An Unnecessary Woman Rabih Alameddine

Having taken great risks -- to immigrate to America, to take monastic vows -- Bengali physician Meena Chatterjee and Brother Flavian are each seeking safety and security when they encounter Johnny Faye, a Vietnam vet, free spirit, and expert marijuana farmer. Amid the fields and forests of a Trappist monastery, Johnny Faye patiently cultivates Meena's and Flavian's capacity for faith, transforming all they thought they knew about duty and desire. In turn they offer him an experience of civilization other than war and chaos. But Johnny Faye’s law-breaking sets him against a district attorney for whom the law is a tool for ambition rather than justice. Their confrontation leads to a harrowing reckoning that ensnares Dr. Chatterjee and Brother Flavian, who must make a life-or-death choice between an act of justice that may precipitate their ruin or a betrayal that offers salvation. Inspired by the real-life state police kidnapping and murder of a legendary storyteller and petty criminal, The Man Who Loved Birds engages pressing contemporary issues through a timeless narrative of ill-fated romance. Celebrated author Fenton Johnson has woven a seamless, haunting fable exploring the eternal conflicts between free will and destiny, politics and nature, the power of law and the power of love.

Susan Muaddi Darraj's short story collection about the inhabitants of a Palestinian West Bank village, Tel al-Hilou, spans generations and continents to explore ideas of memory, belonging, connection, and, ultimately, the deepest and richest meaning of home. A Curious Land gives voice to the experiences of Palestinians in the last century. An excerpt from A Curious Land: When Rabab lowered the magad and clapped-clapped to the well in her mother's too-big slippers, the stone jar digging into her shoulder, she didn't, at first, see the body. The morning sun glazed everything around her -- the cement homes, the iron rails along one wall, the bars on the windows, the stones around the well -- and made her squint her itchy eyes. She was hungry. That was all. They'd arrived here only last night, stopping as soon as Awwad and the men were sure the army had moved south. It must have been the third time in just a few weeks -- collapse the tents, load the mules, disappear into the sands. She hoped this war would end soon, and she didn't really care who won, as long as it ended because they hadn't eaten well in two years. In the past few months, her mother had sold all her gold, except for her bracelet made of liras. It was the only thing left, and she was holding onto it, and Rabab realized, so were they all; she imagined that, the day it was sold, when her mother's wrist was bare, would signal that they were at the end.

A powerful thriller about trauma and forgiveness, from the winner of the International Prize for Arabic Fiction During the violence and chaos of the Lebanese Civil War, a car pulls up to a roadblock on a narrow side street in Beirut. After a brief and confused exchange, several rounds of bullets are fired into the car, killing everyone inside except for a small boy of four or five. The boy is taken to the hospital, adopted by one of the assassins, and raised in a new family. “My father used to kidnap and kill people …” begins this haunting tale of a child who was raised by the murderer of his real family. The narrator of Confessions doesn’t shy away from the horrible truth of his murderous father—instead he confronts his troubled upbringing and seeks to understand the distortions and complexities of his memories, his war-torn country, and the quiet war that rages inside of him.

Documents the award-winning writer's experiences of living, working, and raising twin sons in Rome during the year following his receipt of a prestigious Rome Prize stipend, a period during which he attended the vigil of the dying John Paul II, brought his children on a snowy visit to the Pantheon, and befriended numerous locals. Reprint. 35,000 first printing.

#1 New York Times best-selling, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Anthony Doerr brings his "stunning sense of physical detail and gorgeous metaphors" (San Francisco Chronicle) to selecting The Best American Short Stories 2019. #1 New York Times best-selling, Pulitzer
Prize–winning author Anthony Doerr brings his "stunning sense of physical detail and gorgeous metaphors" (San Francisco Chronicle) to selecting The Best American Short Stories 2019. Doerr and the series editor, Heidi Pitlor, winnow down twenty stories out of thousands that represent the best examples of the form published the previous year. Named after the "divine" Sarah Bernhardt, red-haired Sarah Nour El-Din is "wonderful, irresistibly unique, funny, and amazing," raves Amy Tan. Determined to make of her life a work of art, she tries to tell her story, sometimes casting it as a memoir, sometimes a novel, always fascinatingly incomplete. "Alameddine's new novel unfolds like a secret... creating a tale... humorous and heartbreaking and always real" (Los Angeles Times). "[W]ith each new approach, [Sarah] sheds another layer of her pretension, revealing another truth about her humanity" (San Francisco Weekly). Raised in a hybrid family shaped by divorce and remarriage, and by Beirut in wartime, Sarah finds a fragile peace in self-imposed exile in the United States. Her extraordinary dignity is supported by a best friend, a grown-up son, occasional sensual pleasures, and her determination to tell her own story. "Like her narrative, [Sarah's] life is broken and fragmented. [But] the bright, strange, often startling pieces... are moving and memorable" (Boston Globe). Reading group guide included.

In the tiny borderlands of Istria and Italy, from the forests of Monte Nevoso, to the hidden valleys of the Tyrol, to a Trieste café, Microcosms pieces together a mosaic of stories - comic, tragic, picaresque, nostalgic - from life's minor characters. Their worlds might be small, but they are far from minimalist: in them flashes the great, the meaningful, the unrepeatable significance of every existence.

A happily misanthropic Middle East divorcee finds refuge in books in a "beautiful and absorbing" novel of late-life crisis (The New York Times). Aaliya is a divorced, childless, and reclusively cranky translator in Beirut nurturing doubts about her latest project: a 900-page avant-garde, linguistically serpentine historiography by a late Chilean existentialist. Honestly, at seventy-two, should she be taking on such a project? Not that Aailiya fears dying. Women in her family live long; her mother is still going crazy. But on this lonely day, hour-by-hour, Aaliya’s musings on literature, philosophy, her career, and her aging body, are suddenly invaded by memories of her volatile past. As she tries in vain to ward off these emotional upwellings, Aaliya is faced with an unthinkable disaster that threatens to shatter the little life she has left. In this "meditation on, among other things, aging, politics, literature, loneliness, grief and resilience" (The New York Times), Alameddine conjures "a beguiling narrator . . . who is, like her city, hard to read, hard to take, hard to know and, ultimately, passionately complex" (San Francisco Chronicle). A finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award and the National Book Award, An Unnecessary Woman is "a fun, and often funny . . . grave, powerful . . . [and] extraordinary" Washington Independent Review of Books) ode to literature and its power to define who we are. “Read it once, read it twice, read other books for a decade or so, and then pick it up and read it anew. This one’s a keeper” (The Independent)

Aaliya Saleh lives alone in her Beirut apartment, surrounded by stockpiles of books. Godless, fatherless, childless, and divorced, Aaliya is her family’s ‘unnecessary appendage’. Every year, she translates a new favourite book into Arabic, then stows it away. The thirty-seven books that Aaliya has translated over her lifetime have never been read - by anyone. This breathtaking portrait of a reclusive woman follows Aaliya’s digressive mind as it ricochets across visions of past and present Beirut. Colourful musings on literature, philosophy, and art are invaded by memories of the Lebanese Civil War and Aaliya’s own volatile past. As she tries to overcome her ageing body and spontaneous emotional upwellings, Aaliya is faced with an unthinkable disaster that threatens to shatter the little life she has left. A love letter to literature and its power to define who we are, the prodigiously gifted Rabih Alameddine has given us a magnificent rendering of one woman's life in the Middle East.

Set in the richly drawn art world of nineteenth-century Paris, this stunning historical novel
imagines Édouard Manet’s last days in an indelible snapshot of genius, illness, and the dying embers of passion. Suffering from the complications of syphilis toward the end of his life, Édouard Manet begins to jot down his daily impressions, reflections, and memories in a notebook. He travels for healing respites in the French countryside and finds inspiration in nature—a cloud of dragonflies, peonies blanketed by the morning dew. Back in Paris, the artist holds court in his studio and meets a mysterious muse, Suzon. Entranced by Suzon’s cool blue eyes, he decides to paint his final masterpiece, A Bar at the Folies-Bergere, life-sized—and wagers his health to complete it. In a sensual portrait of Manet’s last years, illustrated with his own sketches, Maureen Gibbon offers a vibrant testament to the endurance of the artistic spirit.

‘A profoundly beautiful novel that infolds the political with the personal in unexpected and new ways . . . An extraordinary book’ Neel Mukherjee, New Statesman, ‘Books of the Year 2016’

‘His stories take the reader into the labyrinth that is the mind . . . The Angel of History is digressive and daring’ the Economist ‘Alameddine has created a scintillating, original work whose moral complexity and detail of observation are wholly contemporary and entirely his own’ Spectator Set over the course of one night in the waiting room of a psych clinic, The Angel of History follows Yemeni-born poet Jacob as he revisits the events of his life, from his maternal upbringing in an Egyptian whorehouse to his adolescence under the aegis of his wealthy father and his life as a gay Arab man in San Francisco at the height of AIDS. Hovered over by the presence of alluring, sassy Satan who taunts Jacob to remember his painful past and dour, frigid Death who urges him to forget and give up on life, Jacob is also attended to by 14 saints. Set in Cairo and Beirut; Sana’a, Stockholm, and San Francisco; Alameddine gives us a charged philosophical portrait of a brilliant mind in crisis. This is a profound, philosophical and hilariously winning story of the war between memory and oblivion we wrestle with every day of our lives. ‘Here is a book, full of story, unrepentantly political at every level. At a time when many western writers seem to be in retreat from saying anything that could be construed as political, Alameddine says it all, shamelessly, gloriously and, realised like his Satan, in the most stylish of forms' the Guardian

That They May Face the Rising Sun was the last novel from John McGahern, one of Ireland’s greatest novelists. Joe and Kate Ruttledge have come to Ireland from London in search of a different life. In passages of beauty and truth, the drama of a year in their lives and those of the memorable characters that move about them unfolds through the action, the rituals of work, religious observances and play. We are introduced, with deceptive simplicity, to a complete representation of existence - an enclosed world has been transformed into an Everywhere. J.S. Kelley weaves epic fantasy and hardboiled noir in this fast-paced, twisting tale of magic, mystery, and a whole lot of unruly behavior. In a kingdom where magic fuels everything from street lamps to horseless carriages, the mage guilds of Penador wield power equal to the king himself. So when Lord Edmund’s infant son is kidnapped by the ruthless Alath Guild, he turns to the one person who’s feared by even the most magically adept: Rosalind Featherstone, a.k.a. the Gutter Mage. But as Roz delves into the circumstances behind the child’s disappearance, she uncovers an old enemy from her traumatic past and a long-brewing plot that could lead to the death of countless innocents, as well as the complete collapse of Penadorian society itself!

A “highly imaginative and utterly exhilarating” (Thrillist) debut that is “the best of what science fiction can be: a thought-provoking, heartrending story about the choices that define our lives” (Kirkus Reviews, Best Debut Fiction and Best Science Fiction & Fantasy of the Year). NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY TORDOTCOM AND KIRKUS REVIEWS A mysterious child lands in the care of a solitary woman, changing both of their lives forever. I expected many things from this trip. I did not expect a family. A ship captain, unfettered from time. A mute child, burdened with unimaginable power. A millennia-old woman, haunted by lifetimes of mistakes. In this captivating debut of connection across space and time, these
outsiders will find in each other the things they lack: a place of love and belonging. A safe haven. A new beginning. But the past hungers for them, and when it catches up, it threatens to tear this makeshift family apart. Praise for The Vanished Birds “This is the most impressive debut of 2020.”—Locus “This extraordinary science fiction epic, which delves deep into the perils of failing to learn from one’s mistakes, is perfect for fans of big ideas and intimate reflections.”—Publishers Weekly (starred review) “A lyrical and moving narrative of space travel, found families, and lost loves set against an evocative space-opera background.”—Booklist (starred review) “The Vanished Birds finds an intimate heartbeat of longing in a saga of galactic progress and its crushing fallout. . . . A novel of vast scope that yet makes time for compassion, wonder, and poetry.”—Indra Das, author of The Devourers “A dazzling mosaic of intersecting lives and fates . . . Comparisons to John Irving and Tennessee Williams would not be amiss in this show-stopping debut” (Kirkus Reviews, starred review). The national bestseller and Today Show Book Club selection, Broken for You is the story of two women in self-imposed exile whose lives are transformed when their paths intersect . . . When we meet septuagenarian Margaret Hughes, she is living alone in a mansion in Seattle with only a massive collection of valuable antiques for company. Enter Wanda Schultz, a young woman with a broken heart who has come west to search for her wayward boyfriend. Both women are guarding dark secrets and have spent many years building up protective armor against the outside world. As their tentative friendship evolves, the armor begins to fall away and Margaret opens her house to the younger woman. This launches a series of unanticipated events, leading Margaret to discover a way to redeem her cursed past, and Wanda to learn the true purpose of her cross-country journey. “I absolutely fell in love with this book. . . . There is a message here about creating family in the most unusual places. . . . A wonderful, engaging story.”—Sue Monk Kidd, New York Times—bestselling author of The Secret Life of Bees “Well-crafted plotting and crackling wit make this debut novel by Seattle author Kallos a delight to read and a memory to savor . . . Book groups will enjoy discussing the layers of meaning, the stylistic nuances, and the powerful message of hope secreted in these pages.”—Booklist (starred review) An obsessive introvert in Beirut, eschewed by her family and neighbors for her divorced status and lack of religious reverence, quietly translates favorite books into Arabic while struggling with her aging body until an unthinkable disaster threatens what little life remains to her. By the best-selling author of The Hakawati. 20,000 first printing. A masterwork of W. G. Sebald, now with a gorgeous new cover by the famed designer Peter Mendelsund The four long narratives in The Emigrants appear at first to be the straightforward biographies of four Germans in exile. Sebald reconstructs the lives of a painter, a doctor, an elementary-school teacher, and Great Uncle Ambrose. Following (literally) in their footsteps, the narrator retraces routes of exile which lead from Lithuania to London, from Munich to Manchester, from the South German provinces to Switzerland, France, New York, Constantinople, and Jerusalem. Along with memories, documents, and diaries of the Holocaust, he collects photographs—the enigmatic snapshots which stud The Emigrants and bring to mind family photo albums. Sebald combines precise documentary with fictional motifs, and as he puts the question to realism, the four stories merge into one unfathomable requiem. Austerlitz, the internationally acclaimed masterpiece by “one of the most gripping writers imaginable” (The New York Review of Books), is the story of a man’s search for the answer to his life’s central riddle. A small child when he comes to England on a Kindertransport in the summer of 1939, one Jacques Austerlitz is told nothing of his real family by the Welsh Methodist minister and his wife who raise him. When he is a much older man, fleeting memories return to him, and obeying an instinct he only dimly understands, he follows their trail back to the world he left behind a half century before. There, faced with the void at the heart of twentieth-century Europe, he struggles to rescue his heritage from oblivion.
"Short stories translated from the Persian"--
One of the Los Angeles Times Top 10 California Books of 2020. One of Publishers Weekly’s Top 10 Fiction Books from 2020. Longlisted for the Carnegie Medal for Excellence and the Joyce Carol Oates prize. One of Exile in Bookville’s Favorite Books of 2020. In The Last Great Road Bum, Héctor Tobar turns the peripatetic true story of a naive son of Urbana, Illinois, who died fighting with guerrillas in El Salvador into the great American novel for our times. Joe Sanderson died in pursuit of a life worth writing about. He was, in his words, a “road bum,” an adventurer and a storyteller, belonging to no place, people, or set of ideas. He was born into a childhood of middle-class contentment in Urbana, Illinois and died fighting with guerrillas in Central America. With these facts, acclaimed novelist and journalist Héctor Tobar set out to write what would become The Last Great Road Bum. A decade ago, Tobar came into possession of the personal writings of the late Joe Sanderson, which chart Sanderson’s freewheeling course across the known world, from Illinois to Jamaica, to Vietnam, to Nigeria, to El Salvador—a life determinedly an adventure, ending in unlikely, anonymous heroism. The Last Great Road Bum is the great American novel Joe Sanderson never could have written, but did truly live—a fascinating, timely hybrid of fiction and nonfiction that only a master of both like Héctor Tobar could pull off.

'I adored this book - a wondrous compendium of Iceland's best sagas' - Hannah Kent A new friendship. An unforgettable journey. A beautiful and bloody history. This is Iceland as you've never read it before ... Broadcaster Richard Fidler and author Kári Gíslason are good friends. They share a deep attachment to the sagas of Iceland - the true stories of the first Viking families who settled on that remote island in the Middle Ages. These are tales of blood feuds, of dangerous women, and people who are compelled to kill the ones they love the most. The sagas are among the greatest stories ever written, but the identity of their authors is largely unknown. Together, Richard and Kári travel across Iceland, to the places where the sagas unfolded a thousand years ago. They cross fields, streams and fjords to immerse themselves in the folklore of this fiercely beautiful island. And there is another mission: to resolve a longstanding family mystery - a gift from Kari's Icelandic father that might connect him to the greatest of the saga authors.

NATIONAL BESTSELLER • National Book Award Finalist • Winner of the PEN/Faulkner Award The acclaimed author of When the Emperor Was Divine tells the story of a group of young women brought from Japan to San Francisco as “picture brides” a century ago in this "understated masterpiece ... that unfolds with great emotional power" (San Francisco Chronicle). In eight unforgettable sections, The Buddha in the Attic traces the extraordinary lives of these women, from their arduous journeys by boat, to their arrival in San Francisco and their tremulous first nights as new wives; from their experiences raising children who would later reject their culture and language, to the deracinating arrival of war. Julie Otsuka has written a spellbinding novel about identity and loyalty, and what it means to be an American in uncertain times.

An NPR Best Book of the Year Winner of the 2017 Prix Goncourt, this behind-the-scenes account of the manipulation, hubris, and greed that together led to Nazi Germany’s annexation of Austria brilliantly dismantles the myth of an effortless victory and offers a dire warning for our current political crisis. February 20, 1933, an unremarkable day during a harsh Berlin winter: A meeting of twenty-four German captains of industry and senior Nazi officials is being held in secret in the plush lounge of the Reichstag. They are there to extract funds for the accession to power of the National Socialist Party and its Chancellor. This opening scene sets a tone of consent that will lead to the worst possible repercussions. March 12, 1938, the annexation of Austria is on the agenda: A grotesque day intended to make history—the newsreels capture a motorized army on the move, a terrible, inexorable power. But behind Goebbels’s splendid propaganda, an ersatz Blitzkrieg unfolds, the Panzers breaking down en masse on the roads
into Austria. The true behind-the-scenes account of the Anschluss—a patchwork of minor flourishes of strength and fine words, fevered telephone calls, and vulgar threats—all reveal a starkly different picture. It is not strength of character or the determination of a people that wins the day, but rather a combination of intimidation and bluff. With this vivid, compelling history, Éric Vuillard warns against the peril of willfully blind acquiescence, and offers a reminder that, ultimately, the worst is not inescapable.

In 2003, Osama al-Kharrat returns to Beirut after many years in America to stand vigil at his father's deathbed. As the family gathers, stories begin to unfold: Osama's grandfather was a hakawati, or storyteller, and his bewitching tales are interwoven with classic stories of the Middle East. Here are Abraham and Isaac; Ishmael, father of the Arab tribes; the beautiful Fatima; Baybars, the slave prince who vanquished the Crusaders; and a host of mischievous imps. Through Osama, we also enter the world of the contemporary Lebanese men and women whose stories tell a larger, heartbreaking tale of seemingly endless war, conflicted identity, and survival. With The Hakawati, Rabih Alameddine has given us an Arabian Nights for this century.

"Ingenious... Builds to one of the most memorable final scenes I've read in a novel this century." —The New York Times

WINNER OF THE 2018 WOMEN'S PRIZE FOR FICTION
FINALIST FOR THE 2019 INTERNATIONAL DUBLIN LITERARY AWARD
LONGLISTED FOR THE MAN BOOKER PRIZE

The suspenseful and heartbreaking story of an immigrant family driven to pit love against loyalty, with devastating consequences Isma is free. After years of watching out for her younger siblings in the wake of their mother's death, she's accepted an invitation from a mentor in America that allows her to resume a dream long deferred. But she can't stop worrying about Aneeka, her beautiful, headstrong sister back in London, or their brother, Parvaiz, who's disappeared in pursuit of his own dream, to prove himself to the dark legacy of the jihadist father he never knew. When he resurfaces half a globe away, Isma's worst fears are confirmed. Then Eamonn enters the sisters' lives. Son of a powerful political figure, he has his own birthright to live up to—or defy. Is he to be a chance at love? The means of Parvaiz's salvation? Suddenly, two families' fates are inextricably, devastatingly entwined, in this searing novel that asks: What sacrifices will we make in the name of love?

A Lit Hub Best Book of 2016 • One of Electric Literature's Best Novels of 2016 • An Entropy Best Book of 2016 "The duchess herself would be delighted at her resurrection in Margaret the First...Dutton expertly captures the pathos of a woman whose happiness is furrowed with the anxiety of underacknowledgment." —Katharine Grant, The New York Times Book Review

Margaret the First dramatizes the life of Margaret Cavendish, the shy, gifted, and wildly unconventional 17th–century Duchess. The eccentric Margaret wrote and published volumes of poems, philosophy, feminist plays, and utopian science fiction at a time when "being a writer" was not an option open to women. As one of the Queen's attendants and the daughter of prominent Royalists, she was exiled to France when King Charles I was overthrown. As the English Civil War raged on, Margaret met and married William Cavendish, who encouraged her writing and her desire for a career. After the War, her work earned her both fame and infamy in England: at the dawn of daily newspapers, she was "Mad Madge," an original tabloid celebrity. Yet Margaret was also the first woman to be invited to the Royal Society of London—a mainstay of the Scientific Revolution—and the last for another two hundred years. Margaret the First is very much a contemporary novel set in the past. Written with lucid precision and sharp cuts through narrative time, it is a gorgeous and wholly new approach to imagining the life of a historical woman. "In Margaret the First, there is plenty of room for play. Dutton's work serves to emphasize the ambiguities of archival proof, restoring historical narratives to what they have perhaps always already been: provoking and serious fantasies, convincing reconstructions, true fictions." —Lucy Ives, The New Yorker

"Danielle Dutton engagingly embellishes the life of Margaret the First, the infamous Duchess of Newcastle—upon—Tyne." —Vanity Fair
A “captivating, perceptive, and empathic novel of New York” told with “panache and mischievous ebullience” (Booklist, starred review). In this retelling of Balzac’s Parisian classic Cousin Bette, Sarah Shulman spins her revenge story in Mad Men–era New York City. Bette, a lonely spinster, has worked as a secretary at an ad agency for thirty years. Her only real friend is her apartment neighbor Earl, a black, gay actor with a miserable job in a meatpacking plant. Shamed and disowned by their families, both find refuge in New York and in their friendship. Everything changes when Hortense, Bette’s wealthy niece from Ohio, moves to the city to pursue her own acting career. Her arrival reminds Bette of her scandalous past and the estranged Midwestern family she left behind. When Hortense’s calculating ambitions cause a rift between Bette and Earl, Bette uses her connections in the television ad world to destroy those who have wronged her. Textured with the grit and gloss of midcentury Manhattan in the days before the Civil Rights and Feminist Movements, The Cosmopolitans “balance[s] the hopes of an entire era on the backs of a fragile relationship. . . . Jarring and beautiful, this is a modern classic” (Kirkus Reviews, starred review).

By National Book Award and the National Book Critics’ Circle Award finalist for An Unnecessary Woman, Rabih Alameddine, comes a transporting new novel about an Arab American trans woman's journey among Syrian refugees on Lesbos island. Mina Simpson, a Lebanese doctor, arrives at the infamous Moria refugee camp on Lesbos, Greece, after being urgently summoned for help by her friend who runs an NGO there. Alienated from her family except for her beloved brother, Mina has avoided being so close to her homeland for decades. But with a week off work and apart from her wife of thirty years, Mina hopes to accomplish something meaningful, among the abundance of Western volunteers who pose for selfies with beached dinghies and the camp's children. Soon, a boat crosses bringing Sumaiya, a fiercely resolute Syrian matriarch with terminal liver cancer. Determined to protect her children and husband at all costs, Sumaiya refuses to alert her family to her diagnosis. Bonded together by Sumaiya’s secret, a deep connection sparks between the two women, and as Mina prepares a course of treatment with the limited resources on hand, she confronts the circumstances of the migrants’ displacement, as well as her own constraints in helping them. Not since the inimitable Aaliya of An Unnecessary Woman has Rabih Alameddine conjured such a winsome heroine to lead us to one of the most wrenching conflicts of our time. Cunningly weaving in stories of other refugees into Mina’s singular own, The Wrong End of the Telescope is a bedazzling tapestry of both tragic and amusing portraits of indomitable spirits facing a humanitarian crisis.

"From the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of perhaps the most bestselling and beloved literary fiction of our time comes a triumph of imagination and compassion, a soaring novel about children on the cusp of adulthood in a broken world, who find resilience, hope, and story. The heroes of Cloud Cuckoo Land are children trying to figure out the world around them, and to survive. In the besieged city of Constantinople in 1453, in a public library in Lakeport, Idaho, today, and on a spaceship bound for a distant exoplanet decades from now, an ancient text provides solace and the most profound human connection to characters in peril. They all learn the story of Aethon, who longs to be turned into a bird so that he can fly to the paradise of Cloud Cuckoo Land, a better world. Twelve-year-old Anna lives in a convent where women toil all day embroidering the robes of priests. She learns to read from an old Greek tutor she encounters on her errands in the city. In an abandoned priory, she finds a stash of old books. One is Aethon's story, which she reads to her sister as the walls of Constantinople are bombarded by armies of Saracens. Anna escapes, carrying only a small sack with bread, salt fish-and the book. Outside the city walls, Anna meets Omeir, a village boy who was conscripted, along with his beloved pair of oxen, to fight in the Sultan's conquest. His oxen have died; he has deserted. In Lakeport, Idaho, in 2020, Seymour, a young activist bent on saving the earth, sits in the public library with two homemade bombs in pressure cookers-another siege. Upstairs, eighty-five-year old Zeno, a former prisoner-of-war, and an amateur
translator, rehearses five children in a play adaptation of Aethon's adventures. On an interstellar ark called The Argos, Konstance is alone in a vault with sacks of Nourish powder and access to all the information in the world—or so she is told. She knows Aethon's story through her father, who has sequestered her to protect her. Konstance, encased on a spaceship decades from now, has never lived on our beloved Earth. Alone in a vault with sacks of Nourish powder and access to "all the information in the world," she knows Aethon's story through her father. Like Marie-Laure and Werner in All the Light We Cannot See, Konstance, Anna, Omeir, Seymour, the young Zeno, the children in the library are dreamers and misfits on the cusp of adulthood in a world the grown-ups have broken. They through their own resilience and resourcefulness, and through story. Dedicated to "the librarians then, now, and in the years to come," Anthony Doerr's Cloud Cuckoo Land is about the power of story and the astonishing survival of the physical book when for thousands of years they were so rare and so feared, dying, as one character says, "in fires or floods or in the mouths of worms or at the whims of tyrants." It is a hauntingly beautiful and redemptive novel about stewardship of the book, of the Earth, of the human heart.——

Set during the 1980s civil war in Lebanon, 'Dreams of Water' is compulsively readable, deceptively simple and overwhelmingly moving.

A New York Times Notable Book for 2011 A Boston Globe Best Fiction Book of 2011 The great panoramic social novel that Los Angeles deserves—a twenty-first century, West Coast Bonfire of the Vanities by the only writer qualified to capture the city in all its glory and complexity With The Barbarian Nurseries, Héctor Tobar gives our most misunderstood metropolis its great contemporary novel, taking us beyond the glimmer of Hollywood and deeper than camera-ready crime stories to reveal Southern California life as it really is, across its vast, sunshiny sprawl of classes, languages, dreams, and ambitions. Araceli is the live-in maid in the Torres-Thompson household—one of three Mexican employees in a Spanish-style house with lovely views of the Pacific. She has been responsible strictly for the cooking and cleaning, but the recession has hit, and suddenly Araceli is the last Mexican standing—unless you count Scott Torres, though you'd never suspect he was half Mexican but for his last name and an old family photo with central L.A. in the background. The financial pressure is causing the kind of fights that even Araceli knows the children shouldn't hear, and then one morning, after a particularly dramatic fight, Araceli wakes to an empty house—except for the two Torres-Thompson boys, little aliens she's never had to interact with before. Their parents are unreachable, and the only family member she knows of is Señor Torres, the subject of that old family photo. So she does the only thing she can think of and heads to the bus stop to seek out their grandfather. It will be an adventure, she tells the boys. If she only knew . . . With a precise eye for the telling detail and an unerring way with character, soaring brilliantly and seamlessly among a panorama of viewpoints, Tobar calls on all of his experience—as a novelist, a father, a journalist, a son of Guatemalan immigrants, and a native Angeleno—to deliver a novel as broad, as essential, as alive as the city itself.

In this "wonderfully rich" (San Francisco Chronicle) novel from the author of the internationally bestselling The Oracle of Stamboul, a young man journeys from California to Cairo to unravel centuries-old family secrets. "This book is a joy."—Rabih Alameddine, author of the National Book Award finalist An Unnecessary Woman WINNER OF: THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION'S SOPHIE BRODY AWARD * THE NATIONAL JEWISH BOOK AWARD IN FICTION * THE SAMI ROHR PRIZE FOR JEWISH LITERATURE * Named One of the Ten Best Books of the Year by the BBC * Longlisted for the Northern California Independent Booksellers Association Fiction Prize * A Penguin Random House International One World, One Book Selection * Honorable Mention for the Middle East Book Award Joseph, a literature student at Berkeley, is the son of a Jewish mother and a Muslim father. One day, a mysterious package arrives on his doorstep, pulling him into a mesmerizing adventure to uncover the
centuries-old history that binds the two sides of his family. From the storied Ibn Ezra Synagogue in Old Cairo, where generations of his family served as watchmen, to the lives of British twin sisters Agnes and Margaret, who in 1897 leave Cambridge on a mission to rescue sacred texts that have begun to disappear from the synagogue, this tightly woven multigenerational tale illuminates the tensions that have torn communities apart and the unlikely forces that attempt to bridge that divide. Moving and richly textured, The Last Watchman of Old Cairo is a poignant portrait of the intricate relationship between fathers and sons, and an unforgettable testament to the stories we inherit and the places we are from. 

Praise for The Last Watchman of Old Cairo “A beautiful, richly textured novel, ambitious and delicately crafted, The Last Watchman of Old Cairo is both a coming-of-age story and a family history, a wide-ranging book about fathers and sons, religion, magic, love, and the essence of storytelling. This book is a joy.”--Rabih Alameddine, author of the National Book Award finalist An Unnecessary Woman “Lyrical, compassionate and illuminating.”--BBC “Michael David Lukas has given us an elegiac novel of Cairo--Old Cairo and modern Cairo. Lukas’s greatest flair is in capturing the essence of that beautiful, haunted, shabby, beleaguered yet still utterly sublime Middle Eastern city.”--Lucette Lagnado, author of The Man in the White Sharkskin Suit and The Arrogant Years “Brilliant.”--The Jerusalem Post

Literary novel with a New York setting and a dash of speculative fiction, for fans of Colum McCann, Colm Toibin, and Dana Spiotta. Ghosts of New York is a novel in which the laws of time and space have been subtly suspended. It interweaves four strands: a photographer newly returned to the neighborhood where she grew up, after years spent living overseas; a foundling raised on 14th Street; a graduate student, his romantic partner, and his best friend entangled in a set of relationships with far-reaching personal and political repercussions; and a shopkeeper suffering from first love late in life. Mixing prophecy, history, and a hint of speculative fiction, its stories are bound together even as they are propelled into stranger territory. And undergirding it all is a song, which appears, disappears, and then resurfaces. Ghosts of New York explores complex lives through indelible renderings of settings-a bar, a night market, a recording studio-that alternate between familiar and unsettling. The work of a celebrated novelist and veteran of the art, film, and music scenes in New York and Austin (described as "a rare talent" by the New York Times and "a powerful literary voice" by Jeffrey Eugenides), this novel will immediately absorb readers intrigued by creative people and the places that sustain and challenge them.

'Your Face Tomorrow is already being compared with Proust and rightly so' Observer 'One of contemporary literature’s major works ... you have to open this book' Ali Smith 'I am myself my own fever and pain' Jacques Deza has been told he has a gift: he can see through people; guess just from their faces what will become of them. When he encounters the enigmatic Bertram Tupra at a party, Deza is persuaded to join a mysterious underground group. His task: to observe an assortment of people - politicians, celebrities, seemingly ordinary citizens - and predict their next move. But where will Deza's descent into this twilight world eventually take him? The first part of Javier Marías' masterly trilogy asks how well we truly know and understand those around us. Translated by Margaret Jull Costa

An Unnecessary WomanA NovelOpen Road + Grove/Atlantic

Winner of the IMPAC Dublin Award, and widely considered Javier Marías's masterpiece, A Heart So White is a breathtaking novel about family secrets that chronicles the relentless power of the past. Juan knows little of the interior life of his father Ranz; but when Juan marries, he begins to consider the past anew, and begins to ponder what he doesn't really want to know. Secrecy--its possible convenience, its price, and even its civility--hover throughout the novel. A Heart So White becomes a sort of anti-detective story of human nature. Intrigue; the sins of the father; the fraudulent and the genuine; marriage and strange repetitions of violence: Marías elegantly sends shafts of inquisitory light into shadows and onto
the costs of ambivalence.

A provocative first collection of stories by the author of Koolaids Following the publication of his critically acclaimed first novel, Koolaids, Rabih Alameddine offers a collection of stories that explores the experience of a number of Lebanese characters - men and women, gay and straight--whose lives have been blown apart by a disastrous civil war and the resulting international diaspora. Daring in style as well as content, these tales explore the relationships that anchor our hearts to the world -- father and son, grandson and grandmother, pedophile and 12-year-old boy, young man and woman of the streets, sister and sister, daughter and father, gay man and heterosexual, the quick and their dead. Suffused by a yearning for what has been lost, these narratives are both experimental and traditional, humorous and disturbing, and confirm without doubt that Alameddine is one of the most original and accomplished young writers to emerge in some time.

• 2021 Colorado Book Awards Winner • R.L. Maizes's Other People’s Pets examines the gap between the families we’re born into and those we create, and the danger that holding on to a troubled past may rob us of the future. La La Fine relates to animals better than she does to other people. Abandoned by a mother who never wanted a family, raised by a locksmith-turned-thief father, La La looks to pets when it feels like the rest of the world conspires against her. La La’s world stops being whole when her mother, who never wanted a child, abandons her twice. First, when La La falls through thin ice on a skating trip, and again when the accusations of “unfit mother” feel too close to true. Left alone with her father—a locksmith by trade, and a thief in reality—La La is denied a regular life. She becomes her father’s accomplice, calming the watchdog while he strips families of their most precious belongings. When her father’s luck runs out and he is arrested for burglary, everything La La has painstakingly built unravels. In her fourth year of veterinary school, she is forced to drop out, leaving school to pay for her father’s legal fees the only way she knows how—robbing homes once again. As an animal empath, she rationalizes her theft by focusing on houses with pets whose maladies only she can sense and caring for them before leaving with the family’s valuables. The news reports a puzzled police force—searching for a thief who left behind medicine for the dog, water for the parrot, or food for the hamster. Desperate to compensate for new and old losses, La La continues to rob homes, but it’s a strategy that ultimately will fail her.

“Daring, dazzling . . . A tough, funny, heart-breaking book” by the National Book Award–nominated author of An Unnecessary Woman (The Seattle Times). Detailing the impact of the AIDS epidemic in America and the Lebanese civil war in Beirut on a circle of friends and their families during the 1980s and 1990s, this “absolutely brilliant” novel mines the chaos of contemporary experience, telling the stories of characters who can no longer love or think except in fragments (Amy Tan). Clips and quips, vignettes and hallucinations, tragic news reports and hilarious short plays, conversations with both the quick and the dead, all shine their combined lights to reveal the way we experience life today in the debut novel of the author Michael Chabon calls “one of our most daring writers.” “A provocative, emotionally searing series of connected vignettes . . . For a nonlinear novel the images chosen retain a remarkable cohesion. Often sexually frank or jarringly violent, they merge into a graphic portrait of two cultures torn from the inside.” —Publishers Weekly “[A] refreshing statement of honesty and endurance . . . Funny, brave, full of heart and willing to say things about war and disease, sexual and cultural politics that have rarely been said so boldly or directly before.” —The Oregonian “Rabih Alameddine is one rare writer who not only breaks our hearts but gives every broken piece a new life.” —Yiyun Li
an epilogue about the future of his characters, was stymied by the radical change that the
Great War brought to their world. With the hindsight of a century, di Canzio imagines a future
for them and a past for Alec—a young villager possessed of remarkable passion and self-
knowledge. Alec continues Forster’s project of telling stories that are part of “a great
unrecorded history.” Di Canzio’s debut novel is a love story of epic proportions, at once
classic and boldly new.

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