

Fiction January 2009

Some of these novels are for reluctant readers.

| Title | Author | Annotation |
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| Darkmans | Barker, Nicola | 2007 Man Booker Prize Finalist A large cast of confused characters blunder their way haphazardly through a few chaotic days in the Kent town of Ashford. |
| Through Black Spruce | Boyden, Joseph | Winner of the 2008 Scotiabank Giller Prize When beautiful Suzanne Bird disappears, her sister Annie, a loner and hunter, is compelled to search for her, leaving behind their uncle Will, a man haunted by loss. While Annie travels from Toronto to New York, from modelling studios to A-list parties, Will encounters dire troubles at home. Both eventually come to painful discoveries about the inescapable ties of family. |
| Zee's Way | Butcher, Kristin | Zee is torn between making a statement with graffiti and making art. |
| Thunderbowl | Choyce, Lesley | Who needs school when you're going to be a rock star? |
| Barnacle Love | De Sa, Anthony | Shortlisted for the 2008 Scotiabank Giller Prize Anthony De Sa captures, in stories brimming with life, the innocent dreams and bitter disappointments of the immigrant experience. |
| The Secret Between Us | Delinsky, Barbara | Shortlisted for the 2007 Giller Prize Deborah Monroe and her daughter, Grace, are driving home from a party when their car hits a man running in the dark. Grace was at the wheel, but Deborah sends her home before the police arrive, determined to shoulder the blame for the accident. Her decision then turns into a deception that takes on a life of its own and threatens the special bond between mother and daughter. |

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| Bifocal | Ellis, Deborah | When a Muslim boy is arrested at a high school on suspicion of terrorist affiliations, growing racial tensions divide the student population. |
| Good to a Fault | Endicott, Marina | 2008 Giller Prize Shortlist Absorbed in her own failings, Clara Purdy crashes her life into a sharp left turn, taking the young family in the other car along with her. When bruises on the mother, Lorraine, prove to be late-stage cancer, Clara against all habit and comfort moves the three children and their terrible grandmother into her own house. |
| World Without End | Follett, Ken | In the town of Kingsbridge, a Gothic cathedral and the priory are at the center of a web of love and hate, greed and pride, ambition and revenge. Proponents of the old ways fiercely battle those with progressive minds, as the Black Death captures the city. |
| The Cellist of Sarajevo | Galloway, Steven | This is a story of three people trying to survive in a city under siege, and of a sorrowing cellist who plays undaunted in their midst. |
| Sea of Poppies | Ghosh, Amitar | 2008 Man Booker Prize Finalist At the heart of this epic saga, set just before the Opium Wars, is an old slave ship, The Ibis. Its destiny is a tumultuous voyage across the Indian Ocean, its crew a motley array of sailors and stowaways, coolies and convicts. In a time of colonial upheaval, fate has thrown together a truly diverse cast of Indians and Westerners. As their old family ties are washed away, they come to view themselves as jahaj-bhais, or ship-brothers, and an unlikely dynasty is born which spans continents, races, and generations. |
| Saint Iggy | Going, K.L. | Iggy Corso, who lives in city public housing, is caught physically and spiritually between good and bad when he is kicked out of high school, goes searching for his missing mother, and causes his friend to get involved with the same dangerous drug dealer |

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| | | who deals to his parents |
| Something Girl | Goobie, Beth | Will Sophie speak up about the abuse at home? |
| Helpless | Gowdy, Barbara | Celia is the single mother of an exceptionally beautiful child: nine-year-old Rachel. All too aware of the precarious balance of the life she has built for the two of them, Celia worries about her daughter's longing for the father she has never met. When Rachel disappears one night during a blackout, Celia is stricken with guilt and terror. But her desperation is only half the story as Ron, the man who has taken Rachel, struggles with feelings that are at once tender, misguided and chillingly fixated. |
| Dead-End Job | Grant, Vicki | When it turns out that the boy Frances has met at her job working the nightshift is a stalker, she realizes she may be in serious danger. |
| Cockroach | Hage, Rawi | The novel takes place during one month of a bitterly cold winter in Montreal's restless immigrant community, where a self-described "thief" has just tried but failed to commit suicide by hanging himself from a tree in a local park. Rescued against his will, the narrator is obliged to attend sessions with a well-intentioned but naïve therapist. This sets the story in motion, leading us back to the narrator's violent childhood in a war-torn country, forward into his current life in the smoky émigré cafés where everyone has a tale, and out into the frozen night-time streets of Montreal, where the thief survives on the edge, imagining himself to be a cockroach invading the lives of the privileged, but willfully blind, citizens who surround him. |
| The Northern Clemency | Hensher, Philip | 2008 Man Booker Prize Finalist In 1974, the Sellers family is transplanted from London to Sheffield in northern England. On the day they move in, the Glover household across |

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| | | the street is in upheaval: convinced that his wife is having an affair, Malcolm Glover has suddenly disappeared. The reverberations of this rupture will echo through the years to come as the connection between the families deepens. But it will be the particular crises of ten-year-old Tim Glover-set off by two seemingly inconsequential but ultimately indelible acts of cruelty-that will erupt, full-blown, two decades later. |
| Sister Slam and the Poetic Motormouth Road | High, Linda Oatman | In this novel told in slam verse, best friends and aspiring poets Laura and Twig embark on a road trip after graduating from high school, from Pennsylvania to New York City, to compete at slam poetry events. |
| Identical | Hopkins, Ellen | Sixteen-year-old identical twin daughters of a district court judge and a candidate for the United States House of Representatives, Kaeleigh and Raeanne Gardella desperately struggle with secrets that have already torn them and their family apart The author uses free verse to write her story. |
| Coventry | Humphreys, Helen | On the evening of November 14, 1940, Harriet stands on the roof of the cathedral in the British town of Coventry and marvels at the magnificence of frost glittering beneath a full moon. But it is a bomber's moon. The Germans are coming to unleash destruction. For Harriet, Jeremy, the young man who shares her duties as a firewatcher, and his free-spirited mother, Maeve, this single night will resonate for the rest of their lives. |
| Red Dog Red Dog | Lane, Patrick | Set in the 1950's, this novel centers on Eddy and Tom Stark, two brothers struggling with their hardscrabble inheritance in the Okanagan Valley. |
| Exit Point | Langston, Laura | Sixteen-year-old Logan is dead, but he realizes he still has unfinished business. |

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| The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo | Larsson, Stieg | Forty years ago, Harriet Vanger disappeared off the secluded island owned and inhabited by the powerful Vanger family. There was no corpse, no witnesses, no evidence. But her uncle, Henrik, is convinced that she was murdered by someone from her own deeply dysfunctional family. Disgraced journalist Mikael Blomkvist is hired to investigate, but he quickly finds himself in over his head. He hires a competent assistant: the gifted and conscience-free computer specialist Lisbeth Salander, and the two unravel a dark and appalling family history. But the Vangers are a secretive clan, and Blomkvist and Salander are about to find out just how far they are prepared to go to protect themselves. |
| A Most Wanted Man | Le Carre, John | Two Turkish Muslims are living in Hamburg when they kindly offer shelter to a desperate homeless man named Issa. Their act of kindness soon turns into a full-on red alert in three different countries when it is revealed that Issa is in fact a wanted terrorist. Innocent people are soon pulled into a complicated maze of spies and government conspiracies, raising many questions about the nature of morality and what is right or true. |
| Down | McClintock, Norah | After serving time for assault, Remy must learn to control his anger. |
| Marked | McClintock, Norah | When Colin accepts a summer job, he doesn't expect to become a criminal suspect. |
| Dead Silence | McClintock, Norah | After Mike skips out on meeting his friend Sal, he is stunned to find out that Sal has been stabbed to death near his high school. Even though there were lots of kids nearby, nobody will come forward to say what they really saw. So Mike starts asking some questions of his own and finds out that Sal was hanging around a girl who recently left a gang. Are they responsible for killing Sal? How can |

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| | | Mike find out the truth when nobody will talk? |
| Last Chance | McClintock, Norah | Robyn had planned to spend August soaking up the sun on a dock. Instead, she finds herself entering data at an animal shelter. It seems like things can't get worse, until she runs into Nick D'Angelo, a boy she'd hoped never to see again. And she's not surprised to learn that he's part of the shelter's young offenders program. But when he's arrested again, Robyn finds herself doubting his guilt. |
| Password: Murder | McClintock, Norah | Harley's dad was killed in a car crash - a car Harley was driving. But lately, Harley has been having doubts. Is he out of his mind to think that maybe, just maybe, his dad's death wasn't all his fault? |
| Cut | McCormick, Patricia | Devastated by the fact that her brother nearly died while under her care, a teenager named Callie begins cutting herself to deal with her pain. Now in a psychiatric hospital, Callie refuses to speak but senses a kinship with the other female patients in her ward. When a serious cutting incident frightens her, Callie begins to seek the help she needs. |
| New Moon | Meyer, Stephenie | Bella and Edward find themselves facing new obstacles, including a devastating separation, the mysterious appearance of dangerous wolves roaming the forest in Forks, a terrifying threat of revenge from a female vampire and a deliciously sinister encounter with Italy's reigning royal family of vampires, the Volturi. |
| Breaking Dawn | Meyer, Stephenie | In the fourth and final book in the #1 bestselling teen vampire Twilight Saga, questions will be answered and the fate of Bella and Edward will be revealed. |
| Eclipse | Meyer, Stephenie | Bella must choose between her friendship with Jacob, a werewolf, and her relationship with Edward, a vampire, but when Seattle is ravaged by a mysterious string of killings, the three of them need to decide whether |

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| | | their personal lives are more important than the well-being of an entire city. |
| Exposure | Murdoch, Patricia | Julie is presented with a perfect opportunity to get back at her tormentor. |
| Exit Here | Myers, Jason | Travis is back from college for the summer, and he's just starting to settle in to the usual pattern at home: drinking, drugging, watching porn, and hooking up. But Travis isn't settling in like he used to; something isn't right. Maybe it's that deadly debauch in Hawaii, the memories of which Travis can't quite shake. Maybe it's Laura, Travis's ex, who reappears on the scene after a messy breakup and seems to want to get together -- or not. Or maybe it's his suddenly sensing how empty and messed up his life is, and wanting out. But once you're at the party, it's tough to leave... |
| Lullabies for Little Criminals | O'Neill, Heather | Finalist for the 2007 Governor General's Award At thirteen, Baby vacillates between childhood comforts and adult temptation: still young enough to drag her dolls around in a vinyl suitcase yet old enough to know more than she should about urban cruelties. Motherless, she lives with her father, Jules, who takes better care of his heroin habit than he does of his daughter. Her blossoming beauty has captured the attention of a charismatic and dangerous local pimp who runs an army of sad, slavishly devoted girls-a volatile situation even the normally oblivious Jules cannot ignore. And when an escape disguised as betrayal threatens to crush Baby's spirit, she will ultimately realize that the power of salvation rests in her hands alone. |
| Yellow Line | Olsen, Sylvia | The line separating Native from White begins to blur as Vince finds himself falling for a First Nations girl. |
| Home Invasion | Polak, Monique | While a home invader terrorizes the city, Josh finds himself sneaking into |

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| | | other people's houses. |
| The Origin of the Species | Ricci, Nino | Winner of the 2008 Governor General's Award Montreal, in the shallow, self-absorbed 1980s, tells the story of Alex, a grad student transfixed by Darwinian ideas and by how those theories resonate with his own life and moral choices. |
| The Lost Highway | Richards, David Adams | When down-and-out Alex Chapman learns from the owner of the local service station, Burton Tucker, that his despotic great uncle, Jim Chapman, has just won thirteen million dollars, Alex decides that he cannot under any circumstances allow his bitter adversary to collect the money |
| Responsible | Ryan, Darlene | In a new school, Kevin must choose between falling in with a rough crowd or doing the right thing. |
| Requiem for a Dream | Selby, Hubert | Two young hoods, Harry and Tyrone, and a girlfriend fantasize about scoring a pound of uncut heroin and getting rich. But their habit gets the better of them, consumes them and destroys their dreams. |
| The Great Karoo | Stenson, Fred | Governor General's Literary Awards Finalist 2008 Globe 100 Best Book, 2008 Shortlisted for The Commonwealth Writers' Prize 2009 In early 1900, a young cowboy from Alberta's Chief Mountain country joins the Canadian Mounted Rifles and sets out to defend British Empire interests in South Africa. The war introduces them to selves they did not know they contained. |
| The System of the World | Stephenson, Neal | In the wake of a power struggle between the throne-seeking Tories and Whigs in early eighteenth-century England, Daniel Waterhouse teams up with friend Isaac Newton to hunt down a shadowy group headed by counterfeiter Jack the Coiner, who uses time bombs to kill Natural Philosophers. |

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| The Confusion | Stephenson, Neal | The intricately plotted parallel adventures of Eliza, jumped-up countess and spy, and Jack Shaftoe, the so-called Vagabond King, continue in this second volume of The Baroque Cycle, set in the late 17th-century. Eliza schemes at the court in Versailles while attempting to preserve both her life and that of her child, while Jack escapes from galley slavery in Algiers and goes in search of pirate gold. |
| Big Guy | Stevenson, Robin | Derek thinks that he might be falling in love for the first time ever. The problem is, he hasn't been entirely honest with his online boyfriend. |
| Boys in the Trees | Swan, Mary | Newcomers in their rural home, William Heath, his wife, and his two daughters appear to be the picture of a devoted family, until accusations of embezzlement prompt William to commit a terrible crime, leaving those around him struggling to reconcile his actions with their preconceived perceptions. |
| The Flying Troutmans | Toews, Miriam | Hattie returns home to Canada after receiving an emergency phone call from her niece. Turns out, Hattie's sister, Min, is back in the psych ward, and her kids, 11-year-old Thebes and 15-year-old Logan, are fending for themselves. Thus the quirky trio-purple-haired, wise-beyond-her-years Thebes, recently expelled brother Logan and overwhelmed Hattie-embark on a road trip to the States to find the kids' long-missing father. |
| The Darwin Expedition | Tullson, Diane | Following an accident on a remote logging road, Liam and Tej must call on all their resources to survive the elements and escape the bear that is following them. |
| The Girl with the Botticelli Face | Valgardson, W.D. | The story of a man's search for a young woman, a waitress at his favourite cafe, who suddenly goes missing. Tormented by the dissolution of his marriage and by his childhood, Bob's own breakdown and therapy parallel his detective mission |

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| | | as he is driven to find the girl with the Botticelli face - or to learn of her fate. His search is not an easy one, and it takes him into situations and encounters with people who show him a side of life and love from which he had shut himself off. |
| Red Dust | Valgardson, W.D. | Contents: Beyond normal requirements - Skald - December bargaining - A Place of one's own - Trees - Celebration - . |
| Grind | Walters, Eric | When Wally is badly injured skateboarding, Phillip must decide what is more important---skating or making things right with his friends. |
| Overdrive | Walters, Eric | When Jake is involved in a street racing accident, he struggles to do the right thing. |
| Stuffed | Walters, Eric | Ian decides to take a stand against a fast-food multinational. |
| In her Shoes | Weiner, Jennifer | Twenty-eight-year-old Maggie Feller, who goes from job to job on the fringes of show business, and her older sister Rose, a lawyer, have had no contact with their grandmother, Ella, since their mother's death years ago, but all three need to find each other to reach happiness. |
| October | Wright, Richard B. | While visiting his gravely ill daughter in England, James Hillyer encounters by chance Gabriel Fontaine, whom he met in his youth while on a holiday in Gaspe. At the time, the boys had competed for the love of a French-Canadian girl from the village. Now, over six decades later and faced with the terrible possibility that he could outlive his own daughter, James must respond to Gabriel's surprising request for company on a final, unthinkable journey. |
| Effigy | York, Alissa | Scotiabank Giller Prize finalist for 2007 Inspired by the real events of the Mountain Meadows Massacre in 1857, Alissa York blends fact with fiction in a haunting story of a family separated by secrets and united by faith. Child bride, Dorrie, the |

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| | | <p>youngest of four wives of a Mormon rancher and hunter, has learned the art of taxidermy. She uses this skill for his hunting trophies until one day he brings home a family of wolves for her to mount. For the first time in her short life she struggles with her craft, dreaming each night of crows and strange scenes of violence. The new hand, Bendy Drown, is the only one to see her dilemma and to offer her help, a dangerous game in a Mormon household. Outside, a lone wolf prowls the grounds looking for his lost pack, and his nighttime searching will unearth the tensions and secrets of this complicated and conflicted family.</p> |
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