

Books for August – January

Aug. 1 A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles

When, in 1922, he is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, the count is sentenced to house arrest in the Metropol, a grand hotel across the street from the Kremlin. Rostov, an indomitable man of erudition and wit, has never worked a day in his life, and must now live in an attic room while some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history are unfolding outside the hotel's doors. Unexpectedly, his reduced circumstances provide him a doorway into a much larger world of emotional discovery.

Sept. 2 The Story teller - Jodi Picoult

Sage Singer is a baker. She works through the night, preparing the day's breads and pastries, trying to escape a reality of loneliness, bad memories, and the shadow of her mother's death. When Josef Weber, an elderly man in Sage's grief support group, begins stopping by the bakery, they strike up an unlikely friendship. Despite their differences, they see in each other the hidden scars that others can't, and they become companions.

Everything changes on the day that Josef confesses a long-buried and shameful secret—one that nobody else in town would ever suspect—and asks Sage for an extraordinary favor. If she says yes, she faces not only moral repercussions, but potentially legal ones as well. With her own identity suddenly challenged, and the integrity of the closest friend she's ever had clouded, Sage begins to question the assumptions and expectations she's made about her life and her family. When does a moral choice become a moral imperative? And where does one draw the line between punishment and justice, forgiveness and mercy?

In this searingly honest novel, Jodi Picoult gracefully explores the lengths we will go in order to protect our families and to keep the past from dictating the future.

Oct. 3. One Good Mama Bone - Bren McClain

Set in early 1950s rural South Carolina, *One Good Mama Bone* chronicles Sarah Creamer's quest to find her mama bone, after she is left to care for a boy who is not her own but instead is the product of an affair between her husband and her best friend and neighbor, a woman she calls

Sister. When her husband drinks himself to death, Sarah, a dirt-poor homemaker with no family to rely on and the note on the farm long past due, must find a way for her and young Emerson Bridge to survive. But the more daunting obstacle is Sarah's fear that her mother's words, seared in her memory since she first heard them at the age of six, were a prophesy, You ain't got you one good mama bone in you, girl.

McClain's writing is distinguished by a sophisticated and detailed portrayal of the day-to-day realities of rural poverty and an authentic sense of time and place that marks the best southern fiction. Her characters transcend their archetypes and her animal-as-teacher theme recalls the likes of *Water for Elephants* and *The Art of Racing in the Rain*. *One Good Mama Bone* explores the strengths and limitations of parental love, the healing power of the human-animal bond, and the ethical dilemmas of raising animals for food."

Nov. 4 *Love Without Limits* - Jacqueline Bussie

Every day, millions of people lament the loss of civility, respect, and hope, and they wonder if it's possible to cultivate a love big enough to overthrow hate and heal our hurts. With courage, authenticity, and relevance, Jacqueline A. Bussie proclaims, "Yes! It's possible!" and urges readers to widen love's wingspan and to love as God loves--without limits or exceptions. In *Love Without Limits*, Bussie imparts practical solutions for people of faith who yearn to love across division and difference in these troubled times. Through poignant personal memoir, engaging theological reflection, inspiring true stories of boundary-busting friendships, creative readings of scripture, and surprising shout-outs to some of love's unsung heroes, Bussie challenges readers to answer God's call to practice a love so deep, it subverts the social order; so radical, it scandalizes the powerful; so vast, it excludes no one.

Dec. 5 *From Sand and Ash* - Amy Harmon

Italy, 1943—Germany occupies much of the country, placing the Jewish population in grave danger during World War II. As children, Eva Rosselli and Angelo Bianco were raised like family but divided by circumstance and religion. As the years go by, the two find themselves falling in love. But the church calls to Angelo and, despite his deep feelings for Eva, he chooses the priesthood.

Now, more than a decade later, Angelo is a Catholic priest and Eva is a woman with nowhere to turn. With the Gestapo closing in, Angelo hides Eva within the walls of a convent, where Eva discovers she is just one of many Jews being sheltered by the Catholic Church.

But Eva can't quietly hide, waiting for deliverance, while Angelo risks everything to keep her safe. With the world at war and so many in need, Angelo and Eva face trial after trial, choice after agonizing choice, until fate and fortune finally collide, leaving them with the most difficult decision of all.

Jan. 6 The Hamilton Affair - Elizabeth Cobbs

Set against the dramatic backdrop of the American Revolution, and featuring a cast of iconic characters such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and the Marquis de Lafayette, *The Hamilton Affair* tells the sweeping, tumultuous, true love story of Alexander Hamilton and Elizabeth Schuyler, from tremulous beginning to bittersweet ending—his at a dueling ground on the shores of the Hudson River, hers more than half a century later after a brave, successful life.

Hamilton was a bastard son, raised on the Caribbean island of St. Croix. He went to America to pursue his education. Along the way he became one of the American Revolution's most dashing—and unlikely—heroes. Adored by Washington, hated by Jefferson, Hamilton was a lightning rod: the most controversial leader of the American Revolution.

She was the well-to-do daughter of one of New York's most exalted families—feisty, adventurous, and loyal to a fault. When she met Alexander, she fell head over heels. She pursued him despite his illegitimacy, and loved him despite his infidelity. In 1816 (two centuries ago), she shamed Congress into supporting his seven orphaned children. Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton started New York's first orphanage. The only “founding mother” to truly embrace public service, she raised 160 children in addition to her own. With its flawless writing, brilliantly drawn characters, and epic scope, *The Hamilton Affair* will take its place among the greatest novels of American history.