

Someone

by Alice McDermott DEBORAH'S PICK (Fiction)

When we first meet Marie, she is seven years old. From a chance encounter with a neighborhood girl, to her parents' deaths, through WW II, marriage and children, this novel moves from one emotionally rich touch point to the next. McDermott captivates readers by delving into daily life with compassion, showing us that we can't always see at the time what will be meaningful in our lives. This simple, bittersweet story will appeal to readers of Alice Munro and Ann Patchett.

Too Much Happiness

by Alice Munro ROBERTA'S PICK (Fiction)

Every story collection from Canada's Alice Munro receives such critical plaudits that it's tempting for reviewers to recycle superlatives and readers to take her for granted. But there is no such thing as "just another" Munro release. Each time, she extends her work in a manner that redefines. Here, Munro reads like a Russian master. It's hard to imagine that anyone could write stories richer than these.

The Twelve Tribes of Hattie

by Ayana Mathis ROBIN'S PICK (Fiction)

This was not the life Hattie expected to live after fleeing Jim Crow Georgia in 1923 and settling in Philadelphia. Married to an irresponsible man, she is poor, cold, hungry, and desperate. Mathis pivots forward in time, spotlighting dramatic episodes in the lives of Hattie's nine children (and one grandchild to make the twelve tribes), galvanizing crises that expose the crushed dreams and anguished legacy of the Great Migration.

Wench

by Dolen Perkins-Valdez ROBIN'S PICK (Fiction)

Four slave women accompany their masters to a resort in the free state of Ohio in the 1850s. Based on research about the resort that became the first black college, Wilberforce University, the novel explores the complexities of relationships in slavery and the comfort of women's friendships.

Wide Sargasso Sea

By Jean Rhys KERRI'S PICK (Fiction)

The heroine of this novel, set in the Caribbean, is Antoinette Cosway, a sensual and protected young woman who is sold into marriage to the prideful Rochester. In this best-seller, Rhys portrays a society so driven by hatred, so skewed in its sexual relations, that it can literally drive a woman out of her mind.

The Wife

by Meg Wolitzer LORRI'S PICK (Fiction)

Joan Castelman is en route to Finland to watch her husband, renowned author Joe Castleman, win the Helsinki Prize when she decides to leave him. What follows is Joan's fascinating recollection of their marriage, his career, and her fading dreams. Wolitzer's crisp pacing and dry wit carry us headlong into a devastating message about the price of love and fame.

A Winter's Tale

by Mark Helprin ROBIN'S PICK (Fiction)

From the very first sequence here (a white milk-cart horse bounds over the newly-built Brooklyn Bridge in a bid for freedom), Helprin makes it clear that he's out to conquer the Latin-American-style genre of magic realism--with splendid worlds of the impossible-made-possible, and storytelling designed to vibrate and shine on each page.



The Affairs of Others

by Amy Grace Loyd ROBERTA'S PICK (Fiction)

A mesmerizing debut novel about a young woman, haunted by loss, who rediscovers passion and possibility when she's drawn into the tangled lives of her neighbors. Celia Cassill has moved from one Brooklyn neighborhood to another and believes in boundaries, but everything changes with the arrival of a new tenant - a dazzling woman of a certain age on the run from her husband's recent betrayal.

Asylum

by Patrick McGrath DANI'S PICK (Fiction)

McGrath explores issues of power, lust, and the ever-shifting definition of sanity in this sensual, yet harrowing, drama of sexual obsession at a high-security insane asylum just outside London. McGrath has a mind that revels in the toxic side of things and, in this tale, descent into darkness and despair.

Blue Plate Special

by Kate Christensen ROBERTA'S PICK (Bio Christensen)

Christensen pegs her tangy memoir to the endless quest for sustenance and the nurturing of the self. In her first food memory, she's just eaten her favorite breakfast, soft-boiled eggs, when her father viciously attacks her mother. Christensen writes with savory, home-cooked clarity as she digs into the pleasures and dangers of food, charting the culinary fads of the 1960s on, as well as changes to women's lives while zestfully telling intimate and hilarious tales.

Burial Rites

by Hannah Kent DEBORAH'S PICK (Fiction)

Kent brings to vivid life the fictional final days of a young woman accused of murder in Iceland in 1829. The harshness of the landscape and the lifestyle of Iceland is as finely detailed as the heartbreak and tragedy of Agnes' life, based on the true story of the last woman executed there. Haunting reading from a bright new talent.

Christian Nation

by Frederic Rich DEBORAH'S PICK (Fiction)

Could a Sarah Palin presidency spark a faith-based civil war in America? Yes, according to Rich's debut novel. The book is narrated by Greg, who, in 2029, is recalling the country's grim fate after John McCain bested Barack Obama in the 2008 election. When McCain dies shortly after taking office, Palin becomes the willing puppet of Christian religious zealots who insist on making the United States a Christian nation, home-schooling their children into soldiers for Christ.

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The Circle

by Dave Eggers LORRI'S PICK (Fiction)

Eggers offers a stunning work of terrifying plausibility, a cautionary tale of subversive power in the digital age, packaged as a Silicon Valley social satire. The "Circle", an internet company that is successor to Facebook, Google, Twitter and more, is seen through the eyes of Mae Holland, a new hire who starts in customer service.

Dark Places

by Gillian Flynn DANI'S PICK (Fiction)

Flynn takes modern readers back to Kansas to explore the fictional 1985 Day family massacre from the perspective of a survivor as well as the suspects. In order to identify the true killer, Libby Day must come to terms with the traumatic events of her childhood. When the truth emerges, it's so twisted that even the most astute readers won't have predicted it.

Defending Jacob

by William Landay LOIS' PICK (Fiction)

Andy Barber has been an ADA in his suburban Massachusetts county for more than 20 years. He is respected in his community and happy at home with his wife, Laurie, and son Jacob, until his 14-year-old is charged with the murder of a fellow student. With its masterfully crafted characterizations and dialogue, emotional depth and frightening implications, the novel rivals the best of Scott Turow and John Grisham.

The Emperor's Children

by Claire Messud LORRI'S PICK (Fiction)

In 2001, a decade after they met at Brown, three best friends are finding it hard to be 30 in Manhattan. Danielle is struggling as a TV documentary maker and Julius is barely surviving financially as a freelance critic. Marina, the beautiful daughter of celebrated social activist, journalist and hob-nobber Murray Thwaite, is living with her parents unable to finish her book.

Extraordinary, Ordinary People

by Condoleezza Rice PEGGY'S PICK (Biography RICE)

This is the story of Condoleezza Rice that has never been told, not that of an ultra-accomplished world leader, but of a little girl and a young woman -- trying to find her place in a sometimes hostile world -- and of two exceptional parents and an extended family and community, that made all the difference.

Hotel du Lac

by Anita Brookner ROBERTA'S PICK (Fiction)

Brookner frames the eternal question "Why love?" and tells the story of Edith Hope, who writes romance novels. When her life begins to resemble the plots of her own novels, however, Edith flees to Switzerland, where the quiet luxury of the Hotel du Lac promises to restore her to her senses.

The Husband's Secret

by Liane Moriarty ROBERTA'S PICK (Fiction)

Moriarty experiments with the intersection of comedy and tragedy in her consideration of secrecy, temptation, guilt and human beings' general imperfections in the intertwining lives of three women connected to a Catholic elementary school in Sidney. Moriarty may be an edgier, more provocative and bolder successor to Maeve Binchy.

Inside the Dream Palace

by Sherill Tippins DEBORAH'S PICK (Non-Fic 647.94 TIP)

The Chelsea Hotel, from its very inception, was different. But the architecture was not what made the Chelsea famous; its residents did. Allen Ginsberg, Andy Warhol, Janis Joplin, and Leonard Cohen, are only a few of the figures populating this entertaining book. A zesty history of more than a century of American culture.

Life After Life

by Jill McCorkle DANI'S PICK (Fiction)

Award-winning author Jill McCorkle takes us on a splendid journey through time and memory. "Life After Life" is filled with a sense of wonder at our capacity for self-discovery at any age. The residents, staff, and neighbors of the Pine Haven retirement center share some of life's most profound discoveries and are some of the most true-to-life characters that you are ever likely to meet in fiction.

Longbourn

by Jo Baker DEBORAH'S PICK (Fiction)

Elizabeth and Darcy take a backseat in this engrossing Austen homage, which focuses on the lives of the servants of Longbourn rather than the Bennet family. Baker's novel finds Sarah yearning for something more than washing soiled dresses and the arrival of a handsome new footman, James Smith, creates quite a stir.

Look at Me: a novel

By Jennifer Egan KERRI'S PICK (Fiction)

Thirty-five-year-old Charlotte, an unpleasant Manhattan-based model who escaped the middle-class nothingness of her upbringing in Rockford, Ill., then spent her adult life getting by on appearances, literally loses her face in a catastrophic car accident in Egan's satisfying stew of philosophy, social commentary, and storytelling.

Mother, Daughter, Me

by Katie Hafner ANNALISE'S PICK (Biography HAFNER)

When Hafner's octogenarian mother, Helen, is no longer able to care for her ailing life partner in her San Diego home, Hafner hatches a brilliant plan: move Helen to San Francisco to live with her and her teenage daughter, Zoe. It seems like an ideal scenario. Heartbreakingly honest, yet not without hope and flashes of wry humor.

Plainsong and Eventide

by Kent Haruf PAT'S PICK (Fiction)

Two bachelor farmer brothers, a pregnant high school girl, and two devoted teachers are a few of the characters featured in Haruf's touching novels. Set in the plains of Colorado, both novels comprise several story lines that flow into one. Haruf quietly depicts the stalwart courage of decent and troubled people going on with their lives. Readers will find that what made "Plainsong" a bestseller - its humanity, its grace and its moving, heartfelt story - shines again in "Eventide", a sequel.

Prayer for Owen Meany

by John Irving BRITTIN'S PICK (Fiction)

Diminutive Owen Meany, believing himself to be God's instrument, unlocks life's mysteries for his closest friend, Johnny, in this imaginative mix of humor and tragedy. Readers will be drawn in by the story of the boys' friendship and by the desire to see some resolution to Johnny's mysteries.

Shocked: My Mother, Schiaparelli and Me

by Patricia Volk ANNALISE'S PICK (Non-Fic 746.9209 SCH)

Volk studies two different but glamorous women-her mother, Audrey, an upper-class New York domestic goddess with the looks and manners of Grace Kelly, and haute couture European artist Elsa Schiaparelli, whose book, art, and perfume forever change the course of young Volk's life. As funny as it is poignant, Volk's work employs a combination of words to live by, rich vignettes, and photographs to show how she learned what it meant to be a woman and how all it takes is one book to transform a young person's world.

Rose Under Fire

by Elizabeth Wein BRENNNA'S PICK (Fiction)
Poignant and memorable, Wein's follow-up to *Code Name Verity* gives readers a look at World War II through the eyes of pilot Rose Justice. Captured by Nazis and sent to a concentration camp for women, Rose uses poetry to express herself and connect with other inmates.

Somewhere Inside

by Laura Ling ANNALISE'S PICK (Non-Fic 365.45 LIN)
In 2009, reporter Laura Ling traveled with a film crew to China. Momentarily crossing into North Korea, Ling and her editor/translator were captured. The women were beaten, held in isolation, tried for attempting to overthrow the government and sentenced to 12 years in a labor camp. A riveting story of captivity, faith, and determination.

Tigers in Red Weather

by Liza Klaussmann LARISSA'S PICK (Fiction)
Postwar marriage and motherhood are more complicated than cousins Nick and Helena expected in Klaussmann's smart, unsettling debut. Tiger House, Nick's family home on Martha's Vineyard, sees a turbulent summer in 1959 when Nick's daughter and Helena's son discover the corpse of a maid. The focus is on simmering tensions within and between the two families as the narrative moves into the 1960s.

Things a Brother Knows

by Dana Reinhardt ROBIN'S PICK (Fiction)
In a Boston suburb, Levi's older brother, Boaz, has just returned from fighting in some desert country half a world away. Reinhardt's poignant story of a soldier coping with survivor's guilt and trauma, and his Israeli American family's struggle to understand and help, is timely and honest. The clever, authentic dialogue beautifully captures the dynamics of the family, friends, and marines in the brothers' lives.

The View from Penthouse b

by Elinor Lipman ANNALISE'S PICK (Fiction)
After losing her divorce settlement in Bernard Madoff's Ponzi scheme, Margot settles into a new penthouse in Greenwich Village with her widowed, jobless sister, Gwen-Laura Schmidt, and Anthony Sarno, a gay, recently laid-off, 20-something financier. Lipman's evokes the lonely world of the mature, newly single woman with a sweet and comforting touch.

The Woman Upstairs

By Claire Messud ROBERTA'S PICK (Fiction)
Nora Eldridge, a schoolteacher who dreams of being an artist, is angry, cynical, and quietly desperate. Then she meets the Shahid family. Nora believes she's found a vigorous self in the orbit of a dangerously charismatic family, but after freeing Nora from herself, the Shahids betray her.

The 5th Wave

by Richard Yancey BRITTIN'S PICK (Science Fiction)
Extraterrestrials unleash a plague that kills the majority of the world's population, including sixteen-year-old Cassie's mother. After her brother, Sammy, is bused to an alien camp Cassie realizes the aliens have been living among them for years. Cassie must place her trust in an alien-human hybrid whose motives are less than clear in this post-apocalyptic struggle.



Above All Things

by Tanis Rideout LORRI'S PICK (Fiction)
Because it's there. George Mallory's famous reply to why he attempts to scale Mount Everest satisfies everyone but his wife, Ruth. Their passionate romance is strained by Mallory's insatiable need to crest a mountain that has vanquished him before. Rideout's vividly authentic historical novel is praise to the ability of love to conquer all but the highest mountains.

The Bean Trees

by Barbara Kingsolver VICTORIA'S PICK (Fiction)
A warmhearted and highly entertaining first novel in which a poor but plucky Kentucky girl with a sharp tongue, soft heart and strong spirit sets out on a cross-country trip and arrives at surprising new meanings for love, friendship, and family--as well as overcoming the big and little fears that inhibit lives.

The Blackhouse

by Peter May DEBORAH'S PICK (Mystery Fiction)
Two bodies are found hanging from trees: one in Edinburgh, the other on the Isle of Lewis. Because of his ties with the region and his fluency in Gaelic, Edinburgh-based DI Fin Macleod is dispatched to Scotland's remote Isle of Lewis to compare two deaths. A gripping plot, pitch-perfect characterization, and an appropriately bleak setting drive this outstanding series debut.

The Blood of Flowers

by Anita Amirrezvani KERRI'S PICK (Fiction)
This first novel is narrated by a nameless teenager whose life in 17th-century Iran is derailed by misfortune following her father's death. With no means of support, she and her mother move to the city of Isfahan to live as servants and the young woman learns the art of carpet design. The story of the plucky narrator's rocky road toward independence is stirring.

Both Ways is the Only Way I Want It

by Maile Meloy KERRI'S PICK (Fiction)
Meloy hits some high notes in these stories of people juggling conflicting emotions. Marital tensions are at the heart of "O Tannenbaum". Other pieces focus on loneliness. Meloy's characters frequently leave each other or let each other down, and it is precisely their vulnerabilities, failures, and flaws that make them so wonderful to follow.

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The Burgess Boys

by Elizabeth Strout LARISSA'S PICK (Fiction)

Two squabbling brothers confront their demons, their crumbling love lives and a hate crime case that thrusts them back to their Maine roots. Jim and Bob Burgess are similar on the surface--lawyers, New Yorkers--but polar opposites emotionally.

Cold Sassy Tree

by Olive Ann Burns VICTORIA'S PICK (Fiction)

A folksy, down-Georgia-way tale, with tangy 1906 dialect--all about the scandalizing that goes on in the town of Cold Sassy when one-armed Grandpa Blakeslee (a new widower) up and marries pretty milliner Miss Love Simpson. The narrator is 14-year-old Will Tweedy, who's on hand when his Grandpa announces the news about his upcoming wedding.

The Cuckoo's Calling

by Robert Galbraith ANNALISE'S PICK (Fiction)

Working as a private investigator after losing his leg in Afghanistan, Cormoran Strike takes the case of a legendary supermodel's suspicious suicide and finds himself in a world of multi-millionaire beauties, rock star boyfriends, desperate designers, and hedonist pursuits. This is J. K. Rowling writing detective novels as Robert Galbraith.

Dept of Speculation

by Jenny Offill LORRI'S PICK (Fiction)

Popping prose and touching vignettes of marriage and motherhood fill Offill's (*Last Things*) slim second book of fiction. Clever, subtle, and rife with strokes of beauty, this book is both readable in a single sitting and far ranging in the emotions it raises.

The Divide: American injustice in the age of the wealth gap

by Matt Taibbi DEBORAH'S PICK (Non-Fic 303.37 TAI)

This is a devastating account of the inequality in our justice, immigration and social service systems. Mixing case studies, interviews and anecdotes with comprehensive research on his topics, Taibbi deals with the frisk-and-stop campaign in New York City, the 2008 financial collapse, our persecution of people on food stamps and other public assistance, and more.

Fever

by Mary Beth Keane DANI'S PICK (Fiction)

In this compelling historical novel, the infamous Typhoid Mary is given great depth and humanity by the gifted Keane. Irish immigrant Mary Mallon is eager to better her station in life and unafraid of hard work. When she is finally made a head cook, she is hired by some of the best families in Manhattan but unwittingly leaves a trail of disease in her wake.

Flight Behavior

by Barbara Kingsolver MARCIA'S PICK (Fiction)

Kingsolver delivers a passionate novel on the effects of global warming. Dellarobia Turnbow, on her way to a rendezvous, is waylaid by the sight of a forest ablaze with millions of butterflies. Their usual migratory route has been disrupted, and what looks to be a stunning view is really an ominous sign.

Flora

by Gail Godwin ROBERTA'S PICK (Fiction)

Godwin examines the bonds of family and the enduring scars inflicted by loss. In the summer of 1945, 10-year-old Helen has just lost Nonie, the grandmother who raised her after her

mother died when she was three. Helen's father, the discontented, hard-drinking principal of the local high school needs someone to stay with her. The protagonists are surrounded by secondary characters just as fully and sensitively drawn.

The Golem and the Jinni

by Helene Wecker DANI'S PICK (Fiction)

Wecker has blended elements of Jewish and Arab folklore and mythology in this intriguing historical fantasy. What happens when a golem, a Polish woman made of clay, marooned in late-nineteenth-century New York, joins forces with jinni, a creature made of fire, accidentally released by a Syrian tinsmith in lower Manhattan? Wecker does not disappoint.

Jane and Prudence

by Barbara Pym LORRI'S PICK (Fiction)

Middle-aged Jane is the well-intentioned but far from perfect clergyman's wife and mother. Prudence, who at 29 is teetering at the edge of spinsterhood, is an attractive, educated working girl. The two best friends share memories of their carefree days at Oxford, leisurely lunches, and gossip, but their ultimate goal is to find a suitable mate for Prudence.

Love and Treasure

by Ayelet Waldman DEBORAH'S PICK (Fiction)

Jack Wiseman, in the last throes of pancreatic cancer, entrusts an enamel locket to his granddaughter, imploring her to find the rightful owner. As Waldman takes us back to Hungary, first in the aftermath of the war, then to the years preceding it, she evokes what it feels like to have your identity and your community stripped from you and how impossibly foolish it can be to think your personal destiny is within your control.

The Light in the Ruins

by Chris Bohjalian PAT'S PICK (Fiction)

In Florence in 1955, Francesca Rosati is murdered. A serial killer is at work, preying on the Rosati family. Serafina Bettini, Florence's only woman detective, wonders if the war has something to do with this gruesome vendetta. In extended flashbacks, we see Francesca and her children living in a lush Tuscany estate which has become a magnet for Nazis.

The Marriage Plot

By Jeffrey Eugenides VICTORIA'S PICK (Fiction)

A stunning novel - erudite, compassionate and penetrating in its analysis of love relationships. Eugenides focuses primarily on three characters, who all graduate from Brown in 1982.

The Martian

by Andy Weir MARCIA'S PICK (Fiction)

Six days ago, astronaut Mark Watney became one of the first people to walk on Mars. Now, he's sure he'll be the first person to die there. After a dust storm nearly kills him and forces his crew to evacuate while thinking him dead, Mark finds himself stranded and completely alone with no way to even signal Earth.

The Promise

by Ann Weisgarber DEBORAH'S PICK (Fiction)

At the turn of the 20th century, ostracized by society following a scandalous romantic affair, pianist Catherine Wainright knows she must leave Dayton. In desperation, she accepts a proposal of marriage from a childhood friend, Oscar Williams, now a farmer on the island of Galveston, Texas.

Staff Picks

FALL 2014

The Story of Edgar Sawtelle

by David Wroblewski VICTORIA'S PICK (Fiction)

A tale reminiscent of "Hamlet" that also celebrates the alliance between humans and dogs follows speech-disabled Wisconsin youth Edgar, who bonds with three yearling canines and struggles to prove that his sinister uncle is responsible for his father's death.

Summer House with Swimming Pool

by Herman Koch DANI'S PICK (Fiction)

A controversial, thought-provoking novel that showcases Herman Koch at his finest. Concealing the medical mistake that caused the death of a famous actor, Dr. Marc Schlosser gradually reveals the personal reasons why he sought the victim's death, including an assault on the doctor's daughter.

The Truth About Alice

by Jennifer Mathieu DEBORAH'S PICK (Fiction)

Healy, Texas, is a small town where everyone knows each other's business, and the scandals that unfold around Alice Franklin are no exception. The book is told from alternating points of view, and four of Alice's classmates provide accounts of heavy drinking and rumors about Alice's promiscuity.

Under Magnolia: a Southern memoir

by Frances Mayes PEGGY'S PICK (Biography)

Set in the author's "one-mile-square" hometown of Fitzgerald in Georgia, Mayes's (adored for her famed Tuscan books) depicts a childhood of rich meals, her adoring and violent father and her restless alcoholic mother. Mayes distracts herself with books and seeks comfort from Willie Bell, the family cook.

We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves

by Karen Joy Fowler ROBERTA'S PICK (Fiction)

Fowler (*The Jane Austen Book Club*) has written a strong, unsettling novel that draws on true accounts of animal behaviorists raising chimps with infant children. Narrator Rosemary Cooke, now nearing 40, tells a heartbreaking story of her family and a pivotal event that has haunted her all her life.

We Were Liars

By E. Lockhart DANI'S PICK (Fiction)

Cadence Sinclair Eastman, eldest grandchild in a Kennedy-esque clan, begins the book by divulging an unspecified accident that happened during her fifteenth summer on the family's private island that left her with debilitating migraines and memory loss. Surprising, thrilling, and beautifully executed, Lockhart spins a tragic family drama, the roots of which go back generations. And the ending? Shhhh. Not telling. (But it's a doozy.)

When Heaven and Earth Changed Places: a Vietnamese woman's journey from war to peace

by Le Ly Hayslip KERRI'S PICK (Non-Fic 959.704 H425)

Now a San Diego restaurateur, Le Ly Hayslip 20 years ago was a child guerrilla near Da Nang who endured imprisonment, rape, constant bombardment, torture, and starvation while fighting for the Viet Cong. Hayslip is piercingly honest. In her ability to love without erasing contradictions and ambiguities, Hayslip shows us what real forgiveness can be.

All the Light We Cannot See

by Anthony Doerr DEBORAH'S PICK (Fiction)

A novel about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II. A novel to live in, learn from, and feel bereft over when the last page is turned.

American Born Chinese

by Gene Luen Yang LARISSA'S PICK (Graphic Novel)

Yang presents a well-crafted work that explores issues of self-image, cultural identity, transformation, and self-acceptance. In a series of three linked tales, the central characters are introduced. Their stories converge into a satisfying coming-of-age novel that blends traditional Chinese fables and legends, action figures, and playground politics.

Born to Run: a hidden tribe, superathletes, and the greatest race the world has ever seen

by McDougall, Christopher BRITTIN'S PICK

(Non-Fic 796.424 MCD)

McDougall reveals the secrets of the world's greatest distance runners--the Tarahumara Indians of Copper Canyon, Mexico--and how he trained for the challenge of a lifetime: a fifty-mile race through the heart of Tarahumara country pitting the tribe against an odd band of super-athletic Americans.

Boy, Snow, Bird

by Helen Oyeyemi LORRI'S PICK (Fiction)

Oyeyemi delves deeply into the nature of identity in this contemplative novel which retells "Snow White" set in 1950s New England. Boy Novak is a 20-year-old young woman who arrives in Flax Hill, MA. She has run away from New York because her abusive father, Frank, a rat catcher by trade who has refused to tell her anything about her never-present mother, has threatened to treat her like one of his rats.

California

by Edan Lepucki DEBORAH'S PICK (Fiction)

In her suspenseful debut, Lepucki envisions a postapocalyptic America. After fleeing a decaying, ransacked Los Angeles to begin anew in the wilderness, married couple Cal and Frida are faced with dwindling supplies and an uncertain future. When Frida discovers she might be pregnant, the need to connect with other survivors becomes all the more imperative.

Call the Nurse: true stories of a country nurse on a Scottish Isles

by Mary J. MacLeod PEGGY'S PICK (Biography)

Being a nurse can be challenging at the best of times, but being a nurse on a remote Scottish island is something else altogether. In this charming memoir, MacLeod recounts her adventures as a nurse in the Hebrides in the 1970s.

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The Cold Song

by Linn Ullmann LORRI'S PICK (Fiction)

The latest and best from Ullmann is a literary page-turner. It's a murder mystery, it's a multigenerational psychodrama of a dysfunctional family and it's a very dark comedy of manners. The plot focuses on the events of one day, the 75th birthday of Jenny Brodal, a cold and caustic woman who's so resistant to the party being thrown in her honor that she ends her sobriety of almost 20 years and gets roaring drunk.

Crazy Rich Asians

by Kevin Kwan JIN'S PICK (Fiction)

Kwan's debut is a scintillating fictional look into the opulent lives of fabulously wealthy Chinese expats living in Singapore. Economics professor Rachel Chu has no idea what she's in for when her handsome boyfriend, Nicholas Young, invites her to join him at his best friend's wedding in Singapore. Rachel is excited to meet Nick's friends and family, but he fails to warn her about the social minefield she's about to cross.

Daughter's Keeper

by Ayelet Waldman PEGGY'S PICK (Fiction)

Elaine, a middle-aged pharmacist, has recently become engaged to Arthur, her accountant. The only wrinkle in their affluent, carefully planned life is Elaine's 22-year-old daughter, who becomes an unwitting accomplice to drug dealing. Waldman's novel captivates the reader both with her reflection on the effects of mandatory sentencing, and her perceptive digging into a tenuous mother-daughter relationship.

The French House: an American family, a ruined 'maison,' and the village that restored them all

by Don Wallace MARION'S PICK (Non-Fic 944.13 WAL)

A journalist and fiction writer's account of how a crumbling house he bought on a French island became his family's unexpected refuge and salvation. Over time, Wallace and his wife went from being the laughingstocks of Kebordadoue to beloved community members on Belle Ile. Warm, funny and full of heart.

The Good Girl

by Kubica DANI'S PICK (Fiction)

This psychological thriller centers on the abduction of a young teacher, Mia Dennett. Chicago Police Detective Gabe Hoffman finds himself increasingly attracted to Mia's mother, a beautiful British woman in her early 60s. The proliferation of older characters will be a pleasant and unexpected find for readers who understand that life over 55 can still be interesting.

The Hundred-Year House

by Rebecca Makkai ROBERTA'S PICK (Fiction)

Beginning in 1999 and retreating backward in time to 1900, Makkai chronicles a century in the life of Laurelfeld, an estate near Lake Michigan, north of Chicago. The author opens with the ghost story of Violet -Devohr, who allegedly killed herself in the attic. Slowly, readers get more clues about the mystery at the book's core.

The Hidden Child

by Camilla Lackberg DEBORAH'S PICK (Fiction)

The fifth book in the Det. Patrik Hedstrom series finds Patrik starting his paternity leave so his wife, crime writer Erica Falck, can work on her new book. After finding a Nazi medal among her late mother's belongings, Erica meets with an old friend of her mother's, who is murdered two days later, and Erica and her husband must turn to family wartime diaries for clues.

I Shall Be Near to You

by Erin Lindsay McCabe BRENNNA'S PICK (Fiction)

When her husband, Jeremiah, joins the Union Army in 1862, newlywed Rosetta Wakefield quickly realizes she isn't prepared to wait quietly at home. She cuts her hair and sets out to join him as "Ross Stone." Inspired by the true stories of women who fought in the Civil War, McCabe's first novel gives readers an intriguing glimpse at the challenges those women faced, but its heart is a shining story of enduring love.

The Invention of Wings

by Sue Monk Kidd PEGGY'S PICK (Fiction)

Inspired by the true story of early-nineteenth-century abolitionist and suffragist Sarah Grimke, Kidd paints a moving portrait of two women linked by the horrors of slavery. Kidd hits her stride and avoids sentimental revisionism with this historical novel about the relationship between a slave and the daughter of slave owners in antebellum Charleston.

The Orchardist

by Amanda Coplin DANI'S PICK (Fiction)

Set in early-20th-century Washington State, Coplin's majestic debut follows a makeshift family through two tragic decades. Middle-aged Talmadge lives alone amid his huge spread of fruit trees in Wenatchee Valley. He remains haunted by his teenage sister's disappearance some 50 years earlier, so when two ragged girls appear on his land, untrusting, hungry, and pregnant, he feels immediately protective of their safety.

The Paris Architect

By Charles Belfoure PAT'S PICK (Fiction)

Would you risk your life for another's in the name of what is right? Belfoure explores this question and others in this debut novel set in Paris during the Nazi occupation. Lucien Bernard—who, like the book's author, is an architect—is offered a large sum of money to outsmart the Gestapo by devising unique hiding places for Jews. After one mistake results in tragedy, however, he begins reevaluating his life.

Pure Grit

by Mary Cronk Farrell BRENNNA'S PICK (NF 940.54 Far)

The harrowing story of U.S. Army and Navy nurses based in the Philippines during WWII. They became POWs in Japanese prison camps, where they nursed soldiers and other captives. Malnutrition and lack of medicine left all the prisoners vulnerable to serious diseases, yet the women bonded, supporting each other until their release in 1945.

Purple Hibiscus

by Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche LORRI'S PICK (Fiction)

Fifteen-year-old Kambili and her older brother, Jaja, live a regal life in impoverished Nigeria. Their father is a very powerful man who owns many factories, lavishes money on his church and the local schools, and publishes a newspaper that is critical of the country's repressive regime. But their marble palace often feels like a prison because the children are terrified of their father's temper; at home, he is a tyrant.

The Seamstress

by Francis de Pontes Peebles KERRI'S PICK (Fiction)

Two sisters work both banks of the river and both sides of the law, united in their knowledge of stitchery, in this semi-epic, set in the steamy Brazilian jungle in the 1920s and '30s. Neither sister feels complete without the other, and neither has the true love she deserves--or does she? This impressive first novel seduces with its sweeping story, strong characterization, and extraordinarily vivid detail. A good read-alike for fans of Isabel Allende