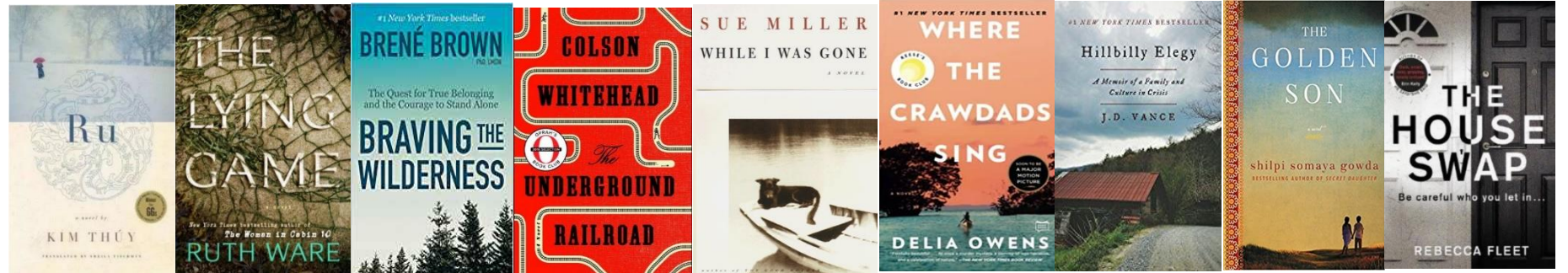


Allard's Book Club Catalogue



The Alice Network by Kate Quinn

In an enthralling new historical novel, two women—a female spy recruited to the real-life Alice Network in France during World War I and an unconventional American socialite searching for her cousin in 1947—are brought together in a mesmerizing story of courage and redemption.

1947

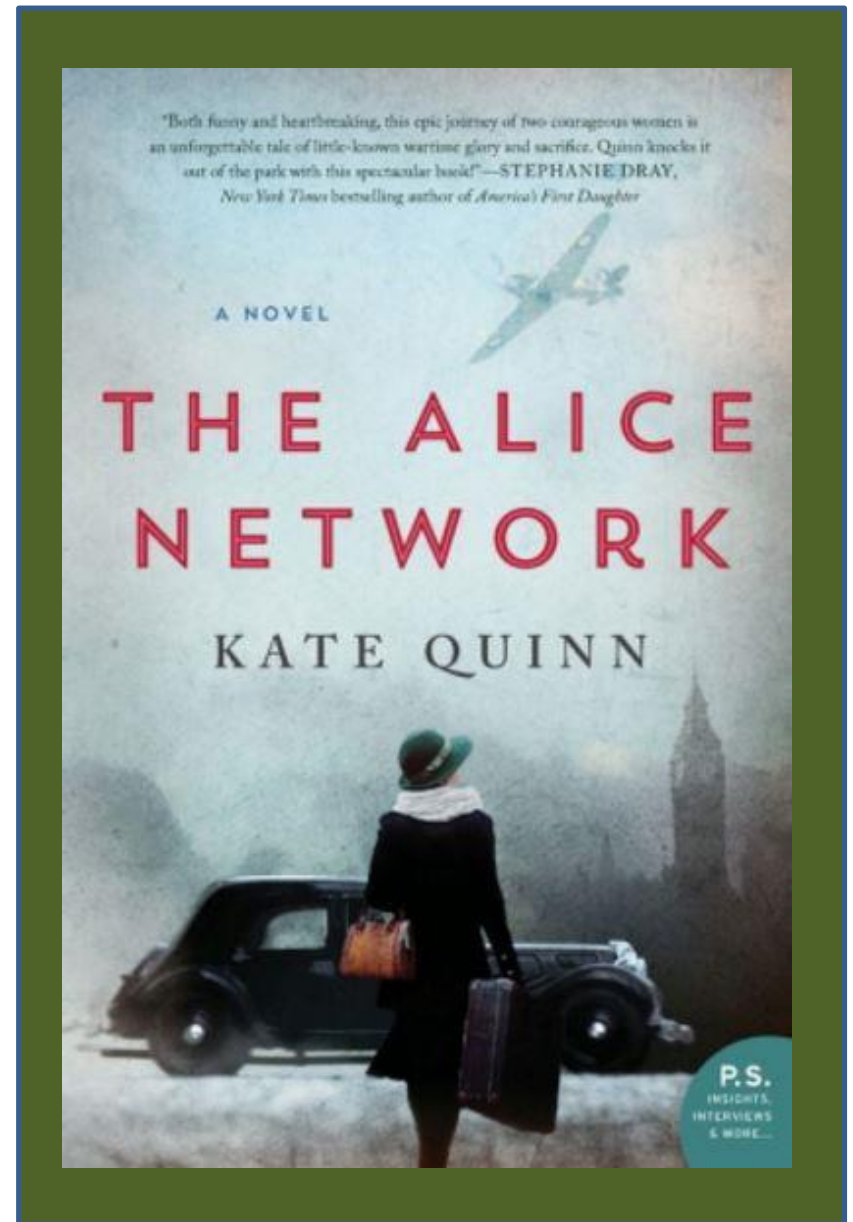
In the chaotic aftermath of World War II, American college girl Charlie St. Clair is pregnant, unmarried, and on the verge of being thrown out of her very proper family. She's also nursing a desperate hope that her beloved cousin Rose, who disappeared in Nazi-occupied France during the war, might still be alive.

So when Charlie's parents banish her to Europe to have her "little problem" taken care of, she breaks free and heads to London. She is determined to find out what happened to the cousin she loves like a sister.

1915

A year into the Great War, Eve Gardiner burns to join the fight against the Germans and unexpectedly gets her chance when she's recruited to work as a spy. Sent into enemy-occupied France, she's trained by the mesmerizing Lili, the "Queen of Spies", who manages a vast network of secret agents right under the enemy's nose.

Thirty years later, haunted by the betrayal that ultimately tore apart the Alice Network, Eve spends her days drunk and secluded in her crumbling London house. Until a young American barges in uttering a name Eve hasn't heard in decades, and launches them both on a mission to find the truth...no matter where it leads. *(From the publisher.)*



Becoming by Michelle Obama

An intimate, powerful, and inspiring memoir by the former First Lady of the United States

In a life filled with meaning and accomplishment, Michelle Obama has emerged as one of the most iconic and compelling women of our era.

As First Lady of the United States of America—the first African American to serve in that role—she helped create the most welcoming and inclusive White House in history, while also establishing herself as a powerful advocate for women and girls in the U.S. and around the world.

She dramatically changed the ways that families pursue healthier and more active lives, while standing with her husband as he led America through some of its most harrowing moments. Along the way, she showed us a few dance moves, crushed Carpool Karaoke, and raised two down-to-earth daughters under an unforgiving media glare.

In her memoir, a work of deep reflection and mesmerizing storytelling, Michelle Obama invites readers into her world, chronicling the experiences that have shaped her—from her childhood on the South Side of Chicago to her years as an executive balancing the demands of motherhood and work, to her time spent at the world’s most famous address.

With unerring honesty and lively wit, she describes her triumphs and her disappointments, both public and private, telling her full story as she has lived it—in her own words and on her own terms.

Warm, wise, and revelatory, *Becoming* is the deeply personal reckoning of a woman of soul and substance who has steadily defied expectations—and whose story inspires us to do the same. *(From the publisher.)*



Before We Were Yours by Lisa Wingate

— *Memphis, 1939.*

Twelve-year-old Rill Foss and her four younger siblings live a magical life aboard their family's Mississippi River shantyboat. But when their father must rush their mother to the hospital one stormy night, Rill is left in charge—until strangers arrive in force.

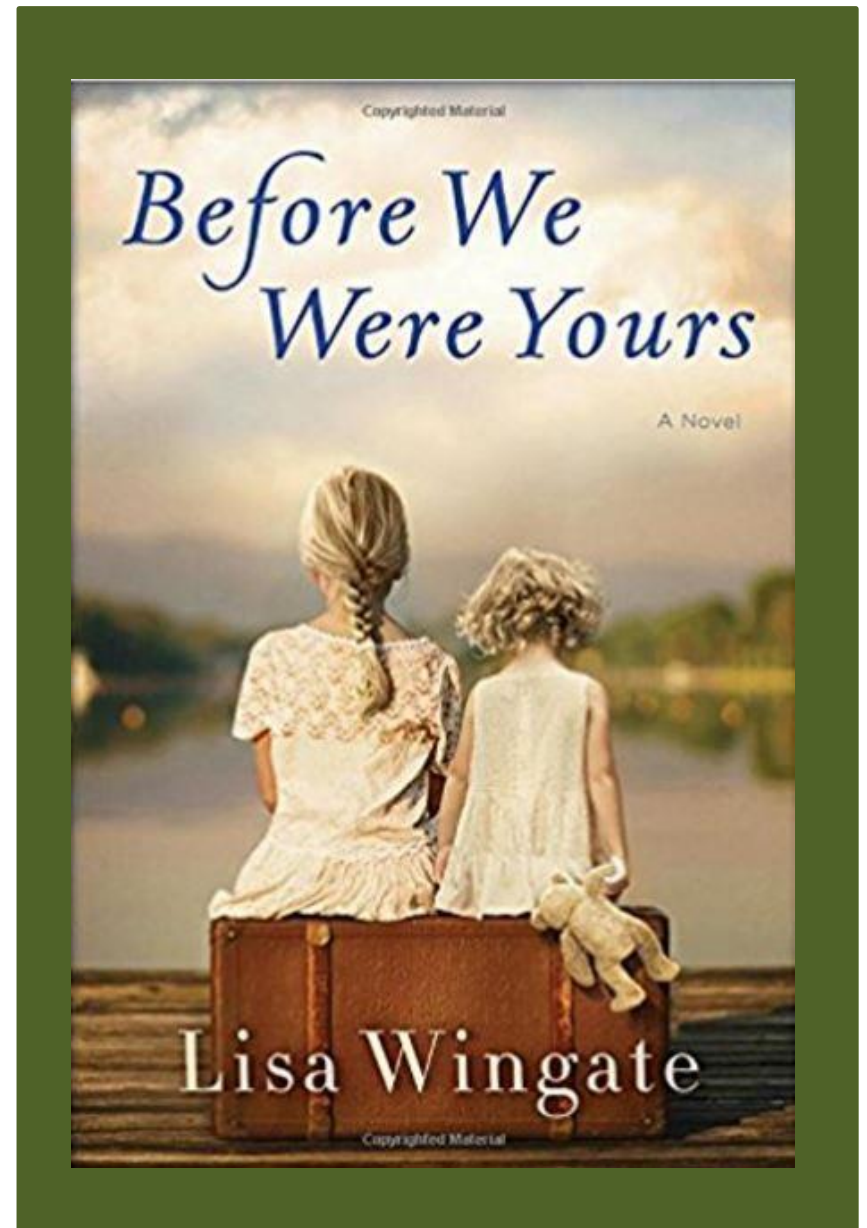
Wrenched from all that is familiar and thrown into a Tennessee Children's Home Society orphanage, the Foss children are assured that they will soon be returned to their parents—but they quickly realize the dark truth.

At the mercy of the facility's cruel director, Rill fights to keep her sisters and brother together in a world of danger and uncertainty.

— *Aiken, South Carolina, present day.*

Born into wealth and privilege, Avery Stafford seems to have it all: a successful career as a federal prosecutor, a handsome fiancé, and a lavish wedding on the horizon. But when Avery returns home to help her father weather a health crisis, a chance encounter leaves her with uncomfortable questions and compels her to take a journey through her family's long-hidden history, on a path that will ultimately lead either to devastation or to redemption.

Based on one of America's most notorious real-life scandals—in which Georgia Tann, director of a Memphis-based adoption organization, kidnapped and sold poor children to wealthy families all over the country—Lisa Wingate's riveting, wrenching, and ultimately uplifting tale reminds us how, even though the paths we take can lead to many places, the heart never forgets where we belong. (*From the publisher.*)



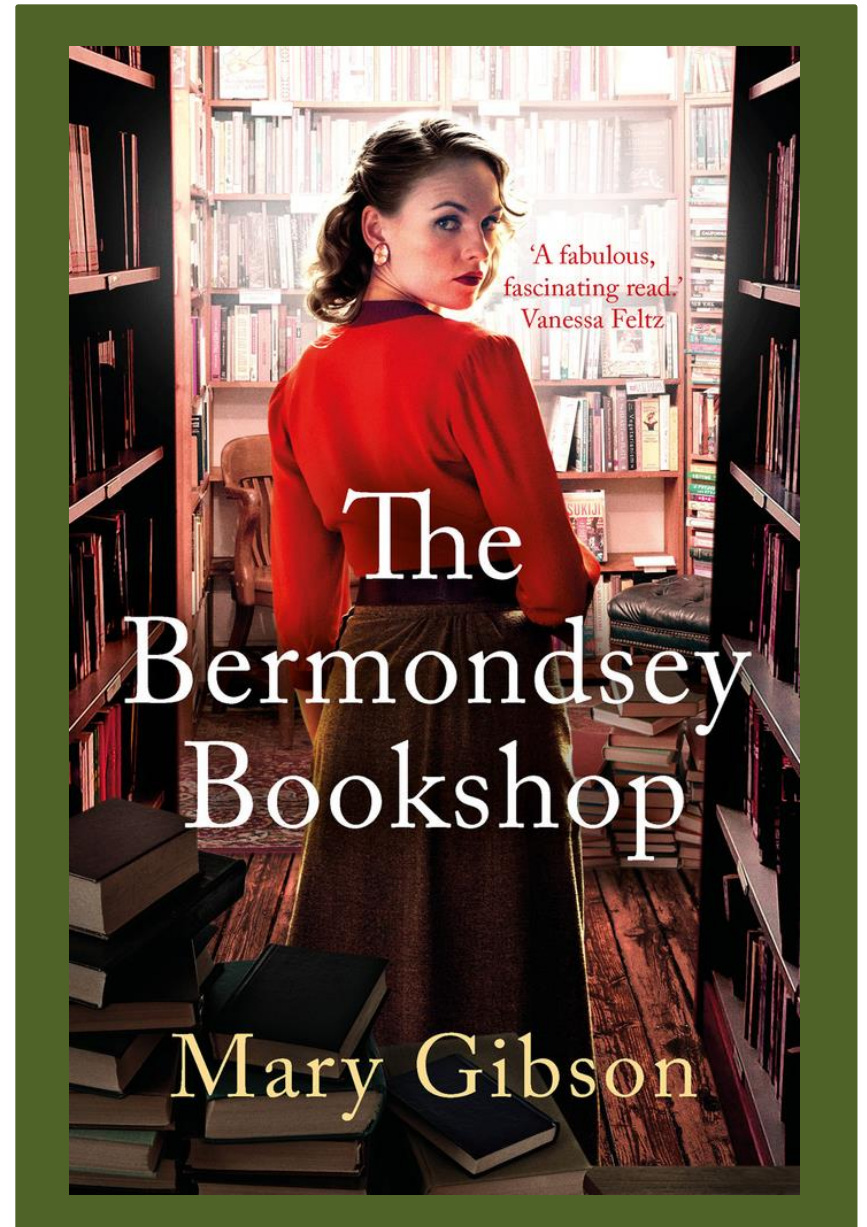
The Bermondsey Bookshop by Mary Gibson

Kate Goss lives in a freezing cold garret, bullied by her aunt and cousins. She dreams of being rescued by her handsome father. No one knows where he is, or what he is doing, just that he is sure to come back a rich man.

By the time Kate is seventeen, she has learnt to cope alone. When her aunt throws her out, she finds a job as a cleaner in the Bermondsey Bookshop and Reading Room.

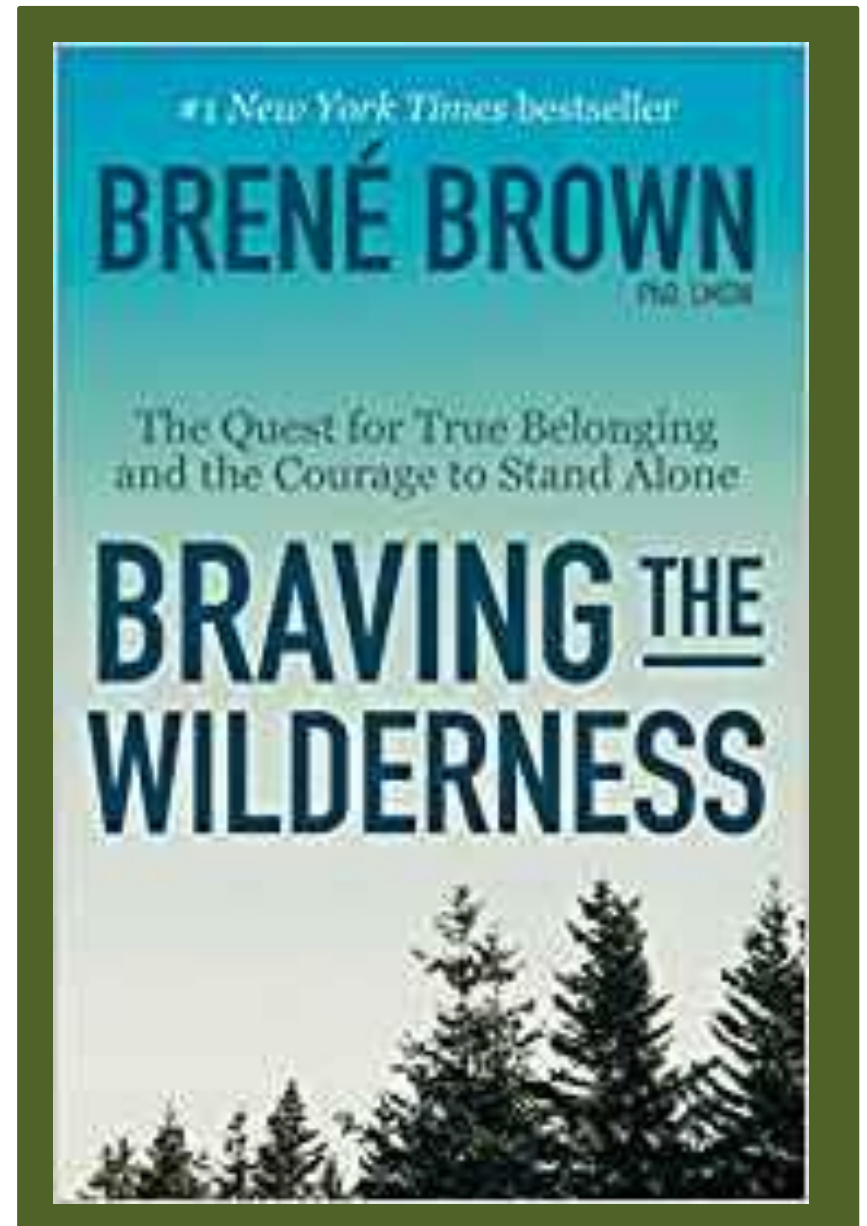
Here she will discover a world she never knew existed. But trouble is never far away and long-held secrets are about to burst into the open, ensnaring her in a web of lies and violence. Will she ever be able to escape?

(From the publisher.)



Braving the Wilderness by Brené Brown

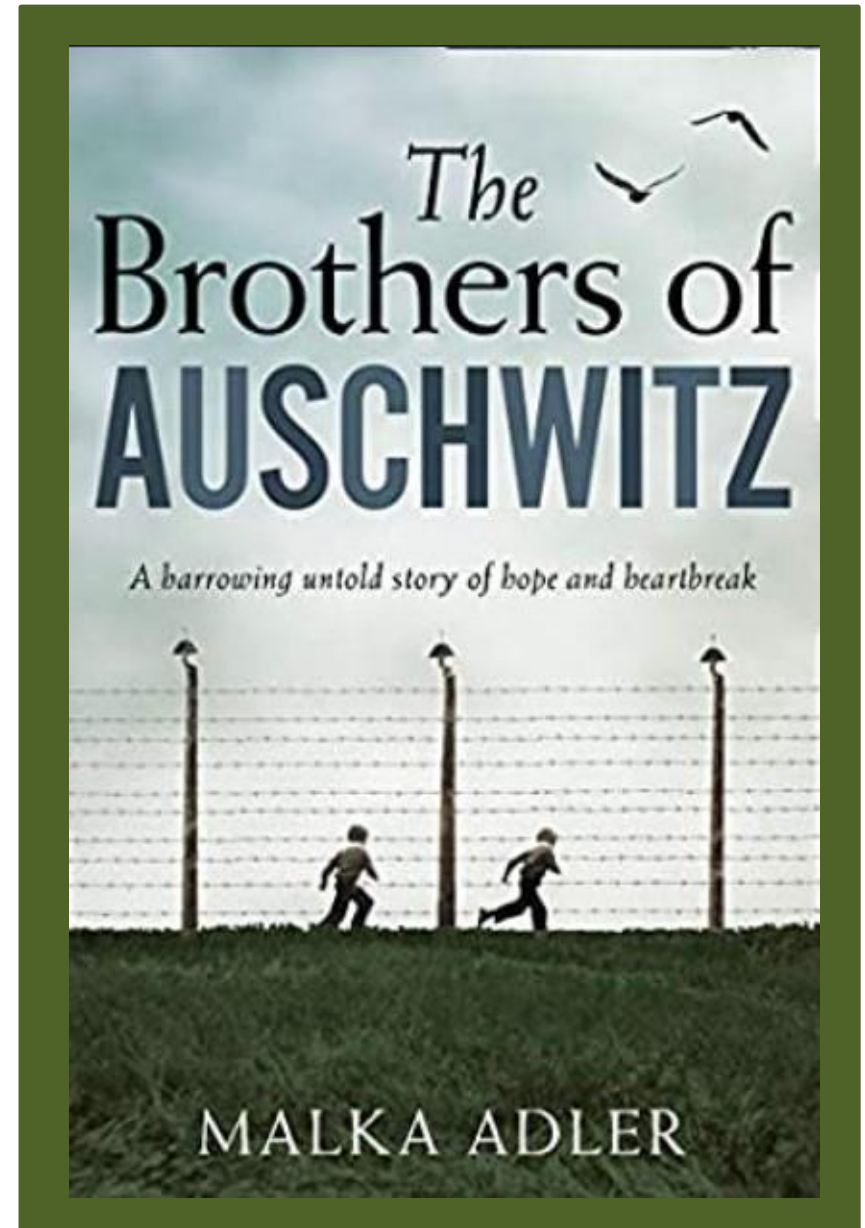
Social scientist Brené Brown, PhD, LMSW, has sparked a global conversation about the experiences that bring meaning to our lives – experiences of courage, vulnerability, love, belonging, shame and empathy. In *Braving the Wilderness*, she redefines what it means to truly belong in an age of increased polarization. With her trademark mix of research, storytelling, and honesty, Brown again changes the cultural conversation while mapping a clear path to true belonging. Brown argues that we're experiencing a spiritual crisis of disconnection and introduces four practices of true belonging. She offers us the clarity and courage we need to find our way back to ourselves and to each other, and that path cuts right through the wilderness, the untamed, unpredictable place of solitude and searching.



The Brothers of Auschwitz by Malka Adler

'There was a good orchestra at Auschwitz. I could immediately hear it was good. I almost wept for the beauty of it, but the large pile of striped pajamas stayed in my mind, and I didn't cry...'

This is the story of a family separated by the Holocaust, their strength in history's darkest hour, and their harrowing journey back to each other.



Everything, Everything by Nicola Yoon

Risk everything . . . for love.

What if you couldn't touch anything in the outside world? Never breathe in the fresh air, feel the sun warm your face...or kiss the boy next door?

In *Everything, Everything*, Maddy is a girl who's literally allergic to the outside world, and Olly is the boy who moves in next door...and becomes the greatest risk she's ever taken.

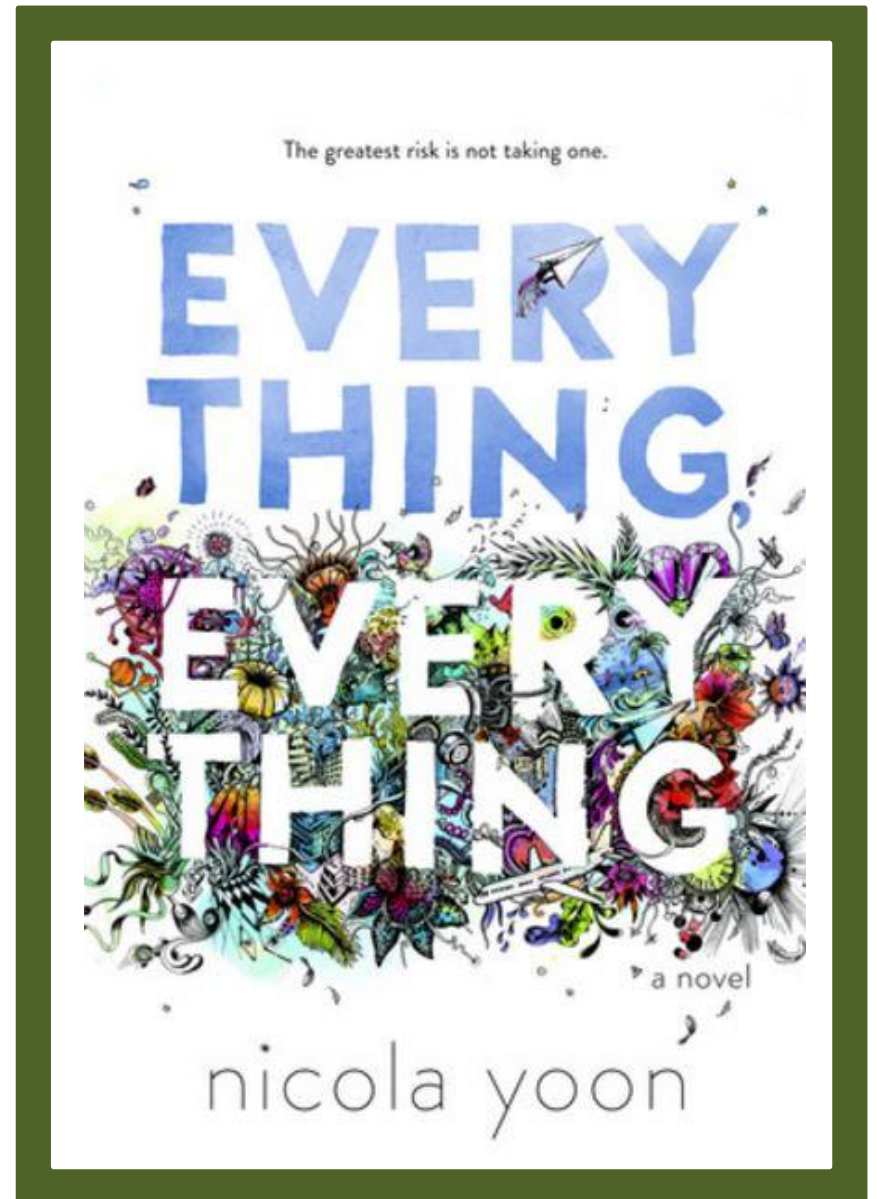
My disease is as rare as it is famous. Basically, I'm allergic to the world. I don't leave my house, have not left my house in seventeen years. The only people I ever see are my mom and my nurse, Carla.

But then one day, a moving truck arrives next door. I look out my window, and I see him. He's tall, lean and wearing all black—black T-shirt, black jeans, black sneakers, and a black knit cap that covers his hair completely. He catches me looking and stares at me. I stare right back. His name is Olly.

Maybe we can't predict the future, but we can predict some things. For example, I am certainly going to fall in love with Olly. It's almost certainly going to be a disaster.

Everything, Everything will make you laugh, cry, and feel everything in between. It's an innovative, inspiring, and heartbreakingly romantic debut novel that unfolds via vignettes, diary entries, illustrations, and more. *(From the publisher.)*

The novel was adapted to film in 2017 and stars Amandla Stenberg as Maddy and Nick Robinson as Olly.

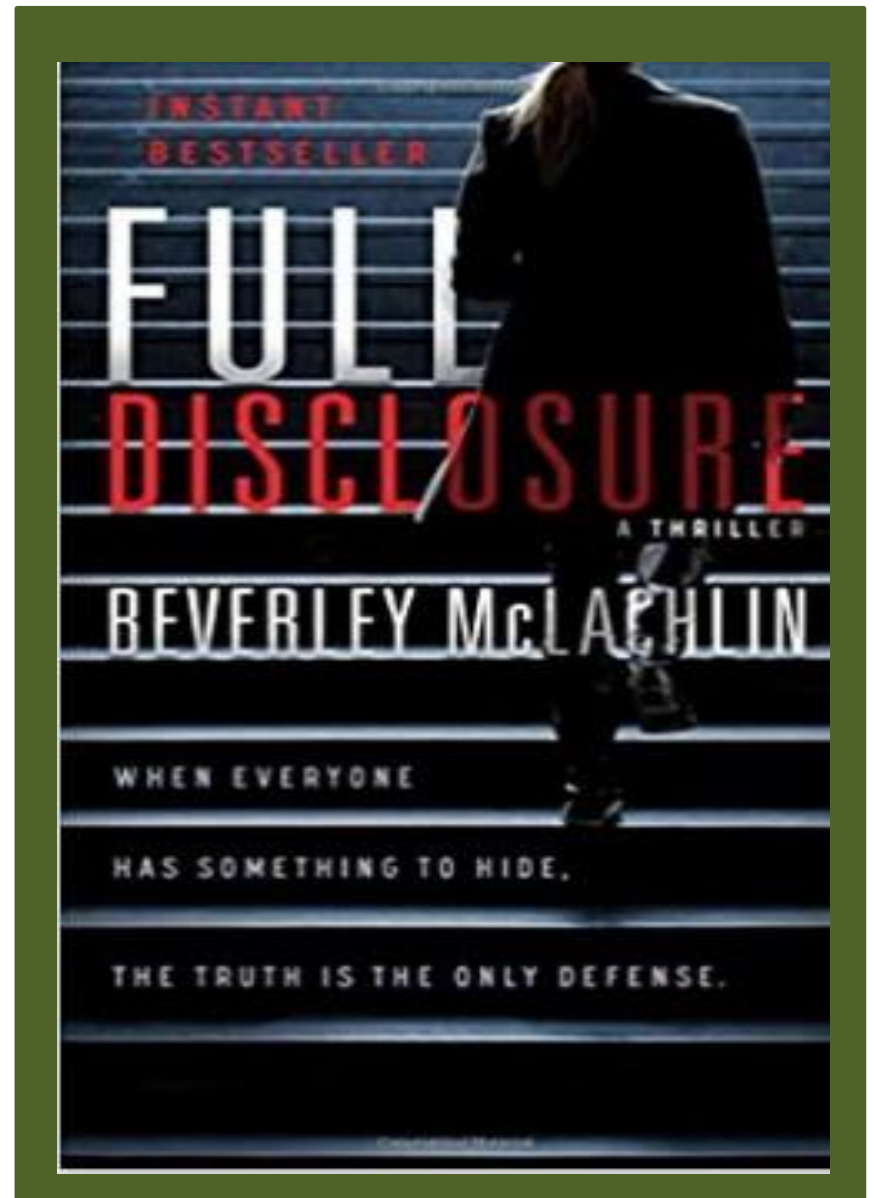


Full Disclosure by Beverley McLachlin

There's nothing Jilly Truitt likes more than winning a case. She has had troubles in the past, the residue of a dark time in a series of foster homes, but now she's building her own criminal defense firm and making a name for herself as a tough-as-nails lawyer willing to take risks in the courtroom.

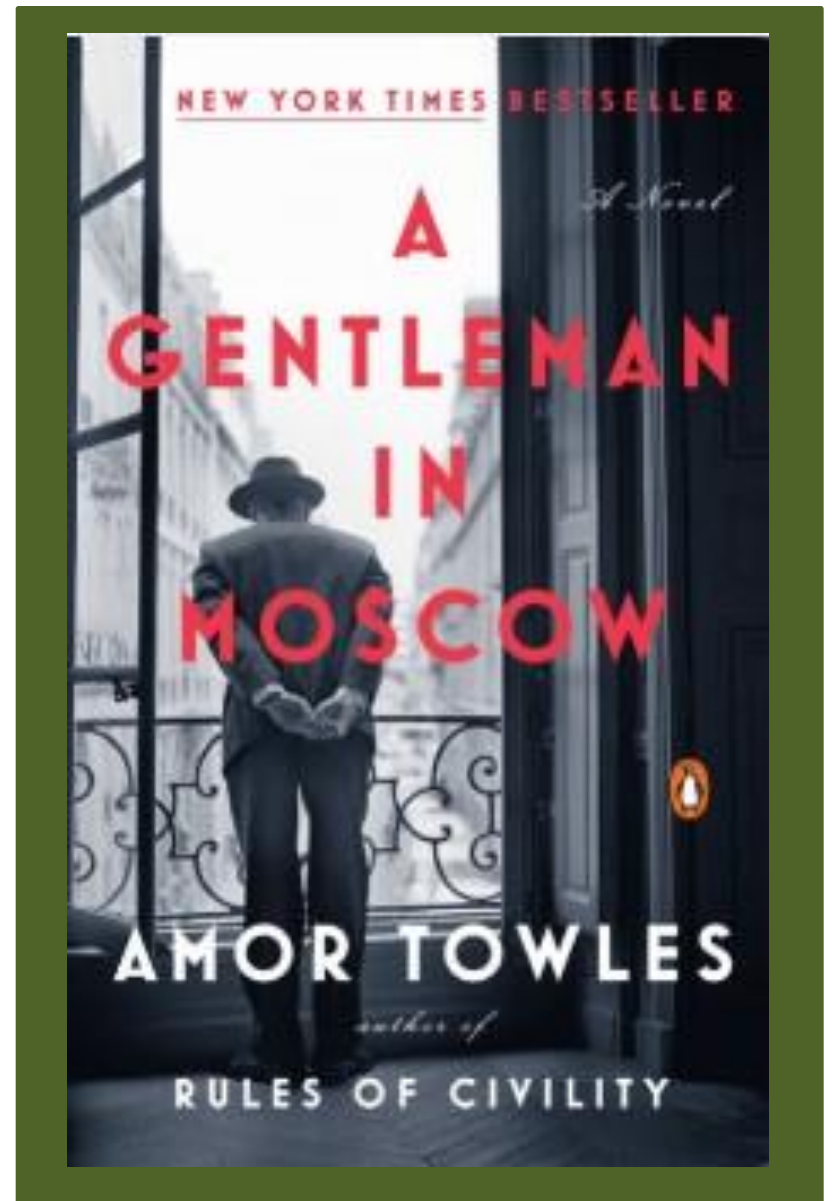
When the affluent and enigmatic Vincent Trussardi is accused of his wife Laura's murder, Jilly agrees to defend him despite predictions that the case is a sure loser and warnings from those close to her to stay away from the Trussardi family. Determined to find a shred of evidence that might give the jury a reasonable doubt, Jilly investigates Laura's death, only to be drawn into an intricate web of secrets.

With her reputation and Vincent's life on the line, Jilly digs deeper, uncovering a startling revelation that will forever change not only the case, but her life.



A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles

When, in 1922, thirty-year-old Count Alexander Rostov is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, he is sentenced to house arrest in the Metropol, a grand hotel near the Kremlin. An indomitable man of erudition and wit, Rostov must now live in an attic room as some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history unfold. Unexpectedly, the Count's reduced circumstances provide him entry into a world of emotional discovery as he forges friendships with the hotel's denizens. But when fate puts the life of a young girl in his hands, he must draw on all his ingenuity to protect the future she deserves. Hailed for its humor, intrigue, and beautifully rendered scenes, this singular novel casts a spell as it relates the Count's endeavour to become a man of purpose. *(From the Publisher)*



The Girl on the Train by Paula Hawkins

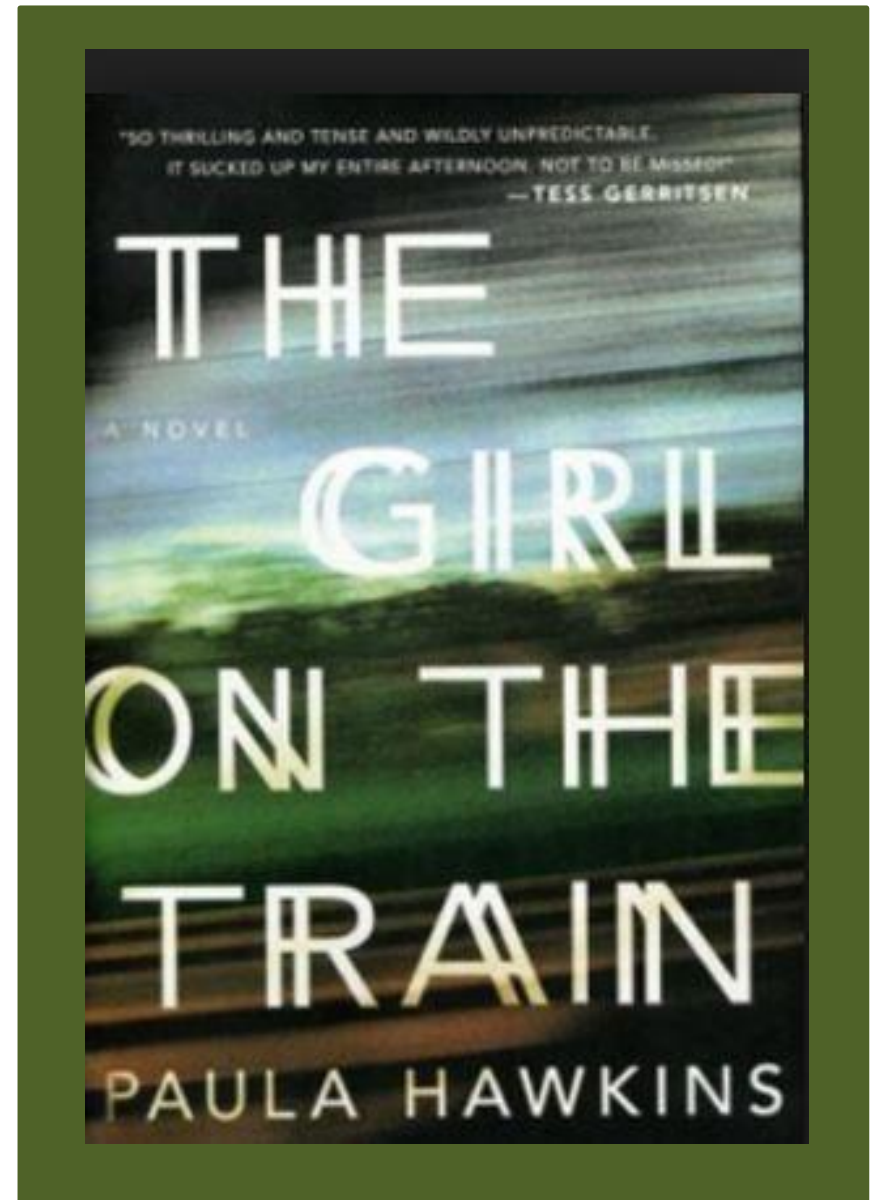
Rachel takes the same commuter train every morning. Every day she rattles down the track, flashes past a stretch of cozy suburban homes, and stops at the signal that allows her to daily watch the same couple breakfasting on their deck.

She's even started to feel like she knows them. "Jess and Jason," she calls them. Their life—as she sees it—is perfect. Not unlike the life she recently lost.

And then she sees something shocking. It's only a minute until the train moves on, but it's enough. Now everything's changed. Unable to keep it to herself, Rachel offers what she knows to the police, and becomes inextricably entwined in what happens next, as well as in the lives of everyone involved. Has she done more harm than good?

Compulsively readable, *The Girl on the Train* is an emotionally immersive, Hitchcockian thriller and an electrifying debut. (*From the publisher.*)

See the 2016 film version with Emily Blunt.



The Golden Son by Shilpi Somaya Gowda

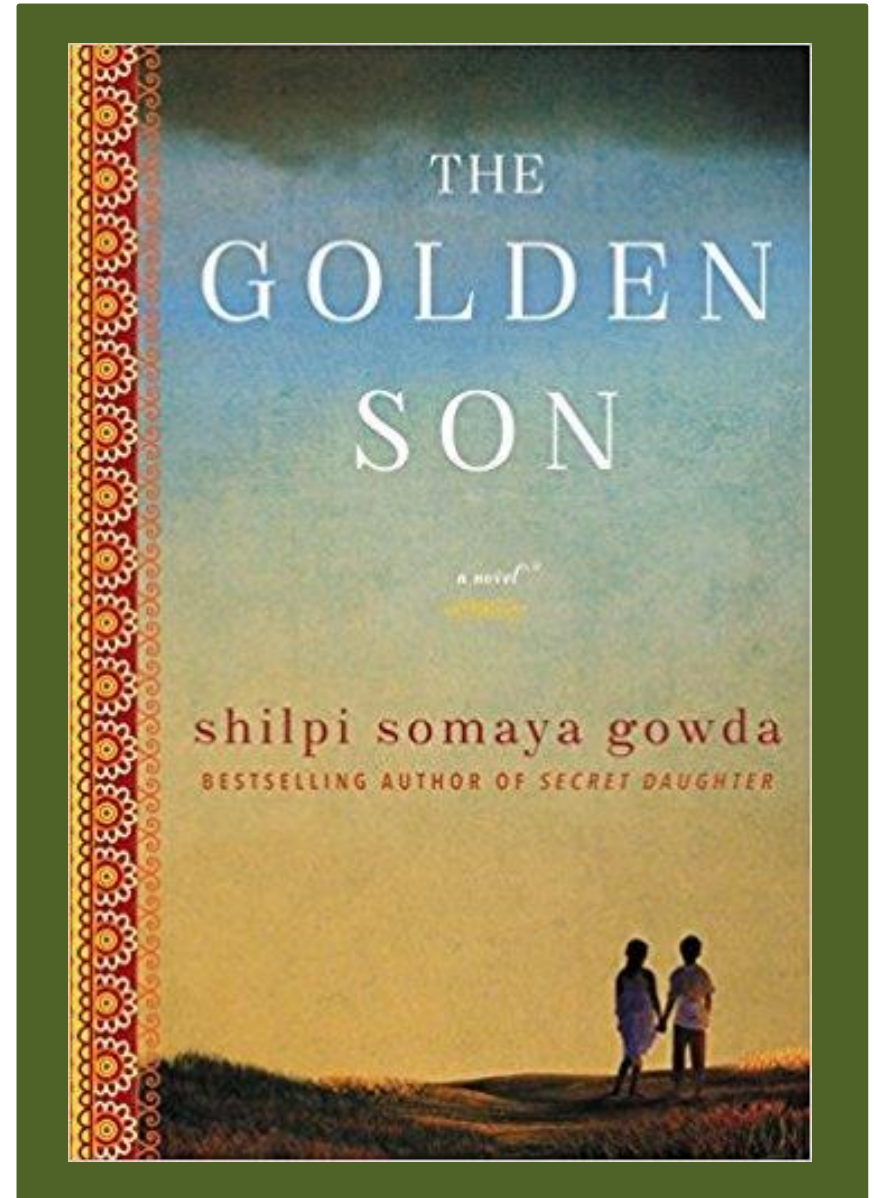
An unforgettable story of love, honor, tradition, and identity.

The first of his family to go to college, Anil Patel, the golden son, leaves his tiny Indian village to begin a medical residency at one of the best hospitals in America.

When his father dies, Anil becomes the head of the Patel household and inherits the mantle of arbiter for all of the village's disputes. But he is uncertain that he has the wisdom and courage required to take on the role.

Back home in India, Anil's childhood friend, Leena, struggles to adapt to her demanding new husband. Arranged by her parents, the marriage shatters Leena's romantic hopes, and forces her to make choices that will hold drastic repercussions for her family.

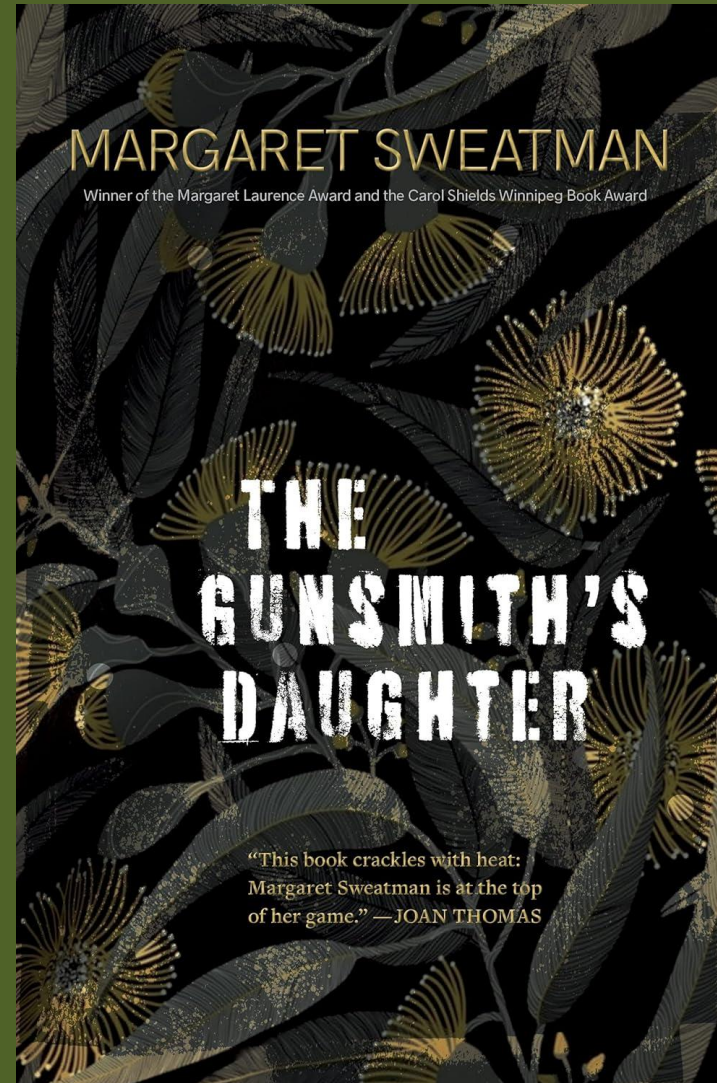
Tender and bittersweet, *The Golden Son* illuminates the decisions we must make to find our true selves. *(From the publisher.)*



The Gunsmith's Daughter by Margaret Sweatman

1971. Lilac Welsh lives an isolated life with her parents at Rough Rock on the Winnipeg River. Her father, Kal, stern and controlling, has built his wealth by designing powerful guns and ammunition. He's on the cusp of producing a .50 calibre assault rifle that can shoot down an airplane with a single bullet, when a young stranger named Gavin appears at their door, wanting to meet him before enlisting for the war in Vietnam. Gavin's arrival sparks an emotional explosion in Lilac's home and inspires her to begin her own life as a journalist, reporting on the war that's making her family rich.

The Gunsmith's Daughter is both a coming-of-age story and an allegorical novel about Canada-US relations. Psychologically and politically astute, and gorgeously written, Margaret Sweatman's portrait of a brilliant gunsmith and his eighteen-year-old daughter tells an engrossing story of ruthless ambition, and one young woman's journey toward independence.



Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis by J.D. Vance

From a former marine and Yale Law School graduate, a powerful account of growing up in a poor Rust Belt town that offers a broader, probing look at the struggles of America's white working class

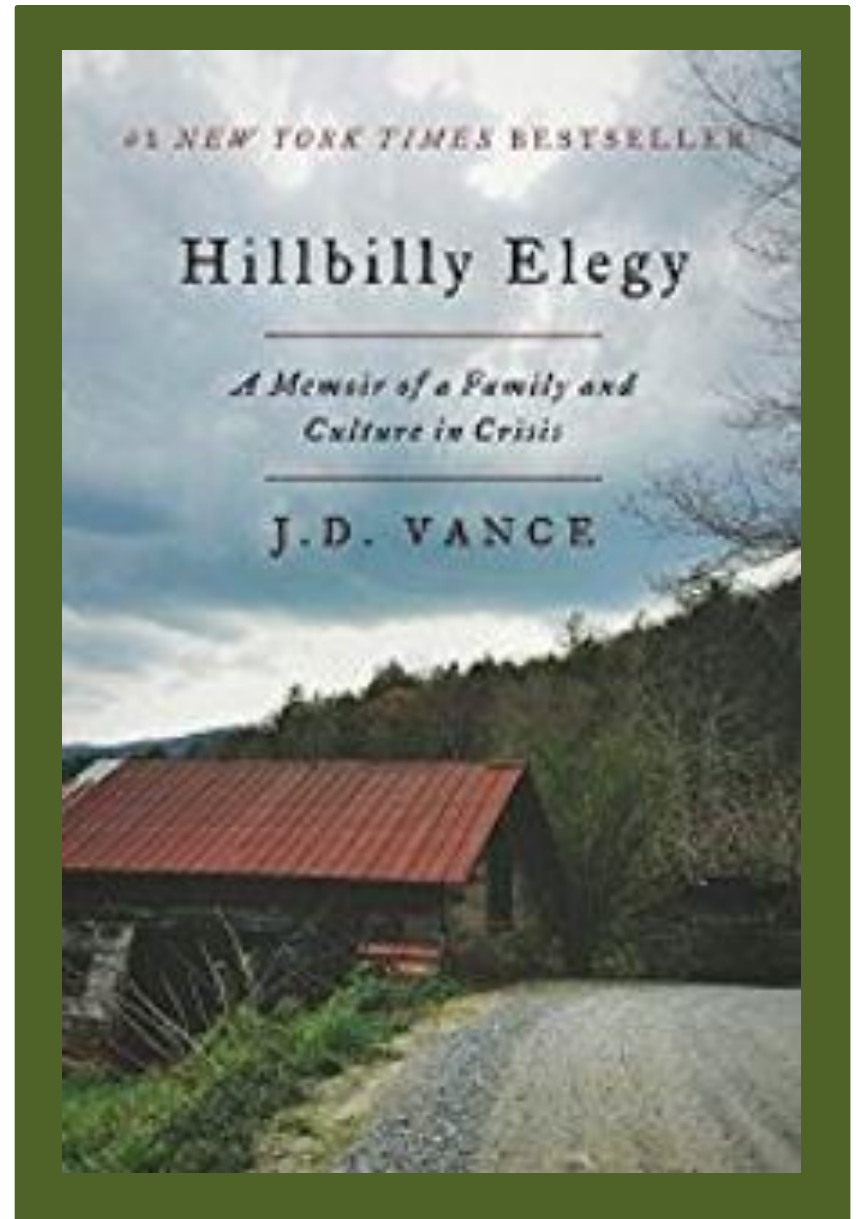
Hillbilly Elegy is a passionate and personal analysis of a culture in crisis—that of white working-class Americans. The decline of this group, a demographic of our country that has been slowly disintegrating over forty years, has been reported on with growing frequency and alarm, but has never before been written about as searingly from the inside.

J. D. Vance tells the true story of what a social, regional, and class decline feels like when you were born with it hung around your neck.

The Vance family story begins hopefully in postwar America. J. D.'s grandparents were "dirt poor and in love," and moved north from Kentucky's Appalachia region to Ohio in the hopes of escaping the dreadful poverty around them. They raised a middle-class family, and eventually their grandchild (the author) would graduate from Yale Law School, a conventional marker of their success in achieving generational upward mobility.

But as the family saga of *Hillbilly Elegy* plays out, we learn that this is only the short, superficial version. Vance's grandparents, aunt, uncle, sister, and, most of all, his mother, struggled profoundly with the demands of their new middle-class life, and were never able to fully escape the legacy of abuse, alcoholism, poverty, and trauma so characteristic of their part of America. Vance piercingly shows how he himself still carries around the demons of their chaotic family history.

A deeply moving memoir with its share of humor and vividly colorful figures, *Hillbilly Elegy* is the story of how upward mobility really feels. And it is an urgent and troubling meditation on the loss of the American dream for a large segment of this country. *(From the publisher.)*



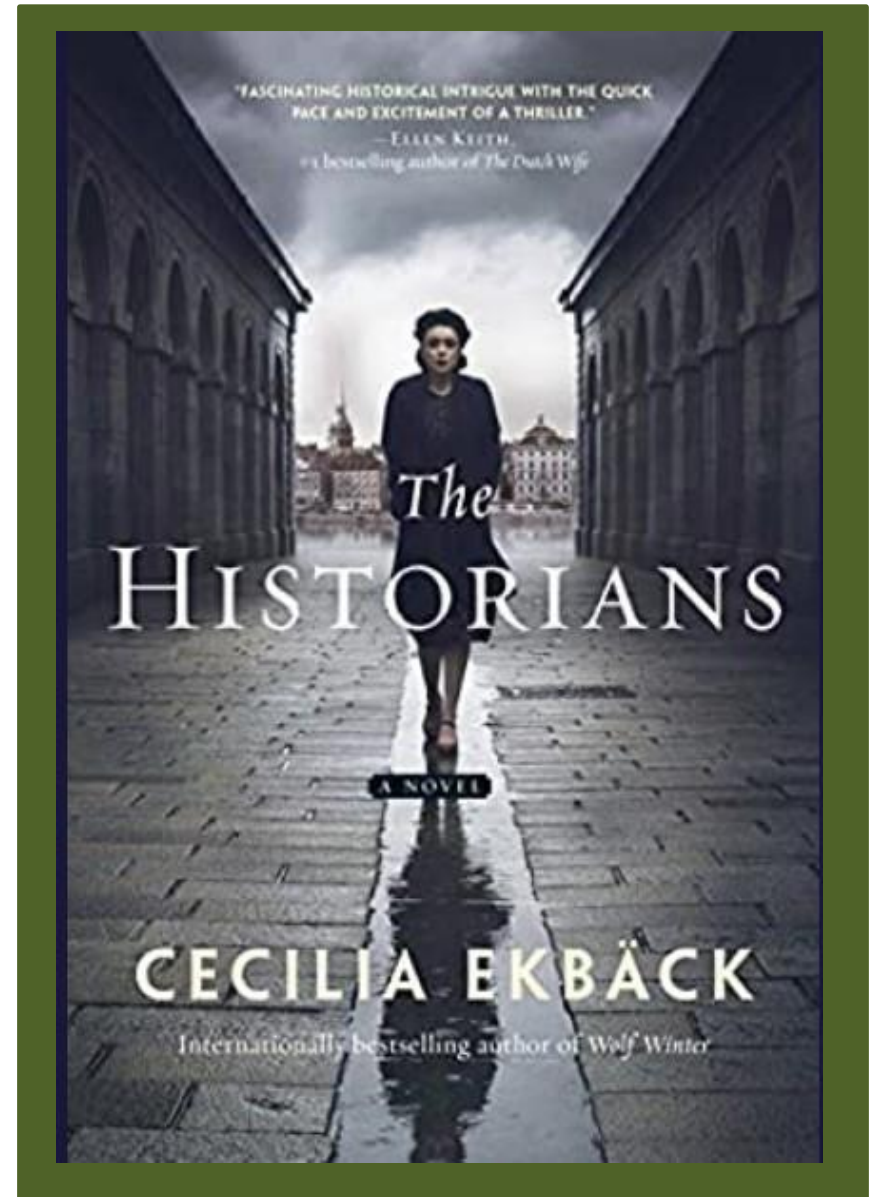
The Historians by Cecilia Ekbäck

It is 1943 and Sweden's neutrality in the war is under pressure. Laura Dahlgren, the right hand of the chief negotiator with Germany, is privy to ongoing discussions about German access to Swedish iron ore. When her former best friend and fellow classmate, Britta, is discovered tortured and murdered, Laura becomes determined to find her killer.

In the Swedish government, Jens Regnell, the secretary to the unpopular minister of foreign affairs, is becoming increasingly worried that his boss is secretly negotiating with the Reich. He is sent Britta's PhD thesis on Scandinavian supremacy without understanding why.

In Lapland, near the iron mine, Sami are mysteriously disappearing. Taneli, a young Sami boy, decides to investigate after his sister suddenly goes missing.

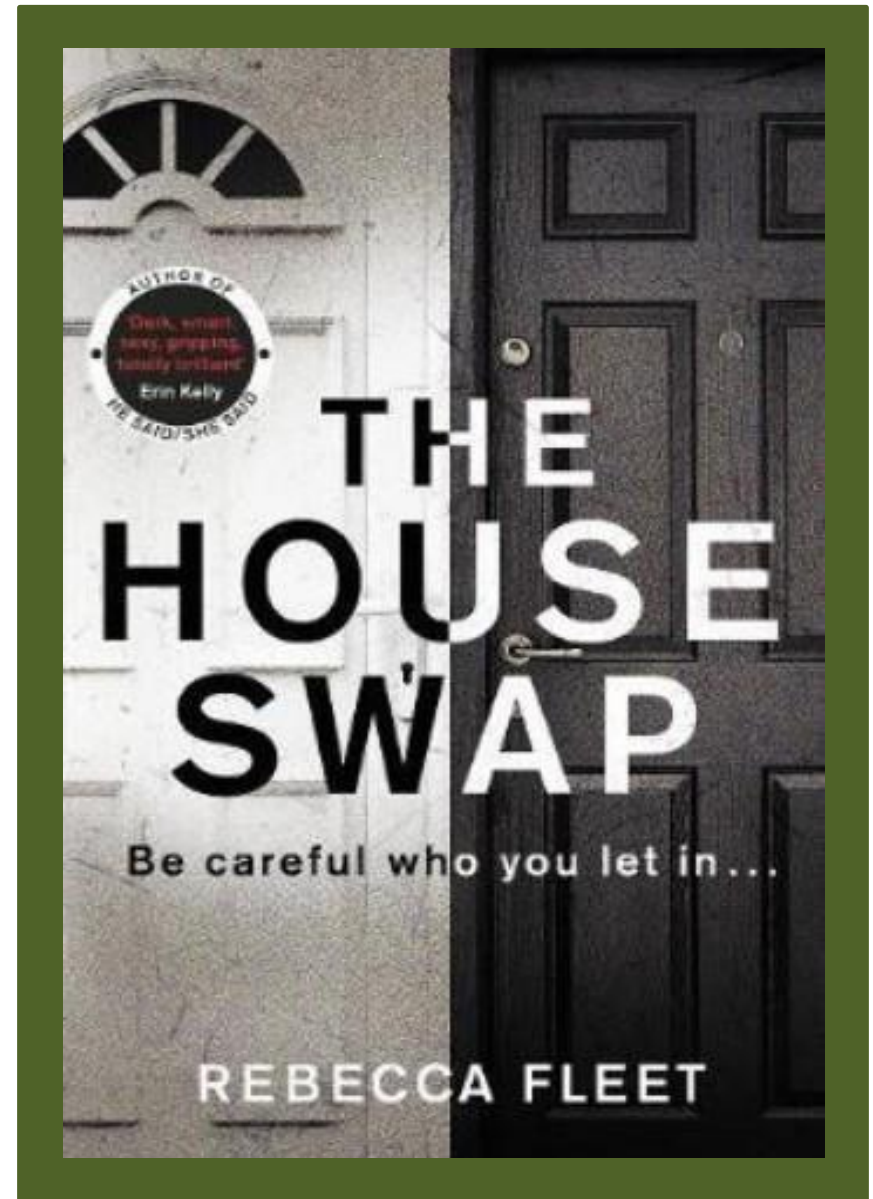
Together these three people will uncover a conspiracy that could topple their government and destroy their country's identity – a conspiracy that others are desperate to contain at any cost. *(From the publisher)*



The House Swap by Rebecca Fleet

When Caroline and Francis receive an offer to house swap – from their city apartment to a house in a leafy, upscale London suburb – they jump at the chance of a week away from home, their son, and the tensions that have pushed their marriage to the brink.

As the couple settles in, the old problems that permeate their marriage start bubbling to the surface. But while they attempt to mend their relationship, Caroline slowly begins to uncover some signs of *her* life. It seems the person they have swapped with is someone who knows her, someone who knows the secrets she's desperate to forget ...



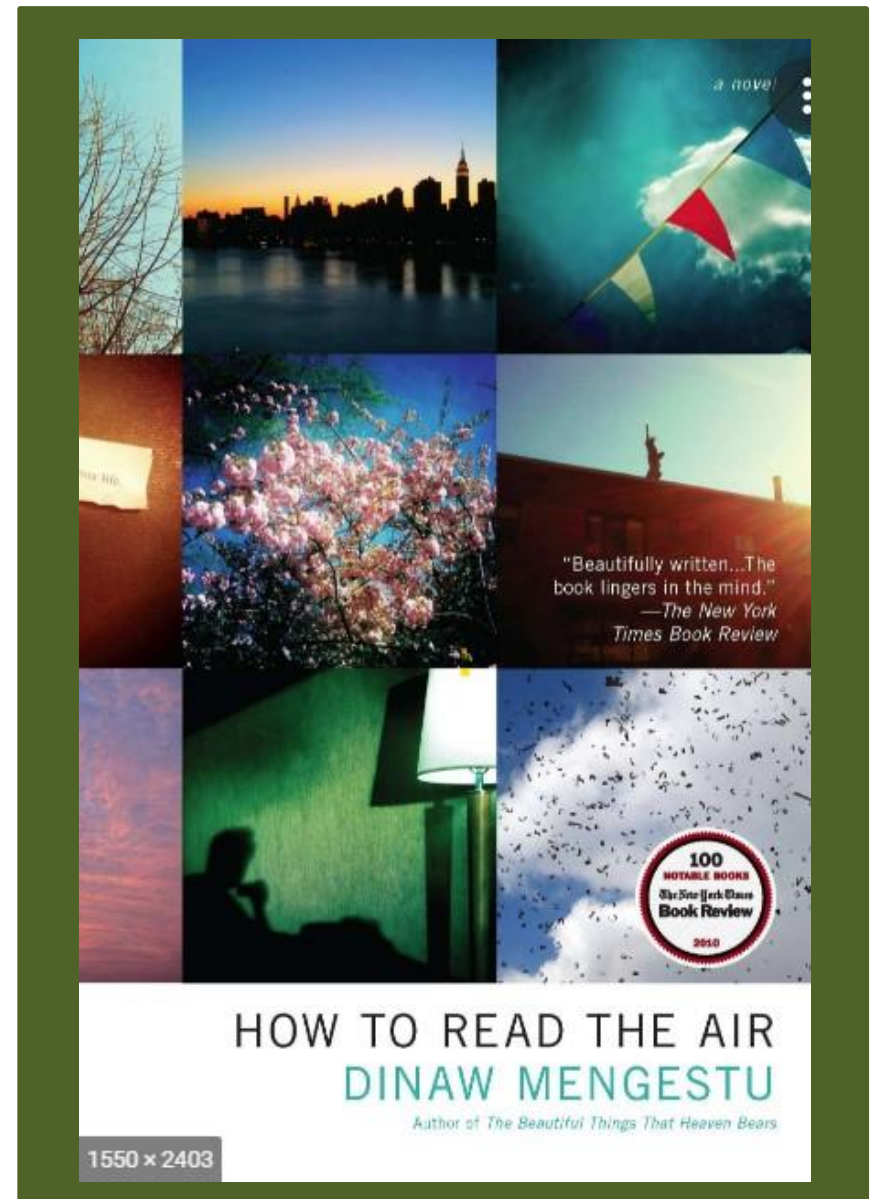
How to Read the Air by Dinaw Mengestu

Dinaw Mengestu's first novel, *The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears*, earned him comparisons to Bellow, Fitzgerald, and Naipaul, and garnered ecstatic critical praise for its haunting depiction of the immigrant experience in America. Now he enriches the themes that defined his debut in a novel that follows two generations of an immigrant family.

One September afternoon, Yosef and Mariam, Ethiopian immigrants who have spent all but their first year of marriage apart, set off on a road trip from their home in Peoria, Illinois, to Nashville, Tennessee, in search of a new identity as an American couple. Just months later, their son, Jonas, is born in Illinois.

Thirty years later, Yosef has died, and Jonas is desperate to make sense of the volatile generational and cultural ties that have forged him. How can he envision his future without knowing what has come before?

Leaving behind his marriage and his job in New York, Jonas sets out to retrace his parents' trip and, in a stunning display of imagination, weaves together a family history that takes him from the war-torn Ethiopia of his parents' youth to a brighter vision of his life in the America of today, a story—real or invented—that holds the possibility of reconciliation and redemption. (*From the publisher.*)



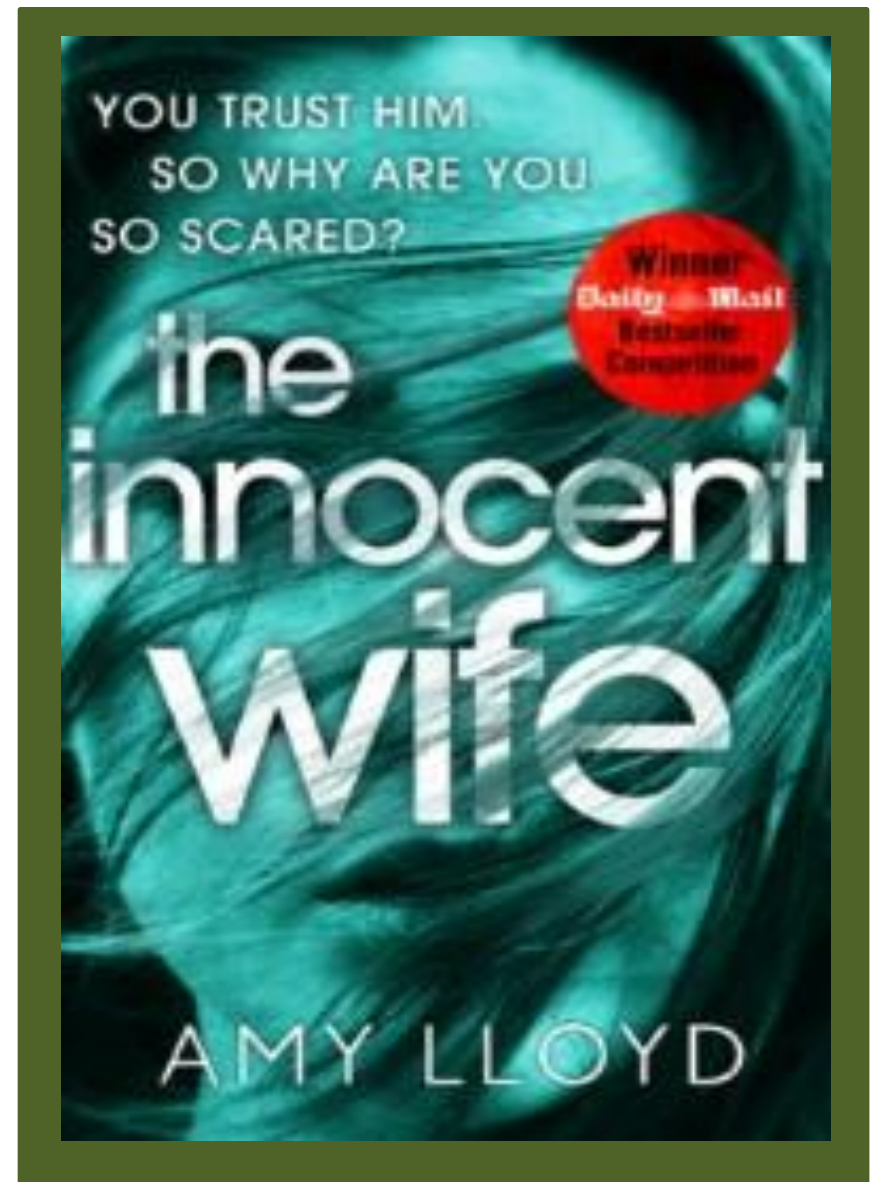
The Innocent Wife by Amy Lloyd

Twenty years ago, Dennis Danson was arrested and imprisoned for the brutal murder of a young girl. Now he's the subject of a true-crime documentary that's whipping up a frenzy online to uncover the truth and free a man who has been wrongly convicted.

A thousand miles away in England, Samantha is obsessed with Dennis's case. She exchanges letters with him, and is quickly won over by his apparent charm and kindness to her. Soon she has left her old life behind to marry him and campaign for his release.

When the campaign is successful and Dennis is freed, however, Sam begins to discover new details that suggest he may not be quite so innocent after all.

But how do you confront your husband when you don't want to know the truth?



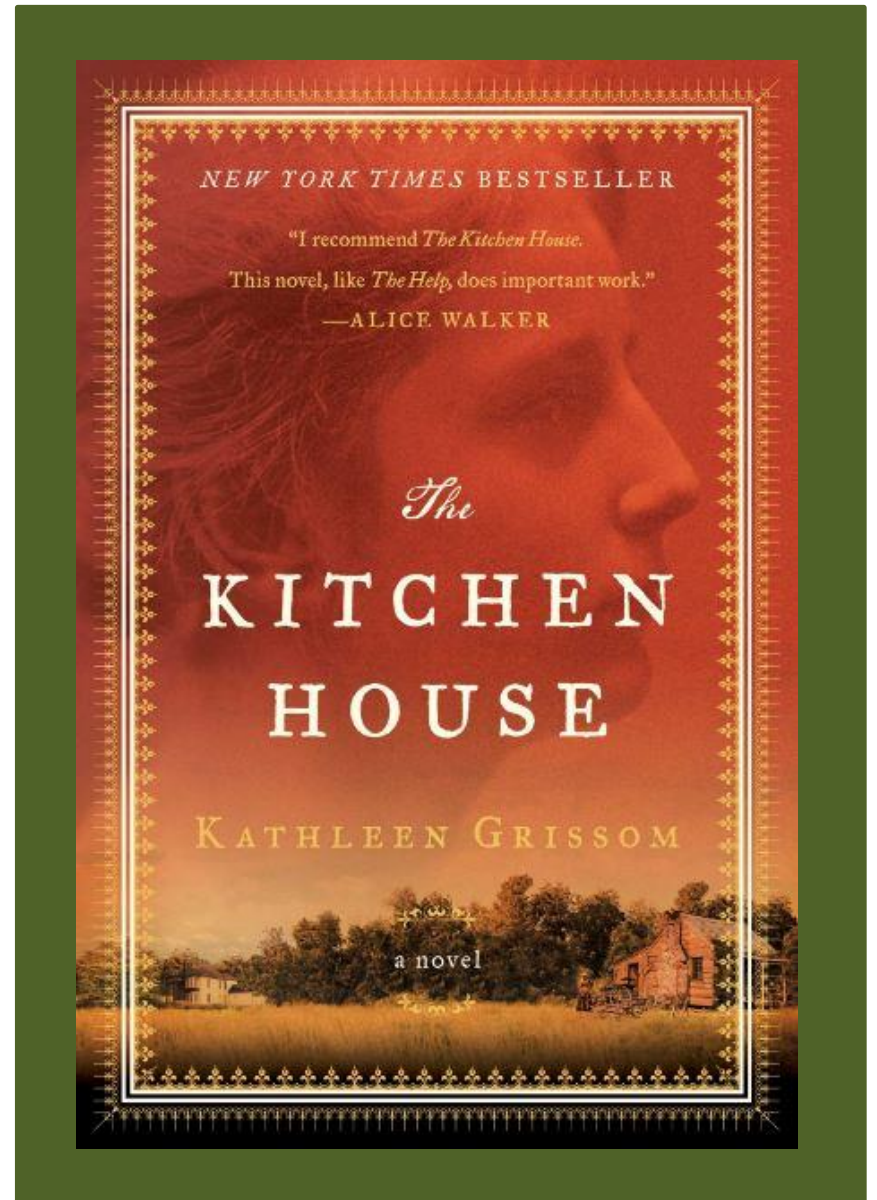
The Kitchen House by Kathleen Grissom

Orphaned while onboard ship from Ireland, seven-year-old Lavinia arrives on the steps of a tobacco plantation where she is to live and work with the slaves of the kitchen house.

Under the care of Belle, the master's illegitimate daughter, Lavinia becomes deeply bonded to her adopted family, though she is set apart from them by her white skin.

Eventually, Lavinia is accepted into the world of the big house, where the master is absent and the mistress battles opium addiction. Lavinia finds herself perilously straddling two very different worlds. When she is forced to make a choice, loyalties are brought into question, dangerous truths are laid bare, and lives are put at risk.

The Kitchen House is a tragic story of page-turning suspense, exploring the meaning of family, where love and loyalty prevail. (From the publisher.)



Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng

From the bestselling author of Everything I Never Told You, a riveting novel that traces the intertwined fates of the picture-perfect Richardson family and the enigmatic mother and daughter who upend their lives.

In Shaker Heights, a placid, progressive suburb of Cleveland, everything is planned — from the layout of the winding roads, to the colors of the houses, to the successful lives its residents will go on to lead.

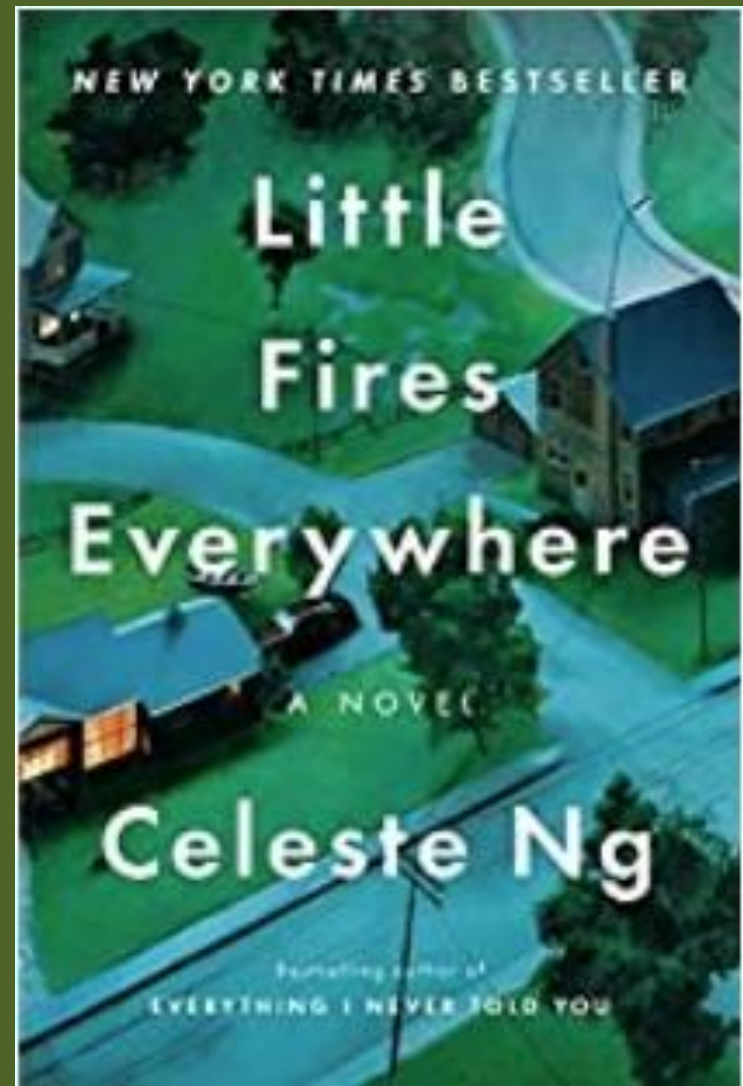
And no one embodies this spirit more than Elena Richardson, whose guiding principle is playing by the rules.

Enter Mia Warren — an enigmatic artist and single mother — who arrives in this idyllic bubble with her teenaged daughter Pearl, and rents a house from the Richardsons. Soon Mia and Pearl become more than tenants: all four Richardson children are drawn to the mother-daughter pair.

But Mia carries with her a mysterious past and a disregard for the status quo that threatens to upend this carefully ordered community.

When old family friends of the Richardsons attempt to adopt a Chinese-American baby, a custody battle erupts that dramatically divides the town — and puts Mia and Elena on opposing sides. Suspicious of Mia and her motives, Elena is determined to uncover the secrets in Mia's past. But her obsession will come at unexpected and devastating costs.

Little Fires Everywhere explores the weight of secrets, the nature of art and identity, and the ferocious pull of motherhood — and the danger of believing that following the rules can avert disaster. (From the publisher.)



The Lying Game by Ruth Ware

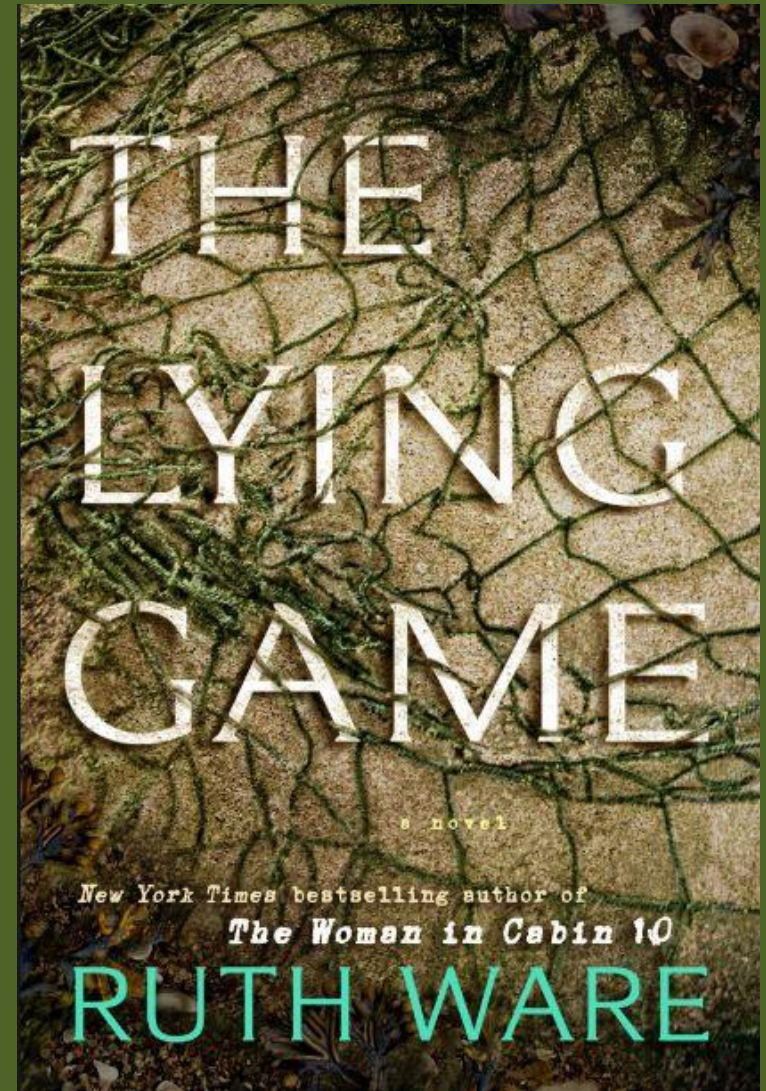
On a cool June morning, a woman is walking her dog in the idyllic coastal village of Salten along a tidal estuary known as the Reach. Before she can stop him, the dog charges into the water to retrieve what first appears to be a wayward stick, but to her horror, turns out to be something much more sinister.

The next morning, three women in and around London — Fatima, Thea, and Isabel — receive the text they had always hoped would NEVER come, from the fourth in their formerly inseparable clique, Kate, that says only, "I need you."

The four girls were best friends at Salten, a second rate boarding school set near the cliffs of the English Channel. Each different in their own way, the four became inseparable and were notorious for playing the Lying Game, telling lies at every turn to both fellow boarders and faculty, with varying states of serious and flippant nature that were disturbing enough to ensure that everyone steered clear of them.

The myriad and complicated rules of the game are strict: no lying to each other — ever. Bail on the lie when it becomes clear it is about to be found out. But their little game had consequences, and the girls were all expelled in their final year of school under mysterious circumstances surrounding the death of the school's eccentric art teacher, Ambrose (who also happens to be Kate's father).

Atmospheric, twisty, and with just the right amount of chill that will keep you wrong-footed — which has now become Ruth Ware's signature style — *The Lying Game* is sure to be her next big bestseller. Another unputdownable thriller from the Agatha Christie of our time. *(From the publisher.)*



Next Year in Havana by Chanel Cleeton

After the death of her beloved grandmother, a Cuban-American woman travels to Havana, where she discovers the roots of her identity—and unearths a family secret hidden since the revolution.

Havana, 1958.

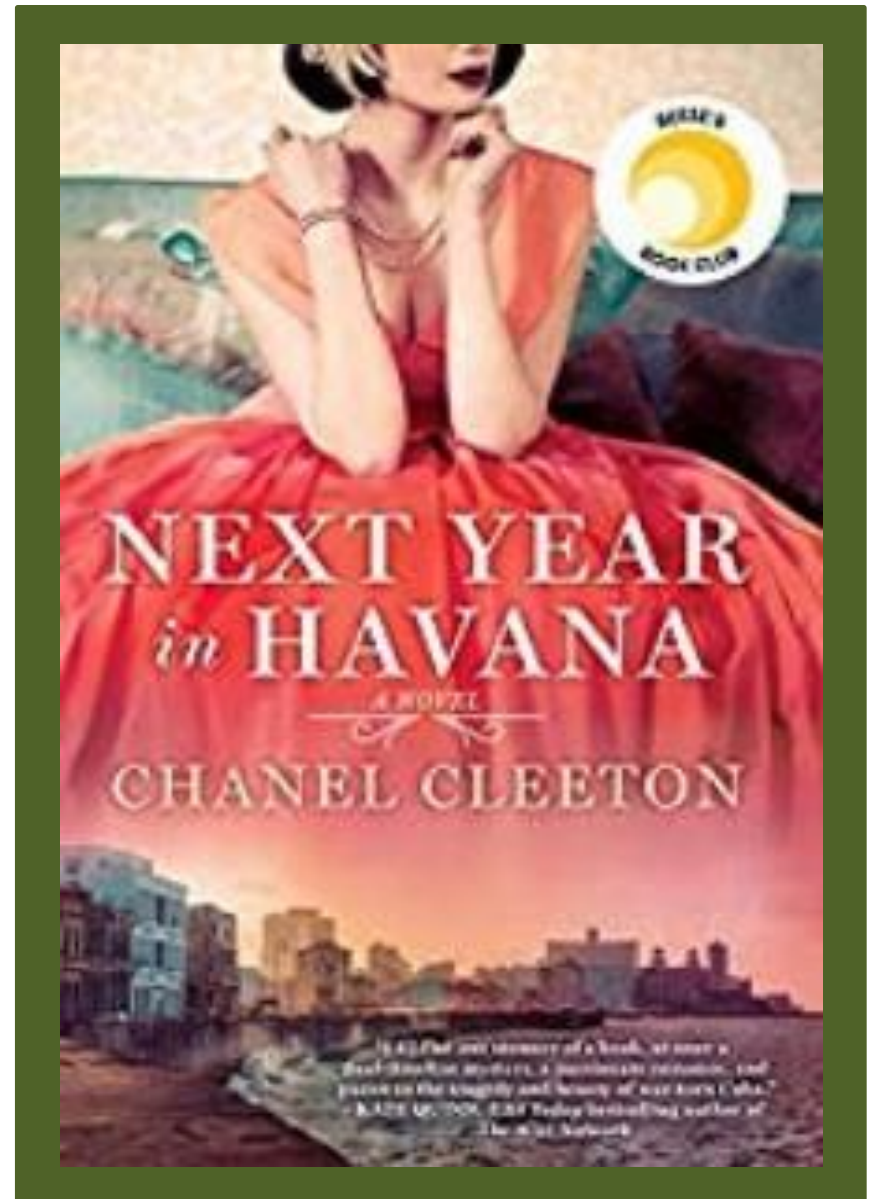
The daughter of a sugar baron, nineteen-year-old Elisa Perez is part of Cuba's high society, where she is largely sheltered from the country's growing political unrest—until she embarks on a clandestine affair with a passionate revolutionary...

Miami, 2017.

Freelance writer Marisol Ferrera grew up hearing romantic stories of Cuba from her late grandmother Elisa, who was forced to flee with her family during the revolution. Elisa's last wish was for Marisol to scatter her ashes in the country of her birth.

Arriving in Havana, Marisol comes face-to-face with the contrast of Cuba's tropical, timeless beauty and its perilous political climate.

When more family history comes to light and Marisol finds herself attracted to a man with secrets of his own, she'll need the lessons of her grandmother's past to help her understand the true meaning of courage. *(From the publisher.)*



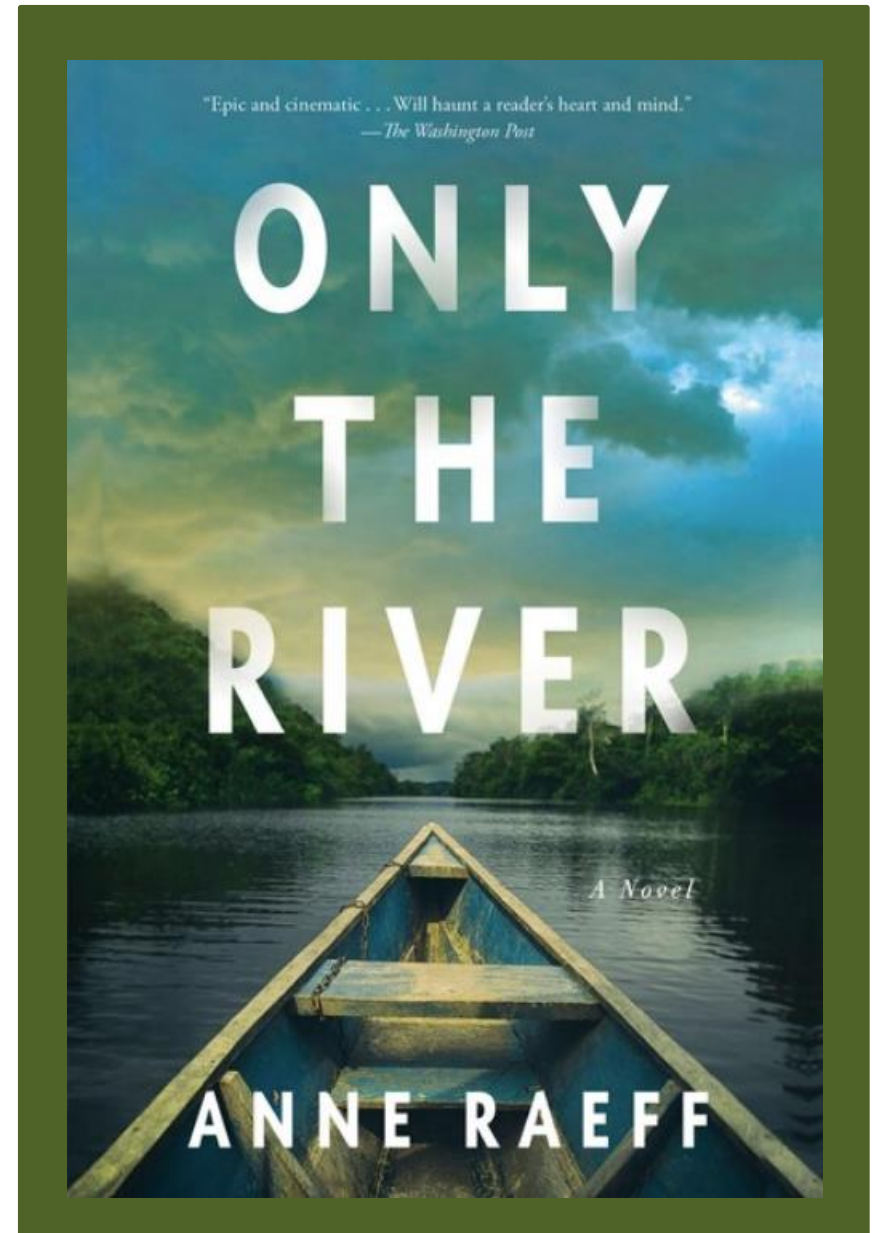
Only the River by Anne Raeff

A family displaced by World War II finds a new home in Central America, only to watch their fortunes rise and fall on the back of a revolution—from the California Book Award silver medalist and Simpson Literary Prize finalist.

Fleeing the ravages of wartime Vienna, Pepa and her family find safe harbor in the small town of El Castillo, on the banks of the San Juan River in Nicaragua. There her parents seek to eradicate yellow fever while Pepa falls under the spell of the jungle and the town's eccentric inhabitants. But Pepa's life-- including her relationship with local boy Guillermo--comes to a halt when her family abruptly moves to New York, leaving the young girl disoriented and heartbroken.

As the years pass, Pepa's and Guillermo's lives diverge, and Guillermo's homeland slips into chaos. Nicaragua soon becomes engulfed in revolutionary fervor as the Sandinista movement vies for the nation's soul. Guillermo's daughter transforms into an accidental revolutionary. Pepa's son defies his parents' wishes and joins the revolution in Nicaragua, only to disappear into the jungle. It will take decades before the fates of these two families converge again, revealing how love, grief, and passion are intertwined with a nation's destiny.

Spanning generations and several wars, *Only the River* explores the way displacement both destroys two families and creates new ones, sparking a revolution that changes their lives in the most unexpected ways.

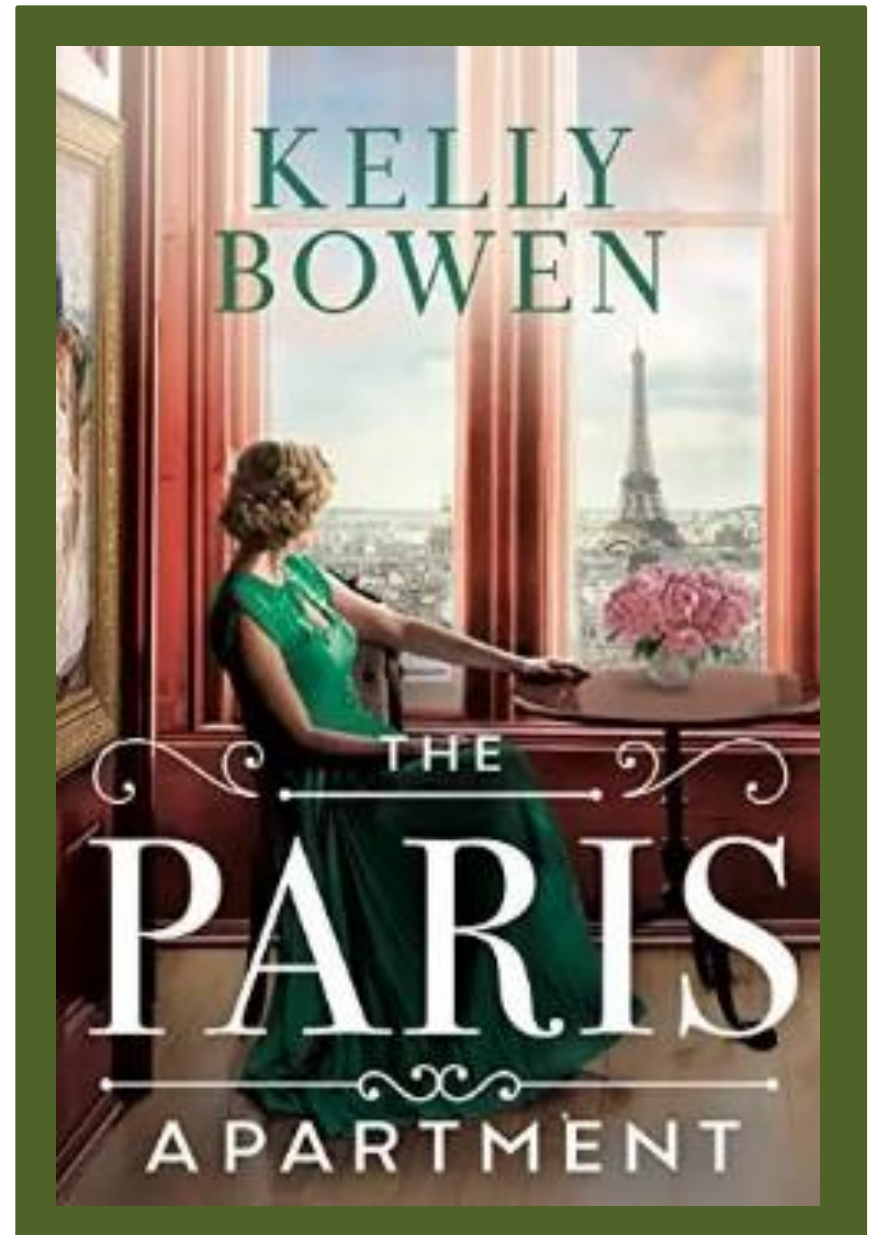


The Paris Apartment by Kelly Bowen

London, 2017: When Aurelia Leclair inherits an opulent Paris apartment, she is shocked to discover her grandmother's hidden secrets—including a treasure trove of famous art and couture gowns. One obscure painting leads Lia to Gabriel Seymour, a highly respected art restorer with his own mysterious past. Together they attempt to uncover the truths concealed within the apartment's walls.

Paris, 1942: The Germans may occupy the City of Lights, but glamorous Estelle Allard flourishes in a world separate from the hardships of war. Yet when the Nazis come for her friends, Estelle doesn't hesitate to help those she holds dear, no matter the cost. As she works against the forces intent on destroying her loved ones, she can't know that her actions will have ramifications for generations to come.

Set seventy-five years apart, against a perilous and prosperous Paris, both Estelle and Lia must summon hidden courage as they navigate the dangers of a changing world, altering history – and their family's futures – forever.



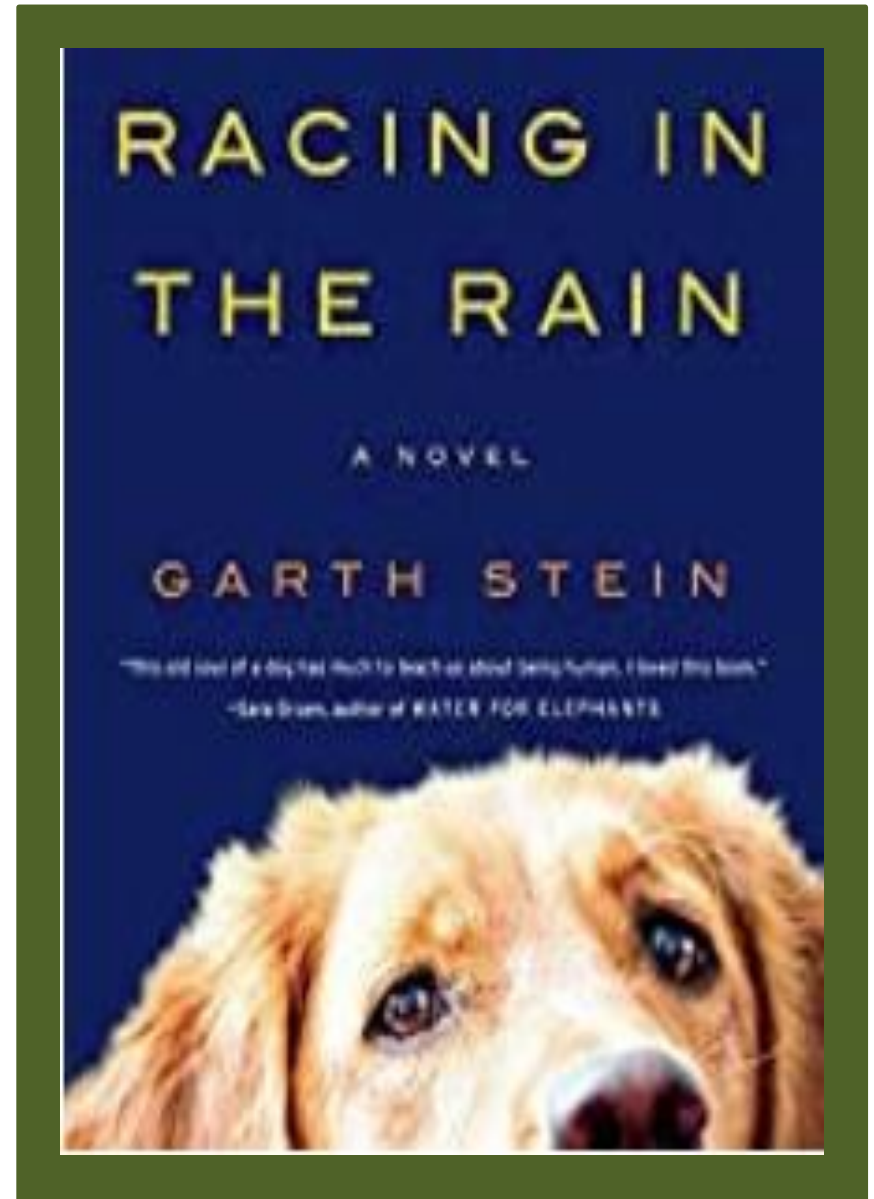
Racing in the Rain: My Life as a Dog by Garth Stein

Enzo knows he is different from other dogs: a philosopher with a nearly human soul (and an obsession with opposable thumbs), he has educated himself by watching television extensively, and by listening very closely to the words of his master, Denny Swift, an up-and-coming race car driver.

Through Denny, Enzo has gained tremendous insight into the human condition, and he sees that life, like racing, isn't simply about going fast. Using the techniques needed on the race track, one can successfully navigate all of life's ordeals.

On the eve of his death, Enzo takes stock of his life, recalling all that he and his family have been through: the sacrifices Denny has made to succeed professionally; the unexpected loss of Eve, Denny's wife; the three-year battle over their daughter, Zoe, whose maternal grandparents pulled every string to gain custody. In the end, despite what he sees as his own limitations, Enzo comes through heroically to preserve the Swift family, holding in his heart the dream that Denny will become a racing champion with Zoe at his side. Having learned what it takes to be a compassionate and successful person, the wise canine can barely wait until his next lifetime, when he is sure he will return as a man.

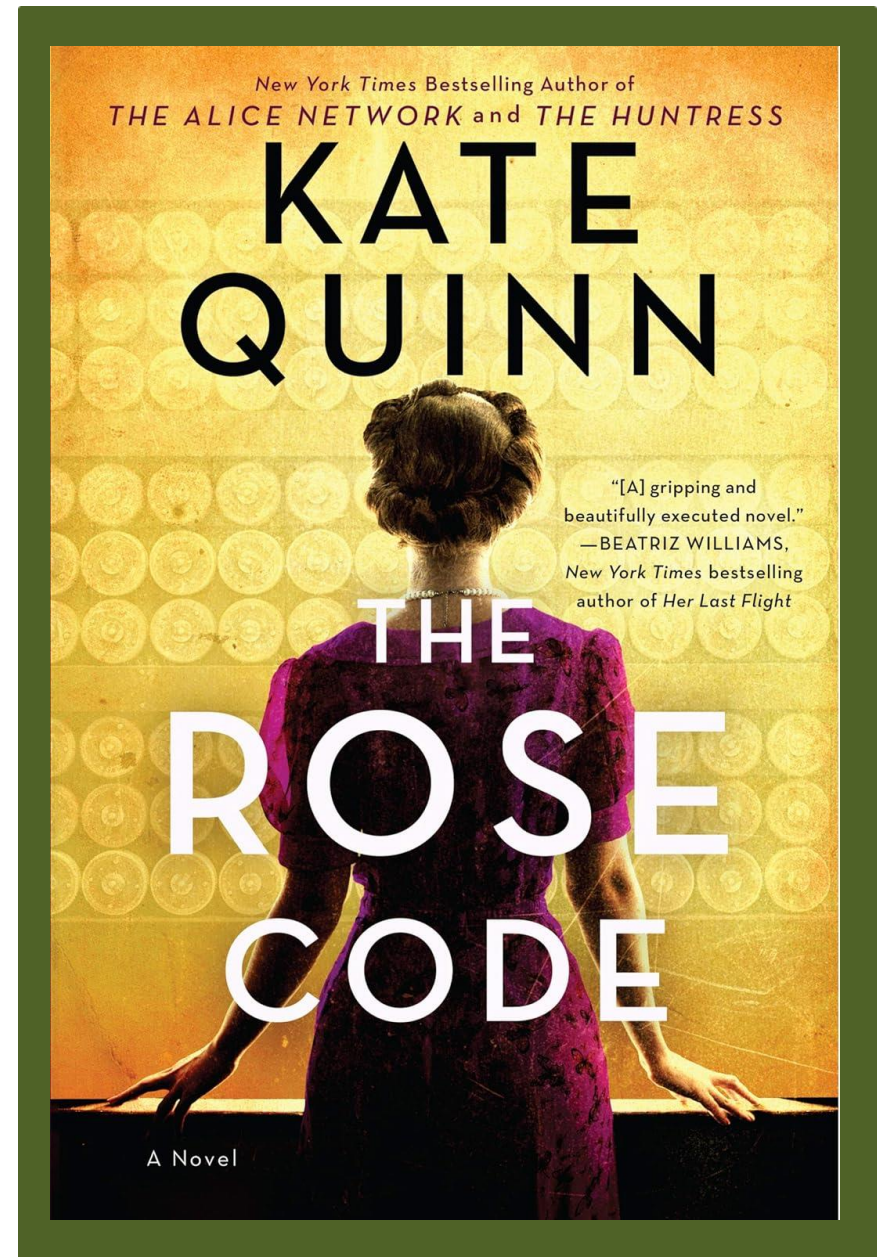
A heart-wrenching but deeply funny and ultimately uplifting story of family, love, loyalty, and hope, *The Art of Racing in the Rain* is a beautifully crafted and captivating look at the wonders and absurdities of human life...as only a dog could tell it. (From the publisher.)



The Rose Code by Kate Quinn

1940. As England prepares to fight the Nazis, three very different women answer the call to mysterious country estate Bletchley Park, where the best minds in Britain train to break German military codes. Vivacious debutante Osla is the girl who has everything—beauty, wealth, and the dashing Prince Philip of Greece sending her roses—but she burns to prove herself as more than a society girl, and puts her fluent German to use as a translator of decoded enemy secrets. Imperious self-made Mab, product of east-end London poverty, works the legendary codebreaking machines as she conceals old wounds and looks for a socially advantageous husband. Both Osla and Mab are quick to see the potential in local village spinster Beth, whose shyness conceals a brilliant facility with puzzles, and soon Beth spreads her wings as one of the Park's few female cryptanalysts. But war, loss, and the impossible pressure of secrecy will tear the three apart.

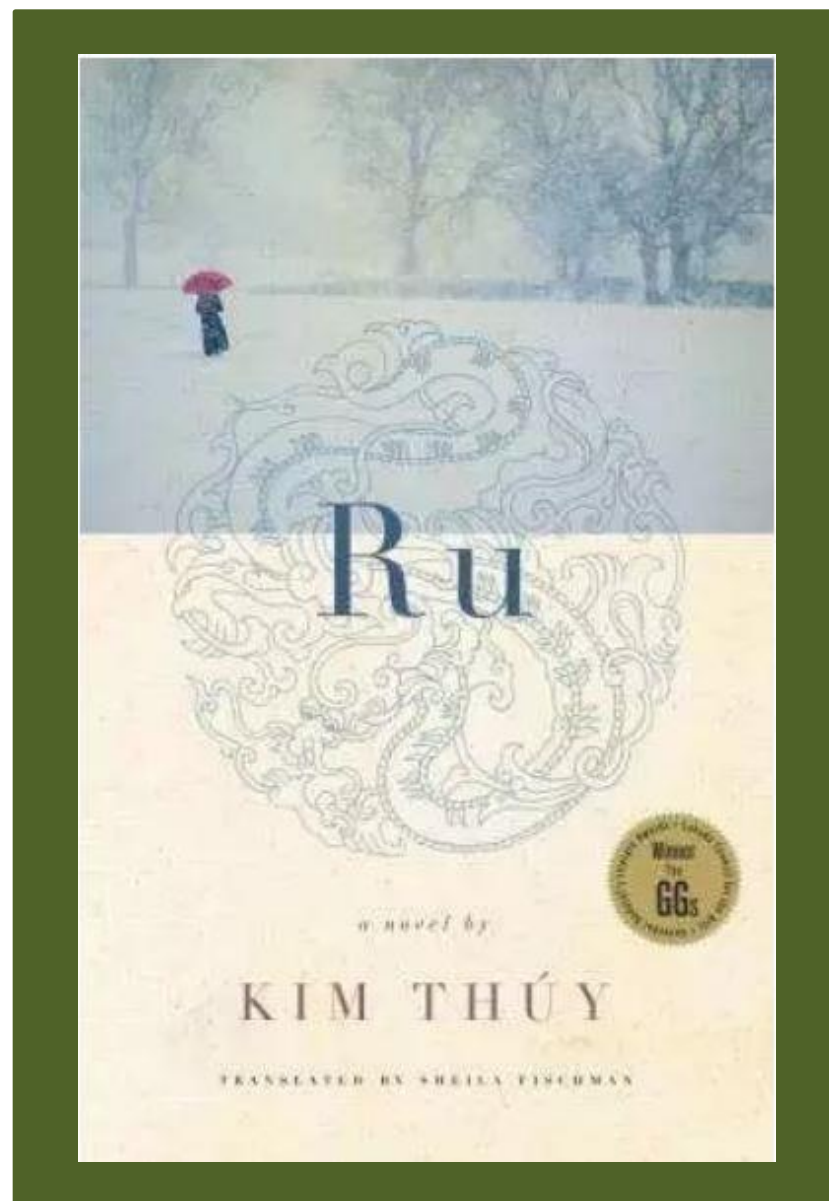
1947. As the royal wedding of Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip whips post-war Britain into a fever, three friends-turned-enemies are reunited by a mysterious encrypted letter--the key to which lies buried in the long-ago betrayal that destroyed their friendship and left one of them confined to an asylum. A mysterious traitor has emerged from the shadows of their Bletchley Park past, and now Osla, Mab, and Beth must resurrect their old alliance and crack one last code together. But each petal they remove from the rose code brings danger--and their true enemy--closer...



Ru by Kim Thuy

Kim Thúy's autobiographical debut novel, *Ru*, describes a life-changing voyage from a childhood in strife-filled postwar Vietnam to a new beginning in 1970s Quebec. Unflinching in content and strikingly unique in form, the novel is itself an ambitious journey. Despite some moments of digression and occasional instances of thematic overreach, *Ru* is a poetic and highly individual exploration of what it can mean to straddle multiple cultures and identities simultaneously. The word "Ru" is Vietnamese for lullaby. In French it can signify a stream or flow. A fitting title for this book, given both *Ru*'s haunting and incantatory writing style and the migratory passage the Montreal-based novelist describes. Sensitively rendered in English by celebrated translator Sheila Fischman, Thúy's novel originated with a French edition that won the Governor General's Literary Award for fiction in 2010.

Although the first-person narrator of *Ru* identifies herself in the novel's opening pages as a woman named Nguyen An Tinh, the author has told the Quebec press that the book's events accurately reflect her personal recollections of a life characterized by dramatic environmental shifts. That harrowing travelogue includes fleeing from an opulent lifestyle as a South Vietnamese child of privilege, to an overcrowded Malaysian refugee camp, to eventual settlement in and acculturation to Bill 101-era Quebec. In unadorned and dignified prose, Thúy spares no detail about the harsh passage by overfull boat, marked by abundances of scabies and excrement, and equal measures of terror and hope.



The Snow Child by Eowyn Ivey

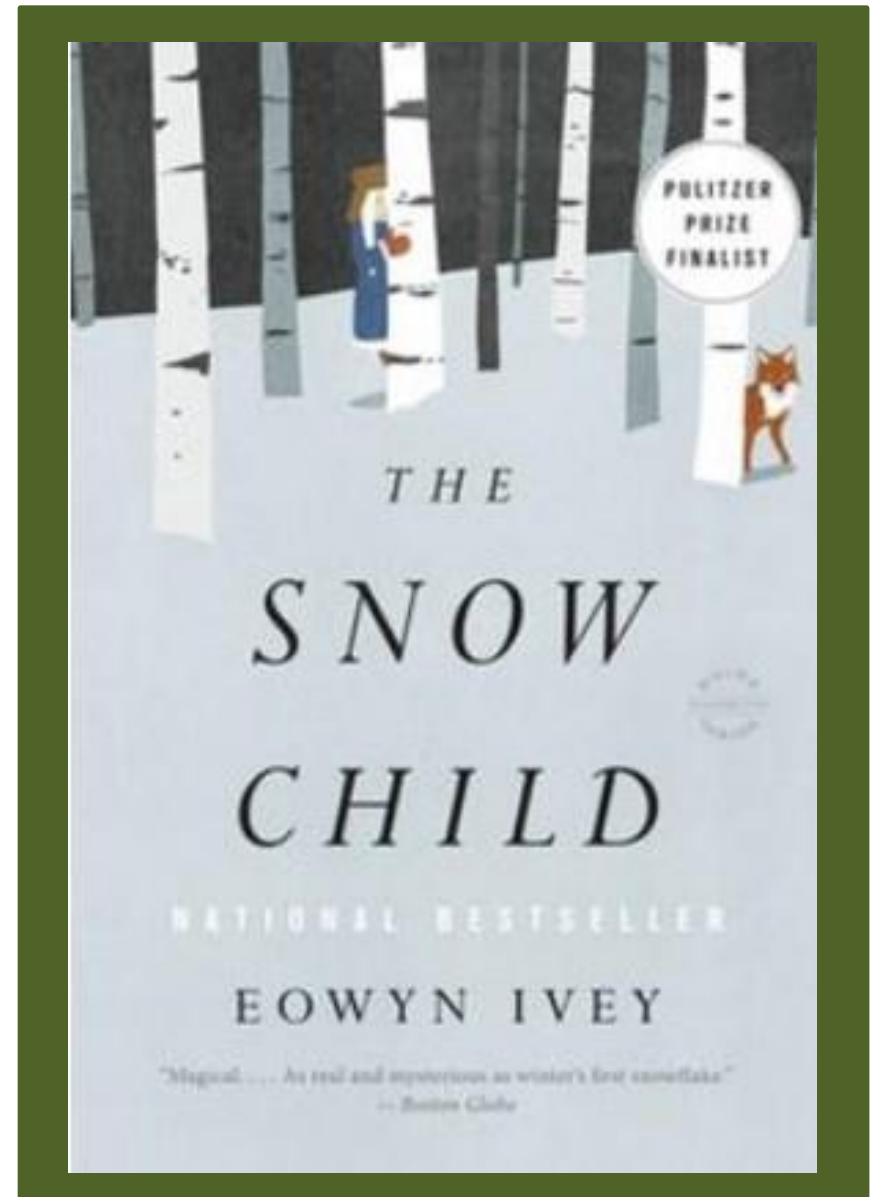
Alaska, 1920: a brutal place to homestead, and especially tough for recent arrivals Jack and Mabel.

Childless, they are drifting apart—he breaking under the weight of the work of the farm; she crumbling from loneliness and despair. In a moment of levity during the season's first snowfall, they build a child out of snow.

The next morning the snow child is gone—but they glimpse a young, blonde-haired girl running through the trees.

This little girl, who calls herself Faina, seems to be a child of the woods. She hunts with a red fox at her side, skims lightly across the snow, and somehow survives alone in the Alaskan wilderness.

As Jack and Mabel struggle to understand this child who could have stepped from the pages of a fairy tale, they come to love her as their own daughter. But in this beautiful, violent place things are rarely as they appear, and what they eventually learn about Faina will transform all of them. *(From the publisher.)*



The Transatlantic Book Club by Felicity Hayes-McCoy

Eager to cheer up her recently widowed gran, Cassie Fitzgerald, visiting from Canada, persuades Lissbeg Library to set up a Skype book club, linking readers on Ireland's Finfarran Peninsula with the US town of Resolve, home to generations of Finfarran emigrants.

But when the club decides to read a detective novel, old conflicts on both sides of the ocean are exposed and hidden love affairs come to light. As secrets emerge, Cassie fears she may have done more harm than good. Will the truths she uncovers about her granny Pat's marriage affect her own hopes of finding love? Is Pat, who's still struggling with the death of her husband, about to fall out with her oldest friend, Mary? Or could the book club itself hold the key to a triumphant transatlantic happy ending?

The Transatlantic Book Club, a standalone novel, continues the stories of the residents of the Finfarran Peninsula, introducing readers to new characters with whom they will surely fall in love. *(From the publisher)*



The Tattooist of Auschwitz by Heather Morris

This beautiful, illuminating tale of hope and courage is based on interviews that were conducted with Holocaust survivor and Auschwitz-Birkenau tattooist Ludwig (Lale) Sokolov—an unforgettable love story in the midst of atrocity.

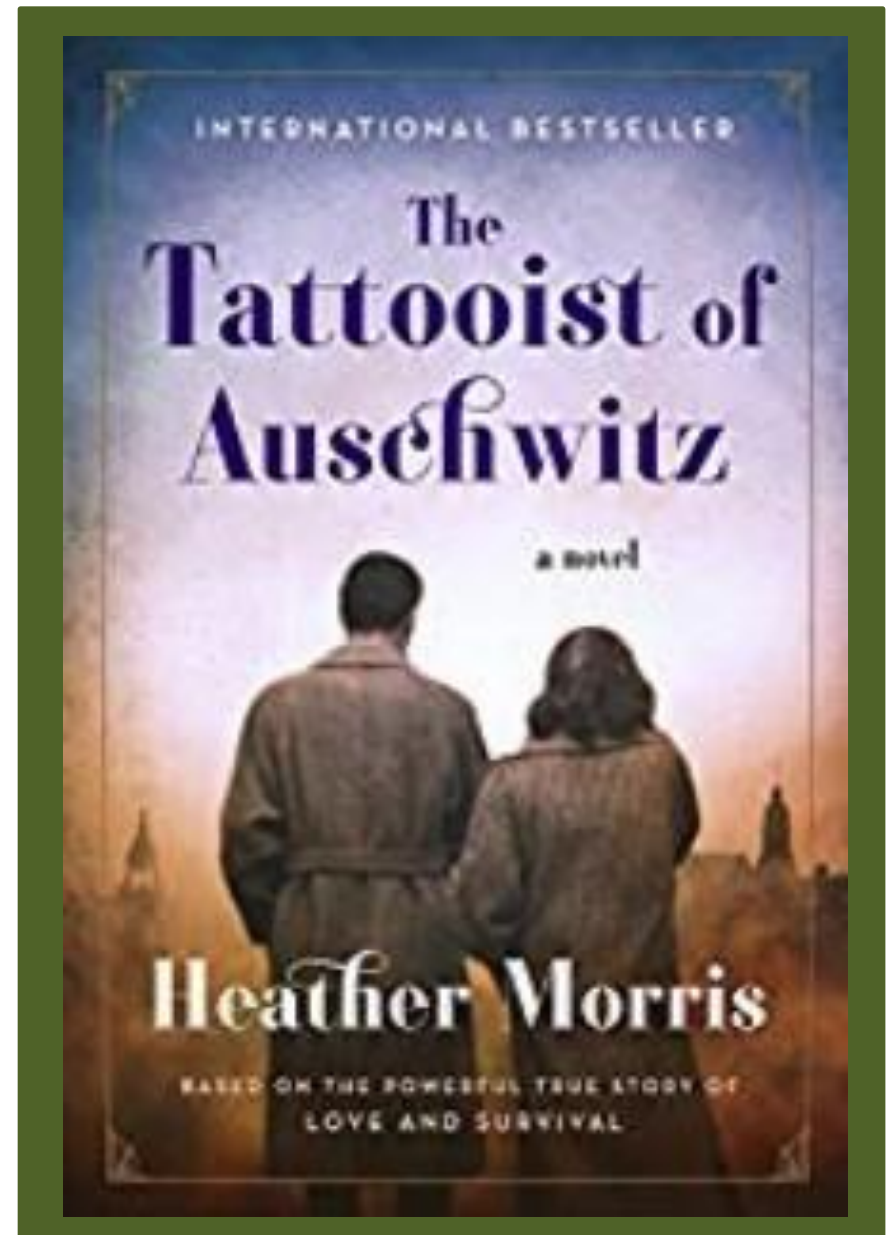
In April 1942, Lale Sokolov, a Slovakian Jew, is forcibly transported to the concentration camps at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

When his captors discover that he speaks several languages, he is put to work as a Tatowierer (the German word for tattooist), tasked with permanently marking his fellow prisoners.

Imprisoned for over two and a half years, Lale witnesses horrific atrocities and barbarism—but also incredible acts of bravery and compassion. Risking his own life, he uses his privileged position to exchange jewels and money from murdered Jews for food to keep his fellow prisoners alive.

One day in July 1942, Lale, prisoner 32407, comforts a trembling young woman waiting in line to have the number 34902 tattooed onto her arm. Her name is Gita, and in that first encounter, Lale vows to somehow survive the camp and marry her.

A vivid, harrowing, and ultimately hopeful re-creation of Lale Sokolov's experiences as the man who tattooed the arms of thousands of prisoners with what would become one of the most potent symbols of the Holocaust, *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* is also a testament to the endurance of love and humanity under the darkest possible conditions. *(From the publisher.)*



The Underground Railroad by Colson Whitehead

Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. Life is hell for all the slaves, but especially bad for Cora; an outcast even among her fellow Africans, she is coming into womanhood—where even greater pain awaits. When Caesar, a recent arrival from Virginia, tells her about the Underground Railroad, they decide to take a terrifying risk and escape.

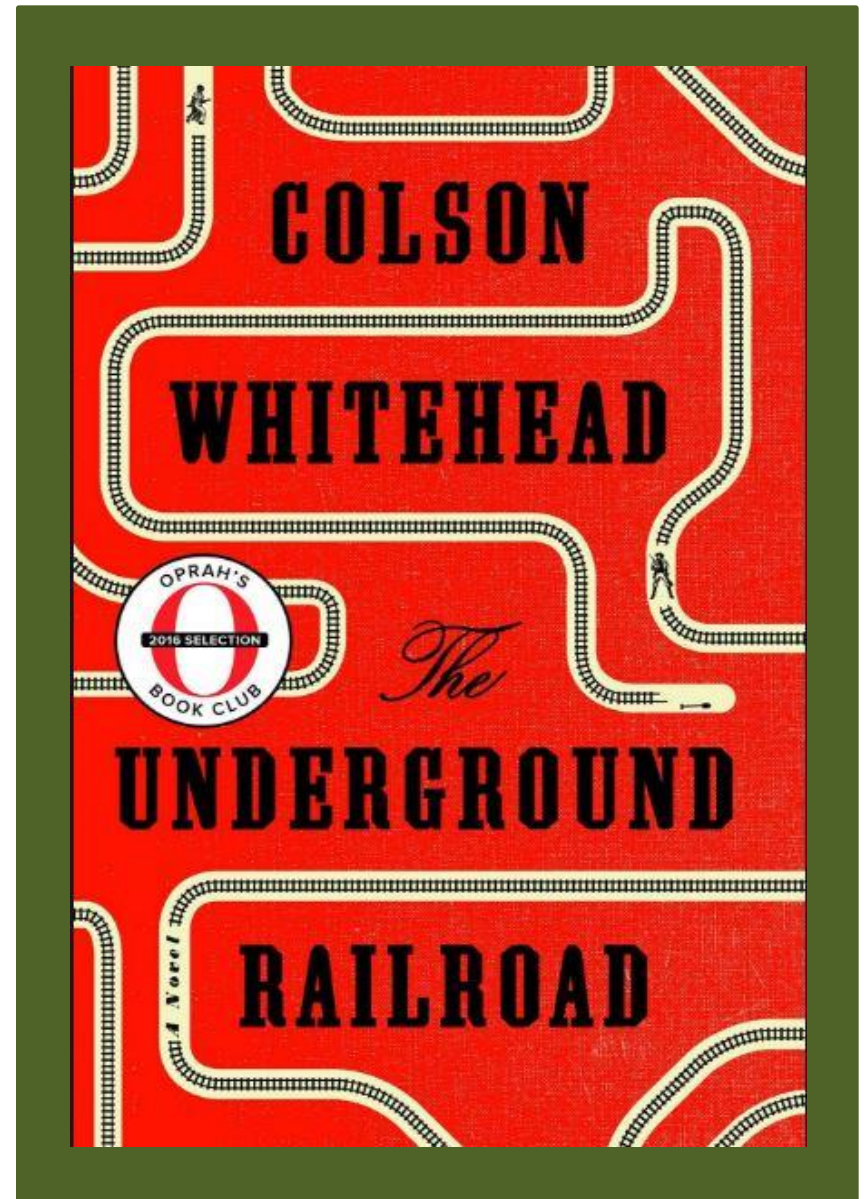
Matters do not go as planned—Cora kills a young white boy who tries to capture her. Though they manage to find a station and head north, they are being hunted.

In Whitehead's ingenious conception, the Underground Railroad is no mere metaphor—engineers and conductors operate a secret network of tracks and tunnels beneath the Southern soil. Cora and Caesar's first stop is South Carolina, in a city that initially seems like a haven.

But the city's placid surface masks an insidious scheme designed for its black denizens. And even worse: Ridgeway, the relentless slave catcher, is close on their heels. Forced to flee again, Cora embarks on a harrowing flight, state by state, seeking true freedom.

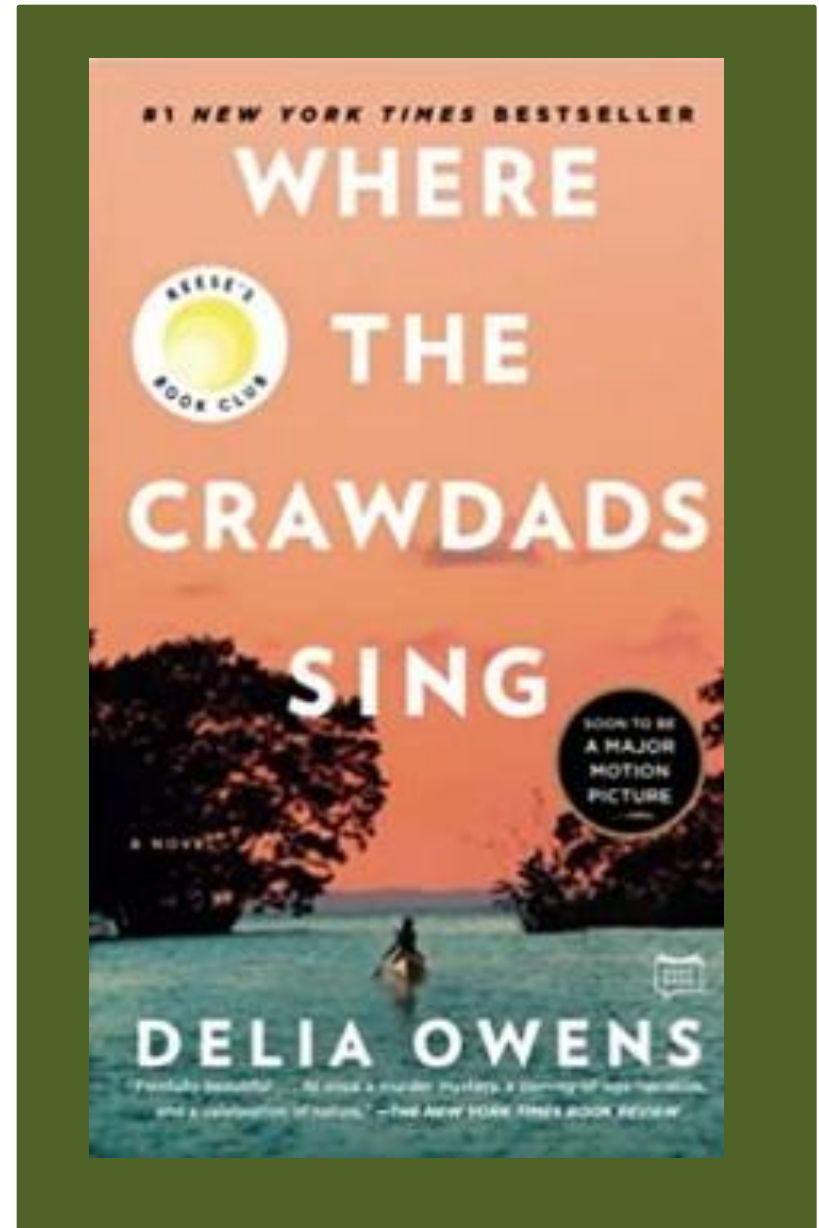
Like the protagonist of *Gulliver's Travels*, Cora encounters different worlds at each stage of her journey—hers is an odyssey through time as well as space. As Whitehead brilliantly re-creates the unique terrors for black people in the pre-Civil War era, his narrative seamlessly weaves the saga of America from the brutal importation of Africans to the unfulfilled promises of the present day.

The Underground Railroad is at once a kinetic adventure tale of one woman's ferocious will to escape the horrors of bondage and a shattering, powerful meditation on the history we all share. (From the publisher.)



Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens

For years, rumors of the “Marsh Girl” have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. But Kya is not what they say. Sensitive and intelligent, she has survived for years alone in the marsh that she calls home, finding friends in the gulls and lessons in the sand. Then the time comes when she yearns to be touched and loved. When two young men from town become intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new life—until the unthinkable happens. *(From the publisher.)*

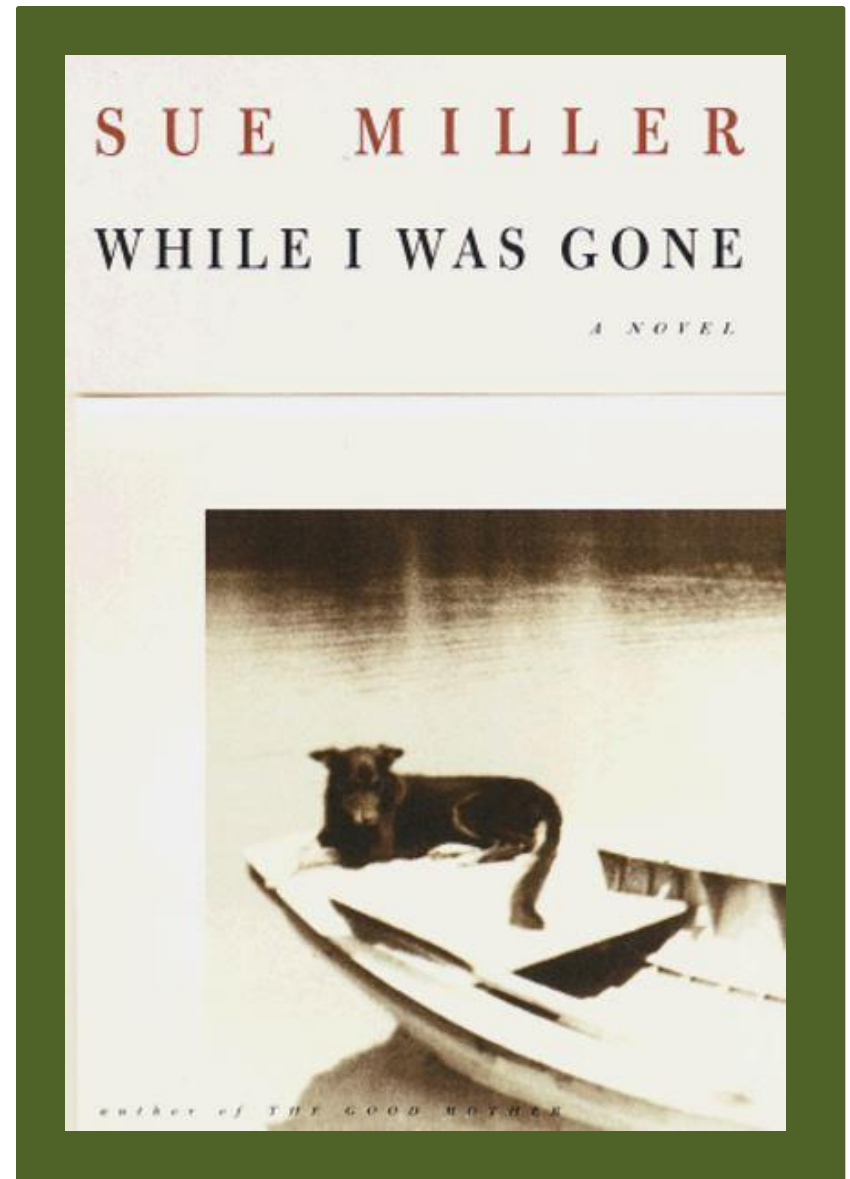


While I Was Gone by Sue Miller

In the summer of 1968, Jo Becker ran out on the marriage and the life her parents wanted for her, and escaped — for one beautiful, idyllic year—into a life that was bohemian and romantic, living under an assumed name in a rambling group house in Cambridge. It was a time of limitless possibility, but it ended in a single instant when Jo returned home one night to find her best friend lying dead in a pool of blood on the living room floor.

Now Jo has everything she's ever wanted: a veterinary practice she loves, a devoted husband, three grown daughters, a beautiful Massachusetts farmhouse. And if occasionally she feels a stranger to herself and wonders what happened to the freedom she once felt, or how she came to be the wife, mother, and doctor her neighbors know and trust—if at times she feels as if her whole life is vanishing behind her as she's living it—she need only look at her daughters or her husband, Daniel, to recall the satisfactions of family and community and marriage.

But when an old housemate settles in her small town, the fabric of Jo's life begins to unravel: seduced again by the enticing possibility of another self and another life, she begins a dangerous flirtation that returns her to the darkest moment of her past and imperils all she loves. *(From the publisher.)*



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