

# 20 FICTION FAVORITES

[www.laurathomasauthor.com](http://www.laurathomasauthor.com)



Hello there, Friend! Welcome to your free copy of “**20 FICTION FAVORITES**”.

“Which book should I read next?” That’s the burning question you may be asking today—I know it’s an ongoing dilemma for most booklovers! As an author and a bookworm, I am frequently asked for reading recommendations.

And so, with you in mind, I have compiled this collection of 20 fiction books, complete with mini-reviews. They are written by some of my favorite authors—I hope you’ll love them, too.

Feel free to print it out, save it, or bookmark it for future reference to add to your To Be Read list.

As always, I would love to hear from you: [laura@laurathomasauthor.com](mailto:laura@laurathomasauthor.com)

Blessings & joy—and happy reading!

*Laura*



[www.laurathomasauthor.com](http://www.laurathomasauthor.com)



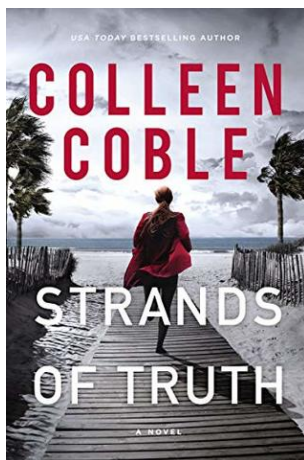
\*CHRISTIAN FICTION

\* CONTEMPORARY FICTION

\* HISTORICAL FICTION



## ● CHRISTIAN FICTION



### **STRANDS OF TRUTH** by Colleen Coble

I love a good family secret, and *Strands of Truth* did not disappoint! The results of DNA testing turn marine biologist Harper Taylor's life upside-down in ways she could never have expected. A heartbreaking murder and suspicious activity throw Harper together with the murder victim's son, Ridge Jackson, as they unravel strands of truth from thirty years ago.

Death, pregnancy, kidnapping, cold cases, and an unlikely romance—this story has it all. And the twists keep the reader guessing to the end. A must-read for Christian romantic suspense fans!



### **THE MASTERPIECE** by Francine Rivers

I'm a huge fan of Francine Rivers, and I devoured this book with relish! Roman Velasco is an unbelieving, wealthy, successful artist with a gigantic chip on his shoulder and a troubled past. Grace Moore, his new personal assistant, is a Christian single mother with her own heartbreaking story. Neither have any intention to fall in love, and both try to deny the attraction they clearly have for one another. Walls are erected and secrets are deeply hidden. But when Roman has an unforgettable encounter with the demons he is fighting, everything changes.

A story of conviction, redemption, and forgiveness—aptly named *The Masterpiece*!





### **UNTIL LEAVES FALL IN PARIS** by Sarah Sundin

Paris, a bookstore, ballet, WWII fiction, and a beautiful thread of faith running through a compelling story—this is an absolute delight to read as it appeals to so many of my passions!

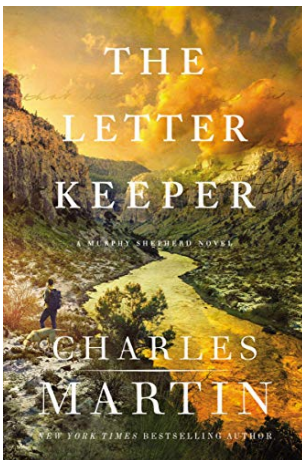
When the Nazis invade the city of Paris in 1940, American ballerina Lucie Girard makes the selfless decision to put her future in ballet on hold as she purchases a bookstore to help her Jewish friends escape to safety. Even though she believes herself to be inadequate with regard to business and intelligence, within the haven of Green Leaf Books she embraces her artistic creativity and plays a role in the resistance.

Paul Aubrey is a serious, successful business owner and widower, trying to make wise decisions when it comes to protecting his sweet

young daughter and doing his part in helping with the resistance as a “double agent”.

When Lucie meets Paul, in spite of a deep attraction for them both, she cannot see past his apparent collaboration with the Nazis. Drawing on their very different strengths, they show incredible courage as their complex relationship takes some heart-wrenching twists and turns.

Well researched with meticulous attention to detail, Sarah Sundin brings us yet another beautiful tale of sacrificial love and unwavering hope.



### **THE LETTER KEEPER** by Charles Martin

There are not many books my husband and I enjoy equally—but Charles Martin hits it out of the park yet again with this phenomenal novel.

“Because the needs of the one outweigh those of the many.”

Human trafficking, abandonment, forgiveness, and grief are tackled with a beautiful tenderness as rescuer, priest, and author Murphy Shepherd puts his own life at risk, believing everyone is worth saving. But when his own loved ones are kidnapped, Murphy faces his most challenging rescue yet in page-turning action and heartbreaking vulnerability.

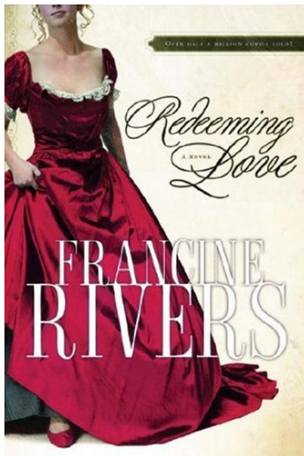
The Letter Keeper can be read as a stand-alone but I would highly recommend reading The Water Keeper first—not only because it’s an exceptional read and should not be missed, but the reader will also fully appreciate the growth of the characters in this breathtaking story of freedom and redemption.



### **LIFE FLIGHT** by Lynette Eason

This first book in the “Extreme Measures” series was gripping from start to finish! The action revolves around an EMS helicopter pilot, Penny Carlton, and FBI Special Agent, Holt Satterfield. When Penny has to navigate an emergency landing on a mountain in a raging storm, she has no idea there is a serial killer on the loose. And when Holt joins the chase, the killer is taken down—or so they believe...

With strong characters, plenty of surprise twists, and interesting subplots to spin off in future stories, this was fast-paced, action-packed, and everything a romantic suspense reader lives for!



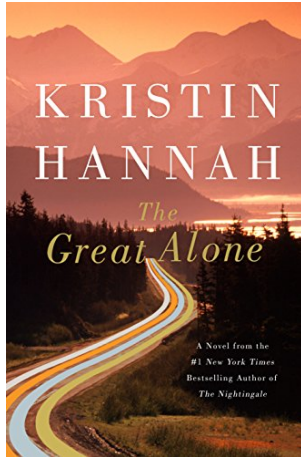
### **REDEEMING LOVE** by Francine Rivers

Set in California in the 1850's, this timeless, heart-wrenching love story is based on the Old Testament book of Hosea. Unconditional love, forgiveness, and grace—one man's plight as he pursues and cherishes a broken woman who feels completely unworthy and unlovable.

This beautifully written novel is incredibly challenging and a wonderful reminder of God's redemptive love for all His children.

One of my absolute favorites. A must-read!

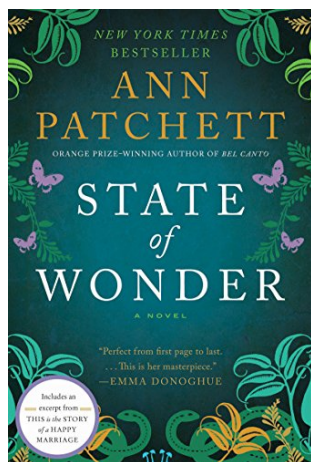
## ● CONTEMPORARY FICTION



### **THE GREAT ALONE** by Kristin Hannah

“All this time, Dad had taught Leni how dangerous the outside world was. The truth was that the biggest danger of all was in her own home.” I always enjoy Kristin Hannah’s writing, and *The Great Alone* ticked all the boxes for me.

Set in the 1970’s, the allure of a fresh start in Alaska draws the Allbright family to a brand-new life. But for thirteen-year-old Leni, it’s the beginning of a nightmarish existence balancing her father’s rages as he battles the aftereffects of returning from war, with the brutal yet beautiful harsh realities of living in the wilds of Alaska. Raw emotions and unthinkable survival skills culminate in a riveting page-turner. Heartbreaking, always with a sliver of hope.



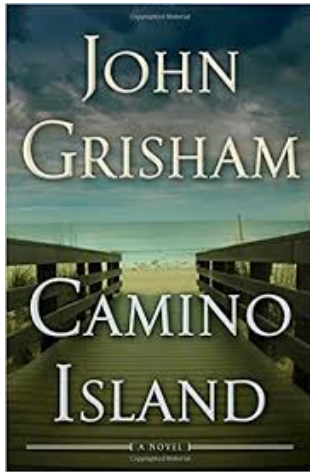
### **STATE OF WONDER** by Anne Patchett

Another captivating read by Ann Patchett in this Amazon mystery with moral dilemmas galore.

When Dr. Marina Singh is tasked by a pharmaceutical company with locating a renowned researcher in the rainforest, she has no idea what she is getting herself into.

Facing childhood traumas, dealing with the death of a friend and colleague, and untangling a romantic relationship, are nothing compared to surviving the dangers and wonders of the jungle.

An extraordinary novel.



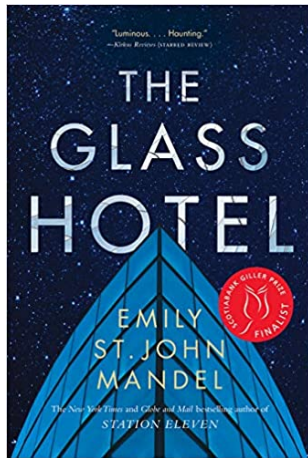
### **CAMINO ISLAND** by John Grisham

As a writer, I was initially intrigued with the notion of stolen priceless manuscripts, and enjoyed how Grisham developed the characters of several published writerly types in a quirky beach town in Florida. I cringed and nodded in agreement with many of their discussions and identified with their worries and woes.

The plot thickens when it becomes apparent the stolen manuscripts could be in the possession of an eccentric bookstore owner, and it takes several turns as we follow the investigation and get sucked into the mystery.

My only slight disappointment was the somewhat abrupt wrap-up at the end, but that probably means I didn't want it to finish and it certainly

doesn't stop me from highly recommending it!



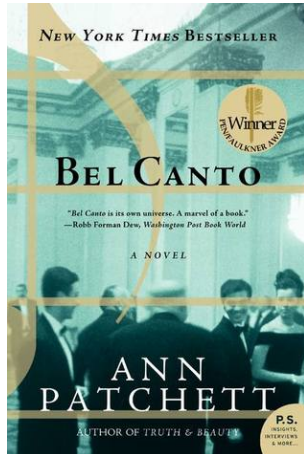
### **THE GLASS HOTEL** by Emily St. John Mandel

From the Canadian author of award-winning Station Eleven, this intriguing book is as fragile yet captivating as one might imagine a glass hotel to be! In true Emily St. John Mandel form, we have a vast array of characters spanning cities and decades, following money, crime, and the pursuit of happiness.

It begins with a container ship at sea and a woman named Vincent drowning while having flashbacks including her life as a bartender in a remote cedar-and-glass hotel off the tip of Vancouver Island, her extravagant pretend marriage, and a dreadful Ponzi scheme that devastates countless individuals.

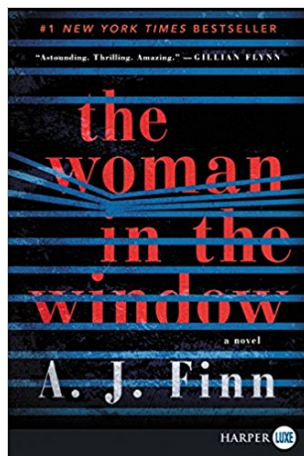
The lives of her New York financier “husband”, her troubled half-brother, a shipping executive, and a myriad of other fascinating characters are woven together in this sobering story of trust and truth, greed and guilt. Even with a host of characters to keep track of, I was completely enthralled!





### **BEL CANTO by Ann Patchett**

The notion of a hostage situation in South America involving a world-famous opera singer had my attention from the beginning. An elaborate birthday celebration for a rich Japanese industrial titan is thrown into turmoil by the intrusion of a band of terrorists. When they realize their target, the president, is not even there, they hold captive an array of diplomats from around the world, as well as a priest, and the beautiful singer. As time seemingly stands still, music is the only common language and relationships are formed under the most horrific of circumstances. I found this a fascinating page-turner!

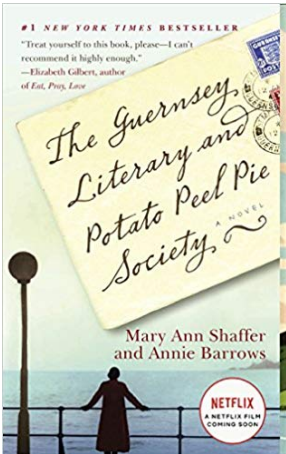


### **THE WOMAN IN THE WINDOW by A.J. Finn**

I have to give this book 5 stars, largely because I couldn't put it down. The premise intrigued me... my own grandmother suffered from agoraphobia and the idea of someone witnessing a crime from the "prison" of their own home was just too fascinating a read to ignore. We soon realize psychologist Anna Fox has suffered some sort of trauma in her life, but I certainly couldn't have predicted the outcome. A literal page-turner with choppy chapters mirroring the emotional state of Anna Fox, this thriller had me gripped right to the end. Raw and rapid, definitely not for the faint of heart!

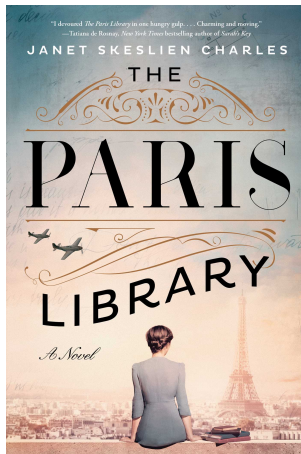


## ● HISTORICAL FICTION:



### **THE GUERNSEY LITERARY AND POTATO PEEL SOCIETY** by Mary Ann Shaffer, Annie Barrows

“Perhaps there is some secret sort of homing instinct in books that brings them to their perfect readers. How delightful if that were true.” A female writer in post-WWII London paired with a quirky book club on the charming island of Guernsey is the recipe for a captivating read. Add the fact that the entire book is written as a series of letters, and you have something truly unique and compelling. The protagonist has a quick wit and is utterly fearless. She navigates romantic relationships, new and old friendships, and devastating revelations with strength and a writer's curiosity. This is one of my absolute favorites!



### **THE PARIS LIBRARY** by Janet Skeslien Charles

“Libraries are lungs, [...] books the fresh air breathed in to keep the heart beating, to keep the brain imagining, to keep hope alive.”

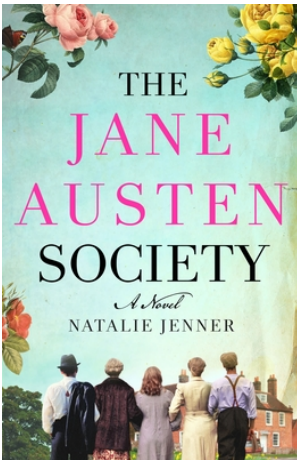
Paris, books, the WWII era, and a library... this time-split novel checked so many of my happy boxes!

In 1939 Paris, Odile Souchet lands her dream job at the American Library, which serves both foreigners and Parisiennes. She has everything going for her—until the war breaks out and her life is forever changed.

In 1983 Montana, an elderly Odile lives a private, secluded existence until she is befriended by an inquisitive teenaged neighbor, Lily, who sheds light on painful secrets Odile has hidden for decades.

Friendship, family, and forgiveness; the bond of books, and the bite of betrayal are all blended by fact and fiction into this captivating story for book lovers everywhere.

The Paris Library is an unforgettable story of how the power of literature brings us together.



### **THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY by Natalie Jenner**

If you enjoyed *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*, this could be your next great read! Set in Chawton, England just after WWII, an unlikely group of Jane Austen fans band together in efforts to protect the late Jane Austen's home and legacy. Each brilliantly-crafted character is dealing with grief or loss of some kind, finding deep comfort in the words of their beloved local author. Avid Jane Austen fans will adore the literary references made—yet prior Austen knowledge is certainly not essential to be utterly swept up in this rich, beautiful story!



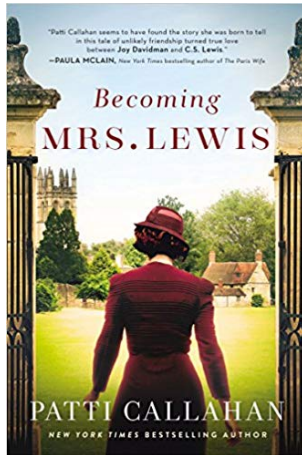
### **MEET ME IN MONACO by Hazel Gaynor and Heather Webb**

This was a perfect vacation book to enjoy reading on a white sandy beach with fruity cocktail in hand between dips in the ocean... what a treat!

A talented, sophisticated young French perfumer and a loveable rogue ex-army English photographer were the most unlikely match—but their paths crossed and hearts entwined, thanks to the kindness of iconic actress, Grace Kelly.

In this beautiful historic fiction set in 1950s Cannes, Sophie and James navigate complicated pasts and uncertain futures after chance encounters with Grace during her whirlwind romance with Prince Rainier of Monaco.

Friendship, love, and tragedy all play their part in this delicious novel, which leaves you longing to take a trip to the south of France, and befriend your very own Grace Kelly!

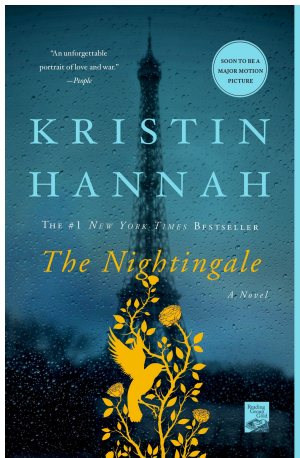


### **BECOMING MRS. LEWIS by Patti Callahan**

A brilliant novel depicting the love story between C.S. Lewis and Joy Davidman. The layers of love are vast and varied between these two uniquely talented writers and unlikely partners.

Patti Callahan brings to life the bold and brave woman we generally hear so little about in this fascinating biographical fiction.

Charming and heartbreaking, hopeful and devastating—this is a story that moved me deeply. I thoroughly recommend this beautifully penned book.



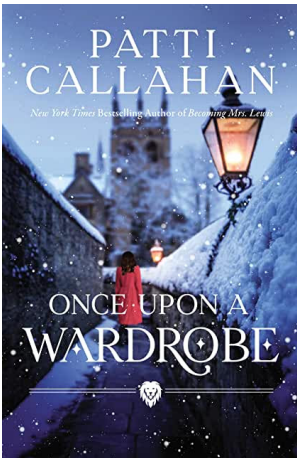
### **THE NIGHTINGALE by Kristin Hannah**

"In love we find out who we want to be; in war we find out who we are."

Harrowing, heartbreaking, and hopeful.

*The Nightingale* drew me in deeply—the relationship between two sisters, the authentic French setting, and the surreal struggle for survival during the Second World War.

Kristin Hannah entices the reader into the fascinating unraveling story of relationships, while providing unimaginable details of the horrors of war. A compelling read and a story that will stay with me for a very long time.



### **ONCE UPON A WARDROBE** by Patti Callahan

“Each and every one of us is born with our own stories and we must decide how to tell them.”

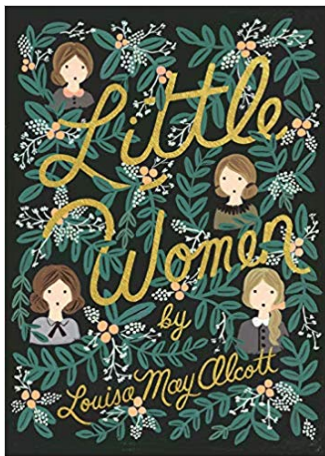
In 1950 Worcester, England, Megs Devonshire is a logically-minded math student at Oxford University, whose heavy heart is breaking as her beloved 8-year-old brother, George, does not have long to live.

An avid reader, George devours a brand-new book by C.S. Lewis called *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, and is left with the burning question, “Where did Narnia come from?”

When George discovers his sister has the possibility of meeting the Oxford don, C.S. Lewis, in person, he begs her to find the answer—and she can’t possibly refuse.

And so, Megs tracks down the famous author and his brother at their home, The Kilns, and over several meetings and strong cups of tea, they answer George’s question with one story after another, sharing nuggets of great joy and harrowing sorrow from their early years. As Megs reports back to her little brother, she eventually sees it is she who is being gifted with deeper truths.

Melding the early years of C.S. Lewis with a tale of a sister’s love for her dying brother, this book beautifully conveys the power of story, inspiration gleaned from seasons of life, and the hope that is offered to all.



### **LITTLE WOMEN** by Louisa May Alcott

I need to re-read this classic every once in a while, to remind myself why I love writing almost as much as reading—Jo March is my hero! As one of four sisters myself, I can identify with much of the loving and bickering, and appreciate the personality of each of the March sisters.

Set in New England at the time of the Civil War, Alcott weaves the most beautiful tapestry of love, loyalty, frustration, devastation, and devotion through the lives of the March family. Every emotion is stirred as the story progresses to a most satisfying conclusion... I now remember why this was my favorite book as a young girl!

A phenomenal read.





[www.laurathomasauthor.com](http://www.laurathomasauthor.com)