
Absurdistan A Novel

A Novel
 The Astrological Diary of God
 To Catch a Traitor
 Super Sad True Love Story
 How a Radio Station Defined Politics, Counterculture, and Rock and Roll
 The Jaguar Smile
 The Essential Fictions
 A Memoir
 125 Years of Literary History
 A Memoir
 The Daily Show (The Book)
 Little Failure
 A Novel
 A Novel
 A Fat Man's Novel
 A Novel
 A Novel
 A Novel
 A Novel
 Little Failure
 An Oral History as Told by Jon Stewart, the Correspondents, Staff and Guests
 Absurdistan
 A Novel
 Pocket Kings
 A Partial History of Lost Causes
 End Your Carb Confusion
 Jewish American Literature since 1969
 The Omnivore's Dilemma
 Then We Came to the End
 The New York Times Book Review
 A Replacement Life
 Yiddish Letter Manuals from Russia and America
 The Cosmopolitans
 A Novel
 Mission to America
 Race, Rights, and Recognition
 Mesopotamia
 Dear Mendl, Dear Reyzl
 Lake Success

Absurdistan A Novel

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ABBEY LOWERY

A Novel Penguin

A visionary novel from the author of *Super Sad True Love Story* and *Little Failure*. The *Russian Debutante's Handbook* introduces Vladimir Girshkin, one of the most original and unlikely heroes of recent times. The twenty-five-year-old unhappy lover to a fat dungeon mistress, affectionately nicknamed "Little Failure" by his high-achieving mother, Vladimir toils his days away as a lowly clerk at the bureaucratic Emma Lazarus Immigrant Absorption Society. When a wealthy but psychotic old Russian war hero appears, Vladimir embarks on an adventure of unrelenting lunacy that takes us from New York's Lower East Side to the hip frontier wilderness of Prava--the Eastern European

Paris of the nineties. With the help of a murderous but fun-loving Russian mafioso, Vladimir infiltrates the Prava expat community and launches a scheme as ridiculous as it is brilliant. Bursting with wit, humor, and rare insight, *The Russian Debutante's Handbook* is both a highly imaginative romp and a serious exploration of what it means to be an immigrant in America.

The Astrological Diary of God Indiana University Press

A masterpiece of religious parody in the tradition of Kurt Vonnegut. Japs Eye Fontanelle, an 88-year-old overweight, retired Japanese kamikaze pilot, insists that he is the rightful king of the Holy Channel Island of Jersey. He also claims to be the Creator of the Universe. This is his autobiography, written while under armed guard inside the gold vault at Fort Knox. Fontanelle recounts his truly remarkable

life: from his birth in the city of Kyoto and his involvement in World War II, to his study of the ancient science of astrology, the historic discovery of his own divinity, and the founding of the first Astrological Kingdom on Earth. Occasionally, when he isn't busy creating galaxies, he takes a break to watch "Star Trek". Structured in twelve meticulously-researched, hilariously funny zodiacal chapters-and padded with photo inserts revealing such delights as God returning from his ninth suicide mission, Shinto monks, and God's genitals- *The Astrological Diary of God* is a savage and irreverent take on modern belief.

To Catch a Traitor Anchor

How Boston radio station WBCN became the hub of the rock-and-roll, antiwar, psychedelic solar system. While San Francisco was celebrating a psychedelic Summer of Love in 1967, Boston stayed

buttoned up and battened down. But that changed the following year, when a Harvard Law School graduate student named Ray Riepen founded a radio station that played music that young people, including the hundreds of thousands at Boston-area colleges, actually wanted to hear. WBCN-FM featured album cuts by such artists as the Mothers of Invention, Aretha Franklin, and Cream, played by announcers who felt free to express their opinions on subjects that ranged from recreational drugs to the war in Vietnam. In this engaging and generously illustrated chronicle, Peabody Award-winning journalist and one-time WBCN announcer Bill Lichtenstein tells the story of how a radio station became part of a revolution in youth culture. At WBCN, creativity and countercultural politics ruled: there were no set playlists; news segments anticipated the satire of *The Daily Show*; on-air interviewees ranged from John and Yoko to Noam Chomsky; a telephone "Listener Line" fielded questions on any subject, day and night. From 1968 to Watergate, Boston's WBCN was the hub of the rock-and-roll, antiwar, psychedelic solar system. A cornucopia of images in color and black and white includes concert posters, news clippings, photographs of performers in action, and scenes of joyousness on Boston Common. Interwoven through the narrative are excerpts from interviews with WBCN pioneers, including Charles Laquidara, the "news dissector" Danny Schechter, Marsha Steinberg, and Mitchell Kertzman. Lichtenstein's documentary *WBCN and the American Revolution* is available as a DVD sold separately.

Super Sad True Love Story Random House Trade Paperbacks

An immigrant Russian family living in Connecticut clash with each other about tradition, search for true love, and struggle to integrate into the new culture.

How a Radio Station Defined Politics, Counterculture, and Rock and Roll

Western Hemisphere Press

Meet Misha Vainberg, aka Snack Daddy, a 325-pound disaster of a human being, son of the 1,238th-richest man in Russia and proud holder of a degree in multicultural studies from Accidental College, USA. Misha is an American impounded in a Russian's body and the only place he feels at home is New York; he just wants to live in the South Bronx with his Latina girlfriend, but after his gangster father murders an Oklahoma businessman in Russia, all hopes of a US visa are lost. Salvation lies in the tiny oil-rich nation of Absurdistan (a fictional former Soviet republic), where a crooked consular officer

will sell Misha a Belgian passport. But after a civil war breaks out between two competing ethnic groups and a local warlord installs hapless Misha as minister of multicultural affairs, our hero soon finds himself covered in oil, fighting for his life, falling in love, and trying to figure out if a normal life is still possible in the twenty-first century.

The Jaguar Smile Clarkson Potter

War Torn: Adventures in the Brave New Canada is travel literature woven with threads of political commentary. Troy Parfitt travels through every Canadian province and territory in a bid to reconnect with his estranged homeland. However, the connection appears to be broken as the author is bothered by poverty, a scandal-ridden and increasingly autocratic government, and quiet complicity about his country's involvement in The War in Afghanistan. Parfitt touches on numerous themes, from Canadian literature, to the nation's obsession with hockey, to descriptions of Newfoundland, British Columbia, and Nunavut. There is plenty of humour (there'd have to be), but the tie that binds is criticism of Canada's shift to the right and the state manufactured belief that bettering citizens' lives comes after fulfilling military contracts and waging war. Readers looking to find out how democratic, friendly, and socialist Canada is should refer to fiction.

The Essential Fictions Simon and Schuster

"A can't-put-it-down modern Western." —Kirk Siegler, NPR Longlisted for the PEN/ESPN Award for Literary Sports Writing *The Last Cowboys* is Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter John Branch's epic tale of one American family struggling to hold on to the fading vestiges of the Old West. For generations, the Wrights of southern Utah have raised cattle and world-champion saddle-bronc riders—many call them the most successful rodeo family in history. Now they find themselves fighting to save their land and livelihood as the West is transformed by urbanization, battered by drought, and rearranged by public-land disputes. Could rodeo, of all things, be the answer? Written with great lyricism and filled with vivid scenes of heartache and broken bones, *The Last Cowboys* is a powerful testament to the grit and integrity that fuel the American Dream.

A Memoir Random House

This New York Times Notable Book from the two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Underground Railroad* and *The Nickel Boys* is a brisk, comic tour de force about identity, history, and the adhesive bandage industry. The town of Winthrop has decided it needs a new name. The resident software millionaire wants to call

it New Prospera; the mayor wants to return to the original choice of the founding black settlers; and the town's aristocracy sees no reason to change the name at all. What they need, they realize, is a nomenclature consultant. And, it turns out, the consultant needs them. But in a culture overwhelmed by marketing, the name is everything and our hero's efforts may result in not just a new name for the town but a new and subtler truth about it as well. Look for Colson Whitehead's bestselling new novel, *Harlem Shuffle!*

125 Years of Literary History Crime Bytes Media

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • GOOD MORNING AMERICA BUZZ PICK • ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR: The New York Times Book Review, Financial Times, The Washington Post, Time, Los Angeles Times, New York Post, Town & Country, Good Housekeeping, Kirkus Reviews "A perfect novel for these times and all times, the single textual artifact from the pandemic era I would place in a time capsule as a representation of all that is good and true and beautiful about literature."—Molly Young, The New York Times *Eight friends, one country house, and six months in isolation—a novel about love, friendship, family, and betrayal hailed as a "virtuoso performance" (USA Today) and "an homage to Chekhov with four romances and a finale that will break your heart" (The Washington Post)* In the rolling hills of upstate New York, a group of friends and friends-of-friends gathers in a country house to wait out the pandemic. Over the next six months, new friendships and romances will take hold, while old betrayals will emerge, forcing each character to reevaluate whom they love and what matters most. The unlikely cast of characters includes a Russian-born novelist; his Russian-born psychiatrist wife; their precocious child obsessed with K-pop; a struggling Indian American writer; a wildly successful Korean American app developer; a global dandy with three passports; a Southern flamethrower of an essayist; and a movie star, the Actor, whose arrival upsets the equilibrium of this chosen family. Both elegiac and very, very funny, *Our Country Friends* is the most ambitious book yet by the author of the beloved bestseller *Super Sad True Love Story*.

A Memoir Cornell University Press

"Absurdistan is not just a hilarious novel, but a record of a particular peak in the history of human folly. No one is more capable of dealing with the transition from the hell of socialism to the hell of capitalism in Eastern Europe than Shteyngart, the great-great grandson of

one Nikolai Gogol and the funniest foreigner alive." –Aleksandar Hemon From the critically acclaimed, bestselling author of *The Russian Debutante's Handbook* comes the uproarious and poignant story of one very fat man and one very small country Meet Misha Vainberg, aka Snack Daddy, a 325-pound disaster of a human being, son of the 1,238th-richest man in Russia, proud holder of a degree in multicultural studies from Accidental College, USA (don't even ask), and patriot of no country save the great City of New York. Poor Misha just wants to live in the South Bronx with his hot Latina girlfriend, but after his gangster father murders an Oklahoma businessman in Russia, all hopes of a U.S. visa are lost. Salvation lies in the tiny, oil-rich nation of Absurdistan, where a crooked consular officer will sell Misha a Belgian passport. But after a civil war breaks out between two competing ethnic groups and a local warlord installs hapless Misha as minister of multicultural affairs, our hero soon finds himself covered in oil, fighting for his life, falling in love, and trying to figure out if a normal life is still possible in the twenty-first century. With the enormous success of *The Russian Debutante's Handbook*, Gary Shteyngart established himself as a central figure in today's literary world—"one of the most talented and entertaining writers of his generation," according to *The New York Observer*. In *Absurdistan*, he delivers an even funnier and wiser literary performance. Misha Vainberg is a hero for the new century, a glimmer of humanity in a world of dashed hopes.

The Daily Show (The Book) Pan Macmillan Adult

A young Jewish-American woman learns that she has brain cancer and through a series of flashbacks examines her wasted life.

Random House Trade Paperbacks

"The novel brims with bravado, fear, jealousy, sympathy, chicanery, cruelty, and nobility. Shuster makes the emotional life of her major characters come fully alive while she continues to ratchet up the suspense—all of this set against a vivid rendering of Moscow's material and political culture." - Philip K. Jason, Jewish Book Council Every family has its secrets. In 1980s Moscow, keeping them is a matter of survival. As the Cold War escalates, the Soviet Union's Jewish community finds itself caught in a tug of war between their allies abroad who want to open the doors to emigration and a country that hates them but won't let them leave. A Jew in Moscow, Sofia knows better than most how high the stakes are.

Her family is among the thousands who have been watched, harassed, and hunted for their defiance of the Soviet machine. Her own husband was sentenced to five harrowing years in the gulag simply for teaching Hebrew. Sofia has dared even greater risks to help her people, and if she's caught, she won't be sent to the gulag. She'll be executed. When her husband is released from prison six months early, she should be overjoyed, but the KGB has eyes and ears everywhere. Anyone could be an informant, even the beloved husband who has finally returned. A shell of his former self, he can't--or won't--explain his unexpected reprieve, and he's acting guilty. She suspects he's harboring dangerous secrets of his own. How can she trust him with hers? The Americans meets *Bridge of Spies* in this can't-put-down Cold War story of intrigue and betrayal. *Sins of a Spy 1. To Catch a Traitor* - released in August 2018 2. *To Hunt a Spy* - released in September 2019 *Little Failure* Bloomsbury Pub Plc USA A *New York Times* Editors' Choice Named a Best Book of 2018 by Bookforum, Nylon, Esquire, and Vulture "This artful and autumnal novel, published in high summer, is a gift to those who wish to receive it." —Dwight Garner, *The New York Times* "Hilarious, heartbreaking . . . A *Terrible Country* may be one of the best books you'll read this year." —Ann Levin, Associated Press "The funniest work of fiction I've read this year." —Christian Lorentzen, Vulture.com A literary triumph about Russia, family, love, and loyalty—from a founding editor of *n+1* and the author of *Raising Raffi* When Andrei Kaplan's older brother Dima insists that Andrei return to Moscow to care for their ailing grandmother, Andrei must take stock of his life in New York. His girlfriend has stopped returning his text messages. His dissertation adviser is dubious about his job prospects. It's the summer of 2008, and his bank account is running dangerously low. Perhaps a few months in Moscow are just what he needs. So Andrei sublets his room in Brooklyn, packs up his hockey stuff, and moves into the apartment that Stalin himself had given his grandmother, a woman who has outlived her husband and most of her friends. She survived the dark days of communism and witnessed Russia's violent capitalist transformation, during which she lost her beloved dacha. She welcomes Andrei into her home, even if she can't always remember who he is. Andrei learns to navigate Putin's Moscow, still the city of his birth, but with more expensive coffee. He looks after his

elderly—but surprisingly sharp!—grandmother, finds a place to play hockey, a café to send emails, and eventually some friends, including a beautiful young activist named Yulia. Over the course of the year, his grandmother's health declines and his feelings of dislocation from both Russia and America deepen. Andrei knows he must reckon with his future and make choices that will determine his life and fate. When he becomes entangled with a group of leftists, Andrei's politics and his allegiances are tested, and he is forced to come to terms with the Russian society he was born into and the American one he has enjoyed since he was a kid. A wise, sensitive novel about Russia, exile, family, love, history and fate, *A Terrible Country* asks what you owe the place you were born, and what it owes you. Writing with grace and humor, Keith Gessen gives us a brilliant and mature novel that is sure to mark him as one of the most talented novelists of his generation.

A Novel Harper Collins

Winner of the VCU Cabell First Novelist Award Winner of the American Library Association's Sophie Brody Medal Finalist for the National Jewish Book Award A singularly talented writer makes his literary debut with this provocative, soulful, and sometimes hilarious story of a failed journalist asked to do the unthinkable: Forge Holocaust-restitution claims for old Russian Jews in Brooklyn, New York. Yevgeny Gelman, grandfather of Slava Gelman, "didn't suffer in the exact way" he needs to have suffered to qualify for the restitution the German government has been paying out to Holocaust survivors. But suffer he has—as a Jew in the war; as a second-class citizen in the USSR; as an immigrant to America. So? Isn't his grandson a "writer"? High-minded Slava wants to put all this immigrant scraping behind him. Only the American Dream is not panning out for him—Century, the legendary magazine where he works as a researcher, wants nothing greater from him. Slava wants to be a correct, blameless American—but he wants to be a lionized writer even more. Slava's turn as the Forger of South Brooklyn teaches him that not every fact is the truth, and not every lie a falsehood. It takes more than law-abiding to become an American; it takes the same self-reinvention in which his people excel. Intoxicated and unmoored by his inventions, Slava risks exposure. Cornered, he commits an irrevocable act that finally grants him a sense of home in America, but not before collecting a price from his family. *A Replacement Life* is a

dark, moving, and beautifully written novel about family, honor, and justice.

A Novel W. W. Norton & Company

In an unnamed New York-based company, the employees are getting restless as everything around them unravels. There's Pru, the former grad student turned spreadsheet drone; Laars, the hysteric whose work anxiety stalks him in his tooth-grinding dreams; and Jack II, who distributes unwanted backrubs-aka "jackrubs"-to his co-workers. On a Sunday, one of them is called at home. And the Firings begin. Rich with Orwellian doublespeak, filled with sabotage and romance, this astonishing literary debut is at once a comic delight and a narrative tour de force. It's a novel for anyone who has ever worked in an office and wondered: "Where does the time go? Where does the life go? And whose banana is in the fridge?" Praise for *PERSONAL DAYS* "Witty and appealing...Anyone who has ever groaned to hear 'impact' used as a verb will cheer as Park skewers the avatars of corporate speak, hellbent on debasing the language....Park has written what one of his characters calls 'a layoff narrative' for our times. As the economy continues its free fall, Park's book may serve as a handy guide for navigating unemployment and uncertainty. Does anyone who isn't a journalist think there can't be two books on the same subject at the same time? We need as many as we can get right now." —The New York Times Book Review "Never have the minutiae of office life been so lovingly cataloged and collated." —"Three First Novels that Just Might Last," —Time A "comic and creepy début...Park transforms the banal into the eerie, rendering ominous the familiar request "Does anyone want anything from the outside world?" —The New Yorker "The modern corporate office is to Ed Park's debut novel *Personal Days* what World War II was to Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*—a theater of absurdity and injustice so profound as to defy all reason....Park may be in line to fill the shoes left by Kurt Vonnegut and other satirists par excellence."—Samantha Dunn, Los Angeles Times "In *Personal Days* Ed Park has crafted a sometimes funny, sometimes heartbreaking, but always adroit novel about office life...Sharp and lovely language." —Newsweek "A warm and winning fiction debut." — Publishers Weekly "I laughed until they put me in a mental hospital. But *Personal Days* is so much more than satire. Underneath Park's masterly portrait of wasted workaday lives is a pulsating heart, and an odd, buoyant hope." — Gary Shteyngart, author of

Absurdistan "The funniest book I've read about the way we work now." —William Poundstone, author of *Fortune's Formula* "Ed Park joins Andy Warhol and Don DeLillo as a master of the deadpan vernacular." —Helen DeWitt, author of *The Last Samurai*

A Fat Man's Novel Anchor

"Spectacular."—NPR • "Uproariously funny."—The Boston Globe • "An artistic triumph."—San Francisco Chronicle • "A novel in which comedy and pathos are exquisitely balanced."—The Washington Post • "Shteyngart's best book."—The Seattle Times The bestselling author of *Super Sad True Love Story* returns with a biting, brilliant, emotionally resonant novel very much of our times. NAMED ONE OF THE TEN BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE AND MAUREEN CORRIGAN, NPR'S FRESH AIR AND NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY The New York Times Book Review • NPR • The Washington Post • O: The Oprah Magazine • Mother Jones • Glamour • Library Journal • Kirkus Reviews • Newsday • Pamela Paul, KQED • Financial Times • The Globe and Mail Narcissistic, hilariously self-deluded, and divorced from the real world as most of us know it, hedge-fund manager Barry Cohen oversees \$2.4 billion in assets. Deeply stressed by an SEC investigation and by his three-year-old son's diagnosis of autism, he flees New York on a Greyhound bus in search of a simpler, more romantic life with his old college sweetheart. Meanwhile, his super-smart wife, Seema—a driven first-generation American who craved the picture-perfect life that comes with wealth—has her own demons to face. How these two flawed characters navigate the Shteyngartian chaos of their own making is at the heart of this piercing exploration, a poignant tale of familial longing and an unsentimental ode to America. LONGLISTED FOR THE CARNEGIE MEDAL FOR EXCELLENCE IN FICTION "The fuel and oxygen of immigrant literature—movement, exile, nostalgia, cultural disorientation—are what fire the pistons of this trenchant and panoramic novel. . . . [It is] a novel so pungent, so frisky and so intent on probing the dissonances and delusions—both individual and collective—that grip this strange land getting stranger."—The New York Times Book Review "Shteyngart, perhaps more than any American writer of his generation, is a natural. He is light, stinging, insolent and melancholy. . . . The wit and the immigrant's sense of heartbreak—he was born in Russia—just seem to pour from him. The idea of riding along behind Shteyngart as he glides

across America in the early age of Trump is a propitious one. He doesn't disappoint."—The New York Times

A Novel Random House

"From the longest-running, most trusted book review in America comes a celebration of The New York Times Book Review, including reviews, essays, and interviews, showcasing the best, worst, funniest, strangest, and influential literary coverage since its beginnings in 1896"--*A Novel* Grand Central Publishing NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • A deliciously dark tale of America's dysfunctional coming years—and the timeless and tender feelings that just might bring us back from the brink. NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY The New York Times • The Washington Post • The Boston Globe • San Francisco Chronicle • The Seattle Times • O: The Oprah Magazine • Maureen Corrigan, NPR • Salon • Slate • Minneapolis Star Tribune • St. Louis Post-Dispatch • The Kansas City Star • Charlotte Observer • The Globe and Mail • Vancouver Sun • Montreal Gazette • Kirkus Reviews In the near future, America is crushed by a financial crisis and our patient Chinese creditors may just be ready to foreclose on the whole mess. Then Lenny Abramov, son of an Russian immigrant janitor and ardent fan of "printed, bound media artifacts" (aka books), meets Eunice Park, an impossibly cute Korean American woman with a major in Images and a minor in Assertiveness. Could falling in love redeem a planet falling apart?

A Novel MIT Press

The National Book Award finalist and debut novel by the bestselling author of *The Dinner Party*: "A readymade classic of the office-novel genre. . . . A truly affecting novel about work, trust, love, and loneliness." --Seattle Times No one knows us quite the same way as the men and women who sit beside us in department meetings and crowd the office refrigerator with their labeled yogurts. Every office is a family of sorts, and the ad agency Joshua Ferris brilliantly depicts in his debut novel is family at its strangest and best, coping with a business downturn in the time-honored way: through gossip, pranks, and increasingly frequent coffee breaks. With a demon's eye for the details that make life worth noticing, Joshua Ferris tells a true and funny story about survival in life's strangest environment--the one we pretend is normal five days a week. *A Novel* Random House Digital, Inc. A first-time visitor to the eastern European country of Slaka, Dr Petworth manages to give a controversial lecture, get embroiled

in the thorny thickets of sexual and domestic intrigues, fall in love and still find time to see the main tourist attractions.

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