**And So It Goes**

*Kurt Vonnegut: A Life, by Charles J. Shields*  
(St. Martin’s Griffin, 9781250012180, $16.99)  
“Shields’ authorized portrayal of one of America’s most beloved authors shed[s] light on the man behind the curtain. Readers for the first time gain insight into the progression of Vonnegut’s works, from market-minded science fiction to literary fiction.”

—Nick Hodge, Read Between the Lynes, Woodstock, IL

**Birds of a Lesser Paradise**

*Stories, by Megan Mayhew Bergman*  
(Scribner, 9781451643367, $15)  
“Birds of a Lesser Paradise is a poignant collection of stories, each filled with vivid imagery, surprising wit, and elegant prose. My copy is filled with dog-eared pages of Bergman’s brilliantly written observations on who we are and who we hope to be. She masterfully captures the fragility of human life by placing it within and against the natural world. Read these stories. You will be so thankful you did, and then you will read them again!”

—Anderson McKean, Page & Palette, Fairhope, AL

**The Healing**

*A Novel, by Jonathan Odell*  
(Anchor, 9780307745462, $13.95)  
“During the years before the Civil War, Master Ben purchases Polly Shine, a slave woman known to possess healing powers, to help ‘doctor’ his slaves suffering from a mysterious plague. Polly also needs to pass on her healing knowledge to the next generation and focuses on Granada, a young slave girl. Granada is not so willing to accept her gift and is not interested in learning anything from Polly. Despite Granada’s impatience and resistance, Polly teaches her that the gift of healing is much more than just learning to heal.”

—Julia Barth, Blue Willow Bookshop, Houston, TX

**History of a Pleasure Seeker**

*A Novel, by Richard Mason*  
(Vintage, 9780307949298, $15.95)  
“Set in Amsterdam during the Belle Epoque, History of a Pleasure Seeker follows Piet Bartol, the poor but cultured young tutor to a wealthy Dutch family. Piet is determined to drink life to the fullest, and this ambition allows not only his own life, but also the lives of those around him. Skillfully and evocatively rendered, this novel feels like its own guilty pleasure, redolent of lazy afternoons and late night liaisons.”

—Stesha Brandon, University Book Store, Seattle, WA

**Holy Ghost Girl**

*How a Few Simple Lessons Transformed A Memoir, by Donna M. Johnson*  
(Gotham, 9781592407354, $16)  
“Johnson’s treatment of her childhood immersed in the Pentecostal tent-meeting movement is flawless. She is truthful about her memories, but she does not rush to the judgment of others. Weak of flesh but strong in willpower, well-meaning Randall Terrell is the leader of a traveling group of the faithful. Tent meetings are huge, and once the donations become enough to cover bills, they soon lead to an excess that is all too familiar. This is an excellent book for those wanting to both know more about this particular spiritual movement and gain some understanding of the faith that kept the followers going.”

—Linda Bond, Auntie’s Bookstore, Spokane, WA

**Lightning Rods**

*A Novel, by Helen DeWitt*  
(Simon & Schuster, 9781451656930, $15)  
“Like a literary love child of Neal Stephenson and Palahniuk, Lightning Rods avoids pretention by being bizarrely revolting to most. Reminiscent of the writings of both Shteyngart and Palahniuk, Lightning Rods avoids pretention by being bizarrely funny and satisfyingly satiric.”

—Rachel Haisley, The King’s English Bookshop, Salt Lake City, UT

**Running the Rift**

*A Novel, by Naomi Benaron*  
(Algonquin Books, 9781616201944, $14.95)  
“Named for the Rwandan god of thunder, Jean Patrick Nkuza is destined for Olympic glory. Pushing his body up the misty hills of his village, he dreams not only of fame, but also of bringing peace to his country to its torturous compatriots. When the floodwaters of hatred and war with the Hutu burst out over his homeland, Patrick must run a different kind of race in order to survive. Both beautiful and heart-rending, horrific and hopeful, this novel carries a message that deserves to be widely read.”

—Amanda Hurley, Inkwood Books, Tampa, FL

**The Wedding Quilt**

*An Elm Creek Quilts Novel, by Jennifer Chiaverini*  
(Putnam, 9780399151569, $14.95)  
“Chiaverini’s elegant and gentle style in this latest in the series will appeal to quilters and non-quilters alike. Sarah has planned to make a quilt for her daughter as a wedding gift and has asked family and friends to sign blocks. Flashbacks take place as quilts, passions, traditions, struggles, and loves are remembered and shared.”

—Cheryl Kroger, Chapters Books & Gifts, Seward, NE