



JANUARY '20

Such a Fun Age: A Novel

By Kiley Reid

"When I attempted to write a review for *Such a Fun Age*, I was at a loss for words. How could I encapsulate how Kiley Reid's startling debut perfectly captured what it means to be a woman? The societal pressure, the self-doubt, the perseverance, the constant comparison—all of it was perfectly represented through Reid's two wonderfully flawed and captivating leads. Follow Emira and Alix, two women on seemingly incongruous paths who find themselves searching for purpose and an authentic sense of self. *Such a Fun Age* tackles complex issues—race, gender, economic status, and the intersection of them all—yet remains accessible. You will not want to put this book down; when you do, you'll be itching to pick it back up again."

—Gennifer Eccles, Flyleaf Books, Chapel Hill, NC



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Dear Edward: A Novel

By Ann Napolitano

"A stunning portrayal of what it means to be a survivor and the fine balance between surviving and actually finding the will to move forward from the shattered remains of your life. This is what 12-year-old Eddie—now known as Edward—must deal with as the sole survivor of a plane crash in which 191 people, including his immediate family, perished. *Dear Edward* is a novel that pierces you to the core with its depiction of grief, guilt, loneliness, and remorse, but through glimpses of hope, friendship, and kindness, shows how Edward slowly mends."

—Maxwell Gregory, Lake Forest Book Store, Lake Forest, IL



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Long Bright River: A Novel

By Liz Moore

"This story's power comes not just from its beautiful writing but the reality of its characters and the incisive nature of its setting. Liz Moore has created a masterpiece that exposes the opioid epidemic in Philadelphia, highlighting the vulnerability of its victims and the sheer scope of suffering it causes. From the first page, when the murder mystery begins, readers will suffer and rejoice with the novel's oh-so-human characters. The power of this story is a fire that will linger for a long time."

—Hilary Kotecki, The Doylestown & Lahaska Bookshops, Doylestown, PA



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Imaginary Museums: Stories

By Nicolette Polek

"It's no small feat to establish a spellbinding presence in the span of 26 micro-stories, but Nicolette Polek pulls it off masterfully with *Imaginary Museums*. Her formula is so subtle that I can't really figure out how she achieves these literary sleights of hand with such consistency: one part magical realism here, a dash of unadorned honesty there, stir in some gallows humor, and serve chilled."

—Sam Faulkner, A Room of One's Own Bookstore, Madison, WI



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Big Lies in a Small Town: A Novel

By Diane Chamberlain

"*Big Lies in a Small Town* offers an intriguing mystery that caused me to stay up way past my bedtime on several occasions. The author perfectly weaves the 1940 and the 1918 storylines throughout alternating chapters, captivating the reader with main characters Anna and Morgan, as well as a host of fascinating supporting players. The ending offers a surprise twist that catches the reader unaware. A must-read for mystery lovers as well as those who appreciate art."

—Gayle Lovvorn, Noteworthy Bookstore, Stamford, TX



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The Magical Language of Others: A Memoir

By E.J. Koh

"A beautifully written memoir of history, culture, past, and present—this might be one of the best books I've read all year and a close second to *Pachinko*, one of my all-time favorites. The letters from a mother read from her daughter's perspective really give you a sense of the complexity of family relationships, and how certain events mold the consequences of what's to come. Just beautiful!"

—Desirae Wilkerson, Paper Boat Booksellers, Seattle, WA



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Uncanny Valley: A Memoir

By Anna Wiener

"Like Joan Didion or Renata Adler, Ben Lerner or Sally Rooney, Anna Wiener writes with dead-on specificity, scalpel-sharp analysis, deep sensitivity, and an eye for the absurd. She headed west into the modern gold rush that is the tech boom and now returns with gleaming ingots of insight, weaving tales of a strange land where boy-CEOs ride ripsticks and Hoover up your data. An essential and very human look at the forces shaping who we are and how we behave."

—Sam MacLaughlin, McNally Jackson Williamsburg, Brooklyn, NY



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The Vanished Birds: A Novel

By Simon Jimenez

"This book has stuck with me in a way that I know can only be attributed to masterful storytelling. In *The Vanished Birds*, Earth becomes uninhabitable and humankind spreads out into space using technology that is all of our capitalist, designer-baby, smart-everything, social-media-age fears realized. But this new world is also beautifully poetic—enormous space stations have been designed to mimic specific birds but have outlived their namesakes for lifetimes. I am dizzied by this world Jimenez has created and the characters that live in it. I find myself thinking about Nia and the people in her orbit—their thoughts, their motives, their choices—and going over mistakes and minutiae as if they were my own. This is literary science fiction at its most effective and affective."

—Samantha Tovey, Tattered Cover Book Store, Denver, CO



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Night Theater: A Novel

By Vikram Paralkar

“What does it mean to be truly alive? When a village surgeon comes face to face with three impossible patients, he must decide if he is willing to risk everything to try and help them. What a story! A mix of speculative fiction and operating room drama, this book totally enraptured me.”

—Jennifer Rohrbach, Newtonville Books, Newton Centre, MA



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JANUARY '20



Lady Clementine: A Novel

By Marie Benedict

“Marie Benedict is a master of historical fiction. *Lady Clementine* is every bit as wonderful and interesting as her previous novel, *The Only Woman in the Room*. Benedict has a gift for taking these women that we know from history and making them come alive—their struggles, their heartbreaks, their loves and joys. *Lady Clementine* focuses on Winston Churchill's wife, a woman of strength and power. Benedict's novels remind us of the women who came before us; their hearts and spirits teach us and remain with us.”

—Karen Bellovich, Anderson's Bookshops, Naperville, IL



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Before and After the Book Deal: A Writer's Guide to Finishing, Publishing, Promoting, and Surviving Your First Book

By Courtney Maum

“Even better than answering the questions a writer is afraid to ask, this book more importantly answers the questions a writer may not know to ask. Filled with anecdotal examples (both negative and positive), humor, and a lot of common sense advice, this book covers everything an aspiring writer might need to know, including how to deal with agents, editors, publishers, advances, social media, book tours, movie/TV rights, depression, failure, and, yes, even success.”

—Keith Glaeske, East City Bookshop, Washington, DC



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Creatures: A Novel

By Crissy Van Meter

“*Creatures* is a novel that invokes the senses most often left to the wayside in fiction: touch, taste, and smell. This imagery is unique to how Evie, our narrator, perceives her surroundings of Winter Island and the people who float in and out of her life. As readers experience Evie's past, present, and future concurrently, they are left with a stark and stunning tale of abandonment, betrayal, love, and healing. With a narrative style reminiscent of Ted Chiang's *The Story of Your Life*, this is a book I couldn't put down!”

—Julia Long, Epilogue: Books Chocolate Brews, Chapel Hill, NC



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Cleanness: A Novel

By Garth Greenwell

"*Cleanness* is a trance-inducing read. I started this book and was immediately swept up in it, and before I knew it, hours had passed. Greenwell describes human relationships in raw, beautiful detail while also exploring the power dynamics at play. If *Cleanness* is not one of my favorite books of 2020, it will have been a spectacular year for books."

—Hunter Gillum, Beaverdale Books, Des Moines, IA



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Deep State: A Thriller

By Chris Hauty

"*Deep State* is a compelling page-turner with an unpredictable last-minute twist that will knock you off your feet. Hayley Chill is an Army infantry soldier with an eye on doing more to serve her country. In true snatched-from-the-headlines fashion, Hayley accepts a White House internship in the administration of a highly controversial and divisive president with apparent strong Russian leanings, which puts him in the crosshairs of operatives intent on taking him and his administration down. Hayley finds herself caught up in the intricate plot and may be the only one who can stop it. Perhaps ironically, I really think this book would appeal equally to suspense-loving readers on either side of the political spectrum!"

—Brent Bunnell, Fiction Addiction, Greenville, SC



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Kingdomtide: A Novel

By Rye Curtis

"Original, fresh, and vulnerable. As soon as I finished *Kingdomtide*, I wanted to read it all over again. The shared plotline of the main characters felt like a heartbeat, speeding up and slowing down as they dealt with what life handed them. This story felt so real, not just in the sense that it could truly happen, but the feelings and emotions and conflicts the characters struggled through, with themselves, others, and society as a whole. A must-read for 2020, it really blew me away. I can't wait for Curtis' next novel."

—Jen Morrow, Bards Alley, Vienna, VA



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You Were There Too: A Novel

By Colleen Oakley

"This book had me from the prologue, when its main character, Mia, wakes up in the midst of some sort of catastrophe, pinned down by a man she won't name but seems to know. The whole novel is, to use Mia's words, 'an incomplete jigsaw puzzle.' I wanted to race through it to fit the pieces together, yet I wanted to read the story slowly as I got to know and care about every character. I absolutely loved this novel and can't wait to share it with readers ready to cozy up to a great story this winter!"

—Lady Smith, The Snail on the Wall, Huntsville, AL



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How Quickly She Disappears: A Novel

By Raymond Fleischmann

"*How Quickly She Disappears* is a Thriller with a capital T!! Set in Alaska with flashbacks to a childhood in Pennsylvania, the story follows Elisabeth, who is still haunted by and feeling partially responsible for the disappearance of her twin sister, Jacqueline, when they were 11. It's been 20 years, but when a stranger, Alfred, shows up claiming to have proof Jacqueline is still alive, Elisabeth sets out to assuage her guilty conscience. Alfred is demanding. Alfred demands frightening things of her. And as he teases her with more and more information, the stakes and demands escalate. How far will she go? Author Raymond Fleischmann will put you to the test. Your heart will race. Your breathing will become shallow. The pages will fly. This thriller is unlike any you've ever read!"

—Nancy Simpson-Brice, Book Vault, Oskaloosa, IA



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JANUARY '20

Why We Can't Sleep: Women's New Midlife Crisis

By Ada Calhoun

"I eagerly snatched this book up, hoping it would offer a magic cure-all for the 4:00 a.m. insomnia that plagues me on a regular basis. Instead, I found solace and comfort, if not in a full eight hours, in the fact that I wasn't alone in staring into the dark in the middle of the night, brain on a carousel, getting pissed and feeling miserable. About most everything. It all makes sense now: I'm not an anomaly or a sleepless loner, I'm part of a larger pattern, a cycle created by the culture of a certain generation—Generation X. *Why We Can't Sleep* gives hope and validation and takes away some of the worry. Although this book is specific to Gen Xers, I think their Baby Boomer parents and their Millennial children will also benefit from reading this fascinating generational study."

—Rani Birchfield, Front Street Books, Alpine, TX



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Come Tumbling Down

By Seanan McGuire

"Seanan McGuire strikes again with another breathtakingly beautiful fantasy! The Wayward Children series is an amazing collection of novellas for those who love the unique and bizarre, who long to see themselves in fiction, who want to lose themselves in words. This particular installment returns to some of her very best characters and can be enjoyed by new readers and devoted fans alike. Highly recommended!"

—Allison Chesbro, Schuler Books, Okemos, MI



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The Tenant: A Novel

By Katrine Engberg

"Truth is stranger than fiction for two detectives and an aspiring author, characters featured in Katrine Engberg's new novel, *The Tenant*. No one is quite who we think they are, so we're right there with police detectives Jeppe Korner and Anette Werner as they try to unravel the multitude of threads connecting victims, possible suspects, and witnesses. Terror and thrills abound as Engberg keeps all of us guessing right up to the end. I didn't breathe a sigh of relief until the last page."

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



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