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The Outside of August Whirlaway Midlife Bites Geist Evensong The Speed of Light Catching Heaven About Schmidt All Is Vanity The Ladies of Garrison Gardens The Good Husband Marvel Studios' Black Panther: Dreams of Wakanda Longing My Russian On Mystic Lake The Ballantine Reader's Circle Reader Lucia, Lucia Last Night in Twisted River Carrie Soto Is Back Transformers: Ghosts of Yesterday Girls About Schmidt Executive Suite The Scent of Burnt Flowers The World Below Wrayth Phoenix Rising Mad Honey Love & Terror on the Howling Plains of Nowhere The Language of Flowers Dark Matter Truly Tasteless Jokes Three Forget Me Not Such Big Dreams Forbidden City Matrix The Speed of Dark Harbinger Upgrade Malibu Rising

The complex bond and unspoken resentments between sisters . . . the aching search for home and connection and community . . . the ever-changing landscape of family and those who define it . . . Sands Hall weaves these powerful elements into a novel ripe with discovery and wonder. Set against the immutable backdrop of the American Southwest, *Catching Heaven* illuminates that quiet place in the heart where solitude embraces serenity and dreams meet possibility. In the Empire of Arkaym, the Order of Deacons protects and shelters the citizens from the attacks of the unliving. All are sworn to fight the evil forces of the geists—and to keep the world safe from the power of the Otherside. . . . Although she is one of the most powerful Deacons in the Order, Sorcha Faris is still unable to move or speak after her last battle. Even her partner, Merrick Chambers, cannot reach her through their shared Bond. Yet there are those who still fear Sorcha and the mystery of her hidden past. Meanwhile, Merrick has been asked to investigate a new member of the Emperor's Court. But when Sorcha is abducted by men seeking Raed Rossin, the shapeshifting rival to the throne, Merrick must choose where his loyalties lie. A savvy former street child working at a human rights law office in Mumbai fights for redemption and a chance to live life on her own terms in

this fresh, propulsive debut novel about fortune and survival. Named a *Loan Stars Top Ten Pick* and a *CBC Canadian Fiction* title to watch. Rakhi is a twenty-three-year-old former street child haunted by the grisly aftermath of an incident that led her to lose her best friend eleven years ago. Constantly reminded she doesn't belong, Rakhi lives alone in a Mumbai slum, working as a lowly office assistant at *Justice For All*, a struggling human rights law office headed by the renowned lawyer who gave her a fresh start. Fiercely intelligent and in possession of a sharp wit and an even sharper tongue, Rakhi is nobody's fool, even if she is underestimated by everyone around her. Rakhi's life isn't much, but she's managing. That is until a fading former Bollywood starlet tries to edge her way back into the spotlight by becoming a celebrity ambassador for *Justice For All*. Steering the organization into uncharted territories, she demands an internship for her young Canadian family friend, Alex, a Harvard-bound graduate student. Ambitious, persistent, and naive, Alex persuades Rakhi to show him "the real" India. In exchange, he'll do something to further Rakhi's dreams in a transaction that seems harmless, at first. As old guilt and new aspirations collide, everything Rakhi once knew to be true is set ablaze. And as the stakes mount, she will come face to face with the difficult choices and moral compromises that people are prepared to make in order to survive, no matter the costs. Reema Patel's transportive debut novel offers a moving, smart, and arrestingly funny look at the cost of ambition and power in reclaiming one's story.

Fiction excerpts from eighteen acclaimed authors whose works appeared as *Ballantine Reader's Circle* titles in 1999; with a personal introduction to each author from their editor on what delights them about their authors' fiction. #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • “An epic adventure about a female athlete perhaps past her prime, brought back to the tennis court for one last grand slam” (Elle), from the author of *Malibu Rising*, *Daisy Jones & The Six*, and *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* “The perfect novel to close out your summer.”—The Washington Post “Gorgeous. The kind of sharp, smart, potent book you have to set aside every few pages just to catch your breath. I'll take a piece of *Carrie Soto* forward with me in life and be a little better for it.”—Emily Henry, author of *Book Lovers* and *Beach Read*

Carrie Soto is fierce, and her determination to win at any cost has not made her popular. But by the time she retires from tennis, she is the best player the world

has ever seen. She has shattered every record and claimed twenty Grand Slam titles. And if you ask Carrie, she is entitled to every one. She sacrificed nearly everything to become the best, with her father, Javier, as her coach. A former champion himself, Javier has trained her since the age of two. But six years after her retirement, Carrie finds herself sitting in the stands of the 1994 US Open, watching her record be taken from her by a brutal, stunning player named Nicki Chan. At thirty-seven years old, Carrie makes the monumental decision to come out of retirement and be coached by her father for one last year in an attempt to reclaim her record. Even if the sports media says that they never liked “the Battle-Axe” anyway. Even if her body doesn’t move as fast as it did. And even if it means swallowing her pride to train with a man she once almost opened her heart to: Bowe Huntley. Like her, he has something to prove before he gives up the game forever. In spite of it all, Carrie Soto is back, for one epic final season. In this riveting and unforgettable novel, Taylor Jenkins Reid tells her most vulnerable, emotional story yet. Five ambitious executives vie for the top job at a major corporation after the president suddenly drops dead in this classic business novel Fifty-six-year-old Tredway Corporation president Avery Bullard is getting into a taxi after a business lunch in Manhattan when he collapses from a cerebral hemorrhage. Although his body isn’t immediately identified, the reverberations of his death will soon be felt in the boardrooms of every branch of his company. In the minutes before he died, Bullard had finally decided on whom to appoint as his executive vice president—but he never got the chance to announce his selection. Now, with no successor in place, five corporate VPs—comptroller Loren P. Shaw, treasurer Frederick W. Alderson, design and development director Don Walling, manufacturing chief Jesse Grimm, and head of sales J. Walter Dudley—compete for the top position. Who will ascend to the executive suite? From the long-simmering resentments to the startling power plays, insider trading to rapid business decisions and personal dramas, *Executive Suite* is a riveting novel as well as an authentic and timeless depiction of how a corporation operates and what it takes to succeed in business. A smart, personal, darkly funny examination of what it’s like to be a woman at the crossroads of a midlife crisis, from the New York Times bestselling author of *People I Want to Punch in the Throat* “I inhaled this book in one sitting; it’s a

must-read for anyone over forty. This should become the gift all girlfriends give one another.”—Zibby Owens, host of the award-winning podcast *Moms Don't Have Time to Read Books* Jen Mann had what appeared to be the perfect life: a successful career as a bestselling author and award-winning blogger, a devoted husband, teenage kids who weren't total jerks, and a badass minivan. So imagine her surprise when, at forty-seven years old, a midlife crisis kicked her straight in the ladybits. *Midlife Bites* offers Jen's trademark wit and honesty when it comes to important conversations and observations about women in midlife. Here, readers will be able to come together and find anecdotes and practical ideas to help navigate through this major point in their lives. For women who may feel isolated or overlooked, this collection of original essays offers valuable insights, takeaways, and, most important, a productive way forward. Jen shares her own story as well as advice and wisdom from the online community she built, tackling everything that bites about midlife, where nothing is off-limits: raging hormones; sex (after forty); finding your purpose; learning to make new friends (yes, even as a grown-up); moving out of your comfort zone; having conversations that count, no more small talk; and how to deal with rogue chin hairs (and other nuisances). Jen Mann is leading the movement to create a new space where middle-aged women can share openly and honestly with one another. This no-BS collection of essays will help start the conversation and keep it going, because as women, we all have a right to be happy, fulfilled, and whole, no matter what stage of life. In the follow-up to *The Three Miss Margarets*, Laurel Selene McReady, the town's down-and-out wild child, suddenly finds herself in possession of a fortune, a legacy from Peggy who died leaving the Garrison fortune to her, and finds life less serene than expected as she copes with her grief, greedy relatives, a corrupt attorney, and a haunted house. Reader's Guide included. Reprint. 20,000 first printing. **NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER** • “This heartwarming tale is full of lessons about taking risks in life and love.”—*Cosmopolitan* “Funny, visual, and moving . . . A vibrant, loving, wistful portrait of a lost time and place.”—*Richmond Times-Dispatch* It is 1950 in glittering, vibrant New York City, and Lucia Sartori is the beautiful twenty-five-year-old daughter of a prosperous Italian grocer in Greenwich Village. The postwar boom is rife with opportunities for talented girls with

ambition, and Lucia becomes an apprentice to an up-and-coming designer at chic B. Altman department store on Fifth Avenue. Engaged to her childhood sweetheart, the steadfast Dante DeMartino, Lucia is torn when she meets a handsome stranger who promises a life of uptown luxury that career girls like her only read about in the society pages. Forced to choose between duty to her family and her own dreams, Lucia finds herself in the midst of a sizzling scandal in which secrets are revealed, her beloved career is jeopardized, and the Sartoris' honor is tested. **NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER** • Read with Jenna Book Club Pick as Featured on Today • From the author of *Daisy Jones & The Six* and *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* . . . **ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR:** *The Washington Post*, *Time*, *Marie Claire*, *PopSugar*, *Parade*, *Teen Vogue*, *Self*, *She Reads* • “Irresistible . . . High drama at the beach, starring four sexy, surfing siblings and their deadbeat, famous-crooner dad.”—People Four famous siblings throw an epic party to celebrate the end of the summer. But over the course of twenty-four hours, the family drama that ensues will change their lives forever. *Malibu: August 1983*. It's the day of Nina Riva's annual end-of-summer party, and anticipation is at a fever pitch. Everyone wants to be around the famous Rivas: Nina, the talented surfer and supermodel; brothers Jay and Hud, one a championship surfer, the other a renowned photographer; and their adored baby sister, Kit. Together the siblings are a source of fascination in Malibu and the world over—especially as the offspring of the legendary singer Mick Riva. The only person not looking forward to the party of the year is Nina herself, who never wanted to be the center of attention, and who has also just been very publicly abandoned by her pro tennis player husband. Oh, and maybe Hud—because it is long past time for him to confess something to the brother from whom he's been inseparable since birth. Jay, on the other hand, is counting the minutes until nightfall, when the girl he can't stop thinking about promised she'll be there. And Kit has a couple secrets of her own—including a guest she invited without consulting anyone. By midnight the party will be completely out of control. By morning, the Riva mansion will have gone up in flames. But before that first spark in the early hours before dawn, the alcohol will flow, the music will play, and the loves and secrets that shaped this family's generations will all come rising to the surface. *Malibu Rising* is a story about one unforgettable night in the life of

a family: the night they each have to choose what they will keep from the people who made them . . . and what they will leave behind. At once darkly comedic and moving, this witty exploration of female friendship, envy, and misguided ambition by the author of the number-one bestseller *Drowning Ruth*, deliciously satirizes the desire to shine in the world. In *All is Vanity*, Margaret and Letty, best friends since childhood and now living on opposite coasts, reach their mid-thirties and begin to chafe at their sense that they are not where they ought to be in life. Margaret, driven and overconfident, decides the best way to rectify this is to quit her job and whip out a literary tour de force. Frustrated almost immediately and humiliated at every turn, Margaret turns to Letty for support. But as Letty, a stay-at-home mother of four, begins to feel pressured to make a good showing in the upper-middle-class Los Angeles society into which her husband's new job has thrust her, Margaret sees a plot unfolding that's better than anything she could make up. Desperate to finish her book and against her better nature, she pushes Letty to take greater and greater risks, and secretly steals her friend's stories as fast as she can live them. Hungry for the world's regard, Margaret rashly sacrifices one of the things most precious to her, until the novel's suspenseful conclusion shows her the terrible consequences of her betrayal. Widely celebrated for her debut novel, *Drowning Ruth*, Christina Schwarz once again proves herself to be a writer of remarkable depth and range. Like *Drowning Ruth*, *All is Vanity* probes into the mysteries of the human heart and uncovers the passions that drive ordinary people to break the rules in pursuit of their own desires. To read Gail Godwin is to touch the very core of human experience. With inimitable grace and aching emotional precision, Godwin probes our own complexities in characters whose lives oscillate between success and struggle, stoic resolve and quixotic temptation, bitter disappointment and small, sacred joys. Now with *Evensong*, she again translates our everyday existence into soul-touching truths as she brings to brilliantly realized life the people of a small Smoky Mountain town--and a woman whose world is indelibly altered by them. **NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER** • "If Michael Crichton had written a superhero novel, it would look a lot like *Upgrade*."—The New York Times Book Review "You don't so much sympathize with the main character as live inside his skin."—DIANA GABALDON, #1 New York Times bestselling author of the

Outlander series “Mysterious, fascinating, and deeply moving—exploring the very nature of what it means to be human.”—ALEX MICHAELIDES, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *The Silent Patient* and *The Maiden* The mind-blowing new thriller from the New York Times bestselling author of *Dark Matter* and *Recursion*—currently in development as a motion picture at Steven Spielberg's Amblin Partners “You are the next step in human evolution.” At first, Logan Ramsay isn’t sure if anything’s different. He just feels a little . . . sharper. Better able to concentrate. Better at multitasking. Reading a bit faster, memorizing better, needing less sleep. But before long, he can’t deny it: Something’s happening to his brain. To his body. He’s starting to see the world, and those around him—even those he loves most—in whole new ways. The truth is, Logan’s genome has been hacked. And there’s a reason he’s been targeted for this upgrade. A reason that goes back decades to the darkest part of his past, and a horrific family legacy. Worse still, what’s happening to him is just the first step in a much larger plan, one that will inflict the same changes on humanity at large—at a terrifying cost. Because of his new abilities, Logan’s the one person in the world capable of stopping what’s been set in motion. But to have a chance at winning this war, he’ll have to become something other than himself. Maybe even something other than human. And even as he’s fighting, he can’t help wondering: what if humanity’s only hope for a future really does lie in engineering our own evolution? Intimate in scale yet epic in scope, *Upgrade* is an intricately plotted, lightning-fast tale that charts one man’s thrilling transformation, even as it asks us to ponder the limits of our humanity—and our boundless potential. "A woman whose name shouldn't be Linda stands inside the locked front door of her apartment, listening. Footsteps: a neighbor, walking. Linda knows her neighbors only from names on lobby mailboxes and glances through the peephole, doesn't care to meet them, can't chance being known. She gives the footsteps enough time to reach the elevator. To press the button, to step in and begin their descent. Then she unlocks the door, exhales the breath she was hiding from the passerby, and steps out onto the hallway's checkered carpet"-- Fleeing persecution in 1960s America, a Black couple seeks asylum in Ghana, but fresh dangers and old secrets threaten their newfound freedom in this hypnotic debut novel. “I am truly blown away by this novel.”—Jacqueline Woodson, *New York Times*

bestselling author of *Red at the Bone* When the windshield of his Chevy Impala shatters in a dark diner parking lot in Alabama, Melvin moves without thinking. A split-second reaction marrows in his bones from the days of war, but this time it is the safety of his fiancé, Bernadette, at stake. Impulse keeps them alive, and yet they flee with blood on their hands. What is life like now that they are fugitives? Pack passports. Empty bank accounts. Set their old life on fire. The couple disguise themselves as a pastor and a reluctant pastor's wife who's hiding a secret from her fiancé. With a persistent FBI agent on their trail, they travel to Ghana to seek the help of Melvin's old college friend who happens to be the country's embattled president, Kwame Nkrumah. The couple's chance encounter with Ghana's most beloved highlife musician, Kwesi Kwayson, who's on his way to perform for the president, sparks a journey full of suspense, lust, magic, and danger as Nkrumah's regime crumbles around them. What was meant to be a fresh start quickly spirals into chaos, threatening both their relationship and their lives. Kwesi and Bernadette's undeniable attraction and otherworldly bond cascades during their three-day trek, and so does Melvin's intense jealousy. All three must confront one another and their secrets, setting off a series of cataclysmic events. Steeped in the history and mythology of postcolonial West Africa at the intersection of the civil rights movement in America, this gripping and ambitious debut merges political intrigue, magical encounters, and forbidden romance in an epic collision of morality and power. "A fine new novel... The great pleasure of reading Louis Begley [is] his exceptional literary intelligence." *The New York Times Book Review* "Begley again demonstrates that he can reveal the complexities of society and personality with a clear eye and graceful style... Morethan meets the requirements of graceful fiction." *Time* Proud, traditional, and impeccably organized, Albert Schmidt is a button-down lawyer of the old school. But now, after years of careful management, his life is slowly unraveling. His beloved wife has recently died. He stumbles--or is he being pushed?--into early retirement. And his daughter, his only child, is planning to marry a man Schmidt cannot approve of, for reasons he can scarcely admit, even to himself. As Schmidt gropes for resolutions, he finds unexpected hope in an intense passion that comes out of the blue. Set in the Hamptons and Manhattan, infused with black humor and startling eroticism, *About Schmidt* is both a

meditation on loneliness and on the power of romance to unlock the most impenetrable recesses of the heart. "Comical, tough, unsparing; it is as if Louis Auchincloss had exchanged the kid gloves for brass knuckles... Interesting and nervy." The Washington Post Book World "A powerful story of a man's fall from grace... The Remains of the Day come[s] to mind." Publishers Weekly (starred review) "Stunning." Los Angeles Times Book Review "[A] BRILLIANT, WITTY AND PROVOCATIVE NEW NOVEL." --San Francisco Chronicle As a young woman, the brilliant and eternally curious Magda Danvers took the academic world by storm. Then, to everyone's surprise, she married Francis Lake, a mild, midwestern seminarian, who has devoted his life to taking care of his charismatic wife. Now, Magda's grave illness puts their marriage to its ultimate test. Though facing her "Final Examination," Magda continues to arouse her visitors with compelling thoughts and questions. Into this provocative atmosphere comes Alice Henry, retreating from family tragedy and a crumbling marriage to novelist Hugo Henry. But is it the incandescence of Magda's ideas that draws Alice, or the secret of "the good marriage" that she is desperate to discover? For Alice, Hugo, Francis, and Magda will learn that the most ideal relationship--even a perfect marriage--doesn't come without a price.... "COMPELLING WRITING...REMARKABLY SKILLFUL...Gail Godwin shows herself to be at the height of her considerable power as a storyteller and a writer." --The Boston Globe "ONE OF HER FINEST BOOKS...It is not only a well-written story, but a mature and wise one, affirmative in its vision of love, unblinking in its portrayal of tragic loss." --Atlanta Journal & Constitution "FASCINATING...[A] BIG SUMPTUOUS BOOK...HER BEST NOVEL." --Entertainment Weekly "A BRILLIANTLY CRAFTED NOVEL, full of fun and mischief and resonating with wisdom and moral depth." --New Woman A Featured Selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club Longing tells the story of the greatest artistic couple in history, Robert Schumann and Clara Wieck. They met when she was eight years old and he was seventeen, drawn together first by music and then by their passion for each other. Drawing on their letters and remarkably frank journals, J. D. Landis writes of Clara and Robert's enforced separations, their marriage, their artistic triumphs and failures, and finally their shared devotion to, and love for, a young genius who both came between them

and brought them together for the last time. *Longing* was a New York Times Notable Book. It was also named by The Guardian (London) as the second finest novel about music (the first being Thomas Bernhard's *Loser*, a judgment with which Mr. Landis is delighted to concur). Living in disguise blocks from her home, Francesca Woodbridge, supposedly in Greece, spies on her husband, a lawyer recovering from a gunshot wound inflicted by an intruder; her teenage son; and her lover, a Russian gardener. Critics and readers alike hailed *Swimming*, Joanna Hershon's fiction debut. "Compelling," said the Washington Post, while *Vanity Fair* called *Swimming* a "page-turning premiere." Now Hershon brings us her anticipated second novel, in which she vividly explores the secrets of an American family. *The Outside of August* is a mesmerizing, beautifully written story that combs the emotional landscape of its characters with power and precision. For as long as Alice Green can remember, her elusive mother, Charlotte, has moved in and out of family life—disappearing relentlessly and often without explanation. Despite the exotic clutter of souvenirs that detail Charlotte's international travels, the Green's home becomes progressively hollow, as nothing but Charlotte can fill the empty spaces. With their mother's tenuous presence, and their tender but distant father working long hours, Alice and her brother, August, react in different ways. While seeking constant affection from other women, August relies on an unspoken bond with Charlotte that allows him a certain freedom. But Alice feels no such security and grows increasingly unmoored, always in search of ways to keep her mother at home. When, years later, her unfettered brother becomes strangely remote, Alice journeys to find him in an isolated beach town. It is there that a deeply buried secret will have to unravel in order for Alice to come to terms with her fractured family and her place within it—and learn to let go of a mother she perhaps never really knew. **BONUS:** This edition includes an excerpt from Joanna Hershon's *A Dual Inheritance*. Every family has a story. Every story, eventually, must be told. For most of their lives, Julian Perel and his sister, Paula, lived in a house cast in silence, witnesses to a father struggling with a devastating secret too painful to share. Though their father took his demons to the grave, his past refuses to rest. As adults, brother and sister struggle to find their voices. A scientist governed by numbers and logic, Julian now lives an ordered life of routine and seclusion.

My father gave up his language and his homeland. But he carried his sadness with him, under his skin. It was mine now. In contrast, Paula has entered the world as eagerly as Julian retracts from it. An aspiring opera singer, she is always moving, buoyant with sound. Singing was the only gift I could offer to my father. I filled the house with music. I tried to give him joy. . . . Yet both their lives begin to change on a Wednesday, miercoles, the day that sounds like miracles. Before embarking on a European opera tour, Paula asks her housekeeper, Sola, to stay at her place--and to look after Julian in the apartment above. Yet Sola, too, has a story. I want to clean myself like the window of a house, make myself clear for things to pass through. Flat and quiet. As Paula uncovers pieces of her father's early life in Budapest and the horrifying truth of his past, Julian bears witness to Sola's story--revelations that help all three learn how to both surrender and revere the shadows that have followed them for so long. *The Speed of Light* is a powerful debut about three unforgettable souls who overcome the tragedies of the past to reconnect with one another and the world around them. In an extraordinary accomplishment, Elizabeth Rosner has created a novel of love and redemption that proves the pain of the untold story is far greater than even the most difficult truth.

NATIONAL BESTSELLER • A poignant and tender story of love, loss, passion, and the fragile threads that bind families together from the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *The Nightingale* “A beautifully simple, deeply compassionate story.”—Diana Gabaldon
Annie Colwater's only child has just left home for school abroad. On that same day, her husband of twenty years confesses that he's in love with a younger woman. Alone in the house that is no longer a home, Annie comes to the painful realization that for years she has been slowly disappearing. Lonely and afraid, she retreats to Mystic, the small Washington town where she grew up, hoping that there she can reclaim the woman she once was—the woman she is now desperate to become again. In Mystic, she is reunited with her first love, Nick Delacroix, a recent widower unable to cope with his grieving, too-silent six-year-old daughter, Izzie. Together, the three of them begin to heal, and, at last, Annie learns that she can love without losing herself. But just when she has found a second chance at happiness, her life is turned upside down again, and Annie must make a choice no woman should have to make. . . . Praise for *On Mystic Lake* “Marvelous . . .

a touching love story . . . You know a book is a winner when you devour it in one evening and hope there's a sequel. . . . This page-turner has enough twists and turns to keep the reader up until the wee hours of the morning."—USA Today "Superb . . . I'll heartily recommend *On Mystic Lake* to any woman . . . who demands that a story leave her in a satisfied glow."—The Washington Post Book World "A luminescent story . . . Kristin Hannah touches the deepest, most tender corners of our hearts."—Tami Hoag "Excellent . . . *On Mystic Lake* is an emotional experience you won't soon forget."—Rocky Mountain News "Propels readers forward to the final chapter."—The Seattle Times

Thoughtful, provocative, poignant, unforgettable, *The Speed of Dark* is a gripping journey into the mind of an autistic person as he struggles with profound questions of humanity and matters of the heart. In the near future, disease will be a condition of the past. Most genetic defects will be removed at birth; the remaining during infancy. Lou Arrendale, a high-functioning autistic adult, is a member of the lost generation, born at the wrong time to reap the rewards of medical science. He lives a low-key, independent life. But then he is offered a chance to try a brand-new experimental "cure" for his condition. With this treatment Lou would think and act and be just like everyone else. But if he was suddenly free of autism, would he still be himself? Would he still love the same classical music—with its complications and resolutions? Would he still see the same colors and patterns in the world—shades and hues that others cannot see? Most important, would he still love Marjory, a woman who may never be able to reciprocate his feelings? Now Lou must decide if he should submit to a surgery that might completely change the way he views the world . . . and the very essence of who he is. Tenth anniversary edition • With a new Introduction by the author Praise for *The Speed of Dark* "Splendid and graceful . . . A lot of novels promise to change the way a reader sees the world; *The Speed of Dark* actually does."—The Washington Post Book World "[A] beautiful and moving story . . . [Elizabeth] Moon is the mother of an autistic teenager and her love is apparent in the story of Lou. He makes a deep and lasting impact on the reader while showing a different way of looking at the world."—The Denver Post "Every once in a while, you come across a book that is both an important literary achievement and a completely and utterly absorbing reading experience—a book with provocative ideas and an equally

compelling story. Such a book is *The Speed of Dark*.”—Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel “A remarkable journey [that] takes us into the mind of an autistic with a terrible choice: become normal or remain an alien on his own planet.”—Mary Doria Russell, author of *The Sparrow* “A powerful portrait . . . an engaging journey into the dark edges that define the self.”—The Seattle Times

NATIONAL BESTSELLER • A teenage girl living in 1960s China becomes Mao Zedong’s protégée and lover—and a heroine of the Cultural Revolution—in this “masterful new novel” (The Washington Post) “A new classic about China’s Cultural Revolution . . . Think *Succession*, but add death and mayhem to the palace intrigue. . . . Ambitious and impressive.”—San Francisco Chronicle **ONE OF THE MOST ANTICIPATED BOOKS OF 2022**—Vulture, Electric Lit, Ms. magazine, The Millions, Book Riot On the eve of China’s Cultural Revolution and her sixteenth birthday, Mei dreams of becoming a model revolutionary. When the Communist Party recruits girls for a mysterious duty in the capital, she seizes the opportunity to escape her impoverished village. It is only when Mei arrives at the Chairman’s opulent residence—a forbidden city unto itself—that she learns that the girls’ job is to dance with the Party elites. Ambitious and whip-smart, Mei beelines toward the Chairman. Mei gradually separates herself from the other recruits to become the Chairman’s confidante—and paramour. While he fends off political rivals, Mei faces down schemers from the dance troupe who will stop at nothing to take her place and the Chairman’s imperious wife, who has secret plans of her own. When the Chairman finally gives Mei a political mission, she seizes it with fervor, but the brutality of this latest stage of the revolution makes her begin to doubt all the certainties she has held so dear. *Forbidden City* is an epic yet intimate portrayal of one of the world’s most powerful and least understood leaders during this extraordinarily turbulent period in modern Chinese history. Mei’s harrowing journey toward truth and disillusionment raises questions about power, manipulation, and belief, as seen through the eyes of a passionate teenage girl. In 1954, in the cookhouse of a logging and sawmill settlement in northern New Hampshire, an anxious twelve-year-old boy mistakes the local constable’s girlfriend for a bear. Both the twelve-year-old and his father become fugitives, forced to run from Coos County—to Boston, to southern Vermont, to Toronto—pursued by the implacable

constable. Their lone protector is a fiercely libertarian logger, once a river driver, who befriends them. In a story spanning five decades, *Last Night in Twisted River* depicts the recent half-century in the United States as “a living replica of Coos County, where lethal hatreds were generally permitted to run their course.” What further distinguishes *Last Night in Twisted River* is the author’s unmistakable voice—the inimitable voice of an accomplished storyteller. **NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • “Alternatingly heart-pounding and heartbreaking. This collaboration between two best-selling authors seamlessly weaves together Olivia and Lily’s journeys, creating a provocative exploration of the strength that love and acceptance require.”—The Washington Post GOOD MORNING AMERICA BOOK CLUB PICK • PEOPLE’S BOOK OF THE WEEK ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR: PopSugar** Olivia McAfee knows what it feels like to start over. Her picture-perfect life—living in Boston, married to a brilliant cardiothoracic surgeon, raising their beautiful son, Asher—was upended when her husband revealed a darker side. She never imagined that she would end up back in her sleepy New Hampshire hometown, living in the house she grew up in and taking over her father’s beekeeping business. Lily Campanello is familiar with do-overs, too. When she and her mom relocate to Adams, New Hampshire, for her final year of high school, they both hope it will be a fresh start. And for just a short while, these new beginnings are exactly what Olivia and Lily need. Their paths cross when Asher falls for the new girl in school, and Lily can’t help but fall for him, too. With Ash, she feels happy for the first time. Yet at times, she wonders if she can trust him completely. . . . Then one day, Olivia receives a phone call: Lily is dead, and Asher is being questioned by the police. Olivia is adamant that her son is innocent. But she would be lying if she didn’t acknowledge the flashes of his father’s temper in Ash, and as the case against him unfolds, she realizes he’s hidden more than he’s shared with her. *Mad Honey* is a riveting novel of suspense, an unforgettable love story, and a moving and powerful exploration of the secrets we keep and the risks we take in order to become ourselves. A powerful guardian stands between the living and the dead in the fourth Book of the Order from Philippa Ballantine. The Order of the Deacons are protectors of the Empire, guardians against possession, sentinels enlisted to ward off the malevolent haunting of the

geists... Among the most powerful of the Order is Sorcha, now thrust into partnership with the novice Deacon, Merrick Chambers. They have been dispatched to the isolated village of Ulrich to aide the Priory with a surge of violent geist activity. With them is Raed Rossin, Pretender to the throne that Sorcha is sworn to protect, and bearer of a terrible curse. But what greets them in the strange settlement is something far more predatory and more horrifying than any mere haunting. And as she uncovers a tradition of twisted rituals passed down through the dark reaches of history, Sorcha will be forced to reconsider everything she thinks she knows. And if she makes it out of Ulrich alive, what in Hell is she returning to? Co-authors Pip Ballantine and Tee Morris ingeniously reimagine England's Edwardian Era in *Phoenix Rising*—a hilarious, rip-roaring steampunk fantasy romp that the voracious fans of New York Times bestseller Gail Carriger will eagerly devour with great relish. In this outrageous, non-stop adventure, Ballantine and Morris introduce us to Agents Books and Braun of the ultra-secret Ministry of Peculiar Occurrences—the most delightful duo of very British evil-bashers since The Avengers, Emma Peel and John Steed. With its malevolent secret societies, earth-shattering conspiracies, breathtaking derring-do, and absolutely wondrous weapons, *Phoenix Rising* out-Sherlocks Robert Downey, Jr.'s Sherlock Holmes. The Deacons of the Order are all that stand between the wicked spirits of the Otherside and the innocent citizens of the Empire. They are sworn to protect humanity, even when they cannot protect themselves... After the Razing of the Order, Sorcha Faris, one of the most powerful Deacons, is struggling to regain control of the runes she once wielded. The Deacons are needed more desperately than ever. The barrier between the world of the living and the world of the dead is weakening, and the Emperor has abandoned his throne, seeking to destroy those he feels have betrayed him. Though she is haunted by the terrible truth of her past, Sorcha must lead the charge against the gathering hordes of geists seeking to cross into the Empire. But to do so, she will need to manipulate powers beyond her understanding—powers that may prove to be her undoing... Eddie Plum, who insists he's been unjustifiably committed to a California psychiatric hospital, manages to finally escape after fourteen years of incarceration to start his life anew. On the run, he holes up in a sheltered barrio on a bluff above the Pacific

Ocean owned by his wealthy but unsympathetic father. Here he meets Sweets, the telepathic dog, laments the loss of Sofia, his madhouse lover, and plays the horses at the Del Mar Racetrack. Eventually he meets up with an old friend, Shelly Hubbard, a fellow horseplayer, record collector/dealer, and hardcore loner, who tells him about his brother, Donny, dead at the age of eighteen from a tragic dive off a thirty-foot La Jolla sea cliff known as the Clam. Eddie discovers a family secret and wants to help, but by then he's already embroiled in the psychotic incident with the Tijuana prostitutes, the madhouse lover, and the police, who are hot on his tail.

Mr. Toad's Wild Ride has nothing on **Whirlaway**, a hilarious novel of escaped mental patients, horseplayers, and record collectors. As he tries to make his life habitable again--after the devastating loss of his wife--retired lawyer Albert Schmidt finds the possibility of regeneration in a new love the old "Schmidtie" would never have dreamt of. Set in the Hamptons and Mahattan, and laced with black humor, **About Schmidt** casts a cold, pitiless eye on the eastern seaboard upper class, the last vestiges of once-ascendant WASPs, and the newcomers whose fortunes are rising. **BONUS:** This edition includes an excerpt from Louis Begley's **Memories of a Marriage**. Disgusting, abhorrent, and just plain terrible. But people love them. Tackling every taboo subject, this truly tasteless little book proves that there's nothing too sacred to be laughed at. After all, it was a #1 bestseller. **A New York Times Notable Book**

In the unrelenting cold and bitter winter of upstate New York, Jack and his wife, Fanny, are trying to cope with the desperate sorrow they feel over the death of their young daughter. The loss forms a chasm in their relationship as Jack, a sardonic Vietnam vet, looks for a way to heal them both. Then, in a nearby town, a fourteen-year-old girl disappears somewhere between her home and church. Though she is just one of the hundreds of children who vanish every year in America, Jack turns all his attention to this little girl. For finding what has become of this child could be Jack's salvation--if he can just get to her in time. . . . **NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER**

The Victorian language of flowers was used to convey romantic expressions: honeysuckle for devotion, asters for patience, and red roses for love. But for Victoria Jones, it's been more useful in communicating mistrust and solitude. After a childhood spent in the foster-care system, she is unable to get close to anybody, and her only connection to the world is through flowers

and their meanings. Now eighteen and emancipated from the system with nowhere to go, Victoria realizes she has a gift for helping others through the flowers she chooses for them. But an unexpected encounter with a mysterious stranger has her questioning what's been missing in her life. And when she's forced to confront a painful secret from her past, she must decide whether it's worth risking everything for a second chance at happiness. Look for special features inside. Join the Circle for author chats and more. Praise for *The Language of Flowers* "Instantly enchanting . . . [Diffenbaugh] is the best new writer of the year."—*Elle* "I would like to hand Vanessa Diffenbaugh a bouquet of bouvardia (enthusiasm), gladiolus (you pierce my heart) and lisianthus (appreciation). In this original and brilliant first novel, Diffenbaugh has united her fascination with the language of flowers—a long-forgotten and mysterious way of communication—with her firsthand knowledge of the travails of the foster-care system. . . . This novel is both enchanting and cruel, full of beauty and anger. Diffenbaugh is a talented writer and a mesmerizing storyteller. She includes a flower dictionary in case we want to use the language ourselves. And there is one more sprig I should add to her bouquet: a single pink carnation (I will never forget you)."—*Washington Post* "A fascinating debut . . . Diffenbaugh clearly knows both the human heart and her plants, and she keeps us rooting for the damaged Victoria."—*O Magazine* "Diffenbaugh effortlessly spins this enchanting tale, making even her prickly protagonist impossible not to love."—*Entertainment Weekly*

From the author of *While I Was Gone*, a stunning new novel that showcases Sue Miller's singular gift for exposing the nerves that lie hidden in marriages and families, and the hopes and regrets that lie buried in the hearts of women. *Maine, 1919*. Georgia Rice, who has cared for her father and two siblings since her mother's death, is diagnosed, at nineteen, with tuberculosis and sent away to a sanitarium. Freed from the burdens of caretaking, she discovers a nearly lost world of youth and possibility, and meets the doomed young man who will become her lover.

Vermont, the present. On the heels of a divorce, Catherine Hubbard, Georgia's granddaughter, takes up residence in Georgia's old house. Sorting through her own affairs, Cath stumbles upon the true story of Georgia's life and marriage, and of the misunderstanding upon which she built a lasting love. With the tales of these two women--one a country doctor's wife with a haunting past, the

other a twice-divorced San Francisco schoolteacher casting about at midlife for answers to her future--Miller offers us a novel of astonishing richness and emotional depth. Linked by bitter disappointments, compromise, and powerful grace, the lives of Georgia and Cath begin to seem remarkably similar, despite their distinctly different times: two young girls, generations apart, motherless at nearly the same age, thrust into early adulthood, struggling with confusing bonds of attachment and guilt; both of them in marriages that are not what they seem, forced to make choices that call into question the very nature of intimacy, faithfulness, betrayal, and love. Marvelously written, expertly told, *The World Below* captures the shadowy half-truths of the visible world, and the beauty and sorrow submerged beneath the surfaces of our lives--the lost world of the past, our lost hopes for the future. A tour de force from one of our most beloved storytellers. AN INSTANT NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER WINNER OF THE 2022 JOYCE CAROL OATES PRIZE FINALIST FOR THE 2021 NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FOR FICTION One of Barack Obama's Favorite Books of 2021 Named a Best Book of the Year by The New York Times, The Washington Post, TIME, NPR, The Financial Times, Good Housekeeping, Esquire, Vulture, Marie Claire, Vox, The Los Angeles Times, USA Today and more! "A relentless exhibition of Groff's freakish talent. In just over 250 pages, she gives us a character study to rival Hilary Mantel's *Thomas Cromwell* ." – USA Today "An electric reimagining . . . feminist, sensual . . . unforgettable." – O, The Oprah Magazine "Thrilling and heartbreaking." –Time Magazine "[A] page-by-page pleasure as we soar with her." –New York Times One of our best American writers, Lauren Groff returns with her exhilarating first new novel since the groundbreaking *Fates and Furies*. Cast out of the royal court by Eleanor of Aquitaine, deemed too coarse and rough-hewn for marriage or courtly life, seventeen-year-old Marie de France is sent to England to be the new prioress of an impoverished abbey, its nuns on the brink of starvation and beset by disease. At first taken aback by the severity of her new life, Marie finds focus and love in collective life with her singular and mercurial sisters. In this crucible, Marie steadily supplants her desire for family, for her homeland, for the passions of her youth with something new to her: devotion to her sisters, and a conviction in her own divine visions. Marie, born the last in a long line of

women warriors and crusaders, is determined to chart a bold new course for the women she now leads and protects. But in a world that is shifting and corroding in frightening ways, one that can never reconcile itself with her existence, will the sheer force of Marie's vision be bulwark enough? Equally alive to the sacred and the profane, Matrix gathers currents of violence, sensuality, and religious ecstasy in a mesmerizing portrait of consuming passion, aberrant faith, and a woman that history moves both through and around. Lauren Groff's new novel, her first since *Fates and Furies*, is a defiant and timely exploration of the raw power of female creativity in a corrupted world. A mindbending, relentlessly surprising thriller from the author of the bestselling *Wayward Pines* trilogy. "Are you happy with your life?" Those are the last words Jason Dessen hears before the masked abductor knocks him unconscious. Before he awakens to find himself strapped to a gurney, surrounded by strangers in hazmat suits. Before a man Jason's never met smiles down at him and says, "Welcome back, my friend." In this world he's woken up to, Jason's life is not the one he knows. His wife is not his wife. His son was never born. And Jason is not an ordinary college physics professor, but a celebrated genius who has achieved something remarkable. Something impossible. Is it this world or the other that's the dream? And even if the home he remembers is real, how can Jason possibly make it back to the family he loves? The answers lie in a journey more wondrous and horrifying than anything he could've imagined—one that will force him to confront the darkest parts of himself even as he battles a terrifying, seemingly unbeatable foe. *Dark Matter* is a brilliantly plotted tale that is at once sweeping and intimate, mind-bendingly strange and profoundly human—a relentlessly surprising science-fiction thriller about choices, paths not taken, and how far we'll go to claim the lives we dream of. The first human-alien contact. The last word in galactic warfare. The story you must read—before *Transformers* rockets to the big screen! A mammoth robotic being, clearly of alien origin, has been found beneath the Arctic ice. Its advanced engineering dwarfs known human technology, and unlocking its secrets will catapult American science eons into the future. In search of the mysterious artifact's origin, a covert government agency sends the manned craft *Ghost 1* on a perilous journey of discovery. When a mishap maroons *Ghost 1* in the far reaches of unknown space, the

ship's distress beacon reaches the very alien race Ghost 1's crew has been seeking: the Autobots. The gigantic mechanized beings are also on a quest: to find the Allspark, a device crucial to the salvation of their home world, Cybertron. But they're not alone. The Decepticons, the Autobots' brutal enemies, have their own sinister purposes in seeking the Allspark. As these adversaries are drawn together once more, the stage is set for a death-dealing new battle in which each is driven by a single-minded aim: total annihilation of the enemy. Join creators, writers, and comics legends as they discuss the impact of Marvel Studios' *Black Panther* in this gorgeously illustrated collection of essays *Marvel Studios' Black Panther* has become more than just a movie—it has shaped conversations about art, culture, science fiction, representation, justice, fashion, comics, creativity, and so much more. Celebrate the legacy of the film with this collection of all-new personal essays and reflections that shed light on its monumental impact, including firsthand stories from artists involved in the film, cultural analysis from journalists and academics, and thoughtful insights from writers and comics legends. Each contributor brings their unique expertise and experience to explore the film's genesis and significance from every angle. Complete with gorgeous original illustrations, *Dreams of Wakanda* brings together a wide array of diverse and multifaceted perspectives that exemplify the many ways the film has impacted cinema, culture, and society. In this collection:

- Costume designer Ruth E. Carter takes us through her Afrofuturistic designs.
- Writer Tre Johnson discusses the metaphoric qualities of vibranium.
- Author Yona Harvey reflects on how the film has resonated with audiences across the African diaspora.
- Journalist Hannah Giorgis uncovers how the soundtrack fits into sonic portraits of Blackness.

The contributors: Marlene Allen Ahmed • Aaron C. Allen • Maurice Broaddus • Ruth E. Carter • Hannah Giorgis • Yona Harvey • Tre Johnson • Arvell Jones • Frederick Joseph • Suyi Davies Okungbowa • Dwayne Wong Omowale • Gil Robertson IV • Foreword by Nic Stone • Art by Mateus Manhanini

To celebrate the launch of this book and *Black Panther*'s global impact, Disney and Penguin Random House are donating books to First Book and Books for Africa respectively. Disney is donating books valued at approximately \$1,000,000 to support First Book, a leading nonprofit that serves children in underserved communities and addresses the needs of the

whole child by supporting their education, basic needs, and wellness—all of which are essential to educational equity. Penguin Random House (PRH) is donating PRH titles valued at approximately \$100,000 to Books For Africa. Books For Africa was founded upon a singular mission: to end the book famine in Africa. BFA collects, sorts, and ships books, computers, tablets, and library enhancement materials to every country in Africa. The author recounts his six-year investigation of a local college professor's death while providing an examination of his small, isolated town, his rocky marriage to a Mexican woman, and his ostensibly autistic son.

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