

## Wedding Complications



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In *Seating Arrangements*, Winn Van Meter and his family descend upon the family's summer retreat house on the New England island of Waskeke. His pregnant daughter Daphne is about to tie the knot. Bidy, her mother, is deeply involved in final wedding preparations, and Winn finds himself strongly drawn to one of the bridesmaids, Agatha. Meanwhile, Daphne's sister, Livia, who just terminated her own pregnancy, is trying hard to get over a big breakup with Teddy Finn. And to her father's horror, Livia plans to become a marine biologist rather than a lawyer. This lovely, slyly humorous novel is brimming with very believable and flawed characters; it captures the insanity, tension, and chaos of a modern wedding.

Winn, an upper-crust, stoic accountant likes things just so. Imagine his consternation when he arrives a day late for the weekend party to find his spiritual retreat taken over by women: his wife and two daughters, three other bridesmaids, and the alcoholic Aunt Celeste, who sees right through Winn's holier than thou exterior to his traitorous heart. During one pre-wedding party with the new in-laws, she follows him up to the widow's walk and warns him, not to ruin Bidy's weekend. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on August 6, 2013

[Seating Arrangements](#)

[Family Relationships](#)

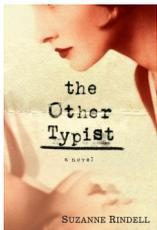
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## Those Rollicking 1920s



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Interested in all the hoopla surrounding *The Great Gatsby*? If this new flick has spurned your interest in 1920s New York, *The Other Typist* is the book for you. Talk about unreliable narrators.

Rose Baker, a former orphan & Catholic schoolgirl, has joined the new wave of women working where men only used to work?big city police stations.

And even though she is still doing women?s work?stenography & typing--she?s listening to risqué and bad language-spiced stories from speakeasy gangsters and murderers including one serial killer who offs several wives in a row for their money. They each end up drowned in the bathtub, yet he keeps convincing juries that he is innocent.

Strong and stoic as Rose is, she soon becomes mesmerized by the new (somewhat incompetent) typist, Odalie, who is beautiful, rich, and ever so modern. She bobs her hair, wears the new slinky dresses with long beads, and is not afraid to make her own way in the world, including visiting the aforementioned speakeasies. But where does Odalie get her money? And is the daddy who pays her rent really her daddy? [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on August 1, 2013

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## Jeremiah Johnson



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I was once asked what I thought of Robert Redford. My response was immediate. I didn't like him and I thought he was a lousy actor trading on his good looks, though he was certainly a talented director. A short while later the discussion turned to our favorite movies when asked I began naming them: [Sneakers](#), [Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid](#), [The Last Castle](#), [The Sting](#), [The Great Waldo Pepper](#), [The Natural](#) and finally [Jeremiah Johnson](#). There was a sudden pause in the discussion when the person I was talking to said, "Didn't you just say ...?" [Read more](#)

Posted by Keith C. on July 31, 2013

[Jeremiah Johnson \[Motion picture : 1972\]](#)

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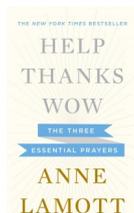
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# Read Alikes for the book Help, Thanks, Wow: Three Essential Prayers by Anne Lamott



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[Help, Thanks, Wow](#) is a funny, candid, simple approach to spiritual practice. Lamott uses her unique brand of humor and wisdom to tell hilarious and often wrenching tales about situations in her own life that have inspired her own prayers and inspired her to encourage others to pray anywhere, anytime and any how. More than a prayer manual [Help, Thanks, Wow](#) is a book about getting through life and will inspire readers to think about notions of gratitude, spirituality and faith--all written in Lamott's own particular brand of intelligence, honesty and comedic timing. Think of it--as one reviewer put it--as Cliff notes for spirituality.

Another author who draws on her own experiences as well as intimate conversations with both ordinary and famous figures is Krista Tippett, author of [Speaking of Faith](#). The popular public radio host of the show *On Being* (formerly known as *Speaking of Faith*) has written a book about the conversational journey she has taken on her radio show about religion, meaning, ethics and faith. Readers who have enjoyed Tippett's radio show will be interested in her personal background and her own theological journey. For those who are unfamiliar with Tippet's public radio program this book will introduce the reader to all kinds of people from all walks of religious life including theologians, physicists, nuns, monks and philosophers speaking from a variety of perspectives.

My third read alike is [Hand Wash Cold: Care Instructions for an Ordinary Life](#) written by Karen Maezen Miller is a "reflection on awareness and finding happiness at the bottom of the laundry basket, the love in the kitchen sink and the peace possible in one's backyard." Beautifully written and simply told this book shares the authors ups and downs including a broken marriage, youthful ambition, self-absorption--then into the steady calm of an "ordinary life." The author is a Zen Buddhist priest but as Miller puts it " I'm not the kind of priest you have pictured in your mind. I'm the kind of priest that looks a lot like you, doing the same things you do every day."

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Posted by Bobby O. on July 31, 2013

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## Rosie Nominations Clean and Bitter End



What I like about the Rosie nominations, is that there are books that cover a wide

variety of subjects and vary in feel from light to pretty dark. Two books on the list deal realistically with the tough topics of dating violence and drug addiction.

In *Bitter End*, Alex is a typical teenager. She struggles with family issues, works a job she mostly enjoys and hangs out with her two best friends Zach and Bethany. Things change when the new boy at school, Cole, begins to show interest. Things are rosy at the beginning, but then Cole's interest becomes increasingly demanding, jealous and violent.

The path from rosy to violent is the crux of this story and is often difficult to read. Early on in the relationship, they becoming very close very quickly and share their deepest secrets. Alex feels that Cole loves her and is able to initially overlook some of Cole's dark moods. The transition from overlooking the dark moods to blaming herself for them is gradual and terrifying. And even when the moods switch from being petty and sarcastic to physical violence Alex still is able to forgive Cole and the cycle continues. [Read more](#)

Posted by sbowman on July 30, 2013

[Award Winner](#)

[Realistic](#)

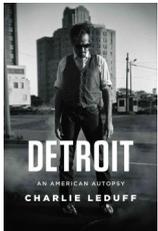
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## Detroit: An American Autopsy



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Leading the news today is the announcement that Detroit filed for bankruptcy. They aren't the first municipality to file, but they are the largest. What this means for residents, city workers, retirees and the state of Michigan remains to be seen. 20 billion dollars is hard to wrap my mind around, and is a figure without names and faces.

Hoping to personalize this story is native son Charlie LeDuff. His recent nonfiction work is called *Detroit: An American Autopsy*. LeDuff is a journalist who left Detroit at an early age and traveled the world covering international conflicts and won a Pulitzer for his contributions at the New York Times. He returns to Detroit to work for The Detroit News.

This book covers a variety of stories, including the fall of ex-Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, city council corruption, the crumbling auto industry implications, and the struggles of a local fire station. You also meet LeDuff's family and follow them while they are coping (or not) with living in and near Detroit. [Read more](#)

Posted by sbowman on July 19, 2013

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