

Staff Favorites: 2021

Fiction:

Billy Summers by Stephen King

From legendary storyteller comes a thrilling new novel about a good guy in a bad job. It's about love, luck, fate, and a complex hero with one last shot at redemption. You won't put this story down, and you won't forget Billy.

The Collector's Daughter by Gill Paul

Fifty years after Lady Evelyn Herbert discovered an ancient burial site, an Egyptian academic starts asking questions about what really happened, unleashing a new chain of events that threaten the happiness she has finally found.

Early Morning Riser by Katherine Heiny

Jane falls in love with Duncan easily in this novel that is alternately bittersweet and laugh-out-loud funny. He is charming, good-natured, and handsome but unfortunately, she sees Duncan's many ex-girlfriends everywhere—at restaurants, at the grocery store, even three towns away. Could it be possible that a deeper kind of happiness is right in front of Jane's eyes?

Forgotten in Death by J. D. Robb

In the latest novel in the #1 New York Times bestselling series, homicide detective Eve Dallas must enter a complex world of real estate development, family history, shady deals, and shocking secrets to find justice for two women whose lives were thrown away.

Golden Girl by Elin Hilderbrand

On a perfect June day, Vivian Howe is killed in a hit-and-run car accident while jogging near her home on Nantucket. She ascends to the Beyond where she is granted three 'nudges' to change the outcome of events on earth.

The Good Sister by Sally Hepworth

Spine tingling, creepy, utterly compelling, and unpredictable, this novel is about the ties that bind sisters together ... and about the madness that lurks where you least expect it.

The Invisible Husband of Frisk Island by Colleen Oakley

Bestselling author Colleen Oakley delivers an unforgettable love story about an eccentric community, a grieving widow, and an outsider who slowly learns that sometimes faith is more important than the facts.

The Kitchen Front by Jennifer Ryan

From the bestselling author of The Chilbury Ladies' Choir comes a new World War II-set story of four women on the home front competing for a spot hosting a BBC wartime cookery program and a chance to better their lives.

Last Chance Library by Freyas Sampson

June Jones emerges from her shell to fight for her beloved local library, and through the efforts and support of an eclectic group of library patrons, she discovers life-changing friendships along the way.

The Last Garden in England by Julia Kelly

The author of The Light over London brings us a poignant and heart wrenching tale of five women in three eras, whose lives are tied together by one very special garden.

The Last House on the Street by Diane Chamberlain

A community's past sins rise to the surface when two women, a generation apart, find themselves bound by tragedy and an unsolved, decades-old mystery.

The Last Thing He Told Me by Laura Dave

Before Owen Michaels disappears, he smuggles a note to his beloved wife of one year: Protect her. Despite her confusion and fear, Hannah Hall knows exactly to whom the note refers - Owen's sixteen-year-old daughter, Bailey.

Lincoln Highway by Amor Towles

The bestselling author of A Gentleman in Moscow and Rules of Civility and master of absorbing, sophisticated fiction returns with a stylish and propulsive novel set in 1950s America. Spanning just ten days this novel will satisfy fans of his multi-layered literary styling.

The Lost and Found Bookshop by Susan Wiggs

In the wake of a shocking tragedy, Natalie Harper inherits her mother's charming but financially strapped bookshop in San Francisco. There's only one problem, Grandpa Andrew owns the building and refuses to sell. Natalie adores her grandfather; she'll do whatever it takes to make his final years happy.

The Man Who Lived Underground by Richard Wright

This scorching novel, a never-before-seen masterpiece, was written between Wright's landmark books Native Son (1940) and Black Boy (1945), at the height of his creative powers.

The Midnight Library by Matt Haig

Somewhere out beyond the edge of the universe there is a library that contains an infinite number of books, each one the story of another reality. One tells the story of your life as it is, others tell the story of the life you could have lived if you had made different choices. What if you had the chance to go to the library and see for yourself?

Murder at Wakehurst by Alyssa Maxwell

While attending a lavish Elizabethan fête in 1899, journalist Emma Vanderbilt stumbles upon a dead body with an arrow in it. The victim is a judge who didn't walk the straight and narrow and Emma must work quickly to stop the killer from taking another life. Number 9 of the Gilded Newport mystery series.

Outlawed by Anna North

The Crucible meets True Grit in this riveting adventure story of a fugitive girl, a mysterious gang of robbers, and their dangerous mission to create change for women in a fictional Wild West.

The Personal Librarian by Marie Benedict

The remarkable story of J. P. Morgan's personal librarian, Belle da Costa Greene, the Black American woman who was forced to hide her true identity and pass as white to leave a lasting legacy that enriched the nation.

The Plot by Jean Hanff Korelitz

Jacob Finch Bonner was once a promising young novelist with a respectably published first book. Today, he's teaching in a third-rate MFA program and struggling to maintain what's left of his self-respect. He hasn't written--let alone published--anything decent in years ... until he discovers the plot. You will not be able to put this page turner down!

Project Hail Mary by Andy Weir.

The sole survivor on a desperate, last-chance mission to save both humanity and the earth, Ryland Grace is hurtled into the depths of space when he must conquer an extinction-level threat to our species.

Ready Player Two by Ernest Cline

Lovingly nostalgic and wildly original, this novel takes us on another imaginative, fun, action-packed adventure through his beloved virtual universe, and jolts us thrillingly into the future once again.

Three Sisters by Heather Morris

Against all odds, three Slovakian sisters have survived years of imprisonment in a notorious death camp in Nazi Germany. By a stroke of luck, they manage to travel to Israel, to their new home, where the battle for freedom takes on new forms. Livia, Magda, and Cibi must face the ghosts of their past to find true peace and happiness.

The Unkindness of Ravens by M.E. Hillard

Greer Hogan is a librarian and an avid reader of murder mysteries. She also has a habit of stumbling upon murdered bodies. This is the first of a new series.

The Venice Sketch Book by Rhys Bowen

Caroline Grant is struggling to accept the end of her marriage when she receives an unexpected bequest. Her beloved great-aunt Lettie leaves her a sketchbook, three keys, and a final whisper . . . Venice.

Whereabouts by Jhumpa Lahari

The character at the center of this new novel wavers between stasis and movement, between the need to belong and the refusal to form lasting ties. Lahari is the winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Interpreter of Maladies.

Nonfiction:

Appalachian Trail: A Biography by Philip D'Anieri

The Appalachian Trail is America's most beloved trek, with millions of hikers setting foot on it every year. Yet few are aware of the fascinating backstory of the oddballs and obsessives who helped bring it to life over the past century.

The Best of Me by David Sedaris

Now, for the first time collected in one volume, the author brings us his funniest and most memorable work. If all you expect to find in Sedaris's work is the deft and sharply observed comedy for which he became renowned, you may be surprised to discover that his words bring more warmth than mockery. Together, the essays reveal the wonder and delight Sedaris finds in the surprises life brings him.

The Boys: a Memoir of Hollywood and Family by Ron Howard and Clint Howard

This is a dual narrative that lifts the lid on the Howard brothers' closely held lives. It's the journey of a tight four-person family unit that held fast in an unforgiving business and of two brothers who survived "child-actor syndrome" to become fulfilled adults.

Empire of Pain: the Secret History of the Sackler Dynasty by Patrick Keefe

From the prize-winning and bestselling author of Say Nothing comes a portrait of three generations of the Sackler family, of the excesses of America's second Gilded Age, of impunity among the super elite, and a relentless investigation of the naked greed and indifference to human suffering that built one of the world's great fortunes.

Failed Promise: Reconstruction, Frederick Douglass and the Impeachment of Andrew Johnson by Robert S. Levine

The absorbing narrative of Frederick Douglass's heated struggle with President Andrew Johnson reveals a new perspective on Reconstruction's demise.

Four Hundred Souls: A community history of African America 1619-2019 by Ibram X. Kendi

Four Hundred Souls is a unique one-volume history of African Americans. The editors, Ibram X. Kendi and Keisha N. Blain, have assembled ninety writers, each of whom takes on a five-year period of that four-hundred-year span. The writers explore their periods through a variety of techniques: historical essays, short stories, personal vignettes, and fiery polemics.

Geniuses at War: Bletchley Park, Colossus and the Dawn of the Digital Age by David A. Price

Geniuses at War is the dramatic, untold story of the brilliant team who built the world's first digital electronic computer at Bletchley Park, during a critical time in World War II, when decoding the communication of the Nazi high command was imperative for the success of the Allied invasion of Normandy.

Killing the Mob: The Fight Against Organized Crime in America by Bill O'Reilly and Martin Dugard

Covering the period from the 1930s to the 1980s, O'Reilly and Dugard trace the prohibition-busting bank robbers of the Depression Era, such as John Dillinger, Bonnie & Clyde, Pretty Boy Floyd and Baby-Face Nelson.

Trejo: My Life of Crime, Redemption, and Hollywood by Danny Trejo

In this funny, painful, and suspenseful memoir, Danny takes us through the incredible ups and downs of his life, including meeting one of the world's most notorious serial killers in prison and working with legends like Charles Bronson and Robert De Niro.

Vanderbilt: the Rise and Fall of an American Dynasty by Anderson Cooper.

New York Times bestselling author and journalist Anderson Cooper teams with New York Times bestselling historian and novelist Katherine Howe to chronicle the rise and fall of a legendary American dynasty—his mother's family, the Vanderbilts.

Children's & Teen Books

Beasts of Prey by Ayana Gray

Sixteen-year-old indentured beastkeeper Koffi and seventeen-year-old warrior candidate Ekon forge an unusual alliance and venture into the Greater Jungle to hunt down a monster that has been menacing their city for a century. (Teen fiction)

Do Your Best Every Day to do your Best Every Day by John Cena

In this book of encouragements, John Cena urges you to be who you are, make the world a better place, and never stop striving. As John will tell you, life is all about the journey and how you spend it--there is so much to be grateful for now, and there is so much more ahead. John's inspiring perspective and thoughtful advice are perfect for milestones like graduations, new siblings, and other big life moments, as well as for anyone who could use a little boost. (Children's Nonfiction)

The Electric Kingdom by David Arnold

After a deadly Fly Flu spreads throughout the world, survivors Nico, her dog, young artist Kit, and the mysterious Deliverer roam the earth, seeking to evade the Flies and find a place where life and love can thrive again. (Teen fiction)

Firekeeper's Daughter by Angeline Boulley

When Daunis witnesses a shocking murder, she reluctantly agrees to go undercover, drawing on her knowledge of chemistry and Ojibwe traditional medicine to track down the source of a new drug. How far will she go to protect her community, if it threatens to tear apart the only world she's ever known? (Teen fiction)

Red Stars by Davide Morosinotto

A middle grade adventure told through diary entries, maps, and photos depicts the harrowing journey of two siblings who become separated when the Nazis declare war on the Soviet Union and their city evacuates its children on trains meant to carry them to safety. (Children's/Young Adult Fiction)

Rez Dogs by Joseph Bruchac

Twelve-year-old Malian lives with her grandparents on a Wabanaki reservation during the COVID-19 pandemic. (Children's fiction)

Twenty-One Steps: Guiding the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier by Jeff Gottesfeld

With every step, the Tomb Guards pay homage to America's fallen. Discover their story, and that of the unknown soldiers they honor, through resonant words and illustrations. (Children's Nonfiction)

Unsettled by Reem Faruqi

Young Nurah reluctantly moves with her family from Karachi, Pakistan, to Peachtree City, Georgia, but, after some ups and downs, begins to feel at home. (Children's fiction)

Winterkeep (Graceling Realm, #4) by Kristin Cashore

Queen Bitterblue of Monsea must head to the nation of Winterkeep after her envoys drown in suspicious circumstances, and somewhere there, Lovisa Cavenda waits and watches while tragedy with devastating political and personal ramifications strikes. (Teen fiction)

Yolk by Mary H.K. Choi

Struggling with emotional problems and an eating disorder, Jayne, a Korean American college student living in New York City, is estranged from her accomplished older sister June, until June gets cancer. (Teen fiction)