
The Open Door Newsletter

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The Open Door

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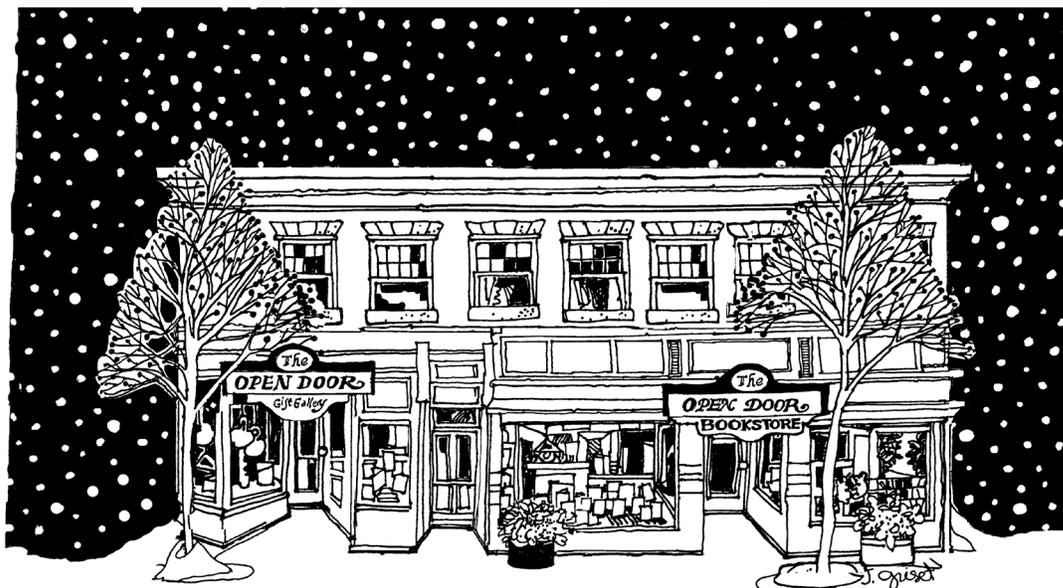
128 Jay Street

Schenectady, N. Y. 12305

Winter 2021

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Editor: Lynn Blankman



Congratulations!

Thanks to all the children who designed book jackets for their favorite books in our annual Children's Art Contest. Their beautiful artwork decorated our shop windows in November.

Congratulations to first prize winners Marlena Rose, Thomas Snow, Faith Williams, Cecilia Lawrence, and Jaxson Soria.

The Open Door

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Books for a winter night

Thank goodness for books as the pandemic drags on and on, and we must stay home. Do you need great fiction as much as we do? Here are some new titles we love. Available now or as noted.

* *The Prophets* by Robert Jones, Jr. is a tour de force debut novel about the forbidden love between Samuel and Isaiah, two young men enslaved on a plantation in the Deep South; the refuge and joy they find in each other; and a betrayal that threatens their existence. Jones's writing is gorgeous and evocative, the characters brilliantly realized, and the story a deeply emotional journey that will move and shake you. Set within the horror of American slavery, this is a powerful, riveting, and important tale of Black queerness that launches Jones into the company of writers like Ta-Nehisi Coates, Colson Whitehead, Toni Morrison, and James Baldwin. \$27.

* Camilla Bruce's *In the Garden of Spite* is an audacious fictionalized account of the murderous career of notorious real-life 19th-century serial killer Belle Gunness, "The Black Widow of La Porte." Diving deep into Belle's psyche and her backstory of deprivation and abuse, Bruce examines how Belle became ruthless in her pursuit of status and financial security and was ultimately responsible for killing 40-plus people. A horrifically fascinating chronicle, dark and twisty, macabre, and impossible to put down. Jan. 19 \$27

* In a windowless shack in the woods, Lena and her two children live a strictly regimented life imposed by their captor, the father, who maintains that he is protecting them from the outside world. One day Lena manages to flee, but the nightmare continues. Is she really the "Lena" who disappeared fourteen years ago? Her family swears she isn't the girl they lost, and they

and the police are all desperately trying to piece together a puzzle that doesn't quite seem to fit. Romy Hausman's suspenseful psychological thriller *Dear Child* is told from three points-of-view: the woman who escaped; the missing Lena's father, who would do anything to get her back; and the daughter raised entirely in that isolated world, a little girl with a photographic memory who may know more than she's letting on. \$26.99

* Kristin Hannah's latest novel, *The Four Winds*, opens in Depression-era Texas in 1934. Millions are out of work, farmers are fighting to keep their land as water is drying up; the crops are failing; and dust threatens to bury them all. In this precarious moment, Elsa Martinelli must make an agonizing choice: fight for the land she loves or trek to California, in search of a better life. Hannah crafts an epic story of love, heroism, and hope, an indelible portrait of America as seen through the eyes of one courageous and indomitable woman. Feb. 22 \$28.99

* If you're looking for a feminist western with heart and guts, you will love (I did!) Anna North's *Outlawed*, a riveting adventure story of a fugitive girl named Ada, a mysterious gang of robbers, and their dangerous mission to transform the Wild West. With an irresistibly bold and determined heroine, *Outlawed* dusts off the myth of the old West and reignites the promise of the frontier with an entirely new set of feminist stakes. An utterly original, unique, and captivating saga about the search for hope in the wake of death, and for truth in a climate of small-mindedness and fear. \$26

Lily Bartels
Book buyer

Open Door staff favorites

* **Mexican Gothic**, Silvia Moreno-Garcia. A chilling Gothic horror story set in the mountains of Mexico. Noemi's cousin sends a disturbing letter claiming to be a prisoner in her husband's home. Is it a haunted house? An evil family? Something else entirely? Noemi will risk everything to find out and you won't be able to put this book down until the very satisfying end. Alexandra \$27

* **The Storyteller's Secret**, Sejal Badani. Devastated by her third miscarriage and her unraveling marriage, Jaya journeys to India to look for healing by learning more about her family's past. Rich in cultural details, sights, and sounds of India, this novel reveals the story of Jaya's grandmother's life of tragedy,

resilience, and love. Jaya's journey displays the beauty of storytelling and its ability to help us be heard and understood, and gives her the strength to put her life back together. Janet \$14.95

* **The Darkest Evening**, Ann Cleves. In this newest addition to the Vera mystery series, the British detective must investigate a murder at her family's ancestral home. Not particularly welcomed, she must spend time with a family that dislikes her in order to solve the case. A great mystery with lots of false leads. I love all of the Vera books! Ellen \$27.99

* **The Forger's Daughter**, Bradford Morrow. This mystery involving the world of literary forgery takes place in an upstate NY farmhouse and Manhattan. A former forger is drawn back into the trade to create a copy of Poe's *Tamerlane and Other Poems*. Also an homage to the inventor of the detective tale, Edgar Allen Poe. John \$26

* **Marriage of Opposites**, Alice Hoffman. I am new to Alice Hoffman! This captivating novel takes place on St. Thomas and is based on the life of Rachel Pizarro and her favorite son, artist Camille Pizarro. The characters

are fascinating and the story is intriguing. The character of Pizarro and the backdrop of the islands reminded me of similarities with Alexander Hamilton's life. Vicki \$17

* **Today We Go Home**, Kelli Estes. Larkin has always been comfortable with "home" and her own identity, both in the Pacific Northwest and as a soldier in Afghanistan...until tragedy shatters her life. Recovering from PTSD at home with family, she discovers a diary of a woman who fought in the Civil War while disguised as a man. Through this diary, Larkin learns "to be a soldier, a woman needs determination, honor, and hope for a better day." Kelli Estes is a master of historical fiction as she interweaves the stories of two women in the military over a century apart. Janet \$15.99

* **Playing Nice**, JP Delaney. A compelling story about two babies switched at birth, the families trying to work with each other for the children's sake, and how far one would go to protect one's family. The story pulls you right in and keeps you guessing until the end. A gripping psychological thriller, just right for cold nights (and days, and any minute you have). Tina \$28

Dear friends!

We could never have imagined a year like this! We are so thankful for all of your support!

You helped us get through the lockdown months of March, April, and May with your web orders, emails and phone orders.

You welcomed us back when we were able to open our doors again in June. You have helped us navigate all the new guidelines by wearing your masks, keeping a distance, and at times waiting outside when we were at capacity.

Your patience was overwhelming!

You really took to heart our suggestion to shop early this holiday season to avoid disappointment, and to shop at local businesses! Your kind messages of support were appreciated and kept us going when things were tough. You were understanding when we began to warn that shipments were moving slowly and we could not make promises.

Your generosity with purchases of books for our Giving Tree with Northeast Parent & Child was more outstanding than ever.

Thank you, everyone, for all of this! We look forward to next year and celebrating our 50th anniversary with you.

Janet Hutchison
Owner

Getting through this winter



How to get through the dark days ahead? We've got suggestions!

Lily recommends:

* **We Did That?** Human Bloopers, Secret Histories Medical Mysteries ...

* **Cursed Objects:** Strange But True Stories of the World's Most Infamous Items

* **The Flip Side of History:** Strange News, Hard to Believe Headlines, and Other Curious Stories from History.

* Ina Garten's **Modern Comfort Food.**

Kathleen recommends a favorite family read-aloud: **The Illustrated Treasury of Classic Children's Stories.**

Karen and Lil recommend:

* Skin-soothing hand creams, lip balms and body lotions

* Scented candles and diffusers from Greenleaf

* Gourmet chocolate bars and homemade fudge. Indulge...

* Alpaca socks for winter walks, plus warm scarves, hats, mittens, and blankets

* Trivia games by Wild & Wolf and a new company, Ginger Fox.

Ellen recommends lots of puzzles and games to help entertain kids at home!

The Open Door staff

Snowy day books for boys and girls



* **Counting Creatures**, Julia Donaldson, Sharon King-Chai. From a bat and its pup to a frog and twelve tadpoles, this gorgeous lift-the-flap picture book offers a counting game that pairs parent animals with their babies. From the bestselling author of *Room on a Broom*. 3-5 \$20.99

* **Outside, Inside**, LeUyen Pham. Something strange happened on an unremarkable day just before the season changed: everyone who was outside went . . . inside. Outside, it was quieter, wilder, and different. Inside, we laughed, we cried, we grew — and we protected those we love and love the ones who protect us. A moving picture book celebrating essential workers and the community coming together to face the challenges of COVID-19. 3-6 \$18.99

* **Milo Imagines the World**, Matt de la Pena, Christian Robinson. Milo, on a long subway ride with his sister, studies the faces around him and makes pictures of their lives. Then, to his surprise, one of the passengers gets off at his stop and walks to the exact same place. From the team behind *Last Stop on Market Street* and *Carmela Full of Wishes*. 4-8 \$18.99 Feb. 2

* **Amari and the Night Brothers**, B.B. Alston. Amari has never stopped believing her missing brother, Quinton, is alive. Not even when the police told her otherwise, or when she got in trouble for standing up to bullies who said he was gone for good. Then she discovers a magical briefcase in his closet, and suddenly she is in a world of magicians, fairies, and aliens, fighting an evil magician to learn what happened to Quinton. 8-12 \$17.99

* **Alone**, Megan E. Freeman. When twelve-year-old Maddie hatches a scheme for a secret sleepover with her two best friends, she ends up waking to a nightmare. She's alone — left

behind in a town that has been mysteriously evacuated and abandoned. Perfect for fans of *Hatchet* and the *I Survived* series. 10+ \$17.99

* **Love Is a Revolution**, Renée Watson. When Nala attends an open mic night, she falls in instant love with Tye, an activist putting on community events for the summer. To impress him, she tells tiny lies, which become harder and harder to keep up. In this YA romance, plus size girls are beautiful, the girl clique has convictions, not mean intentions, and the ultimate love story is showing radical love to the people in your life — including yourself. 13+ \$18.99 Feb. 2

* **Concrete Rose**, Angie Thomas. Bestselling author Thomas revisits Garden Heights 17 years before the events of *The Hate U Give* in this searing and poignant exploration of Black boyhood and manhood. 14+ \$19.99 Jan. 12

Kathleen Kemp
Children's book buyer

Writing contest for girls and boys

Calling all writers in grades one through eight! The Open Door is accepting submissions for our annual children's writing contest.

All entries are due before March 5. Winners will receive store gift certificates at a celebration party in the spring. Call the store (346-2719) or go to www.opendoor-bookstore.com for more information.

The Open Door 2020 bestsellers

Our bestselling books may not be the same as those you see on national best-seller lists, because they reflect the unique tastes of The Open Door's customers.

Adult non-fiction

A Promised Land, Obama
How to Be an Anti-racist, Kendi
White Fragility, DiAngelo
Too Much and Never Enough, Trump
Between the World and Me, Coates
Caste, Wilkerson
Schenectady Genesis II, Gearing
Educated, Westover
The Splendid and the Vile, Larson
Is This Anything?, Seinfeld

Adult fiction

Manchester Christmas, Gray
I, Eliza Hamilton, Scott
Where the Crawdads Sing, Owens
American Dirt, Cummins
Chances Are..., Russo
The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, and the Horse, Mackesy
Little Fires Everywhere, Ng
All the Devils Are Here, Penny
The Overstory, Powers

Picture books

Margaret's Unicorn, Smith
Cozy, Brett
Happy Birthday from the Very Hungry Caterpillar, Carle
Llamas with Lemonade, Koultourides
Counting Creatures, Donaldson
Anti-Racist Baby, Kendi
Becoming a Good Creature, Montgomery
Loon, Vande Griek
Erie Canal, Spier
Hair Love, Cherry

Older Readers

Blackbird Girls, Blankman
One Crazy Summer, Williams-Garcia
Dogman Grime and Punishment, Pilkey
Guts, Telgemeier
Rowley Jefferson's Awesome Friendly Adventure, Kinney
The Mouse and the Motorcycle, Cleary
Midnight Sun, Meyer
This Is Your Time, Bridges
Stamped, Reynolds
Bill Nye's Great Big World of Science, Nye

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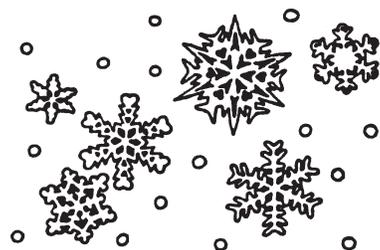
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Ways to save at The Open Door

We offer many ways to save on purchases at The Open Door—and many special services, including fast book orders (usually 2-3 days) and website book ordering (www.opendoor-bookstore.com). Here are some of the many ways you can save:

- * Sign up for our Rewards Program and earn a Rewards Certificate to use on any store merchandise!
- * Reading groups, save 15%.
- * Save 20% with our newsletter coupon.
- * Teachers, save 20%.
- * Save 20 percent with our Revolving Sale.
- * Seniors, save 15% on Tuesdays.
- * Everyone, save 50% on our Bargain Books!

Complete details available in the store.



Remember your Valentine!

Treat your special someone on Valentine's Day with the perfect gift from The Open Door. Stop in to see our valentine cards and decorations, candy, jewelry, glass hearts, romantic fragrances, and scented candles to create a special mood, and many other treats for your sweetie.