

The Leavers Winner Of The PEN Bellweather Prize For Fiction

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Good Kings Bad Kings Susan Nussbaum 2013-11-12 This PEN/Bellwether Prize – winning novel set in a state-run facility for disabled teenagers is “saucy, brutally funny, gritty, profane, poignant and real” (The Kansas City Star). Playwright and activist Susan Nussbaum’s powerful debut novel invites us into the lives of a group of typical teenagers—alienated, funny, yearning for autonomy—except that they live in an institution for juveniles with disabilities. This unfamiliar, isolated landscape is much the same as the world outside: friendships are forged, trust is built, love affairs are kindled, and rules are broken. But those who call it home have little or no control over their fate. Good Kings Bad Kings challenges our definitions of what it means to be disabled in a story told with remarkable authenticity and in voices that resound with humor and spirit. “This is fiction at its best . . . Simply and breathtakingly honest . . . A stunning accomplishment.” —Barbara Kingsolver “Nussbaum’s dramatist skills translate powerfully into fiction as she gives voices to an infatuating cast of characters . . . This is unquestionably an authentic, galvanizing, and righteous novel.” —Booklist (starred review)

Lucky Boy Shanathi Sekaran 2017-01-10 A gripping tale of adventure and searing reality, Lucky Boy gives voice to two mothers bound together by their love for one lucky boy. “Sekaran has written a page-turner that’s touching and all too real.”—People “A fiercely compassionate story about the bonds and the bounds of motherhood and, ultimately, of love.”—Cristina Henríquez, author of The Book of Unknown Americans Eighteen years old and fizzing with optimism, Solimar Castro-Valdez embarks on a perilous journey across the Mexican border. Weeks later, she arrives in Berkeley, California, dazed by first love found then lost, and pregnant. This was not the plan. Undocumented and unmoored, Soli discovers that her son, Ignacio, can become her touchstone, and motherhood her identity in a world where she’s otherwise invisible. Kavya Reddy has created a beautiful life in Berkeley, but then she can’t get pregnant and that beautiful life seems suddenly empty. When Soli is placed in immigrant detention and Ignacio comes under Kavya’s care, Kavya finally gets to be the singing, story-telling kind of mother she dreamed of being. But she builds her love on a fault line, her heart wrapped around someone else’s child. “Nacho” to Soli, and “Iggy” to Kavya, the boy is steeped in love, but his destiny and that of his two mothers teeters between two worlds as Soli fights to get back to him. Lucky Boy is a moving and revelatory ode to the ever-changing borders of love.

Little Gods Meng Jin 2020-01-14 LONGLISTED FOR THE PEN/OPEN BOOK AWARD “Compellingly complex...Expands the future of the immigrant novel even as it holds us in uneasy thrall to the past.” —Gish Jen, New York Times Book Review Combining the emotional resonance of Home Fire with the ambition and innovation of Asymmetry, a lyrical and thought-provoking debut novel that explores the

complex web of grief, memory, time, physics, history, and selfhood in the immigrant experience, and the complicated bond between daughters and mothers. On the night of June Fourth, a woman gives birth in a Beijing hospital alone. Thus begins the unraveling of Su Lan, a brilliant physicist who until this moment has successfully erased her past, fighting what she calls the mind's arrow of time. When Su Lan dies unexpectedly seventeen years later, it is her daughter Liya who inherits the silences and contradictions of her life. Liya, who grew up in America, takes her mother's ashes to China—to her, an unknown country. In a territory inhabited by the ghosts of the living and the dead, Liya's memories are joined by those of two others: Zhu Wen, the woman last to know Su Lan before she left China, and Yongzong, the father Liya has never known. In this way a portrait of Su Lan emerges: an ambitious scientist, an ambivalent mother, and a woman whose relationship to her own past shapes and ultimately unmakes Liya's own sense of displacement. A story of migrations literal and emotional, spanning time, space and class, *Little Gods* is a sharp yet expansive exploration of the aftermath of unfulfilled dreams, an immigrant story in negative that grapples with our tenuous connections to memory, history, and self.

The Leavers (National Book Award Finalist) Lisa Ko 2018-04-24 FINALIST FOR THE 2017 NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FOR FICTION Named a Best Book of 2017 by NPR, Entertainment Weekly, the Los Angeles Times, BuzzFeed, Bustle, and Electric Literature "There was a time I would have called Lisa Ko's novel beautifully written, ambitious, and moving, and all of that is true, but it's more than that now: if you want to understand a forgotten and essential part of the world we live in, *The Leavers* is required reading." —Ann Patchett, author of *Commonwealth* Lisa Ko's powerful debut, *The Leavers*, is the winner of the 2016 PEN/Bellwether Prize for Fiction, awarded by Barbara Kingsolver for a novel that addresses issues of social justice. One morning, Deming Guo's mother, Polly, an undocumented Chinese immigrant, goes to her job at a nail salon—and never comes home. No one can find any trace of her. With his mother gone, eleven-year-old Deming is left mystified and bereft. Eventually adopted by a pair of well-meaning white professors, Deming is moved from the Bronx to a small town upstate and renamed Daniel Wilkinson. But far from all he's ever known, Daniel struggles to reconcile his adoptive parents' desire that he assimilate with his memories of his mother and the community he left behind. Told from the perspective of both Daniel—as he grows into a directionless young man—and Polly, Ko's novel gives us one of fiction's most singular mothers. Loving and selfish, determined and frightened, Polly is forced to make one heartwrenching choice after another. Set in New York and China, *The Leavers* is a vivid examination of borders and belonging. It's a moving story of how a boy comes into his own when everything he loves is taken away, and how a mother learns to live with the mistakes of the past.

Refuge: A Novel Dina Nayeri 2017-07-11 "Rich and colorful... [*Refuge*] has the kind of immediacy commonly associated with memoir, which lends it heft, intimacy, atmosphere." —New York Times The moving lifetime relationship between a father and a daughter, seen through the prism of global immigration and the contemporary refugee experience. An Iranian girl escapes to America as a child, but her father stays behind. Over twenty years, as she transforms from confused immigrant to overachieving Westerner to sophisticated European transplant, daughter and father know each other only from their visits: four crucial visits over two decades, each in a different international city. The longer they are apart, the more their lives diverge, but also the more each comes to need the other's wisdom and, ultimately, rescue. Meanwhile, refugees of all nationalities are flowing into Europe under troubling conditions. Wanting to help, but also looking for a lost sense of home, our grown-up transplant finds herself quickly entranced by a world that is at once everything she has missed and nothing that she has ever known. Will her immersion in the lives of these new refugees allow her the grace to save her father? *Refuge* charts the deeply moving lifetime relationship between a father and a daughter, seen through the prism of global immigration. Beautifully written, full of insight, charm, and humor, the novel subtly exposes the parts of ourselves that get left behind in the wake of diaspora and ultimately asks: Must home always be a physical place, or can we find it in another person?

The Small Backs of Children Lidia Yuknavitch 2020-01-02 In a war-torn village in Eastern Europe, an

American photographer captures a heart-stopping image: a young girl fleeing a fiery explosion that has engulfed her home and family. It becomes an icon for millions, winning acclaim and prizes - and a subject of obsession for one writer, the photographer's best friend, who has suffered a tragedy of her own. With the flash of a camera, one girl's life is shattered and another's is altered forever.

The Fact of a Body Alex Marzano-Lesnevich 2017-05-18 'Part memoir, part true crime, wholly brilliant.'
– Paula Hawkins, author of *The Girl on the Train*. When law student Alexandria Marzano-Lesnevich is asked to work on a death-row hearing for convicted murderer and child molester Ricky Langley, she finds herself thrust into the tangled story of his childhood. As she digs deeper and deeper into the case she realizes that, despite their vastly different circumstances, something in his story is unsettlingly, uncannily familiar. *The Fact of a Body* is both an enthralling memoir and a groundbreaking, heart-stopping investigation into how the law is personal, composed of individual stories, and proof that arriving at the truth is more complicated, and powerful, than we could ever imagine.

In Search of Nella Larsen George Hutchinson 2009-06-30 Born to a Danish seamstress and a black West Indian cook, Nella Larsen lived her life in the shadows of America's racial divide. Her writings about that life, briefly celebrated in her time, were lost to later generations--only to be rediscovered and hailed by many. In his search for Nella Larsen, George Hutchinson exposes the truths and half-truths surrounding her, as well as the complex reality they mask and mirror. His book is a cultural biography of the color line as it was lived by one person who truly embodied all of its ambiguities and complexities.

Tell Me Everything You Don't Remember Christine Hyung-Oak Lee 2017-02-14 A memoir of reinvention after a stroke at age thirty-three. Christine Hyung-Oak Lee woke up with a headache on the morning of December 31, 2006. By that afternoon, she saw the world—quite literally—upside down. By New Year's Day, she was unable to form a coherent sentence. And after hours in the ER, days in the hospital, and multiple questions and tests, her doctors informed her that she had had a stroke. For months afterward, Lee outsourced her memories to a journal, taking diligent notes to compensate for the thoughts she could no longer hold on to. It is from these notes that she has constructed this frank and compelling memoir. In a precise and captivating narrative, Lee navigates fearlessly between chronologies, weaving her childhood humiliations and joys together with the story of the early days of her marriage; and then later, in painstaking, painful, and unflinching detail, the account of her stroke and every upset—temporary or permanent—that it caused. Lee illuminates the connection between memory and identity in an honest, meditative, and truly funny manner, utterly devoid of self-pity. And as she recovers, she begins to realize that this unexpected and devastating event has provided a catalyst for coming to terms with her true self—and, in a way, has allowed her to become the person she's always wanted to be.

Sundays in August Patrick Modiano 2017-08-29 From beloved storyteller and Nobel Prize winner Patrick Modiano, a masterful and gripping crime novel set in picturesque Nice on the French Riviera. Stolen jewels, black markets, hired guns, crossed lovers, unregistered addresses, people gone missing, shadowy figures disappearing in crowds, newspaper stories uncomfortably close and getting closer . . . this ominous novel is Patrick Modiano's most noirish work to date. Set in Nice—a departure from the author's more familiar Paris—this novel evokes the bright sun and dark shadow of the Riviera. Modiano's trademark ability to create a haunting atmosphere is here on full display: readers descend precipitously into a world of mystery, uneasiness, inevitability. A young couple in hiding keeps close watch over a notorious diamond necklace known as the Southern Cross. Its provenance is murky, its whereabouts known only to our hero and heroine, who find themselves trapped by its potential value—and its ultimate cost. Deftly Modiano reaches further and further into the past, revealing the secret histories of the two even as the pressurized present threatens to overwhelm them.

The Book of Dead Birds Gayle Brandeis 2009-10-13 Ava Sing Lo has been accidentally killing her mother's birds since she was a little girl. Now in her twenties, Ava leaves her native San Diego for the Salton Sea, where she volunteers to help environmental activists save thousands of birds poisoned by agricultural runoff. Helen, her mother, has been haunted by her past for decades. As a young girl in Korea, Helen was drawn into prostitution on a segregated American army base. Several brutal years

passed before a young white American soldier married her and brought her to California. When she gave birth to a black baby, her new husband quickly abandoned her, and she was left to fend for herself and her daughter in a foreign country. With great beauty and lyricism, *The Book of Dead Birds* captures a young woman's struggle to come to terms with her mother's terrible past while she searches for her own place in the world.

[Correcting the Landscape](#) Marjorie Kowalski Cole 2009-11-10 The editor of a small weekly newspaper in Fairbanks, Alaska, Gus Traynor is an independent spirit whose idealism has survived numerous tests. When big business interests threaten the breathtaking wilderness he cherishes, he joins forces with his best friend—an often self-serving developer—to take on the forces of progress. Soon, in his determination to preserve the dignity and heritage of his community, Gus is learning more than he has ever imagined about the region's colorful mix of opportunists, dreamers, and artists. But his mission is complicated by the discovery of a young woman's body floating in the river . . . and by the blossoming of an unexpected love.

[The Vigilante](#) John Steinbeck 2018-02 The papers all said he was a fiend. I read all the papers. That's what they all said.' One of America's greatest writers explores mob violence, voyeurism and betrayal in these unforgettable tales of Californian life.

[Hashim & Family](#) Shahnaz Ahsan 2020-04-02 An Observer Best Book of 2020 'A story of quiet striving and determination, of love and friendship' Guardian It is New Year's Eve, 1960. Hashim has left behind his homeland and his bride, Munira, to seek his fortune in England. His cousin and only friend, Rofikul, introduces Hashim to life in Manchester - including Rofikul's girlfriend, Helen. When Munira arrives, the group must learn what it is to be a family. Over the next twenty years, they make their way in the new country - putting down roots and building a home. But when war breaks out in East Pakistan, the struggle for liberation and the emergence of Bangladesh raises questions about identity, belonging and loyalty. *Hashim & Family* is a story of family ties, of migration and of a connection to home, and is the debut of an extraordinary new talent.

[The Twelve-Mile Straight](#) Eleanor Henderson 2017-09-12 From New York Times bestselling author Eleanor Henderson, an audacious American epic set in rural Georgia during the years of the Depression and Prohibition. Cotton County, Georgia, 1930: in a house full of secrets, two babies—one light-skinned, the other dark—are born to Elma Jesup, a white sharecropper's daughter. Accused of her rape, field hand Genus Jackson is lynched and dragged behind a truck down the Twelve-Mile Straight, the road to the nearby town. In the aftermath, the farm's inhabitants are forced to contend with their complicity in a series of events that left a man dead and a family irrevocably fractured. Despite the prying eyes and curious whispers of the townspeople, Elma begins to raise her babies as best as she can, under the roof of her mercurial father, Juke, and with the help of Nan, the young black housekeeper who is as close to Elma as a sister. But soon it becomes clear that the ties that bind all of them together are more intricate than any could have ever imagined. As startling revelations mount, a web of lies begins to collapse around the family, destabilizing their precarious world and forcing all to reckon with the painful truth. Acclaimed author Eleanor Henderson has returned with a novel that combines the intimacy of a family drama with the staggering presence of a great Southern saga. Tackling themes of racialized violence, social division, and financial crisis, *The Twelve-Mile Straight* is a startlingly timely, emotionally resonant, and magnificent tour de force.

[Summary of the Leavers by Lisa Ko: Conversation Starters](#) Bookhabits 2018-04-24 *The Leavers* by Lisa Ko: Conversation Starters Eleven-year-old Deming and his mother Polly are reunited after Deming arrives from China where Polly sent him when he was a baby to be cared for by his grandfather. Polly promises Deming they won't be separated again, but one morning, Polly leaves for the nail salon where she works and never comes home. Ten years pass and Deming is now named Daniel Wilkinson. Feeling the pain of abandonment all those years, Daniel decides to pursue links that will lead him to solve the mystery of his disappearing birth mother. Will Polly and Daniel reunite? Lisa Ko's debut novel, *The Leavers*, winner of the 2016 PEN/Bellwether Prize for Fiction, tells the harrowing story of immigrant mother and son who had to be separated in order to pursue the American Dream. A Brief

Look Inside: EVERY GOOD BOOK CONTAINS A WORLD FAR DEEPER than the surface of its pages. The characters and their world come alive, and the characters and its world still live on. Conversation Starters is peppered with questions designed to bring us beneath the surface of the page and invite us into the world that lives on. These questions can be used to... Create Hours of Conversation: - Promote an atmosphere of discussion for groups - Foster a deeper understanding of the book - Assist in the study of the book, either individually or corporately - Explore unseen realms of the book as never seen before Disclaimer: This book you are about to enjoy is an independent resource meant to supplement the original book. If you have not yet read the original book, we encourage you to before purchasing this unofficial Conversation Starters.

Everybody's Fool Richard Russo 2017-01-05 Richard Russo's new novel takes place in the decaying American town of North Bath over the course of a very busy weekend, ten years after the events of Nobody's Fool. Donald 'Sully' Sullivan is trying to ignore his cardiologist's estimate that he has only a year or two left. Ruth, his long-time lover, is increasingly distracted by her former son-in-law, fresh out of prison and intent on making trouble. Police chief Doug Raymer is tormented by the improbable death of his wife, while local wiseguy Carl Roebuck might finally be running out of luck. Filled with humour, heart and hard-luck characters you can't help but love, Everybody's Fool is a crowning achievement from one of the great storytellers of our time.

The Girl Who Fell from the Sky Heidi W. Durrow 2011-01-11 "The Girl Who Fell from the Sky can actually fly." —The New York Times Book Review Rachel, the daughter of a Danish mother and a black G.I., becomes the sole survivor of a family tragedy after a fateful morning on their Chicago rooftop. Forced to move to a new city, with her strict African American grandmother as her guardian, Rachel is thrust for the first time into a mostly black community, where her light brown skin, blue eyes, and beauty bring a constant stream of attention her way. It's there, as she grows up and tries to swallow her grief, that she comes to understand how the mystery and tragedy of her mother might be connected to her own uncertain identity. This searing and heart-wrenching portrait of a young biracial girl dealing with society's ideas of race and class is the winner of the Bellwether Prize for best fiction manuscript addressing issues of social justice.

Cape May Chip Cheek 2019-04-30 "Inside this mesmerizing tale of sexual desire and discovery, naive newlyweds Henry and Effie are honeymooning in Cape May, N.J., in 1957, tentatively navigating intimacy. Then they meet Clara and Max, hard-partying lovers who dazzle the innocent pair until they've lost more than their virginity. Cheek's sensual first novel leaves you wanting more." — PEOPLE "Henry and Effie's honeymoon is meant to be their introduction to the pleasures of the body, but in the company of Clara and her promiscuous cohort they lose all track of boundaries. A dozy, luxurious sense of enchantment comes over the story, until the rude awakening at its finale.... Cape May does something better than critique or satirize: It seduces." — The Wall Street Journal Cape May is a raw, provocative portrayal of a young 1950s couple on the cusp of a sexual awakening, and the temptations that upturn their honeymoon and reshape their marriage. In this erotic and intimate debut novel, a naïve southern couple is exposed to a group of raucous, debauched urbanites. Arriving for their honeymoon in Cape May, New Jersey, during the off season, Henry and Effie are startled to find the beach town deserted. The abandoned homes and desolate beaches make them shy of each other, and, isolated in their new marriage, they decide to cut their trip short. But before they leave, they encounter their glamorous, sensual neighbors and become swept up by their drama. Clara, a beautiful socialite who feels her youth slipping away; Max, a wealthy playboy and Clara's lover; and Alma, Max's aloof, mysterious, and evocative half-sister, to whom Henry is irresistibly drawn. Slowly, agonizingly, these deeply-flawed, profoundly human characters pull Henry and Effie out of themselves and expose them to a side of desire they never expected. While they discover new truths in each other and in their marriage, the empty beach town becomes their playground. And as they sneak into the vacant summer homes, go sailing, walk naked under the stars, make love, and drink an enormous amount of gin, Henry and Effie slip from innocence into betrayal, with irrevocable consequences. Seductive and moving, this is a novel about marriage, love, raw sexuality, and the ways in which desire and betrayal can

reverberate endlessly throughout our lives.

Little Broken Things Nicole Baart 2020-08-25 "If you liked Big Little Lies, you'll want to crack open [Little Broken Things]." —Southern Living An unforgettable and moving novel about an affluent suburban family whose carefully constructed façade crumbles with the unexpected arrival of an endangered young girl. I have something for you. When Quinn Cruz receives that cryptic text message from her older sister Nora, she doesn't think much of it. They haven't seen each other in nearly a year and their relationship consists mostly of infrequent phone calls and the occasional email. But when a haunted-looking Nora shows up just hours later, a chain reaction is set into motion that will change both of their lives forever. Nora's "something" is more shocking than Quinn could have ever imagined: a little girl, cowering and wide-eyed. Nora hands her over to Quinn with instructions to keep her safe and disappears, leaving Quinn as the unlikely caretaker of a girl introduced simply as Lucy. "Steeped in menace...a race-to-the-finish family drama" (People), Little Broken Things explores life and death, family and freedom, and the lengths one woman will go to protect the ones she loves.

The Moor's Account Laila Lalami 2015-09-22 An "exquisite piece of historical fiction" (Winnipeg Free Press), The Moor's Account is "brilliantly imagined fiction...rewritten to give us something that feels very like the truth" (Salman Rushdie). In 1527, the conquistador Pánfilo de Narváez left the port of San Lucar de Barrameda in Spain with a crew of more than five hundred men. His goal was to claim what is now the Gulf Coast of the United States for the Spanish crown and, in the process, become as wealthy and as famous as Hernán Cortés. But from the moment the Narváez expedition reached Florida it met with incredibly bad luck—storms, disease, starvation, hostile Indians. Within a year, there were only four survivors: the expedition's treasurer, Cabeza de Vaca; a Spanish nobleman named Alonso del Castillo Maldonado; a young explorer by the name of Andrés Dorantes; and his Moroccan slave, Mustafa al-Zamori. The four survivors were forced to live as slaves to the Indians for six years, before fleeing and establishing themselves as faith healers. Together, they traveled on foot through present-day Florida, Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona, gathering thousands of disciples and followers along the way. In 1536, they crossed the Rio Grande into Mexican territory, where they stumbled on a group of Spanish slavers, who escorted them to the capital of the Spanish empire, México-Tenochtitlán. Three of the survivors were asked to provide testimony of their journey—Castillo, Dorantes, and Cabeza de Vaca, who later wrote a book about this adventure, called La Relación, or The Account. But because he was a slave, Estebanico was not asked to testify. His experience was considered irrelevant, or superfluous, or unreliable, or unworthy, despite the fact that he had acted as a scout, an interpreter, and a translator. This novel is his story.

Felt in the Jaw Kristen N. Arnett 2017-08-20 In her debut story collection, Kristen Arnett, with dark humor, explores the lives of queer women and their families in the light of the bleak Florida sun. A young dancer suddenly loses language while her family struggles to understand their new roles. A mother endures a horrifying spider bite while camping with her daughters in the backyard. A family reunion goes sour when a group of cousins are left to their own devices. In these ten stories, outward strength is always betrayed by deep vulnerability: these are characters so desperate for family and connection that they often isolate themselves--and sometimes, it's the world isolating them.

You Should Have Left Daniel Kehlmann 2017-06-13 Now a Major Motion Picture From the internationally bestselling author of Measuring the World and F, an eerie and supernatural tale of a writer's emotional collapse A screenwriter, his wife, and their four-year old daughter rent a house in the mountains of Germany, but something isn't right. As he toils on a sequel to his most successful movie, the screenwriter notices that rooms aren't where he remembers them—and finds in his notebook words that are not his own.

The Son of Good Fortune Lysley Tenorio 2020-07-07 A Recommended Book From: USA Today * The Chicago Tribune * Book Riot * Refinery 29 * InStyle * The Minneapolis Star-Tribune * Publishers Weekly * Baltimore Outloud * Omnivoracious * Lambda Literary * Goodreads * Lit Hub * The Millions FINALIST FOR THE JOYCE CAROL OATES PRIZE WINNER OF THE NEW AMERICAN VOICES AWARD From award-winning author Lysley Tenorio, comes a big hearted debut novel following an

undocumented Filipino son as he navigates his relationship with his mother, an uncertain future, and the place he calls home Excel spends his days trying to seem like an unremarkable American teenager. When he's not working at The Pie Who Loved Me (a spy-themed pizza shop) or passing the time with his girlfriend Sab (occasionally in one of their town's seventeen cemeteries), he carefully avoids the spotlight. But Excel knows that his family is far from normal. His mother, Maxima, was once a Filipina B-movie action star who now makes her living scamming men online. The old man they live with is not his grandfather, but Maxima's lifelong martial arts trainer. And years ago, on Excel's tenth birthday, Maxima revealed a secret that he must keep forever. "We are 'TNT'—tago ng tago," she told him, "hiding and hiding." Excel is undocumented—and one accidental slip could uproot his entire life. Casting aside the paranoia and secrecy of his childhood, Excel takes a leap, joining Sab on a journey south to a ramshackle desert town called Hello City. Populated by drifters, old hippies, and washed-up techies—and existing outside the normal constructs of American society—Hello City offers Excel a chance to forge his own path for the first time. But after so many years of trying to be invisible, who does he want to become? And is it possible to put down roots in a country that has always considered you an outsider? Thrumming with energy and at once critical and hopeful, *The Son of Good Fortune* is a luminous story of a mother and son testing the strength of their bond to their country—and to each other.

Dominicana Angie Cruz 2019-09-03 A GOOD MORNING AMERICA BOOK CLUB PICK Shortlisted for the 2020 Women's Prize for Fiction "Through a novel with so much depth, beauty, and grace, we, like Ana, are forever changed." —Jacqueline Woodson, *Vanity Fair* "Gorgeous writing, gorgeous story." —Sandra Cisneros Fifteen-year-old Ana Cancion never dreamed of moving to America, the way the girls she grew up with in the Dominican countryside did. But when Juan Ruiz proposes and promises to take her to New York City, she has to say yes. It doesn't matter that he is twice her age, that there is no love between them. Their marriage is an opportunity for her entire close-knit family to eventually immigrate. So on New Year's Day, 1965, Ana leaves behind everything she knows and becomes Ana Ruiz, a wife confined to a cold six-floor walk-up in Washington Heights. Lonely and miserable, Ana hatches a reckless plan to escape. But at the bus terminal, she is stopped by Cesar, Juan's free-spirited younger brother, who convinces her to stay. As the Dominican Republic slides into political turmoil, Juan returns to protect his family's assets, leaving Cesar to take care of Ana. Suddenly, Ana is free to take English lessons at a local church, lie on the beach at Coney Island, see a movie at Radio City Music Hall, go dancing with Cesar, and imagine the possibility of a different kind of life in America. When Juan returns, Ana must decide once again between her heart and her duty to her family. In bright, musical prose that reflects the energy of New York City, Angie Cruz's *Dominicana* is a vital portrait of the immigrant experience and the timeless coming-of-age story of a young woman finding her voice in the world.

We Love You, Charlie Freeman Kaitlyn Greenidge 2017-01-31 A FINALIST FOR THE 2016 CENTER FOR FICTION FIRST NOVEL PRIZE AND THE 2017 YOUNG LIONS AWARD "A terrifically auspicious debut." —Janet Maslin, *The New York Times* "Smart, timely and powerful . . . A rich examination of America's treatment of race, and the ways we attempt to discuss and confront it today." —The Huffington Post The Freeman family--Charles, Laurel, and their daughters, teenage Charlotte and nine-year-old Callie--have been invited to the Toneybee Institute to participate in a research experiment. They will live in an apartment on campus with Charlie, a young chimp abandoned by his mother. The Freemans were selected because they know sign language; they are supposed to teach it to Charlie and welcome him as a member of their family. But when Charlotte discovers the truth about the institute's history of questionable studies, the secrets of the past invade the present in devious ways. The power of this shattering novel resides in Greenidge's undeniable storytelling talents. What appears to be a story of mothers and daughters, of sisterhood put to the test, of adolescent love and grown-up misconduct, and of history's long reach, becomes a provocative and compelling exploration of America's failure to find a language to talk about race. "A magnificently textured, vital, visceral feat of storytelling . . . [by] a sharp, poignant, extraordinary new voice of American literature." —T é a Obrecht,

author of *The Tiger's Wife*

And West Is West Ron Childress 2015-10-13 Winner of the prestigious PEN/Bellwether Prize for Socially Engaged Fiction, *And West Is West* is an inspired novel about two young people who learn, the hard way, about the devastating power of new technology to isolate us from the consequences of our actions. When Jessica, a young Air Force drone pilot in Nevada, is tasked with launching a missile against a suspected terrorist halfway across the world, she realizes that though women and children are in the crosshairs of her screen, she has no choice but to follow orders. Ethan, a young Wall Street quant, is involved in a more bloodless connection to war when he develops an algorithm that enables his company's clients to profit by exploiting the international financial instability caused by exactly this kind of antiterrorist strike. These two are only minor players, but their actions have global implications that tear lives apart—including their own. When Jessica finds herself discharged from the service and Ethan makes an error that costs him his job, both find themselves adrift, cast out by a corrupt system and forced to take the blame for decisions they did not make. In *And West Is West*, Ron Childress has crafted a powerful, politically charged, and terrifyingly real scenario that takes readers into the lives of characters living in different worlds yet bound together by forces beyond their control.

The Leavers a Novel 2017 Named one of the most anticipated books of 2017 by Entertainment Weekly, Time.com, Bustle, BuzzFeed, The Millions, and Nylon.com. "The Leavers is courageous, sensitive, and perfectly of this moment."-Barbara Kingsolver An emotionally harrowing debut novel that explores assimilation and loss, immigration and homeland, independence and connection. One morning, Deming Guo's mother, an undocumented Chinese immigrant named Polly, goes to her job at the nail salon and never comes home. No one can find any trace of her. With his mother gone, eleven-year-old Deming is left with no one to care for him. He is eventually adopted by two white college professors who move him from the Bronx to a small town upstate. They rename him Daniel Wilkinson in their efforts to make him over into their version of an "all-American boy." But far away from all he's ever known, Daniel struggles to reconcile his new life with his mother's disappearance and the memories of the family and community he left behind. Set in New York and China, *The Leavers* is a vivid and moving examination of borders and belonging. It's the story of how one boy comes into his own when everything he's loved has been taken away—and how a mother learns to live with the mistakes of her past. This powerful debut is the winner of the 2016 PEN/Bellwether Prize for fiction, awarded by Barbara Kingsolver for a novel that addresses issues of social justice.

At the Edge of the Haight Katherine Seligman 2021-01-19 The 10th Winner of the 2019 PEN/Bellwether Prize for Socially Engaged Fiction, Awarded by Barbara Kingsolver "What a read this is, right from its startling opening scene. But even more than plot, it's the richly layered details that drive home a lightning bolt of empathy. To read *At the Edge of the Haight* is to live inside the everyday terror and longings of a world that most of us manage not to see, even if we walk past it on sidewalks every day. At a time when more Americans than ever find themselves at the edge of homelessness, this book couldn't be more timely." —Barbara Kingsolver, author of *Unsheltered* and *The Poisonwood Bible* Maddy Donald, homeless at twenty, lives with her dog and makeshift family in the hidden spaces of San Francisco's Golden Gate Park. She thinks she knows how to survive and whom to trust until she accidentally witnesses the murder of a young man. Her world is upended as she has to face not only the killer but also the police and then the victim's parents, who desperately want Maddy to tell them about the life their son led after he left home. And in a desire to save her since they could not save their own son, they are determined to have Maddy reunite with her own lost family. But what makes a family? Is it the people who raised you if they don't have the skills to look after you? Is it the foster parents whose generosity only lasts until things become more difficult? Or is it the family that Maddy has met in the park, young people who also have nowhere else to go? Told with sensitivity and tenderness and set against the backdrop of a radically changing city, *At the Edge of the Haight* is narrated by a young girl just beginning to understand herself. The result is a powerful debut that, much like previous Bellwether winners *The Leavers*, by Lisa Ko, or Heidi Durrow's *The Girl Who Fell from the Sky*, grapples with one of the most urgent issues of our day.

Mudbound Hillary Jordan 2008-09-04 NOW A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE STARRING CAREY MULLIGAN, GARRETT HEDLUND & MARY J. BLIGE When Henry McAllan moves his city-bred wife, Laura, to a cotton farm in the Mississippi Delta in 1946, she finds herself in a place both foreign and frightening. Henry's love of rural life is not shared by Laura, who struggles to raise their two young children in an isolated shotgun shack under the eye of her hateful, racist father-in-law. When it rains, the waters rise up and swallow the bridge to town, stranding the family in a sea of mud. As the Second World War shudders to an end, two young men return from Europe to help work the farm. Jamie McAllan is everything his older brother Henry is not and is sensitive to Laura's plight, but also haunted by his memories of combat. Ronsel Jackson, eldest son of the black sharecroppers who live on the farm, comes home from war with the shine of a hero, only to face far more dangerous battles against the ingrained bigotry of his own countrymen. These two unlikely friends become players in a tragedy on the grandest scale.

The Music Shop Rachel Joyce 2018-11-06 "An unforgettable story of music, loss and hope. Fans of High Fidelity, meet your next quirky love story."—People NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY THE TIMES (UK) AND THE WASHINGTON POST It is 1988. On a dead-end street in a run-down suburb there is a music shop that stands small and brightly lit, jam-packed with records of every kind. Like a beacon, the shop attracts the lonely, the sleepless, and the adrift; Frank, the shop's owner, has a way of connecting his customers with just the piece of music they need. Then, one day, into his shop comes a beautiful young woman, Ilse Brauchmann, who asks Frank to teach her about music. Terrified of real closeness, Frank feels compelled to turn and run, yet he is drawn to this strangely still, mysterious woman with eyes as black as vinyl. But Ilse is not what she seems, and Frank has old wounds that threaten to reopen, as well as a past it seems he will never leave behind. Can a man who is so in tune with other people's needs be so incapable of connecting with the one person who might save him? The journey that these two quirky, wonderful characters make in order to overcome their emotional baggage speaks to the healing power of music—and love—in this poignant, ultimately joyful work of fiction. Praise for The Music Shop "Captures the sheer, transformative joy of romance."—The Washington Post "Love, friendship, and especially the healing powers of music all rise together into a triumphant crescendo. . . . This lovely novel is as satisfying and enlightening as the music that suffuses its every page."—The Boston Globe "Magnificent . . . If you love words, if you love music, if you love love, this [novel] will be without question one of the year's best."—BookPage (Top Pick in Fiction) "Joyce has a knack for quickly sketching characters in a way that makes them stick. [The Music Shop] will surprise you."—Minneapolis Star Tribune "Rachel Joyce has established a reputation for novels that celebrate the dignity and courage of ordinary people and the resilience of the human spirit. . . . But what really elevates The Music Shop is Joyce's detailed knowledge of—and passion for—music."—The Guardian

Searching for Zion Emily Raboteau 2013-01-08 A decade in the making, Emily Raboteau's Searching for Zion takes readers around the world on an unexpected adventure of faith. Both one woman's quest for a place to call "home" and an investigation into a people's search for the Promised Land, this landmark work of creative nonfiction is a trenchant inquiry into contemporary and historical ethnic displacement. At the age of twenty-three, award-winning writer Emily Raboteau traveled to Israel to visit her childhood best friend. While her friend appeared to have found a place to belong, Raboteau could not yet say the same for herself. As a biracial woman from a country still divided along racial lines, she'd never felt at home in America. But as a reggae fan and the daughter of a historian of African-American religion, Raboteau knew of "Zion" as a place black people yearned to be. She'd heard about it on Bob Marley's Exodus and in the speeches of Martin Luther King. She understood it as a metaphor for freedom, a spiritual realm rather than a geographical one. Now in Israel, the Jewish Zion, she was surprised to discover black Jews. More surprising was the story of how they got there. Inspired by their exodus, Raboteau sought out other black communities that left home in search of a Promised Land. Her question for them is same she asks herself: have you found the home you're looking for? On her ten-year journey back in time and around the globe, through the Bush years and into the age of Obama,

Raboteau wanders to Jamaica, Ethiopia, Ghana, and the American South to explore the complex and contradictory perspectives of Black Zionists. She talks to Rastafarians and African Hebrew Israelites, Evangelicals and Ethiopian Jews, and Katrina transplants from her own family—people that have risked everything in search of territory that is hard to define and harder to inhabit. Uniting memoir with historical and cultural investigation, Raboteau overturns our ideas of place and patriotism, displacement and dispossession, citizenship and country in a disarmingly honest and refreshingly brave take on the pull of the story of Exodus.

Goodbye to All That (Revised Edition) Sari Botton 2021-04-06 From Roxane Gay to Leslie Jamison, thirty brilliant writers share their timeless stories about the everlasting magic—and occasional misery—of living in the Big Apple, in a new edition of the classic anthology. In the revised edition of this classic collection, thirty writers share their own stories of loving and leaving New York, capturing the mesmerizing allure the city has always had for writers, poets, and wandering spirits. Their essays often begin as love stories do, with the passion of something newly discovered: the crush of subway crowds, the streets filled with manic energy, and the sudden, unblinking certainty that this is the only place on Earth where one can become exactly who she is meant to be. They also share the grief that comes like a gut-punch, when the grand metropolis loses its magic and the pressures of New York's frenetic life wear thin for even the most dedicated dwellers. As friends move away, rents soar, and love—still—remains just out of reach, each writer's goodbye is singular and universal, just like New York itself.

The Sentences That Create Us PEN America 2022-01-11 The Sentences That Create Us draws from the unique insights of over fifty justice-involved contributors and their allies to offer inspiration and resources for creating a literary life in prison. Centering in the philosophy that writers in prison can be as vibrant and capable as writers on the outside, and have much to offer readers everywhere, The Sentences That Create Us aims to propel writers in prison to launch their work into the world beyond the walls, while also embracing and supporting the creative community within the walls. The Sentences That Create Us is a comprehensive resource writers can grow with, beginning with the foundations of creative writing. A roster of impressive contributors including Reginald Dwayne Betts (Felon: Poems), Mitchell S. Jackson (Survival Math), Wilbert Rideau (In the Place of Justice) and Piper Kerman (Orange is the New Black), among many others, address working within and around the severe institutional, emotional, psychological and physical limitations of writing prison through compelling first-person narratives. The book's authors offer pragmatic advice on editing techniques, pathways to publication, writing routines, launching incarcerated-run prison publications and writing groups, lesson plans from prison educators and next-step resources. Threaded throughout the book is the running theme of addressing lived trauma in writing, and writing's capacity to support an authentic healing journey centered in accountability and restoration. While written towards people in the justice system, this book can serve anyone seeking hard won lessons and inspiration for their own creative—and human—journey.

Breaking Night Liz Murray 2011-01-20 _____ Liz Murray never really had a chance in life. Born to a drug-addicted father who was in and out of prison, and an equally dependent mother who was in and out of mental institutions, she seemed destined to become just another tragic statistic; another life wasted on the brutal streets of New York. By the age of 15, Liz found herself homeless with nowhere to turn but the tough streets, riding subways all night for a warm place to sleep and foraging through dumpsters for food. But when her mother died of AIDS a year later, Liz's life changed for ever. With no education, with no chance at a job or a home, she realised that only the most astonishing of turnarounds could stop her heading all the way down the same path her parents took. And so she set her mind to overcoming what seemed like impossible odds - and in the process, achieved something extraordinary. Told with astounding sincerity, Breaking Night is the breathtaking and inspirational story of how a young women, born into a world without hope, used every ounce of strength and determination to steer herself towards a brighter future. Beautifully written, it is a poignant, evocative and stirring portrait of struggle, desperation, forgiveness and survival.

The Best American Short Stories 2016 Junot Díaz 2016-10-04 "The literary 'Oscars' features twenty outstanding examples of the best of the best in American short stories." —Shelf Awareness for Readers The Best American Short Stories 2016 will be selected by Pulitzer Prize winner Junot Díaz. He brings "one of the most distinctive and magnetic voices in contemporary fiction: limber, streetwise, caffeinated and wonderfully eclectic" (Michiko Kakutani, The New York Times) to the collection.

America Is Not the Heart Elaine Castillo 2019-03 A giant debut novel about the redemptive, restorative power of love; about trust and fear; hair and makeup; food and sex; it's about belonging and ... not belonging.

The Old Slave and the Mastiff Patrick Chamoiseau 2018-05-03 A profoundly unsettling story of a plantation slave's desperate escape into a rainforest beyond human control, with his master and a ferocious dog on his heels. This flight to freedom takes them on a journey that will transform them all, as the overwhelming physical presence of the forest and its dense primeval wilderness reshapes reality and time itself. In the darkness, the old man grapples with the spirits of all those who have gone before him; the knowledge that the past is always with us, and the injustice that can cry out from beyond the grave. From a Prix Goncourt writer hailed by Milan Kundera as the 'heir of Joyce and Kafka', *The Old Slave and the Mastiff* fearlessly portrays the demonic cruelties of the slave trade and its human costs - a wise, loving tribute to the Creole culture of Martinique, and a vividly told journey into the heart of Caribbean history and human endurance.

Kissing the Virgin's Mouth Donna M. Gershten 2002-02-05 Guadalupe Magdalena Molina Vázquez -- wife, scoundrel, courtesan, mother -- is full of contradictions: she believes in love but is suspicious of men; she rejects religion but admires the Virgin Mary; she respects tradition while breaking all the rules. Here, in the Golden Zone of Teotihuacán, Mexico, Magda tells her extraordinary life story -- from a poor Mexican barrio to American affluence, from wide-eyed childhood to worldly courtesan life, from full-blooded youth to oncoming blindness -- and bewitchingly imparts the hard-earned wisdom she has gained through the years.

Running the Rift Naomi Benaron 2012-04-01 WINNER OF THE BELLWETHER PRIZE FOR FICTION SHORTLISTED FOR THE COMMONWEALTH WRITERS' PRIZE Jean Patrick dreams of running in the Olympics, and with gruelling training he soon beats a world qualifying time. But his chances of success are threatened by the ethnic tensions erupting all around him. When Hutu violence against Tutsis finally crescendos and his homeland Rwanda is wracked by unforgivable atrocities, Jean Patrick, a Tutsi, has no choice but to run for his life abandoning fatherland, family, and the woman he loves. Finding them again will be the race of his life. Following a decade in Rwanda's history through the eyes of one boy, *Running the Rift* is a wrenching tale of a people's collective trauma, of lives lost, and loves salvaged.