



## The Next Chapter: March 2022 Book Recommendations

**[Burning Questions: Essays and Occasional Pieces, 2004 to 2021](#) by Margaret Atwood**

**Doubleday (March 1, 2022)**

“From literary icon Margaret Atwood comes a brilliant collection of nonfiction—funny, erudite, intimate, impassioned, and always startlingly prescient—which grapples with such wide-ranging topics as: Why do people everywhere, in all cultures, tell stories? How do we get rid of the immense amount of plastic that’s littering our seas and lands? How much of yourself can you give away without evaporating? Is science fiction now writing us? So what if beauty is only skin deep? What do zombies have to do with authoritarianism? Is it true? And is it fair? In over fifty pieces, taken from lectures, autobiographical essays, book reviews, cultural criticism, obituaries, and new introductions to her own body of work (including *The Handmaid’s Tale* thirty years after its initial publication) as well as that of other writers, we watch Atwood aim her prodigious intellect and impish humor at the world, and report back to us on what she finds.”

**[Diamonds and Deadlines: A Tale of Greed, Deceit, and a Female Tycoon in the Gilded Age](#) by Betsy Prioleau**  
**Abrams Press (March 29, 2022)**

“The first major biography of the glamorous and scandalous Miriam Leslie, titan of publishing and an unsung hero of women’s suffrage. Among the fabled tycoons of the Gilded Age—Carnegie, Rockefeller, Vanderbilt—is a forgotten figure: Mrs. Frank Leslie. For twenty years she ran the country’s largest publishing company, Frank Leslie Publishing, which chronicled postbellum America in dozens of weeklies and monthlies. A pioneer in an all-male industry, she made a fortune and became a national celebrity and tastemaker in the process. But Miriam Leslie was also a byword for scandal: She flouted feminine convention, took lovers, married four times, and harbored unsavory secrets that she concealed through a skein of lies and multiple personas. Both before and after her lifetime, glimpses of the truth emerged, including an illegitimate birth and a checkered youth. *Diamonds & Deadlines* reveals the unknown, sensational life of the brilliant and brazen “empress of journalism,” who dropped a bombshell at her death: She left her entire multimillion-dollar estate to women’s suffrage—a never-equalled amount that guaranteed passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. In this dazzling biography, cultural historian Betsy Prioleau draws from diaries, genealogies, and published works to provide an intimate look at the life of one of the Gilded Age’s most complex, powerful women and unexpected feminist icons. Ultimately, *Diamonds and Deadlines* restores Mrs. Frank Leslie to her rightful place in history, as a monumental businesswoman who presaged the feminist future and reflected, in bold relief, the Gilded Age, one of the most momentous, seismic, and vivid epochs in American history.”

**[Good Intentions: A Novel](#) by Kasim Ali**

**Henry Holt and Co. (March 8, 2022)**

“For fans of *The Big Sick* and Nick Hornby--a magnetic debut novel about a young man who has hidden a romance from his parents, unable to choose between familial obligation and the future he truly wants. If love really is a choice, how do you decide where your loyalties lie? It's the countdown to the New Year, and Nur is steeling himself to tell his parents that he's seeing someone. A young British Pakistani man, Nur has spent years omitting details about his personal life to maintain his image as the golden child. And it's come at a cost. Once, Nur was a restless college student, struggling to fit in. At a party, he meets Yasmina, a beautiful and self-possessed aspiring journalist. They start a conversation--first awkward, then absorbing. And as their relationship develops, so too does Nur's self-destruction. He falls deeper into traps of his own making, attempting to please both Yasmina and his family until he must finally reveal the truth: Yasmina is Black, and he loves her. Deftly transporting readers between that first night and the years beyond, Kasim Ali's *Good Intentions* exposes with unblinking authenticity the complexities of immigrant families and racial prejudice. It is a crackling, wryly clever depiction of standing on the precipice of adulthood, piecing together who it is you're meant to be.”

**[Secret Identity: A Novel](#) by Alex Segura**

**Flatiron Books (March 15, 2022)**

“From Anthony Award-winning writer Alex Segura comes, *Secret Identity*, a rollicking literary mystery set in the world of comic books. It's 1975 and the comic book industry is struggling, but Carmen Valdez doesn't care. She's an assistant at Triumph Comics, which doesn't have the creative zeal of Marvel nor the buttoned-up efficiency of DC, but it doesn't matter. Carmen is tantalizingly close to fulfilling her dream of writing a superhero book. That dream is nearly a reality when one of the Triumph writers enlists her help to create a new character, which they call "The Lethal Lynx," Triumph's first female hero. But her colleague is acting strangely and asking to keep her involvement a secret. And then he's found dead, with all of their scripts turned into the publisher without her name. Carmen is desperate to piece together what happened to him, to hang on to her piece of the Lynx, which turns out to be a runaway hit. But that's complicated by a surprise visitor from her home in Miami, a tenacious cop who is piecing everything together too quickly for Carmen, and the tangled web of secrets and resentments among the passionate eccentrics who write comics for a living. Alex Segura uses his expertise as a comics creator as well as his unabashed love of noir fiction to create a truly one-of-a-kind novel--hard-edged and bright-eyed, gritty and dangerous, and utterly absorbing.”

**[Tell Me an Ending](#) by Jo Harkin**

**Scribner (March 1, 2022)**

“What if you once had a painful memory removed? And what if you were offered the chance to get it back? *Tell Me an Ending* follows four characters grappling with the question of what to remember--and what they hoped to forget forever. Across the world, thousands of people are shocked by a notification that they once chose to have a memory removed. Now they are being given an opportunity to get that memory back. Four individuals are filled with new doubts, grappling with the unexpected question of whether to remember unknown events, or to leave them buried forever. Finn, an Irish architect living in the Arizona desert, begins to suspect his charming wife of having an affair. Mei, a troubled grad school

dropout in Kuala Lumpur, wonders why she remembers a city she has never visited. William, a former police inspector in England, struggles with PTSD, the breakdown of his marriage, and his own secret family history. Oscar, a handsome young man with almost no memories at all, travels the world in a constant state of fear. Into these characters' lives comes Noor, a psychologist working at the Nepenthe memory removal clinic in London. The process of reinstating patients' memories begins to shake the moral foundations of her world. As she delves deeper into how the program works, she will have to risk everything to uncover the cost of this miraculous technology. A provocative exploration of secrets, grief, and identity—of the stories we tell ourselves—*Tell Me an Ending* is a sharp, dark, and devastating novel about the power of memory.”

**[The Book of Cold Cases](#) by Simone St. James**

**Berkley (March 15, 2022)**

“A true crime blogger gets more than she bargained for while interviewing the woman acquitted of two cold case slayings in this chilling new novel from the New York Times bestselling author of *The Sun Down Motel*. In 1977, Claire Lake, Oregon, was shaken by the Lady Killer Murders: Two men, seemingly randomly, were murdered with the same gun, with strange notes left behind. Beth Greer was the perfect suspect—a rich, eccentric twenty-three-year-old woman, seen fleeing one of the crimes. But she was acquitted, and she retreated to the isolation of her mansion. Oregon, 2017. Shea Collins is a receptionist, but by night, she runs a true crime website, the Book of Cold Cases—a passion fueled by the attempted abduction she escaped as a child. When she meets Beth by chance, Shea asks her for an interview. To Shea's surprise, Beth says yes. They meet regularly at Beth's mansion, though Shea is never comfortable there. Items move when she's not looking, and she could swear she's seen a small girl outside the window. The allure of learning the truth about the case from the smart, charming Beth is too much to resist, but even as they grow closer, Shea senses something isn't right. Is she making friends with a manipulative murderer, or are there other dangers lurking in the darkness of the Greer house?”

**[The Cartographers: A Novel](#) by Peng Shepherd**

**William Morrow (March 15, 2022)**

“From the critically acclaimed author of *The Book of M*, a highly imaginative thriller about a young woman who discovers that a strange map in her deceased father's belongings holds an incredible, deadly secret—one that will lead her on an extraordinary adventure and to the truth about her family's dark history. What is the purpose of a map? Nell Young's whole life and greatest passion is cartography. Her father, Dr. Daniel Young, is a legend in the field and Nell's personal hero. But she hasn't seen or spoken to him ever since he cruelly fired her and destroyed her reputation after an argument over an old, cheap gas station highway map. But when Dr. Young is found dead in his office at the New York Public Library, with the very same seemingly worthless map hidden in his desk, Nell can't resist investigating. To her surprise, she soon discovers that the map is incredibly valuable and exceedingly rare. In fact, she may now have the only copy left in existence . . . because a mysterious collector has been hunting down and destroying every last one—along with anyone who gets in the way. But why? To answer that question, Nell embarks on a dangerous journey to reveal a dark family secret and discovers the true power that lies in maps . . . Perfect for fans of Joe Hill and V. E. Schwab, *The Cartographers* is an

ode to art and science, history and magic—a spectacularly imaginative, modern story about an ancient craft and places still undiscovered.”

**[The Journey of Humanity: The Origins of Wealth and Inequality](#) by Oded Galor**

**Dutton (March 22, 2022)**

“In a captivating journey from the dawn of human existence to the present, world-renowned economist and thinker Oded Galor offers an intriguing solution to two of humanity’s great mysteries. Why are humans the only species to have escaped - only very recently - the subsistence trap, allowing us to enjoy a standard of living that vastly exceeds all others? And why have we progressed so unequally around the world, resulting in the great disparities between nations that exist today? Immense in scope and packed with astounding connections, Galor's gripping narrative explains how technology, population size, and adaptation led to a stunning “phase change” in the human story a mere two hundred years ago. But by tracing that same journey back in time and peeling away the layers of influence - colonialism, political institutions, societal structure, culture - he arrives also at an explanation of inequality's ultimate causes: those ancestral populations that enjoyed fruitful geographical characteristics and rich diversity were set on the path to prosperity, while those that lacked it were disadvantaged in ways still echoed today. As we face ecological crisis across the globe, *The Journey of Humanity* is a book of urgent truths and enduring relevance, with lessons that are both hopeful and profound: gender equality, investment in education, and balancing diversity with social cohesion are the keys not only to our species’ thriving, but to its survival.”

**[The Resting Place](#) by Camilla Sten (Author), Alexandra Fleming (Translator)**

**Minotaur Books; Reprint edition (March 29, 2022)**

Eleanor lives with prosopagnosia, the inability to recognize a familiar person's face. It causes stress. Acute anxiety. It can make you question what you think you know. When Eleanor walked in on the scene of her capriciously cruel grandmother, Vivianne’s, murder, she came face to face with the killer—a maddening expression that means nothing to someone like her. With each passing day, the horror of having come so close to a murderer—and not knowing if they’d be back—overtakes both her dreams and her waking moments, thwarting her perception of reality. Then a lawyer calls. Vivianne has left her a house—a looming estate tucked away in the Swedish woods. The place her grandfather died, suddenly. A place that has housed a chilling past for over fifty years. Eleanor. Her steadfast boyfriend, Sebastian. Her reckless aunt, Veronika. The lawyer. All will go to this house of secrets, looking for answers. But as they get closer to uncovering the truth, they’ll wish they had never come to disturb what rests there.”

**[The Unsinkable Greta James: A Novel](#) by Jennifer E. Smith**

**Ballantine Books (March 1, 2022)**

“Right after the sudden death of her mother—her first and most devoted fan—and just before the launch of her high-stakes sophomore album, Greta James falls apart on stage. The footage quickly goes viral and she stops playing, her career suddenly in jeopardy—the kind of jeopardy her father, Conrad, has always predicted; the kind he warned her about when he urged her to make more practical choices with her life. Months later, Greta—still heartbroken and very much adrift—reluctantly agrees to accompany Conrad on the Alaskan cruise her parents had booked to celebrate their fortieth anniversary.

It could be their last chance to heal old wounds in the wake of shared loss. But the trip will also prove to be a voyage of discovery for them both, and for Ben Wilder, a charming historian, onboard to lecture about *The Call of the Wild*, who is struggling with a major upheaval in his own life. As Greta works to build back her confidence and Ben confronts an uncertain future, they find themselves drawn to and relying on each other. It's here in this unlikeliest of places—at sea, far from the packed city venues where she usually plays and surrounded by the stunning scenery of Alaska—Greta will finally confront the choices she's made, the heartbreak she's suffered, and the family hurts that run deep. In the end, she'll have to decide what her path forward might look like—and how to find her voice again."

**[The Worth of Water: Our Story of Chasing Solutions to the World's Greatest Challenge](#) by Gary White & Matt Damon, Portfolio (March 29, 2022)**

"On any given morning, you might wake up and shower with water, make your coffee with water, flush your toilet with water—and think nothing of it. But around the world, more than three-quarters of a billion people can't do any of that—because they have no clean water source near their homes. And 1.7 billion don't have access to a toilet. This crisis affects a third of the people on the planet. It keeps kids out of school and women out of work. It traps people in extreme poverty. It spreads disease. It's also solvable. That conviction is what brought together movie actor Matt Damon and water expert and engineer Gary White. They spent years getting the answer wrong, then halfway right, then almost right. Over time, they and their organization, Water.org, have found an approach that works. Working with partners across East Africa, Latin America, South Asia, and Southeast Asia, they've helped over 40 million people access water and/or sanitation. In *The Worth of Water*, Gary and Matt take us along on the journey—telling stories as they uncover insights, try out new ideas, and travel between the communities they serve and the halls of power where decisions get made. With humor and humility, they illuminate the challenges of launching a brand-new model with extremely high stakes: better health and greater prosperity for people all over the world. *The Worth of Water* invites us to become a part of this effort—to match hope with resources, to empower families and communities, and to end the global water crisis for good. All the authors' proceeds from the sale of this book will be donated to Water.org."

**[Things Past Telling: A Novel](#) by Sheila Williams  
**Amistad (March 15, 2022)****

"Born in West Africa in the mid-eighteenth century, Maryam Prescilla Grace—a.k.a "Momma Grace" will live a long, wondrous life marked by hardship, oppression, opportunity, and love. Though she will be "gifted" various names, her birth name is known to her alone. Over the course of 100-plus years, she survives capture, enslavement by several property owners, the Atlantic crossing when she is only eleven years of age, and a brief stint as a pirate's ward, acting as both a spy and a translator. Maryam learns midwifery from a Caribbean-born wise woman, whose "craft" combines curated techniques and medicines from African, Indigenous, and European women. Those midwifery skills allow her to sometimes transcend the racial and class barriers of her enslavement, as she walks the razor's edge trying to balance the lives and health of her own people with the cruel economic mandates of the slave holders, who view infants born in bondage not as flesh-and-blood children but as investment property. Throughout her triumphant and tumultuous life Maryam gains and loses her homeland, her family, her culture, her husband, her lovers, and her children. Yet as the decades pass, this tenacious woman never

loses her sense of self. Inspired by a 112-year-old woman the author discovered in an 1870 U.S. Federal census report for Ohio, loosely based on the author's real-life female ancestors, spanning more than a hundred years, from the mid-eighteen-century to the end of America's Civil War, and spanning across the globe, from what is now southern Nigeria to the islands of the Caribbean to North America and the land bordering the Ohio River, *Things Past Telling* is a breathtaking story of a past that lives on in all of us, and a life that encompasses the best—and worst—of our humanity."

**[Truly, Madly: Vivien Leigh, Laurence Olivier, and the Romance of the Century](#) by Stephen Galloway  
Grand Central Publishing (March 22, 2022)**

"A sweeping and heartbreaking Hollywood biography about the passionate, turbulent marriage of Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh. In 1934, a friend brought fledgling actress Vivien Leigh to see Theatre Royal, where she would first lay eyes on Laurence Olivier in his brilliant performance as Anthony Cavendish. That night, she confided to a friend, he was the man she was going to marry. There was just one problem: she was already married--and so was he. *Truly, Madly* is the biography of a marriage, a love affair that still captivates millions, even decades after both actors' deaths. Vivien and Larry were two of the first truly global celebrities - their fame fueled by the explosive growth of tabloids and television, which helped and hurt them in equal measure. They seemed to have it all and yet, in their own minds, they were doomed, blighted by her long-undiagnosed mental-illness, which transformed their relationship from the stuff of dreams into a living nightmare. Through new research, including exclusive access to previously unpublished correspondence and interviews with their friends and family, author Stephen Galloway takes readers on a bewitching journey. He brilliantly studies their tempestuous liaison, one that took place against the backdrop of two world wars, the Golden Age of Hollywood and the upheavals of the 1960s -- as they struggled with love, loss and the ultimate agony of their parting."

**[Under Lock & Skeleton Key: A Secret Staircase Mystery](#) by Gigi Pandian  
Minotaur Books (March 15, 2022)**

"An impossible crime. A family legacy. The intrigue of hidden rooms and secret staircases. After a disastrous accident derails Tempest Raj's career, and life, she heads back to her childhood home in California to comfort herself with her grandfather's Indian home-cooked meals. Though she resists, every day brings her closer to the inevitable: working for her father's company. Secret Staircase Construction specializes in bringing the magic of childhood to all by transforming clients' homes with sliding bookcases, intricate locks, backyard treehouses, and hidden reading nooks. When Tempest visits her dad's latest renovation project, her former stage double is discovered dead inside a wall that's supposedly been sealed for more than a century. Fearing she was the intended victim, it's up to Tempest to solve this seemingly impossible crime. But as she delves further into the mystery, Tempest can't help but wonder if the Raj family curse that's plagued her family for generations—something she used to swear didn't exist—has finally come for her."



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