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FEBRUARY '17

All Our Wrong Todays: A Novel

By Elan Mastai

"Tom Barren is a time traveler. From 2016. A different 2016 from ours, that is. It's complicated. You see, he travelled from his techno-perfect utopian 2016 back to 1965 and really messed things up, leaving us with our current world. Now, the 2016 Tom-in-our-world, given the chance to return to 1965 and fix what he broke and return the world to the spiffy state he knows, faces the dilemma of loyalty to friends and family from his world versus the possibility of settling down with the love of his life in our grungy world. Whichever he chooses, people he loves will cease to exist. I predict the clever, witty, and poignant *All Our Wrong Todays* will be a huge bestseller for screenwriter and first-time novelist Elan Mastai."

—Clay Belcher, Signs of Life, Lawrence, KS



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FEBRUARY '17

Pachinko: A Novel

By Min Jin Lee

"A father's gentle nature, a mother's sacrifice, a daughter's trust, and a son's determination are the cornerstones of this grand, multilayered saga. *Pachinko* follows one family through an ever-changing cultural landscape, from 1910 Korea to 1989 Japan. As the bonds of family are put to the test in the harsh realities of their world, Sunja and those she holds dear manage to carve themselves a place to call home with hard work, self sacrifice, and a little kimchi. Through it all is a message about love, faith, and the deep-rooted bonds of family. Min Jin Lee gives us a phenomenal story about one family's struggle that resonates with us today. It will take hold of you and not let go!"

—Jennifer Steele, Boswell Book Company, Milwaukee, WI



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FEBRUARY '17

Lincoln in the Bardo: A Novel

By George Saunders

"Saunders' first novel has a steep entry curve. It's not a novel that reveals itself quickly and easily, but if you give it your attention, if you burrow deep into the book, you'll be eminently rewarded. There is a richness and depth of humanity here. There is the strange and wonderful. There is love and grief and mystery all brought together in the story of Abraham Lincoln's dead son, the Civil War, and what may happen to us all after we leave the mortal coil. It's a beautiful and moving book that will stay with you for a long, long while."

—Jason Vanhee, University Book Store, Seattle, WA



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FEBRUARY '17

Lillian Boxfish Takes a Walk: A Novel

By Kathleen Rooney

"Join 85-year-old Lillian on a New Year's Eve stroll through Manhattan, a city as changed by time as Lillian herself. As with Joyce's *Ulysses*, the reader is privy to a life told in snapshots of memory within a single day. Based loosely on the life of Margaret Fishback, Lillian is a former Depression-era advertising copywriter for R.H. Macy's and a poet of light verse. She is also a mother and an ex-wife. Rooney's work has a light touch, but she is never frivolous. Rooney has the capacity to portray depth within brevity, pain within humor. Here is a novel that both entertains and enlightens, a balance rarely achieved."

—Sarah Sorensen, Bookbug, Kalamazoo, MI



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FEBRUARY '17

The Girl Before: A Novel

By J.P. Delaney

"Immediate guarantee: You will NOT be able to put this book down. *The Girl Before* unfolds through the perspectives of two women: Emma (then) and Jane (now). It chronicles their lives in the stunningly and scarily minimalist home One Folgate Street and its aloof yet magnetic owner. J.P. Delaney spins a masterful story that epitomizes the notion that you never really know everything about anyone. Fans of *Gone Girl* and *The Girl on the Train* will realize that there's not only more where that came from, but it's also more thrilling."

—Destinee Hodge, East City Bookshop, Washington, DC



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FEBRUARY '17

The Impossible Fortress: A Novel

By Jason Rekulak

"You don't have to remember the 1980s to deeply 'get' this sweet memory trip back to the decade when video games, personal computers, and mixtapes were new. But if you did come of age in the 1980s, look out. All those awkward boy/girl moments, all those songs that comprised the soundtracks of your make-out sessions and your break-ups, all the wonder of your first encounters with MS-DOS buried deep in a far corner of your memory...Jason Rekulak will bring it all back to you."

—Carol Spurling, BookPeople of Moscow, Moscow, ID



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FEBRUARY '17

A Separation: A Novel

By Katie Kitamura

"We all have a secret self, parts of our personalities that are unknowable, even to the people closest to us. In *A Separation*, Kitamura stays largely inside the narrator's head, musing on a great many things: the muddled truth that can exist between married couples, the precise pain of infidelity, the myriad tiny betrayals we commit every day. Her prose is perfect, spare and beautiful, and her observations are spot-on. Some of her sentences were so good they startled me out of the story, which might sound like a bad thing, but it really isn't. It just meant I spent a little longer with this book, my mind wandering like the narrator's."

—Lauren Peugh, Changing Hands Bookstore, Tempe, AZ



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FEBRUARY '17

Behind Her Eyes: A Novel

By Sarah Pinborough

"*Behind Her Eyes* took me totally by surprise. From the beginning I knew it was the story of a very disturbed person, but which one was the sick one? I knew something happened in the past that was driving two of the main characters, and I thought I was discovering the truth about the past — but, boy, was I wrong. A very dark and eerie psychological thriller of love and obsession that you will not be able to put down until you discover the truth."

—Nancy McFarlane, Fiction Addiction, Greenville, SC

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Perfect Little World: A Novel

By Kevin Wilson

"Izzy Poole is 18, pregnant with her erratic art teacher's baby, and without any family or money to help her raise her child. Dr. Preston Grind is tragically widowered and estranged from his parents, who raised him using unconventional and unhealthy methods in the name of science. Dr. Grind invites Izzy and nine other couples also expecting their first child to join the Infinite Family Project, an experiment in communal parenting and an attempt to rebuild Dr. Grind's broken family. This is a fascinating and touching exploration of what makes or breaks a family."

—Marisa Langlois, Northshire Bookstore, Saratoga Springs, NY

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FEBRUARY '17

Swimming Lessons

By Claire Fuller

"With *Swimming Lessons*, Claire Fuller confirms her place as a writer of exceptional insight and warmth. This tale of a marriage, of a family, and especially of children bearing the brunt of the fallout of betrayals and abandonment, pulls you in and refuses to let you emerge from the lives of its characters until the tale is finished. Even then, it takes time to shake the spell the book creates. A wonderful follow-up to *Our Endless Numbered Days*, that explores similar themes through an entirely different story, *Swimming Lessons* will be a great book for fans of Fuller's first novel and will bring her new fans as well."

—Anmiryam Budner, Main Point Books, Wayne, PA

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FEBRUARY '17

4 3 2 1: A Novel

By Paul Auster

"I celebrate whenever there's something new by Paul Auster. I wasn't prepared, though, for just how moved, awed, and astonished I found myself while immersed in his inventive and grand novel *4 3 2 1*. About a life lived fully, about possibility in love and finding a path to take that's the right one, this is a large novel in all respects, but, most importantly, in spirit. In its writing, Paul Auster has created nothing short of a masterpiece."

—Mitchell Kaplan, Books & Books, Coral Gables, FL

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FEBRUARY '17

300 Arguments: Essays

By Sarah Manguso

"Sarah Manguso is a master of the minimalist form. She can do more with a sentence than many authors can do with an entire book. In this collection of brief ruminations, she covers everything from sex and mortality to ambition, mental illness, writing, desire, and motherhood. These 'arguments' are aphoristic gems in which a seemingly random thought has hardened into a bold, cutting, crystalline truth. There is no exposition. Manguso lets these minute statements stand on their own, and the reader is left with nowhere to hide from direct engagement with a most remarkable literary mind."

—Keaton Patterson, Brazos Bookstore, Houston, TX



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FEBRUARY '17

Desperation Road: A Novel

By Michael Farris Smith

"Russell, just released from an 11-year prison sentence, finds anger and revenge waiting for him on the outside. Maben, homeless, broken, and walking along the interstate in the blazing Mississippi heat toward McComb, is forced to make a decision that puts her and her young daughter on the run from the police. In a desperate moment of chance or fate, Russell and Maben's paths cross, their shared past is revealed, and Russell is left to make the ultimate choice. Smith's novel is mesmerizing from its opening pages; you will have to pace yourself while reading it to fully enjoy and appreciate the pitch-perfect language and descriptions that can only come from one who has a masterful command of storytelling."

—Matt Kelly, Lemuria Bookstore, Jackson, MS



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FEBRUARY '17

Rise: How a House Built a Family

By Cara Brookins

"It's been a long time since I've read a book with such a strong female character—and it's not fiction! Cara Brookins has survived three bad marriages. After the abusive third marriage dissolves, Brookins resolves not to be scared anymore and decides with steadfast determination to take charge of her family. She takes her kids on a road trip to a cabin in the Ozarks, where they begin to dream about having a new house that represents their new life. Though it's hard for them not to be scared at every turn, their recovery and growth parallels the structure of their home. As they build, they tear down emotional walls. I kept looking at the photo of that amazing house on the back of the book with wonder that she was able to do this on her own. What an amazingly strong woman! I loved this book."

—Marya Johnston, Out West Books, Grand Junction, CO



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FEBRUARY '17

The Fifth Petal: A Novel

By Brunonia Barry

"Brunonia Barry's newest witchy tale, set in Salem, follows the threads of three mysteries that all ended in murder. Callie, who carries the scars of murders past, is joined by detectives Rafferty and Towner from Barry's *The Lace Reader* in a race to stop yet more killings and collective town wounds. Barry's prose excels at keeping readers chasing threads and second-guessing theories about the crimes depicted. Her research and experience of Salem are evident, and her witches make me want to become one. History and folklore are woven like lace in this mystery as new characters and old favorites attempt to solve puzzles from as far back as the witch trials that made Salem famous."

—Jessica Hahl, Country Bookshelf, Bozeman, MT



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FEBRUARY '17

Indelible: A Novel

By Adelia Saunders

"In her remarkable debut, Adelia Saunders develops an intriguing idea into an extraordinary book. When Magdalena looks at other people, she sees words describing their lives written on their skin. The impact is so disturbing that she often leaves her glasses off and walks through the world in a blur, almost missing an encounter with Neil, the American student upon whose face her own name is written. Would fate have demanded that they meet? The interwoven stories of Magdalena, Neil, and their families raise thought-provoking questions of destiny and freewill. Well done, Ms. Saunders!"

—Gillian Kohli, Wellesley Books, Wellesley, MA



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Homesick for Another World: Stories

By Ottessa Moshfegh

"This phenomenal collection of short stories has ruined me forever. Ottessa Moshfegh is brilliant when it comes to showing off the uglier, twisted side of humanity, the part that we would never share on Facebook or Instagram. Her characters are often desperate, hungry for something they might be able to obtain if only they could name it. Their bitterness often leads to grotesque, yet honest, reactions to the world around them. I can't wait to recommend this dark little oddity to as many readers as possible."

—Becca Chavez, Tattered Cover Book Store, Denver, CO



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FEBRUARY '17

The Chilbury Ladies' Choir: A Novel

By Jennifer Ryan

"This gorgeous novel grabbed me from the very first page with laughter and kept me hooked with characters that are vivid and lovable. As each woman shares her place in the intrigue, romance, sorrow, and friendship of Chilbury and World War II through letters and diaries, their lives become increasingly real, until you can hardly believe this is fiction. At the center of the story is the indomitable Chilbury Ladies' Choir and when their individual triumphs and sorrows wind together during their performances, Ryan's writing reaches a soulful crescendo that will continue to echo in readers' hearts. Fans of Helen Simonson should not miss this beautiful debut."

—Grace Wright, Parnassus Books, Nashville, TN



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The Lonely Hearts Hotel: A Novel

By Heather O'Neill

"If there is Canadian magical realism, this is it! *The Lonely Hearts Hotel* is the charming story of Rose and Pierrot, two children raised in a Montreal orphanage in the early 20th century. O'Neill traces their romance from their childhood of entertaining rich people in their homes to their less salubrious post-orphanage careers. When Rose and Pierrot meet again as adults, magic happens—but can this magic survive the rigors of the real world? Fantastic and fabulous in the truest sense of both words."

—Susan Taylor, Book House of Stuyvesant Plaza, Albany, NY



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The Refugees

By Viet Thanh Nguyen

"This eloquent and detailed collection of aspirations and dreams tells of those torn between two worlds, the country and family left behind in trade for a distant place of hope and desires fulfilled. Each chapter is an experience of memory suffused with subtle moments that will leave you breathless."

—Shannon Alder, Literati Bookstore, Ann Arbor, MI

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