

ALOFT, by **Chang-rae Lee** (Riverhead, \$14 paper, 1594480702) “The need to connect on the ground and in the air escapes our narrator, and he is left to fly solo looking over—and overlooking—the lives and loves he has left behind. Jerry Battle is, sadly, alone, adrift, and indeed aloft. This is Chang-rae Lee’s most touching and humorous book yet.”—**Fern Jaffe, Paperbacks Plus, Bronx, NY**



MARCH • 2005

FIRES IN THE DARK, by **Louise Doughty** (Perennial, \$14.95 paper, 0060571233) “The fate of the Gypsies under Hitler’s rule is brought to light in this excellent novel. Drawn partly from her own family history, Doughty tells the story of a Romany family first forced to abandon their nomadic lifestyle, then imprisoned in a Moravian labor camp, and, finally, sent to Auschwitz—all except 15-year-old Emil who must decide for himself what his future will be.”—**Laura Hansen, Bookin’ It, Little Falls, MN**



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THE KEENERS, by **Maura D. Shaw** (Medallion Press, \$25.95, 1932815155) “What a great St. Patrick’s Day read. Shaw has written a lovely book that takes you from the blighted fields of Ireland during the Potato Famine to the Irish experience in New York during the Civil War. Her characters are engaging; her scenes are vivid. It makes you want to be Irish!”—**Pamela Headrick, A Thirsty Mind, Lakeway, TX**



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LITTLE CHILDREN, by **Tom Perrotta** (Griffin, \$13.95 paper, 0312315732) “The lives of the parents of young children are tangled by failed dreams, love and sex, and a possible child molester who has moved to their cozy suburb. Perrotta brings to life the world of some rather unappealing characters, and successfully humanizes them. Not for everybody, but, for those special readers, the results are absorbing, vividly rendered, beautifully written, and, often, hilarious.”—**Daniel Goldin, Harry W. Schwartz Bookshop, Milwaukee, WI**



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LONE STAR RISING: *The Texas Ranger Trilogy*, by Elmer Kelton (Forge, \$17.95, 0765312301) “Three of Kelton’s novels are collected in one volume. The trilogy tells the story of Rusty Shannon, a boy who is rescued from the Comanche and, eventually, joins the Texas Rangers. Kelton is one of the best writers of Westerns going. He fuses plot, character, and historical detail into a seamless, eminently readable whole.”—**Peggy Hailey, BookPeople, Austin, TX**



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MR. LUCKY: *A Novel of High Stakes*, by James Swain (Ballantine Books, \$19.95, 0345475445) “Swain’s latest is another of his funny, intricate, and fascinating books with the beloved Tony Valentine, gambling expert and sleuth. This time, most of the action takes place in Slippery Rock, North Carolina, as Tony tries to determine how Ricky Smith became known as Mr. Lucky, after surviving a five-story fall from a Las Vegas hotel and, then, beginning a stunning winning streak.”—**Susan Wasson, Bookworks, Albuquerque, NM**



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NAM-A-RAMA, by Phillip Jennings (Forge, \$24.95, 0765311208) “A completely ribald and hilarious look at the makings of a war from the inside out. Who could not be fascinated by a ‘CIA Pizza Delivery Person to the White House’? Written by an ex-marine, this novel packs a huge punch of satire and fun!”—**Diane Gressman, Books & Company, Oconomowoc, WI**



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A RARE AND CURIOUS GIFT, by Pauline Holdstock (Norton, \$24.95, 0393059685) “This novel, loosely based on the life of 17th century Italian painter Artemisia Gentileschi, is full of gifts both rare and curious, but the rarest and most curious is Holdstock’s gift of language, which is poetic without pretension.”—**Paul Barnes, Posman Books @ Grand Central, New York, NY**



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THE SWALLOWS OF KABUL, by Yasmina Khadra, John Cullen (Trans.) (Anchor, \$12 paper, 1400033764) "Yasmina Khadra is the nom de plume of Mohammed Moulessehoul, a 36-year Algerian military veteran. His novel, never less than searing in its depiction of Afghanistan withering under the repressive Taliban regime, traces the lives of two couples struggling against despair and madness. Brilliant language makes the imagery of souls reduced to husks all the more devastating."—Kathleen McKeague, *Blue Willow Bookshop, Houston, TX*



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A VERY PRIVATE GENTLEMAN, by Martin Booth (Picador, \$14, 0312309090) "A subtle, stylish, and extremely well-crafted work of intrigue disguised as fiction. Martin Booth's latest is right on the money."—Geoffrey Jennings, *Rainy Day Books, Fairway, KS*



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THE WHITE LEAGUE, by Thomas Zigal (Toby Press, \$19.95, 1592641156) "Paul Blanchard, a prominent businessman with a secret to hide, is confronted by a fraternity brother who knows Blanchard's secret and who will reveal it unless he helps him become governor. Capturing the atmosphere of New Orleans, Zigal's novel is truly an engaging read."—Rob Stahl, *Colgate Bookstore, Hamilton, NY*



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BLEACHY-HAIRED HONKY BITCH: *Tales From a Bad Neighborhood*, by Hollis Gillespie (Regan, \$13.95, 0060561998) "The, ahem, title comes from an incident in which Hollis Gillespie was yelled at by a potential neighbor while house hunting in a bad neighborhood. Which is essentially what the book is about: the search for a safe haven in what passes for the ongoing storm otherwise known as Gillespie's life. This writing comes straight from the heart."—Gina Webb, *Tall Tales Book Shop, Atlanta, GA*



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GHOSTS IN THE GARDEN: *Reflections on Memory, Identity, and Meaning*, by **Beth Kephart** (New World Library, \$17, 1577314980) "Kephart writes of her reflections as she takes time out each week to assess past, present, and future in midlife. A lovely book that I found relaxing to read."—**Laurie Benner, Reader's Choice Bookstore, Centerville, OH**

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IN FOND REMEMBRANCE OF ME, by **Howard Norman** (North Point Press, \$21, 0865476802) "A wonderful, touching memoir of the author's time among the Inuit, translating their 'Noah stories,' and the friendship he struck with a woman who was translating the same stories into Japanese. This is a book full of friendship, life, and myth combined in a most appealing way."—**Mike Tyler, Tyler & Tyler Booksellers, North Little Rock, AR**

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PONZI'S SCHEME: *The True Story of a Financial Legend*, by **Mitchell Zuckoff** (Random House, \$25.95, 1400060397) "Ponzi's Scheme reminds us that Ponzi was, in fact, a real person, whose mischief created a new word and whose figurative descendants still prey on the eager and gullible."—**Randy Smith, Destinations Booksellers, New Albany, IN**

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SMASHED: *Story of a Drunken Girlhood*, by **Koren Zailckas** (Viking, \$21.95, 0670033766) "Zailckas relates her compelling story of binge drinking and eventual sobriety without self-pity, detailing the social discomfort that only left her when she drank and the many social pressures that kept her from realizing she had a problem."—**Carol Schneck, Schuler Books & Music, Okemos, MI**

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WORKING FIRE: *The Making of a Fireman*, by Zac Unger (Penguin, \$15 paper, 0143034952) "This is a book for anyone with friends or relatives in fire service, for anyone interested in how a firefighter is trained or how life is lived in a firehouse. It is the story of one individual, from a novice at a fire school to an experienced and dedicated fire fighter. I learned lots from a dedicated firefighter in this memoir."—**Dorothy Dickerson, Books & More, Albion, MI**

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THE MAGDALEN MARTYRS, by Ken Bruen (Minotaur, \$22.95, 0312316453) "When a local thug hires Jack Taylor to track down a woman, the question becomes whether Jack will be able to dodge the bullets flying around his head. The drama is not without humor, which makes it the fun read it is."—**Virginia Hobson Hicks, Books on the Bluff, Townsend, GA**

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PLAYING WITH FIRE, by Peter Robinson (Avon, \$7.50 paper, 0061031100) "In *Playing With Fire*, Inspector Alan Banks and D.I. Annie Cabbot must investigate a series of seemingly unrelated arson/murders. I am awed by Robinson's skill at crafting suspenseful, believable stories and characters."—**Maret Orless, Vroman's Bookstore, Pasadena, CA**

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YEAR OF THE HYENAS: A Novel of Murder in Ancient Egypt, by Brad Geagley (Simon & Schuster, \$23, 074325080X) "The murder of a priestess in ancient Egypt starts the chain of events that leads investigator Semerkhet through the tombs of dead Pharaohs into the villages of the tomb makers and through the dark alleys of the beggars and thieves of Egypt. The author promises this is only the first in a series of mysteries set in ancient times. Let's hope he keeps his promise."—**Barbara Hoagland, The King's English, Salt Lake City, UT**

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