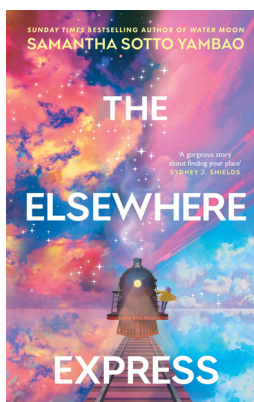
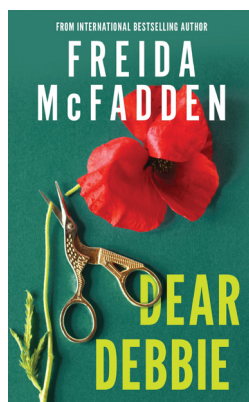
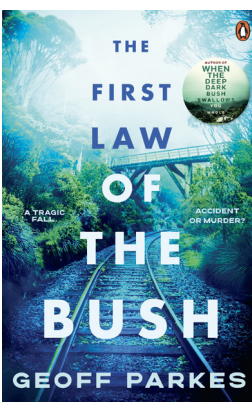
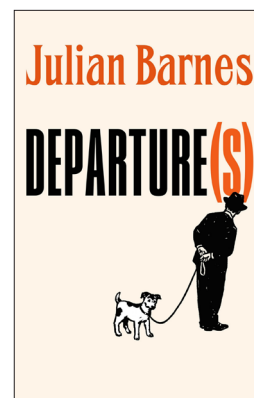
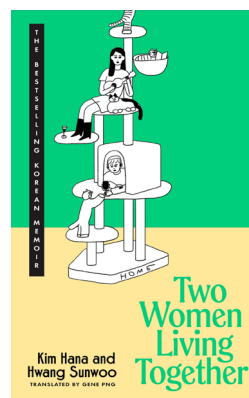
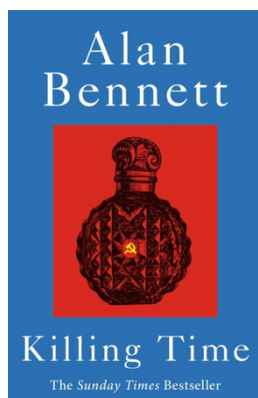
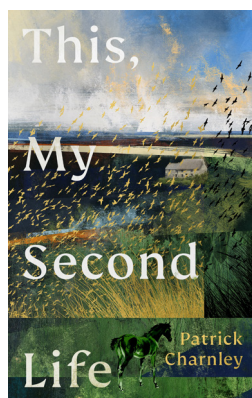
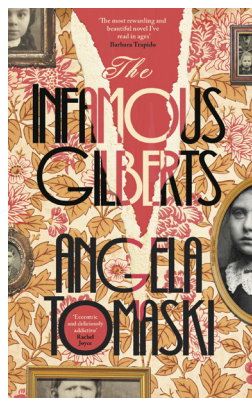


JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY READS OF THE MONTH

ISSUE 01 | 2026



A new year calls for new adventures

Whether it's uncovering hidden motives, embracing your creativity, or finding space to breathe, these books offer journeys of the mind, heart, and imagination. Dive in and start the year inspired.

GENERAL FICTION

The Infamous Gilberts

Angela Tomaski
Fig Tree / \$38.00
As a once-grand Gothic mansion is sold to a luxury hotel chain, its devoted caretaker gives a final tour, revealing the secrets hidden in every room. Each clue unlocks the tumultuous lives of the five eccentric Gilbert siblings: romantics, rebels, dreamers. Their chaotic and love-tangled journey through the twentieth century turns family myth into something far darker and far more unforgettable.

This, My Second Life
Patrick Charnley
Hutchinson Heinemann / \$38.00
Recovering from a life-changing injury, twenty-year-old Jago retreats to his uncle's quiet coastal farm

in Cornwall. But when a dangerous local man fixates on a cliffside field and its abandoned mineshaft, Jago risks his fragile new life to uncover the truth. His search pulls him into a shadowy world he isn't ready for, threatening the hard-won hope he's only beginning to regain.

Killing Time

Alan Bennett
Faber / \$24.99
At Hill Topp House, an eccentric council retirement home ruled by formidable Mrs McBryde, Covid upends routine and sparks darkly comic chaos. As staff fall ill and rules collapse, secrets surface, alliances shift, and the spirited residents seize an unexpected chance at freedom. Amid sherry, mischief and mayhem, this unlikely community discovers liberation in the most surprising summer of their lives.

Two Women Living Together

Kim Hana & Hwang Sunwoo
Doubleday / \$40.00
In their late forties, Sunwoo and Hana choose neither marriage nor solitude. Instead, they build a shared home—four cats included—and a life that defies South Korea's expectations. As they navigate soaring housing costs, nosy social pressures and the quiet freedoms of friendship, their candid reflections reveal a warm, witty, quietly radical vision of family made by choice, not tradition.

Departure(s)

Julian Barnes
Jonathan Cape / \$38.00
Stephen and Jean fall in love twice, first in youth and later at the edge of life, with their ageing Jack Russell Jimmy keeping pace beside them. As bodies weaken

and memories shift into stories, Stephen confronts what remains when certainty fades. This is a tender and clear-eyed exploration of ageing, love rediscovered, and the moments we choose to keep before saying goodbye.

Party Stories

Various Authors
Everyman / \$38.00
From Austen to DeLillo, this gorgeous hardcover celebrates the drama, glamour, and mischief of parties in literature. Explore Natasha's first ball, Gatsby's legendary soirées, Woolf's and Joyce's intricate gatherings, and Poe's haunting Masque of the Red Death. Brimming with humor, intrigue, and literary magic, this beautiful hardcover is a dazzling homage to revelry, character, and unforgettable storytelling.

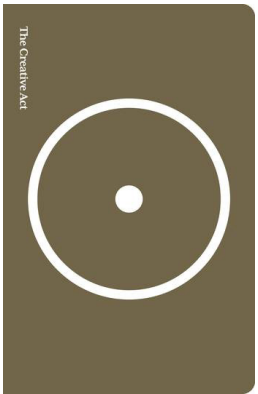
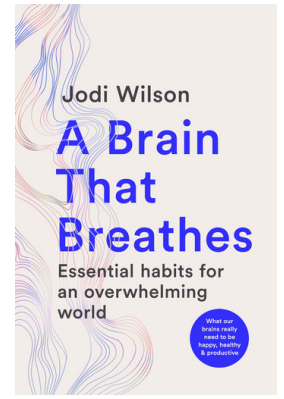
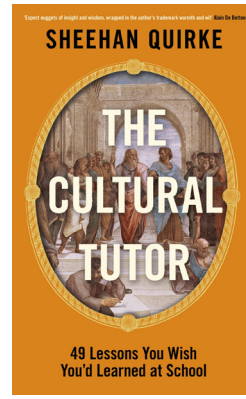
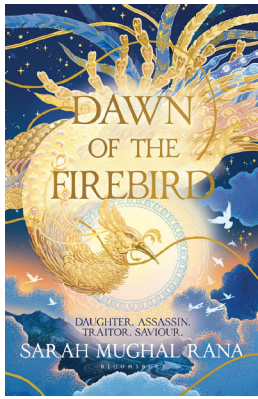
MYSTERY & THRILLER

The First Law of the Bush

Geoff Parkes
Penguin / \$38.00
When Bill Dickerson plunges from a viaduct to his death, his widow Carol is left with questions no one will answer. She hires struggling lawyer Ryan Bradley, newly back in the isolated town of Nashville, to uncover the truth. Stonewalled by employers, friends and evasive witnesses, Ryan senses a darker story lurking beneath small-town loyalties, where asking the wrong question can be fatal.

The First Time I Saw Him

Laura Dave
Century / \$38.00
A chilling text from her



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vanished husband sends Hannah racing from Los Angeles with her step-daughter Bailey, certain someone is hunting them. As they slip north along hidden roads and then flee to Paris, Hannah searches for the truth behind Owen's sudden return. But the city that once held their happiest memories may now hide the enemies determined to destroy them.

Dear Debbie
Freida McFadden
Poisoned Pen Press / \$38.00
Debbie Mullen has spent years giving level-headed life advice in her Dear Debbie column, but her own world is collapsing. She's jobless, her daughters are acting strangely, and her husband's secretive behavior pings on the tracking app she installed. Pushed past her limit, Debbie stops being reasonable and starts taking action, turning her hard-won wisdom into a deliciously ruthless plan for payback.

FANTASY & YA

The Elsewhere Express
Samantha Sotto
Yambao
Bantam / \$38.00
Raya, adrift in life, wakes on the magical Elsewhere Express, a train offering purpose, peace, and belonging—but only if she finds her seat before time runs out. Joined by the charming artist Q, she races through whimsical carriages while a dangerous stowaway threatens the journey. To survive, Raya must uncover the stowaway's identity and discover her true purpose.

Dawn of the Firebird
Sarah Mughal Rana
Bloomsbury / \$37.00
Khamilla Zahr-zad, the discarded daughter of an emperor, discovers a rare heavenly magic within her after her nomadic tribe is slaughtered. Trained in combat and poisons, she pledges loyalty to her father. But when tragedy strikes again, she infiltrates the enemy's academy, mastering magic and martial arts. Torn between revenge and freedom, Khamilla must decide what kind of power she will wield.

King of Ravens
Clare Sager
Wayward TxF / \$38.00
Rhiannon, dying from a mysterious illness, is forced into a bargain with an unseelie King of the Dead: marry him or lose her family. Thrust into a shadowed underworld of withered gods, scheming courtiers, and ancient magic, she refuses to be a pawn. But in a court where every promise has teeth, hatred begins to smolder into something dangerously irresistible.

Beth Is Dead
Katie Bernet
Penguin / \$28.00
After a New Year's Eve party, Beth March is dead and every sister is a suspect. Meg, Jo, Amy and even Beth harbor secrets and hidden motives. In this twisty reimagining of *Little Women*, the beloved sisters confront betrayal, ambition and danger. This is a gripping, contemporary murder mystery where nothing is as sweet or as safe as it seems.

NON-FICTION

The Cultural Tutor
Sheehan Quirke
Viking / \$50.00
Sheehan Quirke, *The Cultural Tutor*, makes art, history, philosophy, and architecture accessible for everyone. In forty-nine lively lessons, he explores provocative questions and fascinating stories—from Babylon to Brutalism, mythology to sports legends—revealing the hidden patterns that shape our world. Witty, thought-provoking, and illuminating, this is a guide to understanding culture and seeing everyday life in a whole new way.

A Brain That Breathes
Jodi Wilson
Murdoch Books / \$37.99
In a world that never stops, best-selling author Jodi Wilson shows how to give your brain the space it needs. Drawing on neuroscience, psychology, and ancestral wisdom, she offers practical, evidence-based habits to reduce overwhelm, restore attention, and boost creativity. *A Brain That Breathes* teaches the power of rest, intentional

“not-doing,” and living well in a busy world.

The Creative Act
Rick Rubin
Canongate / \$45.00
Legendary music producer Rick Rubin shares the wisdom behind a lifetime of helping artists unlock their true creative selves. *The Creative Act* reveals how creativity isn't just output—it's a way of relating to the world. Practical, profound, and deeply inspiring, this book shows how anyone can cultivate a space for invention, transcendence, and the joy of creation.

Strangers
Belle Burden
Ebury Press / \$40.00
When Belle Burden's husband of twenty years abruptly leaves during the early days of the pandemic, her world shatters. In *Strangers*, she navigates heartbreak, betrayal, and the unraveling of a familiar life, emerging stronger and unapologetically empowered. A moving memoir of self-discovery, resilience, and reclaiming one's voice in the face of love lost and patriarchal expectations.