

Room Book Club Discussion Guide

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The Apple Orchard Bloomsbury Publishing
NEW YORK TIMES BEST SELLER • From the acclaimed author of *The Flight Attendant*: “ Historical fiction at its best.... The book is a thriller in structure, and a real page-turner, the ending both unexpected and satisfying ” (Diana Gabaldon, bestselling author of the *Outlander* series, *The Washington Post*). A young Puritan woman—faithful, resourceful, but afraid of the demons that dog her soul—plots her escape from a violent marriage in this riveting and propulsive novel of historical suspense. Boston, 1662. Mary Deerfield is twenty-four-years-old. Her skin is porcelain, her eyes delft blue, and in England she might have had many suitors. But here in the New World, amid this community of saints, Mary is the second wife of Thomas Deerfield, a man as cruel as he is powerful. When Thomas, prone to drunken rage, drives a three-tined fork into the back of Mary's hand, she resolves that she must divorce him to save her life. But in a world where every neighbor is watching for signs of the devil, a woman like Mary—a woman who harbors secret desires and finds it difficult to tolerate the brazen hypocrisy of so many men in the colony—soon becomes herself the object of suspicion and rumor. When tainted objects are discovered buried in Mary's garden, when a boy she has treated with herbs and simples dies, and when their servant girl runs screaming in fright from her home, Mary must fight to not only escape her marriage, but also the gallows. A twisting, tightly plotted novel of historical suspense from one of our greatest storytellers, *Hour of the Witch* is a timely and terrifying story of socially sanctioned brutality and the original American witch hunt.

A Novel Arrow

The USA Today Bestseller From the author of *The Other Einstein* comes the mesmerizing tale of what kind of woman could have inspired an American dynasty. Clara Kelley is not who they think she is. She's not the experienced Irish maid who was hired to work in one of Pittsburgh's grandest households. She's a poor farmer's daughter with nowhere to go and nothing in her pockets. But the other woman with the same name has vanished, and pretending to be her just might get Clara some money to send back home. If she can keep up the ruse, that is. Serving as a lady's maid in the household of Andrew Carnegie requires skills she doesn't have, answering to an icy mistress who rules her sons and her domain with an iron fist. What Clara does have is a resolve as strong as the steel Pittsburgh is becoming famous for, coupled with an uncanny understanding of business, and Andrew begins to rely on her. But Clara can't let her guard down, not even when Andrew becomes something more than an employer. Revealing her past might ruin her future — and her family's. With captivating insight and heart, *Carnegie's Maid* tells the

story of one brilliant woman who may have spurred Andrew Carnegie's transformation from ruthless industrialist into the world's first true philanthropist.

A Novel Atria Books

Tzippy Goldman was born for marriage. She and her mother had always assumed she'd graduate high school, be set up with the right boy, and have a beautiful wedding with white lace and pareve vanilla cream frosting. But at twenty-two, Tzippy's fast approaching spinsterhood. She dreams of escape; instead, she leaves for a year in Jerusalem. There she meets—re-meets—Baruch, the son of her mother's college roommate. When Tzippy last saw him, his name was Bryan and he wore a Yankees-logo yarmulke. Now he has adopted the black hat of the ultra-orthodox, the tradition in which Tzippy was raised. Twelve weeks later, they're engaged...and discovering that desire and tradition, devotion and individuality aren't the easiest balance. Hilarious, compassionate, and tremendously insightful, *The Outside World* illuminates an insular community, marvelously depicting that complicated blend of faith, love, and family otherwise known as life in a modern world.

Tallgrass Atria Books

A BEST OF SUMMER READ ACCORDING TO NEWSWEEK, PARADE MAGAZINE, NBC NEWS, LITHUB, AND POPSUGAR! "The most heartfelt read of the summer...a surprising delight of a novel." --Shondaland An unforgettable and heartwarming debut about how a chance encounter with a list of library books helps forge an unlikely friendship between two very different people in a London suburb. Widower Mukesh lives a quiet life in Wembley, in West London after losing his beloved wife. He shops every Wednesday, goes to Temple, and worries about his granddaughter, Priya, who hides in her room reading while he spends his evenings watching nature documentaries. Aleisha is a bright but anxious teenager working at the local library for the summer when she discovers a crumpled-up piece of paper in the back of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. It's a list of novels that she's never heard of before. Intrigued, and a little bored with her slow job at the checkout desk, she impulsively decides to read every book on the list, one after the other. As each story gives up its magic, the books transport Aleisha from the painful realities she's facing at home. When Mukesh arrives at the library, desperate to forge a connection with his bookworm granddaughter, Aleisha passes along the reading list...hoping that it will be a lifeline for him too. Slowly, the shared books create a connection between two lonely souls, as fiction helps them escape their grief and everyday troubles and find joy again.

The Spare Room St. Martin's Press

INSTANT NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER! "If you liked *Where the Crawdads Sing*, you'll love *This Tender Land*...This story is as big-hearted as they come." —Parade The unforgettable story of four orphans who travel the Mississippi River

on a life-changing odyssey during the Great Depression. In the summer of 1932, on the banks of Minnesota's Gilead River, Odie O'Banion is an orphan confined to the Lincoln Indian Training School, a pitiless place where his lively nature earns him the superintendent's wrath. Forced to flee after committing a terrible crime, he and his brother, Albert, their best friend, Mose, and a brokenhearted little girl named Emmy steal away in a canoe, heading for the mighty Mississippi and a place to call their own. Over the course of one summer, these four orphans journey into the unknown and cross paths with others who are adrift, from struggling farmers and traveling faith healers to displaced families and lost souls of all kinds. With the feel of a modern classic, *This Tender Land* is an enthralling, big-hearted epic that shows how the magnificent American landscape connects us all, haunts our dreams, and makes us whole.

The Outside World Sourcebooks, Inc.

Life is a lucrative business, as long as you play by the rules... Ambitious businesswoman Mae Yu runs Golden Oaks - a luxury retreat transforming the fertility industry. There, women get the very best of everything: organic meals, fitness trainers, daily massages and big money. Provided they dedicate themselves to producing the perfect baby. For someone else. Jane is a young immigrant in search of a better future. Stuck living in a cramped dorm with her baby daughter and her shrewd aunt Ate, she sees an unmissable chance to change her life. But at what cost? Welcome to *The Farm*.

'The Handmaid's Tale of 2019' - Marie Claire 'Set to be one of the biggest books for 2019' - Stylist 'The debut to order now' - Sunday Times 'A firecracker of a novel' - Madeline Miller Chosen as a book of the summer by the Guardian, Telegraph, Evening Standard and Cosmopolitan

The Farm HarperCollins

"One of my favorite books of the year." -Lee Child "Cancel all your plans and call in sick; once you start reading, you'll be caught in your own escape room-the only key to freedom is turning the last page!" -Kirkus Reviews (starred) "A sleek, well-crafted ride." -The New York Times In Megan Goldin's unforgettable debut, *The Escape Room*, four young Wall Street rising stars discover the price of ambition when an escape room challenge turns into a lethal game of revenge. Welcome to the escape room. Your goal is simple. Get out alive. In the lucrative world of finance, Vincent, Jules, Sylvie, and Sam are at the top of their game. They've mastered the art of the deal and celebrate their success in style-but a life of extreme luxury always comes at a cost. Invited to participate in an escape room challenge as a team-building exercise, the ferociously competitive co-workers crowd into the elevator of a high-rise building, eager to prove themselves. But when the lights go off and the doors stay shut, it quickly becomes clear that this is no ordinary competition: they're caught in a dangerous game of survival. Trapped in the dark, the colleagues must put aside their bitter rivalries and work together to solve cryptic clues to break free. But as the game begins to reveal the team's darkest secrets, they realize there's a price to be paid for the terrible deeds they committed in their ruthless climb up the corporate ladder. As tempers fray, and the clues turn deadly, they must solve one final chilling

puzzle: which one of them will kill in order to survive?

A Novel Simon and Schuster

The New York Times and USA Today Bestseller! She possessed a stunning beauty. She also possessed a stunning mind. Could the world handle both? Her beauty almost certainly saved her from the rising Nazi party and led to marriage with an Austrian arms dealer. Underestimated in everything else, she overheard the Third Reich's plans while at her husband's side, understanding more than anyone would guess. She devised a plan to flee in disguise from their castle, and the whirlwind escape landed her in Hollywood. She became Hedy Lamarr, screen star. But she kept a secret more shocking than her heritage or her marriage: she was a scientist. And she knew a few secrets about the enemy. She had an idea that might help the country fight the Nazis...if anyone would listen to her. A powerful novel based on the incredible true story of the glamour icon and scientist whose groundbreaking invention revolutionized modern communication, *The Only Woman in the Room* is a masterpiece.

A Novel Hogarth

Can the bonds of friendship weather a betrayal? Charlotte and Nicole were once best friends, spending long, idyllic summers together in Nicole's family home on the island of Quinnipeague, but they have since grown apart. After ten years, their writing careers bring them back together - to write a cookbook about island food in their childhood haven. When both women reunite, it becomes clear that they are both guarding secrets of the years spent apart. But when Charlotte learns that her secret is the key to saving Nicole's husband's life, she must face her painful past and risk the consequences that honesty might bring ...

Penguin

From the bestselling author of *Still Alice* comes a heartfelt novel about friendship and a mother coping with the loss of her autistic son Olivia Donatelli's dream of a 'normal' life was shattered when her son, Anthony, was diagnosed with autism at age three. He didn't speak. He hated to be touched. He almost never made eye contact. And just as Olivia was starting to realise that happiness and autism could coexist, Anthony died. Now she's alone in a cottage on Nantucket, separated from her husband, desperate to understand the meaning of her son's short life, when a chance encounter with another woman facing her own loss brings Anthony alive again for Olivia in a most unexpected way. In a piercing story about motherhood, love and female friendship, Lisa Genova offers us two unforgettable women on the verge of change who discover the small but exuberant voice that helps them both find the answers they need. Fans of *The Reason I Jump* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-*

time will love Lisa Genova's story: always authentic and utterly moving. *'Remember how you couldn't put down Still Alice? Well, clear your schedule-because you're going to feel the same way' Jodi Picoult*

The Room Vintage

"An extraordinary novel . . . a triumph of insight and storytelling." –Associated Press "A true masterpiece." –Glennon Doyle, author of *Untamed* An extraordinary story set in the first century about a woman who finds her voice and her destiny, from the celebrated number one New York Times bestselling author of *The Secret Life of Bees* and *The Invention of Wings* In her mesmerizing fourth work of fiction, Sue Monk Kidd takes an audacious approach to history and brings her acclaimed narrative gifts to imagine the story of a young woman named Ana. Raised in a wealthy family with ties to the ruler of Galilee, she is rebellious and ambitious, with a brilliant mind and a daring spirit. She engages in furtive scholarly pursuits and writes narratives about neglected and silenced women. Ana is expected to marry an older widower, a prospect that horrifies her. An encounter with eighteen-year-old Jesus changes everything. Their marriage evolves with love and conflict, humor and pathos in Nazareth, where Ana makes a home with Jesus, his brothers, and their mother, Mary. Ana's pent-up longings intensify amid the turbulent resistance to Rome's occupation of Israel, partially led by her brother, Judas. She is sustained by her fearless aunt Yaltha, who harbors a compelling secret. When Ana commits a brazen act that puts her in peril, she flees to Alexandria, where startling revelations and greater dangers unfold, and she finds refuge in unexpected surroundings. Ana determines her fate during a stunning convergence of events considered among the most impactful in human history. Grounded in meticulous research and written with a reverential approach to Jesus's life that focuses on his humanity, *The Book of Longings* is an inspiring, unforgettable account of one woman's bold struggle to realize the passion and potential inside her, while living in a time, place and culture devised to silence her. It is a triumph of storytelling both timely and timeless, from a masterful writer at the height of her powers.

The Reading List HarperCollins

Winner of several prestigious prizes, *The Spare Room* is extraordinary writer Helen Garner's intense, moving investigation of the boundaries and limits of a lifelong friendship. As the novel opens, Helen lovingly prepares the spare room in her home for her dear friend Nicola, who is coming to visit for three weeks while receiving controversial treatment for late-stage cancer. From the moment Nicola staggers off the plane, gaunt and hoarse but still somehow grand, Helen becomes her nurse, her guardian angel, and her stony judge. *The Spare Room* tells an unforgettable story full of complex humour, rage, and compassion.

The House at the End of Hope Street Simon and Schuster

Her life turned upside-down when a Japanese

internment camp is opened in their small Colorado town, Rennie witnesses the way her community places suspicion on the newcomers when a young girl is murdered, an event that prompts Rennie's own perspective change and the discovery of dangerous secrets. By the author of *New Mercies*. 75,000 first printing.

Leave the World Behind Vintage

NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD WINNER • NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • "Of all the stories that argue and speculate about Shakespeare's life ... here is a novel ... so gorgeously written that it transports you." –The Boston Globe In 1580's England, during the Black Plague a young Latin tutor falls in love with an extraordinary, eccentric young woman in this "exceptional historical novel" (The New Yorker) and best-selling winner of the Women's Prize for Fiction. Agnes is a wild creature who walks her family's land with a falcon on her glove and is known throughout the countryside for her unusual gifts as a healer, understanding plants and potions better than she does people. Once she settles with her husband on Henley Street in Stratford-upon-Avon she becomes a fiercely protective mother and a steadfast, centrifugal force in the life of her young husband, whose career on the London stage is taking off when his beloved young son succumbs to sudden fever. A luminous portrait of a marriage, a shattering evocation of a family ravaged by grief and loss, and a tender and unforgettable re-imagining of a boy whose life has been all but forgotten, and whose name was given to one of the most celebrated plays of all time, *Hamnet* is mesmerizing, seductive, impossible to put down—a magnificent leap forward from one of our most gifted novelists.

A Novel Sourcebooks, Inc.

"Casts an enthralling spell, giving both characters and readers not only what they most want, but what they ultimately need." –Brunonia Barry, bestselling author of *The Lace Reader* When Alba Ashby, the youngest Ph.D. student at Cambridge University, suffers the Worst Event of Her Life, she finds herself at the door of 11 Hope Street. There, a beautiful older woman named Peggy invites Alba to stay on the house's unusual conditions: she'll have ninety-nine nights, and no more, to turn her life around. Once inside, Alba discovers that 11 Hope Street is no ordinary house. Past residents include Virginia Woolf, Dorothy Parker, and Agatha Christie, who all stayed there at hopeless times in their lives and who still hang around—quite literally—in talking portraits on the walls. With their help Alba begins to piece her life back together and embarks on a journey that may save her life. Filled with a colorful, unforgettable cast of literary figures, *The House at the End of Hope Street* is a wholly imaginative novel of feminine wisdom and second chances, with just the right dash of magic.

Dear Edward Anchor

This "soul stirring" novel by the New York Times bestselling author of *Room* (O Magazine) is one of the New York Post's best books of the year. Noah Selvaggio is a retired chemistry professor and widower living on the Upper West Side, but born in the South of France. He is days away from his first visit back to Nice since he was a child, bringing with him a handful of puzzling photos he's discovered from his mother's wartime years. But he receives a call from social services: Noah is the closest available relative of an eleven-year-old great-nephew he's never met, who urgently needs someone to look after him. Out of a feeling of obligation, Noah agrees to take Michael along on his trip. Much has changed in this famously charming seaside mecca, still haunted by memories of the Nazi occupation. The unlikely duo, suffering from jet lag and culture shock, bicker about everything from steak frites to screen time. But Noah gradually comes to appreciate the boy's truculent wit, and Michael's ease with tech and sharp eye help Noah unearth troubling details about their family's past. Both come to grasp the risks people in all eras have run for their loved ones, and find they are more akin than they knew. Written with all the tenderness and psychological intensity that made *Room* an international bestseller, *Akin* is a funny, heart-wrenching tale of an old man and a boy, born two generations apart, who unpick their painful story and start to write a new one together. "What begins as a larky story of unlikely male bonding turns into an off-center but far richer novel about the unheralded, imperfect heroism of two women." -- New York Times

This Tender Land Dial Press Trade Paperback
Following his acclaimed New York Times bestseller *Did You Ever Have a Family*, Bill Clegg returns with a "delicate, deeply observed, and deftly crafted" (Nickolas Butler, author of *Shotgun Lovesongs*) second novel about the complicated bonds and breaking points of friendship, the corrosive forces of secrets, the heartbeat of longing, and the redemption found in forgiveness. A retired widow in rural Connecticut wakes to an unexpected visit from her childhood best friend whom she hasn't seen in forty-nine years. A man arrives at a Pennsylvania hotel to introduce his estranged father to his newborn daughter and finds him collapsed on the floor of the lobby. A sixty-seven-year-old taxi driver in Kauai receives a phone call from the mainland that jars her back to a traumatic past. These seemingly disconnected lives come together as half-century-old secrets begin to surface. It is in this moment that Bill Clegg reminds us how choices—to connect, to betray, to protect—become our legacy. "Written in lyrical, beautiful prose that makes even waking up seem like a poetic event" (Good Morning America), this novel is a feat of storytelling, capturing sixty years within the framework of one fateful day.

A Novel Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
In Dublin, 1918, a maternity ward at the height of the Great Flu is a small world of work, risk, death, and unlooked-for love, in "Donoghue's best novel since *Room*" (Kirkus Reviews). In an Ireland doubly ravaged by war and disease, Nurse Julia Power works at an understaffed hospital in the city center, where expectant mothers who have come down with the terrible new Flu are quarantined together. Into Julia's regimented world step two outsiders—Doctor Kathleen Lynn, a rumoured Rebel on the run from the police, and a young volunteer helper, Bridie Sweeney. In the darkness and intensity of this tiny ward, over three days, these women change each other's lives in unexpected ways. They lose patients to this baffling pandemic, but they also shepherd new life into a fearful world. With tireless tenderness and humanity, carers and mothers alike somehow do their impossible work. In *The Pull of the Stars*, Emma Donoghue once again finds the light in the darkness in this new classic of hope and survival against all odds.

Akin Harper Collins
Eliza Naumann, a seemingly unremarkable nine-year-old, expects never to fit into her gifted family: her autodidact father, Saul, absorbed in his study of Jewish mysticism; her brother, Aaron, the vessel of his father's spiritual ambitions; and her brilliant but distant lawyer-mom, Miriam. But when Eliza sweeps her school and district spelling bees in quick succession, Saul takes it as a sign that she is destined for greatness. In this altered reality, Saul inducts her into his hallowed study and lavishes upon her the attention previously reserved for Aaron, who in his displacement embarks upon a lone quest for spiritual fulfillment. When Miriam's secret life triggers a familial explosion, it is Eliza who must order the chaos. Myla Goldberg's keen eye for detail brings Eliza's journey to three-dimensional life. As she rises from classroom obscurity to the blinding lights and outsized expectations of the National Bee, Eliza's small pains and large joys are finely wrought and deeply felt. Not merely a coming-of-age story, Goldberg's first novel delicately examines the unraveling fabric of one family. The outcome of this tale is as startling and unconventional as her prose, which wields its metaphors sharply and rings with maturity. The work of a lyrical and gifted storyteller, *Bee Season* marks the arrival of an extraordinarily talented new writer.

The Family Upstairs Vintage
Set to inherit half of Bella Vista apple

orchard along with a half-sister she's never met, Tess Delaney discovers a world filled with the simple pleasures of food and family.