

The Radcliffe Ladies' Reading Club

Julia Bryan Thomas

Massachusetts, 1954. Alice Campbell escapes halfway across the country and finds herself in front of a derelict building tucked among the cobblestone streets of Cambridge, and she turns that sad little shop into the charming bookstore of her dreams. Tess, Caroline, Evie, and Merritt become fast friends in the sanctuary of Alice's monthly reading club at The Cambridge Bookshop, where they escape the pressures of being newly independent college women in a world that seems to want to keep them in the kitchen. But they each embody very different personalities, and when a member of the group finds herself shattered, everything they know about each other—and themselves—will be called into question.

The Indigo Girl

Natasha Boyd

The year is 1739. Eliza Lucas is sixteen years old when her father leaves her in charge of their family's three plantations in rural South Carolina and then proceeds to bleed the estates dry in pursuit of his military ambitions. Tensions with the British, and with the Spanish in Florida, just a short way down the coast, are rising, and slaves are starting to become restless. Her mother wants nothing more than for their South Carolina endeavor to fail so they can go back to England. Soon her family is in danger of losing everything. Upon hearing how much the French pay for indigo dye, Eliza believes it's the key to their salvation. But everyone tells her it's impossible, and no one will share the secret to making it. Thwarted at nearly every turn, even by her own family, Eliza finds that her only allies are an aging horticulturalist, an older and married gentleman lawyer, and a slave with whom she strikes a dangerous deal: teach her the intricate thousand-year-old secret process of making indigo dye and in return—against the laws of the day—she will teach the slaves to read. Based on historical documents.

Someone Else's Shoes

448 pages

A Novel

by Jojo Moyes

Nisha Cantor lives the globetrotting life of the seriously wealthy, until her husband announces a divorce and cuts her off. Nisha is determined to hang onto her glamorous life. But in the meantime, she must scramble to cope—she doesn't even have the shoes she was, until a moment ago, standing in. That's because Sam Kemp – in the bleakest point of her life – has accidentally taken Nisha's gym bag. But Sam hardly has time to worry about a lost gym bag—she's struggling to keep herself and her family afloat. When she tries on Nisha's six-inch high Christian Louboutin red crocodile shoes, the resulting jolt of confidence that makes her realize something must change—and that thing is herself.

The Secret Book of Flora Lee by Patti Callahan Henry. 353 pages

When fourteen year old Hazel and her younger sister Flora leave London as part of Operation Pied Piper, Hazel makes up a fantasy world called Whisperwood to distract Flora from the harsh realities of war. Soon after evacuating, Flora goes missing and is presumed dead. Twenty years later, Hazel works in a bookstore and comes across a book about a place called Whisperwood. Is Flora alive? This unputdownable novel seamlessly blends historical fiction, mystery, and fantasy, and is absolutely enchanting.

Warlight by Michael Ondaatje

In a narrative as beguiling and mysterious as memory itself—shadowed and luminous at once—we read the story of fourteen-year-old Nathaniel, and his older sister, Rachel. In 1945, just after World War II, they stay behind in London when their parents move to Singapore, leaving them in the care of a mysterious figure named The Moth. They suspect he might be a criminal, and they grow both more convinced and less concerned as they come to know his eccentric crew of friends: men and women joined by a shared history of unspecified service during the war, all of whom seem, in some way, determined now to protect, and educate (in rather unusual ways) Rachel and Nathaniel. But are they really what and who they claim to be? A dozen years later, Nathaniel begins to uncover all that he didn't know and understand in that time.

The Locals by Jonathan Dee

The residents of a quaint Berkshire town see their lives begin to change when a hedge fund titan, spooked by the 9/11 attacks, moves his family there. The story gives voice to a diverse set of white, working class residents and their complicated relationships to the elites that pass through the town. Here are the dramas of twenty-first-century America—rising inequality, working class decline, a new authoritarianism—played out in the classic setting of some of our greatest novels: the small town. *The Locals* is that rare work of fiction capable of capturing a fraught American moment in real time.

What the Wind Knows, by Amy Harmon, 416pp.

Anne Gallagher grew up enchanted by her grandfather's stories of Ireland. Heartbroken at his death, she travels to his childhood home to spread his ashes. There, overcome with memories of the man she adored and consumed by a history she never knew, she is pulled into another time. The Ireland of 1921, teetering on the edge of war, is a dangerous place in which to awaken. But there Anne finds herself, hurt, disoriented, and under the care of Dr. Thomas Smith, guardian to a young boy who is oddly familiar. Mistaken for the boy's long-missing mother, Anne adopts her identity, convinced the woman's disappearance is connected to her own.

As tensions rise, Thomas joins the struggle for Ireland's independence and Anne is drawn into the conflict beside him. Caught between history and her heart, she must decide whether she's willing to let go of the life she knew for a love she never thought she'd find. But in the end, is the choice actually hers to make?

The Winemaker's Wife, by Kristen Harmel, 400 pp.

Champagne, 1940: Inès has just married Michel, the owner of storied champagne house Maison Chauveau, when the Germans invade. As the danger mounts, Michel turns his back on his marriage to begin hiding munitions for the Résistance. Inès fears they'll be exposed, but for Céline, half-Jewish wife of Chauveau's chef de cave, the risk is even greater—rumors abound of Jews being shipped east to an unspeakable fate.

New York, 2019: Liv Kent has just lost everything when her eccentric French grandmother shows up unannounced, insisting on a trip to France. But the older woman has an ulterior motive—and a tragic, decades-old story to share. When past and present finally collide, Liv finds herself on a road to salvation that leads right to the caves of the Maison Chauveau.

Demon Copperhead. by Barbara Kingsolver

Set in the mountains of southern Appalachia, *Demon Copperhead* is the story of a boy born to a teenaged single mother in a single-wide trailer, with no assets beyond his dead father's good looks and copper-colored hair, a caustic wit, and a fierce talent for survival. Relayed in his own unsparing voice, Demon braves the modern perils of foster care, child labor, derelict schools, athletic success, addiction, disastrous loves, and crushing losses.

Charles Dickens wrote *David Copperfield* from his experience as a survivor of institutional poverty and its damages to children in his society. Those problems have yet to be solved in ours. *Demon Copperhead* speaks for a new generation of lost boys, and all those born into beautiful, cursed places they can't imagine leaving behind.

The Good Sister. By Sally Hepworth

Sally Hepworth, the author of *The Mother-In-Law* delivers a knock-out of a novel about the lies that bind two sisters in *The Good Sister*. There's only been one time that Rose couldn't stop me from doing the wrong thing and that was a mistake that will haunt me for the rest of my life.

When Rose discovers that she cannot get pregnant, Fern sees her chance to pay her sister back for everything Rose has done for her. Fern can have a baby for Rose. She just needs to find a father. Simple. Fern's mission will shake the foundations of the life she has carefully built for herself and stir up dark secrets from the past, in this quirky, rich and shocking story of what families keep hidden.

Yellow Wife By Sadeqa Johnson

Born on a plantation in Charles City, Virginia, Pheby Delores Brown has lived a relatively sheltered life. She had been promised freedom on her eighteenth birthday, but instead of the idyllic life she imagined with her true love, Essex Henry, Pheby is forced to leave the only home she has ever known. She unexpectedly finds herself thrust into the bowels of slavery at the infamous Devil's Half Acre, a jail in Richmond, Virginia,

where the enslaved are broken, tortured, and sold every day. To survive, Pheby will have to outwit him, and she soon faces the ultimate sacrifice.

Mistress of the Elgin Marbles by Susan Angel

A highly entertaining biography of the alluring Lady Elgin, whose husband notoriously swiped the legendary sculptures from the Athens' Parthenon and shipped them back to England. Angel's heroine belongs to the fearless, headstrong wanderer species of aristocratic women.

The Prince of the Marshes by Rory Stewart

Stewart's account of his year serving as the deputy governor of 2 southern provinces in Iraq is an instant classic of colonial literature. The then 30 year old diplomat sees wry comedy as much as human tragedy in an assignment that involved arbitrating between paranoid tribal interests and blunderingly unrealistic American goals.

The Aftermath by Phillip Bump

Philip Bump, a reporter as adept with a graph as with a paragraph, is popular for his ability to distill vast amounts of data into accessible stories. THE AFTERMATH is a sweeping assessment of how the baby boom created modern America, and where power, wealth, and politics will shift as the boom ends. How much longer than we'd expected will Boomers control wealth? Will millennials get shortchanged for jobs and capital as Gen Z rises? What kind of pressure will Boomers exert on the health care system? How do generations and parties overlap? When will regional identity trump age or ethnic or racial identity? Who will the future GOP voter be, and how does that affect Democratic strategies? What does the Census get right, and terribly wrong? The questions are myriad, and Bump is here to fight speculation with fact. We know what will happen eventually to the baby boomers. What we don't know is how the boomer legacies might reshape the country one final time. The answers in this book will help us manage the historic disruption of the American state we are now experiencing.

Tom Lake by Ann Patchett

In the spring of 2020, Lara's three daughters return to the family's orchard in Northern Michigan. While picking cherries where they beg their mother to tell them the story of Peter Duke, a famous actor with whom she shared both a stage and a romance years before at a theater company called Tom Lake. As Lara recalls the past, her daughters examine their own lives and relationship with their mother and are forced to reconsider the world and everything they thought they knew. Tom Lake is a meditation on youthful love, married love, and the lives parents have led before their children were born.