

NOVEMBER '19



In the Dream House: A Memoir

By Carmen Maria Machado

"Welcome to the Dream House in this daring new kind of memoir that defies boundaries and boldly discards the conventions of genre. Inside, Carmen Maria Machado bares her soul in all of its pain and beauty, offering an intimate and profoundly vulnerable look at her own life, love, and sexuality. Machado has a gift for exposing the raw nerves and small miracles lurking beneath the surface of our daily lives. Her words move with a strange kind of urgency, surreal and yet true, like late-night phone calls when the rest of the world is asleep. I didn't feel like I was reading a book so much as observing a person's innermost thoughts. *In the Dream House* is a unique and extraordinary book."

—Jason Foose, Changing Hands, Tempe, AZ



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The Starless Sea: A Novel

By Erin Morgenstern

"Rarely is a book such an absolute feast—for the senses, for the intellect, and, above all, for the soul. Morgenstern dazzles in her latest novel, an intricately wrought tale populated by lovers, mystery, and sumptuous magic. *The Starless Sea* is an ode to book lovers everywhere, reanimating the excitement as well as the pure possibility felt when reading books like Harry Potter or *The Lord of the Rings* for the first time. I am reminded of the famous C.S. Lewis quote, 'One day, you'll be old enough to read fairytales again.' When that day comes, *The Starless Sea* will be waiting for you."

—Laura Graveline, Brazos Bookstore, Houston, TX



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Nothing to See Here: A Novel

By Kevin Wilson

"When a politician's young wife hires her old school friend as a nanny for her two stepchildren, the main duty will be to keep the twins out of sight and out of trouble. That's because the kids' father is a senator and under serious consideration to be the next Secretary of State. But what if the children can't control themselves? Who is the best person to take care of children who are afflicted with spontaneous combustion? Obviously, a woman with no fear of fire, nothing to lose, and nothing to gain. At turns hilarious and heartbreaking, this unique novel explores family dynamics, resentment, and retribution, leaving the reader with a new perspective on motherhood and what it means to be loyal to those you love."

—Laura Simcox, Sunrise Books, High Point, NC



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On Swift Horses: A Novel

By Shannon Pufahl

"This densely atmospheric debut sinks its hooks deep into post-war America's tender underbelly, exposing the homophobia and bigotry beneath a nation's renewed spirit of hope and opportunity. Muriel and Julius are restless outsiders, siblings-in-law who share a passion for gambling as well as their more furtive passion. Both are trying to make their own opportunities to find love and happiness—a gamble that one will unexpectedly win and one will just as unexpectedly lose. An immersive and rewarding first novel."

—Karen Brissette, Shakespeare & Co., New York, NY



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The Revisioners: A Novel

By Margaret Wilkerson Sexton

"Set in 1855, 1924, and 2017, this story features Ava, a modern single mother and divorcee who, down on her luck, moves in as a caretaker for her grandmother, whose lingering racism becomes more pronounced as her mind begins to fail. Also told is the story of Ava's grandmother's great-grandmother, Josephine, who is a slave as a child and later in life the widowed owner of a 300-acre farm. Ava and Josephine both have the ability to 'revision,' seeing into others' souls and guiding them to a different place. Sexton does a beautiful job of developing her characters while accurately describing the racism that is never far away no matter the time period. This story is loving and devastating in the best way."

—Todd Miller, Arcadia Books, Spring Green, WI



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The Bromance Book Club: A Novel

By Lyssa Kay Adams

"In just a few short years, Gavin and Thea have gone from starry-eyed young lovers to married with twins. Gavin is at the top of his career in baseball, but Thea is feeling like she's lost who she is—there is definitely trouble in paradise, and Thea wants out! But Gavin's teammates invite him to join a book club that just might reignite that spark the couple once had. Can reading romance novels teach Gavin how to win back his wife? I absolutely love the concept of this novel. The writing was fun and light, yet maintained depth and value. I could relate to Thea as a wife and mother and still rooted for Gavin."

—Miranda Atkins, A Little Bookish, Ooltewah, TN



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Little Weirds: Essays

By Jenny Slate

"*Little Weirds*, a collection of essays by actress and comedian Jenny Slate, is pure magic—a joyous, thoughtful, and deeply gorgeous peek into the soul of an extremely bright and unique individual. Jenny's mastery of the English language, the way she arranges words to tell a story, the vulnerability with which she does it, and the purity of her heart is so astounding at times that reading a paragraph once or twice is simply not enough. *Little Weirds* cuts deeply into what it means to be a woman here on this earth. It is about friendship and growth and learning to love ourselves in all of our tender and wild strangeness."

—Jenna Schenk, BookTowne, Manasquan, NJ



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Get a Life, Chloe Brown: A Novel

By Talia Hibbert

"*Get a Life, Chloe Brown* is such a wonderful, inclusive, body-positive, fun, moving, and steamy book, the kind of novel I want to shove into every person's hand who says they don't read romance. Chloe Brown is a plus-size black British woman with chronic illness who is confident, sharp, sarcastic, brilliant, and adorable as hell—and, to my great relief, totally comfortable and happy with her looks and her size. After being temporarily knocked down by her illness, Chloe decides to reclaim her life, so she makes a to-do list: ride a motorcycle, have meaningless sex, go camping, etc. It was such an absolute treat to read a novel about a plus-size woman with a disability having amazing, mind-blowing sex and loving her life. I truly cannot say enough wonderful things about this book, so instead I will just force everyone I know to read it."

—Elissa Sweet, Bank Square Books, Mystic, CT



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The Family Upstairs: A Novel

By Lisa Jewell

"Just having children does not make you a parent, and that truth is apparent in the pages of this book. A wealthy family in London seems to have everything—a great home, private schools, mentions in the press—but it is somehow not enough. Once you open the door to the unknown, can it really ever be closed? The influence of the charismatic egotist is told with flawless accuracy and stark images. In these situations, the children suffer the most; they are powerless and easy prey. This book details an unfolding family crisis where abuse can take many forms. Hard to put down and with several huge twists, *The Family Upstairs* will satisfy even the most discriminating fan. Lisa Jewell has exceeded all expectations!"

—Jackie Willey, Fiction Addiction, Greenville, SC



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Ordinary Girls: A Memoir

By Jaquira Díaz

"Too often, those of us who grow up below the federal poverty line spend the rest of our lives erasing ourselves. If we manage to migrate out of poverty, we do so at a cost. The gatekeepers of academia, and of literature, often only want to hear our stories if we make a spectacle of our people, or if we tell our stories in the language of the elite at the expense of our own voices. I think this is one of the most powerful things about *Ordinary Girls*. Díaz tells her sad and beautiful stories in her own voice, a voice that still holds the people and the places that made her. What a gift. Growing up poor means that we are taught, every day and in a million tiny ways, that our families are wrong, our speech is ugly, our stories shameful. This is oppression and Díaz banishes it with beauty, love, honesty, and insight. *Ordinary Girls* is a book that makes me feel less alone in this world."

—Tina Ontiveros, Klindt's Booksellers, The Dalles, OR



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Twice in a Blue Moon: A Novel

By Christina Lauren

"This is a story about forgiveness and second chances, and it is full of heart. When 18-year-old Tate, the long-lost daughter of a famous actor, has a whirlwind vacation romance with Sam, he sells a story about her to the press for the big bucks. Now, 14 years later and an established actress herself, she has to work with Sam while trying not to let him see how his betrayal changed the course of her life. This novel feels more subdued, a slow burn dealing a lot with trust issues and complicated family dynamics. If you're looking for a sweet (and sexy) romance with depth that will keep you up until the wee hours of the morning, this is it."

—Leah Atlee, Bright Side Bookshop, Flagstaff, AZ



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Running With Sherman: The Donkey With the Heart of a Hero

By Christopher McDougall

"*Running With Sherman* is one of those special books that just makes you happy. Sherman, an abused donkey adopted by Christopher McDougall and family, needs a task, and that task turns out to be joining the World Championship of burro running in Colorado. In his inimitably engaging style, McDougall has taken the best of his two previous books—the personal stories of *Born to Run* and the history from *Natural Born Heroes*—and created the most enjoyable book I've read this year. I laughed, I got teary, I smiled a lot. Sherman is my new hero!"

—Pete Mock, McIntyre's Fine Books, Pittsboro, NC



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The Crying Book

By Heather Christle

"To be a writer is to be both in constant awe and in constant envy of other writers. Heather Christle is no exception. She is a writer to whom a world of poets look for playful imagery and careful affect. *The Crying Book* is not billed as poetry, but it's not prose—it's something very deeply embedded between genres. There are no line breaks, but there is lyricism and a poetic philosophy of the intimate relationship between things: tears, grief, war, motherhood, friendship, partnership, science, history. The literary world has already likened it to Maggie Nelson's *Bluets*, but Christle's work seems to me more delicate, as though each turn of a tear-soaked page allows readers the permission, as Christle puts it, to be held. And to be held by a book is, I think, exactly what a reader craves."

—Lauren Korn, Fact & Fiction Downtown, Missoula, MT



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Wild Game: My Mother, Her Lover, and Me

By Adrienne Brodeur

"This extraordinary memoir is destined to become a classic in the genre. Brodeur is a gifted storyteller with a doozy of a story to tell, as she is 14 years old when her mother makes her complicit in the decade-long affair between her mother and her stepfather's best friend. Everything about this book is rich—the setting on Cape Cod and the strong sense of place; the unforgettable character of Brodeur's mother, the incomparable Malabar; cinematic moments that stop the reader in their tracks; and layer upon layer of provocative themes around mother-daughter relationships, family secrets, and identity. I can't stop thinking about this book."

—Allison Hill, Vroman's Bookstore, Pasadena, CA



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Life Undercover: Coming of Age in the CIA

By Amaryllis Fox

"Her unconventional childhood—think playing unsupervised on the streets of Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Washington, D.C.—prepared Amaryllis Fox for a career in the CIA. She was recruited because as part of her master's studies at Georgetown's School of Foreign Service, she developed an algorithm that was amazingly accurate at predicting where terrorist cells might pop up in the world. Soon, she was deployed as a spy in the Middle East while posing as an art dealer. After 10 years, Fox left the CIA and is now a writer, a current events analyst, a peace activist, and a mother. One wonders what is next in her fascinating life!"

—Sally Wizik Wills, Beagle and Wolf Books & Bindery, Park Rapids, MN



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Eat Joy: Stories & Comfort Food From 31 Celebrated Writers

By Natalie Eve Garrett (Ed.)

"The visceral quality of food as it relates to memory is unparalleled—sometimes we eat our favorite foods as comfort during grief, or a dish prepared by a friend becomes healing food from then on. *Eat Joy* is a lively collection of autobiographical stories in which food plays a starring role (recipes included—and they are lovely!). A diverse selection of celebrated authors tell their stories of growth, loss, healing, and home-coming, and the resulting collection is nothing short of magical."

—Mary Wahlmeier, Raven Book Store, Lawrence, KS



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The Great Pretender

By Susannah Cahalan

"Susannah Cahalan, the bestselling author of *Brain on Fire*, is back with another riveting true story of madness and the mental health system. In the 1970s, Dr. David Rosenhan convinced seven sane people to join him in committing themselves to mental hospitals as patients and trying to get out on their own. What begins as an inspiring and daring story of experimentation darkens and twists as Cahalan closes in on a story shrouded in mystery—who were these seven 'pseudopatients' in Rosenhan's groundbreaking study, and what really happened to them? *The Great Pretender* is not-to-be-missed narrative nonfiction."

—Megan Bell, Underground Books, Carrollton, GA



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All This Could Be Yours: A Novel

By Jami Attenberg

"I am in love with Jami Attenberg's writing, and was gripped by *All This Could Be Yours* from the opening pages. Everything about the Tuchmans felt so true to me: Alex's confusion and anger toward the family's toxic, now-comatose patriarch, Victor; Barbra's isolation in her later years after a long marriage to a brute; Twyla and Gary's unwinding secret selves—all of it is so perfectly told and paced. Full of Attenberg's trademark dry wit and precise, uncomfortable insight into the psychology of family love (and its close cousin, family hate), this novel had me laughing with genuine joy and crying in real sadness at the same time."

—Liv Stratman, Books Are Magic, Brooklyn, NY



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The Deep: A Novella

By Rivers Solomon, Daveed Diggs, William Hutson,
Jonathan Snipes

"Solomon is perfectly suited to expand the concept of a civilization of merfolk whose origins were born in the violence of pregnant African women sent to the depths from the vessels of white slave traders. *The Deep* focuses on Yetu, whose role as historian is to be individually burdened with six centuries of memories of all the wajinru (merfolk), and the consequences when she abdicates her responsibility. With shades of Hans Christian Andersen, Ursula Le Guin, and Lois Lowry, plus inimitable explorations of difficult social interrelationships, Solomon's short tome is, indeed, a deep read."

—Maryelizabeth Yturralde, Creating Conversations, Redondo Beach, CA



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The Accomplice: A Novel

By Joseph Kanon

"Joseph Kanon has produced his best effort yet, bringing us along on a mission to the Buenos Aires of 1962 to hunt down a reputedly deceased Nazi concentration camp doctor. With the backdrop of the earlier elaborate capture of Eichmann, this one is a homemade operation reluctantly carried out by the nephew of a camp survivor (the eponymous accomplice) and involving the CIA and Mossad. *The Accomplice* explores the life of a socialite in Buenos Aires, the conflicting emotions of the target's daughter and the reluctant spy, the limits of familial loyalty and of trust, and the danger of playing all sides. Emotional zigs and zags leave the reader spellbound as the cat and mouse game closes in on the capture of a detestable unrepentant Nazi."

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



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