

A Fall Harvest Of Great Books By Top Authors And More

by George Rishel

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BUZZ MAGAZINE - October offers a bountiful harvest of great books by some of our top authors.

Best-selling author John Grisham returns to Mississippi in *The Boys from Biloxi* with a gripping legal thriller of two sons of immigrant families who grow up as friends but ultimately find themselves on opposite sides of the law. Biloxi is noted for its beaches, resorts and seafood, but it has a darker side of gambling, prostitution, bootleg liquor, drugs and contract killings. Keith Rudy and Hugh Malco were childhood friends. But Keith's father became a legendary prosecutor determined to clean up the coast, while Hugh's father became the boss of Biloxi's criminal underground. The two families head for the ultimate showdown in a courtroom.

Jodi Piccoult turns to mystery and suspense in *Mad Honey* which features two families who find refuge in small-town New Hampshire. Then the daughter of one family is found dead, and the son of the other family is accused of the crime—creating a soul-stirring ordeal for both families.

Patricia Cornwell returns with *Livid*, a new Kay Scarpetta crime novel. Kay finds herself a reluctant star witness in a sensational televised murder trial causing chaos in Old Town Alexandria. Then, Kay learns the judge's sister has been found dead in an apparent home invasion in which nothing appears to have been taken and the garden is strewn with dead plants and insects.

Among children's books releasing in October are two standouts. The dynamic duo of Mac Barnett and Jon Klassen (*I Want My Hat Back*) present a superb retelling of an old fairy tale in *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*.

Told with pitch perfect timing and pacing, hilarious detail, and Barnett's signature narrator voice, this is *Billy Goats Gruff* as never before. And with Klassen's restrained scenes, arresting characters, and his celebrated artistic style, this picture book is a winner. Alan Gratz has quickly made a name for himself by grappling with tough topics for middle school readers, especially boys (*Grenade*, *Refuge*, *Allies*, and *Projekt 1065*). His latest is *Two Degrees*, which tackles climate change in a breathtaking, action-packed novel. Fire, ice, flood, and four kids fighting for their lives in California, Canada, and Miami.

If you know baking, then the King Arthur Baking Company and their flours, mixes, implements, and a host of baking needs is a familiar brand. Now, the company has distilled its vast baking knowledge into *The King Arthur Baking School, Lessons, and Recipes for Every Baker*. It reflects the honing of the company's baking school curriculum with instructors who are experts not just at baking, but at teaching baking. The recipes, notes, instructive photographs, and thoughtfully organized chapters reflect this depth of experience—a great resource to boost your baking game.

Some of our finest writers have new books releasing this fall. Barbara Kingsolver (*The Poisonwood Bible* and *The Bean Trees*) offers a modern-day take on the David Copperfield story in *Demon Copperhead*. Set in the mountains of southern Appalachia, its main character is a boy born to a teenaged single mother in a single-wide trailer with no assets beyond his dead father's good looks and copper-colored hair, a caustic wit, and a fierce talent for survival. He braves the modern perils of foster care, child labor, derelict schools, athletic success, addiction, disastrous loves, and crushing losses. Through it all, he reckons with his own invisibility in a popular culture where even superheroes have abandoned rural people in favor of cities.

John Irving (*The World According to Garp* and *The Cider House Rules*) takes us to the ski resort of Aspen, Colorado, circa 1941, in *The Last Chairlift*. A slalom skier who gets pregnant during the ski championships returns to New England to become a ski instructor. Years later, her son Adam goes to Aspen—to the hotel where he was conceived and meets some ghosts.

It's been nearly 20 years since Cormac McCarthy (No Country for Old Men and All the Pretty Horses) released a new book, but this fall and winter he has two novels publishing, both part of the same series. The first one in October is *The Passenger*, set in 1980 Pass Christian, Mississippi. The story is about a salvage diver, haunted by loss, afraid of the watery deep, pursued for a conspiracy beyond his understanding, and longing for a death he cannot reconcile with God. It all begins when he makes a dive to a sunken jet with nine bodies still buckled in their sets, but missing the pilot's flight bag, the plane's black box, and the tenth passenger. The second volume in this series, *Stella Maris*, releases in early December.

The fall season would not be complete without a major new book on Abraham Lincoln. Jon Meacham steps forward with *And There Was Light*, where he chronicles the life and moral evolution of Lincoln and explores why and how he confronted secession, threats to democracy, and the tragedy of slavery. He gives us a very human Lincoln—an imperfect man whose moral antislavery commitment was essential to the story of justice in America. He begins with Lincoln's birth in Kentucky in 1809 through his leadership during the Civil War and his tragic assassination at Ford's Theater on Good Friday 1865. Finding a fresh insight on Lincoln is not easy after all that has been written about him, but Meacham manages to do so.

Looking for a gift book for the holidays? Here are some possibilities. Two iconic foundational cookbooks release new editions in October: *Better Home and Gardens New Cookbook* (18th edition in hardback only) and *The Betty Crocker Cookbook* (13th edition). And there is Ripley's *Believe or Not! Escape the Ordinary*, which transports the reader to a world beyond imagination. *The Atlas of Lost Kingdoms* takes you on a journey to lost kingdoms, phantom islands, and even legendary continents once sought by explorers but now believed to be mythical.

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