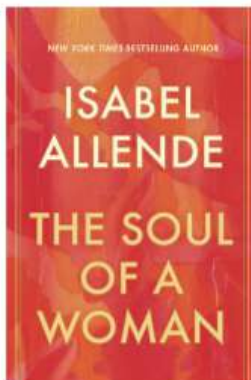


# 10 Books to Add to Your To-read List This New Year

SINCHANA SHETTY



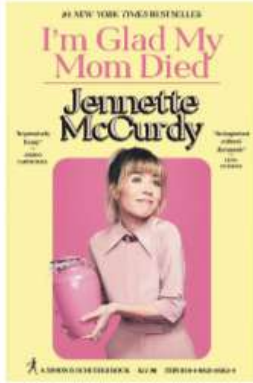
**M**uch to Eliot's dismay, the year has ended with a bang and not a whimper. With new year around the corner and all the excitement it brings about, there is bound to be times of boredom. Boredom as you wait for your food delivery or on a metro about to reach home. A perfect partner to remedy the situation, naturally, is a book. Hard bound, aural or on screen, all types of books leave with you a story worth retelling and a time well spent.

When you can tell leisure will make its way to you on an unexpected day, unpack one of these books and watch the pages consume you. With varying genres and dates of publishing going as far back as a decade, here are some recommendations for everyone to make sure a story will tag along with you into the new year.

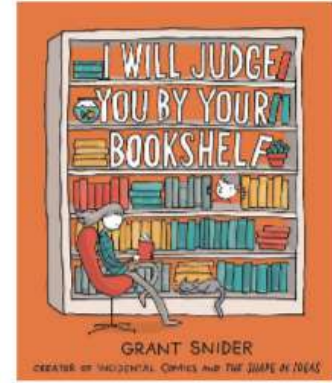
## The Soul of a Woman

Isabel Allende

**1** 'When I say that I was a feminist in kindergarten, I am not exaggerating,' begins Allende in this collection of essays. A young woman who experienced the first wave of feminism when she came of age in the late 1960s, throughout her lifetime, she has witnessed the movement's accomplishments and writes about it passionately. She has also, through a course of three marriages and a defiant life, acquired knowledge about the benefits of embracing one's sexuality, knowing when to back off from a relationship, ageing gracefully and how to be a woman unabashedly. Told with a voice that is equal parts wise and rebellious, this is an essential but quick read.



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### Before the Coffee Gets Cold

Toshikazu Kawaguchi

**2** A coffee shop in Tokyo's back alley offers its visitors a one-of-a-kind opportunity to experience time travel. Four people arrive at the café with the intention of using the service. However, going back in time comes with its own set of risks. Examining the age-old question, 'What would you alter if you could travel back in time?', the novel tells a compelling story to all enchanted by its appealing cover.

### Red, White & Royal Blue

Casey McQuiston

**3** The romantic, satirical, and upbeat *Red, White & Royal Blue* is a breath of fresh air for lovers of rom-coms worldwide. It is about the President's son and the Prince of England who fall in love amid a world of scandal. From enemies to lovers to secret romance, with tropes to nestle yourself into for comfort, this book is a much needed dose of escapism for those into LGBTQIA+ and YA fiction.

### Girls Are Coming Out of the Woods

Tishani Doshi

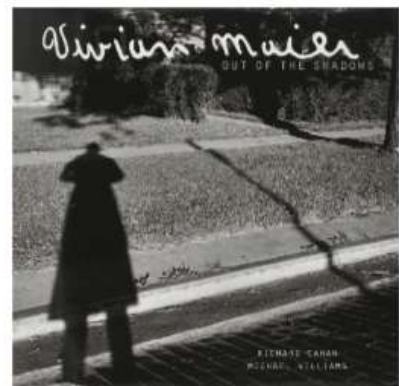
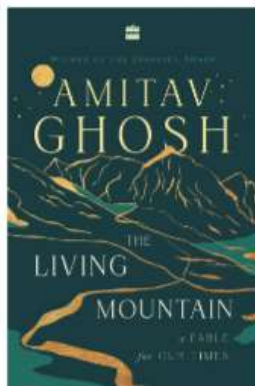
**4** The sinews of nature and empathy are entwined and reading this collection of poems by Doshi, one can easily tell it came from a place that found solace in both. With a perfect balance of all things romance to macabre, most poems have a soft flesh of beauty.

Navigating body image, identity, childhood, womanhood with a deep appreciation to the city she inhabits; this collection is a celebration of themes: love, suffering and anger.

### I'm Glad My Mom Died

Jenny McCurdy

**5** In *I'm Glad My Mom Died*, McCurdy describes how she regained control of her life after facing challenges as a former child actor, including eating disorders, addiction, and a difficult relationship with her controlling mother. Narrated with a tone laced in dark humour and refreshing honesty, it inspires readers to be resilient, self-sufficient, and appreciative of everyday life.



## I Will Judge You by Your Bookshelf

Grant Snider

**6** Building on the well-liked literary comics featured on his website, *Incidental Comics*, writer-artist Grant Snider explores bookishness in all its manifestations as well as the love of writing and reading in this humorous collection of comics. *I Will Judge You By Your Bookshelf* is an ideal read for book lovers of all ages. It is bound to leave you with a laugh and new found appreciation for reading.

## The Living Mountain

Amitav Ghosh

**7** A brand-new tale by the widely acclaimed author Amitav Ghosh, *The Living Mountain* serves as a warning about how we have consistently exploited nature causing an environmental collapse.

## This Dark Country: Women Artists, Still Life and Intimacy in the Early Twentieth Century

Rebecca Birrell

**8** Early in the 20th century, art served as a means of catharsis for female artists. But for every female artist one can recall, there is another we are unaware of as women have always had to put hold on their artistic pursuits to become mothers and wives; their works of art now dusty in attics or archives.

For those who like a deep dive into history, Rebecca Birrell investigates the mechanisms

that construct and deconstruct our lives by bringing to light this innovative blend of group biography and art critique.

## Never Let Me Go

Kazuo Ishiguro

**9** For those who love a good mystery, Ishiguro's latest book is bound to leave you wanting more. In the idyllic English boarding school of Hailsham, Kathy develops into a young woman, away from the influences of the metropolis. But she and her pals Ruth and Tommy don't fully understand what Hailsham is until they leave the secure grounds of the school.

Ishiguro expertly explores the idea of a potential future through a compelling mystery, a heartfelt love tale, and a biting warning against human arrogance.

## Vivian Maier: Out of the Shadows

Vivian Maier, Richard Cahan and Michael Williams

**10** One of the masters of street photography, this book is the first attempt to contextualise Vivian Maier's photographs to paint a compelling portrait of the artist. The photographs in the book are filled with compassion, beauty and life. Whether you'd like to sift through pages admiring the photographs or carefully analyse them, this book will add perspective to your life through pictures and most importantly, understanding the woman behind the lens. ■