

SEPTEMBER 15th

The Headmaster's Darlings by Katherine Clark | HC 256 pages

very limited supply, read ahead

The Headmaster's Darlings is a satirical comedy of manners featuring the morbidly obese Norman Laney, an unorthodox, inspirational English teacher and college counselor for an elite private school in Mountain Brook, a privileged community outside of Birmingham. A natural wonder from blue-collar Alabama, Laney has barged into the exclusive world of Mountain Brook on the strength of his sensational figure and its several-hundred-pound commitment to art and culture. His mission is to defeat "the barbarians," introduce true civilization in place of its thin veneer, and change his Southern world for the better. Although Laney is adored by his students (his "darlings") and by the society ladies (also his "darlings") who rely on him to be the life of their parties and the leader of their book clubs, there are others who think he is a larger-than-life menace to the comfortable status quo of Mountain Brook society and must be banished.

When Laney is summoned to the principal's office one day in November 1984, he expects to be congratulated for a recent public-relations triumph he engineered on behalf of the school. Instead his letter of resignation is demanded with no explanation given. Faced with an ultimatum and his imminent dismissal, Laney must outflank the principal at his own underhanded game, find out who said what about him and why, and launch his current crop of Alabama students into the wider world—or at least into Ivy League colleges.

OCTOBER 20th

The Marriage of Opposites by Alice Hoffman | HC 384 pages

Growing up on idyllic St. Thomas in the early 1800s, Rachel dreams of life in faraway Paris. Rachel's mother, a pillar of their small refugee community of Jews who escaped the Inquisition, has never forgiven her daughter for being a difficult girl who refuses to live by the rules. Growing up, Rachel's salvation is their maid Adelle's belief in her strengths, and her deep, life-long friendship with Jestine, Adelle's daughter. But Rachel's life is not her own. She is married off to a widower with three children to save her father's business. When her husband dies suddenly and his handsome, much younger nephew, Frédérick, arrives from France to settle the estate, Rachel seizes her own life story, beginning a defiant, passionate love affair that sparks a scandal that affects all of her family, including her favorite son, who will become one of the greatest artists of France.

NOVEMBER 17th

Damascus Gate by Robert Stone | PB 528 pages

limited supply, read ahead

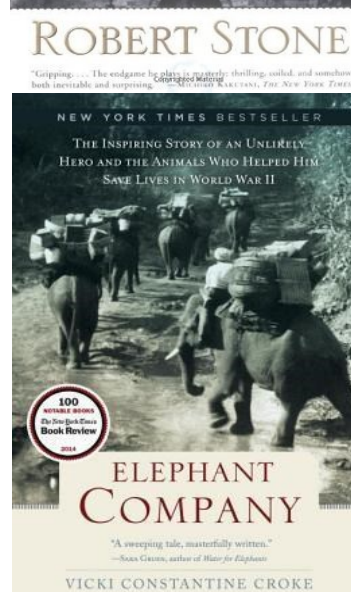
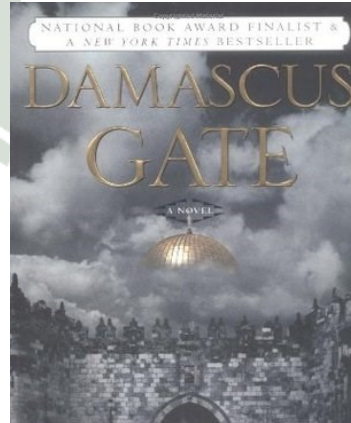
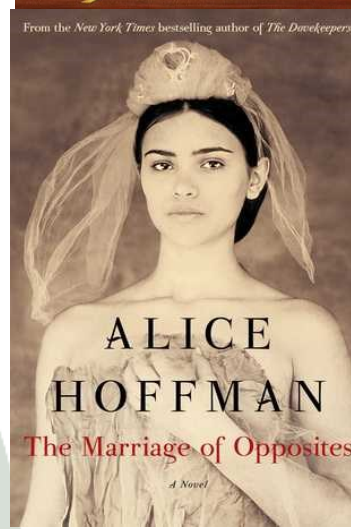
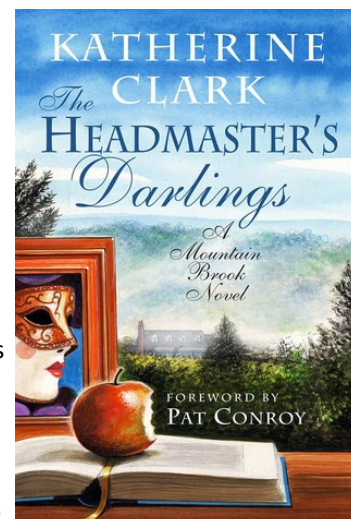
On the cusp of the millennium, Jerusalem has become a battleground in the race for redemption. American journalist Christopher Lucas is investigating religious fanatics when he discovers a plot to bomb the sacred Temple Mount. A violent confrontation in the Gaza Strip, a race through riot-filled streets, a cat-and-mouse game in an underground maze—as Lucas follows his leads, he uncovers an attempt to seize political advantage that reveals duplicity and depravity on all sides of Jerusalem's sacred struggle.

DECEMBER 15th

Elephant Company: The Inspiring Story of an Unlikely Hero and the Animals Who Helped Save Lives in World War II

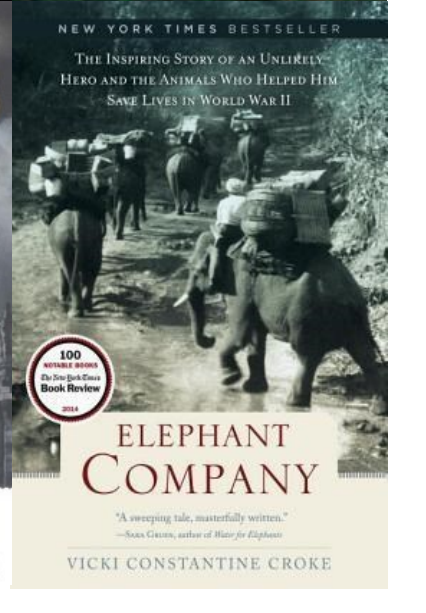
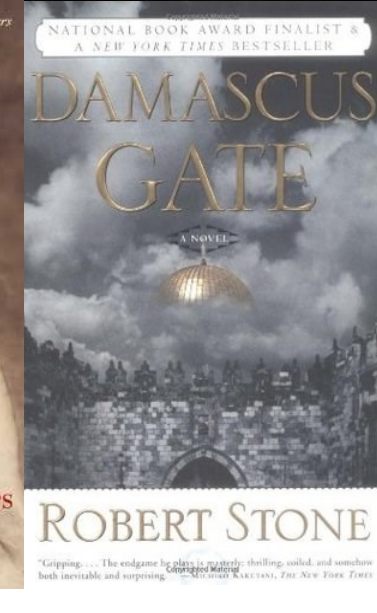
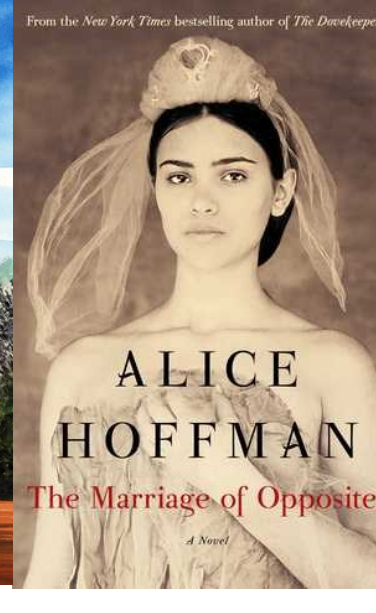
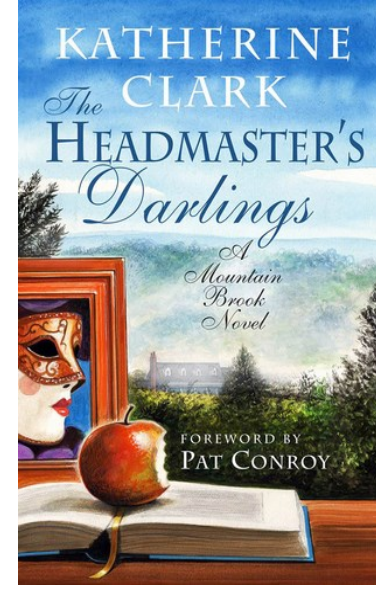
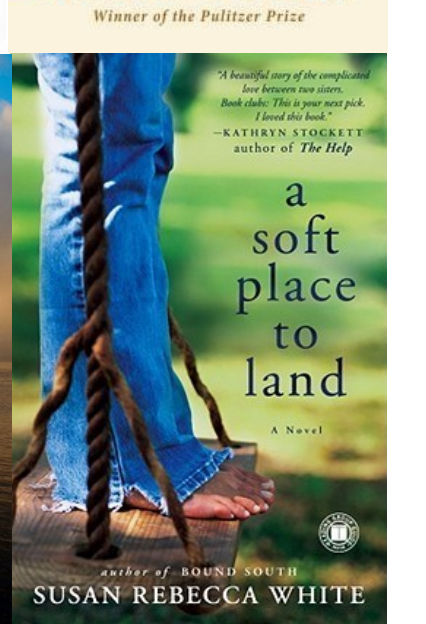
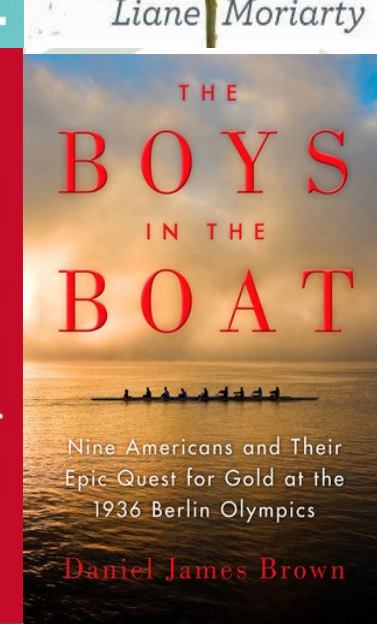
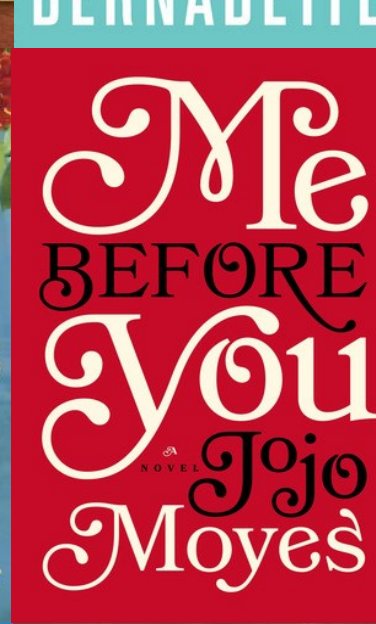
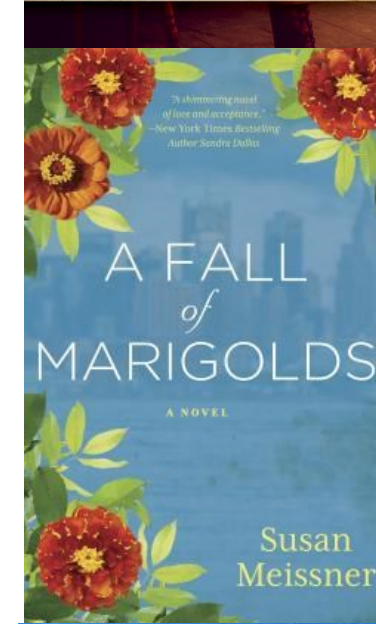
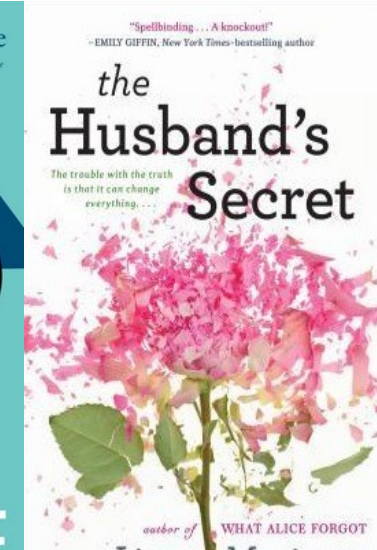
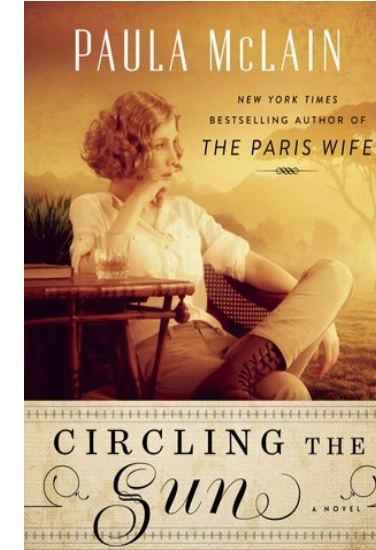
by Vicki Constantine Croke | HC 368 pages

Billy Williams came to colonial Burma in 1920, fresh from service in World War I, to a job as a "forest man" for a British teak company. Mesmerized by the intelligence, character, and even humor of the great animals who hauled logs through the remote jungles, he became a gifted "elephant wallah." Increasingly skilled at treating their illnesses and injuries, he also championed more humane treatment for them, even establishing an elephant "school" and "hospital." In return, he said, the elephants made him a better man. The friendship of one magnificent tusker in particular, Bandoola, would be revelatory. In *Elephant Company*, Vicki Constantine Croke chronicles Williams's growing love for elephants as the animals provide him lessons in courage, trust, and gratitude.



NSL BOOK CLUB 2016

NSL Book Club. Meets every 3rd Thursday @ 10:30 in Upstairs Conference Room (unless otherwise noted) Call 439.5510 for more info.



Dates and location are subject to change. For exact meeting location please call 439.5510 or email nsbluestockings@gmail.com.

JANUARY 21st

Circling the Sun by Paula McLain | HC 384 pages

Paula McLain, author of the phenomenal bestseller *The Paris Wife*, now returns with her keenly anticipated new novel, transporting readers to colonial Kenya in the 1920s. *Circling the Sun* brings to life a fearless and captivating woman—Beryl Markham, a record-setting aviator caught up in a passionate love triangle with safari hunter Denys Finch Hatton and Karen Blixen, who as Isak Dinesen wrote the classic memoir *Out of Africa*.

Brought to Kenya from England as a child and then abandoned by her mother, Beryl is raised by both her father and the native Kipsigis tribe who share his estate. Her unconventional upbringing transforms Beryl into a bold young woman with a fierce love of all things wild and an inherent understanding of nature's delicate balance. But even the wild child must grow up, and when everything Beryl knows and trusts dissolves, she is catapulted into a string of disastrous relationships.

Beryl forges her own path as a horse trainer, and her uncommon style attracts the eye of the Happy Valley set, a decadent, bohemian community of European expats who also live and love by their own set of rules. But it's the ruggedly charismatic Denys Finch Hatton who ultimately helps Beryl navigate the uncharted territory of her own heart. The intensity of their love reveals Beryl's truest self and her fate: to fly.

FEBRUARY 18th

Where'd You Go Bernadette by Maria Semple | HC 330 pages

Bernadette Fox is notorious. To her Microsoft-guru husband, she's a fearlessly opinionated partner; to fellow private-school mothers in Seattle, she's a disgrace; to design mavens, she's a revolutionary architect, and to 15-year-old Bee, she is a best friend and, simply, Mom.

Then Bernadette disappears. It began when Bee aced her report card and claimed her promised reward: a family trip to Antarctica. But Bernadette's intensifying allergy to Seattle—and people in general—has made her so agoraphobic that a virtual assistant in India now runs her most basic errands. A trip to the end of the earth is problematic.

To find her mother, Bee compiles email messages, official documents, secret correspondence—creating a compulsively readable and touching novel about misplaced genius and a mother and daughter's role in an absurd world.

MARCH 17th

The Husband's Secret by Liane Moriarty | HC 396 pages

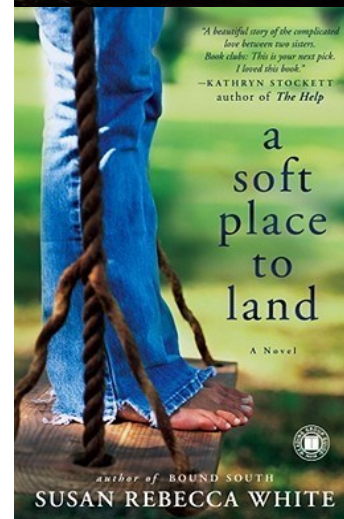
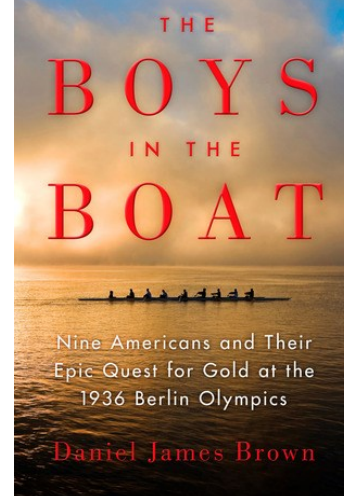
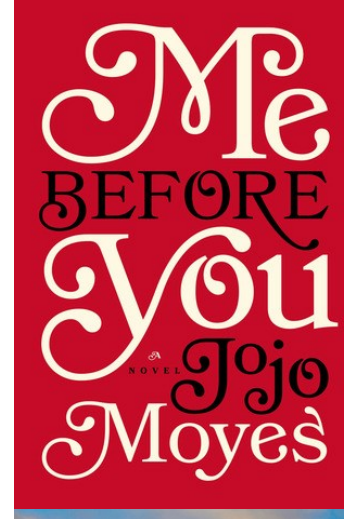
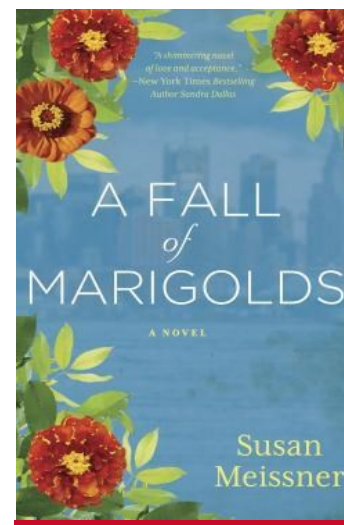
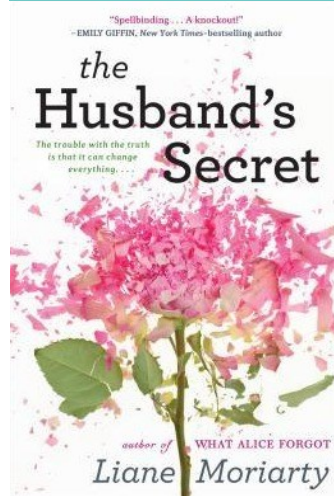
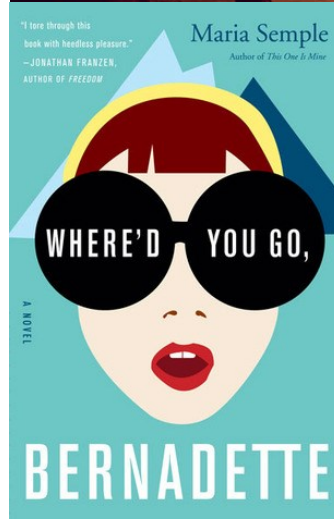
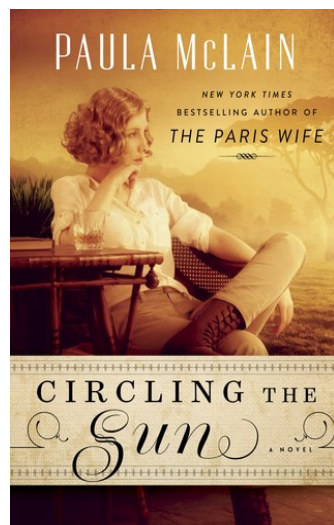
Imagine that your husband wrote you a letter, to be opened after his death. Imagine, too, that the letter contains his deepest, darkest secret—something with the potential to destroy not just the life you built together, but the lives of others as well. Imagine, then, that you stumble across that letter while your husband is still very much alive. . . .

Cecilia Fitzpatrick has achieved it all—she's an incredibly successful businesswoman, a pillar of her small community, and a devoted wife and mother. Her life is as orderly and spotless as her home. But that letter is about to change everything, and not just for her: Rachel and Tess barely know Cecilia—or each other—but they too are about to feel the earth-shattering repercussions of her husband's secret.

APRIL 21st

A Spool of Blue Thread by Anne Tyler | HC 358 pages

"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.



MAY 19th

A Fall of Marigolds by Susan Meissner | HC 394 pages

limited supply, read ahead

September 1911. On Ellis Island in New York Harbor, nurse Clara Wood cannot face returning to Manhattan, where the man she loved fell to his death in the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire. Then, while caring for a fevered immigrant whose own loss mirrors hers, she becomes intrigued by a name embroidered onto the scarf he carries and finds herself caught in a dilemma that compels her to confront the truth about the assumptions she's made. Will what she learns devastate her or free her?

September 2011. On Manhattan's Upper West Side, widow Taryn Michaels has convinced herself that she is living fully, working in a charming specialty fabric store and raising her daughter alone. Then a long-lost photograph appears in a national magazine, and she is forced to relive the terrible day her husband died in the collapse of the World Trade Towers the same day a stranger reached out and saved her. Will a chance reconnection and a century-old scarf open Taryn's eyes to the larger forces at work in her life?

JUNE 16th

Me Before You by Jojo Moyes | HC 369 pages

Lou Clark knows lots of things. She knows how many footsteps there are between the bus stop and home. She knows she likes working in The Buttered Bun tea shop and she knows she might not love her boyfriend Patrick.

What Lou doesn't know is she's about to lose her job or that knowing what's coming is what keeps her sane.

Will Traynor knows his motorcycle accident took away his desire to live. He knows everything feels very small and rather joyless now and he knows exactly how he's going to put a stop to that.

What Will doesn't know is that Lou is about to burst into his world in a riot of colour. And neither of them knows they're going to change the other for all time.

JULY 21st

The Boys in the Boat by Daniel James Brown | HC 416 pages

Daniel James Brown's robust book tells the story of the University of Washington's 1936 eight-oar crew and their epic quest for an Olympic gold medal, a team that transformed the sport and grabbed the attention of millions of Americans. The sons of loggers, shipyard workers, and farmers, the boys defeated elite rivals first from eastern and British universities and finally the German crew rowing for Adolf Hitler in the Olympic games in Berlin, 1936.

The emotional heart of the story lies with one rower, Joe Rantz, a teenager without family or prospects, who rows not for glory, but to regain his shattered self-regard and to find a place he can call home. The crew is assembled by an enigmatic coach and mentored by a visionary, eccentric British boat builder, but it is their trust in each other that makes them a victorious team. They remind the country of what can be done when everyone quite literally pulls together—a perfect melding of commitment, determination, and optimism.

AUGUST 18th

A Soft Place to Land by Susan Rebecca White | PB 352 pages

limited supply, read ahead

For more than ten years, Naomi and Phil Harrison enjoyed a marriage of heady romance, tempered only by the needs of their children. But on a vacation alone, the couple perishes in a flight over the Grand Canyon. After the funeral, their daughters, Ruthie and Julia, are shocked by the provisions in their will...not the least of which is that they are to be separated.

Spanning nearly two decades, the sisters' journeys take them from their familiar home in Atlanta to sophisticated bohemian San Francisco, a mountain town in Virginia, the campus of Berkeley, and lofts in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. As they heal from loss, search for love, and begin careers, their sisterhood, once an oasis, becomes complicated by resentment, anger, and jealousy. It seems as though the echoes of their parents' deaths will never stop reverberating—until another shocking accident changes everything once again.

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