



The Next Chapter: January 2022 Book Recommendations

[*Comedy Comedy Comedy Drama: A Memoir*](#) by Bob Odenkirk

Random House (March 1, 2022)

“Bob Odenkirk embraced a life in comedy after a chance meeting with Second City's legendary Del Close. He somehow made his way to a job as a writer at *Saturday Night Live*. While surviving that legendary gauntlet by the skin of his gnashing teeth, he stashed away the secrets of comedy writing--eventually employing them in the immortal "Motivational Speaker" sketch for Chris Farley. When all hope was lost for the umpteenth time, the phone rang with an offer to appear on *Breaking Bad*--a show about how boring it is to be a high school chemistry teacher. His embrace of this strange new world of dramatic acting led him to working with Steven Spielberg, Alexander Payne, and Greta Gerwig, and then, in a twist that will confound you, he re-re-invented himself as a bona fide action star. Why? Read this and do your own psychoanalysis--it's fun!”

[*Daughter of the Moon Goddess*](#) by Sue Lynn Tan

Harper Voyager (January 11, 2022)

“Growing up on the moon, Xingyin is accustomed to solitude, unaware that she is being hidden from the powerful Celestial Emperor. But when Xingyin’s magic flares and her existence is discovered, she is forced to flee her home, leaving her mother behind. Alone, untrained, and afraid, she makes her way to the Celestial Kingdom, a land of wonder and secrets. Disguising her identity, she seizes an opportunity to learn alongside the Crown Prince, mastering archery and magic, even as passion flames between her and the emperor’s son. To save her mother, Xingyin embarks on a perilous quest, confronting legendary creatures and vicious enemies across the earth and skies.”

[*King Richard: Nixon and Watergate--An American Tragedy*](#) by Michael Dobbs

Knopf; 1st Edition (May 25, 2021)

“*King Richard* is the intimate, utterly absorbing narrative of the tension-packed hundred days when the Watergate conspiracy unraveled as the burglars and their handlers turned on one another, exposing the crimes of a vengeful president. Drawing on thousands of hours of newly-released taped recordings, Michael Dobbs takes us into the heart of the conspiracy, recreating these traumatic events in cinematic detail.”

[*Let's Get Physical: How Women Discovered Exercise and Reshaped the World*](#) by Danielle Friedman

G.P. Putnam's Sons (January 4, 2022)

“In *Let's Get Physical*, journalist Danielle Friedman reveals the fascinating hidden history of contemporary women’s fitness culture, chronicling in vivid, cinematic prose how exercise evolved from a beauty tool pitched almost exclusively as a way to “reduce” into one millions have harnessed as a path to mental, emotional, and physical well-being. *Let's Get Physical* reclaims these forgotten origin stories—and shines a spotlight on the trailblazers who led the way.”

[Light Years from Home](#) by Mike Chen

MIRA; Original edition (January 25, 2022)

“Every family has issues. Most can’t blame them on extraterrestrials. Evie Shao and her sister, Kass, aren’t on speaking terms. Fifteen years ago on a family camping trip, their father and brother vanished. Their dad turned up days later, dehydrated and confused—and convinced he'd been abducted by aliens. Their brother, Jakob, remained missing. When Evie's UFO network uncovers a new event, she goes to investigate. And discovers Jakob is back. He's different—older, stranger, and talking of an intergalactic war—but the tensions between the siblings haven't changed at all. The perfect combination of action, imagination and heart, *Light Years from Home* is a touching drama about a challenge as difficult as saving the galaxy: making peace with your family...and yourself.”

[Must Love Books](#) by Shauna Robinson

Sourcebooks Landmark (January 18, 2022)

“Meet Nora Hughes—the overworked, underpaid, last bookish assistant standing. With her life spiraling and the Parsons staff sinking, Nora gets hit with even worse news. Parsons is cutting her already unlivable salary. Unable to afford her rent and without even the novels she once loved as a comfort, Nora decides to moonlight for a rival publisher to make ends meet...and maybe poach some Parsons' authors along the way. But when Andrew Santos, a bestselling Parsons author no one can afford to lose is thrown into the mix, Nora has to decide where her loyalties lie. Her new Dream Job, ever-optimistic Andrew, or...herself and her future.”

[Notes on an Execution](#) by Danya Kukafka

William Morrow (January 25, 2022)

“Ansel Packer is scheduled to die in twelve hours. He knows what he’s done, and now awaits execution, the same chilling fate he forced on those girls, years ago. But Ansel doesn’t want to die; he wants to be celebrated, understood. Through a kaleidoscope of women—a mother, a sister, a homicide detective—we learn the story of Ansel’s life. We meet his mother, Lavender, a seventeen-year-old girl pushed to desperation; Hazel, twin sister to Ansel’s wife, inseparable since birth, forced to watch helplessly as her sister’s relationship threatens to devour them all; and finally, Saffy, the detective hot on his trail, who has devoted herself to bringing bad men to justice but struggles to see her own life clearly. As the clock ticks down, these three women sift through the choices that culminate in tragedy, exploring the rippling fissures that such destruction inevitably leaves in its wake.”

[Pumpkin](#) by Julie Murphy

Balzer + Bray (May 25, 2021)

“Waylon Russell Brewer is a fat, openly gay boy stuck in the small West Texas town of Clover City. So when Clementine deviates from their master plan right after Waylon gets dumped, he throws caution to the wind and creates an audition tape for his favorite TV drag show, *Fiercest of Them All*. What he doesn’t count on is the tape getting accidentally shared with the entire school. . . . As a result, Waylon is nominated for prom queen as a joke. Clem’s girlfriend, Hannah Perez, also receives a joke nomination for prom king. Waylon and Hannah decide there’s only one thing to do: run—and leave high school with a bang. A very glittery bang. Along the way, Waylon discovers that there is a lot more to running for prom court than campaign posters and plastic crowns, especially when he has to spend so much time with the very cute and infuriating prom king nominee Tucker Watson.”

[Reckless Girls](#) by Rachel Hawkins

St. Martin's Press (January 4, 2022)

“Beautiful, wild, and strange—Meroe Island is a desolate spot in the middle of the Pacific Ocean with a mysterious history of shipwrecks, cannibalism, and even rumors of murder. Six stunning twentysomethings are about to embark on a blissful, free-spirited journey—one filled with sun-drenched days and intoxicating nights. But as it becomes clear that the group is even more cut off from civilization than they initially thought, it starts to feel like the island itself is closing in, sending them on a dangerous spiral of discovery. When one person goes missing and another turns up dead, the remaining friends wonder what dark currents lie beneath this impenetrable paradise—and who else will be swept under its secluded chaos.”

[Shady Hollow](#) by Juneau Black

Vintage Crime/Black Lizard (January 25, 2022)

“The first book in the *Shady Hollow* series, in which we are introduced to the village of Shady Hollow, a place where woodland creatures live together in harmony—until a curmudgeonly toad turns up dead and the local reporter has to solve the case. Reporter Vera Vixen is a relative newcomer to Shady Hollow. The fox has a nose for news, so when she catches wind that the death might be a murder, she resolves to get to the bottom of the case, no matter where it leads. As she stirs up still waters, the fox exposes more than one mystery, and discovers that additional lives are in jeopardy. Vera finds more to this town than she ever suspected. It seems someone in the Hollow will do anything to keep her from solving the murder, and soon it will take all of Vera’s cunning and quickness to crack the case.”

[Something Fabulous](#) by Alexis Hall

Montlake (January 25, 2022)

“Valentine Layton, the Duke of Malvern, has twin problems: literally. It was always his father’s hope that Valentine would marry Miss Arabella Tarleton. But, unfortunately, too many novels at an impressionable age have caused her to grow up...romantic. So romantic that a marriage of convenience will not do and after Valentine’s proposal she flees into the night determined never to set eyes on him again. Arabella’s twin brother, Mr. Bonaventure “Bonny” Tarleton, has also grown up...romantic. And fully expects Valentine to ride out after Arabella and prove to her that he’s not the cold-hearted cad he seems to be. Despite copious misgivings, Valentine finds himself on a pell-mell chase to Dover with Bonny by his side. Bonny is unreasonable, overdramatic, annoying, and...beautiful? And being with him makes Valentine question everything he thought he knew. About himself. About love. Even about which Tarleton he should be pursuing.”

[The Department of Rare Books and Special Collections](#) by Eva Jurczyk

Poisoned Pen Press (January 25, 2022)

“Liesl Weiss long ago learned to be content working behind the scenes in the distinguished rare books department of a large university. But when her boss has a stroke and she's left to run things, she discovers that the library's most prized manuscript is missing. Liesl tries to inform the police about the missing priceless book but is told repeatedly to keep quiet. When a librarian unexpectedly stops showing up to work. Liesl must investigate both disappearances, unspooling her colleagues' pasts like the threads of a rare book binding as it becomes clear that someone in the department must be responsible for the theft.”

[The Good Wife of Bath](#) by Karen Brooks

William Morrow Paperbacks (January 25, 2022)

“A provocative, immersive medieval novel starring one of literature’s most unforgettable characters in her own words—Chaucer’s bold and libidinous Wife of Bath. In the middle ages, a famous poet told a story that mocked a strong woman. It became a literary classic. But what if the woman in question had a chance to tell her own version? Eleanor manages to turn her first marriage into success, and she rises through society from a cast-off farm girl to a woman of fortune who becomes a trusted friend of the social-climbing poet Geoffrey Chaucer. But more marriages follow—some happy, some not—several pilgrimages, many lovers, murder, mayhem, and many turns of fortune’s wheel as Eleanor pursues the one thing that all women want: control of their own lives.”

[The Maid](#) by Nita Prose

Ballantine Books (January 4, 2022)

“Since Gran died a few months ago, twenty-five-year-old Molly has been navigating life’s complexities all by herself. No matter—she throws herself with gusto into her work as a hotel maid. But Molly’s orderly life is upended the day she enters the suite of the infamous and wealthy Charles Black, only to find it in a state of disarray and Mr. Black himself dead in his bed. Before she knows what’s happening, Molly’s unusual demeanor has the police targeting her as their lead suspect. She quickly finds herself caught in a web of deception, one she has no idea how to untangle. Fortunately for Molly, friends she never knew she had unite with her in a search for clues to what really happened to Mr. Black—but will they be able to find the real killer before it’s too late?”

[The Push](#) by Ashley Audrain

Pamela Dorman Books (January 5, 2021)

“Blythe Connor is determined that she will be the warm, comforting mother to her new baby Violet that she herself never had. But in the thick of motherhood's exhausting early days, Blythe becomes convinced that something is wrong with her daughter—she doesn't behave like most children do. Or is it all in Blythe's head? Her husband, Fox, says she's imagining things. The more Fox dismisses her fears, the more Blythe begins to question her own sanity. Then their son Sam is born—and with him, Blythe has the blissful connection she'd always imagined with her child. Even Violet seems to love her little brother. But when life as they know it is changed in an instant, the devastating fall-out forces Blythe to face the truth.”

[Where the Drowned Girls Go](#) by Seanan McGuire (*Wayward Children Series, Book 7*)

Tordotcom (January 4, 2022)

“When Eleanor West decided to open her school, her sanctuary, her "Home for Wayward Children," she knew from the beginning that there would be children she couldn't save; when Cora decides she needs a different direction, a different fate, a different prophecy, Miss West reluctantly agrees to transfer her to the other school, where things are run very differently by Whitethorn, the Headmaster. She will soon discover that not all doors are welcoming.”



Book descriptions provided by publishers.

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