

DECEMBER '16



Moonglow: A Novel

By Michael Chabon

"The intersection of world history and family history, the interplay of memory and imagination, a tangle of humor and grief, and the blurred and shifting line that separates sanity and madness all come into play in this stunning book. In the months before his death, Chabon's grandfather revealed much of his life to his grandson. On that foundation, Chabon has built a novel filled with family stories, World War II episodes—including an appearance by Wernher von Braun—an obsession with rocketry, and a vividly realized, against-all-odds love story. While all the characters are richly developed, the narrator's grandfather—the brave, eccentric, anger-fueled, and deeply loving center of this novel—will remain with readers forever."

—Banna Rubinow, the river's end bookstore, Oswego, NY

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Swing Time

By Zadie Smith

"In her gracefully written new work, the author of *NW* and *White Teeth* addresses the frustrations of family relations, the complications of race, the tyranny of celebrity, and the travesty of cultural appropriation. Smith looks at the fragile threads that tie friends together and how easily they can snap, and her prose flows without effort, granting even the most flawed characters—and there are many—a modicum of redemption."

—Peggy Latkovich, Mac's Backs, Cleveland Heights, OH

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The Fate of the Tearling: A Novel

By Erika Johansen

"Johansen has created an incredibly intense, intriguing, and completely captivating conclusion for her Tearling trilogy, that is sure to please all readers awaiting Queen Kelsea's fate. Rash, reckless, and filled with rage, Kelsea has surrendered to the Red Queen while unwittingly unleashing the Orphan, a threat so evil that both soon find themselves fighting together for their own survival. Will Kelsea unravel the mystery of her magical sapphires and save the Tear kingdom from ultimate destruction? Or, is she destined for an early demise thereby sealing the fate of the Tearling?"

—Kristin Bates, McLean & Eakin Booksellers, Petoskey, MI

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To Capture What We Cannot Keep: A Novel

By Beatrice Colin

"Societal constraints and expectations of the time impede the love affair of Caitriona Wallace and Émile Nougier from the moment they meet in a hot air balloon above the Champ de Mars in 1886. Émile's ailing mother is pressuring him to marry, start a family, and take over the family business even as he is facing both public and professional stress as co-designer of the Eiffel Tower. Cait is a young Scottish widow forced to work as a chaperone to a wealthy brother and sister. Cait's and Émile's paths cross and crisscross as Colin vividly captures the sights and sounds of La Belle Époque in this quiet, atmospheric novel."

—Jennifer Gwydir, Blue Willow Bookshop, Houston, TX

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The Elephants in My Backyard: A Memoir

By Rajiv Surendra

"While filming *Mean Girls* in 2003, actor Rajiv Surendra is told by the cameraman that he must read *Life of Pi* because he *is* Pi. As he reads the novel, Surendra is amazed at the similarities that he discovers between himself and Pi—both live by a zoo, are the same height, and share a similar heritage. Realizing that the book is to be made into a movie, Surendra embarks on a personal journey to win the lead in the film. Along the way, he shares his own epic quest of self-discovery as he experiences exhilaration, disappointment, failure, and love, offering an intimate view of his journey."

—Fran Keilty, Hickory Stick Bookshop, Washington Depot, CT



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The Glass Universe: How the Ladies of the Harvard Observatory Took the Measure of the Stars

By Dava Sobel

"Spectrography is a way of studying stars by taking pictures that separate astral light into different wavelengths. The practice was pioneered by Dr. Henry Draper of the Harvard Observatory in the late 1800s, but the long and detailed work of interpreting the images and classifying the stars was done by a group of women. In this long overdue tribute to Harvard's 'human computers,' Sobel, author of the classic *Longitude*, brilliantly intertwines science, history, and biography, charting not only the advances in astrophysics from the 1870s to the 1940s, but also following the progress women made in establishing themselves in a notoriously male-dominated field."

—Laurie Greer, Politics & Prose Bookstore and Coffeehouse, Washington, DC



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Scrappy Little Nobody

By Anna Kendrick

"*Scrappy Little Nobody* is less outsider-looking-in as it is insider-looking-out. Kendrick's anecdotes, experiences, and her initiation as a working youth breaking into Hollywood reflect her social awkwardness and self-deprecation as the product of a blue-collar family and a dogged work ethic. Humble and hilarious, Kendrick's lack of the knack for celebrity life allows for an unapologetic 'so-it-goes,' bluntness that makes her book relatable and heartwarmingly familiar. Never too funny to not be serious and never too serious to not be personable, *Scrappy Little Nobody* is filled with genuine thoughtfulness, a life's worth of intelligence, and Kendrick's impossible charm."

—Nolan Fellows, Rediscovered Books, Boise, ID



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Moranifesto

By Caitlin Moran

"Moran is a British journalist whose columns are known for covering a broad range of topics, from feminism and politics to fashion and TV. Some of those columns are reprinted in *Moranifesto*, a hilarious collection of opinion pieces that are Moran's personal manifesto for changing the world. The collection covers topics as diverse as the Syrian refugee crisis, cystitis, David Bowie, and why she no longer wears heels. As dissimilar as these themes may be, they are all tackled with the blunt humor for which Moran is known. *Moranifesto* is gloriously funny, feminist, and timely."

—Agnes Galvin, Oblong Books & Music, Millerton, NY



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Victoria: the Queen: An Intimate Biography of the Woman Who Ruled an Empire

By Julia Baird

"Only 18 when she assumed the throne, Victoria ruled a vast empire for more than 60 years. In this biography Baird reveals a woman who so dominated the world that an entire epoch was named for her. Her nine children and their children inhabited most of the thrones of Europe until the upheaval of World War I, and her expansionist policies enabled Great Britain to rule over a quarter of the entire world. Baird also portrays a passionate and vibrant woman who struggled to assert herself in a time and place that was dismissive of the female sex. This enthralling biography is a welcome addition and nuanced look at a dynamic queen."

—Barbara Hoagland, The King's English Book Shop, Salt Lake City, UT



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DECEMBER '16

Writing to Save a Life: The Louis Till File

By John Edgar Wideman

"This is a powerful meditation on the life of Louis Till, the father of Emmett Till whose brutal murder in 1955 spurred the Civil Rights Movement forward. It is not common knowledge today that Louis Till was convicted of a crime and executed in Italy while serving in the Army during World War II. Wideman was 14 years old—the same age as Emmett when he died—the year he saw pictures of Emmett Till's body in *Jet* magazine. When he found out decades later about Louis Till's fate, Wideman set out to investigate the tragic lives of both father and son. The result is a profound and moving exploration of race, manhood, violence, and injustice in our society."

—Cody Morrison, Square Books, Oxford, MS



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DECEMBER '16

Absolutely on Music: Conversations

By Haruki Murakami and Seiji Ozawa

"To sit down with *Absolutely on Music* is to sit down with two maestros—acclaimed writer Haruki Murakami, in a way you've never experienced him before, and famed conductor Seiji Ozawa who lives and breathes classical music. This book is the result of several conversations over two years between the two friends that focused on the music they both love, on writing, and on how the two connect. Written by Murakami in a question-and-answer format, *Absolutely on Music* offers note-by-note talks about classical music and about Ozawa's and Murakami's lives and the intricacies of both. Readers will hear the music!"

—Terry Tazioli, University Book Store, Seattle, WA



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DECEMBER '16

Who Watcheth: An Inspector Irene Huss Investigation

By Helene Tursten, Marlaine Delargy (Trans.)

"Tursten does not disappoint in the ninth installment of her impeccable Inspector Irene Huss Investigation series, moving it forward on a perfect note with Irene and her husband, Krister, beginning a new stage in their lives. One of the things I've always admired about this series, in addition to Irene's strength and intelligence, is the normalcy of her life. I loved this book, but I was so busy racing through it to unravel the various threads that now I need to read it again slowly and savor it. You will, too!"

—Eileen McGervey, One More Page Books, Arlington, VA



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I'll Take You There: A Novel

By Wally Lamb

"Lamb offers another nostalgia-fueled foray into the world of Felix Funicello, last seen in the hilarious and poignant *Wishin' and Hopin'*. This time around readers find Felix as a film studies professor in the present, being schooled by the ghosts of silent screen icons, all of them women. Through the magic of film, they reveal Felix's childhood and the stories of the unforgettable women who shaped him. Lamb, in his inimitable way, weaves a family dramedy in the era of bobbysoxers and hidden 'women's problems,' with the rise of feminism and one man's history as a brother, husband, and father."

—Chrysler Szarlan, Odyssey Bookshop, South Hadley, MA



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Normal: A Novel

By Warren Ellis

"This is an eerily fun read. What if Big Brother was as small as an ant? Patients at a private asylum deep in the woods are all from the world of either Foresight Strategy or Strategic Forecasting. This means they are smart people, but deeply depressed—and many have gone insane—because they are paid to look into the future and it isn't looking good. Visionary writer Ellis offers readers *1984* meets *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* in this provocative novel."

—Randy Schiller, Left Bank Books, St. Louis, MO



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The History of Rock & Roll, Volume I: 1920 – 1963

By Ed Ward

"This is a great, fun book by Ward, a correspondent for NPR's *All Things Considered* and one of the founders of the South by Southwest Conference and Festivals (SXSW). Covering the period of 1920 to 1963, almost every chapter in the book is devoted to a single year and the songs that were recorded and/or released during that year. This is a broad overview that substitutes breadth for depth but doesn't spare the entertainment factor. Ward's sweeping survey reads like the 400-plus page liner notes for a 1,000-song box set and, as a music nerd, that is one of the best compliments I can give!"

—Joe Turner, BookPeople, Austin, TX



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Born a Crime: Stories From a South African Childhood

By Trevor Noah

"Noah's perspective of growing up as the son of a black woman and white man in South Africa during apartheid, mixed with his trademark humor, is both insightful and poignant. We in the U.S. are often presented with what Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie has termed 'the danger of the single story,' which depicts history only from the point of view of the oppressors. It is refreshing and enlightening to learn history from someone directly affected by the heinousness of the apartheid laws."

—Karlena Fagan, Bookshop Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA



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The Whole Town's Talking: A Novel

By Fannie Flagg

"This book will leave you nostalgic for simpler times and craving a home-made piece of pie! Flagg offers an absolutely lovely story about a small Missouri town from its founding in 1889 through the present and beyond, told through narrative, letters, and a gossip column. I will be joyfully recommending this charming and wonderful story to all readers!"

—Mary O'Malley, Anderson's Bookshop, Naperville, IL



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Ema, the Captive

By César Aira, Chris Andrews (Trans.)

"*Ema, the Captive* is a gentle meditation on the natural world in its grotesqueness and its beauty, humanity's place within it, and the effect that human progress has had on both. With his usual incredible attention to detail and in measured, lucid prose, Aira somehow turns this tale into a page-turner, the kind of feat only he could accomplish."

—Justin Souther, Malaprop's Bookstore/Café, Asheville, NC



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Mincemeat: The Education of an Italian Chef

By Leonardo Lucarelli

"This is not a typical chef story where the aspiring individual goes to culinary school, learns all the traditional styles, and then apprentices under a great chef to become established in the profession. Lucarelli started as a dishwasher and then through dumb luck became the chef in a restaurant after its two chefs fought with each other and left. Subsequent kitchens all offered a variety of challenges and disruptive, combative elements that helped to move Lucarelli's career along. If you want to experience some real 'behind the scenes' views of restaurant life, then do yourself a favor and read *Mincemeat*."

—Jason Kennedy, Boswell Book Company, Milwaukee, WI



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Out of Bounds: A Karen Pirie Novel

By Val McDermid

"McDermid is a thriller writer at the top of her game and *Out of Bounds* has everything readers want in a character-driven suspense novel: fully human characters, tight plotting, unexpected twists, and a story that grabs and won't let go. Karen Pirie is still reeling from the death of her partner and is coping by throwing herself into her work as detective chief inspector of Scotland's Historic Cases Unit. As the unit works to unravel a 20-year-old case through a DNA match from the driver in a recent car accident, Pirie skates on thin ice with her superiors by digging into the background of a mentally disturbed man who appears to have committed suicide. Highly recommended!"

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



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