



## THE BOOK NOOK

Some books that ought to be inspiring, comforting, or just plain good reading while snuggled under the covers in these dark winter months ahead . . .

(Note: these are mostly NOT on our shelves, but are surely worth seeking out elsewhere or putting on your Christmas list)

### **Jane Urquhart, *In Winter I Get Up at Night* (novel)**

"In the early morning dark, Emer McConnell rises for a day of teaching music in the schools of rural Saskatchewan. While she travels the snowy roads in the gathering light, she begins another journey, one of recollection and introspection, and one that, through the course of Jane Urquhart's brilliant new novel, will leave the reader forever changed." "Moving as effortlessly through time as the drift of memory itself, *In Winter I Get Up at Night* brings Emer and her singular story to life. At the age of 11, she is terribly injured in an enormous prairie storm—the 'great wind' that shifts her trajectory forever. As she recovers, separated from her family in a children's ward, Emer gets to know her fellow patients, a memorable group including a child performer who stars in a travelling theatre company, the daughter of a Dukhobor community, and the son of a leftist Jewish farm collective. The children are tended to by three nursing sisters and two doctors, whom the ever-imaginative Emer comes to call Doctor Angel and Doctor Carpenter.

Emer's tale grows outwards from that ward, reaching through time and space in a dreamlike fashion, recounting the stories of her mother's entanglement with a powerful yet mysterious teacher; her brother's dawning spirituality, which eventually leads him to the priesthood; the remarkable lives of the nuns who care for her; and the passionate yet distant love affair of Emer and an enigmatic man she calls Harp—a brilliant scientist whose great discovery has forever altered millions of lives around the world.

In luminous prose, and with exhilarating nuance and depth, Jane Urquhart charts an unforgettable life, while also exploring some of the grandest themes of the twentieth century—colonial expansion, scientific progress, and the sinister forces that seek to divide societies along racial and cultural lines. This is a major work of imagination and self-exploration from one of the greatest writers of our time."

### **Sue Monk Kidd, *The Book of Longings* (novel)**

"An extraordinary novel . . . a triumph of insight and storytelling." (Associated Press)

"A true masterpiece." (Glennon Doyle, author of *Untamed*)

"An extraordinary story set in the first century about a woman who finds her voice and her destiny, from the celebrated number one *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Secret Life of Bees* and *The Invention of Wings*"

"In her mesmerizing fourth work of fiction, Sue Monk Kidd takes an audacious approach to history and brings her acclaimed narrative gifts to imagine the story of a young woman

named Ana. Raised in a wealthy family with ties to the ruler of Galilee, she is rebellious and ambitious, with a brilliant mind and a daring spirit. She engages in furtive scholarly pursuits and writes narratives about neglected and silenced women. Ana is expected to marry an older widower, a prospect that horrifies her. An encounter with eighteen-year-old Jesus changes everything.

Their marriage evolves with love and conflict, humor and pathos in Nazareth, where Ana makes a home with Jesus, his brothers, and their mother, Mary. Ana's pent-up longings intensify amid the turbulent resistance to Rome's occupation of Israel, partially led by her brother, Judas. She is sustained by her fearless aunt Yaltha, who harbors a compelling secret. When Ana commits a brazen act that puts her in peril, she flees to Alexandria, where startling revelations and greater dangers unfold, and she finds refuge in unexpected surroundings. Ana determines her fate during a stunning convergence of events considered among the most impactful in human history.

Grounded in meticulous research and written with a reverential approach to Jesus's life that focuses on his humanity, this is an inspiring, unforgettable account of one woman's bold struggle to realize the passion and potential inside her, while living in a time, place, and culture devised to silence her. It is a triumph of storytelling both timely and timeless, from a masterful writer at the height of her powers."

### **Margaret Renkl, *The Comfort of Crows* (nonfiction)**

"A beautiful love letter to nature and the world around us." (Reese Witherspoon - Reese's Book Club September '24 Pick)

"From the beloved *New York Times* opinion writer: a luminous book that traces the passing of seasons, both personal and natural."

"In *The Comfort of Crows*, Margaret Renkl presents a literary devotional: fifty-two chapters that follow the creatures and plants in her backyard over the course of a year. As we move through the seasons—from a crow spied on New Year's Day, its resourcefulness and sense of community setting a theme for the year, to the lingering bluebirds of December, revisiting the nest box they used in spring—what develops is a portrait of joy and grief: joy in the ongoing pleasures of the natural world, and grief over winters that end too soon and songbirds that grow fewer and fewer.

Along the way, we also glimpse the changing rhythms of a human life. Grown children, unexpectedly home during the pandemic, prepare to depart once more. Birdsong and night-blooming flowers evoke generations past. The city and the country where Renkl raised her family transform a little more with each passing day. And the natural world, now in visible flux, requires every ounce of hope and commitment from the author—and from us. For, as Renkl writes, 'radiant things are bursting forth in the darkest places, in the smallest nooks and deepest cracks of the hidden world.'

With fifty-two original color artworks by the author's brother, Billy Renkl, *The Comfort of Crows* is a lovely and deeply moving book from a cherished observer of the natural world."

**Jennifer Rosner, *The Yellow Bird Sings* (novel)**

National Jewish Book Award Finalist

"Rosner's exquisite, heart-rending debut novel is proof that there's always going to be room for another story about World War II. This is an absolutely beautiful and necessary novel, full of heartbreak but also hope, about the bond between mother and daughter, and the sacrifices made for love." (*The New York Times*)

"In Poland, as World War II rages, a mother hides with her young daughter, a musical prodigy whose slightest sound may cost them their lives.

As Nazi soldiers round up the Jews in their town, Róza and her 5-year-old daughter, Shira, flee, seeking shelter in a neighbor's barn. Hidden in the hayloft day and night, Shira struggles to stay still and quiet, as music pulses through her and the farmyard outside beckons. To soothe her daughter and pass the time, Róza tells her a story about a girl in an enchanted garden:

The girl is forbidden from making a sound, so the yellow bird sings. He sings whatever the girl composes in her head: high-pitched trills of piccolo; low-throated growls of contrabassoon. Music helps the flowers bloom.

In this make-believe world, Róza can shield Shira from the horrors that surround them. But the day comes when their haven is no longer safe, and Róza must make an impossible choice: whether to keep Shira by her side or give her the chance to survive apart.

Inspired by the true stories of Jewish children hidden during World War II, Jennifer Rosner's debut is a breathtaking novel. Beautiful and riveting, it is a testament to the triumph of hope—a whispered story, a bird's song—in even the darkest of times."

**Anthony Doerr, *About Grace* (novel)**

"The first novel by Anthony Doerr, the highly acclaimed author of *Cloud Cuckoo Land* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning #1 New York Times bestseller *All the Light We Cannot See*, is one of the most beautiful, wise, and compelling debuts of recent times.

David Winkler begins life in Anchorage, Alaska, a quiet boy drawn to the volatility of weather and obsessed with snow. Sometimes he sees things before they happen--a man carrying a hatbox will be hit by a bus; Winkler will fall in love with a woman in a supermarket. When David dreams that his infant daughter will drown in a flood as he tries to save her, he comes undone. He travels thousands of miles, fleeing family, home, and the future itself, to deny the dream. On a Caribbean island, destitute, alone, and unsure if his child has survived or his wife can forgive him, David is sheltered by a couple with a daughter of their own. Ultimately it is she who will pull him back into the world, to search for the people he left behind.

Doerr's characters are full of grief and longing, but also replete with grace. His compassion for human frailty is extraordinarily moving. In luminous prose, he writes about the power and beauty of nature and about the tiny miracles that transform our lives. *About Grace* is heartbreaking, radiant, and astonishingly accomplished."

**Brooke Kroeger, *Undaunted: How Women Changed American Journalism* (nonfiction)**

“An essential history of women in American journalism, showcasing exceptional careers from 1840 to the present.

*Undaunted* is a representative history of the American women who surmounted every impediment put in their way to do journalism’s most valued work. From Margaret Fuller’s improbable success to the highly paid reporters of the mid-nineteenth century to the breakthrough investigative triumphs of Nellie Bly, Ida Tarbell, and Ida B. Wells, Brooke Kroeger examines the lives of the best-remembered and long-forgotten woman journalists. She explores the careers of standout woman reporters who covered the major news stories and every conflict at home and abroad since before the Civil War, and she celebrates those exceptional careers up to the present, including those of Martha Gellhorn, Rachel Carson, Janet Malcolm, Joan Didion, Cokie Roberts, and Charlayne Hunter-Gault.

As Kroeger chronicles the lives of journalists and newsroom leaders in every medium, a larger story develops: the nearly two-centuries-old struggle for women’s rights. Here as well is the collective fight for equity from the gentle stirrings of the late 1800s through the legal battles of the 1970s to the #MeToo movement and today’s racial and gender disparities.

*Undaunted* unveils the huge and singular impact women have had on a vital profession still dominated by men.”

**Rosalind Miles, *Who Cooked the Last Supper?* (nonfiction)**

“Without politics or polemics, Rosalind Miles’s brilliant and witty book overturns centuries of preconceptions to restore women to their rightful place at the center of culture, revolution, empire, war, and peace. Spiced with tales of individual women who have shaped civilization, celebrating the work and lives of women around the world, and distinguished by a wealth of research, *Who Cooked the Last Supper?* redefines our concept of historical reality.”

**Dava Sobel, *The Glass Universe* (nonfiction)**

“Elegantly written and enriched by excerpts from letters, diaries, and memoirs, Dava Sobel’s *The Glass Universe* is the hidden history of the women whose contributions to the burgeoning field of astronomy forever changed our understanding of the stars and our place in the universe.”

**Lynne Olson, *Empress of the Nile: The Daredevil Archaeologist Who Saved Egypt's Ancient Temples from Destruction* (nonfiction)**

“The remarkable story of the intrepid French archaeologist who led the international effort to save ancient Egyptian temples from the floodwaters of the Aswan Dam, by the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Madame Fourcade’s Secret War: The Daring Young Woman Who Led France’s Largest Spy Network Against Hitler.*”

“In the 1960s, the world’s attention was focused on a nail-biting race against time: the international campaign to save a dozen ancient Egyptian temples from drowning in the floodwaters of the gigantic new Aswan High Dam. But the coverage of this unprecedented

rescue effort completely overlooked the daring French archaeologist who made it all happen. Without the intervention of Christiane Desroches-Noblecourt, the temples—including the Temple of Dendur, now at New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art—would currently be at the bottom of a vast reservoir. It was an unimaginably complex project that required the fragile sandstone temples to be dismantled and rebuilt on higher ground.

Willful and determined, Desroches-Noblecourt refused to be cowed by anyone or anything. As a member of the French Resistance in World War II she survived imprisonment by the Nazis; in her fight to save the temples she defied two of the most daunting leaders of the postwar world, Egypt’s President Abdel Nasser and France’s President Charles de Gaulle. As she told one reporter, ‘You don’t get anywhere without a fight, you know.’

Desroches-Noblecourt also received help from a surprising source. Jacqueline Kennedy, America’s new First Lady, persuaded her husband to help fund the rescue effort. After a century and a half of Western plunder of Egypt’s ancient monuments, Desroches-Noblecourt helped instead to preserve a crucial part of that cultural heritage.”

### **Rebecca Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (nonfiction)**

“Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor Southern tobacco farmer who worked the same land as her slave ancestors, yet her cells—taken without her knowledge—became one of the most important tools in medicine: The first “immortal” human cells grown in culture, which are still alive today, though she has been dead for more than sixty years. HeLa cells were vital for developing the polio vaccine; uncovered secrets of cancer, viruses, and the atom bomb’s effects; helped lead to important advances like in vitro fertilization, cloning, and gene mapping; and have been bought and sold by the billions. Yet Henrietta Lacks remains virtually unknown, buried in an unmarked grave.”

“Rebecca Skloot takes us on an extraordinary journey, from the ‘colored’ ward of Johns Hopkins Hospital in the 1950s to stark white laboratories with freezers full of HeLa cells; from Henrietta’s small, dying hometown of Clover, Virginia — a land of wooden slave quarters, faith healings, and voodoo — to East Baltimore today, where her children and grandchildren live and struggle with the legacy of her cells.”

### **David Von Drehle, *The Book of Charlie: Wisdom from the Remarkable American Life of a 109-year-old Man* (nonfiction)**

“One of our nation’s most prominent writers discovers the truth about how to live a long and happy life from the centenarian next door in this ‘original and highly readable account of a splendid American life.’ (*The Wall Street Journal*).

“When a veteran Washington journalist moved to Kansas, he met a new neighbor who was more than a century old. Little did he know that he was beginning a long friendship—and a profound lesson in the meaning of life. Charlie White was no ordinary neighbor. Born before radio, Charlie lived long enough to use a smartphone. When a shocking tragedy interrupted his idyllic boyhood, Charlie mastered survival strategies that reflect thousands of years of human wisdom. Thus armored, Charlie’s sense of adventure carried him on an epic journey of the Jazz Age, racing aboard ambulances through

Depression-era gangster wars, improvising techniques for early open-heart surgery, and cruising the Amazon as a guest of Peru's president.

David Von Drehle came to understand that Charlie's resilience and willingness to grow made this remarkable neighbor a master in the art of thriving through times of dramatic change. As a gift to his children, he set out to tell Charlie's secrets. The *Book of Charlie* is a 'genuinely original, formula-shattering' (Bob Woodward) gospel of grit—the inspiring story of one man's journey through a century of upheaval. The history that unfolds through Charlie's story reminds you that the United States has always been a divided nation, a questing nation—a nation of Charlies in the rollercoaster pursuit of a good and meaningful life."

### **Ivan Doig, *Dancing at the Rascal Fair* (novel)**

"If you enjoy stories of families during what we call a 'simpler time,' people with a sense of hope, expectation, and determination, you will enjoy this series." [The Montana Trilogy]

"As before, Doig paints a portrait of Montana in the early years of its growth and brings his characters to life in such a way that you feel you know them. He depicts seasons, time, and place poetically and allows the reader to immerse him/herself in those surroundings in all their imagery. The winters are forbidding, deadly ferocious; the winds whip through the pages; the smells of burning land pierce the reader's senses and burn the reader's eyes. You behold the beauty of the Rocky Mountains, the clear running rivers, the green spring grasses, and the vast, seemingly endless vistas."

"I was completely caught up in this story of the early settlers and homesteaders in the Two Medicine country, their dreams, friendships, disillusionments, loves, and tragedies. Doig's writing is simply wonderful.....what separates literature from mere fiction."

"This first book in his Montana Trilogy follows the homesteading trials of the McAskill family, immigrants from Scotland who settle in the Two Medicine country of northwestern Montana. Doig is a fantastic writer who paints a bold, engaging picture of what life must have been like for European homesteaders from the late 1800s into the early 20th century. Centered on the relationship between two Scotsman hailing from Nethermuir, Angus McAskill and Rob Barclay, this novel grabs you from the opening pages and holds your interest (and your emotions) through the final pages. It is equal parts family drama, historical tragedy, and character study; ultimately, it plumbs the depth of the human heart and asks of us 'what does it mean to be a friend, a lover, a husband, a neighbor - in the midst of all that Life can throw at you?'"

### **Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave (autobiography)**

"Former slave, impassioned abolitionist, brilliant writer, newspaper editor, and eloquent orator whose speeches fired the abolitionist cause, Frederick Douglass (1818–1895) led an astounding life. Physical abuse, deprivation and tragedy plagued his early years, yet through sheer force of character he was able to overcome these obstacles to become a leading spokesman for his people. In this, the first and most frequently read of his three autobiographies, Douglass provides graphic descriptions of his childhood and horrifying

experiences as a slave as well as a harrowing record of his dramatic escape to the North and eventual freedom. Published in 1845 to quell doubts about his origins — since few slaves of that period could write — the Narrative is admired today for its extraordinary passion, sensitive and vivid descriptions, and storytelling power. It belongs in the library of anyone interested in African-American history and the life of one of the country's most courageous and influential champions of civil rights.”

“*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* is a captivating and thought-provoking book that resonates with readers for several compelling reasons. One of the most striking aspects is Douglass's masterful storytelling, which draws readers into the tumultuous journey of his life with vivid and evocative language. His ability to convey the depth of his experiences makes the narrative both engaging and emotionally impactful. Readers will appreciate Douglass's resilience and determination in the face of unimaginable adversity. His journey from a life of enslavement to becoming a prominent abolitionist and advocate for social justice is not only inspiring but also a testament to the human spirit's capacity for triumph over oppression. Douglass's narrative skillfully captures the essence of his personal growth and transformation, making it a compelling and relatable story for a wide audience.”

### **Roland Merullo, *The Delight of Being Ordinary: A Road Trip with the Pope and the Dalai Lama* (novel)**

“Roland Merullo’s playful, eloquent, and life-affirming novel finds the world’s two holiest men teaming up for an unsanctioned road trip through the Italian countryside--where they rediscover the everyday joys and challenges of ordinary life.

During the Dalai Lama’s highly publicized official visit to the Vatican, the Pope suggests an adventure so unexpected and appealing that neither man can resist: they will shed their robes for several days and live as ordinary men. Before dawn, the two beloved religious leaders make a daring escape from Vatican City, slip into a waiting car, and are soon traveling the Italian roads in disguise. Along for the ride is the Pope’s neurotic cousin and personal assistant, Paolo, who—to his terror—has been put in charge of arranging the details of their disappearance. Rounding out the group is Paolo’s estranged wife, Rosa, an eccentric entrepreneur with a lust for life, who orchestrates the sublime disguises of each man. Rosa is a woman who cannot resist the call to adventure—or the fun.

Against a landscape of good humor, intrigue, and spiritual fulfillment, *The Delight of Being Ordinary* showcases the uniquely charming sensibilities of author Roland Merullo. Part whimsical expedition, part love story, part spiritual search, this uplifting novel brings warmth and laughter to the universal concerns of family life, religious inspiration, and personal identity—all of which combine to transcend cultural and political barriers in the name of a once-in-a-lifetime adventure.”

### **Elif Shafak, *There Are Rivers in the Sky* (novel)**

“From the Booker Prize finalist, author of *The Island of Missing Trees*, an enchanting new tale about three characters living along two great rivers, all connected by a single drop of water.”

"Make place for Elif Shafak on your bookshelf. Make place for her in your heart too. You won't regret it." (Arundhati Roy, winner of the Booker Prize)

"In the ancient city of Nineveh, on the bank of the River Tigris, King Ashurbanipal of Mesopotamia, erudite but ruthless, built a great library that would crumble with the end of his reign. From its ruins, however, emerged a poem, the Epic of Gilgamesh, that would infuse the existence of two rivers and bind together three lives.

In 1840 London, Arthur is born beside the stinking, sewage-filled River Thames. With an abusive, alcoholic father and a mentally ill mother, Arthur's only chance of escaping destitution is his brilliant memory. When his gift earns him a spot as an apprentice at a leading publisher, Arthur's world opens up far beyond the slums, and one book in particular catches his interest: *Nineveh and Its Remains*.

In 2014 Turkey, Narin, a ten-year-old Yazidi girl, is diagnosed with a rare disorder that will soon cause her to go deaf. Before that happens, her grandmother is determined to baptize her in a sacred Iraqi temple. But with the rising presence of ISIS and the destruction of the family's ancestral lands along the Tigris, Narin is running out of time.

In 2018 London, the newly divorced Zaleekah, a hydrologist, moves into a houseboat on the Thames to escape her husband. Orphaned and raised by her wealthy uncle, Zaleekah had made the decision to take her own life in one month, until a curious book about her homeland changes everything.

A dazzling feat of storytelling, *There Are Rivers in the Sky* entwines these outsiders with a single drop of water, a drop which remanifests across the centuries. Both a source of life and harbinger of death, rivers—the Tigris and the Thames—transcend history, transcend fate: "Water remembers. It is humans who forget."

### **Robert Dugoni, *The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* (novel)**

"Wall Street Journal and New York Times bestselling author Robert Dugoni's coming-of-age story is, according to *Booklist*, 'a novel that, if it doesn't cross entirely over into John Irving territory, certainly nestles in close to the border.'"

"Sam Hill always saw the world through different eyes. Born with red pupils, he was called 'Devil Boy' or Sam 'Hell' by his classmates; 'God's will' is what his mother called his ocular albinism. Her words were of little comfort, but Sam persevered, buoyed by his mother's devout faith, his father's practical wisdom, and his two other misfit friends. Sam believed it was God who sent Ernie Cantwell, the only African American kid in his class, to be the friend he so desperately needed. And that it was God's idea for Mickie Kennedy to storm into Our Lady of Mercy like a tornado, uprooting every rule Sam had been taught about boys and girls.

Forty years later, Sam, a small-town eye doctor, is no longer certain anything was by design—especially not the tragedy that caused him to turn his back on his friends, his hometown, and the life he'd always known. Running from the pain, eyes closed, served little purpose. Now, as he looks back on his life, Sam embarks on a journey that will take him halfway around the world. This time, his eyes are wide open—bringing into clear view what changed him, defined him, and made him so afraid, until he can finally see what truly matters."



**P.G. Wodehouse, *The Code of the Woosters* (novel)**

“To dive into a Wodehouse novel is to swim in some of the most elegantly turned phrases in the English language.” (Ben Schott)

“Follow the adventures of Bertie Wooster and his gentleman’s gentleman, Jeeves, in this stunning new edition of one of the greatest comic novels in the English language. When Aunt Dahlia demands that Bertie Wooster help her dupe an antique dealer into selling her an 18th-century cow-creamer. Dahlia trumps Bertie's objections by threatening to sever his standing invitation to her house for lunch, an unthinkable prospect given Bertie's devotion to the cooking of her chef, Anatole. A web of complications grows as Bertie's pal Gussie Fink-Nottle asks for counseling in the matter of his impending marriage to Madeline Bassett. It seems Madeline isn't his only interest; Gussie also wants to study the effects of a full moon on the love life of newts. Added to the cast of eccentrics are Roderick Spode, leader of a fascist organization called the Saviors of Britain, who also wants that cow-creamer, and an unusual man of the cloth known as Rev. H. P. ‘Stinker’ Pinker. As usual, butler Jeeves becomes a focal point for all the plots and ploys of these characters, and in the end only his cleverness can rescue Bertie from being arrested, lynched, and engaged by mistake!”

“A self-described gentleman’s gentleman, Jeeves is so flawless that his name has its own entry in the Oxford English Dictionary.”

**Langston Hughes, *Not Without Laughter* (novel)**

“Our greatest African American poet’s award-winning first novel, about a black boy’s coming-of-age in a largely white Kansas town.”

“When first published in 1930, *Not Without Laughter* established Langston Hughes as not only a brilliant poet and leading light of the Harlem Renaissance but also a gifted novelist. In telling the story of Sandy Rogers, a young African American boy in small-town Kansas, and of his family—his mother, Annjee, a housekeeper for a wealthy white family; his irresponsible father, Jimboy, who plays the guitar and travels the country in search of employment; his strong-willed grandmother Hager, who clings to her faith; his Aunt Tempy, who marries a rich man; and his Aunt Harriet, who struggles to make it as a blues singer—Hughes gives the longings and lineaments of black life in the early twentieth century an important place in the history of racially divided America.”

“In turn-of-the-century Kansas, Sandy Rogers grows up reading books and questioning morality, religion, and race relations. Hughes described the character as semi-autobiographical, and I think we all want to hang out with Langston Hughes.”

**Peter Matthiessen, *The Snow Leopard* (nonfiction)**

WINNER OF THE NATIONAL BOOK AWARD

“A masterpiece that exceeds the boundaries of the travel genre and envelops you with its incredible prose.” (*Wall Street Journal*)

“An unforgettable spiritual journey through the Himalayas by renowned writer Peter Matthiessen (1927-2014)”

“In 1973, Peter Matthiessen and field biologist George Schaller traveled high into the remote mountains of Nepal to study the Himalayan blue sheep and possibly glimpse

the rare and beautiful snow leopard. Matthiessen, a student of Zen Buddhism, was also on a spiritual quest to find the Lama of Shey at the ancient shrine on Crystal Mountain. As the climb proceeds, Matthiessen charts his inner path as well as his outer one, with a deepening Buddhist understanding of reality, suffering, impermanence, and beauty."

**David Wroblewski, *Familiaris* (novel)**

"The follow-up to the beloved #1 *New York Times* bestselling modern classic *The Story of Edgar Sawtelle*, *Familiaris* is the stirring origin story of the Sawtelle family and the remarkable dogs that carry the Sawtelle name.

It is spring 1919, and John Sawtelle's imagination has gotten him into trouble ... again. Now John and his newlywed wife, Mary, along with their two best friends and their three dogs, are setting off for Wisconsin's north woods, where they hope to make a fresh start--and, with a little luck, discover what it takes to live a life of meaning, purpose, and adventure. But the place they are headed for is far stranger and more perilous than they realize, and it will take all their ingenuity, along with a few new friends—human, animal, and otherworldly—to realize their dreams.

By turns hilarious and heartbreaking, mysterious and enchanting, *Familiaris* takes readers on an unforgettable journey from the halls of a small-town automobile factory, through an epic midwestern firestorm and an ambitious WWII dog training program, and far back into mankind's ancient past, examining the dynamics of love and friendship, the vexing nature of families, the universal desire to create something lasting and beautiful, and of course, the species-long partnership between *Homo sapiens* and *Canis familiaris*."

"By taking us back to the origins of the Sawtelle family, Wroblewski has set a storytelling bonfire as enthralling in its pages as it is illuminating of our fragile and complicated humanity. *Familiaris* is as expansive and enlightening a saga as has ever been written. (Tom Hanks)

**Dorothy Sayers, *The Nine Tailors* (#11 of 15 titles in the Lord Peter Wimsey mystery series)**

"The nine tellerstrokes from the belfry of an ancient country church toll out the death of an unknown man and call the famous Lord Peter Wimsey to investigate the good and evil that lurks in every person. Steeped in the atmosphere of a quiet parish in the strange, flat fen-country of East Anglia, this is a tale of suspense, character, and mood by an author critics and readers rate as one of the great masters of the mystery novel.

**Tony Hillerman, *Coyote Waits* (#10 of 18 titles in the Leaphorn & Chee mystery series)**

"The car fire didn't kill Navajo Tribal Policeman Delbert Nez—a bullet did. And the old man in possession of the murder weapon is a whiskey-soaked shaman named Ashie Pinto. Officer Jim Chee is devastated by the slaying of his good friend Del, and confounded by the prime suspect's refusal to utter a single word of confession or denial.

Lieutenant Joe Leaphorn believes there is much more to this outrage than what appears on the surface, as he and Jim Chee set out to unravel a complex weave of greed and death that involves a historical find and a lost fortune. But the hungry and mythical

trickster Coyote is waiting, as always, in the shadows to add a strange and deadly new twist."

"This year, reading all these books again (for the fourth time), I saw that *Coyote Waits* is the most meaningful of Tony Hillerman's expositions of human nature in relation to the cosmos. If you read no other Hillerman, read this one."

"There is a lot of Navajo mythology included in this book. Both Chee and Leaphorn examine their lives—Leaphorn is still trying to come to grips with his wife's death, and Chee believes he failed his friend and is partly responsible for Nez's death, as Hillerman delves more deeply into the characters' personalities."

**Aimée & David Thurlo, *Blackening Song* (#1 of 17 titles in the Ella Clah mystery series)**

"*Blackening Song* is the debut of Navajo FBI agent Ella Clah, who returns to the reservation to investigate the murder of her father, a minister. The ritual nature of the killing makes Ella's brother, a medicine man, the prime suspect. Without cooperation from the tribe, the FBI, or the local police, Ella must plumb the depths of the struggle between traditionalist and modernist forces among the Navajo to find her father's murderer."

**Arthur W. Upfield, *Inspector Napoleon Bonaparte* mystery series (29 titles)**

Inspector "Bony" Bonaparte, police officer in Australia, is a biracial Aboriginal Australian detective with a reputation for solving difficult cases by finding subtle clues.

**Alexander McCall Smith, *The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency* mystery series (24 titles)**

In this charming series set in Botswana, Mma Ramotswe—with help from her loyal associate, Grace Makutsi—navigates her cases and her personal life with wisdom, good humor, and the occasional cup of tea.

**William Kent Krueger, *Cork O'Connor* mystery series (21 titles)**

Krueger writes a mystery series set in the north woods of Minnesota. His protagonist is Cork O'Connor, a man of mixed heritage—part Irish and part Ojibwe.

**"W.H. Auden said that the classic detective story sees order being restored to a disrupted society—he saw it as a kind of Christian allegory, and I think that allegory works especially well for clerical mysteries." (Martin Edwards)**

**Julia Spencer-Fleming, *In the Bleak Midwinter* (#1 of 9 titles in the Clare Fergusson & Russ Van Alstyne mystery series)**

"Clare Fergusson, St. Alban's new priest, fits like a square peg in the conservative Episcopal parish at Millers Kill, New York. She is not just a 'lady,' she's a tough ex-Army chopper pilot, and nobody's fool. Then a newborn infant left at the church door brings her together with the town's police chief, Russ Van Alstyne, who's also ex-Army and a cynical good shepherd for the stray sheep of his hometown. Their search for the baby's mother quickly leads them into the secrets that shadow Millers Kill like the ever-present Adirondacks. What they discover is a world of trouble, an attraction to each other, and murder..." "Heavy Snow...Icy Desires...Cold-Blooded Murder"

**Ellis Peters, *The Sanctuary Sparrow* (#7 of 20 titles in the Brother Cadfael mystery series)**

“In the gentle Shrewsbury spring of 1140 the midnight matins at the Benedictine abbey suddenly reverberates with an unholy sound—a hunt in full cry. Pursued by a drunken mob, the quarry is running for its life. When the frantic creature bursts into the nave to claim sanctuary, Brother Cadfael finds himself fighting off armed townsmen to save a terrified young man. Accused of robbery and murder is Liliwin, a wandering minstrel who performed at the wedding of the local goldsmith's son. But his supposed victim, the miserly craftsman, is still alive, although a strongbox lies empty. Brother Cadfael believes that Liliwin is innocent, but finding the truth and the treasure before Liliwin's respite in sanctuary runs out may uncover a deadlier sin than thievery—a desperate love that nothing, not even the threat of hanging, can stop.”

**James Runcie, *Sidney Chambers and The Shadow of Death* (#1 of 7 titles in the Grantchester mystery series)**

“With a whiff of Agatha Christie and a touch of G. K. Chesterton's Father Brown”  
“It is 1953, the coronation year of Queen Elizabeth II. Sidney Chambers, vicar of Grantchester and honorary canon of Ely Cathedral, is a thirty-two-year-old bachelor. Tall, with dark brown hair, eyes the color of hazelnuts, and a reassuringly gentle manner, Sidney is an unconventional clerical detective. He can go where the police cannot. Together with his roguish friend, inspector Geordie Keating, Sidney inquires into the suspect suicide of a Cambridge solicitor, a scandalous jewelry theft at a New Year's Eve dinner party, the unexplained death of a jazz promoter's daughter, and a shocking art forgery that puts a close friend in danger. Sidney discovers that being a detective, like being a clergyman, means that you are never off duty, but he nonetheless manages to find time for a keen interest in cricket, warm beer, and hot jazz—as well as a curious fondness for a German widow three years his junior.”

**Sister Carol Anne O'Marie, *Murder Makes a Pilgrimage* (#5 of 11 titles in the Sister Mary Helen mystery series)**

"Sister Mary Helen handles her cases with bustling efficiency and an elfin sense of humor."  
*(The New York Times Book Review)*

“Vivacious and outgoing, Lisa Springer was the most unlikely member of the free pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, the birthplace of Christianity in Spain. And Sister Mary Helen soon had reason to suspect the auburn-haired knockout knew the other members of the tour group—and some of their ugliest secrets—all too well. So when Lisa was discovered strangled to death in a saint's crypt, Sister Mary faced no end of likely suspects—from Lisa's dangerously disaffected ‘best friend’ to the group's charming, unreliable guide to the mild-mannered professor with a relentlessly snobbish wife. And when Sister Mary Helen becomes the target of a number of frightening ‘accidents,’ she and Sister Eileen must race to uncover Lisa's past and expose a clever killer hellbent on prematurely sending one sleuthing nun to her heavenly reward.”