

Historical Novels

Escape *to* Another Time



Agincourt by Bernard Cornwell

An English mercenary banished to France during the Middle Ages finds himself slogging his way to Agincourt toward one of the most remarkable battles of the Hundred Years' War.

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

Death--the narrator of this book--meets the book thief, a 9-year-old girl, when he comes to take her little brother. The horrors of World War II are seen through a young German girl's eyes whose storytelling helps sustain her family, her neighbors, and the Jewish man they are hiding.

Cane River by Lalita Tademy

A riveting family saga chronicling four generations of women in the author's family who were born into slavery and their efforts to provide better lives for their children despite all odds.

Cutting for Stone by Abraham Verghese

A complicated, absorbing story progressing from India, to Ethiopia and then to America. Marion, the narrator of this fictional autobiography, is an identical twin born to a nun and a surgeon. As orphans, the twins develop a long-lasting antipathy to each other over both men's involvement with a young woman, but try to re-establish their relationship as they try to locate their long lost father.

A Fine Balance by Rohinton Mistry

Through the friendship between four individuals, this unforgettable book chronicles the sufferings of outcasts and innocents trying to survive in Indira Gandhi's "State of Internal Emergency" in the 1970s.

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society

by Mary Ann Shaffer & Annie Barrows

London writer Juliet Ashton investigates a book club formed during World War II on the island of Guernsey as a spur-of-the-moment alibi after its members are discovered breaking curfew by the Germans occupying their island. A charming read.

Honolulu by Alan Brennert

Born in Korea in 1897, only daughter Regret learns early on what she can expect from life: servitude, enforced submission, and being "sold" to the highest bidder. To avoid this fate, she becomes a mail-order bride for a Korean man living in Hawaii. This tropical paradise is depicted through the eyes of one of its poorer Asian immigrants.

Island of Exiles: A Mystery of Early Japan by I.J. Parker

In her fourth historical thriller featuring Sugawara Akitada, Parker tells a gripping tale of political intrigue and cold-blooded murder in the imperial household in eleventh-century Japan.

Loving Frank by Nancy Horan

A fictionalized story of the life of Mamah Borthwick Cheney, best known as the woman who wrecked Frank Lloyd Wright's first marriage. The scandal surrounding Wright and Cheney, an independent, educated woman at odds with the restrictions of the early 20th century, brings about a tragic end.

Madonnas of Leningrad by Debra Dean

In a novel that moves between the Soviet Union during World War II and modern-day America, Marina, an elderly Russian woman with Alzheimer's, vividly recalls working at the State Hermitage Museum during the height of the Nazi siege of Leningrad in World War II.

The March by E. L. Doctorow

This ambitious book recreates General William Tecumseh Sherman's Civil War march through Georgia and the Carolinas with 60,000 Union troops, leaving a 60-mile-wide trail of death, destruction, looting, thievery and chaos.

Outlander by Diana Gabaldon

In this time-travel romance set in Scotland, strong-willed and sensual Claire Randall leads a double life with a husband in one century and a lover in another. Torn between fidelity and desire, she struggles to understand her heart's intent.

Pillars of the Earth by Ken Follett

A fascinating story of the building of an English cathedral in the 12th century, involving the point of view and motivations of almost everyone involved: monastery priors, builders, kings and queens, and the ordinary men and women in the cathedral town.

The Power of One by Bryce Courtenay

Set in 1940's South Africa, Courtenay lovingly evokes an African landscape of small town and bush as he describes a young man's journey from a cruel boarding school to vindication in the copper mines of what is now Zambia.

Snow Flower and the Secret Fan by Lisa See

See's engrossing novel set in rural 19th-century China details the deeply affecting story of lifelong, intimate friends Lily and Snow Flower, their imprisonment by rigid codes of conduct for women, and their betrayal by pride and love.

Someone Knows My Name by Lawrence Hill

Abducted from Africa as a child and enslaved in South Carolina, Aminata Diallo dedicates her life to freeing herself and others during the American Revolution, in Nova Scotia, and in Sierra Leone.

Stormy Weather by Paulette Jiles

This engaging novel celebrates four strong women toughing out the Great Depression in the Texas dust bowl.

A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini

Following his best seller, *The Kite Runner*, Hosseini simultaneously captures the history of Afghanistan over the last thirty years and shows how women are treated in conservative Islamic societies.

The Other Boleyn Girl by Philippa Gregory

Two sisters compete for the greatest prize: the love of King Henry VIII of England.

Vivaldi's Virgins by Barbara Quick

This story depicts the dazzling world of Venetian society through the imagined life of the real Anna Maria dal Violin, a resident at a Venetian convent orphanage and music school, who became Antonio Vivaldi's renowned pupil.

Water for Elephants by Sara Gruen

A novel of star-crossed lovers set in the circus world circa 1932. Recently orphaned Jacob Jankowski joins a second-rate circus struggling to survive the Great Depression and ends up in charge of caring for the circus menagerie. He meets Marlena, the beautiful star of the equestrian act, her husband August, a twisted animal trainer and Rosie, the seemingly untrainable elephant that he finds a way to reach.

The Wild Girl : The Notebooks of Ned Giles, 1932 : A Novel by Jim Fergus

Ned's scrupulously detailed diaries vividly recount a nightmare of harrowing misadventures beginning the day in 1932 that the young photographer signs on to be a part of the Great Apache Expedition, one of dozens of men hoping to free the son of a wealthy Mexican rancher kidnapped by the Apaches, using a "wild" Apache girl as ransom.

The Women by T. Coraghessan Boyle

The life of Frank Lloyd Wright as told through the experiences of the four women who loved him.