



# MAY '16

## The Atomic Weight of Love: A Novel

By Elizabeth J. Church

"Church deftly traces the life of Meridian Wallace, an intelligent young woman who is searching for who she is and what she wants to become. As America braces for entrance into WWII, Meri falls for the ambitious Alden Whetstone, a much older but brilliant scientist. Aspiring to be a 'good wife,' Meri abandons her own academic pursuits in ornithology to follow Alden to Los Alamos, but the years that follow are filled with dashed hopes and compromises. Over the decades of her marriage, Meri attempts to fill the void of unrealized dreams by making a home and reclaiming her sense of self. Filled with sharp, poignant prose, the novel mimics the birds Meri studies, following her as she struggles to find her wings, let go, and take flight. Church gives readers a thoughtful and thought-provoking examination of the sacrifices women make in life and the courage needed for them to soar on their own."

—Anderson McKean, Page & Palette, Fairhope, AL

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## Everyone Brave Is Forgiven: A Novel

By Chris Cleave

"*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, from best-selling author Cleave, is storytelling at its finest. Ranging from the decimated streets of London after the Nazi blitz in WWII to the barren island of Malta under siege, Cleave's mastery is to introduce readers to characters in the midst of chaos who bring humanity to the sordid landscape of war. A book that will leave you both laughing and crying on the same page, *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* reminds readers about the power of the novel in telling the fascinating stories of everyday people living in extraordinary times."

—Casey Protti, Bookshop Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA

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## The Mirror Thief: A Novel

By Martin Seay

"In this outstanding debut, three stories are linked by criminal pursuits and Venice—not so much the actual place, but the idea of that place. In late 1500s Venice, Italy, a man schemes to steal the most guarded technology of the day—a mirror; in 1950s Venice Beach, California, a thief discovers a mysterious text that seems to have unusual insights about that stolen mirror; and in 2015, a soldier pursues the thief in The Venetian hotel in Las Vegas to retrieve the book about the mirror. As the stories draw together, Seay's thrilling novel dazzles at every turn. Unexpected and amazing, *The Mirror Thief* will leave readers breathless."

—Jeremy Ellis, Brazos Bookstore, Houston, TX

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## Redemption Road: A Novel

By John Hart

"Hart weaves several plotlines together in this masterful crime novel: the former cop serving hard time for a crime he didn't commit; the son who awaits the release of his mother's killer; the girl whose brutal attackers were tortured and assassinated; and Liz, the cop at the heart of all of these stories, who is, herself, wanted by the police. Like the best crime dramas, there are characters to love, characters to hate, outcomes to root for, and a resolution that readers will not foresee. This book should put John Hart on every reader's radar."

—Jill Miner, Saturn Booksellers, Gaylord, MI

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## Everybody's Fool: A Novel

By Richard Russo

"While any new book from Richard Russo is a cause for celebration, to have one that revisits the characters from a beloved classic feels like a gift from the literary gods. *Everybody's Fool* returns to North Bath, New York, the setting for Russo's breakout novel from 1993, *Nobody's Fool*. No one writes better about the quirks, petty jealousies, hard times, humor, and heartbreak of small-town America. *Everybody's Fool* is good, old-fashioned storytelling at its finest!"

—Shawn Donley, Powell's Books, Portland, OR



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## Britt-Marie Was Here: A Novel

By Fredrik Backman

"Backman's incomparable novels celebrate and revolve around unlikely protagonists: a curmudgeonly widower in *A Man Called Ove*; a girl on the autism spectrum in *My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry*; and now Britt-Marie, an order-obsessed, cleanliness-loving woman of a certain age. Having left her two-timing husband, Britt-Marie takes a job in the small, depressed town of Borg, and magic begins to happen. *Britt-Marie Was Here* is another warmhearted delight!"

—Carol Schneck Varner, Schuler Books & Music, Okemos, MI



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# MAY '16

## Mothering Sunday: A Romance

By Graham Swift

"A beautiful afternoon on Mothering Sunday – now known as Mother's Day—in 1924 provides the backdrop for this exquisite tale of love, longing, and memory. Jane Fairchild, a housemaid, has been the longtime lover of the heir-apparent of the estate next door. Their final cataclysmic afternoon together will alter the course of her destiny in ways that she never contemplated. Told in flashbacks by the nonagenarian Jane, this rare gem of a novella will haunt readers long after they turn the final pages. Superb!"

—Pamela Klinger-Horn, Excelsior Bay Books, Excelsior, MN



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# MAY '16

## LaRose: A Novel

By Louise Erdrich

"When a hunting accident results in the death of his neighbor's son, Landreaux Iron follows native tradition and offers his own son, LaRose, to the bereaved family. Thus begins a powerful story of anger, love, hurt, and joy among a group of families and neighbors living in a small community in the North Dakota hinterland. Erdrich's luminous prose captures each character's struggle to overcome their worst impulses – whether it's a handicapped man's long-nurtured quest for revenge, or the pain of a mother withholding love from her daughter – and reaches into the distant past to reveal the story of the young boy's namesake, the original LaRose. Muted on the surface, but with a heart that beats strong, Erdrich's latest novel is a book to be treasured."

—Peter Sherman, Wellesley Books, Wellesley, MA

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## Julia Reed's South: Spirited Entertaining and High-Style Fun All Year Long

By Julia Reed, Paul Costello, photographs

"Any time Julia Reed publishes a new book is a good excuse for a party. And now, with *Julia Reed's South*, she even gives readers the blueprint for how to do it. What a gift to us all! This book is filled with wonderful ideas for entertaining, fabulous recipes, gorgeous photographs, a host of characters, and, of course, killer cocktails. No one gets the South like Julia, and no matter where you live you'll find inspiration in these pages to make your next gathering unforgettable."

—Cody Morrison, Square Books, Oxford, MS

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## Sleeping Giants

By Sylvain Neuvel

"*Sleeping Giants* reads like a military dossier, interview after interview given with the serious intent of laying out the scientific tale of a discovered history that will change everyone's lives forever. At the age of 10, Rose falls through a hole in the ground and lands in a large metal hand that had been buried. Seventeen years later, she is on the research team that seeks answers to the relic's source and the meaning behind its existence. Is it a weapon? Is it a threat to humanity? Or is it simply a mystery that will remain unsolved? Whatever it is, readers will enjoy this Prometheus-like look into our distant past and the excitement of forecasting the potential future of the human race."

—Linda Bond, Auntie's Bookstore, Spokane, WA

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## Eligible: A Novel

By Curtis Sittenfeld

"It is a universally acknowledged truth that a retelling of *Pride and Prejudice* must be cleverly written and wickedly funny. Sittenfeld has accomplished that and more with her fantastic new novel. The Bennet sisters have been transported to modern day Cincinnati. Jane is a yoga instructor; Liz, a writer for a women's magazine; Lydia and Kitty do nothing but work out; and Mary spends most of her time in her room. The two older sisters live in New York, but have come home to check on Mr. Bennet, who is recovering from a heart attack. The storyline is one that will be familiar to most Austen readers, but with some extremely funny twists."

—Sharon Nagel, Boswell Book Company, Milwaukee, WI

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## The Versions of Us: A Novel

By Laura Barnett

"This is a lovely debut that swept me along with the story of two people destined to be together after one chance meeting in college. From there, Barnett presents three different versions of their story, and readers see the next decades played out through the couple's eyes. Each story is different, yet features the same players, and each does not turn out as expected. This is a thoughtful and touching novel about love, expectations, and forgiveness."

—Kelly Estep, Carmichael's Bookstore, Louisville, KY



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## Imagine Me Gone: A Novel

By Adam Haslett

"*Imagine Me Gone* is a deeply moving portrayal of a family's complex love for one another as they manage and respond to the shape-shifting undercurrent of mental illness experienced by both father and son. A compelling read on every level, this novel is crafted with impressive emotional sensitivity, providing a direct feed into the inner lives and secrets of each character. Writing of this caliber is a rare thing. Haslett has created a gem of a novel that I will recommend over and over again."

—Nancy Scheemaker, Northshire Bookstore, Saratoga Springs, NY



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# MAY '16

## Over the Plain Houses: A Novel

By Julia Franks

"Tense and atmospheric, this novel is set in Depression-era North Carolina but confronts a number of issues that are relevant today. I consider it one of the best historical fiction titles I've read lately—what must have been intensive research blends seamlessly with unforgettable characters and vibrant depictions of mountain caves, mining towns, and struggling farms. The book brilliantly takes readers back to a bygone era while subtly showing that it is an era whose darkness could soon fall again. Fans of Claire Fuller and Ron Rash won't want to miss it."

—Elizabeth Weber, The Book Table, Oak Park, IL



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## Father's Day: A Novel

By Simon Van Booy

"Van Booy's delicate touch is turned to the relationship between orphaned Harvey and her uncle, Jason, a man no one could expect to be the right choice as guardian. Van Booy uses the plot structure of a series of Father's Day gifts given to Jason from the now adult Harvey to reveal more than either of them realized about the life they have shared as adoptive father and daughter, as well as the heartbreaking truth of how they came to be a part of each other's lives. *Father's Day* is Van Booy at his most poignant, showing how redemption can arise from heartbreaking circumstances."

—Don Luckham, The Toadstool Bookshop, Keene, NH



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# MAY '16

## Heat & Light: A Novel

By Jennifer Haigh

"Haigh has been building a body of work around Bakerton, Pennsylvania, for more than a decade. In this new novel, she once again unleashes the sweep of historical forces as out-of-state companies look to drill for natural gas deposits. There is hope among residents that the future will be brighter, but there is also risk that they will just end up victims of greed and further environmental ruin. This is a big, issue oriented book, but its success is found in the brilliance with which Haigh crafts her characters and makes their lives a vehicle for looking at the moral, political, environmental, and economic questions about fracking."

—Anmiryam Budner, Main Point Books, Bryn Mawr, PA

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## The Sport of Kings: A Novel

By C.E. Morgan

"Horse racing and breeding, evolution, race, love, family dynamics, and America's historical past are a few of the subjects and issues that Morgan bravely, confidently, and intelligently explores with a poetic and lyrical sensibility. The result is a gorgeous and engaging novel that is sobering, important, and unforgettable. Morgan combines some of the intense power of the landscape-as-mindscape of Thomas Wolfe, the dramaturgy and myth-mining of Eugene O'Neill, the deep focus and rigor of Richard Powers, the transcendent beauty of Vollmann's best prose, and the strong spiritual commitment of Marilynne Robinson. *The Sport of Kings* unfolds dramatically into an exquisite work of classic American literature."

—Ed Conklin, Chaucer's Books, Santa Barbara, CA

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## Maestra: A Novel

By L.S. Hilton

"Get ready to tear through this hedonistic and refreshingly sex-positive thriller that hits all the right notes. Hilton sets her amoral heroine, Judith, amidst the shallow elegance of the European art world. While Judith is deeply enamored with the lifestyles of the rich and famous, she is also a razor-sharp critic of bad taste and human softness, sniffing out and exploiting male weakness with gusto. She is utterly void of empathy, yet oddly sympathetic. I'll be recommending this novel to everyone I know with a strong constitution and an appreciation for intensity!"

—Seija Emerson, University Book Store, Seattle, WA

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## Life Without a Recipe: A Memoir of Food and Family

By Diana Abu-Jaber

"Is it any wonder that memoir is the richest genre? The stories we live are far more fanciful, heartbreakng, and ridiculous than the ones we create with our imaginations. We have no control over them. They unfold, in spite of our best efforts, in clumsy, unsettled messes that become our lives. In *Life Without a Recipe*, Abu-Jaber stops along the way to consider the terrain. She can't control the events, but she controls the words with tight, perfect sentences. There's an elegance to the prose that elevates this story of the author's search for identity, resulting in a warm and wise delicacy to be savored."

—Terry Nebeker, One More Page, Arlington, VA

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## Valiant Ambition: George Washington, Benedict Arnold, and the Fate of the American Revolution

By Nathaniel Philbrick

"History buffs will welcome this serious and interesting salvaging of the American Revolution from the mists of legend and folklore. This book is also a reminder that the messy, often disturbing politics of our own time are not unique, that idealism conflicts with power struggles, that both war and building a nation can have destructive consequences, and that both revolutionaries and traitors can galvanize a movement. Complex, controversial, and important."

—Susan Thurin, Bookends on Main, Menomonie, WI

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