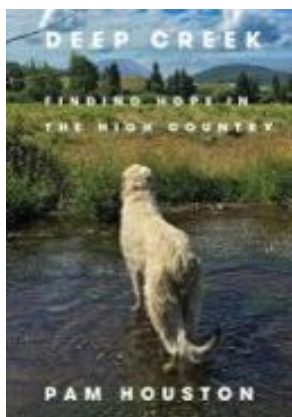


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# THE Inkslinger

Winter Issue 2019

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## **Deep Creek: Finding Hope in the High Country**, Pam Houston

Pam Houston is one tough cookie. Someone the words “true grit” describe perfectly. She is also one hell of a writer, her vision honed by the outdoor world she so loves and over which she has roamed so far, her craft shaped by years spent as a writer and teacher of writing. She’s lived through a lot, had much to come to terms with, and has

found a brilliant way of doing so—one that deals with the agony of the abuse she has experienced, the abuse the earth has experienced, obliquely rather than from a pulpit. Braiding understated strands from her own past with tales of the 120 acres of high Colorado land she has for years protected with the ferocity of a mother bear and the passion of true love, she shapes her accounts of storms and pets and wildlife with silences as eloquent as her most harrowing passages, her compassion—for herself (finally) as well as the world at large—deep and abiding. Houston has crafted a wise and wild and lovely memoir awash with the hope of the subtitle, one that bestows grace on its readers even as it makes peace with the past. A book that will linger in the heart, this is the perfect way to start a year—a new beginning in the best sense of the word. – Betsy Burton, Norton, \$25.95 *Editor’s note: Houston will visit TKE Wednesday, March 13, 7 p.m.*

## **Hope in Dark Times: An Interview with Pam Houston**

by Betsy Burton



I had the pleasure of talking with Pam Houston about her new memoir *Deep Creek: Finding Hope in the High Country* not long ago and, because I had known her since she was a lowly grad student (her words, not mine), I was immensely curious not only about her relationship with the natural world and her journey as a writer and a person over the years, but also about what part in that journey the writing of this particular book played—and about writing in general. Here are some highlights from our conversation:

**BB:** The word grounded, implied if not stated in both the introduction and the final pages of your amazing memoir, is not one I’d have chosen when I read *Cowboys Are My Weakness* back in the ‘70s—much as I adored that book. Tell me, do you now actually feel as grounded—and at the same time as free—as hopeful, even—as you seem to, and if so, does this feeling come as a surprise to you?

**PH:** Good question. I do think of this book as more...well, all of my books are autobiographical but this one more than the others—like, whatever happened to that cowboy girl? She was headed for trouble. But maybe not...I do feel more grounded. But with the caveat that I still feel like an East Coaster who came West. Maybe not quite as much anymore, but I’m definitely not pretending that this is my land. In the first place we stole this land. And homesteaders carved a living out of this place so I owe them a debt too. I don’t pretend that, oh, yeah I’m a native now... But this land has given me a home. It is my home. I never had a home, and never exactly knew I needed one. I was happy on the road, moving around. That’s a natural state for me but the ranch allowed me to cultivate a side I didn’t know I had. I didn’t have any model for it.

So am I surprised? Yes. Buying that ranch was the most surprising thing I ever did in terms of me surprising myself. And what was even more surprising was that I stuck with it. Everything had always been temporary in my life, including relationships. Then a few years ago I thought, ‘I’ve had this land for a long time.’ I had thought buying it was just a crazy adrenalized act. But all of a sudden my whole life had gone by.

That was the impetus for writing this book. I wanted to understand why I bought it. And why I stuck with it. (*continued on page 3*)

**SALE! SALE! SALE!**

**Pick up gifts for all your Valentines  
at TKE’s Semi-annual Sale!**

**30% off hardcovers, 40% off three  
or more, 10% off everything else\***

**Thursday, February 7th –  
Sunday, February 10th**

*\*Excluding special orders and gift cards*

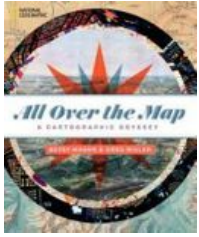
**See the calendar on page 2 for all our upcoming events!**



## Save the Date for These Events!



### Adults



**Wednesday, February 6, 7 p.m.** Rowland Hall alum Betsy Mason will join us to share her amazing *All Over the Map: A Cartographic Odyssey*.

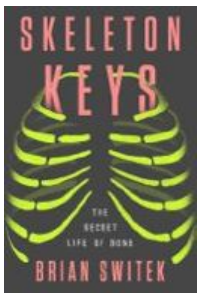
**Thursday, February 7 – Sunday, February 10.** It's our semi-annual hardcover sale! Bring your Valentine! See details on page 1.

**Thursday, February 21,**

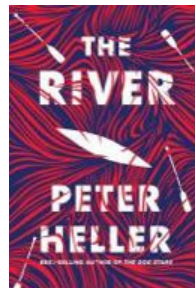
**7 p.m.** Writer Ann Weisberger will read from and sign her new novel, *The Glovemaker*, set in southern Utah during the winter of 1887-1888.



**Tuesday, March 5, 7 p.m.** Nature writer Brian Switek will debut his new book, *Skeleton Keys*, which explains the beauty of bones from dinosaurs to human beings!



**Tuesday, March 12, 7 p.m.** TKE favorite Peter Heller will read from and sign his fast-moving and fabulous new novel, *The River*.



**Wednesday, March 13, 7 p.m.** The inimitable Pam Houston joins us to read from and sign her memoir, *Deep Creek: Finding Hope in the High Country*. (see page 1)

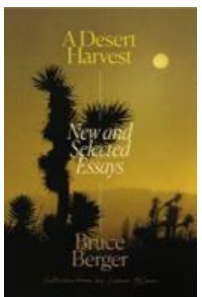


**Thursday, March 14, 7 p.m.** Writer and senior intelligence analyst Alma Katsu

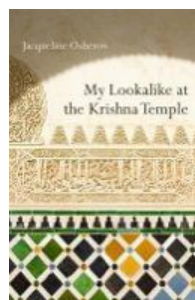
will read from and sign her horror novel, *The Hunger*.



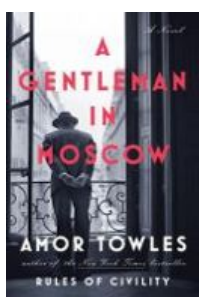
**Friday, March 15, 7 p.m.** Nature writer Bruce Berger, author of *A Desert Harvest: New and Selected Essays*, will discuss his new collection with novelist James Anderson (*Lullaby Road*).



**Thursday, March 21, 7 p.m.** University of Utah professor Jacqueline Osherow will read from and sign her new poetry collection, *My Lookalike at the Krishna Temple*.



**Tuesday, April 2, 7 p.m.** The marvelous Amor Towles will read from and discuss *A Gentleman in Moscow* (details to come in spring *Inkslinger*).



### Kids and Young Adults

**Friday, February 8, 7 p.m.** Jessie Janowitz joins us with her middle grade novel, *The Doughnut Fix*.



**Saturday, February 9, 11 a.m.** TKE bookseller and editor Jennifer Adams will be with us to celebrate her new picture book, *How Do I Love Thee?* Elizabeth Barrett Browning would be proud!

**Tuesday, February 26, 7 p.m.** Local favorite Tricia Levenseller will present her new YA novel, *Warrior of the Wild*, at the Provo Library.

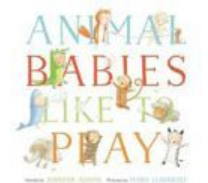


**Saturday, March 2, 11 a.m.** Celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday with a special visit from the Cat in the Hat!



**Tuesday, March 5, 7 p.m.** Jo Schaffer will present the second book in her *Stanley and Hazel* series, *The Winnowing*.

**Saturday, March 9, 11 a.m.** Jennifer Adams joins us again with her picture book, *Animal Babies Like to Play*.



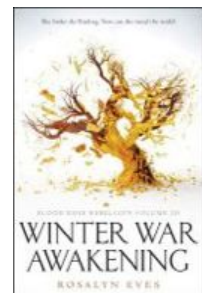
**Monday, March 11, 7 p.m.** Author Crystal Smith will read from and sign her new teen novel, *Bloodleaf*.



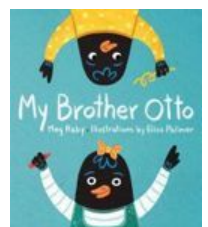
**Tuesday, March 19, 7 p.m.** YA fave, Soman Chainani will read from and sign his new novel, *A Crystal of Time*, the fifth installment in *The School of Good and Evil* series, at the Provo Library.



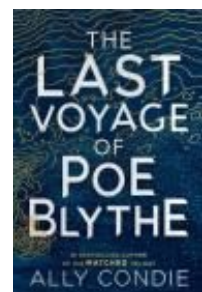
**Thursday, March 21, 7 p.m.** Local author Rosalyn Eves will present *Winter War Awakening*, the thrilling conclusion to her *Blood Rose Rebellion* series, at the Provo Library.



**Saturday, March 23, 11 a.m.** Join us for a special story-time with Meg Raby and her new picture book, *My Brother Otto*.



**Tuesday, March 26, 7 p.m.** Ally Condie will read from and sign her new steampunk novel, *The Last Voyage of Poe Blythe*, at the Provo Library.



## Hope in Dark Times: An Interview with Pam Houston

(continued from page 1) I'd been bouncing around here and there, that cowboy girl who had various jobs, was scattered, taking scraps from everywhere I'd been lucky enough to go, everyone I'd been lucky enough to know for brief periods. Rapid motion was what I thought I was about. And I am to an extent.

When I started writing I told myself, you're not going to rely on old tricks. I don't even know what I meant, but it was something about stillness versus motion, being still at the ranch. I call it writing deeply into the pasture. To cultivate this side I didn't even know I had. That my parents didn't have. Maybe my grandparents, who I never knew, did have. Anyway, two sides of myself were at war with each other and because of the ranch I was cultivating the one I didn't know I had.

**BB:** Whether describing wild lands or pets or people, your memoir is shot through with two narrative threads: your determination to retain your home and your equal determination to write. While your itinerant life as a writer and teacher may have been driven by the need to pay for your ranch, is the writer's life as central to who you are as your land is?

**PH:** Probably. But what is even more central, most central, is my life as a teacher. And that requires motion too. I'm talking to you here from the Institute of American Indian Arts where I teach in the Low Rez program. I'm teaching there now. As I come to later segments of my life it's increasingly important to me to make a space for these young women here at IAIA, young native writers. To make a space for writers whose voices we need to hear. I also run a nonprofit called Writing By Writers which puts on six events a year in California, Colorado, France. I still mentor young writers at UC Davis in California.

Teaching has always been important to me. I never wanted to just write, and I always thought I had a good balance. Writing is a strange and isolating occupation, and then I'd go work with young writers for a semester. I care so much about them. They're even more important now because we need to hear the voices of young writers. They need to be in charge. It's most important to me to be a mentor and teacher. And to be a writer. But at one point I realized I wasn't taking care of the ranch so I did rearrange my priorities—to take care of the ranch. And the ranch taught me things I take into my writing and my teaching.

**BB:** There's a third important thread in this book—your past. I marveled at the ways, in occasional and always understated passages, you so powerfully telegraph the horror of the abuse that you endured as a child without describing it in detail. Was the fragmentary and oblique use of these shards of memory an instinctive decision or one you wittingly made as a writer?

**PH:** None of that was there in the first version of the book. My agent asked if this wasn't the book where it was time to talk about it, and when she said it I thought, have I done anything but that? I thought I'd already worked it in here and there, but it was often in dream and shadow in metaphor. One thing my teaching and writing life has taught me is that everyone has bad shit happen to them. What happened to me was as common as a two-car garage. And there was all kinds of stuff that didn't happen to me—we weren't poor, we lived in a house. So I didn't want to dwell on it, but with the Me Too movement, the war against women that is happening right now in this country, every day, it's still important to say it happened. Both the



decisions to include it and not to dwell on it were conscious choices. I feel good about the mix. I included the why of it but without saying I think I'm special.

The big revelation while writing the book was that I turned to the natural world for mother love at such a young age—even though I didn't realize it. And—last line in the book—that it was a gift. I'm better off. That nature's a much better mother than my mother would have been if she hadn't cast me out.

All of that happened in the writing. It was a coming to terms and a way to make peace. When I started the book I didn't know a lot of it. My editor talked about a book-length adventure and I thought of some—dogsledding to the north pole, sailing the coast of Turkey, things that would be fun, but when I was driving home to the ranch from Davis [where Houston is a professor of English] I thought, oh, this was my big adventure, an adventure in things like constancy, dedication, caretaking. Things that weren't on my list of life goals.

**BB:** You discuss at one point the importance of metaphor. The pairing of past memories and present reality, especially in the wildfire scenes, was an extraordinarily effective way of allowing metaphor to eclipse description. The fire may represent an extreme example but this occurs throughout the book. Can you talk for a moment about your use of metaphor?

**PH:** I teach nonfiction quite a bit and I've always resisted the common view of memoir as writing your experience and then reflecting on it, that that's the formula. I've always believed that if you write well enough, you have already reflected on it. No need to pause and explain what I've always understood—unless it's someone like Mark Doty who has such an interesting mind and never repeats himself—the metaphor knows more than I do. I have to get out of its way and let it be what it is on the page. I move through my life looking for glimmers. They can be anything, a tree, a conversation... I wait for the resonance and then bring those things to the page. I'm a firm believer that the glimmers know more than I do. They create the power on the page, and the pleasure of reading. When I read, 'So, reader, here's what you can get from all that,' it makes me want to throw the book across the room.

**BB:** There's yet another fascinating strand in both your past and present—your adrenalized dance with danger. You address it head-on when talking of your younger self. But it lurks in your present life

## Hope in Dark Times: An Interview with Pam Houston

too. Can you talk about this lingering attraction to danger—where it comes from and what its allure is?

**PH:** It comes from growing up in a house where I was unsafe and I knew it. Therapy 101. I feel more comfortable outwitting the forces aligned against me. Proving I can survive. That I have control. I throw myself in harm's way to prove that I can outwit my adversary. I like to think there's a positive in this too, in that I'm an overachiever. I like to challenge myself and succeed. Everyone used to think I was such a badass, which amazed me, and maybe I have grown a bit into my badassness after all. Writing a memoir was risky—not because of what is revealed because I've done that before. It was risky because I didn't really understand the action of memoir. The challenge was to stay with it. In fiction I love the leap into the exaggeration, into the scene how it might have been, so this idea that I'd stick with the truth was daunting—and the amount of telling, which I do more of here despite my insistence on metaphor, made me so nervous. So I did something I didn't know if I could do. And I still cringe a little at all the telling. When I read the audible version....

**BB:** But your book did so beautifully what a novel does, swept you up, made you think, feel. Enlightened you.

**PH:** Thanks. I'm still more comfortable with fiction but I do like to try things I'm afraid I can't do. I like strong-tasting things and hard hikes in a short time because hard things create good experiences and good writing. And my friends say I always need to go see. I'm always interesting in knowing what's going to happen.

**BB:** Your love for the wild is obvious in every word you write but your love for the animals you live with is clearly an abiding passion too. Irish wolfhounds, horses, even chickens seem to make you whole in ways that people, or at least men, haven't. I'm not implying that you view men negatively. Seems to me you're much more positive about men than you once were at least in terms of the way they inhabit your life, but still they're not there steadily, constantly, like your animals. Can you talk about what the animals in your life give you emotionally?

**PH:** I have always felt safer in the presence of animals than of people. I love a lot of people but there's something about their [the animals'] loyalty and also the dailyness and consistency of being around them, their faithfulness and innate good sense about how to live in the

world a little better than we do. I love the ritual of feeding them too. It's one of the great pleasures of my life.

Going through the death process with several of my animals has taught me about death—even though I've gone through the death of people, being with dogs and horses has taught me huge lessons about how to be with them in those moments. How to think about my own limited life.

I will say that on August 25 I got married. I met a really wonderful man. A forest ranger...

**BB:** Congratulations!

**PH:** I'm not making any promises. I feel like I'm in new territory. He's of the forest. It feels like a new way of being. I'm about ready to start sharing the ranch. He's moving in when he retires. This is the end of a chapter in my life, of trying to be the person who knows how to do everything, fix everything. I'm not the only person who can fix things anymore. Well, maybe that's not true, we had a sort of fight about that recently.... This is an area I haven't excelled at before but I'm very hopeful. It feels very different to me.

If this is a good marriage, which it feels like it might be, it will be because of what the ranch and the animals have taught me. To grow up and be committed and choose better. Sheep, for example. Nothing in me ever wanted sheep. I only got sheep because of the tax law [that required livestock for the agricultural designation]. They're tough. Really tough. They break everything. And they're very independent. But their rhythms, their way of interacting with other animals, of protecting themselves has taught me a lot. The ranch goes into a nature trust soon that will protect its ag status, so I won't have to keep the sheep if I don't want to. They're a lot of work, I could have 20 horses and they wouldn't take as much work. So I'll have to decide. Now that the law doesn't demand I keep them I'm not sure what to do—whether to just let the girls live out their lives or continue to keep rams, to raise more. All these animals bring their own challenges and new ways to see the world. A new set of lessons.

**BB:** You seem to love them but are you as in tune with them as you are with say, your horses. Or your dogs?

**PH:** No, they aren't the same. Neither are the chickens. You can turn your dog into a human. And I do. And a horse too, sort of. But with real livestock that doesn't happen. It's different, but you do have a relationship with them. A bear killed some of my sheep and—he wasn't hungry, didn't eat them, it was random. Killing for sport. He got the best ones because they were the ones that fought. And it gave me a way to understand my neighbors, those ranchers. I'm a progressive, a liberal Democrat. I'm pro wolf, pro bear. But those ranchers have relationships with their animals. You love the animals you raise. They become part of you. So it gave me a way to understand the politics of all this. I always understood people yelling about killing wolves in Yellowstone but now I understand the politics of the people on the other side. That this really hurts them. It's not just about money. It's a tragedy for them. I understand the nuances of the situation.

**BB:** So living so long in your ranching community where you obviously have a deep respect for the people has helped you understand the divisions we're living through right now in different ways?

**PH:** Actually, it's harder to live here under Trump than ever before. Not exactly because of how anyone has behaved toward me. It's just



## Hope in Dark Times: An Interview with Pam Houston

the climate we're in right now. Dog whistling about women and people of color. I woke up one morning alone in my house like I always am. Well not anymore [laughs]. But at 5 a.m. I heard a diesel engine and when I looked out the window there at the end of my driveway was a truck full of hunters—5 or 6 of them who I could see because of the light inside the truck. I am one of the few people who speak out politically around here and I wondered for the first time if they knew who I was. If they might come up the driveway and shoot me.... and even though they didn't, even though I generally have respect for hunters, I've never thought like this before. People around here think local politics are more important than national politics for the most part and I've never felt ostracized. Never been afraid. We're not that kind of town. We have to dig each other out of snow banks. But this was the first time I felt like, hmmm, what if I moved to Portland. To be with my own kind. Maybe I really don't belong. But it's more about what's happening on Twitter and the news than it is about anything that has actually changed in the community.

**BB:** Can you talk about the ways your women friends have impacted your life? It seems like together you form a sort of supportive clan of those who speak the same language and share a world view—and who have abiding respect for one another. How important are they to you and has that importance grown over the years?

**PH:** Absolutely. They've been the center of my life. I didn't get men so right, I have almost no relations, so I've never had a family, grandparents. I have one first cousin, one second cousin and that's it. My husband has a big family and he says they love me but I say they don't even know me. I don't really understand what family is, but I've created my own family with the wonderful women I know. It's right up there in terms of what I value most. And lately, the last five or six years, my ranch has become a place where young people come for six months or a year—I mentor and mother 10-20 young people and that part of my life has become so important. Along with the women friends of my age, my clan—I like that word—I also have these 20-somethings, early 30-somethings who come to visit. I never know who's coming for Christmas. They're my charges.

**BB:** Getting back to where we started, as I read your initial description of buying your ranch with a small down and a big promise, I got the sense that you were not only grounding the reader but also checking your own footing. Your memoir is in large part about the ways land and nature have grounded you, but even after all those years on your land, did you feel as grounded when you began writing *Deep Creek* as you seem to be now or did that feeling become clearer and clearer as you wrote the book?

**PH:** Definitely became clearer. The writing of the book clarified and codified my relationship to the ranch in ways only writing could have. It's given me more time to think about it. There was never any time to reflect. It was earn the money or you'll get kicked off. Well, not really but I set myself on this treadmill to pay for the ranch and it's only been since the fire and the making the final payment—the same years I've been writing the book—that I've had time. One of the reasons I wrote it was to understand why I did buy the ranch, and stuck with it. What it meant. It's not what my people do. It's the only thing I've done for so long. For 25 years. Except writing. The ranch and the writing and being in the outdoors. And dogs [laughs].

**BB:** The subtitle of *Deep Creek* is “Finding Hope in the High Coun-



try,” and you do seem hopeful despite all. We're coming full circle here, but could you talk for another moment about this? Because I have to say your book really gave me hope. Not an easy thing to do in these times in which we live.

**PH:** Yes, this was a weird year—a great year for me in a way, finishing the book after a lot of revision, and being in love, while at the same time all these unconscionably awful things were happening in our country.

I'm happy to hear your say it gave you hope. I'm a natural optimist. Being brutalized as a child I had to learn to find hope. It was a practice I started very young to survive. But I work here at IAIA and....did you read Tommy Orange?

**BB:** Yes. And I loved it [*There, There*]. Loved it!

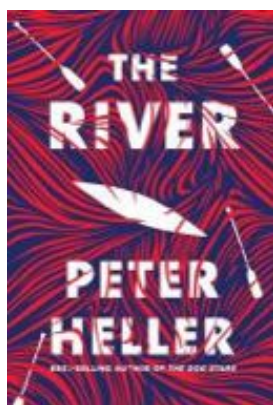
**PH:** You see people like him rising, see the Parkland kids and you see that there are reasons to hope. There are reasons to be scared, we're in a dangerous time, yet we're seeing things so clearly. It's terrible but also hopeful. Plenty of reason to hope.

Except maybe when it comes to climate change. We may have taken it past the point of no return. But in terms of how we treat each other, the ways we're rejecting what's happening, the night of the 2018 election....It's hopeful. We have a system that invests so much in hiding, not saying all the horrible things we've done. But I'm hopeful that they are being said now. That this will help.

To live without hope is not a life at all. We have to have hope to counter despair. I lived with a Trump-like person when I was a child, and I wouldn't have lived at all if I hadn't had hope. I don't know how to live without hope. To survive. It's horrific what we're doing at the border, horrific what we are doing to the land, but I want very much to believe that people are more engaged now. Talking more. And if it is too late, what do we do then? How are we going to go out singing? Go out with love?

**BB:** So much to think about. And to talk about further. I'm looking forward to March and your visit to The King's English. This has been pure pleasure for me, Pam. I obviously loved *Deep Creek* and I can't recommend it highly enough! Thank you for writing it. And for taking the time to talk to me!

**PH:** Thank you for the interview and the really thoughtful questions. I'm so excited to be at the store. See you soon!



***The River*, Peter Heller**

Two young men, fast friends, embark on a river trip in northern Canada about which they have long dreamed. But as they make their way through a string of lakes toward the confluence of the river they plan on running, it quickly becomes evident that they're paddling toward trouble—a virtual maelstrom in fact, involving the specter of a far-off wildfire; disembodied voices in the mist, a couple arguing; and two feral, drunken men... What emerges at river's end—aside

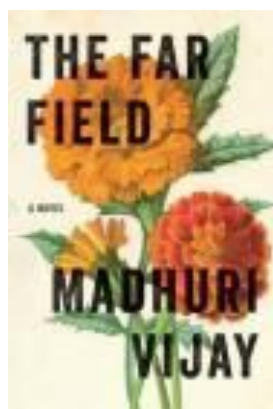
from the read of a lifetime, one that gives the term breathless new meaning—is a sharp-eyed portrait of seemingly similar young men possessed, beneath their shared likes and talents, of utterly different characters. Heller has long been fascinated with such differences, especially when tested in the crucible of fire—in this instance literally. Possessed of an uncanny ability to reveal not just the currents that drive rivers and wildfires but also those that run deep inside us, he is a writer of surpassing skill. In stunning prose he evokes the fierce and dangerous beauty of the land and of us all. Our hearts raced all the way through *The River*; one of us read all day, the other all night, but neither could put the book down until the last page was turned. – Betsy Burton and Anne Holman, Knopf, \$25 *Editor's note: this book will be published March 5; Heller will visit TKE on Tuesday, March 12, to read from and discuss his new novel!*

***The Far Field*, Madhuri Vijay**

I fell instantly under the spell of *The Far Field*. Reading in the first couple of pages of regrets expressed for things that had happened six years before, seeing a sleeping mother, a mysterious visitor, I wanted to know more. I wondered with the child, Shalini, what could be behind the lethal tongue of her quick-witted, unbridled mother or the visits of the man from Kashmir who appeared from time to time, telling them stories as they sat on the couch during the day when the father was at work. My curiosity snagged and my empathy stirred, I made my willing way with Shalini, now grown, as she traveled to Kashmir on an improbable search for the man from her childhood and for answers to that original mystery of who her mother was. Following Shalini from childhood into adulthood, from Bangalore to a small mountain village in Kashmir that opened her eyes and her heart, I found myself transformed—not just by the bewitching language and the irresistible pull of the story but also by the humanity and clear-eyed compassion of the teller. A compassion that allows reader and teller alike to recognize truth and then to forgive—oneself as well as others. This isn't just a good book but a passionate, farseeing and utterly brilliant novel. – Betsy Burton, Grove Press, \$27

***We Cast a Shadow*, Maurice Carlos Ruffin**

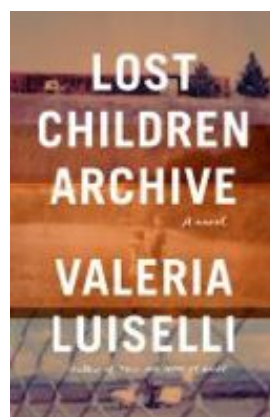
In a near-future southern city marked by racial division and violence, more and more people are opting to have controversial “demelanization” surgeries to make them appear whiter. Our unnamed narrator,



the black father of a biracial child with a dark facial birthmark, has pinned all his hopes on getting his son the surgery. The more his son's birthmark grows and his complexion darkens, the more terrified his father becomes. The narrator, it seems, will do anything he can to protect his son, but what will he lose in the process? One of the best debut novels I have ever read, *We Cast a Shadow* is not only a beautifully crafted allegory of our world, it is also a touching and tender portrait of a family spread thin by inherited violence and desperate hope. A sure hit for fans of Colson Whitehead and Paul Beatty, the novel's sharp, keen insights bolster this riveting story into something that is impossible to look away from and even more impossible to forget. – Rachel Haisley, One World, \$27



***Lost Children Archive*, Valeria Luiselli**



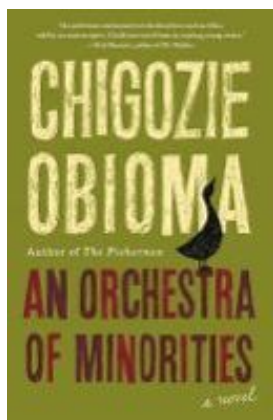
Unlike any book I have ever read, *Lost Children Archive* is an archive in every sense of the word. While its narrative both documents and records the activities of a particular family, it also documents the activity and developing narrative surrounding children lost at the U.S. border. As an archive, it contains public records and other historical documents, such as maps, facsimiles, clippings, photographs, and quotes—all contained in five of seven boxes stashed in the back of the family's

old Volvo which the mother and father have chosen as necessary for their summer cross-country journey from New York City (their home) to a geographical area the father calls “Apacheria.” Boxes VI and VII are empty when the family leaves, brother and sister having chosen to begin with empty boxes as spaces in which to place what they anticipate collecting along the way. These too are full by this story's unnerving end. – Michelle Macfarlane, Knopf, \$27.95

***The Water Cure*, Sophie Mackintosh**

King and his wife have carved out a home for their three daughters that is surrounded by barbed wire, dictated by strict rules and practices, and marked with clear instructions: do not enter. Or perhaps, from the views of the daughters who have never known anything but the waste and violence of the deteriorating world around them, the instructions might read: do not leave. When three men arrive at the family's bunker, the tense balance of the family is thrown into disarray, upending the rhythms that had sustained them. This lyrical, haunting debut evokes the dystopian prose of Alyson Hagy's *Scribe* and the frenzied violence of Naomi Alderman's *The Power*. With its strong voice and utterly propulsive narrative, *The Water Cure* is impossible to put down or, once finished, to stop thinking about. Don't miss it. – Rachel Haisley, Doubleday, \$26.95





***An Orchestra of Minorities*, Chigozie Obioma**

If we all had our own personal ‘chi’ (a cosmic guardian in Nigerian lore), then I would opt for the one possessed by Chinonso, a young poultry farmer who has love in his hands but loses it in his battle for self-improvement. Chinonso’s chi, the narrator of this involving tragic/comedic tale, launches into a lengthy saga in order to explain to his/her cosmic bosses that there are extenuating circumstances in the Odysseus-like peregrinations and

the ultimate fate of Chinonso. In the ensuing episodic tale involving farming, friendship, goslings, boundless love, class, education, betrayal, revenge, and woe, a poor man’s rapture, his struggle to find happiness, his guardian’s often failed attempts to guide him, are overlain by cosmology, leavened with humor, laced with irony, darkly thickened with tragedy. Obioma, whose first novel, *The Fisherman*, was a finalist for the Man Booker prize, blends Western and his own Nigerian literary tradition and folklore with the narrative zest of early Salman Rushdie or Gabriel Garcia Marquez and the sere majesty of Greek Tragedy. – Betsy Burton, Little Brown, \$28

***Black Leopard, Red Wolf*, Marlon James**

Blending myth, history, and magical realism in a gritty, bloody, dark marvel of worldbuilding, Man Booker Prize-winning author James returns in full force with the first novel of his new Dark Star Trilogy. The saga of Tracker, a keen-nosed hunter enlisted to find a missing boy, follows an unlikely cast of characters through an ancient world inhabited by deeply ambivalent forces, toying with themes of power, truth, gender, and sexuality along the way. The story is absolutely magnificent; rich, layered, intense and spellbinding: it was the book I didn’t know I wanted to read until I started. – Rachel Haisley, Riverhead, \$30



***The Heavens*, Sandra Newman**

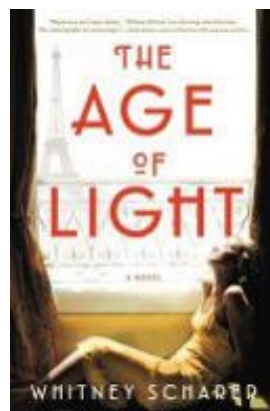
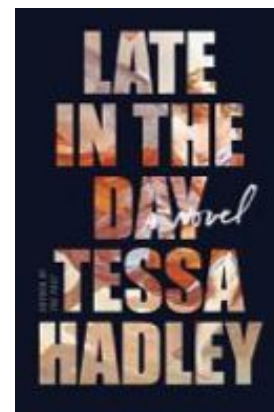
From the time Ben and Kate meet at a Manhattan rooftop party, the reader senses that their relationship will be tempestuous and a little strange; Kate falls into deep sleeps and has dreams that feel more real to her than her waking life. Is she, in fact, in Elizabethan England with Will Shakespeare? Close attention is necessary because so many people are shifting in and out of Kate’s life. One can’t know until the very end of the novel how that life will turn out. – Anne Holman,



Atlantic Monthly, \$26

***Late in the Day*, Tessa Hadley**

“It was a summer’s evening, nine o’clock.” Hadley’s new novel slides immediately into focus when Christine, one of four main characters—all bound as friends, lovers, spouses—takes a call, informing her that one of them, Zachary, has suddenly, inexplicably died. “He was a rock, he was never ill.” Zachary, now a critical absence in each of their lives, will, nonetheless, haunt Hadley’s fragmented narrative—a story of the psychological house of cards these four (two couples) have built of their lives over the years. Its precarious structure begins with an ending and ends with a beginning. Here is the novel’s last line: “She had made the first mark, she had begun something.” Told from the vantage of Christine, a painter, Hadley’s story is primarily one of consciousness represented, a rendering of lives spent—a rendering of the costs of one’s actions. – Michelle Macfarlane, Harper, \$26.99



***The Age of Light*, Whitney Scharer**

Paris, 1929: the year of light in the city of lights, home to, among the many glittering literati, the surrealist, Man Ray. New to Paris and in search of a mentor, Lee Miller, whose beauty so many fashion photographers in the U.S. have captured, longs to find her place behind rather than in front of a camera. When Man Ray agrees to hire her as his assistant, a romance buds, rapidly flowering into passion in a city awash with creative genius and with decadence. Scharer captures

with the exactitude of a camera’s eye bohemian Paris, the streets, the soirees, the exotic parties, the unendingly exciting quest for originality, the constant urge to push boundaries, the radical nature of photography and the ways it sometimes fuses with film and painting. She portrays with equal accuracy the black hole at the center of those whose souls are damaged, whether early in life or by the horrors of war, casting klieg light on the ways the convergence of art and passion can simultaneously feed and destroy. A vivid, heady book about a vivid and heady time. – Betsy Burton, Little Brown, \$28

***The Wartime Sisters*, Lynda Cohen Loigman**

When Millie is born Ruth believes her little sister will be a just like her—smart, gentle-voiced, a bit plain—and that they will be inseparable. Immediately she realizes her assumptions are just that; her parents set her little sister apart as a princess to be babied, admired, and for whom a prince of industry will be found worthy of their grandmother’s opal and diamond ring intended for the engagement. The rivalry and jealousy lead to misunderstanding and betrayal when their parents are tragically killed in a



## FICTION

car accident. Each sister takes her own path, and when Ruth and her husband are transferred to work at the historic armory in Springfield Massachusetts, she believes she will be free of her little sister at last—only to have Millie show up at the gates under less than auspicious circumstances. A war story told on U.S. soil amid the women who worked at the armory, *The Wartime Sisters* looks at beauty vs. intelligence, love and fear, and the lessons taught early in childhood that shape lives forever. – Anne Stewart Mark, St. Martin's Press, \$26.99



*The Perilous Adventures of the Cowboy King*, Jerome Charyn

Follow Theodore Roosevelt as he first battles asthma from the safety of his father's larger than life arms, then mobster politicians, then the Spaniards in the company of his cavalry, the Rough Riders, and his beloved pet mountain lion, Josephine. A riot of battles, internal and external, this novel of Teddy Roosevelt's pre-presidential days is every bit as fun as the cover suggests, a jaunt into distant, wilder times of U.S. history. – Michaela

Riding, Norton, \$26.95

## NONFICTION

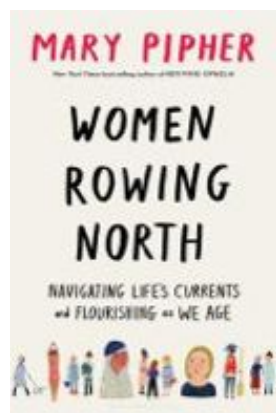
*Stranger & Stranger*, Katharine Coles, Illustrated by Maureen O'Hara Ure

The Red Butte Press at the J. Willard Marriott Library regularly produces unique, signed and numbered books. Their latest endeavor is a wonderful, imaginative bestiary, *Stranger & Stranger*, written by local poet Katherine Coles and illustrated by artist Maureen O'Hara Ure. Evocative poetry, touched with humor, interacts with paintings in a whimsical fashion, weaving language and visuals in a surprising and thought-provoking way. Bound in three sections using a three-stitch technique, and featuring a stunning accordion centerpiece, the design and construction encourage first, second and third glances. Each book is an absolute treasure; all are numbered and signed by both author and artist. – Robert Eckman and Anne Stewart Mark, Red Butte Press, \$100



*Women Rowing North*, Mary Pipher

Pipher brings her wisdom and experience to a new subject: how to contend with ageism and loss as an aging woman in today's world. Her new book is full of practical coping strategies as well as useful metaphors through which to experience the full range of possibility open to women in their last stage of life. Reading her writing is like having a heart-to-heart with a down-to-earth and compassionate best friend, and you will come away with increased resilience and optimism for



what she argues can be a transcendent time of life. – Michaela Riding, Bloomsbury, \$30

## NONFICTION

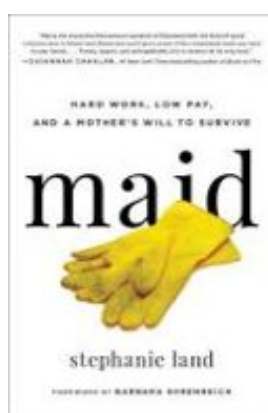
*Silence*, Jane Brox

Brox examines two kinds of silence: Benjamin Rush's idea that convicts be immersed in forced silence in the soon-to-be-built Eastern State Penitentiary outside of Philadelphia, and Thomas Merton's belief in lifelong immersion in silence in his monastic order. Brox asks readers to consider the concepts of silence as punishment, as restorative, and/or as contemplative. The prison and its horrible history, interwoven with the balm of the narrative about Merton and his search for silence—draconian prison reformation juxtaposed to the 'path to peace'—might seem odd, but this book is fascinating in the duality it creates by regarding silence as isolation in a punitive sense and as solitude in a philosophical and even profound sense. All this and an intriguing social history of buildings and the people who inhabit them as well! While Brox's book might not inspire readers to meditate more, it will certainly inspire some lively conversation. – Margaret Brennan Neville, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, \$27



*Maid*, Stephanie Land

With prose that evokes the best of Barbara Ehrenreich and Sarah Smarsh, Land brings a quiet, understated perspective to the financial realities of living paycheck-to-paycheck as a single mother in the United States. Land's clear-eyed narrative, which offers powerful insights into the plight of the female working poor in America, makes this a must-read for fans of *Hillbilly Elegy* and *Evicted*. It is destined to become a nonfiction classic. – Rachel Haisley, Hachette, \$27



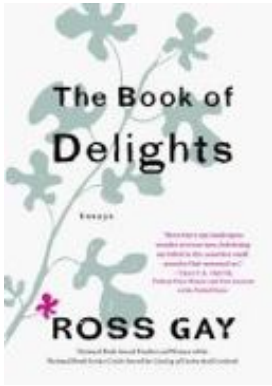
*Inheritance*, Dani Shapiro

Is there such a thing as a family without traumatic secrets buried in its past, waiting to bubble up and disturb the lives of the living? That isn't the question this book asks, but it is one I found myself asking while reading. Shapiro takes us on an exploration of a family secret broken open along the lines of a DNA paternity test, and ultimately on what it means to be a family, and how we define who we are. I couldn't put it down; every time I tried, I found myself drawn back to my chair, to this memoir that I want everyone to read as soon as possible so we can talk about it together. – Michaela Riding, Knopf, \$25.95



*The Book of Delights*, Ross Gay

Early on in this book of short (very) daily essays, poet Gay is sitting outside at a red table reading a book while watching a praying mantis do something mysterious. The book? *When Women Were Birds* by Terry Tempest Williams. The mysterious activity? Masticating the head of a dragonfly. So not the mawkish essays I'd feared. I found in-

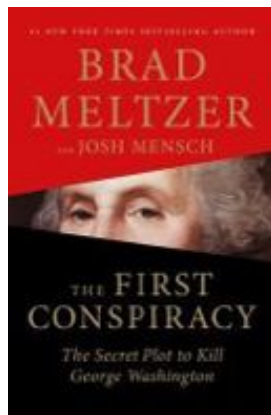


stead writing with bite (no pun intended), flashes of wonder leavened by an occasional sliver of malice or the macabre. Gay has a huge appetite for life, a discerning eye and the sensibility of a poet, along with a sense of humor and an equal sense of life's inequities and cruelties—especially regarding (but by no means limited to) race. A year's worth of brief daily essays on everything from a hummingbird's buzz to a hole in the head to slow dancing with a pigeon, this is a perfect way to see the world afresh each morning: read one

at random and begin your day with a chortle, a wince, a sob—or with all of the above simultaneously. – Betsy Burton, Algonquin, \$23.95

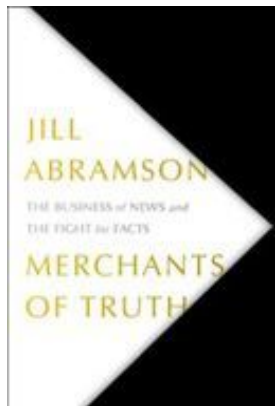
***The First Conspiracy*, Brad Meltzer & Josh Mensch**

From the day George Washington was chosen to lead the Continental Army, plots were hatched to kill him; if he were removed there was a better than even chance the revolution against England would collapse. Times were difficult and it was sometimes hard to determine who was a “loyalist” and who was a “patriot”—people could sometimes be both. Loyalties were often fluid and intelligence was required to determine the next moves of the enemy. Consequently, espionage and counter espionage operations were undertaken by both sides. This history, framed around a plot to kill Washington by members of his closest guard, is also a profound look at a charismatic leader and the origins of America's counterintelligence agencies. – Barbara Hoagland, Flatiron, \$29.99



***Merchants of Truth: The Business of News and the Fight for Facts*, Jill Abramson**

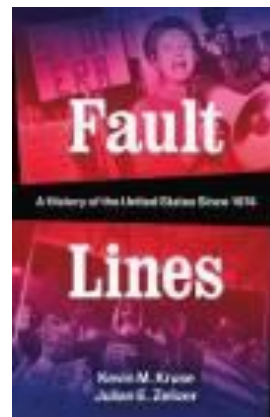
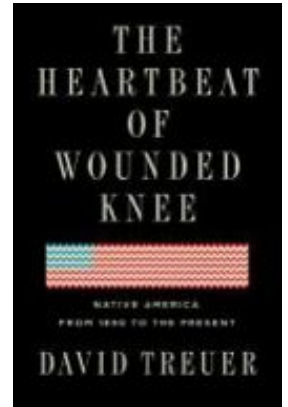
Abramson delves into the history of the disruption of the news media in the last decade. As the former executive editor of *The New York Times*, she worked in the midst of radical changes in the dissemination of the news brought about by the internet. She focuses on four news outlets—the tradition-laden *New York Times* and *The Washington Post* and upstarts BuzzFeed and VICE Media. The



venerable distributors of news via a daily paper became victims of an aging reader and the immediacy of internet competitors. Abramson vividly illuminates the stories behind two very different kinds of news distribution. It is a fascinating examination of technological dislocation and the impact on how we absorb the news. – Barbara Hoagland, Simon & Schuster, \$30

***The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee: Native America from 1890 to the Present*, David Treuer**

Treuer, an Ojibwe, discusses the past, present and future of the American Indian, rounding out the story begun in Dee Brown's famous work, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, but telling the tale of his people in an Indian voice. The first 100 pages give the background on the varied Indian cultures of North America from 100,000 BCE to the arrival of Europeans in the 16th century (this section alone is worth reading the book). Thereafter he describes the series of policies by the federal and some state governments toward Indians and their tribal lands; when reading about them, I found myself just shaking my head in disbelief. Finally, he turns to celebrating the survival of the Indian in the U.S. by describing the role they played in building modern America. Treuer writes, albeit with a bit of a chip on his shoulder (but who can blame him?), the personal stories of many Indian people from tribes all over the U.S. in a homage to the resilience of these individuals and the Indian people. After reading his account, I felt very hopeful for their future. – Patrick Fleming, Riverhead Books, \$28



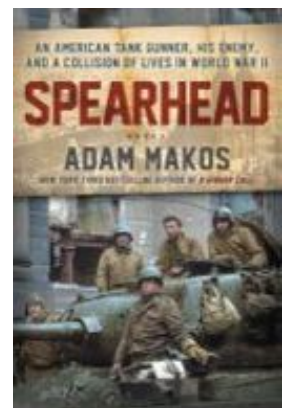
***Fault Lines: A History of the United States Since 1974*, Kevin M. Kruse and Julian E. Zelizer**

How did our politics become so toxic? Where was the turning point and what brought us to this era of tribal politics? Kruse and Zelizer ably explain the history that brought us to this place in time. Watergate, Feminism, income inequality, racial inequality, and the sexual revolution all contributed to a reaction which galvanized the conservative right. The internet gave us a splintered media with

shrill voices on each side and led to a coarsening of public dialogue. This history is a fascinating study and provides a narrative that should be vital reading for all citizens. – Barbara Hoagland, Norton, \$28.95

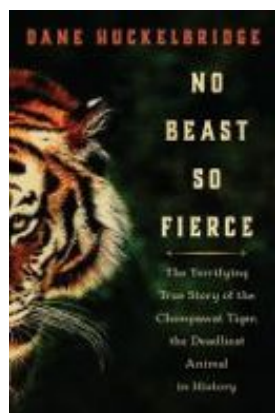
***Spearhead: The World War II Odyssey of an American Tank Gunner*, Adam Makos**

This is a riveting story of a Sherman tank crew, part of the U.S. 3rd Armor Division, whose nom de guerre was the Spearhead Division. Arriving in France just after D-Day, this armor division participated in some of the deadliest battles of the European Theater. The tanks used by the Americans were the M4A1 variant of the Sherman tank with a 75mm cannon. Even as the Sherman was being developed in the early 1940s as the main medium infantry tank, it was already outclassed by the German Panzer tanks. Although very reliable and cheap to produce in quantity, the Sher-



man was a death pyre for its crew if hit by a German Panzer's 88mm cannon, and although the American tank crews knew this they still took on the panzers in head-to-head combat. The story follows a particular tank crew whose gunner had a knack for anticipating where German armor would be and then using his hair trigger aiming and firing skills to hit the German tank first. The action is fast-paced with a climactic battle in Cologne between this crew's newly issued and upgraded Pershing tank and the dreaded German Panther tank—all caught on film by a brave American army photographer. An amazing story made all the better by diagrams of the opposing tanks, great battle maps, and a link to the YouTube video of the Pershing vs Panther fight in Cologne. But probably the most compelling reason to read this book is the author's quest to find the Sherman crew and reunite them with their German foes in 2013. This section of the book adds a human dimension you will not want to miss. Highly recommended for anyone interested in U.S. military history.

– Patrick Fleming, Ballantine Books, \$28



**No Beast So Fierce**, Dane Huckelbridge

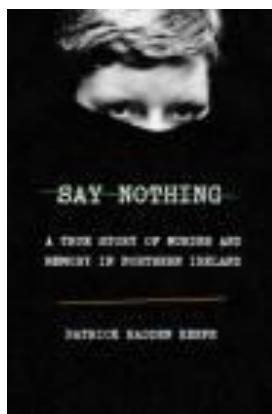
In the early 1900s a man-eating tiger killed approximately 436 humans in a rampage that terrified inhabitants of the border between Nepal and India. This story, surrounding the events that transpired, covers the cultural and ecological conflicts that arose from colonial rule and the resultant poor stewardship which undid generations of tradition. The evolution of the Champawat tiger into a man-eating menace is intriguing as it involves not only the tiger itself but an

examination of the effects of ecological disaster brought on by human missteps. – Barbara Hoagland, Morrow, \$26.99

**Say Nothing: A True Story of Murder and Memory in Northern Ireland**, Patrick Radden Keefe

In December of 1972, a 38-year-old widowed mother was dragged from her Belfast home by masked intruders, never to be seen again. While unusual, this sort of disappearance, often at the hands of the IRA, was not unheard of during the decades of escalating violence. *Say Nothing* uses McConville's disappearance as a starting point to tell a story of the republican movement in Ireland from the perspectives of fighters on the ground, its leaders, as well as the civilians caught in the crossfire (both literally and figuratively). Keefe takes readers on a gripping, unforgettable journey through the Troubles during the second half of the 20th century, offering an analysis that strives to approach the issue from all sides. A must-read for fans of narrative nonfiction like David Grann's *Killers of the Flower Moon* and Hampton Sides' *On Desperate Ground*.

– Rachel Haisley, Doubleday, \$28.95



**Code Name: Lise: The True Story of the Woman Who Became WWII's Most Highly Decorated Spy**, Larry Loftis

Odette Sansom, housewife, mother of three young girls, wife, spy? Early 1942 saw England in such fear of invasion that desperate measures seemed called for. Raised in France, Odette's flawless command of the language made her a perfect candidate for Churchill's spy machine, SOE. She became one of the few brave souls who were parachuted into occupied France to spy on troop movements

and organize sabotage raids against the Nazis. It was there that she met and fell in love with the dashing Peter Churchill (no relation to Winston). Their story is one of intrigue and betrayal as they were finally captured and sent for interrogation. Despite brutal torture, Odette refused to cooperate. She was sentenced to death and sent to a concentration camp in Germany. Her story of fortitude, bravery, and cunning saved not only her own life but that of her lover, as well as the lives of countless other spies she could have compromised. When the war ended, Odette returned to England where she was lauded as the most highly decorated woman of World War II.

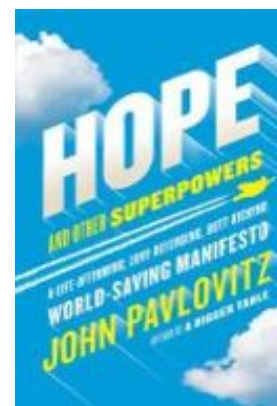
– Barbara Hoagland, Gallery Books, \$27

**Hope and Other Superpowers**,

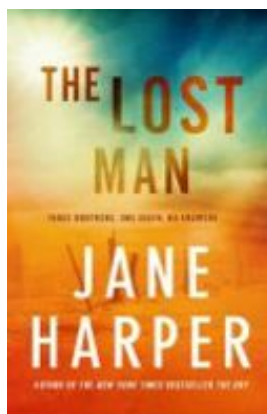
John Pavlovitz

For people who love superhero stories but feel impossibly hopeless and helpless in the current state of world affairs, here's a manual to remind you how to take positive action in your community. With a series of questions based thematically around different superheroes, Pavlovitz encourages action that is tailored to you, not a guilt-based activism that doesn't fit your own personal strengths and weaknesses. If you are looking for someone to buoy you up unconditionally as you make that first jump off a building to help someone in danger, you'll love this book.

– Michaela Riding, Simon & Schuster, \$20



## MYSTERY/THRILLER



**The Lost Man**, Jane Harper

The outback isn't a place to go walkabout without water. What caused Cam Bright, experienced homesteader, loving husband and father, to leave his fully stocked truck and walk almost 10 miles to the stockman's grave where he perished? It's a question his brothers Nathan and Bub are struggling to answer in this standalone psychological thriller from the author of *The Dry*. As the family gathers for Cam's funeral, Nathan begins to speculate on who would want Cam dead—this far into

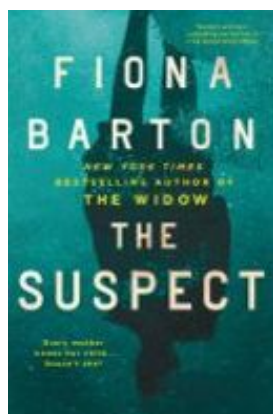
the back of beyond there are only a limited number of suspects.

– Paula Longhurst, Flatiron, \$27.99



## *The Suspect*, Fiona Barton

Reporter Kate Walters and her young protégé Joe get the scoop on a couple of missing teens courtesy of her old contact DI Bob Sparkes. The 18-year-olds went on a three-month backpacking tour in Thailand and haven't posted on social media for over a week. Both sets of parents are going crazy, but how well do they know their daughters? For Kate the story has a very personal connection—her oldest is also travelling in Thailand, and she hasn't seen him for over two years. A nasty twist of fate propels Kate and her family to the front page—and not under her byline. – Paula Longhurst, Berkley, \$26



## *The Vanishing Man: A Charles Lenox Mystery*, Charles Finch

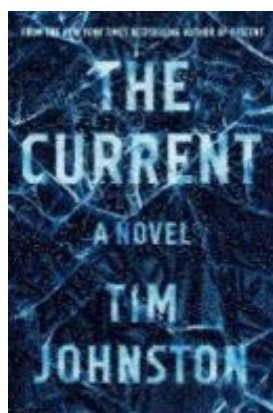
Lenox lives in two worlds. His friends and family, although low on the royal scale, are upper class, and he finds himself fascinated by crime with all its common haunts and characters. When a powerful Duke requests his help in solving a burglary, his curiosity takes him into the darker parts of London where the burglary becomes secondary to murder and the Duke's secrets hinder Lenox in his search for truth. Finch has created a like-



able character in this prequel to his Charles Lenox series. For those who have read the previous novels, this will fill in some unanswered questions about the characters and life in the London of 1853. – Wendy Foster Leigh, Minotaur Books, \$26.99

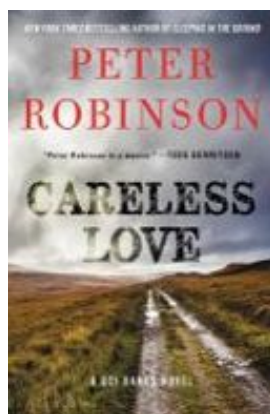
## *The Current*, Tim Johnston

Another freezing mystery from Johnston, this time on the border of Minnesota and Iowa. Audrey and Caroline, college roommates, are driving home for a long weekend when their car slides off a bridge into a freezing river with disastrous results. Worse, it's eerily reminiscent of a previous accident 10 years earlier that left a young girl dead and a town with many questions and few answers. As Audrey emerges from the hospital and into the wreckage of her new life, she decides she wants to answer these questions and that she's going to need help. But 10 years is a long time for some folks in the small town, even if for others it was only yesterday. – Anne Holman, Algonquin, \$27.95



## *Careless Love*, Peter Robinson

An empty abandoned car that had been cordoned off by police is suddenly occupied—by a dead body. The death appears to be a suicide but there are inconsistencies, as there are in another apparent accident being investigated. Bodies have a way of stacking up in the world of DCI Banks and his colleague Annie Cabot; in this case they lead to, among other things, escort services, drugs, human trafficking—in short the underbelly beneath the sophistication of



the wealthy. No surprise to Banks in yet another of Robinson's dependably well-written and intriguing mysteries—with, as always, music (in this case everything from Chet Baker to Vaughn Williams to Creedence Clearwater Revival) thrown in. Hmmm. Wonder if there's a DCI Banks play list... – Betsy Burton, Morrow, \$26.99

## *The Paragon Hotel*, Lyndsay Faye

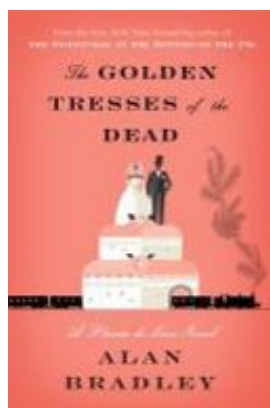
Alice James, a.k.a. No-

body, moves from the violence of the New York Mafia to the KKK of Oregon. Her world is filled with bigger-than-life characters—including mafia bosses, a black Pullman porter, a mixed-race child, and the flamboyant Blossom Fontaine. The only all-black hotel in Portland, the Paragon Hotel, becomes her refuge and its occupants her guardians. When the KKK moves into the city, she attempts to shield her new friends from its cruelty only to be caught up in the violence herself. The book moves back and forth between Harlem and Portland in 1921. Faye is a masterful writer who portrays the time-period and the landscape powerfully. – Wendy Foster Leigh, Putnam & Sons, \$26



## *The Golden Tresses of the Dead*, Alan Bradley

Arthur W. Dogger & Associates have landed their first client and been asked to retrieve stolen letters of an 'inappropriate nature' by a Mrs. Prill, daughter of the famous, wealthy and currently hospitalized Dr. Brocken. Dogger and Flavia are told they come 'highly recommended.' Flavia is on the case; however she's also pursuing the miscreant who left a nasty surprise in Feely and Dieter's wedding cake, and an even nastier one in Mrs. Prill's pantry.



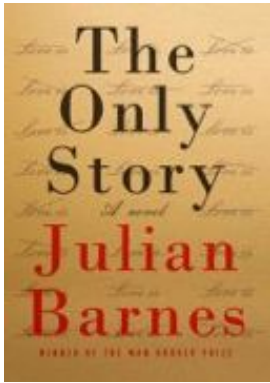
– Paula Longhurst, Random, \$26

## *The Plotters*, Un-Su Kim

With far too many targets for assassination to manage 'in-house,' the government contracts the work out. Corporations too begin to hire killers rather than doing their own work, and pretty soon assassination is a thriving industry in which anonymous 'plotters' target people for death and professional assassins carry out their orders. One such assassin, Reseng, has recently begun to ponder the implications of what he does, thus catapulting himself into a new moral universe where he has to reexamine old loyalties and build a new psychic reality. Or die trying. – Betsy Burton, Doubleday, \$25.95



## FICTION

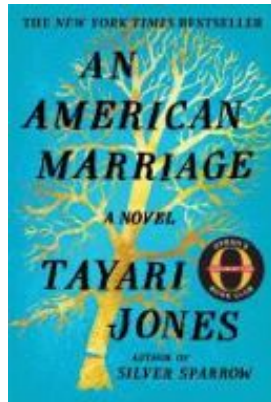
**The Only Story**, Julian Barnes

Barnes (*Sense of an Ending*) has written a story about mourning, about memory, and, ultimately about love. The narrator, Paul, is remembering and telling the story of his first love as a young man, an affair with an older woman that set his life on a path of highs and lows, due to a devotion that lasted decades. But as Paul reminisces, that initial burst of unrelenting passion evolves into a different story, one involving a woman's life that is full of other

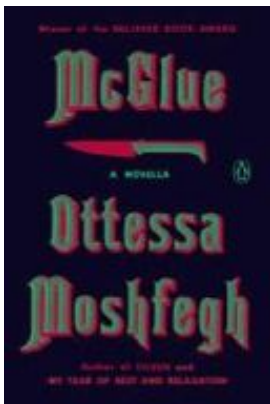
people—an abusive husband, daughters, therapists—none of which fit easily into the initial explosion of desire. Paul's parents loom large in the tale because of his youth, and as reality intrudes and innocence is eroded, Paul is left ruminating on the power of love, literally for the rest of his life. If your book group had a memorable discussion about *On Chesil Beach*, you should put *The Only Story* on your reading list. – Margaret Brennan Neville, Vintage, \$15

**An American Marriage**, Tayari Jones

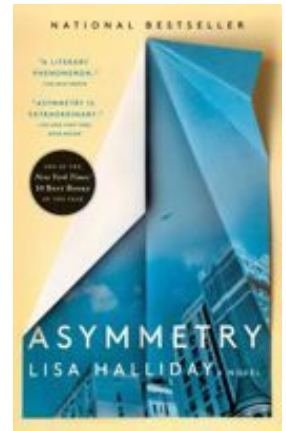
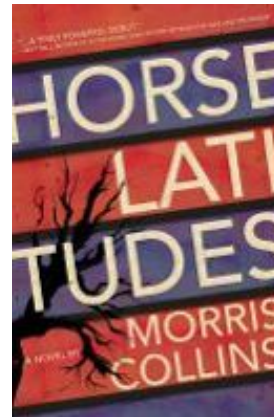
A young couple, very much in love, are a year and a half into marriage—not a perfect marriage, they're still learning to negotiate the currents—when Roy is arrested for rape. He's as innocent as was Fonny in James Baldwin's similarly plotted novel: like Fonny he was with his wife/lover when the rape occurred, both men are convicted, and both novels have race as a principal theme. But Jones takes her tale in a different direction, examining marriage with a knowing eye as we see the letters and visits of the wife, Celestial, become less and less frequent over time as, inevitably, she goes on with her life. Said letters are more insightful than their characters know as we watch Roy grapple with his past, yearn for his wife, struggle for his soul, and as, in a very different way, his wife does too. Then Roy is unexpectedly released, several years early, and what follows is an intensely compelling account of relationships torn asunder and the ways they reweave or fail to do so. A terrific read, *An American Marriage* is, in the end, a wise and insightful book. – Betsy Burton, Atlantic, \$16.95

**McGlue**, Ottessa Moshfegh

What a weird, twisted, wonderfully visceral tale. McGlue is a drunken sailor with a crack in his head, locked in the hold because he may or may not have killed another sailor, who may or may not have been his best friend. The prose is exceptional, completely up to the filthy task of accompanying McGlue as he sobers up on the sea voyage back to his hometown to stand trial for his depravity. – Michaela Riding, Penguin, \$15

**Asymmetry**, Lisa Halliday

A novel about a young editorial assistant falling into an out-of-balance affair with an aging literary luminary (read Philip Roth) abutts another story, this a first-person narrative of a young Iraqi-American man whose brother has disappeared and who is being held at Heathrow. The reader, engrossed in first one tale, then the other, and wondering what, exactly, they have to do with one another, turns to part three, an interview with the now even older literary luminary, and begins to tie together the overlapping themes involving the asymmetry of relationships, whether sexual or familial, the asymmetry of fates based on geography and on wealth. Skillfully written, daringly structured, laced with humor, irony, and sadness, *Asymmetry*, which recently received the 2017 Whiting Award, is an amazing debut. – Betsy Burton, Simon & Schuster, \$16

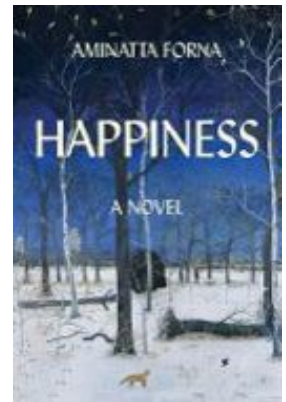
**Horse Latitudes**, Morris Collins

Running headlong away from marriage to a woman he's failed to save from herself, and beset by nightmarish guilt, Ethan crosses the Mexican border, driven by an urge to self-destruct which, if not clear to him, is painfully so to the reader. He ambles heedlessly into one harrowing situation after another, ending up in the bed of a woman who begs him to rescue her sister from a Central American country infamous for its violence. Setting out on this improbable mission Ethan,

submerged in a rum-soaked haze, afflicted by fever, and tormented by a kaleidoscope of interior scenes from his painful marriage, searches first for an old college friend who had disappeared into Central America a decade before. Said friend and a chilling but all-too-believable mercenary after the same young woman, along with an intrigue involving revolutionaries, CIA agents, rivers, jungles and murder, grab the reader by the throat and don't let go for an instant. This is a brilliantly crafted novel, rich in metaphor, complex in structure, awash in violence and vivid as your worst nightmare. Reminiscent of Melville, Conrad, and Malcolm Lowry, once started, *Horse Latitudes* is hard to put down and impossible to forget—however hard you may try. – Betsy Burton, Dzanc Books, \$16.95

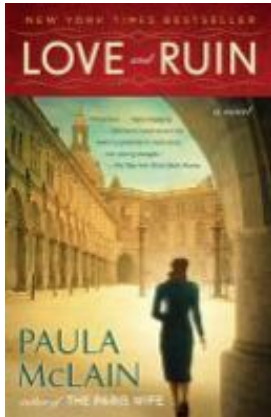
**Happiness**, Aminatta Forna

Two scientists, one an American naturalist who's studying the lifeway of the urban fox, the other a Ghanaian psychiatrist who's studying the impact of trauma on the brain and on human behavior, collide, literally, on a bridge in London. That collision is figurative as well as literal, however, since their encounter creates not just a connection but an unraveling and re-raveling, that have consequences for them both. All of which sounds neat and



## FICTION

tidy but like life, there is nothing tidy or neat about this intriguing, sometimes touching, often funny tale, weaving as it does an ardent chase down urban streets in search of a fox, of a missing child, of an old love, with a search for truth through the muddiness of misinformed beliefs and convictions. *Happiness* is a skillfully constructed, wonderfully written and complicated novel but also a fast-moving one; I couldn't put it down and I still think about it. – Betsy Burton, Grove, \$16



***Love and Ruin*, Paula McLain**

Throughout the tale of Martha Gellhorn's involvement with Hemingway, the reader knows she will eventually not be able to withstand the abuse of the hard-drinking, fierce-loving, ego-driven Ernest. But the way she stands nose to nose and toe to toe with him in writing, in traveling and most of all in terms of her independence in the man's field of journalism in wartime make her the ideal heroine for our days of the #MeToo movement. Marty, as she is known, falls hard for Hemingway when

she first meets him while traveling to Florida with her mother and brother after the death of her father—even though Ernest is all the things she knows she should stay away from. Both end up in Spain reporting on Franco's despoiling of a people and culture, and it's in the descriptions of the war-torn villages and countries that McLain's writing shines. The life they make together in Cuba should be idyllic—and is while Hemingway writes his opus, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*—but things quickly sour as his celebrity mounts. In the end Marty must remove herself to remain in the relationship as his mood begins to darken, and it is those removals to China and to the D-Day landing (the only female reporter on that fateful day) that ultimately make her and destroy them as a couple. – Anne Stewart Mark, Ballantine, \$17



***The Accidental Further Adventures of the 100 Year Old Man*, Jonas Jonasson**

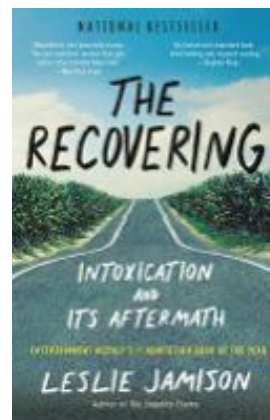
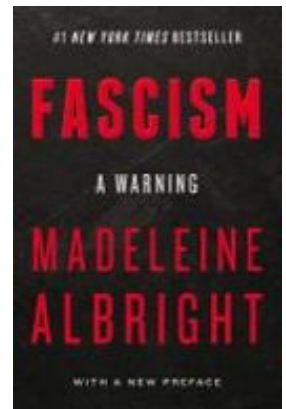
There is no better way to beat the winter doldrums than to pick up the new Jonasson book whose hero has just turned 101. To celebrate this milestone, Allan decides that he wants to go up in a hot air balloon with his sidekick Julius, off an unnamed island in Indonesia. What could possibly go wrong? Well, it did and the further adventures start with being rescued at sea by a North Korean ship carrying some enriched uranium for the Supreme

Leader. With this, the caper is off and running. Allan and Julius not only meet Kim Jong Un, but also Trump and an assortment of other characters. Suspend belief, get a warm cup of tea and curl up with this book. You won't be disappointed. – Jan Sloan, William Morrow, \$15.99

## NONFICTION

***Fascism: A Warning*, Madeleine Albright**

Former Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright (author of the best seller *Madam Secretary*), gives us a not-so-subtle warning about our current state of leadership in the United States and the world in general, and it is sobering. Albright uses examples of 20th and 21st century states from around the world to present a description, definition, and examples of fascism, from Mussolini to Erdogan to Putin and Trump, as case studies to warn us that the slide into fascism is a slippery one and can happen before the average citizen is even aware it is occurring. Each chapter of this very readable and concise book is a short history on an individual country's devolution into fascism and is a great review of certain periods of world history as well. In every instance Albright gives us the warning signs—signs which the informed citizen will recognize only too readily from our current state of governance in the United States and in other countries. – Patrick Fleming, HarperPerennial, \$17.99

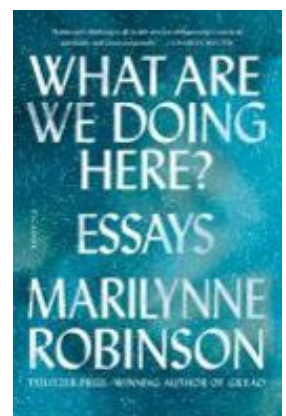


***The Recovering: Intoxication and Its Aftermath*, Leslie Jamison**

Jamison seamlessly blends personal experience with impeccable research and sharp-eyed social critique, looking not only at the social history of addiction and recovery but also at the intersection of substance use and perceptions of genius, drawing examples from literary figures such as Jean Rhys, Raymond Carver, Denis Johnson, and John Berryman. Jamison's language is utterly captivating, but it is also deeply empathetic and beautifully articulated. This book is not only possessed of incredible academic insight, it is a moving, compelling narrative that is impossible to forget. – Rachel Haisley, Back Bay, \$18.99

***What Are We Doing Here? Essays*, Marilynne Robinson**

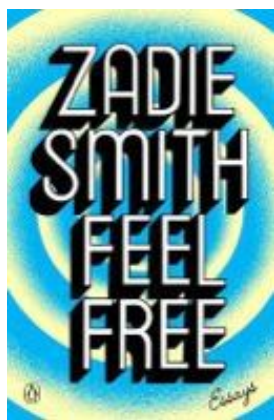
This brilliant book of essays by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Marilynne Robinson challenges the reader to consider those great thinkers who went before us, including de Tocqueville, Emerson, and Cromwell, among others. The essays included in the book are gathered from articles as well as various talks which Robinson gave at colleges across the country. Included is the prestigious Ingersoll Lecture on Human Immortality at the Harvard Divinity School. She covers not only the current political climate and political consciousness but also the way that beauty informs and controls our daily life, including the mysteries of faith and a call to a more disciplined approach to the current intellectual climate in the often-divisive communities of our country. An important book, especially now! – Jan Sloan, Picador, \$18



## NONFICTION

### *Feel Free*, Zadie Smith

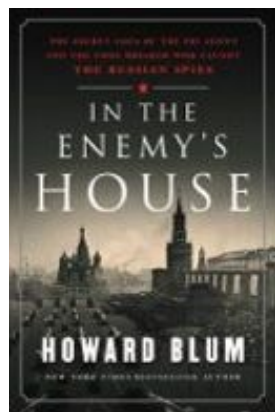
Zadie Smith burst onto the literary scene in her early 20s with her dazzling *White Teeth*, but has since defined herself as not simply a novelist, but as a keen thinker and a sharp-eyed observer of modern life. In these beautifully articulated, incisive essays, the author delves deeply into the Western psyche. Ruminating on race, identity, art, and literature, Zadie Smith has cemented herself as one of the most interesting and astute social critics of this era. – Rachel Haisley, Penguin Press, \$18



### *In the Enemy's House: The Secret Saga of the FBI Agent and the Code Breaker Who Caught the Russian Spies*, Howard Blum

During World War II, Russian agents working in the United States became aware of the ability of the U.S. to produce an atom bomb. It became a Russian imperative to uncover the details of this technology. To that end, a network of spies began to work within the bounds of the nuclear workforce as secret details of the bomb were passed on to the Rus-

sian government. Blum's story of an FBI agent and a linguistic code breaker working together to penetrate and reveal this spy network is fascinating in its detail. Relying on newly declassified documents, Blum illuminates the step-by-step work accomplished by two individuals, work that led ultimately to the conviction and execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg for treason. – Barbara Hoagland, Harper-Perennial, \$17.99



## MYSTERY/THRILLER

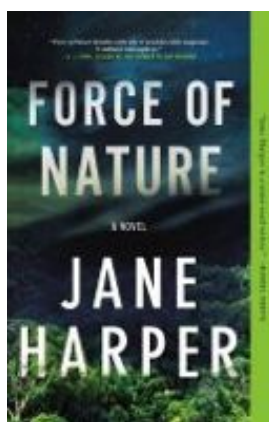
### *MacBeth*, Jo Nesbo

As befits the 'Scottish play', Nesbo makes Inspector MacBeth head of SWAT in a rainy 1970s drug-riddled town near Inverness. Lady is a casino owner and MacBeth's lover. Duncan is the new idealistic police chief and Banquo, MacBeth's second in command. Let the betrayal and manipulations begin. – Paula Longhurst, Hogarth, \$16



### *Force of Nature*, Jane Harper

Two small groups of hikers from the consulting firm Bailey/Tennants are on a three-day corporate retreat in the Giralang wilderness. The five men all make it back, but the women miss their deadline, and when they do make it out, they're one short—Alice Russell is missing. Federal agents Falk and Cooper have a problem. Alice Russell was their contact and she was about to blow the whistle on her bosses, two of whom were on the retreat. Falk takes the maps his father left him



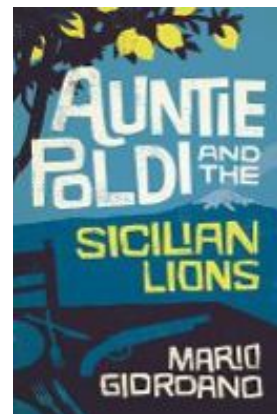
and with Cooper in tow travels down from Melbourne to assist in the search and to quiz the female Bailey/Tennants employees under the guise of finding out what happened to Alice. According to the others, Alice hiked out while they were still sleeping and no one saw her go. She should've gotten back first. He notices that the women seem to have been in the wars; there are some heavy facial bruises, gashes, sprains and an animal bite. But in what order did they occur, and do they have any bearing on Falk and Cooper's case? – Paula Longhurst, Flatiron, \$16.99

### *Auntie Poldi and the Sicilian Lions*, Mario Giordano (translated by John Brownjohn)

Poldi has just hit 60 and decides to move from Munich to Sicily to be near family and drink herself into oblivion with a sea view. Fate, however, has other ideas. Told through the eyes of her nephew who visits every few weeks, Poldi, Doña Poldina to the locals, needs a handyman and is provided with Valentino who, not long after fixing her roof, goes missing, only to turn up shot to death three days later.

Poldi, whose father was Chief of Police in Augsburg, is determined to avenge Valentino's death. She competes against the local police, notably Montana, who, according to Poldi, has Greek-god looks and romantic potential. Poldi may be a woman of a certain age but she combines the fashion sense of Sophia Loren with the laser brain of Miss Marple. Valentino's murderer doesn't stand a chance.

– Paula Longhurst, Mariner, \$14.99



### *Madness Is Better than Defeat*, Ned Beaman

In 1938 two expeditions went into the jungle of Honduras looking for a lost Mayan temple and never came back. Years later, a rogue CIA agent is trying to track down these expeditions, unaware of the secrets and nuances this temple holds. Reminiscent of Christopher Moore or the Cohen bothers, this rollicking, sharpwitted novel is a hilarious piece of escapist writing. – Rachel Haisley, Vintage, \$17.95



## BOOK CLUBS AT THE KING'S ENGLISH

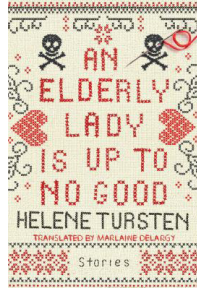
All are open to the public and meet at the bookshop unless otherwise noted.

### ARMCHAIR TRAVEL MYSTERY

3rd Tuesday of the month, 7 p.m.

**February:** *An Elderly Lady Is Up to No Good*, Helene Turston

**March:** *Devil in a Blue Dress*, Walter Mosley



### SECOND MONDAY

2nd Monday of the month, 7 p.m. \$5

**February:** *Loving*, Henry Green

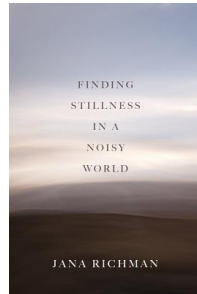
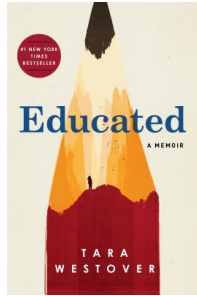
**March:** *The Hello Girls*, Elizabeth Cobbs

### BRIAN SHORT

2nd Tuesday of the month, 7 p.m.

**February:** *Educated: A Memoir*, Tara Westover

**March:** *I'll Be Gone in the Dark*, Michelle McNamara



### ROZ READS!

Cost: \$10 per evening paid to Roz.

Last Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m. See [www.roz-reads.com](http://www.roz-reads.com) for details.

**February:** *Finding Stillness in a Noisy World*, Jana Richman

**March:** *Improvement*, Joan Silber

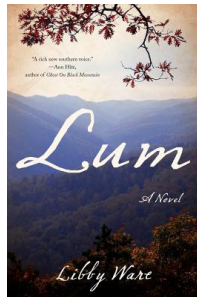
### SLC LESBIAN

1st Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m.

Contact: Nicki Hill | [nickihi@gmail.com](mailto:nickihi@gmail.com) | 801-362-9665

**February:** *Lum*, Libby Ware

**March:** *Marriage of a Thousand Lies*, S.J. Sindu



### YA & WINE

2nd Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m.

**February:** *Match Me if You Can*, Tiana Smith

**March:** *The Prince and the Dress-maker*, Jen Wang

## Losses in the King's English Family



Our beloved family at the bookshop is populated by our booksellers, past and present, by our many customers, by authors we know and love, and by authors we love but have never met, Mary Oliver being one of the latter. TKE bookseller Jan Sloan spoke for us all when she said of her, "whenever I was troubled or down I could always pick up one of Mary Oliver's many books of poetry and be immediately drawn into the world of nature as she sees it; she notices all the intimate details, creates intimacy, and that intimacy is somehow healing. Sad as I am, I know she'll always be there for me inside her books." Mary Oliver died at her home in Hobe Sound, Florida on January 17, 2019, at 83 years old. She was not only a bestselling author but also a widely respected member of the literary community, recipient of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, among many honors.

Leah Felt was a longtime, frequent and beloved customer at TKE whom we all loved and admired. We regarded her as a gentlewoman in the Jane Austen sense of the word in that she was not just gentle but well-educated, well-read and accomplished. Kind, yes, but witty and discerning as well. We could tell all this by our interactions with her and by her taste in books. She read hungrily, with passion, acumen and insight. Born in Salt Lake City on Easter Sunday, April 12, 1925, she passed away on January 1, 2019, at the age of 93.



Noel de Nevers was also a frequent customer at the bookstore along with his wife Klancy whom he met at Stanford University. He was a professor of Chemical Engineering at the University of Utah for many years and an author of textbooks in his field, nonfiction, and the limericks for which he was known and for which he received the title Poet Laureate of Jell-O Salad at the 1983 Last Annual Jell-O Salad Festival in Salt Lake City. A fierce defender of Utah's wild lands, he was also an ardent political activist whose sense of humor was as legendary as his passion. He died on January 4th, 2019, at the age of 86.

## THE INKSLINGER

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