

# OCTOBER '11



## When She Woke

**A Novel, by Hillary Jordan**

"Inspired by *The Scarlet Letter*, this is a stunning, suspenseful, and scary look at what happens to Hannah Payne when she is arrested and convicted of having an abortion in a futuristic America. Her punishment is to become a 'chrome,' a criminal whose skin color is genetically altered to reflect her crime. Hannah becomes a Red for the crime of murder, and she further complicates her situation by refusing to name the father of her unborn child. Once chromed, she is released and must survive as best she can. Her navigation through the perils of a hostile society launches Hannah on a journey of self-discovery and makes readers question the consequences of politicizing the personal. Jordan's characters are compelling and her pacing is flawless; I couldn't put this book down!"

—Erica Caldwell, Present Tense, Batavia, NY



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## The Orchard

**A Memoir, by Theresa Weir**

"Weir's memoir is not only the story of her struggle as a troubled youth, but also of her acceptance into the hard life of a farmer's wife under an oppressive and controlling family matriarch. *The Orchard* is a love letter to her husband and to the life that they built together, as well as a love letter to nature and what nature will yield. It is also a tale of caution regarding the great harm that is done with pesticides and aggressive farming. Weir tells her story with grace, compassion, and unflinching honesty."

—Calvin Crosby, Book Passage, Corte Madera, CA



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## The Dovekeepers

**A Novel, by Alice Hoffman**

"The deaths of 900 Jews at Masada in 70 CE remains a terrifying tale. Through Hoffman's stunning prose, we meet four women as they weave their way to Herod's ancient fortress, believing the mountain top can withstand any siege. Yael, daughter of an assassin, is in search of her brother; Revka, a baker's wife, arrives with her grandsons in the wake of her daughter's murder; Shira is a sorceress and mother figure to all except her own daughter, Aziza, who has chosen the warrior's path. As dovekeepers for the besieged community, they care for both the birds and each other. This haunting novel puts an unforgettable human face on a terrible tragedy that will stay with the reader for a long time."

—Anne Holman, The King's English Bookstore, Salt Lake City, UT



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## Rin Tin Tin

**The Life and the Legend, by Susan Orlean**

"This is the story of a young man whose fateful journey collides with that of a battlefield puppy, setting into motion an extraordinary tale of devotion. Beginning with a tale of redemption, Orlean unfolds a riveting account of the history of both the German shepherd, whose breed exemplifies the good-natured qualities that have made dog and human relationships unparalleled in society, and early American movie making. The result is a wonderful odyssey beautifully depicting loyalty and friendship in a remarkable history lesson and an entertaining read."

—Megan Bruce, Watermark Books & Café, Wichita, KS



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## A Thousand Lives

**The Untold Story of Hope, Deception, and Survival at Jonestown, by Julia Scheeres**

"How could a racially progressive preacher in San Francisco lead more than 900 people to group suicide? How could dozens of parents ever come to poison their children? Even this riveting piece of journalism can't fully answer such grueling questions, but Scheeres does an excellent job humanizing this tragedy while poignantly showing the evolution from hope and belief to desperation."

—Pete Mulvihill, Green Apple Books, San Francisco, CA



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## Reamde

**A Novel, by Neal Stephenson**

"Neal Stephenson has once again proven his breathtaking skill and mastery with a diverse range of characters and subjects. He brings together online gaming, the Russian mafia, hackers, terrorists, fantasy authors, and one resourceful former smuggler in a razor-sharp thriller. Reamde is a book for anyone who enjoys an intelligent and plausible adventure. If we truly live in a global society, then it's Neal Stephenson who not only knows how to draw the map of this new world, but can take us anywhere on that map with speed, grace, and agility."

—Karen Tallant, The Booksellers at Laurelwood, Memphis, TN



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## What It Is Like to Go to War

**by Karl Marlantes**

"This is a courageous, noble, and intelligent grapple with myth, history, and spirituality that beautifully elevates the conversation on the role of the military in today's world. Marlantes volunteers his knowledge and experience (and really, his soul) to the cause of crafting the model of a just and ethical warrior in the 21st century. The long-overdue reckoning that Marlantes' novel *Matterhorn* deftly demanded of America is enhanced and extended with this new work. It is an emotional, honest, and affecting primer for all Americans on war and the national psyche. We ignore this book at our own peril."

—Ed Conklin, Chaucer's Books, Santa Barbara, CA



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## Following Atticus

**Forty-Eight High Peaks, One Little Dog, and an Extraordinary Friendship, by Tom Ryan**

"Reader, beware! This is not just another dog book! When Tom Ryan welcomed Atticus M. Finch, a miniature schauzuer, into his life, little did he know what courage, pluck, and unwavering love he would get in the bargain. This is a beautifully written book about the very special bond between a man and his dog, an amazing quest, and the mountains that healed them."

—Barbara Drake, White Birch Books, North Conway, NH



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## I Married You for Happiness

**A Novel, by Lily Tuck**

"Lily Tuck's new novel is a gem. Sitting beside the body of her husband who has died unexpectedly while she was making dinner, Nina spends the whole night with his body, remembering their marriage of 43 years—the early years as well as the highlights, both the good and the difficult. Written with honesty by a woman who clearly understands relationships and all of the intimacies and secrets that go along with marriage, this is a novel to be savored."

—Penny McConnell, Norwich Bookstore, Norwich, VT



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**OCTOBER '11**

## The Cat's Table

**A Novel, by Michael Ondaatje**

"In a story of intricate delicacy and beauty, Ondaatje not only tells the wondrous story of three boys at sea—a journey that takes them each from one world to another and into the realm of adult ways and mysteries—but also one that has the reader in thrall to what it is to look back and remember. *The Cat's Table* is a luscious, bittersweet rumination on imagination, memory, and place, and what we find by reclaiming what we've lost."

—Rick Simonson, The Elliott Bay Book Company, Seattle, WA



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## American Boy

**A Novel, by Larry Watson**

"Pure. Simple. Classic. Little more needs to be said about Larry Watson's utterly breathtaking coming-of-age novel featuring two high school chums, Johnny Dunbar and Matthew Garth. This novel takes a fresh look at that time of life, the teen years, when everything happens so suddenly and with such ferociousness—a time of intensity, immediacy, and raw emotions. Watson captures it all in this wonderful novel. I recommend it without reserve to every reader who appreciates life and fine literature."

—Nancy Simpson, The Book Vault, Oskaloosa, IA



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## The Forgotten Waltz

**A Novel, by Anne Enright**

"Enright's new book is a beautifully written drama of passionate love and desire. In a suburb of Dublin, Gina Moynihan remembers first meeting the love of her life, a married man with a young daughter, and the ensuing story illustrates the complications of marriage, family, and friendships. The characters are richly described, and the story is both touching and real."

—Ellen Burns, Books on the Common, Ridgefield, CT



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## If Jack's in Love

**A Novel, by Stephen Wetta**

"Jack Witcher's voice is one of the most heartbreaking I've heard in a long time. He's 12 going on 13 and in love with Myra Joyner. When Myra's brother goes missing and Jack's older brother, Stan, becomes the leading suspect in the disappearance, Jack's world starts to unravel. Not that he ever had it very good: his father is unemployed and hangs around the house watching soap operas; his brother is a pot-smoking 'hippie freak' with a terrible temper; and his mother is trying to understand why her family is the laughingstock of the town. Wetta has written a coming-of-age novel set in 1967 that is at once dark, witty, and charming."

—Ken Favell, Books & Company, Oconomowoc, WI



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## Feast Day of Fools

**A Novel, by James Lee Burke**

"James Lee Burke is a genre unto himself. No one can portray the power, beauty, and mystery of nature in the context of a story as he can, while also creating unforgettable characters trapped in unforgiving situations. As Hackberry Holland confronts the rampant criminality along the Mexican border, Burke keeps the reader on edge with his narrative and exposes the deterioration in our society at the same time."

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



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## Holy Ghost Girl

**A Memoir, by Donna M. Johnson**

"Johnson's treatment of her childhood immersed in the Pentecostal tent-meeting movement is flawless. She is truthful about her memories, but she does not rush to the judgment of others. Weak of flesh but strong in willpower, well-meaning Randall Terrell is the leader of a traveling group of the faithful. Tent meetings are huge, and once the donations become enough to cover bills, they soon lead to an excess that is all too familiar. This is an excellent book for those wanting to both know more about this particular spiritual movement and gain some understanding of the faith that kept the followers going."

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



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## Falling Together

**A Novel, by Marisa de los Santos**

"This is the story of three inseparable college friends—Pen, Cat, and Will—who finally go their separate ways until Will and Pen get a mysterious summons from Cat to their college reunion. What they find there is each other, but no Cat, only Cat's forlorn husband, Jason—the catalyst for the trio's split six years earlier. Jason tells them a story that sends them on a journey that changes everything. With these characters, de los Santos demonstrates that people aren't perfect, and that sometimes they aren't true to their friends or even to themselves, but that everybody—even the most flawed among us—deserves a version of 'happily ever after.'"

—Jill Miner, Saturn Booksellers, Gaylord, MI



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## The Kitchen Counter Cooking School

**How a Few Simple Lessons Transformed Nine Culinary Novices Into Fearless Home Cooks, by Kathleen Flinn**

"Flinn's love of cooking led her to study at Le Cordon Bleu and her first book, *The Sharper Your Knife, the Less You Cry*. After helping a clueless cook shop for healthy food at the supermarket, Flinn realized that most Americans are lost when it comes to feeding themselves and their families. She began a project to transform the cooking and buying habits of nine volunteers through cooking lessons. This is a fascinating study of the reliance of Americans on pre-packaged food and the importance of cooking for health and nourishment."

—Avery Dickey, Inkwood Books, Tampa, FL



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## Lost Memory of Skin

**A Novel, by Russell Banks**

"The Kid made a stupid mistake one night and is now excluded from society at the age of 22. Labeled as a sex offender, he is shackled to a GPS monitoring device and forbidden to live within 2,500 feet of anywhere children might gather. One of the few places that remain for him is under a causeway with other convicted sex offenders. Enter the Professor, a bearded, overweight genius with secrets of his own. Has society, with its low tolerance and lack of compassion, created new victims? Banks has tackled a theme important to our welfare as a society. Sure to elicit a stimulating discussion for book groups."

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



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## Damascus

**by Joshua Mohr**

"As *Damascus*, Mohr's third novel, is set in a bar, the comparisons to Charles Bukowski are inevitable. However, Mohr's worldview is far less caustic than Bukowski's. He gives readers a novel that pulls off the nearly impossible feat of breaking their hearts while lifting their souls and finds a lust for life in characters that have nothing left to lose. With *Damascus*, Mohr proves that he's the real deal: a talented writer who can take you to the edge without throwing you into the abyss."

—Gerry Donaghy, Powell's Books, Portland, OR



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## The Wandering Falcon

**by Jamil Ahmad**

"These linked tales set along the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan are unlike anything else you have read about the region. They offer a generous and moving portrait of a little understood way of life. This is the kind of fiction that moves beyond terms like 'great literature' and ventures on to terms like 'essential' and 'necessary.'"

—Robert Sindelar, Third Place Books, Lake Forest Park, WA



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