

## An Unnecessary Woman Rabih Alameddine

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[A Season for Martyrs](#) Grove Press

“ Daring, dazzling . . . A tough, funny, heart-breaking book ” by the National Book Award – nominated author of *An Unnecessary Woman* (The Seattle Times). Detailing the impact of the AIDS epidemic in America and the Lebanese civil war in Beirut on a circle of friends and their families during the 1980s and 1990s, this “ absolutely brilliant ” novel mines the chaos of contemporary experience, telling the stories of characters who can no longer love or think except in fragments (Amy Tan). Clips and quips, vignettes and hallucinations, tragic news reports and hilarious short plays, conversations with both the quick and the dead, all shine their combined lights to reveal the way we experience life today in the debut novel of the author Michael Chabon calls “ one of our most daring writers. ” “ A provocative, emotionally searing series of connected vignettes . . . For a nonlinear novel the images chosen retain a remarkable cohesion. Often sexually frank or jarringly violent, they merge into a graphic portrait of two cultures torn from the inside. ” —Publishers Weekly “ [A] refreshing statement of honesty and endurance . . . Funny, brave, full of heart and willing to say things about war and disease, sexual and cultural politics that have rarely been said so boldly or directly before. ” —The Oregonian “ Rabih Alameddine is one rare writer who not only breaks our hearts but gives every broken piece a new life. ” —Yiyun Li *Nagasaki Grove/Atlantic, Inc.*

In this delightful, funny, and moving first novel, a librarian and a young boy obsessed with reading take to the road. Lucy Hull, a young children's librarian in Hannibal, Missouri, finds herself both a kidnapper and kidnapped when her favorite patron, ten-year-old Ian Drake, runs away from home. The precocious Ian is addicted to reading, but needs Lucy's help to smuggle books past his overbearing mother, who has enrolled Ian in weekly antigay classes with celebrity Pastor Bob. Lucy stumbles into a moral dilemma when she finds Ian camped out in the library after hours with a knapsack of provisions and an escape plan. Desperate to save him from Pastor Bob and the Drakes, Lucy allows herself to be hijacked by Ian. The odd pair embarks on a crazy road trip from Missouri to Vermont, with ferrets, an inconvenient boyfriend, and upsetting family history thrown in their path. But is it just Ian who is running away? Who is the man who seems to be on their tail? And should Lucy be trying to save a boy from his own parents?

The Barbarian Nurseries Ballantine Books

"Already an international sensation: a debut novel that tells a love story set in two countries in two radically different moments in time, bringing together a young man, his mother, a boa constrictor, and one capricious cat. In 1980s Yugoslavia, a young Muslim girl is married off to a man she hardly knows, but what was meant to be a happy match goes quickly wrong. Soon thereafter her country is torn apart by war and she and her family flee. Years later, her son, Bekim, grows up a social outcast in present day Finland, not just an immigrant in a country suspicious of foreigners, but a gay man in an unaccepting society. Aside from casual hookups, his only friend is a boa constrictor whom, improbably--he is terrified of snakes--he lets roam his apartment. But during a visit to a gay bar, Bekim meets a talking cat who moves in with him and his snake. It is this witty, charming, manipulative creature who starts Bekim on a journey back to Kosovo to confront his demons, and make sense of the magical, cruel, incredible history of his family. And it is this that, in turn, enables him finally, to open himself to true love--which he will find in the most unexpected place."--

Danube Penguin

A happily misanthropic Middle East divorcee finds refuge in books in a “ beautiful and absorbing ” novel of late-life crisis (The New York Times). Aaliya is a divorced, childless, and reclusively cranky translator in Beirut nurturing doubts about her latest project: a 900-page avant-garde, linguistically serpentine historiography by a late Chilean existentialist. Honestly, at seventy-two, should she be taking on such a project? Not that Aaliya fears dying. Women in her family live long; her mother is still going crazy. But on this lonely day, hour-by-hour, Aaliya ’ s musings on literature, philosophy, her career, and her aging body, are suddenly invaded by memories of her volatile past. As she tries in vain to ward off these emotional upwellings, Aaliya is faced with an unthinkable disaster that threatens to shatter the little life she has left. In this “ meditation on, among other things, aging, politics, literature, loneliness, grief and resilience ” (The New York Times), Alameddine conjures “ a beguiling narrator . . . who is, like her city, hard to read, hard to take, hard to know and, ultimately, passionately complex ” (San Francisco Chronicle). A finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award and the National Book Award, *An Unnecessary Woman* is “ a fun, and often funny . . . grave, powerful . . . [and] extraordinary ” Washington Independent Review of Books) ode to literature and its power to define who we are.

“ Read it once, read it twice, read other books for a decade or so, and then pick it up and read it anew. This one ’ s a keeper ” (The Independent)

*An Unnecessary Woman* Grove/Atlantic, Inc.

Jaime Deza is a Spaniard who falls in with a secret British intelligence agency that clandestinely examines subjects to determine what they will do in the future.

[The Kindness of Enemies](#) The Feminist Press at CUNY

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY RICHARD FLANAGAN In this fascinating journey Claudio Magris, whose knowledge is encyclopaedic and whose curiosity limitless, guides his reader from the source of the Danube in the Bavarian hills through Austro-Hungary and the Balkans to the Black Sea. Along the way he raises the ghosts that inhabit the houses and monuments - from Ovid to Kafka and Canetti - and in so doing sets his finger on the pulse of Central Europe, the vital crucible of a culture that draws on influences of East and West, of Christendom and Islam.

*An Unnecessary Woman* Archipelago

In this “wonderfully rich” (San Francisco Chronicle) novel from the author of the internationally bestselling *The Oracle of Stamboul*, a young man journeys from California to Cairo to unravel centuries-old family secrets. “This book is a joy.”—Rabih Alameddine, author of the National Book Award finalist *An Unnecessary Woman* WINNER OF: THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION’S SOPHIE BRODY AWARD • THE NATIONAL JEWISH BOOK AWARD IN FICTION • THE SAMI ROHR PRIZE FOR JEWISH LITERATURE • Named One of the Ten Best Books of the Year by the BBC • Longlisted for the Northern California Independent Booksellers Association Fiction Prize • A Penguin Random House International One

World, One Book Selection • Honorable Mention for the Middle East Book Award Joseph, a literature student at Berkeley, is the son of a Jewish mother and a Muslim father. One day, a mysterious package arrives on his doorstep, pulling him into a mesmerizing adventure to uncover the centuries-old history that binds the two sides of his family. From the storied Ibn Ezra Synagogue in Old Cairo, where generations of his family served as watchmen, to the lives of British twin sisters Agnes and Margaret, who in 1897 leave Cambridge on a mission to rescue sacred texts that have begun to disappear from the synagogue, this tightly woven multigenerational tale illuminates the tensions that have torn communities apart and the unlikely forces that attempt to bridge that divide. Moving and richly textured, *The Last Watchman of Old Cairo* is a poignant portrait of the intricate relationship between fathers and sons, and an unforgettable testament to the stories we inherit and the places we are from. Praise for *The Last Watchman of Old Cairo* “A beautiful, richly textured novel, ambitious and delicately crafted, *The Last Watchman of Old Cairo* is both a coming-of-age story and a family history, a wide-ranging book about fathers and sons, religion, magic, love, and the essence of storytelling. This book is a joy.”—Rabih Alameddine, author of the National Book Award finalist *An Unnecessary Woman* “Lyrical, compassionate and illuminating.”—BBC “Michael David Lukas has given us an elegiac novel of Cairo—Old Cairo and modern Cairo. Lukas’s greatest flair is in capturing the essence of that beautiful, haunted, shabby, beleaguered yet still utterly sublime Middle Eastern city.”—Lucette Lagnado, author of *The Man in the White Sharkskin Suit* and *The Arrogant Years* “Brilliant.”—The Jerusalem Post

*My Mother She Killed Me, My Father He Ate Me* MacAdam/Cage Publishing

After the husband and wife that she works for disappear, live-in maid Araceli takes their two boys on a journey through sprawling Los Angeles to locate their grandfather. By the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Translation Nation*. 75,000 first printing.

*Unreal City* Picador

“I started my life in America and my search for my parents, well only my mother now - with Monty as my guide. The journey to find my mother would not be complete without him.” And so begins *Letters to Montgomery Clift*, a first novel by Noel Alumi; a coming of age story of Bong Bong Luwad, a Filipino boy, who enlists the spirit of 1950s screen idol Montgomery Clift to help him find his mother who is imprisoned in the Philippines under the Marcos regime. “After being sent to America by his mother, he is taught by his Aunt to write letters to saints and dead relatives to ask them for favors. As he watches the movie *The Search*, where Montgomery Clift helps a young boy find his mother, he starts to believe that Monty can do this for him. His letters begin and through time he starts to see visions of Monty himself.” “As he reaches adolescence and his hopes of finding his mother diminish, Bong Bong begins to fall deeper into his fantasy world with Clift.” “When eventually he travels back to his homeland and finds the whereabouts of his mother, he is able to bid a final farewell to Monty and begin his life anew back in the States with his family. *Letters To Montgomery Clift* is a novel of endurance and hope. It is a tale of growing up, coming out and going home.”--BOOK JACKET.Title Summary field provided by Blackwell North America, Inc. All Rights Reserved

*Kooloids* MCD

Banished from the sheltered idyll of his Beirut childhood, Toby Shadrach struggles to adapt to the treacherous new realities of a British boarding school. He begins to see a similar pattern of ritual and wild crazes between the school and the sectarian violence of the Middle East.

[Moving the Palace](#) New Directions Publishing

Stork Mountain tells the story of a young Bulgarian immigrant who, in an attempt to escape his mediocre life in America, returns to the country of his birth. Retracing the steps of his estranged grandfather, a man who suddenly and inexplicably cut all contact with the family three years prior, the boy finds himself on the border of Bulgaria and Turkey, a stone's throw away from Greece, high up in the Strandja Mountains. It is a place of pagan mysteries and black storks nesting in giant oaks; a place where every spring, possessed by Christian saints, men and women dance barefoot across live coals in search of rebirth. Here in the mountains, the boy reunites with his grandfather. Here in the mountain, he falls in love with an unobtainable Muslim girl. Old ghosts come back to life and forgotten conflicts, in the name of faith and doctrine, blaze anew. *Stork Mountain* is an enormously charming, slyly brilliant debut novel from an internationally celebrated writer. It is a novel that will undoubtedly find a home in many readers' hearts.

*Homesick* Penguin

During WWII, a teenage boy finds his voice, the courage of his convictions, and friends for life in an emotional and uplifting novel by the New York Times and #1 Amazon Charts bestselling author. 1941. Steven Katz is the son of prosperous landowners in rural California. Although his parents don't approve, he's found true friends in Nick, Suki, and Ollie, sons of field workers. The group is inseparable. But Steven is in turmoil. He's beginning to acknowledge that his feelings for Nick amount to more than friendship. When the bombing of Pearl Harbor draws the US into World War II, Suki and his family are forced to leave their home for the internment camp at Manzanar. Ollie enlists in the army and ships out. And Nick must flee. Betrayed by his own father and accused of a crime he didn't commit, he turns to Steven for help. Hiding Nick in a root cellar on his family's farm, Steven acts as Nick's protector and lifeline to the outside world. As the war escalates, bonds deepen and the fear of being different falls away. But after Nick unexpectedly disappears one day, Steven's life focus is to find him. On the way, Steven finds a place he belongs and a lesson about love that will last him his lifetime.

*The Returned* Penguin

A harrowing account of the last three months of Benazir Bhutto's life October, 2007. Pakistan's former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto returns home after eight years of exile to seek political office once more. Assigned to cover her controversial arrival is TV journalist Ali Sikandar, the estranged son of a wealthy landowner from the interior region of Sindh. While her presence ignites fierce protests and assassination attempts, Ali finds himself irrevocably drawn to the pro-democracy People's Resistance Movement, a secret that sweeps him into the many contradictions of a country still struggling to embrace modernity. As Shah weaves together the centuries-old history of Ali's feudal family and its connection to the Bhuttos, she brilliantly reveals a story at the crossroads of the personal and the political, a chronicle of one man's desire to overcome extremity to find love, forgiveness, and even identity itself.

*I, The Divine: A Novel in First Chapters* Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Austerlitz, the internationally acclaimed masterpiece by “one of the most gripping writers imaginable” (The New York Review of Books), is the story of a man's search for the answer to his life's central riddle. A small child when he comes to England on a Kindertransport in the summer of 1939, one Jacques Austerlitz is told nothing of his real family by the Welsh Methodist minister and his wife who raise him. When he is a much older man, fleeting memories return to him, and obeying an instinct he only dimly understands, he follows their trail back to the world he left behind a half century before. There, faced with the void at the heart of twentieth-century Europe, he struggles to rescue his heritage from oblivion.

[The Cosmopolitans](#) An Unnecessary Woman

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“A versatile prose stylist... [Aboulela’s] lyrical style and incisive portrayal of Muslims living in the West received praise from the Nobel Prize winner J. M. Coetzee... [she is] a voice for multiculturalism.”—New York Times It’s 2010 and Natasha, a half Russian, half Sudanese professor of Islamic studies, is researching the life of Imam Shamil, the 19th century Muslim leader who led the anti-Russian resistance in the Caucasian War. When shy, single Natasha discovers that her star student, Oz, is not only descended from the warrior but also possesses Shamil’s priceless sword, the Imam’s story comes vividly to life. As Natasha’s relationship with Oz and his alluring actress mother intensifies, Natasha is forced to confront issues she had long tried to avoid—that of her Muslim heritage. When Oz is suddenly arrested at his home one morning, Natasha realizes that everything she values stands in jeopardy. Told with Aboulela’s inimitable elegance and narrated from the point of view of both Natasha and the historical characters she is researching, *The Kindness of Enemies* is both an engrossing story of a provocative period in history and an important examination of what it is to be a Muslim in a post 9/11 world.

*De Niro’s Game* Pantheon

*An Unnecessary Woman* Grove/Atlantic, Inc.

*The Perv* Beacon Press

NAMED A BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR BY THE WASHINGTON POST, VOGUE,

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY, NPR, ESQUIRE, AND KIRKUS “There’s some kind of genius

sorcery in this novel. It’s startlingly original, hilarious and harrowing by turns, finally

transcendent. Watkins writes like an avenging angel. It’s thrilling and terrifying to stand in her

wake.” —Jenny Offill, author of *Dept. of Speculation* and *Weather* A darkly funny, soul-rending

novel of love in an epoch of collapse—one woman’s furious revisiting of family, marriage, work,

sex, and motherhood. Since my baby was born, I have been able to laugh and see the funny side

of things. a) As much as I ever did. b) Not quite as much now. c) Not so much now. d) Not at all.

Leaving behind her husband and their baby daughter, a writer gets on a flight for a speaking

engagement in Reno, not carrying much besides a breast pump and a spiraling case of postpartum

depression. Her temporary escape from domestic duties and an opportunity to reconnect with old

friends mutates into an extended romp away from the confines of marriage and motherhood, and

a seemingly bottomless descent into the past. Deep in the Mojave Desert where she grew up, she

meets her ghosts at every turn: the first love whose self-destruction still haunts her; her father, a

member of the most famous cult in American history; her mother, whose native spark gutters

with every passing year. She can’t go back in time to make any of it right, but what exactly is her

way forward? Alone in the wilderness, at last she begins to make herself at home in the world.

Bold, tender, and often hilarious, *I Love You but I’ve Chosen Darkness* reaffirms Watkins as

one of the signal writers of our time.

*Transit Beirut* Modern Library

A “captivating, perceptive, and empathic novel of New York” told with “panache and

mischievous ebullience” (Booklist, starred review). In this retelling of Balzac’s Parisian classic

*Cousin Bette*, Sarah Shulman spins her revenge story in Mad Men–era New York City. Bette, a

lonely spinster, has worked as a secretary at an ad agency for thirty years. Her only real friend is

her apartment neighbor Earl, a black, gay actor with a miserable job in a meatpacking plant.

Shamed and disowned by their families, both find refuge in New York and in their friendship.

Everything changes when Hortense, Bette’s wealthy niece from Ohio, moves to the city to

pursue her own acting career. Her arrival reminds Bette of her scandalous past and the estranged

Midwestern family she left behind. When Hortense’s calculating ambitions cause a rift between

Bette and Earl, Bette uses her connections in the television ad world to destroy those who have

wronged her. Textured with the grit and gloss of midcentury Manhattan in the days before the

Civil Rights and Feminist Movements, *The Cosmopolitans* “balance[s] the hopes of an entire era

on the backs of a fragile relationship. . . . Jarring and beautiful, this is a modern classic” (Kirkus

Reviews, starred review).

*The Wrong End of the Telescope* Gallic Books

A breathtaking, suspenseful story of one man’s obsessive search to find the truth of another man’s downfall,

from the author of *The King Is Always Above the People*, which was longlisted for the 2017 National Book

Award for Fiction. Nelson’s life is not turning out the way he hoped. His girlfriend is sleeping with another man,

his brother has left their South American country, leaving Nelson to care for their widowed mother, and his

acting career can’t seem to get off the ground. That is, until he lands a starring role in a touring revival of *The*

*Idiot President*, a legendary play by Nelson’s hero, Henry Nunez, leader of the storied guerrilla theater troupe

*Diciembre*. And that’s when the real trouble begins. The tour takes Nelson out of the shelter of the city and

across a landscape he’s never seen, which still bears the scars of the civil war. With each performance, Nelson

grows closer to his fellow actors, becoming hopelessly entangled in their complicated lives, until, during one

memorable performance, a long-buried betrayal surfaces to force the troupe into chaos. Nelson’s fate is slowly

revealed through the investigation of the narrator, a young man obsessed with Nelson’s story—and perhaps closer

to it than he lets on. In sharp, vivid, and beautiful prose, Alarcón delivers a compulsively readable narrative and a

provocative meditation on fate, identity, and the large consequences that can result from even our smallest

choices.

*At Night We Walk in Circles* Grove/Atlantic, Inc.

In 2003, Osama al-Kharrat returns to Beirut after many years in America to stand vigil at his father’s deathbed.

As the family gathers, stories begin to unfold: Osama’s grandfather was a hakawati, or storyteller, and his

bewitching tales are interwoven with classic stories of the Middle East. Here are Abraham and Isaac; Ishmael,

father of the Arab tribes; the beautiful Fatima; Baybars, the slave prince who vanquished the Crusaders; and a

host of mischievous imps. Through Osama, we also enter the world of the contemporary Lebanese men and

women whose stories tell a larger, heartbreaking tale of seemingly endless war, conflicted identity, and survival.

With *The Hakawati*, Rabih Alameddine has given us an Arabian Nights for this century.