

Live Borders Reading Groups Book List

The Reading Group titles below are available on request through your local Library and are for reading group purposes only.

If you are part of a reading group and there is a title your group would like to read and critique, please request an appropriate quantity within your local library.

Please note – in most cases, we hold 12 copies of the listed titles.

We welcome new stock suggestions, specifically for Reading Groups: please talk to staff at your local library or call us at St Marys Mill on 01750 726400.

If you are interested in setting up a Readers Group please contact your local library or call 01750 726400 for more information.

Eyemouth Library on 01890 752767 or email: libeyemouth@liveborders1.org.uk

Galashiels Library on 01896 664170 or email libgalashiels@liveborders1.org.uk

Hawick Library on 01450 364640 or Email: libhawick@liveborders1.org.uk

Peebles Library on Tel: 01721 726 333 or Email: libpeebles@liveborders1.org.uk

St Marys Mill (HQ) on 01750 726400 or Email: libraries@liveborders1.org.uk

New to Live Borders

[BROWNING-WROE, Jo – A Terrible Kindness](#)

It is October 1966 and William Lavery is having the night of his life at his first black-tie do. But, as the evening unfolds, news hits of a landslide at a coal mine. It has buried a school - Aberfan. William decides he must act, so he stands and volunteers to attend. It will be his first job as an embalmer, and it will be one he never forgets. His work that night will force him to think about the little boy he was, and the losses he has worked so hard to forget. But compassion can have surprising consequences, because - as William discovers - giving so much to others can sometimes help us heal ourselves.

[EDWARDS, Emily – The Herd](#)

Elizabeth and Bryony are polar opposites, but their unexpected friendship has always worked. They're the best of friends, and godmothers to each other's daughters – because they both trust that the safety of their children is their top priority.

Little do they know that they differ over one very important issue. And when Bryony, afraid of being judged, tells what is supposed to be a harmless white lie before a child's birthday party, the consequences are more catastrophic than either of them could ever have imagined.

ESPACH, Alison – The Wedding People

Phoebe Stone arrives at a grand beachside hotel in Rhode Island wearing her best dress and least comfortable shoes. Immediately she is mistaken for one of the wedding people – but she’s actually the only guest at the Cornwall Inn who isn’t here for the big event. When the bride discovers her elaborate destination wedding could be ruined by a divorced and depressed stranger, she is furious. Lila has spent months accounting for every detail and every possible disaster – except for, well, Phoebe – Soon, both women find their best-laid plans derailed and an unlikely confidante in one another

HOGAN, Ruth – The Phoenix Ballroom

Recently widowed Venetia Hamilton Hargreaves is left with a huge house, a bank balance to match and an uneasy feeling that she’s been sleepwalking through the last fifty years. Buying the dilapidated Phoenix Ballroom and with it a community drop-in centre and spiritualist church could be seen as reckless, but Venetia’s generosity, courage and kindness provide a refuge for a touching cast of damaged and lonely people who find their chosen family.

HOLSINGER, Bruce – Culpability

When the Cassidy-Shaws’ driverless minivan fatally collides with an oncoming car, seventeen-year-old Charlie is in the driver’s seat. His father, Noah, is beside him, and in the back with his younger siblings is his mother, Lorelei – a renowned AI researcher – who is lost in her work. During a weeklong retreat on the Chesapeake Bay, the Cassidy-Shaws wrestle with the moral fallout of the crash as a routine police enquiry starts to unravel.

RIDZEN, Lisa – When The Cranes Fly South

Bo lives a quiet existence in his small rural village in the north of Sweden. He is elderly and his days are punctuated by visits from his care team and his son. Fortunately, he still has his memories, phone calls with his best friend Ture, and his beloved dog Sixten for company. Only now his son is insisting the dog must be taken away. The very same son that Bo is wanting to mend his relationship with before it’s too late.

WHITAKER, Chris – All The Colours of the Dark

Two childhood best friends. Torn apart by tragedy. Reunited by their search for the truth. Even if finding it means losing each other forever. A sweeping coming-of-age tale, an epic love story and a searing thriller, all unfolding on a vast canvas.



ALLENDE, Isabel – A Long Petal of the Sea

Victor Dalmou is a young doctor when he is caught up in the Spanish Civil War, an event that leaves his life – and the fate of his country – forever changed. Together with his sister-in-law, the pianist Roser, he is forced out of Barcelona and into exile in Chile.

AMSTERDAM, Steven - Easy Way Out

"Evan's job is to help people die. Evan is a nurse - a suicide assistant. His job is legal - just. He's the one at the hospital who hands out the last drink to those who ask for it. Evan's friends don't know what he does during the day. His mother, Viv, doesn't know what he's up to at night. ...

ASCHERSON, Neal - The Death of the Fronsac

In 1940, during the Phoney War, a French destroyer blows up in the Firth of Clyde. The disaster is witnessed by Jackie, a young girl who, for a time, thinks she caused the explosion by running away that day from school; by her mother Helen, a spirited woman married to a dreary young officer; and by a Polish officer, whose country has just been erased from the map by Hitler and Stalin. Their lives, and the lives of many others, are changed by the death of the Fronsac. This is a story about divided loyalties, treachery and exile; about people in flight from the destinies that seemed to be theirs before the war disrupted the world they knew.

ATWOOD, Margaret – The Testaments

In this brilliant sequel to *The Handmaid's Tale*, acclaimed author Margaret Atwood answers the questions that have tantalised readers for decades. When the van door slammed on Offred's future at the end of *The Handmaid's Tale*, readers had no way of telling what lay ahead for her - freedom, prison or death. With *The Testaments*, the wait is over. Margaret Atwood's sequel picks up the story more than 15 years after Offred stepped into the unknown, with the explosive testaments of three female narrators from Gilead

BARR, Damian - Maggie & Me

It's 12 October 1984. An IRA bomb blows apart the Grand Hotel in Brighton. Miraculously, Margaret Thatcher survives. In small-town Scotland, eight-year-old Damian Barr watches in horror as his mum rips her wedding ring off and packs their bags. He knows he, too, must survive.

BENNET, Brit – The Vanishing Half

The Vignes twin sisters will always be identical. But after growing up together in a small, southern black community and running away at age sixteen, it's not just the shape of their daily lives that is different as adults, it's everything: their families, their communities, their racial identities. Ten years later, one sister lives with her black daughter in the same southern town she once tried to escape. The other secretly passes for white, and her white husband knows nothing of her past. Still, even separated by so many miles and just as many lies, the fates of the twins remain intertwined. What will happen to the next generation, when their own daughters' story lines intersect?

BOYNE, John – A Ladder To The Sky

A psychological drama of cat and mouse, *A Ladder to the Sky* shows how easy it is to achieve the world if you are prepared to sacrifice your soul. If you look hard enough, you can find stories pretty much anywhere. They don't even have to be your own. Or so would-be writer Maurice Swift decides very early on in his career. A chance encounter in a Berlin hotel with celebrated novelist Erich Ackermann gives him an opportunity to ingratiate himself with someone more powerful than him. For Erich is lonely, and he has a story to tell. Whether or not he should do so is another matter entirely. Once Maurice has made his name, he sets off in pursuit of other people's stories. He doesn't care where he finds them – or to whom they belong – as long as they help him rise to the

top. Stories will make him famous but they will also make him beg, borrow and steal. They may even make him do worse.

BOYNE, John - *The Heart's Invisible Furies*

Forced to flee the scandal brewing in her hometown, Catherine Goggin finds herself pregnant and alone, in search of a new life at just sixteen. She knows she has no choice but to believe that the nun she entrusts her child to will find him a better life.

Cyril Avery is not a real Avery, or so his parents are constantly reminding him. Adopted as a baby, he's never quite felt at home with the family that treats him more as a curious pet than a son. But it is all he has ever known.

And so begins one man's desperate search to find his place in the world. Unspooling and unseeing, Cyril is a misguided, heart-breaking, heartbroken fool. Buffeted by the harsh winds of circumstance towards the one thing that might save him from himself, but when opportunity knocks, will he have the courage, finally, take it?

BRAGG, Melvyn - *Grace and Mary*

John visits his ageing mother Mary in her nursing home by the sea, and mourns the slow fading of her mind. Hoping to shore up her memory, he prompts her with songs, photographs and questions about the 1940s, when she was a young woman and he a child in a small Cumbrian town. But he finds that most of all it is her own mother she longs for - Grace, the mother she barely knew. John sets out to recreate their buried family history, delving into the secrets and silences of Mary's fractured childhood as he imagines the life of her spirited mother.

BROOK, Rhidian - *Aftermath*

In the bitter winter of 1946, Rachael Morgan arrives with her only remaining son Edmund in the ruins of Hamburg. Here she is reunited with her husband Lewis, a British colonel charged with rebuilding the shattered city. But as they set off for their new home, Rachael is stunned to discover that Lewis has made an extraordinary decision.

BUCHAN, John – *John Macnab*

Three high-flying men - a barrister, a cabinet minister and a banker - are suffering from boredom. They concoct a plan to cure it. They inform three Scottish estates that they will poach from each two stags and a salmon in a given time. They sign collectively as 'John Macnab' and await the responses.

BUCHAN, John – *The Thirty-Nine Steps*

Recently returned from South Africa, adventurer Richard Hannay is bored with life, but after a chance encounter with an American who informs him of an assassination plot and is then promptly murdered in Hannay's London flat, he becomes the obvious suspect and is forced to go on the run.

BUCHAN, John – *The Three Hostages*

England is at peace after the end of World War I. Spy-catcher Richard Hannay is enjoying the country life at Fosse Manor. However, Hannay's peace is shattered when a dangerous criminal gang kidnap three children of important national figures.

BURNS, Anna - Milkman

Milkman is a novel written by Anna Burns. It won the 2018 Man Booker Prize for Fiction, the first time a Northern Irish writer has been awarded the prize. It won the 2018 National Book Critics Circle Award for fiction.

CANDLISH, Louise – The Other Passenger

It all happens so quickly. One day you're commuting to work by river bus with your friend Kit in the seat beside you. The next, Kit hasn't turned up and his wife has reported him missing.

CANNON, Joanna - Three Things About Elsie

Eighty-four year-old Florence has fallen in her flat at Cherry Tree Home for the Elderly. As she waits to be rescued, Florence wonders if a terrible secret from her past is about to come to light; and, if the charming new resident is who he claims to be, why does he look exactly a man who died sixty years ago?

CHASE, Eve – The Midnight Hour

Notting Hill, London. One evening, Maggie's mother walks out of their front door and doesn't return. With her little brother in tow, desperate to find her mother, Maggie is drawn into a labyrinthine world of antiques and shadowy figures, far from the grand stucco terraces. There she befriends another young person living on their wits. But can he help solve the mystery of her mother's disappearance? 21 years later, in Paris, Maggie's phone rings and her hard-won grown-up life shatters. While in London, the new owner of their old Notting Hill house is excavating a basement, unaware of what might lie beneath, and the clock starts ticking on buried secrets. Sweeping from bustling London streets, the boulevards of Paris to an old English country house, this novel is a richly woven story about a golden family with a hidden past - and a woman trying to turn back the hands of time before it's too late.

CLARK, Polly – Larchfield

It's early summer when a young poet, Dora Fielding, moves to Helensburgh on the west coast of Scotland and her hopes are first challenged. Newly married, pregnant, she's excited by the prospect of a life that combines family and creativity. She thinks she knows what being a person, a wife, a mother, means. She is soon shown that she is wrong. As the battle begins for her very sense of self, Dora comes to find the realities of small town life suffocating, and, eventually, terrifying; until she finds a way to escape reality altogether.

CLARK, Stuart - The sky's dark labyrinth

At the dawn of the seventeenth century Europe is a dark and dangerous place. As war rages across the continent and men's immortal souls are traded for mortal lives, two astronomers risk everything to reveal the truth behind the universe's grand design.

CLEAVE, Chris – Everyone Brave is Forgiven

As World War Two begins, Mary--a newly qualified teacher in London, left behind to teach the few children not evacuated--meets Tom, a school official. They quickly fall in love, but this is not a simple love story. . . . Moving from Blitz-torn London to the Siege of Malta, this is an epic story of love, loss, prejudice and incredible courage.

CLEMENT, Jennifer - Prayers for the Stolen

The Narcos only had to hear there was a pretty girl around and they'd sweep onto our lands in black SUVs and carry the girl off. Not one of the stolen girls had ever come back, except for Paula. She came back a year after she'd been kidnapped. She held a baby bottle in one hand. She wore seven earrings that climbed the cupped edge of her left ear in a line of blue, yellow, and green studs and a tattoo that snaked around her wrist. 'Did you see that? Did you see Paula's tattoo? My mother said. You know what that means, right? Jesus, Mary's son and Son of God, and the angels in heaven protect us all.' At the time, I didn't know what that meant. But I was going to find out.

CLOSE, Ajay – The Daughter of Lady MacBeth

The Daughter of Lady Macbeth is the story of Freya and her narcissistic mother, Liliias, an actress whose desire for the life of an artist outweighs her maternal instincts. Mother and daughter both love and hate each other, but when Freya tries to become a mother herself she finds herself locked into the patterns Liliias lived through nearly forty years before.

COLEMAN, Rowan – The Summer of Impossible Things

If you could change the past, would you? 30 years ago, something terrible happened to Luna's mother. Something she's only prepared to reveal after her death. Now Luna and her sister have a chance to go back to their mother's birthplace and settle her affairs. But in Brooklyn they find more questions than answers, until something impossible - magical - happens to Luna, and she meets her mother as a young woman back in the summer of 1977. At first Luna's thinks she's going crazy, but if she can truly travel back in time, she can change things. But in doing anything - everything - to save her mother's life, will she have to sacrifice her own?

CONNOLLY, Cressida - After The Party

It is the summer of 1938 and Phyllis Forrester has returned to England after years abroad. Moving into her sister's grand country house, she soon finds herself entangled in a new world of idealistic beliefs and seemingly innocent friendships. ...

CUMMINS, Jeanine - American dirt

'American Dirt' explores the experience of attempting to illegally cross the US-Mexico border, a journey which thousands of migrants make each year. Yesterday, Lydia had a bookshop. Yesterday, Lydia was married to a journalist. Yesterday, she was with everyone she loved most in the world. Today, her eight-year-old son Luca is all she has left. For him, she will carry a machete strapped to her leg. For him, she will leap onto the roof of a high speed train. For him, she will find the strength to keep running.

DAVIES, Carys - West

Cy Bellman, American settler and widowed father, hears news which fills him with wonder: in the deep swamps of Kentucky, huge ancient bones have been discovered. Leaving his young daughter Bess to fend for herself, Cy sets off to see if there is truth in the rumours that giant monsters are still living, roaming the uncharted territory beyond the Mississippi River.

DAVIS, Barbara – The Echo of Old Books

Rare-book dealer Ashlyn Greer's affinity for books extends beyond the intoxicating scent of old paper, ink, and leather. She can feel the echoes of the books' previous owners - an emotional fingerprint only she can read. When Ashlyn discovers a pair of beautifully bound volumes that

appear to have never been published, her gift quickly becomes an obsession. Not only is each inscribed with a startling incrimination, but the authors, Hemi and Belle, tell conflicting sides of a tragic romance.

[DELANEY, JP – Playing Nice](#)

Pete Riley answers the door one morning to a parent's worst nightmare. On his doorstep is Miles Lambert, who breaks the devastating news that Pete's two-year-old, Theo, isn't Pete's real son – their babies got mixed up at birth.

[DOUGLAS-HOME, Mark - Sea Detective](#)

Cal McGill is an Edinburgh-based oceanographer, environmentalist and one-of-a-kind investigator. Using his knowledge of the waves - ocean currents, prevailing winds, shipping records - McGill can track where objects have come from, or where they've gone. It's a unique skill that can help solve all sorts of mysteries.

Such as when two severed feet wash up miles apart on two different islands off the coast of Scotland. Most strangely, forensic tests reveal that the feet belong to the same body.

As Cal McGill investigates, he unravels a web of corruption, exploitation and violence, which threatens many lives across the globe - very soon including his own...

[ELSSHOT, Willem – Cheese](#)

When Frans Laarmans, a feckless clerk at an Antwerp shipyard, is offered a job importing Edam cheese from Holland, he meekly accepts, despite his loathing of the product. His head soon fills with ambition and hope to be accepted by his brother's posh friends. But when the first shipment arrives, he has no idea what to do with the ten thousand red-skinned cheeses, and spends most of his time looking for a pedestal desk for his office instead of selling. This superb tragicomedy offers a poignant and at the same time humorous account of what happens when a mediocre man gets caught between his ambition and his utter ineptitude.

[EVANS, Harriet – The Garden of Lost and Found](#)

England, 1918. To the millions who queued to see it, 'The Garden of Lost and Found' is an exquisite painting of childhood innocence. To Liddy, whose children play in that painted garden, it is a portrait of all she has lost. For her great-granddaughter Juliet, it is an inheritance of secrets she must try to understand.

[FEIN, Louise – People Like Us](#)

Leipzig, 1930s. Hetty Heinrich is a perfect German child. Her father is an SS officer, her brother in the Luftwaffe, herself a member of the BDM. She believes resolutely in her country, and the man who runs it. Until Walter changes everything. Blond-haired, blue-eyed, perfect in every way Walter. He's the boy who saved her life. He's also a Jew.

[FERGUSON, Ben - The Other Hoffmann Sister](#)

Ingrid Hoffmann has always felt responsible for her sister Margarete and when their family moves to German Southwest Africa in 1902, her anxieties only increase. The casual racism that pervades the German community, the strange relationship between her parents and Baron von Ketz, from whom they bought their land, and the tension with the local tribes all culminate in tragedy when Baron von

Ketz is murdered. Baroness von Ketz and their son, Emil, flee with the Hoffmanns as the Baron's attackers' burn down the family's farm.

[FERRANTE, Elena – My Brilliant Friend](#)

A New York Times Bestseller, The Neapolitan Novels (Book 1) A modern masterpiece from one of Italy's most acclaimed authors set against the backdrop of a Naples that is as seductive as it is perilous and a world undergoing epochal change, this story of a lifelong friendship is told with unmatched honesty. Lila and Elena clash, drift apart, reconcile, and clash again, in the process revealing new facets of their friendship. With My Brilliant Friend Ferrante begins the rich, intense, and generous-hearted portrait of two friends, Elena and Lila. Through their lives, she tells the story of a neighbourhood, a city, and a country undergoing momentous change.

[FLETCHER, Susan – The Silver Dark Sea](#)

This powerful novel from the award-winning author of Richard and Judy pick 'Eve Green' is a tale of love and the lore of the sea.

The islanders of Parla are still mourning the loss of one of their own. Four years since that loss, and a man – un-named, unclothed – is washed onto their shores. Some say he is a mythical man from the sea – potent, kind and beautiful; others suspect him. For the bereft Maggie, this stranger brings love back to the isle. But as the days pass he changes every one of them – and the time comes for his story to be told...

[FOWLER, Karen Joy – We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves](#)

Rosemary's young, just at college, and she's decided not to tell anyone a thing about her family. So we're not going to tell you too much either: you'll have to find out for yourselves. Rosemary is now an only child, but she used to have a sister the same age as her, and an older brother. Both are now gone - vanished from her life. There's something unique about Rosemary's sister, Fern. So now she's telling her story: full of hilarious asides and brilliantly spiky lines, it's a looping narrative that begins towards the end, and then goes back to the beginning. Twice..

[FRANKEL, Laurie – This is How it Always is](#)

This is how a family keeps a secret...and how that secret ends up keeping them.

This is how a family lives happily ever after...until happily ever after becomes complicated. This is how children change...and then change the world.

This is Claude. He's five years old, the youngest of five brothers, and loves peanut butter sandwiches. He also loves wearing a dress, and dreams of being a princess.

When he grows up, Claude says, he wants to be a girl.

Rosie and Penn want Claude to be whoever Claude wants to be. They're just not sure they're ready to share that with the world. Soon the entire family is keeping Claude's secret. Until one day it explodes.

[GOWAR, Imogen Hermes – The Mermaid and Mrs Hancock](#)

One September evening in 1785, the merchant Jonah Hancock hears urgent knocking on his front door. One of his captains is waiting eagerly on the step. He has sold Jonah's ship for what appears to be a mermaid. As gossip spreads through the docks, coffee shops, parlours and brothels, everyone wants to see Mr Hancock's marvel. Its arrival spins him out of his ordinary existence and through the doors of high society. At an opulent party, he makes the acquaintance of Angelica

Neal, the most desirable woman he has ever laid eyes on - and a courtesan of great accomplishment. This meeting will steer both their lives onto a dangerous new course, on which they will learn that priceless things come at the greatest cost. What will be the cost of their ambitions? And will they be able to escape the destructive power mermaids are said to possess?

[GREENE, Graham – Brighton rock](#)

A gang war is raging through the dark underworld of Brighton. Seventeen-year-old Pinkie, malign and ruthless, has killed a man. Believing he can escape retribution, he is unprepared for the courageous, life-embracing Ida Arnold. Greene's gripping thriller exposes a world of loneliness and fear, of life lived on the 'dangerous edge of things'.

[HAIG, Matt – The Midnight Library](#)

Nora's life has been going from bad to worse. Then at the stroke of midnight on her last day on earth she finds herself transported to a library. There she is given the chance to undo her regrets and try out each of the other lives she might have lived. Which raises the ultimate question: with infinite choices, what is the best way to live?

[HALL, Sarah – The Wolf Border](#)

For almost a decade Rachel Caine has turned her back on home, kept distant by family disputes and her work monitoring wolves on an Idaho reservation. But now, summoned by the eccentric Earl of Annerdale and his controversial scheme to reintroduce the grey wolf to the English countryside, she is back in the peat and wet light of the Lake District. The earl's project harks back to an ancient idyll of untamed British wilderness - though Rachel must contend with modern-day concessions to health and safety, public outrage and political gain - and the return of the grey after hundreds of years coincides with her own regeneration: impending motherhood, and reconciliation with her estranged family.

[HANNAH, Kristin – The Four Winds](#)

Texas, 1934. Elsa Martinelli had finally found the life she'd yearned for. A family, a home and a livelihood on a farm on the Great Plains. But when drought threatens all she and her community hold dear, Elsa's world is shattered to the winds. Fearful of the future, when Elsa wakes to find her husband has fled, she is forced to make the most agonizing decision of her life. Fight for the land she loves or take her beloved children, Loreda and Ant, west to California in search of a better life. Will it be the land of milk and honey? Or will their experience challenge every ounce of strength they possess?

[HANNAH, Kristin - The Nightingale](#)

Despite their differences, sisters Viann and Isabelle have always been close. Younger, bolder Isabelle lives in Paris while Viann is content with life in the French countryside with her husband Antoine and their daughter. But when the Second World War strikes, Antoine is sent off to fight and Viann finds herself isolated so Isabelle is sent by their father to help her.

As the war progresses, the sisters' relationship and strength is tested. With life changing in unbelievably horrific ways, Viann and Isabelle will find themselves facing frightening situations and responding in ways they never thought possible as bravery and resistance take different forms in each of their actions.

HANNAH, Kristin - The women

In a peaceful retirement village, four unlikely friends meet up once a week to investigate unsolved murders. But when a brutal killing takes place on their very doorstep, the Thursday Murder Club find themselves in the middle of their first live case. Elizabeth, Joyce, Ibrahim and Ron might be pushing 80 but they still have a few tricks up their sleeves. Can our unorthodox but brilliant gang catch the killer before it's too late?

HART, Emilia – Weyward

1940s Colorado: Teenage Victoria Nash is the sole surviving woman in a family of troubled men. She spends her days running the household on her family's peach farm. Wilson Moon is a young drifter with a mysterious past. Displaced from his tribal land, he wants to believe one place is just like another. When Victoria and Wil meet on a street corner, their unexpected connection ignites both passion and danger, revelations and secrets. But when tragedy strikes, Victoria is propelled away from the only home she has ever known and towards a reckoning with loss, hope, and her own untapped strength. Gathering all the pieces of her small and extraordinary existence, she will arrive at a single rocky decision that will change her life for ever.

HEMINGWAY, Ernest – The Old Man and the Sea

Set in the Gulf Stream off the coast of Havana, Hemingway's magnificent fable is the story of an old man, a young boy and a giant fish. It was *The Old Man and the Sea* that won for Hemingway the Nobel Prize for Literature. Here, in a perfectly crafted story, is a unique and timeless vision of the beauty and grief of man's challenge to the elements in which he lives. Not a single word is superfluous in this widely admired masterpiece, which once and for all established his place as one of the giants of modern literature.

HENDERSON, Julietta – The Funny Thing About Norman Foreman

What do you get when you cross a painfully awkward son, lofty comedic ambition and a dead best friend? Norman. Norman and Jax were a legendary comedic duo in waiting. They had a plan to take them all the way to the Edinburgh Fringe in just 5 years' time. But when Jax dies before they turn twelve, Norman decides a tribute act for his best friend just can't wait - so he rewrites their plan: 1. Look after mum 2. Find Dad 3. Get to the Edinburgh Fringe. Sadie won't win a mother of the year award anytime soon and not knowing exactly who her son's father is isn't topping her list of achievements. But if performing at the Fringe and finding his dad is what will help Norman through, they're going to make it happen.

HERRON, Mick - This Is What Happened

26-year-old Maggie Barnes is someone you would never look at twice. Living alone in a month-to-month sublet in the huge city of London, with no family but an estranged sister, no boyfriend or partner, and not much in the way of friends, Maggie is just the kind of person who could vanish from the face of the earth without anyone taking notice. Or just the kind of person MI5 needs to infiltrate the establishment and thwart an international plot that puts all of Britain at risk. Now one young woman has the chance to be a hero - if she can think quickly enough to stay alive.

HILL, Susan – The Comforts of Home

DC Simon Serrailer's last, devastating case was nearly the death of him and left him confronting a new reality. Recovering on a remote Scottish island, his peace doesn't last long. He is pulled in to a

murder inquiry by the overstretched local police. A newcomer, popular with the islanders, has died in perplexing circumstances. It's good to be back on the job but it's when Simon returns to Lafferton that things start to get complicated.

[HOBSON, Charlotte - Vanishing Futurist](#)

The debut novel from award-winning author of *Black Earth City: A Year in the Heart of Russia*. When twenty-two-year-old Gerty Freely travels to Russia to work as a governess in early 1914, she has no idea of the vast political upheavals ahead, nor how completely her fate will be shaped by them.

[HOPE, Anna – Wake \(12 copies\)](#)

'Hope's unblinking prose is reminiscent of Vera Brittain's classic memoir *Testament of Youth*' - *New York Times* Remembrance Day 1920: A wartime secret connects three women's lives: Hettie whose wounded brother won't speak; Evelyn who still grieves for her lost lover; and Ada, who has never received an official letter about her son's death, and is still waiting for him to come home. As the mystery that binds them begins to unravel, far away, in the fields of France, the Unknown Soldier embarks on his journey home. The mood of the nation is turning towards the future - but can these three women ever let go of the past?

[HUSTVEDT, Siri – What I Loved](#)

This is the story of two men who first become friends in 1970s New York, of the women in their lives, of their sons, born the same year, and of how relations between the two families become strained, first by tragedy, then by a monstrous duplicity which comes slowly and corrosively to the surface.

[JEWELL, Lisa – The Family Upstairs](#)

In a large house in London's fashionable Chelsea, a baby is awake in her cot. Well-fed and cared for, she is happily waiting for someone to pick her up. In the kitchen lie three decomposing corpses. Close to them is a hastily scrawled note. They've been dead for several days. Who has been looking after the baby? And where did they go? Two entangled families. A house with the darkest of secrets.

[KENNEDY, Louise – Trespasses](#)

Cushla Lavery lives with her mother in a small town near Belfast. At 24, she splits her time between her day job as a teacher to a class of 7-year-olds, and regular bartending shifts in the pub owned by her family. It's here, on a day like any other - as the daily news rolls in of another car bomb exploding, another man shot, killed, beaten or left for dead - that she meets Michael Agnew, an older (and married) barrister who draws her into his sophisticated group of friends. When the father of a young boy in her class, becomes the victim of a savage attack, Cushla is compelled to help his family. But as her affair with Michael intensifies, political tensions in the town escalate, threatening to destroy all she is working to hold together.

[KENT, Hannah – The Good People](#)

Based on true events and set in a lost world bound by its own laws, *The Good People* is Hannah Kent's startling new novel about absolute belief and devoted love. Terrifying, thrilling and moving in equal measure, this long-awaited follow-up to *Burial Rites* shows an author at the height of her powers.

[KERR, Philip - Prussian blue](#)

France, 1956. Bernie Gunther is on the run. If there's one thing he's learned, it's never to refuse a job from a high-ranking secret policeman. But this is exactly what he's just done. Now he's a marked man, with the East German Stasi on his tail.

Fleeing across Europe, he remembers the last time he worked with his pursuer: in 1939, to solve a murder at the Berghof, Hitler's summer hideaway in the Bavarian Alps. Hitler is long dead, the Berghof now a ruined shell, and the bizarre time Bernie spent there should be no more than a distant memory.

But as he pushes on to Berlin and safety, Bernie will find that no matter how far he thinks he has put Nazi Germany behind him, for him it will always be unfinished business. The Berghof is not done with Bernie yet.

[KIDD, Sue Monk - The Invention of Wings](#)

Sarah Grimkel is the middle daughter. The one her mother calls difficult and her father calls remarkable. On Sarah's 11th birthday, Hetty 'Handful' Grimkel is taken from the slave quarters she shares with her mother, wrapped in lavender ribbons, and presented to Sarah as a gift. Sarah knows what she does next will unleash a world of trouble. She also knows that she cannot accept. And so, indeed, the trouble begins.

[KINGSOLVER, Barbara – Demon Copperhead](#)

This is the tale of Demon Copperhead: our hero. A boy with no assets beyond his dead father's good looks and copper-coloured hair, bucket-loads of charm and a talent or two the world is yet to discover. Born to a teenaged single mother in a single wide trailer, life is not set fair for Demon as he escorts us on this, his journey through the modern perils of foster care, athletic success and addiction, the dizzying highs of true love, and the crushing losses that can accompany it. But Demon is a fighter, a survivor.

[LAIRD, Nick – Modern Gods](#)

Alison Donnelly has suffered for love. Still stuck in the small Northern Irish town where she was born, working for her father's real estate agency, she hopes to pick up the pieces and get her life back together. Her sister Liz, a fiercely independent college professor who lives in New York City, is about to return to Ulster for Alison's second wedding, before heading to an island off the coast of Papua New Guinea to make a TV show about the world's newest religion. Both sisters' lives are about to be shaken apart. Alison wakes up the day after her wedding to find that her new husband has a past neither of them can escape. In a rainforest on the other side of the planet, Liz finds herself becoming increasingly entangled in the eerie, charged world of Belef, the subject of her show, a charismatic middle-aged woman who is the leader of a cargo cult.

[LEFTERI, Christy – The Beekeeper of Aleppo](#)

Nuri is a beekeeper; his wife, Afra, an artist. They live a simple life, rich in family and friends, in the beautiful Syrian city of Aleppo - until the unthinkable happens. When all they care for is destroyed by war, they are forced to escape. But what Afra has seen is so terrible she has gone blind, and so they must embark on a perilous journey through Turkey and Greece towards an uncertain future in Britain. On the way, Nuri is sustained by the knowledge that waiting for them is Mustafa, his cousin and business partner, who has started an apiary and is teaching fellow refugees in Yorkshire to keep

bees. As Nuri and Afra travel through a broken world, they must confront not only the pain of their own unspeakable loss, but dangers that would overwhelm the bravest of souls.

[LEWIS, Susan – I Have Something to Tell You](#)

High-flying lawyer Jessica Wells has it all. A successful career, loving husband Tom and a family she adores. But one case - and one client - will put all that at risk. Edward Blake. An ordinary life turned upside down - or a man who quietly watched television while his wife was murdered upstairs? With more questions than answers and a case too knotted to unravel, Jay suspects he's protecting someone. Then she comes home one day and her husband utters the words no-one ever wants to hear. 'Sit down. because I've got something to tell you'. Now Jay must fight not only for the man she defends, but for the man she thought she trusted with her life - her husband.

[LUPTON, Rosamund - The Quality of Silence](#)

On 24th November Yasmin and her deaf daughter Ruby arrived in Alaska. Within hours they were driving alone across a frozen wilderness where nothing grows, where no one lives, where tears freeze and night will last for another 54 days. They are looking for Ruby's father. Travelling deeper into a silent land. They still cannot find him. And someone is watching them in the dark.

[MAGNUSSON, Sally - Sealwoman's Gift](#)

In 1627 Barbary pirates raided the coast of Iceland and abducted some 400 of its people, including 250 from a tiny island off the mainland. Among the captives sold into slavery in Algiers were the island pastor, his wife and their three children. Although the raid itself is well documented, little is known about what happened to the women and children afterwards. It was a time when women everywhere were largely silent. In this reimagining, Sally Magnusson gives a voice to Asta, the pastor's wife.

[MCALLISTER, Gillian – Anything You Do Say](#)

Joanna is an avoider. So far she has spent her adult life hiding bank statements and changing career aspirations weekly. But then one night Joanna hears footsteps on the way home. Is she being followed? She is sure it's him; the man from the bar who wouldn't leave her alone. Hearing the steps speed up Joanna turns and pushes with all of her might, sending her pursuer tumbling down the steps and lying motionless on the floor. Now Joanna has to do the thing she hates most - make a decision. Fight or flight? Truth or lie? Right or wrong?

[MCBRIDE, Laura - We are Called to Rise](#)

The lives of an immigrant boy, a soldier returned from Iraq, and a middle-aged woman whose marriage is crumbling, collide in this remarkable debut.

[MCGRATH, Patrick – The Wardrobe Mistress](#)

January 1947. London is in ruins, there's nothing to eat, and it's the coldest winter in living memory. To make matters worse, Charlie Grice, one of the great stage actors of the day, has suddenly died. His widow, Joan, the wardrobe mistress, is beside herself with grief. Then one night she discovers her late husband's secret.

[MCGREGOR, Jon - Reservoir 13](#)

Reservoir 13 tells the story of many lives haunted by one family's loss.

Midwinter in the early years of this century. A teenage girl on holiday has gone missing in the hills at the heart of England. The villagers are called up to join the search, fanning out across the moors as the police set up roadblocks and a crowd of news reporters descends on their usually quiet home.

Meanwhile, there is work that must still be done: cows milked, fences repaired, stone cut, pints poured, beds made, sermons written, a pantomime rehearsed.

The search for the missing girl goes on, but so does everyday life. As it must.

MILLER, A.D. - Snowdrops

A stunning novel of moral ambiguity, uncertainty and corruption....

Snowdrops! That's what the Russians call them - the bodies that float up into the light in the thaw. Drunks, most of them, and homeless people who just give up and lie down into the whiteness, and murder victims hidden in the drifts by their killers. Nick has a confession. When he worked as a high-flying British lawyer in Moscow, he was seduced by Masha, an enigmatic woman who led him through her city: the electric nightclubs and intimate dachas, the human kindnesses and state-wide corruption. Yet as Nick fell for Masha, he found that he fell away from himself; he knew that she was dangerous, but life in Russia was addictive, and it was too easy to bury secrets - and corpses - in the winter snows...

MINA, Denise – The Field Of Blood

In Glasgow, a toddler goes missing - snatched from the front garden of his home - and the police are led to the doors of two eleven-year-old boys. Eighteen-year-old Paddy Meehan has just started work on the SCOTTISH DAILY NEWS. Her dream is to become an investigative reporter. Everyone at the DAILY NEWS believes that the boys acted alone. Only Paddy feels that there may be more to it than this...

MINA, Denise – The long Drop

William Watt wants answers about his family's murder. Peter Manuel has them. But Peter Manuel is a liar. William Watt is an ordinary businessman, a fool, a social climber. Peter Manuel is a famous liar, a rapist, a criminal. He claims he can get hold of the gun used to murder Watt's family. One December night in 1957, Watt meets Manuel in a Glasgow bar to find out what he knows. Based on true events, The Long Drop is an extraordinarily unsettling, evocative and compelling novel from a writer at the height of her powers.

MUKHERJEE, Abir – A Necessary Evil

India, 1920. Captain Wyndham and Sergeant Banerjee of the Calcutta Police Force investigate the dramatic assassination of a Maharajah's son. The fabulously wealthy kingdom of Sambalpur is home to tigers, elephants, diamond mines and the beautiful Palace of the Sun. But when the heir to the throne is assassinated in the presence of Captain Sam Wyndham and Sergeant 'Surrender-Not' Banerjee, they discover a kingdom riven with suppressed conflict. Prince Adhir was a moderniser whose attitudes - and romantic relationship - may have upset the more religious elements of his country, while his brother - now in line to the throne - appears to be a feckless playboy. As Wyndham and Banerjee desperately try to unravel the mystery behind the assassination, they become entangled in a dangerous world where those in power live by their own rules and those who cross their paths pay with their lives.

NESBIT, TaraShea - [The Wives of Los Alamos](#)

Their average age was 25. They came from Berkeley, Cambridge, Paris, London and Chicago - and arrived in New Mexico ready for adventure or at least resigned to it. But hope quickly turned to hardship in the desolate military town where everything was a secret, including what their husbands were doing at the lab.

They lived in barely finished houses, in a town wreathed with barbed wire, all for the benefit of 'the project' that didn't exist as far as the greater world was concerned. They were constrained by the words they couldn't say out loud, the letters they couldn't send home, the freedom they didn't have. But then 'the project' was unleashed and even bigger challenges faced the women of Los Alamos, as they struggled with the burden of their contribution towards the creation of the most destructive force in mankind's history - the atomic bomb.

NG, Celeste – [Little Fires Everywhere](#)

In Shaker Heights, a placid, progressive suburb of Cleveland, everything is meticulously planned – from the layout of the winding roads, to the colours of the houses, to the successful lives its residents will go on to lead. And no one embodies this spirit more than Elena Richardson, whose guiding principle is playing by the rules. Enter Mia Warren – an enigmatic artist and single mother – who arrives in this idyllic bubble with her teenage daughter Pearl, and a disregard for the status quo that threatens to upend this carefully ordered community.

NICOLL, Andrew - [The Secret Life and Curious Death of Miss Jean Milne](#)

Based on a true story and set in the heart of a wealthy community, at the very height of the British Empire, Andrew Nicoll tells a shocking tale of class division, money, sex, lies, betrayal and murder. And, at last, after a hundred years, has the curious death of Miss Jean Milne finally been solved?

NORTH, Anna - [The Life and Death of Sophie Stark](#)

This is the story of an enigmatic film director, told by the six people who loved her most. Brilliant, infuriating, all-seeing and unknowable, Sophie Stark makes films said to be 'more like life than life itself'. But her genius comes at a terrible cost: to her husband, to the brother she left behind, and to the actress she can't quite forget

ONDAATJE, Michael - [Warlight](#)

Warlight is a 2018 novel by Canadian author Michael Ondaatje. In London near the end of World War II, 14-year-old Nathaniel and his sister Rachel are left in the care of an enigmatic figure named The Moth, their parents having moved to Singapore.

OSMAN, Richard – [The Thursday Murder Club](#)

In a peaceful retirement village, four unlikely friends meet up once a week to investigate unsolved murders. But when a brutal killing takes place on their very doorstep, the Thursday Murder Club find themselves in the middle of their first live case.

OWENS, Delia – [Where the Crawdads Sing](#)

How long can you protect your heart? For years, rumours of the 'Marsh Girl' have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. But Kya is not what they say. Sensitive and intelligent, she has survived for years alone in the marsh that she calls home,

finding friends in the gulls and lessons in the sand. Then the time comes when she yearns to be touched and loved. When two young men from town become intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new life - until the unthinkable happens.

PARKS, Adele – Just My Luck

It's the stuff dreams are made of – a lottery win so big, it changes everything. For fifteen years, Lexi and Jake have played the same six numbers with their friends, the Pearsons and the Heathcotes. They've laughed of their disappointment when they failed to win anything more than a tenner. But then, one Saturday night, the unthinkable happens. There's a rift in the group. Someone doesn't tell the truth. And soon after, six numbers come up which change everything forever.

PARRY, Ambrose - The Way Of All Flesh

Young women are being discovered dead across the Old Town, all having suffered similarly gruesome ends. In the New Town, medical student Will Raven is about to start his apprenticeship with the brilliant and renowned Dr Simpson. Simpson's patients range from the richest to the poorest of this divided city. His house is like no other, full of visiting luminaries and daring experiments in the new medical frontier of anaesthesia. It is here that Raven meets housemaid Sarah Fisher, who recognises trouble when she sees it and takes an immediate dislike to him. She has all of his intelligence but none of his privileges, in particular his medical education. With each having their own motive to look deeper into these deaths, Raven and Sarah find themselves propelled headlong into the darkest shadows of Edinburgh's underworld.

PATCHETT, Ann – The Dutch House

Danny Conroy grows up in the Dutch House, a lavish folly in small-town Pennsylvania taken on by his property developer father. Though his father is distant and his mother is absent, Danny has his beloved sister Maeve: Maeve, with her wall of black hair, her delicacy, her brilliance. Life is comfortable and coherent, played out under the watchful eyes of the house's former owners in the frames of their oil paintings, or under the cover of the draperies around the window seat in Maeve's room. Then one day their father brings Andrea home: Andrea, small and neat, a dark hat no bigger than a saucer pinned over a twist of her fair hair. Though they cannot know it, Andrea's advent to the Dutch House sows the seed of the defining loss of Danny and Maeve's lives.

PATRICK, Phaedra – The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper

Having been married for over 40 years, 69-year-old Arthur Pepper is mourning the loss of his wife. On the anniversary of her death, he finally musters the courage to go through her possessions, and happens upon a charm bracelet that he has never seen before. What follows is a surprising adventure that takes Arthur from London to Paris and India in an epic quest to find out the truth about his wife's secret life before they met, a journey that leads him to find healing, self-discovery, and love in the most unexpected of places.

PENNEY, Stef - Under a Pole Star

A whaler's daughter, Flora Mackie first crossed the Arctic Circle at the age of twelve, falling in love with the cold and unforgiving terrain and forging lifelong bonds with the Inuit people who have carved out an existence on its icy plains.

POOLEY, Clare – The Authenticity Project

Julian Jessop is tired of hiding the deep loneliness he feels. So he begins The Authenticity Project – a small green notebook containing the truth about his life. Leaving the notebook on a table in his friendly neighbourhood café, Julian never expects Monica, the owner, to track him down after finding it. Or that she'll be inspired to write down her own story.

POOLEY, Clare - The people on Platform 5

Every day at 8:05, Iona Iverson boards the train to go to work. Iona sees the same group of people each day, people she makes assumptions about and gives nicknames to, but never ever talks to. Then, one morning, Smart-But-Sexist Surbiton chokes on a grape right in front of Iona. Too-Good-To-Be-True New Malden saves his life, and this one event sparks a chain reaction. With nothing in common but their commute, an eclectic group of people learn that their assumptions about each other don't match reality. But when Iona's life begins to fall apart, will her new friends be there when she needs them most?

PRESTON, John - A Very English Scandal

Behind oak-panelled doors in the House of Commons, men with cut-glass accents and gold signet rings are conspiring to murder. It's the late 1960s and homosexuality has only just been legalised, and Jeremy

Thorpe, the leader of the Liberal party, has a secret he's desperate to hide. As long as Norman Scott, his beautiful, unstable lover is around, Thorpe's brilliant career is at risk. With the help of his fellow politicians, Thorpe schemes, deceives, embezzles - until he can see only one way to silence Scott for good.

PURCELL, Laura – The Silent Companions

Newly married, newly widowed Elsie is sent to see out her pregnancy at her late husband's crumbling country estate, The Bridge. With her new servants resentful and the local villagers actively hostile, Elsie only has her husband's awkward cousin for company. Or so she thinks. But inside her new home lies a locked room, and beyond that door lies a 200-year-old diary and a deeply unsettling painted wooden figure that bears a striking resemblance to Elsie herself.

READ, Shelley – Go As A River

1940s Colorado: Teenage Victoria Nash is the sole surviving woman in a family of troubled men. She spends her days running the household on her family's peach farm. Wilson Moon is a young drifter with a mysterious past. Displaced from his tribal land, he wants to believe one place is just like another. When Victoria and Wil meet on a street corner, their unexpected connection ignites both passion and danger, revelations and secrets. But when tragedy strikes, Victoria is propelled away from the only home she has ever known and towards a reckoning with loss, hope, and her own untapped strength. Gathering all the pieces of her small and extraordinary existence, she will arrive at a single rocky decision that will change her life for ever.

RYAN, Donal – The Thing About December

While the Celtic Tiger rages, and greed becomes the norm, Johnsey Cunliffe desperately tries to hold on to the familiar, even as he loses those who all his life have protected him from a harsh world. Village bullies and scheming land-grabbers stand in his way, no matter where he turns. Set over the course of one year of Johnsey's life, The Thing About December breathes with his grief,

bewilderment, humour and agonizing self-doubt. This is a heart-twisting tale of a lonely man struggling to make sense of a world moving faster than he is.

[SCHMIDT, Sarah – See What I Have Done](#)

Just after 11am on 4th August 1892, the bodies of Andrew and Abby Borden are discovered. He's found on the sitting room sofa, she upstairs on the bedroom floor, both murdered with an axe. It is younger daughter Lizzie who is first on the scene, so it is Lizzie who the police first question, but there are others in the household with stories to tell: older sister Emma, Irish maid Bridget, the girls' Uncle John, and a boy who knows more than anyone realises. In a dazzlingly original and chilling reimagining of this most notorious of unsolved mysteries, Sarah Schmidt opens the door to the Borden home and leads us into its murkiest corners, where jealousies, slow-brewed rivalries and the darkest of thoughts reside.

[SHAFAK, Elif – The Island of Missing Trees](#)

1974, on the island of Cyprus. Two teenagers, from opposite sides of a divided land, meet at a tavern in the city they both call home. The tavern is the only place that Kostas, who is Greek and Christian, and Defne, who is Turkish and Muslim, can meet, in secret, hidden beneath the blackened beams from which hang garlands of garlic, chilli peppers and wild herbs. This is where one can find the best food in town, the best music, the best wine. But there is something else to the place: it makes one forget, even if for just a few hours, the world outside and its immoderate sorrows. In 'The Island of Missing Trees', prizewinning author Elif Shafak brings us a rich, magical tale of belonging and identity, love and trauma, memory and amnesia, human-induced destruction of nature, and, finally, renewal.

[SHAMSIE, Kamila – Home Fire](#)

Isma is free. After years spent raising her twin siblings in the wake of their mother's death, she is finally studying in America, resuming a dream long deferred. But she can't stop worrying about Aneeka, her beautiful, headstrong sister back in London - or their brother, Parvaiz, who's disappeared in pursuit of his own dream: to prove himself to the dark legacy of the jihadist father he never knew. Then Eamonn enters the sisters' lives. Handsome and privileged, he inhabits a London worlds away from theirs. As the son of a powerful British Muslim politician, Eamonn has his own birthright to live up to - or defy. Is he to be a chance at love?

[SNAITH, Mahsuda – The Things We Thought We Knew](#)

Ravine and Marianne were best friends. They practised handstands together, raced slugs, and looked up at the stars and imagined their own constellations. And then, one day, Marianne disappeared. Ten years later, Ravine lies in a bed in her mother's council flat, plagued by chronic pain syndrome, writing down the things she remembers. As her words fill page after page, she begins to understand that the only way to conquer her pain is to confront the horrors of her past. Heartbreaking, seductive and utterly unforgettable, 'The Things We Thought We Knew' is a rich and powerful novel about the things we remember and the things we wish we could forget.

[STROUT, Elizabeth – Anything is Possible](#)

Anything is Possible tells the story of the inhabitants of rural, dusty Amgash, Illinois, the hometown of Lucy Barton, a successful New York writer who finally returns, after seventeen years of absence, to visit the siblings she left behind.

Reverberating with the deep bonds of family, and the hope that comes with reconciliation, *Anything Is Possible* again underscores Elizabeth Strout's place as one of America's most respected and cherished authors.

[SWANSON, Peter - All The Beautiful Lies](#)

On the eve of his college graduation, Harry is called home by his step-mother Alice, to their house on the Maine coast, following the unexpected death of his father. But who really is Alice, his father's much younger second wife?

[SWIFT, Graham – Mothering Sunday](#)

It is March 30th 1924. It is Mothering Sunday. How will Jane Fairchild, orphan and housemaid, occupy her time when she has no mother to visit? How, shaped by the events of this never to be forgotten day, will her future unfold? Beginning with an intimate assignation and opening to embrace decades, *Mothering Sunday* has at its heart both the story of a life and the life that stories can magically contain. Constantly surprising, joyously sensual and deeply moving, it is Graham Swift at his thrilling best.

[TAYLOR, Matson – The Miseducation of Evie Epworth](#)

July, 1962. 16-year-old Evie Epworth stands on the cusp of womanhood. But what kind of a woman will she become? The fastest milk bottle-delivery girl in East Yorkshire, Evie is tall as a tree and hot as the desert sand. She dreams of an independent life lived under the bright lights of London (or Leeds). The two posters of Adam Faith on her bedroom wall ('brooding Adam' and 'sophisticated Adam') offer wise counsel about a future beyond rural East Yorkshire. Her role models are Charlotte Bronte, Shirley MacLaine and the Queen. But, before she can decide on a career, she must first deal with the malign presence of her future step-mother, the manipulative and money-grubbing Christine. Originally published: 2020

[TOWLES, Amor - A gentleman in Moscow](#)

On 21 June 1922, Count Alexander Rostov – recipient of the Order of Saint Andrew, member of the Jockey Club, Master of the Hunt – is escorted out of the Kremlin, across Red Square and through the elegant revolving doors of the Hotel Metropol. Deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, the Count has been sentenced to house arrest indefinitely. But instead of his usual suite, he must now live in an attic room while Russia undergoes decades of tumultuous upheaval. Can a life without luxury be the richest of all?

[TREMAIN, Rose - The Gustav sonata](#)

What is the difference between friendship and love?

Gustav grows up in a small town in Switzerland, where the horrors of the Second World War seem a distant echo. But Gustav's father has mysteriously died, and his adored mother Emilie is strangely cold and indifferent to him. Gustav's life is a lonely one until he meets Anton. An intense lifelong friendship develops but Anton fails to understand how deeply and irrevocably his life and Gustav's are entwined until it is almost too late...

[TYLER, Anne - A Spool of Blue Thread](#)

'It was a beautiful, breezy, yellow-and-green afternoon'. This is the way Abby Whitshank always begins the story of how she and Red fell in love that day in July 1959. The whole family on the

porch, relaxed, half-listening as their mother tells the same tale they have heard so many times before. And yet this gathering is different. Abby and Red are getting older, and decisions must be made about how best to look after them and their beloved family home. From that porch we spool back through three generations of the Whitshanks, witnessing the events, secrets and unguarded moments that have come to define who and what they are. And while all families like to believe they are special, round that kitchen table over all those years we see played out the hopes and fears, the rivalries and tensions of families everywhere - the essential nature of family life.

[WARD, Amanda Eyre - The Same Sky](#)

Alice and her husband, Jake, own a barbecue restaurant in Austin, Texas. Hardworking and popular in their community, they have a loving marriage and thriving business, but Alice still feels that something is missing, lying just beyond reach. Carla is a strong-willed young girl who's had to grow up fast, acting as caretaker to her six-year-old brother, Junior. Years ago, her mother left the family behind in Honduras to make the arduous, illegal journey to Texas. But when Carla's grandmother dies and violence in the city escalates, Carla takes fate into her own hands and, with Junior, joins the thousands of children making their way across Mexico to America, facing great peril for the chance at a better life.

[WARD, Jesmyn - Sing, Unburied, Sing](#)

An intimate portrait of a family and an epic tale of hope and struggle, 'Sing, Unburied, Sing' examines the ugly truths at the heart of the American story and the power - and limitations - of family bonds.

[WINN, Raynor - The salt path](#)

In one devastating week, Raynor and her husband Moth lost their home of 20 years, just as a terminal diagnosis took away their future together. With nowhere else to go, they decided to walk the South West Coast Path: a 630-mile sea-swept trail from Somerset to Dorset, via Devon and Cornwall. This ancient, wind-battered landscape strips them of every comfort they had previously known. With very little money for food or shelter, Raynor and Moth carry everything on their backs and wild camp on beaches and clifftops. But slowly, with every step, every encounter, and every test along the way, the walk sets them on a remarkable journey. They don't know how far they will travel, but - to their surprise - they find themselves on a path to freedom.

[WINMAN, Sarah – Tin Man](#)

This novel begins with a painting won in a raffle: 15 sunflowers, hung on the wall by a woman who believes that men and boys are capable of beautiful things. And then there are two boys, Ellis and Michael, who are inseparable. And the boys become men, and then Annie walks into their lives, and it changes nothing and everything.