

Amy's Top 10 (okay, 12) Books of 2024

Endings and beginnings. Beginnings and endings. We tend to bookend our lives with these key moments and, often, they become the moments we recall and talk about the most. The moment you met the person you love the most. The hard goodbye. A child being born. Closing the door on a beloved house one last time. All the stuff that happens in between is important too, but it's the endings and beginnings that stick with us.

In the writing world, the beginning of a novel—the first page and sentence, really—can be the deciding factor for a reader to continue reading, for an agent to see promise in the manuscript, for a publisher to say yes. Fellow book lovers also know the thrill of a satisfying ending or the bewilderment that comes with an ending that lacks closure.

My top 10 picks this year either started out with a bang or ended with an interesting flourish and everything in between captured my interest in a variety of ways. Some stories opened with characters facing the end of something they held dear and were forced to create a new beginning. A few of the reads ended with an unexpected and thrilling twist.

As most who receive this list know, the overarching theme I find in my top 10 tends to mirror a theme in my real life. This year held many beginnings and endings for me and Dave. The biggest ending—and beginning—was our move from Albuquerque, New Mexico to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In fact, I finalized my picks while we trekked through Texas, Kansas and Iowa. Like all endings, saying goodbye to great friends and ABQ's beautiful landscape after three and a half years left us feeling melancholy, while saying hello to a bigger city on one of the Great Lakes also has us feeling excited. Two things can be true at once and that is the case here. We will miss what we loved about ABQ, and we're also jazzed to be exploring the Cream City and all it has to offer.

In my writing life, my search for an agent for my novel came to an end when Maria Vicente at P.S. Literary Agency emailed me to say she loved my manuscript. This, of course, has led to the beginning of finalizing my manuscript and, fingers crossed, finding a publisher in 2025. The market is uber tough. Editors and publishers estimate that the odds of being published are only 1-2%. That means they only accept, and publish, one or two out of every hundred manuscripts they receive. Regardless, this is the beginning of a wonderful relationship and I'm forever grateful to Maria for being a champion of my work.

I was also excited to begin the year-long [Bookends](#) program at the Stony Brook University – Southampton in July. Co-founded and co-directed by Meg Wolitzer and Susan Scarf Merrell, Bookends is a non-credit intensive to help writers turn their full-length manuscripts into polished form. The program accepts 12 writers each year and we are the eighth group. As a BookEnds fellow, I spend a year (June 2024 to July 2025) writing, revising, and editing my manuscript alongside eleven other incredible writers—two of whom are my podmates for the program. I couldn't have asked for better podmates in Jeanette and Layla. In our pod, we read each other's novels—more than once—and then discuss spots for improvement along with things that are working well. We're invested in each other's work and its success, something that can be challenging to find outside of MFA programs. I'll also be working with Bookends mentor, [Matt Klam](#), to refine my script.

I was honored to have short stories appear in [Passages North](#) and an [anthology](#) by the Southwest Writers Association. With so much focus on the novel, it felt good to return to the writing form that I adore. I also finished up a middle grade novel set in New Mexico and am hopeful that my agent will eventually take on this project too.

In my other writing life, I'm going on eight years at Fifth Third Bank and still enjoying the projects that come my way and the people I encounter in my work. As the saying goes, variety is the spice of life and I'm fortunate that my role offers me a wide variety of projects and initiatives.

Dave had an incredibly productive and creative year filled with endings and beginnings too. He began the year with recording sessions with his band [Radio Free ABQ](#), and ended the year with the final product—the best record of his musical career, [Destinations](#). If you haven't had a chance to purchase and listen, use the links above or visit any streaming service. You'll definitely find a song or two to love and you'll get a one-of-a-kind piece of art by Dave with your purchase. You can also hear a spoken word piece by me at the end of the song, "Mojave Phone Booth."

Dave and I talk a lot about our creative pursuits. I read his lyrics, and he reads my chapters, but this is the first time I've collaborated in this way on a portion of one of his songs. He asked me to write a piece for the end of the song and I decided to create a mashup of lines from the lyrics. I guess you could call it found poetry. I'm honored to be a very small part of such a great album.

Ending the band as they were continuing to become more popular and launching the record just before we left was emotionally tough but I'm sure he'll begin an equally great new lineup in Milwaukee, with more great hits—solo or with some bandmates—to come.

While most of 2024 was devoted to creating the album, Dave continued his lessons and musical conversations with world-class drummer and composer [Mark Guiliana](#). He made significant contributions at his job at UNM's [Cradle to Career Policy Institute](#), where he'll continue to work remotely now that we're in Milwaukee, including co-leading a research project that was cited in a Congressional hearing. Two good things that did not have to come to an end with our move.

On the family front, the Creelman clan had a rough latter half of the year. My oldest sister Christine had a life-threatening accident while she and her husband were at their home in Hilton Head in June. We are grateful that she survived, thanks to her husband performing CPR, a wonderful care team in Savannah and—I like to think—her Creelman-esque determination and strength. Even though she has a long road ahead, she continues to make progress in her recovery. She's truly a miracle and we're grateful for it.

Sadly, at the end of November, my sister-in-law Lisa passed away unexpectedly. We have a hole in our hearts and in our family that cannot be filled. Lisa was only 64. She had so much more life to live and things she wanted to do. It has my brother and his kids as well as our entire family bereft, but we're all trying to focus on our good memories and all of the incredible work she did as a nurse. Endings like this are something we can never fathom and beginning again after such a loss can feel impossible.

All of the above was a reminder that we cannot predict the future, nor can we control it. Certainly, there are things we can plan for and attempt to achieve but sometimes even the best-laid plans

take an unexpected turn. As I said to many friends who expressed their condolences when we lost our sister-in-law and nearly lost my sister, all we can do is love each other through it.

With that, it's time to end the personal stuff and begin with this year's top 10—I mean, 12! If this list is old hat to you, then you know the drill. As always, my picks aren't necessarily published in the current year. Why limit myself to a specific year when there are so many great books to read?

You also know that what I treasure most about this tradition is when you pass the list along to fellow book lovers, and then you and your pals email or message me with your fave reads so I can put them on my to-read list. If I read something you recommend and it makes the list, you get the credit you deserve.

I still dream of my list making it to other famous readers like Barack Obama, Martin Sheen, Oprah Winfrey, Jenna Bush Hager, Sarah Jessica Parker, Reese Witherspoon etc. etc. etc. or famous people I love like Dave Grohl from the Foo Fighters or Gary Lightbody from Snow Patrol or any of the authors in this year's list. Whatever degrees of separation you have from any of the above, feel free to use your connections and send the list along.

Like last year, you can order any of the top 10 books from my bookshop, [Amy's Page Turners](#), on Bookshop.org. You'll be supporting local bookstores instead of the beast that is Amazon.

Here's hoping that the end of 2024 treats you well and that your new year begins with lots of good times, good reads and good and loving people surrounding you. I wish you and yours a joyful, adventurous, healthy and creative 2025! As always, I'm grateful for the readership and the friendships this list has brought to me.

Amy's Top 10 of 2024

1. *Covenant of Water*, Abraham Verghese and *James*, Percival Everett

There was a three-way tie for my No. 1 pick this year until December. Each of the three books had elements of magical realism, a genre I adore. Then the three-way tie became a four-way tie when I finished my last book of the year. In past years, I've had a tie for first, but never with four books. So, I narrowed it down to the top two, *Covenant of Water* and *James*. Talk about bookending this year—I read *Covenant* at the beginning of the year and then read *James* at the very end.

Both feature history, love, loss and the social and political ills of the places where the novels of set. One is set in South India and the other in the confederate South of the Civil War-era United States but the meaning of family as well as racism and discrimination factor largely in both.

Covenant of Water won because the entire story as well as a few specific scenes stayed with me long after I read the last page. This door-stopper of a book was recommended to me by friend and former colleague, Brandon, who assured me that the 700-plus pages would fly by. He wasn't wrong. It's taken me longer to finish books with half the page count. While reading, I often wondered just how Verghese was able to write such a sweeping epic that weaves together a love story, a family "condition" (e.g. curse), medicine, secrets and more. I mean, he's a doctor, a professor and a novelist. I can barely do my day job and write a novel and he's written this epic as well as award-winning fiction and nonfiction. So impressive.

Anyhow, set in South India's Kerala, this novel follows three generations of a family where at least one person in each generation dies by drowning. The characters are larger than life and so is the setting. I learned so much about South India's culture and history while reading and I often paused to research something that interested me. The story begins in 1900 with a young girl entering into an arranged marriage with an older man. It ends in 1977 with the granddaughter of that girl making a shocking discovery. The young girl grows up to become Big Ammachi, the matriarch of the estate of Parambil. Within Parambil are other characters like Baby Mol as well as an aging elephant that stole my heart while reading.

Running in parallel to life at Prambil is the story of Digby Kilgour, a Scottish doctor who joins the Indian medical service. As the story transitions to the 1970s and Ammachi's granddaughter, Mariamma, the two storylines converge in a stunning way near the end of the book. Mariamma is a physician, and she is also the one who investigates her family's "Condition" to protect future generations. When she uncovers the deeper secret held by the prior two generations, it threatens to unravel all she knows to be true. Granted, there are times the plot lags but there's enough vivid description, history and emotional momentum along with calamities, diseases and fatal accidents that you can't help but continue to turn the pages to see who will prevail.

If you need to escape into fiction and enjoy learning a few things along the way, this may be the perfect book for you. Don't be intimidated by the length of the book. It's possible to set it down and pick back up again later without losing track of the narrative.

As for *James*, the entire time I was reading it, the word 'brilliant' kept coming to mind. Everett can turn a phrase like no other. His language is sharp and, with one simple sentence, he says more than some can say in an entire novel. Everett won the National Book Award and was short-listed for the Booker Prize with this reimagining of Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. I haven't read Finn in decades but that doesn't matter. You can read *James* without knowing Twain's tale and still feel the intensity in a story that is equal parts horrifying and humorous.

The enslaved Jim takes the point of view here as he and Huck Finn travel along the Mississippi. Finn runs away to escape his abusive father. Jim runs away to escape being sold to someone in New Orleans which would tear him from his family. He decides if he can get to freedom in Ohio, he'll make some money and return for his wife and daughter.

Jim can read and write but pretends not to around whites. He speaks in heavy dialect around Huck and other whites because "White folks expect us to sound a certain way and it can only help if we don't disappoint them... The better they feel, the safer we are", or "Da mo' betta dey feels, da mo' safer we be." The language play is both poignant and Everett's way of, according to one review, "lampooning the constructedness of racial identity and its various expressions (literary, linguistic, etc.)."

Jim and Huck make their way down and up the river slowly, encountering a variety of mishaps and near-deadly experiences that feature a few con artists, a minstrel group, a horribly violent slave owner and more. Occasionally they're separated, only to find each other again. They're always hungry, always minutes away from being discovered, always in need of fixing their raft or finding another way to move forward on their journey, always just steps away from freedom when that door shuts on them. Jim has a protective love for this curious and crafty young white boy and the reader finds out what's behind it near the middle of the story.

I finished this slim novel (it's a little over 300 pages) in three nights. So many lines stood out to me. Here's just one exchange between Huck and enslaved Jim when Huck is musing on joining the Civil War.

(Huck) "To fight in a war," he said. "Can you imagine?"

(Jim) "Would that mean facing death every day and doing what other people tell you to do?" I asked.

(Huck) "I reckon."

(Jim) "Yes, Huck, I can imagine."

2. *Bear*, Julia Phillips

Phillips' debut novel, *Disappearing Earth*, a novel of linked stories, made my top 10 list in 2019 so I was excited to read *Bear*. While her debut took us to Russia, *Bear* is set in the remote area of San Juan Islands off Washington state. There, two sisters are caring for their dying mother when a grizzly bear appears on the scene. The bear's appearance threatens to tear apart the bond between Elena and Sam, but I'm getting ahead of myself.

We meet Elena and Sam in their small home in the woods where they're caring for their mom who has cancer. They both work menial jobs and it's clear from the start that they don't have much but each other and their dream to leave home after their mother dies.

There is a folktale and fable quality to the story from the get-go and then the bear arrives at their door, attempting to claw its way in, and the fable-esque quality is heightened even more. Elena, the eldest of the two, is smitten with the bear. There's a dreamlike quality to the way she talks about the bear and then eventually begins to feed and track the bear—or is the bear tracking her—which seems to Elena to be a good luck charm in their lives. Sam, on the other hand, is terrified of the bear and sees it as both a menace and a bad omen. Sam seeks the enlists the help of a wildlife expert to get rid of the bear which causes a rift between the sisters—all while their mother continues to decline. With their dream of leaving the island for a better life seeming to fade, Sam goes to great lengths to break the spell the bear seems to have on her sister, only it does more harm than good.

Within the story is a commentary on working-class resentment of all the rich and beautiful people visiting the island as well as the pros and cons of sibling rivalries. The writing is as beautiful as the myth, magical realism and metaphor in this slim but devastatingly dramatic narrative. The ending made me gasp but I won't tell you if I was gasping out of fear, surprise or adoration for the bravery and raw beauty in Phillips' writing.

3. *The Snow Child*, Eowyn Ivey

As I mentioned above, the three novels tied for my top pick all had elements of magical realism or fables and fairy tales—this being the third novel in that tie. I picked up this book out of my favorite Little Free Library in our neighborhood. It's definitely my kind of book and I was surprised I'd never heard of it. It was written in 2012 and was a finalist for the Pulitzer in 2013. I certainly missed all of that, but I'm glad it showed up in the library. For those who have been following my top 10 list for a while, you also know I love Russian literature. *The Snow Child* is based on the based in the Russian folktale, *Snegurochka* which means "Snow Maiden." The story centers around a couple who build a child out of snow.

Ivey sets her rendition of the folktale in the 1920s in a desolate area of Alaska. Jack and Mabel, a childless couple, are trying to forge a new life in the Alaskan wilderness a few years after their only child was stillborn. Mabel is clearly still grieving and also lonely in this harsh area of the country. Jack is as remote emotionally as the wilderness they live in. One day, they build a snowgirl, but the next morning she is gone. It's then that they begin to catch glimpses of a small blonde girl sneaking around their property.

When they finally meet the child, she tells them her name is Faina and she belongs to the wilderness. Mabel recalls a book from her childhood that belonged to her father. The book included the story of "the Snow Maiden," a girl, half-human and half ice and snow, who comes into the life of a childless old couple. She begins to believe that Faina is that folktale child come to life with a red fox as her companion. As the couple bonds with Faina, one continues reading to decide whether Faina is simply a neglected child running free in the wilderness or if she is some sort of magical snow sprite. Jack discovers Faina's true origins but the folktale aspects of Faina and her relationship with the couple continue to play out in the narrative. The setting is as stunning as the story. If you're looking for a winter's tale, this should be at the top of your reading pile.

4. *Bright Objects*, Ruby Todd

The premise drew me into this novel and the writing kept me. It's 1997 in a small town in Australia where a comet named St. John is going to appear in the sky. Sylvia, who lost her husband in a hit-and-run accident two years before, is anxiously awaiting the comet's arrival because it's then that she can give herself permission to "finally leave the planet." Sylvia's plan to do away with herself takes a few different turns when she meets a stranger who appears at the funeral home where she works. His name is Theo St. John and he's the one who discovered the comet. Add to the cast of characters Sylvia's mother-in-law, Sandy, and a leader of a local doomsday cult who is also planning a strange celebration for the comet's arrival, and you have the makings of a story that focuses on love, death, truth and fate. Todd's writing is both philosophical and spiritual.

There's also a nice bit of history in the story since the St. John comet did indeed attract a large crowd in Australia, many of them assuming the end of the world was riding on that comet's tail. While I sensed a few of the twists in the story early on, I still enjoyed the read and had no problem suspending my disbelief. That said, the ending was a little melodramatic for my tastes. If you decide to read this book, I'd love to hear what you think!

5. *Wandering Stars*, Tommy Orange

One of the literary highlights of 2024 was attending the Santa Fe International Literary Festival where Tommy Orange spoke about his experience as an author and read from *Wandering Stars*. I also got to hear Anthony Doer give a talk which was equally wonderful. If you haven't read Orange's *There, There*, it's a must. While it didn't make my top 10 in 2019 when I read it, it was a contender. According to Orange, *Wandering Stars* is both a prequel and a sequel to *There, There*. It follows a family for over 150 years, from Jude Star escaping and surviving the Sand Creek Massacre in 1864 to the Bear Shield/Red Feather family in present-day Oakland. The characters inherit the trauma of their ancestors while continuing to face discrimination and other injustices, including the government-sponsored erasure of Native American identity, cultures, languages and beliefs.

Orvil Red Feather, who was hit by a bullet in *There, There* returns in this story. A star-shaped bullet shard is lodged in his body, threatening to burst into his bloodstream and poison him. He's

struggling and he tells of the struggles of his younger brothers, their great-aunt Opal Viola Victoria Bear Shield and Jacquie Red Feather, Opal's half-sister and recovering alcoholic.

Orange exercises his writing muscles in a variety of ways throughout the three sections of the book. Some sections are fast-paced, while others move slowly, allowing the reader to explore both history and character arc. Other chapters have a fever dream quality brought on by the circular thoughts of the characters who can't seem to find relief from both past and present-day trauma. The history is brutal, and Orange reminds us that it wasn't all that long ago that there was a "Kill the Indian, Save the Man" government campaign to eradicate Indigenous culture as well as its people is the generational trauma passed down to Orvil, Opal and others and we see the ramifications in their lives. It might sound like a depressing read but it's quite beautiful and also an important part of history that needs to be recognized and reconciled.

6. *Tell Me Everything*, Elizabeth Strout

I've read every book Strout has written, and I think she's appeared on my top 10 list more than any author, although Ann Patchett is in the running too. Once you think she can't plumb the depths of some of her beloved characters like Olive Kitteridge, Lucy Barton and Bob Burgess, she finds a way to continue their stories. I have to think this might be the last time she can go to this well and find the narrative water she needs, but I could be wrong.

It's autumn in Maine. Bob Burgess, as we know from other Strout books, is a lawyer. Somewhat reluctantly, he involves himself in a murder investigation of a man accused of killing his mother. He and his longtime friend, Lucy Barton, have been taking walks together and it's on these walks that they fall in love with each other even though Bob is married, and Lucy is living nearby with her ex-husband William. Lucy and William moved into a house in the area during Covid which was the topic of another one of Strout's books.

Meanwhile, Lucy is introduced to Olive Kitteridge, the cantankerous former school teacher who's living in a retirement community. When Lucy visits Olive, they share stories about people they've known. The stories are, at turns, mundane and surprising, but what they have in common is the impact the people have on both Lucy and Olive. As the murder investigation heats up, so does the relationship with Lucy and Bob. Just my opinion, but I think you have to be a Strout fan and have read her other novels to enjoy the connections she makes here between her characters. While I didn't enjoy this novel as much as some of her others it deserves to be on the list for Strout's singular voice and writing style and her ability to extend her characters' lives. I get the sense that she's truly going to miss them if this is the last installment for this big family of hers.

7. *The Cliffs*, J. Courtney Sullivan

Friend and fellow writer, Judy, recommended this to me in one of our numerous emails and chats about writing. It was the second book this year that was set in Maine. It sounded intriguing – a falling apart haunted house in the remote town of Awadapquit, a woman researching the history of the house and another woman who purchased it with her husband. Historian and archivist Jane Flanagan took refuge from her alcoholic mother and troubled sister in this Victorian house perched on a cliff overlooking the water. Abandoned for decades, Jane felt a sense of peace among the ruins. After graduating from college, Jane married her dream husband and then botches their relationship due to binge drinking not long after her mother's death.

She returns to Awadapquit to sell her own mother's home. It's here she meets Genevieve Richards, a wealthy woman who bought the old Victorian house on the cliff and renovates all of the historic value right out of it. Let's just say the ghosts in the house aren't very happy about that and have some unfinished secrets to tend to. Genevieve hires Jane to research the house and its pain-filled past. While unearthing the house's secrets held by its former owners, Jane must also contend with the pain in her own life, including her battle with alcoholism. The history of the house features accounts of Indigenous and Shaker women and asks the reader to contemplate whether the wrongs in one's past can ever be made right. The writing is lovely, and you get a history lesson in the process. This one is ready-made for a quiet vacation near a lake.

8. *The Searcher*, and *The Hunter*, Tana French

Many book-loving friends have encouraged me to read Tana French, including my favorite book bully, Ann. Ann and I "bully" each other into reading books we love; sometimes we even send those books to each other. No small task since these books travel from Ireland to the States or vice versa. Ann mentioned that she'd read *The Searcher* right about the time I was looking to add a mystery/crime novel to my list. It's a genre I don't read often but have read more of the past couple of years.

The Searcher and *The Hunter* are companion novels—*The Hunter* being the sequel—and I read them nearly back to back. They also aren't typical of French's other novels in her popular series, The Dublin Murder Squad. In *The Searcher*, Cal Hooper is our reluctant detective. After 25 years on the Chicago police force and a nasty divorce, he retreats to the seemingly quiet town of Ardnakelty, Ireland to build a new life and fix up a dilapidated cottage. Cal's desire to remain anonymous is thwarted by a local kid, Trey, whose brother has gone missing. Trey's home life isn't the best and Cal reluctantly agrees to investigate for Trey.

Meanwhile, Cal's neighbor Mart befriends him—even though Cal is looked upon as an outsider—and introduces Cal to some of the townspeople who become important to the investigation. But can Mart and some of the others be trusted? Cal uncovers more than just a few of the town's dark secrets. Like most great crime novels, French provides plenty of twists, clues and red herrings to keep you reading. There's a bit of a Western vibe to this story, at least in the "stranger comes to town" motif.

The Hunter continues with Cal and Trey two years later. Trey's father comes back to town after being absent for years and he brings along his sketchy friend who is convinced that there's gold hidden in the town. Cal can sense the con job immediately but some of his neighbors get caught up in the game, including Mart. And Trey's father is not only conning the town but also putting Trey's life at risk. Like most crime and mystery novels, twists, turns and double crossings abound but French also offers readers more interiority and character development than other commercial or mass fiction.

9. *North Woods*, Daniel Mason

I usually have one book on my list that comes with the "this is not a book for everyone" disclaimer. This year, it's *North Woods*. I enjoyed it but I also enjoy novels of interconnected stories, and I love stories that have a strong sense of place. Mason's novel centers around a yellow house in the woods of Massachusetts and those who occupy it over the course of four centuries.

The cast of characters who find refuge in the house—including a mountain lion—is as diverse as the seasons and history that unfold throughout the stories. There’s a young couple escaping their Puritan colony; an orchardist obsessed with apples; the orchardist’s odd twin daughters; a closeted painter who briefly finds his soulmate; a young Black mother fleeing slavery; a schizophrenic who hallucinates about the house’s former inhabitants (correctly so in some cases); a reporter for *True Crime* magazine; a recently widowed history buff and probably a couple of others I can’t recall. How Mason ties them all together is a literary feat and treat. It takes close reading at times to find the connections and you often have to wait several chapters before Mason connects one decade to another but it’s well worth the wait and the read.

10. *Playground*, Richard Powers

This was the second to last book I read for the year and it knocked a couple of others off the top 10. I was a huge fan of Powers’ *Overstory* and it made my list in 2019, followed by *Bewilderment* in 2022. I’d have to dig back through all of my lists but I think *Orfeo* made it to the top 10 one year as well. Powers is, in my opinion, a highly intelligent and daring writer. I learn something from him in every one of his books.

In *Playground*, Powers takes us to the French Polynesian island of Makatea and the ocean surrounding it. Sadly, I knew nothing of this island or its scarred history until I read this book. There’s a lot more I didn’t know about until I read this book. Powers weaves together the lives of four characters. Rafi Young and Todd Keane hail from Chicago but the island eventually plays a huge role in both of their lives. Ina Aroita grew up on the island and creates art out of plastic that washes ashore. Evie Beaulieu prefers being underwater more than living above sea level.

Rafi and Todd come of age at an elite Chicago high school and bond over a three-thousand-year-old board game called Go. Gaming and AI factor heavily into Keane’s future success while Rafi prefers literature. Both appear to also prefer Ina and she factors into a rift between the two friends. As the story develops, we learn that Makatea has been selected as the site for a floating city. But first, the island’s residents must vote to accept the project or turn the “seasteaders” away. Given the island’s past history of abuse at the hands of capitalism, the vote becomes contentious, especially when some learn that Keane is the mastermind behind the plan.

I can’t say much else without ruining the game and history lesson Powers creates for readers. This was a mind-bender of a story, and there would be plenty to discuss at a book group. In fact, I’m still thinking about this read so feel free to contact me if you want to talk about it after you’ve read it.

Books I Read In 2024

Novels written by my two BookEnds podmates! I hope they will be published someday so you can read them too!

Heaven & Earth Grocery Store, James McBride (thanks to Kevin for the reco)

Day, Michael Cunningham

Liar, Dreamer, Thief, Maria Dong

Hollow Beasts, Alisa Lynn Valdes

The Cloisters, Katy Hays

The Cabinets of Barnaby Mayne, Elsa Hart

The Feather Thief: Beauty, Obsession and the Natural History Heist of the Century, Kirk W. Johnson

The Dinosaur Artist: Obsession, Betrayal and the Quest for Earth’s Ultimate Trophy, Paige Williams

Covenant of Water, Abraham Verghese (thanks to Brandon for the reco)
The Art Thief: A True Story of Love, Crime and a Dangerous Obsession, Michael Finkel
The Searcher, Tana French (thanks to Ann and others for encouraging me to read French)
The Hunter, Tana French
The Traveling Feast, Rick Bass (thanks to Maria for the reco)
The Snow Child, Eowyn Ivey
Within Arm's Reach, Ann Napolitano
The Harpy, Megan Hunter
Wandering Stars, Tommy Orange
The Wife Upstairs, Rachel Hawkins
The Vaster Wilds, Lauren Groff (thanks for the reco, Maria)
Bear, Julia Phillips
The Love of My Life, Rosie Walsh
Grief is a Thing with Feathers, Max Porter
Cemetery of Untold Stories, Julia Alvarez
Bright Objects, Ruby Todd
The Wedding People, Alison Espach
Notes on Your Sudden Disappearance, Alison Espach
The Phone Booth at the Edge of the World, Laura Imai Messina (thanks to Wendy for the reco)
The River We Remember, William Kent Krueger (thanks to Wendy for the reco)
Tell Me Everything, Elizabeth Strout
Signs: The Secret Language of the Universe, Laura Lynn Jackson
The Blue Sisters, Coco Mellors
The Husbands, Holly Gramazio (thanks to my book bully friend, Ann)
Here One Moment, Liane Moriarty
The Cliffs, J. Courtney Sullivan (thanks to Judy for the reco)
Good Material, Dolly Alderton (thanks to Judy for the reco)
The Bee Sting, Paul Murray
Playground, Richard Powers (thanks to my friend Maria for reading this around the same time I did so we could talk about it)
James, Percival Everett
Classic for the year: *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Bronte