



SEPTEMBER '19

This Tender Land: A Novel

By William Kent Krueger

"The work of a master storyteller about the making of a young storyteller, *This Tender Land* is a coming-of-age novel for the ages. It begins in an isolated Dickensian boarding school in Minnesota during the early years of the Depression, then morphs into the story of four runaways in a canoe à la *Huckleberry Finn*. On the run from their school headmistress and the law, they encounter other wanderers and escapees from life as they canoe towards St. Louis to find their only known relative and a possible home. Odie, his brother Albert, their schoolmate Mose, and newly orphaned Emmy are unforgettable characters in an unforgiving era. Epic, thrilling, and beautifully written, this is storytelling at its very best."

—Renee Barker, The Bookstore of Glen Ellyn, Glen Ellyn, IL



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Gideon the Ninth: A Novel

By Tamsyn Muir

"*Gideon the Ninth* is an epic science fantasy that if delivered into the hands of enough people will set the world on fire as it hasn't been since *The Hunger Games*. Brilliance doesn't come close to explaining Tamsyn Muir's narrative where no single word is wasted or her engineering of a world with characters that end up belonging to you wholeheartedly even long after the last page. With fierce independence and hysterical wit, and laced with moments of pure heartbreaking tenderness and loyalty, Gideon and Harrow's relationship simultaneously digs under your skin and tugs at your heartstrings. I cannot recommend this book highly enough."

—Nichole Cousins, Still North Books & Bar, Hanover, NH



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Cold Storage: A Novel

By David Koepf

"Meet Cordyceps Novus, a highly adaptable fungus that just wants one thing: to take over the world. After being contained underground for 40 years, conditions are finally perfect for a comeback. Several floors above, two young night-shift security guards decide to track down the source of the mysterious alarm below. David Koepf's debut novel is both terrifying and humorous — a thrilling combination. After getting an inside look at the growth and spread of this fungus, I will never look at a mushroom the same way again."

—Mary Salazar, The Country Bookshop, Southern Pines, NC



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The Long Call: A Novel

By Ann Cleeves

"I absolutely loved *The Long Call*. In this new mystery, Ann Cleeves introduces us to Inspector Matthew Venn, who embodies his diagram namesake as a character caught between his past and his future. A murder on a beach in Venn's hometown on the English coast leads to a kidnapping, and as the pacing picks up, the suspects get ever closer to Venn's personal life. An expertly plotted mystery that will keep readers guessing until the final pages."

—Keith Vient, Politics and Prose Bookstore, Washington, DC



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The Dearly Beloved: A Novel

By Cara Wall

"*The Dearly Beloved* follows two couples as the men navigate the social and personal turbulence of leading a New York City congregation while the women struggle to find their places and define their relationship to each other. This novel grabs you and brings you in deep right from the start. Through decades of war and protest, success and failure, love and loss, we grow to care about each of these complex characters. Along the way, we also get a glimpse into 1960s New York City and the ways place can so irrevocably impact lives. This is a book that will resonate long after you put it down."

—Lisa Swayze, Buffalo Street Books, Ithaca, NY



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The Last Train to London: A Novel

By Meg Waite Clayton

"Based on a real heroine of the Dutch resistance and scrupulously researched, *The Last Train to London* brings to vivid life the extraordinary bravery of one fiercely dedicated childless woman who is attempting to save the lives of literally thousands of innocent children as Hitler marshals his forces across Europe. By writing the Kindertransport story as a novel, Meg Waite Clayton captures the humanity of the young victims and the inhumanity of those who were 'just following orders' more than any biography could. A memorable addition to the literature of World War II and one that is eerily relevant to present-day migrant struggles the world over."

—Marion Abbott, Mrs. Dalloway's Literary & Garden Arts, Berkeley, CA



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SEPTEMBER '19

The Beekeeper of Aleppo: A Novel

By Christy Lefteri

"Provocative and intense, this harrowing story of Syrian war refugees will take you on an emotional journey. This book took me well beyond the headlines and touched my soul. Perhaps its greatest strength is Lefteri's ability to make this unquestionably horrific reality accessible. You will feel an aching need to turn the page, and then you'll need to share this novel with others. I look forward to putting it into the hands of many readers — we need to see beyond the headlines."

—Kirsten Hess, Let's Play Books!, Emmaus, PA



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The Secrets We Kept: A Novel

By Lara Prescott

"This perfect historical novel is made of the most alluring ingredients. First, a divine and doomed love affair between Russian author Boris Pasternak and his muse and secretary, Olga Ivinskaya, a woman immortalized in Pasternak's epic novel *Doctor Zhivago*, which was banned in Russia for more than 30 years. Second, two American women typists working for CIA and their forbidden love story in the midst of the Cold War and the witch hunt against homosexuals. Lara Prescott brilliantly portrays how a timeless novel like *Doctor Zhivago* can change course of history. After I finished reading *The Secrets We Kept*, I pressed the book against my chest, as if I could hear the lovers' hearts still beating."

—Aggie Zivaljevic, Kepler's Books, Menlo Park, CA



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The Chestnut Man: A Novel

By Soren Sveistrup, Caroline Waight (Transl.)

"This is the thriller of the year! From the creator of the Scandinavian mini-series *The Killing*, *The Chestnut Man* is an unbelievably fast-paced and exciting page-turner. I literally had trouble putting it down so I could go to sleep! A serial killer is on the loose, a cold case kidnapping is brought back to life, and a politician is attacked from all sides. This is the kind of book Thomas Harris would write, and it's one of the best-plotted mysteries in a long time. What a wonderful group of vivid characters and what a ride! Whew!"

—William Carl, An Unlikely Story, Plainville, MA



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Axiomatic

By Maria Tumarkin

"*Axiomatic* is as idiosyncratic and brilliant as writing gets. The topics Tumarkin addresses — suicide, intergenerational trauma, friendships, addiction — serve to ask a larger question: as we move through the world, how do we address our effect on one another? This is a book that feels like the best conversation you've ever had with the smartest person you've ever met. It's the essence of a before-and-after book: you're not the same person on the other side. This is the most necessary book I've read in some time."

—Thomas Flynn, Volumes Bookcafe, Chicago, IL



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SEPTEMBER '19

Machine: A Novel

By Susan Steinberg

"*Machine* is like no book I have encountered before. Lyrically written prose slowly uncovers the details of the mysterious death of one of the young local girls in a small vacation town. In snippets, we see this world through the perspective of another girl, who is shocking in her honesty about how she navigates life as a young woman in this community of locals versus summer residents. Haunting and beautifully constructed."

—Hillary Smith, Copperfield's Books, Sebastopol, CA



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Dominicana: A Novel

By Angie Cruz

"Angie Cruz is a beautiful writer with a powerful voice, and readers of Julia Alvarez and Sandra Cisneros will greatly enjoy this book! *Dominicana* is a riveting story about family, womanhood, and what it means to be an immigrant. Ana Cancion, who's only 15, leaves her home behind for a new life in New York City with her soon-to-be husband, Juan Ruiz. Big lights, tall buildings, and a bright future constitute the promise of a new beginning. However, upon Ana's arrival, her fate untangles into something unexpected. It'll be really hard to forget these characters and the realness in their heartache. Throughout these pages, I fell in and out of love, I laughed, I cried, and I was deeply moved."

—Cristina Lebron, Books & Books, Coral Gables, FL



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The Ten Thousand Doors of January: A Novel

By Alix E. Harrow

"This is one of the most beautifully written pieces of magical fiction I've ever read. I was obsessed with the book within the first two pages. Take an unforgettable journey with January Scaller through doors of lost worlds and heart-wrenching love stories. This book shows just how much power a story can hold, especially with the right storyteller at the helm. I could re-read this book countless times and still find new treasures that speak to me!"

—Alexa Butler, Beach Books, Seaside, OR



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SEPTEMBER '19

The Whisper Man: A Novel

By Alex North

"A creepy, sinister, can't-put-it-down story of a town that survives and then relives the crimes of a child serial killer. For those who love psychological thrillers (with the absence of gore but plenty of plot twists and turns), *The Whisper Man* is a grand ride into the minds of those who kill and those who are victims. You'll find yourself looking over your shoulder when reading this book. Don't stand too close to an open window..."

—Helen Gregory, Maria's Bookshop, Durango, CO



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The Ungrateful Refugee: What Immigrants Never Tell You

By Dina Nayeri

"At a time when some people aim to terrify us with stories about the intentions of those who seek our help, this book brings a timely voice to illustrate what drives people to endure monumental hardships in order to have a chance to reach safety. An engrossing and powerful book that reveals an infrequently heard perspective on the concept of charity, giving, and receiving. *The Ungrateful Refugee* makes us look at ourselves and our actions as well as those who receive our acts of 'kindness.'"

—Becky Garcia, Malvern Books, Austin, TX



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Ducks, Newburyport: A Novel

By Lucy Ellmann

"In 2019's most ambitious novel, Lucy Ellmann puts us in the mind of one of literature's most overlooked characters: an average woman and mother doing her best in a world that respects neither women nor mothers. Rambunctiously political, tenderly personal, and profoundly humanist, Ellmann's simple respect for her protagonist's thoughts, feelings, faults, and successes is revolutionary. And on top of everything else in this towering achievement of a novel, you'll find yourself desperately rooting for a mountain lion."

—Josh Cook, Porter Square Books, Cambridge, MA



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After the Flood: A Novel

By Cassandra Montag

"A gripping story of one mother's harrowing journey to survive a flooded earth and save her daughters from the dangers that surround them. Life after the great flood is treacherous, and lethal groups of raiders steal food, medicine, and children, killing those who would stand in their way. With flawed, relatable characters, *After the Flood* is a real thought-provoker. It demands you ask yourself: What would I do to survive? This passionate tale of survival and determination is not one to miss."

—Kelli O'Malley, Boswell Book Company, Milwaukee, WI



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Bloomland: A Novel

By John Englehardt

"Englehardt's stunning debut is not for the faint of heart; within the first few pages, a shooting occurs in the library of a fictional southern college. But the story is less about this horrific event than it is about the period leading up to it, and what happens to three different people — a student, a professor, and the shooter himself — in the aftermath. In prose that is vivid, specific, and wildly original, Englehardt shows how grief, disillusionment, and, in some cases, resilience take his characters' lives in surprising directions. This is SO good."

—Erika VanDam, RoscoeBooks, Chicago, IL



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Who Are You, Calvin Bledsoe?: A Novel

By Brock Clarke

"Brock Clarke is a genius. His writing is consistently brilliant and stylish, which makes the quiet moments of human understanding even more striking. I LOVE this book — it is unexpected (like all his work — how can that be?), surprising, and profoundly moving. Fans of Jim Shepard and George Saunders will love Clarke and his new book about a middle-aged man whose discovery of a secret aunt (is she a spy? a fake? his mom? crazy?) leads him across Europe in pursuit of... well, he isn't quite sure yet. I laughed out loud, I chortled, I snickered quietly, I gasped. I can see putting this book into the hands of fans of *Less* by Andrew Sean Greer and *Where'd You Go Bernadette* — readers who like to be surprised."

—Mary Cotton, Newtonville Books, Newton Centre, MA



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Tidelands: A Novel

By Philippa Gregory

"Philippa Gregory never fails to create beautifully written stories that suck you in and transport you back to the time and place the book is set. As always, her latest novel, *Tidelands*, is obviously thoroughly researched, with many historical facts sprinkled throughout. I highly recommend this book for fans of historical fiction."

—Lisa Smegal, Rivendell Bookstore, Abilene, KS



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