



OCTOBER '12

The End of Your Life Book Club

by Will Schwalbe

"What a remarkable book! Not only a love letter to his mom, but a love letter to books and their power to help us all remember both the struggle and the joy it is to be human and the grace we can find in our shared humanity. I fell head over heels for Mary Ann Schwalbe, thanks to her son's meticulous and loving tribute. In someone else's hands this is the kind of book that could have slipped into the maudlin or overwrought, but Schwalbe succeeds in portraying his mother's quiet, humble, spot-on wisdom and beautiful daring with both restraint and passion. My copy is thoroughly dog-eared. Is there any better tribute?"

—Laurie Paus, The Elliott Bay Book Company, Seattle, WA



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Live by Night

A Novel, by Dennis Lehane

"This is a stunning epic of a young Irish gangster coming up in the vicious underworld of the Prohibition era who carries the loaded pedigree of being the son of the Boston police chief. Knocked off his game by his first great love, he falls prey to the Italian mob boss who makes him his own and then punishes him for his success. From Charlestown to Tampa to Havana, this stay-up-all-night page-turner is rich in both history and suspense."

—Elizabeth Houghton Barden, Big Hat Books, Indianapolis, IN



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The Lighthouse Road

A Novel, by Peter Geye

"The hurts and burdens of the past as well as the cold and unforgiving North Country conspire against the happiness of the beautifully drawn characters in Geye's latest novel. Even on a journey to a new town in a specially crafted boat, Rebekah and Odd cannot escape the past. People are not always what they seem to be in this story, and outcomes cannot be predicted. A compelling read from an author of great skill and versatility."

—Vicki Erwin, Main Street Books, Saint Charles, MO



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Telegraph Avenue

A Novel, by Michael Chabon

"On the surface, *Telegraph Avenue* is the story of Archy and Nat—longtime proprietors of Brokland Records, a community staple in the variegated neighborhoods of Oakland, California—who face an invasion of Walmart proportions. But intertwined with their struggle is an exploration of so much more: love, in all its forms; race; gentrification; modern medicine; blaxploitation films; vinyl records; and the absolute greatness of jazz and funk. I don't think there's a writer alive who can structure a sentence the way Chabon does, and he's given us yet another masterful, unsparring novel whose vivid characters will inhabit your heart long after the final page."

—Amanda Hurley, Inkwood Books, Tampa, FL



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The Round House

A Novel, by Louise Erdrich

"When 13-year-old Joe's world is shattered by a horrific crime perpetrated against his mother, he seeks to right the wrong. Erdrich masterfully lets the reader experience this period in Joe's life through his eyes. His world is drawn with sure strokes, and his family and their traditions and his friends and their exploits are convincing and real. Erdrich offers a view of life on an Ojibwe reservation as alternately rich in culture and disheartening in its injustice, poverty, and disrespect. Compelling and immediate, *The Round House* is a mesmerizing book."

—Jenny Lyons, The King's English Bookstore, Salt Lake City, UT



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Let the People In

The Life and Times of Ann Richards, by Jan Reid

"*Let the People In* is a rich, engaging look at one of the most exciting political figures of the last 40 years. Reid's biography captures the way Ann Richards thrilled, frustrated, and surprised people across the country again and again. In addition to divulging some of the inner workings of politics in Texas and Washington, Reid provides an in-depth look at Austin in its most formative decades. A great history, a great story, and a great read."

—Sam Ramos, The Book Cellar, Chicago, IL



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Love Anthony

by Lisa Genova

"In her new novel, Genova provides a unique view of unconditional love through Anthony, a boy with autism. His mother, Olivia, and neighbor, Beth, live on the island of Nantucket, where they meet on the shore and later discover how different yet troubled in similar ways their family lives are. Ultimately, the voice and thoughts of Anthony will slowly compel each of them to make a change that is positive. These women become truly admirable in their efforts, and Anthony is unforgettable."

—Kathleen Dixon, Islandtime Books and More, Washington Island, WI



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Sutton

A Novel, by J.R. Moehringer

"Willie Sutton's life was stranger than fiction so it seems only appropriate that Moehringer uses the novel form to describe the fascinating existence of the bank robber who became a folk hero. As Sutton travels about New York with two reporters after his release from prison, the reader is treated to a story almost beyond belief while being transported into another era. Moehringer's eye for detail and his ability to convey a gritty life and time make for a mesmerizing story."

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



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Some Girls, Some Hats and Hitler

A True Love Story Rediscovered, by Trudi Kanter

"Kanter's ability to take you inside her memories is phenomenal. Her tone is fluid, yet full of the tension of the times. You are there, seeing through her eyes. Her use of unique phrases – "it was delicious to know who was walking with whom" – and the way she speaks directly to her husband's memory add a refreshing and dreamlike familiarity to her prose. A love story, a reminder of a cruel period in history, and a book filled with hope, beautifully written. I'll never forget it!"

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



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The News From Spain

Seven Variations on a Love Story, by Joan Wickersham

"The messengers delivering *The News From Spain* vary among the stories in Wickersham's collection, but each serve to remind the reader how a short story can rank with the thickest novel as a vehicle for rich character development and breathtaking plot. The stories take us from an assisted living home to a boys' prep school, from a New York apartment where a paralyzed dancer is confined to a first-person story by Mozart's librettist set within a contemporary tale. Anyone who doubts that the short story form offers a satisfying literary experience should read this extraordinary collection."

—Cheryl McKeon, Rakestraw Books, Danville, CA



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How I Came to Sparkle Again

A Novel, by Kaya McLaren

"As she did in *On the Divinity of Second Chances*, McLaren uses the seemingly rarified setting of a mountain town to explore universal questions about family, love, and true happiness. McLaren's trio of lovable protagonists are all at important crossroads in their lives, and she weaves the stories of Jill, Lisa, and Cassie together as each finds meaningful ways to love authentically, create family, and discover what growing up truly means. This is a feel-good, fun read populated with colorful characters and filled with the sense of possibility."

—Libby Cowles, Maria's Bookshop, Durango, CO



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Accelerated

A Novel, by Bronwen Hruska

"What starts off as a send-up of overscheduled, gifted children and the Rambo parents and elite schools that create them quickly turns into a tale of a huge pharmaceutical conspiracy. When Sean reluctantly caves in to the pressure that New York City's most prestigious school exerts on him to start medicating his son, Toby, for seemingly nonexistent issues, there are disastrous consequences. Sean must gather his allies close and his enemies closer if he wants to take on this bedrock of prestige and wealth, whose arms of power extend eerily into every aspect of his life. A fast-paced read covering a topic about which every reader should be concerned."

—Emily Crowe, Odyssey Bookshop, South Hadley, MA



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Mr. Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore

A Novel, by Robin Sloan

"Booksellers and book lovers alike will adore charming Mr. Penumbra and his towering stacks of mysterious, code-filled tomes, as well as the array of eccentric old men that make up the store's late-night clientele. I now want to keep a log of our bookshop's customers by Mr. Penumbra's criteria: 'You must keep precise records of all purchases. Time. Amount. The customer's appearance. His state of mind. How he asks for the book. How he receives it. Does he appear to be injured. Is he wearing a sprig of rosemary on his hat. And so on.' Wonderful!"

—Andrea Aquino, Bookshop Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA



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Phantom

A Novel, by Jo Nesbø

"I suspect Nesbø is constitutionally incapable of writing a boring book. Oleg, the son of Harry Hole's erstwhile love, Rakel, has been arrested for murder, and Harry feels compelled to return to Norway to investigate, as he seriously doubts that the Oleg he was once so close to is capable of such an act. Nesbø's prose is intricate and intelligent. His ability to create mounting tension is almost Hitchcockian, yet he doesn't neglect the inner lives of his characters. Excellent!"

—Jennie Turner-Collins, Joseph-Beth Booksellers, Cincinnati, OH



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May We Be Forgiven

A Novel, by A.M. Homes

"Homes' latest darkly comic novel is more poignant and moving than it appears at first glimpse, and the rudderless, hapless Nixon scholar Harold Silver's year in the wilderness is more eye-opening than he can at first admit to himself. As Harry grows and grieves in his own way over the course of the insanity-laced year, we are happily along for the ride, unquestioningly loving the person he becomes. A truly remarkable feat of storytelling that both pulsates with the underlying ache of loss and manages to crack a couple of your ribs when you laugh too hard."

—Seth Marko, UCSD Bookstore, San Diego, CA



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It's Fine by Me

A Novel, by Per Petterson, Don Bartlett (trans.)

"This is a dark, brooding novel with a fine, thin, persistent theme of hope that life's better possibilities are just around the corner, waiting for Arvid Jansen (Norway's Holden Caulfield) to believe in them and in himself. A nuanced observation of the pain and disappointments of growing up from one bright and bruised young man's point of view, this is a book about the ordinary yet crushing losses we all incur and the decisions we make to pick ourselves up and continue forward. Petterson is a master at a kind of understated power, and this novel is well worth the reading."

—Linda Milleman, Tattered Cover Book Store, Denver, CO



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The Black Count

Glory, Revolution, Betrayal, and the Real Count of Monte Cristo, by Tom Reiss

"Reiss has written a fast-paced, engaging biography of Alexander Dumas' father. Seemingly ripped from the pages of his son's adventure novels, the mulatto pere de Dumas cuts an amazing figure in France on the cusp of revolution. History, biography, and adventure are woven into this exciting and rewarding read."

—Shawn Wathen, Chapter One Book Store, Hamilton, MT



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In Sunlight and in Shadow

A Novel, by Mark Helprin

"This magnificent, sweeping story, set in post-WWII Manhattan, took my breath away. I was torn between racing along the swift river of the narrative and needing to pause to drink in luminous sentences and searing paragraphs. The author feeds the soul of the reader as he describes the depths of mind, heart, and spirit of characters whose lives have been shaped by the war, the culture, and the city. A deeply romantic and supremely intelligent novel."

—Karen Frank, Northshire Bookstore, Manchester Center, VT



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The Paternity Test

A Novel, by Michael Lowenthal

"This novel is at once timely and classic. Readers won't be able to help rooting for Pat and Stu as they struggle to conceive a child through surrogacy and fight their family's—and their own—preconceived notions of what it means to be gay, all while trying to salvage their rocky relationship. Lowenthal's latest novel ultimately addresses the universal question: What makes a family a family? Deftly told and perfectly paced. Don't miss this one!"

—Alise Hamilton, Andover Bookstore, Andover, MA



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Black Fridays

A Novel, by Michael Sears

"This is not just an inside look at Wall Street but also a heartbreaking look at a father's unconditional love for a son afflicted by autism. Jason Stafford has paid the ultimate price for cheating as a trader on Wall Street—two years in prison. Recently released, he is determined to reclaim his life and the life of his son, but his first job may be his last as he is asked to look into the trades of a man who died in a boating accident. Or was it murder? Exceptional writing, engaging characters, and a plot both complicated and fascinating. I look forward to the sequel!"

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



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