

# **BOOK GIFT GUIDE**



# **2021**

**[PageAfterPage.org/Book\\_Gift\\_Guide](https://PageAfterPage.org/Book_Gift_Guide)**

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# AWARD WINNERS

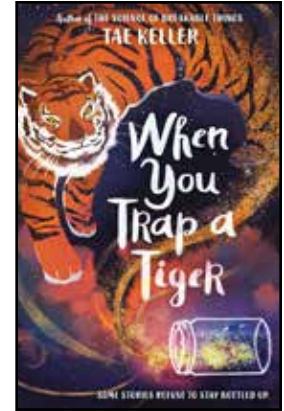
## 2021 Caldecott Medal Winner



### “We Are Water Protectors” by Carole Lindstrom

Inspired by the many Indigenous-led movements across North America, “We Are Water Protectors” issues an urgent rallying cry to safeguard the Earth’s water from harm and corruption.

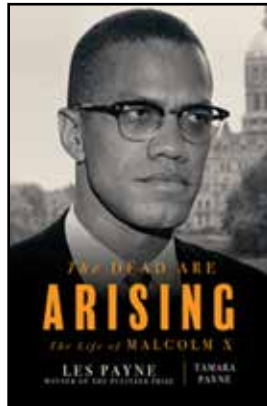
## 2021 Newbery Medal Winner



### “When You Trap a Tiger” by Tae Keller

Would you make a deal with a magical tiger? This uplifting story brings Korean folklore to life as a girl goes on a quest to unlock the power of stories and save her grandmother.

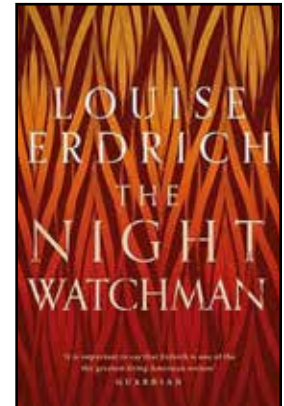
## 2021 Pulitzer Prize for Biography



### “The Dead Are Arising: The Life of Malcolm X” by Les Payne & Tamara Payne

A revisionary portrait of the iconic civil rights leader draws on hundreds of hours of interviews with surviving family members, intelligence officers and political leaders to offer new insights into Malcolm X’s Depression-era youth, religious conversion and 1965 assassination.

## 2021 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction

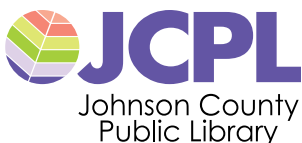


### “The Night Watchman” by Louise Erdrich

Based on the extraordinary life of Erdrich’s grandfather who worked as a night watchman and carried the fight against Native dispossession from rural North Dakota all the way to Washington, D.C., this powerful novel explores themes of love and death with lightness and gravity and unfolds with the elegant prose, sly humor and depth of feeling of a master craftsman.

The Book Gift Guide 2021 is a list compiled by the staff at Johnson County Public Library.

Johnson County Public Library does not profit from the purchase of any of book titles listed in this publication.

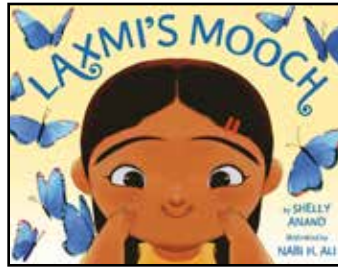


# EARLY READERS



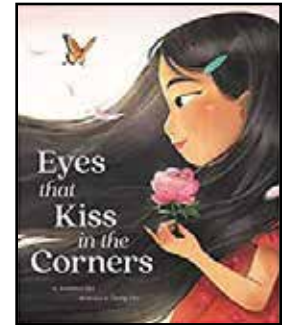
**“Stella’s Stellar Hair”**  
by Yesenia Moises

Stella travels planet to planet visiting her aunties looking for a stellar hairdo for the Big Star Little Gala, but she is not convinced by any of their suggestions.



**“Laxmi’s Mooch”**  
by Shelly Anand

After Laxmi’s friend Zoe points out the hairs on her lip, Laxmi is very self-conscious until her East Indian parents help her to accept and celebrate her appearance.

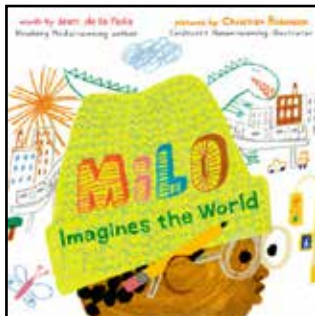


**“Eyes that Kiss In the Corners”**  
by Joanna Ho

A self-confident and strong young girl recounts how she shares her eyes—and so much more—with her mother, her amah and her little sister.

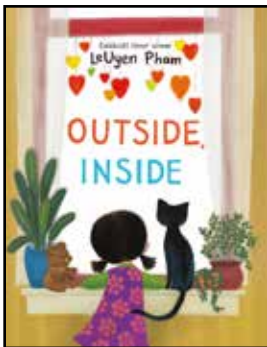


**Recommended by**  
Katie, White River Branch



**“Milo Imagines the World”**  
by Matt de la Peña

While Milo and his sister travel to a detention center to visit their incarcerated mother, he observes strangers on the subway and draws what he imagines their lives to be.

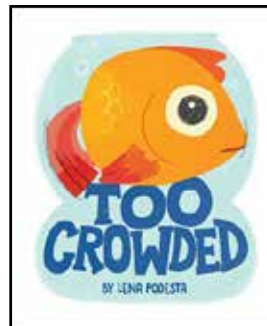


**“Outside, Inside”**  
by Leuyen Pham

This is a beautiful book that describes the impact of COVID-19 on communities and why some essential workers could not quarantine.

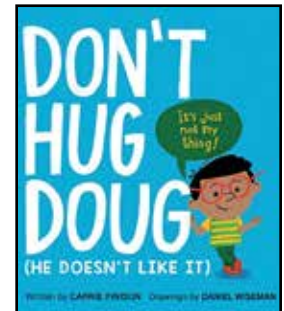


**Recommended by**  
Nicole, Trafalgar Branch



**“Too Crowded”**  
by Lena Podesta

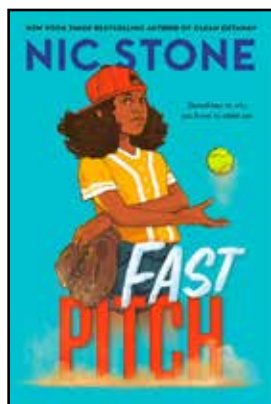
Gil the Goldfish feels crowded in his small bowl with a plant, a castle and 138 pebbles, but when he leaves his bowl in search of a better home, he learns some important lessons.



**“Don’t Hug Doug”**  
by Carrie Finison and Daniel Wiseman

Doug prefers not to be hugged, but there are a variety of other ways his loved ones can show him affection.





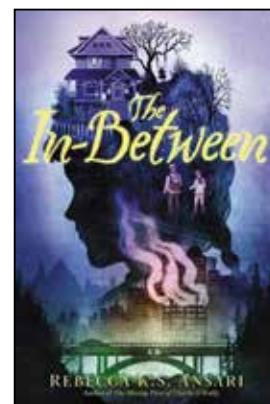
**“Fast Pitch”**  
by Nic Stone

Shenice Lockwood dreams of leading the Fulton Firebirds to the U12 softball regional championship. But Shenice’s focus gets shaken when her great-uncle Jack reveals that a career-ending and family-name-ruining crime may have been a setup. It’s up to Shenice to discover the truth—and fast—before secrets take the Firebirds out of the game forever.



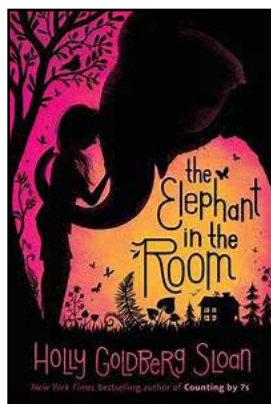
**“Meow or Never”**  
by Jazz Taylor

Avery Williams can sing, but that doesn’t mean she can sing in front of people. She likes to stay backstage at her new school, which is where, to her surprise, she finds a cat tucked away into a nook. Avery names the stray Phantom and visits any time she’s feeling stressed (which is a lot these days).



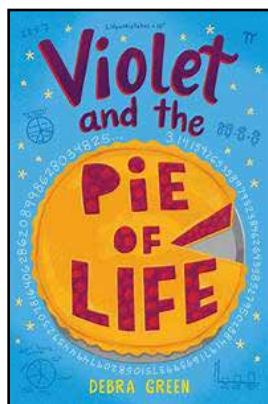
**“The In-Between”**  
by Rebecca K.S. Ansari

Cooper is lost. Ever since his father left their family three years ago, he has become distant from his friends, constantly annoyed by his little sister, Jess, and completely fed up with the pale, creepy rich girl who moved in next door and won’t stop staring at him. So when Cooper learns of an unsolved mystery his sister has discovered online, he welcomes the distraction.



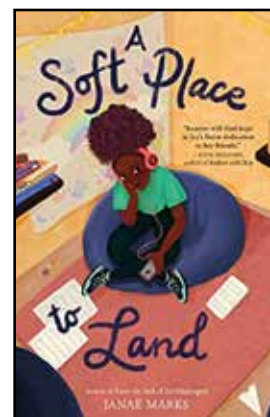
**“The Elephant in the Room”**  
by Holly Goldberg Sloan

Separated from her mother during a long immigration waiting period, young Sila accompanies her mechanic father on a trip outside their Oregon hometown before forging connections with an elderly lottery winner, an abused circus elephant and an unusual boy.



**“Violet and the Pie of Life”**  
by Debra Green

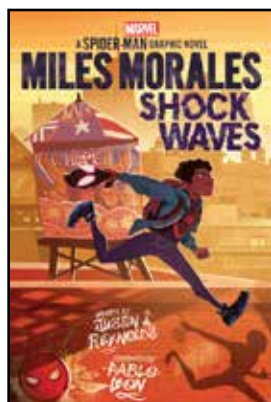
Violet, who is 12 years old, tries to use her math skills to reason through problems of life. Her father’s abandonment and best friend’s unexpected exclusion from the school play helps her come to terms with life’s imperfections.



**“A Soft Place to Land”**  
by Janae Marks

Twelve-year-old Joy dreams of writing music for movies, but first she has to survive her family’s move into a small apartment when her father loses his job.

# GRAPHIC NOVELS



## **“Miles Morales: Shock Waves”**

by Justin A. Reynolds

Miles Morales is still trying to figure out his new life juggling school and protecting the neighborhood as Spider-Man. Then, a new classmate's friend goes missing. Can Miles help his friend while still finding time to be there for his family?



**Recommended by**  
**Katie, White River Branch**



## **“The Girl From the Sea”** by Molly Knox Osterstag

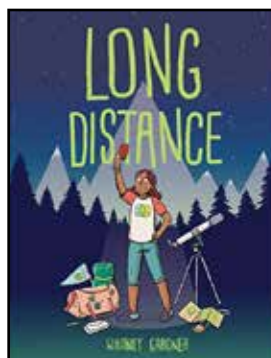
Morgan has a secret: She can't wait to escape the perfect little island where she lives. She's desperate to finish high school and escape her sad divorced mom, her volatile little brother, and worst of all, her friends... who don't understand Morgan at all.

Because, really, Morgan's biggest secret is that she has a lot of secrets, including the one about wanting to kiss another girl.



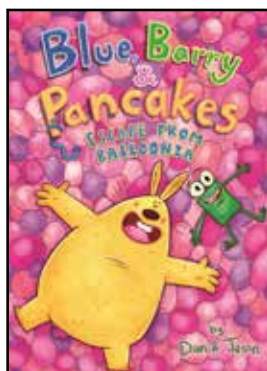
## **“Pawcasso”** by Remy Lai

Every Saturday, Pawcasso trots into town with a basket, a shopping list and cash in paw to buy groceries for his family. One day, he passes Jo peering out the window of her house, bored and lonely. Astonished by the sight of an adorable basket-toting dog on his own, Jo follows Pawcasso, and when she's seen alongside him by a group of kids from her school, they mistake her for Pawcasso's owner.



## **“Long Distance”** by Whitney Gardner

Vega's summer vacation is not going well. When her parents decide it's time to pack up and leave her hometown of Portland, Ore., behind for boring Seattle, Vega is more than upset—she's downright miserable. Forced to leave her one and only best friend, Halley, behind, Vega is convinced she'll never make another friend again.



## **“Blue, Barry & Pancakes: Escape from Balloonina”** by Dan Abdo

One day, when the gang goes to the beach, Barry and Pancakes lose Blue's beach ball. They come up with a plan to get it back, but things go way off course. Now, these pals will have to go inside a giant whale's stomach, crash a pool party on an alien spaceship and survive Duckzilla's volcanic birthday bash if they ever hope to see Blue's beach ball again!

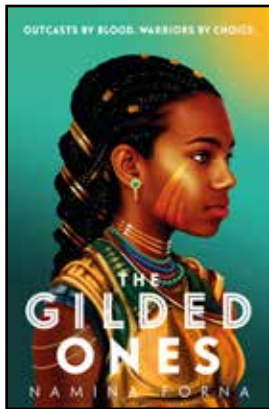


## **“Allergic”** by Megan Lloyd Wagner

Hoping to adopt a pet to find a sense of belonging in her busy family, Maggie is disappointed to discover she is severely allergic to anything with fur and tries to find a pet to love anyway.

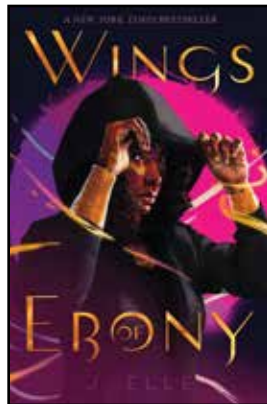


# TEEN / YOUNG ADULT



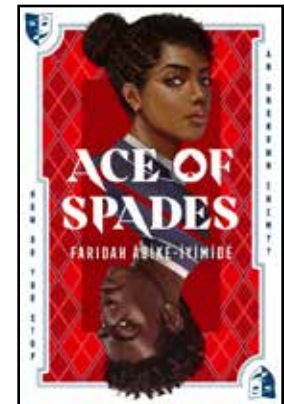
**"The Gilded Ones"**  
by Namina Forna

Sixteen-year-old Deka lives in fear and anticipation of the blood ceremony that will determine whether she will become a member of her village. Already different from everyone else because of her unnatural intuition, Deka prays for red blood so she can finally feel like she belongs.



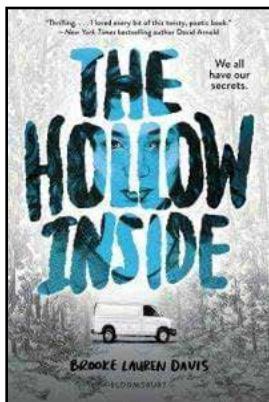
**"Wings of Ebony"**  
by J. Elle

"Make a way out of no way" is just the way of life for Rue. But when her mother is shot dead on her doorstep, life for her and her younger sister changes forever. Rue's taken from her neighborhood by the father she never knew, forced to leave her little sister behind, and whisked away to Ghizon—a hidden island of magic wielders.



**"Ace of Spades"**  
by Farida Àbíké-Íyímídé

Devon Richards and Chiamaka Adebayo, two students at Niveus Private Academy, are selected to be part of the elite school's senior class prefects and they struggle against an anonymous bully who reveals all of their secrets.



**"The Hollow Inside"**  
by Brooke Lauren Davis

After years on the run, 16-year-old Phoenix and mom Nina travel back to Nina's hometown to get revenge on the man she says ruined her life.



**Recommended by**  
**Erin, Clark Pleasant Branch**



**"Pumpkin"**  
by Julie Murphy

Waylon Russell Brewer is a fat, openly gay boy stuck in the small West Texas town of Clover City. After graduation, he plans to move to Austin with his twin sister, Clementine, and finally live his truth.



**"Lost in the Never Woods"**  
by Aiden Thomas

When children start to go missing in the local woods, 18-year-old Wendy Darling must face her fears and a past she cannot remember to rescue them in this novel based on Peter Pan.

# TEEN / YOUNG ADULT



## "Gilded"

by Marissa Meyer

Long ago cursed by the god of lies, a poor miller's daughter has developed a talent for spinning stories that are fantastical and spellbinding and entirely untrue. Or so everyone believes.



Recommended by  
Kelly, Library Services Center



## "Never Saw You Coming"

by Erin Hahn

Eighteen-year-old Meg Hennessey just found out her entire childhood was a lie. Instead of taking a gap year before college to find herself, she ends up traveling north to meet what's left of the family she never knew existed.



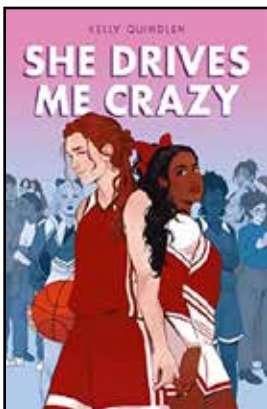
## "Tokyo Ever After"

by Emiko Jean

After learning that her father is the Crown Prince of Japan, Izumi discovers that Japanese imperial life—complete with designer clothes, court intrigue and a forbidden romance with her stoic bodyguard—is a tough fit for the outspoken and irreverent 18-year-old from Northern California.



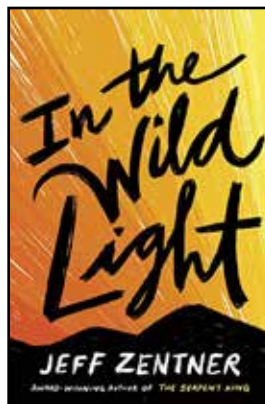
Recommended by  
Katie, White River Branch



## "She Drives Me Crazy"

by Kelly Quindlen

After an embarrassing loss to her ex-girlfriend in their first basketball game of the season, 17-year-old Scottie Zajac gets into a fender bender with the worst possible person: her nemesis, Irene Abraham, head cheerleader for the Fighting Reindeer.



## "In the Wild Light"

by Jeff Zentner

Attending an elite prep school in Connecticut on a scholarship with his best friend (and secret love) science genius Delaney Doyle, 16-year-old Cash Pruitt, from a small town in East Tennessee, struggles with emotional pain and loss until his English teacher suggests writing poetry.



Recommended by  
Liz, Franklin Branch

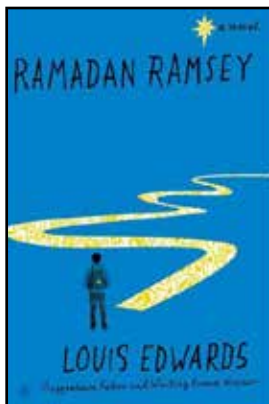


## "Fat Chance, Charlie Vega"

by Crystal Maldonado

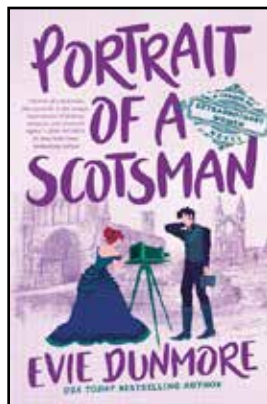
This is a novel about a teenage girl who follows her writing dreams, resists her mother's weight-loss schemes and even falls for the cute boy from art class—until she realizes that he may be after her BFF.

# ADULT FICTION



## **"Ramadan Ramsey"** by Louis Edwards

When Ramadan Ramsey, the son of a ninth generation New Orleans African American and a Syrian refugee, turns 17, he sets off to find the father he has never known and goes on an adventure-filled journey from NOLA to Egypt, Istanbul, and finally, Syria.



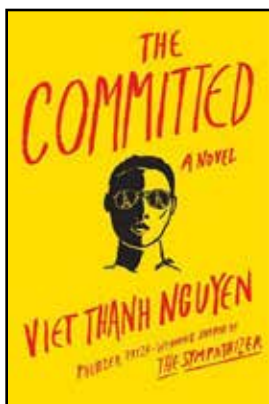
## **"Portrait of a Scotsman"** by Evie Dunmore

London banking heiress Hattie Greenfield, after taking an invigorating little adventure too far, finds herself married to a churlish Scot and questionable financier who has vast wealth but holds little power, and, unbeknownst to her, is driven by revenge.



## **"The Gunkle"** by Steven Rowley

When Patrick, or Gay Uncle Patrick (GUP for short), takes on the role of primary guardian for his young niece and nephew, he sets "Gunkle Rules," but soon learns that parenting isn't solved with treats or jokes as his eyes are opened to a new sense of responsibility.



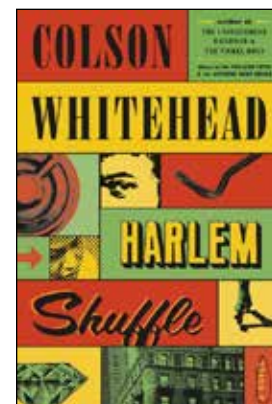
## **"The Committed"** by Viet Thanh Nguyen

A sequel to the Pulitzer Prize winning "The Sympathizer" finds the unnamed "man of two minds" and his blood brother dealing drugs in 1980s Paris, where he navigates the worlds of privileged clients while trying to reconcile two politically polarized friends.



## **"People We Meet on Vacation"** by Emily Henry

Best friends Alex and Poppy try to repair their relationship two years after a disastrous vacation together by planning another vacation together.

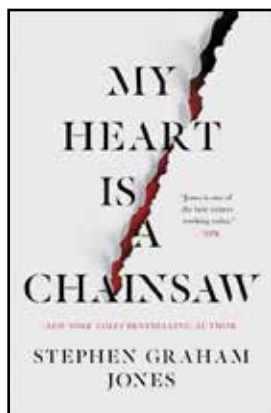


## **"Harlem Shuffle"** by Colson Whitehead

A furniture salesman in 1960s Harlem becomes a fence for shady cops, local gangsters and low-life pornographers after his cousin involves him in a failed heist, in the new novel from the two-time Pulitzer Prize winning author of "The Underground Railroad."



# ADULT FICTION



## **“My Heart is a Chainsaw”** by Stephen Graham Jones

Protected by horror movies—especially the ones where the masked killer seeks revenge on a world that wronged them—Jade Daniels, an angry, half-Indian outcast, pulls us into her dark mind when blood actually starts to spill into the waters of Indian Lake.



## **“Mother May I”** by Joshilyn Jackson

Blackmailed by a mysterious kidnapper to commit a seemingly harmless act, a once-poor woman who married into wealth triggers a devastating chain of consequences.



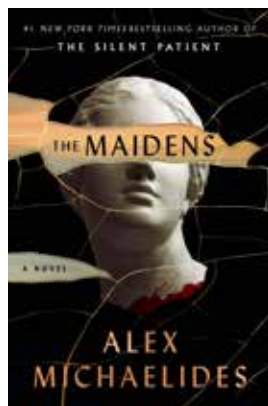
## **“Bombshell”** by Sarah MacLean

No stranger to scandal, Lady Sesily Talbot embraces her bad reputation and continues luring men from Mayfair ballrooms for late night escapades but finds herself pining for what she can't seem to have—her brother's best friend.



## **“The Library of the Dead”** by T.L. Huchu

Ropa dropped out of school to become a ghost talker, and she now speaks to the dead and carries messages to the living. When she learns someone is bewitching children, she investigates and discovers an occult library, a taste for hidden magic and a wealth of Edinburgh's dark secrets.



## **“The Maidens”** by Alex Michaelides

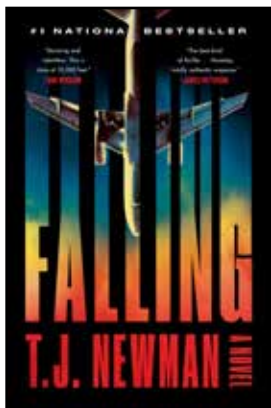
When a member of a secret society known as The Maidens is murdered, a brilliant, but troubled, group therapist finds her obsession with proving the guilt of an untouchable Cambridge University professor spiraling out of control, threatening to destroy her credibility as well as her life.



## **“Every Last Fear”** by Alex Finlay

Still reeling from the deaths of nearly his entire family, Matt must also deal with his older brother, Danny, who, in prison for the murder of his teenage girlfriend, is the subject of a virtual true crime documentary proving his innocence—although Matt knows better.

# ADULT FICTION



## **"Falling"**

by T. J. Newman

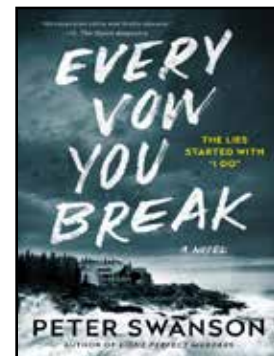
Thirty minutes before a flight to New York, the family of the pilot is kidnapped and in order for them to live, all 143 passengers onboard must die.



## **"The Venice Sketchbook"**

by Rhys Bowen

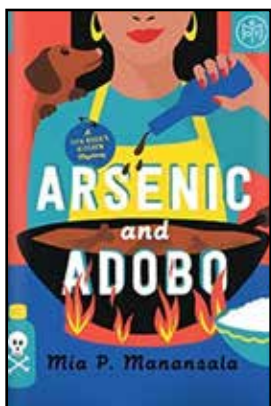
Inheriting her beloved great-aunt's sketchbook, a recently divorced woman uncovers mysteries about her great-aunt's star-crossed romance with a nobleman in World War II Venice.



## **"Every Vow You Break"**

by Peter Swanson

A bride's dream honeymoon with her beloved millionaire groom is upended by the appearance of an obsessive one-night stand who would claim her for himself.



## **"Arsenic and Adobo"**

by Mia P. Manansala

After returning home to help save her Tita Rosie's failing restaurant, Lila Macapagal is shocked when her ex-boyfriend, a notoriously nasty food critic, dies suddenly, moments after they had a confrontation, leaving her the only suspect.



## **"All Her Little Secrets"**

by Wanda M. Morris

The lone Black female corporate attorney in midtown Manhattan discovers her White boss, and lover, dead with a gunshot wound to his head. She must deal with office suspicions and gossip when she is promoted as his successor.

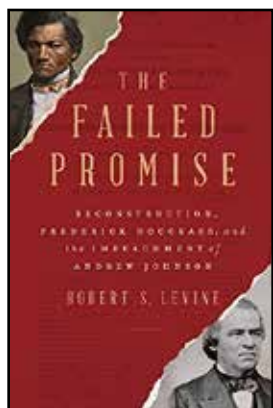


## **"Act Your Age, Eve Brown"**

by Talia Hibbert

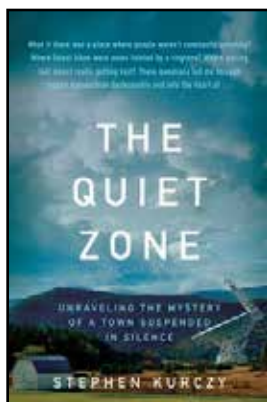
When his life is taken over by a purple-haired tornado of a woman named Eve Brown, B&B owner Jacob Wayne tries to fight his attraction to this sunny, chaotic woman who is his natural-born enemy.

# ADULT NONFICTION



**“The Failed Promise:  
Reconstruction, Frederick  
Douglass, and the Impeachment  
of Andrew Johnson”**  
by Robert Levine

Drawing on letters, articles and the most important African American newspaper of the time, the author recreates the conflicts that brought Frederick Douglass and the wider Black community to reject President Andrew Johnson and call for a guilty verdict in his impeachment trial.



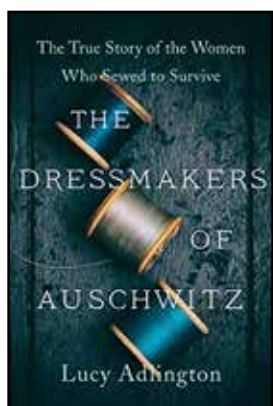
**“The Quiet Zone:  
Unraveling the Mystery of a  
Town Suspended in Silence”**  
by Stephen Kurczyk

An award-winning journalist takes us deep into the Appalachian Mountains where the last truly quiet town of America exists and where its residents live a life free from constant digital connectivity, challenging us to rethink the role of tech in our lives.



**“Piglet”**  
by Melissa Shapiro, DVM with  
Mim Eichler Rivas

A Connecticut veterinarian opens her heart and home to Piglet, a deaf and blind pink dog whose purpose becomes teaching the power of empathy, love and kindness.



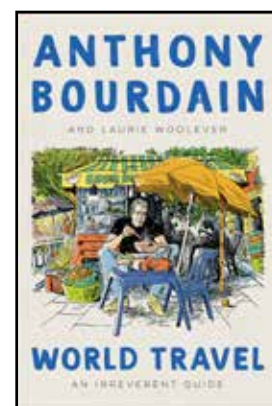
**“The Dressmakers of  
Auschwitz”**  
by Lucy Adlington

Drawing on a vast array of sources, including interviews with the last surviving seamstress, this powerful book tells the story of the brave women who used their sewing skills to survive the Holocaust, exposing the greed, cruelty and hypocrisy of the Third Reich.



**“The Star Trek Book”**  
by Paul J. Ruditis

Newly revised and updated, taking readers even further into one of the greatest science fiction universes ever created, this ultimate Star Trek guide examines, in one volume, the pioneering 1960s series all the way up to the latest movies and streaming shows.

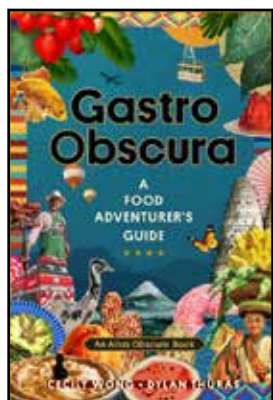


**“World Travel:  
An Irreverent Guide”**  
by Anthony Bourdain

This is a guide to some of the world's most interesting places, as seen and experienced by writer, television host and relentlessly curious traveler Anthony Bourdain.



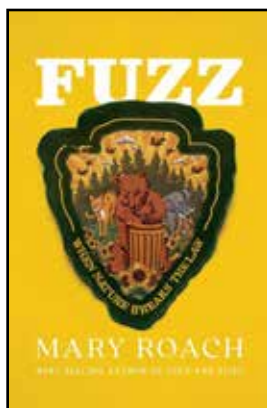
# ADULT NONFICTION



## **"Gastro Obscura: A Food Adventurer's Guide"**

by Cecily Wong & Dylan Thuras

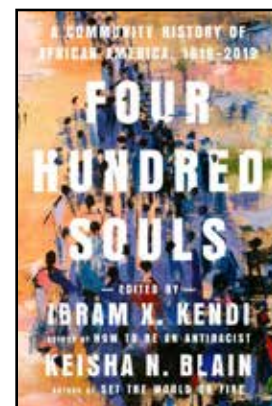
Wonder is around every corner and on every plate. The curious minds behind Atlas Obscura now turn to the hidden curiosities of food, which becomes a gateway to fascinating stories about human history, science, art and tradition.



## **"Fuzz: When Nature Breaks the Law"**

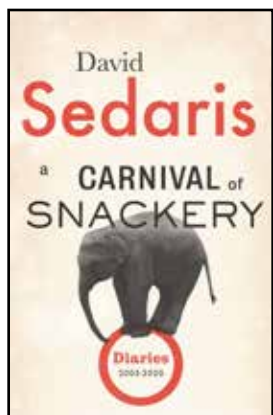
by Mary Roach

Join Mary Roach on an investigation into the world where wildlife and humans meet. What's to be done about a jaywalking moose? A grizzly bear caught breaking and entering? The answers are best found not in jurisprudence but in science: the curious science of human-wildlife conflict.



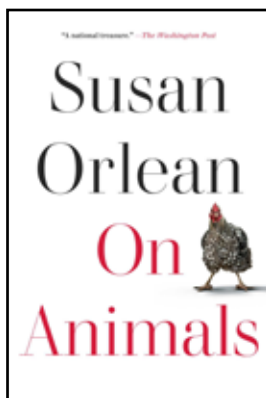
## **"Four Hundred Souls"** edited by Ibram X. Kendi and Keisha N. Blain

2019 marked the 400th anniversary of the first African presence in the Americas and also launched the Four Hundred Souls project. Eighty Black writers, historians, artists, journalists and novelists each contribute an entry about one five-year period to create a dynamic multi-voiced history of Black people in America.



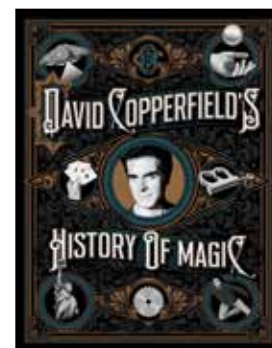
## **"A Carnival of Snackery"** by David Sedaris

In this follow-up to his previous volume of diaries, "Theft by Finding," the award-winning humorist chronicles the years 2003-2020, charting the years of his rise to fame with his trademark misanthropic charm and wry wit.



## **"On Animals"** by Susan Orlean

Examining animal-human relationships through captivating stories she has written over the course of her career, the author, in this book that is equal parts wonderful and profound, celebrates the cross-species connections that grace our collective existence.



## **"David Copperfield's History of Magic"**

The legendary illusionist profiles 28 of the world's most groundbreaking magicians, with over 100 never-before-seen photographs of artifacts from his Museum of Magic including Houdini's straightjackets and handcuffs and Dante's sawing-in-half apparatus.