release of the international bestseller. Now, Nathan's thorough investigation and captivating reporting exposes one of the greatest psychiatric hoaxes of all time. Delving deep into the case history and lives of the three women central to the story of *Sybil*—Shirley Mason, renamed Sybil in the book, her doctor Cornelia Wilbur, and author Flora Schreiber—Nathan presents a thoroughly convincing argument detailing how an ambitious doctor with a pet theory played on the damaged psyche of a sensitive, insecure woman to create a psychiatric case that brought them fame and fortune, but not healing."

—Whitney Spotts, Schuler Books & Music, Lansing, MI



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The Pilgrim

A Novel, by Hugh Nissenson

"The reader is transported back to the earliest days of the settling of America by the sworn statement of one Charles Wentworth, who came to Plymouth soon after the Mayflower landing. The powerful influence of religion and the church is portrayed through his struggles with both his humanity and his faith, as Charles mourns the tragic loss of his betrothed while at the same time reveling in the death of the 'savages' who must be conquered to create a safe new home. This is a great work of historical fiction."

—Carol Katsoulis, Anderson's Bookshop, Naperville, IL



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Lightning Rods

A Novel, by Helen DeWitt

"Joe, an out-of-work encyclopedia salesman, has a lot of ideas. Most are useless, but he stumbles upon a solution to the problem of sexual harassment and low productivity in the workplace. His unconventional idea is an immediate hit for corporate offices, but Joe is then forced to take on the stigma of being very successful at something that is revolting to most. Reminiscent of the writings of both Shteyngart and Palahniuk, *Lightning Rods* avoids pretention by being bizarrely funny and satisfyingly sardonic."

—Rachel Haisley, The King's English Bookshop, Salt Lake City, UT



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