



AUGUST '20

Migrations: A Novel

By Charlotte McConaghy

"Imagine a world where almost all the animals have disappeared. Imagine a love strong enough to believe it can make a difference. In a fragile, near-future world, author Charlotte McConaghy gives us Franny Stone, a character as wild and broken as the few remaining Arctic terns she is determined to follow on what will most likely be their last migration. Franny's quest is as epic as Captain Ahab's, and while it leaves much destruction in its wake, it is ultimately a quest toward life. *Migrations* is a book so beautiful it will leave you breathless. Breathless with cold despair, and breathless with pulsating life and hope. This is a truly stunning debut."

—Lisa Swayze, Buffalo Street Books, Ithaca, NY



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Luster: A Novel

By Raven Leilani

"*Luster* centers on Edie, a young black woman working in New York publishing and barely making rent each month, who finds herself navigating a suburban white couple's open marriage. This novel is filled with unexpected turns taken at breakneck speeds. It seamlessly examines the plight of millennials living under capitalism along with the complications of intimacy and race, all while finding both the humor and profound sadness in those things. This is a multifaceted and brilliant book, as well as an extraordinary debut from Raven Leilani."

—Billy Butler, Bookshop Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA



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AUGUST '20

Harrow the Ninth (The Locked Tomb Trilogy #2)

By Tamsyn Muir

"*Harrow the Ninth* is an exceptional second entry in Tamsyn Muir's Locked Tomb trilogy, which has quickly become a cherished series. The necromancy in this world is given even more room to flex its muscles as an integral part of the story. Muir's particular gift with language and her deft humor remain on full display. For all of the questions answered and curiosities resolved, I'm left desperate to know where we are headed next in this journey!"

—Danielle King, Left Bank Books, St. Louis, MO



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The Death of Vivek Oji: A Novel

By Akwaeke Emezi

"I am staggered by the immersive, fluid, irresistible prose Emezi has perfected in their third novel, *The Death of Vivek Oji*. This tale follows the captivating, curious Vivek through the aftermath of his mysterious death, while simultaneously examining the people and relationships closest to him. Vivek, his cousin Osita, and a distant third-person narrator lead the reader through a grounded, lively picture of Nigeria, family and friendship bonds stretched to their breaking points, and the passing of this unique, complex young boy. Through addictive, multifaceted characters and a simply beautiful story, Emezi inspects masculinity, otherness, and love. This is one of the most magical, compelling, exciting, thought-provoking, and important books of our time."

—Margy Adams, Loganberry Books, Shaker Heights, OH



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Flyaway: A Novella

By Kathleen Jennings

"I've never read anything quite like this book. The prose is confident—it's like an iron backbone on which strange and beautiful flowers grow. Jennings' use of syntax is utterly unique. Words that should bump and snap at each other instead morph and burst into unforgettable sentences. This is a... fairy tale? An allegory? A murder mystery? I'm not entirely sure. It doesn't matter. Trying to categorize this wonderful novel would be like putting a unicorn into a horse box. It wouldn't fit and the horn would shatter the wood. Best to leave it unbound and wild, admire it for what it is, and wonder at what it's not."

—Aimee Keeble, Main Street Books, Davidson, NC



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True Story: A Novel

By Kate Reed Petty

"A brilliant mind-bender of a novel that uses different methods of storytelling to illustrate how storytelling creates different versions of truth (if truth even exists) and reality. Are we the stories we tell ourselves? Or do we become the stories that are told about us? This is the question *True Story* asks as it peels away layer after layer of the narrative. Part fever dream, part timely comment on sexual assault, and part psychological thriller, *True Story* will keep you turning pages and guessing until the genius, puzzle-completing ending. I LOVED this book!"

—Debra Ginsberg, DIESEL, A Bookstore, Santa Monica, CA



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Hieroglyphics: A Novel

By Jill McCorkle

"Jill McCorkle's latest novel, *Hieroglyphics*, tackles early loss and how its memory persists in the minds of those who experience it. McCorkle weaves the stories of four unassuming characters and their individual traumas into a braided cord of empathy, revelation, and survival. Her storytelling skill is in high gear in this quiet yet deeply insightful drama that will remain in the reader's mind long after the final page."

—Linda Kass, Gramercy Books, Bexley, OH



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Memorial Drive: A Daughter's Memoir

By Natasha Trethewey

"Natasha Trethewey was 19 when her mother was murdered by her stepfather in 1985. For decades, she hid the event, and memories of her mother, in the recesses of her mind while she went on to win a Pulitzer Prize and become the Poet Laureate of the United States. Now, decades later, she opens herself up to her past to produce a harrowing yet beautiful memorial."

—Mike Hare, Northshire Saratoga, Saratoga Springs, NY



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Crossings: A Novel

By Alex Landragin

"Whoa! I am blown away by this book! A few wandering souls travel over time and space from the early 1800s to WWII in this truly unique story of love, struggle, and the desire to make things right. This book can be read two different ways: from cover to cover or in a page order mapped out at the beginning. It is a completely different reading experience depending on which way you choose. The atmosphere of *Crossings* is one of Sherlock Holmes written by a David Mitchell-esque character with a love for literature and Paris. This novel is beyond explanation—just read it!"

—Danica Ramgoolam, Townie Books, Crested Butte, CO



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Hamnet: A Novel

By Maggie O'Farrell

"I loved *Hamnet* in very much the same way I loved *Lincoln in the Bardo*. This novel explores the way the dead haunt the living—especially how the death of a child haunts their parents—and does it in the context of a fascinating historical figure and time. But we know so much about the Lincolns, and so little about the Shakespeares. Maggie O'Farrell's ability to construct a palpably real emotional life for all the members of the Shakespeare family—but especially for Shakespeare's wife—is just magical. This is a powerful and haunting novel."

—Nina Barrett, Bookends & Beginnings, Evanston, IL



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Empire of Wild: A Novel

By Cherie Dimaline

"Cherie Dimaline's latest novel packs a wallop of a story. Absolutely stunning in every way, this latest offering follows the story of Joan, whose husband has disappeared, and her courage when confronted with truths and lies. She and her husband, Victor, live in a Métis community, close and tight knit. As Joan deals with the fallout of her emotions after Victor disappears, she comes across another man, Eugene Wolff, who bears her husband's face. He does not carry Victor's memories and insists he has no idea who Joan's husband is. Turning over rocks to find the truth, Joan reaches out to whomever she can in her community for help. What waits for her at the end of her quest is incredible. This novel will have you at the edge of your seat!"

—Annie Carl, The Neverending Bookshop, Edmonds, WA



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The Vanishing Sky: A Novel

By L. Annette Binder

"In the waning months of WWII, as allied forces are closing in from both sides, the devastation of war has reached the Huber family as it struggles to stay intact. With an older son changed forever by the Eastern Front, a younger son heading out to the Western Front, and a husband growing increasingly nationalistic and senile, a mother keeps pushing forward with the hope of having her whole family back together under one roof. In this incredibly moving and personal look at the destruction of Germany that ultimately ended the war, Binder tackles a range of issues within countries and families. In the realm of historical fiction, *The Vanishing Sky* is a true standout."

—Carl Kranz, Fountain Bookstore, Richmond, VA



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AUGUST '20

Universe of Two: A Novel

By Stephen P. Kiernan

"Many people were involved in the creation of the atomic bomb in the mid-1940s, and Charles Fisk was one of them. Like many of those developmental scientists and engineers, Fisk remained deeply troubled and forever changed by the outcome of his efforts. This finely crafted love story—and a love story it is—weaves a well-researched history of the shrouded creation of the atomic bomb with the blossoming love of two people. Kiernan's work exposes a terrifying truth and renders a valuable education while pulling the reader into a fast-paced narrative of love and loss."

—Renee Reiner, Phoenix Books Essex, Essex Junction, VT



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The Eighth Detective: A Novel

By Alex Pavesi

"For an avid mystery reader, this book is deeply satisfying. Short stories are picked apart by a young editor and an older author who are looking for a mathematical standard to the classic detective novel. Each story depicts a variation of victim, killer, and detective, and contains clues to yet another mystery involving the author. Puzzles bloom within puzzles, and the final reveal...well, no spoilers from me, but it was unexpected in the best way!"

—Liesl Freudenstein, Boulder Book Store, Boulder, CO



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The Disaster Tourist: A Novel

By Yun Ko-Eun, Lizzie Buehler (Transl.)

"This book is about every sort of disaster that can happen: ecological, economic, social, moral, and even the unexpected. When Yona, a designer of 'disaster tours' for a travel company, is forced to go on a business trip to a remote island, she gets caught up with making a disaster of her own. This book brilliantly peels back the layers of ecotourism, capitalism, and all the ways we are complicit in creating catastrophes. A shocking, thought-provoking book that's also a great read."

—Dan Schwartz, Changing Hands, Phoenix, AZ



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The Butterfly Lampshade: A Novel

By Aimee Bender

"I absolutely loved reading *The Butterfly Lampshade*. We're escorted through Aimee Bender's novel by Francie, who as a child is removed from her mother's care because of mental illness. Throughout the story, Francie questions her own sanity as she deeply believes she witnesses phenomena that defy nature. Increasingly, she withdraws from the world, owning next to nothing and working hard to remember the events of her life. This book and this amazing character are astonishing."

—Mark LaFramboise, Politics and Prose Bookstore, Washington, DC



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The Bright Side Sanctuary for Animals: A Novel

By Becky Mandelbaum

"*The Bright Side Sanctuary for Animals* is a story of struggle, relationships, understanding, and forgiveness. When a daughter is compelled to return to the home she ran from years earlier, she must confront the truth about why she left and whether all fences can be mended. Becky Mandelbaum weaves together all of the threads of this story until it becomes a beautiful tapestry."

—Mary O'Malley, Anderson's Bookshop, La Grange, IL



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You Had Me at Hola: A Novel

By Alexis Daria

"I don't have enough superlatives to do this book justice. Everything is spot on, from the chemistry between the main characters to the telenovela drama to the meddling but supportive cousins. I love all the Spanish, the backstage glimpses into the making of a TV show (especially the inclusion of the intimacy coordinator), and the way the telenovela tropes, like a secret child, are woven into the grounded romance. Now I just hope Michelle and Ava get their own books soon!"

—Cecilia Cackley, East City Bookshop, Washington, DC



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I Hold a Wolf by the Ears: Stories

By Laura van den Berg

"Laura van den Berg's new collection of stories, one of the most unique I've read in recent years, navigates a space between the outer and inner world and takes unexpected turns that, like her novel, *The Third Hotel*, seem to bring in aesthetics of literature outside our time and place to tell stories that are very much grounded in our present. These stories are thrilling, timeless, and get better when you reread them. I've read 'Hill of Hell' more than five times by now."

—Fernando Flores, Malvern Books, Austin, TX



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Miracle Country: A Memoir

By Kendra Atleework

"*Miracle Country* is one of those books that takes on the personality of the place in which it's set, and in the case of the Owens River Valley, that personality is starkly beautiful and full of rugged vitality. Atleework's unflinching combination of personal and natural exploration is the perfect complement to the backdrop of the High Sierra, and she somehow manages to encapsulate both the allure and the contemptuousness of the mountains—and existence in general—through an examination of her own life. Harsh and brutal, resplendent and inviting, this book makes the Sierra Nevada tangle in a way that only great writing can."

—David Nurick, Cellar Door Books, Riverside, CA



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