

Friendship

Celebrate International Friendship Day with a Movie Marathon!



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There's nothing like a tale of true friendship! **Celebrate International Friendship Day** by grabbing some popcorn, a friend, and one of these heartwarming stories on DVD. [Read more](#)

Posted by Alex G. on July 30, 2017

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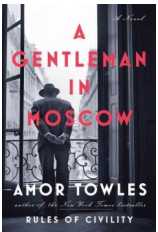
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A Gentleman in Moscow



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During the first half of the twentieth century, thousands of Russians suffered fates much worse than life-long imprisonment. Joseph Stalin sent many artists, writers, and politicians to the Gulag or killed them outright.

This is the fictional story of Count Rostov, an educated aristocrat devoted to the literary arts, who found after the first Russian Revolution that being a count was not only illegal, but dangerous.

The Count traveled to Paris, and unlike many of his contemporaries visiting abroad, decided to return home. But in the 1920s, under Stalin's Article 58 banning counterrevolution, Rostov stood before a tribunal, and was sentenced to permanent imprisonment at the luxury Metropol Hotel for writing a poem that he never wrote. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on July 19, 2017

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Kubo and the Two Strings



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Kubo and the Two Strings is a stunningly beautiful film that tells a deeply moving story of family, belonging, and adventure through the clever stop-motion. This Oscar-nominated film takes place in a medieval, mythologized Japan where our hero, Kubo, is forced to go on a quest to recover magical armor and weapons to stop the Moon King's sinister plans. Kubo is a very talented musician and uses a magical shamisen, a lute-like instrument, to control pieces of his environment and aid him in his quest in breathtakingly beautiful ways that are worth watching over and over.

On his journey, he is joined by a talking macaque, Monkey, and a samurai who was cursed to live as a giant beetle, Beetle, and their interactions provide a great deal of humor. Together they battle monsters, try to untangle the mystery of Kubo's family, become a team, and discover who they truly are. [Read more](#)

Posted by Sam O. on March 16, 2017

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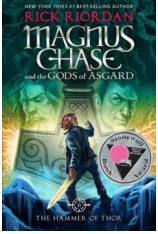
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Magnus Chase and the Hammer of Thor by Rick Riordan



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Winner of the 2017 Stonewall Book Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature, *Magnus Chase and the Hammer of Thor* marks Rick Riordan's return to the world of Asgard. Picking up right after their triumph at the end of the previous story, Magnus Chase and company must now retrieve Thor's hammer, Mjolnir, before the giants invade and destroy Earth. So overall, just your average day really. Filled with Riordan's trademark research, interpretative genius, and wit, *The Hammer of Thor* will satisfy die-hard fans and likely make some new ones, as he tackles issues of race, religion, representation, and gender. [Read more](#)

Posted by Sam O. on February 11, 2017

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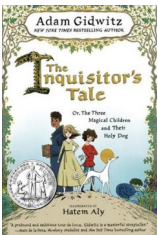
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[The Inquisitor's Tale by Adam Gidwitz](#)



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Gidwitz tackles a slice of medieval history in the style of *The Canterbury Tales* and much of the book is narrated by various individuals being interviewed in a local inn. This story follows a young peasant girl with prophetic visions, a young monk with supernatural strength, and a young Jewish villager who can heal any wound (as well as the aforementioned Holy Dog). Gidwitz mainly focuses on their adventures during the first half of the story, how they got into their current predicament, how they met one another, and the enemies they conquer (such as a dragon, who, due to an unfortunate intestinal issue, breathes fire out of the wrong end). However, this story also covers serious topics within its pages, such as how can three children and a dog stop a book burning, deal with intolerance and discrimination because of who they are, or avoid members of the Inquisition? [Read more](#)

Posted by Sam O. on December 14, 2016

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The Wild Robot by Peter Brown



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Peter Brown's foray into middle-grade literature, *The Wild Robot* is a heartwarming story about a robot stranded on an island only populated by animals. Our heroine, the robot Roz, must learn how to survive on the island and how to coexist with the variety of animals who already inhabit the island. Roz is programmed to learn and adapt to her surroundings and eventually she learns how to communicate with the animals. After disguising herself as a bush, a boulder, or flower patch, and eventually earns their trust. Roz also has to learn how to be a parent after an unfortunate accident. The novel traces this growth and how Roz and the animals are able to work together and overcome challenges that none of them could have completed alone. This story touches on collaboration, compassion, creativity, and some of the deepest, and best, parts of human (and animal) nature. [Read more](#)

Posted by Sam O. on December 13, 2016

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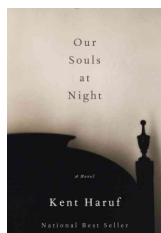
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Our Souls at Night



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This moving book describes a love affair late in life. It's set in the fictional county of Holt, Colorado. One day Addie Moore visits her neighbor Louis. Louis almost falls off his chair when she asks him if he will come to her house and sleep with her that night. To share conversation, Addie adds, "not sex.?"

Shortly after their night visits have begun (pajamas and toothbrush, paper bag will travel), Louis asks Addie, "Why me?" She answers with a question, do you think I'd just invite anyone. Because you're a good man, that's why I chose you.

Haruf, writes laconically, the kind of conversation you might expect from a man raised in a small agricultural town two hours east of Colorado Springs. Yet he succeeds masterfully at tackling the deep subjects: love, death, marriage, the friction between adult children and their parents. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on July 27, 2016

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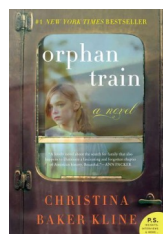
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Orphan Train



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I had a personal connection to this novel because my mom was raised as an orphan in Chicago. Luckily, she never had to experience adoptions or sharing foster homes with unloving parents but she did start out on her own at age sixteen working as a salesgirl in the Chicago Loop.

This touching intertwined story of two orphans: one contemporary and one from depression era days, was a quick and touching read. It begins with Goth-looking Molly, a young, half-Native America girl from Maine who just got busted for stealing a book from the public library. Really? Well not every detail in a novel has to be 100% authentic.

In case you're curious, Molly took the third and the most beaten-up copy of *Jane Eyre*. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on February 17, 2015

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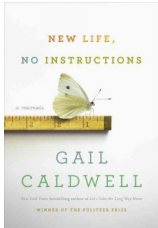
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New Life, No Instructions



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Did you ever hobble around on crutches? Discover that your most basic possession, your body, does not work as it once did? This excellent memoir about rehabilitation, friendship, loss, and the love of a great dog is a tearjerker at times, but always incredibly well-written. Wow, does Caldwell know how to spin a yarn.

Gail Caldwell suffered from polio as a small child. In this account she describes how her mother sprawled on the floor with her when she was young and did the tough leg exercises needed to strengthen Gail's leg.

All her life, Gail adapted to living with a bum leg. In her late fifties she decided to adopt a strong Samoyed pup. And as Tula grew, Gail soon found herself falling more and more often, and that she could no longer hike the three mile reservoir loop with her strong-willed pet.

Doctor after doctor told Gail that her limp, the weakness in her leg and her frequent falls were caused by her polio, but Gail finally sought another opinion. The new doctor asked to see her CT scans and X-rays but there were no recent ones. Upon doing them, he discovered that Gail's hip was shattered with the ball absolutely flat. She needed hip replacement immediately. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on May 25, 2014

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