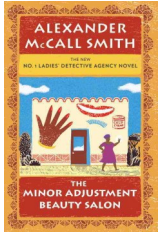


For the Love of Reading

The Minor Adjustment Beauty Salon



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In the bustle and tensions of the holiday season, it was great to take a couple of nights off and travel to Botswana in Alexander McCall Smith's latest book in the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency Series. As usual the mysteries--there are two of them here--are interwoven with descriptions and a philosophy of living a moral life in Africa. Grace Makutsi, who scored an amazing 97% on her secretarial school final exam, is married now and expecting a baby yet she has not yet talked to Precious Ramotswe about taking any leave. Before she does, her little son arrives along with a pesky aunt, the matriarch of the family who swoops in to take charge of Grace's household.

While Grace is gone, giving birth and settling into motherhood, Mma Ramotswe faces two problems: an acquaintance has opened a new beauty salon, the one of the title, but she is receiving daily threats from an anonymous source. Whoever is doing it is scaring away all her customers and this threatens the business. Also, a female lawyer has contacted the 'traditionally built' detective about an inheritance issue: a nephew is supposed to inherit a farm from a famous politician, but is Liso the actual nephew or someone posing as him? Precious discovers that if Liso is not who he claims to be, the lawyer will inherit the bulk of the estate. Coincidentally--or maybe not--this lawyer was having an affair with the politician Mma Ramotswe discovers. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on December 9, 2013

[The Minor Adjustment Beauty Salon](#)

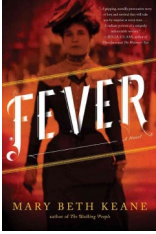
[Mystery](#)

[Information, Answers & Reviews](#)

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Dispelling Dark Myths



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Did you ever hear the story of Typhoid Mary? as a child? I remember a gaggle of us neighborhoods kids scaring each other with stories of the woman whose myth lived long after she died. It's not a person we learned about in school, yet just the mention of her name culled up disease, darkness and death. That's one reason I was happy to come across this sympathetic portrait of an Irish-American woman who was much maligned by the press. Not a biography, this fictional account relies on many true-to-life details to make its story highly believable. Young Mary Mallon emigrated from Ireland at age fifteen to stay with an aunt. She soon went to work and started as a laundress--hot dirty work that offered no hope of advancement. Being smart and clever, Mary noticed that the cooks were paid much more and had more freedom. She also liked the creative aspect of crafting fine meals for the wealthy of early 1900s New York City.

Mary got her big break as a substitute cook, and she turned one success into a career. By the time she was 17, she received an excellent summer gig in Oyster Bay, but unfortunately fever swept through the summer place leaving the baby she loved and several other members of the household dead. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on December 3, 2013

[Fever](#)

[Fiction](#)

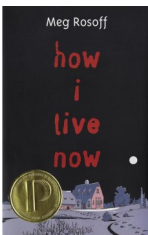
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how i live now



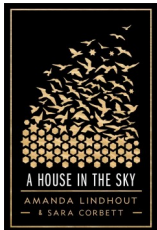
[view in catalog](#)

If you are looking for an antidote to the [Hunger Games](#) mania, as I was this past week, this less-action-oriented Young Adult dystopia might be worth a read. A 2004 [Printz Award](#) and [British Guardian Children's Fiction Prize](#) winner, the story is written from the perspective of Daisy, a 15 year-old girl from a not-too-distant future set New York City, who is sent to live with her cousins in the English countryside to get away from her father, her unliked stepmother, and their newborn child. Almost as soon as she is there, the country is invaded and war breaks out, leaving Daisy and her cousins to fend for themselves in what can only be said, without spoiling the plot, to be a truly harrowing experience. [Read more](#)

Posted by Brandon R. on December 2, 2013

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A House in the Sky



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This memoir is as compelling as any thriller, and much better written than most. In it a young Canadian describes how she escaped her family's poverty and dysfunction in a small town in Alberta by reading *National Geographic* mags cover to cover. The family was so poor that she had to earn money to buy the used magazines herself, but while reading them she not only discovered the world, but was able to dream of a better, more interesting life.

Amanda didn't have the money for college, so instead she became a waitress at high-end clubs and restaurants in Calgary when the money from oil and gas was flowing. She soon began to travel internationally to South America, India, Pakistan, and Nepal. Edgy, dangerous places appealed to her and those far off the tourist track. She went to [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on November 21, 2013

[A House in the Sky: a Memoir](#)

[Memoir](#)

[Nonfiction](#)

[For the Love of Reading](#)

[Information, Answers & Reviews](#)

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Nicole Mones and The Power of Words



It isn't too late to make plans to see award winning author Nicole Mones speak this

Saturday, November 16 at the Buskirk-Chumley theater in downtown Bloomington! [Read more](#)

Posted by sbowman on November 14, 2013

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[International Settings](#)

[Library Program](#)

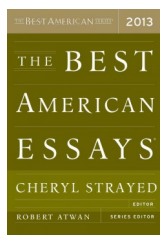
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The Best American Essays 2013



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The Best American Series may seem like a boring reading choice, but whenever I choose a volume from it, I am rewarded to discover new and unfamiliar authors. Plus, reading this series helps me to nudge my book selections in fresh directions. Wilderness writer Cheryl Strayed edited *The Best American Essays 2013* and her intriguing selections offered lots of surprises. Here are examples of a few of the titles: "Free Rent at the Totalitarian Hotel," "Highway of Lost Girls," "My Father's Women," "I'm Jumping off the Bridge," and "Confessions of an Ex-Mormon." In "I'm Jumping off the Bridge" Kevin Sampsell, a bookseller at Portland's Powell Books—my favorite bookstore in the world, described dealing with a suicidal patron and how artfully he handled it. But as the essay continues, you realize that the bookseller had considered suicide himself.

In the chilling "Highway of Lost Girls" Vanessa Veselka decided to investigate the murder of some female hitchhikers in the 1980s. During that time period, she had a terrifying experience while hitchhiking. A truck driver had exited the highway and transported her down a back road. He stopped and pulled out a knife demanding that she climb in the [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on November 12, 2013

[The Best American Essays 2013](#)

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