



What the folks at Westwinds are reading

Lydia

House at Tyneford by Natasha Solomons

It's the spring of 1938 and no longer safe to be a Jew in Vienna. Nineteen-year-old Elise Landau is forced to leave her glittering life of parties and champagne to become a parlor maid in England. She arrives at Tyneford, the great house on the bay, where servants polish silver and serve drinks on the lawn. But war is coming, and the world is changing. When the master of Tyneford's young son, Kit, returns home, he and Elise strike up an unlikely friendship that will transform Tyneford-and Elise-forever.

The Flight of Gemma Hardy by Margot Livesey

When her widower father drowns at sea, Gemma Hardy is taken from her native Iceland to Scotland to live with her kind uncle and his family. But the death of her doting guardian leaves Gemma under the care of her resentful aunt, and it soon becomes clear that she is nothing more than an unwelcome guest at Yew House. When she receives a scholarship to a private school, ten-year-old Gemma believes she's found the perfect solution and eagerly sets out again to a new home. However, at Claypoole she finds herself treated as an unpaid servant.

To Gemma's delight, the school goes bankrupt, and she takes a job as an au pair on the Orkney Islands. The remote Blackbird Hall belongs to Mr. Sinclair, a London businessman; his eight-year-old niece is Gemma's charge. Even before their first meeting, Gemma is, like everyone on the island, intrigued by Mr. Sinclair. Rich (by Gemma's standards), single, flying in from London when he pleases, Hugh Sinclair fills the house with life. An unlikely couple, the two are drawn to each other, but Gemma's biggest trial is about to begin: a journey of passion and betrayal, redemption and discovery, that will lead her to a life of which she's never dreamed.

LuAnn

The World as We Know It by Joseph Monninger

A lifetime of friendship begins the day brothers Ed and Allard save Sarah from drowning in an icy river near their rural New Hampshire home. Though their paths diverge through the years, the connection between the three endures until a heartbreaking tragedy in the remote mountains of Wyoming forces Sarah and Allard to confront the unthinkable. In their grief, they find themselves on separate journeys that test the enduring bonds of their relationship and time's unremitting power to heal. Poignant and transformative, *The World as We Know It* is subtle and heartrending—a love story of friendship, nature, and the surprising twists that can alter our destinies forever.

Sister by Rosamund Lupton

When her mom calls to tell her that Tess, her younger sister, is missing, Bee returns home to London on the first flight. She expects to find Tess and give her the usual lecture, the bossy big sister scolding her flighty baby sister for taking off without letting anyone know her plans. Tess has always been a free spirit, an artist who takes risks, while conservative Bee couldn't be more different. Bee is used to watching out for her wayward sibling and is fiercely protective of Tess (and has always been a little stern about her antics). But then Tess is found dead, apparently by her own hand.

Bee is certain that Tess didn't commit suicide. Their family and the police accept the sad reality, but Bee feels sure that Tess has been murdered. Single-minded in her search for a killer, Bee moves into Tess's apartment and throws herself headlong into her sister's life—and all its secrets.

To be Sung Underwater by Tom McNeal

Judith Whitman always believed in the kind of love that "picks you up in Akron and sets you down in Rio." Long ago, she once experienced that love. Willy Blunt was a carpenter with a dry wit and a steadfast sense of honor. Marrying him seemed like a natural thing to promise. But Willy Blunt was not a person you could pick up in Nebraska and transport to Stanford. When Judith left home, she didn't look back.

Twenty years later, Judith's marriage is hazy with secrets. In her hand is what may be the phone number for the man who believed she meant it when she said she loved him. If she called, what would he say?

Brooke

The Sense of an Ending by Julian Barnes

Tony Webster and his clique first met Adrian Finn at school. Sex-hungry and book-hungry, they navigated the girl drought of gawky adolescence together, trading in affectations, in-jokes, rumour and wit. Maybe Adrian was a little more serious than the others, certainly more intelligent, but they swore to stay friends forever. Until Adrian's life took a turn into tragedy, and all of them, especially Tony, moved on and did their best to forget.

Now Tony is in middle age. He's had a career and a marriage, a calm divorce. He gets along nicely, he thinks, with his one child, a daughter, and even with his ex-wife. He's certainly never tried to hurt anybody. Memory, though, is imperfect. It can always throw up surprises, as a lawyer's letter is about to prove. The unexpected bequest conveyed by that letter leads Tony on a dogged search through a past suddenly turned murky. And how do you carry on, contentedly, when events conspire to upset all your vaunted truths?

Wonder by R. J. Palacio

August (Auggie) Pullman was born with a facial deformity that prevented him from going to a mainstream school—until now. He's about to start 5th grade at Beecher Prep, and if you've ever been the new kid then you know how hard that can be. The thing is Auggie's just an ordinary kid, with an extraordinary face. But can he convince his new classmates that he's just like them, despite appearances?

R. J. Palacio has written a spare, warm, uplifting story that will have readers laughing one minute and wiping away tears the next. With wonderfully realistic family interactions (flawed, but loving), lively school scenes, and short chapters, *Wonder* is accessible to readers of all levels

The Baker's Daughter by Sarah McCoy

In 1945, Elsie Schmidt is a naive teenager, as eager for her first sip of champagne as she is for her first kiss. She and her family have been protected from the worst of the terror and desperation overtaking her country by a high-ranking Nazi who wishes to marry her. So when an escaped Jewish boy arrives on Elsie's doorstep in the dead of night on Christmas Eve, Elsie understands that opening the door would put all she loves in danger.

Sixty years later, in El Paso, Texas, Reba Adams is trying to file a feel-good Christmas piece for the local magazine. Reba is perpetually on the run from memories of a turbulent childhood, but she's been in El Paso long enough to get a full-time job and a fiancé, Riki Chavez. Riki, an agent with the U.S. Border Patrol, finds comfort in strict rules and regulations, whereas Reba feels that lines are often blurred.

Reba's latest assignment has brought her to the shop of an elderly baker across town. The interview should take a few hours at most, but the owner of Elsie's German Bakery is no easy subject. Reba finds herself returning to the bakery again and again, anxious to find the heart of the story. For Elsie, Reba's questions are a stinging reminder of darker times: her life in Germany during that last bleak year of WWII. And as Elsie, Reba, and Riki's lives become more intertwined, all are forced to confront the uncomfortable truths of the past and seek out the courage to forgive