

Midmonth BookNotes

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Fall in Love with a Good Book

Cozy Corner

Flower, Amanda. [In Farm's Way](#) (Sourcebooks \$8.99)
Organic farmer Shiloh Bellamy gets tangled up in the murder of an ice fishing contestant and must wade through the town's fishy characters to lure the killer to the surface while dealing with her struggling family farm. "An adorable pug and characters you can invest in enliven a very cherry-centric mystery." (*Kirkus*)

Fox, Sarah. [Six Sweets Under](#) (Penguin \$8.99)
While testing new flavors in preparation for the annual Gondola Races, former actress-turned-chocolatier Becca Ransome must prove the innocence of her grandfather, the event's organizer, in the murder of local curmudgeon Archie Smith who was stirring up trouble in an attempt to keep tourists away from Larch Haven.

George, Emily. [A Half-Baked Murder](#) (Kensington \$15.95)
After a scathing food review and a messy breakup, a formally trained pastry chef Chloe Barnes returns home to California to launch a cannabis bakery with her quirky Aunt Dawn, in the first novel of a new series. "George checks off all the requisite boxes, including an appealing small-town setting, cute dog, close family, and the possibility of romance on the horizon. Cannabis-infused recipes round out the volume. Cozy

fans will eagerly await the next Cannabis Café mystery." (*PW*)

Popp, Misha. [A Good Day to Pie](#) (Crooked Lane \$29.99)

Daisy Ellery bakes a little murder into every pie she creates, and she and her dog, Zoe, deliver them to the town's worst cads. Now, Daisy's entered a televised, elimination-style competition and has a shot at \$100k in prize money—but she still has a murder pie to deliver between filming. In a completely unexpected turn of events, she discovers that her intended victim is one of the competition judges, and he turns up dead before the pie even arrives. Now, Daisy has to solve the murder—even if it means working a bit of magic—before someone calls foul play and exposes her murderous secret.

Rothschild, Peggy. [Playing Dead](#) (Penguin \$28)

Former PI Molly Madison must put her ex-police skills to good use when a dog trainer's body is found onsite at the Playtime Academy facility. Now Molly must collar the real killer when her friend is arrested for the crime in this follow-up to [A Deadly Bone to Pick](#) (Penguin \$17). "Engaging characters and canine lore will enthrall mystery mavens and dog lovers alike." (*Kirkus*)

Historical Fiction, Mysteries, Romance and More

Asher, April. [Not Your Ex's Hexes](#) (St. Martin's \$16.99)
A one-night-stand between a willful witch Rose Maxwell and a broody half-demon Damian Adams conjures an adventure that wouldn't be complete without several magical mishaps when Rose is sentenced to community service at Damian's animal sanctuary, and it becomes impossible for them to ignore their sparking attraction.

Bailey, Tessa. [Secretly Yours](#) (HarperCollins \$17.99)
Returning home to his family's California winery, Professor Julian Vos, on sabbatical from his Ivy League job, finds himself distracted from his plans to write a novel by eccentric, chronically late, unbelievably beautiful gardener Hallie Welch, who is proving to be a burst of color in his gray-scale life.

Bartz, Julia. [The Writing Retreat](#) (Atria \$27)
While attending a month-long writing retreat at the estate of a feminist horror writer who issues a life-changing challenge, Alex, determined to win this seemingly impossible contest, ignores the strange happenings around her until the disappearance of a fellow writer leads her on a desperate search for the truth."Bartz hits all the gothic highlights, but, far from feeling stale, they work. A perfect winter nights haunting." (*Kirkus*)

Bilow, Rochelle. [Ruby Spencer's Whisky Year](#) (Penguin \$17)
Spending one year living in a tiny town in the Scottish Highlands to write a bestselling cookbook and drink a lot of whisky, Ruby Spencer starts to see a future that goes beyond her year of adventure when she is embraced by the tight-knit community, including Brochan, the ruggedly handsome local handyman.

Brow, Diane Marie. [Black Candle Women](#) (Graydon \$28.99)
Generations of Montrose women—Augusta, Victoria, Willow—have lived together in their quaint two-story bungalow in California for years. They keep to themselves, never venture far from home, and their collection of tinctures and spells is an unspoken bond between them. But when seventeen-year-old Nickie Montrose brings home a boy for the first time, their

quiet lives are thrown into disarray. For the other women have been withholding a secret from Nickie that will end her relationship before it's even begun: the decades-old family curse that any person they fall in love with dies.

Cerra, K.L. [Such Pretty Flowers](#) (Random \$17)
While investigating her brother's apparent suicide, Holly begins to stalk his girlfriend, Maura, a magnetic, black-eyed florist with a penchant for carnivorous plants, and is drawn into Maura's sinister and sensual world, soon feeling a dark attraction to the one woman she shouldn't trust. So, a gothic-tinged botanical suspense novel.

Chang, Janie. [The Porcelain Moon](#) (HarperCollins \$30)
France, 1918. In the final days of the First World War, a young Chinese woman, Pauline Deng, runs away from her uncle's home in Paris to evade a marriage being arranged for her in Shanghai. To prevent the union, she needs the help of her cousin Theo, who is working as a translator for the Chinese Labour Corps in the French countryside. In the town of Noyelles-sur-Mer, Camille Roussel is planning her escape from an abusive marriage, and to end a love affair that can no longer continue. When Camille offers Pauline a room for her stay, the two women become friends. But it's not long before Pauline uncovers a perilous secret that Camille has been hiding from her. As their dangerous situation escalates, the two women are forced to make a terrible decision that will bind them together for the rest of their lives. Set against the little-known history of the 140,000 Chinese workers brought to Europe as non-combatant labor during WWI, *The Porcelain Moon* is a tale of forbidden love, identity and belonging, and what we are willing to risk for freedom.

Chokshi, Roshani. [The Last Tale of the Flower Bride](#) (HarperCollins \$30)
Breaking the promise he made to his beautiful wife, to never pry into her past, when they arrive at her childhood home, a crumbling manor shrouded in mystery, a scholar of myths must choose between reality and fantasy, even if doing so threatens to destroy their marriage--or their lives "Chokshi's prose overflows with metaphor and lavish imagery, adding to the decadent, gothic feel as the mystery of Indigo's past intensifies. The result is equal parts dizzying, dazzling, and foreboding." (*PW*)

Christie, Annette. [For Twice in My Life](#) (Little Brown \$28) **SIGNED**

Layla's chaotic life transformed when she met Ian Barnett. Ambitious, committed, and thoughtful, Ian has been everything she'd dreamed of, and she knows he'd say the same of her. So when he breaks up with her out of the blue, Layla is stunned. What went wrong? But then, Layla gets a call from the local hospital. Ian's had a biking accident. He's okay, but he needs someone--his someone--to get him home safely. As it becomes clear Ian doesn't remember he ended things, it also becomes clear that the accident has given him a new outlook on life...and Layla a second chance to get things right.

Croft, Rachel Koller. [Stone Cold Fox](#) (Penguin \$27) **SIGNED MARCH 2**

After years of perfecting the art of the con, Bea sets her sights on Collin Case, the heir to one of the country's wealthiest families, but Collin's childhood best friend stands in her way, forcing her to cat-and-mouse game that becomes a matter of life and death. "The intricate plot, illuminating backstories, and assorted reprehensible secondary characters expose a devastatingly "pernicious interpretation of love." This clever tale of jealousy, revenge, deception, and betrayal marks Croft as a writer to watch." (PW)

Compton, Johnny. [The Spite House](#) (Tor \$27.99)
Eric Ross, on the run from a mysterious past with his two daughters in tow, takes a job as the caretaker of a house that is reputed to be haunted. "Compton's chilling debut is horror with heart that puts a refreshingly modern spin on the haunted house story." (PW)

Cullen, Lynn. [The Woman with the Cure](#) (Penguin \$17)
In 1940s and 50s America where polio is as dreaded as the atomic bomb, Dr. Dorothy Horstmann, who is one of the world's best minds racing against each other to find a vaccine, must decide what is forgivable, and how much should be sacrificed, in pursuit of the cure.

Daria, Alexis. [Take the Lead](#) (St. Martin's \$17.99)
When star dancer Gina Morales and reluctant celebrity Stone Nielson are teamed up on a reality dancing competition, their mutual dislike soon turns into a secret romance that could threaten everything they've worked for. Think *Dancing with the Stars* but with way more kissing.

De Cadenet, Gia. [Not the Plan](#) (Random \$17)
When she falls for Karim Sarda, who works for her boss's fierce political rival, ambitious chief-of-staff Isadora Maris, striving to make a name for herself in Washington, D.C., risks her heart and her career for a chance at a forever love.

Decos, Lissette. [Ana Takes Manhattan](#) (Grand Central \$15.99)

Ana Karina, a reality TV producer who orchestrates extravagant marriage proposals, decides to start directing her own life and living with no regrets only to find that it just makes things messier until she just learns to listen to her heart.

DeFino, Terri-Lynne. [Varina Palladino's Jersey Italian Love Story](#) HarperCollins \$27.99)

Widow Varina Paladino is too busy running Paladino's Italian Specialties grocery and keeping her large, loud Jersey Italian family from killing one another to have any time left over in her life to think about love. But Varina's 92-year-old mother and her daughter are about to set their plan to find Varina a man in motion. This warm and utterly delightful story about a suburban New Jersey family will remind readers in the best possible way of *Moonstruck* and *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*.

Dodd, Christina. [Forget What You Know](#) (HQN \$29.99) **SIGNED MARCH 13**

Someone is trying to kill Zoey Phoenix. Even though their marriage ended in a bitter divorce, Zoey is certain that her ex-husband Luca Damezas isn't the culprit. After all, why would Luca volunteer as Zoey's bodyguard if he really wanted her dead? That still leaves someone out there who won't stop until Zoey is out of the picture. Could the answer to who is stalking Zoey be buried in her early past, of which Zoey can remember next to nothing? Or, would it just be safer for Zoey if she simply forgets whatever she may know? A protagonist who propagates flowers for a living, an ex-husband who used to be a professional wrestler, a legendary ruby gone missing, and a small town California coastal town filled to the brim with quirky characters might seem like a lot for an author to juggle, but Dodd does it all effortlessly deftly integrating all of these literary elements into a perfectly paced plot that is expertly punctuated with plenty of moments of white-knuckle suspense and spiked with a generous dose of Dodd's dry sense of wit.

Ellison, J.T. [It's One of Us](#) (MIRA \$27.99) **SIGNED FEBRUARY 28**

Successful interior designer Olivia Bender keeps failing in her quest to conceive. So, of course Olivia is shocked when she learns that a suspect in a recent murder investigation is her husband's son from a long-ago donation to a sperm bank.

Enriquez, Mariana. [Our Share of Night](#) (Random \$28.99)

United in grief after the death of the wife and mother they both loved, a young father and son travel to confront the terrifying legacy she bequeathed – a family called the Order that commits unspeakable acts in search of immortality. "Enriquez (*The Dangers of Smoking in Bed*) twines sinister flights of occult imagination through the harsh realities of history in this decades-spanning masterpiece of literary horror. (PW)

Forest, Kristina. [The Neighbor Favor](#) (Penguin \$17) Aspiring children's book author Lily Greene has no idea that when she enlists her new neighbor Nick Brown to help her find a date for her sister's upcoming wedding that Nick is also NR Strickland, Lily's favorite fantasy author, who just happened to ghost her months ago when Lily tried to contact him online.

George, Jessica. [Maame](#) (St. Martin's \$27.99) It's fair to say that Maddie's life in London is far from rewarding. With a mother who spends most of her time in Ghana (yet still somehow manages to be overbearing), Maddie is the primary caretaker for her father, who suffers from advanced stage Parkinson's. At work, her boss is a nightmare and Maddie is tired of always being the only Black person in every meeting. When her mum returns from her latest trip to Ghana, Maddie leaps at the chance to get out of the family home and finally start living.

Handler, David. [The Girl Who Took What She Wanted](#) (WW Norton \$26.95)

Stewart "Hoagy" Hoag's newest celebrity ghostwriting project has him ghostwriting a steamy romance novel for Hollywood's hottest reality TV star Nikki Dymtryk. Reluctantly, Hoagy flies out to L.A. with his trusty basset hound Lulu to see what he's gotten himself into with Nikki. But when he finally meets the starlet, she's nothing like the aimless, airhead image she presents to the media. This project may just be the key to getting Hoagy's creative juices flowing again—and

staying in L.A. might also give him a chance at getting back together with his actress ex-wife, Merilee. But spending time with Nikki isn't all parties and poolside lounging. As Hoagy gets closer to the young woman, he begins to uncover the Dymtryk family's dark secrets. Secrets that are worth killing for.

Hastings, Anastasia. [Of Manners and Murder](#) (St. Martin's \$26.99)

1885: London, England. When Violet's Aunt Adelia decides to abscond with her newest paramour, she leaves behind her role as the most popular Agony Aunt in London, "Miss Hermione," in Violet's hands. And of course, the first letter Violet receives is full, not of prissy pondering, but of portent. Ivy Armstrong is in need of help and fears for her life. But when Violet visits the village where the letters were posted, she finds that Ivy is already dead. Now, Violet will quickly discover that when you represent the best-loved Agony Aunt in Britain, both marauding husbands and murder are par for the course. *Kirkus* said this "first in a series steeped in Victorian mores offers a dashing heroine and an impressive pile of red herrings."

Head, Cheryl A. [Time's Undoing](#) (Penguin \$28) Searching for answers in the unsolved murder of her great-grandfather decades ago, Meghan Mackenzie, the youngest reporter at the *Detroit Free Press*, spurred by the urgency of the Black Lives Matter movement, travels to Birmingham where she uncovers secrets that put her own life in danger.

Heywood, Claire. [The Shadow of Perseus](#) (Penguin \$28)

Nationally bestselling author of *Daughters of Sparta*, Claire Heywood returns with an imaginative and female-centered reinterpretation of the myth of the great hero Perseus, told through the voices of three women who are sidelined in the traditional version - his mother Danae, his trophy Medusa, and his wife Andromeda - but whose viewpoints reveal a man who is not, in fact, a hero at all.

Jemc, Jac. [Empty Theatre](#) (Farrar Straus Giroux \$28)

History knows them as King Ludwig II of Bavaria and Empress Elizabeth of Austria, icons of the late nineteenth century who died young and left behind magnificent portraits and palaces. But to each other they were Ludwig and Sisi, cousins who shared a passion for beauty and a stubborn refusal to submit to the roles imposed upon them. A tragicomic tour

de force, *Empty Theatre* immerses readers in Ludwig and Sisi's rarefied, ridiculous, restrictive world—where the aesthetics of excess belie the isolation of its inhabitants. With wit, pathos, and imagination, Jac Jemc takes us on an unforgettable journey through two extraordinary parallel lives and the complex, tenuous friendship that linked them.

Johnson, Melonie. [Too Wrong to Be Right](#) (St. Martin's \$16.99)

After her latest jerk of a boyfriend dumps her (and ditches her with his pet hedgehog), florist Kat Kowalski is done chasing after Mr. Wrong. With her two best friends moving on to more serious relationships. Armed with a list of qualities for her perfect Mr. Right, Kat swears off dating until she finds him. Then in a meet-disaster involving a corpse and a salty cockatoo, Kat stumbles across Mick O'Sullivan at his family's funeral home. Their immediate chemistry warns Kat to keep things platonic; after all, following her heart never worked out in the past, and this time she's determined to listen to her head. But can Kat and Mick be just friends? As she gets to know him better, the lines blur, and Kat starts to wonder if she's gotten it wrong and Mick is exactly who she's been looking for all along.

Joyce, Rachel. [Maureen](#) (Random \$17)

Ten years after her husband's iconic walk across England, Maureen Fry, after receiving an unexpected message from the North, embarks on her own journey during which she struggles to form bonds with the people she meets as she searches for a way to reconnect with the world she left behind.

Labuskes, Brianna. [The Librarian of Burned Books](#) (HarperCollins \$17.99)

Set against the backdrop of World War II, a novel inspired by the true story of the Council of Books in Wartime follows three women whose fates become intertwined by their belief in the power and goodness of the written word to triumph over the very darkest moments of war.

Lea, Caroline. [Prize Women](#) (HarperCollins \$19)

In Toronto 1926, a childless millionaire leaves behind a controversial will in which the recipient of his fortune will be the woman who bears the most children in the 10 years after his death — a bequest that has dramatic consequences for the lives of two women. Based on a real historical event.

Lowell, Joanna. [Artfully Yours](#) (Penguin \$17)

Raised by her art-forgery brother, Nina Finch would rather be baking instead of forging paintings and accepts a job in the household of London's most discerning art critic, Alan De'Ath, who knows the paintings are fakes, but not that she painted them.

Marshall, Heather. [Looking for Jane](#) (Atria \$27.99)

When Angela Creighton discovers a mysterious letter containing a life-shattering confession, she is determined to find the intended recipient. Her search takes her back to the 1970s when a group of daring women operated an illegal underground abortion network in Toronto known only by its whispered code name: *Jane*. "Marshall keeps the tension high as she reveals the devastating consequences of denying women autonomy over their bodies. A charged topic handled with sensitivity and compassion." (*Kirkus*)

Meyerson, Amy. [The Love Scribe](#) (Park Row \$27.99)

While trying to harness her extraordinary gift—the ability to write stories that make others fall in love—Alice is summoned to the estate of the reclusive Madeline Alger and her mysterious library where she is faced with her most challenging assignment yet, one that forces Alice to confront her own guarded heart and open herself to the possibility of love.

Moyes, Jojo. [Someone Else's Shoes](#) (Penguin \$29)

When she accidentally takes the wrong gym bag, Sam Kemp tries on a pair of six-inch high Christian Louboutin red crocodile shoes that give her the confidence to change her life, while at the same time, the shoes' owner Nisha Cantor tries to cling to her glamorous life after her husband cuts her off financially." Moyes is also brilliant at creating fully formed, charmingly funny side characters, like Nisha's co-worker Jasmine and Sam's friend Andrea. Ultimately, the story is about the importance of women from all walks of life supporting and looking out for one another. A compelling, full-of-heart novel about the power of female friendship." (*Kirkus*)

Patel, Sajni. [Isha, Unscripted](#) (Penguin \$17)

An aspiring screenwriter trying to follow her dreams, Isha Patel, attempts to track down fellow Austenite Matthew McConaughey to pitch her script and her search turns into a night of hijinks and unexpected but fun chaos.

Rose, Karen. [Cold-blooded Liar](#) (Penguin \$27) **SIGNED**
After one of his patients—a pathological liar—starts revealing plausible new details from a long-unsolved serial murder case, psychologist Sam Reeves is compelled to report this anonymously to the SDPD tip line, though his attempts to respect patient confidentiality land him facedown and cuffed by the aggressive (and cute) San Diego homicide detective Kit Mckittrick. Sam is soon released but goes home with both a newfound distaste for the SDPD and a resolve—not unlike Kit’s—to uncover the truth. The question now is whether the two of them can work together to find one of the deadliest serial killers the city has faced in years. Rose launches her new San Diego Case Files series with another superior suspense novel that makes the most of her flair for crafting compelling characters (including a particularly nasty piece of work villain) and a plot packed with plenty of red herrings and surprising twists.

Santopolo, Jill. [Stars in an Italian Sky](#) (Penguin \$28)
In 2017 New York, Luca and Cassandra, the perfect match for each other, find their blossoming relationship changed forever when a chance meeting between their grandparents reveals a long-buried family secret linked back to two star-crossed lovers in post-World War II Italy.

Scott, Kylie. [End of Story](#) (Graydon \$17.99)
Susie Bowen isn’t thrilled to discover her ex’s best friend Lars is her home renovation contractor, but worse still is the discovery of a divorce certificate dated 10 years in the future with both their names on it. “Scott nails the pacing and delivers some delightful comedic moments, but it’s her masterfully crafted characters that really set this apart. Both Susie and Lars feel like mature, fully realized people who bring their entire selves and past experiences to their relationship, and the book’s focus on how they sort through their differences elevates it to the next level. This strikingly fresh romance is sure to win fans.” (PW)

Seeck, Max. [The Last Grudge](#) (Penguin \$17)
With his partner working with the Helsinki police to track down the coven that nearly killed her, Det. Sgt. Yusuf Pepple leads the investigation into the murder of a powerful executive, a seemingly straightforward case that proves to be anything but when it is revealed the evil they’ve been hunting all along has returned.

Sloan, Elissa P. [Hayley Aldridge Is Still Here](#) (HarperCollins \$18.99)

Former child star Hayley Aldridge fights the conservatorship that is governing every aspect of her life, leaving her at the mercy of her controlling parents, and uses social media to build support for her as a court date to review the status of the conservatorship approaches. If this sounds a bit familiar, Sloan was inspired by the real-life events surrounding Brittany Spears’ recent attempts to gain control of her own life.

Spalding, Amy. [For Her Consideration](#) (Kensington \$16.95)

When an aspiring L.A. scriptwriter falls head-over-heels for a bossy and beautiful movie star after a devastating break-up, the two take a risk on love and cast themselves as the leading ladies of their own star-struck romance in this sweet and spirited love story from critically-acclaimed writer Amy Spalding in her adult debut.

Thien-Kim, Lam. [Full Exposure](#) (HarperCollins \$18.99)
When a client cancels a New Orleans shoot at the last minute, boudoir photographer Josie Parks decides to visit the city anyway and meets Spencer Pham after hitting him in the head while attempting to catch Mardi Gras beads. So not your typical “meet-cute.”

Thompson, Kate. [The Little Wartime Library](#) (Grand Central \$16.99)

In 1944 London, librarian Clara Button creates an underground library and shelter, but, as the war drags on, finds her determination to remain strong in the face of adversity tested to the limit when it may come at the price of keeping those closest to her alive

Wees, Alyssa. [Nocturne](#) (Random \$27)

With the Great Depression in full swing, Chicago prima ballerina Grace Dragotta garners the attention of a mysterious patron who, as she begins to unlock his secrets, shows her there may be another way to achieve the artistic goals she’s always sought. Wees’s lyrical debut effectively borrows from *Beauty and the Beast*, the *Phantom of the Opera*, and Greek mythology to create her own enchanting, fairytale novel.

Williams, Sheila. [Things Past Telling](#) (HarperCollins \$17.99)

Recalling the last hundred-plus years of her triumphant and tumultuous life, the narrator Maryam

Prescilla Grace – a.k.a. “Momma Grace” - shares how her midwifery skills allowed her to sometimes transcend the racial and class barriers of her enslavement and how she never lost her sense of self. For this remarkable novel, Williams was inspired by the story of a 112-year-old woman she discovered in an 1870 U.S. Federal census report for Ohio and also drew on her own real-life ancestors.

Yeatman, Robin. [Bookworm](#) (HarperCollins \$17)
Saddled with an unhappy marriage and a dead-end job, Victoria meets a man in a cafe reading the same best-seller and uses every book she has ever read to find a way for them to be together. A wildly original debut novel that borrows from crime fiction, fantasy, and romance with surprising results.

Children’s Books

Larson, Kirsten W. [The Fire of Stars](#) (Chronicle \$18.99)
Larson celebrates the life and scientific discoveries of trailblazing English astronomer and astrophysicist Cecilia Payne, who was the first person to discover what burns at the heart of stars, realizing her dream to one day unlock the mysteries of the universe.

Lincoln, Beth. [The Swifts](#) (Penguin \$17)
When someone gives Arch-Aunt Schadenfreude a deadly push down the stairs during the Swift Family Reunion, Shenanigan Swift, who has a penchant for mischief, decides to become a detective and solve this mysterious case. “An absolutely delightful debut with heartwarming character growth and a clever, genre-savvy country-house mystery.” (*Kirkus*). The publisher bills this as a junior mystery with a *Knives Out* feel by way of Lemony Snicket.

Teen Fiction

De la Cruz, Melissa. [The Headmaster’s List](#) (Roaring Brook \$19.99)
Unable to remember anything about the car crash that killed a fellow elite prep school student, 18-year-old Spencer Sandoval goes to dangerous lengths to

uncover the truth about what really happened. *One of Us Is Lying* meets *Riverdale* in this edge-of-your-seat YA thriller.

Hannah, Andrea. [Where Darkness Blooms](#) (St. Martin’s \$18.99)
When their mothers disappear one stormy night after a terrible secret is revealed, Delilah, Whitney, Bo and Jude set out to discover the truth in a strange town founded on blood that now craves theirs.

Lobb, M.K. [Seven Faceless Saints](#) (Little Brown \$19.99)
During Ombrazia’s Second War of Saints, former friends Rossana Lacertosa and Damian Venturi--she is a rebel who wants to dismantle the corrupt system responsible for her father’s death while he is the young head of security who serves the city and the saints with unswerving devotion--must work together to investigate murders within the city.

Underhill, Edward. [Always the Almost](#) (St. Martin’s \$18.99)
Sixteen-year-old trans boy Miles Jacobson’s New Year resolutions include winning back his ex-boyfriend and winning the Widewest’s biggest classical piano competition, but when a new, proudly queer boy moves to town, Miles reconsiders who is was and who he is now.

Nonfiction

Bringley, Patrick. [All the Beauty in the World](#) (Simon & Schuster \$27.99)
In the tradition of classic workplace memoirs like *Lab Girl* and *Working Stiff*, *All The Beauty in the World* is a surprising, inspiring portrait of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, its hidden treasures, and the people who make it tick, written by a man, who quit his job at *The New Yorker* after the death of his beloved brother and spent ten years seeking beauty at the Met while working as a museum guard.

Brookes, Adam. [Fragile Cargo](#) (Atria \$28.99)
Visitors to China today will find its imperial art treasures divided among two museums: one in Beijing and Taipei. Former BBC Beijing correspondent Brookes tells how this came to be in a gripping true story of the bold and determined Chinese museum

curators who saved the priceless treasures of China's Forbidden City in the years leading up to World War II and beyond.

Ciuraru, Carmela. [Lives of the Wives](#) (HarperCollins \$32)

The legendary British theatre critic Kenneth Tynan encouraged his American wife, Elaine Dundy, to write, then watched in a jealous rage as she became a bestselling author and critical success. In the early years of their marriage, Roald Dahl enjoyed basking in the glow of his glamorous movie star wife, Patricia Neal, until he detested her for being the breadwinner, and being more famous than he was. Elizabeth Jane Howard had to divorce Kingsley Amis to escape his suffocating needs and devote herself to her own writing. ("I really couldn't write very much when I was married to him," she once recalled, "because I had a very large household to keep up and Kingsley wasn't one to boil an egg, if you know what I mean.") Surprisingly, the most traditional partnership in *Lives of the Wives* is a lesbian couple, Una Troubridge and Radclyffe Hall, both of whom were socially and politically conservative and unapologetic snobs. As this erudite and entertaining work shows, each of these literary marriages is a unique story, filled with struggles and triumphs and the negotiation of power.

Collins, Max Allan. [Spillane](#) (WW Norton \$26.95)

There has never been a full-length biography of Mickey Spillane, the most popular and influential mystery writer of his era—until now. There is, however, more to Spillane's life than the books. He also starred as Hammer in a movie, was a circus performer, worked with the FBI in capturing a notorious criminal, and starred in Miller Light beer commercials that were so popular they ran for a quarter of a century. Max Allan Collins became Spillane's friend and collaborator, continuing the Mike Hammer series for years after the author's death, building upon unfinished manuscripts the writer left behind. Now, with co-author James Taylor, Collins has produced the first comprehensive and authoritative profile of the Mystery Writers of America Grand Master.

Darlington, Miriam. [The Wise Hours](#) (WW Norton \$27.95)

Owls have existed for over sixty million years, and in the relatively short time we have shared the planet with these majestic birds they have ignited the human imagination. But even as owls continue to captivate

our collective consciousness, celebrated British nature writer Miriam Darlington finds herself struck by all she doesn't know about the true nature of these enigmatic creatures. Darlington begins her fieldwork in the British Isles with her teenage son, Benji. As her avian fascination grows, she travels to France, Serbia, Spain, Finland, and the frosted Lapland borders of the Arctic for rare encounters with the Barn Owl, Tawny Owl, Long-eared Owl, Pygmy Owl, Snowy Owl, and more. But when her son develops a mysterious illness, her quest to understand the elusive nature of owls becomes entangled with a search for finding a cure.

Gorham, Christopher C. [The Confidante](#) (Kensington \$28)

The first-ever biography of Anna Marie Rosenberg, a Hungarian Jewish immigrant who became a real power behind national policies critical to America winning World War II and prospering afterwards, chronicles her extraordinary career as FDR's special envoy to Europe during the war and an adviser to five presidents.

Matejka, Adrian and Daoudi Youssef. [Last on His Feet](#) (WW Norton \$29.99)

On the morning of July 4, 1910, thousands of boxing fans stormed a newly built stadium in Reno, Nevada, to witness an epic showdown. Jack Johnson, the world's first Black heavyweight champion—and most infamous athlete in the world because of his race—was paired against Jim Jeffries, a former heavyweight champion then heralded as the "great white hope." It was the height of the Jim Crow era, and spectators were eager for Jeffries to restore the racial hierarchy that Johnson had pummeled with his quick fists. Transporting readers directly into the ring, artist Youssef Daoudi and poet Adrian Matejka intersperse dramatic boxing action with vivid flashbacks to reveal how Johnson, the self-educated son of formerly enslaved parents, reached the pinnacle of sport—all while facing down a racist justice system.

Middleton, William. [Paradise Now](#) (HarperCollins \$35)

This delightful tribute to Karl Lagerfeld, a cultural icon and the creative director for the storied House of Chanel, reveals a side the elusive designer kept private from the world while introducing readers to some of the most unforgettable figures of fashion's inner circle for the past four decades.

Olson, Lynne. [Empress of the Nile](#) (Random \$30)
Olson chronicles the fascinating story of Christiane Desroches-Noblecourt, a French archaeologist who led the international effort to save ancient Egyptian temples from the floodwaters of the Aswan Dam as well as her activities during the French Resistance in World War II.

Prud'homme, Alex. [Dinner with the President](#) (Knopf \$35)

Perhaps the most significant meals in the world have been consumed at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue by the presumptive leaders of the free world. Thomas Jefferson had an affinity for eggplant and FDR for terrapin stew. Nixon ate a lump of cottage cheese topped with barbecue sauce every day and Obama regularly had arugula. Now, Alex Prud'homme takes us to the dining tables of the White House to look at what the presidents chose to eat, how the food was prepared and by whom, and the context in which the meals were served, making clear that every one of these details speaks volumes about both the individual president and the country over which he presided.

Schulman, Michael. [Oscar Wars](#) (HarperCollins \$40)
Chronicling the remarkable, sprawling history of the Academy Awards and the personal dramas that have played out on the stage and off camera, this entertaining exploration of the Oscars features a star-studded cast of some of the most powerful Hollywood players of today and yesterday

Smithsonian Institution. [Smithsonian American Table](#) (HarperCollins \$40)

In this exploration of the American table, the Smithsonian Institution presents a fresh look at what and how we've fed ourselves, for sustenance and for pleasure, through the lens of location, immigration, ingenuity, innovation, and culture. With an emphasis on the people, events, and movements that have been left out of the dominant story, this inclusive, enlightening, and entertaining collection uncovers a real look at American food, from the story of a barrier-breaking Black female chef in Jim Crow-era New Orleans, to the technology behind a French fry that stays crispy for up to 60 minutes.

Vardi, Nathan. [For Blood and Money](#) (WW Norton \$30)

During the "great biotechnology decade of the 2010s," Pharmacyclics and Acerta, both based in

California, worked feverishly to develop a new drug that used BTK inhibitors to treat chronic lymphocytic leukemia with minimal side effects. Vardi, managing editor at MarketWatch and former senior editor at *Forbes*, tells a fascinating story of the science behind this approach and the financial arrangements, medical controversies, regulatory processes, and business rivalries without which the two competing drugs—Imbruvica and Calquence—would not have become publicly available.

Warner, Joel. [The Curse of the Marquis de Sade](#) (Crown \$28.99)

Described as both "one of the most important novels ever written" and "the gospel of evil," *120 Days of Sodom* was written by the Marquis de Sade, a notorious eighteenth-century aristocrat who waged a campaign of mayhem and debauchery across France, evaded execution, and inspired the word "sadism." The original manuscript of *120 Days of Sodom*, a tiny scroll penned in the bowels of the Bastille in Paris, would embark on a centuries-spanning odyssey across Europe, passing from nineteenth-century banned book collectors to pioneering sex researchers to avant-garde artists before being hidden away from Nazi book burnings. In 2014, the world heralded its return to France when the scroll was purchased for millions by Gérard Lhéritier, the self-made son of a plumber who had used his savvy business skills to upend France's renowned rare-book market. But the sale opened the door to vendettas by the government, feuds among antiquarian booksellers, manuscript sales derailed by sabotage, a record-breaking lottery jackpot, and allegations of a decade-long billion-euro con, the specifics of which, if true, would make the scroll part of France's largest-ever Ponzi scheme. Told with gripping reporting and flush with deceit and scandal, *The Curse of the Marquis de Sade* weaves together the sweeping odyssey of *120 Days of Sodom* and the spectacular rise and fall of Lhéritier, once the "king of manuscripts" and now known too many as the Bernie Madoff of France.