

Out Of Joint A Private And Public Story Of Arthritis American Lives

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This compelling narrative, 'Out Of Joint,' deeply explores the private and public dimensions of arthritis, offering an intimate look at how this pervasive condition shapes American lives. It chronicles personal struggles and societal impacts, providing a comprehensive understanding of living with arthritis.

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Out of Joint

She begins, in the morning, by casing her joints: Can her ankles take the stairs? Will her fingers open a jar? Peel an orange? But it was not always this way for Mary Felstiner, who went to bed one night an active professional and healthy young mother, and woke the next morning literally out of joint. With wrists and elbows no longer working right, she'd discovered one of the first signs of rheumatoid arthritis, the most virulent form of a common disease. Out of Joint is her account of living through arthritis, a distinction she shares with seventy million Americans. ø While arthritis pain affects one out of three Americans, this book is the first to tell the personal story of the nation's most common yet neglected disease. Part memoir, part medical and social history, Out of Joint folds the author's private experience into far-reaching investigations of a socially hidden ailment and of any chronic condition?how to handle love, work, sexuality, fatigue, betrayal, pain, time, mortality, rights, myths, and memory. Moving from the 1940s to the present, this story of one life with arthritis exposes little-known medical research and provocative social issues: alarming controversies over arthritis miracle drugs, intense demands concerning disability, and the surprising and disproportionate number of women affected by chronic illness. From this prize-winning historian comes a call for healing through history, a moving meditation on the way chronic conditions can be treated by enlisting the past.

American Lives

Memoirs are as varied as human emotion and experience, and those published in the distinguished American Lives Series run the gamut. Excerpted from this series (called "splendid" by Newsweek) and collected here for the first time, these dispatches from American lives take us from China during the Cultural Revolution to the streets of New York in the sixties to a cabin in the backwoods of Idaho. In prose as diverse as the stories they tell, writers such as Floyd Skloot, Ted Kooser, Peggy Shumaker, and Lee Martin, among many others, open windows to their own ordinary and extraordinary experiences. John Skoyles tells how, for his Uncle Fred, a particular "Hard Luck Suit" imparted misfortune. Brenda Serotte describes a Turkish grandmother who made her living reading palms, interpreting cups, and prescribing poultices for the community. In "Son of Mr. Green Jeans," Dinty W. Moore views fatherhood through the lens of pop culture. Janet Sternburg's Phantom Limb muses on the dilemmas of a child caring for a parent. Whether evoking moments of death or disease, in family or marriage, history, politics, religion, or culture, these glimpses into singular American lives come together in a richly textured, colorful patchwork quilt of American life.

Just Breathe Normally

Just Breathe Normally opens with a traumatic accident. Shattered perceptions and shards of narrative recount the events, from wreck through recovery and beyond. In lyric prose, the stories spiral back through generations to touch on questions of mortality and family, immigration and migration, legacies intended or inflicted. In the wake of her near-fatal cycling collision, Peggy Shumaker searches for meaning within extremity. Through a long convalescence, she reevaluates her family's past, treating us to a meditation on the meaning of justice and the role of love in the grueling process of healing. Her book, a moving memoir of childhood and family, testifies to the power of collective empathy in the transformations that make and remake us throughout our lives. We all live with injury and loss. This book transforms injury, transforms loss. Shumaker crafts language unlike anyone else, language at once poetic and profound. Her memoir enacts our human desire to understand the fragmented self. We see in practice the power of words to restore what medical science cannot: the fragile human psyche and its immense capacity for forgiveness.

Pain Woman Takes Your Keys, and Other Essays from a Nervous System

Rate your pain on a scale of one to ten. What about on a scale of spicy to citrus? Is it more like a lava lamp or a mosaic? Pain, though a universal element of human experience, is dimly understood and sometimes barely managed. Pain Woman Takes Your Keys, and Other Essays from a Nervous System is a collection of literary and experimental essays about living with chronic pain. Sonya Huber moves away from a linear narrative to step through the doorway into pain itself, into that strange, unbounded reality. Although the essays are personal in nature, this collection is not a record of the author's specific condition but an exploration that transcends pain's airless and constraining world and focuses on its edges from wild and widely ranging angles. Huber addresses the nature and experience of invisible disability, including the challenges of gender bias in our health care system, the search for effective treatment options, and the difficulty of articulating chronic pain. She makes pain a lens of inquiry and lyricism, finds its humor and complexity, describes its irascible character, and explores its temperature, taste, and even its beauty.

The Pat Boone Fan Club

Memoir of Sue William Silverman, a self-described "white Anglo-Saxon Jew" who grew up going to a Christian school. Discusses how she grew up a fan of Pat Boone before Boone became a Tea Party member.

Works Cited

"Doing things by the book" acquires a whole new meaning in Brandon R. Schrand's memoir of coming of age in spite of himself. The "works cited" are those books that serve as Schrand's signposts as he goes from life as a hormone-crazed, heavy-metal wannabe in the remotest parts of working-class Idaho to a reasonable facsimile of manhood (with a stop along the way to buy a five-dollar mustard-colored M. C. Hammer suit, so he'll fit in at college). The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn informs his adolescent angst over the perceived injustice of society's refusal to openly discuss boners. The Great Gatsby serves as a metaphor for his indulgent and directionless college days spent in a drunken stupor (when

he wasn't feigning interest in Mormonism to attract women). William Kittredge's *Hole in the Sky* parallels his own dangerous adulthood slide into alcoholism and denial. With a finely calibrated wit, a good dose of humility, and a strong supporting cast of literary characters, Schrand manages to chart his own story--about a dreamer thrown out of school as many times as he's thrown into jail--until he finally sticks his landing.

Weeds

In Thomas Jefferson's day, 90 percent of the population worked on family farms. Today, in a world dominated by agribusiness, less than 1 percent of Americans claim farm-related occupations. What was lost along the way is something that Evelyn I. Funda experienced firsthand when, in 2001, her parents sold the last parcel of the farm they had worked since they married in 1957. Against that landscape of loss, Funda explores her family's three-generation farming experience in southern Idaho, where her Czech immigrant family spent their lives turning a patch of sagebrush into crop land. The story of Funda's family unfolds within the larger context of our country's rich immigrant history, western culture, and farming as a science and an art. Situated at the crossroads of American farming, *Weeds: A Farm Daughter's Lament* offers a clear view of the nature, the cost, and the transformation of the American West. Part cultural history, part memoir, and part elegy, the book reminds us that in losing our attachment to the land we also lose some of our humanity and something at the very heart of our identity as a nation.

Body Geographic

A memoir from the award-winning author of *My Lesbian Husband*, Barrie Jean Borich's *Body Geographic* turns personal history into an inspired reflection on the points where place and person intersect, where running away meets running toward, and where dislocation means finding oneself. One coordinate of Borich's story is Chicago, the prototypical Great Lakes port city built by immigrants like her great-grandfather Big Petar, and the other is her own port of immigration, Minneapolis, the combined skylines of these two cities tattooed on Borich's own back. Between Chicago and Minneapolis Borich maps her own Midwest, a true heartland in which she measures the distance between the dreams and realities of her own life, her family's, and her fellow travelers' in the endless American migration. Covering rough terrain—from the hardships of her immigrant ancestors to the travails of her often-drunk young self, longing to be madly awake in the world, from the changing demographics of midwestern cities to the personal transformations of coming out and living as a lesbian—*Body Geographic* is cartography of high literary order, plotting routes, real and imagined, and putting an alternate landscape on the map.

Sleep in Me

Against the backdrop of his teenage sister's car accident in which a dump truck filled with sand slammed into the small car carrying her and her friends Jon Pineda chronicles his sister Rica's sudden transformation from a vibrant high school cheerleader to a girl wheelchair bound and unable to talk. For the next five years of her life, her only ability to communicate was through her rudimentary use of sign language. Lyrical in its approach and unflinching in its honesty, *Sleep in Me* is a heartrending memoir of the coming-of-age of a boy haunted by a family tragedy.

Driving with Dvorak

All our lives are made of moments, both simple and sublime, all of which in some way partake of the cultural moment. Fleda Brown is that rare writer who, in narrating the incidents and observations of her life, turns her story, by wit and insight and a poet's gift, into something more. This is an unconventional memoir. A series of lyrical essays about life in a maddeningly complex family during the even more maddeningly complex fifties and sixties, it adds up to one woman's story while simultaneously reflecting the story of her times. A strange and erratic father, a resigned and helpless mother, a mentally disabled brother, a sister with a brain tumor: folded into Brown's reflections are the intimacies and ambivalences of family and marriage, girlhood and adolescence, identity and self-knowledge. Whether reflecting on the automobile industry or a wrenching parting from beloved pets or the process of aging, Brown's telling rings with great humor, profound perception, and a lyricism that makes even the most commonplace moment uncommonly good reading.

This is Not the Ivy League

Mary Clearman Blew's education began at home, on a remote cattle ranch in Montana. She graduated to a one-room rural school, then escaped, via scholarship, to the University of Montana, where, still in her teens, she met and married her first husband. *This Is Not the Ivy League* is her account of what it was to be that girl, and then that woman—pressured by husband and parents to be the conventional wife of the 1950s, persisting in her pursuit of an education, trailed by a reluctant husband and small children through graduate school, and finally entering the job market with a PhD in English only to find a whole new set of pressures and prejudices. This memoir is Blew's behind-the-scenes account of pursuing a career at a time when a woman's place in the world was supposed to have limits. It is a story of both the narrowing perspective of the social norm and the ever-expanding possibilities of a woman who refuses to be told what she can and cannot be.

If This Were Fiction

If This Were Fiction is a love story—for Jill Christman's long-ago fiancé, who died young in a car accident; for her children; for her husband, Mark; and ultimately, for herself. In this collection, Christman takes on the wide range of situations and landscapes she encountered on her journey from wild child through wounded teen to mother, teacher, writer, and wife. In these pages there are fatal accidents and miraculous births; a grief pilgrimage that takes Christman to jungles, volcanoes, and caves in Central America; and meditations on everything from sexual trauma and the more benign accidents of childhood to gun violence, indoor cycling, unlikely romance, and even a ghost or two. Playing like a lively mixtape in both subject and style, *If This Were Fiction* focuses an open-hearted, frequently funny, clear-eyed feminist lens on Christman's first fifty years and sends out a message of love, power, and hope.

Under My Bed and Other Essays

Jody Keisner was raised in rural Nebraska towns by a volatile father and kind but passive mother. As a young adult living alone for the first time, she began a nighttime ritual of checking under her bed each night, not sure who she was afraid of finding. An intruder? A monster? Her father? Keisner's fears mature as she becomes a wife and mother, and the boogeyman under the bed shape-shifts, though its shapes are no less frightening—a young aunt's drowning, the "chest chomp" in the classic horror movie *The Thing*, a diagnosis of a chronic autoimmune disease, the murder of a young college student, an eccentric grandmother's belief in reincarnation and her dying advice: "Don't be afraid." In *Under My Bed and Other Essays*, Jody Keisner searches for the roots of the violence and fear that afflict women, starting with the working-class midwestern family she was adopted into and ending with her own experience of mothering daughters. In essays both literary and experimental, Keisner illustrates the tension between the illusion of safety, our desire for control, and our struggle to keep the things we fear from reaching out and pulling us under.

Shadow Migration

With her feet firmly rooted on the plains of Nebraska, Suzanne Ohlmann launches the reader into flight over miles and decades of migration: from an apple-pie childhood in America's Fourth of July City to the dirt floors of a cowshed in rural India, we zigzag across time and geography to see the world through Ohlmann's eyes and to discover with her the pain she'd been avoiding through her boomerang travels away from her native home. Through incarnations as a musician, arts manager, and registered nurse, Ohlmann finally lands in Texas, buys a house, and gets a dog. But her house is haunted, and so is she. In the dark solitude of Ohlmann's basement the vision of a dead child presents her with a harrowing choice: she can go home to Nebraska and seek the truth of her biological past, or, like the boy, surrender to the depths of her own darkness. With honesty, compassion, and a sense of humor, Ohlmann recounts her tenacious search into the shadows of her life.

The Sound of Undoing

A memoir in essays, *The Sound of Undoing* deconstructs the way sound has overwhelmingly shaped Paige Towers's life. Each essay focuses on a different sound, some perceptible—like the sound of a loon call or gunshot—and others abstract—like the sound of awakening. Given a hypersensitivity to noise from which she has both suffered and benefited since childhood, Towers uses these sounds as a starting point for making sense of past events. She reflects on the estrangement of a beloved sister, sexual abuse and assault, and the link between mental illness and noise in her family, as well

as nature, religion, violence, and other themes. Experimental in form and provocative in content, *The Sound of Undoing* also makes use of research on silence, nature and noise pollution, listening, sound art, autonomous sensory meridian response, and the acoustic environment in general. By exploring memories and feelings triggered by certain noises, this lyrical meditation untangles a life infused with meaning through sound.

What Becomes You

“Being a man, like being a woman, is something you have to learn,” Aaron Raz Link remarks. Few would know this better than the coauthor of *What Becomes You*, who began life as a girl named Sarah and twenty-nine years later began life anew as a gay man. As he transforms from female to male and from teaching scientist to theatre performer, Link documents the extraordinary medical, social, legal, and personal processes involved in a complete identity change. ø Hilda Raz, a well-known feminist writer and teacher, observes this process both as an “astonished” parent and as a professor who has studied gender issues. All these perspectives come into play in this collaborative memoir, which travels between women’s experiences and men’s lives, explores the art and science of changing sex, maps uncharted family values, and journeys through a world transformed by surgery, hormones, love, and . . . clown school. Combining personal experience and critical analysis, the book is an unusual—and unusually fascinating—reflection on gender, sex, and the art of living. This Bison Books edition features a set of discussion questions.

Autumn Song

We all live lives littered with what we leave behind: places we once lived, friendships we once had, dreams we once envisioned, the people we once were. Each new day we attempt to find a way to continue living despite the absences we experience because of loss and disappointment, injustice and inequity, change and the passage of time. *Autumn Song: Essays on Absence* invites readers into one Black woman’s experiences encountering absences, seeing beyond the empty spaces, and grasping at the glimmers of glory that remain. In a world marred with brokenness, these glimmers speak to the possibility of grieving losses, healing heartache, and allowing ourselves to be changed.

Shift

Sky Songs is a collection of essays that takes inspiration from the ancient seabed in which Jennifer Sinor lives, an elemental landscape that reminds her that our lives are shaped by all that has passed through. Beginning with the conception of her first son, which coincided with the tragic death of her uncle on an Alaskan river, and ending a decade later in the Himalayan home of the Dalai Lama, Sinor offers a lyric exploration of language, love, and the promise inherent in the stories we tell: to remember. In these essays, Sinor takes us through the mountains, deserts, and rivers of the West and along with her on her travels to India. Whether rooted in the dailiness of raising children or practicing yoga, Sinor searches for the places where grace resides. The essays often weave several narrative threads together in the search for relationship and connection. A mother, writer, teacher, and yoga instructor, Sinor ultimately tackles the most difficult question: how to live in a broken world filled with both suffering and grace.

Sky Songs

Everything changes when Julie Riddle’s parents stumble across the wilderness survival guide *How to Live in the Woods on Pennies a Day*. In 1977, when Riddle is seven years old, she and her family—fed up with the challenges of city life—move to the foot of the Cabinet Mountains Wilderness in northwestern Montana. For three years they live in the primitive basement of the log house they are building by hand in the harsh, remote Montana woods. Meanwhile, haunted by the repressed memory of childhood sexual abuse, Riddle struggles to come to terms with the dark shadows that plague her amid entrenched cultural and gender mores enforced by enduring myths of the West. As Riddle grapples with her own painful secrets, she discovers the world around her and its impact on people—the demands of living in a rural, mountain community dependent on boom-and-bust mining and logging industries, the health and environmental crises of the W. R. Grace asbestos contamination and EPA cleanup, and the healing beauty of the Montana wild. More than simply a memoir about family and place, *The Solace of Stones* explores Riddle’s coming of age and the complexities of memory, loss, and identity borne by a family homesteading in the modern West.

The Solace of Stones

Whether pulled from the folds of memory, channeled through the icons of Greek mythology and Roman Catholicism, or filtered through the lens of pop culture, Sonja Livingston's *Queen of the Fall* considers the lives of women. Exploring the legacies of those she has crossed paths with in life and in the larger culture, Livingston weaves together strands of memory with richly imagined vignettes to explore becoming a woman in late 1980s and early 1990s America. Along the way, the award-winning memoirist brings us face-to-face with herself as an inner-city girl—trying to imagine a horizon beyond poverty, fearful of her fertility and the limiting arc of teenage pregnancy. Livingston looks at the lives of those she's known: friends who've gotten themselves into "trouble" and disappeared never to be heard from again, girls who tell their school counselor small lies out of necessity and pain, and a mother whose fruitfulness seems, at times, biblical. Livingston interacts with figures such as Susan B. Anthony, the Virgin Mary, and Ally McBeal to mine the terrain of her own femininity, fertility, and longing. *Queen of the Fall* is a dazzling meditation on loss, possibility, and, ultimately, what it means to be human. Watch a book trailer

Queen of the Fall

On August 4, 2004, Jason Crigler was onstage in a New York City nightclub when a blood vessel burst in his brain. The thirty-four-year-old guitarist, a fixture in the downtown music scene who had played with Marshall Crenshaw, Linda Thompson, and John Cale, narrowly survived the bleed. A string of complications that followed—meningitis, seizures, coma—left him immobile and unresponsive, with his doctors saying nothing more could be done. Meanwhile, Jason's medical insurance quickly hit its lifetime cap, meaning that his policy would no longer pay for his care. Despite such overwhelming circumstances, Jason's parents, sister, and pregnant wife were sure that he was still there, trapped inside his incapacitated body but able to fight his way back. They mounted an intense course of rehabilitation for him even as they fought a healthcare system that was geared toward defeat. In intimate and unflinching prose, Mojie Crigler chronicles her brother's harrowing decline and miraculous recovery. *Get Me Through Tomorrow* is much more than the story of a medical victory amid a broken healthcare system, however. It is about a sister's metamorphosis from fearful naïf to assertive caregiver. It is about families bridging heartache and divorce to find hope. It is about the deep and enduring relationship between siblings—and the love that transforms them.

Get Me Through Tomorrow

When Amy E. Wallen's southern, blue-collar, peripatetic family was transferred from Ely, Nevada, to Lagos, Nigeria, she had just turned seven. From Nevada to Nigeria and on to Peru, Bolivia, and Oklahoma, the family wandered the world, living in a state of constant upheaval. *When We Were Ghouls* follows Wallen's recollections of her family who, like ghosts, came and went and slipped through her fingers, rendering her memories unclear. Were they a family of grave robbers, as her memory of the pillaging of a pre-Incan grave site indicates? Are they, as the author's mother posits, "hideous people?" Or is Wallen's memory out of focus? In this quick-paced and riveting narrative, Wallen exorcizes these haunted memories to clarify the nature of her family and, by extension, her own character. Plumbing the slipperiness of memory and confronting what it means to be a "good" human, *When We Were Ghouls* links the fear of loss and mortality to childhood ideas of permanence. It is a story about family, surely, but it is also a representation of how a combination of innocence and denial can cause us to neglect our most precious earthly treasures: not just our children but the artifacts of humanity and humanity itself.

When We Were Ghouls

Growing up in a small town in South Texas in the eighties and nineties, poverty, machismo, and drug addiction were everywhere for Tomás Q. Morín. He was around four or five years old when he first remembers his father cooking heroin, and he recalls many times he and his mother accompanied his father while he was on the hunt for more, Morín in the back seat keeping an eye out for unmarked cop cars, just as his father taught him. It was on one of these drives that, for the first time, he blinked in a way that evolution hadn't intended. *Let Me Count the Ways* is the memoir of a journey into obsessive-compulsive disorder, a mechanism to survive a childhood filled with pain, violence, and unpredictability. Morín's compulsions were a way to hold onto his love for his family in uncertain times until OCD became a prison he struggled for decades to escape. Tender, unflinching, and even funny,

this vivid portrait of South Texas life challenges our ideas about fatherhood, drug abuse, and mental illness.

Let Me Count the Ways

Clear-sighted, darkly comic, and tender, *The Twenty-Seventh Letter of the Alphabet* is about a daughter's struggle to face the Medusa of generational trauma without turning to stone. Growing up in the New Jersey suburbs of the 1970s and 1980s in a family warped by mental illness, addiction, and violence, Kim Adrian spent her childhood ducking for cover from an alcoholic father prone to terrifying acts of rage and trudging through a fog of confusion with her mother, a suicidal incest survivor hooked on prescription drugs. Family memories were buried—even as they were formed—and truth was obscured by lies and fantasies. In *The Twenty-Seventh Letter of the Alphabet* Adrian tries to make peace with this troubled past by cataloguing memories, anecdotes, and bits of family lore in the form of a glossary. But within this strategic reckoning of the past, the unruly present carves an unpredictable path as Adrian's aging mother plunges into ever-deeper realms of drug-fueled paranoia. Ultimately, the glossary's imposed order serves less to organize emotional chaos than to expose difficult but necessary truths, such as the fact that some problems simply can't be solved, and that loving someone doesn't necessarily mean saving them.

The Twenty-Seventh Letter of the Alphabet

Bethany Maile had a mythological American West in mind when she returned to Idaho after dropping out of college in Boston, only to find a farm-town-turned-suburb instead of the Wild West wonderland she remembered. Haunted by what she had so completely misremembered, Maile resolved to investigate her attachment to the western myth, however flawed. Deciding to engage in a variety of "western" events, Maile trailed rodeo queens, bid on cattle, fired .22s at the gun range, and searched out wild horses. With lively reportage and a sharp wit, she recounts her efforts to understand how the western myth is outdated yet persistent while ultimately exploring the need for story and the risks inherent to that need. *Anything Will Be Easy after This* traces Maile's evolution from a girl suckered by a busted-down story to a more knowing woman who discovers a new narrative that enchants without deluding.

Anything Will Be Easy after This

Many are haunted and obsessed by their own eventual deaths, but perhaps no one as much as Sue William Silverman. This thematically linked collection of essays charts Silverman's attempt to confront her fears of that ultimate unknown. Her dread was fomented in part by a sexual assault, hidden for years, that led to an awareness that death and sex are in some ways inextricable, an everyday reality many women know too well. Through gallows humor, vivid realism, and fantastical speculation, *How to Survive Death and Other Inconveniences* explores this fear of death and the author's desire to survive it. From cruising New Jersey's industry-blighted landscape in a gold Plymouth to visiting the emergency room for maladies both real and imagined to suffering the stifling strictness of an intractable piano teacher, Silverman guards her memories for the same reason she resurrects archaic words—to use as talismans to ward off the inevitable. Ultimately, Silverman knows there is no way to survive death physically. Still, through language, commemoration, and metaphor, she searches for a sliver of transcendent immortality.

How to Survive Death and Other Inconveniences

What forges the unique human personality? In *Island in the City* Micah McCrary, taking his genetic inheritance as immutable, considers the role geography has played in shaping who he is. Place often leaves indelible marks: the badges of self-discovery; the scars from adversity and hardship; the gilded stamps from personal triumphs; the tattoos of memory; and the new appendages—friendships, experiences, and baggage—we carry with us. Each place, with its own personality, has the power to form or revise our personhood in surprising and fascinating ways. McCrary considers three places he has called home (Normal, Illinois; Chicago; and Prague) and reflects on how these surroundings have shaped him. His sharp-eyed, charming memoir-in-essays contemplates how aspects of his identity, such as being black, male, middle-class, queer, and American, have developed and been influenced by where he hangs his hat.

Island in the City

In *This Fish Is Fowl* Xu Xi offers the transnational and feminist perspective of a contemporary “glocalized” American life. Xu’s quirky, darkly comic, and obsessively personal essays emerge from her diverse professional career as a writer, business executive, entrepreneur, and educator. From her origins in Hong Kong as an Indonesian of Chinese descent to her U.S. citizenship and multiple countries of residence, she writes her way around the globe. Caring for her mother with Alzheimer’s in Hong Kong becomes the rhythmic accompaniment to an enforced, long-term, long-distance relationship with her partner and home in New York. In between Xu reflects on all her selves, which are defined by those myriad monikers of existence. As an author who began life as a novelist and fiction writer, she also considers the nature of genre, which snakes its way through these essays. In her linguistic trip across the comic tragedy that is globalism, she wonders about the mystery of humanity and the future of our world at this complicated and precarious moment in human existence. *This Fish Is Fowl* is a twenty-first-century blend of the essayist traditions of both West and East. Xu’s acerbic, deft prose shows her to be a descendant of both Michel de Montaigne and Lu Xun, with influences from stepparent Jonathan Swift.

This Fish Is Fowl

After contracting polio as a child, Sandra Gail Lambert progressed from braces and crutches to a manual wheelchair to a power wheelchair—but loneliness has remained a constant, from the wild claustrophobia of a child in body casts to just yesterday, trapped at home, gasping from pain. *A Certain Loneliness* is a meditative and engaging memoir-in-essays that explores the intersection of disability, queerness, and female desire with frankness and humor. Lambert presents the adventures of flourishing within a world of uncertain tomorrows: kayaking alone through swamps with alligators; negotiating planes, trains, and ski lifts; scoring free drugs from dangerous men; getting trapped in a too-deep snow drift without crutches. *A Certain Loneliness* is literature of the body, palpable and present, in which Lambert’s lifelong struggle with isolation and independence—complete with tiresome frustrations, slapstick moments, and grand triumphs—are wound up in the long history of humanity’s relationship to the natural world. Purchase the audio edition.

A Certain Loneliness

With organized religion becoming increasingly divisive and politicized and Americans abandoning their pews in droves, it’s easy to question aspects of traditional spirituality and devotion. In response to this shifting landscape, Sonja Livingston undertakes a variety of expeditions—from a mobile confessional in Cajun Country to a eucharistic procession in Galway, Ireland, to the Death and Marigolds Parade in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Mass in a county jail on Thanksgiving Day—to better understand devotion in her own life. *The Virgin of Prince Street* chronicles her quest, offering an intimate and unusually candid view into Livingston’s relationship with the swiftly changing Catholic Church and into her own changing heart. Ultimately, Livingston’s meditations on quirky rituals and fading traditions thoughtfully and dynamically interrogate traditional elements of sacramental devotion, especially as they relate to concepts of religion, relationships, and the sacred.

The Virgin of Prince Street

“‘Knocked Down’ is a hilarious memoir about a free-spirited, commitment-phobic Brooklyn girl who, after a whirlwind romance, finds herself living in a rickety farmhouse, knocked up, and faced with bed rest due to an incompetent cervix”--

Knocked Down

Modern manhood is confusing and complicated, but Joey Franklin, a thirtysomething father of three, is determined to make the best of it. In *My Wife Wants You to Know I’m Happily Married*, he offers frank, self-deprecating meditations on everything from male-pattern baldness and the balm of blues harmonica to grand theft auto and the staying power of first kisses. He riffs on cockroaches, hockey, romance novels, Boy Scout hikes, and the challenge of parenting a child through high-stakes Texas T-ball. With honesty and wit, Franklin explores what it takes to raise three boys, succeed in a relationship, and survive as a modern man. *My Wife Wants You to Know I’m Happily Married* is an uplifting rumination on learning from the past and living for the present, a hopeful take on being a man without being a menace to society. Access free teaching resources.

My Wife Wants You to Know I’m Happily Married

"In this candid and moving memoir, John W. Evans articulates the complicated joys of falling in love again as a young widower. Though heartbroken after his wife's violent death, Evans realizes that he cannot remain inconsolable and adrift, living with his in-laws in Indiana. Motivated by a small red X on a map, Evans musters the courage for a cross-country trip. From the Badlands to Yellowstone to the foothills of the Sierra Mountains, Evans's hope and determination propel him even as he contemplates his vulnerability and the legacy of a terrible tragedy. *Should I Still Wish* chronicles Evans's efforts to leave an intense year of grief behind, to make peace with the natural world again, and to reconnect with a woman who promises, like San Francisco itself, a life of abundance and charm. With unflinching honesty Evans plumbs the uncertainties, doubts, and contradictions of a paradoxical experience in this love story, celebration of fatherhood, meditation on the afterlife of grief and resilience, and, ultimately, showcase for life's many profound incongruities"--

Should I Still Wish

In *Borderline Citizen* Robin Hemley wrestles with what it means to be a citizen of the world, taking readers on a singular journey through the hinterlands of national identity. As a polygamist of place, Hemley celebrates Guy Fawkes Day in the contested Falkland Islands; Canada Day and the Fourth of July in the tiny U.S. exclave of Point Roberts, Washington; Russian Federation Day in the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad; Handover Day among protesters in Hong Kong; and India Day along the most complicated border in the world. Forgoing the exotic descriptions of faraway lands common in traditional travel writing, *Borderline Citizen* upends the genre with darkly humorous and deeply compassionate glimpses into the lives of exiles, nationalists, refugees, and others. Hemley's superbly rendered narratives detail these individuals, including a Chinese billionaire who could live anywhere but has chosen to situate his ornate mansion in the middle of his impoverished ancestral village, a black nationalist wanted on thirty-two outstanding FBI warrants exiled in Cuba, and an Afghan refugee whose intentionally altered birth date makes him more easy to deport despite his harrowing past. Part travelogue, part memoir, part reportage, *Borderline Citizen* redefines notions of nationhood through an exploration of the arbitrariness of boundaries and what it means to belong.

Borderline Citizen

At eighteen years old, with no high school diploma, a growing rap sheet, and a failed relationship with his estranged father, Timothy J. Hillegonds took a one-way flight from Chicago to Colorado in hopes of leaving his mounting rage and frustration behind. His plan was simple: snowboard, hang out, live an uncomplicated life. *The Distance Between* chronicles how Hillegonds's plan went awry after he immediately jumped head first into a turbulent relationship with April, a Denny's coworker and single mother. At once passionate and volatile, their relationship was fueled by vodka, crystal methamphetamine, and poverty—and it sometimes became violent. Mere months after moving to the mountains, when the stakes felt like they couldn't be higher, Hillegonds learned April was pregnant with his child. More than just a harrowing story of addiction and abuse or a simple mea culpa, *The Distance Between* is a finely wrought exploration of, and reckoning with, absent fathers, fatherhood, violence, adolescent rage, white male privilege, and Hillegonds's own toxic masculinity. With nuance and urgency, *The Distance Between* takes readers through the grit of life on the margins while grappling with the problematic nature of one man's existence.

The Distance Between

At first glance a reader might mistake *It's Fun to Be a Person I Don't Know* for a juicy Hollywood tell-all, given Chachi D. Hauser's background as the great-granddaughter of Roy Disney, a cofounder with his brother Walt of the Walt Disney Company. And to her credit, Hauser doesn't shy away from confronting painful family memories when considering how the stories, myths, and rumors surrounding this entertainment empire have influenced her own imagination. But family history is only one strand in this intricate and variegated weave that also interlaces the social and environmental history of Hauser's adopted hometown of New Orleans, intimate reflections on love and navigating open relationships, and a searing self-examination that reveals a gender fluidity chafing against social barriers. Hauser's innovative and multifaceted narrative navigates a variety of terrains, seeking truth as its final destination. While the family company excels in fantasy, Hauser's story is that of a young documentary filmmaker determined to train a sharply focused lens on the reality of her lived experiences.

It's Fun to Be a Person I Don't Know

This Jade World centers on a Thai American who has gone through a series of life changes. Ira Sukrungruang married young to an older poet. On their twelfth anniversary, he received a letter asking for a divorce, sending him into a despairing spiral. How would he define himself when he was suddenly without the person who shaped and helped mold him into the person he is? After all these years, he asked himself what he wanted and found no answer. He did not even know what wanting meant. And so, in the year between his annual visits to Thailand to see his family, he gave in to urges, both physical and emotional; found comfort in the body, many bodies; fought off the impulse to disappear, to vanish; until he arrived at some modicum of understanding. During this time, he sought to obliterate the stereotype of the sexless Asian man and began to imagine a new life with new possibilities. Through ancient temples and the lush greenery of Thailand, to the confines of a stranger's bed and a devouring couch, This Jade World chronicles a year of mishap, exploration and experimentation, self-discovery, and eventually, healing. It questions the very nature of love and heartbreak, uncovering the vulnerability of being human.

Body & Soul (Watertown, Mass.)

Day after day, night after night, desperate men come to sit in the black chair next to Charles Barber's desk in a basement office at Bellevue and tell of their travails, of prison and disease, of violence and the voices that plague them. Between the stories, amid the peeling paint, musty odor, and flickering fluorescent light of his office, Barber observes that this isn't really where he is supposed to be and reveals his privileged youth in contrast to his own nightmare of mental illness. By relating these troubled lives to his own, Barber illuminates some of the most disturbing and enduring truths of human nature.

This Jade World

Songs from the Black Chair