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Khirbet Khizeh The Best American Short Stories 2019 ZYZZYVA #118 AutoBioDiversity Strange Attraction Moon Brow Zyzzyva Dead Winter Tell Me I'm Worthless Zyzzyva (3 Issues) Counterfactual Love Stories and Other Experiments Long Story Short Zyzzyva #120 Saturation Project The Great Offshore Grounds The Best American Nonrequired Reading 2019 Immediate Family Focal Point Zyzzyva Beneath the Shadow Afterparties ZYZZYVA #121 Fall 2021 Fall Higher Girl at the Bottom of the Sea The L.A. Issue - ZYZZYVA #119 Distant Transit Seeking Fortune Elsewhere If I Survive You Love, an Index Mermaid in Chelsea Creek For a Song and a Hundred Songs Elegy On Toy Piano Shaky Town A Writer's Book of Days Beasts of a Little Land Saint Friend Unending Rooms Forbidden City Early Work Post-Mortem

'Beasts of a Little Land is a stunning achievement' TLS 'Spectacular' Lisa See, author of The Island of Sea Women 'I loved it' Brandon Hobson, author of The Removed 'Unforgettable' Nguy?n Phan Qu? Mai, author of The Mountains Sing An epic story of love and war, set during the turbulent decades of Korea's fight for independence It is 1917, and Korea is under Japanese occupation; the country is yet to be divided into north and south. With the threat of famine looming, a young girl named Jade is sold by her family to Miss Silver's courtesan school in cosmopolitan Pyongyang, an act of desperation that will cement her place in the lowest social class. But the city's days as a haven are numbered. Jade flees to Seoul where she forms a deep friendship with an orphan boy called JungHo, who scrapes together a living begging on the streets. As Jade becomes a sought-after performer with unexpected romantic prospects, JungHo is swept up in the revolutionary fight for independence. Soon, Jade must decide between following her own ambitions or risking everyone for the one she loves. From the perfumed chambers of the courtesan school to the glamorous cafés of a modernising Seoul, the unforgettable characters of Beasts of a Little Land unveil a world where friends become enemies and enemies become saviours, where heroes are persecuted and beasts take many shapes. "Exhilarating . . . How often can you say about a harrowing, unquiet book that it makes you wrestle with your soul?" —Neel Mukherjee, The Times (London) It's 1948 and the Arab villagers of Khirbet Khizeh are about to be violently expelled from their homes. A young Israeli soldier who is on duty that day finds himself battling on two fronts: with the villagers and, ultimately, with his own conscience. Published just months after the founding of the state of Israel and the end of the 1948 war, the novella Khirbet Khizeh was an immediate sensation when it first appeared. Since then, the book has continued to challenge and disturb, even finding its way onto the school curriculum in Israel. The various debates it has prompted would themselves make Khirbet Khizeh worth reading, but the novella is much more than a vital historical document: it is also a great work of art. Yizhar's haunting, lyrical style and charged view of the landscape are in many ways as startling as his wrenchingly honest view of modern Israel's primal scene. Considered a modern Hebrew masterpiece, Khirbet Khizeh is an extraordinary and heartbreaking book that is destined to be a classic of world literature. FINALIST FOR THE 2023 BOOKER PRIZE. LONGLISTED FOR THE 2022 NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FOR FICTION. Finalist for the 2023 Pen/Faulkner Award and the Southern Book Award. Nominated for the 2022 National Book Critics Circle John Leonard Prize, the 2023 Pen/Jean Stein Open Book Award, the 2023 Pen/Bingham Prize, the 2022 Story Prize, the 2023 Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Fiction, the 2023 Brooklyn Library Prize, and the 2023 Aspen Words Literary Prize. National Bestseller. IndieNext Pick. One of The New York Times Book Review's 100 Notable Books of 2022. "If I Survive You is a collection of connected short stories that reads like a novel, that reads like real life, that reads like fiction written at the highest level." —Ann Patchett A major debut, blazing with style and heart, that follows a Jamaican family striving for more in Miami, and introduces a generational storyteller. In the 1970s, Topper and Sanya flee to Miami as political violence consumes their native Kingston. But America, as the couple and their two children learn, is far from the promised land. Excluded from society as Black immigrants, the family pushes on through Hurricane Andrew and later the 2008 recession, living in a house so cursed that the pet fish launches itself out of its own tank rather than stay. But even as things fall apart, the family remains motivated, often to its own detriment, by what the younger son, Trelawny, calls “the exquisite, racking compulsion to survive.” Masterfully constructed with heart and humor, the linked stories in Jonathan Escoffery’s If I Survive You center on Trelawny as he struggles to carve out a place for himself amid financial disaster, racism, and flat-out bad luck. After a fight with Topper, Trelawny claws his way out of homelessness through a series of odd, often hilarious jobs. Meanwhile, his brother, Delano, attempts a disastrous cash grab to get his kids back, and his cousin Cukie looks for a father who doesn’t want to be found. As each character searches for a foothold, they never forget the profound danger of climbing without a safety net. Pulsing with vibrant lyricism and inimitable style, sly commentary and contagious laughter, Escoffery’s debut unravels what it means to be in between homes and cultures in a world at the mercy of capitalism and whiteness. With If I Survive You, Escoffery announces himself as a prodigious storyteller in a class of his own, a chronicler of American life at its most gruesome and hopeful. Everyone in the broken-down town of Chelsea, Massachusetts, has a story too worn to repeat—from the girls who play the pass-out game just to feel like they’re somewhere else, to the packs of aimless teenage boys, to the old women from far away who left everything behind. But there’s one story they all still tell: the oldest and saddest but most hopeful story, the one about the girl who will be able to take their twisted world and straighten it out. The girl who will bring the magic. Could Sophie Swankowski be that girl? With her tangled hair and grubby clothes, her weird habits and her visions of a filthy, swearing mermaid who comes to her when she’s unconscious, Sophie could be the one to uncover the power flowing beneath Chelsea’s potholed streets and sludge-filled rivers, and the one to fight the evil that flows there, too. Sophie might discover her destiny, and maybe even in time to save them all. Fiction. Asian & Asian American Studies. From fragmented ransom notes to hanging footnotes, contemporary fairy tales to coded text, interconnecting pieces of modal flash fiction to backwards fractal narratives about gradual blindness, transgressive listicles to how-to guides for performative wokeness, variable destinies in downtown Chicago to impossible dating applications, counterfactual relationships to the French translation of adolescence, the conceptual, language-driven short stories in COUNTERFACTUAL LOVE STORIES AND OTHER EXPERIMENTS are an exploration of not just mixed-race/hapa identity in Michigan (and the American Midwest), but also of the infinite ways in which stories can be told, challenged, celebrated, and subverted. NATIONAL BOOK AWARD NOMINEE • A wildly original, cross-country novel that subverts a long tradition of family narratives and casts new light on the mythologies—national, individual, and collective—that drive and define us. On the day of their estranged father’s wedding, half sisters Cheyenne and Livy set off to claim their inheritance. It’s been years since the two have seen each other. Cheyenne is newly back in Seattle, crashing with Livy after a failed marriage and a series of personal and professional dead ends. Livy works refinishing boats, her resentment against her freeloading sister growing as she tamps down dreams of fishing off the coast of Alaska. But the promise of a shot at financial security brings the two together to claim what’s theirs. Except, instead of money, what their father gives them is information—a name—which forces them to come to grips with a long-held family secret. In the face of their new reality, the sisters and their adopted brother each set out on journeys that will test their faith in one another, as well as their definitions of freedom. Moving from Seattle’s underground to the docks of the Far North, from the hideaways of the southern swamps to the storied reaches of the Great Offshore Grounds, Vanessa Veselka spins a tale with boundless verve, linguistic vitality, and undeniable tenderness. #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. These intimate stories of South Indian immigrants and the families they left behind center women’s lives and ask how women both claim and surrender power—a stunning debut collection from an O. Henry Prize winner Traveling from Pittsburgh to Eastern Washington to Tamil Nadu, these stories about dislocation and dissonance see immigrants and their families confront the costs of leaving and staying, identifying sublime symmetries in lives growing apart. In "Malliga Homes," selected by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie for an O. Henry Prize, a widow in a retirement community glimpses her future while waiting for her daughter to visit from America. In "No. 16 Model House Road," a woman long subordinate to her husband makes a choice of her own after she inherits a house. In "Nature Exchange," a mother grieving in the wake of a school shooting finds an unusual obsession. In "A Life in America," a professor finds himself accused of having exploited his graduate students. Sindya Bhanoo’s haunting stories show us how immigrants’ paths, and the paths of those they leave behind, are never simple. Bhanoo takes us along on their complicated journeys where regret, hope, and triumph appear in disguise. Spanning ages and species and cultures, Heather Altfeld’s Post-Mortem pays tribute to the passing glory of this planet and all that our hands have made. Dean Young’s poems are as entertaining and imaginative as a three-ring circus painted by Hieronymous Bosch In Shaky Town, Lou Mathews has written a timeless novel of working-class Los Angeles. A former mechanic and street racer, he tells his story in cool and panoramic style, weaving together the tragedies and glories of one of L.A.’s eastside neighborhoods. From a teenage girl caught in the middle of a gang war to a priest who has lost his faith and hit bottom, the characters in Shaky Town live on a dangerous faultline but remain unshakable in their connections to one another. Like Sherwood Anderson’s Winesburg, Ohio, John Steinbeck’s Cannery Row, Katherine Ann Porter’s Ship of Fools, Gloria Naylor’s The Women of Brewster Place, and Pat Barker’s Union Street, Shaky Town is the story of complicated, conflicted, and disparate characters bound together by place. Winner of the 2020 Steel Toe Books Poetry Award, Focal Point is a scientist's unofficial dissertation, a daughter's faithful correspondence, and a coming-of-age story. Written largely while Jenny Qi was a young Ph.D. student conducting cancer research after her beloved mother's death from cancer, the collection turns to "all the rituals of all the faiths," invoking Western and Eastern mythology and history, metaphors from cell biology, and even Jimi Hendrix, as Qi searches for a container to hold grief. The opening poem of this debut collection primes us to consider all definitions of the titular "focal point," as the speaker evaluates this moment of early loss beneath a literal and metaphorical microscope. Here, the past and future converge, but from here, what does divergence look like? What can a scientific mind do except interrogate and attempt to measure the unknown and immeasurable? These poems, at once tender and suffused with wry humor, diverse in form and scope, go on to navigate illness, early relationships, racism, climate change, mass shootings, and the COVID-19 pandemic, unflinching in the face of death and the darker side of human nature. At its core, Focal Point is an uncompromising interrogation of how to be alive in the world, always loving something that has been or is in the process of being lost. Literature is long. Comics are short. Does Proust get you down? Do you find The Unbearable Lightness of Being simply unbearable? Is The Inferno your own private hell? Do you long to be conversant about classics like Moby Dick, the Bhagavad Gita, Madame Bovary, and, um, Twilight? Bestselling illustrator Lisa Brown (The Airport Book; Baby, Mix Me a Drink) did her homework. Long Story Short offers 100 pithy and skewering three-panel literary summaries, from curriculum classics like Don Quixote, Lord of the Flies, and Jane Eyre to modern favorites like Beloved, The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao, and Atonement, conveniently organized by subjects including “Love,” “Sex,” “Death,” and “Female Trouble.” Lisa Brown’s Long Story Short is the perfect way to turn a traipse through what your English teacher called “the canon” into a frolic—or to happily cram for the next occasion that requires you to appear bookish and well-read. This quarterly of West Coast writers and artists is a fun literary magazine that includes some 25 prints, drawings and photographs in each issue A collection of the journal's greatest pieces from 1985-1994 In February 2010, with the help of a friend who works as a photographer with a National Geographic–sponsored cruise line, Justin Gardiner boarded a ship bound for Antarctica. A stowaway of sorts, Gardiner used his experiences on this voyage as the narrative backdrop for Beneath the Shadow, a compelling firsthand account that breathes new life into the nineteenth-century journals of Antarctic explorers such as Captain Robert Falcon Scott, Sir Ernest Henry Shackleton, and Captain Roald Amundsen. Beneath the Shadow is centered on journal excerpts by eight famous explorers, which Gardiner uses as touchstones for modern-day experiences of harsh seas, chance encounters, rugged terrain, and unspeakable beauty. With equal parts levity and lyricism, Gardiner navigates the distance between the historical and the contemporary, the artistic and the scientific, the heroic and the mundane. The bold and tragic tales of Antarctic explorers have long held our collective imagination—almost as much as the mythically remote land such explorers ventured to—and this book makes those voices come to life as few ever have. These are the people we are. Saint Friend, / carry me when I am tired and carry yourself. / Let's keep singing the songs we don't live by / let's meet tomorrow. Saint Friend is a book of empathy. Its ten lyric poems are troubled with the prospect of satisfying the wants and needs of others. While some of the poems take place in realistic settings or concern real people--an airport, Amelia Earhart--this is a book where fantasy and reality are ultimately indistinguishable. SaintFriend is also a book about how we continue living while overwhelmed by loss and how we band together to survive. It is a freewheeling explosion of celebrations, elegies, narratives, psychologically raw persona pieces. It is at times bizarre and at times heartbreaking. It is, as the title suggests, a book exalting love among friends in our scattered times. In Elegy on Toy Piano, Dean Young's sixth book of poems, elegiac necessity finds itself next to goofy celebration. Daffy Duck enters the Valley of the Eternal. Faulkner and bell-bottoms cling to beauty's evanescence. Even in single poems, Young's tone and style vary. No one feeling or idea takes precedence over another, and their simultaneity is frequently revealed; sadness may throw a squirrely shadow, joy can find itself dressed in mourning black. As in the agitated "Whirlpool Suite": "Pain / and pleasure are two signals carried / over one phoneline." In taking up subjects as slight as the examination of a signature or a true/false test, and as pressing as the death of friends, Young's poems embrace the duplicity of feeling, the malleability of perception, and the truth telling of wordplay. First published a decade ago, A Writer's Book of Days has become the ideal writing coach for thousands of writers. Newly revised, with new prompts, up-to-date Web resources, and more useful information than ever, this invaluable guide offers something for everyone looking to put pen to paper — a treasure trove of practical suggestions, expert advice, and powerful inspiration. Judy Reeves meets you wherever you may be on a given day with: • get-going prompts and exercises • insight into writing blocks • tips and techniques for finding time and creating space • ways to find images and inspiration • advice on working in writing groups • suggestions, quips, and trivia from accomplished practitioners Reeves's holistic approach addresses every aspect of what makes creativity possible (and joyful) — the physical, emotional, and spiritual. And like a smart, empathetic inner mentor, she will help you make every day a writing day. When Peter meets Leslie, a sexual adventurer, he gets a glimpse of what he imagines himself to be: a writer of talent and nerve. Over the course of a Virginia summer, their charged, increasingly intimate friendship opens the door to difficult questions about love and literary ambition Fiction: "Odd Jobs" by Jonathan Escoffery: A college grad living out of his car can't be too finicky about what a young woman asks him to do for a bit of cash. "Panda Express" by Francisco Gonzalez: Far from the eyes of family, a student allows himself to savor what he truly hungers for. "Jello Sees" by Kathleen Mackay: "Jello had come to hate the celebrities. Funhouse faces that looked familiar and disappointing in their ordinariness, but always beautiful, always remarkable for their familiarity. This seemed unfair." Plus stories from Michelle Latiolais, Siel Ju, Andres Reconco, and Perry Janes. And in honor of Ray Bradbury's centenary, a republication of his classic story "The Pedestrian." Nonfiction: "Postcard from L.A., April" by Nina Reyovr: When you've long been attuned to life's precariousness, what does the growing threat of pandemic mean? "Alterations" by Wendy C. Ortiz: "I write to you, craving. I know there are music and texts I won't gravitate toward in these next few fragile weeks of newness, because they threaten to drive me back to pleasure ..." Plus essays by Joe Donnelly (on the enduring legacy of the wolf known as OR-7) and A. Kendra Greene (on the museum that is the Holyland Exhibition). Interview: The late Wanda Coleman on writing for TV, running in the same circles as Charles Bukowski, and being "a poet, about as valueless as anyone in this nation can be. But maybe I save a life." Poetry by: Victoria Chang, David Hernandez, Genevieve Kaplan, Douglas Manuel, Dan Murphy, and Mary Otis. Art by: Henry Lara From a groundbreaking Slovenian-Austrian poet comes an evocative, captivating collection on searching for home in a landscape burdened with violent history. At its core, Distant Transit is an ode to survival, building a monument to traditions and lives lost. Infused with movement, Maja Haderlap’s Distant Transit traverses Slovenia’s scenic landscape and violent history, searching for a sense of place within its ever-shifting boundaries. Avoiding traditional forms and pronounced rhythms, Haderlap unleashes a flow of evocative, captivating passages whose power lies in their associative richness and precision of expression, vividly conjuring Slovenia’s natural world—its rolling meadows, snow-capped alps, and sparkling Adriatic coast. Belonging to the Slovene ethnic minority and its inherited, transgenerational trauma, Haderlap explores the burden of history and the prolonged aftershock of conflict—warm, lavish pastoral passages conceal dark memories, and musings on the way language can create and dissolve borders reveal a deep longing for a sense of home. New poetry collection by Matvei Yankelevich NATIONAL BESTSELLER • A teenage girl living in 1960s China becomes Mao Zedong’s protégée and lover—and a heroine of the Cultural Revolution—in this “masterful” (The Washington Post) novel. “A new classic about China’s Cultural Revolution . . . Think Succession, but add death and mayhem to the palace intrigue. . . . Ambitious and impressive.”—San Francisco Chronicle ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR: The Washington Post, PopSugar • Longlisted for the Joyce Carol Oates Prize On the eve of China’s Cultural Revolution and her sixteenth birthday, Mei dreams of becoming a model revolutionary. When the Communist Party recruits girls for a mysterious duty in the capital, she seizes the opportunity to escape her impoverished village. It is only when Mei arrives at the Chairman’s opulent residence—a forbidden city unto itself—that she learns that the girls’ job is to dance with the Party elites. Ambitious and whip-smart, Mei beelines toward the Chairman. Mei gradually separates herself from the other recruits to become the Chairman’s confidante—and paramour. While he fends off political rivals, Mei faces down schemers from the dance troupe who will stop at nothing to take her place and the Chairman’s imperious wife, who has secret plans of her own. When the Chairman finally gives Mei a political mission, she seizes it with fervor, but the brutality of this latest stage of the revolution makes her begin to doubt all the certainties she has held so dear. Forbidden City is an epic yet intimate portrayal of one of the world’s most powerful and least understood leaders during this extraordinarily turbulent period in modern Chinese history. Mei’s harrowing journey toward truth and disillusionment raises questions about power, manipulation, and belief, as seen through the eyes of a passionate teenage girl. Literary Nonfiction. "The genre-defying genius of SATURATION PROJECT brings memoir and essay to the land of myth. Here, the wildness of what we experience, that which cannot be controlled but controls nonetheless, finds expression through etherealizing and visceral saturations of the body: a feral, humming, windswept girlhood mapped with uncharted brilliance."--Claudia Rankine "Christine Hume tells of that hum neither utterance nor song that is so inside us and that hum that is everywhere in crowds, in industry, in nature. She tells of wind, unconstrained force, in which we exist, stand and advance. A child, lost or abandoned, is nurtured by a bear in Greece, in India, in Azerbaijan, in Champagne, in Kansas. Christine Hume tells her daughter she is that child, and she sees her daughter being nurtured by another species. So many

profound and surface things Christine Hume brings close to us with her so crystal words so luminous with thought."--Alphonso Lingis *ZYZZYVA* #120: The Technology Issue, Stories, Dreams and Nightmares examines the various ways technology has shaped us, and imagines how it might do so in the near future. Noted reporter and author John Markoff shares an essay on the conflicted legacy of Stewart Brand. UC Berkeley doctoral student and technologist Xiaowei Wang discusses blockchain, the incorporation of tech in rural China, and asks, "What does it mean to live, to be human right now?" Fiction by Lee Conell, Juhea Kim, and Kate Reed Petty considers the impacts of technology and a changing environment upon communication and connection, and our sense of identity. In Troy Jollimore's essay, a rumination on the films of the Coen Brothers dovetails with urgent questions about how personal and cultural narratives are shaped by the media and technology with which they are told--and how the disastrous proliferation of conspiracy theories fostered by internet culture has deep roots in American history. Also includes fiction from Andrew Tonkovich and Kate Reed Petty; poetry from Sheryl Luna, Benjamin Voigt, Amanda Moore, William Brewer, art by Dave McClinton; and many others. Howard Junker is a collection of memoirs, confessions, and personal narratives from "*ZYZZYVA*, the premiere literary journal of the West Coast, now celebration its 20th anniversary. From "one of Iran's most important living fiction writers" (*The Guardian*) comes a fantastically imaginative story of love and war narrated by two angel scribes perched on the shoulders of a shell-shocked Iranian soldier who's searching for the mysterious woman haunting his dreams. Before he enlisted as a soldier in the Iran-Iraq War and disappeared, Amir Yamini was a carefree playboy whose only concerns were seducing women and riling his religious family. Five years later, his mother and sister Reyhaneh find him in a mental hospital for shell-shocked soldiers, his left arm and most of his memory lost. Amir is haunted by the vision of a mysterious woman whose face he cannot see--the crescent moon on her forehead shines too brightly. He names her Moon Brow. Back home in Tehran, the prodigal son is both hailed as a living martyr to the cause of Ayatollah Khomeini's Revolution and confined as a dangerous madman. His sense of humor, if not his sanity, intact, Amir cajoles Reyhaneh into helping him escape the garden walls to search for Moon Brow. Piecing together the puzzle of his past, Amir decides there's only one solution: he must return to the battlefield and find the remains of his severed arm--and discover its secret. All the while, two angels sit on our hero's shoulders and inscribe the story in enthrallingly distinctive prose. Wildly inventive and radically empathetic, steeped in Persian folklore and contemporary Middle East history, Moon Brow is the great Iranian novelist Shahriar Mandanipour's unforgettable epic of love, war, morality, faith, and family. "Daniel Chacon's collection of stories, set mainly in the southwest, digs deep into the lives of each character, laying bare their emotional distance, vulnerabilities and desires. Chacon's writing is deceptively simple, Carveresque at times in its plain talk. And yet, the narrative in each of these stories is dead-on-the-money, intimate and insightful."--BOOK JACKET. Alison Rumfitt's *Tell Me I'm Worthless* is a dark, unflinching haunted house story that confronts both supernatural and real-world horrors through the lens of the modern-day trans experience. "A triumph of transgressive queer horror." —Publishers Weekly, STARRED review "Easily one of the strongest horror debuts in recent memory." —Booklist, STARRED review Three years ago, Alice spent one night in an abandoned house with her friends, Ila and Hannah. Since then, Alice's life has spiraled. She lives a haunted existence, selling videos of herself for money, going to parties she hates, drinking herself to sleep. Memories of that night torment Alice, but when Ila asks her to return to the House, to go past the KEEP OUT sign and over the sick earth where teenagers dare each other to venture, Alice knows she must go. Together, Alice and Ila must face the horrors that happened there, must pull themselves apart from the inside out, put their differences aside, and try to rescue Hannah, whom the House has chosen to make its own. Cutting, disruptive, and darkly funny, *Tell Me I'm Worthless* is a vital work of trans fiction that examines the devastating effects of trauma and how fascism makes us destroy ourselves and each other. "Ambitious, brutal, and brilliant." —Gretchen Felker-Martin, author of *Manhunt* Also by Alison Rumfitt: *Brainwurms* At the Publisher's request, this title is being sold without Digital Rights Management Software (DRM) applied. As *ZYZZYVA* marks its 35th anniversary, we celebrate over three decades of enriching contemporary literature and supporting literary communities in the Bay Area and beyond. With fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and an artist portfolio, ISSUE #118, celebrates *ZYZZYVA*'s legacy at the premier journal or arts & letters from San Francisco for over 35 years An eclectic collection of fiction, essays, poetry, and graphic work selected by high school students with the help of New York Times best-selling author Edan Lepucki. Over the past year, fifteen Bay Area high school students have gathered each week in the basement of an independent publishing house to pore over online and print literary journals, magazines, books, plays, and graphic novels. They read things they couldn't shake and engaged in deep conversations about how good writing brings people together, no matter what else is happening around the world. With the help of New York Times best-selling author Edan Lepucki they have compiled *The Best American Nonrequired Reading 2019*. The San Francisco Journal of Arts & Letters Sophie Swankowski is the hero from the stories she's been hearing all her life: she's the girl who will save the world. Or so she's been told. Now she and her unlikely guardian—the gruff, filthy mermaid Syrena—must travel the pitch-black seas from broken-down Chelsea, Massachusetts, to Syrena's homeland in Poland. Along the way, Syrena will reveal the terrible truth about her past, and teach Sophie about the ages-old source of her newly discovered power. But left behind in Chelsea, without Sophie to protect them from the dark magic she's awakened, what will become of Sophie's friends and family? *Girl at the Bottom of the Sea* is the follow-up to Michelle Tea's beloved *Mermaid in Chelsea Creek*, "a refreshing breath of air in the world of YA, equal parts eerie, heartbreaking, and fantastical." (*ZYZZYVA*). INSTANT NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER WINNER OF THE NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE'S JOHN LEONARD PRIZE FOR BEST FIRST BOOK WINNER OF THE FERRO-GRUMLEY AWARD FOR LGBTQ FICTION Named a Best Book of the Year by: New York Times * NPR * Washington Post * LA Times * Kirkus Reviews * New York Public Library * Chicago Public Library * Harper's Bazaar * TIME * Maureen Corrigan, *Fresh Air* * Boston Globe* *The Atlantic* A vibrant story collection about Cambodian-American life—immersive and comic, yet unsparing—that offers profound insight into the intimacy of queer and immigrant communities Seamlessly transitioning between the absurd and the tenderhearted, balancing acerbic humor with sharp emotional depth, *Afterparties* offers an expansive portrait of the lives of Cambodian-Americans. As the children of refugees carve out radical new paths for themselves in California, they shoulder the inherited weight of the Khmer Rouge genocide and grapple with the complexities of race, sexuality, friendship, and family. A high school badminton coach and failing grocery store owner tries to relive his glory days by beating a rising star teenage player. Two drunken brothers attend a wedding afterparty and hatch a plan to expose their shady uncle's snubbing of the bride and groom. A queer love affair sparks between an older tech entrepreneur trying to launch a "safe space" app and a disillusioned young teacher obsessed with *Moby-Dick*. And in the sweeping final story, a nine-year-old child learns that his mother survived a racist school shooter. The stories in *Afterparties*, "powered by So's skill with the telling detail, are like beams of wry, affectionate light, falling from different directions on a complicated, struggling, beloved American community" (George Saunders). From the renowned Chinese poet in exile comes a gorgeous and shocking account of his years in prison following the Tiananmen Square protests. A goop Book Club Selection and Best Book of the Year • Amazon Editors' Choice "This unsparing and absorbing family portrait broke my heart and remade it a hundred times over." —Rachel Khong, author of *Goodbye, Vitamin* It is the day of her brother's wedding and our narrator is still struggling with her toast. Despite a recent fracture between them, her brother, Danny, has asked her to give a speech and she doesn't know where to begin, how to put words to their kind of love. She was nine years old when she traveled with her parents to Thailand to meet her brother, six years her junior. They grew up together like any other siblings, and shared a bucolic childhood in Northern California. Yet when she holds their story up to the light, it refracts in ways she doesn't expect. What follows is a heartfelt letter addressed to Danny and an attempt at a full accounting of their years growing up, invoking everything from the classic Victorian adoption plot to childless women in literature to documents from Danny's case file. It's also a confession of sorts to the parts of her life that she has kept from him, including her own struggle with infertility. And as the hours until the wedding wane, she uncovers the words that can't and won't be said aloud. In *Immediate Family*, a tender and fierce debut novel, Ashley Nelson Levy explores the enduring bond between two siblings and the complexities of motherhood, infertility, race, and the many definitions of family. A man disappears. The woman who loves him is left scarred and haunted. In her fierce, one-of-a-kind debut, Rebecca Lindenberg tells the story—in verse—of her passionate relationship with Craig Arnold, a much-respected poet who disappeared in 2009 while hiking a volcano in Japan. Lindenberg's billowing, I-contain-multitudes style lays bare the poet's sadnesses, joys, and longings in poems that are lyric and narrative, at once plainspoken and musically elaborate. Regarding her role in Arnold's story, Lindenberg writes with clear-eyed humility and endearing dignity: "The girl with the ink-stained teeth / knows she's famous / in a tiny, tragic way. / She's not / daft, after all." And then later, playfully, of her travels in Italy with the poet, her lover: "The carabinieri / wanted to know if there were bears / in our part of America. Yes, we said, / many bears. Man-eating bears? Yes, of course, / many man-eating bears." Every poem in this collection bursts with humor, pathos, verve—and an utterly unique, soulful voice. This widely anticipated debut, already selected as a finalist for several prominent book awards, marks the first collection in the newly minted McSweeney's Poetry Series. MPS is an imprint which seeks to publish a broad range of excellent new poetry collections in exquisitely designed hardcovers—poetry that's useful and meaningful to anyone in any walk of life.

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