



The Next Chapter: April 2022 Book Recommendations

[Atomic Anna](#) by Rachel Barenbaum

Grand Central Publishing (April 5, 2022) 448 pages.

“In 1986, renowned nuclear scientist, Anna Berkova, is sleeping in her bed in the Soviet Union when Chernobyl’s reactor melts down. It’s the exact moment she tears through time—and it’s an accident. When she opens her eyes, she’s landed in 1992 only to discover Molly, her estranged daughter, shot in the chest. Molly, with her dying breath, begs Anna to go back in time and stop the disaster, to save Molly’s daughter Raisa, and put their family’s future on a better path. In ‘60s Philadelphia, Molly is coming of age as an adopted refusenik. Her family is full of secrets and a past they won’t share. She finds solace in comic books, drawing her own series, Atomic Anna, and she’s determined to make it as an artist. When she meets the volatile, charismatic Viktor, their romance sets her life on a very different course. In the ‘80s, Raisa, is a lonely teen and math prodigy, until a quiet, handsome boy moves in across the street and an odd old woman shows up claiming to be her biological grandmother. As Raisa finds new issues of Atomic Anna in unexpected places, she notices each comic challenges her to solve equations leading to one impossible conclusion: time travel. And she finally understands what she has to do. As these remarkable women work together to prevent the greatest nuclear disaster of the 20th century, they grapple with the power their discoveries hold. Just because you can change the past, does it mean you should?”

[End of the World House: A Novel](#) by Adrienne Celt

Simon & Schuster (April 19, 2022) 320 pages.

“Bertie and Kate have been best friends since high school. Bertie is a semi-failed cartoonist, working for a prominent Silicon Valley tech firm. Her job depresses her, but not as much as the fact that Kate has recently decided to move from San Francisco to Los Angeles. When Bertie’s attempts to make Kate stay fail, she suggests the next-best thing: a trip to Paris that will hopefully distract the duo from their upcoming separation. The vacation is also a sort of last hurrah, coming during a ceasefire in a series of escalating world conflicts. When a mysterious stranger offers them a private tour of the Louvre, the women find themselves alone in the museum where nothing is quite as it seems. Caught up in a day that keeps repeating itself, the two are eventually separated, and Bertie is faced with a mystery that threatens to derail everything.”

[Forest Walking: Discovering the Trees and Woodlands of North America](#) by Peter Wohlleben

Greystone Books (April 26, 2022) 240 pages.

“Forest Walking teaches you how to get the most out of your next adventure by becoming a forest detective, decoding nature’s signs and awakening to the ancient past and thrilling present of the ecosystem around you. What can you learn by following the spread of a root, by tasting the tip of a branch, by searching out that bitter almond smell? What creatures can be found in a stream if you turn over a rock--and what is the best way to cross a forest stream, anyway? How can you understand a forest’s history by the feel of the path underfoot, the scars on the trees along the trail, or the play of sunlight through the branches? How can we safely explore the forest at night? What activities can we

use to engage children with the forest? Throughout *Forest Walking*, the authors share experiences and observations from visiting forests across North America: from the rainforests and redwoods of the west coast to the towering white pines of the east, and down to the cypress swamps of the south and up to the boreal forests of the north.”

[Four Treasures of the Sky: A Novel](#) by Jenny Tinghui Zhang

Flatiron Books (April 5, 2022) 336 pages.

“Daiyu never wanted to be like the tragic heroine for whom she was named, revered for her beauty and cursed with heartbreak. But when she is kidnapped and smuggled across an ocean from China to America, Daiyu must relinquish the home and future she imagined for herself. Over the years that follow, she is forced to keep reinventing herself to survive. From a calligraphy school, to a San Francisco brothel, to a shop tucked into the Idaho mountains, we follow Daiyu on a desperate quest to outrun the tragedy that chases her. As anti-Chinese sentiment sweeps across the country in a wave of unimaginable violence, Daiyu must draw on each of the selves she has been—including the ones she most wants to leave behind—in order to finally claim her own name and story.”

[Hope and Glory: A Novel](#) by Jendella Benson

William Morrow (April 19, 2022) 400 pages.

“Glory Akindele returns to London from her seemingly glamorous life in LA to mourn the sudden death of her father, only to find her previously close family has fallen apart in her absence. Her brother, Victor, is in jail and won’t speak to her because she didn’t come home for his trial. Her older sister, Faith, once a busy career woman, appears to have lost her independence and ambition, and is instead channeling her energies into holding together a perfect suburban family. Worst of all, their mother, Celeste, is headed toward a breakdown after the death of her husband and the shame of her son’s incarceration. Rather than returning to America, Glory decides to stay and try to bring them all together again. It’s a tall order given that Glory’s life isn’t exactly working out according to plan either, and she’s acutely aware that she’s not so sure who she is and what she wants. A chance reunion with a man she’d known in her teens—the perceptive but elusive Julian—gives her the courage to start questioning why her respectable but obsessively private Nigerian immigrant family is the way it is. But then Glory’s questioning unearths a massive secret that shatters the family’s fragile peace—and she risks losing everyone she deeply cares about in her pursuit of the truth and a reunited family.”

[In On the Joke: The Original Queens of Standup Comedy](#) by Shawn Levy

Doubleday (April 5, 2022) 400 pages.

“*In on the Joke* is the story of a group of unforgettable women who knocked down the doors of stand-up comedy so other women could get a shot. It spans decades, from Moms Mabley’s rise in Black vaudeville between the world wars, to the roadhouse ribaldry of Belle Barth and Rusty Warren in the 1950s and ’60s, to Elaine May’s co-invention of improv comedy, to Joan Rivers’s and Phyllis Diller’s ferocious ascent to mainstream stardom. These women refused to be defined by type and tradition, facing down indifference, puzzlement, nay-saying, and unvarnished hostility. They were discouraged by agents, managers, audiences, critics, fellow performers—even their families. And yet they persevered against the tired notion that women couldn’t be funny, making space not only for themselves, but for the women who followed them.”

[Kaikeyi: A Novel](#) by Vaishnavi Patel

Redhook (April 26, 2022) 496 pages.

“I was born on the full moon under an auspicious constellation, the holiest of positions—much good it did me. So begins Kaikeyi’s story. The only daughter of the kingdom of Kekaya, she is raised on tales of

the gods: how they churned the vast ocean to obtain the nectar of immortality, how they vanquish evil and ensure the land of Bharat prospers, and how they offer powerful boons to the devout and the wise. Yet she watches as her father unceremoniously banishes her mother, listens as her own worth is reduced to how great a marriage alliance she can secure. And when she calls upon the gods for help, they never seem to hear. Desperate for some measure of independence, she turns to the texts she once read with her mother and discovers a magic that is hers alone. With this power, Kaikeyi transforms herself from an overlooked princess into a warrior, diplomat, and most favored queen, determined to carve a better world for herself and the women around her. But as the evil from her childhood stories threatens the cosmic order, the path she has forged clashes with the destiny the gods have chosen for her family. And Kaikeyi must decide if resistance is worth the destruction it will wreak—and what legacy she intends to leave behind.”

**[Left on Tenth: A Second Chance at Life: A Memoir](#) by Delia Ephron
Little, Brown and Company (April 12, 2022) 291 pages.**

“Delia Ephron had struggled through several years of heartbreak. She'd lost her sister, Nora, and then her husband, Jerry, both to cancer. Several months after Jerry's death, she decided to make one small change in her life--she shut down his landline, which crashed her internet. She ended up in Verizon hell. She channeled her grief the best way she knew: by writing a New York Times op-ed. The piece caught the attention of Peter, a Bay Area psychiatrist, who emailed her to commiserate. Recently widowed himself, he reminded her that they had shared a few dates fifty-four years before, set up by Nora. Delia did not remember him, but after several weeks of exchanging emails and sixties folk songs, he flew east to see her. They were crazy, utterly, in love. But this was not a rom-com: four months later she was diagnosed with AML, a fierce leukemia. *In Left on Tenth*, Delia Ephron enchants as she seesaws us between tears and laughter, navigating the suicidal lows of enduring cutting-edge treatment and the giddy highs of a second chance at love. With Peter and her close girlfriends by her side, with startling clarity, warmth, and honesty about facing death, Ephron invites us to join her team of warriors and become believers ourselves.”

**[Lessons in Chemistry: A Novel](#) by Bonnie Garmus
Doubleday (April 5, 2022) 400 pages.**

“Chemist Elizabeth Zott is not your average woman. In fact, Elizabeth Zott would be the first to point out that there is no such thing as an average woman. But it's the early 1960s and her all-male team at Hastings Research Institute takes a very unscientific view of equality. Except for one: Calvin Evans; the lonely, brilliant, Nobel-prize nominated grudge-holder who falls in love with—of all things—her mind. True chemistry results. But like science, life is unpredictable. Which is why a few years later Elizabeth Zott finds herself not only a single mother, but the reluctant star of America's most beloved cooking show *Supper at Six*. Elizabeth's unusual approach to cooking (“combine one tablespoon acetic acid with a pinch of sodium chloride”) proves revolutionary. But as her following grows, not everyone is happy. Because as it turns out, Elizabeth Zott isn't just teaching women to cook. She's daring them to change the status quo. Laugh-out-loud funny, shrewdly observant, and studded with a dazzling cast of supporting characters, *Lessons in Chemistry* is as original and vibrant as its protagonist.”

**[Out of the Corner: A Memoir](#) by Jennifer Grey
Ballantine Books (May 3, 2022) 352 pages.**

“In this beautiful, close-to-the bone account, Jennifer Grey takes readers on a vivid tour of the experiences that have shaped her, from her childhood as the daughter of Broadway and film legend Joel Grey, to the surprise hit with Patrick Swayze that made her America's sweetheart, to her inspiring season eleven win on ABC's *Dancing with the Stars*. Throughout this intimate narrative, Grey richly

evokes places and times that were defining for a generation—from her preteen days in 1970s Malibu and wild child nights in New York’s club scene, to her roles in quintessential movies of the 1980s, including *The Cotton Club*, *Red Dawn*, and her breakout performance in *Ferris Bueller’s Day Off*. With self-deprecating humor and frankness, she looks back on her unbridled, romantic adventures in Hollywood. And with enormous bravery, she shares the devastating fallout from a plastic surgery procedure that caused the sudden and stunning loss of her professional identity and career. Grey inspires with her hard-won battle back, reclaiming her sense of self from a culture and business that can impose a narrow and unforgiving definition of female worth. She finds, at last, her own true north and starts a family of her own, just in the nick of time.”

[Portrait of a Thief: A Novel](#) by Grace D. Li

Tiny Reparations Books (April 5, 2022) 384 pages.

“History is told by the conquerors. Across the Western world, museums display the spoils of war, of conquest, of colonialism: priceless pieces of art looted from other countries, kept even now. Will Chen plans to steal them back. A senior at Harvard, Will fits comfortably in his carefully curated roles: a perfect student, an art history major and sometimes artist, the eldest son who has always been his parents’ American Dream. But when a mysterious Chinese benefactor reaches out with an impossible—and illegal—job offer, Will finds himself something else as well: the leader of a heist to steal back five priceless Chinese sculptures, looted from Beijing centuries ago. His crew is every heist archetype one can imagine—or at least, the closest he can get. A con artist: Irene Chen, a public policy major at Duke who can talk her way out of anything. A thief: Daniel Liang, a premed student with steady hands just as capable of lockpicking as suturing. A getaway driver: Lily Wu, an engineering major who races cars in her free time. A hacker: Alex Huang, an MIT dropout turned Silicon Valley software engineer. Each member of his crew has their own complicated relationship with China and the identity they’ve cultivated as Chinese Americans, but when Will asks, none of them can turn him down. Because if they succeed? They earn fifty million dollars—and a chance to make history. But if they fail, it will mean not just the loss of everything they’ve dreamed for themselves but yet another thwarted attempt to take back what colonialism has stolen. Equal parts beautiful, thoughtful, and thrilling, *Portrait of a Thief* is a cultural heist and an examination of Chinese American identity, as well as a necessary critique of the lingering effects of colonialism.”

[Sea of Tranquility: A Novel](#) by Emily St. John Mandel

Knopf (April 5, 2022) 272 pages.

“Edwin St. Andrew is eighteen years old when he crosses the Atlantic by steamship, exiled from polite society following an ill-conceived diatribe at a dinner party. He enters the forest, spellbound by the beauty of the Canadian wilderness, and suddenly hears the notes of a violin echoing in an airship terminal—an experience that shocks him to his core. Two centuries later a famous writer named Olive Llewellyn is on a book tour. She’s traveling all over Earth, but her home is the second moon colony, a place of white stone, spired towers, and artificial beauty. Within the text of Olive’s best-selling pandemic novel lies a strange passage: a man plays his violin for change in the echoing corridor of an airship terminal as the trees of a forest rise around him. When Gaspéry-Jacques Roberts, a detective in the black-skied *Night City*, is hired to investigate an anomaly in the North American wilderness, he uncovers a series of lives upended: The exiled son of an earl driven to madness, a writer trapped far from home as a pandemic ravages Earth, and a childhood friend from the *Night City* who, like Gaspéry himself, has glimpsed the chance to do something extraordinary that will disrupt the timeline of the universe.”

[The Club: A Novel](#) by Ellery Lloyd

Harper (March 1, 2022) 320 pages.

“The Home Group is a glamorous collection of celebrity members' clubs dotted across the globe, where the rich and famous can party hard and then crash out in its five-star suites, far from the prying eyes of fans and the media. The most spectacular of all is Island Home—a closely-guarded, ultraluxurious resort, just off the English coast—and its three-day launch party is easily the most coveted A-list invite of the decade. But behind the scenes, tensions are at breaking point: the ambitious and expensive project has pushed the Home Group's CEO and his long-suffering team to their absolute limits. All of them have something to hide—and that's before the beautiful people with their own ugly secrets even set foot on the island. As tempers fray and behavior worsens, as things get more sinister by the hour and the body count piles up, some of Island Home's members will begin to wish they'd never made the guest list. Because at this club, if your name's on the list, you're not getting out.”

[Unlikely Animals: A Novel](#) by Annie Hartnett

Ballantine Books (April 12, 2022) 368 pages.

“When Emma Starling returns to Everton, New Hampshire after four years away in order to help her ailing father, she isn't the successful young healer everyone believed she would be. Instead, she feels lost at home, with an eccentric father who sees hallucinations of animals and the ghost of naturalist Ernest Harold Baynes, a brother overcoming his drug addiction, and a controlling mother trying to hold the family together. Emma hopes to find some direction in her life and get out of town. But when she learns her former best friend has been missing and only Emma's father is continuing the search, she slowly realizes how much she took her community for granted. The longer Emma stays in Everton, the more she must confront her past before, unexpectedly, embarking on a healing journey of her own.”

[When the Corn Is Waist High](#) by Jeremy Scott

Keylight Books (April 19, 2022) 294 pages.

“In the early 1980s, a tight-knit Indiana community is struck by a series of violent murders. Father Solomon Lancaster—the town's dry-witted sheriff and priest at the community Catholic church—finds himself on the forefront of the investigation. Soon, he's fighting to match wits with the serial killer terrorizing his town while trying to justify his law enforcement credentials to the FBI as their analysts and profilers take Crooked Creek, Indiana, by storm. But Father Solomon is hiding secrets of his own. Ones that threaten to rise to the surface as the murders continue and the investigation draws nearer to the truth. As the killer begins to escalate, Father Solomon finds that even the innocent have dark sides, and trust might be the deadliest weapon of all.”



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