

# Short and Sweet



# Book Club

## Brookfield Public Library

2021 Calendar

Books are available at the Circulation Desk one month before the meeting date.

Please see bookmark insert each month for that title's selected stories.

### NOTE:

**On the date of each meeting, please check the sign in the lobby for meeting location.**

**Thursday, June 10, 2021**

**1:00pm**

*Fragile Things*

Neil Gaiman

This collection of short fictions and wonder ranges from a tale of zombies to a series of meditations inspired by singer Tori Amos's album, *Strange Little Girls*. As in his other books, there are fantastical elements. Gaiman follows no overarching theme, but that is what makes these stories charming, at times creepy, and good fun. They read like dreams and meditations, with a stream-of-consciousness quality to their presentation. Gaiman also explains some of the inspiration behind the stories to help put them in perspective. (*Library Journal*)

**Thursday, July 8, 2021**

**1:00pm**

*Where the Light Falls*

Nancy Hale

Hale's early stories have coming-out parties, jazz orchestras, Ivy League athletics, fast driving in fancy cars. Yet they paint quietly acid pictures of Southern, male dominance masking fragility, and ethnic tensions in summer communities. Hale acknowledged women's ambivalence about having children and the potential oppressiveness of marriage. Hale's prose is elegant without calling attention to itself, like the well-cut dresses one is sure her female characters wear. (*Kirkus Review*)

**Thursday, August 12, 2021**

**1:00pm**

*The Bus Driver Who Wanted To Be God*

Etgar Keret

Brief, intense, painfully funny, and shockingly honest, Keret's stories are snapshots that illuminate with intelligence and wit the hidden truths of life. Hilarity and anguish are the twin pillars of his work. Keret covers a remarkable emotional and narrative terrain. These wildly inventive, uniquely humane stories are for fans of transforming, brilliant fiction. (Riverhead Books)

**Thursday, September 9, 2021**

**1:00pm**

*The Boat*

Nam Le

From a Colombian slum to the streets of Tehran, seven characters in seven stories struggle with very particular Swords of Damocles in Le's accomplished debut. The story's ironies are masterfully controlled by Le, and reverberate through the rest of this peripatetic collection. Taken together, the stories cover a vast geographic territory and are filled with exquisitely painful and raw moments of revelation, captured in an economical style as deft as it is sure. (*Publishers Weekly*)

**Thursday, October 14, 2021**

**1:00pm**

*We Love Anderson Cooper*

R.L. Maizes

Maizes depicts characters who feel ostracized from their peers under an array of circumstances in her delightfully eclectic collection. She excels in humanizing the characters through their occasionally self-destructive flaws. United under the loose common theme of isolation, the stories meld together nicely, giving the collection a satisfying cumulative feel. Maizes's direct manner of storytelling and her imperfect yet unmistakably human characters are sure to win over readers. (*Publishers Weekly*)

**Thursday, November 11, 2021**                      **1:00pm**

*After the Quake*

Haruki Murakami

Murakami's haunting short stories were born in the aftermath of the terrible Kobe earthquake of 1995, which continues to preoccupy and concern this keen and poetic writer. Spare yet richly mysterious and emotionally prismatic, these unpredictable tales explore the subtle ways the earthquake affected those who live far from its epicenter yet who are nonetheless shaken to their very core. Murakami magically links the mythical past, when animals spoke to humans and dreams mattered, to today's anxious world, where, tattooed by the fitful light of televisions emitting images of disaster, people stand on ever-shifting ground and valiantly offer a hand, and their love, to one another. (*Booklist*)

**Thursday, December 9, 2021**                      **1:00pm**

*Maggie Brown & Others*

Peter Orner

The 44 concise and stinging tales simmering here, along with a stunningly piquant novella, express a full spectrum of caustic observations, nuanced emotions, and life-warping predicaments. Set in California, Chicago, upstate New York, and shabby Fall River, Massachusetts, Orner's poignant and hilarious stories feature fractious Jewish families, angry teens, marriages moribund and vital, estranged friends, and outright enemies. Each milieu reflects daunting social biases, while each of Orner's wise-cracking, cynical, brainy, secretive, yearning, and combative characters vividly embodies the grating contradictions and surprising depths of human nature. (*Booklist*)

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