

**1. THE ENGLISH GERMAN GIRL** by Jake Wallis Simons, 340 pp

This powerful, meticulously researched novel is a moving tale of one girl's struggle against a world in turmoil. In 1930s Berlin, choked by the tightening of Hitler's fist, the Klein family are gradually losing everything that is precious to them. Their fifteen-year-old daughter, Rosa, slips out of Germany on a Kindertransport train to begin a new life in England. Charged with the task of securing a safe passage for her family, she vows that she will not rest until they are safe. But as war breaks out and she loses contact with her parents, Rosa finds herself wondering if there are some vows that can't be kept ...A sweeping tale of love and loss, with the poignant story of the Kindertransport at its heart, this is an exceptional accomplishment from one of Britain's bravest and most vibrant young writers.

**2. TINSELTOWN** by William J. Mann, 463 pp

By 1920, the movies had suddenly become America's new favorite pastime, and one of the nation's largest industries. Never before had a medium possessed such power to influence. Yet Hollywood's glittering ascendancy was threatened by a string of headline-grabbing tragedies—including the murder of William Desmond Taylor, the popular president of the Motion Picture Directors Association, a legendary crime that has remained unsolved until now.

In a fiendishly involving narrative, bestselling Hollywood chronicler William J. Mann draws on a rich host of sources, including recently released FBI files, to unpack the story of the enigmatic Taylor and the diverse cast that surrounded him—including three beautiful, ambitious actresses; a grasping stage mother; a devoted valet; and a gang of two-bit thugs, any of whom might have fired the fatal bullet. And overseeing this entire landscape of intrigue was Adolph Zukor, the brilliant and ruthless founder of Paramount, locked in a struggle for control of the industry and desperate to conceal the truth about the crime. Along the way, Mann brings to life Los Angeles in the Roaring Twenties: a sparkling yet schizophrenic town filled with party girls, drug dealers, religious zealots, newly-minted legends and starlets already past their prime—a dangerous place where the powerful could still run afoul of the desperate.

A true story recreated with the suspense of a novel, Tinseltown is the work of a storyteller at the peak of his powers—and the solution to a crime that has stumped detectives and historians for nearly a century.

**3. THE LIVES OF OTHERS** by Neel Mukherjee , 516 pp

The aging patriarch and matriarch of the Ghosh family preside over their large household, made up of their five adult children and their respective children, unaware that beneath the barely ruffled surface of their lives the sands are shifting. Each set of family members occupies a floor of the home, in accordance to their standing within the family. Poisonous rivalries between sisters-in-law, destructive secrets, and the implosion of the family business threaten to unravel bonds of kinship as social unrest brews in greater Indian society. This is a moment of turbulence, of inevitable and unstoppable change: the chasm between the generations, and between those who have and those who have not, has never been wider. The eldest grandchild, Supratik, compelled by his idealism, becomes dangerously involved in extremist political activism an action that further catalyzes the decay of the Ghosh home.

Ambitious, rich, and compassionate, *The Lives of Others* anatomizes the soul of a nation as it unfolds a family history, at the same time as it questions the nature of political action and the limits of empathy. It is a novel of unflinching power and emotional force."

**4. ALL THE LIGHT WE CANNOT SEE** by Anthony Doerr, 531 pp

Marie Laure lives with her father in Paris within walking distance of the Museum of Natural History where he works as the master of the locks (there are thousands of locks in the museum). When she is six, she goes blind, and her father builds her a model of their neighborhood, every house, every manhole, so she can memorize it with her fingers and navigate the real streets with her feet and cane. When the Germans

occupy Paris, father and daughter flee to Saint-Malo on the Brittany coast, where Marie-Laure's agoraphobic great uncle lives in a tall, narrow house by the sea wall.

In another world in Germany, an orphan boy, Werner, grows up with his younger sister, Jutta, both enchanted by a crude radio Werner finds. He becomes a master at building and fixing radios, a talent that wins him a place at an elite and brutal military academy and, ultimately, makes him a highly specialized tracker of the Resistance. Werner travels through the heart of Hitler Youth to the far-flung outskirts of Russia, and finally into Saint-Malo, where his path converges with Marie-Laure.

Doerr's gorgeous combination of soaring imagination with observation is electric. Deftly interweaving the lives of Marie-Laure and Werner, Doerr illuminates the ways, against all odds, people try to be good to one another. Ten years in the writing, *All the Light We Cannot See* is his most ambitious and dazzling work.

**5. NECESSARY LIES** by Dian Chamberlain, 368 pp

Bestselling author Diane Chamberlain delivers a breakout book about a small southern town fifty years ago, and the darkest—and most hopeful—places in the human heart. After losing her parents, fifteen-year-old Ivy Hart is left to care for her grandmother, older sister and nephew as tenants on a small tobacco farm. As she struggles with her grandmother's aging, her sister's mental illness and her own epilepsy, she realizes they might need more than she can give.

When Jane Forrester takes a position as Grace County's newest social worker, she doesn't realize just how much her help is needed. She quickly becomes emotionally invested in her clients' lives, causing tension with her boss and her new husband. But as Jane is drawn in by the Hart women, she begins to discover the secrets of the small farm—secrets much darker than she would have guessed. Soon, she must decide whether to take drastic action to help them, or risk losing the battle against everything she believes is wrong.

Set in rural Grace County, North Carolina in a time of state-mandated sterilizations and racial tension, *Necessary Lies* tells the story of these two young women, seemingly worlds apart, but both haunted by tragedy. Jane and Ivy are thrown together and must ask themselves: how can you know what you believe is right, when everyone is telling you it's wrong?

**6. WALKING ON WATER** by Richard Paul Evans, 320 pp

In this fifth New York Times bestseller in the Walk series, Richard Paul Evans' hero Alan Christoffersen must say some painful goodbyes and learn some important lessons as he comes to the end of his cross-country walk to Key West.

After the death of his beloved wife, after the loss of his advertising business to his once-trusted partner, after bankruptcy forced him from his home, Alan Christoffersen's daring cross-country journey; a walk across America, from Seattle to Key West, with only the pack on his back has taught him lessons about love, forgiveness and, most of all, hope.

Now Alan must again return west to face yet another crisis, one that threatens to upend his world just as he had begun to heal from so much loss, leaving him unsure of whether he can reach the end his journey. It will take the love of a new friend, and the wisdom of an old friend, to help him to finally leave the past behind and find the strength and hope to live again

**7. WHAT SHE LEFT BEHIND** by Ellen Marie Wiseman, 336 pp

In this stunning new novel, the acclaimed author of *THE PLUM TREE* merges the past and present into a haunting story about the nature of love and loyalty—and the lengths we will go to protect those who need

us most.

Ten years ago, Izzy Stone's mother fatally shot her father while he slept. Devastated by her mother's apparent insanity, Izzy, now seventeen, refuses to visit her in prison. But her new foster parents, employees at a local museum, have enlisted Izzy's help in cataloging items at a long-shuttered state asylum. There, amid piles of abandoned belongings, Izzy discovers a stack of unopened letters, a decades old journal, and a window into her own past.

Clara Cartwright, eighteen years old in 1929, is caught between her overbearing parents and her love for an Italian immigrant. Furious when she rejects an arranged marriage, Clara's father sends her to a genteel home for nervous invalids. But when his fortune is lost in the stock market crash, he can no longer afford her care—and Clara is committed to the public asylum.

Even as Izzy deals with the challenges of yet another new beginning, Clara's story keeps drawing her into the past. If Clara was never really mentally ill, could something else explain her own mother's violent act? Piecing together Clara's fate compels Izzy to re-examine her own choices—with shocking and unexpected results.

**8. UNDER THE WIDE AND STARRY SKY** by Nancy Horan, 474 pp

From Nancy Horan, New York Times bestselling author of *Loving Frank*, comes her much-anticipated second novel, which tells the improbable love story of Scottish writer Robert Louis Stevenson and his tempestuous American wife, Fanny.

At the age of thirty-five, Fanny Van de Grift Osbourne has left her philandering husband in San Francisco to set sail for Belgium—with her three children and nanny in tow—to study art. It is a chance for this adventurous woman to start over, to make a better life for all of them, and to pursue her own desires. Not long after her arrival, however, tragedy strikes, and Fanny and her children repair to a quiet artists' colony in France where she can recuperate. Emerging from a deep sorrow, she meets a lively Scot, Robert Louis Stevenson, ten years her junior, who falls instantly in love with the earthy, independent, and opinionated "belle Americaine."

Fanny does not immediately take to the slender young lawyer who longs to devote his life to writing—and who would eventually pen such classics as *Treasure Island* and *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. In time, though, she succumbs to Stevenson's charms, and the two begin a fierce love affair—marked by intense joy and harrowing darkness—that spans the decades and the globe. The shared life of these two strong-willed individuals unfolds into an adventure as impassioned and unpredictable as any of Stevenson's own unforgettable tales.

**9. TREASURE ISLAND** by Robert Lewis Stevenson, 183 pp

Following the demise of bloodthirsty Buccaneer Captain Flint, young Jim Hawkins finds himself with the key to a fortune. For he has discovered a map that will lead him to the fabled *Treasure Island*. But a host of villains, wild beasts, and deadly savages stand between him and the stash of gold. Not to mention the most infamous pirate ever to sail the high seas . . . There's pirates, mutiny, a treasure map--all the elements of a memorable adventure tale.

**10. THE SHADOW CATCHER** by Marianne Wiggins 336 pages

Following her National Book Award finalist, *Evidence of Things Unseen*, Marianne Wiggins turns her extraordinary literary imagination to the American West, where the life of legendary photographer Edward S. Curtis is the basis for a resonant exploration of history and family, landscape and legacy. *The Shadow Catcher* dramatically inhabits the space where past and present intersect, seamlessly interweaving

narratives from two different eras; the first fraught passion between turn-of-the-twentieth-century icon Edward Curtis (1868-1952) and his muse-wife, Clara; and a twenty-first-century journey of redemption. Narrated in the first person by a reimagined writer named Marianne Wiggins, the novel begins in Hollywood, where top producers are eager to sentimentalize the complicated life of Edward Curtis as a sunny biopic: "It's got the outdoors. It's got adventure. It's got the do-good element." Yet, contrary to Curtis's esteemed public reputation as servant to his nation, the artist was an absent husband and disappearing father. Jump to the next generation, where Marianne's own father, John Wiggins (1920-1970), would live and die in equal thrall to the impulse of wanderlust. Were the two men running from or running to? Dodging the false beacons of memory and legend, Marianne amasses disparate clues – photographs and hospital records, newspaper clippings and a rare white turquoise bracelet – to recover those moments that went unrecorded, "to hear the words only the silent ones can speak." *The Shadow Catcher*, fueled by the great American passions for love and land and family, chases the silhouettes of our collective history into the bright light of the present.

**11. AMERICAN PASSAGE: THE HISTORY OF ELLIS ISLAND** by Vincent J. Cannato 496 pages  
For most of New York's early history, Ellis Island had been an obscure little island that barely held itself above high tide. Today the small island stands alongside Plymouth Rock in our nation's founding mythology as the place where many of our ancestors first touched American soil. Ellis Island's heyday from 1892 to 1924 coincided with one of the greatest mass movements of individuals the world has ever seen, with some twelve million immigrants inspected at its gates. In *American Passage*, Vincent J. Cannato masterfully illuminates the story of Ellis Island from the days when it hosted pirate hangings witnessed by thousands of New Yorkers in the nineteenth century to the turn of the twentieth century when massive migrations sparked fierce debate and hopeful new immigrants often encountered corruption, harsh conditions, and political scheming.

*American Passage* captures a time and place unparalleled in American immigration and history, and articulates the dramatic and bittersweet accounts of the immigrants, officials, interpreters, and social reformers who all play an important role in Ellis Island's chronicle. Cannato traces the politics, prejudices, and ideologies that surrounded the great immigration debate, to the shift from immigration to detention of aliens during World War II and the Cold War, all the way to the rebirth of the island as a national monument. Long after Ellis Island ceased to be the nation's preeminent immigrant inspection station, the debates that swirled around it are still relevant to Americans a century later. In this sweeping, often heart-wrenching epic, Cannato reveals that the history of Ellis Island is ultimately the story of what it means to be an American.

**12. AMERICANAH** by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, 477 pp  
A story of love and race centered around a young man and woman from Nigeria who face difficult choices and challenges in the countries they come to call home.

As teenagers in a Lagos secondary school, Ifemelu and Obinze fall in love. Their Nigeria is under military dictatorship, and people are leaving the country if they can. Ifemelu—beautiful, self-assured—departs for America to study. She suffers defeats and triumphs, finds and loses relationships and friendships, all the while feeling the weight of something she never thought of back home: race. Obinze—the quiet, thoughtful son of a professor—had hoped to join her, but post-9/11 America will not let him in, and he plunges into a dangerous, undocumented life in London.

Years later, Obinze is a wealthy man in a newly democratic Nigeria, while Ifemelu has achieved success as a writer of an eye-opening blog about race in America. But when Ifemelu returns to Nigeria, and she and Obinze reignite their shared passion—for their homeland and for each other—they will face the toughest decisions of their lives.

Fearless, gripping, at once darkly funny and tender, spanning three continents and numerous lives, *Americanah* is a richly told story set in today's globalized world: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's most powerful and astonishing novel yet

One of The New York Times's Ten Best Books of the Year; Winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction; An NPR "Great Reads" Book, a Chicago Tribune Best Book; a Washington Post Notable Book; a Seattle Times Best Book; an Entertainment Weekly Top Fiction Book; a Newsday Top 10 Book; and a Goodreads Best of the Year pick.

**13. WITHOUT YOU, THERE IS NO US** by Suki Kim, 304 pp

Kim's enthralling account of the five months she spent teaching English to North Korea's elite university students reveal the perplexing innocence and ignorance of one of the world's most secretive countries.

**14. THE POSSIBILITIES** by Kauai Hart Hemmings.

It is about the sudden death of an only child and hometown boy as a result of an avalanche and a snowboarding accident. It takes place in Breckenridge, Colo, and the author explores what it means to belong to a community using the locals and the tourists.