



MARCH '20

My Dark Vanessa: A Novel

By Kate Elizabeth Russell

"In this gripping debut novel, a teenage girl falls into an affair with her English teacher, who is 30 years her senior. The voice of Vanessa, the narrator, is unparalleled in its honesty, and her emotions are fiercely conveyed with unrelenting realness. This novel is a timely and important read, sometimes difficult, but ultimately an unforgettable experience. You will be left astonished and transformed. Vanessa is formidable and so is her story; you won't be able to put down this powerhouse of a novel."

—Luisa Barbano, Oblong Books and Music, Millerton, NY



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MARCH '20

Writers & Lovers: A Novel

By Lily King

"Casey lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts, waits tables, worries about her debt, and falls for the wrong man and the right one. She dreams, she grieves, and she worries about her health. In spite of it all, she manages to finish her novel. Lily King's assured, closely observed story is a loving portrait of Casey and the writing life. I don't think there's a single unnecessary word in the whole thing. *Writers & Lovers* is a joy to read, a gift from a writer at the top of her game."

—David Enyeart, Next Chapter Booksellers, St. Paul, MN



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MARCH '20

A Good Neighborhood: A Novel

By Therese Anne Fowler

"Therese Anne Fowler's new novel will have you examining the actions and motivations of everyone you know. Her exquisite storytelling and character development deliver an unforgettable and unpredictable story that touches on many contemporary issues, including race, wealth, control, and status. Be sure to leave yourself some time for this one—once you hit the tipping point, you won't put it down until you finish."

—Kari Erpenbach, University of Minnesota Bookstores, Minneapolis, MN



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Saint X: A Novel

By Alexis Schaitkin

"A family vacation to a Caribbean island goes terribly wrong and the tragedy casts a pall over the life of Claire, who is only seven years old when this mesmerizing novel begins. We follow Claire into adulthood and along her pursuit of truth and resolution, while her life becomes increasingly affected by her obsessive search for the answers to the mystery that occurred on Saint X. You will not be able to put down this startlingly accomplished novel, and it will sneak into your dreams! I envy anyone who has it to look forward to."

—Tova Beiser, Brown University Bookstore, Providence, RI



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In Five Years: A Novel

By Rebecca Serle

"Rebecca Serle's *In Five Years* has so many of the things I want in a terrific novel: a twisty plot that leaves me guessing; radically unexpected developments; settings that I can see, smell, and taste; and probably the thing that Serle does best—an introduction to characters I'll grow to care about and shed tears with. That last one? The tear thing? *In Five Years* had me weeping for the last part of a coast-to-coast flight, prompting the flight attendant to hand me a drink because, she said, it looked like I needed one. I loved this book and can't wait to offer it to readers."

—Nick Petrulakis, Brookline Booksmyth, Brookline, MA



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Docile: A Novel

By K.M. Szpara

"People will often refer to a book as one that's 'unlike anything they've ever read before,' but for maybe the first time in my reading life, I can honestly say that about K.M. Szpara's *Docile*. This erotic speculative science fiction novel takes place in a frighteningly plausible future where people become 'dociles'—essentially indentured slaves working off debt—and explores themes of consent, capitalism, and the abuse cycle. A visceral reading experience that will challenge, confront, titillate, and disgust, *Docile* feels like a book we will be talking about for decades."

—Caleb Masters, Bookmarks, Winston-Salem, NC



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MARCH '20

Apeirogon: A Novel

By Colum McCann

"This is a towering, breathtaking, sweeping work of poetic and technical brilliance. Although much of *Apeirogon* resides in the current and past state of Israeli-Palestinian relations, the novel demonstrates how each person, each story, in this ultimately small section of the world represents but one point of an infinitely sided shape—how between all of us, even those locked in seemingly irreconcilable conflict, there pulses a vital connectivity, a path to understanding, forgiveness, and compassion."

—Ben Newgard, Flyleaf Books, Chapel Hill, NC



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This Town Sleeps: A Novel

By Dennis E. Staples

"*This Town Sleeps*, set on an Ojibwe reservation in northern Minnesota, is not an elegiac or idyllic work but rather a direct, unblinking, poetic novel that draws the reader inexorably into the gray areas of the hearts of those in this story. A queer coming-of-age story bound up in a town mystery, this tale of Marion Lafournier, a young gay Ojibwe man, is a compelling debut. Dennis E. Staples is an author whose voice and story-telling will be appreciated in so many ways for years to come."

—Christine Havens, BookPeople, Austin, TX



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Eight Perfect Murders: A Novel

By Peter Swanson

"Malcolm Kershaw is an unassuming bookseller who once wrote a list of the eight most perfect literary murders. He is surprised when the FBI shows up at his door and explains that someone is using this list and recreating the murders. With perfect pacing and shocking twists, this is a murder mystery with a classic feel that will leave you questioning how well you can know anyone. It will also add eight more books to your to-be-read pile as you will immediately need to read all the books on the perfect murder list!"

—Carrie Deming, The Dog Eared Book, Palmyra, NY



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MARCH '20

We Ride Upon Sticks: A Novel

By Quan Barry

"This is such a fun romp! It has everything you could possibly want in a book: field hockey, witches, and '80s bangs that have literally taken on a life of their own. Set in Salem in the 1980s, we follow a group of high school field hockey players as they struggle with their new dark powers and attempt to end their losing streak. One of the strangest, most satisfying books I have read in a long time!"

—Hillary Smith, Copperfield's Books, Calistoga, CA



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MARCH '20

Greenwood: A Novel

By Michael Christie

"Trees: They provide shelter, sustenance, and sanctuary for vast numbers of creatures. They create the very air we breathe. And they are under threat. For generations, the Greenwood family lives with, destroys, fights for, and monetizes these gentle giants until their very existence is absorbed into the class system designed and upheld by the one percent. This is a sweeping arboreal saga full of blood, greed, heart, and humanity. *Greenwood* will fell readers worldwide."

—Bex Petterson, Bloomsbury Books, Ashland, OR



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MARCH '20

Deacon King Kong: A Novel

By James McBride

"*Deacon King Kong* is a quintessential New York story. Set in the Brooklyn projects in 1969, a perpetually inebriated deacon called Sportcoat aims a gun at the neighborhood's main drug dealer in the public plaza and pulls the trigger. Incredibly well-constructed and hilarious at times, McBride's story entwines a number of storylines that are kickstarted by this central event. The local Italian gangster, the veteran cop, the meddling churchgoers, and the drug pushers all have their own agendas, hopes, and dreams that are affected. And though Sportcoat doesn't remember his actions and is always under the influence of gut-rot moonshine, I couldn't help but root for him as I was reading this. His delightful ineptitude and absence of clarity made this book impossible for me to put down. If you've never read McBride before, this is a great introduction."

—Stuart McCommon, Novel., Memphis, TN



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MARCH '20

Sharks in the Time of Saviors: A Novel

By Kawai Strong Washburn

"*Sharks in the Time of Saviors* is one of the best pieces of contemporary fiction I've had the pleasure to read. The fact that the book takes place in Hawaii makes it even more special. The author provides the reader with a unique 'chicken skin' experience. The book captures contemporary Hawaii's history over the past 20+ years, including the socioeconomics of race and being Hawaiian, income disparity, housing issues, family issues, and the diaspora that affects so many families in Hawaii who are unable or unwilling to deal with the cost of living. Truly a master work of art."

—Benjamin "Buddy" Bess, Da Shop: Books & Curiosities, Honolulu, HI



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MARCH '20

Undercover Bromance

By Lyssa Kay Adams

"Steamy, spicy, and tender, if this book were a gourmet meal it would be worth a thousand bucks for sure. Lyssa Kay Adams has outdone herself; her sophomore novel in the Bromance Book Club collection is even better than her debut. Liv is a firecracker, taking nothing from nobody. Mack is a big softie with a heart of gold. When they team up to take down a famous and powerful chef with a history of abusing women, there is nothing these two won't risk—including their hearts. Please read this lovely romance; you will not regret it and it will make you a better person. And if you are a man, this should be required reading—study up, dudes."

—Sam Butler, Bright Side Bookshop, Flagstaff, AZ



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Recollections of My Nonexistence: A Memoir

By Rebecca Solnit

"Over Rebecca Solnit's 30 years of writing, readers like me have fallen in love with her seismic, world-shifting essays, and I was not disappointed by this memoir, her first longform writing in seven years. True to her form, this is a memoir not necessarily of the events of Solnit's coming of age, but rather the greater influences in her development as a feminist, an activist, and a writer in 1980's San Francisco. In these pages, Solnit describes the formation of her own powerful voice while interrogating the culture that routinely silences women through violence and disregard. By sharing these formative years, Solnit is sure to inspire and vindicate generations of women of all ages and offer much-needed encouragement to people of all genders to invest in voices long suppressed."

—Megan Bell, Underground Books, Carrollton, GA



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MARCH '20

The Animals at Lockwood Manor: A Novel

By Jane Healey

"During WWII, Hetty Cartwright arrives at Lockwood Manor to take care of specimens from a natural history museum in London. The hosts of the large manor, the controlling Major and his anxious daughter, Lucy, welcome Hetty and the specimens but don't fully understand her. As time passes, there are ghosts, unexplained visitors, fears, and moving animals that make the job of safekeeping the animals and fossils difficult. This book is a page-turner, a thriller, a love story, and a moving story with surprises."

—Lauren Zimmerman, The Writer's Block Bookstore, Winter Park, FL



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MARCH '20

Oona Out of Order: A Novel

By Margarita Montimore

"Oona Lockhart has been cursed (or blessed) with a magical wrinkle in time that has her leaping forward and back through the years. Inside she is aging chronologically, but on the outside, Oona is sometimes 51, 30, or 26 years old. A life lived out of order, however, can be just as valid as a life lived forward. Surprising, bittersweet, and filled with love, Oona discovers both the wisdom of age and the spontaneity of youth. Don't miss out on what is sure to be the most enchanted reading experience of 2020."

—Pamela Klinger-Horn, Excelsior Bay Books, Excelsior, MN



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MARCH '20

The Splendid and the Vile: A Saga of Churchill, Family, and Defiance During the Blitz

By Erik Larson

"Erik Larson has done it again! With years of impeccable research into diaries, archives, dossiers, biographies, and official British documents, he has presented an intimate and detailed account of Winston Churchill in his first years as prime minister as he dealt with the London Blitz and his own personal and family issues. This is Churchill as few of us can imagine, in his silky pajamas entertaining major dignitaries at his weekend retreat, all the while continuing to reassure the British people during their darkest days that they have what it takes to withstand the German onslaught. *The Splendid and the Vile* reads like an engrossing novel, with all the fascinating details and facts that Erik Larson can provide."

—Gail Meyer, The Bookstore Plus Music & Art, Lake Placid, NY



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MARCH '20

The Girl With the Louding Voice: A Novel

By Abi Daré

"This year is overflowing with phenomenal debuts—including this one from Abi Daré. It tells the story of Adunni, a young girl in Nigeria whose dreams and ambition focus in on one thing: education. In a city where girls like her are looked down upon and considered unworthy, she comes to find that change can begin with even the smallest of voices. This story is the kind that makes you itch: you'll ache for Adunni, bristle at the people who treat her so unjustly, and yearn for her to succeed. This is a stunning, important, and fascinating first novel."

—Lindsay Howard, Lark and Owl Booksellers, Georgetown, TX



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Separation Anxiety: A Novel

By Laura Zigman

"Told with humor, wit, and wisdom, Laura Zigman's novel explores the unexpected trials of middle age. We follow Judy Vogel, who is rebounding from the recent deaths of her parents, struggling with writer's block, juggling financial issues, coping with a failing marriage, and raising an adolescent son. When she comes across her son's old baby sling, she starts to wear the family dog as a unique form of support. This thought-provoking novel is full of heart, hope, and the strength to move forward."

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



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