



# OCTOBER '18

## Virgil Wander: A Novel

By Leif Enger

"From the fated flight of Virgil Wander's Pontiac into the frigid waters of Lake Superior to an encounter with Rune, an enigmatic kite enthusiast searching for word of a long-lost son, and other interactions with the citizens of Greenstone, Minnesota, Leif Enger's new novel is a most welcome, albeit quirky, story of words and people lost and found. Lovers of *Peace Like a River*, rejoice! Enger is back with another enchanting and enriching tale of community and revival, with his ever-deft touch of magic and grace. A perfect remedy for those whose hearts ache from our present reality, *Virgil Wander* is a treasure to be shared with all readers."

—Mark Nichols, Bank Square Books, Mystic, CT



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## Waiting for Eden: A Novel

By Elliot Ackerman

"I was completely captivated by this intensely emotional yet compact novel. Both of Ackerman's previous novels were acclaimed by readers and critics alike, but *Waiting for Eden* proves something more. In less than 200 pages, the intersecting lives of three people and the consequences of their choices are revealed in an astounding manner. It's a love story, a ghost story, a horror story, a war story, and, ultimately, a testament to the resilience of the human spirit. I don't want to tell you much more as I don't want to spoil it, but urge you to read this powerful and important work of literature."

—Cody Morrison, Square Books, Oxford, MS



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## November Road: A Novel

By Lou Berney

"Lou Berney's engrossing novel *November Road* unfolds in the immediate aftermath of JFK's assassination, but the heady confusion and shock of that dark day play second fiddle to the stories of Frank Guidry and Charlotte Roy, two desperate individuals seeking to outrun the entanglements of their very different lives. Guidry, a once-trusted player for the Marcello mob, is a marked man fleeing for his life; Roy, a weary housewife, seeks better prospects for herself and her daughters, so she must escape from both her dead-end town and deadbeat husband. Told in sharp, cinematic prose, this novel explodes the boundaries of the typical crime novel and offers up something more literary, a finely tuned exploration of the will to change."

—Mike Wysock, The Book Stall, Winnetka, IL



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## Heartland: A Memoir of Working Hard and Being Broke in the Richest Country on Earth

By Sarah Smarsh

"A classic is born! Sarah Smarsh takes us on a five-generation trek through the hardscrabble life of her Kansas childhood in the '80s and '90s. Just as J.D. Vance's *Hillbilly Elegy* and Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed* addressed the uncomfortable topic of poverty in this country, *Heartland* successfully gives the reader an in-depth look at impoverishment in the bread basket of America. She writes with a crystal-clear and objective voice, never giving in to self-pity or malevolence. Indeed, tongue-in-cheek humor and tenderness often shine through. This book is a must-read, a milestone in the life of our country."

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



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## All You Can Ever Know: A Memoir

By Nicole Chung

"Nicole Chung's memoir is a moving account of a young woman's gradually evolving understanding of family and of herself as she uncovers the truth about the circumstances behind her adoption. Refusing the false dichotomy of adoption as inherently positive or negative, she reminds us that adoption is a fact and that it's always complicated. This is an extraordinary account, told with candor and empathy. Though the transracial adoption of Asian Americans into white families and communities is common, few books have been written from the perspective of the adoptee. Chung has much to teach us, and readers approaching this book with a heart as open as hers will find much to nourish them here."

—Karen Maeda Allman, The Elliott Bay Book Company, Seattle, WA

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## A Spark of Light: A Novel

By Jodi Picoult

"Once again, Jodi Picoult tackles a highly charged social issue head on with compassion and insight. The characters in *A Spark of Light* offer readers insight into the varied and complex issues surrounding the pro-choice/pro-life debate. Although I know where I stand on the issue, I finished this novel with a greater understanding of how a person could hold beliefs different from my own. I hope this book becomes required reading for high schools across the country as well as a reading group favorite!"

—Andrea Avantaggio, Maria's Bookshop, Durango, CO

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## The 7 1/2 Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle: A Novel

By Stuart Turton

"I didn't know how badly I needed to escape my own life and sink into someone else's, or, in this case, many lives. Multiple perspectives give this book a mind-blowing mash-up feeling of *Clue* and the best Agatha Christie. There's a certain delicious joy to being confused and then ignoring the rest of the world while you read, desperate to discover the answers. Sure, it's the basic premise of a mystery, but for some readers it's a forgotten joy in need of reviving. Fun, inventive, and thoroughly entertaining, perhaps 'leave your own reality' reading is the new binge-watching."

—Beth Reynolds, Norwich Bookstore, Norwich, VT

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## The Real Lolita: The Kidnapping of Sally Horner and the Novel That Scandalized the World

By Sarah Weinman

"Any fan of Nabokov's *Lolita* will be enthralled by Sarah Weinman's investigation of the real-life kidnapping and sexual assault that became the basis for the 20th-century masterpiece. Weinman dives deep into the archives to piece together the ties between fact and fiction, even when the author or the victim's family refused to discuss history. Swapping between true-crime journalism and contemporary literary analysis, the author brings new attention to Nabokov's seminal work and draws the tragedy of Sally Horner out of obscurity."

—Ariel Jacobs, Solid State Books, Washington, DC

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## Transcription: A Novel

By Kate Atkinson

"In *Transcription*, Kate Atkinson brings the past of mid-20th-century Britain so thoroughly to life that she almost seems to be reporting rather than inventing. Her details are so rich and her hand so certain that, as readers, we are there—we are walking those streets, sitting in those smoky rooms. And, most of all, we are completely caught up in the emotional power of the tensions and fears of that past. With Juliet Armstrong, Atkinson has given us a remarkable addition to the canon of British spies."

—Michael Barnard, Rakestraw Books, Danville, CA



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## The Mermaid and Mrs. Hancock: A Novel

By Imogen Hermes Gowar

"This book was a pure delight from beginning to end. High-class escorts, nouveau riche merchants, madams, back-stabbings, broken hearts, mended hearts, parties, an angry mob, pining, mermaids: what more could you ask from a historical novel taking place in the late 18th century? The characters are so well-rounded I found myself cringing for them in their embarrassment and cheering for them in their triumph. The writing is so atmospheric it feels absolutely authentic. I can't remember the last time I enjoyed reading a book as much as I enjoyed reading this one. The only way to describe this book is as an absolute romp."

—Chelsea Bauer, Union Avenue Books, Knoxville, TN



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## Night Moves

By Jessica Hopper

"Like reading the diary of your best friend from the best time of your life, *Night Moves* is a music-as-literature, literature-as-music bildungsroman set in Chicago's indie music underground, but it's also everywhere: the moment the gentrification and glass luxury condos began to take over everything original in this country, a fading glimpse at youth gone by in the slow burn into adulthood that we've all shared. It's all of us who've ever ridden a bike through our town late at night, watching the lights glowing, to a playlist of our own creation inside our heads."

—Will Evans, Deep Vellum Books, Dallas, TX



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## Man With a Seagull on His Head: A Novel

By Harriet Paige

"Ray Eccles, a nonentity, goes for a walk on his 40th birthday. He seems almost reassured by the thought that he is past the age when something interesting is likely to happen to him. He assumes he is all alone on a deserted beach, but then, in quick succession, a woman appears, they lock eyes, and Ray is knocked cold by a seagull plummeting from the sky. Is it Ray's salvation or doom? Is Ray's ensuing story, told in Harriet Paige's gem-like prose, the stuff of tragedy or farce? Or are we all Ray, placid and longing, dreaming of rising into the sky?"

—Ezra Goldstein, Community Bookstore, Brooklyn, NY



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## The Clockmaker's Daughter: A Novel

By Kate Morton

"*The Clockmaker's Daughter* features a beautiful collection of characters who each endure loss and love tinged by the poetry of art. Their stories intertwine in the most unexpected ways. Each character's story wraps you up in their lives—their hopes and dreams, their families, and their fateful ends—until you're swiftly but gently awoken to their connection to the other characters and how it affects the overall mystery. I couldn't put this book down. *The Clockmaker's Daughter* left me falling through time until the very end."

—Erica Watkins, Green Apple Books on the Park, San Francisco, CA



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## Bitter Orange: A Novel

By Claire Fuller

"What I look forward to most in Claire Fuller's writing is the deliberate unfolding of plot and character, the careful chemistry that crackles when characters observe one another and reader observes narrator. *Bitter Orange* is Fuller's most mysterious novel yet, a house haunted by the stories its characters tell of their pasts and the slow unraveling of the truth. Dark and twisty and full of secrets, *Bitter Orange* is a satisfying page-turner perfect for readers who like a spooky and psychological read."

—Kelsey O'Rourke, Literati Bookstore, Ann Arbor, MI



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## The Witch Elm: A Novel

By Tana French

"Reading Tana French means disappearing into another life for a while. Her stories aren't meant to be slick or flashy, but deliberate, intricate studies of characters and their motivations. *The Witch Elm* is no different, as it follows the unraveling of Toby starting the night he surprises two burglars in his apartment. As you learn the secrets and weaknesses of Toby and his family, you begin to realize that while finding out what happened is enjoyable and surprising, finding out the how and the why is even better."

—Tyler Goodson, Avid Bookshop, Athens, GA



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## An Absolutely Remarkable Thing: A Novel

By Hank Green

"This book is so much fun. When April May stumbles across the first 'Carl,' she initially thinks it's an art installation. It turns out these giant statues turned up overnight in major cities around the globe. Due to the viral video she made with her friend Andy, April May finds herself in the middle of a worldwide conversation and trying to manage her newfound celebrity status. Green is an excellent storyteller and has delivered a great coming-of-age/sci-fi debut novel."

—Jennifer Hill, Powell's Books, Portland, OR



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## The Labyrinth of the Spirits: A Novel

By Carlos Ruiz Zafón

"Zafón is one of my favorite authors of all time. I found his first book in the series, *The Shadow of the Wind*, years ago at an airport and was hooked forever; I have been entranced by the adventures of Daniel Sempere and Fermin and many others. In *The Labyrinth of the Spirits*, the horrors of the Spanish Civil War loom large over Daniel's family and those he loves. And Alicia Gris—what a story she has to tell. In the midst of this violent time in Spanish history, the love that the characters have for each other shines bright. Through it all, Zafón shares magnificent tales about books, booksellers, authors, and life. This is a must-read!"

—Stephanie Crowe, Page and Palette, Fairhope, AL



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## There Will Be No Miracles Here: A Memoir

By Casey Gerald

"Casey Gerald's *There Will Be No Miracles Here* might very well—and rightfully so—come to be considered one of the great memoirs of African American experience in America. Gerald recounts his childhood and life beginning with his early years in Dallas, which were rife with family drama, religious questioning, and grappling with his sexuality, through his football career at Yale. In his meditative, lyrical, and ruminative tone, Gerald questions American identity, myth, and success. His conversational and conspiratorial style is undergirded by a proficient, experimental, and stylish set of literary techniques."

—Margaret Grace Myers, Books Are Magic, Brooklyn, NY



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## Washington Black: A Novel

By Esi Edugyan

"Epic in scope, ranging from a brutal slave plantation in Barbados to scenes in the Arctic, antebellum America, and London, plus a thoughtful denouement in the Moroccan desert, Edugyan's novel explores the complex relationship between slave and master, the hubris of good intentions, and the tense life of a runaway in constant flight with a Javert on his tail. What results is a compulsive page-turner blessed with effortless prose. Highly recommended."

—Matt Lage, Iowa Book, Iowa City, IA



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## 1,000 Books to Read Before You Die: A Life-Changing List

By James Mustich

"Irresistible! A book about books! What a joy to read a thoughtfully compiled list of the 1,000 books James Mustich thought most important. Many of my favorites are found among the pages, along with new suggestions to investigate. It is great fun to read about Mustich's impressions of some of my favorites, such as works by Charles Dickens, Edward Abbey, Henry James, and Anne Tyler. With so many books to choose from, you will surely find some new treasure to enjoy or be reminded of an old pleasure to revisit."

—Deon Stonehouse, Sunriver Books & Music, Sunriver, OR



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