



DECEMBER '12

Thomas Jefferson

The Art of Power, by Jon Meacham

"It could be argued that few individuals have had a greater impact on the course of our nation's history than Thomas Jefferson. Meacham's engaging biography reveals the extraordinary skills of this uniquely gifted and driven man as well as his heart and soul. In a poetic, moving epilogue, Meacham explains Jefferson's unabated appeal: 'He endures because we can see in him all the varied and wondrous possibilities of the human experience—the thirst for knowledge, the capacity to create, the love of family and friends, the hunger for accomplishment, the applause of the world, the marshaling of power, the bending of others to one's own vision.' Jefferson's story has never been more perfectly told. Quite simply, Meacham has written a masterpiece!"

—Christopher Rose, Andover Bookstore, Andover, MA



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DECEMBER '12

A Possible Life

A Novel in Five Parts, by Sebastian Faulks

"This incredible novel traces the separate trajectories of five unforgettable lives in five different time periods. Each life story is expertly etched by Faulks, and each could stand alone, but the stories become even more compelling as they join to form a provocative whole."

—Jenny Lyons, The King's English Bookshop, Salt Lake City, UT



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DECEMBER '12

Life Among Giants

A Novel, by Bill Roorbach

"Roorbach has given readers a totally unique family saga that is infused with love, sex, and murder. This is the kind of story that takes you on a journey from the very first page and races right along to the unforgettable conclusion. I was drawn in by the characters, both sympathetic and despicable. This is a great book to recommend to everyone."

—Barbara Kelly, Portland Bookstore-University of Southern Maine, Portland, ME



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DECEMBER '12

City of Dark Magic

A Novel, by Magnus Flyte

"Sarah, a music graduate student in Boston, finds solace, courage, and a kindred spirit through a piece of music written in 1830 by Beethoven. She will need these attributes and more when she accepts a job cataloging newly discovered papers of Beethoven at the Prague Castle. Pollina, her favorite pupil, warns her that Prague is a city steeped in blood, and Sarah soon learns this to be true as seven people at a fundraiser including her mentor jump to their deaths. Suicide or murder? Mix in experiments with a time-warping drug, a 400-year-old dwarf, a handsome prince, and a U.S. senator willing to commit murder to keep her dark secrets hidden, and the result is a fast-paced, hilarious, sexy, suspense novel, richly layered with history and music that will leave you begging for more."

—Karen Briggs, Great Northern Books & Hobbies, Oscoda, MI



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DECEMBER '12

Hand for a Hand

by T. Frank Muir

"A dismembered hand is found on a golf course green with a note addressed to Scottish DCI Andy Gilchrist consisting of just one word: *Murder*. The subsequent investigation gets too close to home for Andy when family members become involved. Set in historic St. Andrews with dour characters and dreary weather to set the mood, this first in a new series is a real nail-biter until the last page."

—Rita Moran, Apple Valley Books, Winthrop, ME



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DECEMBER '12

Because I Said So

The Truth Behind the Myths, Tales, and Warnings Every Generation Passes Down to Its Kids, by Ken Jennings

"Did your mom ever tell you not to swallow your gum because it would stay in your stomach for seven years? Ever wonder if that was true? In his new book, Jennings, the witty, charming *Jeopardy!* champ, gets to the bottom of the old wives' tales your parents told you and uncovers the truth. If you've got kids, read this so you can lie informatively, and if you don't have kids, read this so you can undermine your friends who do!"

—Flannery Fitch, Bookshop Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA



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DECEMBER '12

The Confidant

A Novel, by Helene Gremillon, Alison Anderson (Trans.)

"Infertility and infidelity lie at the heart of this very French romance. In 1975, Camille, a young Parisian editor who has just lost her mother, receives an unusual letter of condolence, the first of a weekly series of lengthy reminiscences from an anonymous source concerning events and people in wartime France from 1939 to 1943. Is it an author with a novel method of getting an editor's attention or a bona fide memoir of prewar France? And is Camille really the intended recipient? Family secrets, unsuspected for 30 years, shake Camille to her core in this suspenseful and intricately plotted debut."

—Darwin Ellis, Books on the Common, Ridgefield, CT



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DECEMBER '12

The Black Box

by Michael Connelly

"Detective Harry Bosch is haunted by the memory of a beautiful young Danish photojournalist murdered during the riots following the Rodney King verdict. The killing was never solved and is forgotten by all but Bosch. Despite the reluctance of his bosses to reopen the case because they fear that focusing on the killing of the blond when there were so many other victims of color will inflame the community, Bosch is determined to find the 'black box' that will pull all the clues together. This is classic Connelly. I couldn't put it down."

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



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DECEMBER '12

Dear Life

Stories, by Alice Munro

"'Nothing changes really about love.' This is the last line of the second story in this collection and it sums up a lot of what makes Alice Munro's writing a gift to the world. Aching real people in ordinary situations are illuminated by her words as an elusive shock of recognition grabs the reader. The four selections at the end are marvelous autobiographical sketches, with the last concealing the line from which the title is taken: 'Just after my mother had grabbed me up, as she said, for dear life.'"

—Karen Frank, Northshire Bookstore, Manchester Center, VT



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DECEMBER '12

The Valley of the Shadow

A Cornish Mystery, by Carola Dunn

"The sights and sounds of the coast of Cornwall come alive in *The Valley of the Shadow*. The rescue of a drowning Indian man leads to a race against time to rescue his family, trapped in the smugglers' caves on the rocky shore. Feisty retiree Eleanor Trewynn enlists her fellow villagers in tracking down those responsible for abandoning the refugees—but will the smugglers find her first? Dunn gives us a thoroughly enjoyable, cozy suspense novel—one with a social conscience."

—Carol Schneck Varner, Schuler Books & Music, Okemos, MI



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DECEMBER '12

Heads in Beds

A Reckless Memoir of Hotels, Hustles, and So-Called Hospitality, by Jacob Tomsky

"Here is the authentic voice of the Front Desk Agent: funny, experienced, profane, and able to tell a good story or two. Tomsky shares his story of beginning as a parking valet and rising to the heights of the front desk, with a horrifying detour through the housekeeping department along the way. This book is packed with characters, anecdotes, celebrities, and useful information for any hotel guest, such as 'Don't be afraid to tip the Front Desk Agent if you are after an upgrade.' *Heads in Beds* does for hotel workers what Anthony Bourdain's *Kitchen Confidential* did for restaurant workers. It should be an instant classic!"

—Mary Muller, Market Block Books, Troy, NY



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DECEMBER '12

Memoir of the Sunday Brunch

by Julia Pandl

"Growing up the youngest in a family of nine can make a kid feel lost, but the alternative, moving to a far-off suburb while all the older kids stay behind, can be even worse. It's a good thing then that the author was forced to tend to pancakes at a young age so she could further bond with her eccentric restaurateur father. Pandl shares family stories that will resonate with anyone from a large family, and some of the kitchen tales make Anthony Bourdain's confessions seem tame. But most of all, this is the story of a woman's bond with her father, built slowly with blocks of forced labor and family craziness, and then, when all that was swept away, rebuilt with the help of a lot of care and a bit of humor."

—Daniel Goldin, Boswell Book Company, Milwaukee, WI



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DECEMBER '12

Cold Quiet Country

by Clayton Lindemuth

"Sheriff Bittersmith is called to investigate a violent crime, but it's his last day in power and he wants to take his anger out on someone. There were no witnesses to the killing, but the victim's daughter and the hired man have vanished into the impending snow storm. Handyman Gale G'wain is innocent of the murder and other crimes the sheriff's bitter mind has ascribed to him, but he knows that he will never be given the chance to tell his story. Weak, wounded and holed up in an unoccupied farmhouse, Gale loads the guns he finds there and gets ready to defend himself. Lindemuth's story raises many questions about law, justice, and the difference between the two."

—Keri Rojas, Cornerstone Cottage Kids, Hampton, IA



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DECEMBER '12

Constantine the Emperor

by David Potter

"The impact of Constantine on Western civilization cannot be emphasized enough, yet the Roman emperor is mostly a creature of myth and legend. Potter brings this powerful, world-changing figure to life in a biography that gives true meaning to the man whose actions established Christianity in Europe. Examining the politics and conflicts of the late empire, Potter gives the reader an understanding of the forces that eventually led to a major religious and philosophical change."

—Bill Cusumano, Nicola's Books, Ann Arbor, MI



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DECEMBER '12

The Boy in the Snow

An Edie Kiglatuk Mystery, by M.J. McGrath

"Highly recommended for fans of Dana Stabenow's Kate Shugak series, this follow-up to McGrath's debut, *White Heat*, offers a view of the life of Inuits in Alaska. Half-Inuit Edie Kiglatuk is another strong heroine who has a troubled past but tries to do what she can to make things right. I look forward to learning more about what drives her in future books in this series."

—Nancy McFarlane, Fiction Addiction, Greenville, SC



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DECEMBER '12

The Great Pearl Heist

London's Greatest Thief and Scotland Yard's Hunt for the World's Most Valuable Necklace, by Molly Caldwell Crosby

"This is the true story of the heist of the most valuable pearl necklace in the world in 1913 London by one of the biggest international jewel thieves and the man who sent him to jail. This little-known case is a great read about how Scotland Yard began to use forensic sleuthing to solve crimes as well as a compelling description of how the criminals were almost able to get away with the theft."

—Beth Carpenter, The Country Bookshop, Southern Pines, NC



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DECEMBER '12

The Valley of Unknowing

by Philip Sington

"This well-crafted novel, set in the East German state in the 1980's, is an intricate story of subterfuge and betrayal that shares many features of the best thrillers. Sington offers not only a spot-on description of life in the former DDR, but also gives us real characters in a tale that provides engaging twists up to the very satisfying ending."

—Garry Jarman, Island Books, Etc., Mercer Island, WA



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DECEMBER '12

Hands-On Healing Remedies

150 Recipes for Herbal Balms, Salves, Oils, Liniments & Other Topical Therapies, by Stephanie L. Tourles

"This book is an absolute smorgasbord of recipes for topical herbal remedies. A wonderful resource for experienced herbalists and those who enjoy working with essential oils, it's also accessible for beginners and a great place to find inspiration to make gifts and remedies for family members who are new to herbalism. The design and layout make it a pleasure to use."

—Kristen Eaton, Phoenix Books, Essex Junction, VT



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DECEMBER '12

Raised From the Ground

A Novel, by Jose Saramago, Margaret Jull Costa (Trans.)

"Published in Portugal in 1980 and just now appearing in English, Saramago's third novel was worth the wait. A pivotal book in the late Nobel laureate's development, this tale marks the debut of Saramago's inimitable literary voice: digressive, ironic, humorous, and graceful, but impatient with 'lyrical tosh,' it features a narrator who speaks as 'we' and embraces all of humanity in a drama of good versus evil. Scathing about the abuse of the poor by the rich and powerful, Saramago's story is nonetheless written from a deep faith in the pure-heartedness and resilience of the human spirit, showing how even the most down-trodden will eventually rise up."

—Laurie Greer, Politics and Prose Bookstore and Coffeehouse, Washington, DC



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DECEMBER '12

Song of the Vikings

Snorri and the Making of Norse Myths, by Nancy Marie Brown

"As you read about 13th century storyteller Snorri Sturluson and his writing, you will also learn about the history of the fiercely independent Icelanders and their often difficult relationships with their Scandinavian neighbors. This book is full of blood-curdling tales of family rivalries all interwoven with stories of Norse gods and other mythical creatures of the sagas. Those who have read Tolkien's Lord of the Rings will find some names that will sound oddly familiar!"

—Dominica Borg, Norwich Bookstore, Norwich, VT



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