The Bishop's Wife
A Novel, by Mette Ivie Harrison
(Soho Crime, 978-166956189-2, $15.95)
“Linda Wallheim is the local bishop’s wife and
the mother of five sons, all but one out of the
house and on their own. As a Mormon, Linda
has been increasingly dissatisfied with some of
the Church’s doctrine. While her life is busy
fulfilling her duties with many community
services and being the hostess for the ward at
every meeting, she cares for the patriarchal
beliefs and practices. When she is called to care
for a five-year-old girl whose mother has
mysteriously disappeared, Linda begins to question
the circumstances of the young wife’s absence. A compelling read!”
—Patricia Worth, River Reader, Lexington, MO

First Impressions
A Novel, by Charlie Lovett
(Penguin Books, 9780143127727, $16)
“This is a frothy and fun mystery/romance that asks
‘What if Jane Austen plagiarized her greatest work, Pride and Prejudice?’
By alternating chapters about Austen and her
fictional friendship with an elderly minister and
writer with those involving a modern-day
bookseller and Austen fan who is searching for
love and rare books, Lovett builds suspense while tossing in all kinds
of fun Austen factoids. The tale is simple and sweet and the heroine
is a modern-day Eliza, torn between two passions of each. Delightful, especially for Austen fans—and really, who isn’t?”
—William Carl, Wellesley Books, Wellesley, MA

Jerry Lee Lewis
His Own Story, by Rick Bragg
(Harper Paperbacks, 9780062078247, $16.99)
“It is possible only Rick Bragg could do true
justice to The Killer, a man whose music is an
indelible aspect of the American cultural scene. Bragg’s knowledge of the South enables him to
provide the background of a region of incredible contrasts that spawned Jerry Lee
Lewis and helped contribute to a musical
revolution, which eventually swept the world. Lewis’ own improbable life complements the story of a cultural phenomenon
that helped to change society and is still relevant today.”
—Bill Cusumano, Square Books, Oxford, MS

The Laughing Monsters
A Novel, by Denis Johnson
(Picador, 9781250070491, $16)
“In the chaos of West and Central Africa,
Johnson has found a setting to match his
fevered, conspiratorial, and hilarious
imagination. Cracking with wild energy and
bizarre happenings, The Laughing Monsters tells
the story of two desperate and insane souls—an
American spy and an African combat expert
and ‘man of opportunity’—who are each trying to pull off bizarre
dangerous schemes without revealing their true motives
to each other or even to themselves. This is quintessential Denis
Johnson madness.”
—Rico Lange, Bookshop Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA

Lila
A Novel, by Marilynne Robinson
(Picador, 978-1250070484, $16)
“Robinson revisits the characters from the
Pulitzer Prize-winning Gilead and its companion
novel, Home, with her new novel covering the
backstory of her main character, Lila, whose
rash and inexplicable migratory patterns are
now in play. The ebb and flow of the story and the rhythm of the sentences
seem effortless, and while the reader is
held in her spell, Robinson’s work is fully on
display. In Gilead, Iowa, Robinson has created her own
Yoknapatawpha County, and if Alice Munro is regarded as our
modern-day Chekhov, surely Robinson is our contemporary Faulkner.
An impressive work.”
—Matthew Lage, Iowa Book, Iowa City, IA

Man V. Nature
Stories, by Diane Cook
(Harper Perennial, 9780062333117, $14.99)
“Cook has a keen eye for dredging up our
deepest fears in these surreal stories. From child
abduction to global warming to characters who face
the unthinkable with remarkable aplomb and
surprising results. Cook is a true original and it’s
impossible to guess just which way her stories
will turn, but you can trust that most of the time it
will be the right way.”
—Arsen Kashkashian, Boulder Bookstore, Boulder, CO

Night Blindness
A Novel, by Susan Strocker
(St. Martin’s Griffin, 9781250042842, $15.99)
“Family tragedy and guilt are too much for
16-year-old Jensen Reilly to handle by herself,
but that is what she tries to do for 13 years. She
abandons everything that defines her and starts
a new life as an artist and model, eventually
falling with her art professor. Jensen is finally
forced to face her past, her old friends, her
family, and her first true love when her father is diagnosed with a
brain tumor and she returns home to help care for him. Night Blindness is a story of first love, family, grief, guilt, forgiveness, and
how the truth can truly set one free.”
—Nancy McFarlane, Fiction Addiction, Greenville, SC

On Immunity
An Inoculation, by Eula Biss
(Graywolf Press, 9781555977207, $16.95)
“Biss’ essays about the immunization debate
draw from the personal to the body politic and
back again. Drawing on her experiences as a
mother and employing an astonishing diversity
of sources, Biss plumbs our ancient fear of
infection. Acknowledging the permeability of
both our borders and bodies, she arrives at the
conclusion that ‘immunity is a shared space—a garden we tend
together.’ Biss’ precise language and wry humor make On Immunity
as engaging as it is informative.”
—Brooke Alexander, Brazos Bookstore, Houston, TX

Penelope Fitzgerald
A Life, by Hermione Lee
(Vintage, 9780804179767, $16)
“As always with Lee’s work, her latest
biography offers a detailed and fascinating
view of her subject’s life. Penelope Fitzgerald
was a teacher, a scholar, a world-class novelist, a two-time winner of Britain’s Man Booker
Prize, and a devoted mother and wife. Fitzgerald came late to fame, and this
meticulously researched and beautifully written biography
reveals every facet of her life in the most intimate way. I loved it!”
—Kathy Ashton, The King’s English Bookshop, Salt Lake City, UT

Vanessa and Her Sister
A Novel, by Priya Parmar
(Ballantine Books, 9780804176392, $16)
“This novel tells the story of sisters Vanessa and Virginia Stephens, later to become Vanessa Bell and Virginia Woolf. Vanessa, an emerging
painter, tells their stories in her journal
accompanied by the letters and telegrams of their families, husbands, and the many brilliant
artists and painters in this compelling novel. It is a story of art, literature, betrayal, emotional upheaval, and, above all, the
many complicated forms love takes. Set against the backdrop of Edwardian England, a time of sweeping social transformations,
Vanessa and Her Sister is a moving portrait of a brilliant family.”
—Staci Rice, Bluebird Books, Hutchinson, KS

We Are Pirates
A Novel, by Daniel Handler
(Bloomsbury, 9781608197767, $16)
“From the mind behind Lemony Snicket comes
this weird and wonderful novel, featuring a
troubled teenage girl, her befuddled parents,
and, of course, pirates. Handler plays it straight, until he
doesn’t, and demonstrates why he is one of the most
playful, macabre, and beloved writers
working today.”
—Cody Morrison, Square Books, Oxford, MS

Wildalone
A Novel, by Krassi Zourkova
(William Morrow Paperbacks, 9780062328038, $14.99)
“Thea, a piano prodigy determined to leave
Bulgaria for America, has just discovered she is
a ‘ghost child,’ someone raised in the shadow
of a dead sibling. Her sister, Elza, attended
Princeton, also as a piano prodigy, but was
found dead with no known cause. Eighteen
years later, as Thea continues to work with
her haunted sister’s complete NEW YORK TIMES
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