



### ***Adventures in Solitude* ~ Grant Lawrence**

*Adventures in Solitude* is an exceptional and entertaining read. Grant Lawrence writes about growing up visiting his family's Desolation Sound property and the diverse group of characters in the neighbouring area. I loved Grant's storytelling and vivid accounts of his time spent on the Coast including the history of the area, the wicked West Coast weather and the dire effects of "going bush."



### ***The Hunt of the Unicorn* ~ C. C. Humphreys**

It's true – I thoroughly enjoyed this book about unicorns! Elayne, a teenage New Yorker dealing with a sick and dying father is suddenly pulled through a magical tapestry into a world full of dangerous mythical beasts, a corrupt monarchy and a prophecy that will determine the fate of both worlds. This was a great adventure story filled with danger, fear and darkness but also one full of hope, strength and love.



### ***The Forgotten Garden* ~ Kate Morton**

When Nell learns that she was found on an Australian dock at 4 years old her life changes forever. What follows is a multigenerational epic journey to solve the mystery of Nell's past. Kate Morton's novel is charming, beautifully written and filled with wonderful and sometimes dark surprises.



### ***The Paper Garden* ~ Molly Peacock**

Mrs. Mary Delany was a minor 18th century aristocrat who, at 72 years of age, began a series of 985 mixed media, paper cut collages of flowers, which are now housed in the British Museum. Molly Peacock has expertly created parallels between Mrs. Delany's life and her art to capture a time where the known world was expanding and changing. I was surprised at how much I enjoyed reading about Mrs. Delany's life, which was far from ordinary. Her life was dramatic, adventurous, sorrowful and creative. She designed gowns, gardens and shell grottos, dined and lived with kings and queens and corresponded with the musician Handel and writer Jonathan Swift. Mrs. Delany was truly extraordinary.



### ***The Lightning Thief* ~ Rick Riordan *Percy Jackson & the Olympians Book 1***

What a great first book in the *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series. Did you know the Greek Gods moved to America and they are on the verge of war? Well Perseus "Percy" Jackson is about to find out that he's not like other boys and is fated to go on an epic quest even though he has all those creatures from Greek mythology chasing him. The *Lightning Thief* is full of great humour and has a fast paced exciting storyline.



### ***Sacred Hearts* ~ Sarah Dunant**

Once again Sarah Dunant has written a vibrant look into Renaissance Italy. This time the story is contained within the convent walls of Santa Caterina in the northern city of Ferrara. Don't let the pious setting fool you as many who come to the convent do so against their will.



### ***Dreamweave* ~ Erik Graham**

What if our dreams could be manipulated by others? What if all our dreams were connected somehow? This is the premise of *Dreamweave*, a frighteningly clever and disturbing story by first time Vancouver author Erik Graham.



### ***The Book Thief* ~ Markus Zusak**

Markus Zusak's novel *The Book Thief* had me hooked from the first page. Narrated by Death himself, we follow ten year old Liesel, a German and a book thief in Nazi Germany during World War II. *The Book Thief* is a truly stunning and powerful story of grief, love, fear, salvation, hope and forgiveness.



### ***The Bells* ~ Richard Harvell**

The enchanting story of Moses began in a belfry in 18th century Switzerland. His mother was a deaf-mute who rang the bells and it was here that Moses discovered his gift and curse of exceptional hearing and an angelic voice, both of which would eventually shape his fate. Moses' story is in many ways tragic, but he finds his way with the help of his two unusual friends and a woman who he loves with all his heart.



### ***Windflower* ~ Nick Bantock**

A surprising and magical story by *Griffin & Sabine* author Nick Bantock. On her wedding day Ana, of the Capolan people, runs away knowing that leaving is the only way to save her peoples' way of life. To protect herself and the Capolan she must dance but there are those who seek to distract Ana from her purpose. Ana proves that she is a determined woman and stronger than she or anyone else thought possible.



### ***The Children's Book* ~ A. S. Byatt**

The early 20<sup>th</sup> century was a time of great change and Byatt captures it perfectly. She not only writes a vivid historical account of the Edwardian era but she also introduces us to the personal triumphs and heartbreaks of her diverse characters. The novel revolves around Olive Wellwood, a fairy tale writer whose stories are sprinkled throughout the book, and her circle of friends and family members, which includes craftspeople, master puppeteers, writers, political figures and many others, real and imagined. *The Children's Book* is a truly wonderful read for anyone interested in early 20<sup>th</sup> century history, literature, art and theatre.



### ***The Birth of Venus* ~ Sarah Dunant**

Sarah Dunant brings Renaissance Italy alive in this historical novel set during a time of glorious art and political unrest. The city of Florence is dealing with the threat of plague, invasion, a serial killer and the fanatical monk Savonarola. During this troubled time the beautiful and talented Alessandra marries a man she does not love but who will give her freedom to be a great painter. *The Birth of Venus* is a very exciting and enchanting novel.



### ***Food Rules* ~ Michael Pollan**

*Food Rules* is brilliant in its simplicity. Michael Pollan's (author of *The Omnivore's Dilemma* and *In Defence of Food*) little book contains 64 rules for eating well. He encourages eating real food, but not too much, and mostly plants. Can't be much simpler than that, can it?



### ***People of the Book* ~ Geraldine Brooks**

*People of the Book* is an emotional historical fiction novel about the imagined past of a real book. Hanna, a book conservator travels to Sarajevo to restore a rare Jewish illuminated Haggadah. The story alternates between the present with Hanna and the past with the Haggadah's origins. Hanna's story includes the clues found within the pages of the manuscript, which hint at where it has been over the centuries. Although fictionalized, *People of the Book* is an exceptional novel of a proud, strong people who endure.



### ***The Catcher in the Rye* ~ J. D. Salinger**

If you didn't read *The Catcher in the Rye* in high school read it now! Holden Caulfield is the perfect example of teenage angst, rebellion, confusion, alienation and sexuality. Salinger's writing style perfectly represents Caulfield's thought process as he deals with his internal teenage turmoil. Although this novel was written nearly 60 years ago it is still relevant and easy to relate to now.



### ***The Gargoyle* ~ Andrew Davidson**

*The Gargoyle* is an incredibly intense and vivid novel by Canadian author Andrew Davidson. Don't let the first few chapters scare you away as the unnamed narrator explains in brutal detail what it feels like to be burned alive and survive. While he is in recovery he meets Marianne, a psychiatric patient and sculptor, who begins to tell him the stories of their love affairs with one another over the centuries. Whether you believe Marianne's tales or not they are as compelling as the two lovers' current lives together.



### ***The Short Second Life of Bree Tanner* ~ Stephenie Meyer**

Just in time for the *Eclipse* movie premiere, Stephenie Meyer released this new *Twilight* series novella. It is a quick, easy, entertaining read from a newborn Vampire's perspective. If you have read the rest of the *Twilight* series definitely read this one too. I know you want to.



### ***Galore* ~ Michael Crummey**

This 19<sup>th</sup> century multi-generational tale set in Newfoundland is a wonderfully vivid, intricate, magical and absorbing story. The novel begins on the beach with the struggling townspeople of Paradise Deep, a dead beached whale and a man cut from the whale's belly. From the beginning through to the end I was drawn into the amazing lives and relationships of the people that Michael Crummey brought to life.



### ***The Golden Spruce* ~ John Vaillant**

This amazing book is about a unique 300 year old spruce tree which was the victim of eco-vandalism. The tree, found in Haida Gwaii (the Queen Charlotte Islands), was sacred to the Haida people and considered rare due to its golden colour in a forest of green. John Vaillant gives a well documented account of the tree's fate and the science behind its golden appearance as well as a wonderfully researched history into British Columbia's West Coast trade, logging, conflicts and myths.



### ***The World More Full of Weeping* ~ Robert Wiersema**

Eleven year old Brian Page discovers that the forest is a place full of secrets and somewhere in which to disappear. Victoria author Robert Wiersema (also read his novel *Before I Wake*) uses the BC coastal forests as a chilly setting for this engaging, creepy, heartbreaking and spooky novella.



### ***The Good Mayor* ~ Andrew Nicoll**

A truly lovely love story about the good mayor of Dot, Tibo Krovic, and Mrs. Agathe Stopak, his beautiful, lonely and married secretary. *The Good Mayor* is tragic, desperate, sad, funny and magical. This is a wonderful romantic tale full of the unexpected.



### ***A Reliable Wife* ~ Robert Goolrick**

In the 1890s, Ralph Truitt, a lonely, haunted, wealthy businessman in rural Wisconsin, advertised for a "reliable wife." Catherine Land, a beautiful woman with a mysterious past responds to his ad and deceives him before they even meet. A surprising story full of passion, obsession, murder and lust.



### ***The 100-Mile Diet* ~ Smith & MacKinnon**

"The average ingredient in a North American meal travels 1500 miles from farm to plate." After learning this statistic Vancouverites Alisa and James decided to eat food produced within 100-miles of their home for one year. The book is full of humour and frustration that had the ability to either make or break Alisa and James relationship. This is obviously not an easy way to live your life but by just making small changes we have the ability to support local enterprises, eat healthier and reduce our impact on the earth.



### ***The Time Traveler's Wife* ~ Audrey Niffenegger**

This is the ultimate unconventional love story of Henry and Clare. Henry is born with a rare genetic disorder, which causes him to involuntarily travel through time. He meets his future wife Clare while time travelling when she is only 6 years old but they eventually meet in real time when Henry is 28 and Clare is 20. This is a great story that proves love knows no boundaries and transcends time and even death.



### ***The Lost Symbol* ~ Dan Brown**

Once again we are taken on a historical fact and fiction laden rollercoaster ride through city streets, buildings and monuments in Dan Brown's newest novel. This time symbologist Robert Langdon is kept on home soil as he enters the mysterious world of the Masons in Washington DC. If you are a Dan Brown fan *The Lost Symbol* will not disappoint.



### ***Graceling* ~ Kristin Cashore**

Possibly one of the best new fantasy novels I have read in a long time.

Our unlikely heroine Kasta lives in a land where some people are *graced* with special abilities. Kasta unfortunately is *graced* with killing. This story is full of adventure, battles, obsession, passion and love. If you like

J.K. Rowling (*Harry Potter*), Philip Pullman (*Golden Compass*) and Christopher Paolini (*Eragon*) then add Kristin Cashore to your fantasy author list.



### ***Fire* ~ Kristin Cashore**

I loved Kristin Cashore's first novel *Graceling* and her second *Fire* is just as compelling. Set in the same world as *Graceling* but in another nation, *Fire* introduces us to a new group of characters with their own special talents. Experience a world full of colourful monsters, spies, thieves, obsession, war and romance.



### ***Pride & Prejudice & Zombies* ~ Jane Austen & Seth Grahame-Smith**

Of all the adaptations of Jane Austen's novels this one is sure to have her turning over in her grave, hopefully just figuratively not actually. I love Austen's classic story and Seth Grahame-Smith has managed to keep much of the propriety found in *Pride and Prejudice* but he has added a humourous twist, which includes more romance, sword fighting, hand to hand combat and brain eating zombies.



### ***A Boy in War* ~ Jan de Groot**

Jan de Groot was seven when the Nazis invaded his home in Holland.

This World War II true story seen through the eyes of a child is touching, hopeful and tragic. Mr. de Groot has shown that children were not only aware of the evil of the Nazis and the fear they instilled but also they were conscious of the quiet heroism of ordinary men and women in times of war.



### ***Inkheart* ~ Cornelia Funke**

What if your father wouldn't read to you? Not because he doesn't want to, but because when he does, the characters in the books come to life and his loved ones disappear. *Inkheart* is the ultimate fairytale adventure with unexpected heroes and really nasty bad guys.



### ***Suite Française* ~ Irène Némirovsky**

*Suite Française* is a truly stunning, beautifully written snapshot of France and its people, and this book was nearly lost in the devastation of World War II. Némirovsky started *Suite Française* during the Nazi invasion of France and due to her Jewish heritage was captured and died in a concentration camp before the novel was completed. The book contains her personal notes on what is happening in France in the 1940s, her plans for the development of *Suite Française* and personal correspondence that will break your heart. I can honestly say this was one of the best books I've read this year.



### ***Angels and Demons* ~ Dan Brown**

*Angels and Demons* is a fun, fast-paced adventure novel full of twists and turns through the streets of Rome and Vatican City. Once again Robert Langdon, who we met in Dan Brown's novel *The Da Vinci Code*, attempts to uncover the secrets of the *Illuminati*. An enjoyable, entertaining, quick read from start to finish.



### ***Austenland* ~ Shannon Hale**

Jane Hayes's obsession with Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is out of control. In this charming novel Jane Hayes introduces us to her love life misadventures as she vacations in *Austenland*, a playground for those who fantasize about the romantic worlds of Jane Austen and their search for their own Mr. Darcy.



### ***Knit Two* ~ Kate Jacobs**

The second book of *The Friday Night Knitting Club* novels takes place five years after the tragedy that ended the first book. The group of women from *Walker & Daughter* is moving on with marriages, families and new loves. The diverse women learn that knitting is a way to string their lives together and that their relationships with one another will make them stronger.



### ***Victory of Eagles* ~ Naomi Novik**

Although I feel the fifth book of the fantastic *Temeraire* series is not Novik's strongest it is still an intriguing, action-packed, alternate history adventure. Napoleon's army has made it onto British soil and only Temeraire, separated from Will Laurence due to his treasonous acts in book four, can keep the dragons fighting to save king and country.



### ***Ecotopia* ~ Ernest Callenbach**

*Ecotopia*, originally written in 1975, is a novel that really addresses environmental concerns and solutions we are dealing with today. Reporter Will Weston travels to the isolated, eco-friendly country, which was previously Northern California, Oregon and Washington, to be an objective observer of the earth-friendly nation. A fantastic, nearly realistic look at what extreme environmentalism could achieve.



### ***The Friday Night Knitting Club* ~ Kate Jacobs**

*The Friday Night Knitting Club* is a heart warming story about a group of diverse women who become friends because of a wonderful yarn shop in the heart of New York City. Although knitting is a common thread (no pun intended) throughout the book it is the characters' stories that will make you feel all warm and fuzzy inside, kind of like your favourite sweater or blanket.



### ***Into the Wild* ~ Jon Krakauer**

If you've seen the movie (or not) you must read the book too. *Into the Wild* isn't solely about Chris McCandless' ill-fated journey into the wilds of Alaska, it is also about Jon Krakauer's fascinating insights into the adventuring spirit of many young men including his own experiences as a young risk taker.



### ***Babies are Boring* ~ Jon Ritchie**

We all know that babies aren't really boring but *Babies are Boring* does make a clever title for this delightful book. Jon Ritchie's story is full of excellent rhyming descriptions on what it's like to have a new baby and his brother Alex has created wonderfully whimsical illustrations for it. *Babies are Boring* is the perfect book for a new parent, especially a new father.



### ***Sammy Squirrel & Rodney Raccoon* ~ Duane Lawrence**

Local author Duane Lawrence has written a wonderful tale of adventure set in Vancouver's very own Stanley Park. The story takes Sammy Squirrel and his friend Rodney Raccoon from the safety of the park, across the Pacific Ocean to Japan and back again. What kind of things did Sammy and Rodney do along the way? Well, you have to read the book to find out.



### ***The Secret Life of Bees* ~ Sue Monk Kidd**

*The Secret Life of Bees* centres on Lily Owens, a fourteen-year-old girl living in South Carolina during the racial unrest of the early 1960s. As she tries to come to terms with her mother's tragic death and her father's abuse, she discovers a safe haven in the company of a family of bee-keeping women. This is a story about female empowerment, love, loss, safety and encouragement found in the most unlikely places. Generally *The Secret Life of Bees* is just a really nice story about women and their relationships with men and bees.



### ***Twilight* ~ Stephenie Meyer**

Bella is a new student in the town of Forks on the Olympic Peninsula and along with starting at a new school and living with her Father for the first time she has teenage life to deal with. Bella then meets the gorgeous, although a little strange and pale, Edward and there are definite sparks between them. *Twilight* is the ultimate young love story between Bella and Edward who by the way turns out to be a vampire, so needless to say it is a complicated relationship but they grow to trust one another as they fall further in love.



### ***New Moon* ~ Stephenie Meyer**

The love story between teenager Bella and Edward the 100 year old vampire continues in the second book of the *Twilight* series. In *New Moon* Edward has competition for Bella's affections in young Jacob Black, who has secrets of his own and a century's long blood feud erupts in the small town of Forks on the Olympic Peninsula. Another truly entertaining storyline that twists and turns as Bella is sucked into the world of ancient vampires and other monsters as well as her own insecurities.



### ***Eclipse* ~ Stephenie Meyer**

The third book of the *Twilight* series continues with Bella caught in a love triangle between Edward, the 100 year old Vampire, and Jacob, her best friend and Werewolf. Not only does Bella have to deal with the romantic battle brewing but she also has to deal with the blood feud raging between the local tribe of Werewolves and Edward's Vampire family. While all this is going on there are other dangers from Vampires seeking revenge, finishing high school, the prom and choosing a college too. In the end Bella needs to make a choice, a mortal life with Jacob or an immortal death with Edward. All I can say is, I hope Stephenie Meyer writes the fourth book really soon!



### ***Breaking Dawn* ~ Stephenie Meyer**

The final book in the *Twilight* series is full of unexpected twists and turns. Do Edward and Bella finally get to spend the rest of eternity together or does Jacob and being human get in the way? Once again I thoroughly enjoyed this entertaining book of fantasy and young love.



### ***The Host* ~ Stephenie Meyer**

Earth has been invaded by a species that takes over the mind. It's a silent invasion that no one saw coming until it was too late. There are a few who fight the "souls" but are they really our enemies? Although not as creepy as I was hoping for Meyer's (author of the *Twilight* series) novel delves into moral dilemmas faced by both species. *The Host* is like a cross between *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and a romance novel with a few unexpected surprises. A fun and entertaining read.



### ***Late Nights on Air* ~ Elizabeth Hay**

Hay's Giller Prize winning novel follows the lives of an unusual group of men and women at a radio station in 1970s Yellowknife. The characters become more interesting as you get entangled in their relationships to one another, but it's Hay's amazing description of the Arctic wilderness and the occasional history lessons that really held my interest. The canoe trip made the story in my opinion. *Late Nights on Air* is a truly wonderful Canadian story.



### ***King of the Lost & Found* ~ John Lekich**

One of the funniest young teen (tween) books I've read in a while. If you look up "nerd" in the dictionary you will see a picture of tenth grader Raymond Dunne. Raymond faints for no reason and he also get nosebleeds and sneezes over everything. He hangs out with the Vice Principal, collects keys to various rooms in the school and runs the Lost & Found, which always seems to be in jeopardy of being shut down. What Raymond doesn't know is that the Lost & Found holds a very important secret that is revealed when he is befriended by the mysterious, good looking Jack Alexander. *King of the Lost & Found* is a funny story with a message that will make you more empathetic to those who are different.



### ***Provence Je T'aime* ~ Gordon Bitney**

Gordon Bitney and his wife are our guides through their summer adventures renovating their villa in the Provence region of France. It is a delightful story filled with colourful characters, cats and building a wall stone by stone. Gordon gives detailed accounts of his knowledge of the region and its food and wine that will make your mouth water and want to move to Provence too.



### ***The Amber Spyglass* ~ Philip Pullman**

The third and final book of Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* (*Book 1: The Golden Compass* & *Book 2: The Subtle Knife*) continues to follow Lyra and Will as they seek to find their role in saving the World's they travel through. They each make their own sacrifices to save the living and the dead as the war rages on and the ever important Dust continues to fly across the sky. Do Lyra and Will make the ultimate sacrifice to save each other? Can they fix the damage done by the careless men and women who came before them? A fantastic adventure trilogy.



### ***The Subtle Knife* ~ Philip Pullman**

The second book of Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* (*Book 1: The Golden Compass*) series finds Lyra crossing over into new worlds and discovering her role in the battle between good and evil. Along the way she finds an ally in Will Parry whose destiny is tied to Lyra's and the fate of all the known worlds. Another great adventure filled with soul-eating Specters, Angels, Witches, Demons and Scientists.



### ***The Golden Compass* ~ Philip Pullman**

The first book of Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* series begins in a world similar to our own but we soon learn how different it is as we follow young Lyra and her shape shifting demon Pantalaimon. Lyra begins her quest to rescue children who have been taken by the Gobblers and also begins her search for the source of the mysterious Dust. She is joined and protected by many different characters including an Armoured Bear, flying Witches and the Gyptians but soon learns that her destiny will have a larger impact on her world and beyond. A terrific start to an amazing adventure that leaves you ready for more so make sure you have the second book *The Subtle Knife* waiting.



### ***Before I Wake* ~ Robert J. Wiersema**

*Before I Wake* is a beautifully written first novel by Victoria, BC writer Robert Wiersema. The perfect family: husband Simon, wife Karen and three year old daughter Shelly. Everything appears perfect until Sherry is struck by a hit-and-run driver and their family begins to unravel. It is a story full of loss, redemption, forgiveness, miracles and includes a battle of wills between good and evil. I can honestly say that this novel is one of the best I have read this year.



### ***Positively False* ~ Floyd Landis**

I am a huge *Le Tour de France* fan and I was cheering Floyd Landis on as he bounced back from bonking to win the *maillot jaune* (yellow jersey) in 2006. He was later accused of testing positive for performance enhancing drugs but was he guilty? *Positively False* follows Floyd's career as a young cyclist, his Mennonite upbringing, riding on Lance Armstrong's winning team, his hip replacement, the rights of athletes and his fight to clear his name. Floyd is a great cyclist and like many athletes he is arrogant, cocky and opinionated but I believe in his right to fight for his career and for the rights of all athletes.



### ***Conceit* ~ Mary Novik**

Set in 17<sup>th</sup> century England *Conceit* is vivid with historical detail as we learn about poet and preacher John Donne and his relationship with his wife and numerous children. The novel is told by Donne's daughter Pegge who is consumed by her love for her father and Izaak Walton, a man who loves Pegge's older sister and fishing. Pegge is an odd child and an even odder woman who defies convention even after her marriage to the King's tailor William Bowles. A complicated but satisfying story entwined briefly with John Donne's poetry and sermons.



### ***A Long Way Gone ~ Ishmael Beah***

In 1993 Ishmael Beah and other children of Sierra Leone were robbed of their childhoods as rebels attacked their villages. It is hard to differentiate between the good guys and the bad guys in a war where both sides use children who have been threatened, traumatized and drugged into wielding AK-47s without remorse. Ishmael writes about his years running from the war (began at age 12) and becoming a soldier (age 13) with a detachment that is heartbreaking because you know these horrible events and acts were probably not the worst he experienced. At 15 years old suffering from drug addiction and blinding migraines Ishmael was released from the army and taken by UNICEF to be “rehabilitated” which is where he was supposed to begin a normal life but his troubles do not end and the war closed in once again. Building a new life carried its own difficulties. This is a story that I recommend for anyone over the age of 14. It will make you think differently about your life, the life of others and what you need to do to reach your goals.



### ***Dispatches from the Edge ~ Anderson Cooper***

Being born into a famous family didn't stop Anderson Cooper from making a name for himself. His memoir gives us a peek at his family history and expands on his amazing journalistic ability. Although we don't learn much about his personal life the memoir does confirm his dedication to his job. For all Anderson's family fame and fortune he has repeatedly put his life in danger in order to discover the truth in world tragedies including his emotional and heartfelt coverage of the Hurricane Katrina disaster, African famine and the war in Sarajevo.



### ***The 100-Mile Diet ~ Smith & MacKinnon***

“*The average ingredient in a North American meal travels 1500 miles from farm to plate.*” After learning this statistic Vancouverites Alisa and James decided to eat food produced within 100-miles of their home for one year. Although they mistakenly began their year of eating locally on the first day of spring (there isn't much available locally fresh yet) they survived an odyssey of local living by creating relationships with the people and places that produced what they ate. The book is full of humour and frustration that had the ability to either make or break Alisa and James relationship. This is obviously not an easy way to live your life but by just making small changes we have the ability to support local enterprises, eat healthier and reduce our impact on the earth.



### ***The Road ~ Cormac McCarthy***

*The Road* is one of the best books I've read this year, even if it was an Oprah pick. The well written, Pulitzer Prize winning story revolves around a man and his son as they struggle to survive in a world that is dying. McCarthy not only writes about their journey with tenderness, compassion and heartbreak but also one full of hope.



### ***Forever In Blue ~ Ann Brashares***

The fourth and final book in the *Summer of the Sisterhood* series follows the four beautiful and talented young women Lena, Carmen, Bridget and Tibby as they grow into adulthood. They once again deal with life and love with humour and disappointment as they become independent of one another but they also realize that old friendships are important even when you go in different directions. Another fun read by Brashares which makes me hope she continues to write about these fun and vivacious women.



### ***Bridge to Terabithia* ~ Katherine Paterson**

All Jess wanted was to be the fastest runner in the fifth grade and he almost was until Leslie arrived at his school. Against his better judgement Jess and Leslie became best friends and together they created the most amazing, magical, imaginary kingdom called Terabithia where they ruled as King and Queen. When tragedy strikes does Terabithia fall or does it grow stronger? I first read this book when I was 8 and 30 years later I still love it. A story for all ages, full of laughter and the occasional tear.



### ***A Paris Moment* ~ Gordon Cope**

Gordon Cope and his wife Linda let us into their lives during their yearlong adventure on the Right Bank of the Seine in the historical Le Marais area of Paris. Cope writes from the heart with humour and wonder as he wanders the narrow streets of his Le Marais neighbourhood dipping into the lives of its residents, its history and their amazing culinary experiences found in the local brasseries and restaurants.



### ***In The Company of the Courtesan* ~ Sarah Dunant**

An intricate and enthralling novel set in Rome and Venice in the 16<sup>th</sup> century told by Bucino, a dwarf and companion to Fiammetta, a highly sought after courtesan. Dunant has once again mixed fact with fiction to capture the decadent and debauched world of Renaissance Italy filled with colourful characters, beauty and brutality. (Read Sarah Dunant's first book, *The Birth of Venus*).



### ***The Lost Painting* ~ Jonathan Harr**

Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio's "The Taking of Christ" was a great masterpiece of the Italian Baroque period but it was lost for 400 years. This book follows the lives of the many people who find the vague clues scattered through history to rediscover the lost Caravaggio painting. From its beginnings in Italy to its end in Ireland, the story is simply told but you are easily drawn into the intimate lives of the people and the art.



### ***Eldest* ~ Christopher Paolini**

If you loved Christopher Paolini's book *Eragon* you're going to love his second book in the Inheritance Trilogy, *Eldest*. With the help of his friends, including elves & dwarves, Eragon & his dragon Saphira continue to fight against the evil forces of King Galbatorix's army. Unfortunately Eragon suffers losses & is betrayed by those closest to him... Meanwhile, back at the farm, Eragon's cousin Roran fights against unseen forces & finds a strength he never knew he possessed. Barely 21 years old, Paolini has written another captivating & exciting adventure.



### ***Brisingr* ~ Christopher Paolini**

The third book of the *Inheritance Cycle* is a set up for the fourth and final book of the series. Be prepared for more heroism and battles with Eragon's cousin, Roran. While Roran is doing his thing, Eragon and Saphira return to the elves for more training with Oromis and Eragon gains a magical sword. I admit this is the weakest of Paolini's three novels and it's pretty predictable but there is a lot of important information that will be integral to the final book.



### ***Rowboat in a Hurricane* ~ Julie Angus**

In 2005/2006 Julie and Colin Angus rowed 10,000 km in their 7 metre rowboat across the Atlantic Ocean from Portugal to Costa Rica through one of the worst storm seasons in recorded history. Julie not only writes about her human-powered journey, which solidified her *Explorer of the Year* award from National Geographic, she also gives important insight into the state of the world's oceans. *Rowboat in a Hurricane* is a really great read for the adventurer in all of us.



### ***The Fetch* ~ Chris Humphreys**

The first book of the *Runestone Saga* is an exciting adventure full of magic, shape shifting, time travel and Vikings. The adventure begins when Sky finds an old sea chest that belonged to his missing, and presumed dead, Grandfather. Inside the chest are a journal and a set of runestones, which begin the exciting trilogy.

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### ***The Book of Negroes* ~ Lawrence Hill**

*The Book of Negroes*, the winner of CBC Radio's *Canada Reads* contest, is a deeply moving historical novel. Aminata Diallo begins her tale happily in Africa catching babies with her Mother and learning the Qur'an from her Father. At age 11 everything changes when Aminata is stolen from her family and sold into slavery where she survives on her skills as a midwife, her strength of will and her desire to read and write. This is an epic story full of vivid characters in a terrifying part of history.



### ***Dewey* ~ Vicki Myron**

A cat lover's tale to make you smile and shed a tear or two. Dewey Readmore Books is a library cat who brought the small community of Spencer, Iowa together during the 80s farm crisis. He was 8 weeks old when he was dropped into the library's book return on one of the coldest nights of the year. Suffering from frostbite and close to death he adopted the staff and made the library his home for 19 years. His Mom, Vicki Myron, writes about her beloved Dewey, her own successes and struggles and the economic and social history of the town.