



APRIL '21

Libertie: A Novel

By Kaitlyn Greenidge

"*Libertie* is a beautifully written, immersive historical novel inspired by the story of a Black doctor and her daughter who lived in a free Black community in Brooklyn during the Reconstruction era. It is also a profound meditation on what it means to be truly free—whether born free or formerly enslaved, whether in America, Haiti, or Liberia—while struggling against grief, sexism, racism, colorism, or classism. *Libertie's* quest to forge her own path is a much-needed inspiration!"

—Alyssa Raymond, Copper Dog Books, Beverly, MA



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APRIL '21

Broken (in the best possible way)

By Jenny Lawson

"Lawson speaks to all of us who are weird, wacky, and unafraid (but, really, often afraid) to share our quirks with the world. Some chapters of this book moved me deeply, where it felt as though she was narrating my own life. Other chapters made me ugly laugh, the type that turns strangers' heads in public. I'm so happy I was given the opportunity to start 2021 with this book. It set the bar high for hope in the year to come, and for the books that will be read."

—Jasmin Brooks, The Bookery Manchester, Manchester, NH



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APRIL '21

Of Women and Salt: A Novel

By Gabriela Garcia

"Gabriela Garcia has delivered a gripping novel that moves between modern-day Miami and revolutionary and post-revolution Cuba to tell the stories of four generations of women whose past traumas continue to play out in current times. It's a story of strength, immigration, and the unbreakable bonds between mothers and daughters. *Of Women and Salt* took my breath away on multiple occasions and continues to take hold of my thoughts."

—Pat Rudebusch, Orinda Books, Orinda, CA



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APRIL '21

The Night Always Comes: A Novel

By Willy Vlautin

"*The Night Always Comes* is urgent. For two days and two nights, Lynette's future rests on a tightly plotted race through the gentrified and changing districts of Portland as she tries to secure what she believes to be a better life for herself and for her mother and brother. Willy Vlautin writes with honesty and generosity about people who are just a step ahead of disaster. He makes us care for lives that are singularly defined by the challenge of earning a living wage while navigating the circumstances of society, family, and self. Vlautin is a necessary writer for our times."

—Christine Kelly, Sundance Bookstore, Reno, NV



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Raft of Stars: A Novel

By Andrew J. Graff

"*Raft of Stars* is an engaging coming-of-age story that will appeal to a wide range of readers. Believing they are murderers, two young boys go on the run in northern Wisconsin. As the adults in their lives set out to find them, questions of guilt, hope, and the future rise to the surface. With characters that come alive and a setting that is real enough to feel, touch, and smell, Graff's novel has action and emotion as well. Filled with themes of family and friendship, this warm-hearted adventure is sure to be a winner!"

—Betsy Von Kerens, The Bookworm of Omaha, Omaha, NE



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APRIL '21

Gold Diggers: A Novel

By Sanjena Sathian

"Gold as a drug. Gold as a metaphor for the glittering hopes and burdens new immigrants put on their children's shoulders. Gold as the thread weaving history, memory, and imagination, a meditation on how the past blends into the present. Gold as the object of an improbable heist. There is so much in this book, but it is first and foremost an extraordinarily good yarn, the story of two generations of American-Indian immigrants trying to become Americanized while clinging to a fetishized, culturally commodified India. There is love, drugs, alchemy, and stories about the gold rush, both the forty-niners and the new gold diggers of the tech bubble. It's fun and fast-paced, except when you stop short for a sentence so evocative you want to dwell on it. A seriously good book by a seriously talented writer."

—Françoise Brodsky, Shakespeare & Co., New York, NY



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APRIL '21

Mother May I: A Novel

By Joshilyn Jackson

"I'm a huge Joshilyn Jackson fan, and she's written another fast-paced, exhilarating read with *Mother May I*. This domestic thriller is comparable to a roller coaster, taking you to dramatic, earth-shaking highs before dropping your heart into your stomach on the lows. I quickly devoured this book but didn't miss its poignant, timely message. Powerful, smart, thrilling—a new favorite."

—Beth Mynhier, Lake Forest Book Store, Lake Forest, IL



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Northern Spy: A Novel

By Flynn Berry

"This emotionally rich espionage story set in present-day Ireland looks at a country divided, the invisibility of motherhood, and the bonds of family that can supersede all else. It is the story of two sisters, one a paramedic and one a BBC news service employee. When one sister is apparently part of an IRA attack, the other refuses to believe it and sets out to prove her sister's innocence. I read this in one sitting—compelling is not a strong enough adjective for this thrilling novel!"

—Mary Lee Delafield, Warwick's, La Jolla, CA



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The Elephant of Belfast: A Novel

By S. Kirk Walsh

"*The Elephant of Belfast* is a gem of historical fiction involving a young female zookeeper and an elephant during the Belfast bombings in 1941. The beautiful writing weaves an intricate balance between themes of loss, identity, and resilience during a difficult time. A wonderful book for those who need an element of surprise and who believe the love between animals and humans can make us whole."

—Kathy Detwiler, Buttonwood Books and Toys, Cohasset, MA



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APRIL '21

When the Stars Go Dark: A Novel

By Paula McLain

"No matter what the genre, McLain is a masterful storyteller. Her protagonist in this latest novel is one of the most authentic and powerful characters I have ever experienced. Anna Hart, a missing persons detective, shares not only her knowledge as an expert on missing children but she lays bare her own personal demons as she struggles to find a teen who has disappeared. I was captivated from page one and couldn't stop until I finished this intense and provocative story. Absolutely mesmerizing!"

—Stephanie Crowe, Page and Palette, Fairhope, AL



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APRIL '21

Finding Freedom: A Cook's Story; Remaking a Life from Scratch

By Erin French

"A memoir that grabs you from the beginning and immediately has you rooting hard for a scrappy, young, genius chef-to-be as she overcomes some pretty serious challenges along the way to owning one of the most sought-out restaurants in New England."

—Michael Herrmann, Gibson's Bookstore, Concord, NH



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APRIL '21

Astrid Sees All: A Novel

By Natalie Standiford

"*Astrid Sees All* is the novel for everyone who has ever moved to a new city to reinvent themselves—and hit some bumps along the way. In a love letter to the East Village of Manhattan, the neighborhood's grit, glamor, and romance feels palpable. The reader never stops rooting for these complex and compelling characters, despite their many missteps. What I wouldn't give to party with Phoebe and her friends for a night at Plutonium!"

—Erin Neary, Book Club, New York, NY



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APRIL '21

The Lost Village: A Novel

By Camilla Sten, Alexandra Fleming (Transl.)

"Hearing this book described as a cross between *The Blair Witch Project* and *Midsommar* meant I could not grab it fast enough. This chilling novel, set in a remote village in Sweden, tells the story of a scrappy documentary film crew trying to find out why the entire town disappeared many years ago. The camp they set up in the town square is immediately beset with mysterious happenings that become less and less harmless. Tension mounts as they explore the mystery of where the residents of Silvertjarn went and wonder if they will meet the same fate."

—Andrea Richardson, Fountain Bookstore, Richmond, VA



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APRIL '21

Red Island House: A Novel

By Andrea Lee

"Shay, an African American professor married to a brash Italian businessman, is seduced by the beauty and exoticism of Madagascar. The lavish Red Island House her husband builds (supposedly for her but more as a testament to his success) affords Shay a dream vacation home, but as she navigates her role as its mistress, she must also come to terms with the effects of colonialism on the people of this island nation, a people with whom she shares skin color and a legacy. Across 20 years, Lee weaves stories of those who arrogantly deem a paradise for their taking with those left grasping for what is rightfully theirs. This is a provocative tale of magic, power, and identity."

—Linda Sherman-Nurick, Cellar Door Books, Riverside, CA



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APRIL '21

What Comes After: A Novel

By JoAnne Tompkins

"Abandoned and homeless, a pregnant 16-year-old finds shelter in the home of a man who has recently lost his son and his faith. Achingly poignant, *What Comes After* by JoAnne Tompkins brims with raw emotions and conflicting feelings. A redemptive story of loss and love. Keep tissues nearby."

—Jane Simons, The Dog Eared Book, Palmyra, NY



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APRIL '21

A Little Devil in America: Notes in Praise of Black Performance

By Hanif Abdurraqib

"Using Black performance as a loose organizing principle, Abdurraqib has written a brilliant, expansive, insightful, and personal book. There is something of Montaigne's penchant for humility and brilliance in equal measure; of Susan Sontag's use of cultural criticism to understand history and the self; of Zadie Smith's verbal wizardry, playfulness, and wide-ranging curiosity; and Ross Gay's sensitivity, sense of beauty and poignancy, and, ultimately, joyfulness. Another gift from this magical writer!"

—Jeff Deutsch, Seminary Co-op Bookstore and 57th Street Books, Chicago, IL



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APRIL '21

The Good Sister: A Novel

By Sally Hepworth

"Having a title like *The Good Sister* might lead a reader to assume there is also a bad sister. Here we meet twin sisters Rose and Fern, whose mother was a sociopath. That upbringing affected Fern the most, so Rose cared for her sister during most of their childhood. Now adult women, Fern begins to come out of her shell and experience life on her own; she likes the freedom and the adventures. But Rose does not. When Fern makes a huge sacrifice to mollify Rose, the story grows more tense as it becomes clear who the good sister is and how bad the bad sister can be. Readers might change allegiances during the book, but no one will see the end coming! Highly recommended!"

—Nancy Simpson-Brice, Book Vault, Oskaloosa, IA



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APRIL '21

Every Vow You Break: A Novel

By Peter Swanson

"I was hooked on Peter Swanson with *Eight Perfect Murders*, but he is now one of my favorite authors with *Every Vow You Break*. This book was brilliant! I was enthralled from the beginning and could *not* put this book down to save my life. The twists and turns were not expected, and I was very happy with the ending. Bravo!"

—Patty Reed, Ferguson Books & More, Grand Forks, ND



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APRIL '21

Eternal: A Novel

By Lisa Scottoline

"*Eternal* is an exhilarating, sweeping novel from the beloved Lisa Scottoline. Fans of *The Nightingale* and *All the Light We Cannot See* will instantly fall in love with this beautiful WWII novel. With a dash of everything you want in your next favorite read plus everything we have ever loved about Scottoline's writing, *Eternal* will without a doubt be at the top of every must-read list for 2021."

—Amanda Zirn Hudson, Bethany Beach Books, Bethany Beach, DE



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APRIL '21

Permafrost: A Novel

By Eva Baltasar, Julia Sanches (Transl.)

"A lush and deeply incisive novel about what it means to love and to live as a woman, a novel that could only have been written by a poet as piercing as Eva Baltasar and translated by her perfect match, Julia Sanches."

—Emma Ramadan, Riffraff, Providence, RI



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