

## May 2022 Staff Picks

**Author: Jennifer Murphy**    **Title: Scarlet in Blue**

A beautiful and gripping psychological novel about a mother and daughter who, after a lifetime on the run from a dark and dangerous past, land in a small Michigan town that may hold the key to ending their fugitive lifestyle. Told through the alternating voices of Blue, Scarlet, and Henry, this is a page-turning story about the ramifications of past trauma, the way art can hold our lives together, and, most of all, the enduring bond between mother and child.

**Author: Liz Curtis Higgins**    **Title: My Heart's in the Lowlands**

This book makes me want to start planning a trip! Liz Curtis Higgins is well-known for her historical Christian fiction books set in Scotland. In this non-fiction book Liz takes us on a 10-day journey with her around the countryside of Galloway visiting idyllic country villages, remote castles and churches, and even some of the places she used as settings in her fictional series.

**Author: Kristin Hannah**    **Title: The Four Winds**

Elsa believes what her family tells her—that she is weak because she suffered scarlet fever as a child. Elsa, however, soon proves her strength by helping her family survive during the worst and bleakest time in American history, the dust bowl years. Even though Elsa loses everything she owns twice and her husband, Rafe, leaves her, the story never becomes depressing or maudlin. She fiercely loves her children, even if the oldest one, Loreda, blames her for her father's desertion. Elsa rallies her children and takes them to California. However, they face resentment from Californians and exhausting migrant work. This was a beautiful tale about family, perseverance, and what it means to survive.

**Author: Chan, Jessamine**    **Title: The School for Good Mothers**

Captivating, terrifying, and thought-provoking. In Chan's dystopian novel, "bad" mothers, women who exhibit bad parenting skills, are sent to rehabilitation centers. Some parents, like Frida Liu, have only minor infractions yet they are still sent.

**Author: Hirahara, Naomi**    **Title: Clark and Division**

Winner of the Mary Higgins Clark award and Lefty for Best Historical Fiction. After being released from Manzanar, a concentration camp for Japanese Americans, the Itos hope to go to Chicago where Rose, their oldest daughter has already settled. On the eve of reuniting with Rose, the Itos learn Rose has died. Aki, Rose's younger sister, does not believe officials who said her sister's death was a suicide. Determined to find the truth, Aki leads her own investigation.

**Author: Zhang, Jenny Tinghui    Title: Four Treasures of the Sky**

Kidnapped and taken to America as a young girl, Daiyu must continually reinvent herself to survive. Even though she experiences anti-Chinese sentiment in the American West, Daiyu ultimately forges her own path.

**Author: Livesey, Margot    Title: The Boy in the Field**

The novel opens with an unusual discovery—a boy has been wounded and left for dead in a field. Three teenagers comes across his body by accident when they are out walking. The discovery has a ripple effect in the local community, altering every life that intersects with his. This is a rich, layered novel that should not be missed.

**Author: Hepworth, Sally    Title: The Good Sister**

Fraternal twin sisters, Fern and Rose, look nothing alike yet they are devoted to each other. Rose takes care of Fern whose autism spectrum disorder often leads to sensory overload. The two of them have had a difficult childhood. They emerge mostly unscathed except for that one time Fern did a horrible thing during a camping trip. At least, that is what Fern has always believed.

As fully grown adults, both now have jobs—Fern works in a library and Rose has a corporate job, yet they are curiously dependent on one another. When Fern learns that Rose and her husband cannot conceive a child, Fern decides to give one to Rose. She decides to have a baby with a stranger (in this case Wally) in order to pay Rose back. While her intentions are pure, Fern does not realize her thinking is illogical. Since this is a Hepworth novel, there is more going on here than meets the eye. This a taut psychological novel about the close bond sisters share and the sacrifices they are willing to make for each other. *The Good Sister* won the 2021 Adult Crime Novel Davitt Award.