

Alderman, Naomi- Disobedience (set of 20)

By the age of 32, Ronit has left London and transformed her life. She has become a cigarette-smoking, wise-cracking, New York career woman, who is in love with a married man. But when Ronit's father dies she is called back into the very different world of her childhood, a world she thought she had left far behind.

Armitage, Simon-Sir Gawain & Green Knight (Non Fiction) (set of 20)

Rediscovered only 200 years ago, and published for the first time in 1839, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is one of the earliest great stories of English literature. It narrates in crystalline verse the strange tale of a green knight on a green horse, who challenges the virtuous Gawain to a wager, resulting in a fantastical quest. Simon Armitage's new version is meticulously responsible to the tact and sophistication of the original, but is utterly deserving of being read as an original new poem. It is as if, six hundred years apart, two northern poets set out on a journey through the same mesmeric landscapes - acoustic, physical and metaphorical.

Atwood, Margaret-The Penelopiad (set of 20)

When Odysseus goes off to fight the Trojan War, his wife Penelope manages to keep over a hundred suitors at bay. When Odysseus comes home, he kills her suitors and - curiously - twelve of her maids. What led to the hanging of the maids, and what was Penelope really up to? This book sets out to provide an answer to an ancient mystery.

Bennett, Arnold-Anna of the Five Towns (set of 20)

The first of Arnold Bennett's novels set in the Five Towns, this novel about a young woman and her father grapples with his dual fascination with the Puritan work ethic and with the opulent life of the rich. Bennett called it "a sermon against parental tyranny."

Bryson, Bill-Life and Times Thunderbolt Kid (set of 20)

The universally acclaimed travel writer, and author of the popular science guide. *A Short history of nearly everything*, Bill Bryson takes a personal journey into his own Mid- Western childhood in this funny memoir. A tale about growing up in 1950s America, this is also everyone's story, one that will speak volumes to anyone who has ever been young. 'A wittily incisive book about innocence and its limits, but in no sense an innocent book...

Dawkins, Richard-The God Delusion (set of 20)

The *God Delusion* caused a sensation when it was published in 2006. Within weeks it became the most hotly debated topic, with Dawkins himself branded as either saint or sinner for presenting his hard-hitting, impassioned rebuttal of religion of all types. His argument could hardly be more topical. While Europe is becoming increasingly secularized, the rise of religious fundamentalism, whether

in the Middle East or Middle America, is dramatically and dangerously dividing opinion around the world. Dawkins attacks God in all his forms. He eviscerates the major arguments for religion and demonstrates the supreme improbability of a supreme being. He shows how religion fuels war, foments bigotry and abuses children. The God Delusion is a brilliantly argued, fascinating polemic that will be required reading for anyone interested in this most emotional and important subject.

Desai, Kiran-The Inheritance of Loss (set of 20)

At the foot of Mount Kanchenjunga in the Himalayas, an embittered old judge's life is changed by the arrival of his orphaned granddaughter, Sai. A Nepalese insurgency threatens her romance with her tutor, and the judge must revisit his past and his role in this grasping world of conflicting desires. A brilliant, bittersweet family saga and a powerful reflection of modern times, which won last year's Man Booker Prize, and was book of the year for a range of newspapers. 'Affecting and endearing, full of laughter and tears'

Edwards, Kim-The Memory Keeper's Daughter (set of 20)

The night Dr David Henry delivers his wife's twins is a night that will haunt five lives for ever. For though David's son is a healthy boy, his daughter has Down's syndrome. And, in a shocking act of betrayal whose consequences only time will reveal, he tells his wife their daughter died while secretly entrusting her care to a nurse.

Franklin, Ariana- Mistress of the Art of Death (set of 20)

In Cambridge a child has been hideously murdered and other children have disappeared. The Jews, made scapegoats by the all-powerful Christian clergy, have been forced to retreat into the castle to avoid slaughter by angry townspeople. Henry, King of England, is displeased. The Jews provide a large part of his revenue and therefore the real killer must be found, and quickly. A renowned investigator, Simon of Naples, is recruited and he arrives in town from the continent accompanied by an Arab and a young woman, Adelia Aguilar. There are few female doctors in 12th century Europe, but Adelia is one of them, having qualified at the great School of Medicine in Salerno. What's more, her speciality is the study of corpses. She is, in fact, a mistress of the art of death, a skill that must be concealed in case she's accused of witchcraft. Adelia's investigation takes her deep into Cambridge, its castle and convents and in a medieval city teeming with life, Adelia makes friends and even finds romance. And, fatally, the attention of a murderer who is prepared to kill again...

Gaskell, Elizabeth-North and South (set of 20)

When her father leaves the Church, Margaret Hale is uprooted from her comfortable home in Hampshire to move with her family to the North of England. Initially repulsed by the ugliness of her new surroundings in the industrial town of Milton, Margaret becomes aware of the poverty and suffering of local mill workers

and develops a passionate sense of social justice. In *North and South* Gaskell skillfully fused individual feeling with social concern and in Margaret Hale created one of the most original heroines of Victorian literature.

Greene, Graham-The Quiet American (set of 20)

Pyle is a young idealistic American sent to promote democracy in colonial Vietnam in the 1950's through a mysterious 'Third Force'. As his naive optimism starts to cause bloodshed, his friend Fowler, a cynical foreign correspondent, finds it hard to stand aside and watch. But even as he intervenes he wonders why: for the sake of politics, or for love?

Guo, Xiaolu-Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for lovers (set of 20)

Twenty-three-year-old Zhuang (or Z as she calls herself) arrives in London to spend a year learning English. Struggling to find her way in the city, and through the puzzles of tense, verb and adverb; she falls for an older Englishman and begins to realise that the landscape of love is an even trickier terrain.

Hemingway, Ernest- For Whom the Bell Tolls (set of 20)

'For Whom the Bell Tolls' is a 1940 novel by Ernest Hemingway. It tells the story of Robert Jordan, a young American in the International Brigades attached to an anti-fascist guerilla unit in the mountains during the Spanish Civil War. As an expert in the use of explosives, he is given an assignment to blow up a bridge to accompany a simultaneous attack on the city of Segovia

Holland, Jane- Boudicca & Co. (set of 20)

Sensual and politically engaged, 'Boudicca & Co.' drives narrative poetry in new feminist directions. It creates a cast of strong provocative female characters with complex agendas, centred around a controversial sequence of poems in the voice of Boudicca. A collection with a powerful sense of place and purpose.

Hosseini, Khaled-A Thousand Splendid Suns (set of 20)

Mariam is only fifteen when she is sent to Kabul to marry Rasheed. Nearly two decades later, a friendship grows between Mariam and a local teenager, Laila, as strong as the ties between mother and daughter. When the Taliban take over, life becomes a desperate struggle against starvation, brutality and fear. Yet love can move a person to act in unexpected ways, and lead them to overcome the most daunting obstacles with a startling heroism.

Husain, Ed-The Islamist (set of 20)

This is my story. When I was sixteen I became an Islamic fundamentalist. Five years later, after much emotional turmoil, I rejected fundamentalist teachings and returned to normal life and my family. I tried to put my experiences behind me, but as the events of 7/7 unfolded it became clear to me that Islamist groups pose a threat to this country that we - Muslims and non-Muslims alike - do not yet understand. Why are young British Muslims becoming extremists? What are the

risks of another home-grown terrorist attack on British soil? By describing my experiences inside these groups, the reasons I joined them and how, after leaving I recovered my faith and mind, I hope to explain the appeal of extremist thought, how fanatics penetrate Muslim communities and the truth behind their agenda of subverting the West and moderate Islam. Writing candidly about life after extremism, I illustrate the depth of the problem that now grips Muslim hearts and minds. I will lay bare what politicians and Muslim 'community leaders' do not want you to know. This is the first time an ex-member openly discusses life within radical Islamic organisations.

James, Henry- What Maisie knew (set of 20)

The child of parents who divorce, remarry and then embark on adulterous affairs, Maisie Farange survives by her intelligence and spirit. For all its sombre theme of childhood innocence exposed to a corrupted adult world, this novel is one of James' comic masterpieces. The outrageous behaviour of the characters on the seedy fringes of the English upper class is conveyed with wit and relish. The dual perspective of a sophisticated narrator richly appreciative of the absurdities of the adult sexual merry-go-round and the candid vision of Maisie, 'rebounding' from one parent to another like a 'shuttlecock', together create an 'associational magic'. Strangely and unexpectedly, from so much that is tawdry, comes a tale of moral energy and subtlety. James' foresight was in understanding the modernity of his subject, which is even more relevant today in the twenty-first century.

Kernick, Simon-Relentless (set of 20)

John Meron, a happily married father of two who's never been in trouble, receives a phone call that will change his life for ever. His friend Jack Calley, a high-flying City lawyer, is screaming down the phone for help. As Meron listens, Calley is murdered. His last words, spoken to his killer, are the first two lines of Meron's address. Confused and terrified, Meron scoops up his children and hurries out of the house. Just in time. Within minutes, a car pulls up outside, and three men get out. It's clear that they're coming for him. He's being hunted and has no idea why. And with his wife missing, an unidentified corpse in her office, and the police after him for murder, his life's about to get a lot worse.

Kerouac, Jack-On the Road (set of 20)

On the Road swings to the rhythms of 1950s underground America, jazz, sex, generosity, chill dawns and drugs, with Sal Paradise and his hero Dean Moriarty, traveller and mystic, the living epitome of Beat. Now recognized as a modern classic, its American Dream is nearer that of Walt Whitman than Scott Fitzgerald, and it goes racing towards the sunset with unforgettable exuberance, poignancy and autobiographical passion.

Lewycka, Marina-Two Caravans (set of 20)

A field of strawberries in Kent...

And sitting in it two caravans – one for the men and one for the women. The residents are from all over: miner's son Andriy is from the old Ukraine, while sexy young Irina is from the new: they eye each other warily. There are the Poles Tomasz and Yola, two Chinese girls and Emanuel from Malawi. They're all here to pick strawberries in England's green and pleasant land.

But these days England's not so pleasant for immigrants. Not with Russian gangster-wannabes like Vulk, who's taken a shine to Irina and thinks kidnapping is a wooing strategy. And so Andriy must set off in search of that girl he's not in love with.

McEwan, Ian-On Chesil Beach (set of 20)

It is June, 1962. In a hotel on the Dorset coast, overlooking Chesil Beach, Edward and Florence, who got married that morning, are sitting down to dinner in their room. Neither is entirely able to suppress their anxieties about the wedding night to come ..*On Chesil Beach* is another masterwork from Ian McEwan - a story about how the entire course of a life can be changed by a gesture not made or a word not spoken.

Morton, Kate-The House at Riverton (set of 20)

Summer 1924: On the eve of a glittering Society party, by the lake of a grand English country house, a young poet takes his life. The only witnesses, sisters Hannah and Emmeline Hartford, will never speak to each other again. Winter 1999: Grace Bradley, 98, one-time housemaid of Riverton Manor, is visited by a young director making a film about the poet's suicide. Ghosts awaken and memories, long-consigned to the dark reaches of Grace's mind, begin to sneak back through the cracks. A shocking secret threatens to emerge; something history has forgotten but Grace never could. A thrilling mystery and a compelling love story, *The House at Riverton* will appeal to readers of Ian McEwan's *Atonement*, L.P. Hartley's *The Go-Between*, and lovers of the film *Gosford Park*.

Nemirovsky, Irene- Suite Francaise (set of 20)

Set during a year that begins with France's fall to the Nazis in June 1940 and ending with Germany turning its attention to Russia, this book falls into two parts. It depicts a group of Parisians as they flee the Nazi invasion; and follows the inhabitants of a rural community under occupation who find themselves thrown together in unexpected ways.

Penney, Stef-The Tenderness of Wolves (set of 20)

It is 1867, Canada: as winter tightens its grip on the isolated settlement of Dove River, a man is brutally murdered and a 17-year old boy disappears. Tracks leaving the dead man's cabin head north towards the forest and the tundra beyond. In the wake of such violence, people are drawn to the township - journalists, Hudson's Bay Company men, trappers, traders - but do they want to solve the crime or exploit it? One-by-one the assembled searchers set out from Dove River, pursuing the tracks across a desolate

landscape home only to wild animals, madmen and fugitives, variously seeking a murderer, a son, two sisters missing for 17 years, a Native American culture, and a fortune in stolen furs before the snows settle and cover the tracks of the past for good. In an astonishingly assured debut, Stef Penney deftly weaves adventure, suspense, revelation and humour into a panoramic historical romance, an exhilarating thriller and a keen murder mystery.

Rubinfeld, Jed-The Interpretation of Murder (set of 20)

A dazzling literary thriller - the story of Sigmund Freud assisting a Manhattan murder investigation. Think *shadow of the wind* meets *the historian*. This is an inventive tour de force inspired by Sigmund Freud's 1909 visit to America, accompanied by protege and rival Carl Jung. When a wealthy young debutante is discovered bound, whipped and strangled in a luxurious apartment overlooking the city, and another society beauty narrowly escapes the same fate, the mayor of New York calls upon Freud to use his revolutionary new ideas to help the surviving victim recover her memory of the attack, and solve the crime. But nothing about the attacks - or about the surviving victim, Nora - is quite as it seems. And there are those in very high places determined to stop the truth coming out, and Freud's startling theories taking root on American soil.

Trevor, William-The story of Lucy Gault (set of 20)

Captain Gault has decided that his family must leave Lahardane. They are after all Protestants living in the big house in rural Cork, and the country is in turmoil. It is 1921. But 8-year-old Lucy can't bear to leave the seashore, the old house, the woods - so she hatches a plan. It is then that the calamity happens - an accident almost, but so vicious in its consequences that it blights the lives of the Gaults for years to come.

Tropper, Jonathan-How to Talk to a Widower (set of 20)

When Doug Parker married Hailey - beautiful, smart and ten years older - he left his carefree Manhattan life behind to live with her and her teenage son, Russ, in the suburbs. Three years later, Hailey has been dead for a year, and Doug, a widower at 29, just wants to drown himself in self-pity and whisky. But his family has other ideas...Russ is furious with Doug for not adopting him after Hailey died, and has fallen in with a bad crowd. Claire, Doug's irrepressible and pregnant twin sister, has just left her husband and moved in, uninvited, determined to turn his life around. Then there's Debbie, their younger sister, engaged to Doug's ex-best friend and maniacally determined to pull off the perfect wedding at any cost. Soon, Doug finds himself trying to forge a relationship with Russ, reconnecting with his own eccentric nuclear family, and reluctantly dipping his toes into the shark-infested waters of the second-time-around dating scene. It isn't long before his new life is spinning hopelessly out of control...