



The Next Chapter: July 2022 Book Recommendations

[*Acts of Violet*](#) by Margarita Montimore

Flatiron Books (July 5, 2022) 336 pages.

“Nearly a decade ago, iconic magician Violet Volk performed her greatest trick yet: vanishing mid-act. Though she hasn’t been seen since, her hold on the public hasn’t wavered. While Violet sought out the spotlight, her sister Sasha, ever the responsible one, took over their mother’s salon and built a quiet life for her daughter, Quinn. But Sasha can never seem to escape her sister’s orbit or her memories of their unresolved, tumultuous relationship. Then there’s Cameron Frank, determined to finally get his big break hosting a podcast devoted to all things Violet—though keeping his job hinges on an exclusive interview with Sasha, the last person who wants to talk to him. As the ten-year anniversary approaches, the podcast picks up steam, and Cameron’s pursuit of Sasha becomes increasingly intrusive. He isn’t the only one wondering what secrets she might be keeping: Quinn, loyal to the aunt she always idolized, is doing her own investigating. Meanwhile, Sasha begins to experience an unsettling series of sleepwalking episodes and coincidences, which all lead back to Violet. Pushed to her emotional limits, Sasha must finally confront the most painful truths about her sister, and herself, even at the risk of losing everything. Alternating between Sasha’s narration and Cameron’s podcast transcripts, interspersed with documents that offer a tantalizing peek at Violet herself, *Acts of Violet* is an utterly original, propulsive story of fame, deception, and forgiveness that will make you believe in magic.”

[*All-American Dogs: A History of Presidential Pets from Every Era*](#) by Andrew Hager

Dey Street Books (August 9, 2022) 288 pages.

“From historian-in-residence at the Presidential Pet Museum, Andrew Hager, comes a fond, fascinating, and often surprising look at the dogs who were the best friends of the presidents, featuring unforgettable photographs. President Biden’s German shepherds, Major and the late Champ, are the latest in a long line of presidential dogs. Dating all the way back to George Washington, dogs have been constant companions to nearly all of America’s presidents. Of the past 46 presidents, 31 have had at least one dog at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. Organized by historical eras, *All-American Dogs* will take readers through the captivating history of the White House’s four-legged friends, the impact they had on their owner-in-chiefs, and, ultimately, American history.”

[*An Honest Living: A Novel*](#) by Dwyer Murphy

Viking (July 26, 2022) 288 pages.

“A sharp and stylish debut from the editor-in-chief of *CrimeReads* in which an unwitting private eye gets caught up in a crime of obsession between a reclusive literary superstar and her bookseller husband, paying homage to the noir genre just as smartly as it reinvents it. After leaving behind the comforts and

the shackles of a prestigious law firm, a restless attorney makes ends meet in mid-2000s Brooklyn by picking up odd jobs from a colorful assortment of clients. When a mysterious woman named Anna Reddick turns up at his apartment with ten thousand dollars in cash and asks him to track down her missing husband Newton, an antiquarian bookseller who she believes has been pilfering rare true crime volumes from her collection, he trusts it will be a quick and easy case. But when the real Anna Reddick—a magnetic but unpredictable literary prodigy—lands on his doorstep with a few bones to pick, he finds himself out of his depth, drawn into a series of deceptions involving Joseph Conrad novels, unscrupulous booksellers, aspiring flâneurs, and seedy real estate developers. Set against the backdrop of New York at the tail end of the analog era and immersed in the worlds of literature and bookselling, *An Honest Living* is a gripping story of artistic ambition, obsession, and the small crimes we commit against one another every day.”

[Golden Age Locked Room Mysteries](#) by Otto Penzler (Editor)

American Mystery Classics (July 19, 2022) 508 pages.

“Fourteen impossible crimes from the American masters of the form. For devotees of the Golden Age mystery, the impossible crime story represents the period’s purest form: it presents the reader with a baffling scenario (a corpse discovered in a windowless room locked from the inside, perhaps), lays out a set of increasingly confounding clues, and swiftly delivers an ingenious and satisfying solution. During the years between the two world wars, the best writers in the genre strove to outdo one another with unfathomable crime scenes and brilliant explanations, and the puzzling and clever tales they produced in those brief decades remain unmatched to this day. Among the Americans, some of these authors are still household names, inextricably linked to the locked room mysteries they devised: John Dickson Carr, Ellery Queen, Clayton Rawson, Stuart Palmer. Others, associated with different styles of crime fiction, also produced great works—authors including Fredric Brown, MacKinlay Kantor, Craig Rice, and Cornell Woolrich. All of these and more can be found in *Golden Age Locked Room Mysteries*, selected by Edgar Award-winning mystery expert and anthologist Otto Penzler. Featuring a delightful mix of well-known writers and unjustly-forgotten masters, the fourteen tales included herein highlight the best of the American impossible crime story, promising hours of entertainment for armchair sleuths young and old.”

[Proving Ground: The Untold Story of the Six Women Who Programmed the World’s First Modern Computer](#) by Kathy Kleiman

Grand Central Publishing (July 26, 2022) 320 pages.

“After the end of World War II, the race for technological supremacy sped on. Top-secret research into ballistics and computing, begun during the war to aid those on the front lines, continued across the United States as engineers and programmers rushed to complete their confidential assignments. Among them were six pioneering women, tasked with figuring out how to program the world’s first general-purpose, programmable, all-electronic computer—better known as the ENIAC— even though there were no instruction codes or programming languages in existence. While most students of computer history are aware of this innovative machine, the great contributions of the women who programmed it were never told -- until now. Over the course of a decade, Kathy Kleiman met with four of the original six ENIAC Programmers and recorded extensive interviews with the women about their work. *Proving*

Ground restores these women to their rightful place as technological revolutionaries. As the tech world continues to struggle with gender imbalance and its far-reaching consequences, the story of the ENIAC Programmers' groundbreaking work is more urgently necessary than ever before, and *Proving Ground* is the celebration they deserve."

[Some of It Was Real](#) by Nan Fischer

Berkley (July 26, 2022) 352 pages.

"A psychic on the verge of stardom who isn't sure she believes in herself and a cynical journalist with one last chance at redemption are brought together by secrets from the past that also threaten to tear them apart. Psychic-medium Sylvie Young starts every show with her origin story, telling the audience how she discovered her abilities. But she leaves out a lot—the plane crash that killed her parents, an estranged adoptive family who tend orchards in rainy Oregon, panic attacks, and the fact that her agent insists she research some clients to ensure success. After a catastrophic reporting error, Thomas Holmes's next story at the L.A. Times may be his last, but he's got a great personal pitch. "Grief vampires" like Sylvie who prey upon the loved ones of the deceased have bankrupted his mother. He's dead set on using his last-chance article to expose Sylvie as a conniving fraud and resurrect his career. When Sylvie and Thomas collide, a game of cat and mouse ensues, but the secrets they're keeping from each other are nothing compared to the mysteries and lies they unearth about Sylvie's past. Searching for the truth might destroy them both—but it's the only way to find out what's real."

[The Birdcage](#) by Eve Chase

G.P. Putnam's Sons (July 19, 2022) 368 pages.

"In the spirit of Lisa Jewell and Kate Morton, an emotional mystery set in the rugged remote landscape of north Cornwall full of dark secrets and twists, about three unusual sisters forced to confront the past. Some secrets need to be set free...When half-sisters Kat, Flora, and Lauren are unexpectedly summoned to Rock Point, their wild and remote Cornish summer home, it's not a welcome invitation. They haven't been back since that fateful summer twenty years ago—a summer they're desperate to forget. But when they arrive, it's clear they're not alone. Someone is lurking in the shadows, watching their every move. Someone who remembers exactly what they did...Will the sisters be able to protect the dark past of Rock Point? Or are some secrets too powerful to remain under lock and key?"

[The Book of Gothel](#) by Mary McMyne

Redhook (July 26, 2022) 368 pages.

"Everyone knows the story of Rapunzel in the tower, but do you know the story of the witch who put her there? Told from her own perspective, *The Book of Gothel* is a lush, historical retelling filled with dark magic, crumbling towers, mysterious woods, and evil princes. This is the truth they never wanted you to know, as only a witch might tell it. Haelewise has always lived under the shadow of her mother, Hedda—a woman who will do anything to keep her daughter protected. For with her strange black eyes and even stranger fainting spells, Haelewise is shunned by her village, and her only solace lies in the stories her mother tells of child-stealing witches, of princes in wolf-skins, of an ancient tower cloaked in mist, where women will find shelter if they are brave enough to seek it. Then, Hedda dies, and Haelewise is left unmoored. With nothing left for her in her village, she sets out to find the legendary

tower her mother used to speak of—a place called Gothel, where Haelewise meets a wise woman willing to take her under her wing. But Haelewise is not the only woman to seek refuge at Gothel. It's also a haven for a girl named Rika, who carries with her a secret the Church strives to keep hidden. A secret that reveals a dark world of ancient spells and murderous nobles behind the world Haelewise has always known..."

[The Daughter of Doctor Moreau](#) by Silvia Moreno-Garcia

Del Rey (July 19, 2022) 320 pages.

"Carlota Moreau: A young woman growing up on a distant and luxuriant estate, safe from the conflict and strife of the Yucatán peninsula. The only daughter of a researcher who is either a genius or a madman. Montgomery Laughton: A melancholic overseer with a tragic past and a propensity for alcohol. An outcast who assists Dr. Moreau with his experiments, which are financed by the Lizaldes, owners of magnificent haciendas and plentiful coffers. The hybrids: The fruits of the doctor's labor, destined to blindly obey their creator and remain in the shadows. A motley group of part human, part animal monstrosities. All of them live in a perfectly balanced and static world, which is jolted by the abrupt arrival of Eduardo Lizalde, the charming and careless son of Dr. Moreau's patron, who will unwittingly begin a dangerous chain reaction. For Moreau keeps secrets, Carlota has questions, and, in the sweltering heat of the jungle, passions may ignite. *The Daughter of Doctor Moreau* is both a dazzling historical novel and a daring science fiction journey."

[The Finalists](#) by David Bell

Berkley (July 5, 2022) 400 pages.

"On a beautiful spring day, six college students with nothing in common besides a desperate inability to pay for school gather to compete for the prestigious Hyde Fellowship. The six of them must surrender their devices when they enter Hyde House, an aging Victorian structure that sits in a secluded part of campus. Once inside, the doors lock behind them. The students are not allowed to leave until they spend eight hours with a college administrator who will do almost anything to keep the school afloat, and Nicholas Hyde, the privileged and notoriously irresponsible heir to the Hyde family fortune. If the students leave before time is up, they'll be immediately disqualified. But when one of the six finalists drops dead, the other students fear they're being picked off one by one. With a violent protest raging outside, and no way to escape, the survivors viciously turn on each other. *The Finalists* is a chilling and profound look at the lengths both students and colleges will go to survive in a resource-starved academic world."

[The Force of Such Beauty: A Novel](#) by Barbara Bourland

Dutton (July 19, 2022) 400 pages.

"After a failed attempt at escape, the princess of a tiny kingdom begins to reevaluate her life. Caroline, a former marathon runner who dropped out of school at fourteen to pursue an Olympic medal, was the perfect candidate for a tiara: shapely, disciplined, accustomed to public attention, and utterly uneducated. After she meets Finn, the handsome prince of a small European kingdom, her fate is sealed. With a collar of pearls locked around her throat and a rope of diamonds leashing her to a balcony, Caroline uses her once-powerful body to smile, wave, and produce children with perfect grace. But once

she begins to open her eyes to the world around her—and examine her own reflection—Caroline discovers that she may have entered a bargain that cannot be undone. Barbara Bourland’s stunning third novel is her most ambitious and most imaginative book to date. Inspired by accounts of real-life princesses who yearned to escape, and set in a grotesque and gaudy prerecession 2000s Europe, *The Force of Such Beauty* is a heart-wrenching and compulsively readable testament to the way in which real-life power structures around the world ultimately rest on the subjugation of women’s bodies.”

[Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow: A Novel](#) by Gabrielle Zevin

Knopf (July 5, 2022) 416 pages.

“On a bitter-cold day, in the December of his junior year at Harvard, Sam Masur exits a subway car and sees, amid the hordes of people waiting on the platform, Sadie Green. He calls her name. For a moment, she pretends she hasn’t heard him, but then, she turns, and a game begins: a legendary collaboration that will launch them to stardom. These friends, intimates since childhood, borrow money, beg favors, and, before even graduating college, they have created their first blockbuster, *Ichigo*. Overnight, the world is theirs. Not even twenty-five years old, Sam and Sadie are brilliant, successful, and rich, but these qualities won’t protect them from their own creative ambitions or the betrayals of their hearts. Spanning thirty years, from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Venice Beach, California, and lands in between and far beyond, Gabrielle Zevin’s *Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow* is a dazzling and intricately imagined novel that examines the multifarious nature of identity, disability, failure, the redemptive possibilities in play, and above all, our need to connect: to be loved and to love. Yes, it is a love story, but it is not one you have read before.”



Book descriptions provided by publishers.
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