



The Next Chapter: August 2022 Book Recommendations

[*A Place in the World: Finding the Meaning of Home*](#) by Frances Mayes
Crown (August 23, 2022) 304 pages.

“A lyrical and evocative collection of personal stories from the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Under the Tuscan Sun*, in which the queen of wanderlust reflects on the comforts of home.

Though Frances Mayes is known for her travels, she has always sought a sense of home wherever she goes. In this poetic testament to the power of place in our lives, Mayes reflects on the idea of home, from the earliest imprint of four walls to the startling discoveries of feeling the strange ease of homes abroad, friends’ homes, and even momentary homes that spark desires for other lives. Her musings are all the more poignant after so many have spent their long pandemic months at home. From her travels across Italy—Tuscany, of course, but also Venice and Capri—to the American South, France, and Mexico, Mayes examines the connective tissue among them through the homes she’s inhabited. *A Place in the World* explores Mayes’s passion and obsessions with houses and the things that inhabit them—old books, rich food, beloved friends, transportive art. The indelible marks each refuge has left on her and how each home influenced the next serve as the foundations of its chapters. Written in Mayes’s signature intimate style, *A Place in the World* captures the adventure of moving on while seeking comfort in the cornerstone closest to all of us—home.”

[*Bookish People*](#) by Susan Coll
Harper Muse (August 2, 2022) 336 pages.

“A perfect storm of comedic proportions erupts in a DC bookstore over the course of one soggy summer week—narrated by two very different women and punctuated by political turmoil, a celestial event, and a perpetually broken vacuum cleaner. Independent bookstore owner Sophie Bernstein is burned out on books. Mourning the death of her husband, the loss of her favorite manager, her only child’s lack of aspiration, and the grim state of the world, she fantasizes about going into hiding in the secret back room of her store. Meanwhile, renowned poet Raymond Chaucer has published a new collection, and rumors that he’s to blame for his wife’s suicide have led to national cancellations of his publicity tour. He intends to set the record straight—with an ultra-fine-point Sharpie—but only one shop still plans to host him: Sophie’s. Fearful of potential repercussions from angry customers, Sophie asks Clemi—bookstore events coordinator, aspiring novelist, and daughter of a famed literary agent—to cancel Raymond’s appearance. But Clemi suspects Raymond might be her biological father, and she can’t say no to the chance of finding out for sure. This big-hearted screwball comedy features an intergenerational cast of oblivious authors and over-qualified booksellers—as well as a Russian tortoise named Kurt Vonnegut Jr.—and captures the endearing quirks of some of the best kinds of people: the ones who love good books.”

[*I’m Glad My Mom Died*](#) by Jennette McCurdy
Simon & Schuster (August 9, 2022) 320 pages.

“Jennette McCurdy was six years old when she had her first acting audition. Her mother’s dream was for her only daughter to become a star, and Jennette would do anything to make her mother happy. So she

went along with what Mom called “calorie restriction,” eating little and weighing herself five times a day. She endured extensive at-home makeovers while Mom chided, “Your eyelashes are invisible, okay? You think Dakota Fanning doesn’t tint hers?” She was even showered by Mom until age sixteen while sharing her diaries, email, and all her income. In *I’m Glad My Mom Died*, Jennette recounts all this in unflinching detail—just as she chronicles what happens when the dream finally comes true. Cast in a new Nickelodeon series called *iCarly*, she is thrust into fame. Though Mom is ecstatic, emailing fan club moderators and getting on a first-name basis with the paparazzi (“Hi Gale!”), Jennette is riddled with anxiety, shame, and self-loathing, which manifest into eating disorders, addiction, and a series of unhealthy relationships. These issues only get worse when, soon after taking the lead in the *iCarly* spinoff *Sam & Cat* alongside Ariana Grande, her mother dies of cancer. Finally, after discovering therapy and quitting acting, Jennette embarks on recovery and decides for the first time in her life what she really wants. Told with refreshing candor and dark humor, *I’m Glad My Mom Died* is an inspiring story of resilience, independence, and the joy of shampooing your own hair.”

[Platonic: How the Science of Attachment Can Help You Make--and Keep-Friends](#) by Marisa G. Franco, PhD

G.P. Putnam's Sons (September 6, 2022) 336 pages.

“Is understanding the science of attachment the key to building lasting friendships and finding “your people” in an ever-more-fragmented world? How do we make and keep friends in an era of distraction, burnout, and chaos, especially in a society that often prizes romantic love at the expense of other relationships? In *Platonic*, Dr. Marisa G. Franco unpacks the latest, often counterintuitive findings about the bonds between us—for example, why your friends aren’t texting you back (it’s not because they hate you!), and the myth of “friendships happening organically” (making friends, like cultivating any relationship, requires effort!). As Dr. Franco explains, to make and keep friends you must understand your attachment style—secure, anxious, or avoidant: it is the key to unlocking what’s working (and what’s failing) in your friendships. Making new friends, and deepening longstanding relationships, is possible at any age—in fact, it’s essential. The good news: there are specific, research-based ways to improve the number and quality of your connections using the insights of attachment theory and the latest scientific research on friendship. *Platonic* provides a clear and actionable blueprint for forging strong, lasting connections with others—and for becoming our happiest, most fulfilled selves in the process.”

**[She's Up to No Good: A Novel](#) by Sara Goodman Confino
Lake Union Publishing (August 1, 2022) 395 pages.**

“For two women generations apart, going home will change their lives in this funny, poignant, and life-affirming novel about family, secrets, and broken hearts by the author of *For the Love of Friends*. Four years into her marriage, Jenna is blindsided when her husband asks for a divorce. With time on her hands and her life in flux, she agrees to accompany her eccentric grandmother Evelyn on a road trip to the seaside Massachusetts town where much of their family history was shaped. When they hit the road, Evelyn spins the tale of the star-crossed teenage romance that captured her heart more than seventy years ago and changed the course of her life. She insists the return to her hometown isn’t about that at all—no matter how much she talks about Tony, her unforgettable and forbidden first love. Upon arrival, Jenna meets Tony’s attentive great-nephew Joe. The new friendship and fresh ocean air give her the confidence and distance she needs to begin putting the pain of a broken marriage behind her. As the secrets and truths of Evelyn’s past unfold, Jenna discovers a new side of her grandmother, and of herself, that she never knew existed—and learns that the possibilities for healing can come at the most unexpected times in a woman’s life.”

[Stay Awake: A Novel](#) by Megan Goldin

St. Martin's Press (August 9, 2022) 352 pages.

“Liv Reese wakes up in the back of a taxi with no idea where she is or how she got there. When she’s dropped off at the door of her brownstone, a stranger answers—a stranger who claims to live in her apartment. She reaches for her phone to call for help, only to discover it’s missing. In its place is a bloodstained knife. Her hands are covered in scribbled messages, like graffiti on her skin: STAY AWAKE. Two years ago, Liv was thriving as a successful writer for a trendy magazine. Now, she’s lost and disoriented in a New York City that looks nothing like what she remembers. Catching a glimpse of the local news, she’s horrified to see reports of a crime scene where the victim’s blood has been used to scrawl a message across a window, similar to the message that’s inked on her hands. What did she do last night? And why does she remember nothing from the past two years? Liv finds herself on the run for a crime she doesn’t remember committing. But there’s someone who does know exactly what she did, and they’ll do anything to make her forget—permanently.”

[The Blame Game: A Novel](#) by Sandie Jones

Minotaur Books (August 16, 2022) 256 pages.

“Games can be dangerous. But blame can be deadly. As a psychologist specializing in domestic abuse, Naomi has found it hard to avoid becoming overly invested in her clients’ lives. But after helping Jacob make the decision to leave his wife, Naomi worries that she’s taken things too far. Then Jacob goes missing, and her files on him vanish. . . .But as the police start asking questions about Jacob, Naomi’s own dark past emerges. And as the truth comes to light, it seems that it’s not just her clients who are in danger.”

[The Many Daughters of Afong Moy: A Novel](#) by Jamie Ford

Atria Books (August 2, 2022) 384 pages.

“Dorothy Moy breaks her own heart for a living. As Washington’s former poet laureate, that’s how she describes channeling her dissociative episodes and mental health struggles into her art. But when her five-year-old daughter exhibits similar behavior and begins remembering things from the lives of their ancestors, Dorothy believes the past has truly come to haunt her. Fearing that her child is predestined to endure the same debilitating depression that has marked her own life, Dorothy seeks radical help. Through an experimental treatment designed to mitigate inherited trauma, Dorothy intimately connects with past generations of women in her family: Faye Moy, a nurse in China serving with the Flying Tigers; Zoe Moy, a student in England at a famous school with no rules; Lai King Moy, a girl quarantined in San Francisco during a plague epidemic; Greta Moy, a tech executive with a unique dating app; and Afong Moy, the first Chinese woman to set foot in America. As painful recollections affect her present life, Dorothy discovers that trauma isn’t the only thing she’s inherited. A stranger is searching for her in each time period. A stranger who’s loved her through all of her genetic memories. Dorothy endeavors to break the cycle of pain and abandonment, to finally find peace for her daughter, and gain the love that has long been waiting, knowing she may pay the ultimate price.”

[The Very Secret Society of Irregular Witches](#) by Sangu Mandanna

Berkley (August 23, 2022) 336 pages.

“A warm and uplifting novel about an isolated witch whose opportunity to embrace a quirky new family—and a new love—changes the course of her life. As one of the few witches in Britain, Mika Moon knows she has to hide her magic, keep her head down, and stay away from other witches so their powers don’t mingle and draw attention. And as an orphan who lost her parents at a young age and was raised by strangers, she’s used to being alone and she follows the rules...with one exception: an online account, where she posts videos "pretending" to be a witch. She thinks no one will take it seriously. But

someone does. An unexpected message arrives, begging her to travel to the remote and mysterious Nowhere House to teach three young witches how to control their magic. It breaks all of the rules, but Mika goes anyway, and is immediately tangled up in the lives and secrets of not only her three charges, but also an absent archaeologist, a retired actor, two long-suffering caretakers, and...Jamie. The handsome and prickly librarian of Nowhere House would do anything to protect the children, and as far as he's concerned, a stranger like Mika is a threat. An irritatingly appealing threat. As Mika begins to find her place at Nowhere House, the thought of belonging somewhere begins to feel like a real possibility. But magic isn't the only danger in the world, and when peril comes knocking at their door, Mika will need to decide whether to risk everything to protect a found family she didn't know she was looking for...."

[Wake: A Novel](#) by Shelley Burr

William Morrow (August 30, 2022) 368 pages.

"The tiny outback town of Nannine lies in the harsh red interior of Australia. Once a thriving center of stockyards and sheep stations, years of punishing drought have petrified the land and Nannine has been whittled down to no more than a stoplight, a couple bars, and a police station. And it has another, more sinister claim to fame: the still-unsolved disappearance of young Evelyn McCreery nineteen years ago. Mina McCreery's life has been defined by the intense public interest in her sister's case—which is still a hot topic in true-crime chat rooms and on social media. Now an anxious and reclusive adult, Mina lives alone on her family's sunbaked destocked sheep farm. Enter Lane Holland, a young private investigator who dropped out of the police academy to earn a living cracking cold cases. Before she died, Mina's mother funded a million-dollar reward for anyone who could explain how Evelyn vanished from her bed in the family's farmhouse. The lure of cash has only increased public obsession with Evelyn and Mina—but yielded no answers. Lane wins Mina's trust when some of his more unconventional methods show promise. But Lane also has darker motivations, and his obsession with the search will ultimately risk both their lives—and yield shocking results."

[Walking Gentry Home: A Memoir of My Foremothers in Verse](#) by Alora Young

Hogarth (August 2, 2022) 240 pages.

"*Walking Gentry Home* tells the story of Alora Young's ancestors, from the unnamed women forgotten by the historical record but brought to life through Young's imagination; to Amy, the first of Young's foremothers to arrive in Tennessee, buried in an unmarked grave, unlike the white man who enslaved her and fathered her child; through Young's great-grandmother Gentry, unhappily married at fourteen; to her own mother, the teenage beauty queen rejected by her white neighbors; down to Young in the present day as she leaves childhood behind and becomes a young woman. The lives of these girls and women come together to form a unique American epic in verse, one that speaks of generational curses, coming of age, homes and small towns, fleeting loves and lasting consequences, and the brutal and ever-present legacy of slavery in our nation's psyche. Each poem is a story in verse, and together they form a heart-wrenching and inspiring family saga of girls and women connected through blood and history. Informed by archival research, the last will and testament of an enslaver, formal interviews, family lore, and even a DNA test, *Walking Gentry Home* gives voice to those too often muted in America: Black girls and women."



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