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# BOOK CLUB

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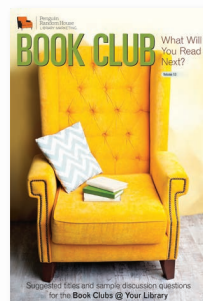
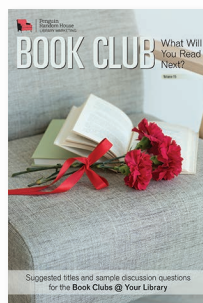
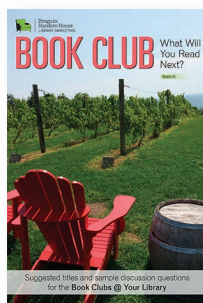
Volume 18



Suggested titles and sample discussion questions  
for the **Book Clubs @ Your Library**

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# Claire Adam

## Golden Child:

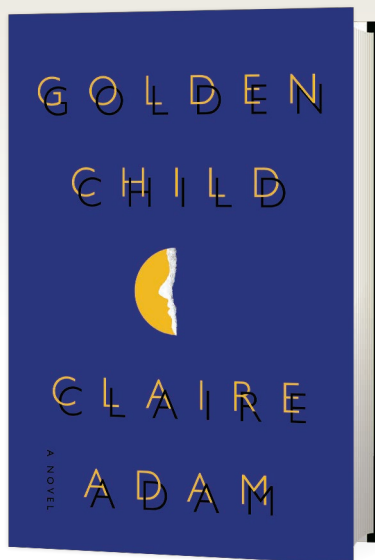
### A Novel

978-0-525-57299-2 | \$26.00/\$35.00C | Hogarth | HC

📞 978-0-525-57301-2 | 📍 AD: 978-1-9848-2814-9

#### READERS' ADVISORY:

From Sarah Jessica Parker's imprint, SJP for Hogarth: this deeply affecting debut novel set in Trinidad, follows the lives of a family as they navigate impossible choices about scarcity, loyalty, and love. Perfect for fans of Celeste Ng, Khaled Hosseini, and Cristina Henríquez.



#### ABOUT THE BOOK:

**R**ural Trinidad: a brick house on stilts surrounded by bush; a family, quietly surviving, just trying to live a decent life. Clyde, the father, works long, exhausting shifts at the petroleum plant in southern Trinidad; Joy, his wife, looks after the home. Their two sons, thirteen years old, wake early every morning to travel to the capital, Port of Spain, for school. They are twins but nothing alike: Paul has always been considered odd, while Peter is widely believed to be a genius, destined for greatness.

When Paul goes walking in the bush one afternoon and doesn't come home, Clyde is forced to go looking for him, this child who has caused him endless trouble already, and who he has never really understood. And as the hours turn to days, and Clyde begins to understand Paul's fate, his world shatters—leaving him faced with a decision no parent should ever have to make.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why is Clyde hesitant to accept help from people, even family? Do you think Uncle Vishnu is genuine in his desire to help? Do you trust him?
2. Why does Joy insist that the twins attend the same school?
3. What do you make of Father Kavanagh assuring Paul that he's normal, contrary to what others have said his whole life? Is he right? Is too much made of Paul's deficiencies? Do you think Father Kavanagh oversteps his boundaries in expressing this belief to Clyde?
4. Does Clyde make enough of an effort to bring Paul home safely? Because of his actions, or lack thereof, is he ultimately responsible for what happens to Paul?
5. Is it right to sacrifice the future (or life) of one child to ensure the future of another if the latter's is assuredly brighter? Would you make the same decision as Clyde?
6. What do you think are a parent's obligations to his or her children?

For more discussion questions visit: [CrownPublishing.com/Readers-Guides](https://www.CrownPublishing.com/Readers-Guides)



## Melanie Benjamin

# Mistress of the Ritz:

### A Novel

978-0-399-18224-2 | \$28.00/\$37.00C | Delacorte Press | HC

📞 978-0-399-18225-9 | 📻 AD: 978-0-525-49275-7

📀 CD: 978-0-525-49274-0

#### **READERS' ADVISORY:**

**A captivating novel based on the real-life American woman who secretly worked for the French Resistance during World War II—while playing hostess to the invading Germans at the iconic Hôtel Ritz in Paris—from the bestselling author of *The Swans of Fifth Avenue*.**

#### **ABOUT THE BOOK:**

**F**avored guests like Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Coco Chanel, and the Duke and Duchess of Windsor walk through the famous doors of the Ritz to be welcomed and pampered by Blanche Auzello and her husband, Claude, the hotel's director. The Auzellos allow the glamour and glitz to take their minds off their troubled marriage, and off the secrets that they keep from their guests—and each other.

Until June 1940, when the German army sweeps into Paris, setting up headquarters at the Ritz. Suddenly, with the likes of Hermann Goëring moving into suites once occupied by royalty, Blanche and Claude must navigate a terrifying new reality. One that entails even more secrets and lies. One that may destroy the tempestuous marriage between this beautiful, reckless American and her very proper Frenchman. For in order to survive—and strike a blow against their Nazi “guests”—Blanche and Claude must spin a web of deceit that ensnares everything and everyone they cherish.

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. What is your overall opinion of Blanche Auzello? Do you find her a sympathetic character? In what ways does she change during the course of the novel? And how is she affected by her imprisonment, in particular?
2. Did the Hôtel Ritz come alive for you? Did it seem as if the hotel itself was a major character in the book? If so, why? How does reading a book set in one specific location compare to reading a book that uses multiple settings? How does this enhance or distract from the characters and their stories?
3. How do you feel about the way Claude served the German officers at the Ritz during the war, doing his best to please them. Do you think he could or should have treated them differently?
4. Why do you think the author wrote the novel in alternating chapters, from Claude's and Blanche's perspectives? What did she achieve with this structure that a standard third person narration would have lacked?

For more discussion questions visit: [PenguinRandomHouse.com](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com)

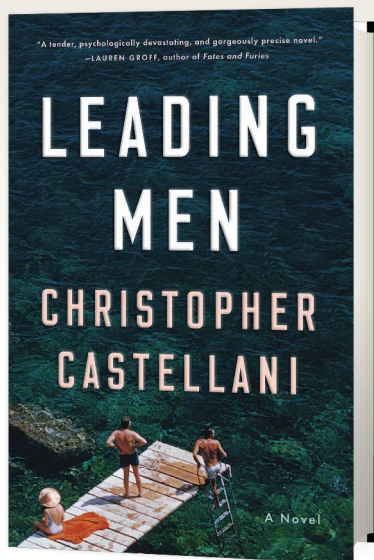
# Christopher Castellani

## Leading Men: A Novel

978-0-525-55905-4 | \$27.00/\$36.00C | Viking | HC  
978-0-525-55906-1 | AD: 978-1-9848-4251-0

### READERS' ADVISORY:

A glittering novel of desire and ambition that illuminates one of the great love stories of the twentieth century—Tennessee Williams and his longtime partner Frank Merlo. For readers of *The Master* and *The Paris Wife*.



### ABOUT THE BOOK:

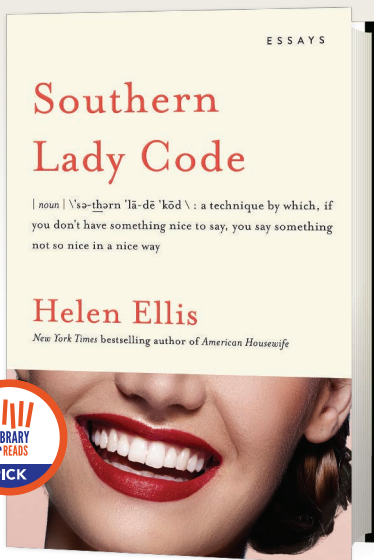
In July of 1953, at a glittering party thrown by Truman Capote in Portofino, Italy, Tennessee Williams and his longtime lover Frank Merlo meet Anja Blomgren, a young Swedish beauty and aspiring actress. Their encounter will go on to alter all of their lives.

Ten years later, Frank revisits the tempestuous events of that fateful summer from his deathbed in Manhattan, where he waits anxiously for Tennessee to visit him one final time. Anja, now legendary film icon Anja Bloom, lives as a recluse in the present-day U.S., until a young man connected to the events of 1953 lures her reluctantly back into the spotlight after he discovers she possesses the only surviving copy of Williams's final play.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. This novel is a fictionalized account based on the lives of real people, some of whom are very famous for their roles in elite literary circles. How did the author's characterizations of these people surprise you?
2. What is your opinion of Frank and Tenn's relationship, and why do you think it endured for so long? What do they bring to and take from each other?
3. *Leading Men* examines the trappings and pitfalls of living in close proximity to celebrity, ambition, and excess. How did your understanding of this kind of relationship evolve over the course of the novel?
4. The title of the book is *Leading Men*, but much of the novel hinges on Anja. How do you think Anja's experiences with her own set of leading men—Hovland; her husband, Pieter; Sandrino; her father—relate to the larger themes in the novel?
5. What did you make of *Call It Joy*, Tennessee's "lost" play? What did it reveal to you about the man who wrote it?

For more discussion questions visit: [PenguinRandomHouse.com](https://www.PenguinRandomHouse.com)



## Helen Ellis

# Southern Lady Code: Essays

978-0-385-54389-7 | \$22.00/\$29.00C | Doubleday | HC

📞 978-0-385-54390-3 | 📖 AD: 978-1-9848-4086-8

📖 CD: 978-1-9848-4085-1

### READERS' ADVISORY:

For fans of Sloane Crosley and Samantha Irby.

### ABOUT THE BOOK:

**H**elen Ellis has a mantra: “If you don’t have something nice to say, say something not-so-nice in a nice way.” Say “weathered” instead of “she looks like a cake left out in the rain.” Say “early-developed” instead of “brace face and B cups.” And for the love of Coke Salad, always say “Sorry you saw something that offended you” instead of “Get that stick out of your butt, Miss Prissy Pants.” In these twenty-three raucous essays Ellis transforms herself into a dominatrix Donna Reed to save her marriage, inadvertently steals a \$795 Burberry trench coat, witnesses a man fake his own death at a party, avoids a neck lift, and finds a black-tie gown that gives her the confidence of a drag queen. While she may have left her home in Alabama, married a New Yorker, forgotten how to drive, and abandoned the puffy headbands of her youth, Helen Ellis is clinging to her Southern accent like mayonnaise to white bread, and offering readers a hilarious, completely singular view on womanhood for both sides of the Mason-Dixon.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What was your favorite “Southern Lady Code” term in the book? What phrases were the most familiar or unfamiliar to you?
2. The author’s Southern mother is a prominent character in these essays. Is there a valuable piece of motherly advice you have followed throughout your life? Are there any “words of wisdom” that you’ve chosen to ignore?
3. Do you have a go-to dinner party story like “The Topeka Three-Way”?
4. Helen Ellis is an Alabama native who now lives on Manhattan’s Upper East Side. How did you see this culture clash manifest itself in the book? Have you ever lived somewhere that was culturally different from the place you grew up?
5. The author says that there are two kinds of people: Halloween People and Christmas People. Which one are you, and why?

For more discussion questions visit: [KnopfDoubleday.com/Reading-Group-Center](https://www.knopfdoubleday.com/reading-group-center)

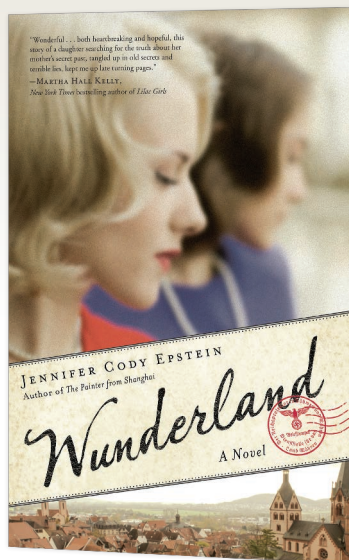
# Jennifer Cody Epstein Wunderland: A Novel

978-0-525-57690-7 | \$27.00/\$36.00C | Crown | HC

📖 978-0-525-57692-1 | 📄 AD: 978-1-9848-4494-1

## READERS' ADVISORY:

For readers of *Women in the Castle*, *Lilac Girls*, and *We Were the Lucky Ones*, an intimate portrait of a friendship severed by history, and a sweeping saga of wartime, motherhood, and legacy by an award-winning novelist.



## ABOUT THE BOOK:

**E**ast Village, 1989. Things had never been easy between Ava Fisher and her estranged mother Ilse. Too many questions hovered between them: Who was Ava's father? Where had Ilse been during the war? Why had she left her only child in a German orphanage during the war's final months? But now Ilse's ashes have arrived from Germany, and with them, a trove of unsent letters addressed to someone else unknown to Ava: Renate Bauer, a childhood friend. As her mother's letters unfurl a dark past, Ava spirals deep into the shocking history of a woman she never truly knew.

Berlin, 1933. As the Nazi party tightens its grip on the city, Ilse and Renate find their friendship under siege—and Ilse's increasing involvement in the Hitler Youth movement leaves them on opposing sides of the gathering storm. Then the Nuremberg Laws force Renate to confront a long-buried past, and a catastrophic betrayal is set in motion.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why does the author choose to write in multiple time periods? Would the story have been different had it been written chronologically?
2. Renate's sense of identity is turned upside down at a pivotal point in her adolescence. What impact do you think this had on Renate's life? Can you relate to her experience?
3. As the novel progresses, we see Ilse remain silent as drastic changes take place in her city, many of which ultimately impact Renate. Why do you think Ilse doesn't speak up?
4. Did you find Ilse to be a sympathetic character? When did you begin to understand her point of view, or when did you lose touch with her?
5. *Wunderland* opens with an epigraph from *Alice in Wonderland* and Renate returns to this children's story several times in the novel. What is the significance of this to the novel and to Renate in particular?

For more discussion questions visit: [CrownPublishing.com/Readers-Guides](https://www.crownpublishing.com/readers-guides)



## Juliet Escoria

# Juliet the Maniac:

## A Novel

978-1-61219-759-3 | \$16.99/\$21.99C | Melville House | TR

📞 978-1-61219-760-9

### READERS' ADVISORY:

"Beautiful . . . fresh and forthright."

—*Library Journal*

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### ABOUT THE BOOK:

**F**or readers of *A Million Little Pieces* and *Drinking: A Love Story*, a shockingly dark, funny, and heartbreaking portrait of a young teenager's clash with mental illness and her battle toward understanding and recovery.

Ambitious, talented 14-year-old honors student Juliet is poised for success at her Southern California high school. However, she soon finds herself on an increasingly frightening spiral of drug use, self-harm, and mental illness that lands her in a remote therapeutic boarding school, where she must ultimately find the inner strength and determination to survive.

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### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Juliet's voice is unrelenting, raw, and honest. How does the voice drive the narrative? Does her voice change over the course of the novel?
2. Despite the internal issues regarding the workings of Redwood Trail, do you think it genuinely aided the residents in recovery? Why? If not, do you think it helped them in other ways?
3. If you were Juliet's parents, what would you have done? Do you think she needed to be sent to an institution?
4. Discuss effect of peer pressure on Juliet and other characters in the novel, and the harmful or helpful role(s) it played in their daily lives and in their recoveries.
5. Do you think Juliet's group of friends (especially Holly) before she left for Redwood Trail were good for her? If yes, how so?
6. How do you feel about the way the novel portrays mental illness? Were there any parts of Juliet's descriptions of her illness that particularly stood out to you?

For more discussion questions visit: [TinyUrl.com/JulietTheManiac](http://TinyUrl.com/JulietTheManiac)

# Jessica Francis Kane

## Rules for Visiting:

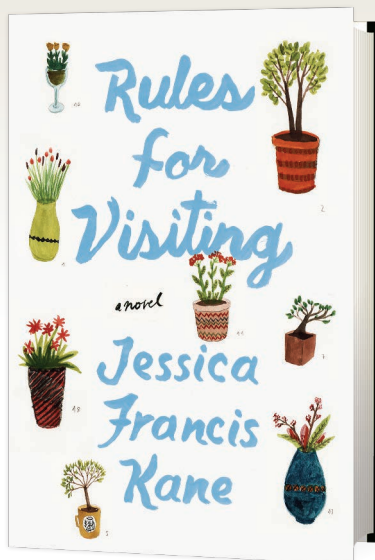
### A Novel

978-0-525-55922-1 | \$26.00/\$35.00C | Penguin Press | HC

📞 978-0-525-55923-8 | 📍 AD: 978-1-9848-8887-7

#### READERS' ADVISORY:

A beautifully observed and deeply funny novel of May Attaway, a university gardener who sets out on an odyssey to reconnect with four old friends over the course of a year. For fans of Maria Semple and Elizabeth Strout.



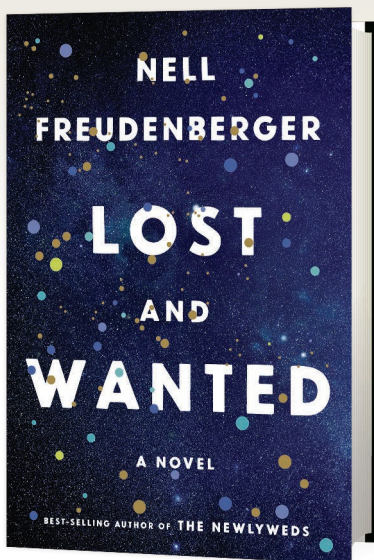
#### ABOUT THE BOOK:

At forty, May Attaway is more at home with plants than people. Over the years, she's turned inward, finding pleasure in language, her work as a gardener, and keeping her neighbors at arm's length while keenly observing them. But when she is unexpectedly granted some leave from her job, May is inspired to reconnect with four once close friends. She knows they will never have a proper reunion, so she goes, one-by-one, to each of them. A student of the classics, May considers her journey a female *Odyssey*. What might the world have had if, instead of waiting, Penelope had set out on an adventure of her own?

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Do you believe in the concept of a best friend? If so, why? If not, when did that notion lose its meaning for you?
2. May taps into her truest self through gardening, nurturing the care that she brings on her visits. What is the hobby or calling where you find that quality in yourself? Do we attribute enough value to the things that make us into better people?
3. Social media plays an important role in the novel—Amber's story gives May the inspiration for her journey, Lindy filters her life through Facebook and Instagram, and #fortnightfriends goes viral. How have digital platforms had an impact on your friendships?
4. From the Virginia Woolf epigram to Emerson's "Happy is the house that shelters a friend," the book draws inspiration from centuries of writing on friendship and visiting. Are there aphorisms or essays dear to you on these topics?
5. Rose describes May as "[p]rickly, but in a soft, long-needed way." By one definition, the thrill of true friendship is having someone who sees the virtue in your unevenness. How do your friends describe you? What does it take to see past your defenses?

For more discussion questions visit: [PenguinRandomHouse.com](https://www.PenguinRandomHouse.com)



## Nell Freudenberger **Lost and Wanted:** A Novel

978-0-385-35268-0 | \$26.95/\$35.95C | Knopf | HC  
📞 978-0-385-35269-7 | 📍 AD: 978-1-9848-4010-3  
📖 LP: 978-1-9848-8328-5

### **READERS' ADVISORY:**

For readers of Meg Wolitzer, Emma Straub,  
Zadie Smith, and Curtis Sittenfeld.

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### ABOUT THE BOOK:

**H**elen Clapp's breakthrough work on five-dimensional spacetime landed her a tenured professorship at MIT; her popular books explain physics in plain terms. Helen disdains notions of the supernatural in favor of rational thought and proven ideas. So it's perhaps especially vexing for her when, on an otherwise unremarkable Wednesday in June, she gets a phone call from a friend who has just died.

That friend was Charlotte Boyce, Helen's roommate at Harvard. The two women had once confided in each other about everything, but as the years passed, Charlie became more elusive, and her calls came less and less often. And now she's permanently, tragically gone.

As Helen is drawn back into Charlie's orbit, and also into the web of feelings she once had for Neel Jonnal—a former college classmate now an acclaimed physicist on the verge of a Nobel Prize-winning discovery—she is forced to question the laws of the universe that had always steadied her mind and heart.

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### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What was your impression of Helen at the beginning of the novel as compared to the end? Even with her rare intellectual abilities, and her scientific ways of thinking, does she discover new things to learn, and new parts of herself, in response to Charlie's death?
2. What do you think brought Charlie and Helen together as friends in the first place? How did they learn to speak the same language, despite their different interests and backgrounds? And does this change, when Charlie passes away?
3. Compare the children's understanding of death and higher powers with that of the adults in the novel. Which kind of faith proves more accurate, and how might you see the children's perspective influencing the adults', and vice versa?

For more discussion questions visit: [KnopfDoubleday.com/Reading-Group-Center](https://www.knopfdoubleday.com/Reading-Group-Center)

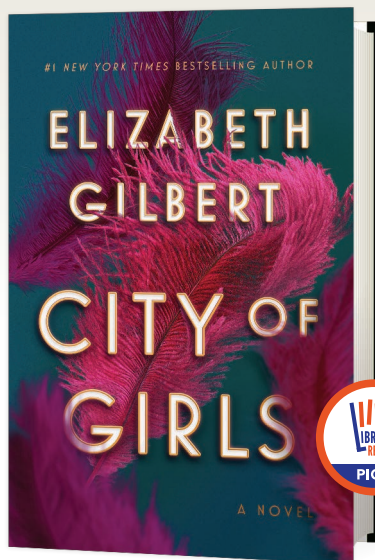
# Elizabeth Gilbert

## City of Girls: A Novel

978-1-59463-473-4 | \$28.00/\$37.00C | Riverhead | HC  
📞 978-0-698-40832-6 | 📖 AD: 978-1-9848-8849-5  
📻 CD: 978-1-9848-8848-8 | 📧 LP: 978-0-593-10436-1

### READERS' ADVISORY:

From the # 1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *Eat, Pray, Love*, a delicious novel of glamour, sex, and adventure, about a young woman discovering that you don't have to be a good girl to be a good person.



### ABOUT THE BOOK:

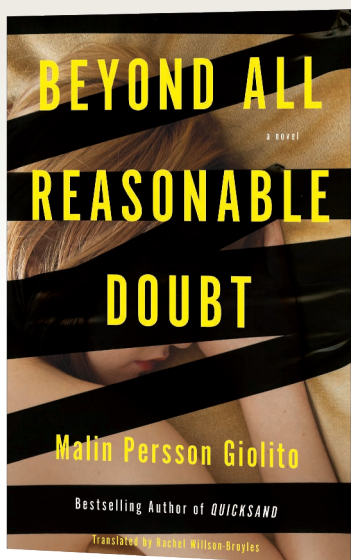
In 1940, nineteen-year-old Vivian Morris has just been kicked out of Vassar College, owing to her lackluster freshman-year performance. Her affluent parents send her to Manhattan to live with her Aunt Peg, who owns a flamboyant, crumbling midtown theater called the Lily Playhouse. There Vivian is introduced to an entire cosmos of unconventional and charismatic characters. But when Vivian makes a personal mistake that results in professional scandal, it turns her new world upside down. Ultimately, though, it leads her to a new understanding of the kind of life she craves—and the kind of freedom it takes to pursue it. It will also lead to the love of her life, a love that stands out from all the rest.

Now eighty-nine years old and telling her story at last, Vivian recalls how the events of those years altered the course of her life—and the gusto and autonomy with which she approached it.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Elizabeth Gilbert chooses to tell Vivian's story in the form of a letter Vivian is writing to a younger woman, Angela. How do you think the story benefits from being told in the voice of eighty-nine-year-old Vivian looking back on her life? What did you learn from this vantage? How did it influence your reading experience?
2. In 1940, nineteen-year-old Vivian's introduction to life in New York City and within the Lily Playhouse is a shock after her world at Vassar and with her family outside of the city. What is so different about it all? What elements of this new city and world shape her the most, do you think? And how might they have struck her differently if she'd come from a different kind of family and class background?
3. Consider the portrayal of Vivian's friendship with Celia Ray, the smoldering showgirl at the Lily Playhouse. How does it compare to her previous experiences with female friendship from school? How much does this friendship influence what happens next for Vivian?

For more discussion questions visit: [PenguinRandomHouse.com](https://www.PenguinRandomHouse.com)



Malin Persson Giolito;  
Translated by  
Rachel Willson-Broyles  
**Beyond All  
Reasonable Doubt:**  
A Novel

978-1-59051-919-6 | \$16.99/\$22.99C | Other Press | TR  
📞 978-1-59051-920-2 | 📄 AD: 978-0-593-14973-7

**READERS' ADVISORY:**  
For readers of *Quicksand* and courtroom dramas,  
and fans of Dennis Lehane.

## ABOUT THE BOOK:

**F**rom the award-winning author of *Quicksand*, a gripping legal thriller that follows one woman's conflicted efforts to overturn what may be a wrongful conviction.

I'm giving you a chance to achieve every lawyer's dream, said Sophia Weber's old professor. Freeing an innocent man. Thirteen years ago, a fifteen-year-old girl was murdered. Doctor Stig Ahlin was sentenced to life in prison. But no one has forgotten the brutal crime. Ahlin is known as one of the most ruthless criminals.

When Sophia Weber discovers critical flaws in the murder investigation, she decides to help Ahlin. But Sophia's doing her utmost to get her client exonerated arouses many people's disgust. And the more she learns, the more difficult her job becomes. What kind of man is her client really? What has he done? And will she ever know the truth?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. In a criminal case, the jury must reach a verdict that determines guilt or innocence "beyond a reasonable doubt." In legal terms, this is sometimes described as "a moral certainty." Does Sophia Weber reach a "moral certainty" regarding Stig Ahlin's guilt or innocence?
2. What role does the media coverage of Stig Ahlin's case play in shaping public perception of his guilt or innocence? Does this affect Sophia's objectivity in choosing whether to represent him? How does it impact her methods in handling the case?
3. Throughout the novel, we follow not only Sophia's professional life as a lawyer, but also her personal life and relationships. How do these two spheres of Sophia's life influence each other? The practice of law strives for neutrality, removed from the personal; do you think that neutrality is ever possible?
4. Discuss Sophia's relationship with her grandfather. How does this affect her relationships with other men in her life?

For more discussion questions visit: [TinyUrl.com/BeyondAllReasonableDoubt](https://TinyUrl.com/BeyondAllReasonableDoubt)

Jane Green  
**The Friends  
We Keep:**  
A Novel

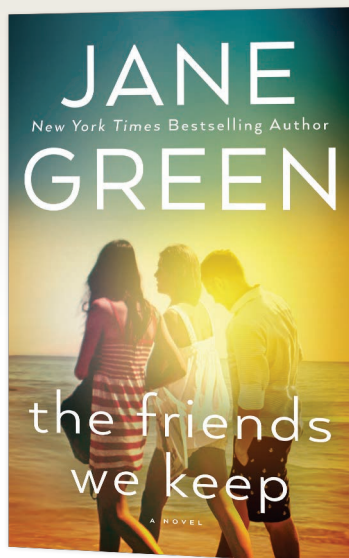
978-0-399-58334-6 | \$26.00/\$35.00C | Berkley | HC

📖 978-0-399-58335-3 | 📻 AD: 978-0-7352-8568-2

🎧 CD: 978-0-7352-8567-5

**READERS' ADVISORY:**

*The Friends We Keep* is the warm and wise new novel from Jane Green, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Sunshine Sisters* and *The Beach House*.



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**ABOUT THE BOOK:**

**E**wie, Maggie, and Topher have known each other since university. Their friendship was something they swore would last forever. Now years have passed, the friends have drifted apart, and none of them ever found the lives they wanted. Evwie starved herself to become a supermodel but derailed her career by sleeping with a married man. Maggie married Ben, the boy she fell in love with at university, never imagining the heartbreak his drinking would cause. Topher became a successful actor but the shame of a childhood secret shut him off from real intimacy.

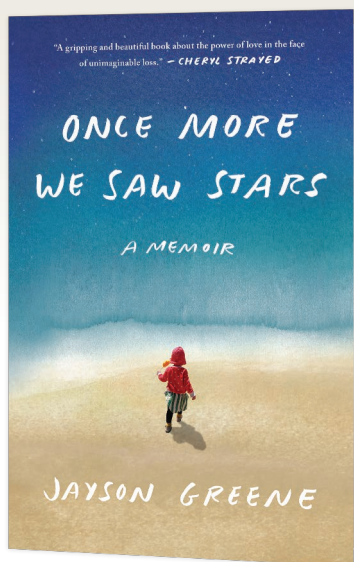
By their thirtieth reunion, these old friends have lost touch with each other and with the people they dreamed of becoming. Together again, they have a second chance at happiness . . . until a dark secret is revealed that changes everything.

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**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. The novel opens with Ben's point of view, and we see that he wants to change for the better. Do you think there could have been redemption for him, or was it far too late at that point?
2. Evwie commits an act of betrayal against Maggie, but Maggie is able to forgive her in the end. Do you think you could forgive Evwie? Why do you think Maggie can?
3. Have you ever lost touch with your old and close friends and then seen them again? What did that feel like? How did time change—or not change—your relationships?
4. If you were in Jack's position, how do you think you'd feel after finding out the truth? Would you have behaved the way Jack did? Why and why not?
5. Topher, Maggie, and Evwie decide to move in together after the ordeals they've all endured. As they continue to live together, what do you think the dynamic will be like?

For more discussion questions visit: [PenguinRandomHouse.com](https://www.PenguinRandomHouse.com)



## Jayson Greene

# Once More We Saw Stars:

## A Memoir

978-1-5247-3353-7 | \$25.00/\$34.00C | Knopf | HC  
● 978-1-5247-3354-4 | ♻ AD: 978-1-9848-4028-8  
♻ CD: 978-1-9848-4027-1 | ♻ LP: 978-1-9848-8620-0

### READERS' ADVISORY:

For readers of *When Breath Becomes Air*, *The Year of Magical Thinking*, and *The Rules Do Not Apply*.

### ABOUT THE BOOK:

As the book opens: two-year-old Greta Greene is sitting with her grandmother on a park bench on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. A brick crumbles from a window sill overhead, striking her unconscious, and she is immediately rushed to the hospital. But although it begins with this event and with the anguish Jayson and his wife, Stacy, confront in the wake of their daughter's trauma and the hours leading up to her death, *Once More We Saw Stars* quickly becomes a narrative that is as much about hope and healing as it is about grief and loss. Jayson recognizes, even in the midst of his ordeal, that there will be a life for him beyond it—that if only he can continue moving forward, from one moment to the next, he will survive what seems unsurvivable. With raw honesty, deep emotion, and exquisite tenderness, he captures both the fragility of life and absoluteness of death, and most important of all, the unconquerable power of love. This is an unforgettable memoir of courage and transformation—and a book that will change the way you look at the world.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Jayson and Stacy used the weekend seminar to release some of their feelings of anger. Who or what are you angry about? How do you release it?
2. Jayson asks, "What did it mean to honor Greta?" Have you thought about what it means to honor your loved one who has died?
3. Jayson tells of his success rate in finding safe places to scream in crowded New York City. Where are your safe places? What do you do there? Cry? Scream?
4. If you have children, how will you teach them to live in this uncertain world? Can you teach them not to live in fear of loss? Have you been able to let go of the fear and move forward?
5. What is your takeaway from the book you'd like to share with someone else? With whom would you share it and why?

Discussion guide by David Kessler, grief specialist and author of *Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief*. For more resources on loss, please visit [www.grief.com](http://www.grief.com).

# Lisa Grunwald

## Time After Time: A Novel

978-0-8129-9343-1 | \$27.00/\$36.00C | Random House | HC

📞 978-0-679-64548-1 | 📍 AD: 978-0-593-10305-0

### READERS' ADVISORY:

**A magical love story, inspired by the legend of a woman who vanished from Grand Central Terminal, sweeps readers from the 1920s to World War II, in the spirit of *The Time Traveler's Wife* and *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*.**



### ABOUT THE BOOK:

**O**n a clear December morning in 1937, at the famous gold clock in Grand Central Terminal, Joe Reynolds, a hardworking railroad man from Queens, meets a vibrant young woman who seems mysteriously out of place. Nora Lansing is a Manhattan socialite whose flapper clothing and talk of the Roaring Twenties don't seem to match the bleak mood of Depression-era New York. Captivated by Nora, Joe despairs when he tries to walk her home and she disappears.

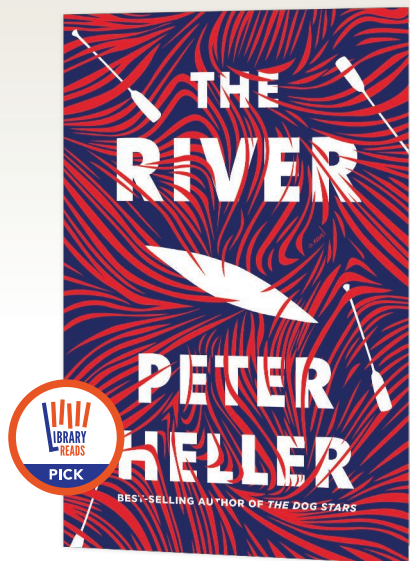
Nora, a fiercely independent aspiring artist, is shocked to find she's somehow been trapped in the terminal, governed by rules she cannot fathom. It isn't until she meets Joe that she begins to understand the effect that time is having on her.

As thousands of visitors pass under the famous celestial blue ceiling, Joe and Nora create infinite love in a finite space. But when the construction of another landmark threatens their future, Nora and Joe are forced to test the limits of freedom and love.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Nora and Joe test the rules that govern Nora's appearances and disappearances, questioning whether they are linked to time or distance. Which would you rather be: able to go anywhere for a limited amount of time, or confined to a single place with the chance of living forever?
2. Discuss the ways in which Joe's genuine concern for Nora's safety and wellbeing can blur into possessiveness and attempts at control. Where do you draw the boundary?
3. What does art offer Nora that Joe can't?
4. Nora makes a controversial decision at the end of the novel. What would you have done if you were in her shoes? Do you agree with what she did?

For more discussion questions visit: [PenguinRandomHouse.com](https://www.PenguinRandomHouse.com)



## Peter Heller

# The River: A Novel

978-0-525-52187-7 | \$25.95/\$34.95C | Knopf | HC  
📞 978-0-525-52188-4 | ♿ AD: 978-1-9848-3994-7  
📻 CD: 978-1-9848-3993-0 | ♿ LP: 978-1-9848-8326-1

### READERS' ADVISORY:

For readers of *My Absolute Darling*, *The Revenant*, and *Into the Wild*, from the bestselling author of *The Dog Stars*.

### ABOUT THE BOOK:

Wynn and Jack have been best friends since freshman orientation, bonded by their shared love of mountains, books, and fishing. Wynn is a gentle giant, a Vermont kid never happier than when his feet are in the water. Jack is more rugged, raised on a ranch in Colorado where sleeping under the stars and cooking on a fire came as naturally to him as breathing. When they decide to canoe the Maskwa River in northern Canada, they anticipate long days of leisurely paddling and picking blueberries, and nights of stargazing and reading paperback Westerns. But a wildfire making its way across the forest adds unexpected urgency to the journey. When they hear a man and woman arguing on the fog-shrouded riverbank and decide to warn them about the fire, their search for the pair turns up nothing and no one. But: The next day a man appears on the river, paddling alone. Is this the man they heard? And, if he is, where is the woman?

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

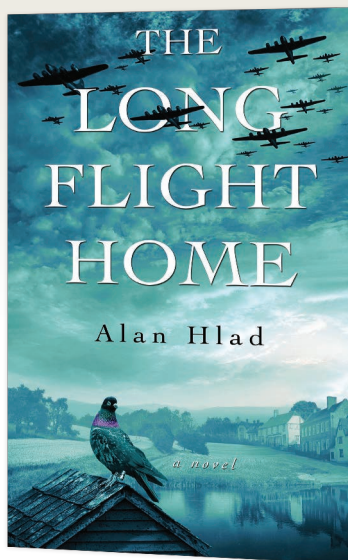
1. Explore the early days of Jack and Wynn's friendship. What brought them together? What does each young man admire about the other?
2. Examine Jack's mother's death. How old was he when she died, and how does he understand his own role in her death? To what extent has he processed his grief? How does our knowledge of this part of Jack's history deepen our understanding of his character?
3. Consider Jack and Wynn's decision to go back up the river to look for Maia. Whose initial idea is it, and why is the choice ultimately made in spite of what the two men know about the threat of the fire?
4. Examine the role that nature plays in the novel. What is it about nature that is so appealing to both Jack and Wynn? Does their understanding of their place in nature change as the novel progresses?
5. Discuss the theme of luck as it is depicted in the novel. Would you characterize Jack and Wynn as lucky? Why or why not?

For more discussion questions visit: [KnopfDoubleday.com/Reading-Group-Center](https://www.knopfdoubleday.com/Reading-Group-Center)

Alan Hlad  
**The Long  
Flight Home**

978-1-4967-2167-9 | \$26.00/\$29.95C | A John Scognamiglio Book | HC  
978-1-4967-2167-9

**READERS' ADVISORY:**  
"Tense, heartwarming and life affirming,  
*The Long Flight Home* gives a fresh slant  
on heroism in WWII." —Rhys Bowen,  
*New York Times* bestselling author



### ABOUT THE BOOK:

Set among the London Blitz of World War II, when British Services enlisted the aid of over 200,000 homing pigeons to carry messages across enemy lines, *The Long Flight Home* is a bittersweet tale of courage, soulmates and sacrifice.

It's the story of an almost-love affair between two people brought together, and then driven apart by war: Susan, a young woman who trains homing pigeons in England; and Ollie, a crop-duster from Maine, who disregards US neutrality and travels to Britain in a quest to join the Royal Air Force. With compassionate insight, beautiful detail and meticulous research, Alan Hlad illuminates mostly-forgotten corners of WWII history, conjuring an inspiring and deeply moving wartime experience from a time when hope truly was the thing with feathers.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What are Susan's fears during the Blitz?
2. Why does she believe her pigeons can help save Britain?
3. What did you learn about the German bombing offensive against Britain in 1940 and 1941?
4. If Ollie's parents had not been killed in a car accident, do you think he would have embarked on a quest to join the fight? How does his encounter with an air vice marshal for the Royal Canadian Air Force, as well as being robbed in a train station, influence his decision to defer college and travel to Britain?
5. Describe Susan. What kind of woman is she? When Susan attends the Source Columba meeting in London, she is the only woman in the group. Describe Susan's courage, compared to other members of the National Pigeon Service, to confront a senior military officer on the mission's errors. What is meant by her affirmation, be an egg? Describe her relationship with her grandfather, Bertie. What role does Bertie play in shaping Susan's values and beliefs?

For more discussion questions visit: [TinyUrl.com/AlanHlad](http://TinyUrl.com/AlanHlad)



## Helen Hoang

# The Bride Test

978-0-451-49082-7 | \$15.00/\$20.00C | Berkley Jove | TR  
978-0-451-49083-4

### READERS' ADVISORY:

From the critically acclaimed author of *The Kiss Quotient* comes a romantic novel about love that crosses international borders and all boundaries of the heart. For readers of *Crazy Rich Asians* and *The Rosie Project*.

### ABOUT THE BOOK:

**K**hai Diep has no feelings. He thinks he's defective. His family knows better—that his autism means he just processes emotions differently. When he steadfastly avoids relationships, his mother takes matters into her own hands and returns to Vietnam to find him the perfect bride.

As a mixed-race girl living in the slums of Ho Chi Minh City, Esme Tran has always felt out of place. When the opportunity arises to come to America and meet a potential husband, she can't turn it down, thinking this could be the break her family needs. Seducing Khai, however, doesn't go as planned. Esme's lessons in love seem to be working, but only on herself. She's hopelessly smitten with a man who's convinced he can never return her affection.

With Esme's time in the United States dwindling, Khai is forced to understand he's been wrong all along. And there's more than one way to love.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Khai grew up in America, while My/Esme was born and raised in a small village in Vietnam. What cultural differences can you see and how do you think this affects who they are now?
2. In the beginning of the book, Khai's mother is in Vietnam to search for a wife for Khai. Do you think it's wrong of his mother to meddle and interfere in his personal life, or is this justified as an act of love?
3. Throughout the book, Khai is adamant about not having feelings, thus creating a chasm between him and everyone else. When do you see a breakthrough in this way of thinking? How does My/Esme help with this?
4. As adamant as Khai is about not loving My/Esme, he does things for her that show how much he does care about her, such as carrying her and helping to find her father. What other ways does he show he loves her?
5. At the end of the book, Khai tells My/Esme he loves her in Vietnamese. What is the significance of this?

For more discussion questions visit: [PenguinRandomHouse.com](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com)

# Bruce Holsinger

## The Gifted School:

### A Novel

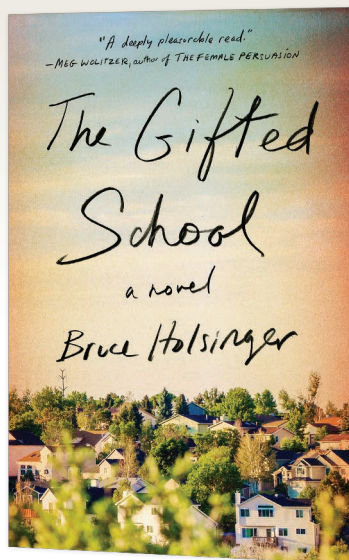
978-0-525-53496-9 | \$26.00/\$35.00C | Riverhead | HC

📞 978-0-525-53498-3 | 📻 AD: 978-1-9848-8851-8

📱 LP: 978-0-593-10437-8

#### READERS' ADVISORY:

For fans of *Big Little Lies*, a compulsively readable novel about a group of friends and parents that is nearly destroyed by their own competitiveness when an exclusive school for gifted children opens in the community.



#### ABOUT THE BOOK:

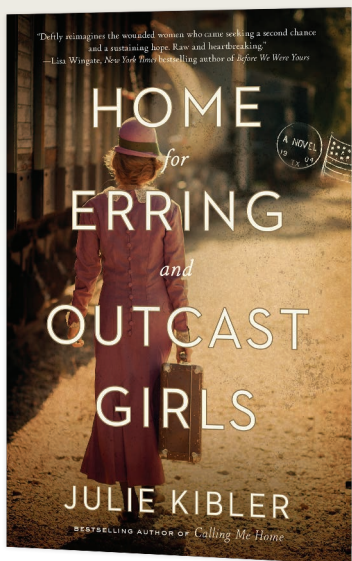
A keenly entertaining novel that observes the drama within a community of friends and parents as good intentions and high ambitions collide in a pile-up with long-held secrets and lies. Seen through the lens of four families who've been a part of one another's lives since their kids were born over a decade ago, the story reveals not only the lengths that some adults are willing to go to get ahead, but the effect on the group's children, sibling relationships, marriages, and careers, as simmering resentments come to a boil and long-buried, explosive secrets surface and detonate.

It's a humorous, keenly observed, timely take on ambitious parents, willful kids, and the pursuit of prestige, no matter the cost.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Do you understand the general anxieties of this community of parents? Why do they feel so competitive about this school, given the fact that their children are already doing well in the previously available institutions? If you do consider the parents' motivations and intentions justified, do you also understand the behaviors that follow? What would you have done in a similar situation?
2. How does the novel make you think about intelligence vs. giftedness; talent vs. skill; ambition vs. competition; privilege vs. prestige? What role does privilege play in this story? What about ambition? Insecurity? How do the ambitions of some of the characters relate to prestige?
3. Consider the supportive roles that neighboring families can play in the raising of children within a shared community. Consider the good things that these families have contributed to one another. Now consider the secrets that many of the characters kept and the hurtful behaviors of which they were guilty. In the end, what do you think of these friendships? Would they have continued happily, indefinitely, if Crystal Academy hadn't come along?

For more discussion questions visit: [PenguinRandomHouse.com](https://www.PenguinRandomHouse.com)



## Julie Kibler

# Home for Erring and Outcast Girls:

### A Novel

978-0-451-49933-2 | \$27.00/\$36.00C | Crown | HC  
📞 978-0-451-49935-6 | 📄 AD: 978-0-525-63563-5

#### **READERS' ADVISORY:**

**An emotionally raw and resonant story of love, loss, and the enduring power of friendship for readers of Lisa Wingate, Christina Baker Kline, and Sara Gruen.**

#### **ABOUT THE BOOK:**

**I**n turn-of-the-20th century Texas, the Berachah Home for the Redemption and Protection of Erring Girls is an unprecedented beacon of hope for young women consigned to the dangerous poverty of the streets by birth, circumstance, or personal tragedy. Built in 1903 on the dusty outskirts of Arlington, a remote dot between Dallas and Fort Worth's red-light districts, the progressive home bucks public opinion by offering faith, training, and rehabilitation to prostitutes, addicts, unwed mothers, and "ruined" girls without forcibly separating mothers from children. When Lizzie Bates and Mattie McBride meet there—one sick and abused, but desperately clinging to her young daughter, the other jilted by the beau who fathered her ailing son—they form a friendship that will see them through unbearable loss, heartbreak, difficult choices, and ultimately, diverging paths.

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Did any character in *Home for Erring and Outcast Girls* make a decision you felt was unfathomable or unforgivable?
2. Lizzie vows to keep her daughter safe at any cost. How do you think this affected Lizzie's relationships—especially with Docie as she matured? How does their relationship contrast with other mother-daughter type relationships in the novel, biological and not?
3. What themes of sisterhood and friendship appear throughout the novel? What examples of destructive female relationships appear?
4. Did you find Hallie to be a sympathetic character? Was there any point at which you began to understand her point of view, or any point at which you lost empathy for her?
5. At one point, Lizzie notes that "everyone might be worth saving, but not everyone can be saved." What does that mean to you? Do you think it's true?
6. What is the benefit of reading a fictionalized story about this time period?

For more discussion questions visit: [CrownPublishing.com/Readers-Guides](https://www.crownpublishing.com/readers-guides)

Binnie Kirshenbaum  
**Rabbits for Food:**  
A Novel

978-1-64129-053-1 | \$26.00/\$32.00C | Soho Press | HC  
📍 978-1-64129-053-1

**READERS' ADVISORY:**  
For readers who enjoy irreverent, funny,  
unsympathetic narrators; and fans of  
Rachel Kushner, Nora Ephron, and also  
Jami Attenberg's *The Middlesteins*.



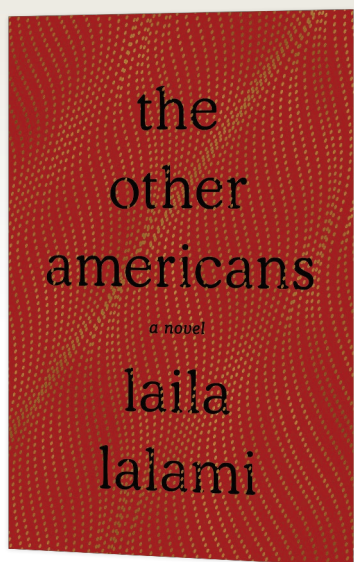
### ABOUT THE BOOK:

It's New Year's Eve, the holiday of forced fellowship, mandatory fun, and paper hats. While dining out with her husband and their friends, Kirshenbaum's protagonist—an acerbic, mordantly witty, and clinically depressed writer—fully unravels. Her breakdown lands her in the psych ward of a prestigious New York hospital, where she refuses all modes of recommended treatment. Instead, she passes the time chronicling the lives of her fellow “lunatics” and writing a novel about what brought her there. Her story is a hilarious and harrowing deep dive into the disordered mind of a woman who sees the world all too clearly.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. At one point, someone asks: “Why would they name you Bunny?” Bunny responds, “They raised rabbits. For food.” How does this encapsulate Bunny's relationship with her family? What do you think of the origin of Bunny's name—is she telling the truth?
2. Outwardly, Bunny's journey—through extreme episodes of depression to her eventual commitment to a psychiatric ward—is objectively bleak. Yet there's plenty of humor in the book. What is the relationship between pain and humor in *Rabbits for Food*?
3. Bunny is “off-putting” to other characters in the book, but also a compelling figure to the reader. How did you feel about Bunny's character? Did you enjoy spending time with her, so to speak?
4. *Rabbits for Food* is about depression, but it is also about loss and grief—in particular the death of Bunny's friend, Stella. How did Bunny's experiences with death shape her, if at all?
5. The narrator alternates between third person and first person POV. Which did you prefer? What does this narrative shift add to Bunny's story and our perception of her?
6. What role do Bunny's writing prompts play in the book, and how do they reflect her mental state? Similarly, how do the chapter headings (*The Shape of It*, *Ideation*, *The Tip of a Cigarette*, to name a few) come into play?

For more discussion questions visit: [TinyUrl.com/RabbitsForFood](https://TinyUrl.com/RabbitsForFood)



## Laila Lalami

# The Other Americans:

### A Novel

978-1-5247-4714-5 | \$25.95/\$34.95C | Pantheon | HC  
📞 978-1-5247-4715-2 | 📄 AD: 978-1-9848-4654-9

#### **READERS' ADVISORY:**

For readers of *Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid and *Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng.

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#### **ABOUT THE BOOK:**

**L**ate one spring night, Driss Guerraoui, a Moroccan immigrant living in California, is walking across a darkened intersection when he is killed by a speeding car. The repercussions of his death bring together a diverse cast of characters: Guerraoui's daughter Nora, a jazz composer who returns to the small town in the Mojave she thought she'd left for good; his widow, Maryam, who still pines after her life in the old country; Éfraín, an undocumented witness whose fear of deportation prevents him from coming forward; Jeremy, an old friend of Nora's and an Iraq War veteran; Coleman, a detective who is slowly discovering her son's secrets; Anderson, a neighbor trying to reconnect with his family; and the murdered man himself.

As the characters—deeply divided by race, religion, and class—tell their stories, connections among them emerge, even as Driss's family confronts its secrets, a town faces its hypocrisies, and love, messy and unpredictable, is born.

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#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. *The Other Americans* explores themes of immigration, community, and identity. Discuss each of these topics with relation to *The Other Americans*. How is it a novel of immigration? And community? How do these connect to identity?
2. How is *The Other Americans* a novel about storytelling and the importance of stories, everyone's stories? And the importance of telling and listening to stories?
3. Why do you think Lalami tells this story using many different voices and writing in the first person for each voice? And why does she turn to the second person for Salma's chapter? How does this affect your reading? How do you relate to the various characters?
4. Everyone in the novel is an outsider in some way. How? Discuss each of the characters and their place as outsider or "other," whether it is by race, religion, or class.
5. How is this a general tale of our time and a story specific to its place, Southern California? Describe the setting. How does nature (and in particular the Mojave Desert and the Joshua Tree National Park), play a part in the novel?

For more discussion questions visit: [KnopfDoubleday.com/Reading-Group-Center](https://www.knopfdoubleday.com/Reading-Group-Center)

# Claire Lombardo

## The Most Fun We Ever Had:

### A Novel

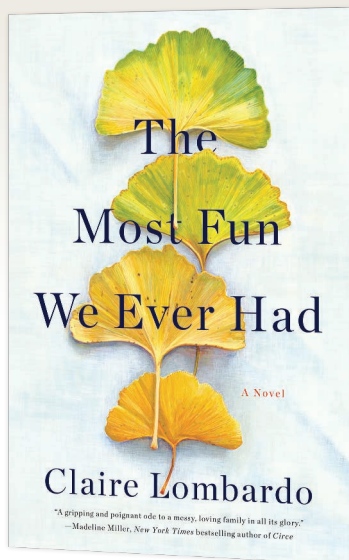
978-0-385-54425-2 | \$28.95/\$36.95C | Doubleday | HC

📞 978-0-385-54426-9 | 📻 AD: 978-0-525-64369-2

📖 LP: 978-0-593-10276-3

#### READERS' ADVISORY:

For fans of Ann Patchett, Jonathan Franzen,  
Meg Wolitzer, and Celeste Ng.



#### ABOUT THE BOOK:

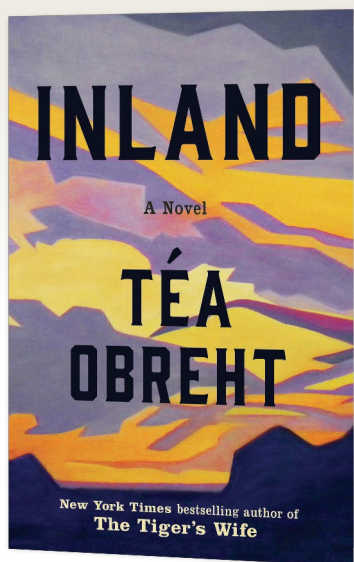
When Marilyn Connolly and David Sorenson fall in love in the 1970s, they are blithely ignorant of all that's to come. By 2016, their four radically different daughters are each in a state of unrest: Wendy, widowed young, soothes herself with booze and younger men; Violet, a litigator-turned-stay-at-home-mom, battles anxiety and self-doubt when the darkest part of her past resurfaces; Liza, a neurotic and newly tenured professor, finds herself pregnant with a baby she's not sure she wants by a man she's not sure she loves; and Grace, the dawdling youngest daughter, begins living a lie that no one in her family even suspects. Above it all, the daughters share the lingering fear that they will never find a love quite like their parents'.

As the novel moves through the tumultuous year following the arrival of Jonah Bendt—given up by one of the daughters in a closed adoption fifteen years before—we are shown the rich and varied tapestry of the Sorensons' past: years marred by adolescence, infidelity, and resentment, but also the transcendent moments of joy that make everything else worthwhile.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Ginkgo leaves and trees show up many times during the course of the novel—during the opening scene and when David and Marilyn first fall in love, just to name a couple. How do ginkgoes function as a symbol in the book? What do they represent?
2. Who is your favorite character in the novel? Who are you most similar to?
3. By the end of *The Most Fun We Ever Had*, we've seen decades of David and Marilyn's marriage unfold through many ups and downs. What do you see as the key to their successful and enduring marriage?
4. Do you think the way Wendy surprised Violet with Jonah was ethical? Do you think Violet's reaction was warranted?
5. Many readers share that reading *The Most Fun We Ever Had* was an emotional experience. What was the most emotional scene for you to read? Why?

For more discussion questions visit: [KnopfDoubleday.com/Reading-Group-Center](https://www.knopfdoubleday.com/reading-group-center)



## Téa Obreht **Inland:** A Novel

978-0-8129-9286-1 | \$27.00/\$36.00C | Random House | HC | August

📞 978-0-679-64411-8 | 📻 AD: 978-0-449-80708-8

📀 CD: 978-0-449-80705-7 | ♿ LP: 978-1-9848-9090-0

### **READERS' ADVISORY:**

The bestselling author of *The Tiger's Wife* returns with a stunning tale of perseverance—an epic journey across an unforgettable landscape of magic and myth—perfect for readers of Philipp Meyer, Patrick deWitt, Maile Meloy, Louise Erdrich, and Annie Proulx.

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### ABOUT THE BOOK:

**I**n the lawless, drought-ridden lands of the Arizona Territory in 1893, two extraordinary lives collide. Nora is an unflinching frontierswoman awaiting the return of the men in her life—her husband, who has gone in search of water, and her elder sons, who have vanished after an explosive argument. Nora is biding her time with her youngest son, who is convinced that a mysterious beast is stalking the land around their home.

Lurie is a former outlaw and a man haunted by ghosts. He sees lost souls who want something from him, and he finds reprieve from their longing in an unexpected relationship that inspires a momentous expedition across the West. The way in which Nora's and Lurie's stories intertwine is the surprise and suspense of this brilliant novel.

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### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. The novel is structured as dual storylines—one from Nora's perspective, and one from Lurie's. How do these two stories differ, and in what ways are they similar? Did you connect more strongly to one story than the other, and if so, why?
2. What do you understand "the want" to be, that gets inside of Lurie? How is it driving him?
3. How would you characterize Nora and Emmett's marriage? What makes their union a strong one, and what has challenged it?
4. Why is Nora unable to let go of Evelyn? How do you feel her relationship with Evelyn changed, from the novel's beginning to its end?
5. Nora and Desma's friendship is a bond between two independent, strong-willed women. Why does it go awry?

For more discussion questions visit: [PenguinRandomHouse.com](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com)

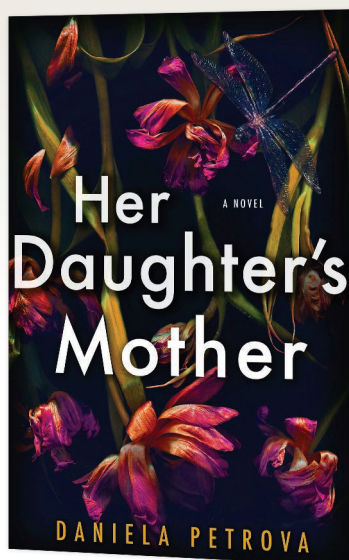
# Daniela Petrova Her Daughter's Mother

978-0-525-53997-1 | \$26.00/\$35.00C | Putnam | HC

📖 978-0-525-53999-5 | 📍 AD: 978-1-9848-8761-0

## READERS' ADVISORY:

For fans of *The Perfect Mother* and *The Wife Between Us* comes a gripping psychological suspense debut about two strangers, one incredible connection, and the steep price of obsession.



## ABOUT THE BOOK:

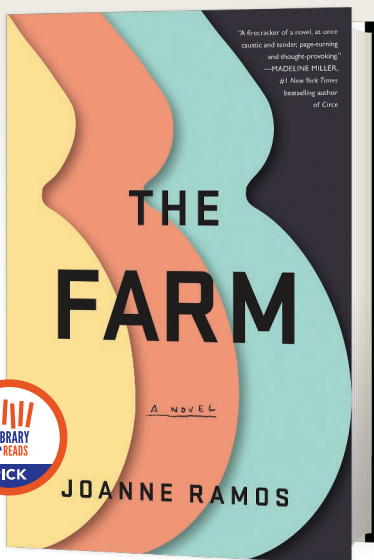
Lana Stone has never considered herself a stalker—until the night she impulsively follows a familiar face through the streets of New York’s Upper West Side. Her target? The “anonymous” egg donor she’d selected through an agency, the one who’s making motherhood possible for her. But when circumstances bring them face-to-face, an unexpected friendship is born.

Katya, a student at Columbia, is a breath of fresh air for Lana and a welcome distraction from her painful breakup with her baby’s father. Then, just as suddenly as Katya entered Lana’s life, she disappears—and Lana might have been the last person to see her before she went missing. Determined to find out what became of the woman to whom she owes so much, Lana digs into Katya’s past, even as the police grow suspicious of her motives. But she’s unprepared for the secrets she unearths, and their power to change everything she thought she knew about those she loves best.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. After Tyler leaves Lana, she makes a bold decision about becoming pregnant. If you were in Lana’s shoes, would you have gone through with the embryo transfer after Tyler left? Was Lana wrong to not tell Tyler initially about the pregnancy?
2. The action that starts the chain of events in the novel is Lana following Katya off the subway. Would you have made the same decision Lana makes?
3. Lana and Katya, though quite different, quickly develop an intense friendship. What qualities does each bring out in the other?
4. Katya makes choices that both Lana and Josh sometimes find questionable. Did you find Katya to be a sympathetic character?
5. Bulgarian culture, inspired by the author’s own background, plays a rich role in *Her Daughter’s Mother*. What flavor does it add to the story?

For more discussion questions visit: [PenguinRandomHouse.com](https://www.PenguinRandomHouse.com)



## Joanne Ramos

# The Farm:

## A Novel

978-1-9848-5375-2 | \$27.00 | Random House | HC  
978-0-385-69321-9 | \$24.95C | Doubleday Canada | TR  
📞 978-1-9848-5376-9 | 📍 AD: 978-1-9848-8665-1  
📖 LP: 978-1-9848-8694-1

### READERS' ADVISORY:

For readers of smart, female-driven literary fiction, like Celeste Ng's *Little Fires Everywhere* and Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney's *The Nest*.

### ABOUT THE BOOK:

Nestled in New York's Hudson Valley is a luxury retreat boasting every amenity: organic meals, personal fitness trainers, daily massages—and all of it for free. In fact, you're paid big money to stay here—more than you've ever dreamed of. The catch? For nine months, you cannot leave the grounds, your movements are monitored, and you are cut off from your former life while you dedicate yourself to the task of producing the perfect baby. For someone else.

Jane, an immigrant from the Philippines, is in desperate search of a better future when she commits to being a "Host" at Golden Oaks—or the Farm, as residents call it. But now pregnant, fragile, consumed with worry for her family, Jane is determined to reconnect with her life outside. Yet she cannot leave the Farm or she will lose the life-changing fee she'll receive on the delivery of her child.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. After finishing the book, how would you describe how you felt in one word?
2. What other books, movies, or TV shows did *The Farm* remind you of?
3. Does it seem like a place like Golden Oaks could exist now or in the near future? Could you see yourself applying to be a Host or using Golden Oaks' services? Why or why not?
4. Reagan and Jane come from very different worlds, yet end up being close friends. How are their experiences and viewpoints similar, and how do they differ? Why do you think they formed such a close bond? What does each of them offer to the other?
5. What did you think of Jane's choice to work for Mae after leaving Golden Oaks? How do you think this decision relates to the agency she gains throughout the novel? Considering all the factors at play in Jane's life, do you think she made the right decision? What would you have done in her place?

For more discussion questions visit: [PenguinRandomHouse.com](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com)

# Ruth Reichl

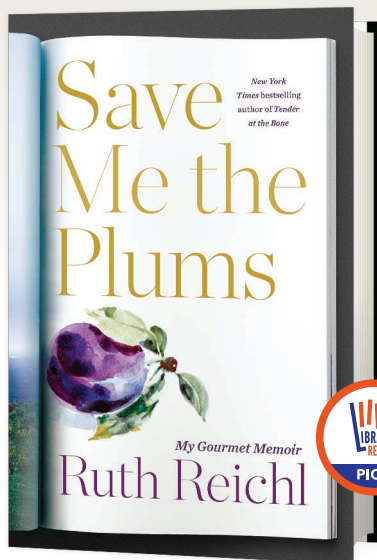
## Save Me the Plums: My Gourmet Memoir

978-1-4000-6999-6 | \$27.00 | Random House | HC  
978-0-525-61060-1 | \$32.00C | Appetite by Random House  
📞 978-0-679-60523-2 | 📍 AD: 978-0-385-39351-5

### READERS' ADVISORY:

For readers of *Blood, Bones & Butter*,  
*Kitchen Confidential*, and *Sweetbitter*.

“A must for any food lover . . . [Reichl] peels  
back the curtain to a glamorous time of  
magazine-making. You'll tear through  
this memoir.” —*Refinery29*



### ABOUT THE BOOK:

When Condé Nast offered Ruth Reichl the top position at America's oldest epicurean magazine, she declined. She was a writer, not a manager, and had no inclination to be anyone's boss. Yet, Reichl had been reading *Gourmet* since she was eight; it had inspired her career. How could she say no?

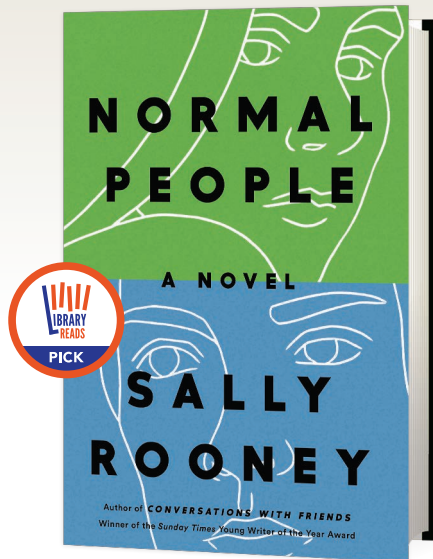
This is the story of a former Berkeley hippie entering the corporate world and worrying about losing her soul. It is the story of the moment restaurants became an important part of popular culture, a time when the rise of the farm-to-table movement changed, forever, the way we eat. Readers will meet legendary chefs, idiosyncratic writers, and a colorful group of editors and art directors who, under Reichl's leadership, transformed stately *Gourmet* into a cutting-edge publication.

Complete with recipes, *Save Me the Plums* is a personal journey of a woman coming to terms with being in charge and making a mark, following a passion and holding on to her dreams.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When Condé Nast offers Reichl the job of editor-in-chief of *Gourmet*, she initially says no. What helps her change her mind? Do you relate to her feeling that “it wasn't the job that frightened me: I was just terrified of change.”? Do you think taking this risk ultimately paid off?
2. Early on, Reichl says that her management philosophy, “if I had such a thing,” would be: “Everybody's good at something. You just have to figure out what that is.” How did she employ this idea with her staff at *Gourmet*?
3. One of the themes throughout the book is women and work: what it means to love your work and find solace in it, but also what it means to juggle work and family. How does Reichl address this balance? Were you able to relate to her feelings on this? Why, or why not?

For more discussion questions visit: [PenguinRandomHouse.com](https://www.PenguinRandomHouse.com)



## Sally Rooney

# Normal People:

### A Novel

978-1-9848-2217-8 | \$26.00/\$29.95C | Hogarth | HC

978-1-9848-2219-2 | AD: 978-1-9848-4334-0

#### READERS' ADVISORY:

Sally Rooney brings her brilliant psychological acuity and perfectly spare prose to a story that explores the subtleties of class, the electricity of first love, and the complex entanglements of family and friendship. Longlisted for the Man Booker Prize.

#### ABOUT THE BOOK:

At school, Connell and Marianne pretend not to know each other. He's popular and well-adjusted, star of the school football team, while she is lonely, proud, and intensely private. But when Connell comes to pick his mother up from her job at Marianne's house, a strange and indelible connection grows between the two teenagers—one they are determined to conceal.

A year later, they're both studying at Trinity College in Dublin. Marianne has found her feet in a new social world while Connell hangs at the sidelines, shy and uncertain. Throughout their years at university, Marianne and Connell circle one another, straying toward other people and possibilities but always magnetically, irresistibly drawn back together. And as she veers into self-destruction and he begins to search for meaning elsewhere, each must confront how far they are willing to go to save the other.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Were you critical of Connell for the way he treated Marianne in school, or were you sympathetic toward his adolescent self-consciousness?
2. How can the experience of "first love" transform a person's self-image and view of the world?
3. How does Marianne's family influence her opinion of herself and affect her relationships with other people? How does she attempt to distance herself from her family? And how does Connell's upbringing compare and contrast to Marianne's?
4. How do class dynamics affect Connell and Marianne in Dublin? How do their reactions to class prejudice and snobbery shade your view of them as characters?
5. How would you describe the power that Connell and Marianne hold over each other?
6. What qualifies a person as normal, and do you think that such a completely normal person can exist?

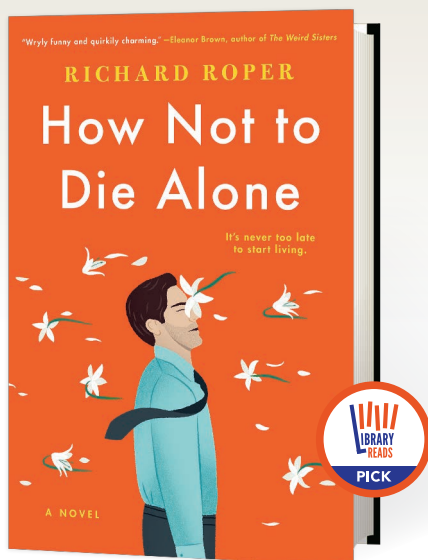
For more discussion questions visit: [CrownPublishing.com/Readers-Guides](https://www.crownpublishing.com/readers-guides)

# Richard Roper How Not to Die Alone

978-0-525-53988-9 | \$26.00/\$35.00C | Putnam | HC  
978-0-525-53990-2 | AD: 978-1-9848-8759-7  
LP: 978-0-593-10431-6

## READERS' ADVISORY:

A smart, funny, and life-affirming story about the importance of taking a chance when we feel we have the most to lose. Perfect for readers of *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine* and *The Story of Arthur Truluv*.



## ABOUT THE BOOK:

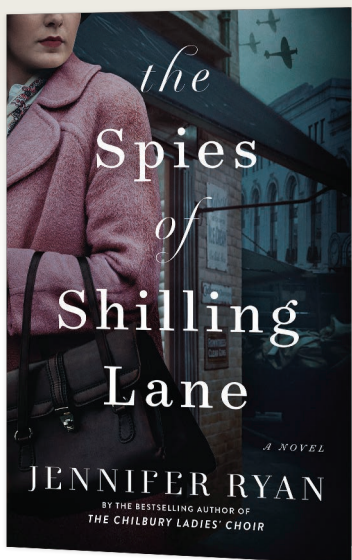
Andrew's been feeling stuck. For years he's worked a thankless public health job, searching for the next of kin of those who die alone. Luckily, he goes home to a loving family every night. At least, that's what his coworkers believe. Then he meets Peggy.

A misunderstanding has left Andrew trapped in his own white lie and his lonely apartment. When new employee Peggy breezes into the office like a breath of fresh air, she makes Andrew feel truly alive for the first time in decades. Could there be more to life than this? But telling Peggy the truth could mean losing everything. For twenty years, Andrew has worked to keep his heart safe, forgetting one important thing: how to live. Maybe it's time for him to start.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What did you think of Andrew when you first met him? Were you surprised by his white lie? Do you agree with his decision to keep up this false pretense?
2. Why does Andrew connect with Peggy so immediately? How is Peggy different from Andrew's other colleagues? What do you think Peggy sees in Andrew?
3. Andrew is an unusual protagonist, and many of the things that happen to him are quite funny. What were your favorite moments in the novel?
4. Were you surprised when you learned about Andrew's past? How did Andrew's last relationship change him?
5. How does Peggy change Andrew? Discuss how his life is different at the end of the novel. Is Andrew himself different?
6. How is loneliness explored throughout the novel? Is loneliness different for men than it is for women? How does loneliness affect Andrew?

For more discussion questions visit: [PenguinRandomHouse.com](https://www.PenguinRandomHouse.com)



## Jennifer Ryan

# The Spies of Shilling Lane:

### A Novel

978-0-525-57649-5 | \$27.00/\$36.00C | Crown | HC

📍 978-0-525-57651-8 | 🗂 AD: 978-1-9848-8680-4

📖 LP: 978-0-593-10285-5

#### **READERS' ADVISORY:**

*For readers of **The Chilbury Ladies' Choir**, **We Were the Lucky Ones**, and **The Summer Before the War**.*

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#### **ABOUT THE BOOK:**

**F**rom the bestselling author of *The Chilbury Ladies' Choir* comes a second story set against a backdrop of WWII about a divorced (gasp!) mother who, fancying herself a Miss Marple, travels to London to “investigate” the disappearance of her daughter, discovering both herself and a second chance at love along the way.

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#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. How is a woman's life different today, compared to in the 1930s and '40s, in terms of her personal relationships and marriage?
2. Why do you think the war contributed to looser sexual mores among women, especially among those like Betty, who moved to London to work?
3. Betty believes that Mrs. Braithwaite has become more thoughtful, and Mr. Norris more daring, as a result of spending time together. How do you think this happened? Do you think it is common for people to affect one another this way?
4. The book is a story about a mother and a daughter coming back together after years of misunderstanding. Do you think that the mother-daughter relationship is an inherently complicated one?
5. Death and destruction were never far away during the war. How do you think this affected the people who were living through it? How does the omnipresence of death make people think differently about their lives?
6. Mrs. Braithwaite's character evolves dramatically over the course of the novel. In your view, what was the most marked change? What was the most important? How about Mr. Norris? What was his most crucial change?

For more discussion questions visit: [CrownPublishing.com/Readers-Guides](https://www.crownpublishing.com/readers-guides)

# Catherine Steadman

## Something in the Water:

### A Novel

978-1-524-79767-6 | \$17.00/\$23.00C | Ballantine Books | TR

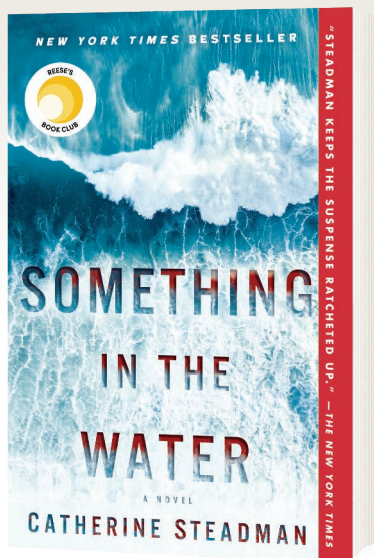
978-1-524-79719-5 | AD: 978-0-525-59361-4

CD: 978-0-525-59360-7 | LP: 9780525632924

#### READERS' ADVISORY:

**A shocking discovery on a honeymoon in paradise changes the lives of a picture-perfect couple in this taut psychological thriller debut—for readers of Ruth Ware, Paula Hawkins, and Shari Lapena.**

REESE'S BOOK CLUB X HELLO SUNSHINE PICK



#### ABOUT THE BOOK:

Erin is a documentary filmmaker on the brink of a professional breakthrough, Mark a handsome investment banker with big plans. Passionately in love, they embark on a dream honeymoon to the tropical island of Bora Bora, where they enjoy the sun, the sand, and each other. Then, while scuba diving in the crystal blue sea, they find something in the water . . .

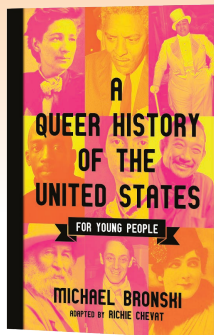
Suddenly the newlyweds must make a dangerous choice: to speak out or to protect their secret. After all, if no one else knows, who would be hurt? Their decision will trigger a devastating chain of events.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. The novel begins with the striking scene of Erin digging a grave, then flashes back in time to describe the events leading up to it. Is this an effective way to enter the story? Did the opening pages hook you? Why or why not?
2. Erin's career as a documentary filmmaker puts her in touch with incarcerated people she may never have met otherwise, and her relationship with Eddie is especially complex. Why does Erin become so closely involved with him? How genuine are her connections with her other documentary subjects, and how do those relationships affect the events in the novel?
3. Throughout the novel, Erin makes questionable decisions in order to secure what she thinks is the best future for her and Mark. Did you sympathize with her or criticize her actions? Does she ever become suspicious or untrustworthy as a narrator?
4. After their discovery on the scuba dive, how does Erin and Mark's relationship change? Despite the secrets they're hiding from each other, they do not struggle intimately. Do they truly love each other?

For more discussion questions visit: [PenguinRandomHouse.com](https://www.PenguinRandomHouse.com)

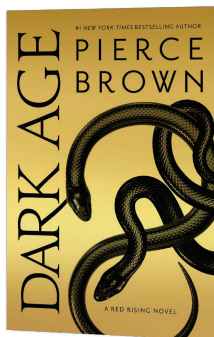
# TITLES FOR TEEN BOOK GROUPS



## Michael Bronski; Adapted by Richie Chevat **A Queer History of the United States for Young People**

978-0-8070-5612-7 | \$18.95/\$24.95C | Beacon Press | TR  
📞 978-0-8070-5613-4

**Q**ueer history didn't start with Stonewall. This book explores how LGBTQ people have always been a part of our national identity, contributing to the country and culture for over 400 years.

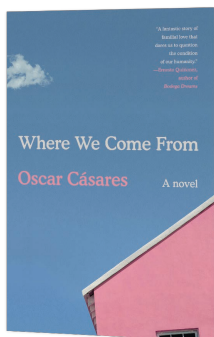


## Pierce Brown **Dark Age: Book 5 of the Red Rising Saga**

978-0-425-28594-7 | \$28.99/\$38.99C | Del Rey | HC  
📞 978-0-425-28595-4

**T**he #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *Morning Star* returns to the Red Rising universe with the thrilling sequel to *Iron Gold*.

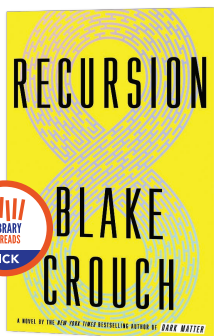
For a decade Darrow led a revolution against the corrupt color-coded Society. Now, outlawed by the very Republic he founded, he wages a rogue war on Mercury in hopes that he can still salvage the dream of Eo. But as he leaves death and destruction in his wake, is he still the hero who broke the chains? Or will another legend rise to take his place?



## Oscar Cásares **Where We Come From: A Novel**

978-0-525-65543-5 | \$25.95/\$34.95C | Knopf | HC  
📞 978-0-525-65544-2 | 🗣 AD: 978-1-9848-9198-3

**F**or readers of Cristina Henríquez, Sandra Cisneros, and Rudolfo Anaya—a stunning and timely new novel about a Mexican-American family in a Texas border town who reluctantly become involved in smuggling immigrants into the United States.

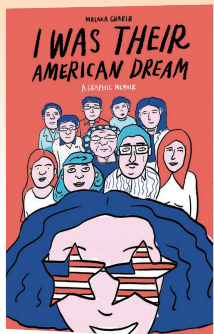


## Blake Crouch **Recursion: A Novel**

978-1-5247-5978-0 | \$27.00/\$36.00C | Crown | HC  
📞 978-1-5247-5980-3 | 🗣 AD: 978-1-9848-8689-7 | 🗣 CD: 978-1-9848-8688-0

**F**rom the bestselling author of *Dark Matter*, a relentless thriller and intricate science fiction puzzle box, *Recursion* is a deeply felt exploration of the flashbulb moments that define us. For fans of Andy Weir and Harlan Coben.

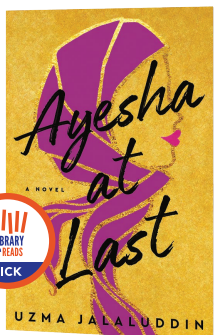




**Malaka Gharib**  
**I Was Their American Dream:**  
 A Graphic Memoir

978-0-525-57511-5 | \$16.99/\$22.99C | Clarkson Potter | TR  
 978-0-525-57512-2

One part Mari Andrew, one part Marjane Satrapi, *I Was Their American Dream: A Graphic Memoir* is a triumphant tale of self-discovery, a celebration of a family's rich heritage, and a love letter to American immigrant freedom.



**Uzma Jalaluddin**  
**Ayesha at Last**

978-1-9848-0279-8 | \$16.00 | Berkley | TR  
 978-1-9848-0280-4 | AD: 978-1-9848-9041-2

A modern-day Muslim *Pride and Prejudice* for a new generation of love. For readers of Jasmine Guillory and Helen Hoang.



**Lauren Kate**  
**The Orphan's Song**

978-0-7352-1257-2 | \$26.00/\$35.00C | Putnam | HC  
 978-0-7352-1259-6 | AD: 978-1-9848-8755-9 | CD: 978-1-9848-8754-2  
 LP: 978-0-593-10430-9

The historical adult debut novel by #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Lauren Kate, a sweeping love story about family and music—and the secrets each hold—that follows the intertwined fates of two Venetian orphans.

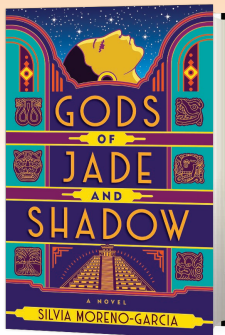


**Michelle Ruiz Keil**  
**All of Us with Wings**

978-1-64129-034-0 | \$18.99/\$21.99C | Soho Teen | HC  
 978-1-64129-035-7

Michelle Ruiz Keil's YA fantasy debut about love, found family, and healing is an ode to post-punk San Francisco through the eyes of a Mexican-American girl.

# TITLES FOR TEEN BOOK GROUPS



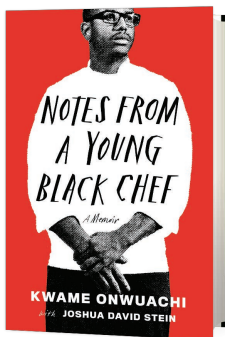
## Silvia Moreno-Garcia **Gods of Jade and Shadow**

978-0-525-62075-4 | \$26.00/\$35.00C | Del Rey | HC | August  
📍 978-0-525-62076-1 | 🗣️ AD: 978-1-9848-9037-5

**T**he Mayan god of death sends a young woman on a harrowing, life-changing journey in this dark fairy tale inspired by Mexican folklore.

“A wondrous and magical tale about choosing our own path.”

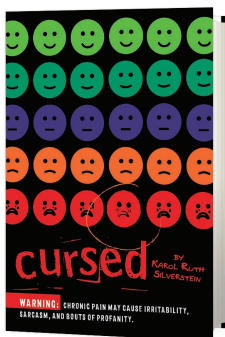
—Kevin Hearne, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Iron Druid Chronicles*



## Kwame Onwuachi with Joshua David Stein **Notes From a Young Black Chef: A Memoir**

978-1-5247-3262-2 | \$26.00/\$35.00C | Knopf | HC  
📍 978-1-5247-3263-9 | 🗣️ AD: 978-1-9848-3990-9

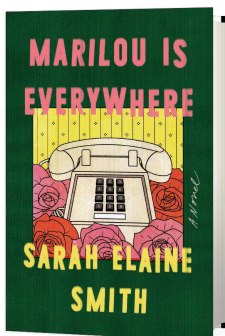
**B**y the time he was twenty-seven, Kwame Onwuachi had competed on *Top Chef*, cooked at the White House, and opened and closed one of the most talked about restaurants in America. In this inspiring memoir, he shares the remarkable story of his culinary coming-of-age.



## Karol Ruth Silverstein **Cursed**

978-1-58089-940-6 | \$17.99/\$21.99C | Charlesbridge Teen | HC  
📍 978-1-63289-799-2

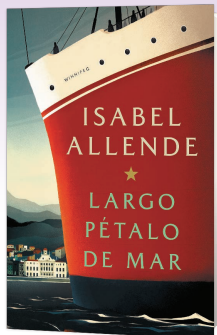
**A** debut novel for fans of *The Fault in Our Stars* that thoughtfully and humorously depicts teen Ricky Bloom’s struggles with a recent chronic illness diagnosis.



## Sarah Elaine Smith **Marilou is Everywhere: A Novel**

978-0-525-53524-9 | \$26.00/\$35.00C | Riverhead | HC  
📍 978-0-525-53526-3 | 🗣️ AD: 978-1-9848-8855-6

**C**onsumed by the longing for a different life, a teenager flees her family and carefully slips into another—replacing a girl whose own sudden disappearance still haunts the town.



Isabel Allende  
**Largo pétalo de mar**

978-1-9848-9916-3 | \$28.95/\$36.95C | Vintage Español | HC

**F**rom the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The House of the Spirits* comes an epic novel spanning decades and crossing continents, following two young people as they flee the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War in search of a new place to call home.



Anne Frank;  
 Illustrated by David Polonsky and Ari Folman  
**El diario de Anne Frank** (novela gráfica)

978-0-525-56450-8 | \$24.95/\$33.95C | Vintage Español | HC

**T**he only graphic novel adaptation of Anne Frank's diary that has been authorized by the Anne Frank Foundation and that uses text from the diary—it will introduce a new generation of young readers to this classic of Holocaust literature.



David Grann  
**Los asesinos de la luna de las flores**

978-0-525-56693-9 | \$16.95/\$22.95C | Vintage Español | TR

**N**ational Book Award Finalist. From the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Lost City of Z* comes the twisting, haunting true-life murder mystery about the systematic killing of Native Americans from the Osage Nation in 1920s Oklahoma, inspired by greed for their oil wealth.



Ingrid Rojas Contreras  
**La fruta del borrachero**

978-0-525-56450-8 | \$24.95/\$33.95C | Vintage Español | HC

**A**mesmerizing debut set in Colombia at the height Pablo Escobar's violent reign about a sheltered young girl and a teenage maid who strike an unlikely friendship that threatens to undo them both.

"A coming of age story, an immigrant story, a thrilling mystery novel, thoroughly lived and felt—this is an exciting debut novel that showcases a writer already in full command of her powers." —Julia Alvarez

For more information about books in Spanish, visit: [KnopfDoubleday.com/Imprint/Vintage-Espanol](https://www.knopfdoubleday.com/imprint/vintage-espanol)

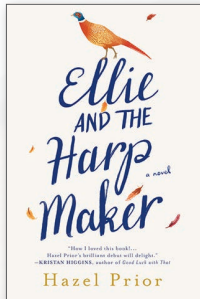
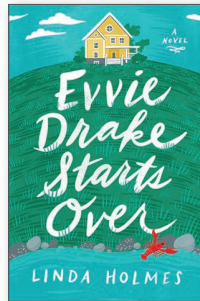
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- For the chance to win free books.



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first look  
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