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The Water Cure: A Novel
By Sophie Mackintosh
Seabury & Estes, January 7, 2020

“Here is what they know: men hunt women, even if they don’t mean to. And the island is the only safe place in a world that has been completely corrupted by pollution—all that’s left is the shore. So sisters Grace, Lila, and Lilu encompass themselves with the peaceful rhythms their parents have devised, exercises that will make them stronger and immune to Io’s violence. Every day in the same way until the three women are gone. Three strange men appear in his place. Violence is inevitable, but who will be the victor?”
—Lauren Pugh, Powell’s Books, Portland, OR

Ghost Wall: A Novel
By Sarah Moss
Scribner, January 7, 2020

“Sarah Moss writes with a lyricism and an intelligence unlike any other author, and in Ghost Wall she deftly weaves threads of history, power, gender, and obsession into a stunning story that envelops you from the very first page. Lovely and haunting, Ghost Wall is both a powerful glimpse into how humanity interprets its history and a chilling reminder that the lines between past, present, and future are not as clear as they seem.”
—Anderson Maps, Anderson’s Bookshop, La Grange, IL

Freefall: A Novel
By Jessica Barry
Harper, January 7, 2020

“There used to be a canalized road where you would stand against a wall and as the ride spun faster and faster the floor would drop out but the force of the spin would keep you pressed to the wall. I got the same feeling when reading Jessica Barry’s Freefall. The plot moved faster and faster until I felt myself holding my breath, right up until the final page. Clear your schedule and order takeout before you turn this thriller into your favorite.”
—Mary O’Malley, Anderson’s Bookshop, La Grange, IL

Inheritance: A Memoir of Genealogy, Paternity, and Love
By Dan Shapiro
Skylight, January 7, 2020

“What is we? Why do we think we are chosen when we learn a secret that alters the course of our identity? Shapiro has explored issues of identity in stunning memoirs over the years, but in his latest he appraises her signature candor and heart to a riveting, provocative, and inspiring exploration of epistemology and ethical significance.”
—Romona Cloudy, J.J. Bookes Bookshop, Madison, CT

An Anonymous Girl: A Novel
By Greer Hendricks, Sarah Pekkanen
Knopf, January 7, 2020

“The signature spaced houses at the top of the street hide a dark past of past and present intrigue. Complex relationships among the brothers and teacher, student, innocent love and the themes of infidelity, and, of course, a murder. Jewell’s understanding of the young people and by sleuths makes for a deliciously hard-to-put-down whodunit that has all the clues to home. She is a story woman like no other and she had me guessing the whole way through.”
—Lauren Taylor, The Oxford Exchange, Tampa, FL

Looking: A Novel
By Laura Sims
Doubleday, January 7, 2020

“ ‘Wine, wine, wine. Anyone who has ever appreciated an unremarkable narrator will be transfixed by this story of obsession and weakening madness. In the wake of infertility and a looming divorce, our unnamed protagonist becomes more and more preoccupied by the seemingly perfect couple who lives down the block. You’ll read Looking in one sitting and want to pass it on to everyone you know— this is a stunner and a fantastic debut.”
—Emeline Souerre, East City Bookshoppe, Washington, DC

The Winter of the Witch: A Novel
By Katherine Arden
Harper, January 7, 2020

“The Winter of the Witch takes place immediately after the events in The Girl in the Tower. The world of the old gods is fading, and a new religion is claiming the hearts of Vanys people. Rus is on the brink of war; and Vanys is in ruins against the whole world. With the help of new allies, Vanya is determined to save all that she holds dear or even it means sacrificing everything. Vanya is the kind of character you cheer for; cry with, and love alongside.”
—Ponchette, the word used to describe that sweet, earthly smell after it rains, is how I would describe the Winter’s Trilogy. Arden’s storytelling encompasses all your senses, so grab a hot mug of your favorite drink and settle in for Vanya’s adventures in The Winter of the Witch.”
—Jon Steele, Bowell Book Compay, Milwaukee, WI

Sugar Run: A Novel
By Mitch Rouse
Mango Books, January 7, 2020

“ ‘This is the gritty Southern novel I’ve always wanted. Marais deliciously navigates the two eras in tilling interconnected, moodle-laced stories and mixes in unwholesome with the West Virginia landscape he characters inhabit. She uses the presence offarming on the family farm as a multidimensional metaphor, demonstrating exactly how easy it fall prey to the type of immediate relief that will eventually destroy you. Dark, yes, but it well developed, intense and shocking in its delivery that I absolutely could not put this book down.”
—Maggie Frein, Garretcha’s Bookstore, Louisville, KY

Golden State: A Novel
By Ben Winters
Mulholland Books, January 7, 2020

“Golden State is a gripping and brassy page-turner. Writers read his readers into magics California as a screech (and surveillance) state in which intentionally lying is the greatest federal offense. The sympathetic heroine of reality television program’s main character, a team of federal agents, including her Harris, Lachlan Raine. Golden State is a mystery in both form and content: In addition to the seemingly simple innocent Lachlan investigations at the start of the novel, there’s the bigger question of what a novel really is, or means, or can be in the good golden state. The world is made transparent to Winter’s. It’s eerily good at helping you keep reading off players. Not even his biggest fan will see many of the turns and backs turn this books. His best book yet.”
—John Franciscis, Bank Square Books, Mystic, CT

The Paragon Hotel: A Novel
By Lyndsay Faye
William Morrow, January 7, 2020

“Good gracious. I just adore all things written by Lyndsay Faye. Like her glorious Shadrach, the Garamond series, her new Paragon Hotel is a clever, fast-paced read with a unique ensemble of characters. Set during the Prohibition era, the novel bypasses the mob stuff and instead goes for the vaudeville, the music hall, and the ebb and flow of humanity. Faye has given readers another deliciously clever story.”
—Anderson Maps, Anderson’s Bookshop, La Grange, IL

The Orphan of Salt Winds: A Novel
By Elizabeth Brooks
Riverhead Books, January 7, 2020

“With the winds of war blowing strong, the first of the Salt Winds books claimed her heart as a young woman. As the West was called into action for the war, young girls, a young woman on her doorstep and complicated her plan, bringing a tidal wave of memories that cause her to fear the last day of an otherwise darker lighter. Tell in alternating timelines that follow Virginia as a child in the early stages of WWII and as she plans her last butnot last day show in 2015. Elizabeth Brooks’ novel of memory and present past plays out as a burned-out mystery room Agatha Christie would be envious of.”
—The Run To The Moon Book Table, Oak Park, IL

The Last Whistlers: Three Years in the Far Pacific With a Courageous Tribe and a Vanishing Way of Life
By Doug Clark
Crown, January 7, 2020

“A great book can open your eyes to a world you won’t know existed, a great book will make you care about those who inhabit it. Doug Clark’s The Last Whistlers is just such a book, inviting us into the lives of one of the last remaining tribes in existence as they struggle to hold on to the values of their past amid the threat of present backbones to the younger generation. With gripping hunting scenes, tender family moments, and colorful language, it weaves a bridge between tradition and hope. Doug Clark does a great job of bringing these moments to life and gives voice to the celebration of their wedding at the passport.”
—Both Carpenter, The Country Bookshoppe, Southern Pines, NC

The Au Pair: A Novel
By Emma Roux
William Morrow, January 7, 2020

“’If you have been to Iran, you know what it is like to walk between cultures and seem so you find that the book will take you into the fray with Saraphina’s head, and it won’t take long before you finishing turning the pages to find out what happens.”
—John Katsanides, Murder by the Book, Houston, TX

To Keep the Sun Alive: A Novel
By Michael Bruno
Graywolf, January 7, 2020

“Set during the Iranian Revolution, To Keep the Sun Alive is a bravely written novel that dares to complete.”
—John Kwiatkowski, Murder by the Book, Houston, TX

In an Absent Dream (Wayward Children)
By Seanan McGuire
Troll, January 7, 2020

“Seanan McGuire’s fourth installment in the lovely, open-ended Children series has the same balance of mystery and canny that defines the entire series. Illustrates just how much we are defined by both the choices we choose and the choices we refuse to make. Beautifully written, atmospheric, and just long enough to leave you longing for more, In an Absent Dream is a perfect winter reading.”
—Chelsie Bauer, Union Avenue Books, Knoxville, TN