



Mississippi Library Commission's

# Book Club in a Box Kits

**A Collection for Adults**





# Book Club in a Box Kits for Adults

- Each Book Club kit comes with 10 copies of the title and a discussion guide unless otherwise noted.
- Libraries, Schools, or Book Club Groups can sign up for book club kits for a three-month period. This includes the time to receive, distribute, discuss, and send the kits back.
- To sign up for a book club kit, your group/library will need to have an Institution Card with MLC, which is free to sign up for.
- Book Club Kits are free to check out. MLC will cover the cost of mailing the Book Club Kits to you. However, you will need to pay for the return shipping.

If you have questions or would like to schedule a Book Club in a Box Kit, contact Charlie Simpkins at

[csimpkins.mlc.lib.ms](mailto:csimpkins.mlc.lib.ms) or 601-432-4498



This publications and service is made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Grants to States Program as administrated by the Mississippi Library Commission

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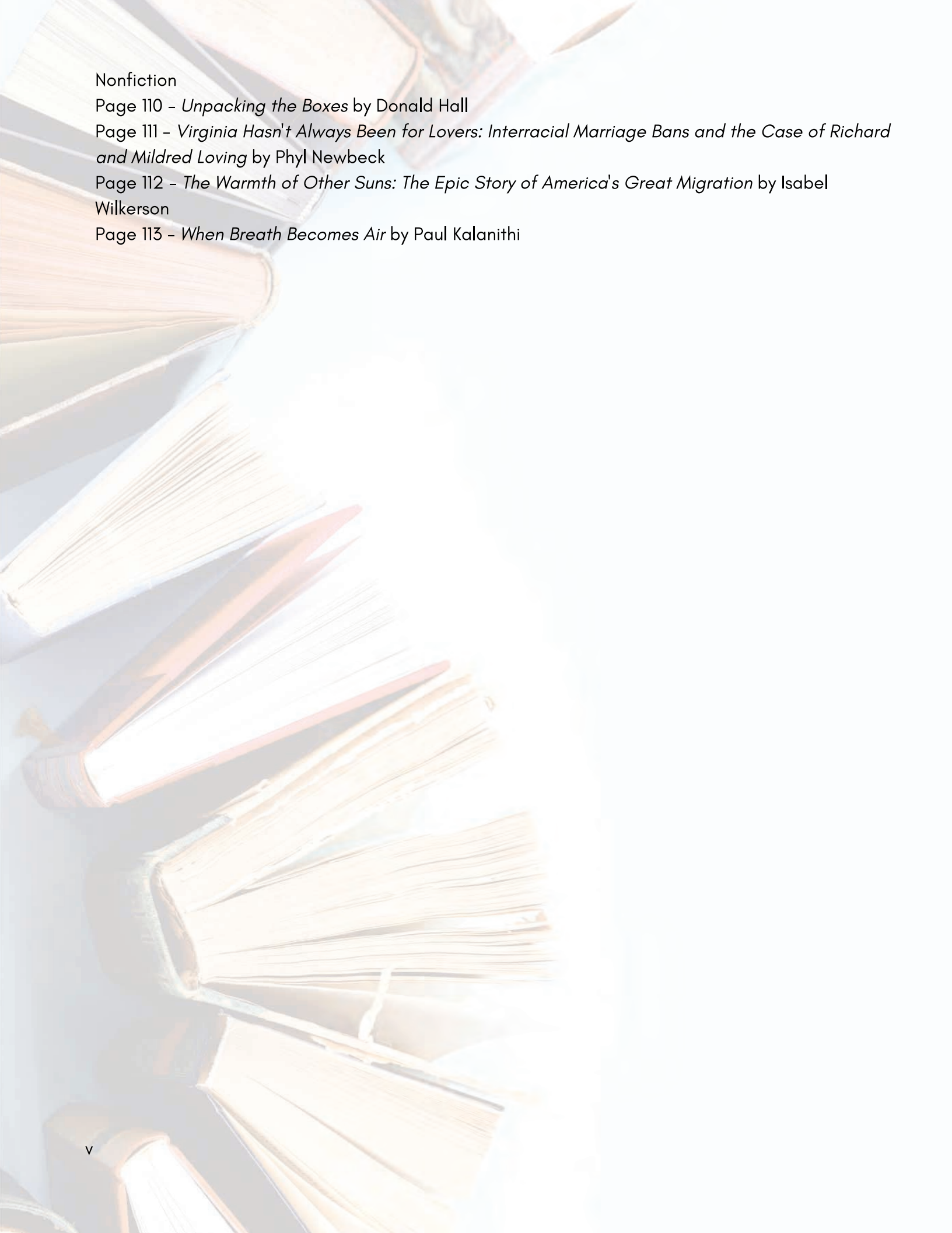
## Nonfiction

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Page 70 - *The Art Forger* by B.A. Shapiro  
Page 71 - *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life* by Anne Lamott  
Page 72 - *Carly's Voice* by Authur and Carly Fleischmann  
Page 73 - *Coming of Age in Mississippi* by Anne Moody  
Page 74 - *Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania* by Erik Larson  
Page 75 - *Delta Epiphany: Robert F Kennedy in Mississippi* by Ellen B. Meacham

## Nonfiction

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- Page 83 – *I'll Be Gone in the Dark: One Woman's Obsessive Search for the Golden State Killer* by Michelle McNamara
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- Page 106 – *Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat: Mastering the Elements of Good Cooking* by Samin Nosrat
- Page 107 – *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II* by Douglas A. Blackmon
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Nonfiction

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Page 113 – *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi

## ***Aliens in the Prime of Their Lives: Stories***



by Brad Watson

A collection of stories explores every kind of domestic discord: unruly or distant children, alienated spouses, domestic abuse, loneliness, death, and divorce.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Storyline:** Intricately plotted

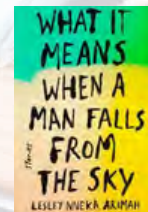
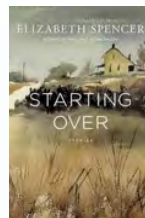
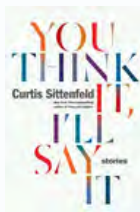
**Writing Style:** Compelling; Lyrical

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Short stories

**Subjects:** Family relationships

### **Read-Alikes**



***You Think It, I'll Say It: Stories*** by Curtis Sittenfeld

***Binocular Vision: New & Selected Stories*** by Edith Pearlman

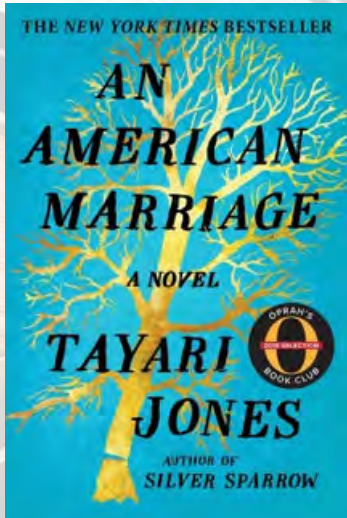
***Starting Over: Stories*** by Elizabeth Spencer

***What it Means when a Man Falls from the Sky: Stories*** by Lesley Nneka Arimah



## ***An American Marriage: A Novel***

by Tayari Jones



When her new husband is arrested and imprisoned for a crime she knows he did not commit, a rising artist takes comfort in a longtime friendship, only to encounter unexpected challenges in resuming her life when her husband's sentence is suddenly overturned.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Love on the rocks

**Character:** Complex; Culturally diverse

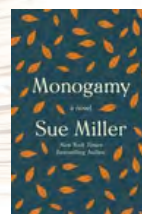
**Storyline:** Character-driven; Own voices

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** African American fiction; Domestic fiction; Literary fiction; Southern fiction

**Subjects:** African American families; African Americans; Consequences; Extramarital affairs; False imprisonment; Husband and wife; Letter writing; Life change events; Loss (Psychology); Marriage; Men/women relations; Racism

### **Read-Alikes**



***The Mars Room*** by Rachel Kushner

***If Beale Street Could Talk*** by James Baldwin

***Monogamy: A Novel*** by Sue Miller

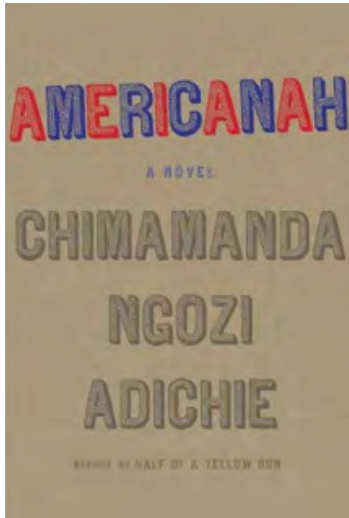
***Upstate*** by Kalisha Buckhanon

## ***Americanah: A Novel***

by Chimamanda Adichie  
Ngozi

Separated by respective ambitions  
after falling in love in occupied  
Nigeria, beautiful Ifemelu  
experiences triumph and defeat in

America while exploring new  
concepts of race, while Obinze endures an  
undocumented status in London until the pair is  
reunited in their homeland 15 years later, where they  
face the toughest decisions of their lives.



### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Facing racism; Immigrant experiences

**Character:** Authentic; Complex; Culturally diverse; Relatable; Strong female

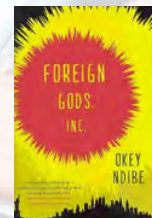
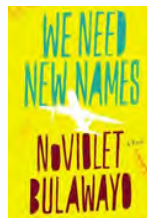
**Storyline:** Character-driven; Own voices

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Literary fiction; Love stories; Political fiction

**Subjects:** Immigrants; Men/women relations; Nigerians in England; Nigerians in the United States; Race relations; Refugees

### **Read-Alikes**



***Three Daughters of Eve: A Novel*** by Elif Shafak

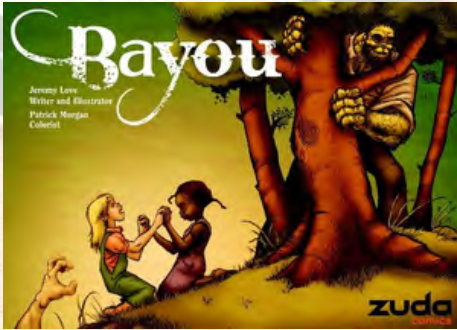
***We Need New Names: A Novel*** by NoViolet Bulawayo

***All Our Names: A Novel*** by Dinaw Mengestu

***Foreign Gods, Inc.*** by Okey Ndibe



## ***Bayou, Vol. 1***



by Jeremy Love  
Lee Wagstaff is the daughter of a black sharecropper in the depression-era town of Charon, Mississippi. When Lily Westmoreland, her white playmate, is snatched by

agents of an evil creature known as Bog, Lee's father is accused of kidnapping. Lee's only hope is to follow Lily's trail into this fantastic and frightening alternate world.

### **Appeal Factors**

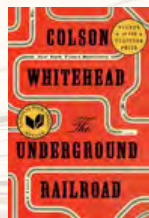
**Character:** Culturally diverse

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Adult books for young adults; Afrofuturism and Afrofantasy; Comics and Graphic novels; Historical fantasy

**Subjects:** African American girls; African Americans; Depressions; Interracial friendship; Lynching; Magic; Malicious accusation; Missing children; Monsters; Racism; Rescues

### **Read-Alikes**



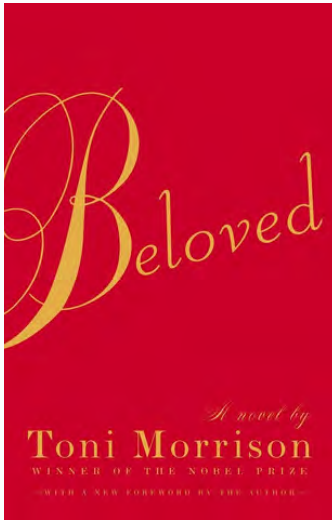
***The Water Dancer*** by Ta-Nehisi Coates

***The Underground Railroad*** by Colson Whitehead

***The Twelve-Mile Straight*** by Eleanor Henderson

***Whistling Past the Graveyard*** by Susan Crandall

## ***Beloved***



by Toni Morrison  
Sethe, an escaped slave living in post-Civil War Ohio with her daughter and mother-in-law, is persistently haunted by the ghost of her dead baby girl.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Coping with death

**Character:** Complex; Culturally diverse; Flawed; Sympathetic

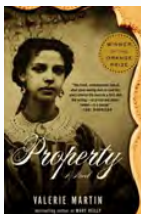
**Storyline:** Character-driven; Own voices

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** African American fiction; Books to movies; Historical fiction; Literary fiction; Magical realism; Modern classics; Southern fiction; Southern Gothic

**Subjects:** African American women; Children; Coping in women; Freed slaves; Fugitive slaves; Mothers and daughters; Slavery

### **Read-Alikes**



***Property*** by Valerie Martin

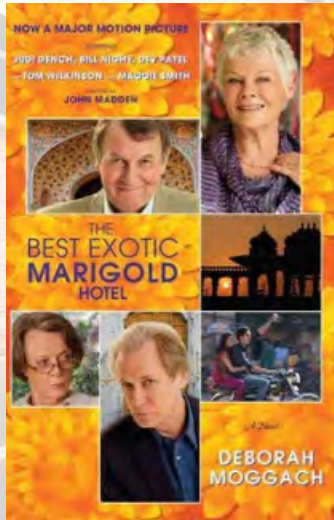
***Homegoing*** by Yaa Gyasi

***Corregidora*** by Gayl Jones

***Grace*** by Natasha Deon



## ***The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel***



by Deborah Moggach  
When Dr. Ravi Kapoor's cousin sets up a retirement home in India, Ravi's father-in-law is one of its first guests, but what the renovation lacks in promised amenities and luxury, it makes up for in adventure, stunning beauty, and unexpected love.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Second act

**Pace:** Fast-paced

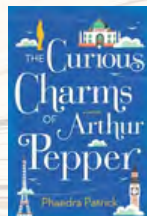
**Storyline:** Character-driven

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Books to movies; Romantic comedies

**Subjects:** British in India; Fathers-in-law; Historic buildings; Men/women relations; Nastiness in senior men; Nursing homes; Race relations; Self-fulfillment in seniors; Senior romance; Seniors

### **Read-Alikes**



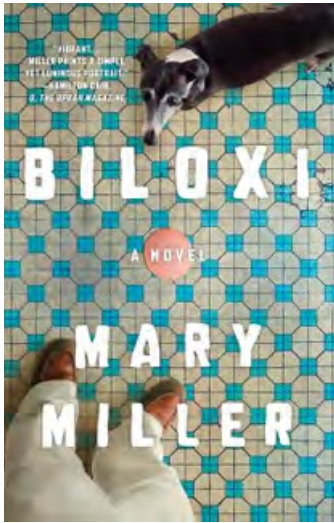
***The Matchmaker*** by Elin Hilderbrand

***The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper*** by Phaedra Patrick

***Major Pettigrew's Last Stand*** by Helen Simonson

***Secrets in Summer*** by Nancy Thayer

## ***Biloxi: a Novel***



by Mary Miller

Mary Miller seizes the mantle of Southern literature with this wry tale of middle age and the unexpected turns a life can take.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Second act

**Character:** Flawed

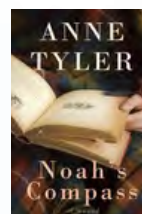
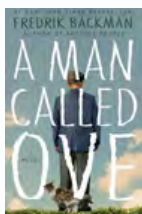
**Pace:** Leisurely paced

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Literary fiction; Southern fiction

**Subjects:** Divorced men; Dog adoption; Dogs; Human/animal relationships; Inheritance and succession; Men and dogs; Options, alternatives, choices; Pets; Retirees; Second chances; Sixties (Age); Unhappiness

### **Read-Alikes**



***A Man called Ove*** by Fredrik Backman

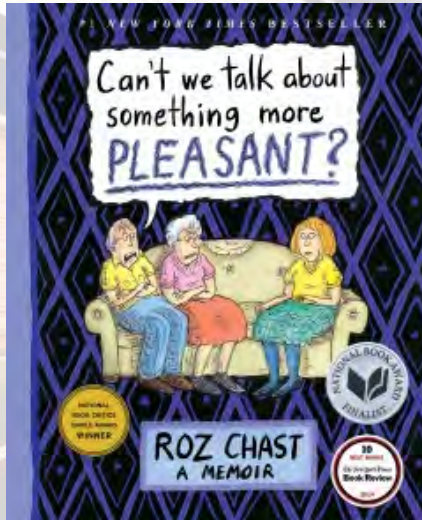
***The Story of Arthur Truluv*** by Elizabeth Berg

***Noah's Compass*** by Anne Tyler

***The Friend*** by Sigrid Nunez



## ***Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?***



by Roz Chast

Celebrates the final years of the author's aging parents' lives through cartoons, family photos, and documents that reflect the author's struggles with caregiver challenges.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Tone:** Moving

**Writing Style:** Candid; Witty

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Autobiographical comics; Autobiographies and memoirs; Comics and Graphic novels; Family and Relationships; Life stories

**Subjects:** Aging; Aging parents; Cartoonists; Chast, Roz; Children of aging parents; Life change events; Parent and adult child; Seniors

### **Read-Alikes**



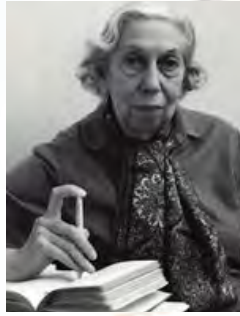
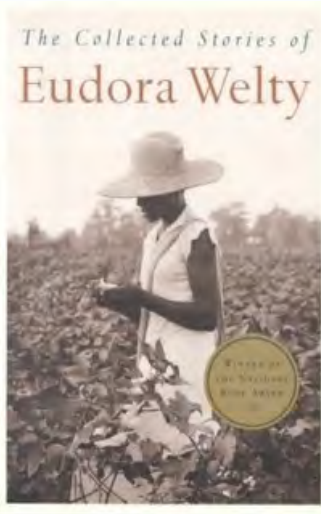
***Ethel and Ernest: A True Story*** by Raymond Briggs

***Don't Worry, He Won't Get Far on Foot*** by John Callahan

***Fifty Things that aren't My Fault: Essays from the Grown-Up Years*** by Cathy Guisewite

***All Things Consolated: A Daughter's Story*** by Elizabeth Hay

## ***Collected Stories: Eudora Welty***



by Eudora Welty

All forty-one stories published by the distinguished writer are brought together, displaying her insights into the American South and including her most famous work, "Death of a Traveling Salesman".

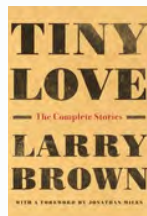
### **Appeal Factors**

**Tone:** Atmospheric

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Modern classics; Short stories; Southern fiction

### **Read-Alikes**



***Something Rich and Strange: Selected Stories*** by Ron Rash

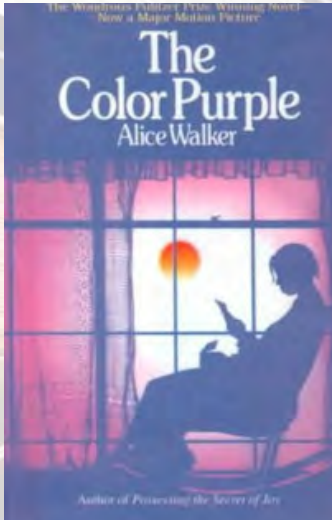
***Tiny Love: The Complete Stories*** by Larry Brown

***It wasn't All Dancing: and Other Stories*** by Mary Ward Brown

***Lovesick*** by James Driggers



# ***The Color Purple***



by Alice Walker

The lives of two sisters--Nettie, a missionary in Africa, and Celie, a southern woman married to a man she hates--are revealed in a series of letters exchanged over thirty years.

## **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** I'm a survivor; Surviving sexual violence

**Character:** Complex; Culturally diverse; LGBTQIA diverse

**Storyline:** Character-driven; Own voices

## **Story Elements**

**Genres:** African American fiction; Books to movies; Epistolary novels; First person narratives; Literary fiction; Modern classics; Multiple perspectives; Southern fiction

**Subjects:** African American lesbians; African American women; Family relationships; Husband and wife; Loyalty in women; Separated friends, relatives, etc.; Sisters

## **Read-Alikes**



***The Girl with the Louding Voice*** by Abi Daré

***The Bluest Eye*** by Toni Morrison

***Silver Sparrow*** by Tayari Jones

***Ruby*** by Cynthia Bond

## ***A Confederacy of Dunces***



by John Kennedy Toole  
Ignatius J. Reilly of New Orleans, --  
selfish, domineering, deluded,  
tragic and larger than life-- is a  
noble crusader against a world of  
dunces. He is a modern-day  
Quixote beset by giants of the modern age. In  
magnificent revolt against the twentieth century,  
Ignatius propels his monstrous bulk among the flesh  
posts of the fallen city, documenting life on his Big  
Chief tablets as he goes, until his maroon-haired  
mother decrees that Ignatius must work.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** Quirky; Unlikeable

**Storyline:** Character-driven

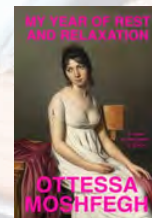
**Tone:** Moving; Offbeat; Sardonic

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Literary fiction; Satirical fiction; Southern fiction

**Subjects:** Alienation in men; Mothers and sons; Self-fulfillment in men; Social reformers

### **Read-Alikes**



***Handling Sin*** by Michael Malone

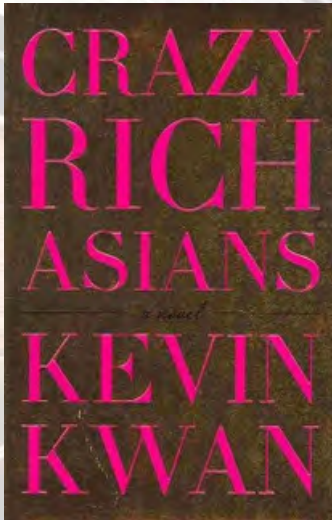
***Absurdistan*** by Gary Shteyngart

***Hume's Fork*** by Ron L. Cooper

***My Year of Rest and Relaxation*** by Ottessa Moshfegh



## ***Crazy Rich Asians***



by Kevin Kwan

Envisioning a summer vacation in the humble Singapore home of a boy she hopes to marry, Chinese American Rachel Chu is unexpectedly introduced to a rich and scheming clan that strongly opposes their son's relationship with an American girl.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Rich and famous

**Character:** Culturally diverse; Exaggerated

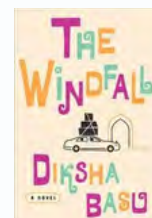
**Pace:** Fast-paced

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Books to movies; Relationship fiction

**Subjects:** Americans in Singapore; Chinese American women; Engaged persons; Rich families; Social conflict

### **Read-Alikes**



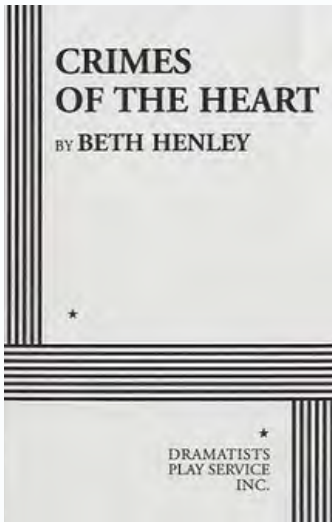
***Destination Wedding*** by Diksha Basu

***Unmarriageable*** by Soniah Kamal

***His Only Wife*** by Peace A. Medie

***The Windfall*** by Diksha Basu

## ***\*Crimes of the Heart***



by Beth Henley

THE STORY: The scene is

Hazlehurst, Mississippi, where the three Magrath sisters have gathered to await news of the family patriarch, their grandfather, who is living out his last hours in the local hospital.

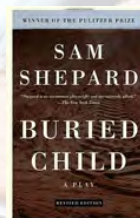
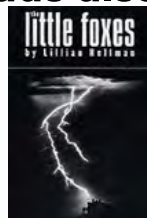
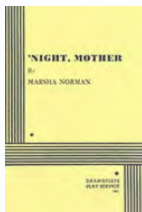
Lenny, the oldest sister, is unmarried at thirty and facing diminishing marital prospects; Meg, the middle sister, who quickly outgrew Hazlehurst, is back after a failed singing career on the West Coast; while Babe, the youngest, is out on bail after having shot her husband in the stomach. Their troubles, grave and yet, somehow, hilarious, are highlighted by their priggish cousin, Chick, and by the awkward young lawyer who tries to keep Babe out of jail while helpless not to fall in love with her. In the end the play is the story of how its young characters escape the past to seize the future—but the telling is so true and touching and consistently hilarious that it will linger in the mind long after the curtain has descended.

## **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Plays

\*Information from publisher's website.

## **Readers on GoodReads also enjoyed:**



***'night, Mother*** by Marsha Norman

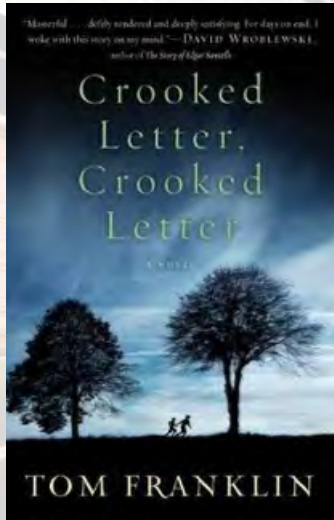
***The Little Foxes*** by Lillian Hellman

***Proof*** by David Auburn

***Buried Child*** by Sam Shepard



## ***Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter***



by Tom Franklin

African-American Constable Silas

Jones must confront his white former friend Larry Ott, who has lived under suspicion for twenty years since a girl disappeared

while on a date with him, after another girl disappears and Larry is blamed once again.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Sad small towns; We used to be friends

**Tone:** Atmospheric; Moody

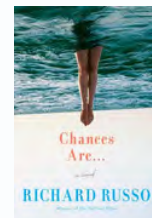
**Writing Style:** Stylistically complex

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Psychological suspense; Southern fiction; Southern Gothic

**Subjects:** Childhood friends; Male friendship; Missing girls; Reconciliation in men; Small town life

### **Read-Alikes**



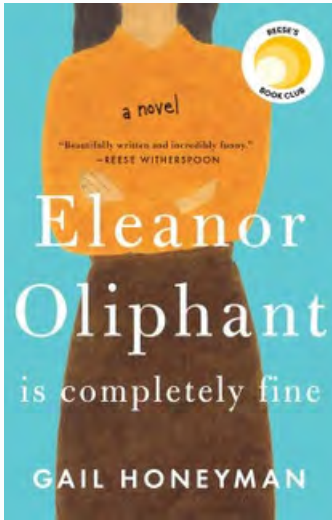
***Devil Sent the Rain*** by Lisa Turner (Lisa Celeste)

***Go Set a Watchman*** by Harper Lee

***The Current*** by Tim Johnston

***Chances Are...*** by Richard Russo

## ***Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine***



by Gail Honeyman

A socially awkward, routine-oriented loner teams up with a bumbling IT guy from her office to assist an elderly accident victim, forging a friendship that saves all three from lives of isolation and secret unhappiness.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Dealing with mental illness; Fish out of water

**Character:** Awkward; Quirky; Sympathetic

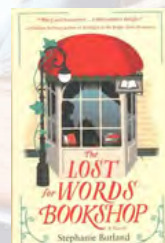
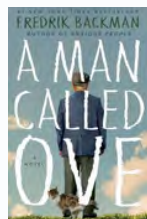
**Storyline:** Character-driven

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Adult books for young adults; Relationship fiction

**Subjects:** Abused women; Accidents; Computer programmers; Consequences; Friendship; Interpersonal relations; Life change events; Loners; Misfits (Persons); Office workers; Senior men; Social isolation

### **Read-Alikes**



***The Cactus*** by Sarah Haywood

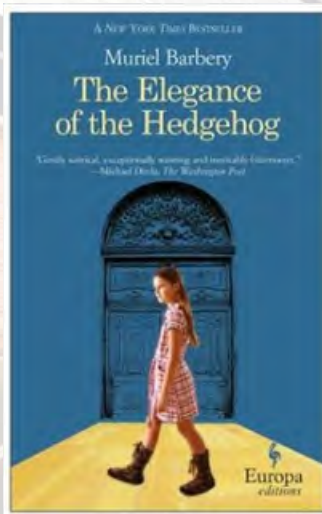
***A Man called Ove*** by Fedrik Backman

***The Rosie Project*** by Graeme C. Simsion

***The Lost for Words Bookshop*** by Stephanie Butland



## ***The Elegance of the Hedgehog***



by Muriel Barbery

The lives of fifty-four-year-old concierge Rene Michel and extremely bright, suicidal twelve-year-old Paloma Josse are transformed by the arrival of a new tenant, Kakuro Ozu.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Introspective; Quirky

**Pace:** Leisurely paced

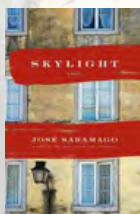
**Storyline:** Character-driven; Issue-oriented

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** First person narratives; Literary fiction; Multiple perspectives; Translations

**Subjects:** Aesthetics; Apartment house life; Friendship; Japanese in France; Pessimism; Philosophy; Secrets; Social classes; Suicide; Twelve-year-old girls; Widows; Women and cats

### **Read-Alikes**



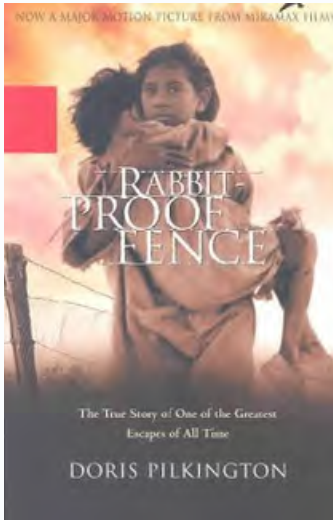
***Skylight*** by Jose Saramago

***The Cleaner of Chartres*** by Salley Vickers

***The Married Man*** by Edmund White

***44 Scotland Street*** by Alexander McCall Smith

## ***Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence***



by Doris Pilkington

Three mixed-race Australian girls, having been taken from their Aboriginal families, escape and return home on foot, without supplies or gear, while trying to evade recapture, in an account based on a true story.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Storyline:** Own voices

**Tone:** Moving; Thought-provoking

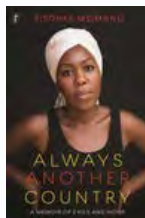
**Writing Style:** Richly detailed; Spare

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Australian literature; Books to movies; Family and Relationships; Society and culture

**Subjects:** Aboriginal Australian children; Aboriginal Australians; Assimilation (Sociology); Escapes; Multiracial children; Pilkington, Doris, 1937-; Race relations; Runaways; Separated friends, relatives, etc.; Sisters; Wilderness survival

### **Read-Alikes**



***Swallow the Air*** by Tara June Winch

***Always Another Country: A Memoir of Exile and Home*** by Sisonke Msimang

***Simply Ing*** by Helen Ing Nellie

***The Oceans Between Us*** by Gill Thompson



## ***Freedom: a Novel***



by Jonathan Franzen

The idyllic lives of civic-minded environmentalists Patty and Walter Berglund come into question when their son moves in with aggressive

Republican neighbors, green lawyer Walter takes a job in the coal industry, and go-getter Patty becomes increasingly unstable and enraged.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** Complex; Flawed; Introspective; Unlikeable

**Pace:** Leisurely paced

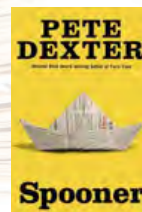
**Storyline:** Character-driven; Intricately plotted

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Literary fiction

**Subjects:** Dysfunctional families; Family relationships; Husband and wife; Interpersonal relations; Love triangles; Neighbors; Self-discovery; Self-fulfillment; Sexuality

### **Read-Alikes**



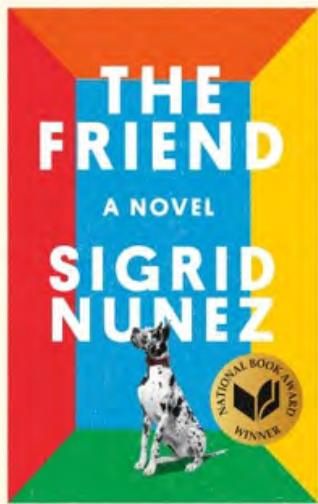
***Aloft*** by Chang-rae Lee

***Little Children*** by Tom Perrotta

***Spooner*** by Pete Dexter

***The Lonely Polygamist*** by Brady Udall

## ***The Friend: a Novel***



by Sigrid Nunez

Becoming the guardian of her late best friend's enormous Great Dane, a grieving woman is evicted from her no-pets apartment and forges a deep bond with the equally distraught animal in ways that initially disturb her friends.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Coping with death; Human and animal bonds

**Character:** Introspective

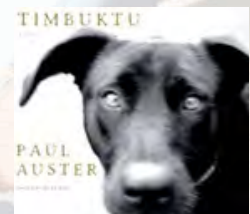
**Pace:** Leisurely paced

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Literary fiction; Psychological fiction

**Subjects:** Coping; Eviction; Female friendship; Friends' death; Great Danes; Grief; Grief in animals; Human/animal relationships; Loss (Psychology); Survivors of suicide victims; Women and dogs

### **Read-Alikes**



***The Dogs of Babel*** by Carolyn Parkhurst

***Lily and the Octopus*** by Steven Rowley

***When You Read This*** by Mary Adkins

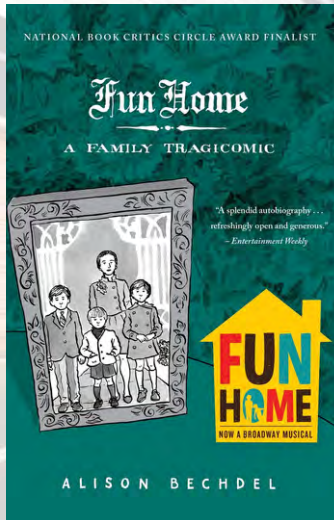
***Timbuktu*** by Paul Auster



## ***Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic***

by Alison Bechdel

An unusual memoir done in the form of a graphic novel by a cult favorite comic artist offers a darkly funny family portrait that details her relationship with her father, a historic preservation expert dedicated to restoring the family's Victorian home, funeral home director, high-school English teacher, and closeted homosexual.



### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** LGBTQIA diverse

**Tone:** Moving; Reflective

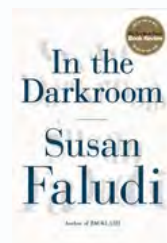
**Writing Style:** Conversational

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Adult books for young adults; Autobiographical comics; Autobiographies and memoirs; Comics and Graphic novels; Family and Relationships; LGBTQIA comics; Life stories

**Subjects:** Bechdel, Alison, 1960–; Brothers; Cartoonists; Children of divorced parents; Closeted gay men; Death; Divorce; Fathers and daughters; Funeral homes; Gay men; Historic preservation; Lesbian teenagers; Parent and child; Teachers; Teacher-student relationships; Undertakers

### **Read-Alikes**



***The Undertaker's Daughter: A Memoir*** by Katherine Mayfield

***Stitches: A Memoir*** by David Small

***Fairyland: A Memoir of My Father*** by Alysia Abbott

***In the Darkroom*** by Susan Faludi

## ***A Gentleman in Moscow***



by Amor Towles

Deemed unrepentant by a Bolshevik tribunal in 1922, Count Alexander Rostov is sentenced to house arrest in a hotel across the street from the Kremlin, where he lives in an attic room while some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history unfold.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** Likeable

**Storyline:** Character-driven

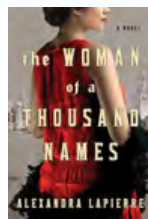
**Tone:** Strong sense of place

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Historical fiction; Literary fiction

**Subjects:** Aristocracy; Counts and countesses; Home confinement (Corrections); Hotels; Interpersonal relations

### **Read-Alikes**



***The Kitchen Boy: A Novel of the Last Tsar*** by Robert Alexander

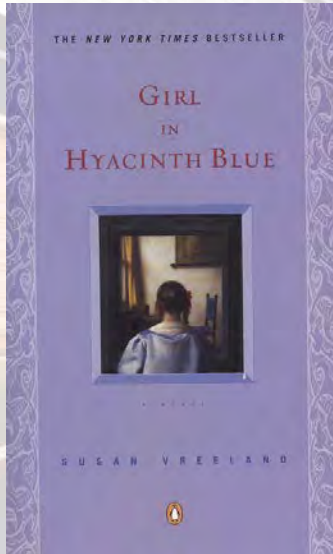
***The Woman of a Thousand Names*** by Alexandra Lapierre

***Mikhail and Margarita*** by Julie Lekstrom Himes

***Lost Roses*** by Martha Hall Kelly



## ***Girl in Hyacinth Blue***



by Susan Vreeland  
Chronicles the history of a painting and the lives with which it intersects, from the artist's inspiration to its admiration by two art scholars three hundred years later.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Life in art; Web of connections

**Character:** Religiously diverse

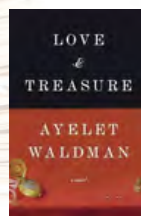
**Storyline:** Character-driven

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Biographical fiction; Literary fiction

**Subjects:** Art thefts; Artists; Children of artists; Children of Nazis; College teachers; Fathers and daughters; Jewish girls; Memories; Men/women relations; Ownership; Vermeer, Johannes, 1632-1675

### **Read-Alikes**

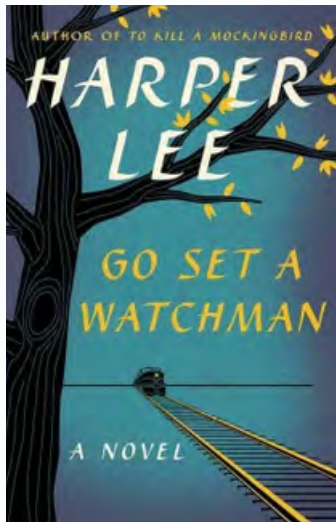


***Keeping the World Away*** by Margaret Forster

***The Swan Thieves*** by Elizabeth Kostova

***Love and Treasure*** by Ayelet Waldman

***The Fortunate Ones*** by Ellen Umansky



## ***Go Set a Watchman***



by Harper Lee

Twenty years after the trial of Tom Robinson, Scout returns home to Maycomb to visit her father and struggles with personal and political issues as her small Alabama town adjusts to the turbulent events beginning to transform the United States in the mid-1950s.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Facing racism

**Character:** Complex

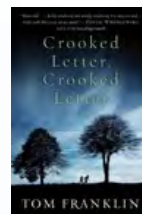
**Storyline:** Character-driven

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Literary fiction; Southern fiction

**Subjects:** Fathers and daughters; Homecomings; Hometowns; Independence in women; Men/women relations; Race relations; Racism; Small town life; Social change

### **Read-Alikes**



***The Secret of Magic*** by Deborah Johnson

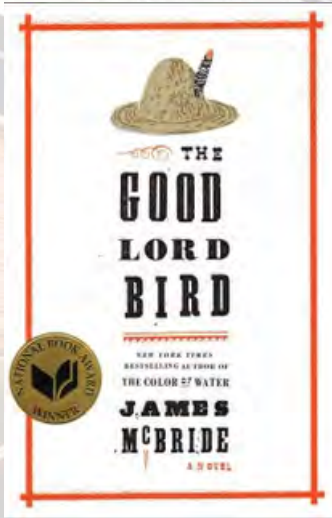
***Four Spirits*** by Sena Jeter Naslund

***Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter*** by Tom Franklin

***The Evening Road*** by Laird Hunt



## ***The Good Lord Bird***



by James McBride

Mistaken for a girl on account of his curly hair, delicate features, and sackcloth smock, 12-year-old slave Henry Shackleford realizes that his accidental disguise affords

him greater safety and decides to remain female. Dubbed "Little Onion" by his liberator, abolitionist John Brown, Henry accompanies the increasingly fanatical

Brown on his crusade to end slavery -- a picaresque journey that takes them from Bloody Kansas to Rochester, New York, where they attempt to enlist the support of such notables as Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman before embarking on the infamous, ill-fated 1859 raid on Harpers Ferry.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** Authentic; Flawed

**Pace:** Fast-paced

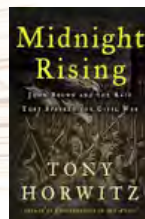
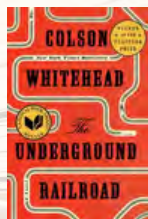
**Storyline:** Character-driven

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Adult books for young adults; African American fiction; Books to TV; Historical fiction; Literary fiction

**Subjects:** Abolitionists; Brown, John, 1800-1859; Children and adults; Extremists; False personation; Female impersonators; Fugitive slaves; Gender identity; Obsession; Self-perception in men; Twelve-year-olds

### **Read-Alikes**



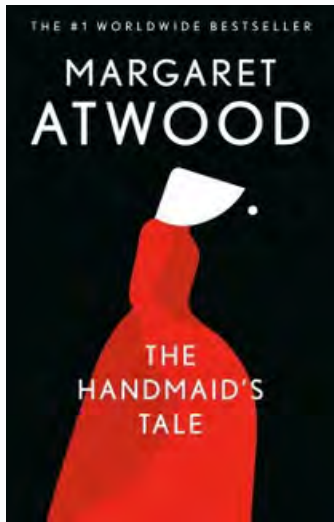
***Daughter of a Daughter of a Queen*** by Sarah Bird

***The Underground Railroad*** by Colson Whitehead

***Midnight Rising*** by Tony Horwitz

***Cloudsplitter*** Russell Banks

## ***The Handmaid's Tale***



by Margaret Atwood  
Offred, a Handmaid, describes life in what was once the United States, now the Republic of Gilead, a shockingly repressive and intolerant monotheocracy, in a satirical tour de force set in the near future.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** Complex; Introspective; Large cast of characters

**Pace:** Leisurely paced

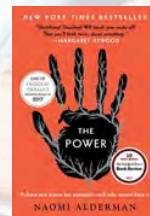
**Storyline:** Character-driven

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Books to movies; Books to TV; Canadian fiction; Dystopian fiction; Literary fiction; Science fiction; Science fiction classics

**Subjects:** Caste; Dystopias; Infertility; Misogyny; Near future; Sex discrimination; Sexism; Theocracy; Women's role; Young women

### **Read-Alikes**



***Godshot*** by Chelsea Jean Bieker

***Lighthouse Island*** by Paulette Jiles

***Women Talking*** by Miriam Toews

***The Power*** by Naomi Alderman



## ***The Healing***



by Jonathan Odell

Concerned about his wife's extensive grief over the loss of their daughter and worrying about a mysterious illness that is afflicting his slaves, Master Satterfield purchases a slavewoman known as a healer only to be further unsettled by her troubling predictions and possible inauthenticity.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Coping with death; Facing racism

**Pace:** Leisurely paced

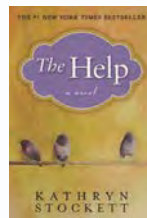
**Storyline:** Character-driven; Intricately plotted

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Historical fiction; Psychological fiction

**Subjects:** African American senior women; Children; Grief in women; Healing; Loss (Psychology); Midwives; Opium addiction; Plantations; Slaveholders; Slavery; Women healers; Women slaves

### **Read-Alikes**



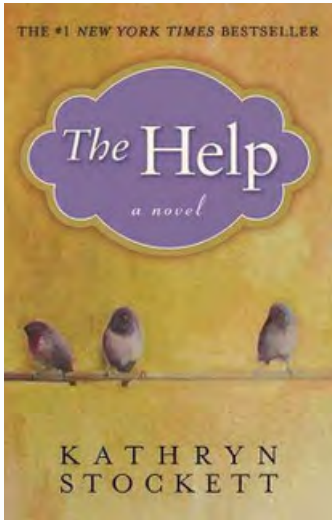
***Wench*** by Dolen Perkins-Valdez

***Conjure Women*** by Afia Atakora

***Grace*** by Natasha Deon

***The Help*** by Kathryn Stockett

## *The Help*



by Kathryn Stockett  
Limited and persecuted by racial divides in 1962 Jackson, Mississippi, three women, including an African-American maid, her sassy and chronically unemployed friend, and a recently graduated white woman, team up for a clandestine project.

### Appeal Factors

**Themes:** Facing racism

**Pace:** Fast-paced

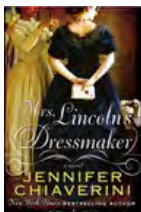
**Tone:** Hopeful; Moving; Strong sense of place

### Story Elements

**Genres:** Books to movies; Historical fiction; Relationship fiction; Southern fiction

**Subjects:** African American women; Civil Rights Movement; College graduates; Determination in women; Household employees; Housekeepers; Interracial friendship; Life change events; Race relations; Unemployed persons

### Read-Alikes



***Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker*** by Jennifer Chiaverini

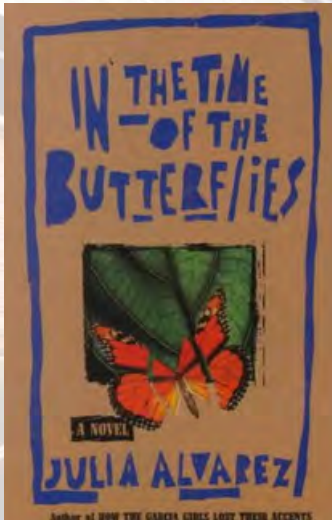
***The Healing*** by Jonathan Odell

***Call Your Daughter Home*** by Deb Spera

***Freshwater Road*** by Denise Nicholas



## ***In the Time of the Butterflies***



by Julia Alvarez

A fictional account of the young lives of Mirabal sisters Patria, Minerva, and Maria Teresa, otherwise known in the Dominican Republic as Las Mariposas, describes their suffering and martyrdom in the last days of the Trujillo dictatorship.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** Culturally diverse

**Pace:** Leisurely paced

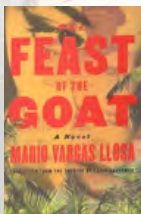
**Storyline:** Character-driven

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Biographical fiction; Books to movies; First person narratives; Historical fiction; Multiple perspectives; Political fiction

**Subjects:** Martyrs; Murder; Political corruption; Revolutionaries; Sisters; Trujillo Molina, Rafael Leonidas, 1891-1961; Women rebels

### **Read-Alikes**



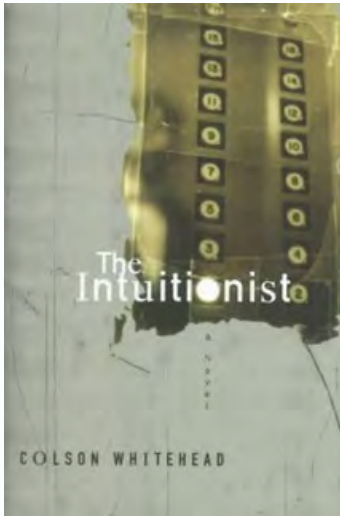
***The Feast of the Goat*** by Mario Vargas Llosa

***The Poisonwood Bible*** by Barbara Kingsolver

***Perla*** by Carolina De Robertis

***Memories from Cherry Harvest*** by Amy Wachspress

## ***The Intuitionist***



by Colson Whitehead  
A black female elevator inspector must prove that her method of inspection by intuition, as opposed to visual observation, is not at fault when an elevator in a new city building crashes.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Facing racism

**Character:** Culturally diverse

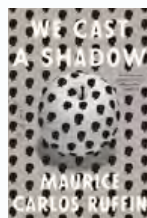
**Storyline:** Own voices; World-building

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** African American fiction; Afrofuturism and Afrofantasy; Contemporary fantasy; Literary fiction

**Subjects:** African American women; City life; Elevators; Intrigue; Intuition; Labor unions; Race relations; Sects

### **Read-Alikes**



***Friday Black: Stories*** by Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah

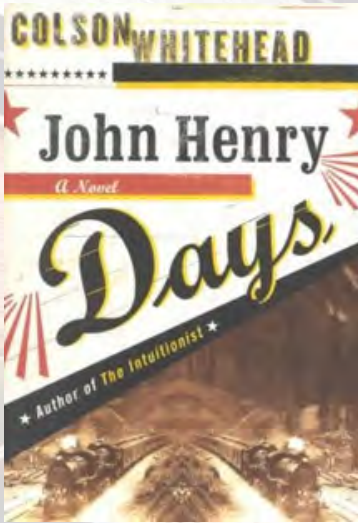
***We Cast a Shadow*** by Maurice Carlos Ruffin

***Gabriel's Story*** by David Anthony Durham

***Such a Fun Age*** by Kiley Reid



## ***John Henry Days***



by Colson Whitehead  
An assignment for a travel Web site takes J. Sutter, a young black journalist, to West Virginia for the first annual "John Henry Days" festival, where history and popular culture are juxtaposed as the real story of John Henry unfolds.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** Culturally diverse

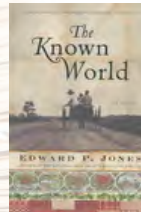
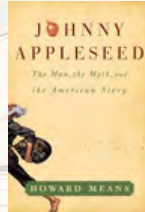
**Storyline:** Own voices

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** African American fiction; Psychological fiction

**Subjects:** African American journalists; African American men; Festivals; John Henry

### **Read-Alikes**



***Ragtime*** by E. L. Doctorow

***Johnny Appleseed: The Man, the Myth, and the American Story*** by Howard Means

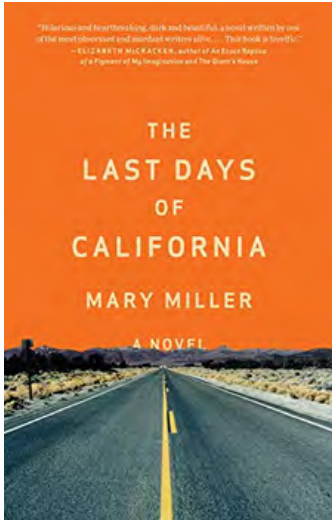
***The Known World*** by Edward P. Jones

***Boy, Snow, Bird*** by Helen Oyeyemi

## ***The Last Days of California***

by Mary Miller

Fourteen-year-old Jess' beliefs falter when her evangelical father packs up the family, including her secretly pregnant older sister and her long-suffering mother, to travel across the country and save souls ahead of the anticipated end of the world.



### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Road tripping

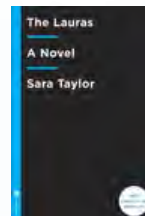
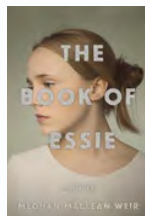
**Tone:** Atmospheric; Moving

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Adult books for young adults; Coming-of-age stories

**Subjects:** Automobile travel; Christians; Cross-country automobile trips; Families; Family relationships; Partying; Rapture (Christian eschatology); Self-destructive behavior; Self-discovery; Teenage girls

### **Read-Alikes**



***Faithful*** by Alice Hoffman

***The Book of Essie*** by Meghan MacLean Weir

***The Lauras*** by Sara Taylor

***The Girl who Slept with God*** by Val Brelinski



## ***Less: a Novel***



by Andrew Sean Greer  
Receiving an invitation to his ex-boyfriend's wedding, Arthur, a failed novelist on the eve of his 50th birthday, embarks on an international journey that finds him falling in love, risking his life, reinventing himself and making connections with the past.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Books about books; Second act

**Character:** Complex; Flawed; LGBTQIA diverse

**Storyline:** Character-driven; Own voices

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** LGBTQIA fiction; Literary fiction; Romantic comedies

**Subjects:** Americans in foreign countries; Authors; Birthdays; Former boyfriends; Gay men; Memories; Men/women relations; Middle-aged men; Voyages and travels

### **Read-Alikes**



***Remembrance of Things I Forgot*** by Bob Smith

***Fleishman is in Trouble*** by Taffy Brodesser-Akner

***This is Your Life, Harriet Chance!*** by Jonathan Evison

***Love*** by Roddy Doyle

## ***Let the Right One In***

by John Ajvide Lindqvist

Twelve-year-old Oskar is obsessed by the murder that's taken place in his neighborhood. Then he meets the new girl from next door. She's a bit weird, though. And she only comes out at night.



### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Childhood trauma; Vampire menace

**Storyline:** Character-driven

**Tone:** Bleak; Creepy; Disturbing; Menacing

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Adult books for young adults; Books to movies; Horror; Translations

**Subjects:** Curiosity in boys; Neighbors; Obsession; Overweight boys; Revenge; Suburban life; Teenage murder victims; Twelve-year-old boys; Vampires

### **Read-Alikes**



***The Lesser Dead*** by Christopher Buehlman

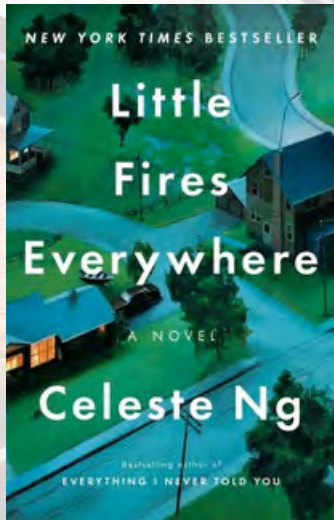
***Hex*** by Thomas Olde Heuvelt

***Locke and Key*** by Joe Hill

***The Shadows*** by Alex North



## ***Little Fires Everywhere***



by Celeste Ng

Fighting an ugly custody battle with an artistic tenant who has little regard for the strict rules of their progressive Cleveland suburb, a straitlaced family woman who is seeking to adopt a baby becomes obsessed with exposing the tenant's past, only to trigger devastating consequences for both of their families.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Maybe baby; Suburban malaise

**Character:** Complex

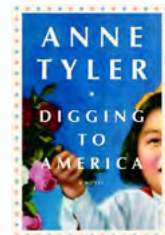
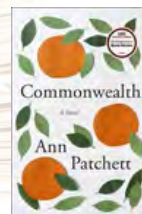
**Storyline:** Character-driven; Nonlinear

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Adult books for young adults; Books to TV; Literary fiction; Multiple perspectives

**Subjects:** Adoption; Artists; Child custody; Consequences; Interpersonal conflict; Interracial adoption; Landlord and tenant; Secrets; Single mothers

### **Read-Alikes**



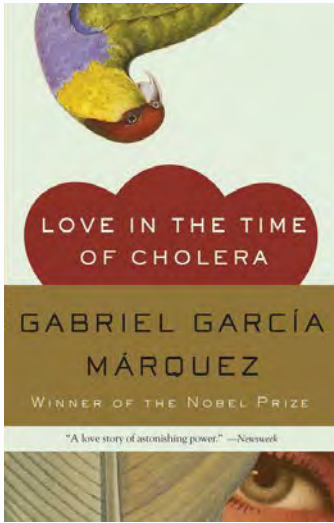
***Such a Fun Age*** by Kiley Reid

***Big Little Lies*** by Liane Moriarty

***Commonwealth*** by Ann Patchett

***Digging to America*** by Anne Tyler

## ***Love in the Time of Cholera***



by Gabriel García Márquez

Florentino Ariza has never forgotten his first love. He has waited nearly a lifetime in silence since his beloved Fermina married another man. But now her husband is dead. Finally Florentino has another chance to declare his eternal passion and win her back. Will love that has survived half a century remain unrequited?

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Together again

**Character:** Complex; Culturally diverse; Flawed

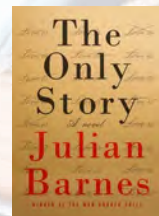
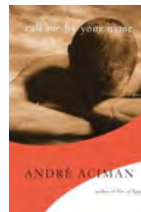
**Pace:** Leisurely paced

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Books to movies; Literary fiction; Love stories; Magical realism; Modern classics; Translations

**Subjects:** Courtship; Love triangles; Men/women relations; Romantic love; Unrequited love

### **Read-Alikes**



***The Bad Girl*** by Mario Vargas Llosa

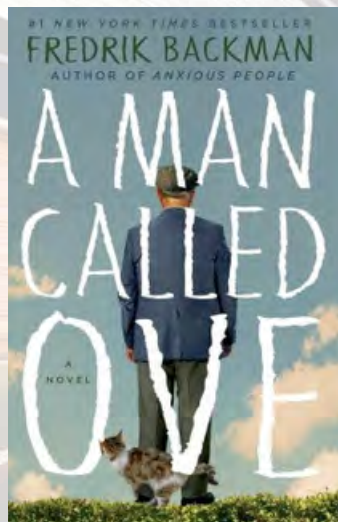
***Mothering Sunday*** by Graham Swift

***Call Me by Your Name*** by André Aciman

***The Only Story*** by Julian Barnes



## ***A Man called Ove***



by Fredrik Backman

A curmudgeon hides beneath a cranky and short-tempered exterior a terrible personal loss while clashing with new neighbors, a boisterous family whose chattiness and habits lead to unexpected friendship.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Confronting mortality; Coping with death

**Character:** Quirky; Sympathetic

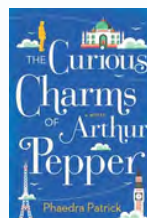
**Tone:** Upbeat

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Books to movies; Relationship fiction; Translations

**Subjects:** Aging; Communities; Grouches; Interpersonal relations; Loss (Psychology); Neighbors; Senior men; Seniors; Suicidal behavior; Widowers

### **Read-Alikes**



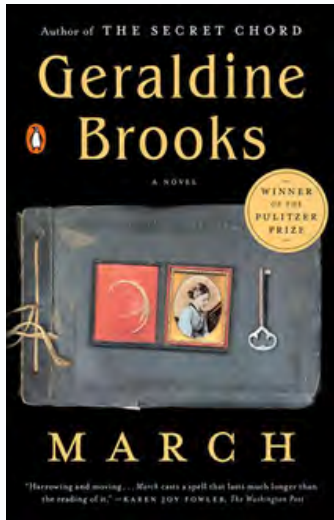
***The House in the Cerulean Sea*** by TJ Klune

***Elling*** by Ingvar Ambjørnsen

***The Brilliant Life of Eudora Honeysett*** by Annie Lyons

***The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper*** by Phaedra Patrick

## ***March: A Novel***



by Geraldine Brooks  
Set during the American Civil War, March tells the story of John March, known to us as the father away from his family of girls in Little Women, Louisa May Alcott's classic American novel.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** Complex; Courageous; Flawed

**Storyline:** Character-driven

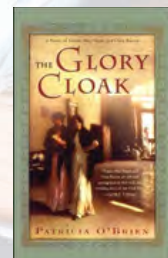
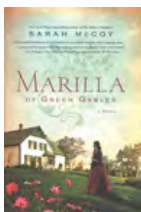
**Tone:** Bittersweet; Dramatic

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Adaptations; Adult books for young adults; Australian fiction; Epistolary novels; First person narratives; Historical fiction; Literary fiction; Multiple perspectives; War stories

**Subjects:** Abolitionists; Civil war; Families; Father-separated families; Freed slaves; Husband and wife; March family (Fictitious characters); Married men; Military chaplains; Plantation life; Racism; Separated friends, relatives, etc.; Slavery; Teachers; United States Civil War, 1861-1865

### **Read-Alikes**



***Marilla of Green Gables*** by Sarah McCoy

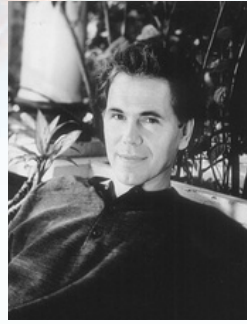
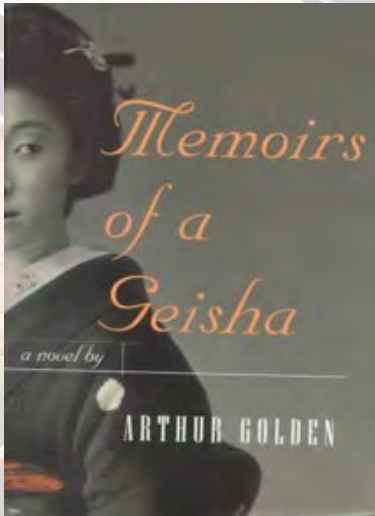
***Hamnet*** by Maggie O'Farrell

***Twain and Stanley Enter Paradise*** by Oscar Hijuelos

***The Glory Cloak*** by Patricia O'Brien



## ***Memoirs of a Geisha***



by Arthur Golden

The "memoirs" of one of Japan's most celebrated geishas describes how, in 1929, as a little girl, she is sold into slavery; her efforts to learn the arts of the geisha; the impact of World War II; and her struggle to reinvent herself to win the man she loves.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Rags to riches

**Pace:** Leisurely paced

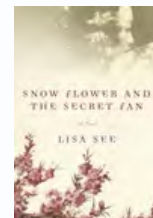
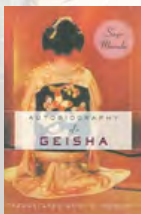
**Tone:** Atmospheric; Reflective

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Books to movies; Historical fiction

**Subjects:** Artisans; Competition in women; Female friendship; First loves; Geishas; Jealousy in women; Men/women relations; Prostitution; Sisters; Women entertainers

### **Read-Alikes**



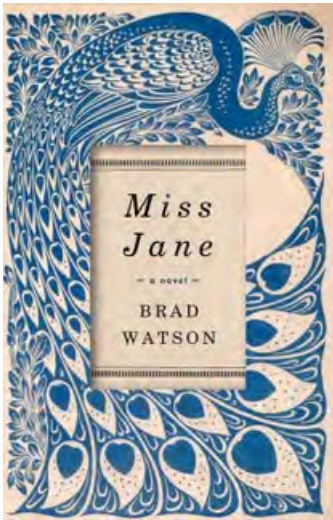
***Autobiography of a Geisha*** by Sayo Masuda

***The Tale of Genji*** by Shikibu Murasaki

***The Buddha in the Attic*** by Julie Otsuka

***Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*** by Lisa See

## ***Miss Jane***



by Brad Watson

A tale inspired by the story of the author's great-aunt explores the life of a woman in early 20th-century rural Mississippi whose genital birth defect prevents her marriageability as she endures the hardships of farm life, observes the erotic qualities of nature and shares a relationship with a boy who loves but is forced to leave her.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** Complex

**Storyline:** Character-driven

**Tone:** Atmospheric; Haunting; Melancholy

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Historical fiction; Southern fiction; Southern gothic

**Subjects:** Birth defects; Farm life; Gender role; Interpersonal relations; Loneliness in women; Misfits (Persons); Physicians; Self-fulfillment in women; Women and nature

### **Read-Alikes**



***If the Creek Don't Rise*** by Leah Weiss

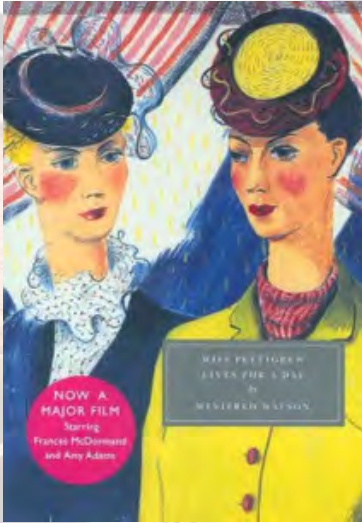
***Blue Asylum*** by Kathy Hepinstall

***The Signature of All Things*** by Elizabeth Gilbert

***The Turtle Catcher*** by Nicole Lea Helget



## ***Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day***



by Winifred Watson  
Miss Pettigrew, a governess looking for work, is sent by mistake to the home of Delysia LaFosse, a glamorous nightclub singer involved with three different men and is invited to stay after offering Miss LaFosse common sense advice about her love life.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** 24 hour stories; Unlikely friendships

**Tone:** Funny; Upbeat

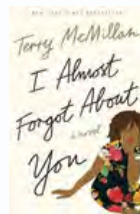
**Writing Style:** Engaging; Lyrical

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Books to movies; Literary fiction; Modern classics

**Subjects:** Advice; Female friendship; Governesses; Life change events; Lifestyle change; Men/women relations; Middle-aged women; Second chances; Self-discovery in women; Women singers

### **Read-Alikes**



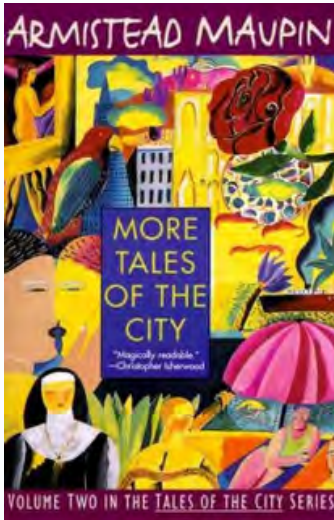
***Cold Comfort Farm*** by Stella Gibbons

***Big Girls*** by Danielle Steel

***The Three Weissmanns of Westport*** by Cathleen Schine

***I Almost Forgot About You*** by Terry McMillan

## ***More Tales of the City***



by Armistead Maupin  
The lives of the colorful residents of a San Francisco boarding house are comically intertwined as they search for themselves, their lovers, and families.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** LGBTQIA diverse

**Pace:** Leisurely paced

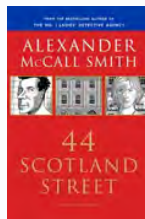
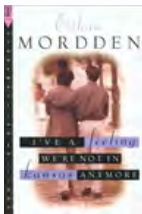
**Storyline:** Character-driven; Intricately plotted; Own voices

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** LGBTQIA fiction

**Subjects:** City life; Gay communities; Gay culture; Gay men; Lesbians; Madrigal, Anna (Fictitious character); Men/women relations; Ramsey, Mona (Fictitious character); Sex customs; Sexuality; Singleton, Mary Ann (Fictitious character); Tolliver, Michael (Fictitious character); Trans women

### **Read-Alikes**



***I've a Feeling We're Not in Kansas Anymore: Tales from Gay Manhattan***

by Ethan Mordden

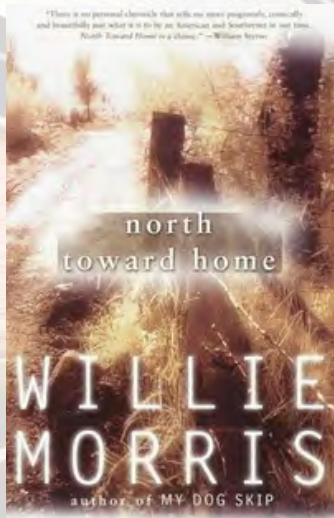
***44 Scotland Street*** by Alexander McCall Smith

***Cathedral City*** by Gregory Hinton

***The House of Impossible Beauties*** by Joseph Cassara



## **\*North Toward Home**



by Willie Morris

With his signature style and grace, Willie Morris, arguably one of this country's finest Southern writers, presents us with an unparalleled memoir of a country in transition

and a boy coming of age in a period of tumultuous cultural, social, and political change.

In *North Toward Home*, Morris vividly recalls the South of his childhood with all of its cruelty, grace, and foibles intact. He chronicles desegregation and the rise of Lyndon Johnson in Texas in the 50s and 60s, and New York in the 1960s, where he became the controversial editor of Harper's magazine. *North Toward Home* is the perceptive story of the education of an observant and intelligent young man, and a gifted writer's keen observations of a country in transition. It is, as Walker Percy wrote, "a touching, deeply felt and memorable account of one man's pilgrimage."

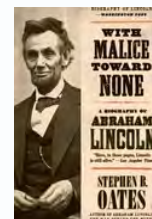
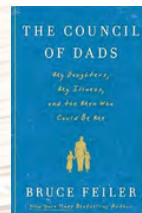
### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Autobiographies and Memories

**Subjects:** 20th Century U.S. History; Arts & Entertainment Biographies and Memoirs; Literary Figure Biographies and Memoirs

\*Information from publisher's website.

### **Readers on GoodReads also enjoyed:**



***No Time Like the Future: An Optimist Considers Mortality*** by Michael J. Fox

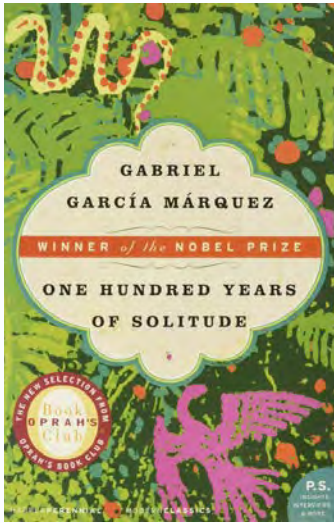
***Once a Runner*** by John L. Parker Jr.

***The Council of Dads: My Daughters, My Illness, and the Men Who Could Be Me*** by Bruce Feiler

***With Malice Toward None: A Biography of Abraham Lincoln*** by Stephen B.

Oates

## ***One Hundred Years of Solitude***



by Gabriel García Márquez

The evolution and eventual decadence of a small South American town is mirrored in the family history of the Buendias.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Unhappy families

**Character:** Flawed; Large cast of characters

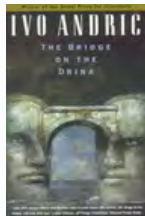
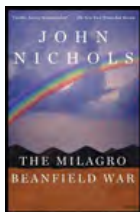
**Tone:** Haunting; Melancholy; Romantic

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Family sagas; Literary fiction; Magical realism; Modern classics; Translations

**Subjects:** Families; Ghosts; Good and evil; Insurgency; Murder; Patriarchs; Solitude; Unrequited love; Villages

### **Read-Alikes**



***The Milagro Beanfield War*** by John Treadwell Nichols

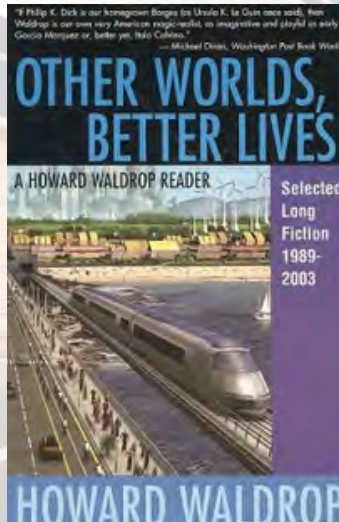
***The Bridge on the Drina*** by Ivo Andrić

***Galore*** by Michael Crummey

***Desolation Road*** by Ian McDonald



## ***Other Worlds, Better Lives, Selected Long Fiction, 1989-2003***



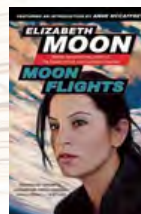
by Howard Waldrop  
Presents a collection of science fiction novellas that describes alternate histories for places around the world throughout the twentieth century.

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Adult books for young adults; Fantasy fiction; Science fiction; Short stories

**Subjects:** Social movements

### **Read-Alikes**



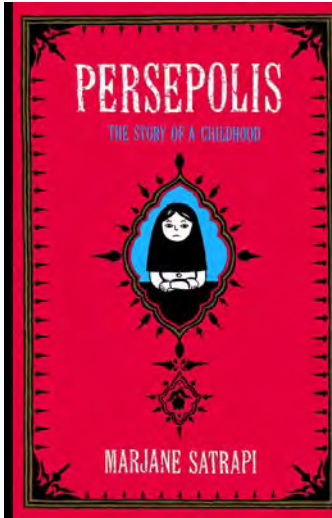
### ***The Best Science Fiction and Fantasy of the Year, Vol. 6***

***Keeper of Dreams*** by Orson Scott Card

***Moon Flights*** by Elizabeth Moon

***Nebula Awards Showcase 2017***

## *Persepolis*



by Marjane Satrapi  
The great-granddaughter of Iran's last emperor and the daughter of ardent Marxists describes growing up in Tehran in a country plagued by political upheaval and vast contradictions between public and private life.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Storyline:** Own voices

**Tone:** Reflective; Sobering; Strong sense of place; Thought-provoking

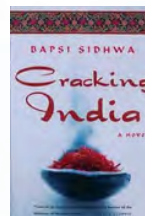
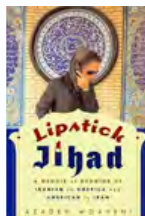
**Writing Style:** Spare

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Adult books for young adults; Autobiographical comics; Autobiographies and memoirs; Books to movies; Comics and Graphic novels; Family and Relationships; History writing; Life stories

**Subjects:** Children and war; Iran-Iraq War; Muslims; Nine-year-old girls; Satrapi, Marjane, 1969–

### **Read-Alikes**



**Maus** by Art Spiegelman

**Lipstick Jihad** by Azadeh Moaveni

**Cracking India** by Bapsi Sidhwa

**Boxers** by Gene Luen Yang



## ***A Princess Bride***



by William Goldman

A classic swashbuckling romance retells the tale of a drunken swordsman and a gentle giant who come to the aid of Westley, a handsome farm boy, and

Buttercup, a princess in dire need of rescue from the evil schemers surrounding her.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** To the rescue!

**Storyline:** Intricately plotted; Unconventional

**Tone:** Funny; Romantic

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Books to movies; Classics; Fantasy fiction; Humorous stories; Metafiction

**Subjects:** Agricultural laborers; Giants; Imaginary kingdoms; Kidnapping; Princes; Princesses; Rescues; Swordfighters

### **Read-Alikes**



***The Accidental Highwayman: Being the Tale of Kit Bristol, his Horse Midnight, a Mysterious Princess, and Sundry Magical Persons Besides*** by

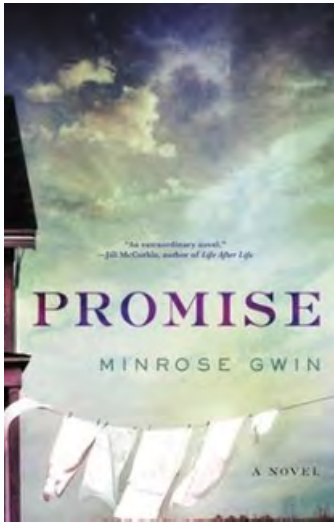
Ben Tripp

***Kill the Farm Boy*** by Delilah S. Dawson and Kevin Hearne

***My Lady Jane*** by Cynthia Hand

***How to Break an Evil Curse*** by Laura Morrison

## ***Promise***



by Minrose Gwin

Barely surviving an F5 tornado that rips through her 1936 Mississippi hometown, an African-American laundress and great-grandmother searches for her family among the catastrophe's survivors while bonding with the traumatized teen daughter of a despised white judge.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** Well-developed

**Tone:** Moving

**Writing Style:** Engaging; Lyrical

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Historical fiction

**Subjects:** African American women; Determination (Personal quality); Family secrets; Generation gap; Great-grandmothers; Interpersonal relations; Race relations; Racism; Survival (after tornadoes); Teenage girls; Tornadoes

### **Read-Alikes**



***The Four Winds*** by Kristin Hannah

***The Well and the Mine*** by Gin Phillips

***Into the Free*** by Julie Cantrell

***Some Luck*** by Jane Smiley



## ***Ready Player One***



by Ernest Cline

Immersing himself in a mid-twenty-first-century technological virtual utopia to escape an ugly real world of famine, poverty, and disease, Wade Watts joins an increasingly violent effort to solve a series of puzzles by the virtual world's creator.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Press play to start

**Character:** Likeable

**Pace:** Fast-paced

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Adult books for young adults; Books to movies; Coming-of-age stories; First person narratives; Science fiction

**Subjects:** Avatars (Virtual reality); Dystopias; Geeks (Computer enthusiasts); Inheritance and succession; Locks and keys; Near future; Popular culture; Puzzles; Quests; Regression (Civilization); Social networks; Teenage boys; Virtual reality

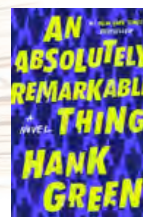
### **Read-Alikes**



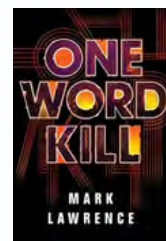
***Tuesday Mooney Talks to Ghosts*** by Kate Racculia



***The Demi-Monde*** by Rod Rees

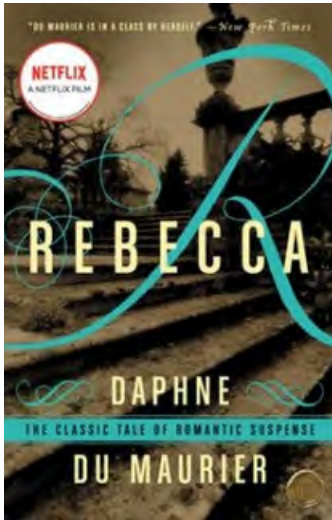


***An Absolutely Remarkable Thing*** by Hank Green



***One Word Kill*** by Mark Lawrence

## **Rebecca**



by Daphne DuMaurier  
A classic novel of romantic suspense finds the second Mrs. Maxim de Winter entering the home of her mysterious and enigmatic new husband and learning the story of the house's first mistress, to whom the sinister housekeeper is unnaturally devoted.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Unnamed narrator; Unreliable narrator

**Pace:** Leisurely paced

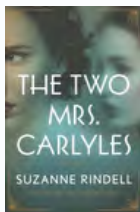
**Tone:** Atmospheric; Moody

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Books to movies; First person narratives; Gothic fiction; Modern classics; Psychological suspense

**Subjects:** Family estates; Household employees; Housekeepers; Men/women relations; Obsession; Remarriage; Rich people; Secrets; Widowers

### **Read-Alikes**



***The Two Mrs. Carlyles*** by Suzanne Rindell

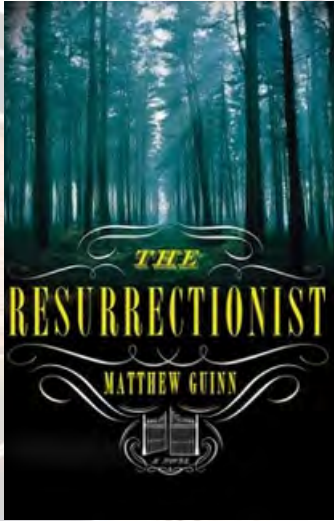
***Murder at Mullings: A 1930s Country House Murder Mystery*** by Dorothy Cannell

***The Darkling*** by R. B. Chesterton

***The Thirteenth Tale*** by Diane Setterfield



## ***The Resurrectionist***



by Matthew Guinn  
A medical student faces an ethical difficulty when he is asked to be part of a cover-up after a remodeling project on campus literally digs up bones of dissected African American slaves, once used for anatomy training.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** Complex

**Pace:** Fast-paced

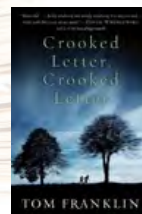
**Storyline:** Intricately plotted

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Literary fiction; Parallel narratives; Southern fiction; Southern Gothic

**Subjects:** African Americans; Grave robbing; Medical care; Medical colleges; Medical students; Scandals; Secrets

### **Read-Alikes**



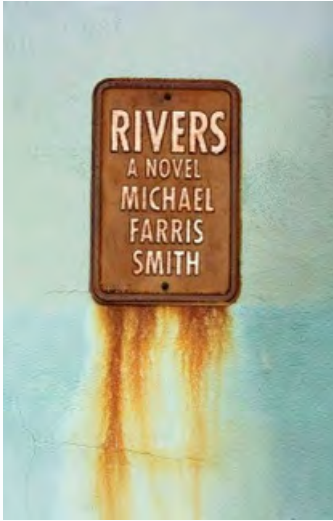
***Every Fifteen Minutes*** by Lisa Scottoline

***All is Not Forgotten*** by Wendy Walker

***Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter*** by Tom Franklin

***The Secret of Magic*** by Deborah Johnson

## ***Rivers: A Novel***



by Michael Farris Smith  
In a hurricane-ravaged Mississippi of the near future, a man who elects to remain behind when most people have fled the area is brutally attacked by two hitchhikers who steal his supplies, a crime that prompts him to pursue justice.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Tone:** Atmospheric; Bleak; Haunting

**Writing Style:** Compelling

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Apocalyptic fiction

**Subjects:** Cults; Dystopias; Hitchhikers; Hurricanes; Stealing; Wilderness  
survival-year-old boys

### **Read-Alikes**



***The Wolves of Winter*** by Tyrell Johnson

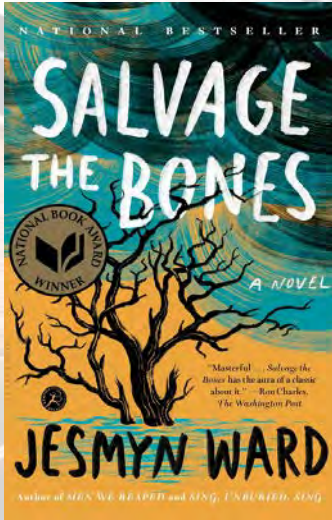
***The Dog Stars*** by Peter Heller

***After the Flood*** by Cassandra Montag

***Red Rising*** by Pierce Brown



## ***Salvage the Bones***



by Jesmyn Ward

Enduring a hardscrabble existence as the children of alcoholic and absent parents, four siblings from a coastal Mississippi town prepare their meager stores for the arrival of Hurricane Katrina while struggling with such challenges as a teen pregnancy and a dying litter of prize pups.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** Complex; Culturally diverse; Sympathetic

**Storyline:** Character-driven; Own voices

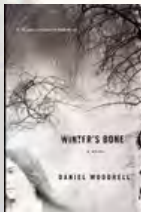
**Tone:** Bleak; Moving; Sobering

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Adult books for young adults; African American fiction; Coming-of-age stories; Literary fiction; Southern fiction

**Subjects:** African American families; African American teenage girls; Brothers and sisters; Hurricane Katrina, 2005; Mother-separated families; Rural poor; Teenage pregnancy

### **Read-Alikes**



***Winter's Bone*** by Daniel Woodrell



***The Bluest Eye*** by Toni Morrison

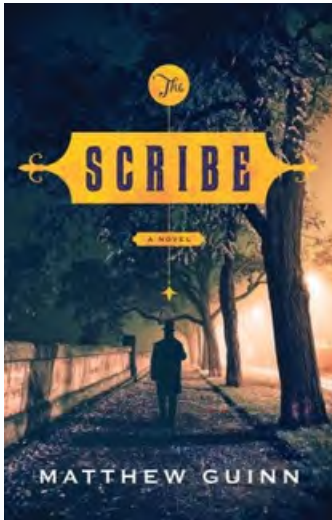


***Hurricane Song*** by Paul Volponi



***Sap Rising*** by Christine Lincoln

## ***The Scribe***



by Matthew Guinn  
Investigating a series of murders targeting post-Civil War Atlanta's wealthiest black entrepreneurs, a disgraced former detective partners with the city's first African-American officer in a case marked by fierce racial, political, and personal tensions.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Rookie on the beat; Urban police

**Character:** Authentic; Flawed

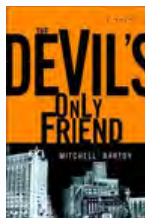
**Pace:** Fast-paced

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Historical mysteries

**Subjects:** Crimes against African Americans; Crimes against rich people; Detectives; Mutilation; Police; Racism; Serial murder investigation; Serial murderers; Upper class

### **Read-Alikes**



***Darktown*** by Thomas Mullen

***The Devil's Only Friend*** by Mitchell Bartoy

***Hard Revolution*** by George P. Pelecanos

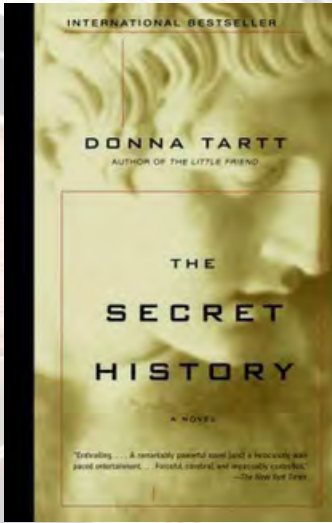
***The Glass Rainbow*** by James Lee Burke



## ***The Secret History***

by Donna Tartt

A transfer student from a small town in California, Richard Papen is determined to affect the ways of his Hampden College peers, and he begins his intense studies under the tutelage of eccentric Julian Morrow.



### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** Complex; Flawed; Unlikeable

**Pace:** Leisurely paced

**Storyline:** Character-driven

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** First person narratives; Literary fiction; Psychological suspense

**Subjects:** Campus life; Cliques; College students; College teachers; Deception; Friendship; Guilt in men; Intellectuals; Murder; Responsibility in men; Suicide; Universities and colleges

### **Read-Alikes**



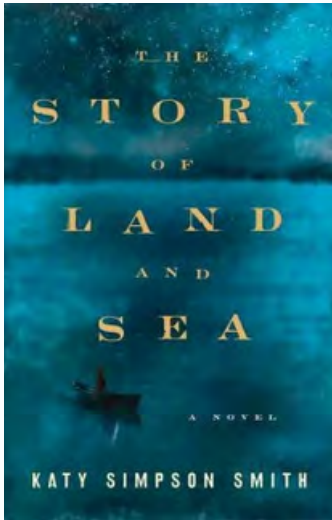
***The Pull of the Moon*** by Diane Janes

***A Wonderful Stroke of Luck*** by Ann Beattie

***Bradstreet Gate*** by Robin Kirman

***Every Contact Leaves a Trace*** by Elanor Dymott

## ***The Story of Land and Sea***



by Katy Simpson Smith  
A sweeping generational story, set in a small coastal town in North Carolina during the waning years of the American Revolution follows fathers and daughters, mother and son, and master and slave as they search for redemption during a time of war, servitude and love.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Tone:** Bittersweet; Haunting; Moving

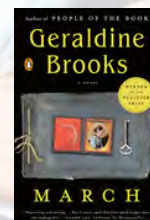
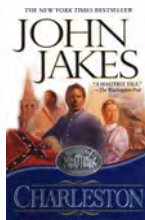
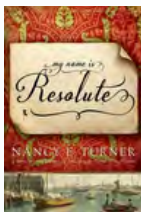
**Writing Style:** Spare

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Family sagas; Historical fiction

**Subjects:** American Revolution, 1775-1783; Coastal towns; Familial love; Fathers and daughters; Grief; Loss (Psychology); Mothers and sons; Plantations; Redemption; Slavery

### **Read-Alikes**



***My Name is Resolute*** by Nancy E. Turner

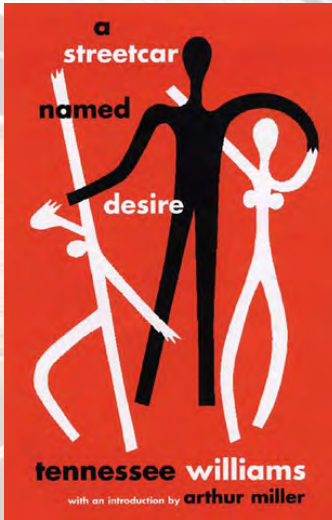
***Charleston*** by John Jakes

***The Second Mrs. Hockaday*** by Susan Rivers

***March: A Novel*** by Geraldine Brooks



## \****A Streetcar Named Desire***



by Tennessee Williams  
It is a very short list of 20th-century American plays that continue to have the same power and impact as when they first appeared—*A Streetcar Named Desire* is one of

those plays. The story of the fading and desperate Blanche DuBois and how her sensuous and brutal brother-in-law, Stanley Kowalski, pushes her over the edge is now classic. Who better than Arthur Miller,

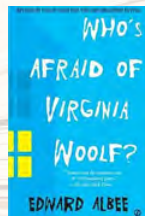
America's elder statesman of the theater (*Death of a Salesman*, *The Crucible*, *A View from the Bridge*, *Broken Glass*, *Resurrection Blues*), to write as a witness to the lightning that struck American culture when Williams's singular style of poetic dialogue, violence, compassion, and dramatic sexuality was first encountered in the form of *A Streetcar Named Desire*? Miller's rich perspective and lucid insights make this a unique and essential new edition. Included are Williams's essay "The World I Live In" and a chronology of the author's life and works.

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Plays

\*Information from publisher's website.

### **Readers on GoodReads also enjoyed:**



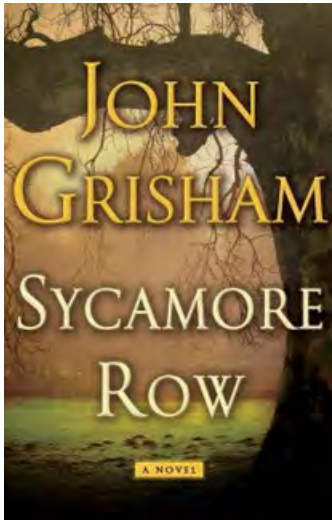
***Death of a Salesman*** by Arthur Miller

***Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*** by Edward Albee

***Othello*** by William Shakespeare

***A Doll's House*** by Henrik Ibsen; translated by T. Weber and Michael Meyer

## ***Sycamore Row***



by John Grisham

When a wealthy man hangs himself and leaves his fortune to his black maid, Jake Brigance finds himself embroiled in a controversial trial that will expose old racial tensions and force Ford County to confront its tortured history.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Pace:** Fast-paced

**Storyline:** Plot-driven

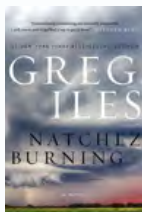
**Tone:** Dramatic; Suspenseful

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Books to movies; Legal thrillers

**Subjects:** Defense attorneys; Family secrets; Inheritance and succession; People with cancer; Race relations; Rich men; Suicide investigation; Trials

### **Read-Alikes**



***Natchez Burning*** by Greg Iles

***Identical*** by Scott Turow

***The Reversal*** by Michael Connelly

***Black Water Rising*** by Attica Locke



# ***A Tale of Two Cities and Great Expectations***

by Charles Dickens

## **GREAT EXPECTATIONS**

The orphan, Pip, and the convict, Magwitch, the beautiful Estella, and her guardian, the embittered and vengeful Miss Havisham, the ambitious lawyer, Mr. Jaggers -- all have a part to play in the mystery.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** Authentic; Complex; Flawed

**Storyline:** Intricately plotted

**Tone:** Dramatic; Romantic

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Books to movies; Books to TV; Classics; Coming-of-age stories; Literary fiction

**Subjects:** Benefactors; Classism; Former convicts; Men/women relations; Orphans; Pirrip, Philip (Fictitious character) ; Poor children; Revenge; Senior women; Victoriana; Young men

## **A TALE OF TWO CITIES**

When the starving French masses rise to overthrow a corrupt and decadent government, both the guilty and innocent become victims of their frenzied anger.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Love in wartime

**Character:** Authentic; Flawed; Large cast of characters

**Storyline:** Intricately plotted

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Books to movies; Classics; Historical fiction

**Subjects:** Classism; Executions and executioners; Fathers and daughters; French in England; French Revolution, 1789-1799; Look-alikes; Self-sacrifice

## **Readers on GoodReads also enjoyed:**



***Havisham*** by Ronald Frame



***The Goldfinch*** by Donna Tartt

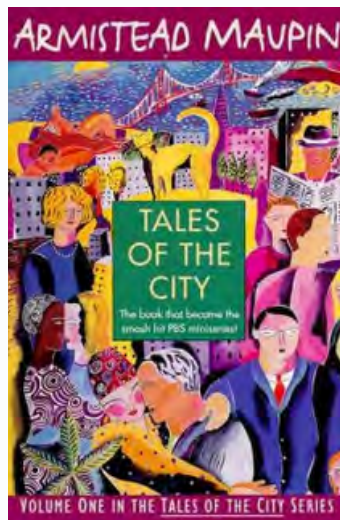


***The Scarlet Pimpernel*** by Baroness Emma Orczy



***The Glass-Blowers*** by Daphne Du Maurier

## ***Tales of the City: a Novel***



by Armistead Maupin  
A naive young secretary, fresh out of Cleveland, tumbles headlong into a brave new world of laundromat Lotharios, pot-growing landladies, cut throat debutantes, and Jockey Shorts dance contests. The saga that ensues is manic, romantic, tawdry, touching, and outrageous.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** LGBTQIA diverse

**Pace:** Leisurely paced

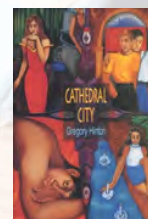
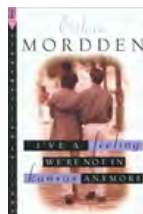
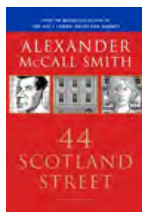
**Storyline:** Character-driven; Intricately plotted; Own voices

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Books to TV; LGBTQIA fiction

**Subjects:** City life; Gay communities; Gay culture; Gay men; Lesbians; Madrigal, Anna (Fictitious character); Men/women relations; Ramsey, Mona (Fictitious character); Sex customs; Sexuality; Singleton, Mary Ann (Fictitious character); Tolliver, Michael (Fictitious character); Trans women

### **Read-Alikes**



***44 Scotland Street*** by Alexander McCall Smith

***Over Easy*** by Mimi Pond

***I've a Feeling We're Not in Kansas Anymore: Tales from Gay Manhattan*** by Ethan Mordden

***Cathedral City*** by Gregory Hinton



## ***Their Eyes Were Watching God***



by Zora Neale Hurston  
When Janie Starks returns home, she seeks identity and independence as the small southern black community buzzes with gossip about the outcome of her affair with a younger man.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Facing racism; Go your own way

**Character:** Complex; Culturally diverse

**Storyline:** Character-driven; Own voices

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** African American fiction; Literary fiction; Love stories; Modern classics; Psychological fiction; Southern fiction

**Subjects:** African American men/women relations; African American women; Husband and wife; Independence in African American women; Marriage; Scandals; Self-fulfillment in African American women; Women murder suspects

### **Read-Alikes**



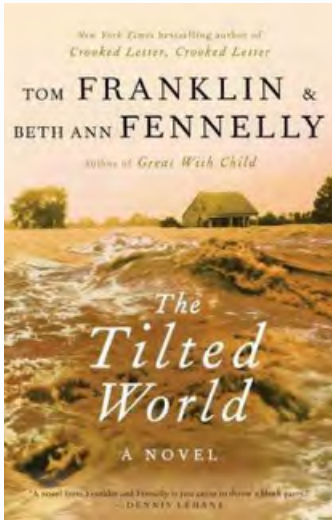
***The Women of Brewster Place*** by Gloria Naylor

***Annie John*** by Jamaica Kincaid

***Jazz: A Novel*** by Toni Morrison

***Meridian*** by Alice Walker

## ***The Tilted World***



Beth Ann Fennelly  
and Tom Franklin

In 1927, as the Mississippi River threatens to burst its banks and engulf all in its path, two federal revenue agents investigate the disappearance of two fellow agents on the trail of a local bootlegger.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Tone:** Atmospheric; High-drama

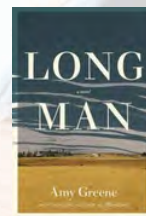
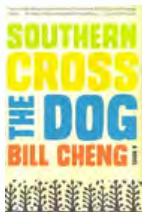
**Writing Style:** Gritty; Lyrical

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Historical fiction; Love stories

**Subjects:** Abused women; Extramarital affairs; Floods; Interpersonal attraction; Levees; Missing persons investigation; Orphans; Revenue agents; Violence in men; Women bootleggers

### **Read-Alikes**



***Southern Cross the Dog*** by Bill Cheng

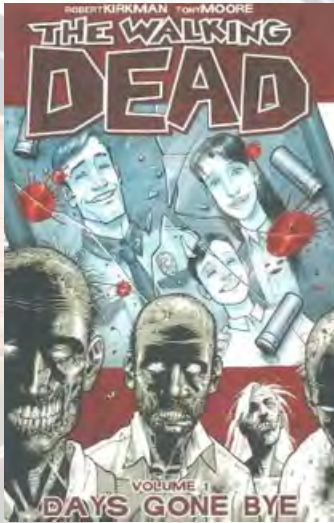
***The Wettest County in the World: A Novel Based on a True Story*** by Matt Bondurant

***This Rock*** by Robert Morgan

***Long Man*** by Amy Greene



## ***The Walking Dead, Vol. 1: Days Gone Bye***



by Robert Kirkman

Police officer Rick Grimes is shot on the job and wakes up a month later to find that the world that he knows is gone. Zombies have taken over and are killing and eating those who are still alive. He sets out toward Atlanta in the hope that his family is still alive and endures many horrors along the way.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Band of survivors; Zombie apocalypse

**Tone:** Bleak; Gruesome

**Writing Style:** Compelling

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Books to TV; Comics and Graphic novels; Horror comics

**Subjects:** End of the world; Epidemics; Missing persons; People in comas; Police; Survival (after epidemics); Zombies

### **Read-Alikes**



**Saga: Vol. 1** by Brian K. Vaughan; Illustrated by Fiona Staples

**Nailbiter: Vol. 1, There will be Blood** by Joshua Williamson; Illustrated by Mike Henderson

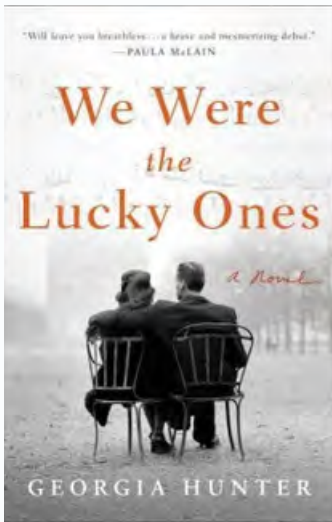
**Hack/Slash: Vol. 1, First Cut** by Tim Seeley; Illustrated by Stefano Caselli

**The Rage: Vol. 1, Zombie Generation** by Pierre Boisserie; Illustrated by Malo Kerfriden

## ***We Were the Lucky Ones***

by Georgia Hunter

A novel based on the true story of a Jewish-Polish family recounts how the Kurcs are scattered throughout the world by the horrors of World War II and fight respective hardships to survive, reach safety and find each other.



### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Large cast of characters; Religiously diverse

**Tone:** Dramatic; Moving

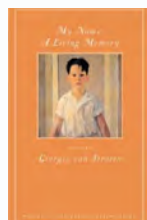
**Writing Style:** Compelling; Well-researched

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Biographical fiction; Family sagas; Historical fiction

**Subjects:** Escapes; Holocaust (1933-1945); Holocaust survivors; Jewish families; Jews, Polish; Separated friends, relatives, etc.; World War II

### **Read-Alikes**



***The Things We Cannot Say*** by Kelly Rimmer

***My Name, A Living Memory*** by Giorgio Van Straten

***The Tattooist of Auschwitz: A Novel*** by Heather Morris

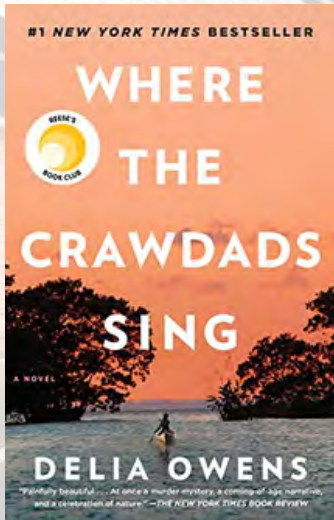
***Florence Adler Swims Forever*** by Rachel Beanland



## ***Where the Crawdads Sing***

by Delia Owens

Viewed with suspicion in the aftermath of a tragedy, a beautiful hermit who has survived for years in a marsh becomes targeted by unthinkable forces.



### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Green reads

**Character:** Quirky; Sympathetic

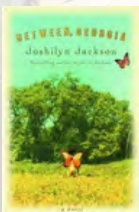
**Pace:** Leisurely paced

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Adult books for young adults; Coming-of-age stories; Literary fiction

**Subjects:** Coasts; Hermits; Loners; Marshes; Murder suspects; Prejudice; Rural women; Suspicion; Wilderness survival; Xenophobia

### **Read-Alikes**



***Between, Georgia*** by Joshilyn Jackson

***Tell the Wolves I'm Home*** by Carol Rifka Brunt

***To Kill a Mockingbird*** by Harper Lee

***My Absolute Darling*** by Gabriel Tallent

## ***Where'd You Go, Bernadette?***



by Marie Temple

When her notorious, hilarious, volatile, talented, troubled and agoraphobic mother goes missing, teenage Bee begins a trip that takes her to the ends of the earth to find her.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Themes:** Web of connections

**Character:** Quirky

**Storyline:** Intricately plotted

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Adult books for young adults; Books to movies; Humorous stories; Pacific Northwest fiction; Relationship fiction

**Subjects:** Agoraphobia in women; Missing persons investigation; Mothers and daughters; Phobias; Women architects

### **Read-Alikes**



***Saving CeeCee Honeycutt*** by Beth Hoffman

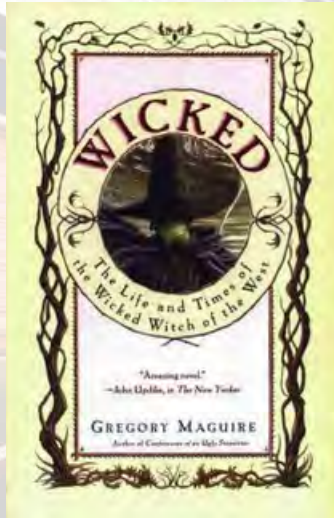
***Ally Hughes has Sex Sometimes*** by Jules Moulin

***The Family Fang: A Novel*** by Kevin Wilson

***South Pole Station: A Novel*** by Ashley Shelby



## ***Wicked: the Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West***



by Gregory Maguire  
Set in an Oz where a morose Wizard battles suicidal thoughts, the story of the green-skinned Elphaba, otherwise known as the Wicked Witch of the West, profiles her as an animal rights activist striving to avenge her dear sister's death.

### **Appeal Factors**

**Character:** Sympathetic

**Tone:** Dramatic; Sardonic; Whimsical

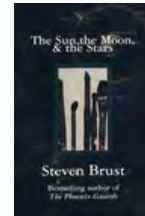
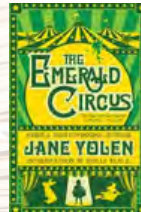
**Writing Style:** Compelling; Lyrical; Richly detailed

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Adaptations; Fantasy fiction

**Subjects:** Glinda (Fictitious character); Good and evil; Oz (Imaginary place); Social acceptance; Wicked Witch of the West (Fictitious character); Wickedness; Witches

### **Read-Alikes**

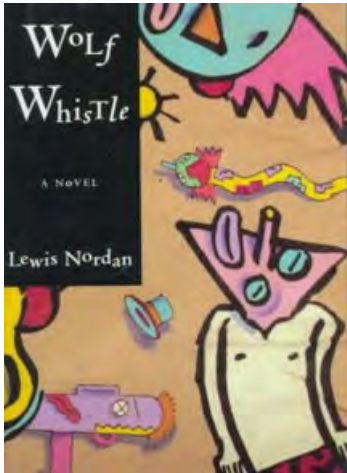


***Fallen: A Novel*** by David Maine

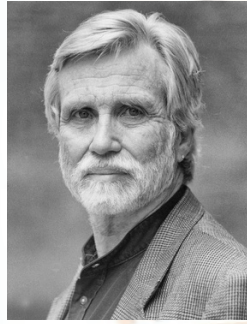
***All the Ever Afters: The Untold Story of Cinderella's Stepmother*** by Danielle Teller

***The Emerald Circus*** by Jane Yolen

***The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars*** by Steven Brust



## ***Wolf Whistle: A Novel***



by Lewis Nordan

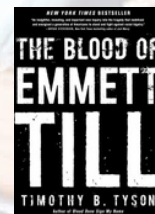
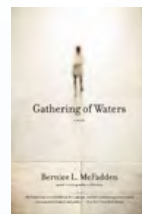
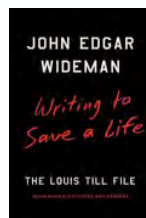
In 1955, in Arrow-Catcher, Mississippi, fourth-grade teacher Alice Conroy, hoping to teach her children something important, takes her class on field trips to the bedside of a terminally burned classmate, the sewage plant, a funeral parlor, and a murder trial.

### **Story Elements**

**Genres:** Southern fiction; Southern Gothic

**Subjects:** Arrow Catcher (Miss.: Imaginary place); Lynching; Racism; Small town life; Till, Emmett, 1941-1955; Trials (Murder); Women elementary school teachers

### **Read-Alikes**



***To Kill a Mockingbird*** by Harper Lee

***Writing to Save a Life: The Louis Till File*** by John Edgar Wideman

***Gathering of Waters: A Novel*** by Bernice L. McFadden

***The Blood of Emmett Till*** by Timothy B. Tyson