



DECEMBER '14

Us

A Novel, by David Nicholls

"This gorgeous novel manages to be heart-wrenching and hilarious all at once. Connie tells Douglas that she suspects their 20-year marriage has 'run its course' right before they're set to leave on a European tour with their teenage son. Regardless, they take the trip and flashbacks of their more passionate days are interspersed with the narrative of their everything-at-stake adventure. A brilliant and humanizing picture of mature love—and a look at whether or not people truly outgrow each other."

—Mary Cotton, Newtonville Books, Newton, MA



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The Boston Girl

A Novel, by Anita Diamant

"Diamant brings a generation of women to life through the voice of Addie Baum. Born in 1900, Addie tells of her early childhood in Boston as the child of immigrant parents; her formative years as a Saturday Club girl, where she found her lifelong friends; her career path as a typist and journalist; and meeting her husband and finding meaningful work as a social worker. Her story plays out against a backdrop of some of the most basic issues women had to face as they found their places in 20th century America. A historical feat and a very enjoyable read."

—Jenny Lyons, The Vermont Book Shop, Middlebury, VT



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The Gigantic Beard That Was Evil

by Stephen Collins

"Slip into a black and white world where order reigns supreme and all untidiness must be eradicated. Dave lives a nondescript life in Here, until the day an untamable beard sprouts from his chin. Could the beard be a maleficent portal to There? Collins gently addresses the tangles of human existence in this playful graphic fable, perfect for fans of Edward Gorey and Roald Dahl."

—Rhianna Walton, Powell's Books, Portland, OR



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Enter Pale Death

A Joe Sandilands Investigation, by Barbara Cleverly

"The tales of pre-World War II Scotland Yard's Joe Sandilands are becoming addictive. Intrigue, political manipulations, the ever-present undercurrent of class differences, and the rising spectre of Nazism run throughout the series. Joe always expected to one day wed Dorcas and is alarmed to find that she has attached herself to her academic patron, Sir James Truelove. The detective is sent to Truelove's family estate to investigate the death of Sir James's wife. Murder investigations, just like true love, never run smoothly. Is Sandilands going to find the way through this snake's nest?"

—Becky Milner, Vintage Books, Vancouver, WA



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The Happiest People in the World

A Novel, by Brock Clarke

"This satiric treatment of weighty topics, including religious intolerance, provincialism, and the American obsession with Homeland Security, ranges from a backwater in Denmark to a backwater in upstate New York. It follows the plight of a hapless Danish cartoonist who unleashes chaos in his life by authoring a politically incorrect cartoon of Muhammad. Put into a witness protection program and improbably installed as a guidance counselor in the local high school, he is at the mercy of bumbling agents of the CIA and Homeland Security. His first time observations of America and Americans are priceless."

—Darwin Ellis, Books on the Common, Ridgefield, CT



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The Wild Truth

by Carine McCandless

"As sad as Jon Krakauer's *Into the Wild* was, the truth behind Chris McCandless's decision to divorce his parents after graduating from college is even more heartbreaking. Carine, his sister, does an admirable job telling the story of their shared, difficult childhood—rich in material goods, but poor in parental love and support. In public, their parents were wealthy and admired pillars of the community; in private, they abused their children both physically and emotionally. The truths Carine shares do much to redeem her brother's memory and to demonstrate how strong they both were in the face of adversity."

—Susan M. Taylor, Market Block Books, Troy, NY



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DECEMBER '14

Moriarty

A Novel, by Anthony Horowitz

"I've been reading Sherlock Holmes pastiches for 20 years, but I've never read anything as devious as this! After the famous encounter between Holmes and Moriarty at Reichenbach Falls, Inspector Athelney Jones and Pinkerton Agent Frederick Chase are thrown together to combat the rising shadow of an American crime boss looking to take over Moriarty's empire. Horowitz comes up with a unique voice with several parallels to the Holmes and Watson dynamic. As soon as you finish, you'll want to read it again with a new appreciation for Horowitz's masterful plotting. Exquisitely done!"

—Steven Sautter, Books Inc., San Francisco, CA



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Alphabet

A Novel, by Kathy Page

"This brutal novel of a young murderer's imprisonment, his attempt at rehabilitation, and his struggles to remain feeling like a human while caged like an animal is jarring. Page is an amazingly talented writer and her unflinching look at what makes us human and what we deserve in life will be relevant for ages."

—Liberty Hardy, RiverRun Bookstore, Portsmouth, NH



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The Midnight Plan of the Repo Man

A Novel, by **W. Bruce Cameron**

"This madcap romp through the not-so-scenic parts of northern Michigan—a very beautiful and scenic part of the country for the most part—will keep you laughing until the very last page. Let us hope that there are more Ruddy McCann adventures on the way as Cameron, the bestselling author of *A Dog's Purpose* and *A Dog's Journey*, could well become the Carl Hiaasen of the North."

—Jill Miner, Saturn Booksellers, Gaylord, MI



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DECEMBER '14

Small Victories

Spotting Improbable Moments of Grace, by **Anne Lamott**

"Thank Annie's god for her continued willingness to share the obvious, the hazy, and the crazy with us. This collection of new and selected essays is such that her 'old' stuff sounds new, and *Small Victories* becomes a refresher course in why we love Annie's books and her advice 'to fall in love with your own crazy, ruined self.'"

—Hope W. Mays, Bookmiser, Roswell, GA



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DECEMBER '14

Irène

The Commandant Camille Verhoeven Trilogy, by **Pierre Lemaitre, Frank Wynne, Trans.**

"This extremely suspenseful, fast-paced crime novel is not for the fainthearted. Its graphic violence may turn some readers away, but those who stick through the opening scenes will be richly rewarded by following Commander Verhoeven's pursuit of a monstrous serial killer who models his gruesome crimes on scenes from classic crime novels. The intense action is enriched by scenes from Verhoeven's domestic life, as well as the interactions among the distinct personalities of his Paris detective squad."

—Joe Strelbel, Anderson's Bookshops, Naperville, IL



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The Paris Winter

A Novel, by **Imogen Robertson**

"In 1909 Paris, a Russian princess, a French model, and a young Englishwoman meet at Academie Lafond, a school for aspiring female artists. It was a time when it was a woman's duty to marry and support her husband in his career and become the work of art, not the artist. These fictional characters are inspired by real women such as Suzanne Valadon, a friend and muse to Toulouse Lautrec; Ada Leigh, who ran a house for penniless English and American women in Paris; and Gertrude Stein, whose salon paintings noted in *The Paris Winter* were Picasso's. The reader, drawn into the underbelly of Paris with its backdrop of opium addiction, murder, and revenge, will be haunted by this tale long after the last page is turned."

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



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The Final Silence

by **Stuart Neville**

"Rea Carlisle inherited a house from an uncle she never knew. In it was a locked room, and when she forced open the door what she found terrified her—a book detailing the murders of a variety of people over a period of many years. After attempts to investigate were thwarted by her father, Rea reached out to the only policeman she knew, disgraced inspector Jack Lennon. When Lennon arrived, he found Rea dead, and he quickly became the number one suspect in her murder. What follows is a harrowing investigation that pulls down Rea's father, a local politician with ties to the IRA—ties that lead directly to a serial killer who will keep killing until he gets what he wants."

—Janice Hunsche, Kaleidosaurus Books, Metamora, IN



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The Heart Has Its Reasons

A Novel, by **Maria Duenas**

"Blanca Perea is a college professor in Madrid. When her husband announces that he is in love with another woman and is leaving her, Blanca's perfect world is shattered. Desperate, she flees Madrid and takes a position at a university near San Francisco. It is her job to probe into the history of a long-deceased writer and former professor, Andres Fontana. As Blanca immerses herself in Fontana's life, she becomes captivated by the things that drove him—his ambitions, his relationships, and his ill-fated lost love. As she untangles hidden agendas and lies, Blanca finds a strength that enables her to pursue a new life with new possibilities."

—Nancy Nelson, Sunriver Books, Sunriver, OR



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DECEMBER '14

Wait for Signs

Twelve Longmire Stories, by **Craig Johnson**

"Sometimes short stories hit the spot, especially when they're set in a favorite world. For years, Johnson has gifted his friends with stories at Christmas, and this anthology has brought them together for the first time, along with one new story. For the uninitiated, this is a wonderful introduction into Walt Longmire's world, and for those already familiar with Absaroka County, Wyoming, these snippets of time spent with favorite characters will be like little vacations, a series of short visits with old friends. Sometimes funny, sometimes touching, and always entertaining."

—JB Dickey, Seattle Mystery Bookshop, Seattle, WA



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DECEMBER '14

The Heart Does Not Grow Back

A Novel, by **Frank Venturini**

"If you possessed the power of human regeneration, what would you do with it? In the case of Dale Sampson, you use your 'gift' for the ultimate good: reality television. After a horrific incident in high school, Dale realizes he has the ability to spontaneously regenerate his organs and limbs. Following years of depression, he decides—with the help of his longtime best friend and spurred on by the disastrously romantic idea of saving a high school sweetheart—to give himself up to the reality show moguls in Hollywood. As outlandish as the plot may sound, this novel is thought-provoking and inspirational, with more than a few laughs along the way."

—Amanda Hurley, Inkwood Books, Tampa, FL



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Penelope Fitzgerald

A Life, by Hermione Lee

"As always with Lee's work, her latest biography offers a detailed and fascinating view of her subject's life. Penelope Fitzgerald was a teacher, a scholar, a world-class novelist, a two-time winner of Britain's Man Booker Prize, and a devoted mother and wife. Fitzgerald came late to fame, and this meticulously researched and beautifully written biography reveals every facet of her life in the most intimate way. I loved it!"

—Kathy Ashton, The King's English Bookshop, Salt Lake City, UT



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DECEMBER '14

Texts from Jane Eyre

And Other Conversations With Your Favorite Literary Characters, by Mallory Ortberg

"If this book were liquor, I'd buy shots for the whole bar. If it were a YouTube video, I'd be walking around showing it to strangers on my phone. But it's a book, so I'm going to buy multiple copies and hand them out to everyone I know who loves to read. The combination of irreverent, modern text-speak and classic literary characters makes for one hilarious imaginary conversation after another. The exchange between the husband and wife from Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Yellow Wallpaper* had me snort-laughing! Every English major, every bookseller, every reader of any sort needs this book!"

—Mary Laura Philpott, Parnassus Books, Nashville, TN



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DECEMBER '14

Far As the Eye Can See

A Novel, by Robert Bausch

"It is a delight to experience the Montana and Wyoming territories circa 1870-1876 through the adventures of Civil War veteran Bobby Hale. His original plan to travel to California fades as he rides west with settlers, scouts for the army, and cares for an injured woman who is running from her Indian husband. The dialect of the narrator and the language of the characters are accurate for the period, allowing the reader to be completely immersed in the setting of this rip-roaring tale."

—Paula Steige, MacDonald Bookshop, Estes Park, CO



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33 Artists in 3 Acts

by Sarah Thornton

"In her previous book, *Seven Days in the Art World*, Thornton examined the institutions that form the channels through which contemporary art may find its way to the public. In *33 Artists in 3 Acts*, she converses with some of today's most high-profile artists, including Ai Weiwei, Jeff Koons, Cindy Sherman, and Damien Hirst. None of the artists display reticence or mystery; rather, philosophy, politics, narcissism, and even some genuine candidness are evident. Thornton does not overly editorialize, allowing the artists to speak for themselves, and the results are sometimes thought-provoking, sometimes maddening, but always entertaining."

—Michael Bristow, University Book Store, Seattle, WA



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