

# A Complicated Kindness Miriam Toews

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Becoming Naomi Leon Pam Munoz Ryan 2012-10-01 A reissue of Pam Munoz Ryan's bestselling backlist with a distinctive author treatment and new cover art by Raul Colon. Naomi Soledad Leon Outlaw has had a lot to contend with in her young life, her name for one. Then there are her clothes (sewn in polyester by Gram), her difficulty speaking up, and her status at school as "nobody special." But according to Gram, most problems can be overcome with positive thinking. And with Gram and her little brother, Owen, Naomi's life at Avocado Acres Trailer Rancho in California is happy and peaceful...until their mother reappears after seven years of being gone, stirring up all sorts of questions and challenging Naomi to discover and proclaim who she really is.

Summer of My Amazing Luck Miriam Toews 2010-01-08 A Novel by the Governor General's Literary Award—winning author of A Complicated Kindness Lucy Van Alstyne always thought she'd grow up to become a forest ranger. Instead, at the age of eighteen, she's found herself with quite a different job title: Single Mother on the Dole. As for the father of her nine-month-old son, Dillinger, well...it could be any of number of guys. At the

Have-a-Life housing project—aptly nicknamed Half-a-Life by those who call it home—Lucy meets Lish, a zany and exuberant woman whose idea of fashion is a black beret with a big silver spider brooch stuck on it. Lish is the mother of four daughters, two by a man on welfare himself and twins from a one-week stand with a fire-eating busker who stole her heart—and her wallet. Living on the dole isn't a walk in the park for Lucy and Lish. Dinner almost always consists of noodles. Transportation means pushing a crappy stroller through the rain. Then there are the condescending welfare agents with their dreaded surprise inspections. And just across the street is Serenity Place, another housing project with which Half-a-Life is engaged in a full-on feud. When the women aren't busy snitching on each other, they're spreading rumours—or plotting elaborate acts of revenge. In the middle of a mosquito-infested rainy season, Lish and Lucy decide to escape the craziness of Half-A-Life by taking to the road. In a van held together with coat-hangers and electrical tape and crammed to the hilt with kids and toys, they set off to Colorado in search Lish's lost love and the father of her twins. Whether they'll find him is questionable, but the down-and-out adventure helps Lucy realize that this just may be the summer of her amazing luck. Miriam Toews's debut novel, *Summer of My Amazing Luck* opens our eyes to a social class rarely captured in fiction. At once hilarious and heartbreaking, it is inhabited by an unforgettable and poignant group of characters. Shortlisted for both the McNally Robinson Book of the Year Award and for the Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour, it also earned Miriam the John Hirsch Award for the Most Promising Manitoba Writer.

A Master Plan for Rescue Janis Cooke Newman 2016-05-24 "Set in 1942 New York and Berlin, *A Master Plan for Rescue* is an enchanting novel about the life-giving powers of storytelling, and the heroism that can be inspired by love. In essence, it is two love stories. It is the story of a child who worships his parents, then loses his father to an accident and his mother to her resulting grief. And it is the story of a young man who stumbles into the romance of his life, then watches her decline, forever changing the arc of his future. Each is propelled by the belief that if he acts heroically enough, it will restore some part of what - or whom - he has lost. But when they meet, this boy and this man, their combined grief and magical thinking will allow them to dream the impossible. Sharing stories of the people they have lost, they are inspired to join forces and act in their memory.

To do something so memorable that it might actually bring their loved ones back - even if only in spirit"--

Not Yet Wayson Choy 2009-05-29 Framed by Wayson Choy's two brushes with death, *Not Yet* is an intimate and insightful study of one man's reasons for living. In 2001, Wayson Choy suffered a combined asthma-heart attack. As he lay in his hospital bed, slipping in and out of consciousness, his days punctuated by the beeps of the machines that were keeping him alive, Choy heard the voices of his ancestors warning him that without a wife, he would one day die alone. And yet through his ordeal Choy was never alone; men and women, young and old, from all cultures and ethnicities, stayed by Choy's side until he was well. When his heart failed him a second time, four years later, it was the strength of his bonds with these people, forged through countless acts of kindness, that pulled Choy back to his life. *Not Yet* is a passionate, sensitive, and beautiful exploration of the importance of family, which in Choy's case is constituted not through blood but through love. It is also a quiet manifesto for embracing life, not blind to our mortality, but knowing how lucky we are for each day that comes.

The Vanished Collection Pauline Baer de Perignon 2022-01-11 It all started with a list of paintings. There, scribbled by a cousin she hadn't seen for years, were the names of the masters whose works once belonged to her great-grandfather, Jules Strauss: Renoir, Monet, Degas, Tiepolo and more. Pauline Baer de Perignon knew little to nothing about Strauss, or about his vanished, precious art collection. But the list drove her on a frenzied trail of research in the archives of the Louvre and the Dresden museums, through Gestapo records, and to consult with Nobel laureate Patrick Modiano. What happened in 1942? And what became of the collection after Nazis seized her great-grandparents' elegant Parisian apartment? The quest takes Pauline Baer de Perignon from the Occupation of France to the present day as she breaks the silence around the wrenching experiences her family never fully transmitted, and asks what art itself is capable of conveying over time.

Mona in the Promised Land Gish Jen 2012-08-29 A New York Times Notable Book In these pages, acclaimed author Gish Jen portrays the day-to-day of American multiculturalism with poignancy and wit, introducing us to teenaged Mona Chang, who in 1968 moves with her newly prosperous family to Scarshill, New York. Here, the Chinese are seen as "the new Jews." What could be more natural than for Mona to take this literally—even to the point of converting? As Mona attends temple "rap" sessions and falls in love (with a nice Jewish boy who lives in a tepee), Jen introduces us to one of the most charming and sweet-spirited heroines in recent fiction, a

girl who can wisecrack with perfect aplomb even when she's organizing the help in her father's pancake house. On every page, Gish Jen sets our received notions spinning with a wit as dry as a latter-day Jane Austen's.

A Complicated Kindness Miriam Toews 2009-02-24 Sixteen-year-old Nomi Nickel longs to hang out with Lou Reed and Marianne Faithfull in New York City's East Village. Instead she's trapped in East Village, Manitoba, a small town whose population is Mennonite: "the most embarrassing sub-sect of people to belong to if you're a teenager." East Village is a town with no train and no bar whose job prospects consist of slaughtering chickens at the Happy Family Farms abattoir or churning butter for tourists at the pioneer village. Ministered with an iron fist by Nomi's uncle Hans, a.k.a. The Mouth of Darkness, East Village is a town that's tall on rules and short on fun: no dancing, drinking, rock 'n' roll, recreational sex, swimming, make-up, jewellery, playing pool, going to cities or staying up past nine o'clock. As the novel begins, Nomi struggles to cope with the back-to-back departures three years earlier of Tash, her beautiful and mouthy sister, and Trudie, her warm and spirited mother. She lives with her father, Ray, a sweet yet hapless schoolteacher whose love is unconditional but whose parenting skills amount to benign neglect. Father and daughter deal with their losses in very different ways. Ray, a committed elder of the church, seeks to create an artificial sense of order by reorganizing the city dump late at night. Nomi favours chaos as she tries to blunt her pain through "drugs and imagination." Together they live in a limbo of unanswered questions. Nomi's first person narrative shifts effortlessly between the present and the past. Throughout, in a voice both defiant and vulnerable, she offers hilarious and heartbreaking reflections on life, death, family, faith and love. Winner of the Governor General's Literary Award and a Giller Prize finalist, A Complicated Kindness earned both critical acclaim and a long and steady position on our national bestseller lists.

A Complicated Kindness Miriam Toews 2006-02-01 Her uncle, known as The Mouth, is head of the church, responsible for the harsh laws and cruel 'shunning', yet that doesn't stop Nomi falling for the town's most unsuitable boy - Travis. In such a secretive and god-fearing community, Nomi finds it impossible to find ways to express her many and growing passions.

A Complicated Kindness Miriam Toews 2019-01-15 Winner of the Governor General's Literary Award In this stunning coming-of-age novel, the award-winning author of Women Talking balances grief and hope in the voice of a witty, beleaguered teenager whose family is shattered by fundamentalist Christianity "Half of our family, the

better-looking half, is missing," Nomi Nickel tells us at the beginning of *A Complicated Kindness*. Left alone with her sad, peculiar father, her days are spent piecing together why her mother and sister have disappeared and contemplating her inevitable career at Happy Family Farms, a chicken slaughterhouse on the outskirts of East Village. Not the East Village in New York City where Nomi would prefer to live, but an oppressive town founded by Mennonites on the cold, flat plains of Manitoba, Canada. This darkly funny novel is the world according to the unforgettable Nomi, a bewildered and wry sixteen-year-old trapped in a town governed by fundamentalist religion and in the shattered remains of a family it destroyed. In Nomi's droll, refreshing voice, we're told the story of an eccentric, loving family that falls apart as each member lands on a collision course with the only community any of them have ever known. A work of fierce humor and tragedy by a writer who has taken the American market by storm, this searing, tender, comic testament to family love will break your heart. "Brilliant." —New York Times Book Review "A darkly funny and provocative novel." —O, the Oprah Magazine

*A Complicated Kindness* by Miriam Toews Emma Gordon Williams 2007

Women Talking Miriam Toews 2019-04-02 National Bestseller Winner of the Brooklyn Public Library Literary Prize for Fiction Shortlisted for the Governor General's Award for Fiction Shortlisted for the Reading Women Award "This amazing, sad, shocking, but touching novel, based on a real-life event, could be right out of *The Handmaid's Tale*." --Margaret Atwood, on Twitter "Scorching . . . *Women Talking* is a wry, freewheeling novel of ideas that touches on the nature of evil, questions of free will, collective responsibility, cultural determinism, and, above all, forgiveness." --New York Times Book Review, Editor's Choice One evening, eight Mennonite women climb into a hay loft to conduct a secret meeting. For the past two years, each of these women, and more than a hundred other girls in their colony, has been repeatedly violated in the night by demons coming to punish them for their sins. Now that the women have learned they were in fact drugged and attacked by a group of men from their own community, they are determined to protect themselves and their daughters from future harm. While the men of the colony are off in the city, attempting to raise enough money to bail out the rapists and bring them home, these women—all illiterate, without any knowledge of the world outside their community and unable even to speak the language of the country they live in—have very little time to make a choice: Should they stay in the only world they've ever known or should they dare to escape? Based on real events and told through the

“minutes” of the women’s all-female symposium, Toews’s masterful novel uses wry, politically engaged humor to relate this tale of women claiming their own power to decide. Named a Best Book of the Year By THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW (Notable Books of the Year) \* NPR.ORG\* THE WASHINGTON POST \* REAL SIMPLE \* THE NEW YORK TIMES (PARUL SEHGAL'S TOP BOOKS OF THE YEAR) \* SLATE \* STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL) \* LITHUB \* AUSTIN CHRONICLE \* GOOP\* ELECTRIC LITERATURE \* KIRKUS REVIEWS \* JEZEBEL\* BUSTLE \* PUBLISHERS WEEKLY \* TIME\* LIBRARY JOURNAL \* THE AV CLUB \* MASHABLE \* VOX \*

A Boy of Good Breeding Miriam Toews 2019-03-12 Winner of the McNally Robinson Book of the Year Award

“Tonic for the spirit: a charming, deeply moving, unerringly human story, perfectly shaped and beautifully told.”  
—The Globe and Mail Life in Winnipeg didn’t go as planned for Knute and her daughter. But living back in Algren with her parents and working for the longtime mayor, Hosea Funk, has its own challenges: Knute finds herself mixed up with Hosea’s attempts to achieve his dream of meeting the Prime Minister—even if that means keeping the town’s population at an even 1,500. Bringing to life small-town Canada and all its larger-than-life characters, *A Boy of Good Breeding* is a big-hearted, hilarious novel about finding out where you belong.

Lullabies for Little Criminals Heather O’Neill 2016-04-05 A new deluxe edition of the international bestseller by Heather O’Neill, the Giller-shortlisted author of *Daydreams of Angels* and *The Girl Who Was Saturday Night*, featuring an original foreword from the author, to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the coming-of-age story that People describes as “a vivid portrait of life on skid row.” Baby, all of thirteen years old, is lost in the gangly, coltish moment between childhood and the strange pulls and temptations of the adult world. Her mother is dead; her father, Jules, is scarcely more than a child himself and is always on the lookout for his next score. Baby knows that “chocolate milk” is Jules’ slang for heroin and sees a lot more of that in her house than the real article. But she takes vivid delight in the scrappy bits of happiness and beauty that find their way to her, and moves through the threat of the streets as if she’s been choreographed in a dance. Soon, though, a hazard emerges that is bigger than even her hard-won survival skills can handle. Alphonse, the local pimp, has his eye on her for his new girl; he wants her body and soul—and what the johns don’t take he covets for himself. At the same time, a tender and naively passionate friendship unfolds with a boy from her class at school, who has no

notion of the dark claims on her—which even her father, lost on the nod, cannot totally ignore. Jules consigns her to a stint in juvie hall, and for the moment this perceived betrayal preserves Baby from terrible harm—but after that, her salvation has to be her own invention. Channeling the artlessly affecting voice of her thirteen-year-old heroine with extraordinary accuracy and power, Heather O’Neill’s heartbreaking and wholly original debut novel blew readers away when it was first published ten years ago. Now in a new deluxe package it is sure to capture its next decade of readers as Baby picks her pathway along the edge of the abyss to arrive at a place of redemption, and of love.

Where Goodness Still Grows Amy Peterson 2020-01-21 Declining church attendance. A growing feeling of betrayal. For Christians who have begun to feel set adrift and disillusioned by their churches, *Where Goodness Still Grows* grounds us in a new view of virtue deeply rooted in a return to Jesus Christ’s life and ministry. The evangelical church in America has reached a crossroads. Social media and recent political events have exposed the fault lines that exist within our country and our spiritual communities. Millennials are leaving the church, citing hypocrisy, partisanship, and unkindness as reasons they can’t stay. In this book Amy Peterson explores the corruption and blind spots of the evangelical church and the departure of so many from the faith - but she refuses to give up hope, believing that rescue is on the way. *Where Goodness Still Grows*: Dissects the moral code of American evangelicalism Reimagines virtue as a tool, not a weapon Explores the Biblical meaning of specific virtues like kindness, purity, and modesty Provides comfort, hope, and a path towards spiritual restoration Amy writes as someone intimately familiar with, fond of, and deeply critical of the world of conservative evangelicalism. She writes as a woman and a mother, as someone invested in the future of humanity, and as someone who just needs to know how to teach her kids what it means to be good. Amy finds that if we listen harder and farther, we will find the places where goodness still grows. Praise for *Where Goodness Still Grows*: “In this poignant, honest book, Amy Peterson confronts her disappointment with the evangelical leaders who handed her *The Book of Virtues* then happily ignored them for the sake of political power. But instead of just walking away, Peterson rewrites the script, giving us an alternative book of virtues needed in this moment. And it’s no mistake that it ends with hope.” — James K. A. Smith, author of *You Are*

## What You Love

**The Flying Troutmans** Miriam Toews 2009-02-24 In this completely captivating book, Miriam Toews has created some of the most engaging characters in Canadian literature: Hattie, Logan and Thebes are bewildered, hopeful, angry, and most of all, absolutely alive. Full of richly skewed, richly funny detail, *The Flying Troutmans* is a uniquely affecting novel. Days after being dumped by her boyfriend Marc in Paris – "he was heading off to an ashram and said we could communicate telepathically" – Hattie hears her sister Min has been checked into a psychiatric hospital, and finds herself flying back to Winnipeg to take care of Thebes and Logan, her niece and nephew. Not knowing what else to do, she loads the kids, a cooler, and a pile of CDs into their van and they set out on a road trip in search of the children's long-lost father, Cherkis. In part because no one has any good idea where Cherkis is, the traveling matters more than the destination. On their wayward, eventful journey down to North Dakota and beyond, the Troutmans stay at scary motels, meet helpful hippies, and try to ignore the threatening noises coming from under the hood of their van. Eleven-year-old Thebes spends her time making huge novelty cheques with arts and crafts supplies in the back, and won't wash, no matter how wild and matted her purple hair gets; she forgot to pack any clothes. Four years older, Logan carves phrases like "Fear Yourself" into the dashboard, and repeatedly disappears in the middle of the night to play basketball; he's in love, he says, with New York Times columnist Deborah Solomon. Meanwhile, Min can't be reached at the hospital, and, more than once, Hattie calls Marc in tears. But though it might seem like an escape from crisis into chaos, this journey is also desperately necessary, a chance for an accidental family to accept, understand or at least find their way through overwhelming times. From interwoven memories and scenes from the past, we learn much more about them: how Min got so sick, why Cherkis left home, why Hattie went to Paris, and what made Thebes and Logan who they are today.

**Passive Intruder** Michael Upchurch 1995 When a paranoid young woman and a troubled gay psychiatrist cross paths in Seattle, their pasts come threatening to life, in a novel that explores the shifting boundaries of gender, the sexuality of photography, and the impact of AIDS.

**Complete World Knowledge** John Hodgman 2012-10-02

**This Is Happiness** Niall Williams 2020-07 "Change is coming to Faha, a small Irish parish that hasn't changed in

a thousand years. For one thing, the rain is stopping. Nobody remembers when it started; rain on the western seaboard is a condition of living. But now - just as Father Coffey proclaims the coming of the electricity - the rain clouds are lifting. Seventeen-year-old Noel Crowe is idling in the unexpected sunshine when Christy makes his first entrance into Faha, bringing secrets he needs to atone for. Though he can't explain it, Noel knows right then: something has changed. As the people of Faha anticipate the endlessly procrastinated advent of the electricity, and Noel navigates his own coming-of-age and his falling in and out of love, Christy's past gradually comes to light, casting a new glow on a small world. Harking back to a simpler time, *This Is Happiness* is a tender portrait of a community - its idiosyncrasies and traditions, its paradoxes and kindnesses, its failures and triumphs - and a coming-of-age tale like no other. Luminous and lyrical, yet anchored by roots running deep into the earthy and everyday, it is about the power of stories: their invisible currents that run through all we do, writing and rewriting us, and the transforming light that they throw onto our world."--Publisher description.

City of the Century Donald L. Miller 2014-04-09 "A wonderfully readable account of Chicago's early history" and the inspiration behind PBS's *American Experience* (Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times*). Depicting its turbulent beginnings to its current status as one of the world's most dynamic cities, *City of the Century* tells the story of Chicago—and the story of America, writ small. From its many natural disasters, including the Great Fire of 1871 and several cholera epidemics, to its winner-take-all politics, dynamic business empires, breathtaking architecture, its diverse cultures, and its multitude of writers, journalists, and artists, Chicago's story is violent, inspiring, passionate, and fascinating from the first page to the last. The winner of the prestigious Great Lakes Book Award, given to the year's most outstanding books highlighting the American heartland, *City of the Century* has received consistent rave reviews since its publication in 1996, and was made into a six-hour film airing on PBS's *American Experience* series. Written with energetic prose and exacting detail, it brings Chicago's history to vivid life. "With *City of the Century*, Miller has written what will be judged as the great Chicago history." —John Barron, *Chicago Sun-Times* "Brimms with life, with people, surprise, and with stories." —David McCullough, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *John Adams* and *Truman* "An invaluable companion in my journey through Old Chicago." —Erik Larson, *New York Times*—bestselling author of *The Devil in the White City*

The Russlander Sandra Birdsell 2011-12-14 Katherine (Katya) Vogt is now an old woman living in Winnipeg, but

the story of how she and her family came to Canada begins in Russia in 1910, on a wealthy Mennonite estate. Here they lived in a world bounded by the prosperity of their landlords and by the poverty and disgruntlement of the Russian workers who toil on the estate. But in the wake of the First World War, the tensions engulfing the country begin to intrude on the community, leading to an unspeakable act of violence. In the aftermath of that violence, and in the difficult years that follow, Katya tries to come to terms with the terrible events that befell her and her family. In lucid, spellbinding prose, Birdsell vividly evokes time and place, and the unease that existed in a county on the brink of revolutionary change. The *Rusländer* is a powerful and moving story of ordinary people who lived through extraordinary times.

My Father's Notebook Kader Abdolah 2007-11-02 When he was a boy, Aga Akbar, the illegitimate, deaf son of a Persian nobleman, travelled with his uncle to a cave on nearby Saffron Mountain. Once there, he was to transcribe a cuneiform inscription over three thousand years old. Decades later, his son, Ishmael – a political dissident in exile – attempts to translate a notebook filled with a private language made from this ancient script . . . and in the process tells his father's story, his own, and the story of twentieth-century Iran. *My Father's Notebook* is at once a masterful chronicle of a culture's troubled voyage into modernity and the heart-rending, timeless tale of a son's enduring love.

*Who They Was* Gabriel Krauze 2021-06-29 Longlisted for the Booker Prize Named a Most Anticipated Book of Summer 2021 by Entertainment Weekly, Time, and CrimeReads Named a Best Book of 2021 by Time An astonishing, visceral autobiographical novel about a young man straddling two cultures: the university where he is studying English Literature and the disregarded world of London gang warfare. The unforgettable narrator of this compelling, thought-provoking debut goes by two names in his two worlds. At the university he attends, he's Gabriel, a seemingly ordinary, partying student learning about morality at a distance. But in his life outside the classroom, he's Snoopz, a hard living member of London's gangs, well-acquainted with drugs, guns, stabbings, and robbery. Navigating these sides of himself, dealing with loving parents at the same time as treacherous, endangering friends and the looming threat of prison, he is forced to come to terms with who he really is and the life he's chosen for himself. In a distinct, lyrical urban slang all his own, author Gabriel Krauze brings to vivid life the underworld of his city and the destructive impact of toxic masculinity. *Who They Was* is a disturbing yet

tender and perspective-altering account of the thrill of violence and the trauma it leaves behind. It is the story of inner cities everywhere, and of the lost boys who must find themselves in their tower blocks.

The Pages Hugo Hamilton 2022-02-01 An entirely original novel in which a book—Joseph Roth's masterpiece *Rebellion*—narrates its own astonishing life story, from 1930s Germany to the present day, at the heart of a gripping mystery. "A powerful, powerful piece of work." —Colum McCann, best-selling author of *Apeirogon* One old copy of the novel *Rebellion* sits in Lena Knecht's tote bag, about to accompany her on a journey from New York to Berlin in search of a clue to the hand-drawn map on its last page. It is the brilliantly captivating voice of this novel—a first edition nearly burned by Nazis in May 1933—that is our narrator. Fast-paced and tightly plotted, *The Pages* brings together a multitude of dazzling characters, real and invented, in a sweeping story of survival, chance, and the joys and struggles of love. At its center are Roth, an Austrian Jewish author on the run, and his wife, Friederike, who falls victim to mental illness as Europe descends into war. With vivid evocations of Germany under Nazism and today, *The Pages* dramatically illuminates the connections between past and present as it looks at censorship, oppression, and violence. Here is a propulsive, inspiring tale of literature over a hundred years: a novel for book lovers everywhere that will bring a fresh audience to this acclaimed writer.

Bookclub in a Box Discusses the Novel a Complicated Kindness Marilyn Herbert 2006-07-01 Discusses the novel, "A Complicated Kindness".

Peace Shall Destroy Many [text (large Print)] Rudy Wiebe 1993 Conflicts between the disciplined, non-violent dedication of the thriving Mennonite community and the threats and challenges from the war-torn world they left behind reveal a lurking violence beneath the peaceful surface of settlement life.

All My Puny Sorrows Miriam Toews 2019-10-15 From the bestselling author of *Women Talking*, a "wrenchingly honest, darkly funny novel" (*Entertainment Weekly*). Elf and Yoli are sisters. While on the surface Elfrieda's life is enviable (she's a world-renowned pianist, glamorous, wealthy, and happily married) and Yolandi's a mess (she's divorced and broke, with two teenagers growing up too quickly), they are fiercely close-raised in a Mennonite household and sharing the hardship of Elf's desire to end her life. After Elf's latest attempt, Yoli must quickly determine how to keep her family from falling apart while facing a profound question: what do you do for a loved one who truly wants to die? *All My Puny Sorrows* is a deeply personal story that is as much comedy as it is

tragedy, a goodbye grin from the friend who taught you how to live.

Mercy Among the Children David Adams Richards 2011-07-27 Mercy Among the Children received effusive praise from the critics, was nominated for a Governor General's Award and won the Giller Prize. It was named one of 2000's best books, became a national bestseller in hardcover for months, and would be published in the US and UK. It is seen, however, as being at odds with literary fashion for concerning itself with good and evil and the human freedom to choose between them — an approach that puts Richards, as Maclean's magazine says, firmly in the tradition of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. Author Wayne Johnston recounts hearing Richards read in 1983 and being struck by his unqualified love for every one of his characters, even though "it was not then fashionable to love your characters". Pottersfield Portfolio editor Tony Tremblay calls Richards the most misunderstood Canadian writer of the century, and a "great moralist", comparing him to Morley Callaghan, Kafka and Melville. As a boy, Sydney Henderson thinks he has killed Connie Devlin when he pushes him from a roof for stealing his sandwich. He vows to God he will never again harm another if Connie survives. Connie walks away, laughing, and Sydney embarks upon a life of self-immolating goodness. In spite of having educated himself with such classics as Tolstoy and Marcus Aurelius, he is not taken seriously enough to enter university because of his background of dire poverty and abuse, which leads everyone to expect the worst of him. His saintly generosity of spirit is treated with suspicion and contempt, especially when he manages to win the love of beautiful Elly. Unwilling to harm another in thought or deed, or to defend himself against false accusations, he is exploited and tormented by others in this rural community, and finally implicated in the death of a 19-year-old boy. Lyle Henderson knows his father is innocent, but is angry that the family has been ridiculed for years, and that his mother and sister suffer for it. He feels betrayed by his father's passivity in the face of one blow after another, and unable to accept his belief in long-term salvation. Unlike his father, he cannot believe that evil will be punished in the end. While his father turns the other cheek, Lyle decides the right way is in fighting, and embarks on a morally empty life of stealing, drinking and violence. A compassionate, powerful story of humanity confronting inhumanity, it is a culmination of Richards' last seven books, beginning with Road to the Stilt House. It takes place in New Brunswick's Miramichi Valley, like all of his novels so far, which has led some urban critics to misjudge his work as regional — a criticism leveled at Thomas Hardy, Joseph Conrad and Emily Bronte in

their own day. Like his literary heroes, Richards aims to evoke universal human struggles through his depiction of the events of a small, rural place, where one person's actions impact inevitably on others in a tragic web of interconnectedness. The setting is extremely important in Richards' work, "because the characters come from the soil"; but as British Columbia author Jack Hodgins once told Richards, "every character you talk about is a character I've met here in Campbell River".

**Book Of Sands** Karim Alrawi 2015-09-01 A powerful, lyrical novel of the endurance of love, set amid the upheaval of the Arab Spring and the brutal repression of a totalitarian regime Tarek, a young father, watches as the city he lives in is mired in protests, hemmed in by barricades and strangely inundated by great flocks of birds. Facing the threat of police arrest, he flees with his nine-year-old daughter, Neda. He is forced to leave behind his pregnant wife, Mona, under the watchful eye of Omar, her deeply troubled and religious brother. Compounding the difficulties of these times, babies refuse to be born and mothers stop giving birth. As Tarek and Nada journey through villages razed by conflict toward a mountain refuge, they meet with travellers from Tarek's past and his time as a political prisoner. The reunion reveals secrets that Tarek must come to terms with for his own and Neda's sake. Ultimately, he must decide where this journey will take them and if he will ever be able to return home again. In the tradition of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and Orhan Pamuk's *Snow*, debut novelist Karim Alrawi deftly weaves an atmospheric, multi-layered story of intimate lives, informed by recent events and heightened by touches of magic realism, set against the wider canvas of historic events.

**Swing Low** Miriam Toews 2001 Recounts the story of Mel Toews, a devoted husband and father, a popular schoolteacher, and faithful member of the Mennonite church who could no longer deal with the pain and darkness of manic depression.

**Clara Callan** Richard B. Wright 2009-03-17 In a small town in Canada, Clara Callan reluctantly takes leave of her sister, Nora, who is bound for New York. It's a time when the growing threat of fascism in Europe is a constant worry, and people escape from reality through radio and the movies. Meanwhile, the two sisters -- vastly different in personality, yet inextricably linked by a shared past -- try to find their places within the complex web of social expectations for young women in the 1930s. While Nora embarks on a glamorous career as a radio-soap opera star, Clara, a strong and independent-minded woman, struggles to observe the traditional boundaries of a small

and tight-knit community without relinquishing her dreams of love, freedom, and adventure. However, things aren't as simple as they appear -- Nora's letters eventually reveal life in the big city is less exotic than it seems, and the tranquil solitude of Clara's life is shattered by a series of unforeseeable events. These twists of fate require all of Clara's courage and strength, and finally put the seemingly unbreakable bond between the sisters to the test.

**A Complicated Kindness** Miriam Toews 2005 In this stunning coming-of-age novel, award-winner Miriam Toews balances grief and hope in the voice of a witty, beleaguered teenager whose family is shattered by fundamentalist Christianity "Half of our family, the better-looking half, is missing," Nomi Nickel tells us at the beginning of *A Complicated Kindness*. Left alone with her sad, peculiar father, her days are spent piecing together why her mother and sister have disappeared and contemplating her inevitable career at Happy Family Farms, a chicken slaughterhouse on the outskirts of East Village. Not the East Village in New York City where Nomi would prefer to live, but an oppressive town founded by Mennonites on the cold, flat plains of Manitoba, Canada. This darkly funny novel is the world according to the unforgettable Nomi, a bewildered and wry sixteen-year-old trapped in a town governed by fundamentalist religion and in the shattered remains of a family it destroyed. In Nomi's droll, refreshing voice, we're told the story of an eccentric, loving family that falls apart as each member lands on a collision course with the only community any of them have ever known. A work of fierce humor and tragedy by a writer who has taken the American market by storm, this searing, tender, comic testament to family love will break your heart.

**Fight Night** Miriam Toews 2021-10-05 "Move over, Scout Finch! There's a new contender for feistiest girl in fiction, and her name is Swiv." -USA Today, "Best Books of the Year" "Toews is a master of dialogue." -New York Times Book Review, Editors' Choice "A revelation." -Richard Russo NPR Best Books of the Year \* Shortlisted for the Scotiabank Giller Prize \* Writers' Trust Fiction Prize Finalist \* Indie Next Pick \* Amazon Editors' Pick \* Apple Book of the Month From the bestselling author of *Women Talking* and *All My Puny Sorrows*, a compassionate, darkly humorous, and deeply wise novel about three generations of women. "You're a small thing," Grandma writes, "and you must learn to fight." Swiv's Grandma, Elvira, has been fighting all her life. From her upbringing in a strict religious community, she has fought those who wanted to take away her joy, her

independence, and her spirit. She has fought to make peace with her loved ones when they have chosen to leave her. And now, even as her health fails, Grandma is fighting for her family: for her daughter, partnerless and in the third term of a pregnancy; and for her granddaughter Swiv, a spirited nine-year-old who has been suspended from school. Cramped together in their Toronto home, on the precipice of extraordinary change, Grandma and Swiv undertake a vital new project, setting out to explain their lives in letters they will never send. Alternating between the exuberant, precocious voice of young Swiv and her irrepressible, tenacious Grandma, *Fight Night* is a love letter to mothers and grandmothers, and to all the women who are still fighting-painfully, ferociously- for a way to live on their own terms.

The Case of Lena S. David Bergen 2012-12-18 The Case of Lena S. follows the life, loves, and coming-of-age of sixteen-year-old Mason Crowe during a year in which he will learn what it truly means to be in the world. At the centre of the novel is Lena, a troubled girl who has "chosen" Mason and will teach him something of desire and despair. Impulsive, provocative, vulnerable, and sad, Lena becomes haunting for Mason in ways he does not always understand. We meet Mason's first "love," an older girl destined for an arranged marriage; his mother, who takes a lover; and a wise and erudite blind man with a voyeuristic streak, to whom Mason reads. Playful, and with deadpan humour, the novel brilliantly captures the yearnings of youth, as well as the tantalizing possibilities and the confounding absurdities that sometimes lie at the heart of our most intimate relationships.

Irma Voth Miriam Toews 2011-04-05 From the award-winning author of *A Complicated Kindness* comes a heart-wrenching yet wryly funny story about setting out on the road to self-discovery, and finding the strength to survive in the face of immeasurable loss. Nineteen-year-old Irma Voth lives in a Mennonite community in northern Mexico, surrounded by desert and both physically and culturally isolated from the surrounding towns and cities. It's been six years since her family up and left Canada to escape the prying eyes of the government and preserve their religious freedom, but Irma still misses the minor freedoms she had in their small town. She even misses the cold. This new life has not been an easy one, and Irma finds herself deserted by her husband of one year, who has left to pursue a life of drug-running, instead of working her family's farm. The most devastating blow for Irma is that he didn't take her with him, take her away, so now she's left to live under her father's domineering rule alone. Things change for Irma when a film crew moves into the empty house next door.

They've come to make a movie about the Mennonite community, and have made a deal with Irma's father to stay on their land. The director enlists Irma to work for them as a translator, as she can speak not only Spanish and English but Plattdeutsch, or Low German, the language of her people. At first bemused by the ragged and absurd crewmembers, Irma comes to embrace the passion and creative freedom of their world – but in doing so brings on the wrath of her father, who is determined to keep her from it at all costs. When Irma's thirteen-year-old sister Aggie begins to come by and spend time with the crew, their father is sent over the edge with rage, and Irma is forced to make a hard decision to save not only herself, but her younger sister, and to break the dark chain of violence holding her family. The girls flee to the capital, Mexico City, not knowing where they'll find food or shelter, let alone build a life, but knowing for the first time that they are free to make that choice. And even as they begin to understand the truth of the tragedy that has their family in its grip, Irma and Aggie use their love as a source of strength to help each other move on from their past lives and work toward a future that can truly become anything they want it to be.

Little Fish Casey Plett 2018-06-26 WINNER, Lambda Literary Award; Firecracker Award for Fiction; \$60,000 Amazon Canada First Novel Award When thirty-year-old trans woman Wendy Reimer comes across evidence that her late grandfather—a devout Mennonite farmer—might have been transgender himself, she dismisses this revelation, having other problems at hand. But as she and her friends struggle to cope with their increasingly volatile lives—which range from alcoholism, to sex work, to suicide—Wendy grows increasingly drawn to the lost pieces of her grandfather's life, becoming determined to unravel the mystery of his truth. Alternately warm-hearted and dark-spirited, desperate and mirthful, *Little Fish* explores the winter of discontent in the life of one transgender woman as her past and future become irrevocably entwined.

*The Way of the World* Franco Moretti 2000-09-17 *The Way of the World* has been widely acclaimed for its unique combination of narrative theory and social history. This new edition includes an additional final chapter on the collapse of the Bildungsroman in the years around the First World War (a crisis which opened the way for Modernist experimentation), and a new preface in which the author looks back at *The Way of the World* in light of his more recent work.

*Saltus* Tara Gereaux 2021-04-24 *Evocative of Miriam Toews' A Complicated Kindness* and Diane Warren's *Cool*

Water, Tara Gereaux's novel, set in small-town Saskatchewan, dissects themes of Métis identity, female identity and motherhood, aging and regret, and finally, acceptance. Nothing ever seems to happen in the small town of Saltus. At the Harvest Gold Inn and Restaurant off Highway 53, two waitresses spend their evening shifts delivering Salisbury steak specials and slices of pie to the regulars. But everything changes when Nadine, a headstrong single mother, and her teenager, Aaron, arrive at the Gold, where Aaron—who has repeatedly been denied appropriate gender-affirming medical care from the mainstream system—undergoes a near-fatal procedure performed by an unqualified and eccentric recluse who lives on the outskirts of Saltus. The events that transpire that evening force each towns person to look long and hard at themselves, at their own identities, and at the traumas and experiences that have shaped them. Told from multiple perspectives, Saltus reveals the complexities inherent in accepting the identities of loved ones, and the tragic consequences that unfold if they are ignored. It is a story about relationships with others, and, even more importantly, with ourselves.

The Sound of Gravel Ruth Wariner 2016-01-05 An instant New York Times bestseller "A haunting, harrowing testament to survival." — People Magazine "An addictive chronicle of a polygamist community." — New York Magazine "Unforgettable" — Entertainment Weekly The thirty-ninth of her father's forty-two children, Ruth Wariner grew up in polygamist family on a farm in rural Mexico. In *The Sound of Gravel*, she offers an unforgettable portrait of the violence that threatened her community, her family's fierce sense of loyalty, and her own unshakeable belief in the possibility of a better life. An intimate, gripping tale of triumph and courage, *The Sound of Gravel* is a heart-stopping true story.

Summer of My Amazing Luck Miriam Toews 2019-04-09 "[A] memorable portrait of a struggling young person who finds unexpected resilience and peace . . . Hilarious, heartbreaking, and poignant." —Booklist Miriam Toews welcomes her readers to the Have-a-Life housing project (better known as Half-a-Life). The welfare regulations are endless and the rate-fink neighbors won't mind their own business. Lucy Von Alstynne sends fictitious letters to her friend Alicia, pretending to be the father of Alicia's twins. When the two mothers and their five children set off on a journey to find him, facing along the way the complications of living in poverty and raising fatherless children, Lucy discovers this just may be the summer of her amazing luck.

Women Talking Miriam Toews 2019-04-02 Now a Major Motion Picture from Director Sarah Polley, starring

Rooney Mara, Claire Foy, and Jessie Buckley, with Ben Wishaw and Frances McDormand. INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER "This amazing, sad, shocking, but touching novel, based on a real-life event, could be right out of *The Handmaid's Tale*." -Margaret Atwood, on Twitter "Scorching . . . a wry, freewheeling novel of ideas that touches on the nature of evil, questions of free will, collective responsibility, cultural determinism, and, above all, forgiveness." -New York Times Book Review, Editors' Choice One evening, eight Mennonite women climb into a hay loft to conduct a secret meeting. For the past two years, each of these women, and more than a hundred other girls in their colony, has been repeatedly violated in the night by demons coming to punish them for their sins. Now that the women have learned they were in fact drugged and attacked by a group of men from their own community, they are determined to protect themselves and their daughters from future harm. While the men of the colony are off in the city, attempting to raise enough money to bail out the rapists and bring them home, these women—all illiterate, without any knowledge of the world outside their community and unable even to speak the language of the country they live in—have very little time to make a choice: Should they stay in the only world they've ever known or should they dare to escape? Based on real events and told through the "minutes" of the women's all-female symposium, Toews's masterful novel uses wry, politically engaged humor to relate this tale of women claiming their own power to decide.