—Jenny Lyons, The Vermont Book Shop, Middlebury, VT

The Invention of Exile
A Novel, by Vanessa Manko
(Penguin Books, 9780143127690, $16)

“Manko’s debut novel is the beautifully written story of Austin Varonkov, a Russian inventor who immigrates to the U.S., but, through a series of unfortunate events, finds himself a man without a country. Filled with poignant insights on what it means to belong, The Invention of Exile gives readers a sweeping, masterfully told story spanning continents and years. A heart-wrenching portrait of this determined immigrant and engineer, who relentlessly works to reverse his fate and return home.”

—Anderson McKean, Page & Palette, Fairhope, AL

Hold the Dark
A Novel, by William Giraldi
(Scribner, 9781476759307, $15.99)

“In their second installment in what will surely be an epic trilogy, the Boston girls find themselves in the American obsession with Homeland Security. Perfect for lovers of the works of Homer, they explore the wildness of a remote land. Finding meaningful work as a social worker, her narrative begins as a child of immigrant parents, her formative years as a Saturday Club girl, where she found her lifelong friends; her career as a typist and journalist; and meeting her husband and children. Her story plays out against a backdrop of some of the most basic issues women had to face as they found their places in 20th century America.”

—Jenny Lyons, The Vermont Book Shop, Middlebury, VT

The Rosie Effect
A Novel, by Graeme Simsion
(Simon & Schuster, 9781476752751, $15.99)

“If you loved The Rosie Project, you’ll love knowing what happens next to Don and his new wife, Rosie, as they settle into their lives in New York City and find out that becoming a family isn’t all it’s cracked up to be. Rosie may love Don, but neither of them is sure if he’s ready to be a father. This book is as warm as the original and as full of Don’s humorous—and cringe-worthy—misunderstandings of social behavior.”

—Kate Madison, Penguin Bookshop, Sewickley, PA

The Rosie Project
A Novel, by Graeme Simsion
(Penguin Books, 9781476731919, $16)

“In her fourth novel, French maintains her masterful prose, engaging characters, and complex but lucid plotting. While the story revolves around the murder of a male student on the grounds of an exclusive Dublin girls’ school, it gains richness and depth with its exploration of the thorny relationship between the investigators, plus the rivalries, adolescent anxieties, and barbed dialogue of the students. The plot launches when the daughter of Detective Frank Mackey, reduced in French’s Faithful Place—brings to the police an anonymous claim about the identity of the murderer of the student a year earlier. A gripping addition to the Dublin Murder Squad series.”

—Joe Streb, Anderson’s Bookshop, Naperville, IL

The Short and Tragic Life of Robert Peace
A Brilliant Young Man Who Left Newark for the Ivy League, by Jeff Hobbs
(Scribner, 9781476731919, $16)

“On one level, The Short and Tragic Life of Robert Peace is about unfulfilled potential and heartbreakingly tragic loss, but more importantly, it deals with the pressure we all feel to succeed and be happy in an increasingly competitive society. It is a beautiful and powerful portrait of what it means to be young, talented, and conflicted.”

—Sharon Donley, Powell’s Books, Portland, OR

The Story of Land and Sea
A Novel, by Katy Simpson Smith
[Harper Perennial, 9780062335951, $15.99]

“Simpson’s debut novel is a quiet and radiant book. This story of love and loss is set during the later part of the American Revolutionary War and is told from the shifting viewpoints of a 10-year-old white girl, Tabitha; her family; their slave, Moll; and Moll’s young son, Davy. While we can never know exactly what it felt like to be living on the North Carolina coast, on land and sea, at the end of the 18th century, Smith’s graceful writing seems to capture the very essence of a different way of being in the world. This is an exceptionally written novel with characters whose hard lives are redeemed by moments of both beauty and mercy.”

—Sarah Goddin, Quail Ridge Books & Music, Raleigh, NC

The Secret Place
A Novel, by Tana French
(Penguin Books, 9780143127512, $17)

“In her fourth novel, French maintains her masterful prose, engaging characters, and complex but lucid plotting. While the story revolves around the murder of a male student on the grounds of an exclusive Dublin girls’ school, it gains richness and depth with its exploration of the thorny relationship between the investigators, plus the rivalries, adolescent anxieties, and barbed dialogue of the students. The plot launches when the daughter of Detective Frank Mackey, reduced in French’s Faithful Place—brings to the police an anonymous claim about the identity of the murderer of the student a year earlier. A gripping addition to the Dublin Murder Squad series.”

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