



MARCH '21

We Begin at the End: A Novel

By Chris Whitaker

"*We Begin at the End* is dramatic storytelling at its best, full of layers of intrigue and complex personalities set around the murder of the book's most vulnerable character. The stoical, 13-year-old Duchess Day Radley takes center stage, and her heartbreaking life unleashes a hero within: self-proclaimed outlaw, bold and courageous, though to her peril not always wise beyond her years. Chris Whitaker has created a character for the ages and an extraordinary reading experience. By turns amusing, frightening, and exhilarating."

—Robin Sung, Porter Square Books, Cambridge, MA



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MARCH '21

Klara and the Sun: A Novel

By Kazuo Ishiguro

"*Klara and the Sun* from Nobel-winner Kazuo Ishiguro is a radiant new novel about the bond between Klara, an Artificial Friend, and Josie, her human companion. The setting, a dystopian realm of genetic editing and stark class divisions, is not surprising given the author's previous work, yet Ishiguro's immense, unwavering portrayal of kindness is astonishing and revitalizing. Classic Ishiguro themes of loyalty, friendship, and sacrifice weave through the novel, but the thread of love runs deep, giving the book warmth and hope so that the earned twist feels more like a dawn than a sunset. Whether you're returning to Ishiguro or discovering his voice for the first time, I'm excited for you. This is a chance to bask in the brilliance of one of the greatest writers of our time."

—Caroline McGregor, Books & Books, Coral Gables, FL



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The Lost Apothecary: A Novel

By Sarah Penner

"A wonderful melding of two timelines told by a trio of female voices. Each woman is standing at a crossroads; one is just becoming a woman, one is anticipating the end of her life, and one the end of her marriage. A small, blue apothecary bottle links the women and the timelines together. Penner skillfully guides us along the path each woman chooses. I could hardly bear to put the book down, such was the need to know the choice each woman makes and the consequences of that choice."

—Sandi Madore, Magnolia's Bookstore, Seattle, WA



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Brood: A Novel

By Jackie Polzin

"Over the course of a year, told in a collection of snapshots, *Brood* shows the life of a woman grieving by doing anything but. She gives herself purpose by taking care of a small flock of chickens, as well as finding small but kind, funny, or wry ways of interacting with her neighbors, eccentric mother-in-law, and caring husband, Percy. There are plenty of clever and funny moments from scene to scene (not to mention the odd and interesting analyses of a chicken's life and point of view), but the beauty in this book lies in the narrator's acceptance of the everyday, and of all the things—bad, good, but mostly in-between—that come therein."

—Cat Chapman, The Oxford Exchange, Tampa, FL



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The Rose Code: A Novel

By Kate Quinn

"While many WWII stories have been told in triplicate, Kate Quinn presents a new angle on the Bletchley Park/code breaker part of the war. She gives us three magnificent main characters who must navigate the turbulent waters not only of the war, but of a new puzzle to solve shortly before the royal wedding of Princess Elizabeth (Queen Elizabeth II) and Prince Philip."

—Sarah Danforth, Towne Book Center and Wine Bar, Collegetown, PA



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The Windsor Knot: A Novel

By SJ Bennett

"I love the idea of Queen Elizabeth sleuthing behind the scenes! As charmingly and convincingly portrayed by SJ Bennett, the Queen is an astute observer whose decades of experience serve her well in this role. When a Russian pianist is found dead at Windsor Castle, the new head of MI5 muddles the case and makes the mistake of treating the Queen like his doddering granny. It's up to the Queen to secretly and skillfully line up the pieces of the puzzle for MI5 to solve."

—Margo Grimm Eule, East City Bookshop, Washington, DC



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MARCH '21

Infinite Country: A Novel

By Patricia Engel

"Patricia Engel's new book is a true gem, a family story in which each voice is equally interesting and dynamic as well as a great examination on the brutish nature of the U.S. government and citizens toward people traveling stateside to start a new life. Your heart breaks and mends and breaks all over again for this family. In less than 200 pages, Engel works magic."

—James Harrod, Malaprop's Bookstore/Café, Asheville, NC



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MARCH '21

The Echo Wife: A Novel

By Sarah Gailey

"Just wow! I am so delighted that there are writers like Sarah Gailey producing science fiction of this caliber. Their latest novel, *The Echo Wife*, kept me riveted from beginning to end with elegant prose and a compelling, vulnerable protagonist who narrates the story in a wonderfully intimate first-person point of view. This is a refreshing, fast-paced thriller that gives center stage to questions of our humanity without asking them from a male-only perspective."

—Christine Havens, BookPeople, Austin, TX



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Act Your Age, Eve Brown: A Novel (The Brown Sisters #3)

By Talia Hibbert

"A satisfying conclusion to an absolutely delightful series! In the final installment of the trilogy, we follow the youngest Brown sister, Eve, a lovable hot mess who is looking to prove to her parents that she can get her life together. Her attempts to turn things around lead her to accidentally interview for a job as a chef at a bed and breakfast. The owner of the B&B, Jacob, is Eve's polar opposite on paper, so they naturally get off to a bad start. It doesn't help that Eve also hits him with her car! As the pair begin to learn more about each other, the sweetest romance blooms. Talia Hibbert proves once again that she knows how to write a romantic comedy!"

—Tyrinne Lewis, Cafe Con Libros, Brooklyn, NY



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MARCH '21

The Smash-Up: A Novel

By Ali Benjamin

"Ali Benjamin's debut adult novel is an interesting portrayal of a contemporary marriage and the many pressures it faces. Through the lives of her main characters, Benjamin explores many present-day issues—the #MeToo movement, the place of social protests, the difficulties of childrearing, and the temptation of infidelity. As Zo and Ethan each face a moral dilemma, Benjamin shows us their individual struggles. While there is sadness and conflict in this book, there is also hope."

—Jane Stiles, Wellesley Books, Wellesley, MA



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MARCH '21

Vera: A Novel

By Carol Edgarian

"Experience the San Francisco earthquake of 1906 like never before—from inside the family of one of the most famous brothel madams. In this story, Edgarian combines lyrical writing and a cast of unforgettable characters, both real and imagined, with themes of love, rejection, graft, and economic disparity, all sprinkled with racism and misogyny. You won't be able to visit the City by the Bay ever again without looking for Rose and her descendants. I couldn't put this down."

—Gayle Shanks, Changing Hands, Tempe, AZ



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MARCH '21

Float Plan: A Novel

By Trish Doller

"Whenever I pick up a romance novel, it's generally because I want a happy ending—I want rainbows and heartthrobs, and for everything to turn out perfectly. *Float Plan* gives us way more than that. We are introduced to a character at her lowest point and through a self-imposed challenge, she ventures through comedy, heartbreak, defeat, and more. A completely lovely story! Also, now I need a sailboat..."

—Miranda Atkins, A Little Bookish, Ooltewah, TN



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MARCH '21

Cosmogony: Stories

By Lucy Ives

"Ives writes boldly; her stories are strong and wild, as if she left the door open to the dream world and let all that magic saturate. Her writings are grounded in the real world, but there's a shimmering rind to them, magical realism at its toughest. She's also mastered that tricky art of creating beautiful content while offering an intimate and substantial reflection on very human happenings and feelings. Perfect for those who love the minds of women who are unafraid to blast boundaries apart."

—Aimee Keeble, Main Street Books, Davidson, NC



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MARCH '21

Every Last Fear: A Novel

By Alex Finlay

"This is a riveting debut crime novel featuring a nonstop propulsive plot with twists and turns that will keep you up at night racing through the pages to figure out what will happen. Finlay has crafted an unforgettable story that glides between past and present while moving from locales in the U.S. to Tulum, Mexico. This will surely earn a legion of fans."

—Cody Morrison, Square Books, Oxford, MS



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Good Eggs: A Novel

By Rebecca Hardiman

"Filled with warmth and hilarity, this book reads like a mix of *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Frye* and a Maeve Binchy novel. The Irish setting is especially welcome on this side of the pond, and of the three plotlines following different generations, the absolute best paints 83-year-old pistol of a grandma Millie as a delightfully quirky and determined soul. A charming, offbeat novel—perfect to savor as we emerge from this particular winter."

—Deb Wayman, Fair Isle Books, Washington Island, WI



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MARCH '21

Brother, Sister, Mother, Explorer: A Novel

By Jamie Figueroa

"One of a number of excellent debut novels already out in the still-new year, this is a singular work. Taking on the coming-of-age from young adulthood into something deeper and more mature, the story follows a sister and brother as they reckon with their mother's passing and begin to understand what life should and should not be as it gets lived. Their tourist town of Ciudad de Tres Hermanas gives us not only a vivid picture of the present but casts a knowing eye on the layers of the past. Beautifully done."

—Rick Simonson, The Elliott Bay Book Company, Seattle, WA



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MARCH '21

The Girls Are All So Nice Here: A Novel

By Laurie Elizabeth Flynn

"*The Girls Are All So Nice Here* is the first, but not the last, lie you will read when you devour this dark and disturbing novel about college girls and how they treat each other in order to be popular or important. The writing is chilling and so authentic, I felt like I was back in high school or college with a group of toxic girls who would stop at nothing to get what they wanted. The more I read, the more I wondered how Flynn could possibly come up with an ending that would be both satisfying and as deliciously evil as the rest of the book. She managed to deliver, and then some."

—Nancy McFarlane, Fiction Addiction, Greenville, SC



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MARCH '21

Band of Sisters: A Novel

By Lauren Willig

"Willig's *Band of Sisters* pulled me in and took me on a journey of complicated friendships that grew and matured in the midst of hardship and trial. Between mishaps with roosters, snowstorms, and reminders of the kindness and resilience of people, this historical fiction is a delight to read."

—Laura DeLaney, Rediscovered Books, Boise, ID



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MARCH '21

First Comes Like: A Novel

By Alisha Rai

"Alisha Rai has continued to deliver another relevant, swoon-worthy romance with *First Comes Like*. This book is perfect for readers who love a slow burn or fans of *You Had Me at Hola* by Alexis Daria. I enjoyed seeing the perspective of a contemporary Muslim woman in a way that wasn't sensationalized or exoticized. Rai has written a book that is still sexy, even when the characters aren't having sex. Jia, the heroine, is a ball of sunshine toward whom I instantly gravitated for her open, generous heart, big dreams, and strong work ethic. Reading about her journey to conquer self-doubt taught me a little bit about reframing my own flaws and accepting myself, too."

—Stephanie Otani-Sunamoto, The Novel Neighbor, Webster Groves, MO



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MARCH '21

The Committed: A Novel

By Viet Thanh Nguyen

"In this sequel to *The Sympathizer*, Viet Thanh Nguyen (and his semi-nameless narrator) once again skewer multiple ideologies with caustic wit, philosophical gravitas, and broad historical understanding. A mix of organized crime and psychological and political thriller, this book offers action (and there is lots of action!) unfolding amidst piercing meditations on colonialism, national identity, and ethics. In other words, *The Committed* uses much the same recipe as its Pulitzer-winning predecessor and delivers a similarly gripping, enraging, smart, and bleakly funny tale."

—Annie Metcalf, Magers & Quinn Booksellers, Minneapolis, MN



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