



Staff Picks Digital and Print Edition

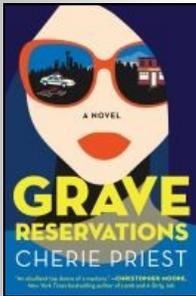
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FICTION

GRAVE RESERVATIONS BY CHERIE PRIEST

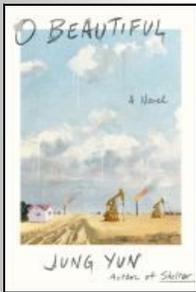
(PICKED BY KT)



Meet Leda Foley: devoted friend, struggling travel agent, and inconsistent psychic. When Leda, sole proprietor of Foley's Flights of Fancy, impulsively re-books Seattle PD detective Grady Merritt's flight, her life changes in ways she couldn't have predicted. After watching his original plane blow up from the safety of the airport, Grady realizes that Leda's special abilities could help him with a cold case he just can't crack. Despite her scattershot premonitions, she agrees for a secret reason: her fiancé's murder remains unsolved. Leda's psychic abilities couldn't help the case several years before, but she's been honing her skills and drawing a crowd at her favorite bar's open-mic nights, where she performs Clairvoyant Karaoke—singing whatever song comes to mind when she holds people's personal effects. Now joined by a rag-tag group of bar patrons and pals alike, Leda and Grady set out to catch a killer—and learn how the two cases that haunt them have more in common than they ever suspected. (304 pgs)

O BEAUTIFUL BY JUNG YUN

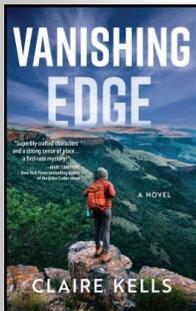
(PICKED BY SLS)



Elinor Hanson, a former model, is struggling to reinvent herself as a freelance writer when she receives an unexpected assignment. Her mentor from grad school offers her a chance to write for a prestigious magazine about the Bakken oil boom in North Dakota. Elinor grew up near the Bakken, raised by an overbearing father and a distant Korean mother who met and married when he was stationed overseas. After decades away from home, Elinor returns to a landscape she hardly recognizes, overrun by tens of thousands of newcomers. Elinor experiences a profound sense of alienation and grief. She rages at the unrelenting male gaze, the locals who still see her as a foreigner, and the memories of her family's estrangement after her mother decided to escape her unhappy marriage, leaving Elinor and her sister behind. The longer she pursues this assignment, the more her past intertwines with the story she's trying to tell, revealing disturbing new realities that will forever change her and the way she looks at the world. (320 pgs)

VANISHING EDGE BY CLAIRE KELLS

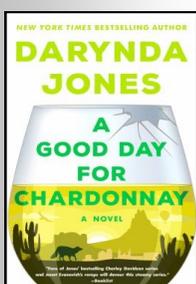
(PICKED BY SM)



The rugged landscape of Sequoia National Park is a challenge on the best of days—but when a park ranger discovers an abandoned exclusive campsite with an empty tent and high-end technical gear, the wilderness takes on a sinister new hue. Felicity Harland—a former FBI agent who left the service in the wake of a personal tragedy and has taken her skills off the grid—is brought in as chief investigator. As a federal agent with the Investigative Services Bureau, she tackles crimes that occur on National Parks lands. The private company that set up the exclusive camp won't reveal their client list, leaving Felicity with zero clues. But when she meets Ferdinand Huxley, a Navy SEAL turned park ranger, she begins to see the value in not just working with a partner, but trusting one, too. The investigation takes Felicity and Hux deep into a wilderness that tests their physical limits to the extreme—and to Los Angeles, where they begin to learn the grisly truth behind the campers' disappearance. (288 pgs)

A GOOD DAY FOR CHARDONNAY BY DARYNDA JONES

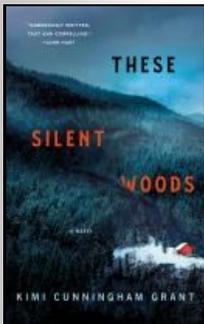
(PICKED BY KT)



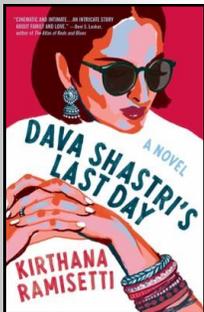
Running a small-town police force in the mountains of New Mexico should be a smooth, care-free kind of job. Sadly, full-time Sheriff—and even fuller-time coffee guzzler—Sunshine Vicram, didn't get that memo. Sunny's got a bar fight gone bad, a teenage daughter hunting a serial killer and the still unresolved mystery of her own abduction years prior. All evidence points to a local distiller, a dangerous bad boy named Levi Ravinder, but Sun knows he's not the villain of her story. Between policing a town her hunky chief deputy calls *four cents short of a nickel*, that crush she has on Levi which seems to grow every day, and a raccoon that just doesn't know when to quit, Sunny's life is about to rocket to a whole new level of crazy. (416 pgs)

**ALL HER LITTLE SECRETS BY WANDA MORRIS****(PICKED BY SP)**

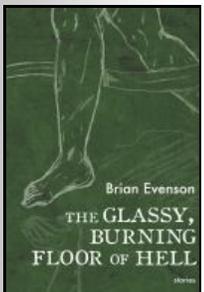
Ellice Littlejohn seemingly has it all: an Ivy League law degree, a well-paying job as a corporate attorney in midtown Atlanta, great friends, and a “for fun” relationship with a rich, charming executive, who just happens to be her white boss. Everything changes one morning when Ellice arrives in the executive suite and finds him dead with a gunshot to his head. Ellice has been keeping a cache of dark secrets, including a small-town past and a kid brother who has spent time on the other side of the law. Instead of grieving this tragedy, people are gossiping, the police are getting suspicious, and Ellice, the company’s lone black attorney, is promoted to replace her boss. While the opportunity is a dream-come-true, Ellice just can’t shake the feeling that something is off. When she uncovers shady dealings inside the company, Ellice is trapped in an impossible ethical and moral dilemma. Suddenly, Ellice’s past and present lives collide as she launches into a race to protect the brother she tried to save years ago and stop a conspiracy far more sinister than she could have ever imagined... (384 pgs)

**THESE SILENT WOODS BY KIMI CUNNINGHAM GRANT****(PICKED MG)**

For eight years, Cooper and his young daughter, Finch, have lived in isolation in a remote cabin in the northern Appalachian woods. That's exactly the way Cooper wants it, because he's got a lot to hide. Finch has been raised on the books filling the cabin's shelves and the beautiful but brutal code of life in the wilderness. But she's starting to push back against the sheltered life Cooper has created for her—and he's still haunted by the painful truth of what it took to get them there. The only people who know they exist are a mysterious local hermit named Scotland, and Cooper's old friend, Jake, who visits each winter to bring them food and supplies. But this year, Jake doesn't show up, setting off an irreversible chain of events that reveals just how precarious their situation really is. When a stranger wanders into their woods, Finch's growing obsession with her could put them all in danger. After a shocking disappearance threatens to upend the only life Finch has ever known, Cooper is forced to decide whether to keep hiding—or finally face the sins of his past. (288 pgs)

**DAVA SHASTRI'S LAST DAY BY KIRTHANA RAMISETTI****(PICKED BY SLS & SM)**

Dava Shastri, one of the world's wealthiest women, has always lived with her sterling reputation in mind. A brain cancer diagnosis at the age of seventy, however, changes everything, and Dava decides to take her death—like all matters of her life—into her own hands. Summoning her four adult children to her private island, she discloses shocking news: in addition to having a terminal illness, she has arranged for the news of her death to break early, so she can read her obituaries. As someone who dedicated her life to the arts and the empowerment of women, Dava expects to read articles lauding her philanthropic work. Instead, her "death" reveals two devastating secrets, truths she thought she had buried forever. And now the whole world knows, including her children. In the time she has left, Dava must come to terms with the decisions that have led to this moment—and make peace with those closest to her before it's too late. (384 pgs)

**THE GLASSY, BURNING FLOOR OF HELL BY BRIAN EVENSON****(PICKED BY TA)**

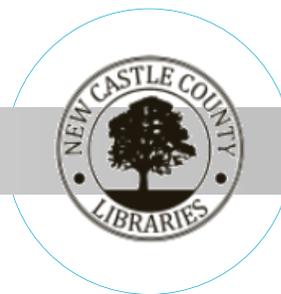
A sentient, murderous prosthetic leg; shadowy creatures lurking behind a shimmering wall; brutal barrow men—of all the terrors that populate *The Glassy, Burning Floor of Hell*, perhaps the most alarming are the beings who decimated the habitable earth: humans. In this new short story collection, Brian Evenson envisions a chilling future beyond the Anthropocene that forces excruciating decisions about survival and self-sacrifice in the face of toxic air and a natural world torn between revenge and regeneration. (248 pgs)

**BRIGHT BURNING THINGS BY LISA HARDING****(PICKED BY BS)**

Sonya used to perform on stage. She used to attend glamorous parties, date handsome men, ride in fast cars. But somewhere along the way, the stage lights Sonya lived for dimmed for good. In their absence, came darkness—blackouts, empty cupboards, hazy nights she can't remember. What keeps Sonya from losing herself completely is Tommy, her son. But her immense love for Tommy is in fierce conflict with her immense love of the bottle. Addiction amplifies her fear of losing her child; every maternal misstep compels her to drink. Tommy's precious life is in her shaky hands. Eventually Sonya is forced to make a choice. Give up drinking or lose Tommy—forever. (336 pgs)

STAFF PICKS

JANUARY 2022

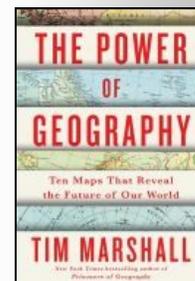


NON-FICTION

THE POWER OF GEOGRAPHY BY TIM MARSHALL

(PICKED BY SLH)

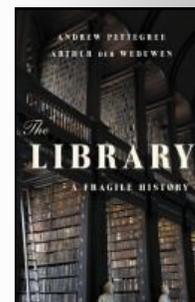
In this revelatory new book, Marshall explores ten regions that are set to shape global politics in a new age of great-power rivalry: Australia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the UK, Greece, Turkey, the Sahel, Ethiopia, Spain and Space. Find out why Europe's next refugee crisis is closer than it looks as trouble brews in the Sahel; why the Middle East must look beyond oil and sand to secure its future; why the eastern Mediterranean is one of the most volatile flashpoints of the twenty-first century; and why the Earth's atmosphere is set to become the world's next battleground. (360 pgs)



THE LIBRARY BY ANDREW PETTEGREE

(PICKED BY SLS)

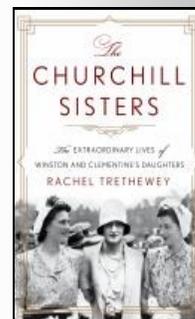
Famed across the known world, jealously guarded by private collectors, built up over centuries, destroyed in a single day, ornamented with gold leaf and frescoes, or filled with bean bags and children's drawings—the history of the library is rich, varied, and stuffed full of incident. In *The Library*, historians Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen introduce us to the antiquarians and philanthropists who shaped the world's great collections, trace the rise and fall of literary tastes, and reveal the high crimes and misdemeanors committed in pursuit of rare manuscripts. In doing so, they reveal that while collections themselves are fragile, often falling into ruin within a few decades, the idea of the library has been remarkably resilient as each generation makes—and remakes—the institution anew. (528 pgs)



THE CHURCHILL SISTERS BY RACHEL TRETHERWEY

(PICKED BY MG)

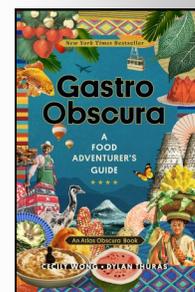
Bright, attractive and well-connected, in any other family the Churchill girls – Diana, Sarah, Marigold and Mary – would have shone. But they were not in another family, they were Churchills, and neither they nor anyone else could ever forget it. From their father – ‘the greatest Englishman’ – to their brother, golden boy Randolph, to their eccentric and exciting cousins, the Mitford Girls, they were surrounded by a clan of larger-than-life characters which often saw them overlooked. While Marigold died too young to achieve her potential, the other daughters lived lives full of passion, drama and tragedy. Diana, intense and diffident; Sarah, glamorous and stubborn; Mary, dependable yet determined – each so different but each imbued with a sense of responsibility toward each other and their country. Far from being cosseted debutantes, these women were eyewitnesses at some of the most important events in world history, at Tehran, Yalta and Potsdam. This story is an intimate saga that sheds light on the complex dynamics of family set against the backdrop of a tumultuous century. (320 pgs)

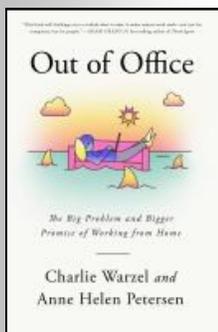


GASTRO OBSCURA BY CECILY WONG

(PICKED BY SLS & SLH)

Covering all seven continents, *Gastro Obscura* serves up a loaded plate of incredible ingredients, food adventures, and edible wonders. Ready for a beer made from fog in Chile? Sardinia's "Threads of God" pasta? Egypt's 2000-year-old egg ovens? But far more than a menu of curious minds, delicacies and unexpected dishes, *Gastro Obscura* reveals food's central place in our lives. Culture—picture four million women gathering to make rice pudding. Travel—scale China's sacred Mount Hua to reach a tea house. Festivals—feed wild macaques pyramids of fruit at Thailand's Monkey Buffet Festival. And hidden gems that might be right around the corner, like the vending machine in Texas dispensing full sized pecan pies. (448 pgs)





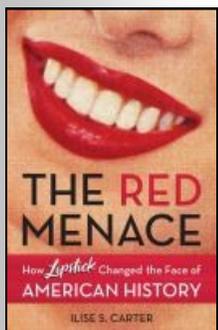
OUT OF OFFICE BY CHARLIE WARZEL & ANNE HELEN PETERSON (PICKED BY BS)

The past two years have shown us that there may be a new path forward, one that doesn't involve hellish daily commutes and work schedules that no longer make sense. But how can we realize that future in a way that benefits workers and companies alike? *Out of Office* illuminates the key values and questions that should be driving this conversation: trust, fairness, flexibility, inclusive workplaces, equity, and work-life balance. Above all, they argue that companies need to listen to their employees – and that this will promote, rather than impede, productivity and profitability. As a society, we have talked for decades about flexible work arrangements; this book makes clear that we are at an inflection point where this is actually possible for many employees and their companies. *Out of Office* is about so much more than zoom meetings and hybrid schedules: it aims to reshape our entire relationship to the office. (272 pgs)



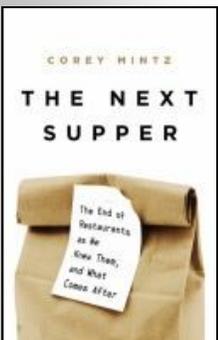
COKIE: A LIFE WELL LIVED BY STEVEN ROBERTS (PICKED BY SM)

Through her visibility and celebrity, Cokie Roberts was an inspiration and a role model for innumerable women and girls. A fixture on national television and radio for more than 40 years, she also wrote five bestselling books focusing on the role of women in American history. Reflecting on her life, those closest to her remember her impressive mind, impish wit, infectious laugh, and the tenacity that sent her career skyrocketing through glass ceilings at NPR and ABC. They marvel at how she often put others before herself and cared deeply about the world around her. When faced with daily decisions and dilemmas, many still ask themselves the question, 'What Would Cokie Do?' In this loving tribute, Cokie's husband of 53 years and bestselling-coauthor Steve Roberts reflects not only on her many accomplishments, but on how she lived each day with a devotion to helping others. For Steve, Cokie's private life was as significant and inspirational as her public one. (272 pgs)



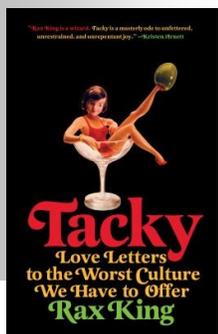
THE RED MENACE BY ILISE CARTER (PICKED BY SLH)

Lipstick is a multi-billion-dollar industry and one of our most iconic accessories of gender. This engaging history of lipstick from the colonies to the present will give readers a new view of the little tube's big place in modern America from defining the middle class to building Fortune 500 businesses to being present at Stonewall and being engineered for space travel. Lipstick evolved from a beauty secret for a select few to a required essential for well turned-out women but also a mark of rock 'n' roll rebellion and a political statement. How has this mainstay of the makeup kit remained relevant? Carter suggests that it's because the simple lipstick says a lot. From the provocative allure of a classic red lip to the powerful statement of drag, the American love affair with lipstick is linked to every aspect of our experience of gender. (216 pgs)



THE NEXT SUPPER BY COREY MINTZ (PICKED BY SM)

In the years before the pandemic, the restaurant business was booming. Americans spent more than half of their annual food budgets dining out. In a generation, chefs had gone from behind-the-scenes laborers to TV stars. The arrival of Uber Eats, DoorDash, and other meal delivery apps was overtaking home cooking. Beneath all that growth lurked serious problems. Many of the best restaurants in the world employed unpaid cooks. Meal delivery apps were putting restaurants out of business. And all that dining out meant dramatically less healthy diets. The industry may have been booming, but it also desperately needed to change. Then, along came COVID-19. From the farm to the swarm of delivery vehicles, everything about the restaurant business is changing, for better or worse. *The Next Supper* tells this story and offers clear and essential advice for what and how to eat to ensure the well-being of cooks and waitstaff, not to mention our bodies and the environment. (352 pgs)



TACKY BY RAX KING (PICKED BY TA)

Tacky is about the power of pop culture—like any art—to imprint itself on our lives and shape our experiences, no matter one's commitment to "good" taste. These fourteen essays are a nostalgia-soaked antidote to the millennial generation's obsession with irony, putting the aesthetics we hate to love—snakeskin pants, *Sex and the City*, Cheesecake Factory's gargantuan menu—into kinder and sharper perspective. Each essay revolves around a different maligned (and yet, Rax would argue, vital) cultural artifact, providing thoughtful, even romantic meditations on desire, love, and the power of nostalgia. (208 pgs)