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A stylishly original collection of seven newly translated stories from the iconic Japanese writer The stories in this fantastical, unconventional collection are subtly wrought depictions of the darkness of our desires. From an isolated bamboo grove, to a lantern festival in Tokyo, to the Emperor's court,

they offer glimpses into moments of madness, murder, and obsession. Vividly translated by Bryan Karetnyk, they unfold in elegant, sometimes laconic, always gripping prose. Akutagawa's stories are characterised by their stylish originality; they are stories to be read again and again. NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • BOOKER PRIZE NOMINEE • From the beloved Pulitzer Prize-winning author, a sparkling novel about misperception, second chances, and the sometimes elusive power of human connection. Micah Mortimer is a creature of habit. A self-employed tech expert, superintendent of his Baltimore apartment building, cautious to a fault behind the steering wheel, he seems content leading a steady, circumscribed life. But one day his routines are blown apart when his woman friend (he refuses to call anyone in her late thirties a "girlfriend") tells him she's facing eviction, and a teenager shows up at Micah's door claiming to be his son. These surprises, and the ways they throw Micah's meticulously organized life off-kilter, risk changing him forever. An intimate look into the heart and mind of a man who finds those around him just out of reach, and a funny, joyful, deeply compassionate story about seeing the world through new eyes, *Redhead by the Side of the Road* is a triumph, filled with Anne Tyler's signature wit and gimlet-eyed observation. NATIONAL BESTSELLER • "How did our democracy go wrong? This extraordinary document ... is Applebaum's answer." —Timothy Snyder, author of *On Tyranny* The Pulitzer Prize-winning historian explains, with electrifying clarity, why elites in democracies around the world are turning toward nationalism and authoritarianism. From the United States and Britain to continental Europe and beyond, liberal democracy is under siege, while authoritarianism is on the rise. In *Twilight of Democracy*, Anne Applebaum, an award-winning historian of Soviet atrocities who was one of the first American journalists to raise an alarm about antidemocratic trends in the West, explains the lure of nationalism and autocracy. In this captivating essay, she contends that political systems with

radically simple beliefs are inherently appealing, especially when they benefit the loyal to the exclusion of everyone else. Elegantly written and urgently argued, *Twilight of Democracy* is a brilliant dissection of a world-shaking shift and a stirring glimpse of the road back to democratic values. Part epistolary memoir, part handbook, *Teaching Life* reflects on more than three decades of teaching literature and touching the lives of students. Both a reflection on a life in literature and a primer on teaching as a vocation, this soul-stirring work also provides behind-the-scenes stories of many of the authors who have influenced Dale Salwak's career. Written in response to the sudden death of one of his students, who died tragically in an automobile accident on her way to Salwak's office to talk over her career plans, *Teaching Life* is an effort to impart lessons to the next generation of teachers: "It was the suddenness of her death, I think, along with the utter loss of so much potential, which struck me forcibly, and I found myself wondering if anything I had said in class had made a difference in her too-short life or, for that matter, in the lives of any of my students." By turns analytical, reflective, and exhortatory, *Teaching Life* unselfconsciously captures the fascination, enlightenment, and sheer joy that literary studies can offer professors and students. It also implicitly speaks to society's prevailing—and disturbing—prejudice against the profession.

WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE • NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • Evoking Jane Austen, Emma Straub, and other masters of the literary marriage, *Breathing Lessons* celebrates the small miracles and magic of truly knowing someone. Unfolding over the course of a single emotionally fraught day, this stunning novel encompasses a lifetime of dreams, regrets and reckonings—and is often regarded as Tyler's seminal work. Maggie and Ira Moran are on a road trip from Baltimore, Maryland to Deer Lick, Pennsylvania to attend the funeral of a friend. Along the way, they reflect on the state of their marriage, its trials and its triumphs—through their quarrels, their routines, and

their ability to tolerate each other's faults with patience and affection. Where Maggie is quirky, lovable and mischievous, Ira is practical, methodical and mired in reason. What begins as a day trip becomes a revelatory and unexpected journey, as Ira and Maggie rediscover the strength of their bond and the joy of having somebody with whom to share the ride, bumps and all. "More powerful and moving than anything [Tyler] has done." —Los Angeles Times From the author of *White Noise* (winner of the National Book Award) and *The Silence*, an eerily convincing fictional speculation on the events leading up to the assassination of John F. Kennedy In this powerful, unsettling novel, Don DeLillo chronicles Lee Harvey Oswald's odyssey from troubled teenager to a man of precarious stability who imagines himself an agent of history. When "history" presents itself in the form of two disgruntled CIA operatives who decide that an unsuccessful attempt on the life of the president will galvanize the nation against communism, the scales are irrevocably tipped. A gripping, masterful blend of fact and fiction, alive with meticulously portrayed characters both real and created, *Libra* is a grave, haunting, and brilliant examination of an event that has become an indelible part of the American psyche. **NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER** • The beloved Pulitzer Prize-winning author brings us the story of Ian Bedloe, the ideal teenage son, leading a cheery, apple-pie life with his family in Baltimore. That is, until a careless and vicious rumor leads to a devastating tragedy. Imploding from guilt, Ian believes he is the one responsible for the tragedy. No longer a star athlete with a bright future, and desperately searching for salvation, he stumbles across a storefront with a neon sign that simply reads: **CHURCH OF THE SECOND CHANCE**. Ian has always viewed his penance as a burden. But through the power of faith and the love of family, he begins to view it as a gift. After years spent trying to atone for his foolish mistakes, Ian finds forgiveness and peace in the life he builds for himself. Contains: *The Accidental Tourist*; *Breathing Lessons*; *Searching for Caleb*.

Paul, a divorced father, wants to back out of his child care arrangement and spend less time with his children. Nathan has been lying to his wife about a serious medical condition. Marsha, recently separated from her husband, cannot resist telling her children negative things about their father. What is the role of therapy in these situations? Trained to strive for neutrality and to focus strictly on the clients' needs, most therapists generally consider moral issues such as fairness, truthfulness, and obligation beyond their domain. Now, an award-winning psychologist and family therapist criticizes psychotherapy's overemphasis on individual self-interest and calls for a sense of moral responsibility in therapy. First appearing in the pages of *Seventeen Magazine*, "Teenage Wasteland" has become one of Anne Tyler's most widely beloved short stories—an affecting and masterful portrait of a life interrupted and a family come undone. Daisy Coble had been a good mother, and so she was ashamed to find out from Donny's teacher that he had been misbehaving. He was noisy, lazy, disruptive, and he was caught smoking. At night, she lay awake wondering where she had gone wrong, and how she could have failed as a parent. Unsure of herself, Daisy follows the advice of professionals, and hires Donny a tutor with some unusual ideas to set the boy straight. But, has the gap between them grown too wide to bridge? A Vintage Short. The beloved bestselling, Pulitzer Prize-winning author gives us a wise, haunting, and deeply moving novel about loss and recovery, pierced throughout with her humor, wisdom, and always penetrating look at human foibles. Crippled in his right arm and leg, Aaron grew up fending off a sister who constantly wanted to manage him. So when he meets Dorothy, an outspoken, independent young woman, she's like a breath of fresh air. He marries her without hesitation, and they have a relatively happy, unremarkable marriage. Aaron works at his family's vanity-publishing business, turning out titles that presume to guide beginners through the trials of life. But when a tree crashes into their house and Dorothy is killed,

Aaron feels as though he has been erased forever. Only Dorothy's unexpected appearances from the dead—in their house, on the roadway, in the market—help him to live in the moment and to find some peace. Gradually, Aaron discovers that maybe for this beginner there is indeed a way to say goodbye. From the beloved Pulitzer Prize-winning author a brilliantly observed, joyful and wrenching, funny and true new novel that reveals, as only she can, the very nature of a family's life. "It was a beautiful, breezy, yellow-and-green afternoon." This is the way Abby Whitshank always begins the story of how she fell in love with Red that day in July 1959. The whole family--their two daughters and two sons, their grandchildren, even their faithful old dog--is on the porch, listening contentedly as Abby tells the tale they have heard so many times before. And yet this gathering is different too: Abby and Red are growing older, and decisions must be made about how best to look after them, and the fate of the house so lovingly built by Red's father. Brimming with the luminous insight, humor, and compassion that are Anne Tyler's hallmarks, this capacious novel takes us across three generations of the Whitshanks, their shared stories and long-held secrets, all the unguarded and richly lived moments that combine to define who and what they are as a family. A poignant, uplifting, heartbreaking love story from the beloved bestselling, Pulitzer Prize-winning author: "To read a novel by Anne Tyler is to fall in love" (PEOPLE). Thirty-eight-year-old Jeremy Pauling has never left home. He lives on the top floor of a Baltimore row house where he creates collages of little people snipped from wrapping paper. His elderly mother putters in the rooms below, until her death. And it is then that Jeremy is forced to take in Mary Tell and her child as boarders. Mary is unaware of how much courage it takes Jeremy to look her in the eye. For Jeremy, like one of his paper creations, is fragile and easily torn—especially when he's falling in love.... "To read a novel by Anne Tyler is to fall in love." —People The beloved bestselling, Pulitzer Prize-winning author brings us the



story of Evie Decker, a shy, slightly plump teenager, lonely and silent. But her quiet life is shattered when she hears the voice of Drumstrings Casey on the radio and becomes instantly attracted to him. She manages to meet him, bursting out of her lonely shell—and into the attentive gaze of the intangible man who becomes all too real... “Without Anne Tyler, American fiction would be an immeasurably bleaker place.” —Newsweek

*A Company of Swans* is a sweeping tale of romance, freedom and the beauty of dance from award-winning author, Eva Ibbotson, with a new introduction by Joanna Nadin. Weekly ballet classes are Harriet Morton's only escape from her intolerably dull life. So when she is chosen to join a corps de ballet which is setting off on a tour of the Amazon, she leaps at the chance to run away for good. Performing in the grand opera houses is everything Harriet dreamed of, and falling in love with an aristocratic exile makes her new life complete. Swept away by it all, she is unaware that her father and intended fiancé have begun to track her down . . .

'I have binged on Eva Ibbotson . . . her elegantly written, witty and well-observed fables' Nigella Lawson, *The Times*

Rediscover Eva Ibbotson, award-winning author of *Journey to the River Sea*, in her sweeping historical romances, including *The Morning Gift*, *A Song For Summer* and *The Secret Countess*, originally published as *A Countess Below Stairs*, *Magic Flutes*, originally published as *The Reluctant Heiress*, *Madensky Square* and *A Company of Swans*. **NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER** •

A novel of self-discovery and second chances from the beloved Pulitzer Prize-winning author—Willa Drake has had three opportunities to start her life over: in 1967, as a schoolgirl whose mother has suddenly disappeared; in 1977, when considering a marriage proposal; and in 1997, as a young widow trying to hold her family together. So she is surprised when in 2017 she is given one last chance to change everything, after receiving a startling phone call from a stranger. Without fully understanding why, she flies across the country to Baltimore to help a young woman she's never

met. This impulsive decision, maybe the first one she's consciously made in her life, will lead Willa into uncharted territory—surrounded by eccentric neighbors who treat each other like family, she finds solace and fulfillment in unexpected places. A bewitching novel of hope and transformation, *Clock Dance* gives us Anne Tyler at the height of her powers. What exactly is goodness? Where is it found in the literary imagination? Toni Morrison, one of American letters' greatest voices, pondered these perplexing questions in her celebrated Ingersoll Lecture, delivered at Harvard University in 2012 and published now for the first time in book form. Perhaps because it is overshadowed by the more easily defined evil, goodness often escapes our attention. Recalling many literary examples, from Ahab to Coetzee's Michael K, Morrison seeks the essence of goodness and ponders its significant place in her writing. She considers the concept in relation to unforgettable characters from her own works of fiction and arrives at conclusions that are both eloquent and edifying. In a lively interview conducted for this book, Morrison further elaborates on her lecture's ideas, discussing goodness not only in literature but in society and history—particularly black history, which has responded to centuries of brutality with profound creativity. Morrison's essay is followed by a series of responses by scholars in the fields of religion, ethics, history, and literature to her thoughts on goodness and evil, mercy and love, racism and self-destruction, language and liberation, together with close examination of literary and theoretical expressions from her works. Each of these contributions, written by a scholar of religion, considers the legacy of slavery and how it continues to shape our memories, our complicities, our outcries, our lives, our communities, our literature, and our faith. In addition, the contributors engage the religious orientation in Morrison's novels so that readers who encounter her many memorable characters such as Sula, *Beloved*, or Frank Money will learn and appreciate how Morrison's notions of goodness and mercy also reflect

her understanding of the sacred and the human spirit. Pearl Tull may be dying, but she remembers well the day her husband abandoned her and left her to raise their three children--Cody, Ezra, and Jenny--by herself. Now, as these three are brought together by Pearl's nearing death, each sibling recounts the bitter memories of their childhood: Cody, the oldest, who felt responsible as the cause for his father's departure, all the while hiding his envy for his younger brother Ezra, whom he believes to be his mother's favourite; Ezra, the kind, nurturing young son whose sole wish is to see his family be together and happy, trying repeatedly (and failing) to bring his splintered family together for a meal at the restaurant where he works; and Jenny, the willful scholar, who only encounters familial stability after her third marriage. Contending with the troubles of their past and present, Ezra makes a final attempt to bring the family together for a meal, where the Tull siblings will come together to hash out their repressed feelings--and encounter a surprise visitor--recounting with painful candor what the family meant to them. With wondrous observations and bittersweet humor, the beloved best-selling, Pulitzer Prize-winning author tells the story of an unsuspecting young woman who becomes the North star that helps a stumbling, dysfunctional family find its footing. Mrs. Emerson, widowed with seven adult children, lives alone in crumbling Victorian mansion outside Baltimore with only a collection of antique clocks to keep her company. Elizabeth Abbott—twenty-three years old, aimless, bohemian, and beautiful—leads a vagabond lifestyle until she happens upon Mrs. Emerson's home and convinces the older woman to hire her as a handyman. When three of the strange, idiosyncratic Emerson children return to their childhood home for a visit, they are irresistibly drawn to Elizabeth. The United States has the highest family fragmentation rates in the industrial world. Nonmarital birth rates for the nation as a whole are 40%, with proportions dramatically higher in many communities as defined by race, ethnicity, or geography.

Divorce rates, while moderating in recent decades, are still estimated at about 40% for first marriages and 50% for second ones. Together, this fragmentation impacts millions of children as well as adults, leading to educational, economic, and other losses that in turn lead to lower social mobility and deepening class divisions. In *Broken Bonds*, Mitch Pearlstein explores the declining state of the American family and what its disintegration means for our future. Based on candid interviews with forty leading family experts across the political spectrum - from Stephanie Coontz, to Heather Mac Donald - Pearlstein ruminates on the political, social, and spiritual fallout of this trend. In honest and frank conversations, Pearlstein and his interviewees fearlessly diagnose the problems that many have been too timid to explore and suggest ways to reverse these trends that threaten our social fabric. "DeLuca keeps readers guessing. Minette Walters fans will be pleased." —Publishers Weekly (starred review) Perfect for fans of Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace* and Hannah Kent's *Burial Rites*, this taut psychological thriller offers a delicious take on deviant and defiant Victorian women in a time when marriage itself was its own prison. England, 1873. Clara Blackstone has just been released after one year in a private asylum for the insane. Clara has two goals: to reunite with her husband, Henry, and to never—ever—return to the asylum. As she enters Durham, Clara finds her carriage surrounded by a mob gathered to witness the imprisonment of Mary Ann Cotton—England's first female serial killer—accused of poisoning nearly twenty people, including her husbands and children. Clara soon finds the oppressive confinement of her marriage no less terrifying than the white-tiled walls of Hoxton. And as she grows increasingly suspicious of Henry's intentions, her fascination with Cotton grows. Soon, Cotton is not just a notorious figure from the headlines, but an unlikely confidante, mentor—and perhaps accomplice—in Clara's struggle to protect her money, her freedom, and her life. The beloved bestselling, Pulitzer Prize-winning author brings us a novel filled

with "emotional power" (The New York Times). • "To read a novel by Anne Tyler is to fall in love." —PEOPLE In the small town of Larksville, the Pike family is hopelessly out of step with the daily rhythms of life. Mrs. Pike seldom speaks, while Mr. Pike maintains a forced stoicism. Only their ten-year-old, Simon, seems able to acknowledge that their world has changed. He just doesn't understand why. The Pikes may choose to stand still, to hide from an unnameable past, but the strange shroud over their home cannot be contained. Soon it's inching its way toward their neighbors, where brothers Ansel and James will have to confront their own dark secrets if they want to bring their neighborhood back out into the light. 'A skilful novel by a writer in full flight from the obvious' Observer For thirty-five year old Charlotte Emory, leaving her husband seems to offer the only way out from the mundaneness of every day life's earthly possessions and emotional complications. In the bank, she withdraws enough money to escape a life and a marriage gone sour. But Charlotte is about to escape in a way she never expected, as a young bank robber takes her hostage, and they head south for Florida in a stolen car. **\*\*ANNE TYLER HAS SOLD OVER 8 MILLION BOOKS WORLDWIDE\*\*** 'Anne Tyler takes the ordinary, the small, and makes them sing' Rachel Joyce 'She knows all the secrets of the human heart' Monica Ali 'A masterly author' Sebastian Faulks 'I love Anne Tyler. I've read every single book she's written' Jacqueline Wilson A collection including six earlier volumes of Wilbur's poetry, twenty-seven new poems, and a cantata. An Oprah Editor's Pick and NPR Best Book of the Year From the author of the award-winning and word-of-mouth sensation *Our Endless Numbered Days* comes an exhilarating literary mystery that will keep readers guessing until the final page. Ingrid Coleman writes letters to her husband, Gil, about the truth of their marriage, but instead of giving them to him, she hides them in the thousands of books he has collected over the years. When Ingrid has written her final letter she disappears from a

Dorset beach, leaving behind her beautiful but dilapidated house by the sea, her husband, and her two daughters, Flora and Nan. Twelve years later, Gil thinks he sees Ingrid from a bookshop window, but he's getting older and this unlikely sighting is chalked up to senility. Flora, who has never believed her mother drowned, returns home to care for her father and to try to finally discover what happened to Ingrid. But what Flora doesn't realize is that the answers to her questions are hidden in the books that surround her. Scandalous and whip-smart, *Swimming Lessons* holds the Coleman family up to the light, exposing the mysterious truths of a passionate and troubled marriage. "UTTERLY COMPELLING . . . WONDERFULLY SATISFYING . . . VIRTUALLY FLAWLESS." --Chicago Tribune

**BALTIMORE WOMAN DISAPPEARS DURING FAMILY VACATION**, declares the headline. Forty-year-old Delia Grinstead is last seen strolling down the Delaware shore, wearing nothing more than a bathing suit and carrying a beach tote with five hundred dollars tucked inside. To her husband and three almost-grown children, she has vanished without trace or reason. But for Delia, who feels like a tiny gnat buzzing around her family's edges, "walking away from it all" is not a premeditated act but an impulse that will lead her into a new, exciting, and unimagined life. . . .

"TYLER DETAILS DELIA'S ADVENTURE WITH GREAT SKILL. . . . As so often in her earlier fiction, [she] creates distinct characters caught in poignantly funny situations. . . . Tyler writes with a clarity that makes the commonplace seem fresh and the pathetic touching." --The New York Times

An unflinching thriller that takes us deep into the White Rose resistance movement during World War II. • "Compelling...nonstop action." —The Baltimore Sun

When Nat Turnbull's mentor, Gordon Wolfe, is arrested for possession of a missing WWII secret service archive and then turns up dead in jail, Nat's quiet academic life is suddenly thrown into tumult. The archive is a time bomb of sensitive material, but key documents are still missing, and the FBI dispatches Nat to track them down.

Following a trail of cryptic clues, Nat's journeys to Germany, where he soon crosses paths with Berta, a gorgeous and mysterious student and Kurt Bauer, an arms billionaire with a dark past. As their tales intersect, long-buried exploits of deceit emerge, and each step becomes more dangerous than the last. NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • From the beloved Pulitzer Prize-winning author—an irresistible novel exploring the slippery alchemy of attracting opposites, and the struggle to rebuild one's life after unspeakable tragedy Travel writer Macon Leary hates travel, adventure, surprises, and anything outside of his routine. Immobilized by grief, Macon is becoming increasingly prickly and alone, anchored by his solitude and an unwillingness to compromise his creature comforts. Then he meets Muriel, an eccentric dog trainer too optimistic to let Macon disappear into himself. Despite Macon's best efforts to remain insulated, Muriel up-ends his solitary, systemized life, catapulting him into the center of a messy, beautiful love story he never imagined. A fresh and timeless tale of unexpected bliss, *The Accidental Tourist* showcases Tyler's talents for making characters—and their relationships—feel both real and magical. “Incandescent, heartbreaking, exhilarating...One cannot reasonably expect fiction to be much better than this.” —The Washington Post Pulitzer Prize winner and American master Anne Tyler brings us an inspired, witty and irresistible contemporary take on one of Shakespeare's most beloved comedies. Kate Battista feels stuck. How did she end up running house and home for her eccentric scientist father and uppity, pretty younger sister Bunny? Plus, she's always in trouble at work - her pre-school charges adore her, but their parents don't always appreciate her unusual opinions and forthright manner. Dr. Battista has other problems. After years out in the academic wilderness, he is on the verge of a breakthrough. His research could help millions. There's only one problem: his brilliant young lab assistant, Pyotr, is about to be deported. And without Pyotr, all would be lost. When Dr. Battista

cooks up an outrageous plan that will enable Pyotr to stay in the country, he's relying - as usual - on Kate to help him. Kate is furious: this time he's really asking too much. But will she be able to resist the two men's touchingly ludicrous campaign to bring her around? NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

- From the beloved Pulitzer Prize-winning author—a rich and compelling novel about a mismatched marriage and its consequences, spanning three generations They seemed like the perfect couple—young, good-looking, made for each other. The moment Pauline, a stranger to the Polish Eastern Avenue neighborhood of Baltimore (though she lived only twenty minutes away), walked into his mother's grocery store, Michael was smitten. And in the heat of World War II fervor, they are propelled into a hasty wedding. But they never should have married. Pauline, impulsive, impractical, tumbles hit-or-miss through life; Michael, plodding, cautious, judgmental, proceeds deliberately. While other young marrieds, equally ignorant at the start, seemed to grow more seasoned, Pauline and Michael remain amateurs. In time their foolish quarrels take their toll. Even when they find themselves, almost thirty years later, loving, instant parents to a little grandson named Pagan, whom they rescue from Haight-Ashbury, they still cannot bridge their deep-rooted differences. Flighty Pauline clings to the notion that the rifts can always be patched. To the unyielding Michael, they become unbearable. From the sound of the cash register in the old grocery to the counterculture jargon of the sixties, from the miniskirts to the multilayered apparel of later years, Anne Tyler captures the evocative nuances of everyday life during these decades with such telling precision that every page brings smiles of recognition. Throughout, as each of the competing voices bears witness, we are drawn ever more fully into the complex entanglements of family life in this wise, embracing, and deeply perceptive novel. In this, her fourteenth novel--and one of her most endearing--Anne Tyler tells the story of a lovable loser who's trying to get his life in order. Barnaby



Gaitlin has been in trouble ever since adolescence. He had this habit of breaking into other people's houses. It wasn't the big loot he was after, like his teenage cohorts. It was just that he liked to read other people's mail, pore over their family photo albums, and appropriate a few of their precious mementos. But for eleven years now, he's been working steadily for Rent-a-Back, renting his back to old folks and shut-ins who can't move their own porch furniture or bring the Christmas tree down from the attic. At last, his life seems to be on an even keel. Still, the Gaitlins (of "old" Baltimore) cannot forget the price they paid for buying off Barnaby's former victims. And his ex-wife would just as soon he didn't show up ever to visit their little girl, Opal. Even the nice, steady woman (his guardian angel?) who seems to have designs on him doesn't fully trust him, it develops, when the chips are down, and it looks as though his world may fall apart again. There is no one like Anne Tyler, with her sharp, funny, tender perceptions about how human beings navigate on a puzzling planet, and she keeps us enthralled from start to finish in this delicious new novel. Liam Pennywell, who set out to be a philosopher and ended up teaching fifth grade, never much liked the job at that run-down private school, so early retirement doesn't bother him. But he is troubled by his inability to remember anything about the first night that he moved into his new and spare condominium on the outskirts of Baltimore. All he knows when he wakes up the next day in the hospital is that his head is sore and bandaged. His effort to recover the moments of his life that have been stolen from him leads him on an unexpected detour. What he needs is someone who can do the remembering for him. What he gets is . . . well, something quite different. A Study Guide for Anne Tyler's "Breathing Lessons," excerpted from Gale's acclaimed *Novels for Students*. This concise study guide includes plot summary; character analysis; author biography; study questions; historical context; suggestions for further reading; and much more. For any literature project, trust *Novels for Students* for all of

your research needs. NEW YORK TIMES BEST SELLER • A NEW YORKER ESSENTIAL READ • From the best-selling author of *Atonement* and *Saturday* comes the epic and intimate story of one man's life across generations and historical upheavals. From the Suez Crisis to the Cuban Missile Crisis, the fall of the Berlin Wall to the current pandemic, Roland Baines sometimes rides with the tide of history, but more often struggles against it. A BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR: *Vogue* • The New Yorker "Masterful.... McEwan is a storyteller at the peak of his powers.... One of the joys of the novel is the way it weaves history into Roland's biography.... The pleasure in reading this novel is letting it wash over you." —Associated Press

When the world is still counting the cost of the Second World War and the Iron Curtain has closed, eleven-year-old Roland Baines's life is turned upside down. Two thousand miles from his mother's protective love, stranded at an unusual boarding school, his vulnerability attracts piano teacher Miss Miriam Cornell, leaving scars as well as a memory of love that will never fade. Now, when his wife vanishes, leaving him alone with his tiny son, Roland is forced to confront the reality of his restless existence. As the radiation from Chernobyl spreads across Europe, he begins a search for answers that looks deep into his family history and will last for the rest of his life. Haunted by lost opportunities, Roland seeks solace through every possible means—music, literature, friends, sex, politics, and, finally, love cut tragically short, then love ultimately redeemed. His journey raises important questions for us all. Can we take full charge of the course of our lives without causing damage to others? How do global events beyond our control shape our lives and our memories? And what can we really learn from the traumas of the past? Epic, mesmerizing, and deeply humane, *Lessons* is a chronicle for our times—a powerful meditation on history and humanity through the prism of one man's lifetime. From the beloved bestselling, Pulitzer Prize-winning author—a timeless portrait of a young man's homecoming, and his ensuing journey

through youth, identity, family, and love. Here is the debut novel that set Tyler on the path to becoming an American classic. Ben Joe Hawkes is a worrier. Raised by his mother, grandmother, and a flock of busy sisters, he's always felt the outsider. When he learns that one of his sisters has left her husband, he heads for home and back into the confusion of childhood memories and unforeseen love.... Two ordinary people on the way to a friend's funeral learn how extraordinary their lives are. "Once upon a time, there was a woman who discovered that she had turned into the wrong person." So Anne Tyler opens this irresistible new novel. The woman is Rebecca Davitch, a fifty-three-year-old grandmother. Is she an impostor in her own life? she asks herself. Is it indeed her own life? Or is it someone else's? On the surface, Beck, as she is known to the Davitch clan, is outgoing, joyous, a natural celebrator. Giving parties is, after all, her vocation—something she slipped into even before finishing college, when Joe Davitch spotted her at an engagement party in his family's crumbling nineteenth-century Baltimore row house, where giving parties was the family business. What caught his fancy was that she seemed to be having such a wonderful time. Soon this large-spirited older man, a divorcé with three little girls, swept her into his orbit, and before she knew it she was embracing his extended family plus a child of their own, and hosting endless parties in the ornate, high-ceilinged rooms of The Open Arms. Now, some thirty years later, after presiding over a disastrous family picnic, Rebecca is caught un-awares by the question of who she really is. How she answers it—how she tries to recover her girlhood self, that dignified grownup she had once been—is the story told in this beguiling, funny, and deeply moving novel. As always with Anne Tyler's novels, once we enter her world it is hard to leave. But in *Back When We Were Grownups* she so sharpens our perceptions and awakens so many untapped feelings that we come away not only refreshed and delighted, but also infinitely wiser. LITERARY COMPANIONS, BOOK REVIEWS & GUIDES.

Everybody loves a list but this is a list of major ambition: namely, to select the best 100 novels in the English language, published from the late 17th century to the present day. This list has been built up week by week in *The Observer* since September 2013, and selected by writer and *Observer* editor Robert McCrum. With a short critique on each book, this is a real delight for literary lovers. Anne Tyler's richest, most deeply searching novel—a story about what it is to be an American, and about Iranian-born Maryam Yazdan, who, after 35 years in this country, must finally come to terms with her “outsiderness.” Two families, who would otherwise never have come together, meet by chance at the Baltimore airport – the Donaldsons, a very American couple, and the Yazdans, Maryam's fully assimilated son and his attractive Iranian wife. Each couple is awaiting the arrival of an adopted infant daughter from Korea. After the instant babies from distant Asia are delivered, Bitsy Donaldson impulsively invites the Yazdans to celebrate: an “arrival party” that from then on is repeated every year as the two families become more and more deeply intertwined. Even Maryam is drawn in – up to a point. When she finds herself being courted by Bitsy Donaldson's recently widowed father, all the values she cherishes – her traditions, her privacy, her otherness—are suddenly threatened. A luminous novel brimming with subtle, funny, and tender observations that immerse us in the challenges of both sides of the American story. The beloved bestselling, Pulitzer Prize-winning author brings us a novel that is “funny and lyric and true” (*The New Yorker*). Through the syncopated rhythms of the ragtime era to the thumping, rocking beats of the 1970s, generations of Pecks have maintained a determined steadiness. Adamantly middle class—Peck-proud, as the family slogan goes—they are quick to sweep under the rug those members who do not live up to their standards. Maybe that's why Caleb Peck took off with his violincello as a boy? Sixty years later, his brother Daniel is still wondering. No longer willing to live without answers, he turns to his daughter-

in-law, Justine, another Peck family eccentric. A studied tarot card reader, Justine comes across one message over and over in the cards: change is coming. With Daniel's help, she's hoping to find the courage to embrace whatever happens next. An unlikely pair struggling against a stifling family, Daniel and Justine believe they'll find freedom in just the right mix of magic, music, and mystery.

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