

Midmonth BookNotes

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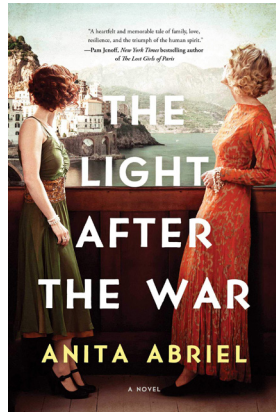
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Literary Valentines for Readers

Abriel, Anita. [The Light After the War](#)
(Atria \$27)

Vera Frankel and her best friend Edith Ban narrowly escape being put on a train heading for Auschwitz. After hiding out on an Austrian farm during the war, the two young women arrive in Naples in 1946 to start new lives. Armed with a letter of recommendation from an American officer, Vera, who dreams of becoming a playwright, finds work at the United States embassy where she falls in love with Captain Anton Wight. Edith, still mourning the death of her beloved Stephan, sews dresses to earn her living. But as Vera and Edith grapple with the aftermath of the war, so too does Anton, and when he suddenly disappears, Vera is forced to change course. Their quest for a better life takes Vera and Edith from Naples to Ellis Island to Caracas as they start careers, reunite with old friends, and rebuild their lives after terrible loss. This poignant, evocative, and stunning story of friendship, love, and survival was inspired by the true tale of the author's mother.



Ahern, Cecelia. [Postscript](#)
(Grand Central \$27).

Seven years after her husband's death -- six since she read his final letter -- Holly Kennedy has moved on with her life. When Holly's sister asks her to tell the story of the "PS, I Love You" letters on her podcast --

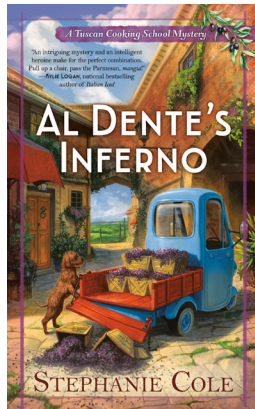
to revisit the messages Gerry wrote before his death to read after his passing -- she does so reluctantly, not wanting to reopen old wounds. But after the episode airs, people start reaching out to Holly, and they all have one thing in common: they're terminally ill and want to leave their own missives behind for loved ones. Suddenly, Holly finds herself drawn back into a world she's worked tirelessly to leave behind -- but one that leads her on another incredible, life-affirming journey. Ahern, the daughter of the then Irish PM, broke into publishing sixteen years ago with her best-selling novel of love and loss *P.S., I Love You* (which in so many ways was the literary precursor to Jo Jo Moyes' *Me Before You*). Plan on stocking up on Kleenex before starting this.

Brennan, Allison. [The Third to Die](#)
(MIRA \$26.99)

Detective Kara Quinn, on leave from the LAPD, is on an early morning jog in her hometown of Liberty Lake when she comes upon the body of a young nurse. The manner of death shows a pattern of highly controlled rage. Meanwhile in DC, FBI special agent Mathias Costa is staffing his newly minted Mobile Response Team. Word reaches Matt that the Liberty Lake murder fits the profile of the compulsive Triple Killer. It will be the first case for the MRT. This time they have a chance to stop this zealous if elusive killer before he strikes again. But only if they can figure out who he is and where he is hiding before he disappears for another three years. The Poisoned Pen still has a few signed copies of this chilling novel of suspense by award-winning and best-selling Brennan.

Cole, Stephanie. [Al Dente's Inferno](#)
(Penguin \$7.99)

When Nell Valenti is offered a chance to move to Tuscany to help transform an aging villa into a farm-to-table cooking school, she eagerly accepts. After all, both her job and her love life in America have been feeling stale. Plus, she'll get the chance to work under the acclaimed Italian Chef Claudio Orlandini. But Nell gets more than she bargained for when she arrives. Not only does the villa need major repairs, but Chef O seems less than "focused" on the big picture of getting the villa ready for a special dinner designed to impress a group of local dignitaries. Throw into the mix that fact that the documentary filmmaker chronicling the opening of the school is none other than Nell's odious former romantic fling, Buford Kaplan, and you have the perfect recipe for disaster. Especially when Buford winds up murdered! Stephanie Cole is the pseudonym for Edgar and Agatha award-winning author Shelly Costa, and the first delectably fun entry in her Tuscan Cooking School mystery is *molto delizioso*! The book's rich cast of characters, evocatively rendered Italian setting, and lively writing seasoned with just the right dash of dry humor add up to the perfect treat for cozy mystery fans. If you love Katherine Hall Page's equally entertaining books or miss the mysteries of Diane Mott Davidson, this charming cozy will be just what you crave.



Fowler, Therese Anne. [A Good Neighborhood](#)
(St Martins \$27.99).

In Oak Knoll, a verdant, tight-knit North Carolina neighborhood, professor of forestry and ecology Valerie Alston-Holt is raising her bright and talented biracial son, Xavier, who's headed to college in the fall. All is well until the Whitmans—a family with new money and a secretly troubled teenage daughter—raze the house and trees next door to build themselves a showplace. With little in common except a property line, these two families quickly find themselves at odds: first, over an historic oak tree in Valerie's yard, and soon after, the blossoming romance between their two teenagers. Fowler got her literary start writing historical novels like *Z* (a fictionalized ac-

count of Zelda Fitzgerald) and *A Well-Behaved Woman* (an enlightening account of Consuelo Vanderbilt) and now she turns her gimlet eye on the modern-day issue-driven novel (in this case: class and race) a la Jodi Picoult. Don't be surprised if you see this popping up on a lot of book club lists this year.

Kamali, Marjan. [The Stationery Shop](#)
(Gallery \$16).

Amidst the political upheaval of Tehran in 1953, Roya finds a literary oasis in kindly Mr. Fakhri's neighborhood book and stationery shop. When Mr. Fakhri, with a keen instinct for a budding romance, introduces Roya to his other favorite customer; handsome Bahman, who has a burning passion for justice and a love for Rumi's poetry; she loses her heart at once. And, as their romance blossoms, the modest little stationery shop remains their favorite place in all of Tehran. A few short months later, on the eve of their marriage, Roya agrees to meet Bahman at the town square, but her beloved never shows up. Now more than sixty years later, an accident of fate leads Roya back to Bahman and offers her a chance to ask him the questions that have haunted her for more than half a century: Why did he leave? Where did he go? How was he able to forget her? This eloquently written love story explores loss, reconciliation, and the concept of fate and was one of NPR's best books of 2019.

Kidd, Jess. [Things in Jars](#)
(Atria \$27)

The sooty streets of Victorian London are crawling with nefarious characters, and Bridie Devine--female detective extraordinaire with the added bonus of being medically trained--must confront her most remarkable puzzle yet: the kidnapping of Sir Edmund Berwick's daughter Christabel. Winding her way through a mystery as labyrinthine as the city streets, Bridie won't rest until she finds Christabel, who it turns out is less Sir Edmund's daughter and more a valued part of his collection, even if it means unearthing a past that she'd rather keep buried. "Deliciously dark" and "strangely sinister" are just a few of the ways reviews have characterized the latest marvelously inventive work from Kidd, whose first novel *Himself* was short-listed for the Irish Book Awards. *Kirkus* gave it a coveted star saying "With so much detail and so many clever, Dickensian charac-

ters, readers might petition Kidd to give Bridie her own series. Creepy, violent, and propulsive; a stand-out gothic mystery.”

Kleypas, Lisa. [Chasing Cassandra](#)
(Avon \$7.99)

Railway magnate Tom Severin is wealthy and powerful enough to satisfy any desire as soon as it arises. Anything; or anyone; is his for the asking. It should be simple to find the perfect wife; and from his first glimpse of Lady Cassandra Ravenel, Tom is determined to have her. But the beautiful and quick-witted Cassandra is equally determined to marry for love; the one thing Tom doesn't think he can give her. The latest in award-winning Kleypas' Victorian-set Ravenel family series is another lyrically written, lushly sensual treat.

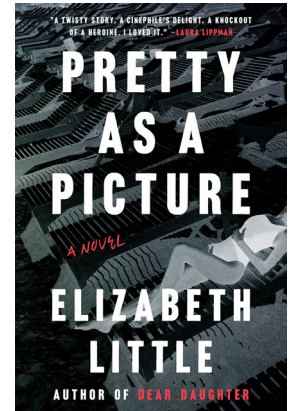
Levangie, Gigi. [Been There, Married That](#)
(Simon Schuster \$27.99).

Agnes Murphy Nash is the perfect Hollywood wife – she has the right friends, the right clothes, and even a side career of her own as a writer. Her husband Trevor is a bigshot producer, and from the outside it looks like they're living a picture-perfect celebrity life, complete with tennis tournaments and lavish parties. But the job description of a Hollywood wife doesn't cover divorce, which is the way Agnes' life is headed after she comes home one day to find her credit cards cancelled and the security passwords to get into her enormous LA home changed. Oh, and there's a guy there whose job it is to taser her if she tries to enter...which she does. *PW* gave this a star concluding with “Screenwriter Levangie has a keen insight into the inner workings, and foibles, of the Hollywood elite, and her sharp, canny wit drives her mile-a-minute prose and spares no one. Agnes's voice is wry and funny, and there's just enough pathos about her to keep the more farcical elements in check. Readers looking for a fast, laugh-out-loud romp will find much to enjoy.”

Little, Elizabeth. [Pretty as a Picture](#)
(Penguin \$27)

“When you think about it, an editor – that is to say, a film editor – isn't really so different from a detective. We are both presented with incomplete or imperfect information and tasked with piecing together a coherent narrative.” Movie editor Marissa Dahl pro-

vides this insight into her creative process about halfway through *Pretty as a Picture* when she finds herself caught up investigating the decades old unsolved murder of aspiring teenage actress Caitlyn Kelly. Legendary – infamously egomaniacal – Hollywood director Tony Rees has chosen the crime as the subject of his latest movie, which is being shot on a small island off the coast of Delaware. Hired to replace the film previous editor, who left suddenly under circumstances about which no one else on the cast wishes to speak. But Marissa soon discovers that on this set, nothing is as it's supposed to be--or as it seems. There are rumors of accidents and indiscretions, of burgeoning scandals and perilous schemes. Half the crew has been fired. The other half wants to quit. Even the actors have figured out something is wrong. Then Marissa meets two teenage girls, who are convinced the wrong man was suspected for the original crime and are determined to solve the real-life murder that is the subject of the movie now under production. It isn't long before Marissa finds herself drawn into their investigation. It has been five years since the publication of Little's previous novel, the stunning book *Dear Daughter*, and now the author is back with another brilliantly crafted suspense novel that deftly explores the current fascination with true crime as well as society's addiction to podcasts. An author's voice – the way in which they narrate their story – is key in making a great book, and Little has a dryly witty tone and the ability to create realistically quirky characters that is simply remarkable. Throw in a protagonist, whose love of movies plays a continuous role in her approach to life - and detection- and you have another truly satisfying must-read suspense novel of the year.



Maher, Kerri. [The Girl in White Gloves](#)
(Berkley \$26).

Hungry for her art and hopeful for the future, young Grace Kelly has the world at her feet. MGM's rising queen is poised to win the Oscar, but she chafes at the studio's increasing restrictions on her life. When an unexpected friendship develops between her and Prince Rainier of Monaco, she faces the tempting possibility of a new role--one that offers the power

and stability she craves. But life isn't like the movies. Twenty years into her crumbling marriage, Grace finds herself frustrated and disillusioned. Conflicted by notions of family, career, and the very nature of womanhood--notions Grace herself shaped for a generation of women--the world's loneliest princess searches for purpose beyond the labels and headlines. Maher is no stranger to fictionally chronicling the lives of the wealthy and powerful (her previous book covered the Kennedys), and now she tackles a Hollywood icon, who was the very definition of grace and class. If you love superiorly crafted historical fiction by authors like Melanie Benjamin, Paula McLain, and Beatriz Williams, who says Maher is a "true force in biographical fiction," you will savor every word of this marvelous novel.

Nicholls, Owen. [Love, Unscripted](#) (Random \$17).

Fledgling journalist Ellie Brown has the quizzical eyebrows of a *Broadcast News* era Holly Hunter and the neon-red hair of Kate Winslet in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*. At least that's what caught cinema fan and movie house projectionist Nick Marcet's attention when he met her on the night of 2008's historic presidential election. A devotee of great movie love stories, Nick always fancied himself the Tom Hanks of his own romantic comedy, and when sparks flew with Ellie that night, he swiftly cast her as the Meg Ryan of his story. For four blissful years, Nick loved Ellie just as he loved his job as a film projectionist: wholly, earnestly, cinematically. But now Ellie has moved out, convinced that the fire's gone; and Nick is forced to sift through his memories to figure out where it all went wrong. That night was a perfect meet-cute, yes, but was their romance as destined for a "happily ever after" as he'd thought? Was he really the rom-com hero he believes he'd been? Or did this Harry let his Sally down? *PW* concluded their rave of this terrific romantic debut with "Nicholls writes with verve and wit, elevating the unsurprising plot with infectious film commentary, the pratfalls of young love, and a time capsule of London life before Brexit. Nick Hornby fans will appreciate this."

Pataki, Allison. [The Queen's Fortune](#) (Ballantine \$28).

A chance encounter with Napoleon Bonaparte, the ambitious and charismatic young military prodigy,

provides Desiree Clary with the solution as to how she can save her brother from the threat of the guillotine. When her beloved sister Julie marries Napoleon's brother Joseph, Desiree and Napoleon's futures become irrevocably linked. Quickly entering into their own passionate, dizzying courtship that leads to a secret engagement, they vow to meet in the capital once his career has been secured. But her newly laid plans with Napoleon turn to sudden heartbreak, thanks to Napoleon's new love the rising star of Parisian society, Josephine de Beauharnais. Once again, Desiree's life is turned on its head.

Swept to the glittering halls of the French capital, Desiree is plunged into the inner circle of the new ruling class, becoming further entangled with Napoleon, his family, and the new Empress. But her fortunes shift once again when she meets Napoleon's confidant and star general, the indomitable Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte. As the two men in Desiree's life become political rivals and military foes, the question that arises is: must she choose between the love of her new husband and the love of her nation and its Emperor? Pataki has been on a literary mission to give voice to some of history's significant women told from the viewpoint of these women themselves. Her previous novels have featured Peggy Shippen Arnold (the wife of Benedict Arnold) and Empress Elizabeth of Austria.



Rothschild, Hannah. [House of Trelawney](#) (Knopf \$27.95)

For more than seven hundred years, the vast, rambling Trelawney Castle in Cornwall--turrets, follies, a room for every day of the year, four miles of corridors and 500,000 acres--was the magnificent and grand "three dimensional calling card" of the earls of Trelawney. By 2008, it is in a complete state of ruin due to the dulled ambition and the financial ineptitude of the twenty-four earls, two world wars, the Wall Street crash, and inheritance taxes. Still: the heir to all of it, Kitto, his wife, Jane, their three children, their dog, Kitto's ancient parents, and his aunt Tuffy Scott, an entomologist who studies fleas, all manage to live there and keep it going. Four women dominate the story: Jane; Kitto's sister, Blaze, who left Tre-

lawney and made a killing in finance in London, the wildly beautiful, seductive, and long-ago banished Anastasia and her daughter, Ayesha. When Anastasia sends a letter announcing that her nineteen-year-old daughter, Ayesha, will be coming to stay, the longestranged Blaze and Jane must band together to take charge of their new visitor--and save the house of Trelawney.

Quick, Amanda. [Tightrope](#) (\$7.99).

Amalie Vaughn is used to taking chances. After all, when she was an aerialist in the circus, she regularly worked without a net. But now Amalie may be facing the biggest risk of her life when she uses all of her savings to buy a reportedly "cursed" mansion in Burning Cove in order to turn it into a bed and breakfast. Of course, having her first guest be murdered doesn't help with future bookings, nor does having private investigator Matthias Jones becoming a permanent fixture in her life with his persistent questions about the incident. In her third Burning Cove set book, *Quick* (pseudonym for *New York Times* best-selling Jayne Ann Krentz) once again stylishly fuses an intriguing 1930s, Hollywood kissed setting with a quicksilver paced plot and then wraps the whole thing up in writing richly imbued with her deliciously tart sense of humor.

Sayers, Constance. [A Witch in Time](#) (Orbit \$26).

Helen Lambert has lived several lives--a young piano virtuoso in 1890s Paris, an actress in 1930's Hollywood, a rock star in 1970s Los Angeles--only she doesn't know it. Until she meets a strange man who claims he's watched over her for centuries, bound to her from the beginning.

At first, Helen doesn't believe him. Her life is as normal as any other modern career woman's. Then she begins having vivid dreams about ill-fated love and lives cut short. Caught in a curse, Helen will be forced to relive the same tragic events that ruined her previous lives. But with each rebirth, she's developed uncanny powers. And as the most powerful version of herself, Helen must find a way to break the curse before her time runs out.

Sosa, Mia. [The Worst Best Man.](#) (Harper \$15.99).

It is bad enough that Max Hartley ruined her wedding; did he have to tank her career as well? Ever since her fiancé Andrew Hartley ditched her at the altar (right after having a heart-to-heart talk with his younger brother and best man Max the night before the wedding) Carolina Santos -- understandably -- had something of a grudge against Max. Now several years later just as Carolina, a wedding consultant (and yes, the irony of it all is not lost on her) has the chance to land a lucrative job coordinating weddings for one of the D.C. area's hottest boutique hotels, who should turn up but Max. It turns out Max is angling to land a marketing contract with the same hotel chain, but the owner insists that Carolina and Max work together on a presentation before she will decide who gets the contract. Now if Carolina and Max can just figure out a way to work together without killing each other, they might have a chance to nail their presentation.



St. James, Simone. [The Sun Down Motel](#) (Berkley \$26)

No one knows quite how to send a shiver down a reader's spine quite like Simone St. James. In her latest deliciously spooky novel of suspense, Carly Kirk arrives in Fell, N.Y. determined to find some answers about her aunt Viv Delaney's mysterious disappearance from the area 35 years earlier. Taking a job as the night clerk at the Sun Down Motel, where her aunt worked before she went missing, seems like a good place to start until Carly discovers Fell has a surprisingly high crime rate for such a small town. St. James effectively uses the dual time line of her plot to keep readers on edge while skillfully deploying her signature literary mix of mysterious chills, supernatural thrills, and a dash of romance. Not since the Bates Motel opened up for business has there been a scarier place to stay than the Sun Down Motel.

St. John, Madeleine. [The Women in Black](#)
(Scribner \$16).

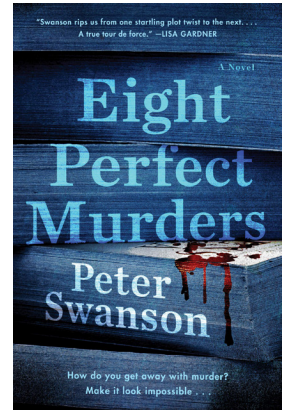
Set in an upscale department store called Goode's in Sydney in the 1950s, this debut novel centers on three women in black, so named for the black frocks they wear while working. Patty is in her mid-thirties and has been a fixture at Goode's for years. Patty is married to Frank, who seems to have forgotten she exists. Fay is looking for a nice man to settle down with, but somehow she keeps missing the boat when it comes to marriage-minded males. Glamorous Magda, a Slovenian émigré who runs the high-end gowns department, dreams of one day opening her boutique. Then there is Lisa, a teenager who takes a job at Goode's for the holidays, and who finds an unexpected alley in Magda when her dreams of attending university seem out of reach. *Kirkus* called this debut novel a "witty little gem of tale, reminiscent of Barbara Pym and Muriel Spark," while the publisher says this delightful and uplifting novel is "perfect for fans of *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*." Sounds like just the kind of life-affirming story we can all use in these turbulent times.

Stratford, Sara. [Red Letter Days](#)
(Penguin \$17).

Phoebe Adler's dreams of becoming a famous screenwriter are derailed when she is blacklisted and becomes entangled in Joseph McCarthy's relentless search for any American citizen considered to be part of the Red Menace. Phoebe manages to relocate to London, where she hopes to clear her name while continuing to pursue her writing career. Phoebe's future seems to take a turn for the better when she strikes up a friendship with fellow American exile Hannah Wolfson, who now works as a television producer in England and flirts with danger by hiring blacklisted writers. However, neither Phoebe nor Hannah realize that the danger from which they thought they had escaped, still looms in the shadows....and that their fight is only just beginning. Stratford, author of the terrific historical novel *Radio Girls*, based her character of Hannah Wolfson on Hannah Weinstein, who headed her own television production company in England in the 1950s. *PW* concluded their review of this with "Stratford's bracing adventure effortlessly melds politics, romance, and history. This delivers on every level."

Swanson, Peter. [Eight Perfect Murders](#)
(HarperCollins \$27.99)

What if someone gave you the blueprints for committing the perfect murder? Apparently, that is exactly what Boston bookseller Malcolm Kershaw has done, if he is to believe FBI agent Gwen Mulvey. Agent Mulvey believes that someone is using Malcolm's "Eight Perfect Murders" – a list of crime novels whose protagonists got away with murder that Malcolm wrote for the Old Devil's Bookstore's blog several years earlier – as a template for committing their own series of murders. Now the question is whether Malcolm can figure out exactly who the killer is before he or she crosses the last book off the list. Sometimes a reader gets lucky and discovers a book that has it all: a terrific setting, great characters, a plot filled with unexpected twists, and polished writing seasoned with just the right dash of dry humor. Swanson's latest noir-tinged masterpiece is exactly that kind of book. I loved the bookstore setting (including the addition of the store's tots adorbs cat Nero!) as well as the protagonist's musings on what makes some of crime fiction's greatest novels so outstanding (Swanson's editor calls it a "veritable love letter to the classics and their creators" and he is absolutely right). Like John Dunning's *Booked to Death*, *Eight Perfect Crimes* is destined to become a modern crime classic in its own right.



Trentham, Laura. [Everyday Hero](#)
(\$16.99).

At thirty, Greer Hadley never expected to be forced home to Madison, Tennessee with her life and dreams up in flames. A series of bad decisions and even worse luck lands her community service hours at a nonprofit organization that aids veterans and their families. Greer cannot fathom how she's supposed to help anyone deal with their trauma and loss when everything that brought her joy has failed her. Then Greer meets fifteen-year-old Ally Martinez, a gifted girl who lost her father in action and now hides her pain behind a mask of sarcasm. But Greer sees something undeniable that she can't walk away

from. To make matters more complicated, Greer finds herself spending more and more time with Emmett Lawson—a man with both physical and emotional scars of his own. When a situation with Ally becomes dire, the two of them must become a team to save her—and along the way they might just save themselves too.

Waldherr, Kris. [The Lost History of Dreams](#)
(Atria \$17)

When famed Byronesque poet Hugh de Bonne is discovered dead in his bath one morning, his cousin Robert Highstead, a post-mortem photographer, is charged with a simple task: transport Hugh's remains for burial in a chapel. This chapel, a stained-glass folly set on the moors, was built by de Bonne sixteen years earlier to house the remains of his beloved wife and muse, Ada. Since then, the chapel has been locked and abandoned, a pilgrimage site for the rabid fans of de Bonne's last book, *The Lost History of Dreams*. However, Ada's grief-stricken niece refuses to open the glass chapel for Robert unless he agrees to her bargain: before he can lay Hugh to rest, Robert must record Isabelle's story of Ada and Hugh's ill-fated marriage over the course of five nights. This gothic-suffused tale is tailor-made for readers of Diane Setterfield's *The Thirteenth Tale* or A. S. Byatt's *Possession*.

Wiggs, Susan. [The Oysterville Sewing Circle](#)
(\$8.99).

Forced by scandal and tragedy to return to her Pacific coast childhood home, Caroline Shelby assumes guardianship over her best friend Angelique's two young children and in the process, Caroline finds herself forming a domestic violence support group with a circle of fellow seamstresses in memory of her friend. A moving and emotional compelling story about courage and friendship.

Williams, Synithia. [Forbidden Promises](#)
(HQN \$7.99)

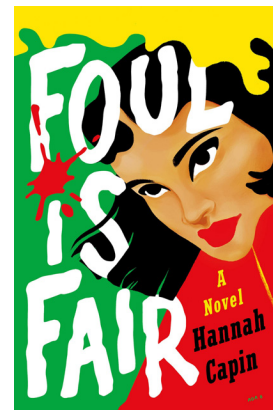
Get in and get out. That was India Robidoux's plan for this family visit. But when her brother needs her help with his high-profile political campaign, India has no choice but to stay and face the one man she's been running from for years: Travis Strickland, her sister's ex-husband. Travis Strickland owes everything to the Robidoux family. There's nothing he wouldn't do for them; his divorce could never change that. Still,

he has one regret. Impulsive and passionate, India always understood him better than anyone else. And the longer they work together on the campaign, the more torn he is. Coming between her and her sister is out of the question. But how can he let love pass him by a second time?

TEEN FICTION

Capin, Hannah. [Foul is Fair](#)
(SMP \$18.99)

Jade and her friends Jenny, Mads, and Summer rule their glittering LA circle. Untouchable, they have the kind of power other girls only dream of. Every party is theirs and the world is at their feet. Until the night of Jade's sweet sixteen, when they crash a St. Andrew's Prep party. The night the golden boys choose Jade as their next target. They picked the wrong girl. Sworn to vengeance, Jade transfers to St. Andrew's Prep. She plots to destroy each boy, one by one. She'll take their power, their lives, and their control of the prep school's hierarchy. And she and her coven have the perfect way in: a boy named Mack, whose ambition could turn deadly. This intense, dark, and sometimes brutal teen novel has been getting plenty of press including from *Kirkus* which concluded "Elements of the coven's elaborately staged scheme are hard to swallow, and a lack of character depth may blunt the impact for some, despite intersectional inclusivity across secondary characters. Still, Capin's twisty, blood-soaked take on Shakespeare's play is a propulsive, white-hot juggernaut of vengeance that packs a viscerally satisfying punch."



Khanani, Intisar. [Thorn](#)
(HarperCollins \$18.99)

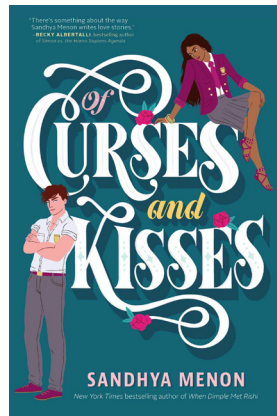
Princess Alyrra has always longed to escape the confines of her royal life, but when her mother betroths her to a powerful prince in a distant kingdom, she has little hope for a better future.

Until Alyrra arrives at her new kingdom, where a mysterious sorceress robs her of both her identity

and her role as princess; and Alyrra seizes on the opportunity to start a new life for herself as a goose girl. But as Alyrra uncovers dangerous secrets about her new world, including a threat to the prince himself, she knows she can't remain silent forever. With the fate of the kingdom at stake, Alyrra is caught between two worlds, and ultimately must decide who she is and what she stands for.

Menon, Sandhya. [Of Curses and Kisses](#) (Simon \$18.99)

For Princess Jaya Rao, nothing is more important than family. When the loathsome Emerson clan steps up their centuries-old feud to target Jaya's little sister, nothing will keep Jaya from exacting her revenge. Then Jaya finds out she'll be attending the same elite boarding school as Grey Emerson, and it feels like the opportunity of a lifetime. She knows what she must do: Make Grey fall in love with her and break his heart. But much to Jaya's annoyance, Grey's brooding demeanor and lupine blue eyes have drawn her in. There's simply *no way* she and her sworn enemy could find their fairy-tale ending; right? An interesting spin on the classic Beauty and the Beast fable.



Miller, Linsey. [Belle Revolte](#) (Sourcebooks \$17.99)

Emilie des Marais is more at home holding scalpels than embroidery needles and is desperate to escape her noble roots to serve her country as a physician. But society dictates a noble lady cannot perform such gruesome work. Annette Boucher, overlooked and overworked by her family, wants more from life than her humble beginnings and is desperate to be trained in magic. So when a strange noble girl offers Annette the chance of a lifetime, she accepts.

Emilie and Annette swap lives—Annette attends finishing school as a noble lady to be trained in the ways of divination, while Emilie enrolls to be a physician's assistant, using her natural magical talent to save lives. But when their nation instigates a terrible war, Emilie and Annette come together to help the rebellion unearth the truth before it's too late.

Sater, Steven. [Alice by Heart](#) (Penguin \$17.99)

Amidst the rubble of the Blitz of World War II, fifteen-year-old Alice Spencer and her best friend, Alfred, are forced to take shelter in an underground tube station. Sick with tuberculosis, Alfred is quarantined, with doctors saying he won't make it through the night. In her desperation to keep him holding on, Alice turns to their favorite pastime: recalling the book that bonded them, and telling the story that she knows by heart--the story of *Alice in Wonderland*. What follows is a stunning, fantastical journey that blends Alice's two worlds: her war-ravaged homeland being held together by nurses and soldiers and Winston Churchill, and her beloved Wonderland, a welcome distraction from the bombs and the death, but a place where one rule always applies: the pages must keep turning. Tony Award-winning playwright Steven Sater adapted his off-Broadway musical for this stunning novel about grief, loss, and first love.

NONFICTION

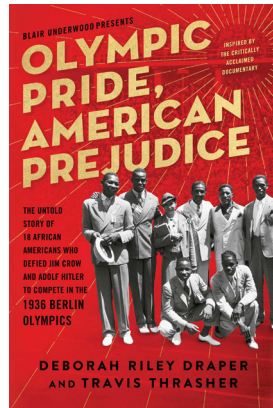
de Courcy, Anne. [Chanel's Riviera](#) (St. Martin's \$28.99)

The Cote d'Azur in 1938 was a world of wealth, luxury, and extravagance, inhabited by a sparkling cast of characters that included the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Joseph P. Kennedy, Gloria Swanson, Colette, the Mitfords, and Picasso, all of whom flocked to the Riviera each year to swim, gamble, and escape from the turbulence plaguing the rest of Europe. At the glittering center of it all was Coco Chanel, whose very presence at her magnificently appointed villa, *La Pausa*, made it the ultimate place to be. But this wildly seductive world was poised on the edge of destruction. In a matter of months, the Nazis swooped down to claim everything for their leader. *PW* said de Courcy "fluidly written history succeeds in capturing the era's intoxicating mix of glitz and grit. Even if she gives Chanel a pass on her own anti-Semitism and her ability of get around the food shortages and other hardships imposed on those in the region due to her affair with Nazi intelligence officer Hans von Dincklage."

Draper, Debra Riley et al. [Olympic Pride American Prejudice](#)

(Atria \$27.99)

Set against the turbulent backdrop of a segregated United States, sixteen black men and two black women are torn between boycotting the Olympic Games in Nazi Germany or participating. If they go, they would represent a country that considered them second-class citizens and would compete amid a strong undercurrent of Aryan superiority that considered them inferior. Yet, if they stayed, would they ever have a chance to prove them wrong on a global stage? To be better than anyone ever expected? Filmmaker Draper, who directed *Versailles '73* among other pictures, chronicles the inspiring story of 18 African Americans, including Jesse Owens, Tidy Pickett, and Jackie Robinson's brother Mack, who competed in the 1936 Berlin Olympics despite the racism at home and abroad in this companion volume to the 2016 documentary.



DuBois, Ellen Carol. [Suffrage](#)

(Simon and Schuster \$28)

Just in time to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the passing of the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution, distinguished historian Ellen Carol DuBois tells the thrilling story of how a diverse group of determined women (and a few good men) fought to see that women in America had the right to vote. DuBois begins in the pre-Civil War years with foremothers Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Sojourner Truth as she explores the links of the woman suffrage movement to the abolition of slavery. After the Civil War, Congress granted freed African American men the right to vote but not white and African American women, a crushing disappointment. DuBois shows how suffrage leaders persevered through the Jim Crow years into the reform era of Progressivism. She introduces new champions Carrie Chapman Catt and Alice Paul, who brought the fight into the 20th century, and she shows how African American women, led by Ida B. Wells-Barnett, demanded voting rights even as white suffragists ignored them.

Fehrman, Craig. [Author in Chief](#)

(Simon and Schuster \$30)

Presidential books have made an enormous impact on American history, catapulting their authors to the national stage and even turning key elections. Beginning with Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia*, the first presidential book to influence a campaign, and John Adams's *Autobiography*, the first score-settling presidential memoir, *Author in Chief* draws on newly uncovered information; including never-before-published letters from Andrew Jackson, John F. Kennedy, and Ronald Reagan; to cast fresh light on the private drives and self-doubts that fueled our nation's leaders.

Gornick, Vivian. [Unfinished Business](#)

(FSG \$25)

In nine essays that traverse literary criticism, memoir, and biography, Gornick, one of our most celebrated critics writes about the importance of reading—and re-reading—as life progresses. Gornick finds herself in contradictory characters within D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*, assesses womanhood in Colette's *The Vagabond* and *The Shackle*, and considers the veracity of memory in Marguerite Duras's *The Lover*. She revisits Great War novels by J. L. Carr and Pat Barker, uncovers the psychological complexity of Elizabeth Bowen's prose, and soaks in Natalia Ginzburg, "a writer whose work has often made me love life more." And after adopting two cats, whose erratic behavior she finds vexing, she discovers Doris Lessing's *Particularly Cats*.

Gross, Edward and Mark A. Altman. [Nobody Does It Better](#)

(Forge \$29.99)

Bestselling authors Mark A. Altman and Edward Gross take you behind-the-scenes of the most famous and beloved movie franchise of all-time filled with reflections from over 150 cast, crew, critics and filmmakers who reflect on the impact of this legendary movie franchise as well as share their thoughts about their favorite (and least) favorite 007 adventures and the spy mania which gripped fans the world over in the wake of the success of the James Bond films. Bond fans (or fanatics depending on where you stand) will spend hours going through this oral history of the movie franchise.

Inskeep, Steve. [Imperfect Union](#)
(Penguin \$32)

John C. Frémont was relatively unknown in 1842, when he commanded the first of his expeditions to the uncharted West. But in only a few years, he was one of the most acclaimed people of the age; known as a wilderness explorer, bestselling writer, gallant army officer, and latter-day conquistador, who in 1846 began the United States's takeover of California from Mexico. He was not even 40 years old when Americans began naming mountains and towns after him. He had perfect timing, exploring the West just as it captured the nation's attention. But the most important factor in his fame may have been the person who made it all possible: his wife, Jessie Benton Frémont. With rare detail and in consummate style, Steve Inskeep tells the story of a couple whose joint ambitions and talents intertwined with those of the nascent United States itself.

Christina. [Phantom Lady](#)
(Chicago Review \$30)

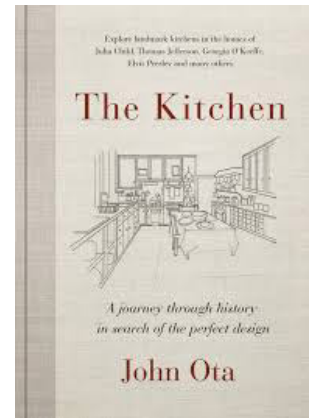
Phantom Lady chronicles the untold story of Joan Harrison, Hollywood's most powerful female writer-producer of the 1940's. Alfred Hitchcock's confidante and the Oscar-nominated screenwriter of his first American film, *Rebecca*, she was one of his closest collaborators, critically shaping his brand as the "master of suspense." Forging an image as "the female Hitchcock," Harrison went on to produce numerous Hollywood features before becoming a television pioneer as the producer of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*.

Norton, Mary Beth. [1774](#)
(Knopf \$32.50)

Using pamphlets, newspaper accounts, and personal correspondence, Pulitzer Prize finalist Norton (*Founding Mothers & Fathers*) and 2018 president of the American Historical Association examines the critical "long year" of 1774 and the revolutionary change that took place from December 1773 to mid-April 1775, from the Boston Tea Party and the first Continental Congress to the Battles of Lexington and Concord.

Ota, John. [The Kitchen](#)
(Random House \$25)

John Ota has a dream: to create the perfect kitchen. Up until now, John and his wife had been making do with the standard-issue kitchen, but when it came right down to it, the kitchen left a lot to be desired. So, John set out on a mission across the country: to explore examples of exemplary kitchens throughout history and draw inspiration for his own dream kitchen. Along the way, John cooked with experts and learned about the kitchens of everyone from Thomas Jefferson to Julia Child to Elvis Presley. Illustrated with photographs as well as drawings by the author, this is a book for homeowners, interior designers, cooks, armchair historians, and anyone who – like John Ota before them – is seeking inspiration for their own dream kitchen.



Raab, Nathan. [The Hunt for History](#)
(Scribner \$30)

Each day, people from all over the world contact Nathan Raab for help understanding what they have, what it might be worth, and how to sell it. The Raab Collection's president, Nathan is a modern-day treasure hunter and one of the world's most prominent dealers of historical artifacts. Most weeks, he travels the country, scours auctions, or fields phone calls and emails from people who think they *may* have found something of note in a grandparent's attic. In *The Hunt for History*, Raab shares some fascinating stories about his professional exploits: spotting a letter from British officials that secured the Rosetta Stone; discovering a piece of the first electric cable laid by Edison; restoring a fragmented letter from Andrew Jackson that led to the infamous Trail of Tears; and locating copies of missing audio that had been recorded on Air Force One as the plane brought JFK's body back to Washington. Whether it's the first report of Napoleon's death or an unpublished letter penned by Albert Einstein to a curious soldier, every document and artifact Raab uncovers comes with a spellbinding story and often offers new insights into a life we thought we knew.