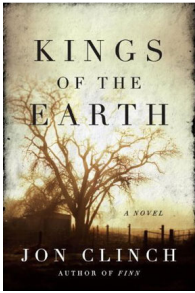


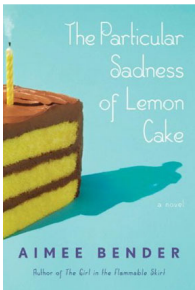
## Oprah's 2010 Summer Reading List



### **Kings of the Earth**

By Jon Clinch 416 pages; Random House

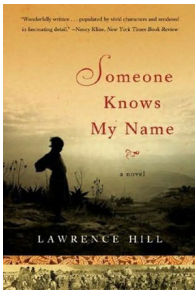
In his masterful and compassionate new novel Clinch borrows from a true-life case of possible fratricide in 1990. Three elderly, semiliterate brothers live in squalor on a ramshackle dairy farm in central New York state. They barely wash, their coveralls are splattered in cow manure, and their tiny house is a fetid mess. Strangest of all, they share a bed—and on a summer night one dies from what the local medical examiner calls strangulation. Through evocative descriptions of the rural landscape—"a countryside full of that same old homegrown desolation"—and by imbuing these odd men with a gentle nobility and an "antique strangeness," Clinch has created a haunting, suspenseful story.



### **The Particular Sadness of Lemon Cake**

By Aimee Bender 304 pages; Doubleday

At age 9, Rose Edelstein discovers she can taste feelings in food—lonely pie, adulterous roast beef, resentment soup—whatever angst or elation the cook might have experienced while preparing the meal. Weird for any kid, yes. But when a family like the Edelsteins is serving up its own wacky stew of alienation and contradiction—from the taciturn father, who "always seemed a little like a guest," to the misanthropic brother, a physics prodigy with KEEP OUT posted (in 17 languages) on his bedroom door—having the ability to sense the dissonance between emotion and behavior can be especially painful. Voracious for human connection, Rose comes of age while unraveling family secrets as strangely lucid as they are nightmarish.

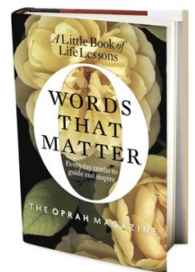


### **Someone Knows My Name**

By Lawrence Hill 512 pages; Norton

Aminata Diallo is abducted from her West African home at age 11, forced to walk in a "coffle," a line of slaves who are sold off one by one. Aminata is anything but meek, however, and her fearlessness is both a liability and an asset. When she speaks out, she is sometimes punished or raped, but that same strong personality wins her friends and protectors. That she is a skilled "baby catcher," having learned midwifery from her mother back home, also increases her usefulness and status.

This is a gritty, at times almost too detailed, tale—after page upon page describing abuse and cruelty, a reader might almost become inured to Aminata's suffering. Still, she is an admirable heroine, and Hill's depiction of her journey to freedom is a powerful tale of pride and perseverance.

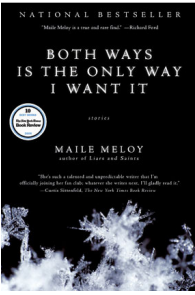


### **Words That Matter**

176 pages; HarperStudio

"What you risk reveals what you value," declares the novelist Jeanette Winterson. "A woman cannot directly choose her circumstances, but she can choose her thoughts, and so indirectly, yet surely, shape her circumstance. ... As a woman thinketh in her heart, so is she," said author Dorothy Hult. "Can one be spiritual without religious faith? One can. All one needs is to be open to someone else's concerns, fears, and hopes, and to make him or her feel less alone," suggests the Nobelist Elie Wiesel. These are just a few of the wise thoughts in Words That Matter, a book of quotations full of everyday truths and surprising insights.

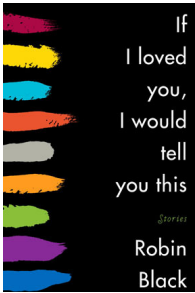
## Oprah's 2010 Summer Reading List



### **Both Ways Is the Only Way I Want It**

By Maile Meloy 240 pages; Riverhead

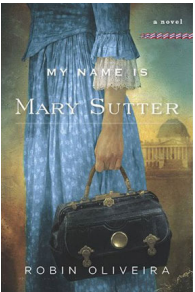
Maile Meloy's *Both Ways Is the Only Way I Want It* reads like a Bruce Springsteen album sounds: raw with a tender wildness and loaded with adolescent ache. The nuanced depictions of small-town life in some of these stories ("He could have told her that her father was the first person he had ever seen falling down drunk, but that seemed unfriendly") make for a rich tableau of lovelorn cowboys, provincial lawyers, and renegade women. Don't miss this sleeper hit of 2009, due out in paperback this month.



### **If I Loved You, I Would Tell You This**

By Robin Black 288 pages; Random House

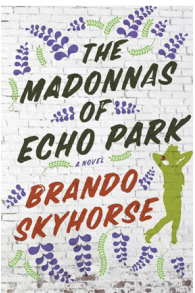
This book is not a fast read. Rather, it offers the kind of storytelling that's so deft, so understated, and so compelling that you have to slow down to savor each vignette. Poetics aside, Black's characters are conventional, like people we know—the soccer mom, the teenage daughter, the guy next door—but their tales vibrate with aberrant energy. Fans of *Mary Gaitskill*, *Amy Bloom*, and *Miranda July* will feel like they've found gold in a river when they discover Robin Black; she's a nervy new writer to watch.



### **My Name Is Mary Sutter**

By Robin Oliveira 384 pages; Viking

The title of Robin Oliveira's debut historical novel perfectly evokes its eponymous heroine's style: clear, determined, and, unlike most women of the Civil War era, unapologetically direct. Expected, at most, to follow her mother into local midwifery, Mary has the nerve to want to be a "real" doctor. ("No woman is a surgeon," chides even her admiring twin sister, Jenny.) When Mary's beloved, Thomas, devastates her by choosing the more conventional Jenny as his wife, Mary sets out for Washington, D.C.; perhaps there she can heal herself as well as those wounded in war. Her heartbreak may have given her compassion equal to her excellent medical skills—both of which endear her to two male surgeons along the way—but Mary (who's nothing if not plucky) struggles mightily to achieve her dream.

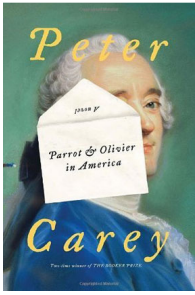


### **The Madonnas of Echo Park**

By Brando Skyhorse 199 pages; Free Press

Culture, identity, and politics are just a few of the threads masterfully woven through the partly autobiographical novel of linked stories that is *The Madonnas of Echo Park*. Author Brando Skyhorse—so named because his mother revered the famous actor—grew up in the largely Mexican-American L.A. neighborhood of the title, which explains his understanding of its residents: among them a gang member, a day laborer, and a little girl tragically in the wrong place at the wrong time. Far from stock, Skyhorse's characters also include an iconoclastic bus driver who considers himself more American than Mexican and rails against newcomers, illegal or no, and a maid who has one complex relationship with her gringa employer.

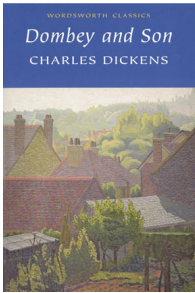
## Oprah's 2010 Summer Reading List



### **Parrot & Olivier in America**

By Peter Carey 400 pages; Knopf

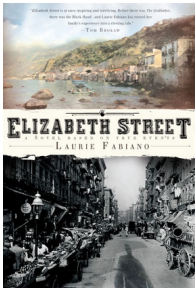
Thin-skinned, myopic Olivier de Garmont is the scion of an aristocratic family terrorized (and mortified) by the French Revolution and its "great lava flow of democracy." Earthy, wily, artistic Parrot (a.k.a. John Larrit) is the son of an itinerant English printer who weaned him on Rousseau and the fugitive hope of human equality. Set in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Peter Carey's gorgeously entertaining and moving new novel takes this mismatched pair to that bold young republic.



### **Dombey and Son**

By Charles Dickens 1040 pages; Wordsworth Classics

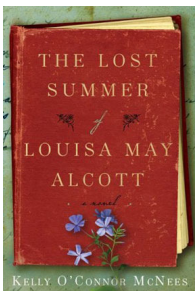
This hidden gem that even Dickens fans may have missed, combines a rollicking, biting sense of humor with nuanced psychological insights that feel surprisingly modern in their attitudes toward women. The title itself is an ironic joke: Successful businessman Paul Dombey neglects and mistreats his daughter, Florence, the true "son" of the title, until both his business and their relationship are nearly ruined. If Florence is a typical 19th-century heroine, a little too sweetly perfect to be believed, strong women abound in these pages. The linchpin is Mr. Dombey's second wife, Edith, trapped in marriage to a man she despises; she is a riveting, tragic figure in whom generosity combines with pride, avarice with integrity, self-awareness with intransigence. She may have to depend on men financially, but she's their equal for good or ill, and she knows it.



### **Elizabeth Street**

By Laurie Fabiano 438 pages; Amazon Encore

In her debut novel based on her family's history, Laurie Fabiano examines the lives of Italian immigrants who struggled to survive in the tenements of New York City in the early 1900s. Giovanna is mute when she embarks for America, her voice having disappeared as news of her husband's death arrived. But once she sees land several months later, she can speak: "[Her voice] wasn't loud; it was strong and deep as if it had been buried...." Determined not to become another immigrant broken by poverty and prejudice, Giovanna immerses herself in the shadowy world of extortion and murder to fight the Black Hand, a precursor to the Mafia, and save her family. Over almost 20 years and more than 400 pages, we watch her naïveté turn to wisdom in a place where the reality of daily survival quickly overshadows even the idea of prosperity.

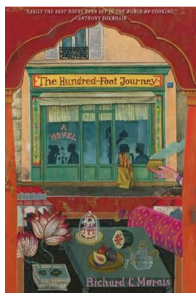


### **The Lost Summer of Louisa May Alcott**

By Kelly O'Connor McNees 352 pages; Amy Einhorn Books

Anyone growing tired of the Jane Austen re-dos (and who isn't, at least just a little?) might take succor in this novel devised from the Little Women author's journals. It mixes truth (Alcott's lifelong fascination with Walt Whitman) with imagination (a fictional suitor) to produce a plausible love story about one of the most fiercely independent women of any time.

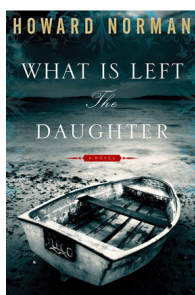
## Oprah's 2010 Summer Reading List



### **The Hundred-Foot Journey**

By Richard C. Morais 256 pages; Scribner

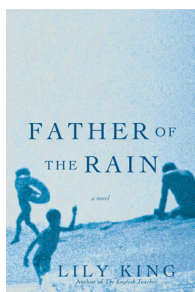
"My first sensation of life was the smell of machli ka salan, a spicy fish curry, rising through the floorboards," recalls Hassan Haji, in Richard C. Morais' *The Hundred-Foot Journey*, a mouthwatering debut novel of colliding cultures and cuisines. Cooking has always sent Hassan into a "magic trance," but when his family's grand Bombay restaurant burns to the ground, they go eating across Europe: A "platto di Mussolini" is a plate of mussels, not the dictator on a dish, Hassan has to explain to a waiter in Tuscany. The family finally opens Maison Mumbai in a small French mountain town and incurs the wrath of the imperious chef across the street, in this hilarious romp through life, love, and the workings of a French kitchen.



### **What Is Left the Daughter**

By Howard Norman 256 pages; Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

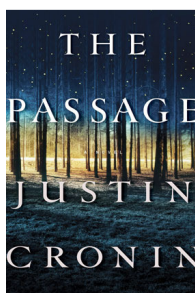
Fans of Howard Norman's *The Bird Artist* will recognize the venue and the oddball characters in the author's beautiful new novel, *What Is Left the Daughter*. In isolated Nova Scotia during WWII, an earnest, if dim, 17-year-old named Wyatt Hillyer is orphaned when both his parents commit suicide over their love for the same woman. Taken in by his uncle in nearby, optimistically named Middle Economy, Wyatt is apprenticed to the family toboggan business, and trying to win the affections of his headstrong cousin, Tilda, who, alas, is betrothed to another. This is an old story of unrequited love, but thanks to the delightfully weird details Norman turns a tiny town into an entire world in which even the most heinous sins can—almost—be forgiven.



### **Father of the Rain**

By Lily King 384 pages; Atlantic

Lily King's luminous novel centers on a child's blinding hunger for a parent's affection. King makes this well-worn theme seem fresh with her vividly drawn characters—especially Daley's father, Gardiner, a narcissistic alcoholic with an ugly temper and a magnetic charm—and a clear eye for the details of their singularly messed-up relationships. Set in the affluent East Coast seaside town where Gardiner was raised, in a world of Wasp privilege he takes for granted, the novel covers three decades starting in the mid-'70s. Daley's mother leaves Gardiner, but Daley can't give up hoping he'll change. "You want the daddy you never got," her boyfriend says. Obvious? Maybe to us. The uplifting ending comes as Daley finally sees for herself what's been clear all along. —

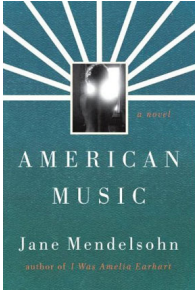


### **The Passage**

By Justin Cronin 784 pages; Ballantine

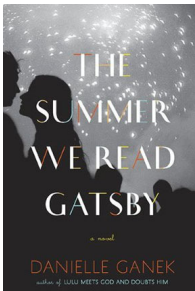
Part apocalyptic tale, part allegory, and all great storytelling, this genre-whirling novel includes such characters as a PTSD-scarred African nun, a female warrior with a heart of titanium, and a villain who threatens victims through their dreams. The novel begins with a desperate woman abandoning her little girl, Amy, at a convent. Amy winds up in the care of an FBI agent named Wolgast and the pair must flee the "virals"—humans turned vampires during a military experiment gone awry. For all the semihuman characters and disastrous military subterfuge, *The Passage* is ultimately a very long novel about a young woman's journey to understanding herself. Let others quibble over whether *The Passage* is thriller or literature; we see it as vital, tender, and compelling.

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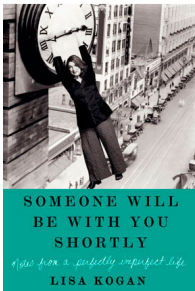
### American Music

By Jane Mendelsohn 256 pages; Knopf  
In 2005 we meet Honor, a young rehabilitation therapist, and Milo, a 24-year-old war veteran who's paralyzed physically and emotionally. When Honor massages Milo, they both inexplicably begin seeing flashes of imaginary people and events: "The first time it had happened she was touching his ankle when there arose in her mind the image of a woman standing underwater in a shaft of light, her dark hair wafting weightlessly like ink." More characters mysteriously emerge: a jazz lover choosing between two women; a sultan's concubine falling for her guard. Honor's touch, meant to heal Milo, frees the stories locked within him. As the two try to understand these images, they discover that what we keep inside has the power to break us—but also to break us open.



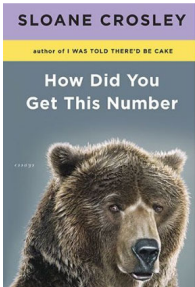
### The Summer We Read Gatsby

By Danielle Ganek 304 pages; Viking  
A sophisticated comedy of manners about a wealthy family torn apart and brought together by the contents of a will. A bit over-the-top and rarified—as befits both the title reference and the author's history. Ganek wrote about the chi-chi New York arts scene in *Lulu Meets God and Doubts Him*.



### Someone Will Be with You Shortly: Notes from a Perfectly Imperfect Life

By Lisa Kogan 208 pages; HarperStudio  
Kogan riffs on motherhood, politics, relationships, and life itself are what we wish we'd said, only sharper and funnier. ("Johannes and I are not married in the eyes of the law," she writes about her daughter's father, who lives in Switzerland, "[but] we have privately vowed to irritate each other for as long as we both shall live.") This is good stuff.



### How Did You Get This Number

By Sloane Crosley 288 pages; Riverhead  
A collection of weird and wonderful essays from the author of *I Was Told There Would Be Cake*. A little out there to be considered truly "crowd-pleasing"—unless, that is, your crowd happens to be smart, funny and more than a tad on the irreverent side.