

Emily Alone Stewart Onan

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Emily, Alone Penguin

What to read next is every book lover's greatest dilemma. Nancy Pearl comes to the rescue with this wide-ranging and fun guide to the best reading new and old. Pearl, who inspired legions of litterateurs with "What If All (name the city) Read the Same Book," has devised reading lists that cater to every mood, occasion, and personality. These annotated lists cover such topics as mother-daughter relationships, science for nonscientists, mysteries of all stripes, African-American fiction from a female point of view, must-reads for kids, books on bicycling, "chick-lit," and many more. Pearl's enthusiasm and taste shine throughout.

Snow Angels Penguin

"I was intrigued by *Our Little World* from the chilling first paragraph. It's a coming-of-age novel complicated by a tragic and untimely death, and it's also a novel about two sisters you will never forget. I fell in love with the confidence of the writing and the colorful nostalgia of the mid-'80s details. *Our Little World* will transport and transfix you."—Elin Hilderbrand July 1985. It's a normal, sweltering New Jersey summer for soon-to-be seventh grader Bee Kocsis. Her thoughts center only on sunny days spent at Deer Chase Lake, on evenings chasing fireflies around her cul-de-sac with the neighborhood kids, and on Max, the boy who just moved in across the street. There's also the burgeoning worry that she'll never be as special as her younger sister, Audrina, who seems to effortlessly dazzle wherever she goes. But when Max's little sister, Sally, goes missing at the lake, Bee's long-held illusion of stability is shattered in an instant. As the families in her close-knit

community turn inward, suspicious and protective, things in Bee's full of surprises.

own home become increasingly strained, most of all with Audrina, *Emily, Alone Penguin*

when a shameful secret surfaces. With everything changed, Bee and Audrina's already-fraught sisterhood is pushed to the limit as they grow up—and apart—in the wake of an innocence lost too soon. Perfect for readers of Celeste Ng's *Everything I Never Told You*, *Our Little World* is a powerful and lyrical coming-of-age story that examines the complicated bond of sisterhood, the corrosive power of envy, and how the traumas of our youths can shape our identities for a lifetime.

Being Esther Vintage

A member of the greatest generation looks back on the loves and losses of his past and comes to treasure the present anew in this poignant and thoughtful new novel from a modern master Stewart O'Nan is renowned for illuminating the unexpected grace of everyday life and the resilience of ordinary people with humor, intelligence, and compassion. In *Henry, Himself* he offers an unsentimental, moving story of a twentieth-century everyman. Soldier, son, lover, husband, breadwinner, churchgoer, Henry Maxwell has spent his whole life trying to live with honor. A native Pittsburgher and engineer, he's always believed in logic, sacrifice, and hard work. Now, seventy-five and retired, he feels the world has passed him by. It's 1998, the American century is ending, and nothing is simple anymore. His children are distant, their unhappiness a mystery. Only his wife Emily and dog Rufus stand by him. Once so confident, as Henry's strength and memory desert him, he weighs his dreams against his regrets and is left with questions he can't answer: Is he a good man? Has he done right by the people he loves? And with time running out, what, realistically, can he hope for? Like *Emily, Alone*, O'Nan's beloved portrait of Henry's wife, *Henry, Himself* is a wry, warmhearted portrait of an American original—a man who believes he's reached a dead end only to discover life is

Set in a working-class town on the Rhode Island coast, O'Nan's latest is a crushing, beautifully written, and profoundly compelling novel about sisters, mothers, and daughters, and the terrible things love makes us do. In the first line of *Ocean State*, we learn that a high school student was murdered, and we find out who did it. The story that unfolds from there with incredible momentum is thus one of the build-up to and fall-out from the murder, told through the alternating perspectives of the four women at its heart. Angel, the murderer, Carol, her mother, and Birdy, the victim, all come alive on the page as they converge in a climax both tragic and inevitable. Watching over it all is the retrospective testimony of Angel's younger sister Marie, who reflects on that doomed autumn of 2009 with all the wisdom of hindsight. Angel and Birdy love the same teenage boy, frantically and single mindedly, and are compelled by the intensity of their feelings to extremes neither could have anticipated. O'Nan's expert hand paints a fully realized portrait of these women, but also weaves a compelling and heartbreaking story of working-class life in Ashaway, Rhode Island. Propulsive, moving, and deeply rendered, *Ocean State* is a masterful novel by one of our greatest storytellers.

A World Away Lulu.com

The writing team that delivered the bestselling *Faithful*, about the 2004 Red Sox championship season, takes readers to the ballpark again, and to a world beyond in this baseball tale with a twist from master storyteller Stephen King. Dean Evers, an elderly widower, sits in front of the television with nothing better to do than waste his leftover evenings

watching baseball. It's Rays/Mariners, and David Price is breezing through the line-up. Suddenly, in a seat a few rows up beyond the batter, Evers sees the face of someone from decades past, someone who shouldn't be at the ballgame, shouldn't be on the planet. And so begins a parade of people from Evers's past, all of them occupying that seat behind home plate. Until one day Dean Evers sees someone even eerier....

Faithful Sasquatch Books

In 1945, with no homes to return to, Jewish refugees set out for Palestine in their tens of thousands. *City of Secrets* follows one survivor, Brand, as he tries to regain himself after losing everyone he's ever loved. Now driving a taxi provided - like his new identity - by the underground, he navigates the twisting streets of Jerusalem as well as the overlapping, sometimes deadly loyalties of the resistance. Alone, haunted by memories, he tries to become again the man he was before the war - honest, strong, capable of moral choice. He falls in love with Eva, a fellow survivor and member of his cell, reclaims his faith, and commits himself to the revolution, accepting secret missions that grow more and more dangerous even as he begins to suspect he's being used by their cell's dashing leader, Asher. By the time Brand understands the truth, it's too late, and the tragedy that ensues changes history. A noirish, deeply felt novel of intrigue and identity written in O'Nan's trademark lucent style, *City of Secrets* asks how both despair and faith can lead us astray, and what happens when, with the noblest intentions, we join movements beyond our control.

Bones of Plenty Milkweed Editions

Eightysomething Esther Lustig tells the story of her life in a witty, touching novel that "will linger long in readers' minds and hearts" (Pioneer Press). "Widowed and in her mid-eighties, Esther checks in with her friend Lottie each morning to confirm that each has made it through the night. But there is no way that she's going to surrender to her bossy daughter, Ceely, and move into an assisted living facility, which she disdainfully calls Bingoville. In her first novel, *Karmel* takes an understated and disarming approach to the closing years in the life of a seemingly ordinary woman, imbuing Esther with a subtle but zingy wit and underappreciated intelligence. Esther reflects on her mother's frostiness and her mother-in-law's 'acid tongue,' her own passion for books, the grinding disappointments and late-blooming joys of her marriage, and Ceely's harrowing incommunicado years. Brimming with keen observations yet slow to articulate them due to her body's strange new hesitations, Esther is appalled by how strangers treat her as an 'object of concerned looks and condescension.' *Karmel*'s novel of womanhood, the love and strife between mothers and daughters, marital dead zones, and the baffling metamorphosis of age is covertly complex, quietly

incisive, and stunning in its emotional richness." —Booklist "Being Esther is impossible to put down . . . a wonderful debut." —Margot Livesey, author of *The Flight of Gemma Hardy*

The Good Wife Catapult

This compilation of essays and reviews, gathered posthumously from the New York Times Book Review and other publications, solidifies John Gardner's legacy as a consummate teacher and controversial critic with a provocative sense of humor. Writing about his fellow craftsmen, John Gardner offers piercing insights into those whose works he admired and those whose works he didn't. In exacting unapologetic evaluations upon such writers as Saul Bellow, Vladimir Nabokov, Philip Roth, John Cheever, Larry Woiwode, Joyce Carol Oates, and John Updike, Gardner separates genuine fiction from fakery, careful not to spare his own writings in the process, and in doing so, he displays his influences and wide-reaching observations of the literary life. Refreshingly unpredictable and self-aware, this collection lays bare the core qualities of lasting fiction and is essential reading for anyone interested in American literature.

The Circus Fire Univ of South Carolina Press

A scintillating debut novel about a young couple whose marriage is tested when they move to an army base rife with love triangles, life-or-death conflicts, and a dramatic cover-up In 1959, Nat Collier moves with her husband, Paul, and their two young daughters to Idaho Falls, a remote military town. An Army Specialist, Paul is stationed there to help oversee one of the country's first nuclear reactors—an assignment that seems full of opportunity. Then, on his rounds, Paul discovers that the reactor is compromised, placing his family and the entire community in danger. Worse, his superiors set out to cover up the problem rather than fix it. Paul can't bring himself to tell Nat the truth, but his lies only widen a growing gulf between them. Lonely and restless, Nat is having trouble adjusting to their new life. She struggles to fit into her role as a housewife and longs for a real friend. When she meets a rancher, Esrom, she finds herself drawn to him, comforted by his kindness and company. But as rumors spread, the secrets between Nat and Paul build and threaten to reach a breaking point. Based on a true story of the only fatal nuclear accident to occur in America, *The Longest Night* is a deeply moving novel that explores the intricate makeup of a marriage, the shifting nature of trust, and the ways we try to protect the ones we love. Praise for *The Longest Night* " [A] stunning debut." —Entertainment Weekly " [A] smart and detailed portrait of a dissolving postwar marriage . . . will remind many readers of Richard Yates's *Revolutionary Road*." —San Francisco Chronicle " [Andria] Williams's quietly confident style is without swagger or gimmick. . . . What emerges most powerfully from *The Longest Night* is a kind of quiet wonder at the exquisite intricacy, but

astonishing durability, of familial love." —Los Angeles Review of Books "Think *Army Wives* meets *Serial* meets your perfect long weekend read. About an army base with a lot of love triangles, and a cover-up." —theSkimm "The tension builds heavily with each page." —InStyle "Scintillating . . . A smoldering, altogether impressive debut that probes the social and emotional strains on military families in a fresh and insightful way." —Kirkus Reviews (starred review) " [A] luminous debut . . . Williams expertly builds tension between Paul and Nat as the story progresses towards the inevitable nuclear tragedy in this utterly absorbing and richly rewarding novel." —Booklist (starred review) "Andria Williams's debut is an intimately detailed portrait of love, trust, and guilt in a town—and an era—clouded with secrets." —Celeste Ng, author of *Everything I Never Told You* "A smart and compassionate novel that offers as many fresh insights into marriage and intimacy as it does about American nuclear history. Andria Williams is a terrific writer—clear-eyed and empathetic—and this is a fantastic debut." —Molly Antopol, author of *The UnAmericans* "It's hard to believe *The Longest Night* is Andria Williams's debut novel. Her command of language, character and plot—the three essential ingredients for a riveting read—is extraordinary." —David Abrams, author of *Fobbit*

The Speed Queen Penguin

Now a major motion picture from Warner Independent starring Sam Rockwell and Kate Beckinsale In Stewart O'Nan's *Snow Angels*, Arthur Parkinson is fourteen during the dreary winter of 1974. Enduring the pain of his parents' divorce, his world is shattered when his beloved former babysitter, Annie, falls victim to a tragic series of events. The interlinking stories of Arthur's unraveling family, and of Annie's fate, form the backdrop of this intimate tale about the price of love and belonging, told in a spare, translucent, and unexpectedly tender voice.

Understanding Stewart O'Nan Random House

A member of the greatest generation looks back on the loves and losses of his past and comes to treasure the present anew in this poignant and thoughtful new novel from a modern master Stewart O'Nan is renowned for illuminating the unexpected grace of everyday life and the resilience of ordinary people with humor, intelligence, and compassion. In *Henry, Himself*, he offers an unsentimental, moving life story of a twentieth-century everyman. Soldier, son, lover, husband, breadwinner, churchgoer, Henry Maxwell has spent his whole life trying to live with honor. A native Pittsburgher and engineer, he's always believed in logic, sacrifice, and hard work. Now, seventy-five and retired, he feels the world has passed him by. It's 1998, the American century is ending, and nothing is simple anymore. His children are distant, their unhappiness a mystery. Only his wife Emily and dog Rufus stand by him. Once so confident, as Henry's strength and

memory desert him, he weighs his dreams against his regrets and is left with questions he can't answer: Is he a good man? Has he done right by the people he loves? And with time running out, what, realistically, can he hope for? Like *Emily, Alone*, which *The New York Times* called "O'Nan's best novel yet," *Henry, Himself* is a wry, warmhearted portrait of an American original who believes he's reached a dead end only to discover life is full of surprises.

Of Love and Dust National Geographic Books

A deadly epidemic threatens the lives and sanity of a Civil War veteran and his family in this "new masterpiece of American literature" (Dennis Lehane). Set in Friendship, Wisconsin, just after the Civil War, *A Prayer for the Dying* tells of a horrible epidemic that is suddenly and gruesomely killing the town's residents and setting off a terrifying paranoia. Jacob Hansen, Friendship's sheriff, undertaker, and pastor, is soon overwhelmed by the fear and anguish around him, and his sanity begins to fray. Dark, poetic, and chilling, Stewart O'Nan's *A Prayer for the Dying* examines the effect of madness and violence on the morality of a once-decent man. Praise for *A Prayer for the Dying* *New York Times* Book Review Notable Book of the Year "A *Prayer for the Dying* reads like the amazing, unrelenting love child of Shirley Jackson and Cormac McCarthy. It's twisted proof that God will do worse to test a faithful man than the devil would ever do to punish a sinner." Chuck Palahniuk "O'Nan again proves himself a writer of dazzling virtuosity and imagination. . . . A mesmerizing story and a brilliant tour de force." —Publishers Weekly (starred review)

The Distance Home Allen & Unwin

A ghost story that begins in everyday tragedy, from a distinctly American master of both forms: a "scary, sad, funny . . . mesmerizing read" (Stephen King) At Midnight on Halloween in a cloistered New England suburb, a car carrying five teenagers leaves a winding road and slams into a tree, killing three of them. One escapes unharmed, another suffers severe brain damage. A year later, summoned by the memories of those closest to them, the three that died come back on a last chilling mission among the living. A strange and unsettling ghost story, *The Night Country* creeps through the leaf-strewn streets and quiet cul-de-sacs of one bedroom community, reaching into the desperately connected yet isolated lives of three people changed forever by the accident: Tim, who survived yet lost everything; Brooks, the cop whose guilty secret has destroyed his life; and Kyle's mom, trying to love the new son the doctors returned to her. As the day wanes and darkness falls, one of them puts a terrible plan into effect, and they find themselves

caught in a collision of need and desire, watched over by the knowing ghosts. Macabre and moving, *The Night Country* elevates every small town's bad high school crash into myth, finding the deeper human truth beneath a shared and very American tragedy. As in his highly-prized *Snow Angels* and *A Prayer for the Dying*, once again Stewart O'Nan gives us an intimate look at people trying to hold on to hope, and the consequences when they fail.

Morningside Heights Farrar, Straus and Giroux

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • From the beloved Pulitzer Prize – winning author—a rich and compelling novel about a mismatched marriage and its consequences, spanning three generations They seemed like the perfect couple—young, good-looking, made for each other. The moment Pauline, a stranger to the Polish Eastern Avenue neighborhood of Baltimore (though she lived only twenty minutes away), walked into his mother's grocery store, Michael was smitten. And in the heat of World War II fervor, they are propelled into a hasty wedding. But they never should have married. Pauline, impulsive, impractical, tumbles hit-or-miss through life; Michael, plodding, cautious, judgmental, proceeds deliberately. While other young marrieds, equally ignorant at the start, seemed to grow more seasoned, Pauline and Michael remain amateurs. In time their foolish quarrels take their toll. Even when they find themselves, almost thirty years later, loving, instant parents to a little grandson named Pagan, whom they rescue from Haight-Ashbury, they still cannot bridge their deep-rooted differences. Flighty Pauline clings to the notion that the rifts can always be patched. To the unyielding Michael, they become unbearable. From the sound of the cash register in the old grocery to the counterculture jargon of the sixties, from the miniskirts to the multilayered apparel of later years, Anne Tyler captures the evocative nuances of everyday life during these decades with such telling precision that every page brings smiles of recognition. Throughout, as each of the competing voices bears witness, we are drawn ever more fully into the complex entanglements of family life in this wise, embracing, and deeply perceptive novel.

The Amateur Marriage Grove/Atlantic, Inc.

When a popular high-school student goes missing from her small Midwestern community, her loving parents, introverted sister, friends, and boyfriend devote themselves to finding her, an effort that gives way to pleading television appearances, private investigations, and intimate struggles to cling to hope. 60,000 first printing.

The Weekend Open Road + Grove/Atlantic

Annie Clyde Dodson and her three-year-old daughter Gracie are among the last holdouts in a tiny town, standing in the way of progress in the Tennessee River Valley. Just a few days before the Long Man river is scheduled to wash Yuneetah off the map, Gracie disappears one stormy evening. Did she simply wander off into the rain, or was she

taken—perhaps by the mysterious drifter who has returned to his hometown on the verge of its collapse? Set against the backdrop of real-life historical events, *Long Man* is a searing portrait of a soon-to-be-scattered community brought together by change and crisis, and of one family facing a terrifying ticking clock.

City of Secrets Penguin

A death-row inmate gives her confession—a hair-raising tale of sex, drugs and murder across Oklahoma—in this "vividly realized" novel (*The New York Times* Book Review). Marjorie Standiford has quite a story to tell. And on the eve of her execution for a sensational murder spree, she's giving every detail, just as she remembers them, to the famous novelist who has come to record it all. Of course, Marjorie contends that she didn't do any killing. That was all Lamont, her boyfriend, and Natalie, their girlfriend, while Marjorie got high and took care of the baby. But she was in it just the same, careening across the desert plains of Oklahoma, fueled by lust, crime, cars, drugs—speed in all its forms. *The Speed Queen* is the story of a terrifying voyage into the dark soul of America's Heartland. From acclaimed author Stewart O'Nan—selected by *Granta* as one of the Best Young American Novelists—this is "classic American noir" in the tradition of James M. Cain (*San Francisco Chronicle*). *Songs for the Missing* Vintage

Now in paperback, two fiercely avid Red Sox fans document one of the most eagerly anticipated baseball seasons of all time. From devoted fans O'Nan and King comes this unique chronicle of one baseball team's journey from spring training to post-season play. *West of Sunset* Grove Press

While a son serves in World War II, his parents fight their own war, infidelity their weapon. Caught in the middle are the son's wife and a younger brother.

The Odds Penguin

In the new novel from the author of *Emily, Alone* and *Henry, Himself*, a middle-age couple goes all in for love at a Niagara Falls casino Stewart O'Nan's thirteenth novel is another wildly original, bittersweet gem like his celebrated *Last Night at the Lobster*. Valentine's weekend, Art and Marion Fowler flee their Cleveland suburb for Niagara Falls, desperate to recoup their losses. Jobless, with their home approaching foreclosure and their marriage on the brink of collapse, Art and Marion liquidate their savings account and book a bridal suite at the Falls' ritziest casino for a second honeymoon. While they sightsee like tourists during the day, at night they risk it all at the roulette wheel to fix their finances—and save their marriage. A tender yet honest exploration of faith, forgiveness and last

chances, The Odds is a reminder that love, like life, is always a gamble.