



MAY '18

### A Lucky Man: Stories

By Jamel Brinkley

"A *Lucky Man* marks the arrival of a brilliant new voice in contemporary fiction. In quiet, elegant prose, debut author Jamel Brinkley renders characters who are universally relatable yet entirely unique, with all the complexities and subtleties of living, breathing people. As I read their stories, I was swept up into the lives of these characters, so much so that at times I forgot I was reading fiction and felt instead that I was reading letters from old friends. This is an important and powerful collection. Its slice-of-life stories glow with a soft light, revealing rich detail and vibrant beauty in the dark corners of human experience. Every moment held me in silent awe."

—Jason Foose, Changing Hands Bookstore, Tempe, AZ



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MAY '18

### Tin Man: A Novel

By Sarah Winman

"Michael loves Ellis, Ellis loves Annie, and Annie loves them both. Yet Sarah Winman's blistering novel *Tin Man* is anything but the usual love triangle. Instead, Winman asks us to consider what remains of love after its object is gone. She crowds this spare little book, set in London, Oxford, and the south of France, with vivid portraits of loss and mourning. At once terse and expansive, *Tin Man* is a firework flashing in the night—gone too soon but burned forever into the reader's memory."

—David Enyeart, Common Good Books, St. Paul, MN



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### Noir: A Novel

By Christopher Moore

"Christopher Moore has done it again! *Noir* is now among my very favorites by this popular novelist. This book is everything it promises: A love letter to hard-boiled detective fiction, a thorough and loving bath in the atmosphere of 1947 San Francisco, and loads of laughs along the way. Aliens? Yes. Romance? Also yes. Add in a cast of characters with heart, moxie, and beguiling banter and you've got *Noir*, a recipe for pure enjoyment."

—Mary McDonald, Nicola's Books, Ann Arbor, MI



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### Love and Ruin: A Novel

By Paula McLain

"*The Paris Wife* and *Circling the Sun* were two of the most successful titles of the last decade for Alabama Booksmith, and *Love and Ruin* is more proof for the pudding that Paula McLain is a member of the master class of historical fiction writers. This exciting page-turner follows Martha Gellhorn as she reports from the center of the action of the Spanish Civil War, then jeopardizes her reputation and very existence by falling in love with the greatest literary giant of the day, Ernest Hemingway. This spectacular read is fact-based and deliciously entertaining."

—Jake Reiss, Alabama Booksmith, Birmingham, AL



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### The Ensemble: A Novel

By Aja Gabel

"My goodness, I love the quartet of flawed and wonderful characters Aja Gabel brings to life. I felt the heartbreak and triumph each time the ensemble performed. *The Ensemble* captures everything from the relentless rehearsals to the particular hand injuries musicians worry over to the conflict within the group. Henry, Daniel, Jana, and Britt are each characters unto themselves, but together they create a fifth character: the quartet itself. An inventive novel about the lives of musicians and the world they inhabit, full of tension, ambition, confusion, and loyalty. *The Ensemble* is a remarkable achievement."

—Sarah Bagby, Watermark Books, Wichita, KS



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### The Only Story: A Novel

By Julian Barnes

"*The Only Story*, a love story that captivated me from the very first page, tells of Paul, a young man who at the age of 19 falls in love with a woman almost 30 years his senior. Now in the sunset of his life, Paul looks back with tenderness on the life they had together, how everything fell apart, and how his life evolved as a result. I loved the author's reflections on love and found myself savoring his words, not wanting the book to end. A beautiful story from a superb writer."

—Danielle Bauter, Laguna Beach Books, Laguna Beach, CA



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### The Perfect Mother: A Novel

By Aimee Molloy

"Buckle up for a gripping read that had me up until 2:00 in the morning! Aimee Molloy taps into two of the deepest fears a mother can have: The ultimate fear of losing a child, and the secretive fear of losing her identity. As a new mother, this book spoke to me on every level. The insecurity, the worries, the panic, the judgment—you name it. Add a missing child, and all those feelings were multiplied by a thousand. Don't miss this captivating novel—it won't disappoint!"

—Teresa Steele, Old Firehouse Books, Fort Collins, CO



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### Welcome to Lagos: A Novel

By Chibundu Onuzo

"A disparate and electric ensemble cast—sad, hopeful, honorable, conniving, quixotic, and just plain wacky—drive Chibundu Onuzo's remarkable debut, but it's the character of Nigeria itself—the air and soil of its countryside and the high-voltage freneticism of its largest city—that so often shines through, undeniably alive. Equally madcap, heartbreaking, and redemptive, *Welcome to Lagos* unflinchingly and beautifully captures the ambitions and contradictions of a nation on the brink."

—Sam Kaas, Third Place Books, Lake Forest Park, WA



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### Warlight: A Novel

By Michael Ondaatje

"With his usual virtuosity, master storyteller Michael Ondaatje delivers a mysterious, shimmering new coming-of-age novel. *Warlight* is the unexpected story of two teenagers abandoned by their enigmatic parents in post-war London. Casually watched over by a dodgy cast of characters—petty criminals, opera singers, and panting greyhounds—Nathaniel and Rachel try to make sense of their new world while struggling to define their parents' shadowy wartime pasts. Years later, Nathaniel embarks on a quest to discover the disturbing truth, and his own unwitting part in it. Balancing poignance with surprising comic touches, *Warlight* is a stellar addition to the Ondaatje canon."

—Chrysler Szarlan, Odyssey Bookshop, South Hadley, MA



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### My Ex-Life: A Novel

By Stephen McCauley

"This story of loves both great and small is most certainly not saccharine sweet. *My Ex-Life* reminds us that there is a reason for everything, and that sometimes it's wise to go back to the familiar (albeit old) parts of ourselves to remind us just how far we've come. Stephen McCauley writes like your best friend—the one who always says what you're thinking but you'd never have the guts to utter out loud. His perception of even the mundane tasks of life reveals a witty tone dripping with self deprecation and amusement. This book is most certainly one you should put at the top of your to-be-read pile!"

—Jordan Arias, Anderson's Bookshop, Naperville, IL



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MAY '18

### The Mars Room: A Novel

By Rachel Kushner

"Rachel Kushner writes some seriously smart and gorgeous prose, so when she headed to prison in *The Mars Room*, I went. It is dark. It is painful. At times, the level of detail in the book and its fabulously invented and drawn characters make it feel like a documentary. We are struggling with so many social justice issues across the country right now it is overwhelming, and I worried that *The Mars Room* would push me over the edge. Instead, I couldn't stop reading. What really happened? Who is to blame? How will things turn out? How can we make things better? Ultimately, Kushner's great success is profoundly illustrating a very simple message: It's complicated."

—Sara Hinckley, Hudson Booksellers, Marietta, GA



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### Mr. Flood's Last Resort: A Novel

By Jess Kidd

"Jess Kidd has done it again. I absolutely loved her first book, *Himself*, and her latest does not disappoint. This tale of Mr. Flood and his caregiver, Maud, brings together eccentric characters, ghosts, saints, a crumbling mansion, missing children, and a suspicious suicide. It perfectly balances tragedy with dark comedy; the dialogue crackles and every detail enchants. I will miss spending time in Maud's world."

—Kathi Kirby, Powell's Books, Portland, OR



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### How to Walk Away: A Novel

By Katherine Center

"*How to Walk Away* deals with a tragic situation evoking emotions of despair, humor, pity, and love. Margaret has a full life, a wonderful boyfriend, a new job, and an exciting future, but this is all taken away when a plane accident leaves her paralyzed. Katherine Center creates a character so vivid that the reader can relate to her denial, self-pity, humor, and, finally, her acceptance as she copes with her new reality and begins to truly understand herself, what she is capable of doing, and whom she is capable of loving. This is a heartwarming and sensitive story that captivated me from beginning to end."

—Fran Duke, *Where the Sidewalk Ends*, Chatham, MA



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### You Think It, I'll Say It: Stories

By Curtis Sittenfeld

"No one does a better job of writing about the high and low points of contemporary relationships than Curtis Sittenfeld. Her characters are petty, flawed, tender, funny, and completely believable. The characters in *You Think It, I'll Say It* do not shy away from assuming they know those around them, making the twist when their misjudgments are revealed even more satisfying. While it is easy to fall in love with the insightful storytelling and humor, Sittenfeld's true gift is to make you recognize yourself in these pages."

—Luisa Smith, *Book Passage*, Corte Madera, CA



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MAY '18

### Wicked River: A Novel

By Jenny Milchman

"I am a huge Jenny Milchman fan, so I had high expectations for this book. My expectations were met and surpassed. Doug and Natalie both have secrets and issues with trust. Add in debts to old friends and a wedding not celebrated by all, and complications are everywhere. The honeymoon in the wilderness is the stuff of nightmares and will keep your heart pounding. Any fan of a good thriller with psychological twists will love this book."

—Jackie Willey, *Fiction Addiction*, Greenville, SC



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### The Feather Thief: Beauty, Obsession, and the Natural History Heist of the Century

By Kirk Wallace Johnson

"A fascinating true crime book, *The Feather Thief* recounts the theft of more than 200 bird skins from a museum in England. Along the way, Johnson also covers Darwin contemporary Alfred Russel Wallace's travels to acquire birds of paradise, the theory of evolution, and the decimation of bird species in the name of fashion. It is a book about obsession, from the fly-tying community's hunt for specific bird species to Johnson's own need for justice and closure after the case is resolved. This is a gripping, multifaceted book about our need to possess beauty in the name of historical authenticity."

—Anton Bogomazov, *Politics and Prose Bookstore*, Washington, D.C.



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## First, We Make the Beast Beautiful: A New Journey Through Anxiety

By Sarah Wilson

"*First, We Make the Beast Beautiful* evokes the strange and magical feeling of having discovered a personal journal in a public place. It is first and foremost a memoir that tackles difficult subjects, touching on many experiences, both traumatic and constructive, that the author feels have affected her journey through anxiety. A great deal of the book is spiritual and suggests that anxiety is the product of an unrest in the soul. Fans of Rupi Kaur will enjoy the candid rawness of this book, as it pulls them through a journey that is perhaps all too painfully familiar."

—Kaitie Radel, The Oxford Exchange, Tampa, FL



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## The Girl Who Smiled Beads: A Story of War and What Comes After

By Clemantine Wamariya and Elizabeth Weil

"*The Girl Who Smiled Beads* is a beautiful and heartbreaking look into the life of a woman who survived the genocide in Rwanda. I was so moved by Clemantine's story of her escape and time as a child refugee, and equally moved by her struggle to come to terms with her experiences after moving to the U.S. Looking at what happened through the story of someone who escaped as a child makes the horrors even more viscerally felt by the reader. I am humbled and grateful to have been able to read this important account."

—Hillary Smith, Copperfield's Books, Sebastopol, CA



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MAY '18

## Motherhood: A Novel

By Sheila Heti

"Sheila Heti has a way of tapping into the throes of consciousness and coming out with a precisely articulated version of how we think. Her new book, *Motherhood*, delves deep into the decision of whether or not to have children, while simultaneously exploring femininity, identity, and self purpose. Even if motherhood is not pertinent to your life, this book will shed light on our culture and the expectations that are bound to affect everyone at some point."

—Courtney Flynn, Trident Booksellers & Café, Boston, MA



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MAY '18

## The Best Cook in the World: Tales From My Momma's Table

By Rick Bragg

"This is the funniest cookbook in the world! Packed with old fashioned southern recipes, Bragg's brilliant storytelling and old black-and-white photographs bring his relatives to life. From lost cows to dead hogs to giant turtles, his stories feature grandparents and great grandparents, aunts and uncles. But most of all, his mother's voice comes through loud and clear. More than anything, you are taken by the back-and-forth between Bragg and his down-to-earth, matter-of-fact, shy but feisty mother. I absolutely loved this book! And I recommend the pecan pie!"

—Helen Stewart, Quail Ridge Books, Raleigh, NC



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