



The End of Everything

A Novel, by Megan Abbott

"Innocence ends abruptly for 13-year-old Lizzie and Evie. As bone-deep best friends and neighbors, Lizzie thought there were no secrets between them. But can we ever truly know one another? Evie disappears, and as the town frantically searches for the young girl, Lizzie becomes the focus of attention. Life can be confusing for 13-year-old girls, their bodies just awakening, their emotions not quite ready to be adult. Abbot perfectly captures the tragedy of vulnerability."

—Deon Stonehouse, Sunriver Books, Sunriver, OR



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The Flight of Gemma Hardy

A Novel, by Margot Livesey

"There is nothing like a good visit with old friends, and that is what it's like to savor this novel. Even better, really, since in this retelling of Jane Eyre the characters are imbued with a more modern sensibility—and this time around Mr. Rochester is not a reprehensible misogynist! Livesey's Gemma remains true to the spirit of Jane, and the dark settings of Scotland and the Orkney Islands are as atmospheric as they come. This is the perfect book to curl up with for a weekend with a pot o' tea—or perhaps a wee dram of something stronger."

—Emily Crowe, Odyssey Bookshop, South Hadley, MA



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A Good Hard Look

A Novel of Flannery O'Connor, by Ann Napolitano

"Although Flannery O'Connor's literary and personal history has been well examined, Napolitano shows an exquisite ability to capture the essence of mid-20th century Georgia and the fictional characters that O'Connor created. Some novelists might have been tempted to emulate her Southern Gothic style; Napolitano treads lightly in this field, letting tragedy work where it best fits. She captures both the joys and weaknesses of O'Connor's characters in a parallel to the beloved author's belief that it is difficult to distinguish between blessings and curses. *A Good Hard Look* is an artful novel that is as electrifying as O'Connor's peacocks and as magnetic as her life."

—Bill Threlfall, Tattered Cover Bookstore, Denver, CO



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The Little Women Letters

A Novel, by Gabrielle Donnelly

"Donnelly has written a vibrant, humorous, and heart-warming novel about three sisters who are the imagined descendants of those famous March sisters known to the rest of us as Louisa May Alcott's Little Women. There's Emma, who's about to be married; Lulu, who's undecided about a career; and Sophie, who is utterly theatrical, both on and off stage. You will fall in love with them—along with their friends and relatives—and wish that they lived next door!"

—Ellen Klein, Hooray for Books!, Alexandria, VA



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The Magician King

A Novel, by Lev Grossman

"Lev Grossman's *The Magicians*, my favorite novel of 2009 by a landslide, cleverly combined aspects of classic fantasy with modern literature and pop culture. With that groundwork in place, Grossman takes us back to Fillory with *The Magician King*. Quentin is a powerful sorcerer and a royal monarch who is bored out of his mind. He embarks on a seemingly menial errand to collect back taxes from a faraway island and stumbles into an epic and momentously important quest to save the magical world. Grossman's trademark eloquent-yet-hip writing style flourishes in this sequel."

—Greg Bruce, Boswell Book Company, Milwaukee, WI

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The Night Circus

A Novel, by Erin Morgenstern

"This elegant debut is a striking example of a nostalgic yet modern fairy tale. When two competing magicians lay a wager as to which can mold the more powerful protege, they opt to use a fantastical traveling wonderland—*The Night Circus*—as the venue for the competition. What is meant to be a battle of magical skills evolves into something much deeper as apprentices Celia and Marco enchant not only the circus around them, but also each other. The real conflict arises when the two realize how the competition is meant to end and they set about trying to change their predestined fate."

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

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The Return of Captain John Emmett

A Mystery, by Elizabeth Speller

"It is in particular stories of war that we are forced to see the cost of one life lost and how that loss effects so many others. Speller's novel of the aftermath of World War I is such a story. After his military service has ended, John Emmett is found dead, an apparent suicide. His grieving sister Mary calls on Laurence Bartram, an old schoolmate, to help her understand what has happened. This is a compelling story with a sympathetic protagonist who finds that there are seldom easy answers, few happy endings, and no good wars."

—Laura Keys, Blue Elephant Book Shop Inc., Decatur, GA

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Tolstoy and the Purple Chair

My Year of Magical Reading, by Nina Sankovitch

"This graceful memoir describes a true love affair with books. After losing her 46-year-old sister to cancer, Sankovitch embarks on a year of reading: one book every day for a full year. Her project, complete with daily book reviews, becomes an ongoing conversation with her sister and provides insight into her own past and contact with bibliophiles across the world. This is the best description of the power of books that I have ever encountered!"

—Caitlin Doggart, Where the Sidewalk Ends, Chatham, MA

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The Train of Small Mercies

A Novel, by David Rowell

"Old and young, black and white, nuns and bikers, girls in bikinis and men in military uniforms, all gathered to pay homage to Robert Kennedy as his funeral train passed by. This novel depicts a day in the lives of six characters who are looking for hope in an America overcome by grief. All ask the same question: Who now will stand up for those who need championing? A stunning debut!"

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



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A Trick of the Light

A Chief Inspector Gamache Novel, by Louise Penny

"I love character-driven suspense novels with a strong sense of place, and Penny's series featuring Chief Inspector Armand Gamache and set in the magical world of Three Pines, Quebec, fits that bill. In *A Trick of the Light*, artist Clara Morrow's celebration of her first major exhibition in Montreal is followed by the discovery of a murdered woman's body in her garden. The subtle shadings of Penny's characters and the twists of the plot make this tale a work of art in its own right. Highly recommended!"

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



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Untold Story

A Novel, by Monica Ali

"Spoiler alert! This perfect summer read ties into the recent Royal Wedding so tightly that one feels rather guilty in a faintly voyeuristic way. It is also fascinating as an imagined, but quite believable, character study. And best of all, it comes from the pen of the wonderful Monica Ali!"

—Dana Brigham, Brookline Booksmith, Brookline, MA



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Zone One

A Novel, by Colson Whitehead

"Finally, a zombie novel that's a literary tour de force! Whitehead's post-apocalyptic world decimated by zombies has a resonance well beyond the supernatural. The narrator, Mark Spitz (not that Mark Spitz), who is working with a team trying to eliminate infected stragglers in Zone One of Manhattan, recounts his experiences since the beginning of the terror. This story stayed in my mind for weeks."

—Carole Horne, Harvard Book Store, Cambridge, MA



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