

## The Bookworm Presents the Indie Next List for July 2020

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From: The Bookworm (bookwormomaha@shelf-awareness.com)

To:

Date: Thursday, July 2, 2020, 10:10 AM CDT

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The best new books this month chosen by us and other independent booksellers across the country.

### From Our Store

During times like these we're grateful for the solace and escape of a great book. We're grateful also for your support. We hope you and yours are all safe and sound, and we hope you love these books as much as we do.

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## THIS MONTH'S #1 INDIE NEXT LIST PICK...

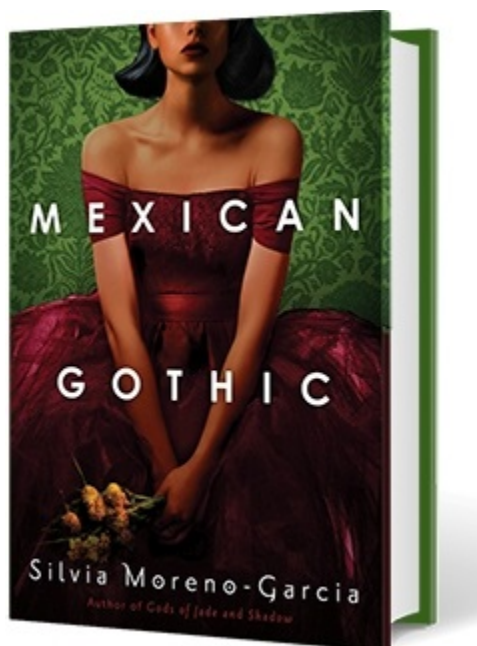
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### Mexican Gothic

By Silvia Moreno-Garcia

(Del Rey, 9780525620785, \$27)

"Creepy and romantic, *Mexican Gothic* is easily one of my favorite books of 2020! Upon receiving a strange letter from her cousin, Noemi Taboada goes to investigate the happenings of High Place, a decaying manor filled with secrets, and is plagued by terrifying dreams and visions. Moreno-Garcia delivers a fresh take on a classic gothic novel that will grab your attention from the very first chapter!"





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## THIS MONTH'S #1 INDIE NEXT LIST PICK AUTHOR INTERVIEW

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Independent booksellers across the country have chosen *Mexican Gothic* by Silvia Moreno-Garcia (Del Rey) as their number-one pick for the July 2020 Indie Next List.

### **Where did the idea for this book come from?**

This novel was inspired by several things, one of them being a real town called Real del Monte, located in the mountains of Hidalgo. It was an important mining center and it's nicknamed "little Cornwall" because of the British mining operations that took place there in the 19th century. Because of that history, it has a specific kind of architecture. It doesn't look exactly like other Mexican towns in the area. The other thing that it has is an English cemetery, which, when I visited, looked like something out of a Hammer film. I thought about that cemetery for a while, just kept it in the back of my head, and when I was thinking of what to write next, it came back it came back as a visual idea. So, that was one of the inspirations, and the other inspiration was the mid-20th century Gothic novels, which most people tend to recognize as paperbacks with a cover of a woman running away from a castle at night in a flowing gown. There are other elements that inspired me, like horror films of the time period--black and white horror films, Hammer films, that kind of thing.



(photo: Martin Dee)

### **Noemí and her cousin Catalina repeatedly reference Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, in addition to fairy tales, like *Snow White* and *Sleeping Beauty*. Why did you decide to incorporate these aspects?**

Because I was interested in the cultural legacy of Mexico, and specifically in this town, in these British mining operations. It's not the only place in Mexico that had, and has still, European mining operations going on. At first, this one was mined by the Spanish and then it was mined by the British. And I was just interested in seeing what happens when somebody comes in from another part of the world and begins exploring the local resources, the local population. Normally, they just leave when the resources run out or something doesn't go right, when a war or conflict interferes. But the scars that that leaves are great. Mexico and all of Latin America have systematically been plundered for decades in one way or another by foreign powers, so this was just one part of that plundering.

I think most people know that there was a Spanish Conquest. I think they think that once there was a war of independence [but] in all of Latin America, things didn't just end in 1800, where everyone was free and happy and nothing bad ever happened again.....

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## MORE INDIE NEXT LIST GREAT READS



### Take a Hint, Dani Brown

By Talia Hibbert

(Avon, 9780062941237, \$15.99, trade paper)

"*Take a Hint, Dani Brown* is a heartwarming romance that shines a light in dark times. Talia Hibbert normalizes quirks, coping mechanisms, and other human conditions that can get glossed over in a happily ever after. She makes it clear that verbalizing needs, sharing them with a loved one, and having them accepted is the true meaning of love. The depth of the characters and their struggles to come together are wonderfully balanced with charm, humor, and a large dollop of sarcasm. *Take a Hint, Dani Brown* is a delight."

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--Julie Karaganis, Copper Dog Books, Beverly, MA



### The Girl From Widow Hills

By Megan Miranda

(Simon & Schuster, 9781501165429, \$26.99)

"How do you cope when the whole world knows your name and acts like they own a bit of your trauma story? Maybe you change your name, like Olivia does, and try to make a break from your past. Until one night when you find yourself sleepwalking. Like you did 20 years ago. And suddenly not only has your past caught up with you, it is legit stalking you. Now your secret is out, but there are even more deadly secrets hiding in the shadows. The final twists in this story are so sharp, you'll check yourself for stab wounds! Another fantastic, twisty, thrilling read from Megan Miranda!"



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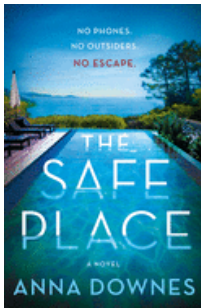
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--Kate Towery, Fountain Bookstore, Richmond, VA



### The Safe Place

By Anna Downes



(Minotaur Books, 9781250264800, \$26.99)

"*The Safe Place* is sure to captivate readers as they look to unearth the secret within the gates of an idyllic estate on the southern coast of France. From chapter one, I was hooked and transported to the luxurious lifestyle Downes creates in the book. Her storytelling and the myriad of clues she sprinkles throughout the story made this an unputdownable page-turner. A must for your 2020 reading list!"

--Elise Lee, Away With Words Bookshop, Poulsbo, WA

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## The Only Good Indians

By Stephen Graham Jones

(Gallery/Saga Press, 9781982136451, \$26.99)

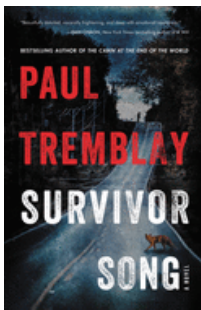
"I loved this book. Jones has a unique narrative voice, allowing 'the entity' to step in and take over unexpectedly, amping up the horror. Also, each character has a distinct voice that brings them to life. Jones combines the culture and traditions of the Blackfoot and Crow people with the social truths of their contemporary life. It is refreshingly different from any other horror novel I've read. This book is gruesome and honestly scary. I couldn't put it down."

--Kristine Jelstrom-Hamill, Buttonwood Books and Toys, Cohasset, MA



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## Survivor Song

By Paul Tremblay

(William Morrow, 9780062679161, \$27.99)

"When a take-no-prisoners virus sweeps through the area, how will people react? *Survivor Song* is a thriller that follows a pair of friends trying to survive, but it also offers an interesting and realistic look at how society on a local scale may try to cope while also trying to maintain some semblance of order. On the other side of the coin, others don't always have everyone's best interests at heart. Can our characters make it? Can society withstand a disaster like this?"


--Lydia Frederick, Owosso Books & Beans, Owosso, MI

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THE WILL TO SURVIVE.



"AS BEAUTIFUL AND AS WRENCHING AS ANYTHING I'VE EVER READ."  
—EMILY ST. JOHN MANDEL

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## Fresh Water for Flowers

By Valérie Perrin  
Hildegard Serle (Transl.)

(Europa Editions, 9781609455958, \$25)

"Valérie Perrin's *Fresh Water for Flowers* is gorgeous. Reading it was almost like being baptized by Violette's presence as a cemetery keeper, in its comfort, stability, and floral surroundings. Perrin takes us into the pool of Violette's melancholic past, from first loves to devastating losses. It truly gripped each and every one of my emotions, from fear and sorrow to elation and sentimentality. Whatever I can write as a review, this book is still so much more. I'm so thankful to have read it and can't wait to share it with readers."

--Cat Chapman, The Oxford Exchange, Tampa, FL

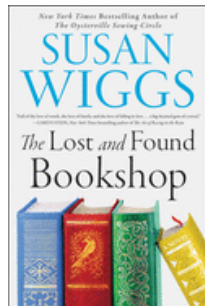


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## The Lost and Found Bookshop

By Susan Wiggs

(William Morrow, 9780062914095, \$27.99)

"This is an absolutely splendid novel that spoke volumes to me. You have a girl who experiences a tragedy that leads to a better life, despite issues and hardship along the way, and a guy right in front of her who is perfect for her though she assumes he is not. I highlighted so many passages in this book to savor and remember. This is a perfect story for bookstore lovers and lovers of books."

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

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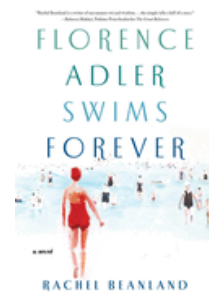
## Florence Adler Swims Forever

By Rachel Beanland

(Simon & Schuster, 9781982132460, \$25.99)

"Florence Adler comes alive on the pages of this book, from the first page until the last. Told mainly through the perspective of her 11-year-old niece, Gussy, the characters are fully realized as sympathetic yet flawed human beings. I was drawn to all, but mostly to Florence's mother, Esther. Esther's fierce love for Florence and her sister, and her drive to protect them, propels her actions throughout the book, and she doesn't allow the reader--or herself--to succumb to emotions until the end of the story. This may be the best book of the year."

--Camille Kovach, Completely Booked, Murrysville, PA



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## The Shadows

By Alex North

(Celadon Books, 9781250318039, \$26.99)



"Paul Adams may have left behind his hometown and the tragedy that happened 25 years ago, but as we know, 'The past is never dead. It's not even past.' The murder that has haunted him for so long comes roaring back into his life when there's a new killing and secrets are uncovered. Dreams really do come true, but this one may just kill Paul. Highly atmospheric and emotionally gripping, *The Shadows* is best read with all the lights on and well before you plan to go to sleep."

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

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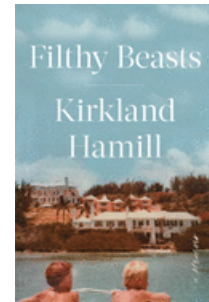


## Filthy Beasts: A Memoir

By Kirkland Hamill

(Avid Reader Press/Simon & Schuster, 9781982122768, \$27)

"Memoir enthusiasts will love *Filthy Beasts* by debut author Kirkland Hamill. East Coast wealth, glamorous locations, and a dysfunctional family make for a great blend of memoir and page-turner. Hamill, brought up by a loving but alcoholic mother, sets forth an honest and heartbreaking story that is well-written and well worth reading this summer."



--Sally Lovegrove, Barrett Bookstore, Darien, CT



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## Crooked Hallelujah

By Kelli Jo Ford

(Grove Press, 9780802149121, \$26)

"This astonishing debut fills the imagination with vivid scenes of life in Oklahoma's Cherokee Nation and in the oil country of Texas. Home can be hard to find, men can be forever unreliable, and poverty can be more brutal than the harsh rural landscape, but the bonds women form with their mothers, grandmothers, and daughters make life not just bearable but luminous. This is an astonishing debut novel, rich in Cherokee history and culture, full-bodied in terms of character, and as bighearted as the women it portrays."



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--Betsy Burton, The King's English Bookshop, Salt Lake City, UT



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## The Last Flight

By Julie Clark

(Sourcebooks Landmark, 9781728215723, \$26.99)

"When two women from different backgrounds, each with good reason for wanting to escape her current life, meet by chance at JFK, they decide to switch plane tickets and identities. When one of the flights crashes, the action really begins. This is a

unique thriller that draws you into both lives and will have you turning the pages until the unexpected but perfect ending. I loved it!"

--Terry Gilman, Creating Conversations, Redondo Beach, CA



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## Utopia Avenue

By David Mitchell

(Random House, 9780812997439, \$30)

"Another delightfully addictive novel from this masterful storyteller. We get in on the ground floor witnessing the formation and rise of a rock band in London just as the British Invasion is taking off. Filled with great characters and lots of fun, inside Mitchellisms fans will love--a character named De Zoet, an album with Cloud Atlas in the title--this is a wonderful book and perfect summer reading."

--Cody Morrison, Square Books, Oxford, MS

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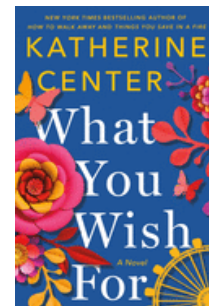
## What You Wish For

By Katherine Center

(St. Martin's Press, 9781250219367, \$27.99)

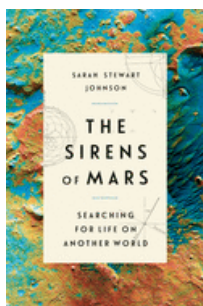
"Sam Casey loves her job as an elementary school librarian on Galveston Island. That is until the founder and principal suddenly passes away and is replaced by Sam's former crush Duncan Carpenter, who has become a stickler for rules and safety rather than the carefree, charismatic leader he was when they worked together years ago. As Sam and her colleagues try to thwart Duncan's initiatives, she digs deeper to learn why he's changed. A lovely novel about moving through grief and choosing to find joy wherever you can."

--Cathy Berner, Blue Willow Bookshop, Houston, TX



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## The Sirens of Mars: Searching for Life on Another World

By Sarah Stewart Johnson

(Crown, 9781101904817, \$28.99)

"I loved this quietly gorgeous book. Sarah Johnson Stewart brings her characters to vivid life--philosophers and scientists from the annals of Western history, family and teachers from her own life, or the dusty dunes of the 'red planet' itself--with clear, almost poetic prose, detailing the history of humanity's fascination with Mars, as well



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as her own. You will leave these pages with a deeper understanding of interplanetary science and the wonder of humanity's next discovery."

--Jocelyn Shratter, Bookshop Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA



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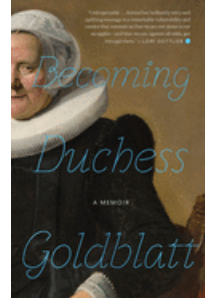
## Becoming Duchess Goldblatt: A Memoir

By Anonymous

(Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 9780358216773, \$24)

"After the collapse of her marriage and her whole life, the anonymous author of *Becoming Duchess Goldblatt* started a Twitter account, speaking in the voice of an imperious, slightly dotty, always caring 81-year-old writer. The Duchess became the focus of intense adoration and eventually helped her creator to reconnect with the 'real world' even as she kept her identity a secret. *Becoming Duchess Goldblatt* is a glorious memoir, a truly 21st-century tale of life both online and off."

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



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## Friends and Strangers

By J. Courtney Sullivan

(Knopf, 9780525520597, \$27.95)

"I will be recommending J. Courtney Sullivan's newest to my friends and even perfect strangers this summer. It's that good! So many of my best friends are new mothers right now and I can't wait to get this book in their hands. It's the perfect grass-is-always-greener story. It's smart, it's relevant, and it touches on so many relationships, from motherhood to marriage, from friendship to acquaintanceship. I loved it!"

--Tim Ehrenberg, Nantucket Bookworks, Nantucket, MA

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## Nine Shiny Objects

By Brian Castleberry

(Custom House, 9780062984395, \$27.99)

"This debut novel is a puzzle worth working out--don't give up! Castleberry cleverly entwines nine characters over 50 years--a tribute to America as we struggle to 'become enlightened' while at the same time understand those who reject new ideas. This book will make you think, work through the characters, and come out with a complex but beautiful story describing the American movement since 1947. Assume nothing about this book--or even its title. It's beautiful!"

--Kappy Kling, HearthFire Books, Evergreen, CO



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## The Beauty in Breaking: A Memoir By Michele Harper



(Riverhead Books, 9780525537380, \$27)

"This memoir is a fascinating examination of a life dedicated to helping others, and an illuminating, up-close view of what happens in emergency rooms. Moments of profound human connection exist alongside confrontations with dangerous and erratic patients, overzealous police demands, a lack of resources, and bureaucratic barriers. And the author's perspective as one of few African American female ER doctors is a valuable contribution to our understanding of the profession."

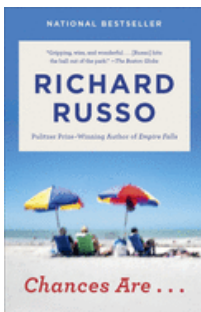
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--Mary Williams, Skylight Books, Los Angeles, CA



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## Chances Are... By Richard Russo

(Vintage, 9781101971994, \$16)

"This book reads like a literary mystery. Forty years ago, a woman disappeared while at a get-together at Martha's Vineyard. Now, the four friends who were with her have returned to the scene, still driven by a need to know what happened. This latest story by Richard Russo has all the elements that make him one of the most popular authors today: characters we can relate to, settings that we see in our dreams, and a story both perplexing and satisfying. Fans and new readers alike will enjoy diving in."

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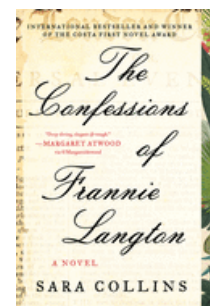
--Linda Bond, Auntie's Bookstore, Spokane, WA



## The Confessions of Frannie Langton By Sara Collins

(Harper Perennial, 9780062851802, \$16.99)

"Drawing on her experiences of growing up in the Cayman Islands, attending university in London, and practicing law, outstanding debut author Sara Collins has drawn a character one will not soon forget. Told with evocative language, Frannie Langton's confession is a life story not to be missed. Raised on a sugar plantation in Jamaica, then transported to a life of servitude in London, Frannie lives a life of twists and turns of love and betrayal that will both shock and intrigue you. I was as tense as she was waiting for the verdict to be handed down. Thank you, Sara Collins!"



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--Mary Mollman, Booked, Evanston, IL



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## The Editor By Steven Rowley

(G.P. Putnam's Sons, 9780525537984, \$17)

"Steven Rowley's new novel is exactly the balm I needed in today's climate. Focusing on a young writer who discovers that his editor is none other than Jackie Kennedy Onassis, the book explores both romantic and familial relationships in a humorous and touching manner. Although the writing is wickedly barbed and the zingers fly at the speed of a 1940s rom-com, *The Editor* is so much more. There is real heart in the writing as well as real love between the characters. It's a true delight and the kind of book people who loved *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine* or *Less* will truly enjoy. Just be prepared with a box of tissues and your favorite cocktail (Jackie would suggest daiquiris)."

--William Carl, An Unlikely Story, Plainville, MA



## Exhalation: Stories By Ted Chiang

(Vintage, 9781101972083, \$16.95)

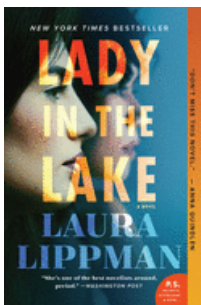
"WOW. My first experience with Ted Chiang absolutely blew me out of the water. Each story left me with wide eyes and a racing mind, running to my husband to read a passage so we could both be knocked over with wonder. *Exhalation* filled me with so many questions about our collective past, present, and future, I'll be coming back to this book again and again trying to find the answers."

--Kasey Kane, Country Bookshelf, Bozeman, MT



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## Lady in the Lake By Laura Lippman

(William Morrow Paperbacks, 9780062390028, \$16.99)

"I continue to be in awe of Laura Lippman's ability to write novels that are so much more than mysteries. *Lady in the Lake* is, of course, a wonderful mystery with twists and turns and surprises--nothing is predictable. But it is also a beautiful character study and a sensitive look at the desire to have a meaningful life and how ambition can be motivating but also blinding. I loved the multiple voices in the novel--Laura's characters are never perfect and therefore come across as real people with real needs. I have no doubt that *Lady in the Lake* will be a huge success."

--Ann Berlin, The Ivy Bookshop, Baltimore, MD



## The Lager Queen of Minnesota By J. Ryan Stradal

(Penguin Books, 9780399563065, \$17)

"A Minnesota family grounded in farming, beer, and award-winning pies is split for decades when one of two sisters inherits the farm. Helen and Edith--whose stories author J. Ryan Stradal effectively weaves together--stop speaking, while one's fortunes soar and the other's plummet. When a woman of the next generation has a chance at success, she may also reunite the Calder family. Stradal brings the heartland to the page with warmth, humor, and plenty of hops-inspired lore."

--Cheryl McKeon, Book Passage, Corte Madera, CA



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## The Last Train to London

By Meg Waite Clayton

(Harper Paperbacks, 9780062946942, \$16.99)

"Based on a real heroine of the Dutch resistance and scrupulously researched, *The Last Train to London* brings to vivid life the extraordinary bravery of one fiercely dedicated childless woman who is attempting to save the lives of literally thousands of innocent children as Hitler marshals his forces across Europe. By writing the Kindertransport story as a novel, Meg Waite Clayton captures the humanity of the young victims and the inhumanity of those who were 'just following orders' more than any biography could. A memorable addition to the literature of World War II and one that is eerily relevant to present-day migrant struggles the world over."

--Marion Abbott, Mrs. Dalloway's Literary & Garden Arts, Berkeley, CA

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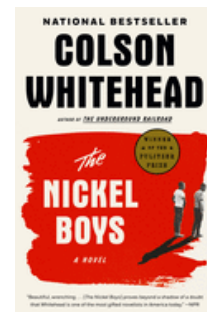
## The Nickel Boys

By Colson Whitehead

(Anchor, 9780345804341, \$15.95)

"With every book, Colson Whitehead proves his ever-growing genius. He's a master of the written word and truly one of the greatest living American novelists of our time. I didn't think it was possible for him to write something better than *Underground Railroad*, but he most certainly has--*The Nickel Boys* grabbed me at page one. It's a mystery and a thriller, a treatise on race and social injustice, and a literary masterpiece all rolled into one. Ellwood and Turner are characters that will stay with me forever. This should be mandatory reading in every classroom."

--Michelle Malonzo, Changing Hands, Tempe, AZ



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## Say Say Say

By Lila Savage

(Vintage, 9780525565529, \$16)

"Say Say Say is a small and subtle debut novel that packs an emotional wallop. Lila Savage's writing is so beautiful and vulnerable it's impossible to put down. This is the kind of novel that shines with such honesty and compassion you feel the need re-



evaluate your life right along the main character, Ella. I eagerly await reading anything else Savage writes."

--Katerina Argyres, Bookshop West Portal, San Francisco, CA

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## The Secrets We Kept By Lara Prescott

(Vintage, 9780525566106, \$16.95)

"This perfect historical novel is made of the most alluring ingredients. First, a divine and doomed love affair between Russian author Boris Pasternak and his muse and secretary, Olga Ivinskaya, a woman immortalized in Pasternak's epic novel *Doctor Zhivago*, which was banned in Russia for more than 30 years. Second, two American women typists working for CIA and their forbidden love story in the midst of the Cold War and the witch hunt against homosexuals. Lara Prescott brilliantly portrays how a timeless novel like *Doctor Zhivago* can change course of history. After I finished reading *The Secrets We Kept*, I pressed the book against my chest, as if I could hear the lovers' hearts still beating."



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--Aggie Zivaljevic, Kepler's Books, Menlo Park, CA



## The Snakes By Sadie Jones

(Harper Perennial, 9780062897039, \$16.99)

"Breathless. This novel left me absolutely breathless. I found beauty in the multiple layers of sadness and tragedy of the characters and felt a unique sense of closeness to the main character. Jones has delivered an enthralling tale of personal exploration, leading us through scenes full of deep and raw emotion that leave the reader unsure where to place their alliance. Superb!"

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--Jennifer Morrow, Bards Alley, Vienna, VA



## Three Women By Lisa Taddeo

(Avid Reader Press/Simon & Schuster, 9781451642308, \$17)

"I can't recall the last time I've been reading a work of nonfiction and woken up excited purely by the fact that, today, I would get to read more. Compulsive and psychologically riveting, *Three Women* reads like a novel. I couldn't keep from dog-eared its pages each time Taddeo perfectly expressed something I'd felt but never





had the words for. In Sloane, Maggie, and Lina, I recognized aspects of myself--namely the desire for connection and for love. When three women tell their uncensored truth, they can liberate a nation. I feel deeply grateful to Lisa Taddeo for giving us this gift of raw authenticity."

--Michaela Carter, Peregrine Book Company, Prescott, AZ

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