Dear Reader,

Winter/Spring 2021

Nick

Michael Farris Smith

Author of Blackwood
To underline it—2020 was not Square Books’ best year. Like everyone, we struggled—but we are grateful to remain in business, and that all the booksellers here are healthy. When Covid19 arrived, our foot-traffic fell precipitously, and sales with it—2020 second-quarter sales were down 52% from those of the same period in 2019. But our many loyal customers adjusted along with us as we reopened operations when we were more confident of doing business safely. The sales trend improved in the third quarter, and November/December were only slightly down compared to those two months last year. We are immensely grateful to those of you who ordered online or by phone, allowing us to ship, deliver, or hold for curbside pickup, or who waited outside our doors to enter once our visitor count was at capacity. It is only through your abiding support that Square Books remains in business, ending the year down 30% and solid footing to face the continuing challenge of Covid in 2021.

And there were some very good books published, of which one hundred bestsellers we’ll mention now. (By the way, we still have signed copies of many of these books; enquire accordingly.) Many books appear on this list every year—old favorites, if you will, including three William Faulkner books: Selected Short Stories (37th on our list) which we recommend to WF novices, The Sound and the Fury (59) and As I Lay Dying (56), as well as a notably good new biography of Faulkner by Michael Gorra, The Saddest Words: William Faulkner's Civil War (61). To Kill a Mockingbird (94) still knows how to fly, and some other old friends we might mention are Robert Khayat’s The Education of a Lifetime (96); Curtis Wilkie’s The Fall of the House of Zeus (97); Wyatt Waters’ Oxford Sketchbook (29); Tom Franklin, Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter (86); Larry Brown, Tiny Love (57); Ed Croom, The Land of Rowan Oak (81); and John Cofield, Oxford, Mississippi (30). Richard Ford’s books may be found on many of our lists over the years, and Sorry for Your Trouble (27) is there this year and last, as well; and Ron Rash, who has visited us many times, zoomed this year with his excellent In the Valley (46).

In Square Books’ earliest years, our annual bestseller list had maybe two or three local authors. You guessed it—Willie Morris, Barry Hannah, and William Faulkner. This year, no less than one third of the 100 bestsellers are by writers who live or have lived in Oxford, including all but three of our top fifteen bestsellers. One of those is by Richard Grant (he lived in the Delta), whose The Deepest South of All (9) is about Natchez; another is by Alabamian Rick Bragg, Where I Come From (8); and the third is by a very good writer who is not from the South, but happens to be a former U.S. President—Barack Obama, A Promised Land (12). The rest of the top fifteen—all of which were signed by their respective authors—include Larry Wells’ fine memoir, In Faulkner’s Shadow (15); Ace Atkins: The Revelators (13); John Grisham, with two—Camino Winds (5) and A Time for Mercy (2), both NY Times #1 sellers; Kiese Laymon’s revised How to Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America (11); Jerry Mitchell’s important exhumation of unresolved Mississippi Civil Rights cases, Race Against Time (10); Oxford’s literary chef-in-chief John Currence’s Tailgreat (4); Lee Durkee’s very winning The Last Taxi Driver (7); Lee Harper’s gift of a precious Tiny Oxford (6); the dazzling World of Wonders (3), #5 on the NY Times list, given to us by Aimee Nezhukumatathil, whose signature is as lovely as her name is long; Blackwood (14) by Michael Farris Smith, whose just-published Nick is the first book we are willing to bet will finish in the top 15 of 2021; and, at number one, Wright Thompson’s spirited Pappyland (1), which reached as high as #8 on the NY Times list. Congrats, all.

Following the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, Black Lives Matter manifested its urgency in many ways, including matters literary, with a doubling of our inventory in related books and a universal surge in popularity of books both old and new on that topic and/or by Black writers, including the haunting memoir Memorial Drive (16), by U.S. Poet Laureate and Mississippian Natasha Trethewey; Isabel Wilkerson’s Caste (42); Black Bottom Saints (100) by Alice Randall; Bryan Stevenson’s Just Mercy (53); this year’s John Grisham Visiting Writer, Maurice Carlos Ruffin’s We Cast a Shadow (52); Jon Meacham’s biography of John Lewis, His Truth Is Marching On (89); both Sing, Unburied, Sing (45) and Salvage the Bones (82), paperback favorites by Jesmyn Ward, The New Jim Crow (63) by Michelle Alexander; White Fragility (33) by Robin DiAngelo; How to Be an Antiracist (20) by Ibram X. Kendi; and pride of Moss Point, Mississippi, and favorite occasional morning TV guest and Princeton professor Eddie Glaude, author of the brilliant take on James Baldwin, Begin Again (55).

Regionalism aside, bestselling books across the world found ways to our list, too. New in hardcover, we recently discovered Katherine May’s timely Wintertime: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times (85); Such a Fun Age (47) by Kiley Reid; Transcendent Kingdom (50) by Yaa Gyasi, who mentioned Megha Majumdar’s A Burning (67) as “a stunning debut”; What the Eyes Don’t See (74) by Mona Hanna-Attisha: The Guest List (69) by Lucy Foley; Lily King’s excellent Writers and Lovers (58); Ready Player Two (65) by Ernest Cline, which stormed the bestseller lists; screen idol Matthew McConaughery’s Greenlights (36); The Splendid and the Vile (17) by Erik Larson. The one that just won’t go away is perhaps how rival publishers think of Delia Owens’ Where the Crawdads Sing (18), which is fine by us, and there are Jeanine Cummins’ much-discussed American Dirt (19); a couple of fine bird books—David Sibley’s What It’s Like to Be a Bird (24), followed closely by Jennifer Ackerman’s enlightening and entertaining The Bird Way (38); Hidden Valley Road (93) by Robert Kolker; Brit Bennett’s The Vanishing Half (22); Untamed (35) by Glennon Doyle; Maggie O’Farrell’s Hamnet (87); and, had we been able to keep it in stock it, would be much higher—Charlie Mackesy’s The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, and the Horse (23); and, for the second year, Tara Westover’s Educated (48).

Many books on the list last year or the year before now appear on our list in paperback editions. Superlative as a literary work as well as in popularity is The Overstory (27) by Richard Powers, which settled in on the list before it won the Pulitzer Prize nearly two years ago. Other paperback favorites include Yuval Noah Harari’s Sapiens (90); Circe (54) by Madeline Miller; The Glass Hotel (39) by Emily St. John Mandel; The Nightingale (92) by Kristin Hannah; The Tattooist of Auschwitz (40) by Heather Morris; Little Fires Everywhere (34) by Celeste Ng; The Woman in the Window (66) by “A.J. Finn”; All the Light We Cannot See (43) by Anthony Doerr; Sally Rooney’s Normal People (49); Frank Herbert’s classic, Dune (75); and—who could resist it—The Liberal Redneck Manifesto (51) by Trae Crowder n’them.
Back to Oxford, and to Mississippi—where we’re crazy for William Boyle and his books, this year it’s City of Margins (41); Wright Thompson’s Pappyland gave quite a boost to an earlier work in paperback, The Cost of These Dreams (25); old times here are recalled by Donald Miller’s great Civil War account of Vicksburg (62), as well as in Allie Stuart Povall’s Rebels in Repose (60); Nico Walker, who’s in the territory, along with the staying power of his Cherry (83); Greg Iles’s Cemetery Road (79); Lisa Howorth and Summerlings (99); and John T. Edge’s paperback of The Potlikker Papers (78).

2020 was nothing if not a year for political books, though one imagines they didn’t do so well sales-wise as a ratio of sheer tonnage; still, these made the list: a bio from Jenna Bush Hager, who generously signed some of our copies of Everything Beautiful in Its Time (84); Bob Woodward’s Trump smack-down, Rage (77); and John Bolton, who was in The Room Where It Happened (73). There is plenty of Mississippian Stuart Stevens’ wisdom in It Was All a Lie (31); and Mary Trump was totally in the room, with Too Much and Never Enough (31).

There are Don Winslow’s Broken (80); A Private Cathedral (32) by a Square Books friend, James Lee Burke; Squeeze Me (88) by Carl Hiaasen; and another from John Grisham, Camino Island (98); David Sedaris gave us The Best of Me (64) and David Hill, The Vapors (28); no one knows the Southern Lady Code (68) like Helen Ellis. Off Square contributed much to this list, some previously mentioned as well as Elizabeth Heiskell’s What Can I Bring? (26); Modern Comfort Food (70) by Ina Garten; and The Art of the Host (71) by Alex Hitz.

A delightful surprise for us arrived late this year in the person of Professor Richard S. Balkin, Assistant Chair in Leadership and Counselor Education at the University of Mississippi, with his book from Oxford University Press, Practicing Forgiveness (76), which has had a very nice reception from colleagues, students and acquaintances, and is finding new readers here every day, for who can claim to be above such wise counsel?

Finally, two books we report here with sadness for the loss of their respective authors: My Own Words (91) by Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who gave our nation immense wisdom during a time when it was much needed; and Julia Reed’s New Orleans (72), by Mississippian Julia Reed, a dear friend who gave us many books over the years that brought forth her great spirit, spunk, sass, sense of style, and exactly what was on her mind. We’ll miss these two great women, both of whom wrote—and lived—so very well.

Thank you, again, and here’s to ’21!—from all the Gang at Square Books.

– Richard Howorth

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### VIRTUAL EVENTS

**February**

- **February 16**
  - JEMAR TISBY
  - How to Fight Racism
  - Zoom, 5pm
  - Crossroads Book Group

- **February 17**
  - LAIRD HUNT
  - Zorrie
  - Zoom, 5pm

- **February 20**
  - KIESE LAYMON
  - How to Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America
  - 7pm
  - MS Public Radio

- **February 13**
  - WRIGHT THOMPSON
  - Pappyland
  - 7pm
  - MS Public Radio

**March**

- **March 15**
  - MELISSA GINSBURG
  - The House Uptown
  - Zoom, 5:30pm

- **March 16**
  - W. RALPH EUBAXKS
  - A Place Like Mississippi
  - Zoom, 3pm

- **March 25**
  - VIET THANH NGUYEN
  - The Committed
  - 7pm
  - MS Public Radio

**April**

- **April 15**
  - MARTHA HALL KELLY
  - Sunflower Sisters
  - Zoom, 5pm

- **April 20**
  - WILLY VLAUTIN
  - The Night Always Comes
  - Zoom, 5pm

Although in-person events might not be happening, you can still keep up with authors via a wide range of virtual events. Join us online for Crossroads Book Club, Zoom readings, and new episodes of Thacker Mountain Radio, which is rolling into a new season with remote interviews and in-studio performances. Event calendar subject to change. Visit www.squarebooks.com/event for the most up-to-date list.
NICK
by Michael Farris Smith; Little, Brown and Company, $27.00; pub. 1/5
Signed Copies Available
In his early travels toward becoming a writer, Michael Farris Smith, who had loved F. Scott Fitzgerald's masterpiece, The Great Gatsby, could not stop thinking about Fitzgerald's character, Nick Carraway, particularly what might have been this character's life before he met Jay Gatsby. Smith began to write what is now Nick—a prequel to Gatsby, if you will—and eventually sent it to his agent, unaware of the possibility of copyright restrictions. His agent and publisher cautioned him that the book could not be published until the rights entered public domain, which, at the time, happened to be five years away. The manuscript was quietly filed away, and now we have Nick in the killing fields (and tunnels) of WWI France; meeting a young French woman in Paris; leaving Europe for home in the U.S.—a home he searches for in Chicago and New Orleans. This is a tale of adventure, love, and life, wrought in the fine, taut prose of the author, and a terrific read and companion to Gatsby.

P.S. Nick is at the top of a Gatsby publishing free-for-all heap; the classic Scribner’s Gatsby, newly introduced by Jesmyn Ward; a Gatsby Vintage edition, intro by John Grisham; a Penguin edition, intro by Min Jin Lee; a nice illustrated edition from Black Dog and Leventhal; a Canterbury Press edition, and two Scribner hardcover editions—come take a look at these, or call or email us for further information. – Richard

THE HOUSE UPTOWN
by Melissa Ginsburg
Flatiron Books, $26.99; pub. 3/16
Signed Copies Available
A young girl and the grandmother she does not know are forced together by tragedy, and soon discover they not only have to learn about each other but that the traumatic memories of the past can lead to dire consequences for both of them. Ginsburg has a poet’s ability to be concise in her language yet still create a beautifully layered portrait of her characters and their travails. – Bill

THE PROPHETS
by Robert Jones Jr.
G.P. Putnam’s Sons, $27.00; pub. 1/5
Signed Copies Available
A remarkable debut about the forbidden love between two enslaved young men on a Mississippi plantation. This unique and masterful novel will inspire conversations among all who read it. – Sasha

WE RUN THE TIDES
by Vendela Vida
Ecco, $26.99; pub. 2/9
Signed Copies Available
In this gripping mystery, pre–tech boom San Francisco finds its mirror in the changing lives of the teenage girls at the center of this story of innocence lost, the pain of too much freedom, and the struggle to find one’s authentic self.

SERGEANT SALINGER
by Jerome Charyn
Belletruse Literary Press, $16.99; pub. 1/5
J.D. Salinger is remembered today as a reclusive misanthrope. Charyn’s Salinger is a young WWII draftee assigned to the Counter Intelligence Corps. Grounded in biographical fact, this is an astonishing portrait of a devastated young man on his way to becoming the mythical figure behind a novel that has marked generations.

THE FORTUNATE ONES
by Ed Tarkington
Algonquin Books, $26.95; pub. 1/5
Signed Copies Available
When Charlie Boykin was young, he thought his life with his single mother on the working-class side of Nashville was perfectly fine. But when he’s admitted as a scholarship student at an elite private school, he is suddenly introduced to what the world can feel like to someone cushioned by money. That world, he discovers, is an almost irresistible place where one can bend—and break—rules and still end up untarnished.

THE UNCOLLECTED STORIES OF ALLAN GURGANUS
by Allan Gurganus; Liveright, $25.95; pub. 1/12
Signed Copies Available
These meticulously crafted parables recall Faulkner’s scope and O'Connor’s corrosive wit. Imbuing each story with charged drama, Gurganus again proves himself among our funniest writers and our wisest.

HOW BEAUTIFUL WE WERE
by Imbolo Mbue
Random House, $28.00; pub. 3/9
Signed Copies Available
The discovery and development of an oil field in an African village and the residents’ eventual resistance spells doom for the people over the course of decades. Using multiple narrators, the author lets their words and story bring home a powerful indictment of a society that abandons its people. This is one those of rare works that will constantly live in memory and is an incredible example of the power of prose. It will be difficult to find a better work in the calendar year. – Bill

SPEED READER
Sign up for our weekly newsletter, Speed Reader, featuring book news, new releases, and upcoming events at Square Books at www.squarebooks.com
FICTION

BROOD
by Jackie Polzin
Doubleday, $24.00; pub. 3/9
A year in the life of a woman and her flock of chickens would not seem the material for gripping read, but it would be a huge mistake to pass up this gem of a novel. It is beautiful, poignant, and incisive as the narrator relates her daily triumphs, disappointments, and the constant vagaries of life that eventually define human existence. This is an auspicious and special debut that will linger long after completion. – Bill

THE RIB KING
by Ladee Hubbard
Amistad, $27.99; pub. 1/19
Following the exhilarating The Talented Ribkins, Hubbard gives us a powerful novel of identity and conflict where decisions and crimes lead to explosive consequences, all set in the early 20th century of a nascent civil rights movement and the rise of Black political organizations. As in her first novel, the author probes deep into the world of relationships, identity and perception that permeate our society. – Bill

THIS CLOSE TO OKAY
by Leesa Cross-Smith
Grand Central Publishing, $27.00; pub. 2/2
A powerful, vibrant novel about the emotionally charged and life-changing weekend shared between two strangers in Kentucky, from the award-winning writer Roxane Gay calls “a consummate storyteller.”

THE LIAR’S DICTIONARY
by Eley Williams
Doubleday, $26.95; pub. 1/5
This exhilarating and laugh-out-loud debut novel chronicles the misadventures of a lovelorn Victorian lexicographer and the young woman put on his trail a century later to root out his misdeeds while confronting questions of her own sexuality and place in the world.

THE SWALLOWED MAN
by Edward Carey
Riverhead Books, $26.00; pub. 1/26
Carey returns to reimagine a time-honored fable: the story of an impatient father, a rebellious son, and a watery path to forgiveness for the young man known as Pinocchio. With all the charm, atmosphere, and emotional depth for which Carey is known—and featuring his trademark fantastical illustrations.

FIRST PERSON SINGULAR
by Haruki Murakami
Knopf, $28.00; pub. 4/6
The eight stories in this new work are all told by a classic Murakami narrator. Occasionally, a narrator may or may not be Murakami himself. Is it memoir or fiction? Philosophical and mysterious, the stories here touch beautifully on love and solitude, childhood and memory...all with a signature Murakami twist.

A BRIGHT RAY OF DARKNESS
by Ethan Hawke
Knopf, $27.95; pub. 2/2
Signed Copies Available
Fresh from his great film adaptation of James McBride’s excellent historical novel, The Good Lord Bird (written with Square Books stalwart Mark Richard), Hawke offers this hot story, set in NYC. Surely drawing on his own life, it’s the tale of a famous movie actor who’s facing the scary professional challenge of playing Hotspur in a Broadway production of Henry IV. At the same time his happy marriage is falling apart due to a sexual indiscretion. Full of sex, drugs, booze, and New York life, Hawke gives us a rich picture of what goes on behind the scenes in big-time theater, as well as insights about acting, actors, and the timeless power of Shakespeare, all written with humor and heartbreak. – Lisa

THE COMMITTED
by Viet Thanh Nguyen
Grove Press, $27.00; pub. 3/2
Signed Copies Available
Pulitzer Prize—winner Nguyen brings back his narrator from The Sympathizer, placing him in the expat community of Paris, but the past experiences of Vietnam and the United States continue to drive all experience. The result is a powerful condemnation of all forms of colonialism and paternalism and the detrimental effects on all phases of the human condition, whether it be personal, political, historical, cultural, physical or mental. This powerful, riveting story only further establishes Nguyen’s legacy as one of the great cultural commentators of our time. – Bill

BROTHER, SISTER, MOTHER, EXPLORER
by Jamie Figueroa
Catapult, $25.00; pub. 3/2
A brother and sister struggle to come to terms with the death of their mother and the weight of the past in this beautifully written and compulsively readable novel. While the action takes place in one short weekend, its scope is so much wider—encompassing questions of generational trauma, migration, and the will to survive. A memorable and wonderful debut. – Jude

THE SMASH-UP
by Ali Benjamin
Random House, $27.00; pub. 2/23
A family is upended when their small-town life becomes the latest battlefield in the culture wars. Startling, witty, and thought-provoking, this exciting novel offers the shock of recognition as it deftly illuminates some of the biggest issues of our time and explores how the things we fail to see can fracture a life, a family, a community, and a nation.

THE FOUR WINDS
by Kristin Hannah
St. Martin’s Press, $28.99; pub. 2/2
From the bestselling author of The Nightingale comes an epic novel of love, heroism, and hope, set against the backdrop of the Great Depression. In this uncertain and dangerous time, Elsa Martinelli—like so many of her neighbors—must make an agonizing choice: fight for the land she loves or go west in search of a better life.
FICTION

MILK BLOOD HEAT
by Daniel W. Moniz
Grove Press, $25.00; pub. 2/2
Man, what a brilliant new voice. Moniz brings it in this amazing debut collection of stories. Set in her native Florida, she depicts girls, women, and men who are often outsiders wrestling with their demons and reckoning with their place in the world. These stories sing and I can’t wait to hear more from this talented young writer. – Cody

KLARA AND THE SUN
by Kazuo Ishiguro
Knopf, $28.00; pub. 3/2
I don’t throw out the word “genius” much but I think it’s fair to say that Ishiguru is just that. His new novel is more proof that he is indeed one of our greatest living writers. I loved this book. It reminded me in some ways of his classic, Never Let Me Go, perhaps because of its dystopian setting, but it’s a wholly original and fully realized parable about technology, love, and humanity. – Cody

WE BEGIN AT THE END
by Chris Whitaker
Henry Holt & Co., $27.99; pub. 3/2
This is the story of the remnants of a down-and-out family in Cape Haven, a beautiful tourist destination on the California coast, and a host of townie characters linked together over the years by love gone wrong, loyalty, and crime. The protagonist is a 13-year-old self-proclaimed outlaw and outcast, who is passionately committed to taking care of her five-year-old brother after they become orphaned by their feckless mother. Walk, chief of police, and Vincent King, a recently released convict, are committed to protecting them, particularly from a greedy, creepy local developer. As Wally Lamb says, “...you can’t not keep turning the pages” of this engaging mystery. – Lisa

LIBERTIE
by Kaitlyn Greenidge
Algonquin Books, $26.95; pub. 3/30
Inspired by the life of one of the first Black female doctors in the United States and rich with historical detail, Greenidge (We Love You, Charlie Freeman) returns with an unforgettable story about the meaning of being Black and free. Perfect for readers of Brit Bennett, Min Jin Lee, and Yaa Gyasi.

LAND OF BIG NUMBERS
by Te-Ping Chen
Mariner Books, $15.99; pub. 2/2
I loved this debut collection of stories. Chen digs deep and uses her experience as a foreign correspondent to portray the voices and lives of people living in modern China. These characters will stay with you and their tales provide a real and varied look at what it must be like to live in a nation where censorship, party loyalty, and surveillance rule the day. – Cody

THE NIGHT ALWAYS COMES
by Willy Vlautin
Harper, $26.99; pub. 4/6
Signed Copies Available
In this heart-wrenching novel, Vlautin explores the impact of trickle-down greed and the opportunism of gentrification on ordinary lives as he captures the plight of a young woman pushed to the edge as she fights to secure a stable future for herself and her family.

BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME
by Julia Claiborne Johnson
Custom House, $28.99; pub. 1/5
Signed Copies Available
A charming, funny novel set in 1938 Reno, divorce capital of the world, where a clutch of women gather at a dudette ranch for six weeks to await their walking papers. Told from the perspective of the handsome young ranch hand, we see these ladies up close and personal—their backstories, foibles, desires, and quirks. Johnson explores class, love, and marriage in a poignant and witty style. – Lisa

VERA
by Carol Edgarian
Simon & Schuster, $27.00; pub. 3/2
San Francisco, 1906: 15-year-old Vera is the secret daughter of the city’s most famous madam. Raised in respectability by a surrogate mother, but with enticing glimpses of her birth mother’s hedonistic life, her upbringing has so far straddled two entirely separate worlds. The great earthquake brings the walls between those worlds crashing down, as Vera is forced to rely on her wits to survive in the destroyed city. This wonderful coming-of-age story is rich with vivid detail, particularly in the descriptions of the earthquake, while feisty, independent Vera is a heroine for the 21st century. – Jude

CLOUDMAKER
by Malcolm Brooks
Riverhead, $28.00; pub. 3/9
A teenage boy wanting to build an airplane and a young woman wishing to emulate Amelia Earhart are the protagonists of this Depression-era novel of hope, striving, and the bonds of family and friendship. Set in the open landscape of Montana, Brooks uses a terrain he knows intimately and loves dearly as a crucial piece of his narrative, making it a character in its own way. Brooks’ newest effort shines with a beauty that reflects its setting through his exceptional use of prose to describe place, people, and era. – Bill

MY YEAR ABROAD
by Chang-rae Lee
Riverhead, $28.00; pub. 2/2
A bildungsroman told in flashbacks, My Year Abroad concerns Tiller, an honest, affable Asian-American teenager who comes under the wing of Pong Lou, a savvy immigrant businessman. Across years and continents, Tiller’s journey into maturity is narrated with wit and intercultural insight. This is a Great Expectations for the hyphenated Americans of the new millennium. – Conor
I was completely enamored with this incredibly moving novel. *Zorrie*, like its main character, is full of heart. It is a stunning achievement and a testament to a singular life—that of Zorrie Underwood, a Midwestern girl who is orphaned at a young age and forced to reinvent herself over and over as she overcomes hardship and tragedy to find joy, heartbreak, wonder, family, love, and loss during the course of a good, long life. In under 200 pages, Hunt masterfully portrays her and her world with a deep and resounding richness which reflects the power and beauty of our own humanity. – Cody

**INFINITUM**

*by Tim Fielder*

*Amistad,* $27.99; pub. 1/19

Sure to become a treasured collectible, this gorgeous, groundbreaking, full-color Afrofuturist graphic novel from a Tupelo, MS, local captures the spirit of the groundbreaking film *Black Panther* and its mantra “Wakanda Forever.”

**NO ONE IS TALKING ABOUT THIS**

*by Patricia Lockwood*

*Riverhead Books,* $25.00; pub. 2/16

In this genre-defying book, a social media “influencer” travels around the world to meet her fans. Suddenly, two alarming texts from her mother pierce the fray. Soon the woman must confront a world that seems to contain both an abundance of proof that there is goodness, empathy, and justice in the universe, and a deluge of evidence to the contrary.

**A TIP FOR THE HANGMAN**

*by Allison Epstein*

*Doubleday,* $26.95; pub. 2/9

The 16th century meets the 21st in Epstein’s thrilling debut. It’s 1585, and aspiring playwright Christopher Marlowe is recruited as a spy while an impoverished Cambridge scholar. His task: to help foil an alleged Catholic plot to overthrow Elizabeth I. Blending fact and fiction, and period detail with modern sensibilities, Epstein deftly creates a heady mix of intrigue, drama, and romance in this captivating page-turner. – Jude

**THE SURVIVORS**

*by Jane Harper*

*Flatiron Books,* $27.99; pub. 2/2

Another riveting knock-out suspense novel from Harper. Set in a remote coastal town in Tasmania, a native son returns home to visit family but finds the ghosts of his past won’t let him go. This might be my favorite of her books yet. If, like a lot of crime fiction readers, you’re looking for a new writer to get addicted to and you haven’t encountered her work before, then give this a try. – Cody

**THE UNWILLING**

*by John Hart*

*St. Martin’s Press,* $27.99; pub. 2/2

Set in the South at the height of the Vietnam War, Hart combines suspense and searing glimpses into the human mind and soul. This is crime fiction at its most raw, an exploration of family and the past, of prison and war and the indelible marks they leave.

**COLD READING MURDER**

*by R.J. Lee*

*Kensington,* $15.95; pub. 2/23

In the third Bridge to Death Mystery, bridge expert and small town Mississippi investigative reporter Wendy Winchester must put her amateur sleuthing skills to the test while investigating the death of a flamboyant psychic.

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POETRY

BLACK GIRL, CALL HOME
by Jasmine Mans
Berkeley, $15.00; pub. 3/9
Mans writes to call herself—and us—home. Each poem explores what it means to be a daughter of America—and the painful, joyous path to adulthood as a young, queer Black woman. A love letter to the wandering Black girl and a vital companion to any woman on a journey to find truth, belonging, and healing.

MADE TO EXPLODE
by Sandra Beasley
W. W. Norton & Company, $26.95; pub. 2/9
The acclaimed poet interrogates the landscapes of her life in fearless and precise poems that fuse intimacy and intensity, from memories of growing up in Virginia to her home in DC.

EVERYDAY MOJO SONGS OF EARTH
by Yusef Komunyaka
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, $35.00; pub. 3/16
This work brings together selected poems from the past twenty years of Komunyaka’s work, as well as new poems from the Pulitzer Prize winner.

THE HILL WE CLIMB
by Amanda Gorman
Viking Books, $15.99; pub. 3/16
On January 20, 2021, Amanda Gorman became the youngest poet, at age 22, to deliver a poetry reading at a presidential inauguration. Her inaugural poem, “The Hill We Climb,” is now available to cherish in this special edition.

MISTER TOEBONES
by Brooks Haxton
Knopf, $28.00; pub. 3/23
In these marvelous pages, the award-winning poet turns a searching gaze toward the shared habitat and intertwined fates of man and animal. He looks back and forward in time, down at the soil, up at the stars, and deeply into his personal relationships.

BIOGRAPHY & MEMOIR

AFTERSHOCKS
by Nadia Owusu
Simon & Schuster, $26.00; pub. 1/12
Owusu’s childhood was highly nomadic. Family secrets, both lived and inherited, deepened the instability. Yet she somehow hauls herself from the wreckage of her life’s perpetual quaking, coming to understand that the only ground firm enough to count on is the one written into existence by her own hand.

MY BROKEN LANGUAGE
by Quiara Alegria Hudes
One World, $28.00; pub. 4/6
A Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright tells her story of coming-of-age against the backdrop of a devastated barrio, with her sprawling, idiosyncratic, love-and-trouble filled Puerto Rican family as a collective muse.

LADY BIRD JOHNSON: HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT
by Julia Sweig
Random House, $32.00; pub. 3/16
This biography draws substantially on the former First Lady’s own voice in her White House diaries to place “Lady Bird” Johnson center stage and reveal a woman ahead of her time—and an accomplished politician in her own right.

THE THREE MOTHERS
by Anna Malaika Tubbs
Flatiron Books, $28.99; pub. 2/2
Much has been written about Berdis Baldwin’s son James, Alberta King’s son Martin, and Louise Little’s son Malcolm. But virtually nothing has been said about the extraordinary women who raised them, who themselves contended with the prejudices Black women faced during Jim Crow.

THE AGITATORS
by Dorothy Wickenden
Scribner, $30.00; pub. 3/30
From the intimate perspective of three friends in mid-19th-century Auburn, NY—Harriet Tubman, Frances Seward, and Martha Wright—Wickenden tells the crucially American stories of abolition, the Underground Railroad, the early women’s rights movement, and the Civil War.

THE UNQUIET ENGLISHMAN
by Richard Greene
W. W. Norton & Company, $40.00; pub. 1/12
This new witty and insightful biography of Graham Greene responds to the thousands of pages of letters that have just come to light and to new memoirs by those who knew him best. It deals sensitively with questions of private life and mental illness, and sheds new light on one of the foremost modern writers.

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by Laurence Bergreen
Custom House, $29.99; pub. 3/16
Bergreen brings to life the extraordinary adventures of Sir Francis Drake, whose mastery of the seas during the reign of Elizabeth I changed the course of history—as a pirate raiding Spanish galleons, as the first explorer to successfully circumnavigate the globe, and as a naval hero who defeated the Spanish Armada and reshaped the global order. – Bill

THE GUN, THE SHIP, AND THE PEN
by Linda Colley
Liveright, $35.00; pub. 3/2
Tracing the global history of written constitutions from the 1750s to the 20th century, Colley both reappraises famous constitutions and recovers those that have been marginalized but were central to the rise of a modern world.

THE YORK PATROL
by James Carl Nelson
William Morrow, $28.99; pub. 2/23
Diving into Alvin York's famous capture of 132 German soldiers, Nelson gives a thorough overview of York's men and their roles in the mission. He also provides a fascinating look at York himself, from his upbringing in rural Tennessee to his struggle with his role in the war, complicated by his desire to be a conscientious objector. A must-read for WWI history buffs. – Andrew P.

IMPERFECT UNION
by Steve Inskeep
Penguin Books, $18.00; pub. 1/5
Signed Copies Available
Now in Paperback
– Inskeep tells the riveting story of John and Jessie Frémont, the husband and wife team who in the 1800s were instrumental in the westward expansion of the United States, and thus became America’s first great political couple.

A WORSE PLACE THAN HELL
by John Matteos
W. W. Norton & Company, $35.00; pub. 2/9
Pulitzer Prize–winning author Matteos illuminates three harrowing months of the Civil War and their enduring legacy for America, interweaving the historic and the personal in a work as beautiful as it is powerful.

MORE BAD DAYS IN HISTORY
by Michael Farquhar
National Geographic, $27.00; pub. 4/6
From the decadent palaces of ancient Rome to the modern Halls of Congress, this illuminating (sometimes disturbing) collection features an endless array of misbehavior, mishaps, and misfortune over the ages and across the historical spectrum.

A PLACE LIKE MISSISSIPPI
by W. Ralph Eubanks
Timber Press, $27.95; pub. 3/16
Signed Copies Available
While many books have covered Mississippi literature, most are of the reference variety. Eubanks gives us so much more in this beautiful, splendid book that includes around 40 writers—about half of whom are alive today. Kiese Laymon said, “While Mississippi is 50th in many things, when it comes to riveting, textured, literary art, we are one of one,” and correctly praises Eubanks’ new book as “literary and geographic lineage so beautifully and rigorously explored and valued…” – Richard

RACE AGAINST TIME
by Jerry Mitchell
Simon & Schuster, $17.00; pub. 2/2
Signed Copies Available
Now in Paperback
– The MacArthur Genius reporter and Jackson, MS, local tells the tick-tock story of three infamous, unsolved civil rights era murders and how he reopened these cold cases, ultimately bringing Klansmen to justice decades later.

THE AMERICAN SOUTH
by Charles Reagan Wilson
Oxford University Press, $11.95; pub. 1/1
Signed Copies Available
While some in these parts may have misgivings about “a very short” anything about the South, one should consider that this little book was written for the outstanding series from Oxford University Press, and was composed by the esteemed editor of the Encyclopedia of Southern Culture, Charles Wilson. One imagines that the process of omitting so much from this book caused much pain in its birth, but the baby is beautiful. Scholars and slackers alike—this is the book on the South for you! – Richard

TAKING THE FIGHT SOUTH
by Howard Ball
University of Notre Dame Press, $32.00; pub. 2/1
With breathtaking historical authority, historian and civil rights activist Ball narrates the experience of his family as Jewish outsiders in Mississippi, an unfamiliar and dangerous landscape contending with the aftermath of the civil rights struggle.

SHAKING THE GATES OF HELL
by John Archibald
Knopf, $28.00; pub. 3/9
In this moving and powerful book, Pulitzer Prizing–winning journalist Archibald writes of his complex search for whether a good person can remain silent in the face of discrimination and horror, and still be a good person, and of the conspiracy of silence his father faced in the South and in the Church.
FOUR HUNDRED SOULS
by Ibram X. Kendi
One World, $32.00; pub. 2/2
A book to be read and reread as Americans continue to grapple with our past and how it defines our present. Four Hundred Souls chronicles the history of the African American community from 1619 to 2019, its symbolic 400-year anniversary. With many well-known and celebrated contributors, Kendi describes the collection as a choir of unified voices. Full of reverence and reckoning, this is simply a must-read. – Asia

THE BLACK CHURCH
by Henry Louis Gates
Penguin Press, $30.00; pub. 3/30
As Gates brilliantly shows, the Black church has never been only one thing. As a source of strength and a force for change, the Black church is at the center of the action at every stage of the American story, as this enthralling history makes vividly clear.

THE MOVEMENT
by Thomas C. Holt
Oxford University Press, $18.95; pub. 1/28
Holt provides an informed, nuanced understanding of the origins, character, and objectives of the mid-century freedom struggle, focusing on the aspirations and initiatives of the ordinary, grassroots people who made it. This groundbreaking book reinserts the concept of “movement” back into our image and understanding of the civil rights movement.

THE BLACK CIVIL WAR SOLDIER
by Deborah Willis
NYU Press, $35.00; pub. 1/26
This stunning collection of stoic portraits and intimate ephemera from the lives of Black Civil War soldiers offers a kaleidoscopic yet intimate portrait of the African American experience, from the beginning of the Civil War to 1900.

THE DEVIL YOU KNOW
by Charles M. Blow
Harper, $30.00; pub. 3/9
Signed Copies Available
Blow has penned a groundbreaking manifesto, proposing nothing short of the most audacious power play by Black people in the history of this country. This book is a grand exhortation to generations of a people, offering a road map to true and lasting freedom.

JULIAN BOND’S TIME TO TEACH
by Julian Bond
Beacon Press, $29.95; pub. 1/12
The late Bond, co-founder of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), followed his time as a legendary activist with two decades teaching the history of the civil rights movement. This book, edited from his class notes, is a thorough overview of the movement, its events, and its communities. If history always bears twins, this book will show you where the fire this time will kindle from. – Conor

A SHOT IN THE MOONLIGHT
by Ben Montgomery
Little, Brown Spark, $28.00; pub. 1/26
The sensational true story of George Dinning, a freed slave, who in 1899 joined forces with a Confederate war hero in search of justice in the Jim Crow South. So begins one of the strangest legal episodes in American history—one that ended with Dinning becoming the first Black man in America to win damages after a wrongful murder conviction.

A BETTER LIFE FOR THEIR CHILDREN
by Andrew Feiler
University of Georgia Press, $34.95; pub. 4/1
In 1912, Julius Rosenweld and Booker T. Washington launched a program to partner with Black communities across the segregated South to build public schools for African American children. To tell this story, Feiler photographed over 100 of the schools and conducted dozens of interviews, sharing the stories of the schools’ connections to the Trail of Tears, the Great Migration, the Tuskegee Airmen, Brown v. Board of Education, embezzlement, murder, and more.

I DON’T LIKE THE BLUES
by B. Brian Foster
University of North Carolina Press, $24.95; pub. 12/14/20
Signed Copies Available
In this illuminating work, Foster takes us into the homes, memories, and lifeworlds of Black folks in contemporary Mississippi to hear what they have to say about the blues and all that has come about since their forebears first sang them. In so doing, Foster urges us to think differently about race, place, and community development and models a different way of hearing the sounds of Black life.

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NON-FICTION

LAND
by Simon Winchester
Harper, $29.99; pub. 1/19
Signed Copies Available
The author of The Professor and the Madman explores the notion of property—our proprietary relationship with the land—through human history, how it has shaped us and what it will mean for our future.

A SWIM IN A POND IN THE RAIN
by George Saunders
Random House, $28.00; pub. 1/12
Signed Copies Available
Saunders guides us through 7 Russian short stories he’s been teaching for 20 years in the Syracuse University MFA creative writing program. Paired with stories by Chekhov, Turgenev, Tolstoy, and Gogol, his essays are for anyone interested in how fiction works, and why it’s more relevant than ever in these turbulent times.

WHY I AM NOT GOING TO BUY A COMPUTER
by Wendell Berry
Counterpoint, $10.00; pub. 2/9
Berry first challenged the idea that our advanced technological era is a good thing when he penned the namesake essay in the late 1980s, galvanizing a critical reaction. He responded with “Feminism, the Body, and the Machine.” Both essays are collected here in one volume for the first time.

ROBERT E. LEE AND ME
by Ty Seidule
St. Martin’s Press, $27.99; pub. 1/26
Part history lecture, part meditation on the Civil War and its fallout, and part memoir, the head of the West Point history department challenges the legends and myths of the Confederacy, and provides a surprising interpretation of essential truths that our country still has a difficult time accepting.

HOW TO TELL A JOKE
by Marcus Tullius Cicero, trans. Michael Fontaine
Princeton University Press, $16.95; pub. 3/30
One of Rome’s greatest politicians, speakers, and lawyers, Cicero was also reputedly one of antiquity’s funniest people. This lively new translation of Cicero’s writings on humor is a timeless practical guide to how a well-timed joke can win over any audience.

A LITTLE DEVIL IN AMERICA
by Hanif Abdurraqib
Random House, $27.00; pub. 3/30
Brilliant, powerful, timely, and urgent. If you’re new to Abdurraqib, this is a perfect starting place and, well, you’re in for an awakening. Wide-ranging and ambitious, at once personal and universal, this book demands our utmost attention as readers and Americans. – Cody

LET ME TELL YOU WHAT I MEAN
by Joan Didion
Knopf, $23.00; pub. 1/26
From one of our most iconic and influential writers: a timeless collection of mostly early pieces that reveal what would become Didion’s subjects, including the press, politics, California robber barons, women, and her own self-doubt.

WONDERWORKS
by Angus Fletcher
Simon & Schuster, $30.00; pub. 3/9
A brilliant examination of literary invention through the ages—from ancient Mesopotamia to Elena Ferrante—showing how writers created technical breakthroughs as sophisticated and significant as any in science.

HOW TO KEEP AN OPEN MIND
by Sextus Empiricus, trans. Richard Bett
Princeton University Press, $16.95; pub. 3/30
Provides an unmatched introduction to skepticism by presenting a fresh, modern translation of key passages from the writings of Sextus Empiricus, the only Greek skeptic whose works have survived.

THE SOUL OF A WOMAN
by Isabel Allende
Ballantine Books, $22.99; pub. 3/2
A passionate and inspiring meditation on what it means to be a woman from the bestselling author of A Long Petal of the Sea.

THINK AGAIN
by Adam Grant
Viking, $28.00; pub. 2/2
The bestselling author of Give and Take examines the critical art of rethinking and learning to question your opinions to open other people’s minds, positioning you for excellence at work and wisdom in life.

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by Anne Lamott
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Lamott explores the thorny issues of life and faith by breaking them down into manageable, human-sized questions, in the process showing us how we can amplify life’s small moments of joy by staying open to love and connection.

IN THE LAND OF THE CYCLOPS
by Karl Ove Knausgaard, trans. Martin Aitken
Archipelago, $28.00; pub. 1/5
An anthology of ambitious, erudite writings on art, literature, culture, and philosophy—Knausgaard’s first essay collection to be published in English. These wide-ranging pieces reflect on subjects such as Ingmar Bergman’s notebooks, the Northern Lights, Rembrandt, and the role of an editor.
In Hope in Times of Fear, Keller unlocks the meaning of Jesus’s resurrection for readers. Here, the central message of the Christian faith is revealed in a way only Keller could—filled with unshakable belief, piercing insight, and a profound new way to look at a story you think you know. After reading this book, the true meaning of Easter will no longer be unseen.

FRANCIS BACON: REVELATIONS
by Mark Stevens
Knopf; $60.00; pub. 3/23
A decade in the making: the first comprehensive look at the life and art of Francis Bacon, one of the iconic painters of the twentieth century—from the Pulitzer Prize-winning authors of de Kooning: An American Master.

BEESWING
by Richard Thompson, with Scott Timberg
Algonquin Books, $27.95; pub. 4/6
In this intimate memoir, songwriter and guitarist Thompson re-creates the spirit of the 1960s, where he found, then lost, and then found his way again—and he takes us inside life on the road in the UK and the US, crossing paths—and occasionally sharing the stage—with the likes of Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd, Jimi Hendrix, and others.

I AM A MAN
by William R. Ferris
University Press of Mississippi, $40.00; pub. 2/15
The years from 1960 to 1970 unleashed both hope and profound change as desegregation opened public spaces and African Americans secured their rights. The photographs in this volume reveal, as only great photography can, the pivotal moments that changed history, and yet remind us how far we have to go.

THE SLEEVE SHOULD BE ILLEGAL
by Ed. Michaelyn Mitchell
DelMonica Books, $29.95; pub. 1/26
Explore the treasures of The Frick Collection through the eyes of a diverse group of contemporary writers, artists, and other cultural figures, from George Condo, Lydia Davis, and Lena Dunham to Abbi Jacobson and Edmund White.

THE SPIRIT OF MUSIC
by Victor L. Wooten
Vintage, $16.00; pub. 2/2
From the Grammy winner and founding member of Bela Fleck and the Flecktones, a fable of three musicians who are summoned to Nashville to join with Victor to battle against the “Phasers” and their “music-cancelling” headphones. Only by coming together, connecting, and making the joyful sounds of live music can the world be restored to the power and spirit of music.

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by Paul Nurse
W. W. Norton & Company, $20.00; pub. 2/2
Nurse writes with a delight at life’s richness and a sense of the urgent role of biology in our time. To survive the challenges that face us all today—climate change, pandemic, loss of biodiversity, and food security—it is vital that we all understand what life is.

FUNDAMENTALS
by Frank Wilczek
Penguin Press, $26.00; pub. 1/12
Synthesizing questions, facts, and speculations, Wilczek investigates the ideas that form our understanding of the universe: time, space, matter, energy, complexity, and complementarity. Brilliant, lucid, and accessible, this celebration of human ingenuity and imagination will expand your world and your mind.

THE GOD EQUATION
by Michio Kaku
Doubleday, $22.00; pub. 4/6
Kaku, renowned theoretical physicist and bestselling author of Hyperspace and The Future of Humanity, tells the story of the greatest quest in all of science—one that would ultimately tie all the forces in the universe together into one beautiful equation that can unlock the deepest mysteries of space and time.

THE CODE BREAKER
by Walter Isaacson
Simon & Schuster, $35.00; pub. 3/9
The bestselling author of Leonardo da Vinci and Steve Jobs returns with a gripping account of how Nobel Prize winner and co-discoverer of CRISPR Jennifer Doudna and her colleagues launched a revolution that will allow us to cure diseases, fend off viruses, and have healthier babies.

A WORLD ON THE WING
by Scott Weidensaul
W. W. Norton & Company, $32.00; pub. 3/30
An exploration of the science and wonder of global bird migration, this breathtaking work of nature writing from Pulitzer Prize finalist Weidensaul introduces readers to scientists, researchers, and bird lovers trying to preserve global migratory patterns in the face of climate change and other environmental challenges.

UNSOULACED
by Gretel Ehrlich
Pantheon, $26.95; pub. 1/5
From the author of the enduring classic The Solace of Open Spaces, here is a wondrous meditation on how water, light, wind, mountain, bird, and horse have shaped her life and her understanding of a world besieged by a climate crisis.

A HISTORY OF THE HUMAN BRAIN
by Bret Stetka
Timber Press, $24.95; pub. 3/16
Clearly and expertly told, Stetka takes us on an intriguing journey, explaining how our most mysterious organ developed. From the brain’s improbable watery beginnings to the marvel that sits in the head of Homo sapiens, Stetka covers an astonishing progression, even tackling future brainy frontiers such as epigenetics and CRISPR.

PROBABLE IMPOSSIBILITIES
by Alan Lightman
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SECOND NATURE
by Nathaniel Rich
MCD, $27.00; pub. 3/30
A deeply reported, beautifully told exploration of our post-natural world, a time in which the old distinctions—between natural and artificial, dystopia and utopia, science fiction and science fact—have blurred, losing all meaning. The question is no longer “how do we return to the world that we’ve lost?” It’s “what world do we want to create in its place?”

BELOVED BEASTS
by Michelle Nijhuis
W. W. Norton & Company, $27.95; pub. 3/9
Don’t let John Audubon be the only conservationist you know of! Michelle Nijhuis presents a fascinating and nuanced look at the history of the modern conservation movement. Nature, history, and human studies are all rolled into this spirited book. –Al

A MOST REMARKABLE CREATURE
by Jonathan Meiburg
Knopf, $30.00; pub. 3/30
A hybrid of science writing, travelogue, and biography, this is an enthralling account of a modern voyage of discovery as we meet the clever, social birds of prey called caracaras, which puzzled Darwin, fascinate modern-day falconers, and carry secrets of our planet’s deep past in their family history.

HOW TO AVOID A CLIMATE DISASTER
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This gardening guide shows how color provides one of the easiest, most impressive ways to shape a garden. Each template provides detailed instructions for a trouble-free start while offering plenty of room to adapt designs.

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Here you’ll find beautiful flower varieties and illustrated design ideas that will have you seeing the potential for colorful flowers, annual and perennial, in outdoor spaces large or small. Essential advice is accompanied by lush photos and growing tips for gardeners of all levels.

**THE BEGINNER’S GUIDE TO GROWING GREAT VEGETABLES**
by Lorene Edwards Forkner
Timber Press, $19.95; pub. 3/2
This beginner-friendly guide offers new vegetable gardeners all the information they need to grow food successfully.

**FLORAPEDIA**
by Carol Gracie
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**ROSA**
by Peter E. Kukielski
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A beautifully illustrated and unique history of the “queen of flowers” in art, medicine, cuisine, and more.

**MAVERICK GARDENERS**
by Felder Rushing
University Press of Mississippi, $20.00; pub. 3/15
Grow healthy, delicious veggies and herbs at home—just follow the author’s expert advice as she shares all the information you need. Features regional planting charts and a month-by-month planner.

**SPORTS & OUTDOORS**

**OUR TEAM**
by Luke Epplin
Flatiron Books, $29.99; pub. 3/30
The riveting story of four men—Larry Doby, Bill Veeck, Bob Feller, and Satchel Paige—whose improbable union on the Cleveland Indians in the late 1940s would shape the immediate post-war era of Major League Baseball and beyond.

**A WINDOW TO HEAVEN**
by Patrick Dean
Pegasus Books, $27.95; pub. 3/2
The captivating and heroic story of Hudson Stuck, an Episcopalian priest, and his team’s history-making summit of Denali in 1913. An excellent addition to the canon of literature built around mountain climbing. Fans of Jon Krakauer, Alex Honnold, or any of many others will be fascinated by this story of adventure.

**BRACKETOLOGY**
by Joe Lunardi
Triumph Books, $28.00; pub. 3/2
The inventor of Bracketology is here to reveal the mystery and science behind the legend. While going in depth on the ever-evolving Bracketology formula, Lunardi compares great teams from different eras with intriguing results, talks to the biggest names in college basketball about their perception of Bracketology, and looks ahead to the future.

**THE STORY OF THE MASTERS**
by David Barrett
Tatra Press, $30.00; pub. 3/10
The first comprehensive history of the characters and drama that make the Masters the highlight of any golf season. Veteran golf journalist Barrett draws upon contemporaneous reporting and other source material to offer accounts of each year the tournament has been played, starting in 1934.
FOOD

ANIMAL, VEGETABLE, JUNK
by Mark Bittman
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, $28.00; pub. 2/2
A century ago, food was industrialized. Since then, new styles of agriculture and food production have driven both climate change and global health crises. Bestselling food authority Bittman offers a panoramic view of the story and explains how we can rescue ourselves from the modern wrong turn.

RODNEY SCOTT’S WORLD OF BBQ
by Rodney Scott and Lolis Eric Elie
Clarkson Potter, $29.99; pub. 3/16
In the first cookbook by a Black pitmaster, the James Beard Award–winning chef and owner of Whole Hog BBQ in Charleston celebrates an incredible culinary legacy through his life story, family traditions, and unmatched dedication to his craft.

WHY WE COOK
by Lindsay Gardner
Workman Publishing Company, $24.95; pub. 3/2
An inspirational and powerful book that celebrates women's stories and trailblazing achievements in today's culinary world, with personal essays, recipes, Q&As, illustrated quotes, and more from over 100 women in the world of food (restaurateurs, activists, writers, professional, and home cooks).

THE UNREASONABLE VIRTUE OF FLY FISHING
by Mark Kurlansky
Bloomsbury Publishing, $28.00; pub. 3/2
From the award-winning, bestselling author of Cod—the irresistible story of the science, history, art, and culture of the least efficient way to catch a fish.

THE BONA FIDE LEGEND OF COOL PAPA BELL
by Lonnie Wheeler
Abrams Press, $28.00; pub. 2/9
The first full biography of the star Negro Leaguer and Hall of Famer. Born to sharecroppers in Mississippi, Bell was part of the Great Migration, and in St. Louis, baseball saved Bell from a life working in slaughterhouses. Wheeler charts Bell’s ups and downs in life and in baseball. Rich in context and suffused in myth, this is a treat for fans of baseball history.

A GOOD MEAL IS HARD TO FIND NOTES
by Amy C. Evans
Chronicle Books, $15.95; pub. 2/23
Featuring art from the cookbook A Good Meal Is Hard to Find, these vintage-inspired notecards are ideal for dashing off a quick “thinking of you” message, sharing a favorite recipe, or sending a heartfelt thank-you to a friend. Perfect for anyone who loves the South, Southern culture, and Southern food.

Sports & Outdoors

TROUT WATER
by Josh Greenberg
Meltz, $24.99; pub. 3/30
After a close friend passes, Greenburg takes to the Au Sable River in Michigan. The solitude he gets from fishing prompts him to reflect on the impact of the natural world on his life in his fisherman’s journal. Soon the journal includes lyrical nature writing, entertaining stories of the ones that got away, cheerful introspection about love, and yes, a tip or two.

THE CAMPING LIFE
by Brendan Leonard and Forest Woodward
Artisan, $24.95; pub. 3/2
Outdoor adventurers Leonard and Woodward cover it all: how to pack a backpack, how to set up a tent in the snow, how to camp with your dog, how to build a campfire, how to judge a river’s difficulty. And, critically, how to leave no trace, while returning home refreshed, recharged, and alive with new experience.

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Sports & Outdoors

HOT, HOT CHICKEN
by Rachel Louise Martin
Vanderbilt University Press, $19.95; pub. 3/15
For almost 70 years, hot chicken was made and sold primarily in Nashville's Black neighborhoods—its story says something powerful about race relations in Nashville, especially as the city tries to figure out what it will be in the future. This engaging read recounts the history of Nashville’s Black communities through the story of its hot chicken scene from the Civil War all the way up to current hot chicken craze.

BLACK, WHITE, AND THE GREY
by Mashama Bailey and John O. Morisano
Lorena Jones Books, $28.00; pub. 1/12
This is the story about The Grey in Savannah, and the two individuals with seemingly little in common—James Beard Award winner Mashama Bailey from Queens and restaurateur John O. Morisano from Staten Island—who partnered up, relocated to the South, and built a relationship and a restaurant they knew would get people talking about race, gender, class, and culture.

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The first full biography of the star Negro Leaguer and Hall of Famer. Born to sharecroppers in Mississippi, Bell was part of the Great Migration, and in St. Louis, baseball saved Bell from a life working in slaughterhouses. Wheeler charts Bell’s ups and downs in life and in baseball. Rich in context and suffused in myth, this is a treat for fans of baseball history.

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PICTURE BOOKS

MOMMY
by Leslie Patricelli
Candlewick, $7.99; pub. 3/2; Ages 0+
Every day is Mother’s Day as the inimitable Baby sings Mommy’s praises in this board book full of humor and heart.

YOU BE MOMMY
by Karla Clark, illus. Zoe Persico
Feiwel & Friends, $7.99; pub. 3/30; Ages 2-6
A tired mother lets her rambunctious toddler have a turn being the parent at bedtime in this sweet lullaby board book.

SPRING STINKS
by Ryan T. Higgins
Disney-Hyperion, $9.99; pub. 1/5; Ages 2-5
Ruth the bunny is excited to share the smelly springtime smells of spring with Bruce! But what will Bruce think of all that stink? This pint-sized “Little Bruce Book” is perfect for fans of the Mother Bruce board books.

A NEW DAY
by Brad Meltzer, illus. Dan Santat
Dial Books, $17.99; pub. 3/2; Ages 3-5
Signed Copies Available
Sunday quit, just like that. She said she was tired of being a day. So the other days of the week had no choice but to advertise: “WANTED: A NEW DAY. Must be relaxing, tranquil, and replenishing. Serious inquiries only.”

OUTSIDE, INSIDE
by LeUyen Pham
Roaring Brook Press, $18.99
pub. 1/5; Ages 3-6
From Caldecott honoree Pham, a moving picture book celebrating essential workers and the community coming together to face the challenges of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

MEL FELL
by Corey R. Tabor
Balzer + Bray, $17.99; pub. 2/2; Ages 4-8
A charming and innovative tale about self-confidence and taking a leap of faith, starring an adorable, brave kingfisher.

OONA
by Kelly DiPucchio, illus. Raissa Figueroa
Katherine Tegan Books, $17.99; pub. 1/12; Ages 4-8
Meet Oona. The big sea’s littlest mischief maker. She and her best friend, Otto, love to search for treasure...but often find trouble instead. Messy trouble. Tricky trouble. Even shark-related trouble. That’s never stopped them before, though!

MILO IMAGINES THE WORLD
by Matt de la Peña, illus. Christian Robinson
G.P. Putnam’s Sons Books for Young Readers, $18.99; pub. 2/2; Ages 4-8
Signed Copies Available
Milo is on a long subway ride with his older sister. To pass the time, he studies the faces around him and makes pictures of their lives. Eventually, though, Milo realizes that you can’t really know anyone just by looking at them.

THE DUCK WHO DIDN’T LIKE WATER
by Steve Small; Simon & Schuster, $17.99
pub. 3/30; Ages 4-8
Duck is not like other ducks. Duck doesn’t like water and is perfectly fine alone, thank you very much. But one dark and stormy night, an outgoing, water-loving, and very lost Frog turns up at Duck’s door. Can this odd couple find Frog’s home? And will they find friendship along the way?

EYES THAT KISS IN THE CORNER
by Joanna Ho, illus. Dung Ho
HarperCollins, $17.99; pub. 1/5; Ages 4-8
The tender yet powerful words and vibrant illustrations in this lovely picture book inspire readers to recognize their own beauty and strength, igniting a revolution of self-discovery and confidence.

THE ROCK FROM THE SKY
by Jon Klassen
Candlewick, $18.99; pub. 4/13; Ages 4-8
A hilarious meditation on the workings of friendship, fate, shared futuristic visions, and that funny feeling you get that there’s something off somewhere, but you just can’t put your finger on it.

Capacity at Square Books Jr. is limited to 8 customers. For information about appointments, please call the store at 662-236-2207.
Zonia’s Rain Forest
by Juana Martinez-Neal
Candlewick, $17.99; pub. 3/30; Ages 4-8
Zonia’s home is the Amazon rain forest, where it is always green and full of life. Every morning, the rain forest calls to Zonia, and every morning, she answers, visiting the creatures of the forest. But one morning, the rain forest calls to her in a troubled voice. How will Zonia answer?

Follow That Frog!
by Philip C. Stead
Neal Porter Books, $18.99; pub. 2/2; Ages 4-8
Signed Copies Available
When a curiously croaking stranger comes knocking at the door, Aunt Josephine launches into a rambling tale about her lifelong pursuit of a rare giant frog in this story full of rambunctious fun and sensational artwork!

Harry and the Guinea Pig
by Gene Zion, illus. Margaret Bloy Graham
HarperCollins, $17.99; pub. 1/5; Ages 4-8
Harry is a white dog with black spots who loves being the center of his family’s attention. But when the neighbor’s guinea pig visits for a whole week, Harry feels ignored, so he sprints into action, doing everything he can to be noticed. Then the children decide to bring both Harry and the guinea pig to school, and the real adventure begins!

Dear Teacher
by Lisa Paris Rosenthal, illus. Holly Hatam
$18.99; pub. 2/17; Ages 4-8
A thank-you letter to leaders everywhere. Penned by Paris Rosenthal—a bestselling author and the daughter of the beloved Amy Krouse Rosenthal—this book makes an ideal gift for a teacher, coach, instructor, or role model from the children who appreciate them.

Someone Builds the Dream
by Lisa Wheeler, illus. Loren Long
Dial Books, $19.99; pub. 3/23; Ages 5-8
Signed Copies Available
Gorgeously illustrated, this is an eye-opening exploration of the many types of work that go into building our world—from the making of a bridge to a wind farm, an amusement park, and even the very picture book that you’re reading.

What the Road Said
by Cleo Wade, illus. Lucie de Moyencourt
Feiwel & Friends, $18.99; pub. 3/23; Ages 6-10
This picture book celebrates the journey we are all on, and the questions we ask along the way. With gentle reminders that it’s okay to be afraid or wander down the wrong path, children (and adults) are encouraged to lead with kindness and remember that the most important thing we can do in life is to keep going.

Love
by Robert Sabuda
Candlewick, $29.99; pub. 3/30; Ages 5-8
Tender expressions of the different guises of love spring from the pages of this charming pop-up book. The ideal gift for someone you love!

Investigators: Off the Hook
by John Patrick Green
First Second, $9.99; pub. 2/23; Ages 7-10
Mango and Brash don their fanciest vests for this new mystery in the hilarious adventure series perfect for fans of Dog Man!

Slime for Dinner
(Geronimo Stilton Graphic Novel #2)
by Geronimo Stilton & Tom Angleberger
Graphix, $12.99; pub. 2/2; Ages 7-10
Geronimo receives a mysterious package: a gift-wrapped coffin! It was an invitation to a spine-tingling mystery dinner at Cacklefur Castle! Geronimo, Thea, and Trap find spiders, bats, and ... something slimy! Can Geronimo solve the mystery before he is frightened out of his fur?

Dog Man: Mothering Heights
by Dav Pilkey
Graphix, $12.99; pub. 3/23; Ages 7-10
Dog Man is down on his luck, Petey confronts his not so purr-fect past, and Grampa is up to no good. The world is spinning out of control as new villains spill into town. But hope is not lost. Can the incredible power of love save the day?

Claudia and the New Girl
by Ann M. Martin, illus. Gabriela Epstein
Graphix, $12.99; pub. 2/2; Ages 8-12
A brand-new Baby-sitters Club graphic novel! Claudia has always been the most creative kid in her class…until Ashley comes along. Ashley thinks Claudia is wasting her artistic talent with The BSC. When Claudia starts spending more time with Ashley and missing BSC meetings, it becomes clear that Claudia has a decision to make.

The Last Kids on Earth:
Thrilling Tales from the Tree House
by Max Brallier, illus. Douglas Holgate
Viking Books for Young Readers, $13.99; pub. 4/6; Ages 8-12
Signed Copies Available
The first-ever graphic novel in the Last Kids on Earth series. Includes six brand new Last Kids short stories full of sometimes outrageous, often hilarious details of their action-packed escapades during the monster-zombie apocalypse! Now a Netflix original series.
MIDDLE GRADE

AMARI AND THE NIGHT BROTHERS
by B.B. Alston
Balzer + Bray, $17.99; pub. 1/19; Ages 8-12
This has immediately become my number one middle grade fantasy recommendation. Not only is it fantastically imaginative (can I work at the Bureau, please?) but Amari is also a one-of-a-kind protagonist with guts, heart, and wisdom beyond her years. This is a story about family, legacy, and discovery; about being true to yourself and standing tall against opposition. I can’t think of a book we need more right now. – Sami

THE ANTI-BOOK
by Raphael Simon
Dial Books, $17.99; pub. 4/6; Ages 8-12
With nods to The Phantom Tollbooth and Coraline, this darkly funny fantasy is a classic-in-the-making—the story of a boy who wants the world to disappear...and what happens when it does.

RESCUE
by Jennifer A. Nielsen
Scholastic Press, $17.99; pub. 3/2; Ages 8-12
From a bestselling author comes a thrilling World War II story of espionage and intrigue, as one girl races to save her father and aid the French resistance.

MRS. FRISBY AND THE RATS OF NIMH
by Robert C. O’Brien, illus. Zena Bernstein
Aladdin, $9.99; pub. 3/23; Ages 8-12
A special 50th anniversary edition of the Newbery Award–winning classic about a brave mouse who makes unexpected new friends!

ARU SHAH AND THE CITY OF GOLD
by Roshani Chokshi
Rick Riordan Presents, $16.99; pub. 4/6; Ages 8-12
Signed Copies Available
Filled with wondrous magic, unforgettable creatures, manipulative gods, and laugh-out-loud dialogue, this fourth book in the Pandava series, a fantasy adventure loosely based on mythology, will leave readers wishing they could read the finale right now.

WILDERLORE: THE ACCIDENTAL APPRENTICE
by Amanda Foody
Margaret K. McElderry Books, $17.99; pub. 3/30; Ages 8-12
Eleven-year-old Barclay must set off on a quest in the mysterious Woods after he accidentally bonds with a magical Beast and goes from mushroom farmer's apprentice to reluctant hero in this exciting adventure brimming with heart and cheeky humor.

GROUND ZERO
by Alan Gratz
Scholastic Press, $17.99; pub. 2/2; Ages 9-12
Signed Copies Available
A pulse-pounding and unforgettable take on history and hope, revenge and fear—and the stunning links between the past and present. Two kids. One devastating day. Nothing will ever be the same.

THIRTEEN WITCHES: THE MEMORY THIEF
by Jodi Lynn Anderson
Alladin, $17.99; pub. 3/2; Ages 9-13
A young girl whose mother doesn’t remember her has to battle witches to regain her family, her friends, her history and ultimately, her world.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

FUNGARIUM
by Ester Gaya, illus. Katie Scott
Big Picture Press, $35.00; pub. 4/6
Ages 8-12
Exploring every sort of fungi, from the ones on supermarket shelves to those like penicillium that have shaped history, this collection is the definitive introduction to what fungi are and just how vital they are to the world’s ecosystem.

GONE TO THE WOODS
by Gary Paulsen
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, $17.99
pub. 1/12; Ages 8-12
A middle-grade memoir from a living literary legend, giving readers a new perspective on the origin of Paulsen’s famed survival stories.

THE OUTDOOR SCIENTIST
by Temple Grandin
Philomel Books, $18.99; pub. 4/6; Ages 8-12
Grandin, an inventor and world-renowned scientist, introduces readers to the many scientists who unlock the wonders of the natural world. With forty projects to give readers a deeper understanding of the world around them, from the depths of space to their own backyard, this is a perfect read for budding scientists, inventors, and creators!
**HOUSE OF HOLLOW**  
by Krystal Sutherland  
G.P. Putnam’s Sons Books for Young Readers, $18.99; pub. 4/6; Ages 12+  
A dark, twisty modern fairytale in which three sisters discover they are not exactly all that they seem and evil things really do go bump in the night.

**MUTED**  
by Tami Charles  
Scholastic Press, $18.99; pub. 2/2; Ages 12+  
Inspired by true events, *Muted* is a fearless exploration of the dark side of the music industry, the business of exploitation, how a girl’s dreams can be used against her—and what it takes to fight back.

**THE PROJECT**  
by Courtney Summers  
Wednesday Books, $18.99; pub. 2/2; Ages 13-18  
*Signed Copies Available*  
Orphaned and betrayed, Lo Denham seeks to uncover the truth about the organization that her sister thinks saved her. However, the closer Lo gets to the Unity Project, the more she struggles to make sense of her own traumatic past. Perfect for fans of dark YA thrillers, *The Project* is a chilling story sure to leave readers speechless. — Asia

**VICTORIES GREATER THAN DEATH**  
by Charlie Jane Anders  
Tor Teen, $18.99; pub. 4/13; Ages 12+  
*Signed Copies Available*  
A thrilling adventure set against an intergalactic war with an international bestselling author at the helm in her YA debut—think Star Wars meets Doctor Who, and buckle your seatbelts.

**LOST IN THE NEVER WOODS**  
by Aiden Thomas  
Swoon Reads, $18.99; pub. 3/23; Ages 13-18  
When children start to go missing in the local woods, a teen girl must face her fears and a past she can’t remember to rescue them in this atmospheric YA novel from the author of *Cemetery Boys*.

**RULE OF WOLVES**  
by Leigh Bardugo  
Imprint, $22.99; pub. 3/30; Ages 14-18  
The wolves are circling and a young king will face his greatest challenge in the explosive finale of the bestselling King of Scars Duology. And the Grishaverse will be coming to Netflix soon with *Shadow and Bone*, an original series!

**GAME CHANGER**  
by Neal Shusterman  
Quill Tree Books, $17.99; pub. 2/9; Ages 14+  
*Signed Copies Available*  
This new novel from National Book Award–winning and bestselling author Shusterman is an ambitious, high-concept, and magnetic novel about a teenage football player who finds himself in a series of parallel lives that he barely recognizes as his.

**CONCRETE ROSE**  
by Angie Thomas  
Balzer + Bray, $19.99; pub. 1/12; Ages 14+  
*Signed Copies Available*  
International phenomenon Angie Thomas revisits Garden Heights seventeen years before the events of *The Hate U Give* in this searing and poignant exploration of Black boyhood and manhood.

**WINTERKEEP**  
by Kristin Cashore  
Dial Books, $19.99; pub. 1/19; Ages 14+  
*Signed Copies Available*  
Winterkeep is a land of miracles, a democratic republic run by people who like each other, where people speak to sea creatures, adopt telepathic foxes as pets, and fly across the sky in ships attached to balloons. But when Bitterblue’s envoys to Winterkeep drown under suspicious circumstances, she, Giddon, and her half-sister Hava set off to discover the truth.

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