

Loveable



*They try to make it through life
without too many bumps and bruises.
Their lives may not be perfect but we
love them anyway.*

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memorably lovable troublemaker, and McNally's talent for characterization and his lush sense of place make for funny and oddly compelling reading. Set in South Suburban Chicago.

Nobody's Fool by Richard Russo

Sixty-year-old Sully is down to his last few bucks and he's worried that he's started on a run of bad luck. The comic timing and continuous warmth of this intricately woven novel lets you enjoy its humor while appreciating the stark realities of the lives of the people within.

Harry Revised by Mark Savras

This is the hilarious and tender story of Harry Rent, a down-on-his-luck widower, who tries to reinvent himself following his wife's untimely death. Harry's emotional journey takes him from his own solipsistic and outrageously misdirected fantasies about an obsidian-haired, twenty-two-year-old waitress at his local greasy spoon to the tenuous beginnings of an actual personal transformation.

Lucky Us by Joan Silber

Elisa finds out that she is HIV positive just before her marriage. She turns against the stable and caring Gabe and reignites her abusive relationship with an ex-boyfriend. Her path of self-destruction is grounded in guilt, but it eventually leads to personal growth and acceptance.

How to Talk to a Widower by Jonathan Tropper

Twenty-nine-year-old widower Doug Parker finds his life spiraling out of control as he struggles to come to terms with grief, love, family, and suburbia while dealing with a bossy, pregnant twin sister who urges him to begin dating again, a younger sister planning her wedding, a mother dealing with her ailing husband, and a hostile teenage stepson.

The Other Shulman by Alan Zweibel

Joking that he has been gaining and losing the same thirty-five pounds since junior high, Shulman, a chubby, middle-aged stationary store owner from New Jersey, is stunned when he actually meets this doppelganger Shulman, a successful man who made all the choices that the original Shulman had spurned.

About Schmidt by Louis Begley

Albert Schmidt is a lawyer of the old school. After years of a carefully managed life, his world is falling apart. His beloved wife dies, he takes early retirement and his yuppie daughter is marrying a man he can't approve.

Amateur Barbarians by Robert Cohen

Unsettled by his brother's death and his own health scare, middle-aged school principal Teddy Hastings recklessly attempts to broaden his horizons and winds up on the wrong side of the law, while perpetual grad student Oren Pierce abandons his quest for an extraordinary life and unexpectedly settles well into a humble existence.

Geek Love by Katharine Dunn

At this novel's center are Al and Lil Binewski, carnival owners who breed freak offspring through drug use so that they can perform in the show. Over the years, this ghoulish process becomes the norm; indeed, as we share the experiences of the children, we find that for this close-knit family, a child's signs of normalcy are seen as a real threat.

The Monk Downstairs by Tim Farrington

This is the story of the beguiling romance between Rebecca Martin, a jaded graphic designer who's lost her faith in men, and Mike a disillusioned monk who has lost his faith in God. Mike rents the downstairs apartment in Rebecca's house. Before they know it, life's strange twists and turns bring them together and they glimpse the real mystery of love and the unfathomable depths of faith.

Love Creeps by Amanda Filipacchi

The slightly overweight, slightly balding Alan Morton begins to stalk Lynn Gallagher, a move that puzzles rather than frightens her. She herself hasn't desired anyone in quite a long time, and when she's confronted with Alan's desire for her, she decides to do something about it. So Lynn randomly picks an attractive man, a lawyer named Roland Dupont, to follow. Alan in turn befriends Roland, trying to figure out what it is that Lynn sees in the handsome but cold man. By telling the story of these three strange people, Filipacchi makes piercing observations about human nature and seemingly inexplicable behavior.

The Sportswriter by Richard Ford

As a sportswriter, Frank Bascombe makes his living studying people--men, mostly--who live entirely within themselves. This is a condition

that Frank himself aspires to. But at thirty-eight, he suffers from incurable dreaminess, occasional pounding of the heart, and the not-too-distant losses of a career, a son, and a marriage. In the course of the Easter week in which Ford's moving novel transpires, Bascombe will end up losing the remnants of his familiar life, though with his spirits soaring.

All That I Have by Castle Freeman Jr.

Sheriff Lucian Wing is an experienced, practical man who enforces the law in his corner of Vermont with a steady hand. Things are not as they should be, however, in the sheriff's small, protected domain. The outside world draws near, and threats multiply: the arrival in the district of a band of major league criminals; an aggressive deputy; the self-destructive exploits of a local bad boy; Wing's discovery of a domestic crisis. The sheriff's response to these diverse challenges calls on all the personal resources he has cultivated during his working life: patience, tact, and (especially) humor.

Peregrine's Rest by Jennifer Gostin

What do a resident caretaker of an historic cemetery, a self-styled explorer and a 70-year-old comic book collector have in common? All three aid each other in their quests while foiling a plot to desecrate the old cemetery. This is a light and engaging whodunit.

The Dream Life of Sukhanov by Olga Grushin

At fifty-six, Anatoly Sukhanov has everything a man could want. Nearly twenty-five years ago, he traded his precarious existence as a brilliant underground artist for the perks and comforts of a high-ranking Soviet apparatchik. Once he created art; now he censors it. His past is a shadow, repressed to the point of nonexistence. But a series of increasingly bizarre events transforms his perfect world into a nightmare. Buried dreams return to haunt him, his life begins to unravel, new political alignments in the Kremlin threaten to undo him, and little by little, he finds himself losing everything he sold his soul to gain.

Sole Survivor by Derek Hansen

Rosie Tretheway is disillusioned with her daily grind in Auckland, New Zealand. She finds that she's inherited a shack on an isolated island, off the coast of New Zealand. There are only two other inhabitants where she will be, and they don't want her there. One man is a survivor of a Japanese POW camp. The other is a retired, burnt-out police officer. Can these three strangers in search of a new life, be able to survive each other's company?

Vinnie's Head by Marc Lecard

Small-time Long Island criminal, Johnnie LoDuco, after giving up a promising career as a smut peddler, gets involved with some friends who rob a convenience store, get caught because they are too stoned to make a getaway, and then pin all the blame on him. And when his childhood buddy Vinnie bails him out of jail, he agrees to partake in a scam Vinnie has put together that will make them all rich. The only problem is: while out fishing one day Johnnie reels in the biggest catch of his life, Vinnie's head on the end of the fishing line. Now mafia types, bounty hunters, and Vinnie's girlfriend are after him, and Johnnie LoDuco doesn't have a clue as to why.

The Funnies by J. Robert Lennon

Tim Mix has been left a legacy by his father. He has three months to learn to draw his father's "Family Circus" style comic strip or get nothing. In his search Tim learns about cartooning, his father and his family.

Milt & Marty by Tom Leopold

By 1968, the infamous comedy writing team of Milt Wagonman and Marty Sloyxne have become two washed-up, obnoxious 70-somethings who "couldn't even get blacklisted" during McCarthyism. When young East Coasters Tom and Bob move to L.A. to launch their writing careers, they encounter Milt and Marty on their first gig—writing for sitcom pilot "Give Your Uncle Back His Legs". In a desperate mission to survive in Tinsel Town, Milt and Marty attempt to hitch themselves to Tom and Bob's rising star, and the jokes pour out like schmaltz on the borscht belt.

Home Land by Sam Lipsyte

Catamount Notes, the Eastern Valley High School alumni newsletter, is filled with tales of success from the school's graduates, until Lewis "Teabag" Miner, class of 1989, sends a hilarious confession about his failure at love, work, and life.

The Book of Ralph by John McNally

Our narrator Hank details his misadventures with the scheming, eccentric Ralph. Having already been held back twice by the time they become friends in eighth grade, Ralph is nonetheless charmingly bright and mischievous—he does extensive research in the library, for instance, before finalizing his price list for his business of mob-style hits (he charges \$15 for chewing off an ear, though naturally never goes through with it). Ralph is a