

#1

**The Accidental President: Harry S. Truman and the Four Months That Changed the World, by A J Baime, 431 pp**

The dramatic, pulse-pounding story of Harry Truman's first four months in office, when this unlikely president had to take on Germany, Japan, Stalin, and the atomic bomb, with the fate of the world hanging in the balance.

Heroes are often defined as ordinary characters who get thrust into extraordinary circumstances, and through courage and a dash of luck, cement their place in history. Chosen as FDR's fourth term Vice President for his well-praised work ethic, good judgment, and lack of enemies, Harry S. Truman--a Midwesterner who had no college degree and had never had the money to buy his own home--was the prototypical ordinary man. That is, until he was shockingly thrust in over his head after FDR's sudden death. During the climactic months of the Second World War, Truman had to play judge and jury, pulling America to the forefront of the global stage. The first four months of Truman's administration saw the founding of the United Nations, the fall of Berlin, victory at Okinawa, firebombings of Tokyo, the first atomic explosion, the Nazi surrender, the liberation of concentration camps, the mass starvation of Europe, the Potsdam Conference, the controversial decision to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the surrender of Imperial Japan, and finally, the end of World War II and the rise of the Cold War. No other president had ever faced so much in such a short period of time.

#2

A Woman Is No Man by Etaf Rum 336 pages

In Brooklyn, eighteen-year-old Deya is starting to meet with suitors. Though she doesn't want to get married, her grandparents give her no choice. History is repeating itself: Deya's mother, Isra, also had no choice when she left Palestine as a teenager to marry Adam. Though Deya was raised to believe her parents died in a car accident, a secret note from a mysterious, yet familiar-looking woman makes Deya question everything she was told about her past. As the narrative alternates between the lives of Deya and Isra, she begins to understand the dark, complex secrets behind her community.

#3

Elinor Oliphant Is Completely Fine by Gail Honeyman 327 pages

No one's ever told Eleanor that life should be better than fine. Meet Eleanor Oliphant: She struggles with appropriate social skills and tends to say exactly what she's thinking. Nothing is missing in her carefully timetabled life of avoiding social interactions, where weekends are punctuated by frozen pizza, vodka, and phone chats with Mummy. But everything changes when Eleanor meets Raymond, the bumbling and deeply unhygienic IT guy from her office. When she and Raymond together save Sammy, an elderly gentleman who has fallen on the sidewalk, the three become the kinds of friends who rescue one another from the lives of isolation they have each been living. And it is Raymond's big heart that will ultimately help Eleanor find the way to repair her own profoundly damaged one. Soon to be a major motion picture produced by Reese Witherspoon, *Elinor Oliphant Is Completely Fine* is the smart, warm, and uplifting story of an out-of-the-ordinary heroine whose deadpan weirdness and unconscious wit make for an irresistible journey as she realizes. . . The only way to survive is to open your heart.

#4

City of Girls by Elizabeth Gilbert 470 pages

Beloved author Elizabeth Gilbert returns to fiction with a unique love story set in the New York City theater world during the 1940s. Told from the perspective of an older woman as she looks back on her youth with both pleasure and regret (but mostly pleasure), *City of Girls* explores themes of female sexuality and promiscuity, as well as the idiosyncrasies of true love.

In 1940, nineteen-year-old Vivian Morris has just been kicked out of Vassar College, owing to her lackluster freshman-year performance. Her affluent parents send her to Manhattan to live with her Aunt Peg, who owns a flamboyant, crumbling midtown theater called the Lily Playhouse. There Vivian is introduced to an entire cosmos of unconventional and charismatic characters, from the fun-chasing showgirls to a sexy male actor, a grand-dame actress, a lady-killer writer, and no-nonsense stage manager. But when Vivian makes a personal mistake that results in professional scandal, it turns her new world upside down in ways that it will take her years to fully understand. Ultimately, though, it leads her to a new understanding of the kind of life she craves—and the kind of freedom it takes to pursue it. It will also lead to the love of her life, a love that stands out from all the rest.

Now ninety-five years old and telling her story at last, Vivian recalls how the events of those years altered the course of her life - and the gusto and autonomy with which she approached it. *At some point in a woman's life, she just gets tired of being ashamed all the time, she muses. After that, she is free to become whoever she truly is.* Written with a powerful wisdom about human desire and connection, *City of Girls* is a love story like no other.

#5

*Sea of Memories* by Fiona Valpy 273 pages

In 1937, seventeen-year-old Ella's life changes forever when she is sent to spend the summer on the beautiful Île de Ré and meets the charismatic, creative Christophe. They spend the summer together, exploring the island's sandy beaches and crystal-clear waters, and, for the first time in her life, Ella feels truly free. But the outbreak of war casts everything in a new light. Ella is forced to return to Scotland, where she volunteers for the war effort alongside the dashing Angus. In this new world, Ella feels herself drifting further and further from who she was on the Île de Ré. Can she ever find her way back? And does she want to? From the windswept Île de Ré to the rugged hills of Scotland, *Sea of Memories* is a spellbinding journey about the power of memory, love and second chances.

#6

*The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood 344 pages

Offred is a Handmaid in the Republic of Gilead. She may leave the home of the Commander and his wife once a day to walk to food markets whose signs are now pictures instead of words because women are no longer allowed to read. She must lie on her back once a month and pray that the Commander makes her pregnant, because in an age of declining births, Offred and the other Handmaids are valued only if their ovaries are viable. Offred can remember the years before, when she lived and made love with her husband, Luke; when she played with and protected her daughter; when she had a job, money of her own, and access to knowledge. But all of that is gone now...

#7

Lit: **A Memoir - Mary Karr.**

Karr's longing for a solid family seems secure when her marriage to a handsome, Shakespeare-quoting blueblood poet produces a son they adore. But she can't outrun her apocalyptic past. She drinks herself into the same numbness that nearly devoured her charismatic but troubled mother, reaching the brink of suicide. A hair-raising stint in "The Mental Marriott," with an oddball tribe of gurus and saviors, awakens her to the possibility of joy and leads her to an unlikely faith. Not since Saint Augustine cried, "Give me chastity, Lord-but not yet!" has a conversion story rung with such dark hilarity

#8

*The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* by Robert Dugoni, 434 pg

Sam Hill always saw the world through different eyes. Born with red pupils, he was called "Devil Boy" or Sam "Hell" by his classmates; "God's will" is what his mother called his ocular albinism. Her words were of little comfort, but Sam persevered, buoyed by his mother's devout faith, his father's practical wisdom, and his two other misfit friends. Sam believed it was God who sent Ernie Cantwell, the only African American kid in his class, to be the friend he so desperately needed. And that it was God's idea for Mickie Kennedy to storm into Our Lady of Mercy like a tornado, uprooting every rule Sam had been taught about boys and girls. Forty years later, Sam, a small-town eye doctor, is no longer certain anything was by design—especially not the tragedy that caused him to turn his back on his friends, his hometown, and the

life he'd always known. Running from the pain, eyes closed, served little purpose. Now, as he looks back on his life, Sam embarks on a journey that will take him halfway around the world. This time, his eyes are wide open—bringing into clear view what changed him, defined him, and made him so afraid, until he can finally see what truly matters.

#9

**Where the Crawdads Sing** by Delia Owens

For years, rumors 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. Perfect for fans of Barbara Kingsolver and Karen Russell, *Where the Crawdads Sing* is at once an exquisite ode to the natural world, a heartbreaking coming-of-age story, and a surprising tale of possible murder. Owens reminds us that we are forever shaped by the children we once were, and that we are all subject to the beautiful and violent secrets that nature keeps.

#10

**Into the Water** by Paula Hawkins

A single mother turns up dead at the bottom of the river that runs through town. Earlier in the summer, a vulnerable teenage girl met the same fate. They are not the first women lost to these dark waters, but their deaths disturb the river and its history, dredging up secrets long submerged. Left behind is a lonely fifteen-year-old girl. Parentless and friendless, she now finds herself in the care of her mother's sister, a fearful stranger who has been dragged back to the place she deliberately ran from—a place to which she vowed she'd never return. With the same propulsive writing and acute understanding of human instincts that captivated millions of readers around the world in her explosive debut thriller, *The Girl on the Train*, Paula Hawkins delivers an urgent, twisting, deeply satisfying read that hinges on the deceptiveness of emotion and memory, as well as the devastating ways that the past can reach a long arm into the present.

#11

**Small Mercies** by Eddie Joyce

In unflinching but lyrical prose, Joyce shows us one mother's struggle to keep her family together and preserve the memory of her son. Following Gail as she moves from the corner offices of white-shoe Manhattan law firms to the blue-collar gin mills of the outer boroughs, *Small Mercies* reveals a different New York, one that exists in the hearts and minds of its inhabitants.

#12

**The Magpie Murders** by Anthony Horowitz

When editor Susan Ryeland is given the manuscript of Alan Conway's latest novel, she has no reason to think it will be much different from any of his others. After working with the bestselling crime writer for years, she's intimately familiar with his detective, Atticus Pünd, who solves mysteries disturbing sleepy English villages.

Conway's latest tale has Atticus Pünd investigating a murder at Pye Hall, a local manor house. The more Susan reads, the more she's convinced that there is another story hidden in the pages of the manuscript: one of real-life jealousy, greed, ruthless ambition, and murder.

#13

**Maybe you should Talk to Someone** by Lori Gottlieb 412 pg

One day, Lori Gottlieb is a therapist who helps patients in her Los Angeles practice. The next, a crisis causes her world to come crashing down. Enter Wendell, the quirky but seasoned therapist in whose office she suddenly lands. With his balding head, cardigan, and khakis, he seems to have come straight from Therapist Central Casting. Yet he will turn out to be anything but. A boldly revealing portrait of what it means to be human.