



JUNE '18

### There There: A Novel

By Tommy Orange

"*There There* is the kind of book that grabs you from the start and doesn't let go, even after you've turned the last page. It is a work of fiction, but every word of it feels true. Tommy Orange writes with a palpable anger and pain, telling the history of a cultural trauma handed down through generations in the blood and bones and stories of individual lives. He also writes with incredible heart and humor, infusing his characters with a tangible humanity and moments of joy even as they are headed toward tragedy. *There There* has claimed a permanent spot in my heart despite having broken it, or maybe because it did. I think this may be the best book I've ever read."

—Heather Weldon, Changing Hands Bookstore, Tempe, AZ



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### The Word Is Murder: A Novel

By Anthony Horowitz

"When a healthy 60-year-old woman is found strangled in her London home the very day she had organized and paid for her own funeral, former police detective—now consultant—Daniel Hawthorne convinces author Anthony Horowitz to shadow his investigation to eventually publish this very story. Imagine sitting in a darkened English pub listening to Horowitz bemoaning his involvement as he tells the story of the unlikeable but captivating Hawthorne. Readers will quickly join in playing detective as characters, plot twists, clues, and red herrings escalate while enjoying the old-fashioned feel of Agatha Christie and Sherlock Holmes in a modern setting. Delicious!"

—Jennifer Gwydir, Blue Willow Bookshop, Houston, TX



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### Florida: Stories

By Lauren Groff

"After wowing readers (former President Barack Obama included) with 2015's *Fates and Furies*, Lauren Groff returns with a collection of stories just as wise and meticulously constructed. Within the sun-kissed, palmetto-strewn swampland of Groff's Florida, we encounter a pair of abandoned sisters, anxious mothers, and a woman being pushed to the edge. Looking inward and out, Groff examines the lives of her characters with a surveyor's eye, capturing the sense of dread and desire that pervades their existence. *Florida* is an exploration of time and place, both sensual and terrifying, and seems to me both timely and timeless."

—Uriel Perez, BookPeople, Austin, TX



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### A Place for Us: A Novel

By Fatima Farheen Mirza

"Mirza evokes with equal skill and nuance the first- and second-generation immigrant experience and the universal themes of family unity and discord. In *A Place for Us*, she captures the complicated dynamics of one family's relationships with each other with astonishing insight. I found it tremendously moving in a way that only the most authentic stories and voices can be. The last 70 pages buckled my knees. How can a story about characters so outside my own life experience be so hauntingly familiar?"

—Stan Hynds, Northshire Bookstore, Manchester Center, VT



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### Shelter in Place: A Novel

By Nora Roberts

"As you read this book, coincidence and life forever changing in a brief moment will be on your mind. The rash of mass shootings we have experienced over the past few years comes to gruesome life in this book. The news and our memories of the horrors we saw on it fade with time, but what if you were there and the memory never disappeared? How would it change your life? This book is an excellent exploration of that situation."

—Jackie Willey, Fiction Addiction, Greenville, SC



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### Invitation to a Bonfire: A Novel

By Adrienne Celt

"Adrienne Celt's *Invitation to a Bonfire* is a propulsive literary thriller masterfully constructed and written with an extraordinary, raw urgency that will leave readers breathless. Inspired by the marriage of Vladimir and Vera Nabokov, Celt explores the love and ambition of two strong-willed women who compete for the passions and artistic control of a literary icon. The novel's characters are original and vividly drawn, with all the complexity and contradictions of their emotions and intensions fully realized. This is a story that you will not be able to put down, and certainly one of the most memorable and satisfying reads of the year. Adrienne Celt is a writer to watch."

—Lori Feathers, Interbang Books, Dallas, TX



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### Convenience Store Woman: A Novel

By Sayaka Murata, Ginny Tapley Takemori (Trans.)

"Keiko Furukura has worked at her local convenience store for 18 years. Every day, she ensures that the shelves are tidy, the hot food bar is stocked, and the featured items are adequately displayed. She greets every customer with a cheerful 'Irasshaimase!' and no one notices that she's never fit in anywhere else. Murata draws lush descriptions of the beauty of order and routine out of simple, spare prose, and every page crackles with the life she's created. Because of the humor, the wit, the almost unbearable loveliness of it all, *Convenience Store Woman*, a small book about a quiet life, makes an enormous impact on the reader."

—Lauren Peugh, Powell's Books, Portland, OR



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### Southernmost: A Novel

By Silas House

"Asher, a rural evangelical preacher in Tennessee, welcomes two gay men into his congregation after a flood washes away most of his town. His change of heart results in him being ousted from his church and losing custody of his son in the midst of an ugly divorce. Unable to stand the separation from his boy, he steals him away and flees to Key West in search of his estranged brother. Living on the run, Asher must learn how to make peace with the past as he discovers a new way of living and thinking. Silas House's writing is captivating and honest and proves how different ways of life can coexist and even combine to create something cohesive and meaningful."

—Carl Kranz, The Fountain Bookstore, Richmond, VA



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**MEM: A Novel**

By Bethany C. Morrow

"Adding fictional scientific breakthroughs to a glittering era of history is a setup for a great plot, but it takes an artist's hand to carry it beyond its initial gimmick. Bethany C. Morrow's examination of memory, desire, and what makes us human flourishes in its alternative historical setting. Her writing is as well-paced as her plot, in which the Mems develop beyond their creator's intentions and the most evolved of them suffers at our least-evolved hands. Morrow's novel has a beauty to it that underlines its critical depth and heart-racing conclusion."

—Hannah Oliver Depp, WORD, Brooklyn, NY



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**Rising: Dispatches From the New American Shore**

By Elizabeth Rush

"Focusing on the shorelines of our nation, Elizabeth Rush takes us from north to south and east to west on an intimate journey that vividly tells the story of the effects of our rising sea level and its impact on animal and plant life. In *Rising*, Rush has written a personal, passionate plea for us to take action before it is too late and to rethink our priorities to the benefit of our environment. This is environmental writing at its best. Please read *Rising* and then grab a friend and make them read it, too. It's that good!"

—Bill Reilly, the river's end bookstore, Oswego, NY



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**Visible Empire: A Novel**

By Hannah Pittard

"Pulling from the historical record, Hannah Pittard has constructed a compelling novel around the Air France crash at Orly that shook the Atlanta art scene in 1962. The well-constructed narrative shifts effortlessly among a few characters to provide a richer, more comprehensive perspective on the disaster and its aftermath. *Visible Empire* goes well beyond a simple retelling of the contemporary newspaper accounts and addresses the issues of race, wealth, and culture prevalent in that moment and that still persist today."

—Jay McCoy, Brier Books, Lexington, KY



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**The Death of Mrs. Westaway: A Novel**

By Ruth Ware

"Does Ruth Ware keep getting better and better? Yes, she does. A down-on-her-luck protagonist, a too-good-to-be-true inheritance, and a creepy old mansion combine for a deliciously suspenseful tale. The plucky heroine, Hal, believes she's mistakenly been identified as an heir to a great estate, but she decides to play along in the hopes of scamming a couple thousand pounds out of the situation. Once she's arrived at the reading of the will, she quickly realizes that she is in way over her head. This is a deceptive and suspense-riddled thrill ride!"

—Connie Brooks, Battenkill Books, Cambridge, NY



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### Who Is Vera Kelly?: A Novel

By Rosalie Knecht

"Who is Vera Kelly? Find out in this twisty, turny spy thriller set in 1960s Argentina as Vera, working for the CIA, becomes stuck in the country during a hostile takeover. Through flashbacks, we learn about Vera's past and the forces that worked together to create this devilishly smart, very sexy woman. The book reads like the love child of John le Carré and Rita Mae Brown. I loved Vera immensely, even more so as the plot progressed and the threats became deadlier. What a fun read and what a terrific character! I can't wait for the next installment."

—William Carl, Wellesley Books, Wellesley, MA



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### The Book of Essie: A Novel

By Meghan MacLean Weir

"*The Book of Essie* is a captivating debut. The original plot moves at lightning speed while giving the reader characters to hang on to, care for, and sympathize with. The novel focuses on 16-year-old Essie Hicks, a star on a reality TV show following her preacher father and her ultra-religious, conservative family. When Essie finds out she is pregnant, she must protect herself and her future in the face of public scorn. I couldn't stop turning the pages to see what would happen to Essie and Roarke, the boy Essie's mother has decided she will marry in a primetime, live-televised wedding. Weir proves herself to be a brilliant new talent with a sensitive but unflinching take on child exploitation and life in the public eye. A must-read!"

—Liv Stratman, Books Are Magic, Brooklyn, NY



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### The Optimistic Decade: A Novel

By Heather Abel

"When faced with a world you don't like, do you engage as a social justice advocate or do you head to the wilderness to live off the land and contribute as little as possible to this capitalist society? Rebecca, fresh off of her first year at UC Berkeley and a lifetime of attending rallies and protests with her activist parents, finds herself pondering this question. In a tale that spans the Reagan and George H.W. Bush presidencies and two generations of three interconnected families, Abel skillfully presents arguments for and against following your heart, sticking to your principles, and engaging with the world. Ultimately, we are left to reflect on where we are in our own personal 'Optimistic Decade,' and what we will do with that time."

—Jessica Fowle, Bookbug, Kalamazoo, MI



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### Mirror, Shoulder, Signal: A Novel

By Dorte Nors

"Once again, Dorte Nors writes with precision and depth about the experience of single, childless women in their 40s, which is under-explored in literature. Loneliness and invisibility factor in, but not in the way that the dominant spinster/maiden aunt narrative would have us believe. Nors uncovers nuance, heart, and connection with her signature stripped-down prose and humor. A vital and important book for us all."

—Melanie McNair, Malaprop's Bookstore/Café, Asheville, NC



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### Well, That Escalated Quickly: Memoirs and Mistakes of an Accidental Activist

By Franchesca Ramsey

"Franchesca Ramsey hadn't planned to be an activist, but that was before her insightful and seriously funny YouTube video *What White Girls Say...to Black Girls* was viewed more than 12 million times. She was inundated with media requests along with both fan and hate mail. After some missteps, she decided to use her voice and her talent to fight injustice. Determined to provide ways for us to listen to each other, Ramsey, who will soon have a show on Comedy Central, has written an insightful book that brings us laughter as well as tools for understanding our differences and our shared humanity."

—Elaine Petrocelli, Book Passage, Corte Madera, CA



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### The High Season: A Novel

By Judy Blundell

"What would you do to keep your home by the sea on Long Island? Maybe rent it out for the summer to get some cash to pay the bills? But what if the person who rents the house this summer is out to get more than the house? Ruthie's about to find out what she's capable of when the rich and famous Adeline Clay takes over her nest. The parties, guests, and nasty business keep building until Ruthie reaches the end of her patience and there's only one thing left to do. You'll be glad you decided to go along on this ride!"

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



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### Lying in Wait: A Novel

By Liz Nugent

"Liz Nugent returns with another riveting tale of intrigue and domestic drama. Teenage Laurence suspects that his father might be involved in the mysterious death of a young woman. After his father suddenly dies, Laurence becomes even more bound by the smothering love of his overly attentive mother. When Laurence falls in love with the dead girl's sister, lies ensue, complications arise, and the hidden depths of evil lurking in the manor house are exposed. Readers will be mesmerized by *Lying in Wait*, and the ending is so devious that it will knock your socks off."

—Pamela Klinger-Horn, Excelsior Bay Books, Excelsior, MN



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### The Lost Family: A Novel

By Jenna Blum

"The characters in Jenna Blum's *The Lost Family* are deeply real and unforgettable: a man and a woman both trying to compensate for the losses of their previous families by creating a new family, and the daughter who grows up with them, feeling equally lost. Blum gets so many things effortlessly right: the terror of Nazi Germany; the fluctuating zeitgeist of New York in the 1960s, '70s, and '80s; the way the foodie father, the dieting wife, and the eating-disordered daughter all express themselves through their relationship with food. I would recommend it for Meg Wolitzer fans, though Blum's style is definitely her own."

—Nina Barrett, Bookends & Beginnings, Evanston, IL



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