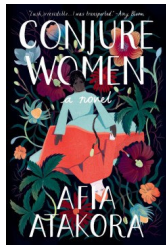


# Historical Fiction



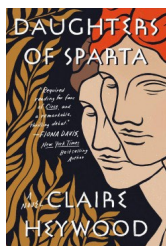
Monroe County  
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Read, Learn, Connect & Create

## **Conjure Women by Afia Atakora**



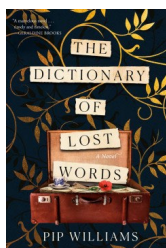
This sweeping story brings the world of the South before and after the Civil War vividly to life. Spanning eras and generations, it tells of the lives of three unforgettable women: Miss May Belle, a wise healing woman; her precocious and observant daughter Rue, who is reluctant to follow in her mother's footsteps as a midwife; and their master's daughter, Varina. The secrets and bonds among these women and their community come to a head at the beginning of a war and at the birth of an accursed child, who sets the townspeople alight with fear and a spreading superstition that threatens their newly won, tenuous freedom.

## **Daughters of Sparta by Claire Heywood**



For millennia, men have told the legend of the woman whose face launched a thousand ships—but now it's time to hear her side of the story. *Daughters of Sparta* is a tale of secrets, love, and tragedy from the women behind mythology's most devastating war, the infamous Helen and her sister Klytemnestra.

## **The Dictionary of Lost Words by Pip Williams**

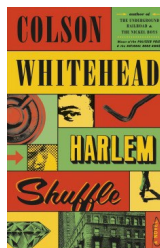


Set during the height of the women's suffrage movement and with the Great War looming, *The Dictionary of Lost Words* reveals a lost narrative, hidden between the lines of a history written by men. Inspired by actual events, the author delved into the archives of the Oxford English Dictionary to tell this highly original story. It is a delightful, lyrical, and deeply thought-provoking celebration of words and the power of language to shape the world.

## **Hamnet: A Novel of the Plague by Maggie O'Farrell**



Inspired by the son of a famous playwright, this is a story of the bond between twins, and of a marriage pushed to the brink by grief. It is also the story of a kestrel and its mistress; flea that boards a ship in Alexandria; and a glovemaker's son who flouts convention in pursuit of the woman he loves. Above all, it is a tender and unforgettable reimagining of a boy whose life has been all but forgotten, but whose name was given to one of the most celebrated plays ever written.



## **Harlem Shuffle by Colson Whitehead**

This ingenious story plays out in a beautifully recreated New York City of the early 1960s. It's a family saga masquerading as a crime novel, a hilarious morality play, a social novel about race and power, and ultimately a love letter to Harlem.

## **Harsh Times by Mario Vargas Llosa**



This is a gripping, revealing novel that directly confronts recent history. No one is better suited to tell this riveting story than Vargas Llosa, and there is no form better for it than his deeply textured fiction. Not since *The Feast of the Goat*, his classic novel of the downfall of Trujillo's regime in the Dominican Republic, has the author combined politics, characters, and suspense so unforgettably.

## **The Kitchen Front by Jennifer Ryan**



In this inspiring tale about the unbreakable bonds of family, the importance of friendship, and the resilience of the female spirit, four very different British women engage in a cooking competition that both divides and unites them as they struggle with the rationing and privations of World War II. Experiment with some of the included ration-conscious recipes!

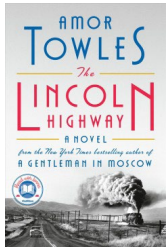
## **Libertie by Kaitlynn Greenidge**



Coming of age as a free-born Black girl in Reconstruction-era Brooklyn, Libertie Sampson tries to parse what freedom actually means for a Black woman. When she meets Emmanuel Chase, a young doctor from Haiti, she is overwhelmed both by his eager courtship and his depiction of Haiti as a Black utopia—but it's only when she's married and far from home that she discovers her husband's egalitarian vision will only be reality for women at some indeterminate time in the future. Greenidge explores issues that are still real today while also inviting readers into historical moments that will be new to many.

### **The Lincoln Highway by Amor Towles**

In June 1954, 18-year-old Emmett Watson is driven home to Nebraska by the warden of the juvenile work farm where he has just served 15 months for involuntary manslaughter. His mother long gone, his father recently deceased, and the family farm foreclosed upon by the bank, Emmett's intention is to pick up his eight-year-old brother and head to California where they can start their lives anew. Then, Emmett discovers that two friends from the work farm have hidden themselves in the trunk, hatching an altogether different plan for Emmett's future, one that will take them all on a fateful journey to New York City.



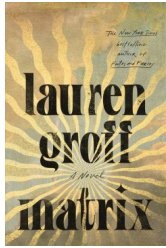
### **The Shadow King by Maaza Mengiste**

With the threat of Mussolini's army looming, recently orphaned Hirut struggles to adapt to her new life as a maid to Kidane and his wife. Kidane, an officer in Emperor Haile Selassie's army, rushes to mobilize his strongest men before the Italians invade. His initial kindness to Hirut shifts to cruelty when she resists his advances, and Hirut finds herself tumbling into a new world of thefts and violations, of betrayals and rage. As the war begins in earnest, the Emperor goes into exile and Ethiopia quickly loses hope. Hirut helps disguise a gentle peasant and soon becomes a guard, inspiring other women to take up arms against the Italians.



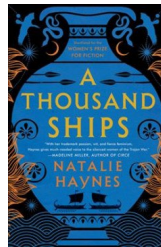
### **Matrix by Lauren Groff**

Equally alive to the sacred and the profane, *Matrix* gathers currents of violence, sensuality, and religious ecstasy in a mesmerizing portrait of consuming passion, aberrant faith, and a woman that history moves both through and around. It is a defiant and timely exploration of the raw power of female creativity in a corrupted world.



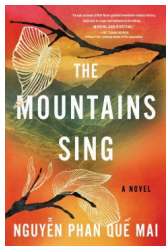
### **A Thousand Ships by Natalie Haynes**

A retelling of the Trojan War from the perspectives of its women, this lively reinvention follows the stories of a vigil-keeping Penelope, an Amazon princess rival of Achilles, and three goddesses whose feud sparks a tragic conflict. Short-listed for Britain's Women's Prize for Fiction and best-booked by *The Guardian* and the *Times Literary Supplement*.



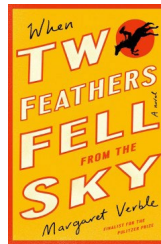
### **The Mountains Sing by Phan Qué Mai Nguyễn**

This first novel in English by the Vietnam-born author centers on the Trần family living in North Vietnam during three conflict-struck generations. With lyrical writing, Nguyễn tells a sweeping tale of one family's shifting fortune—a tale which balances the unrelenting devastation of war with redemptive moments of surprising humanity.



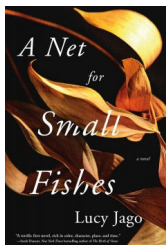
### **When Two Feathers Fell from the Sky by Margaret Verble**

Louise Erdrich meets Karen Russell in this deliciously strange and daringly original novel from the Pulitzer Prize finalist. Set in 1926 Nashville, it follows a death-defying young Cherokee horse-diver who, with her companions from the Glendale Park Zoo, must get to the bottom of a mystery that spans centuries.



### **A Net for Small Fishes by Lucy Jago**

*Wolf Hall* meets *The Favourite* in this gripping dark novel based on the true scandal of two women determined to create their own fates in the Jacobean court. As the women grow closer, each hopes to change her circumstances. Frances is trapped in a miserable marriage while loving another, and newly-widowed Anne struggles to keep herself and her six children alive as she waits for a promised proposal. A desperate plan to change their fortunes is hatched. But navigating the Jacobean court is a dangerous game and one misstep could cost them everything.



### **Zorrie by Laird Hunt**

After losing both her parents and her aunt, Zorrie is cast into the perilous realities of rural Depression-era Indiana. Drifting west, surviving on odd jobs, Zorrie finds a position at a radium processing plant. When Indiana calls Zorrie home, she finds the love and community that has always eluded her in and around the small town of Hillisburg, but discovers that her trials have only begun.

