**Fiction**

**Before the Devil Fell by Neil Olson** *(Picked by BS)*

Will Connor returns to his hometown, a village north of Boston, to care for his injured mother. He’s kept his distance from the town since high school, but once home he finds himself reexamining a horrific incident that took place during one of his mother’s “spirit circles.” His mother had embraced the hippie generation’s fascination with New Age and the arcane, but the unexpected death of a close friend put an end to the meetings of the modern-day coven. Or did it? As Will looks deeper into his family’s history he discovers that her practices weren’t so much a passing fad but the latest link in a long tradition of New England witchcraft, which still seems to hold a strange power over the town. Will hopes that unearthing the facts about the death will put his questions to rest, but there are those willing to resort to violence to keep those secrets buried. (320 pgs)

**Stolen Things by Rachael Herron** *(Picked by SM)*

Laurie Ahmadi has worked as a 911 police dispatcher in her quiet Northern California town for nearly two decades. She considers the department her family; her husband, Omid, is its first Arab American chief, and their teenaged daughter, Jojo, has grown up with the force. So when Laurie catches a 911 call and, to her horror, it’s Jojo, the whole department springs into action. Jojo, drugged, disoriented, and in pain, doesn’t remember how she ended up at the home of Kevin Leeds, a pro football player famous for his on-the-field activism and his work with the CapB—“Citizens Against Police Brutality”—movement. She has no idea where her best friend Harper, who was with her earlier in the evening, could be. But when Jojo begins to dive into Harper’s social media to look for clues to her whereabouts, Jojo uncovers a shocking secret that turns everything she knew about Harper—and the police department—on its head. With everything they thought they could rely on in question, Laurie and Jojo begin to realize that they can’t trust anyone to find Harper except themselves . . . and time is running out. (368 pgs)

**The Warehouse by Rob Hart** *(Picked by SLS)*

Paxton never thought he’d be working for Cloud, the giant tech company that’s eaten much of the American economy. Much less that he’d be moving into one of the company’s sprawling live-work facilities. But compared to what’s left outside...well, it doesn’t seem so bad. It’s more than anyone else is offering. Zinnia never thought she’d be infiltrating Cloud. But now she’s undercover, inside the walls, risking it all to ferret out the company’s darkest secrets. And Paxton, with his ordinary little hopes and fears? He just might make the perfect pawn. If she can bear to sacrifice him. Together, they’ll learn just how far the company will go...to make the world a better place. The Warehouse is a near-future thriller about what happens when Big Brother meets Big Business—and who will pay the ultimate price. (368 pgs)

**The Library of the Unwritten by A.J. Hackwith** *(Picked by BS)*

Many years ago, Claire was named Head Librarian of the Unwritten Wing—a neutral space in Hell where all the stories unfinished by their authors reside. Her job consists mainly of repairing and organizing books, but also of keeping an eye on restless stories that risk materializing as characters and escaping the library. When a Hero escapes from his book and goes in search of his author, Claire must track and capture him with the help of former muse and current assistant Brevity and nervous demon courier Leto. But what should have been a simple retrieval goes horrifyingly wrong when the terrifyingly angelic Ramiel attacks them, convinced that they hold the Devil's Bible. The text of the Devil's Bible is a powerful weapon in the power struggle between Heaven and Hell, so it falls to the librarians to find a book with the power to reshape the boundaries between Heaven, Hell ... and Earth. (368 pgs)
**STAFF PICKS**

**THE SECOND SLEEP BY ROBERT HARRIS**  
(Picked by SLH)  
1468. A young priest, Christopher Fairfax, arrives in a remote Exmoor village to conduct the funeral of his predecessor. The land around is strewn with ancient artefacts—coins, fragments of glass, human bones—which the old parson used to collect. Did his obsession with the past lead to his death? Fairfax becomes determined to discover the truth. Over the course of the next six days, everything he believes—about himself, his faith, and the history of his world—will be tested to destruction. (301 pgs)

**A BITTER FEAST BY DEBORAH CROMBIE**  
(Picked by SLS)  
Scotland Yard Detective Superintendent Duncan Kincaid and his wife, Detective Inspector Gemma James, have been invited for a relaxing weekend in the Cotswolds. They and their children are guests at Beck House, the country estate belonging to the family of Melody Talbot, Gemma’s trusted detective sergeant. A centerpiece of this fall getaway is a posh charity luncheon catered by up-and-coming chef Viv Holland. After more than a decade in London, Viv has returned to her native Gloucestershire, making a name for herself with her innovative use of the local bounty. Attended by several dozen of the area’s well-to-do, as well as national food bloggers and restaurant critics, the event could make Viv a star. But a tragic car accident followed by a series of mysterious deaths could ruin her ascent. Each piece of information that surfaces makes it clear that the killer had a connection with Viv’s pub—and perhaps with Beck House itself. Further revelations rock the Talbots’ estate and pull Duncan and Gemma and their colleagues into the investigation. With so much at stake both personally and professionally, especially for Melody Talbot, finding the killer becomes one of the team’s most crucial cases. (384 pgs)

**GET A LIFE, CHLOE BROWN BY TALIA HIBBERT**  
(Picked by KT)  
Chloe Brown is a chronically ill computer geek with a goal, a plan, and a list. After almost dying, she’s come up with seven directives to help her “Get a Life”, and she’s already completed the first: finally moving out of her glamorous family’s mansion. The next items? Enjoy a drunken night out. Ride a motorcycle. Have meaningless but thoroughly enjoyable sex. Travel the world with nothing but hand luggage and... do something bad. But it’s not easy being bad, even when you’ve written step-by-step guidelines on how to do it correctly. What Chloe needs is a teacher, and she knows just the man for the job. Redford ‘Red’ Morgan is a handyman with tattoos, a motorcycle, and more sex appeal than ten-thousand Hollywood heartthrobs. He’s also an artist who paints at night and hides his work in the light of day, which Chloe knows because she spies on him occasionally. But when she enlists Red in her mission to rebel, she learns things about him that no spy session could teach her. Like why he clearly resents Chloe’s wealthy background. And why he never shows his art to anyone. And what to rebel, she learns things about him that no spy session could teach her. Like why he clearly resents Chloe’s wealthy background. And why he never shows his art to anyone. And what

**OLIVE, AGAIN BY ELIZABETH STROUT**  
(Picked by SH & SM)  
The iconic Olive Kitteridge struggles to understand not only herself and her own life but also the lives of those around her in the town of Crosby, Maine. Whether with a teenager coming to terms with the loss of her father, a young woman about to give birth during a hilariously inopportune moment, a nurse who confesses a secret high school crush, or a lawyer who struggles with an inheritance she does not want to accept, the unforgettable Olive, in thirteen interconnected stories, will continue to startle us, to move us, and to inspire moments of transcendent grace. (304 pgs)

**KNIFE BY JO NESBO**  
(Picked by PB)  
Harry Hole is not in a good place. Rakel—the only woman he’s ever loved—has ended it with him, permanently. He’s been given a chance for a new start with the Oslo Police but it’s in the cold case office, when what he really wants is to be investigating cases he suspects have ties to Svein Finne, the serial rapist and murderer who Harry helped put behind bars. And now, Finne is free after a decade-plus in prison–free, and Harry is certain, unreformed and ready to take up where he left off. But things will get worse. When Harry wakes up the morning after a blackout, drunken night with blood that’s clearly not his own on his hands, it’s only the very beginning of what will be a waking nightmare the likes of which even he could never have imagined. (464 pgs)
NON-FICTION

**On Day by Gene Weingarten** *(Picked by SMC & SLH)*

On New Year's Day 2013, two-time Pulitzer Prize-winner Gene Weingarten asked three strangers to, literally, pluck a day, month, and year from a hat. That day—chosen completely at random—turned out to be Sunday, December 28, 1986, by any conventional measure a most ordinary day. Weingarten spent the next six years proving that there is no such thing. That Sunday between Christmas and New Year's turned out to be filled with comedy, tragedy, implausible irony, cosmic comeuppance, kindness, cruelty, heroism, cowardice, genius, idiocy, prejudice, selflessness, coincidence, and startling moments of human connection, along with evocative foreshadowing of momentous events yet to come. Lives were lost. Lives were saved. Lives were altered in overwhelming ways. Many of these events never made it into the news; they were private dramas in the lives of private people. They were utterly compelling. On Day asks and answers the question of whether there is even such a thing as "ordinary" when we are talking about how we all lurch and stumble our way through the daily, daunting challenge of being human. (384 pgs)

**Exposure by Robert Bilott** *(Picked by SLS)*

In 1998, Rob Bilott began a legal battle against DuPont that would consume the next twenty years of his life, uncovering the worst case of environmental contamination in modern history and a corporate cover-up that put the health of hundreds of thousands of people at risk. Representing a single farmer who was convinced the creek on his property had been poisoned by runoff from a nearby DuPont landfill, Rob ultimately discovers the truth about PFAS—unregulated, toxic chemicals used in the manufacturing of Teflon and a host of other household goods. DuPont's own scientists had issued internal warnings for years about the harmful effects of PFAS on human health, but the company continued to allow these chemicals to leach into public drinking water. Until Rob forced them to face the consequences. Exposure is an unforgettable legal drama about malice and manipulation, the failings of environmental regulation, and one lawyer’s quest to expose the truth about this previously unknown—and still unregulated—chemical that presents one of the greatest human health crises of the 21st century. (400 pgs)

**Mobituaries by Mo Rocca** *(Picked by SLH)*

Mo Rocca has always loved obituaries—reading about the remarkable lives of global leaders, Hollywood heavyweights, and innovators who changed the world. But not every notable life has gotten the send-off it deserves. His quest to right that wrong inspired Mobituaries, his #1 hit podcast. Now with Mobituaries, the book, he has gone much further, with all new essays on artists, entertainers, sports stars, political pioneers, founding fathers, and more. Even if you know the names, you've never understood why they matter...until now. With his dogged reporting and trademark wit, Rocca brings these men and women back to life like no one else can. Mobituaries is an insightful and unconventional account of the people who made life worth living for the rest of us, one that asks us to think about who gets remembered, and why. (384 pgs)

**The Body by Bill Bryson** *(Picked by SLS)*

Bill Bryson once again proves himself to be an incomparable companion as he guides us through the human body—how it functions, its remarkable ability to heal itself, and (unfortunately) the ways it can fail. Full of extraordinary facts (your body made a million red blood cells since you started reading this) and irresistible Bryson-esque anecdotes, The Body will lead you to a deeper understanding of the miracle that is life in general and you in particular. As Bill Bryson writes, "We pass our existence within this wobble of flesh and yet take it almost entirely for granted." The Body will cure that indifference with generous doses of wondrous, compulsively readable facts and information. (400 pgs)
WHO SAYS YOU’RE DEAD? BY JACOB APPEL  
(PICKED BY SMC)
Drawing upon the author’s two decades teaching medical ethics, as well as his work as a practicing psychiatrist, this book offers up challenging ethical dilemmas and asks readers, what would you do? A daughter gets tested to see if she’s a match to donate a kidney to her father. The test reveals that she is not the man’s biological daughter. Should the doctor tell the father? Or the daughter? A deaf couple prefers a deaf baby. Should they be allowed to use medical technology to ensure they have a child who can’t hear? Who should get custody of an embryo created through IVF when a couple divorces? Dr. Appel takes on hot-button issues that many of us will confront: genetic screening, sexuality, privacy, doctor-patient confidentiality. He unpacks each hypothetical, explaining how others have approached these controversies in real-world cases. Who Says You’re Dead? is designed to defy easy answers and to stimulate thought and debate among professionals and armchair ethicists alike. (352 pgs)

DREAMS OF EL DORADO BY HW BRANDS  
(PICKED BY SMC)
In Dreams of El Dorado, H. W. Brands tells the thrilling, panoramic story of the settling of the American West. He takes us from John Jacob Astor’s fur trading outpost in Oregon to the Texas Revolution, from the California gold rush to the Oklahoma land rush. He shows how the migrants’ dreams drove them to feats of courage and perseverance that put their stay-at-home cousins to shame—and how those same dreams also drove them to outrageous acts of violence against indigenous peoples and one another. The West was where riches would reward the miner’s persistence, the cattlemen’s courage, the railroad man’s enterprise; but El Dorado was at least as elusive in the West as it ever was in the East. (544 pgs)

HOME WORK BY JULIE ANDREWS  
(PICKED BY BS)
With this second memoir, Home Work: A Memoir of My Hollywood Years, Andrews picks up the story with her arrival in Hollywood and her phenomenal rise to fame in her earliest films—Mary Poppins and The Sound of Music. Andrews describes her years in the film industry. Not only does she discuss her work in now-classic films and her collaborations with giants of cinema and television, she also unveils her personal story of adjusting to a new and often daunting world, dealing with the demands of unimaginable success, being a new mother, the end of her first marriage, embracing two stepchildren, adopting two more children, and falling in love with the brilliant and mercurial Blake Edwards. The pair worked together in numerous films, including Victor/Victoria, the gender-bending comedy that garnered multiple Oscar nominations. (560 pgs)

GOOD HUSBANDRY BY KRISTIN KIMBALL  
(PICKED BY SM)
Kristin Kimball describes the highs and lows of life on Essex Farm—a 500-acre farm that produces a full diet for a community of 250 people. Farming has many ups and downs, and the middle years were hard for the Kimbballs. Mark got injured, the weather turned against them, and the farm faced financial pressures. Meanwhile, they had two small children to care for. How does one traverse the terrain of a maturing marriage and the transition from being a couple to being a family? How will the farm survive? What does a family need in order to be happy? Kristin had chosen Mark and farm life after having a good look around the world, with a fair understanding of what her choices meant. She knew she had traded the possibility of a steady paycheck, and spontaneous vacations, for a life and work that was challenging but beautiful and fulfilling. Good Husbandry is about animals and plants, farmers and food, friends and neighbors, love and marriage, births and deaths, growth and abundance. (304 pgs)

DID YOU KNOW?
Dog is Love by Clive Wynne  
(PICKED BY BS)
What makes dogs truly special? The unparalleled loyalty and total devotion of a dog seems the stuff of true love—but is this a whimsical construction that bears little relation to reality? Through scientific experiments and historical evidence, canine behavioral psychologist Dr. Clive Wynne unlocks the secret to our unique bond with dogs: their capacity to love, an unprecedented attribute in the animal kingdom. In Dog is Love, Dr. Wynne debunks the myth that dogs possess a unique form of intelligence. Instead, he shows that dogs are able to show sympathy and can respond to human emotions in a way that is truly remarkable. Dr. Wynne explains the science behind what really goes on when a young pup grows up in a human family. This is a delightful, heart-warming and fascinating analysis of the unique bond between humans and dogs. (272 pgs)

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Charles Darwin observed that “the love of dogs is the most remarkable and the most excellent of the animal world.” It has long been assumed that the love dogs show for us is a byproduct of their need to stay close to us for protection and food, resulting in a lifelong devotion to those who feed and take care of them.

In Dog is Love, Clive Wynne, a canine behavioral psychologist, shows that this view of dogs is all wrong. He reveals that dogs have a unique form of emotional intelligence that is rare or nonexistent in other animals. In other words, dogs love us.

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